

The NCO Journal

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A Quarterly Forum for Professional Development

*Special Bonus: Max PT
Article Reprint, Page 16*

*Centralized Promotion
Boards Explained, Page 12*

BOWLES

Promotions: Getting Squared Away

Army finishes assessment of NCO Corps' well-being

Washington, D.C. (Army News Service)--The Army Training and Leader Development Panel's (ATLDP) Phase II (NCO Study) report is now complete. The study, which follows Phase I (Officer Study), is the largest self-assessment study ever done by the Army. It focuses on training and leader development requirements for NCOs.

"People are the engines of our capabilities and are the most important elements of Army Transformation," said GEN Eric K. Shinseki, Chief of Staff of the Army. "We need the input of key constituent groups to help chart the proper path to transforming this Army and ATLDP gives us that input."

More than 30,000 active and reserve component officers, warrant officers, noncommissioned officers, enlisted soldiers, and spouses provided input to the study through surveys, participation in focus groups, or personal interviews.

The panel found the study was an assessment to determine how the Army could make a professional NCO Corps even better. The study found that NCOs understand Army Transformation and the role the Army and the nation expects them to accomplish. They believe the Army must re-capitalize and modernize the training and leader development tools to enable them to continue being the backbone of the Army.

NCOs are strongly committed to the nation and the Army. They believe as strongly as those who served before them in service to the nation and the Army. Today's NCOs have a strong service ethic, take pride in the Army and what they do, and are steadfast in accomplishing the mission. Additionally, NCOs believe that the Army, while continuing to develop highly professional noncommissioned officers, must assure the well-being of NCOs and their families if it is to continue to attract and retain high quality leaders.

Recommendations in the study's action plan require decisions by Army senior leaders, setting of priorities, and allocation of resources. The Army

must reevaluate the way it trains and look for ways to balance requirements and available training time with competing demands, while providing predictability and reducing personnel turbulence across the force. The recommendations are linked to six of the imperatives established in the ATLDP Phase I (Officer Study).

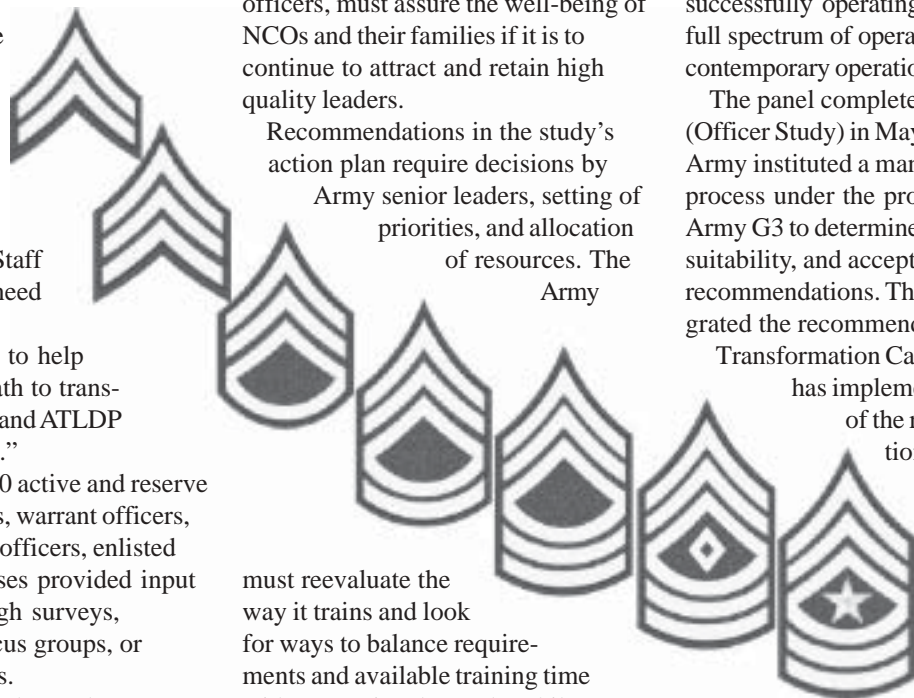
They are in the areas of: Army culture, NCO Education System (NCOES), training, systems approach to training, training and leader development model, and lifelong learning.

General Shinseki chartered the ATLDP in June 2000. The panel convened at Fort Leavenworth, Kan. The Army Chief of Staff instructed the panel to examine issues affecting training and leader development, and empowered the panel to examine appropriate institutions, processes, tools, and the environment. The purpose was to ensure soldiers, leaders, and units are capable of successfully operating throughout the full spectrum of operations and the contemporary operational environment.

The panel completed Phase I (Officer Study) in May 2001. The Army instituted a management process under the proponency of the Army G3 to determine the feasibility, suitability, and acceptability of the recommendations. The Army integrated the recommendations into its Transformation Campaign Plan and

has implemented a number of the recommendations and developed actions, decisions and resources required to implement the others.

The ATLDP continues its mission by examining the Warrant Officer Corps (Phase III) and Department of the Army Civilians (Phase IV). The panel will conclude its mission by developing a final report on training and leader development for the Army that enables battlefield and operational success and develops our operational commanders and leaders to meet the demands of our National Military Strategy.



TRADOC begins to implement suggestions from NCO Professional Development survey

By Jim Caldwell

FORT MONROE, Va. (Army News Service, May 2, 2002) — The Training and Doctrine Command is working to update and publish soldiers' manuals, mission training plans and other training resources, according to a TRADOC official.

The lack of such training packages was cited in the NCO Army Training and Leader Development Panel study released May 2 as one of the reasons NCOs find it difficult to train their soldiers to standard.

"In this study, as well as the officers' study, we found that some of our training enablers aren't as good as they should be," said Col. Dennis Redmond, director of individual training under TRADOC's deputy chief of staff for Operations and Training. Redmond is responsible for implementing coordinated TRADOC initiatives in response to all of ATLDP studies.

"We haven't been able to focus on them as we have been a very busy Army and, too, there has not been a lot of money to spread around to every facet of training and training support," Redmond said. "The chief of staff of the Army (Gen. Eric K. Shinseki) is committed to help fix these problems. That's why he has embarked on the very comprehensive introspective look at our Army to

identify what we need to focus on to enable our noncommissioned officers to do their job."

Redmond said that in some courses trainers have had to use "in-lieu-of equipment" for hands-on training.

"Sometimes that in-lieu-of equipment is not current, so we might be training on a piece of equipment that's not what's out there on the ground," he said.

Redmond said TRADOC is also working to update NCO Education System professional military education courses to produce adaptable NCO leaders and to ensure sergeants get the right training when they need it.

"We took an exhaustive look at common core curriculums for NCOES and found that some of these tasks continue to migrate downward," he said. "There are a lot of tasks that are being taught at, say, sergeant first class level in Advanced NCO Courses that should be rolled down to the staff sergeant in the Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course.

"We've started to work on a vertical needs assessment to determine exactly what tasks belong to and need to be taught in each noncommissioned officer rank and educational level."

The final course in NCOES is the Sergeants Major Course.

"We recognize that there's a gap between advanced noncommissioned officer course and the Sergeants Major Course where there are no formal courses," Redmond said. There are two functional courses — First Sergeants Course and Battle Staff NCO Course," the colonel said. "Not everybody is happy about filling that gap with another educational course, but if an NCO is promoted to sergeant first class at the 12th year of his career, that's an average of eight years between that grade and being sent to the sergeant major course. That's a big gap; we've got to look at how best to provide education within that void."

Technology will make instruction more exciting for soldiers, and it will replace lectures and slides.

"In the civilian world, schools that use innovation through technology find that students retain and increase their knowledge base rapidly," Redmond said. "We've got to leverage advanced distributed learning as it can provide great access and opportunity for both the active and reserve components. Increased use of simulations and simulators in curriculums will provide more exciting instruction (compared to lecture and slide method).

"We've already moved out on it, but it's going to get even better."

USASMA graduates Sergeants Major Class 52

Five hundred and twenty-one senior NCOs from the Army, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard and allied nations formally ended their studies at the United States Army Sergeants Major Academy during the Class 52 graduation ceremony at the El Paso Convention and performing Arts Center May 30.

Special guests at the ceremony included the first USASMA command sergeant major and third Sergeant Major of the Army, SMA (Ret.) William G. Bainbridge, SMA Jack Tilley, and Army Undersecretary Les Brownlee, the ceremony's guest speaker.

Graduates completed nine months of higher education at USASMA, studying leadership, resource management, and military operations. Graduation is mandatory for promotion to sergeant major or command sergeant major in the Army.

Editor's Note

The NCO Journal publishes the most pertinent News and Issues sent to us within the first several pages of each issue. Email your news and issues for consideration to atss-sj-ncojournal@bliss.army.mil.

NCO Journal honors fourth SMA; Van Autreve ‘member of greatest generation’

By Master Sgt. David Schad

WASHINGTON (Army News Service, March 15, 2002) — Retired Sgt. Maj. of the Army Leon L. Van Autreve, 82, died March 14 at his home in San Antonio, Texas, following a brief illness.

A veteran of World War II and the Vietnam War, Van Autreve served as the fourth sergeant major of the Army from July 1973 until his retirement in June 1975.

As sergeant major of the Army, Van Autreve served as the Army chief of staff’s personal adviser on all enlisted-related matters impacting soldier training and quality of life. Sergeants major of the Army typically spend the majority of their time traveling throughout the Army and sit on a variety of councils and boards that make decisions impacting soldiers, families, veterans and retirees.

Upon learning of Van Autreve’s death, Secretary of the Army Thomas White said both the Army and the nation had lost a patriot, a soldier and a role model.

“We are grateful for Sgt. Maj. of the Army Van Autreve’s selfless service to our great nation and the soldiers he loved,” White said. “His legacy endures forever in our

noncommissioned officer corps — the finest in the world.”

Noting his World War II service in North Africa, Sicily and Normandy, Gen. Eric K. Shinseki called Van Autreve a member of The Greatest Generation and said his service made a direct contribution to the status and privilege our nation and our Army enjoys today.

“The Army lost a true friend, a great soldier, and a magnificent noncommissioned officer,” Shinseki said. “He was a soldier’s soldier who had the strongest sense of duty to something greater than a sense of self — the notion of duty to country as the most honorable of endeavors.”

Sgt. Maj. of the Army Jack Tilley remembered Van Autreve for his role in rebuilding an NCO Corps that had been left marginalized and demoralized following the Vietnam War.

“He worked tirelessly to motivate sergeants and restore the prestige of the NCO Corps,” Tilley said. “He energized our NCO training system, he improved standards among the corps and — above all else — he motivated sergeants to believe in themselves and take ownership of the duties NCOs historically have been charged with. The success of our Army in the Gulf War and today in the hills of Afghanistan is in no small part attributable to Sgt. Maj. of the Army Van Autreve’s vision and his legacy.”

Tilley also noted the important contributions made by Van Autreve’s wife, Rita, during her husband’s career. Her concern for soldiers and their families was especially crucial during her husband’s tenure as the SMA when the military was becoming an all-volunteer force.

“She traveled extensively with her husband and understood exactly the concerns that many families had,” Tilley added. “Her involvement resulted in a number of quality of life improvements for families, and it allowed Sgt. Maj. of the Army Van Autreve to better represent family member needs to leaders in the Pentagon and on Capitol Hill.”

A native of Belgium, Van Autreve was raised in Ohio, where he enlisted in the National Guard in 1938. Upon his retirement, Van Autreve and his wife settled in San Antonio, Texas.

He is survived by his wife, Rita, daughters Robin and Jodi, and two grandchildren. Funeral arrangements are pending.

Go to Army Knowledge Online and follow the links through the SMA’s Leadership web pages for Van Autreve’s photo and complete biography.



SMA Leon L. Van Autreve

MSG Schad is the Public Affairs NCO for the Sergeant Major of the Army.

Chinook flight engineer saves lives in Afghan night

By SFC (Ret.) Phil Tegtmeier

It's a bitterly cold January night. Line elements of the 101st are repositioning by air. A flight of three CH-47 Chinook's carries infantry soldiers through the black air. As the birds approach the landing zone, their rotors kick up the desert dirt. The lead Chinook comes in, its pilots executing a rolling landing. Bird two follows, swallowed up by the dust cloud from the lead aircraft. Bump.

Another rolling landing. The trail aircraft approaches. The flight engineer and crew chief keep watch out the sides. The infantry makes ready for their insertion into an area where they know they can expect friendly forces but are ready for anything. The bird comes in, tilted forward on the proper approach angle. The front wheel touches down. It begins to roll. Suddenly, out of the black night, hidden by the dust and dirt, a rut in the frozen ground snatches the wheel and the Chinook's nose crashes down. The bird flips to the right, spilling cargo, soldiers, and machinery in a maelstrom of wreckage. There's no time to *think*. It's time for soldiers to *do*.

"Everything just clicked," said SGT Terry Miller, the flight engineer in the 101st ID's aviation element in charge of the aircraft that night. "I knew the infantry guys were out on the perimeter, doing their job securing the aircraft. I knew they knew what they were doing. So I did what I had to do."

Miller, crew chief SGT Jeremy Charles, and infantry team leader SSG James Lanfear organized the emergency response effort. Miller and Charles focused on the injured. Miller is a qualified Combat Lifesaver. Charles had taken Lifeguard Aid training with the American Red Cross. The able-bodied all pitched in alongside the walking wounded. They pulled gear off soldiers, pulled them all out of the aircraft, took care of the critically injured first. Lanfear did a



SGTs Terry Miller and Jeremy Charles.

head count. Eighteen infantrymen. Miller did a headcount. Six crewmembers.

"When the fire team leader yelled out, 'Eighteen,' and I yelled out 'Six,' we knew we'd be okay," Miller said. There were 24 soldiers on the aircraft that night, and 24 lived to tell their story.

"We had set up our perimeter, soldiers facing out with all our weapons on the perimeter," Lanfear said. "After we did the

headcount and knew we had everybody, we heard noises from the aircraft that sounded like it might be catching on fire. We got down and covered the casualties 'till we figured the aircraft wasn't going to blow. Then we moved the perimeter out about 150 meters and got everyone away from the aircraft. We saw some locals come up to our position, but because we'd been told there were friendlies in the area, we held our fire. It turned out they were friendly, and they had some Special Forces guys with them. The SF guys called for help, and we started to move everyone to the SF compound. The two crew chiefs went back into the plane and pulled the seats out so we could use them as litters, and we got the guys who'd been hurt bad moved out. The other units with us came over and took over our perimeter duties, and the rest of us went on to the compound. Then the MEDEVAC birds came in and lifted everyone out."

"When we were there in the dark, I knew it was just the 24 of us," Miller said. "We knew we *had* to count on each other, and we knew we *could* count on each other. That's how everything just clicked."

(Phil Tegtmeier currently works as managing editor of the NCO Journal. He visited the men and women of Third Army in Afghanistan in February.)

Three-time Olympian scores big at World Cup

By Scott Engen

SYDNEY, Australia — SFC Todd Graves, 39, of Laurel, Miss., battled his way through a heated shoot-off to win the Silver Medal in the men's skeet event at the International Shooting Sport Federation World Cup earlier this week. A member of the U.S. Army Marksmanship Unit at Fort Benning, Ga., Graves is a three-time U.S. Olympian and won the Bronze Medal in skeet at the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney.

Graves emerged from a 45-shooter field after the 125-target qualifying round having missed only one target and found himself in a three-way tie for the overall lead with Norway's Erik Watndal and Leos Hlavacek of the Czech Republic. A perfect score in the 25-target medals final round gave the Norwegian the Gold Medal and a highly-coveted quota slot for Norway in this event at the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens. Two misses from both Graves and Hlavacek brought the pair to the line for a tie-breaking shoot-off for the remaining two medals. As the shoot-off progressed through several stations, it was the

Czech who finally dropped his sixth target, giving the Silver Medal to the determined American.

"The men's skeet scores were very high in Sydney," observed the USA Shooting Team's National Shotgun Coach Lloyd Woodhouse after the match. "We came very close to getting an Olympic quota slot in skeet from Todd Graves, missing it by only a couple of targets."

The U.S. Shooting Team later moved on to Shanghai, China, for another ISSF World Cup that ran until the end of April.

Graves, the 2000 Army Athlete of the Year, enlisted in the Army in January 1984 and was assigned to the Army Marksmanship Unit after he completed Basic and Infantry Training at Fort Benning. In 1990, he was assigned as a team leader with the 20th Infantry Regiment in Korea and then returned to the Marksmanship Unit in 1991.

Since he joined the Army, Graves has had quite an impressive shooting career. He has won medals in every major shooting match in the

world and was the 1997 U.S. Olympic Committee Shooter of the Year. Not only does Graves shoot skeet well, but he also excels in trap and double trap, having won medals in all three in Interservice and National Championships as well as at World Cups.

"I'd like to go back to where it all started, in Athens, Greece, in 2004 to win the Gold Medal," Graves said. "Ascension to perfection is an ongoing struggle, but I'm going in the right direction."

Graves and his wife, Tracy, live in Cusseta, Ga., with their two children, James and Cody. In his spare time, he likes to hunt, fish and coach Little League; he also performs trick-shooting demonstrations for charity, helps Boys Scouts earn their Marksmanship Badges and conducts gun safety classes for youth groups.

The 39-year-old infantryman said he's going to stay in the Army "as long as they let me."

"All my goals have been fulfilled, except one — Olympic Gold," Graves said. "Not very many people get it, but as long as I can, I'll keep trying."

Recruiter wins Army Times competition

Courtesy Army Times

The Army Times, in association with AT&T and Fisher House, honored an Army recruiter with its annual Army Times Soldier of the Year Award.

SFC Roy Handy, Jr., an Army recruiter in his hometown of New Orleans, helps others to be the best that they can be. He is highly engaged in community activities, volunteering for a variety of youth mentoring and community improvement programs. To make a difference in the development of children, he visits elementary schools to plant

seeds for success later in life. Handy works with the Joint Community Services Group, where he gets local businesses to provide training and jobs for those who cannot qualify for the Army.

"SFC Handy is a superb recruiter, easily surpassing his goals," said his commanding officer. In the last two years, Handy exceeded his goals by 125 percent.

Handy makes a difference for his community and the Army. He embodies the commitment, leadership and the highest standards of

personal and professional conduct that is at the core of the United States Army.

The award "is designed to recognize a special soldier who has shown unusual or heretofore unrecognized honor, valor, and dedication to fellow soldiers and the community."

The Times organization will recognize Handy, "an everyday hero of the U.S. Army, one whose efforts unselfishly and consistently go above and beyond the call of duty," at a ceremony on Capitol Hill later this year.

SGT John Denny's actions set example of courage

Personal courage, loyalty, dedication to duty, honor, selfless service, integrity and respect – the Army's core values – are more than just words. They translate into actions. Such actions were taken by SGT John Denny, Company C, 9th US Cavalry in September of 1879 during the Victorio Apache campaign.

Five days of tracking the Apache Chief Victorio and more than 200 of his warriors through the deserts of New Mexico ended when the worn out Buffalo Soldiers of the 9th Cavalry found themselves ambushed and trapped within a box canyon.

Soon after the battle started, Denny saw a wounded private lying in the open, more than 100 yards from the nearest source of cover. When Denny asked CPT Beyer to have the troop cover him while he retrieved the private, he was ordered not to leave the safety of the rocks where most of the troop had found cover and to let the private die. Denny understood that if left in the open the wounded private faced certain death. He also understood that if he weren't killed in the rescue attempt, he would face a court martial for disobeying an order. Denny elected to do the right thing. He ran 100 yards under heavy fire to the private's position, put the private on his back, and carried him to safety.

Later the same day a plan was devised to enable the soldiers of the 9th Cavalry to escape the box canyon. The mission called for a small group to climb a cliff and displace the Apaches on the East Side of the canyon. 1LT Emmet, G Troop, 9th Cavalry, asked for volunteers, but most of the soldiers knew it was almost certainly a suicide mission. It wasn't until Denny volunteered for the mission first that the other soldiers followed suit and volunteered to go as well.

Emmet took Denny, five other soldiers and two Navajo



**SGT John Denny
9th Cavalry**

scouts on the mission.

After climbing about half way up the cliff, the volunteers found themselves trapped under heavy enemy fire. They could no longer advance up the cliff, but the Apaches above couldn't fire on the cavalry troops below with the volunteers in the middle. The volunteers however, could fire effectively enough to suppress the Apaches on the west side of the canyon, enabling the remaining cavalry soldiers to escape to safety.

When the four cavalry troops below had escaped from the canyon, the soldiers on the cliff fought their way down to safety while surrounded by the enemy. During the fighting one of the Navajo scouts was wounded. Denny carried the scout on his back as they descended the cliff.

Emmet said the deciding factor of the battle had been Denny's actions. "He, time and time again, kept the group focused on the mission and why they were facing certain death along the cliff. If not for the actions of SGT Denny all four of the cavalry troops within the canyon would have been killed."

The small group accomplished their mission and returned safely to their units losing only one soldier to enemy fire. For his actions that day, Denny did not receive a court martial, but a Congressional Medal of Honor.

Denny's display of values was not limited to the battlefield. He practiced them throughout his career. The men of the 9th Cavalry spoke of the values Denny displayed prior to and after the battle. He continually displayed the high moral ethics of the non-commissioned officer. We should remember that the next time we see something wrong and set the standard as SGT Denny did.

Information supplied by MSG Robert D. Halsell.

Diversity of Army Materiel Command mission presents challenges in preparing NCOs

By CSM Ty Walker

It's not uncommon to see civilians before seeing a soldier at any U.S. Army Materiel Command installation. In fact, there are places with more than 2,000 civilians and only one uniform. So it is in a command with more than 60,000 civilians and only 1,500 military. That means the soldiers at AMC face the daunting task of communicating the soldier's perspective and needs. Working here is a major challenge for any non-commissioned officer.

The command sergeant major for AMC is responsible for seeing to it that the cadre receives the best training possible to prepare soldiers for the next promotion and the next assignment. Nearly every military occupation specialty in the Army is represented somewhere in this command, from personnel and finance specialists to soldiers in the combat arms career fields.

AMC keeps the Army rolling and soldiers fed while looking ahead to develop even better meals and equipment to sustain the Army. It's a command where sustainment means maintaining a fleet of one-quarter million wheeled vehicles, managing 8,000 communications systems and providing more than 25 million rations each year.

Senior sergeants with varied specialties come to AMC from units with many soldiers. At some AMC sites tankers, aviators, or scouts work with civilian scientists and engineers – lending them the benefit of their years of experience. In many offices these senior sergeants will find they have just a handful of soldiers to lead, yet they have the opportunity to influence the development of the equipment for the next generation of soldiers. They have been with the soldiers in the field, so they know what works. Along with those responsibilities, they have to prepare for standard training and testing that will help them advance in their careers.

Among the many challenges for any command sergeant major is ensuring the soldiers under their command receive the leadership and soldier training they need to get promoted, while at the same time continuing with their own training to help them progress in their career specialties. The diversity of skills and leadership opportunities at AMC presents a challenge. While the soldiers are held to the same standards as their counterparts in other commands, AMC soldiers predominantly work with civilians. To ensure they continue to develop their leadership and soldier skills in these unique circumstances, a

new, vigorous Non-commissioned Officer Development Program that reflects the unique nature of the command and reinforces their roles as future senior leaders in the NCO ranks was instituted.

The NCODP at AMC ensures NCOs retain their soldier and leadership skills through standard soldier skills training, "staff rides" to other AMC facilities, and special training on NCO matters from experts in soldiers' business. Special command forums with AMC's sergeants major are held at different locations throughout the command to broaden the knowledge and perspective of our senior NCOs.

Whatever they do, these NCOs are key to AMC's success. They are the link between the soldier in the field and the research and development community. Their role is to help create, improve, and field new equipment, which represents leadership of a different kind.



CSM Ty Walker



As part of their NCODP, NCOs from Army Materiel Command recently visited the Army Research Laboratory, where they had the opportunity to learn more about their command.

PLDC preparatory course gives Gordon soldiers edge

Story and photos by SGT Andre Butler

In units throughout the Army, NCOs train individual soldiers on a daily basis, developing and maintaining a standard that's time honored. These warfighters, who lead the way for the future leaders of the service, are known as the backbone of the Army, and they pride themselves in the work they perform.

But before one can attain the goal of becoming a noncommissioned officer, one must endure educational as well as hands-on tasks, which are in place to make sure he is ready to face the challenges of becoming an NCO.

The first step in this process is the Primary Leadership Development Course. This course is the very basic of what soldiers who plan on making the next step must do.

And one particular warfighter had the experience of finding out first-hand how demanding this course could be.

SPC Daniel Fernandez, A Company, 206th Military Intelligence Battalion, at Fort Gordon Ga., recently met this challenge and became one of the newest members of the NCO Corps.

Due to a unique course offered at Fort Gordon,

warfighters throughout post have the opportunity to fine tune their individual soldier skills before going to PLDC.

The 206th Military Intelligence Battalion offers a 7-day Junior Leadership Skills and Development Course to anyone planning on attending PLDC—which proved to be helpful for some.

“This course gave me the edge needed to go to PLDC and graduate without any worries about my individual performance,” said Fernandez.

The JLSD course offers detailed classes in map reading, drill and ceremony, physical fitness, land navigation and the wear and appearance of the military uniform.

And although they are all equally important, the one most focused on by the warfighters attending is the land navigation portion.

“In my particular job, I have done very little land navigation,” Fernandez said.

“Maybe once a year since basic training,” he added.

Time and time again, this particular block of instruction has been the downfall for many potential NCOs.

“We have more problems with soldiers failing to pass land navigation than any other subject we teach,” said SFC Darryl Harris, a senior instructor for PLDC at Fort Benning, Ga.

“Instructors here can only teach individual soldiers so much during the course of a 4-week period. So it does help if they have the opportunity to train on some of tasks before getting here,” he said. “You can really tell what NCOs take the time to prepare their soldiers before hand.”

With this, the instructors — for the PLDC and JLSD



SPC Fernandez plots points during land navigation.

SOLDIERS IN ACTION



SPC Fernandez shoots an azimuth. Land nav is the toughest part of PLDC, and the prep school focuses on these skills.



Fieldcraft skills are also emphasized during the prep course.

courses — as well as the students agree that a pre-course is very beneficial for those soldiers who will attend PLDC.

And some agree that the ones who do in fact go to a pre-course have an advantage on the ones who do not.

“If some of my classmates would have attended some type of training or classes before coming here, I’m sure they wouldn’t be having the problems they are having,” said SPC Tommy Elmore, another PLDC student from 3rd Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, Fort Benning, Ga.

“For me, things are going well—but the things we’re being taught here, I see or perform daily. It’s my job to know these subjects, but some of the people here just don’t know how to read a map or navigate from one point to another. So any training they could receive prior would probably be very helpful to them,” Elmore said.

SFC Ernesto Stewart, the branch chief at PLDC, also agreed that advance training and preparation would benefit the warfighters.

“If a post has something in place to teach soldiers some of the basic skills performed here, I think it is worthwhile sending them to that program,” Stewart said. “They should be somewhat prepared before getting to us. Our main mission here is to develop future leaders who will continue to defend our nation.”

“And after leaving, we feel confident that each soldier who passed through here is up to the job,” he added.

Getting through the practical exercises are important; however, maintaining a passing average is of equal importance.

The JLSD course instructors emphasize this point also — to all who attend.

And by attending the junior’s course, soldiers can focus more on the academic portion of the actual primary course.

“Attending the JLSD course before coming here gave me an advantage with my studies,” Fernandez said. “I don’t really think about the practical exercises because I’m more confident in my abilities. All I have to do now is make sure I get good grades throughout the entire class.”

And in this particular case, the pre-course and Fernandez’s study habits did pay off in the end. Fernandez ended up on the Commandant’s list and received the Physical Fitness Award for Fort Benning’s PLDC Class 5-02.

SGT Butler is the 116th Military Intelligence Group PAO NCO, Fort Benning, Ga.

'Just an idea' gets go-ahead, serves entire post's NCOs

Story and photos by SSG Dave Enders

It was an idea. But once two NCOs got the green light to put it to action, it grew from an effort to help a few soldiers to a battalion-wide training program to a battalion-supported program servicing the entire post...and beyond.

SSG Barbara E. Vigil and SSG William S. Stewart, 206th Military Intelligence Bn, Fort Gordon, Ga. were the two NCOs who set out in 1998 to prepare their soldiers for the Primary Leadership Development Course at Fort Benning, Ga. They surveyed what they had and turned it into what they needed.

"They initiated the JLSD course as a means of assisting their soldiers, to prepare them for PLDC," said SSG Robert M. Cortes, who now runs the program. That idea grew.

For the last several years, the 206th has conducted 10 JLSD courses each fiscal year, coordinating the schedule for each to mirror the PLDC course at Fort Benning, where Fort Gordon soldiers most often attend PLDC. Despite having only 20 seats available for each class, soldiers from Fort Gordon and elsewhere have benefited by attending the JLSD course.

"In the last several classes we've had soldiers come TDY from Florida to attend the course," said Cortes. "We've had a couple of reserve units send their soldiers as well."

Setting up your soldiers for success at a PLDC is, in theory, an ongoing process that begins when they first arrive at your unit. For combat arms MOSs, the theory tends to work well. But, for the majority of the Army, whose MOS is in some area of support, soldiers need their NCOs to play a proactive role to ensure their success.

Vigil and Stewart played that proactive role and their initiative led to an ongoing program that has not only helped develop soldiers into NCOs but also led dozens of NCOs to take the same proactive approach by taking the raw material and shaping it.

It was a battalion conference room. Carved wooden insignias and other representative artwork filled the walls around a horseshoe-shaped conference table; an old



SPC Claude House, 63rd Signal Battalion, marches his squad through a series of drill and ceremony movements.

computer sat in the back, used only for displaying PowerPoint® slideshows on the pull-down screen in the front of the room; and, a lectern angled toward the conference table from the left corner of the room as the Stars and Stripes stood behind it.

It became a classroom. Aspiring NCOs worked with the instructors and one another to learn leadership counseling, wear and appearance of the uniform, tactical formations, types of tactical elements, hand and arm signals, and map reading.

It was an old basketball court. Sun-faded macadam cracked and

stretched to poles behind dinged metal backboards where rust patches challenged a fresh coat of paint; it was surrounded on one side by barracks buildings and a company headquarters building on the opposite side, and by a chain link fence that encased an old tennis court on another side and a road on the last side. It was used and used more still.

It became a drill and ceremony training field. Lower enlisted soldiers conducted company formations where specialists learned to act as first sergeant and take accountability reports from similarly ranked platoon sergeants, and everyone practiced marching a formation, calling cadence, and executing facing and marching commands.

It was a series of nature-walk trails set up on an old training area. Wildlife was allowed to flourish where trees and shrubs covered rolling hills and valleys, a scene broken only by the occasional stream, several small lakes and one big precipice. The old training area was separated from Fort Gordon's other training areas, surrounded by officer housing on one side and enlisted housing on the opposite side, and by buildings on one side and a highway on the last side. It was a place where dirt roads came and went over the span of decades and nothing quite matched the map that was made in the 1970s.

It became a land navigation course. Signals analysts, linguists, computer technicians, medical specialists, and other soldiers whose duty rarely takes them into the sunlight

SOLDIERS IN ACTION

linguists, computer technicians, medical specialists, and other soldiers whose duty rarely takes them into the sunlight learned to orient their mostly accurate maps to the ground and move from one point to another.

It was field. A flat patch of tailored grass spanned roughly a half-acre of real estate, surrounded by two roads that met to form one corner and a parking lot and barracks building that met to form the opposite corner.

It became a physical instruction training area. JLSD students took turns as PT leaders, planning and conducting their own PT sessions from warm up to cool down.

Since the course's inception, JLSD students have been instructed, monitored and graded as they were to be at PLDC. "We've received requests through after action reviews for more in-depth training on NCOER and how to write an award, but we have limited time, so we try to focus on what is actually evaluated at PLDC," said Cortes. "We get feedback from returning PLDC graduates to keep up with the PLDC program at Fort Benning." And, the JLSD graduates' track records at PLDC have validated that approach.

Since the JLSD course began its graduates have excelled at PLDC: out of 391 JLSD graduates 177 made the commandant's list, five earned leadership awards, five earned inspection awards, three graduated as honor graduates and five as distinguished honor graduates.

It's the NCOs in the 206th who've made their JLSD program successful. "The majority of the instructors are from the 206th, and all of them work shift work and instruct on their personal time, often times (instructing JLSD) after working a full shift and before going on shift," said Cortes. "The only instructor currently not from the 206th is SGT Crystal M. Rodriguez, from 249th General Hospital, and she puts as much of herself into the program as our instructors do."

The NCOs at the 206th typically volunteer as instructors for the JLSD course for about one year, until they're rotated out with other NCOs. "Usually, students return from PLDC and volunteer to instruct the JLSD course to give something back to the course that they benefited from," said Cortes. Each of those NCOs played a role in building the JLSD program's success, which has been recognized at higher levels.

The daughter of Fort Gordon's commanding general, MG John P. Cavanaugh, attended the 206th JLSD course when her reserve unit sent her on TDY. "His daughter graduated the JLSD

course and went on to earn commandant's list at PLDC," said Cortes. "MG Cavanaugh personally met and thanked all of the instructors for the JLSD course and presented them with coins."

As part of an ongoing project, The NCO Journal is beginning an on-line library of materials designed by NCOs. The entire course program for the 206th JLSD course is now archived for your use at <http://usasma.bliss.army.mil/journal/library/JLSD/index.htm> on the NCO Journal website.

SSG Enders is the NCO Journal Editor-in-Chief.



SGT Jodi Barth, JLSD instructor, demonstrates how not to wear the uniform. Find what's wrong and send us your answers at atss-sj-ncojournal@bliss.army.mil. We'll print a compilation of answers next issue.

Senior Enlisted Centralized Selection Boards: How do they work?

By SGM Deborah Seimer

(This month's issue focuses on promotions. Soldiers working to attain the rank of sergeant and staff sergeant come face-to-face with senior NCOs who will decide their fate before a promotion board. Those aspiring for the ranks of sergeant first class and above know there's a system that makes the selections. Meet the system.)

What do Centralized Promotion Boards do?

The Centralized Enlisted Promotion Selection System has been described universally as the fairest, most comprehensive selection system in the military. A number of foreign governments have used it as a model for their own promotion systems. It is a system that has passed the test of time and been refined to the point that it is safe to say every soldier in the zone of consideration receives equal consideration for promotion.

First, let's discuss just how a board works. There are three promotion boards held at Indianapolis annually. These are the SFC Board in June, the SGM/CSM Board in October, and the MSG Board in February. Each board has the same mission—to select the best qualified NCO for promotion to the next rank.

To accomplish that mission, the Chief of Staff, Army selects a general officer to preside over the board. The general officer Board President is assisted by 12 colonels, seven lieutenant colonels and more than 45 CSMs and SGMs who are all selected by HQDA. These senior leaders are broken down by specialty into 11 or 12 panels. Each panel is charted to review promotion files of soldiers from specific career management fields. The board members do not know the number of soldiers they are selecting until they have reviewed (voted) all the files on soldiers in the zone of consideration. They do this by rank order, from best qualified to least qualified for each MOS.

How do the boards work?

Prior to looking at or reviewing any file, EREC provides board members with a comprehensive orientation on the board process and evaluations reports, as well as providing detailed written guidance from the Army Deputy Chief of Staff, G-1 and the various branch proponents.

The G-1's Memorandum of Instruction gives them specific guidance on how to conduct themselves during the board process. The proponents provide specific guidance on the unique qualifications soldiers should possess to be the most competitive for selection.

With this information and their own experience, the board members determine, as a group, what attributes make a soldier best qualified for selection using a numbering system from a low of 1 to a high of 6. Each panel member agrees to the criteria and use them to vote each file throughout the board process.

Debunking the myths surround

Myth: It is recommended that you personally visit EREC to review your Official Military Personnel File (OMPF) because board members are told who came to EREC to review their records and who did not.

Fact: This myth is false. Board members are NOT told who did or did not visit EREC. They have much more critical information to review and many important tasks to accomplish. Also, it would be unfair to consider this type of information because the majority of the NCOs considered by a board do not have the opportunity to visit EREC. Board members want NCOs to review their OMPF and make sure it is accurate. They do not know or care how NCOs accomplished it. NCOs should review their OMPF On-Line at www.perscom.army.mil or www.erec.army.mil rather than drive to Indianapolis.

Myth: There are quotas that each board must meet for the various ethnic categories and for females. Such as, the board had to promote X number of blacks, X number of Hispanics, and X number of females.

Fact: This myth is false. The mission of each senior enlisted selection board is to select the best-qualified NCOs for promotion in each MOS - period. Once the best-qualified NCOs are identified based on the select objectives provided by DA, the board results are not changed. The board does NOT go back and move anyone up or down on the order of merit list based on ethnic or gender quotas. The mission of each board is outlined in the board's Memorandum of Instruction published by Department of the Army. The MOI is available for review along with the published selection list at www.perscom.army.mil on PERSCOM On-line.

Myth: Board members only review the last five NCOERs in each file.

Fact: This myth is false. Board members are provided the Performance portion of the Official Military Personnel File that contains all

evaluation data, and performance current g reports.

Myth: B vote on th

Fact: Th within ea concept.' military a disciplin the panel under the each file discussio

Myth: T must be r

Fact: Th PQRs for members informati encourag problems every sol review ar in. At lea with their

What then, exactly, do board members use to vote on the soldier?

The most important document in the promotion file is the Official Military Personnel File, which is stored at EREC. Within the OMPF, board members look primarily at each evaluation report, i.e., EERs, AERs, and NCOERs. They generally review all reports and place emphasis on the last five issued or those issued while the soldier held the current grade. The board also has access to another key document—the official photo—and a synopsis of the previous five assignments. They also review whatever correspondence the soldier forwards to the board president along with the Personnel Qualification Record submitted by the personnel office.

Typically, when voting members are given a soldier's record to vote, they first look at the photo to make sure it is recent and in

the serving grade. They want to look at the soldier's appearance and have it in their "mind's eye" as they read the narratives contained in the evaluation reports. A photograph speaks volumes. Having no photograph or one that is not in the current grade implies that a soldier simply does not care about his or her career. Next they review the ERB and DA Form 2-1. This can be a daunting task if these records do not compare with the OMPF. Again, if these documents are missing, it sends a signal to the board.



Having seen the photo, looked at the OMPF, and the personnel data, the board member then votes the file based on the standards they set earlier. This is an important point: Your record is voted against the standards set by the members of your panel. That way, the first record voted is graded against the same criteria as the last record voted, and all the soldiers whose records are reviewed by the panel receive the same consideration.

An equally important point is that even though each panel has four to eight members, only three of the eight vote each record. A computer program selects the voters randomly. They vote the record independently of each other and are not allowed to discuss the file with any other voting member of the board. Voting members with personal knowledge of misdeeds not reflected in the record are bound to report that knowledge to appropriate officials, but may not divulge personal information about you to other members. In fact, at the beginning of each board, the members take an oath not to do so!

When all the voting is completed, then all the soldiers are rank-ordered from the highest to the lowest score. Specific select objectives HQDA sets for each MOS determine who gets promoted and who does not. The panel may only select the number of NCOs for promotion by MOS that the Army projects it will need over the next 12 months. Boards cannot select every NCO found fully qualified for promotion. Because of this, competition for promotion can be tough and your record's condition can make the difference.

The board applies those numbers to the order of merit list for each MOS. The highest scoring soldiers that fall within the designated requirement are identified as the selects. EREC then prepares a series of rosters that are authenticated, and the list goes to HQDA.

ing centralized boards

n reports (EER/NCOER/AER), training data, commendatory any disciplinary data that was directed for file in the nce section. While the last five NCOERs—or those in the grade—probably carry the most weight, board members see all

board members talk to each other about the records while they hem.

is myth is false. Board members set specific voting standards ch panel before voting begins using the "whole soldier" Categories include performance, potential, assignments; and civilian education; awards; APFT and height/weight; and ary info. Once agreed to and approved by the Board President, members use these standards to vote each file independently "blind voting concept." This means each panel member votes against the standards he or she has agreed to and no n of records is allowed during this process.

the Personnel Qualification Record (ERB and DA Form 2-1) etyped with no line outs or corrections made to them.

is myth is false. Personnel offices are not required to retype boards, and board members are told this. EREC and board need accurate and legible PQRs to obtain and validate on on NCOs. Pen and ink changes to the ERB and 2-1 are ed, especially when problems with SIDPERS 3 are causing and delays. Personnel offices are required to submit a PQR on dier in the zone of consideration. If the soldier is unavailable to d sign the PQR, the Personnel Officer must review it and send it st 90 days prior to a board, NCOs should make an appointment personnel office to review and update their PQR.

SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE and ATTITUDES

Preparing for the Board

So with that as a background, let's answer the burning question on your mind. *How can I best prepare for a selection board?* Based on feedback we have received from board members over the years, there are five areas you should focus on.

Career: Take the hard jobs and do them well. If you go to a TDA job, get back with troops as soon as possible. Regardless of what jobs you have, do them well. The NCOER is the most important document in your file and the one that, when combined with your assignment history, carries the greatest weight.

Official Military Personnel File: You have a responsibility to ensure your records are up to date and ready for review by the selection board. If they aren't right, you are to blame. With the latest tool available—OMPF Online—the task of getting a copy of your OMPF has been eliminated. Now you can go online and see your actual file, real time. All you need is an AKO account and password to access the OMPF Online website. Go to www.perscom.army.mil or www.erec.army.mil and click on the OMPF Online link. Look at it and compare it to your personal paper files. If it is incomplete, then get the missing documents to EREC either through digital senders located in many PSB's or the most expeditious means possible. EREC posts the documents that they receive to the OMPF within 24 hours of receipt.

Official Photograph: Since you cannot appear in person before a centralized board, your individual photograph represents you. The regulation says to have a photo taken every five years or each time your status changes. If you are serious about a promotion, however, get a new photo for the board appearance. Having no photo in your current grade means you have a slim chance of selection. Poor-quality photos also can affect your chance of selection. Bottomline, whenever possible, get a new photo for a selection board.

Personnel Qualification Record: The data information counterpart to the OMPF. We are working on a virtual ERB that will be available online by the fall of 2002. Until then, the only way to review the PQR is to visit the local personnel office to review and sign your PQR prior to every board. Look carefully at each item on the PQR to ensure the data is there and accurate. Once you are confident that it is correct, then sign and date and keep a copy for your records. Board members understand that PQRs will have "line-outs" and changes; they do not expect retyped PQRs. What they want, and what is in your best interest, is a PQR that is accurate and legible.

Memorandum to the President of the Board: Golden Rule, only write a letter if your file is missing something of significance, to point out a current assignment that cannot be documented in an NCOER or to explain a particular event in your career. **DO NOT** write a letter just to tell the board they should select you. Your record will speak for itself. A random memorandum seldom generates a positive outcome. If you have to write, remember to be brief and factual. Prepare your letter in memorandum format shown in AR 25-50. You should only include information that is not contained in your OMPF. Memos must be addressed to the board president and they



must include your social security number and signature. Remember, memos to the Board President should not be used to express grievances, to justify past misconduct, or to boast about yourself. Also, extraneous documents already filed on the OMPF or that are not authorized for filing should not be enclosed. Before mailing,

have someone else review your memo for content, flow, format, as well as for grammatical and spelling errors.

For more information concerning boards and updating your records, visit the EREC website at www.erec.army.mil as soon as possible. Your local personnel specialists will help with questions or problems concerning your records.

Remember, the Army's Enlisted Centralized Promotion/Selection process is fair and equitable. However, the decisions made by these boards are only as good as the information provided to them.

SGM Seimer is the EREC sergeant major in Indianapolis.

Start early for promotions

Preparation for promotion is an everyday task. The process is affected by how NCOs conduct themselves as soldiers; how well they do their job; how they approach problems and challenges; how they interact with superiors, peers, and subordinates; and how they seek self-improvement.

Soldiers should work on preparing for promotion two grades up. For example, a PFC should be doing the things needed to be ready for the SGT board. Continually work on areas like military and civilian education, and improve your physical fitness and basic marksmanship scores. Soldiers should start seeking the tough jobs early in their career and keep doing it. Waiting until the right time or the last minute before a board appearance will be too late.

Soldiers need to work on education from the day they come in the Army: this is important no matter what their career plans are. Take Army correspondence courses and enroll in college courses whenever your duties allow. Volunteering for any available military training and skills courses also helps. Everything soldiers do to show their enthusiasm to excel and improve their value and abilities counts for each promotion.

NCOs should strive to be the very best in whatever position they are assigned to. They will receive an NCOER for every position they hold and every report can affect competitiveness.

The quality of our Army's NCO Corps is extremely high and competition is tough. Unfortunately, everyone that a promotion board finds fully qualified cannot be promoted. The Army can only select and promote the number of NCOs that it needs by MOS; therefore, selection boards are charged with picking the best qualified NCOs. This is not an easy task. Each board leaves thousands of very qualified NCOs unselected based on the needs of the Army. Board members themselves wish that they could pick more because of the high quality they see in the records of deserving soldiers.

NCOs need to review their Official Military Personnel File regularly. That has been made easy with the advent of OMPF Online. OMPF Online is available to all soldiers with an Army Knowledge Online account and password via either www.erec.army.mil or PERSCOM

Online. Information on how to review and update the OMPF is provided at the web site. NCOs should review their file carefully to ensure that all NCOERs, AERs, award certificates, and other authorized documents are properly posted. Send missing documents in to update the OMPF.

Another item to check is the photograph. The photograph provides board members a visual representation of the NCO so it is important that it be current, that their uniform fits correctly, and that all authorized awards and decorations are properly displayed.

As mentioned in the accompanying article, many great NCOs are not promoted each year because of the needs of the Army. NCOs who are not selected for promotion should do a couple of things. First, they should make an appointment with their CSM or SGM and ask him or her to review their record with them. NCOs should not just ask why they didn't get promoted, they should ask them to point out the strengths and weaknesses in the file and give their opinion on how well their NCOERs have been written over time.

When an NCO has a good file (and most do) but doesn't get promoted, they sometimes ask, *Why didn't I get promoted?* The typical answer is, *You have a good file and I think you should have been promoted—I don't know why not.* No matter how good an NCO's OMPF portrays him or her, NCOs should ask what else they can do to make themselves more competitive. Something shined brighter in the records of those who were selected. Think about what you have done in the areas mentioned above and strive to improve anything, whether it is education or a tough assignment, to make yourself as competitive as possible. NCOs can also write to their career branch in PERSCOM. Again, NCOs shouldn't just ask why they didn't get promoted. They should request an analysis of their records in comparison to their peers who have been selected for promotion and ask for suggestions that may help make them more competitive. Areas to ask for comparisons in are assignments, duty positions, awards, military and civilian schools, special skills, and any other areas that apply to the NCO's MOS and career field. S1s and PSBs/MPDs have the addresses for PERSCOM's career branches.

Maximize your APFT score

By SGM Robert S. Rush

Many soldiers can increase their physical fitness beyond their present level if they're willing to concentrate on deficiencies instead of just trying to run faster.

The individual PT program revealed here was developed for soldiers with little time to devote to PT.

The program was validated using 40 students in an ROTC program. Students exercised three times per week for 20-25 minutes, not including the run. The following results were achieved: after one month the average score for students increased by 15-20 points from an average of 192 to 212; at the end of three months, students went from their average of 212 to 243; the second three months saw average scores climb to 267 with the low score 242 and the high score 300. Since this is an individual program, it is designed to fit each soldier's physical ability. The program takes a soldier gradually to a higher level of physical fitness.

Take a look at your last APFT. From your scores you can determine where the starting point for your Individual Fitness Program should be. If you haven't taken an APFT in the last three to four months, you may want to conduct an assessment of your physical abilities before beginning.

To conduct a self-assessment, do as many correct pushups and sit-ups as you can in a one-minute period, and then run as hard as you can for a timed one-half mile. Multiply your pushup and sit-up scores by 1.25 to find an entry point into the charts. Multiply your one-half mile time by four.

The Program

If done correctly, the program will bring you to muscle failure. This exercise regime is designed to be done every other day, as your muscles need from 24 to 48 hours to recover from hard usage.

To get your starting numbers, look at the charts. The numbers along the top of the charts are the number of pushups or sit-ups you performed. Follow the number down the row to give you the number of repetitions for each exercises you're to begin with in your individual program.

Pushup and Sit-up Improvement

1. Regular pushups: Do three sets with one-minute rests between sets. Form is important. If you can't do the pushups properly, go to your knees and continue until you've finished the sets. After three workouts, add three pushups to each set. (Example: you start with 14 pushups on Wednesday, The next Wednesday you go to 17 pushups.)

2. Regular sit-ups: Do three sets with one-minute rests between sets. If you can't do all the sit-ups properly, lower the angle of your legs until they're almost parallel to the ground. After three workouts, add three sit-ups to each set. (Example: you start with 11 sit-ups on Wednesday. The next Wednesday you go to 14 sit-ups.)

3. Diamond pushups: Put your hands together under your chest in a diamond shape. Perform the pushups. Go to your knees if necessary. Add one diamond after every three workouts.

4. Wide-arm pushups: Place hands as far apart as possible. Perform the pushups. Go to your knees if necessary. Add one wide-arm after every three workouts.

5. Crunches: See separate chart.

6. Turn and bounce: Hold arms parallel to the ground. Palms facing up. The exercise is an eight-count movement at a slow cadence. Pivot slowly at the waist to the right for four counts and then to the left for four counts. Add two turn and bounces after every three workouts. (Editor's note: Since this program was developed in 1993, studies have shown that, during the turn and bounce, exaggerated or excessive bouncing at the turn can be harmful. The turn and bounce done more like a *turn and stretch* is much more effective.)

7. Flutter kicks: Put your hands under your buttocks while laying flat

APFT Number of Sit-ups																
Number	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85
Sit-ups	4	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22	24	26	28	30	32	34
Crunches	4	5	6	7	8	8	9	9	10	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Flutter Kick	5	6	7	8	9	10	12	14	16	18	20	22	24	26	28	30
Leg Spreaders	5	6	7	8	9	10	12	14	16	18	20	22	24	26	28	30

APFT Number of Push-ups																
Number	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85
Push-ups	4	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22	24	26	28	30	32	34
Close-hand	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Widearm	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Turn & Bounce	5	6	7	8	9	10	12	14	16	18	20	22	24	26	28	30

on your back. Lift your feet six to eight inches off the ground to start. Begin by lifting legs in sequence six to 18 inches. Keep legs slightly bent to reduce the strain on your back. One repetition equals four counts. Add two flutter kicks after every three workouts.

8. Leg spreaders: Put your hands under your buttocks while laying flat on your back. Lift your feet six to eight inches off the ground to start. Begin by spreading legs 18-30 inches and then bringing them back together. Keep legs slightly bent to

reduce the strain on your back. One repetition equals four counts. Add two leg spreaders after every three workouts.

Running

Use the running chart to increase your aerobic and anaerobic stamina and to improve your two-mile time. Enter the table using your two-mile time from your APFT or your time from your self-assessment (half-mile times four). For example, your run time is 14:15. Enter the chart at +14. This program is designed to be run every other day, although there is no harm in running more often.

Sprint day: Enter the sprint portion of the chart at your run time now. Do four sprints of each of the distances, alternating your sprints between the distances. Begin with the lower distance for your speed. Attempt to beat the time listed. Rest one minute before you run the longer sprint. Rest two minutes between the longer and shorter sprints. If you feel you are not properly stressed (and as you develop your wind) decrease the amount of rest time between sprints. For those with run times of +17 to +19, when the 220-yard sprint goal is met, move up to the one-quarter mile (440 yards) and one-half mile (880 yards) runs.

Fast run day: Begin with the lower distance for your speed. When you beat the time for the distance, move to a longer distance in the same row. When you surpass the time for the time for the distance at the bottom of

the row, move to the left one row maintaining the same distance. When you move one row to the left on the fast run, also move your sprint goals to the same row.

Long and slow run: Run at least 20 minutes for a good cardio-vascular workout. Run for time during this session, not necessarily distance.

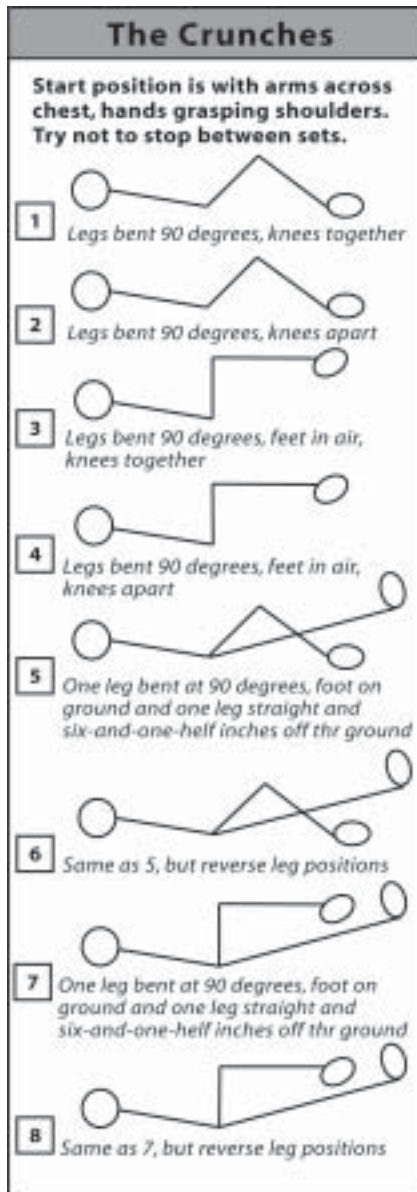
Using the Program

The program is designed to have very little paper overhead. Each soldier is responsible for his or her pace in the program, which has the additional benefit of exercising the soldier's self discipline.

One technique to start the program would be to give each soldier a packet and have the program explained after an APFT or diagnostic test. Organized PT would still be conducted, but with each soldier doing the amount of exercise determined by his or her specific program. As a check, periodic diagnostic tests could be used to review progress.

As with any program, results are directly attributable to the amount of effort expended. Soldiers who can't keep up on the battlefield are losses just as much as casualties suffered through enemy action. We, as NCOs, are charged with not letting this happen.

(Rush was the Army advisor to the 26th Infantry Division, Camp Edward, ME, when this article was written. Reprinted from our Summer '93 issue.)



APFT Run Times								
minutes	+12	+13	+14	+15	+16	+17	+18	+19
220 yards	—	—	—	—	—	:48	:51	:48
440 yards	1:07	1:15	1:23	1:30	1:37	1:45	1:52	2:00
880 yards	2:45	3:00	3:15	3:30	3:45	4:00	4:15	4:30
Fast Run	—	—	—	—	—	+00-4:00	+01-4:15	+02-4:30
	2 mi 11:30	2 mi 12:30	2 mi 6:30	2 mi 7:00	2 mi 7:30	1 mi 8:00	1 mi 8:30	1 mi 9:00
	2 mi 14:30	2 mi 15:30	2 mi 13:30	2 mi 14:30	2 mi 15:30	2 mi 16:30	2 mi 17:30	2 mi 18:30
Long and Slow Run	Run at least 20 minutes, for time and not distance							

Volunteer for recruiting duty, become more promotable

By Pearl Ingram

It could be said that volunteer recruiters are much like volunteer soldiers – they are usually happier doing their jobs because they volunteered for the duty. With that thought, a renewed Volunteer Recruiter Initiative has begun at U.S. Army Recruiting Command with the intent to raise the volunteer recruiter population from 36 percent to 50 percent, increase satisfaction with recruiting duty, and to increase recruiting production.

“When commanders went out to the field and talked with NCOs about recruiting, there seemed to be a consensus that NCO volunteers tend to be happier with their assignment, and we hope they are performing better,” said MSG Jackie Miracle, NCOIC for the Special Missions team.

USAREC now has two teams with the Recruit the Recruiter program. Each team is made up of two experienced recruiters at the rank of sergeant first class. The teams travel to installations throughout the country and present 30-minute to one-hour briefings to interested soldiers about the advantages and the challenges of recruiting duty.

According to Miracle, he plans to target those NCOs who have thought about recruiting duty in the past and tell them about the new incentives and assignment preferences. He said that at one time, prospective volunteer recruiters could select five battalion areas for assignment preference. Now they can choose down to company level assignments.

“They can choose three companies, and we will assign them their first



USARC Photo

A view of the U.S. Army Recruiting School campus.

choice if it is available,” said Miracle. “If their first choice is not available, we look at the second. We’ve been having a pretty good success rate at getting them where they want to go so far, but it’s the early stages.”

A few years ago the Recruit the Recruiter Team was operating under the Personnel Directorate at HQ USAREC. It was later moved to Recruiting Operations Directorate, where it was combined with the warrant officer recruiting team.

During the past few months, the teams traveled together with the warrant officer team doing a briefing followed by the Recruit the Recruiter Team briefing.

“We didn’t think it was really successful,” said Miracle. “It confused a lot of people. NCOs might arrive at 0930 for the Recruit the Recruiter brief and find the warrant officer brief going for the next hour. Often they might not be able to come

back for the recruiter brief.”

The teams are now traveling separately, which Miracle feels allows his team to be more mission focused.

“We generate the interest around the Army for NCOs to take a look at our program and to submit applications,” said Miracle.

The team is looking to find about 1,000 NCOs over this fiscal year to volunteer for recruiting duty. He feels the change from individual missioning to station missioning will help in developing interest in volunteering.

“We’re trying to tell all sides of the recruiting story,” said Miracle. “If we have an NCO on a three-year detail and he has had a bad experience, he will share that with the NCOs in his platoon, company or battalion. We are trying to counter that bad information with the complete story.”

He tells the NCOs who attend the briefing that not all people are cut out for recruiting duty. He also tells them

IN THE LINE OF DUTY

that with a good work ethic, a good attitude, and a winner spirit they are going to be successful and probably enjoy what they are accomplishing.

“As a recruiter, you make your own schedule for success,” said Miracle. “An individual has to be proactive, a go-getter, and a good planner.”

The team travels Armywide to Korea, Germany, Alaska and Hawaii. Each briefing is at least 30 minutes and volunteers are interviewed and

pre-qualified at the end of the briefing. They then must submit an application and be qualified by USAREC.

Department of the Army detailed recruiters must make up the difference in the number of recruiters needed for recruiting duty and the number of soldiers who volunteer. The volunteer rate to date is near 23 percent versus the 72 percent DA select this year. The goal is to bring the volunteer rate up to 50 percent. A few years ago the

volunteer rate was at 46 percent.

“Not only will this initiative help the Recruiting Command, but hopefully it will help the Army by DA not having to select soldiers who don’t want to be recruiters,” said Miracle.

The Recruit the Recruiter Team web site is www.usarec.army.mil and links from Army Knowledge Online.

Pearl Ingram is editor of USAREC’s Recruiter Journal.

Meeting the requirements for recruiting duty

Volunteer recruiters should meet the following requirements. Some are waiverable and some are not. Army Regulation 601-1 can provide more guidance.

Be a U.S. citizen

Be a high school graduate or GED with 30 semester hours of college. CLEP, DANTES or military evaluations credit is not acceptable. **(W)**

Have a minimum GT score of 110, waiverable to 100 **(W)**

Be at least 21 years old, but not exceed 37 for sergeant or 39 for staff sergeant or sergeant first class. **(W)**

Must not be a first-term soldier

Must have 12 months on station if in CONUS **(W)**. If OCONUS, you must have 6-10 months remaining until DEROs for short tour areas and 6-12 months remaining for long tour areas.

Must have completed at least 1 year of service since reclassification

Must have 3 years Time in Service remaining after completion of the Army Recruiting Course (ARC)

Must have at least 4 years TIS and not exceed the following Time in Grade (TIG) or TIS standards:

(1) Staff sergeant(P) or sergeant first class: Maximum 2 years TIG and 14 years TIS. TIG limit does not apply to staff sergeant(P) **(W)**

(2) Sergeant(P) or staff sergeant: Maximum 12 years TIS **(W)**

(3) Sergeant: Maximum 8 years TIS **(W)**

Meet NCOES requirements: PLDC for sergeant, BNCOC (or class date) for staff sergeant and ANCOE (or class date) for sergeant first class.

Meet the height/weight standards of AR 600-9 or be within body fat limits

No AWOL or lost time during the current enlistment or in the past 3 years, whichever is longer

Not currently assigned to a Military Entrance Processing Command (MEPCOM) testing section

Minimum profile (PULHES) standard of 132221 or better, no shaving profile, and no visible tattoos that may be perceived as offensive, sexist, distasteful, gang related, etc. If you have been the subject of a Military Medical Review Board, the findings must have indicated you are eligible to remain in your MOS.

Have a valid civilian driver’s license with no record of careless, reckless or unsafe driving

No bankruptcy within the past five years, no current credit problems, and adequate spendable income

Not currently nor have previously enrolled in the past 12 months in a drug or alcohol dependency intervention program of any type. No alcohol related incidents within the past 5 years such as DUI, DWI, or drunk and disorderly.

No law violations such as courts martial, felonies or moral/integrity violations

No marital, emotional, medical, or family problems that would hamper duty performance

Not have more family members (spouse included) than two for sergeant, three for sergeant(P), four for staff sergeant and five for sergeant first class. **(W)**

Married Army couples must have family care plans and both must apply and get accepted for the program **(W)**

Sole parents with a family care plan may apply and will be considered on a case-by-case basis **(W)**

Cannot be pregnant at time of selection or prior to attending Army Recruiting Course (ARC)

Note: Requirements followed by (W) can be waived on a case-by-case basis.

Attendance at recruiting school: A student's perspective of the process

By SFC Terry Anderson, Class 061-01

"Are you tracking?"

"Click the forward tank."

"Obviously you have a reason for saying that. Would you mind telling me what it is?"

Three phrases you're sure to hear at Fort Jackson's U.S. Army Recruiting and Retention school.

At any one time, nearly 600 soldiers are attending the Army Recruiting Course, and I was in class #061-01 along with 100 other prospective recruiters. The majority of my class was selected by Department of the Army: I was one of a handful of volunteers.

My sergeant major's first reaction when I told him I was volunteering for recruiting duty was "Why in the world would you want to ruin your career like that?" And that was one of the milder reactions.

I'm a broadcast journalist by MOS, and I've had a successful career. First of all I don't believe I would be throwing any of those skills away. The U.S. Army Recruiting Command values skills like public speaking, clear and concise writing, interpersonal skills and being able to think on your feet. I haven't been *on mission* yet, so I still have a lot to prove to myself and to my station commander, but using my broadcast journalist skills can only help my phone calls, interviews and sales presentations.

Our first day in class, Division I instructor SFC Simms walked in the room with a shocked look on his face, informing us that two planes had just hit the World Trade Center buildings in New York City and one had hit the Pentagon. You could've heard a pin drop in that room. Not a way you want to start the ARC. But the tragic events of September 11th made us realize how important recruiters are to the Army. No soldiers will die in the war on terrorism, God willing, but our job as recruiters is to *put 'em in boots*, to keep the Army strong.

Week one at the Recruiting and Retention school can be described in one word: hectic. After in-processing en masse, we dove right into USAREC regulation 601-210, the *Bible* of recruiting. Everyone quickly realized how serious the instructors were about learning the material on enlistment eligibility and moral & administrative details. When ARC class #061-01 started week one, we were 101 strong. When our class began week two, we lost 10 of our classmates for various reasons: admin problems with their recruiting packets, being overweight, and failing one of the first two tests. We lost two more during week five. The ARC instructors gave classes on enlistment eligibility and moral and administrative qualifications. Students who failed either test had the chance to retest. If they failed

again, they went home or were recycled. It was sad to see some of our classmates go home but it was refreshing to see that the school held students to a high standard.

Weeks two through six involved training on Army benefits and programs, computers, how to make cold calls and how to do sales presentations. The course is laid out in a very logical manner, easing students into what recruiting is all about: meeting one-on-one with America's young men and women and selling them on soldiering.

ARC instructors stressed interpersonal skills over memorization skills. During telephone calls in week four, students had to call leads and try to get them to agree to an initial appointment. Getting in front of your peers and role-playing with an instructor was a bit nerve racking for many students. My multimedia small group instructor, SFC Gregory Foster, made sure our class hit all the steps during our sales presentations, but if our energy or enthusiasm was lacking he tore us up.

Each multimedia sales presentation at the schoolhouse takes approximately one hour. Students must establish rapport with the prospective soldiers and then sit them down and determine their needs and interests. We were more concerned with hitting each step in the interview process than we were with establishing rapport. But once we got comfortable with the interview framework, the comfort level increased and the interviews went smoothly.

The final week of the ARC is known as RECEX, or recruiting exercise. It's a three-day culmination of six weeks of intense instruction. RECEX starts with a Class A inspection and the formal speech presentation follows immediately after. Then comes a 50 question test, an evaluated phone call and a multimedia presentation. It's a chaotic week, but RECEX ensures each student leaves the school with a solid base of training. Everyone was relieved when graduation day finally arrived.

I made some good friends during my seven weeks at Fort Jackson, friends I'll keep in touch with while I'm on the recruiting trail. We'll share stories, compare notes, and compete with each other to see who gets their recruiter's gold badge first. When we started the course, many of my classmates didn't want to be there. But when we finished, I can honestly say I didn't hear anyone talk about not wanting to recruit. That's a testament to the professionalism and teaching skills of the ARC leadership and cadre.

So for the next three years as we're *putting 'em in boots*, we'll think back and reminisce about clicking the forward tank during computer week, we'll handle objections from potential recruits, and we'll definitely be tracking due to our seven weeks at Fort Jackson.

The theory of CMF promotion equality

by ISG Richard W. King

Current promotion procedures cause unfair advantages and disadvantages for certain MOSs that are combined within Career Management Fields at the senior NCO levels. This is particularly apparent at the E-9 level in CMFs 31, 35, 71, 91, 92, 95 and 96.

Using Career Management Field 31 as an example, where 31T, 31U and 31W all compete for promotion to 31Z, statistics have shown that 31W soldiers have a consistently higher percentage of promotions to the grade of E-9 than 31T and 31U soldiers do. The question is why? Are 31W soldiers actually better than the soldiers they are competing against, or do they merely have a wider variety of assignments and more opportunity for increased levels of responsibility?

Board members receive guidance stating that they shouldn't penalize NCOs who did not participate in combat or in certain peacekeeping or humanitarian missions. The fact is that soldiers who have performed these types of duties successfully stand out above their peers in much the same way as soldiers who have seen drill sergeant and recruiting duty. It can definitely be a discriminator of promotion between soldiers who are equally competent and fully qualified. When you have soldiers from several MOSs competing for promotion within a CMF, it creates an

imbalance because certain MOSs generally do not have the same career opportunities as others. While the board members are provided with this guidance (to be fair)...records do speak for themselves and the best-qualified NCOs are promoted based on the information provided.

One solution to this problem is simple. When combining MOS's for promotion within a CMF, an attempt should be made to even the selection rates among all MOS's within that CMF. Again, using CMF 31 as an example, on the 2001 SGM/CSM promotion board there was an average 14.6% selection rate for the CMF.

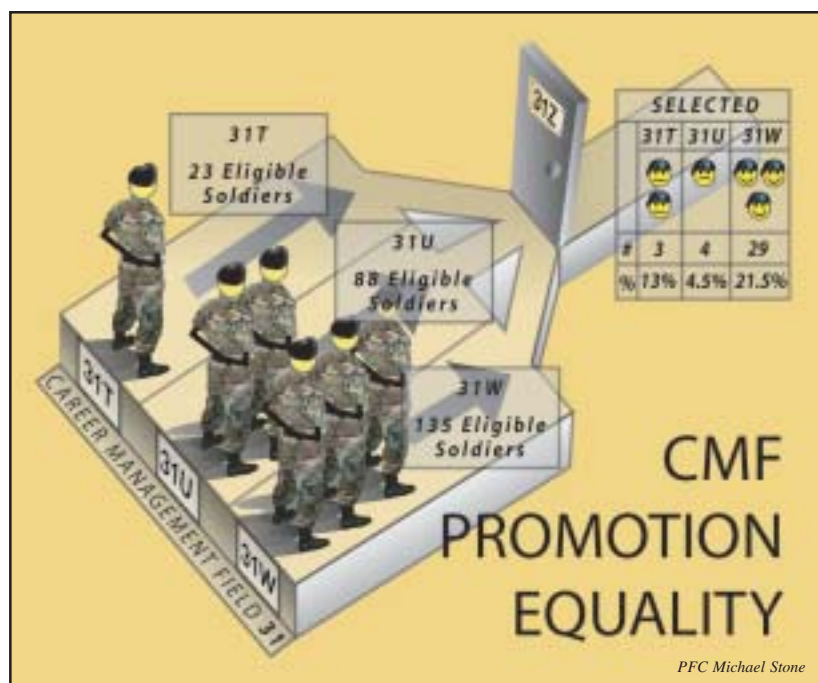
Out of 246 soldiers considered for promotion, 36 were selected. If this selection rate were applied across all MOS's in the CMF, it would have allowed for 2 more 31T promotions, 8 more 31U promotions and 10 less 31W promotions. Promotion-select objectives for the CMF would have still been achieved.

One of the arguments leveled against this theory of *CMF promotion equality* is that possibly lesser-qualified NCOs will be selected before those that are better qualified. If this argument can be substantiated, it would then pose the question of why each MOS doesn't maintain the same percentage of high quality NCOs. This, in turn, prompts

additional issues of training and NCO development within that MOS. In my opinion, the advantages of *CMF promotion equality* far outweigh the supposed disadvantage in the fact that Sergeants Major and Command Sergeants Major assigned throughout the Army will more accurately represent the CMF from which they were selected.

Once the centralized promotion board has convened and board recommendations and after-action reports have been forwarded to the Director of Military Personnel Management, senior NCOs in all MOSs should be confident that theirs was equally represented for promotion to the next level of the NCO Corps.

(ISG King is currently assigned as a first sergeant for HQ Squadron, Regional Signal Group SHAPE (RSGS), SHAPE, Belgium.)



Land Warrior's digital world changes how we do business

By SFC (Ret.) Phil Tegtmeier

I saw a special on the History Channel about the Land Warrior. Those who feel the Transformation is just a fad that will pass with new leadership really need to see this special report on the future of land combat. With the information links the Land Warrior system provides the



The Land Warrior: Digital Demon

combat infantryman, tomorrow's chain of command will shed layers in order to take advantage of this system's real-time decision-making capabilities. The future is coming hard and fast, and the NCO Corps needs to lead the way in adapting to coming digital advances.

Already, the Army has commissioned a study of the difference in skills necessary for students in the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy's Battle Staff NCO Course to prepare those graduates for working in digitized command centers. Skills with cutouts of unit symbols and preparing acetate overlays for wall-mounted maps will become as useful as learning to clean a Springfield '03. I can see land navigation courses abandoning paper maps and plastic protractors for palm-sized Global Positioning Satellite displays. Range cards for fighting positions? Digital. Guard post orders? Digital. Fragos? Digital fields on data sheets.

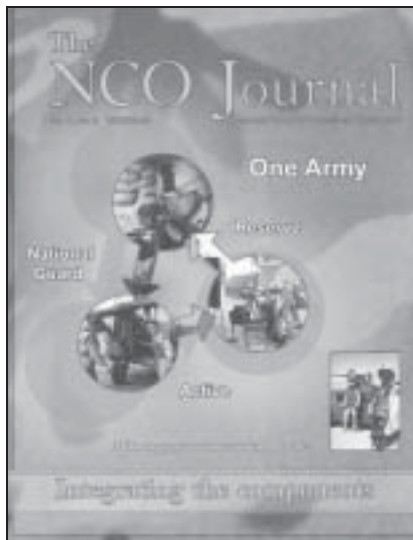
This issue is all about promotions. In my day, we had to go to a good deal of trouble to get hold of our Official Military Personnel File tucked away at the Enlisted Records and Evaluation Center at Fort Benjamin Harrison, Ind. Now, those records are accessible online (see the EREC article on page 12). Soldiers preparing to have their records examined by the Army's centralized promotion boards need to find a computer and figure out how to go online.

And, for those who haven't yet signed on for an account with Army Knowledge Online, take this opportunity to log on to www.us.army.mil now. The Army Portal gives access to a wealth of data, collaboration centers, and shared information on how to become a better soldier and better NCO.

For those specialists out there looking up the long promotion ladder leading into the future, following the sound advice and taking advantage of the information we have provided here will help you immensely. But, while learning from those who have gone before, you might want to prepare yourself to lead the way. Take a computer course. Buy a Personal Data Assistant. An NCO's charge is to take care of soldiers. Don't be surprised if the advice a soldier asks you for concerns getting his date book figured out on his PDA. It's a whole new world out there.

"Push the envelope!"

Phil Tegtmeier is the NCO Journal Managing Editor.



Letters

Developing future officers

As an instructor at Texas A&M Corpus Christi University, I think the NCO Journal should write an article on the job we NCOs are doing to develop future officers. I am but one of many NCOs who recruit and teach at colleges. We are the ones who teach military science classes and are the ones who get into the nitty-gritty of things. Not only do I teach first-year cadets, it is also my job to motivate and inspire the cadets to want to join or serve on active duty after their two years of college. I'm sure there are many officers in today's Army who received their inspiration and motivation from an NCO at an ROTC program.

There's a lot of good work going on out here, and I think we are doing a hell of a job. The NCOs who have been here more than four years who deserve recognition are SFC Rodriguez, SSG Crooms, and SGT Lugo. They and others deserve some credit, and I hope you consider doing a story on this subject.

*MSG Gilberto Pantoja,
MSC Instructor (USAR)
Texas A&M Corpus Christi University*

Misunderstood relationship

I recently read the NCO Journal Fall 2001 edition article about the Officer/NCO Relationship. In my 26 years of

service, the most misunderstood relationship (I've encountered) is the one between the first sergeant and his or her lieutenants. Most first sergeants whom I've seen tend to distance themselves from their lieutenants. They think they only belong to the company commander. Wrong answer!!! The first sergeant is just as important to the growth of those lieutenants as to that captain. You show me a platoon leader who has been relieved of his or her duties, and—eight times out of ten—I'll show you a platoon sergeant who helped foster that situation combined with a first sergeant who allowed the problem to happen through inattentiveness. The first sergeant didn't get involved because he or she believed the lieutenants' problems were the commanders' problems, not the first sergeant's.

To all first sergeants out there, "those lieutenants are your soldiers, too!"

*SGM John P. Wyche
Pentagon Training Directorate
Washington, D.C.*

Keep improving the Corps

I was reading the Summer 2001 edition of the NCO Journal while in-processing at my first duty station. The NCOES articles and the interview with CSM John Beck (The Man who Knows NCOES) caught my attention.

While I've been stationed here, a few articles—School of Hard Knocks by SFC William W. Applegarth; NCOES Success Begins with Preparation by CSM Robert E. Fox, the Beck interview by SFC Donald Sparks, and The Future Of NCOES: Where do We Go From Here? by SGM Felix

McNair—came to life for me, illustrating the ever-too-popular status quo. I agree: it's a shame and a crime that such acts/activities have occurred in the NCO Corps. I was wondering what progress had been made to correct these problems and prevent their reoccurrence (I am open to private discussions as well).

Secondly, in the Beck interview, there was mention made about TATS. Where could a soldier find out more about the program and its requirements?

*SPC Dexter Ryan,
312th MI Battalion,
Fort Hood, Texas*

Significant transition

It was June 1979. A typical American Citizen was on his way to Fort Knox for basic training. During the bus trip to the reception station, this citizen experienced a myriad of feelings--anxiety, uncertainty, excitement, anticipation, and, yes, a degree of fear.

At no time did the idea of dishonorably serving his country enter this citizen's mind. After all, this citizen was raised with the understanding that dishonorably serving your country would be a permanent and lifelong scar on the family name. Greater than the fear of scaring the family name; came the fear of failing your country with dishonorable service.

At the reception-station this citizen, like so many before him, focused on graduating from basic training. As any soldier who graduated from basic knows, you must be a team player first, and listen to every word the Drill Sergeant speaks.

Even when the recruit intently listens to every word the Drill Sergeant speaks, mistakes are still made.

What becomes of the recruits who make mistakes in basic training? Are they drummed out of service? Are they sent to jail for incompetence? Are they forever stigmatized as a loser or failure because they made a mistake?

No, the seasoned, mature Drill Sergeant retrains the soldier until the training is retained or comprehended. This is the citizen's first exposure to one-on-one mentorship and professional development as a recruit. This *taking care of soldiers* is the type of soldier development that leaves recruits with a life-long memory of their Drill Sergeant. Most importantly, the atmosphere is not zero defects.

A point that must be made before I go farther in my writing is all of these new soldiers are graduates of basic training. The significance is that before the new soldier gets to the permanent party assignment they are riding a wave of success. These soldiers are disciplined and motivated to do almost anything they're instructed to do in the name of duty, honor, and country.

What is it then that causes freshly trained, and motivated recruits to become disenchanted with their current situation? Many may immediately point to frequent deployments, pay inadequacies, benefit issues or many of the typical issues soldiers mention as army issues. I submit that the issue is far simpler than any of the previously mentioned.

I base my opinion on 23 years of active federal service and personal observations of our NCO corps. I believe in many instances (not all) that our soldiers become disenchanted with military service in the U.S. Army because the loyalty from junior and mid-level NCOs is absent or seriously lacking. Specifically, NCOs are the experience and maturity that our aspiring soldiers look to when the need for professional development or personal guidance is required. When this situation presents itself, many NCOs will shirk off the desire for help as whining or laziness and resort to disciplined leadership to solve the

problem rather than take the time to investigate by counseling.

My aim in this writing is not to beat the importance of counseling into your head; this is done often enough through other publications and articles. Instead, my intention is to remind all of us that soldiers are people who have real personal and professional needs. As noncommissioned officers, we are our soldier's counselor and mentor. When we put chevrons on our shoulders, we became part of a corps that is bigger than ourselves, and whose primary job is the development and well-being of our soldiers.

Therefore, the next time a private walks up to you and approaches you with an issue you might think is odd or unimportant, remember, your powerbase is at stake. How maturely and professionally you handle the situation leaves a life long impression on your soldiers. Once we were young, new soldiers, and we too needed someone to turn to when we were uncertain of ourselves. You will see by being there for your soldiers they will be there for you. This is healthy for your soldiers and our Army.

Oh, that soldier I referred to in the beginning of this letter...that was me. Be there for them!

*MSG (P) Nicholas J. Araiz,
USASMA, Class 52*

Meeting the challenge of ROTC Instructor duty

When my Command Sergeant Major at Fort Hood, Texas, informed me that I had orders to Cadet Command, I wondered if my professional experience would apply to the role of a college instructor. I considered my new audience to be civilians who had a very slight understanding about the military, and I questioned their motivation for participating in a military program. I felt that soldiering was a *profession*, not an extracurricular activity. I wondered, "Can I turn

college students into Army officers?"

But once I arrived on campus and met with the Military Science professor, the clouds of doubt lifted. I recognized I had a once-in-a-career chance. I would demonstrate to my students what an active duty senior NCO must be, know, and do to lead soldiers. To meet that challenge, I started with myself. I worked hard to polish my delivery in the classroom, to personify the Army Values both on and off duty, and above all to promote the NCO Corps as a group of professional soldiers who deserved respect but would return that respect ten-fold to their officer leadership.

In short, I renewed my dedication to this small passage from the NCO Creed:

Officers in my unit will have maximum time to accomplish their duties; they will not have to accomplish mine.

My goal was for my cadets to leave the classroom confident in the truth of the NCO Creed and determined to meet those standards themselves.

I have to admit, it was not an easy task to leave my tank battalion and assume a duty that I had never attempted. But as my first year at Indiana University at Purdue passed, I realized that although my duty station had changed, my mission had not: at Fort Hood, I had trained young soldiers and junior NCOs to master their individual and collective tasks, to project resolute leadership, and to live the Army Values. My cadets were responding just like my soldiers had. I was making soldiers, and I was proud of them. Only this time, what I made would become what I would follow.

When I return to those soldiers as a Sergeant Major, I can tell them that the officers they'll follow are the best America has to offer. I know, because I made them.

*MSG (P) Jose A. Madera
Former ROTC Instructor*