

# DR. QASSIM A. ABDULLAH

## *Humbled by the Recognition, Proud of My Service*

It is not easy to climb to the forefront of the achievers list, but it is more possible to reach than many people may think. Passions and dedication to your profession of choice are keys to reach your goals. Sincere and creative dreams can lead you to places you would never reach without them.

I am writing this piece to inspire young professionals who may find themselves tangled in the corporate rat race and feel they have nowhere to go. Life, unless you were born wealthy, will always require a hard and often difficult daily routine. However, you need to recognize this reality and decide on whether you want to let this routine consume you or if you can acknowledge the routine and plan an exit strategy. The latter option, not only helps you survive the routine, but allows you to unleash the potential in yourself that may lead you to even greater successes.

I would like to share the personal side of my professional life experience, hoping it will help you in your quest to excel and reach your goals. Throughout my 40-year career, I have dedicated my professional life to engineering and geospatial sciences, and technology. I have practiced these with integrity, passion, curiosity and hard work. Integrity is paramount to gain the trust of people around you. Passion drives you to persevere when things get hectic. Curiosity pushes you to create and to think outside the box. And hard work provides you with the extra time you need outside of your daily work commitments and routines. Like me, you likely will find yourself working, reading or analyzing issues during holidays and weekends, while others are enjoying their favorite sports on television.

We all make different choices in life, and all choices are worth respect and recognition. You need to learn that recognition for creativity and hard work sometimes is not instantaneous. Years may pass without assurance from others that you are on the right path or confirmation that your work in the science profession is worthwhile. This is normal. Do not let it discourage you from marching forward, as you may lose the momentum you need to take you to the next step.

I practiced all of the above factors and now find myself in a position in which many professionals wish to be. I am proud to be one of the professionals shaping the geospatial mapping industry and its technologies. People put trust in me due to



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my long history with them through innovations, assessments, evaluations, critiques and publications. I have been honored with and humbled by many recognitions and awards throughout my career. These have included the prestigious Fairchild Photogrammetric Award, a presidential citation for co-authoring the new mapping accuracy standards, and the Outstanding Workshop Instructor Award for my contributions in teaching workshops during the American Society of Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing (ASPRS) conferences over the last 20 years or so.

*“...keep up the good work and do not get discouraged if the tide sometimes flows against your dreams. This too shall pass.”*

Most recently, I was awarded with two new awards by ASPRS, The Outstanding Service Award for publishing my monthly column “Mapping Matters” and the ASPRS Fellow Award, as I was elected to be an ASPRS fellow. The ASPRS Fellow Award is the second highest honor bestowed by the society to its members in recognition to their contributions to the science and profession. In a letter from the ASPRS president, he stated: “It gives me great pleasure to inform you that you have been elected a Fellow of the American Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing. You have given your

## Who I am?

Phonetic pronunciation of my first name: KAA-SIM

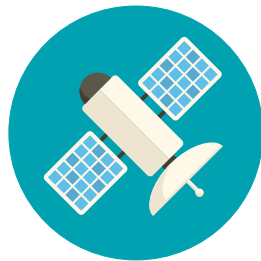
I am a civil engineer and photogrammetrist, a graduate of the Civil Engineering Department at the University of Washington, Seattle. I consider myself an accomplished scientist with more than 40 years of combined industrial, research and development, and academic experience in analytical photogrammetry, digital remote sensing, and civil and surveying engineering. My current responsibilities include designing and managing strategic programs to develop and implement new remote sensing technologies focused on meeting the evolving needs of geospatial users. Currently, I work as a lead research scientist and a member of Woolpert Labs team. In addition, I serve as an adjunct professor at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County and at Penn State teaching graduate courses on UAS, Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing.

My latest accomplishments include evaluating and introducing the Geiger and single photon LiDAR to the geospatial industry and leading Woolpert research activities in the field of Unmanned Aerial System (UAS), its sensor calibration, and its workflow development. I publishes a monthly column "Mapping Matters", in the American Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing (ASPRS) journal PE&RS. Besides being a certified photogrammetrist by ASPRS, I am also a licensed professional surveyor and mapper with the states of Florida, Oregon, Virginia, and South Carolina. I am also a certified thermographer by the FLIR Infrared Training Center and a Certified GEOINT Professional in Remote Sensing and Imagery Analysis (CGP-R) by the United States Geospatial Intelligence Foundation (USGIF).

time unselfishly to the Society and have worked diligently for the science and the profession." The two new awards will be bestowed during a ceremony during the ASPRS Annual Conference in Baltimore in March.

I am grateful to the ASPRS, which has provided an invaluable technical environment and shaped me as professional, and to many of my former and current bosses who allowed me to be creative. I am also grateful to many of my friends and colleagues who I meet at work or technical conferences and who have trusted my technical opinions. I also want to offer many thanks to the readers of my column, "Mapping Matters," who challenged me with difficult questions, which have contributed to polishing my skills and knowledge.

Finally, my friends, I encourage you to keep up the good work and do not get discouraged if the tide sometimes flows against your dreams. This too shall pass. You will prevail.



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