

Around

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For government, doing more with less is the new normal

February Continuous Improvement training class at Aerostructures propels City of Chula Vista's Lean journey forward

Transforming the City of Chula Vista into one of the few U.S. cities to embrace and use the Lean principles was not at the top of Chula Vista Mayor Cheryl Cox's list of priorities a few years ago – not even close. She was actually after a tighter bond with one of the city's longest-term employers, Goodrich Aerostructures. But the more she learned about our business unit's embrace of the Lean tools, the more committed she became to exploring their use in streamlining city processes.

"It was a Goodrich partnership I was interested in. I wanted to figure out how we could lock arms and work together to attack local issues as they arose," said Cox. "Then I toured Goodrich and saw the dedication to using Lean to run the day-to-day business, how well activity seemed to flow through the facility, and how status updates are made to visual metrics in real time. I'm a big believer in process and I wanted to be on board; I wanted to know how we could take what works in a design and manufacturing company and translate it to a bureaucratic organization like the city."

Assistant City Manager Scott Tulloch was also on the forefront of learning more about Aerostructures' use of Lean.

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Continuous Improvement in action

Before her introduction to the city's 6S (Sort, Straighten, Shine, Standardize and Sustain... plus Safety) initiative, the supply room that was the responsibility of Legal Assistant Cheryl Ponds in the Chula Vista City Attorney's office resembled a "junk drawer" on shelves. "The tops of the cabinets were a dumping ground for out-of-service office equipment and there was no organization to what was on the shelves, either," Ponds said. "As supplies came in, I would just put them anywhere there was available space." After 6S training, Ponds completely restructured the supply room – removing out-of-date equipment, organizing and labeling supplies and developing a key "map" of where particular supplies could be found. "My goal was to make sure that if I wasn't here, that employees could easily find anything." The City of Chula Vista's Lean transformation was launched through a collaboration with Aerostructures. (Photo by Randy Stambok)

“Scott jumped at the opportunity to learn more about Aerostructures’ use of Lean. He is always figuring out ways to get people to talk to one another,” she said. “I give him a lot of credit for taking this on the way he did.”

What Tulloch did was work with Aerostructures senior leadership to learn more about the company’s Lean journey. Those initial queries led to an invitation for the city to begin sending handfuls of employees to Aerostructures’ two-week Continuous Improvement Foundation (CIF) training classes. Starting last year, the partnership ratcheted up further when Goodrich offered a special one-week CIF session exclusively for 50 city employees. That offer was repeated recently, with another 50 city employees attending a week’s worth of CIF training... with a twist.

Taking a step few cities have: naming a Continuous Improvement Manager

“The CIF training for the city has a lot of the same exercises as the two-week class for Aerostructures employees, but no virtual kaizen event,” said Michelle Scullin, a Supply Chain CI and Integration team leader who facilitated both of the city’s training sessions. “We altered the agenda to cover some of the product development tools, which we recognize they’ll use more for scheduling, assigning and completing projects. We also wanted to cover at least the ‘quads’ (Impact Matrix, Risk Register, Deliverables Map and Least Waste Way Program Plan). We purposely went heavier into project planning and execution rather than Lean Manufacturing principles – like jidoka (line stop).”

And in between the two classes, Chula Vista took a step that few cities have: it named a Continuous Improvement Manager to coordinate CI efforts across the city’s many departments. Ed Chew, a long-time City employee, took the position last July. Since then, he’s been busy introducing the Lean principles into a city organization that’s been battered by the economic downturn, resulting layoffs and service cuts.

“As our people came out of the CI training at Goodrich, we looked for the folks who were on board, excited about the training and the possibilities of Lean. We found more than a dozen employees to be champions for each of their departments and to help lead our events,” Chew said. “When we hit the holiday season, though, things started to run out of gas. I think everyone started burning out because we’ve lost so many staff and the workload hasn’t diminished. People are ‘standing on their heads’ doing their regular duties... and then here I come, trying to get CI going.”

With a new batch of graduates fresh from a late February class at Goodrich, Chew is now seeing renewed interest in Lean... and he’s fanning the flames to ensure that the passion grows. He continues to spread the word about the fundamentals of Lean, starting with an area where he’d seen great success last year: 5S – or, in the City’s case, 6S.

“Fred Rohr would be proud”

Chula Vista Mayor says city is operating more efficiently thanks to Aerostructures’ “tremendous commitment”

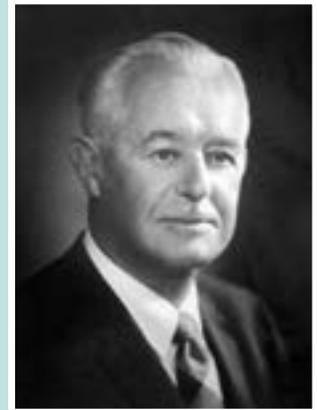
Chula Vista Mayor Cheryl Cox and City Manager Jim Sandoval have been working closely with leadership at the Chula Vista facility for a number of years to train city employees in use of the Lean tools to improve processes. Both officials took the opportunity recently to thank our business unit for their assistance. Here’s the text of an April letter they sent to Aerostructures President Marc Duvall...

We want to thank you and Goodrich Aerostructures for your tremendous commitment to the City of Chula Vista. We appreciate your response to our request to share what is working at Goodrich. With more than 100 Chula Vista staff now trained by Goodrich in the Continuous Improvement program, our City is definitely operating more lean and efficiently.

The time and effort your team put into providing a customized training for our staff is remarkable and their efforts are truly appreciated. We especially want to recognize Martin Lodge for his executive leadership in developing and implementing this program. And, we thank Michelle Scullin for her dedication and enthusiasm for this partnership. Everyone who has participated comes back to work energized and motivated to implement the CI program.

In 2011, we conducted Kaizen events on several processes and already are seeing measurable improvements. The City Attorney and City Clerk offices collaborated to develop new policies and streamlined the process to respond to public records act requests. The Human Resources team conducted a Kaizen event that has resulted in a 63 percent time savings in how flexible spending accounts are processed. And, a cross-departmental Kaizen event was conducted to better coordinate our special events permitting process.

Fred Rohr would be proud that his legacy of contributing to the success of the City of Chula Vista continues. We know this effort will pay great dividends for our City for years to come. We appreciate the partnership and look forward to sharing in future successes.



Fred Rohr

Safety as the sixth “S”

“We took 5S (Sort, Straighten, Shine, Standardize and Sustain) and added Safety as the sixth ‘S.’ While Public Works and the fire and police departments all look at safety closely, we don’t have that strong safety culture in our office environment. When we first rolled it out, we had some people who I never thought would do 5S instead became real proponents for it,” he said. “For instance, I did some training in the City Attorney’s office late last year and talked with one of the legal assistants there about it afterwards. Around the end of the year, when offices are closed but staff is around, she went into their office supply cabinet and she did an absolutely awesome job. It went from total chaos to a perfect example of 5S in action.”

Chew added that other city departments also embraced 6S, citing successes in the Human Resources department and Public Works – a group that applied 6S to clean up and organize its chemical storage.

When Chew was figuring how to catapult Lean to a new level in 2012, he decided to do some benchmarking. Lean is relatively new to the world of government, although at least one congressional candidate in South Carolina made it part of his platform and Lean/Six Sigma was even touted by presidential contender Newt Gingrich during his campaign last year. But Chew found a few government organizations against which he could measure Chula Vista’s efforts.

“The State of Minnesota and the Environmental Protection Agency have a lot of information about their Lean implementation on their web sites. I’ve talked with the City of Irving, Texas and Ventura County, California. I’m asking a ton of questions and was feeling like the new kid on the block,” he said. “It turns out that we’re going down the same path that these organizations that have been really successful have been going down, too. They’re just three or four years down the road where Lean has had time to take hold and they’ve been able to build on those successes. It was reassuring to find that out.”

But along with that reassurance, Chew also identified some areas where Chula Vista is going to play catch up with other organizations’ Lean efforts, especially when it comes to kaizen events.

“I’m finding there are details that we’re missing. When I go back through the Goodrich binder I received during my CIF training, I found things like setting up regular intervals after an event to track whether we’re still seeing the successes from the event needs some work. Our follow-up hasn’t been as strong as it could be,” he said. “And on my own To-Do list, I have developing Standard Work for coming up with our kaizen events. I want to make sure that whichever events we come up with tie to our overall city goals, much like your Policy Deployment at a high level. And then there are the basics: knowing exactly what participants want to change and what the desired outcomes

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“This was a real eye-opener for the staff”

Legal assistant uses 6S to remove the ordeal of visiting the supply room

Think about your “junk drawer” at home (*come on, everyone has one!*). Now imagine all the items in that drawer filling the shelves of a storeroom. That gives you a pretty good idea of what the office supply room in the City Attorney’s office at Chula Vista City Hall used to look like.

“The doorway just outside the store room leads to the mayor’s and councilmember’s offices. And I used to be embarrassed when they would walk by because this room was such an eyesore,” according to Cheryl Ponds, legal assistant. “No one could find anything in here. They didn’t even want to try to find things, it was so bad. In the past, if I saw anyone from the Legal staff headed this direction, I’d call out: ‘What are you looking for?’ and I’d have to find what they needed. I was up and down all day as a result.”

That was before the City took employees through 6S training. Afterward, Ponds was able to tackle the supply room armed with new CI tools. The first thing she found was that the tops of the cabinet had become a dumping ground for out-of-service office equipment.

Using a kanban approach, labels and visual controls to restore order

“After the 6S training, I knew the first thing I had to do was get rid of everything we didn’t use, so I had the old equipment taken away,” Ponds said. “Then I looked at the most frequently requested items – pens, pencils, pads, etc. – which were all in the back shelves furthest from the door and I moved them onto the shelves closest to the door. Labeling was a big part of the 6S effort, too. My goal was to make sure that if I wasn’t here, that employees could easily find anything.”

Ponds ensured that by developing a visual control – a key that tells employees in which section and on which shelf they can find every item. Even printer cartridges carry unique labels with the printer owner’s initials. And there’s also a kanban approach, so that when employees notice that they’re running low on an item, it’s added to a whiteboard that will trigger ordering replenishments.

“This was a real eye-opener for the staff. I’m enthusiastic about 6S because it’s saved me a lot of time already,” Ponds said. “The store room has only been like this since the first of the year and I still get comments from staff about how much better it is whenever they go in there.”

are. That way there is built-in follow-up that happens on a regular schedule after the event so that we can measure our progress. That's the part that we missed on a couple of these things."

The November election cycle will bring change to Chula Vista City Hall. But Chew is confident that change of elected leadership will not affect the City's dedication to continuing its Lean journey.

Election cycle not expected to alter CI focus

"If you listen to candidates at all levels of government, what they're saying is: 'We need to have government be more efficient because doing more with less is the new normal.' So how can you look at CI and say we shouldn't be doing that, that we need to figure out another way to be more efficient? How can you argue against making change for the better and trying to drive down costs and increase efficiency and productivity, given a finite set of resources?" Chew said "And if someone wants to challenge CI, I just tell them to look down the street to Goodrich Aerostructures, to a company that was on the verge of 'being done' at one point and is now a leader in its industry in large part because of Lean."

For Cox, introducing Lean into the City of Chula Vista's operations during her tenure is something she touts at every opportunity... and considers part of the mark she made while mayor.

"I'm very proud of our Lean efforts and brought them up in my recent State of the City address. I bring our Lean successes up often when I speak to student groups and other organizations. And while a lot of us want to move faster, it's not all about speed. It's really about people," she said. "In addition to CI, one of the things I saw at Goodrich that really resonated with me was your People Philosophy, particularly the importance of mutual trust and respect. That will be the key to our continued successes. Our people who have been trained will help train others, and this will be self-perpetuating. There will be a time when we can do this on our own, and it won't be solely top-down effort. It will include people at all levels working together. And I'm confident in our people, our skills and our ability to do this."



Armando Mendoza with the City of Chula Vista's Public Works department displays the results of the 6S activities the City has undertaken – which were launched via a collaboration with Aerostructures. Public Works is a broad organization that performs a variety of vital functions for the City – including vehicle maintenance, road and landscape upkeep and repair. Each of the chemical, gasoline and herbicide storage lockers in the department has been cleaned and reorganized, while all stock has been labeled. (Photo by Randy Stambook)

New Operations manager brings a world of experience to the Alabama Service Center

Scott Hannah has spent more than 23 years in the aerospace industry, beginning his career at British Aerospace in 1989. For the last 15 years, however, Goodrich has been Hannah's home. He has worked as a technical then strategic buyer, a logistics team leader and, ultimately, a business unit leader at the Prestwick Service Center in Scotland. Last month, he launched the next leg of his Goodrich journey, assuming a position as Operations manager at the Alabama Service Center (ASC) in Foley.

Prior to coming to the ASC, Hannah spent five years as the Director of Operations at the Goodrich campus in Dubai, helping to get that Middle East maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) facility up and running.

Around Aerostructures recently asked the well-traveled leader to discuss his experiences at Goodrich and Aerostructures... and also to provide a look forward at his new role.

You started at the Foley facility on April 9, straight off the airplane. What was it about this position that attracted you?

The United States was my first choice in terms of destinations after Dubai. Having just spent five years building the facility and the business from scratch, the opportunity to work in a larger established facility was appealing. The Alabama Service Center is in a more mature stage of the Continuous Improvement journey and I felt this would give me more experience in that environment. And, of course, the milder weather and scenery didn't hurt, either.

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Scott Hannah, the Alabama Service Center's (ASC) new Operations manager, brings nearly a quarter of a century of aerospace industry experience to his new assignment at the Foley MRO facility. His Goodrich career has included stops in Scotland and Dubai. Hannah is pictured above (at center) with Clay Allison, ASC FHA (Flight Hour Agreement) team leader and Crystal Huffman, FHA Customer Support representative. (Photo by Vickie Langham)

With your experience in Prestwick and Dubai, you bring a broad range of international seasoning to your position. How do you think your exposure to different MRO operations – and different countries and cultures – will help you in your new position at Foley?

Understanding people and emotional intelligence, in general, is an area in which I have gained a lot of experience over the past five years. Everyone has their reasons for their perceptions and how they feel. I've learned that when an employee has matters to overcome, understanding each person's individual circumstances is key. Dubai allowed me to realize that this is the same everywhere.

What aspect of your new position excites you the most?

There are two things that I'm looking forward to.

One is being part of a large established facility and getting a better understanding of how successful teamwork is sustained in this environment.

Secondly, my new role as the Flight Hour Agreement (FHA) manager for Hawaiian Airlines will allow me to become more directly involved (than I was in Dubai) in customer and contract-related interactions, both day-to-day and strategically. Gaining this experience will be a new learning achievement for me.

What are the biggest challenges you see in this new assignment? What keeps you up at night about it?

Establishing a good working relationship with the team at the ASC is a top priority. It's easy for the "new guy" to have ideas on how things could or should be, based on previous experiences. But understanding why things are the way they are, as well as the history of the process that got them to where they are now, will help me offer informed and objective improvement ideas.

I'm very happy to say though that, so far, everybody has been very welcoming and I've not had a reason for sleepless nights... other than the initial jetlag when I first arrived.

What is it that gives you the most satisfaction, that allows you to go home thinking: "This was a good day"?

A good day is when something is achieved... whether that's a problem resolved or a CI initiative in action that is clearly showing a benefit. Sometimes it takes time for improvements to come to fruition. Having the patience to stick with them is vital. Often times, when a newly implemented CI process isn't quite working, it's easy to revert to the old way of doing things rather than taking the time to investigate the root causes for the lack of improvement. Being disciplined in the CI process and overcoming human nature can also give you that feeling that it was a successful day.

You've said you want to change the way the ASC team operates through a series of focused Lean events. Is that the entire ASC team or the FHA team?

Initially, my focus will be on the FHA line. However, as I become more familiar with the people and the FHA line begins to show flow improvements, I'll be more than willing to share our best practices with others that believe our FHA improvements could benefit their teams.

What type of Lean events do you think you'll conduct to help you with improving operations at the ASC?

The team has a high percentage of new recruits. To ensure the less experienced get a real opportunity to learn from the experienced team members, changes to the percent loads have been made. Also, daily CI – like 5S, point of use tooling and visual controls – will naturally lead to improvements.

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As we move forward, it's probable that the layout will change. And, with that, the percent load could be redefined. From there, we will address Standard Work as we will be in a position in which each area of the team will have more experts than exist currently.

Not every change or improvement will require an event. But, for those actions that require our total focus and dedication to the process, we will definitely take the time to hold an event.

A couple of years ago, there was a major event which realigned the layout of the ASC. Do you see yourself embarking on anything of that sweeping scale? Or will you be taking more of a "one bite at a time" approach?

Over the past year, the ASC has seen a dramatic change in the mix of work received. Therefore, the facility layout is about to change again and I have been asked to participate and support this new layout process. By the way, Goodrich do Brazil is moving into a new facility in the near future and I recently served on that show and layout event.

Cultures vary from location to location, country to country. One of the things that our businesses pride ourselves on is the well-defined Goodrich Culture. What sort of cultural differences did you see between your three most recent locations? Does the Goodrich Culture vary from site to site? For instance, since Dubai is a more "top-down" society, how do things like challenging the status quo/processes go over there?

The Goodrich Culture is the same the world over, as is the fact that all of us – no matter which country, state, city or previous company we came from – start off from somewhere else.

The Goodrich Culture, for many new employees, is something completely different than the culture they have experienced... or different from the culture they expected. For some, it takes time for them to trust that this is the way Goodrich operates before they will take that leap of faith and begin practicing positive assumptions, open face-to-face communication, etc.

As for Dubai, it has more than 10 nationalities... I remember having 14 at one time. Yet the Goodrich Culture worked there. I think there's no difference, wherever you are. You just have to get the culture started and make it a habit to work that way.

What will success at the ASC look like for you?

Being known as someone who has contributed to the success of the business... and not just as the new guy.

Finding an opportunity to volunteer just got easier

New online resource offers Aerostructures employees guidelines and opportunities to give back to their communities

Goodrich Aerostructures employees have been volunteering in their communities since the company opened for business 72 years ago. They've shown their giving nature on projects ranging from World War II-era clothing drives, to sponsorship of an annual Halloween party for Chula Vista's children in the 1950s, to the toy and blood drives of today. One constant has tied these efforts together: employees' desire to be a positive force in the communities they live and work in.

While the company has long supported such activities, it recently put guidelines into place to help enable volunteering on work time. In addition, Aerostructures just launched an online resource employees can access to identify company-endorsed volunteer activities.

"We held a Lean event earlier this year to look into how we could better coordinate our efforts so that it was easier for employees to volunteer, which – in turn – benefits all of our communities," said Chula Vista Training and Development Manager Valorie McClelland. "The outcome is a SharePoint site providing guidelines on which sorts of organizations employees should consider as volunteering opportunities. The site also offers some steps that employees or teams can take to have a successful volunteer event."

The guidelines for selecting deserving organizations follow the Goodrich enterprise "giving" goals: *Honor, Educate and Engage*. That opens the door for employees to serve a variety of organizations – such as schools, arts and cultural organizations, civic and community groups (including those that support members of the military, like the USO), and health and human services entities, which includes groups such as local food banks.

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Aerostructures employees have had a giving focus since the company’s inception – as Rohr Aircraft Corporation in 1940. In this June 1943 photo, Rohr employees demonstrate their strong desire to contribute to the war effort by donating bundles of clothes to a Russian Clothing Relief Drive. Such drives were popular in America after Germany attacked the Soviet Union, providing humanitarian support for Soviet citizens and war orphans who were living in devastated villages with near-famine conditions.

Avoiding overlap or duplication of volunteer efforts

“We’ve had the same giving focus for the past several years at the enterprise level. And having Aerostructures align with those goals is perfect,” said Goodrich Community Relations Director Kelly Chopus, who came to Chula Vista to participate in the volunteering event. “Our employees demonstrate on a daily basis how they care about their communities. It’s part of their DNA, part of the Goodrich culture that sets us apart.”

In addition to the volunteering guidelines, the new SharePoint site – called *Volunteering@Aerostructures* (http://onesitegr/aero/teams2/hr_volunteering/default.aspx) – features links to Frequently Asked Questions. Potential volunteer opportunities are also listed on a calendar. If a volunteer opportunity matches an employee’s interests, he/she can click on it and be linked to further details – including the organization benefited, the number of volunteers needed, and who’s organizing the effort.

“We know we have volunteer activities around the globe that enrich our communities. We’re hopeful everyone who coordinates volunteer work will use this (Volunteering@Aerostructures) calendar. Not only will it paint a holistic picture of the impact that we’re having on our communities, it’s also a good way for sharing of best practices.”

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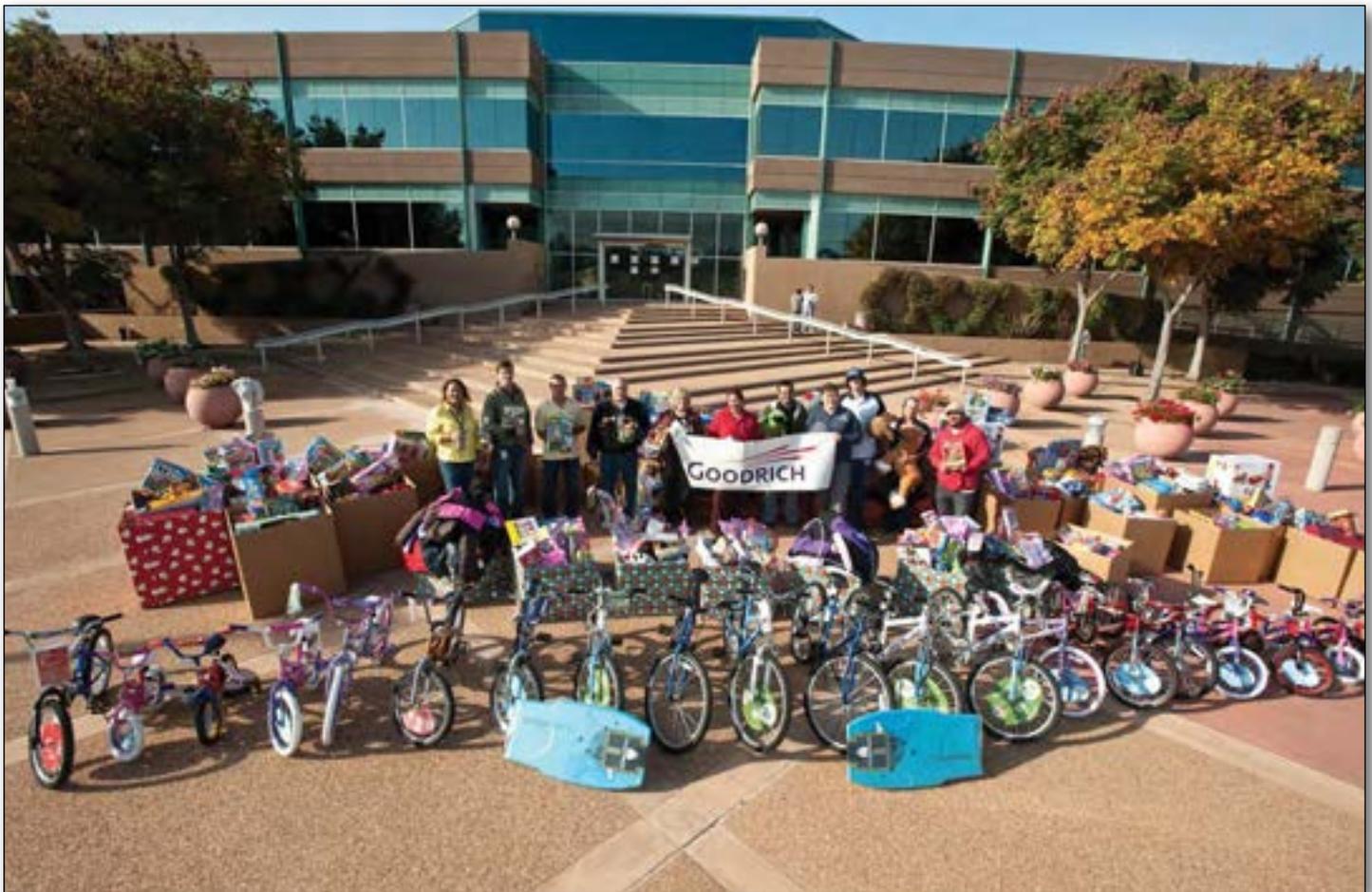
“There is so much good work that employees do with worthy organizations. But that sheer diversity could also lead to ‘the right hand not knowing what the left hand is doing’ issues,” said Communications Specialist Patrick Palmer, who co-lead the event with McClelland. “The purpose of this SharePoint site is twofold. One, it lets employees find a volunteer event of interest to them. Two, it helps prevent us from inadvertently overlapping or duplicating our volunteer efforts.”

Palmer added that while all the events currently listed on the volunteering calendar are in Chula Vista, it is meant to be used across Aerostructures.

“We know we have volunteer activities around the globe that enrich our communities,” he said. “We’re hopeful everyone who coordinates volunteer work will use the calendar. Not only will it paint a holistic picture of the impact that we’re having on our communities, it’s also a good way for sharing of best practices.”

The Volunteering SharePoint site can also be used to publish photos taken during community service events, eliminating the need for the event organizer to email such pictures to event participants.

(If you have a volunteer event you’d like to have added to the calendar, please send an email with details to Volunteer.Coordinator@goodrich.com.)



Chula Vista employees and representatives from the Chula Vista Cares organization – which conducts an annual collection of clothing and holiday gifts for needy families – are pictured above surrounded by the huge quantity of items donated for the charity’s 2010 Toy and Jacket Drive. (Photo by Randy Stambook)