

**L Jean Camp, Ph.D.**

**Placement Report for the IEEE-USA Congressional Fellowship**

**January 2010**

I began my appointment as an IEEE-USA Congressional Fellow on Monday January 4 in the Office of Rep. Bob Etheridge (NC-02).

What was helpful in the placement process was the initial listing of individuals interested in a fellow, the initial reception, and the very helpful, "Congress at Your Fingertips." Also helpful was the introduction of previous fellows during panels and AAAS events. The opportunity for informal interaction and feedback during the receptions during the AAAS training was also helpful.

What was difficult in the placement process was trying to time the placement, and my own lack of understanding about when placement was expected. As a January start, I took four short trips to DC to interview. Several approaches could address this. First, fellows could be allowed to begin searching during blocks of time in training. Second, a week of required commitment for placement in August could be announced as part of the commitment when the opportunities are announced, to ease planning. Had I planned for that, I think it would have been easier. Finally, a week of formal placement training at the beginning of January, with the same kind of bullpen experience given to the fellows starting in the Fall, could have been helpful.

My focus in interviews was on the topics which I would be assigned and committee membership. However, as the interviews continued I came to appreciate that there were other issues. It was important not to select an office based on a single issue, as this might not be addressed, or may be addressed before I arrived. As the Cybersecurity Bill had completed its passage through the House before my first fellowship month was completed, this ended up being ideal.

My final decision was based on fit for the district. Being in a House personal office implies an exposure to politics as well as policies. Choosing a district in North Carolina as opposed to the northeast or west allows me to be able to participate in an informed and appropriate manner. Also, the possibility of having a supervisor who himself began as an AAAS Fellow was part of my decision process.

I selected the office of Rep. Etheridge NC-02 (D). My portfolio is defense, telecommunications, transportation, and cybersecurity. I will be reviewing and categorizing earmarks for the 2010 budget year.