

Clear The Way

By Major General William H. McCoy
Commandant, United States Army Engineer School



Jill and I are honored, privileged, and excited to return to Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri. We cherish this opportunity to serve with a remarkably proficient, innovative, and enthusiastic engineer team. The diversity, commitment, and professionalism of the team (including Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, civilians, community members and leaders, and all their respective family members and loved ones) make this a great place to train, work, and live. Our engineers' effectiveness is rooted in the training, doctrine, and materiel development occurring here daily. I would like to commend former and current key leaders of the Engineer School: Brigadier General Todd Semonite; Brigadier General (P) Jack Sterling; Command Sergeant Major Clint Pearson; the command team of 1st Engineer Brigade, including Colonel Mike Iverson and Command Sergeant Major Ioakimo Falaniko; and our dedicated service members, civilian employees, and families for their selfless, tireless, and innovative efforts to train, transform, deploy, and take care of our engineer team.



Our Army and Regiment are experiencing one of the most challenging, dynamic, and rewarding periods in their history. The selfless service and sacrifice of our Soldiers, civilians, and families in support of the GWOT is exemplary and a testament to their commitment to defending peace, liberty, freedom, and democracy. Support from families, FRGs, rear detachments, and communities are paramount to our success and ability to persevere in this challenge. Jill and I are incredibly touched and moved by the personal examples of courage, commitment, and selfless and patriotic service we've observed since the inception of this war. Each day we witness acts of kindness, strength, and passion which truly make our *Army Strong*.

Our Regiment's ability to support the incredible OPTEMPO associated with the GWOT—equating to multiple deployments by our engineer forces from Active Army, Reserve, and National Guard forces, while simultaneously accelerating transformation of some units—is indicative of the resolve, innovation, and flexibility of the total team. The fusion cell continues to serve as an outstanding means to affect transformation while sustaining support to the war in a synchronized and integrated manner. I'm inspired by current efforts to establish and sustain a fusion cell process for Reserve engineer forces integrated with efforts to transform the Active Army. Ongoing efforts by

Active, Reserve, and National Guard engineer forces to train and transform themselves while simultaneously supporting the GWOT is vital to our ability to provide timely, relative, and responsive support.

Leader development is an absolute investment in our force and future. Quality leadership is essential to winning the war, transforming the force, and preparing for the future force. I encourage leaders at every level to seek and support developmental opportunities for themselves and their Soldiers through assignment opportunities or schooling. I recognize and appreciate the challenges associated with manning the engineer force in support of the ARFORGEN model. My chal-

lenge to engineer leaders is to allow Soldiers to attend and complete leader development opportunities despite the pressures of our existing OPTEMPO. We must address this challenge proactively and in parallel with crucial family and personal time during appropriate periods of the ARFORGEN model.

The United States Army Maneuver Support Center and the United States Army Engineer School are using every available resource to train, equip, and protect Soldiers. Leaders at all levels are passionately and aggressively committed to DOTMLPF integration and ensuring the timely development of the right doctrine and materiel to fight the current and future war. Efforts by organizations such as the Counter Explosive Hazards Center (CEHC) to address current challenges, such as IED defeat, at an unprecedented rate are indicative of the resourcefulness, initiative, and innovation necessary to accomplish the mission while safeguarding and protecting our forces. The Engineer School is the subject matter expert in mine detection and specialized search dogs, a proven capability in the theater of operations. The solutions are innovative, complex, and dynamic, much like the threat. Technology and materiel alone can't resolve the challenge. Leadership is the critical component to addressing these challenges as we've seen demonstrated time and time again since the beginning of the war. I applaud the efforts by our engineer leaders and Soldiers to establish, sustain, and enforce the standards and discipline to counter the threats to our forces, reduce and eliminate our vulnerabilities, and care for our Soldiers and families.

I ask that we continue to remember our Soldiers and civilians who have made enormous sacrifices in the service of our nation. Please reflect on their service and join me in keeping our brave deployed service members and their families foremost in our thoughts and efforts.