

Lawson M. Anderson, CHMM  
Project Manager  
TETRA TECH NUS, Inc.  
65 Union Avenue, Suite 340  
Memphis, TN 38103

June 21, 2006

Re: Phoenix Award Letter of Support

Mr. Anderson;

I am honored to present this letter as confirmation of the pride that my community and I feel in the ongoing success of the project that the U S Navy and its associates have accomplished at the old Orlando Navy Base.

An area in Winter Park but close to the base has been my home for 42 years, so I am very familiar with the old base itself, the ongoing changes, and the rebirth of this space as Baldwin Park.

The base was situated in an edge area of Orlando facing modest but well kept concrete block houses of one level. It was within a couple of miles of POSH Winter Park known for its treasured trees and lush green canopy, sparkling lakes and picturesque waterways. The businesses near the base were a part of short strip mall configuration and were in small office, cafe, or retail venues of primary level. Within a mile of the base eventually was built a shopping mall. Orlando loved its Navy Base and the Navy Base loved Orlando. As a teacher I, many times, brought my class to the Friday Graduation as did dozens of other educators. Can you imagine the sadness stirred on both sides by the departure of the Navy from this location? It was as painful as losing a beloved friend and the adjustment took time.

Thus it was that the Navy had to call on not only its scientific and technical skills but also its skills of communication, understanding, and good will for a community about to endure months of demolition and construction. Even before the activity began, the Navy was hard at work behind the scenes forming a RAB and making plans for the rebirth of a barren, poisoned, and now nakedly ugly territory. The Navy must also satisfy the environmentally conscious active groups of Orlando. Could this forlorn space rise from the ashes ? Could it evoke pride not only for its residents but just as importantly for its varied neighbors and critics? The answer was, indeed, a resounding YES.

Mountains of sluggish and toxic earth were transported and new homes and a beautiful school with surrounding ballpark and recreational areas evolved. Lakes were cleansed and original waterflow between lakes restarted. Canals banked by overflowing green vines and water plants wound through the residential areas and an inviting and compact business area emerged in the center.. Shabby debris was removed, and green spaces gave margins to the new homes and concrete sidewalks. Bike trails were soon occupied by youth and adults alike adding to the family friendly ambience. Best of all, the home field of the much beloved Blue Jacket training ship became Blue Jacket Park, a tribute to all the fine young men who trained on the imposing model. Many who traveled the busy adjacent road had a special place in their hearts for the sight of the huge ship and they would miss it. Now they still can remember Blue Jacket as they enjoy the sight of the lovely park named in its honor. People come to walk their dogs or jog or watch their children play or just sit by the beautiful fountain to meditate in Blue Jacket Park. This huge expanse with its open invitation is the gemstone of the Navy's accomplishment. Under Navy direction the old base has risen from toxic ashes to environmentally cleansed beauty for all to share. We are grateful.

Appreciatively- Blanche Parrott Olson

*Blanche Parrott Olson*  
1820 Blencoe Rd 32789  
Winter Park, FL