

THE NGO JOURNAL

VOL: 19, ISSUE: 1 JANUARY 2010

A MONTHLY FORUM FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

CHAPLAIN ASSISTANTS

100 YEARS

OF SERVICE



ON THE COVER

A Soldier's hands frame an early-dawn portrait of Hope Chapel, Fort Bliss, Texas, mimicking the branch insignia of chaplain assistants.

Photo illustration by NCO Journal staff



pg 22



pg 12



pg 8

JANUARY 2010 CONTENTS

THE NCO JOURNAL

Cover story 8

100 Years of Chaplain Assistants

History in the Making: The Institute for NCO Professional Development 12
Linda Crippen

NEWS 2 USE

News and information aimed at benefiting today's NCOs/Soldiers. 4

- Army launches first user-customized Web site ■
- Hooah Mail: Hybrid mail system prints e-messages, photos deliverable to the field ■

EDITORIAL

From the CSM: Getting Back to the Basics 2
Command Sgt. Maj. Ralph Beam

Commentary: What's your New Year's Resolution? 3
David Crozier



AL

ALIBIS

EIB XXI - A new format for a new century 18
Michael L. Lewis

Mellinger: Proud to be a Soldier 22
Angela Simental

Sergeants' Corner 26
Michael L. Lewis

28

NCO Stories

*Master Sgt. Woodrow Wilson Keeble
Staff Sgt. Christopher Waiters
Staff Sgt. Matthew Matlock*

32

ROLL CALL

We honor the men and women who have sacrificed their lives in current operations around the world.

THE NCO JOURNAL

PUBLISHER - Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth O. Preston **BOARD OF DIRECTORS** - Command Sgt. Maj. Raymond F. Chandler III, Commandant; Command Sgt. Maj. Richard S. Rosen, Deputy Commandant; Charles E. Guyette, Chief of Staff; Jesse W. McKinney, MA, Director, Personnel and Administration **EDITOR-IN-CHIEF** - David B. Crozier DSN 621-1046 **SENIOR MILITARY JOURNALIST** - Master Sgt. Antony Joseph DSN 621-1043 **JOURNALISTS** - Linda Crippen, Michael L. Lewis, Cindy Ramirez, Angela Simental, Cassandra Yardeni, Spc. Samuel Phillips **GRAPHICS** - Sgt. Russel C. Schnaare and Pfc. David Gafford. *The NCO Journal* is a professional publication for Noncommissioned Officers of the U.S. Army. Views expressed herein are those of the authors. Views and contents do not necessarily reflect official Army or Department of Defense positions and do not change or supersede information in other official publications. Our mission is to provide a forum for the open exchange of ideas and information, to support training, education and development of the NCO Corps and to foster a closer bond among its members. The Secretary of the Army approved funds for printing this publication in accordance with provisions of AR 25-30. **Distribution:** *The Journal* is distributed through the U.S. Army Publishing Agency, Distribution Operations Facility, 1655 Woodson Road, Overland, MO 63114-6128 (Phone: (314) 263-7305 or DSN 693-7305). Units or offices with valid publications accounts can receive the *Journal* by having their publications office submit DA Form 12-99 for inclusion in the 12-Series requirements (12-05 Block 0041). Submissions: Print and visual submissions of general interest to the NCO Corps are invited. Unsolicited submissions will not be returned. Photographs are U.S. government-furnished, unless otherwise credited. Prospective contributors are encouraged to contact the *Journal* to discuss requirements. Contacts: Our FAX number is DSN 621-8484 or (915) 744-8484. Or call, (915) 744-1046 or DSN 621-1046. Our e-mail is: ATSS-SCN@conus.army.mil Letters: Letters to the Editor must be signed and include the writer's full name and rank, city and state (or city and country) and mailing address. Letters should be brief and are subject to editing. *The NCO Journal* (ISSN 1058-9058) is published monthly by the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy, 11291 SGT E Churchill St., Fort Bliss, TX 79918-8002. Periodicals postage is paid at El Paso, Texas and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *The NCO Journal*, Commandant, USASMA, ATTN: ATSS-SCN, Editor, 11291 SGT E Churchill St., Fort Bliss, TX 79918-8002.

From the CSM

Getting back to the basics

By **Command Sgt. Maj. Ralph Beam**
U.S. Army Europe Command Sergeant Major

Our Army has now been at war for more than eight years. We have sustained this pace due to a well-trained NCO Corps, but it has taken its toll. The result is we now have an entire generation of noncommissioned officers who have grown up in a wartime Army. These NCOs are part of the finest Army in the world. These are Americans who had the courage to join the Army knowing they would go into combat again and again.

As senior leaders we focus a lot of energy teaching our NCOs to execute the Army's missions in combat. And we should; it's a dangerous environment, one in which the first step in winning the peace is surviving the war. Even so, our mission as NCOs is to coach, teach, mentor and take care of our Soldiers. Basically, we are training the perfect weapon. To do that, we need to get back to the basics. We need to remember what our charter, as noncommissioned officers, is. Preparing Soldiers for combat is only part of it.

Taking care of Soldiers is a major part of who we are; it's one of our core duties. We tell the world what our job is in a 287-word document. It is our NCO Creed. It lays out the basic standards for taking care of our Soldiers. Soldiers don't learn those basic standards through memorization alone. Our Soldiers learn from us, their NCOs, the skills that we have learned through time and experience – both in and out of combat. Our charter is to grow our Soldiers and pass along those skills.

It has been said that “the standards required to take care of and lead Soldiers don't change with the environment. It is the leaders who change. But, some NCOs have forgotten the basics or never learned how important a role they play in mission accomplishment. We have the world's best Army today because we understood and embraced this concept, and we cannot afford to forget how we got here.

Leadership is action, not position. The NCO Creed tells us that our NCOs' most basic tenets are the accomplishment of the mission and the welfare of the Soldiers. The NCO Creed states, “All Soldiers are entitled to outstanding leadership.” It's our job as senior sergeants to mentor our young sergeants to provide that leadership. It all starts with the basics.

Know your Soldiers. Place their needs above your own. Communicate consistently with them to keep them informed. Be fair and impartial in both rewards and punishments. It is all easy to say but hard to do if never done. Taking care of Soldiers isn't just performing tasks that are a matter of life and death, like pre-combat checks. Sometimes it's a matter as simple as helping a Soldier fix a pay problem. NCOs aren't issued a crystal ball that shows them what's going on in their Soldiers' lives. They have to know their Soldiers.

NCOs are leaders, trainers, standard bearers, role models and mentors. Their mission is to ensure Soldiers are physically and mentally prepared to function as effective members of the team, to be the perfect weapon. A Soldier who is worried because he or she received a “no pay due” is not an effective team member.

This is where that first-line supervisor makes all the difference in the world. That first-line supervisor is responsible for their Soldiers both on and off duty, whether they are deployed in a combat zone or at home station.

To put this in perspective, NCOs should feel the same sense of responsibility to their Soldiers as they do to their own children. They should guide and mentor them. They have to be there for their Soldiers. It's the only way Soldiers are going to learn, grow, gain experience and mature into strong noncommissioned officers.

One of the basics is that special bond good NCOs share with their Soldiers. That doesn't mean that they are every Soldier's buddy. It means they know each of their Soldiers well enough to recognize the small signals that tell them when a Soldier on the team needs their assistance. Here, again, is why it's important to get back to the basics.

We want our Soldiers and junior NCOs to have the skills and capabilities to do their jobs and take care of Soldiers, but how do we think they're going to get those skills? Not by osmosis. You have to teach them the basics. Teach them what ‘right’ looks like. Make on-the-spot corrections. Of course, that means NCO leaders must know regulations and local guidance themselves before they can correct others. Use NCO professional development sessions to put out information and educate NCOs and Soldiers on new programs such as the Post-9/11 GI Bill and the newly reinstated Qualitative Management Program. Develop informal Sergeants Time and NCO Leadership 101 programs.

Perhaps, most importantly – while it sounds like a cliché – the best way to teach your Soldiers how to be strong NCOs is by setting the right example. Self-assessment is a great way to find out where you are and if you're setting that example. Ask yourself, how well you know your Soldiers, and what's going on in their off-duty lives. If you want to take it a step further, AKO offers a great site called “My Leader Development: The Multi-Source Assessment and Feedback Program” at <https://msaf.army.mil/Default.aspx>. Using your AKO login, you can initiate a complete assessment that incorporates confidential and anonymous feedback on your leadership skills, based on the eight Army leadership competencies described in FM 6-22. The feedback can come from a combination of peers, subordinates and superiors, is only available to you and is designed to help you develop your self-awareness as a leader. This is a great tool, no matter what your rank.

Being a senior sergeant is no different than being a junior sergeant. Every NCO is a sergeant with a different title. All are charged with the same duties – taking care of Soldiers – just at different levels of responsibility and organization. Building the next generation of NCOs is paramount among those duties, and a basic responsibility on which we need to focus much more time and effort. Malcolm Forbes, the former editor of *Forbes* magazine, once said, “Diamonds are nothing more than chunks of coal that stuck to their jobs.” That's what NCOs are. They are a rare breed – rare gems – because they stick to their duties and never lose sight of the basics.

What's your New Year's resolution?

Every December, as we gather to bring in the New Year we vow to our friends and comrades that we will resolve to do something life-changing for the next 365 days of our existence. According to the Web site *Squiddo.com*, the top 10 New Year's resolutions most people share are to – stop smoking, get fit, lose weight, enjoy life more, quit drinking, get organized, learn something new, get out of debt, spend more time with the family and help others.

The problem with all of these resolutions is keeping them. Think about it: How many resolutions have you made over the years, and how many of them have you succeeded in keeping? My bet is not many. Whatever the reasons are, we have a hard time keeping our resolutions. How about this for a resolution: I intend to live up to all of my responsibilities as a noncommissioned officer.

This resolution should be easy to keep because you took an oath to do just that. In keeping this resolution, NCOs can help those who won't or can't find the way to succeed in fulfilling their New Year's resolutions. Let's just take the top 10 for starters;

Quit Smoking – Each year we embrace the Great American Smokeout on the third Thursday in November. We know smoking is not the best thing for our health, but some folks need to be encouraged and mentored for a period of time to overcome the habit. A caring NCO will be that mentor.

Get fit – This one is a no brainer. Every Soldier in the Army must meet physical fitness standards. The issue at hand is, are we just meeting the standard or are we exceeding the standard? If we exceed the standard, then number three – **Losing weight** – won't be a problem. Along with that, NCOs need to be cognizant of what their Soldiers are eating every day. Are they going to fast-food restaurants for lunch all the time? Do they understand the need for a balanced diet and where to get that information? NCOs who live up to all of their responsibilities will show them the way.

Enjoy life more – *All work and no play makes Johnny a dull boy.* I used to type that all the time to help me improve my typing skills, so did Jack Nicholson's character in *The Shining*. But the awesome fact is that work can be enjoyable when led by an NCO who lives up to all of his or her responsibilities. When NCOs don't, life can be hard; NCOs set the command climate.

Quit drinking – Not everyone can handle alcohol and many Soldiers have problems. Because we live and work in a high-

stress environment, many find solace in the occasional drink. However, NCOs must remain keenly aware of their Soldiers who demonstrate a problem with alcohol and get them the help they need, no questions asked.



David Crozier

Get organized – It's in our description – military *organization*, and as such we live by the need to be organized. Without organization, we would have mass chaos; the left hand won't know what the right hand is doing. Getting organized, in this context however, should mean ensuring that there is a plan for everything we do and that the plan is communicated to the force. Who better to do this than the NCO?


Learn something new – In this age of burgeoning technology, changing military tactics and the transformation of our education system, this resolution should be a life-long endeavor during your entire Army career. It should also be a life-long resolution for every one of your Soldiers. NCOs who live up to their responsibilities encourage this consistently.

Spend more time with family – Without them, life would be very different for Soldiers. Our families are the rocks that ground us, give us strength and care for us when times are rough. If you don't spend time with them, you will surely lose a precious piece of who you are. Good NCOs include family in everything they do.

Help others – This is the basic tenet of being an NCO. It is what makes the Corps stand out in the eyes of others. Living up to all of your responsibilities as an NCO ensures this last resolution never has to be said; it just happens automatically each and every day.

Here's one more to consider that is not on this list:

I will live by the Army Values.

So what is your New Year's resolution? I think we all know what it should be for the Corps. 

David Crozier
Editor

To contact David Crozier, e-mail david.b.crozier@us.army.mil.

Capstone Concept: Today's battlefield, tomorrow's Army

TRADOC Public Affairs

The 2009 Army Capstone Concept, last updated in 2005, is now available in its final version online.

Led by Brig. Gen. H.R. McMaster, director of the Army Capabilities Integration Center's Concepts Development and Experimentation Directorate, the Capstone Concept discusses the conditions of today's battlefield and how the Army will address them.

"The Capstone Concept aims to define the problem of future armed conflict and describes how the Army will function in the future," said McMaster.

Called "Operational Adaptability: Operating under Conditions of Uncertainty and Complexity in an Era of Persistent Conflict 2016-2028," the Army Capstone Concept takes a long-term look at challenges and methods of addressing them.

"What you will find is a broader

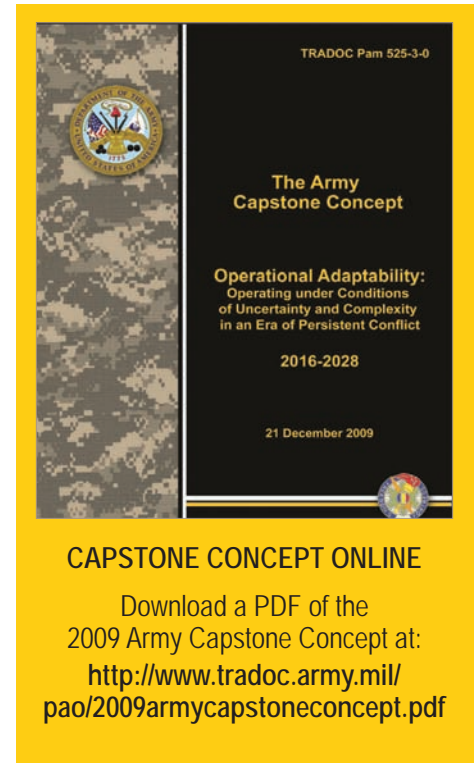
definition of situational understanding," he said.

"We tended to believe that it could be delivered on a computer screen, but now we understand that [it] involves knowledge of history, knowledge of culture, and being able to forge positive relationships with indigenous populations," he added.

Written with the input from joint, interagency, intergovernmental and multinational partners, the Army Capstone Concept also integrates the need for a total government approach to seeking success in combat zones.

The Capstone Concept was the first Army document to be crowd-sourced while in draft form.

In September 2009, the document was posted to the *Small Wars Journal's* discussion board, and participants were welcome to read, comment and contribute to the draft before it was submitted for final approval.



Army launches first user-customized Web site

U.S. Army Public Affairs

In an effort to create a more personalized browsing experience, the Army launched **My.Army.Mil**, the first user-customized Web site under the Department of Defense, in January.

My.Army.Mil offers visitors the ability to sign-in and create a personalized destination for official Army information, ranging from traditional news stories to up-to-the-minute social media updates.

After visitors sign-in and authenticate with their Google Friend Connect (AIM,



Information/Suggestions:

Web: <http://www.army.mil/MyArmy>
E-mail: my.army@us.army.mil

Google, Yahoo and OpenID) or Army Knowledge Online login, they will be prompted to add and arrange a series of

widgets to suit their specific information needs.

The featured widgets include:

- Flickr, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube
- My Army News with customized feeds from commands, corps and divisions
- A features widget highlighting stories of valor, Army events, history and heritage
- AKO log in
- Official Army videos and newscasts
- RSS feeds to pull news from external sites

NCO Suggested Reading

Bruning, John R. *The Devil's Sandbox: With the 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry at War in Iraq*. St. Paul: Zenith Press, 2006.

Fullan, Michael. *Leading in a Culture of Change*. New York: Jossey-Bass, 2001.

Gray, J. Glenn. *The Warriors: Reflections of Men in Battle*. New York: Harcourt Brace, 1959.

Hunter, James C. *The Servant: A Simple Story About the True Essence of Leadership*. Roseville: Prima, 1998.

Mauldin, Bill. *Up Front*. New York: Norton, 2000.

Scales, Jr., Robert H. *Yellow Smoke: The Future of Land Warfare for America's Military*. Lanham, Md.,

Rowan & Littlefield, 2005.



Hybrid mail system prints e-messages, photos deliverable to the field in as little as one day

Army News Service →

In the first month of HooahMail, more than 3,540 accounts were set up by families and friends of Soldiers in Afghanistan, and approximately 1,690 letters were delivered.

The letters, many accompanied by photos, were often delivered to those Soldiers in less than 24 hours.

HooahMail, a one-year pilot program that began Dec. 1, 2009, allows Soldiers in Afghanistan to keep with them a physical reminder of their loved ones to be read and re-read, whether in the field or at their forward operating base.

Under the hybrid mail system, family and friends establish free accounts at www.hooahmail.us, where they create and send letters that can include black-and-white photos.

The letters are then transmitted

through the HooahMail secure server in Bagram and Kandahar, Afghanistan.

From there, the Army postal office downloads the letters to a special machine that prints, folds and seals the letters automatically.

The final stop is delivery to Soldiers through unit mail call.

Brig. Gen. Richard P. Mustion, the Army's adjutant general, said HooahMail will grow.

"In fact, we're expanding to about eight other FOBs, principally on the eastern side of Afghanistan," Mustion said.

"They'll be able to directly receive the mail, and it won't have to go through Bagram or Kandahar. That will potentially make it much quicker than it is today," he added.

The HooahMail system combines the modern technology that's available to the Army through the Internet with

traditional mail, he said, but cuts delivery time from 14 days down to as little as one day.

While the Army has established Internet cafes and phone-call banks, Mustion said the Army also found that in some outlying areas, access to those systems is sometimes restricted and not readily available. That is how the concept of HooahMail came to light.

"This was an item that was brought up to us by family members as well as by Soldiers," he said.

"We looked at available technology and found this system works," Mustion said. "We're seeing the number of users and the number of letters continuing to increase."

Information: 1-877-507-9673 ext. 703 or online at www.hooahmail.us. Select "Help" from the menu tab, then select "Customer Care." HooahMail is free, private and secure.

Stop-Loss payments halted

American Forces Press Service →

The fiscal 2010 defense budget extends payments to service members involuntarily extended on active duty under the Stop-Loss program, but those who received a bonus for voluntarily re-enlisting or extending their service after being involuntarily extended no longer qualify for retroactive pay.

Service members affected by the new policy who already received Stop-Loss payments will not be required to repay them, defense officials said. However, all outstanding applications from affected service members will be returned.

In March 2009, defense department officials announced their intention to eliminate the Stop-Loss policy.

While the services work to phase out the policy, officials authorized a special pay of \$500 a month for anyone retained on active duty due to Stop Loss.

Retroactive payments applied for anyone who served on active duty between Sept. 11, 2001, and Sept. 30, 2009, and the fiscal 2010 defense budget extended that authority through September 2010.

Housing allowance to increase

American Forces Press Service →

Military members will see an average raise of 2.5 percent in housing allowance rates in 2010, according to a Basic Allowance for Housing program analyst.

The increase averages about \$37 per month for the more than 900,000 service members expected to draw the basic allowance for housing in 2010, said Cheryl Anne Woehr.

The 2010 raise — the smallest percent increase since the inception of the BAH program in 2000 — is due to the past year's recession and declining housing market, she said.

"As the economy has declined, vacancy rates have increased [and] rental prices have declined, which results directly to lower BAH rates in various areas," Woehr said.

Some areas will see a higher increase, while others will see less, Woehr said.

An individual rate protection law protects those who already are under a rental agreement. An estimated \$19 billion in BAH will be paid to nearly 1 million service members in 2010, she said.

NCOs, Soldiers honored for Best Warrior support

Fort Lee Public Affairs

During the 2009 Best Warrior Competition, the spotlight focused on the 24 noncommissioned officers and Soldiers vying for the titles of NCO and Soldier of the Year.

But on Dec. 11, 2009, nearly 100 Fort Lee, Va., NCOs and Soldiers and more than a dozen civilians, were recognized for their behind-the-scenes efforts during the annual competition.

Presenting the awards, Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth O. Preston said it was the meticulous planning and execution of the competition, held for the seventh consecutive year at Fort Lee, which set the standard for warrior training in the Army.

“This was about Soldiers and NCOs pitting themselves against the standard. And all of you helped create that standard.”

One of Preston’s objectives during the competition was to present the competitors with challenges that would both test and strengthen their skills and knowledge in the tasks Soldiers face in today’s operating environment.

Master Sgt. Derrick Williams, Best Warrior planning cell operations NCO in charge, said the competition was designed with that in mind.

“We designed the competition to be extremely realistic and



Photo courtesy Fort Lee Public Affairs by Mike Strasser

Sgt. 1st Class Jared Caldwell, right, is recognized by Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth O. Preston (center) and, from left, Command Sgt. Maj. Nathan Hunt and Brig. Gen. Jesse R. Cross.

robust while still creating scenarios that Soldiers can take back and use for training without costing their units a lot of money,” said Williams. He described the dozens of Fort Lee organizations – including DA civilians, NCOs and Soldiers who worked on Best Warrior – as being committed to putting forth the very best competition.

During the awards ceremony, Preston mentioned the return of the competition to Fort Lee in 2010.

Army’s longest-serving female CSM retires

Fort Myer Public Affairs

Although she won’t formally retire until March, a retirement ceremony was held Nov. 13, 2009, for Command Sgt. Maj. Cynthia A. Pritchett, the senior enlisted leader for the Army element of the U.S. Central Command at Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall.

Pritchett, who joined the Women’s Army Corps in 1973 before it was integrated into the regular Army, is the longest-serving female command sergeant major in the service.

Accompanied by Old Guard Regimental Command Sgt. Maj. David Martel, Pritchett walked in crisp formation past the stationary companies of the 3rd U.S. Infantry for a final inspection.

The units, which also included a contingent from the U.S. Army Band “Pershing’s Own,” later paraded in formation past the official party in the grandstand of Conny Hall for a final pass and review, acknowledging Pritchett and Command Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth O. Preston, who hosted the ceremony.



Photo courtesy U.S. Army by Adam Skoczylas

3rd U.S. Infantry Regimental Command Sgt. Maj. David Martel leads retiring CENTCOM Command Sgt. Maj. Cynthia A. Pritchett on a final inspection of troops Nov. 13, 2009.

Preston outlined Pritchett’s career, touching on her accomplishments through the decades as a supply specialist, platoon sergeant, recruiter, a tour in Somalia and her appointment by Lt. Gen. David Barno as his principal enlisted advisor for Combined Forces Command-Afghanistan in 2002, making her the Army’s first and only female command sergeant major of a sub-unified command.

“[Pritchett] spent 35 of her 36 ½ years in the Army as an NCO. She took on tough jobs that made her a leader, a trainer and a role model,” Preston said, adding that the recognition of noncommissioned officers with the Year of the NCO didn’t come about by accident. “The seeds for many of these initiatives were planted by Command Sgt. Maj. Pritchett.”

Pritchett was named to the U.S. Army Women’s Foundation Hall of Fame in April 2009.

“You only get the opportunity to be the ‘first’ once. Hopefully I’ve done right by the servicewomen who come after me,” she said, concluding with “Army strong! Hooah!”

Liberian military studies U.S. Army officer-NCO relationships

By Kristin Molinaro
The Bayonet →

A Liberian military defense delegation is looking at ways to build respect in the ranks of the re-formed Armed Forces of Liberia by modeling its professional relationship between officers and noncommissioned officers after the U.S. Army.

A three-member delegation recently visited Fort Benning, Ga., to observe NCO-led training. The visit was aimed at furthering Liberia's efforts to build an army capable of sustaining security as the United States transitions to an advisory role, said Col. A.L. Rumphrey, chief of the office of security cooperation, U.S. Africa Command, at the U.S. Embassy in Monrovia, Liberia.

In the last year, the AFL added basic and advanced training courses modeled after the principles of the U.S. military.

Now, the army wants to develop the officer-NCO relationship that it lacked in previous years, said AFL Command Sgt. Maj. Bamidele Awofeso, senior regimental NCO for the army.

Awofeso is a member of the Nigerian



Photo courtesy The Bayonet by Kristin Molinaro
Sgt. 1st Class Julius Bryant, (left), explains bridge operations to the Liberian delegation. The delegates were accompanied by Col. A.L. Rumphrey of U.S. Africa Command.

army attached to the AFL as part of a bilateral agreement between the two countries.

"Our officers don't look at NCOs as colleagues," Awofeso said.

Lt. Col. Waidi Shaibu, chief of staff for the AFL headquarters, and Lt. Col. Solomon Gonny, the operations officer for the AFL, joined Awofeso in observing the Pre-Ranger Course, Expert Infantryman

Badge program and Phase 1 Combative Training.

"The NCO corps is the bedrock of any army," said Gonny, who has completed several courses in the United States, including Intermediate Level Education. "When you have a well-disciplined and trained NCO corps, then you have an army."



Haiti relief efforts online with links, related stories, slideshows

In the wake of the earthquake that devastated the country of Haiti on Jan. 12, U.S. Southern Command is coordinating the Department of Defense relief efforts.

For a list of links to stories involving the U.S. Army in Haiti, including slideshows, videos, links to other government agencies, and links where you can go to help, visit <http://www.army.mil> and click on the "Hot Topic" button or the "Earthquake Relief Haiti" icon.

We're now online!

<https://usasma.bliss.army.mil/NCOJournal/>

 <https://twitter.com/ncojournal>

facebook Search "NCO Journal"

You may also reach us the old-fashioned way —
by mail at NCO Journal, USASMA,
11291 Sgt. E. Churchill St., Fort Bliss, TX 79918,
or call us at 915-744-8023.

100 YEARS

Celebrating a century of religious support,
chaplain assistants cast light on their unique role

BY MICHAEL L. LEWIS

You are as likely to find them in the motor pool as in the chapel, and they readily admit to cussing as much as any other Soldier. Yet, they are responsible for helping Soldiers exercise their constitutional right to practice their faith, whatever it is, wherever they may be.

As chaplain assistants celebrate their centennial – 100 years since the Army officially introduced the occupational specialty – they realize their distinctive role in the Army is often misunderstood. In fact, over the last century, their job has evolved from that of a general clerk to a highly trained and essential component within a professional ministry team. Not only are they empathetic listeners within their units, they are also able protectors of their chaplains, who by international law are unarmed noncombatants. Theirs is a unique mix of roles and responsibilities that sets them apart in a stand-alone military occupational specialty; however, it hasn't always been that way.

Since the earliest days of the Continental Army, enlisted personnel have assisted chaplains ministering on the battlefield. Yet, for more than half of the Army's existence, that assistance was unofficial and often fleeting, tacked on as a supple-

ment to a Soldier's primary duties within the unit, which always took precedence.

Then, on Dec. 28, 1909, the Army officially created the position of chaplain assistant, for the first time authorizing a Soldier to provide full-time religious support. The War Department's General Order No. 253 simply read, "One enlisted man will be detailed on special duty, by the commanding officer of any organization to which a chaplain is assigned for duty, for the purpose of assisting the chaplain in the performance of his official duties." But, except for "good moral character," no prerequisite training or special skills were considered necessary for the position. The Soldier filling this role was considered to be only a clerk, with duties entirely administrative in nature, a way of thinking that continued until the Army's 2001 decision to separate chaplain assistants into their own career field – religious support (with an MOS designation of 56M).

"It's changed dramatically since I came in," said Sgt. Maj. Tommy Marrero, the regimental sergeant major of the Chaplain Corps. "I came in when the MOS was 71M, under the 71 series, which was more of an administration MOS. Since then, it has evolved into a highly professional career management field. It is no longer

administration-focused; it's operations-focused."

That new focus more accurately reflects what chaplain assistants are now expected to do, said Sgt. 1st Class Timothy Eye, operations NCO for chaplains in U.S. Army Africa. "We're no longer just administrators. For instance, now I'm the operations NCO; I deal with planning and strategic thinking in relation to religious support on the continent of Africa. I never in a million years would have thought I'd be where I am right now."

LISTENERS & PROTECTORS

Despite the new emphasis on plans and strategy, the crux of a chaplain assistant's duties remains being a receptive ear to Soldiers in need, said Sgt. Maj. Pamela Neal, sergeant major for chaplains in U.S. Army Europe.

"Listening – it's being available to those who need you. That's the basis of the job to me, because you never know when you are going to be the last person

Right: Sgt. Darrell Bowie, NCOIC for the Regimental Chapel at Fort Benning, Ga., prepares for a Friday night Jewish service in December 2009.

Photo by Michael L. Lewis



to listen. You could be the cross between life and death for some people.”

Being available to listen requires being a regular presence wherever Soldiers are every day, said Sgt. 1st Class Norberto Diaz, the senior chaplain assistant at Fort Bliss, Texas.

“It is very important for all chaplain assistants to be with their units, because that’s where we get our meat and potatoes – having face time with the Soldiers, out there doing the same things they do. That’s how you earn their trust, so that they’ll know we are Soldiers just like them,” he said.

Eye agreed. “My bread and butter is down there, in the trenches, with the Soldiers. If you’re in the motor pool turning wrenches and I come by and turn wrenches with you, or if you’re digging a foxhole like we used to and I’m out there digging the same foxhole with you – when you have an issue, words just flow and there’s no hesitation as to whether or not you can trust me.”

Being wherever their Soldiers are also means doing whatever they do, whether it be physical fitness training, weapons qualifications or field exercises, said Sgt. Maj. Monica Dixon, the liaison sergeant major at the Armed Forces Chaplaincy Center, Fort Jackson, S.C. When assigned as a chaplain assistant in the 82nd Airborne Division, that attitude led her to become the first female jumpmaster-qualified chaplain assistant.

“That was my focus when I was in the [82nd] Airborne Division. I needed to set myself to be the same as all these other airborne Soldiers,” she said, noting the same principle applies in other units, too. “If you’re in a [military intelligence] unit, keep focused on matching the progression of the MI Soldiers. Whatever training the MI people are doing, you need to get out there and do the same thing.”

Participating in unit maneuvers and individual training also hones chaplain assistants’ soldiering skills, which directly contribute to perhaps their most important duty – protecting their chaplain. It’s

a responsibility unique within the Army, Diaz said.

“Chaplains are not allowed to carry weapons. So, during deployment, we have to be with them at all times and be their quote-unquote bodyguard,” he said.

“I think we’re the only MOS who carries one weapon for two people,” Marrero added.

But, chaplain assistants aren’t the only ones responsible for providing



Photo by Pfc. Kimberly Cole

Staff Sgt. Miguel Martinez-Velazquez, chaplain assistant NCOIC for the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, shelters Chaplain (Maj.) Paul Jaedicke from incoming fire during training August 2008 at Fort Polk, La.

chaplains with protection. Indeed, their role is much larger and involves providing coordination and direction, Marrero said.

“I’m right at [the chaplain’s] side. But, one person cannot provide 360-degree protection for the chaplain. That’s why we train our chaplain assistants to integrate force protection for the chaplain wherever he or she goes. For example, when we’re in a convoy, we always tell the convoy leaders, ‘Hey, I’ve got a non-combatant here.’ The role then for the convoy is to protect him and strategically position him.”

Maintaining weapons qualifications and physical fitness above and beyond other Soldiers is key to providing the protection chaplains require, Eye said, recalling his experiences meeting local religious leaders in Iraq.

“Those are very close quarters. When you are sitting down with a bunch of big wigs in a room somewhere, you really don’t have a lot of time to lock and load your weapon. So, it might have to get hands-on,” he said. The desire to be well-trained for those situations led him to become certified in Level 2 combatives before deploying. “In that aspect, I felt more comfortable in close-quarters situations because it made me more confident in my ability to do my job and protect my chaplain down-range.”

That extra training also provides inspiration for the Soldiers under his leadership, he said. “By going through combatives and increasing my skills, number one, I’m showing the Soldiers who are under me that this is what I believe ‘right’ looks like. But, also, [it shows] how much of a combat multiplier you can be.”

BUSTING MYTHS

Actual ministerial duties, such as counseling, giving spiritual advice or providing religious guidance to Soldiers, are strictly left to the chaplain. “We’re chaplain assistants. We’re not assistant chaplains,” Neal asserted.

“That is certainly a myth. We absolutely don’t counsel” as a chaplain does, she said.

“The distinction needs to be made because we don’t have training for that. That area is set aside for medical personnel and for the chaplains, who have a degree or specialization in that field. Chaplain assistants are basically there to bring the Soldier to the chaplain; we’re there to refer. Otherwise, we’re out of our lane.”

Diaz said he advises young chaplain assistants to become well-versed in evaluating, then referring Soldiers who need help. “Sometimes, a Soldier just wants to talk. Then, we can refer them. We can make an assessment – ‘You know, it would be best to talk to a chaplain who is experienced in detail with these kinds of issues’ – or maybe refer them to other agencies. Maybe they have a drinking problem or a drug problem or a financial problem.”

Nonetheless, many chaplain assistants find enlisted personnel are more comfortable talking with them rather than the chaplains.

“There are times, especially during deployments, when the chaplain is out or busy, or sometimes a Soldier will feel more comfortable talking with another enlisted Soldier instead of an officer,” Diaz said. “That’s where I come in – just being a peer to that individual.”

“It has something to do with being less formal,” Eye said. “Because, when you are in a line unit, it’s bred into you that officers are the individuals who you’ll see when there’s some kind of negative action that is being brought unto you. But, being a hard-striper and an NCO with the troops, they see you every day, and it’s a lot easier for them to open up and talk.”

Many Soldiers don’t realize chaplain assistants are bound by the same confidentiality statutes as chaplains, Eye said. Federal law prevents either from divulging the content of a conversation with a Soldier without that Soldier’s permission.

“I tell Soldiers when they talk to me that I’m only bound to tell one other person, and that’s my chaplain. If you don’t want to talk to him, that’s fine. But, with your permission, I’m going to talk to him about what your issues are. Whatever it takes to get you the help you need, I’m going to do my best to do it.”

As much as chaplain assistants strive to blend in with their peers, they are put on a pedestal by some Soldiers, Marrero said, and expected to be highly religious, overly pious or morally perfect.

“The perception some have is that chaplain assistants have huge, huge moral standards. Well, we do have high moral standards; but, we’re also Soldiers who make mistakes. The very religious Soldier who is always in the church or mosque or synagogue, we’re not.”

“A lot of chaplain assistants are normal Soldiers,” Neal said. “And when I say ‘normal,’ I mean some drink, some go to the club, and some get into trouble like any other Soldier. But what’s bad is that the Soldiers in the unit hold us to a higher standard. They expect us to be a bunch of nuns and priests, and we are far from that,” she said.

Sgt. Darrell Bowie, the NCO in charge at the Regimental Chapel, Fort Benning, Ga., has tried to clear up the

same misconception among his Soldiers.

“People think that chaplain assistants are goody two-shoes. But, I always tell my Soldiers, if you see chaplain assistants who [use colorful language], those are probably the best ones because they can relate to you and take care of your problems at the same time.”

In fact, being too religious could actually detract from being effective, he said, for chaplain assistants are required by law to help Soldiers of all religions practice their faith.


“My point of view is that you can either be religious or not,” Neal said. “But, as far as the job is concerned, one has nothing to do with the other. Whether you’re religious or non-religious, you just can’t interfere with someone else’s expression of faith. Or, you can’t interfere with someone else’s *non-expression* of faith. So, if someone determines that they want to be an atheist or Wiccan or whatever, you have to support any and every spectrum of someone’s expression of faith.”

Bowie said that the job is tougher than some Soldiers realize. Even he underestimated it at first.

“I kind of underrated it; I thought it was an easy, sham job. But, it’s a lot harder than it seems, especially if you deploy,” he said. “There will be a lot of command sergeants major and battalion commanders who look to you, and you have more responsibility than you realize. As a private, you have to act like an NCO, right off the bat.”

The enhanced expectations come with the job, Neal said. “We work with commissioned officers every single day. So, you have to be mature. You have to be no-nonsense. And, you have to be proficient at what you do.”

But, despite others’ misconceptions, Marrero is proud of the myriad of tasks that chaplain assistants accomplish daily in the course of supporting the religious needs of their units.

“From setting up a chapel, to coordinating volunteers, to safeguarding the offering monies – the most important thing is ensuring that every Soldier can enhance their spiritual life. It’s a very behind-the-scenes job, but we do it with professionalism. We do it quietly.” 

To contact Michael L. Lewis, e-mail michael.lewis73@us.army.mil.

Chaplain Assistants: A timeline

1778: As early as the American Revolutionary War, enlisted Soldiers serve as ad hoc assistants to Army chaplains. However, these temporary assistants rarely help with ministerial duties.

1866: The Army allows competent enlisted Soldiers to be detailed to teach basic school subjects under the auspices of the local chaplain, who serves as the schoolmaster.

1902: Calvin P. Titus is awarded the Medal of Honor by President Teddy Roosevelt for actions performed as a corporal during the Boxer Rebellion. While in his infantry unit, he drew from his family’s background in ministry to serve as his chaplain’s unofficial assistant.

1909: On Dec. 28, the War Department officially establishes the chaplain assistant position, though no training or organization was specified. About 60 chaplains are in the Army at this time.

1920: The Chaplain Corps is established as a separate branch for officers.

1933: The first unofficial school for chaplain assistants is established in San Antonio, Texas. However, it pertained mostly to administrative duties, not religious support. The maximum pay grade is E-5.

1950s: During the Korean War, chaplain assistants receive the MOS of 71B, in the same career field as administrative aides, such as payroll and postal clerks. A new four-week chaplain assistant course opens at Fort Dix, N.J., and Fort Ord, Calif.

1965: In August, after a major rewrite of the MOS classification system, chaplain assistants are redesignated 71M. The maximum pay grade for a chaplain assistant is now E-7.

1966: Chaplain assistant training is consolidated at Fort Hamilton, N.Y.

1972: Chaplain assistant training is integrated into the NCO Education System.

1974: The unit ministry team concept is developed, whereby chaplain assistants are given more responsibilities regarding religious support. The same year, the Chaplain School moves to Fort Wadsworth, N.Y., then Fort Monmouth, N.J., in 1979.

1985: Chaplain assistants receive their own branch insignia, a stylized set of hands surrounding a chapel with open doors.

1986: The chaplaincy is designated a regiment, and a regimental crest is developed, featuring the corps’ motto – “Pro Deo et Patria,” which in Latin means, “For God and Country.”

1995: The Chaplain School moves to its current home at Fort Jackson, S.C.

2001: In October, the Army redesignates chaplain assistants as 56M, a stand-alone MOS in its own career management field – religious support.

2009: The Department of Defense begins collocating the chaplain schools for all branches at the newly designated Armed Forces Chaplaincy Center at Fort Jackson. There are now more than 3,400 chaplain assistants and 2,700 chaplains Armywide.

HISTORY IN THE MAKING



Army unveils the Institute for Noncommissioned Officer Professional Development

By Linda Crippen

No doubt by now, Soldiers have realized the changes taking place within the Noncommissioned Officer Education System. New curricula have been implemented in the Warrior Leader Course, the Advanced Leader Course and the Sergeants Major Course, just to name a few. Structured Self Development and lifelong learning will soon be commonplace verbiage, a lifestyle, for all Soldiers. But what issues are the driving forces behind all these changes, and who is responsible for the transitions? Introducing: the Institute for NCO Professional Development.

Officials announced the creation of the institute during the Association of the United States Army Conference in October 2009, briefing attendees about the general necessity for a department or division within the Army to oversee the purpose and direction of NCOES and enlisted leader development. With the establishment of INCOPD, for the first time in the Army's history, NCOs (and former NCOs) will manage all NCO and enlisted educational and career development programs.

Based on ideas and suggestions from Command Sgt. Maj. David Bruner, U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command command sergeant major, the formation of the institute comes at the behest of commanding general Gen. Martin Dempsey, who said, "Allowing the NCO Corps to own the outcome of what it means to be an NCO, and what it means to develop as an NCO, is just too powerful to ignore, in particular, because of the way they've been performing [during] the last nine years of conflict. With the investment comes accountability. I'm sure they will step up to the accountability and responsibility."

WHAT IS INCOPD

As director of INCOPD, John D. Sparks, who has been described as a visionary by other institute staff members, explained, "We want to provide one entity that really looks at purpose and direction of the NCO Education System, based upon input primarily from the field and the leadership." Before the institute, there were multiple offices and organizations engaged in the big picture of NCOES. These offices were doing an incredible effort to maintain the flow of NCOES, but we had situations where decisions would be made at one headquarters and not made at another headquarters, which was problematic, he added.

Officially, the institute's mission statement is to "provide direction and oversight of the NCOES across the Army; integrate all actions and activities related to NCO leader development into the Army Leader Development Strategy; and serve as the NCO subject matter experts for the Army Leader Development Enterprise."

Breathing life into a new organization is not an easy task, but Sparks is no stranger to the TRADOC environment; his tenure serving as TRADOC's command sergeant major lasted three years. After retiring, he worked on various NCOES projects prior to the creation of INCOPD. Sparks stated that his position as

Opposite: The new INCOPD logo has three stars representing the three pillars of leader development: institutional training and education; operation assignments; self-development — each are dynamic and interconnected. The individual gains skills, knowledge and behaviors at the institution and practices them during operational assignments to refine skills, broaden knowledge and shape behavior. These experiences are shared during institutional training and education. Self-development enhances, sustains and expands skills, knowledge and behaviors.

INCOPD director is based upon what he perceives is the need to have someone oversee all of NCOES.

The deputy director of INCOPD, Dan Hubbard, also a retired sergeant major, said the organization wants to be viewed as problem solvers. "We're focused on the NCO Corps, and that's our sole focus in life. Regardless of the issue, NCO academy structures, [school] backlog or quality of instruction, INCOPD wants to be part of the solution. We will not allow ourselves to become [an] additional bureaucratic step in some process. That is not the intent. There are a lot of things that can be done, and there's a lot of energy about making sure we keep current with the force," he said.

Sgt. Maj. Chris Camacho, sergeant major of INCOPD and the highest-ranking active duty staff member, describes the organization as "NCOs running NCO business." He likens the institute's role to that of an advocate. When orders come from the Department of the Army, TRADOC or the operational force for implementation, INCOPD will be the negotiators between academies and these executive organizations. "We are the fighter; we fight the battles for the NCO academies at DA," he said.

Camacho welcomes ideas and suggestions from the field. "If Soldiers have an idea, they can submit it to us. We will research and assess it. If it's sound and would be an improvement, then we'll take it to DA and negotiate the change and necessary resources," he said. With an entire network of people working to champion the cause of the NCO Corps, the central focus is on improving the system and empowering enlisted members.

THE DIVISIONS

There are three main divisions within INCOPD: Learning Innovations and Initiatives (LIID); Learning Execution and Evaluations (LEED); and Learning Integration (LID). Each division has an explicit mission and focus, all of which center on improving the NCOES. The staff is comprised mostly of retired command sergeants major. There are a few active duty NCOs, and the rest of the institute's staff are former military personnel, with the one exception of a resident Ph.D. education academic expert who spearheads the first department.

Each division deals with specific concerns that are considered either current or future issues. LIID and LID are both future focused, so the tasks they receive mostly consist of future projects or research that could enhance the future of NCOES. LEED deals with issues that are considered current battles; hence, LEED division takes on tasks that are immediate or currently affecting NCOES.

LIID is dedicated to looking at revolutionary learning advancements within academia and industry. In January, the division hosted a three-day workshop on NCOA Leadership Immersive Training. The workshop was sponsored by the University of Southern California's Institute for Creative Technology in Marina del Rey.

A form of technology-based instruction, immersive technology offers highly realistic, job-relevant instructional scenarios using proven principles of instructional design. Aside from studying current research about learning methodologies, LIID is dedicated to providing trainers and training developers the latest research in adult learning and instruction in order to improve NCO and Soldier training.

Some of LIID's involvement with cutting-edge technology includes being active in two virtual worlds: Second Life, managed and owned by Linden Lab; and Activeworlds, a product of Activeworlds, Inc. LIID's Second Life space is located on the Department of Defense continent, where they have conducted several virtual educational fairs and are working on a virtual warrior university. The Activeworlds virtual world has allowed LIID to conduct several training scenarios in a three-dimensional environment to replicate situations and interactions Soldiers might experience in theater.

Collaborating with the Department of Defense, LIID is also looking into other aspects of mobile learning. The division will research best practices for what might benefit Soldiers and conduct assessments that include looking at how the Army does business today and identifying areas in which to improve. Hubbard explained that it is a matter of realizing and researching issues and then looking for solutions. Ultimately, the division will marry solutions to the problems.

The next division encompasses Learning Execution and Evaluation, or LEED, which handles issues that are currently affecting NCOES. Also, this division interfaces with TRADOC's Quality Assurance Office. For example, one current project concerns Army Campaign Plan Decision Point 59.1, which sets the standard for NCO academies' structure and manpower. Programs of instruction that come in for review, like the updated Warrior Leader Course, also fall under LEED's area of responsibility. In addition, this division works with mobile training teams, pro-

so that all enlisted Soldiers can meet their personal and professional goals.

Coordinating all three divisions is Hubbard, who described his duties as, "just [being] in the middle there with beans, bullets, orchestrating, tracking tasks and trying to herd cats."

GETTING HERE

"The impetus for change," explained Command Sgt. Maj. Raymond Chandler, commandant of the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy, Fort Bliss, Texas, "came from two studies: the Review of Education, Training and Leadership (RETAL) and the Army Initiative 5 (AI-5), which is leader development." These studies led to the Army realizing some changes were necessary to prepare NCOs to be more closely aligned with the Army Force Generation model.

TRADOC's Bruner says the idea for the institute grew out of his experiences as an instructor at the old Primary Leadership Development Course (now WLC) and then as commandant of the NCO academy at Fort Bragg, N.C. "Things would come to me to put into NCOES that maybe didn't belong there," he said.

Shortly after Dempsey took command of TRADOC in December 2009, Bruner approached him with the idea of putting NCOs in charge of NCO education, and "the general thought it was brilliant," Bruner said. Prior to INCOPD, when there was a crisis and things were being pushed into training, the automatic response was to add it into NCOES, but things did not always fit.

"We went through all the analysis, and we looked at it very

Coordinating all three INCOPD Divisions is Hubbard, who described his duties as, "just [being] in the middle there with beans, bullets, orchestrating, tracking tasks and trying to herd cats."

viding needs-analysis above and beyond what commandants of those organizations provide. Perhaps the biggest current project is transitioning the remaining NCOAs within U.S. Army Forces Command to TRADOC, a feat within itself.

The third division is Learning Integration, or LID, which is committed to integrating military and civilian education so that Soldiers can earn a degree without the many headaches experienced by previous generations. Through programs like College of the American Soldier, a new-and-improved Army Correspondence Course Program and Structured Self Development, Soldiers should be able to earn college credits toward a degree with almost anything and everything they study, whether they be military or civilian courses.

With these programs, combined with the soon-to-be-released Army Career Tracker, Soldiers will have more control over their leadership development and military careers than ever before. ACT will provide them and their supervisors the ability to track all educational opportunities, past, present and future. For example, when a Soldier has completed SSD1, ACT will check off that particular block of instruction and then schedule the Soldier for the next course. Alternatively, when a Soldier completes a civilian college course through the College of the American Soldier, ACT will keep track of that progression as well. LID is devoted to the life-long learning approach, and its initiatives are geared toward leveraging civilian education and military training

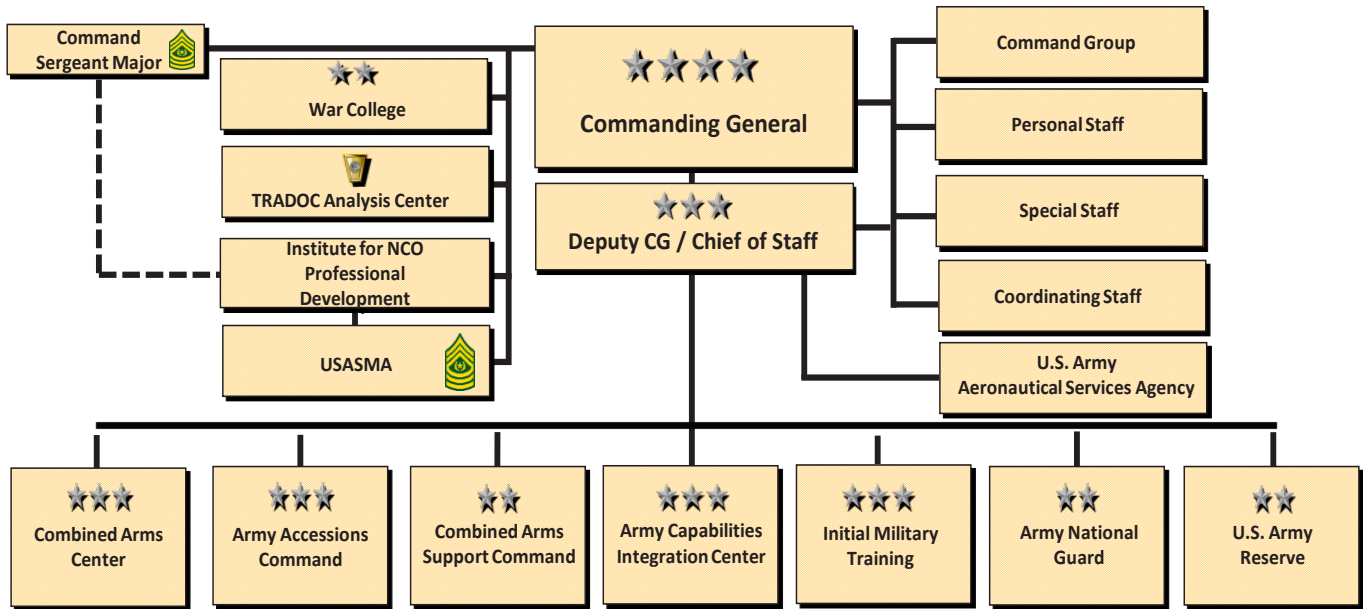
deliberately," Bruner explained. "What do you take out [in order] to put something new into NCOES? Now, when anything new comes in, INCOPD will evaluate it to figure out where it goes. Next, we'll send it up to the sergeant major of the Army and through the board of directors who sit with the SMA, and then we'll implement the necessary changes into NCOES," he said.

Last October at the AUSA annual meeting, Bruner discussed how NCO education had been fragmented in the past. Chandler agreed that NCOES "did not necessarily have a fully-integrated approach to lifelong learning. We want to grow leaders to assume positions of greater responsibility in our Army, and that vertical and horizontal integration of learning has not always been clearly defined," he said.

According to Sparks, an example of defragmentation occurred when Soldiers were sent to the Basic NCO Course (now Advanced Leader Course), yet they had already been serving as squad leaders or platoon sergeants. Sparks estimated that roughly 70 to 80 percent of Soldiers who attended BNCOC were already staff sergeants or serving in staff sergeant positions.

Sparks explained that one way INCOPD intends to defragment the problem is by training sergeants and staff sergeants to be platoon sergeants in the ALC Common Core, now delivered completely via the Internet. "The problem with NCOES [has been] that we really had no one who was charged with the responsibility to look at [those issues]. What we had were a grouping of

TRADOC



INCOPD courtesy graphic

Above, the TRADOC organizational chain-of-command, which now includes the Institute for NCO Professional Development.

people who had the responsibilities of injecting more information and keeping stuff current, but no one really looked at [the issues] problematically,” he said.

With the recent release of TRADOC Pamphlet 525-3-0, “The Army Capstone Concept — Operational Adaptability: Operating under Conditions of Uncertainty and Complexity in an Era of Persistent Conflict 2016 – 2028,” the timing of the institute’s creation is ideal. The Capstone Concept provides a framework in how the Army intends to modernize future force development and leverage its resources to adapt functionally in the era of persistent conflict within ambiguous and uncertain environments. More specifically, the Capstone Concept emphasizes that “the Army must revise its leader development strategy to prepare leaders through training, education and experience for these increased responsibilities.”

In approving the creation of INCOPD, Dempsey said there were three things that led him to the decision — first, his experiences with competent and can-do NCOs. For example, as an armor battalion commander, he was once kicked off a gunnery range by his sergeant major, as Dempsey’s oversight was not really necessary for the small-crew, live-fire exercise. The second catalyst was the Year of the NCO. Third was appointing Chandler as commandant of USASMA. Having worked with Chandler in the past, Dempsey was impressed with his work at the academy.

After putting Chandler in charge of the academy, Dempsey said, “that kind of sprung me into the idea that maybe we just do the whole professional military education line, the whole line of effort. We put it into the hands of NCOs.”

CONCERNS

While many agree these changes and transitions are headed in the right direction, some concerns have been raised by members of the NCO Corps. Master Sgt. Troy Babin, operations NCO, 224th Military Intelligence Battalion, Headquarters Support

Company, Hunter Army Airfield, Savannah, Ga., wonders if the new institute will be able to raise NCO education to the same level as Army officers.

“I’d like to see NCOES have the proper recognition and importance as officer courses,” he said, explaining that his aviation unit will do almost anything to get pilots in courses, including certification courses that typically expire every two years. However, when it comes to NCOES, chain of command will “too often write a memo for [an enlisted] Soldier to be taken off of the Army Training Requirements and Resources System [in order to fulfill] operational needs.”

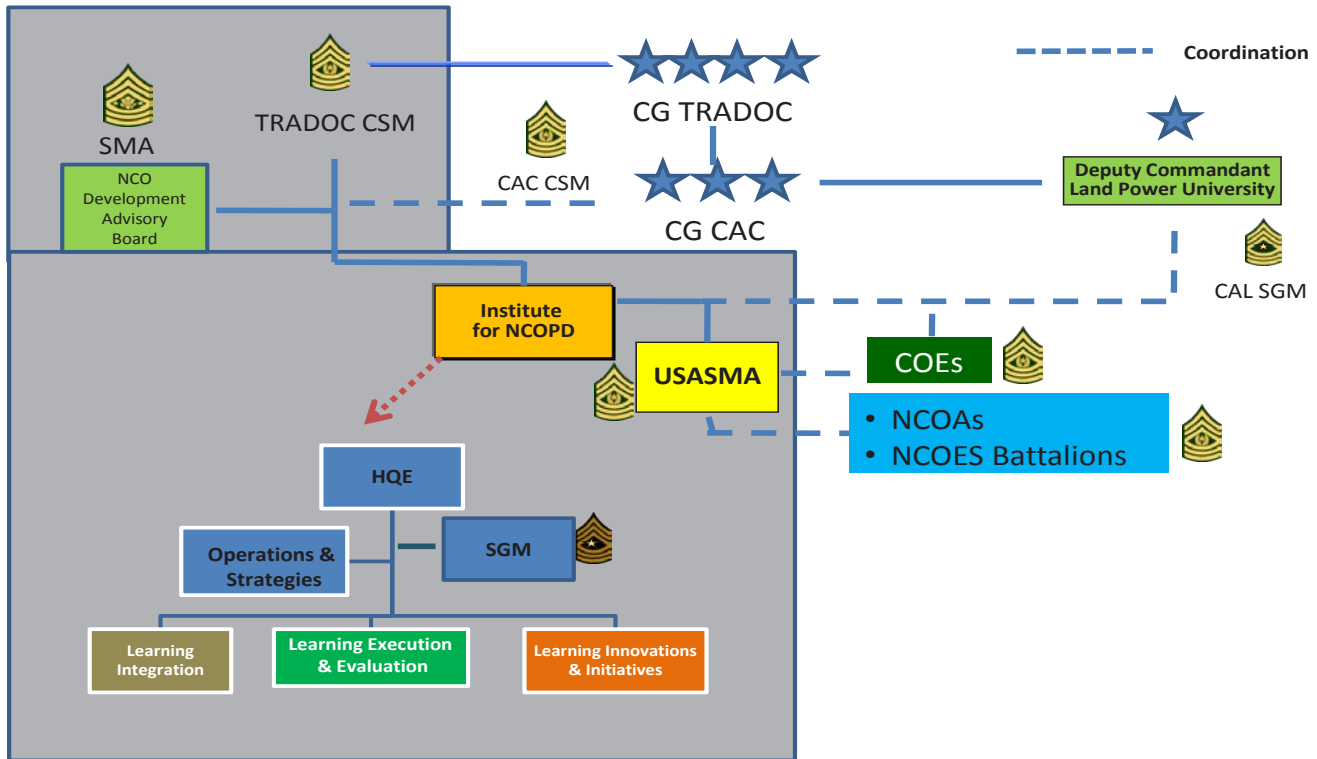
Intimating that units rarely think twice about officers’ professional development, Babin added, “We don’t pause for officers to get all the training they need or desire, but we often overlook the most important resource we have — the junior enlisted workhorses — the sergeants and staff sergeants who make everything happen. These junior enlisted are the very near future of our Army, and we have to invest in them or perish as a superpower.”

Master Sgt. C.J. Grisham of the 504th Military Intelligence Brigade, Fort Hood, Texas, has similar concerns. “It’s great that INCOPD will incorporate a focus on civilian education, but will that focus provide the same opportunities to complete studies on Army time, as the officers get?” he asked. “Senior NCOs should be afforded opportunities to complete degrees full time if they commit to an equal amount of additional service to receive it, and they shouldn’t have to use their veteran’s education benefits to do it either,” he added.

Operation tempo is another shared concern. With several courses moving to an online delivery method, including Structured Self Development, Grisham worries that being visible in the unit will equate to being present for duty. The temptation to continue tasking NCOs enrolled in an online course will be a hard habit to break, he said.

“Traditionally, the out of sight, out of mind mentality helped

INCOPD Tasking Coordination Flow



INCOPD courtesy graphic

Above the tasking coordination flow for INCOPD. The United States Army Sergeants Major Academy is aligned with INCOPD. Note: This depiction is for coordination and collaboration purposes only, not a hierarchical chain-of-command. For chain-of-command, see previous page.

NCOs focus on their schooling with resident courses. Units will have to create policies and procedures to ensure that NCOs enrolled in courses are left alone and provided with an environment free of distractions during this time,” said Grisham, who is in the middle of a permanent change of station and has not signed into his new unit. He added, “If I’m given another first sergeant slot, I will ensure that NCOs are given duty time to work on on-line education. All units should do this and come up with policies that exempt Soldiers from duty rosters and other training requirements while enrolled.”

Grisham also raised another valid point about deployments and backlog. He explained that some NCOs have less professional development than their subordinates because they have been deployed more than the Soldiers they supervise. “The Army is trying to address [backlog] through priority screening, but the results aren’t standard across the service. For example, I recently sent a sergeant first class to ALC Phase I that he missed due to deployments. He had already graduated from Phase II and the Senior Leader Course. These kinds of anecdotal stories aren’t exactly few and far between,” he said.

Addressing the issue of influence, Dempsey explained that the creation of INCOPD indeed places the NCO Corps on the same level as the other groups. “It is part of the leader development enterprise,” he said. There are now four cohorts: the officer corps, led by Major Gen. Ed Cardon at Fort Leavenworth, Kan.; INCOPD represents the NCO Corps, led by Sparks (closely partnered with Chandler at USASMA); the warrant officer corps, also

out of Fort Leavenworth; and the Army civilian corps out of Fort Belvoir, Va. “It was my intent to empower the NCO cohort to take ownership, responsibility and accountability for their professional development,” he added.

Sparks intimated as such, saying, “We want USASMA to have the same sort of recognition as the other senior-service college kinds of places. So, if you look at where USASMA sits right now, you might think they work for the institute, but really they work for Gen. Dempsey, the TRADOC commander.”

He explained that assigning a command sergeant major to the commandant position was more than an investment. “It was a physical statement to the Army that NCOs are responsible for NCO education. We are responsible to the Army and responsible to a four-star general. In my view, what we’ve done is elevate the prestige and the sort of aura of USASMA. And it’s our intent in the future to bring about the sort of change in support of USASMA that they are recognized, they are resourced — it’s acknowledged that we have to make a commitment with this organization.”

THE BIG PICTURE

INCOPD is already exploring ways to help enlisted Soldiers and NCOs improve their professional self-development and education. Both Sparks and Chandler hinted at the possibility of some type of personal data assistant becoming a piece of standard issue so Soldiers can study anywhere at anytime.

“We’re looking at this mobile learning initiative,” Chan-

lder explained. “By putting some type of PDA in the Soldier’s hand, he can take [it] with him and do the course wherever, so he doesn’t have to use a government computer, go to the library or go to the learning resource center.”

“Everyone knows that technology is leaping forward with that kind of connectivity. Today, somebody can get on a 3G network and have Internet access nearly as quickly as they can get it from a high-speed cable modem,” Sparks said. “‘There’s an app for that’ is relative. I don’t think it’s out of the realm of possibility. Our role is to determine whether it’s efficient to do that. Personally — John Sparks talking — I think we’re sort of at the point right now where we strongly need to be considering that,” he added.

However, technology is not the only thing on the horizon for the Army’s enlisted. With a new institute dedicated solely to improving NCO educational opportunities and leadership development, so begins a new era — a new era in which attitudes and beliefs will be challenged.


Bruner foresees INCOPD becoming one-stop shopping. “As it evolves, we’re finding more and more things that it should be involved in.” The divisions within INCOPD will not be lacking in projects and initiatives. They will play an integral role in aligning the NCO Corps with the Capstone Concept projections, according to Dempsey.

A point of emphasis in the Capstone Concept is “developing the situation through action,” Dempsey said. He explained that in the past, [the Army] believed technology would provide the information, intelligence and situational awareness needed to prevail. “In some ways, we were sending messages to our developing leaders that they could be the consumers of information and intelligence in order to accomplish the mission. Developing leaders cannot merely be consumers of information and intelligence in order to accomplish the mission successfully. Technology is an important and useful tool, but ultimately, leaders must develop the situation through action and context. The context of the mission, the texture of it, the feel of it on the ground — the information that comes from the bottom up is more important than what you get from top down in many cases,” he continued, explaining that INCOPD will be responsible for turning those principles of leadership into curricula.

Dempsey expects INCOPD “to take the Capstone Concept, take the principles of leadership that it requires, adjust their programs of instruction, take advantage of technology and introduce rigor and relevance into the TRADOC schoolhouse.” He expects NCOs to raise the bar on education, take advantage of technology and introduce rigor and relevance into the TRADOC schoolhouse, all of which he anticipates seeing within the next five years.

The era of choosing college *or* the Army is over; the institute intends to make it college *and* the Army. Both Bruner and Dempsey envision an educated NCO Corps in which many or most achieve their associate, bachelor’s and even master’s degrees while pursuing their military career, or perhaps more appropriately, in conjunction with their military career.

“I think in the next five years, we’re going to see more and more people with associate and bachelor’s degrees,” Bruner said, pointing out that INCOPD will be the agency to track all of the numbers. “We’re going to expect more of [Soldiers]. You have to fight full-spectrum operations, where we rely on and decentralize down into those fire teams, squads, and platoons. These tremendous patriots who are out there on the front line every day, we give them the best training. I don’t even know if I could pass Basic Combat Training these days. With a good base of training, a good base of education — it’s hard for me to even put into words. ... With INCOPD keeping their finger on the pulse of our education for NCOs, it’s powerful.”

Dempsey added, “When I came into the Army there was absolutely no expectation that an NCO after a 20-year career would leave with any civilian education. Today, I think the institute is raising the bar on what we think is appropriate for an NCO to achieve in self-development and development through the schoolhouse. I think the INCOPD will continually assess relationships inside and outside the Army, leveraging technology, and we’ll have a much more rigorous and relevant experience in leader development.” 

This article is the first of a series regarding the Institute for NCO Professional Development. Future articles will detail the mission and function of the specific divisions within the INCOPD. To contact Linda Crippen, e-mail linda.crippen@us.army.mil.

INCOPD’s responsibilities include the following:

- ◆ Serve as TRADOC lead for all NCO Cohort initiatives.
- ◆ Ensure NCO leader development program meets the intent of the Army’s Leader Development Strategy and is progressive and sequential across NCOs’ careers.
- ◆ Provide Soldiers with more efficient and effective ways to monitor their development.
- ◆ Serve as an integrating element for all directed NCO leader development requirements from Department of the Army HQ, TRADOC and the Combined Arms Center.
- ◆ Monitor the quality of NCO development, products and courses.
- ◆ Synchronize and coordinate HQDA and TRADOC policy related to NCO development.
- ◆ Develop and communicate NCO leader development themes and messages to the Army, while maintaining accountability to the NCO Corps.

T

hough mostly unseen during recent years of constant deployment, the simple blue rectangle and musket of the Expert Infantryman Badge has not gone away. While its wreathed counterpart – the Combat Infantryman Badge, awarded for combat experience down-range – takes precedence and appears instead on many a uniform these days, it’s the simpler EIB, the design of which the CIB is based on, that remains the ultimate mark of an infantryman, branch leaders say.

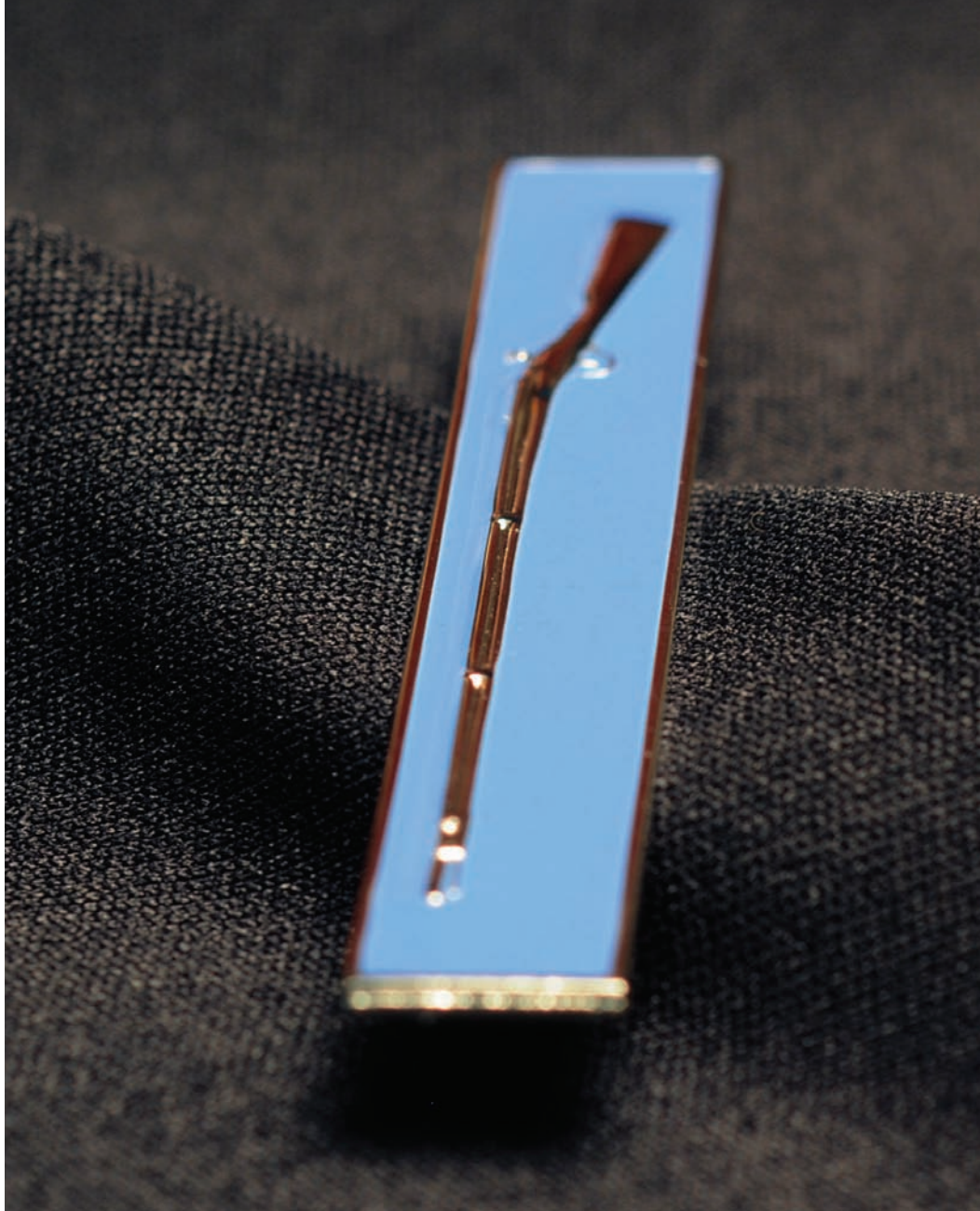
However, earning the EIB has not been the high priority it once was. Units have struggled to incorporate into their individual training a test that took as long as a month to complete and featured a bevy of tasks that weren’t necessarily relevant to future missions.

“Commanders didn’t think they were getting the bang for their buck,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Matthew Walker, command sergeant major at the U.S. Army Infantry School, Fort Benning, Ga. “When you have a known combat deployment on the horizon and you have a [deployment] date of X, every single moment is accounted for. So, where in that timeline do you put in a ‘legacy’ three-week event that gets after individual training only? It took five or six years of being at war before we realized, hey, we’ve got to change this to be more user-friendly; the guys have to get more out of it.”

To that end, leaders at the Infantry School redesigned the EIB’s rigorous testing to better fit into a unit’s dwell time and to closer match the skills needed in today’s fight. Two years in the making, the new format takes the badge of expertise into the 21st century and has, consequently, been dubbed EIB XXI. The changes, Walker hopes, will enhance both the relevancy and prestige of the EIB at a time when many Soldiers aren’t presented with the chance to earn it.

“Sergeants and sergeants first class are coming to school, and when you ask, ‘Who’s had the opportunity to compete for an EIB?’, you might have only 30 to 40 percent of the class raise their hand. And that’s only those who had the opportunity to compete; who’s *received* it is another question.”

Indeed, some units haven’t offered the EIB in more than eight years, said EIB manager Master Sgt. Octavis Smiley. “There are people who have heard about EIB. But, some of the



younger Soldiers and NCOs haven’t had the opportunity.”

That’s because operations in Iraq and Afghanistan have necessarily shifted focus to the Combat Infantryman Badge, said Command Sgt. Maj. Earl Rice, command sergeant major of the Maneuver Center of Excellence at Fort Benning.

“Pre-9/11, you saw a whole lot of EIBs,” he said. “But, from then to now, our infantrymen have had a lot of opportunities to earn a CIB. And, that is great; that’s what we train for, to get to that. But, what allows us to be able to earn that Combat Infantryman Badge with comfort and confidence is that Expert Infantryman’s Badge. The EIB says that this infantryman has the skills to be able to operate effectively on the battlefield.”

Then and Now

The EIB was introduced in 1944 by Army Chief of Staff Gen. George Marshall as a means to build esprit de corps within the infantry branch. Only infantrymen in the U.S. Army were eligible to earn the award, which was specifically designed to be replaced by the Combat Infantryman Badge after the wearer participated in combat.

EIB XXI

A new format for a new century

BY MICHAEL L. LEWIS

Photo by Sgt. Russel Schnaare

“Infantrymen are killed and wounded in battle in far greater numbers than other branches,” Lt. Gen. Leslie McNair said when awarding the first badges to members of the 100th Infantry Division, Fort Bragg, N.C., that spring. “Be proud of your badges, and become more expert every day. May they change to combat badges before long.”

Throughout the decades since, EIB testing has always included physical fitness tests, road marches, land navigation, first aid and marksmanship qualifications. But, by the time the most recent standards were introduced in 1989, the event had grown into a time-consuming, weeks-long behemoth. A typical testing set-up under the old format consisted of 30 fixed stations with graders at each, involving nearly 100 personnel. But, because Soldiers had trained for weeks on the specific test components with the graders themselves, the element of surprise was often lacking.

The new outcome-based format was designed to be more rigorous, mission-focused and realistic, mimicking conditions infantrymen encounter in combat. Candidates are tested not only in infantry fundamentals, but also in their ability to solve problems in ambiguous conditions. To be more mission-oriented,

commanders now choose from a menu of tasks directly related to their unit’s future missions. The result is a shorter, more relevant event that can be more easily added into a unit’s training schedule, test leaders said.

“What it’s morphed into is a combination of the best of the old and the new to try and make everybody happy,” Smiley said. “A week prior, you do round-robin training, where every weapons system and every piece of equipment that is on the test is part of that site. After that week is over, then the testing starts – Monday to Friday – then you’re done.”

Testing week begins with the Army Physical Fitness Test, marksmanship qualifications and evaluations of day and night land navigation skills. Those who do not meet the higher standards for the EIB in any portion are immediately disqualified.

While some candidates are shocked at the new one-and-done aspect, they shouldn’t be, Walker said. “No, no, no. It’s *one* time, not ‘stay on the range until you shoot expert.’ That defeats the purpose of the event. I don’t bring guys out to the land nav site 12 times till they finally get a ‘go’ so they can compete in the EIB.”

It boils down to immediacy, he said. “Can everybody pass

the PT test? Yes, they can. Can you do it *right now*? Because today is the day you're testing for the EIB, not three days from now, when you feel better – right this moment, with that grader right there... go. And then, we're going to the next event; we're going out to the range, right now with your rifle... go. Shoot expert. [Scored a] 35? Sorry, my friend, you're not in the running for the EIB anymore. So, the gravity of it changes, and that is something that appeals to me – that shared hardship that you go through as a unit."

"The time for practice is over, just like when you leave the wire," Smiley said. "When you leave the [forward operating base], it's time to execute; it's not time to practice. It's getting people in that warfighting frame of mind, and bringing that back to the garrison."

Soldiers qualifying through the first portion then move on to the three testing lanes – urban, patrol and traffic control point. A single grader moves with the candidate as he completes the tasks in each lane. Afterward, graders conduct an after-action review with each Soldier to discuss areas of improvement. Soldiers must complete 80 percent of lane tasks within 20 minutes to remain eligible.

Tailor-Made Testing

Because the lanes are comprised of a mix of mandatory and unit-selected optional tasks, no two will be identical. That flexibility allows commanders to tailor the entire EIB event to their particular units' needs.

"We've made this menu of choices that guys can select from based on what kind of pieces of equipment they have in their unit and what the leadership of that unit thinks their unit should focus on – what guys are weak on," Walker said.

"You have 15 core tasks that you have to do, which are your basic shoot, move and communication tasks," Smiley said. "The other 15, add in what you want. If you want to do escalation of force, if you want to do shape charges or flex-linear charges – whatever you want to do or whatever area you're planning on going to, fold it into [the test]. It's that adaptable; you can customize it."

With these new options, unit leaders can build a tailor-made event that serves as a unique evaluation tool, he said.

"Within a week's time, the commander can get a snapshot of what his battalion or brigade is weak in. Day 1, you're going to see if they are strong in PT or weak in PT. In the patrol lanes, you're going to see if your Soldiers can operate X, Y and Z. But, not only does the commander have the tool, the team leader has the tool. If I've got nine guys going through the lane training, and all nine of my guys make it, as a leader, I should feel proud because I've trained my Soldiers. Now, if I had just one make it, that highlights the areas I am weak in as a leader. How can I rethink what I'm doing in training my Soldiers?"

Rice said EIB XXI's new format is a resource rich in value, effectively producing true infantry experts who will be successful



Photos by Staff Sgt. Matt Meadows

Top: Pfc. Johannes Albrecht, of the 2nd Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, shoots an azimuth using a compass while negotiating a land navigation course during EIB testing at Fort Polk, La., last September.

Bottom: Pfc. James Hardin, of the 2nd Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment, 4th BCT, 10th Mountain Div., applies an emergency bandage to a "wounded" comrade on a traffic control point lane.

on the battlefield.

"When a unit gets to conduct an EIB, they have to see why it's important. You lay it out there and say, here are the things that save Soldiers lives and here's why it's important.

"If the formation is proficient, you can feel pretty confident in that firefight – in the heat of battle in Afghanistan or on the streets of Iraq – they're going to be able to take care of themselves. They're going to be all right."



COMPARING FORMATS

Test leaders say the revamped EIB XXI format reduces both the number of personnel and the amount of time necessary to test for the Expert Infantryman Badge. Here's how the new version compares to the one it replaces:

OLD EIB FORMAT	NEW EIB XXI FORMAT
Test site consisted of 30 fixed stations, each with an assigned grader	Test site consists of three lanes comprised of 15 mandatory and 15 unit-selected optional tasks
Time required: At least three weeks: one for training, one for practice and one for the actual test	Time required: 10 days, including a week for training; there is no practice time
Personnel needed: A minimum of 73 Soldiers to run the testing for a battalion	Personnel needed: About 35 Soldiers to run the testing for 400 candidates
Training: Relies on graders to train candidates in their specific station	Training: Squad leaders train their Soldiers beforehand
Grading: Graders remain at their individual station; A candidate can re-test if they receive a 'no-go'	Grading: Graders follow the candidate throughout the lane. A candidate receiving a 'no-go' is immediately disqualified

Even though only Soldiers in infantry or special forces career fields can earn the EIB, both Walker and Rice say going through the testing will be beneficial for any Soldier, no matter their military occupational specialty.

"Everybody should go through it," Walker said. "All your MOSs should be afforded the opportunity to attend it, because there's not a single training task we do that somebody can't benefit from."

"It's not just for the infantryman; it's good for all," Rice said. "It focuses on skill sets that are good for all Soldiers on the battlefield, regardless of their MOS: weapons systems, medical skills, physical fitness."

"It makes you feel good when a Soldier is an expert with his weapons. Bad guy shooting at you? I can go one shot, one kill. Medical skills allow us to increase our survivability on the battlefield. It's imperative that you have the skill set to be able to take care of your brother when he gets in harm's way and gets wounded. And this whole thing starts out with physical fitness. It says that these Soldiers can get from point A to point B, and when they get to the objective – when bullets are flying in all different directions – they are experts with their skills and can accomplish their mission."

"Bottom line, it builds confidence with these Soldiers," Smiley said. "They can turn around and say, 'You know what? I did it. I did it back in the rear, so I know I can do it in combat. I am an expert at my task. I am literally an expert.'"

Testing the Test

So far, units participating in new-format testing events have responded positively, Smiley said. Members from the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, completed their testing at Fort Polk, La., last September, for example. Sgt. 1st Class Shane Mellon of 2nd Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment, who helped plan the EIB event, said the differences allowed for scenarios that were perfectly suited for his unit's expected missions.

"We are going to go to Afghanistan sometime in the future, so we said, 'What would we take with us?' So, we [structured] our EIB around the core tasks we are going to be doing."

The new testing lanes presented his Soldiers with hyper-real situations in which they may soon find themselves, he said.

"The testing, the realism – as much as we could [recreate it] – the stress we put on it, that is going to prepare them better than the old-school EIB ever would," Mellon said.

Soldiers from the 2nd Stryker BCT, 25th Infantry Div., who completed their testing under the new format at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, also in September, found the new format to be advantageous as well. Sgt. Arthur Smith of Company A, 1st Battalion, said the test was more challenging than the course he attempted in 2006.


"It was a lot more fast-paced test than I am used to. You are moving so quickly through these lanes that it takes a second for the knowledge to come out. But, I took my time and did alright."

Smith said the added realism made the test more relevant. "In the old way, we didn't use things like flash bang [grenades], which this test had," he said. "The lanes were similar to what a Soldier would face in combat with 9-line MEDEVACs, [unexploded ordnance], and overall things an infantryman sees."

Rice believes Soldiers completing the testing process will indeed demonstrate that they can handle anything in combat. "They can take out targets, they can take care of their brothers if they get injured, and their bodies aren't going to run out of gas before they get to their objective. That's why [the EIB] is important."

"Our promotion guidance as a branch continues to say the best candidate for promotion *will* – it doesn't say 'should' – be a recipient of the Expert Infantryman Badge," Walker said. "So, it's our job in the Infantry School to keep it going, to keep it successful, and that's what we're trying to do. To get that word out to the field: Get on board," Walker said.

And, while those who've earned a CIB will never display their EIB on their uniforms, the skills EIB XXI testing instills are just as prestigious and enduring, Rice said.

"Again, the EIB – the *Expert Infantryman Badge* – is the mark of an infantryman. That is his résumé. Just like if you get wounded on the battlefield, you would like to know that the doctor has the skill set to patch you up and save your life; you would like to know that as an infantryman you have the right skill set where you can engage and destroy the enemy on the battlefield. For an infantryman, that is his goal; his pride and joy is to be able to say, 'check this out: I am an expert in my profession.'" 

Staff Sgt. Matt Meadows, 4th BCT, 10th Mountain Div., and Sgt. Ricardo Branch, 8th Theater Sustainment Command, contributed to this article.

To contact Michael L. Lewis, e-mail michael.lewis73@us.army.mil.

PROUD TO BE A SOLDIER

Command Sgt. Maj. Jeffrey J. Mellinger, the last draftee on continuous active duty service, reminisces and shares his thoughts on leadership, education and Army equipment

By Angela Simental

It was April 18, 1972, in Eugene, Ore., when 19-year-old Jeffrey J. Mellinger, a drywall hanger, came home to find a draft notice. Skeptical, he went to the draft board and asked if, in fact, he had been selected to serve. It was no joke. He was determined to get out of the Army following the required two years of service but was persuaded by his company commander to re-enlist. That, as he describes, was the best decision of his life.



*Command Sgt. Maj. Mellinger
2007*

It has been almost 38 years since he was drafted, and today, Mellinger holds not only one of the highest achievable enlisted ranks as the 13th command sergeant major of the U.S. Army Materiel Command, but he is also the last draftee on continuous active duty service, the last of almost 2 million Soldiers drafted during the Vietnam era. “Somebody asked me one day, ‘Hey, you got drafted, didn’t you? How many draftees are there?’ and I said, ‘Well, it can’t be many,’” he said with a mischievous laugh. “I tell people when I hear all about that ‘all-volunteer’ Army, ‘Not so fast, there is still one of us left.’”

Throughout his military career, Mellinger has received more than 15 awards including the Legion of Merit with oak leaf cluster, the Defense Superior Service Medal and the Bronze Star Medal with “V” device. Among his many assignments, he also served as command sergeant major of Multi-National Force–Iraq for nearly three years. His office wall at the AMC headquarters in Fort Belvoir, Va., chronicles his time and experiences in the Army. The entrance greets guests with a small, scrapbook-like wall filled with plaques and memorabilia – a history told through photos, awards and commendations.

With almost 40 years of service, the obvious question remains: When will this “national asset,” as Gen. David Petraeus has called him, retire? Mellinger said he doesn’t want to think that far ahead, and retirement is not yet on his calendar. “When I was getting to 20 years [of service], I thought, ‘Pretty soon, I can retire,’” he said.

“The people I work with everyday, the places I get to go, the things I get to do, that’s what kept me around. It’s the people, the Soldiers – it’s always been about the Soldiers.”

It is hard to imagine Mellinger, a tall, imposing figure with a forceful and vigorous voice, starting his military career as a private; but he is proud of his beginnings and recognizes those who have influenced him. Mellinger said that in any Soldier’s career, one thing remains true: There is always somebody along the way who influences him or her. For him, it was a company commander by the name of Capt. Robert J. Myers during Mellinger’s first assignment as a unit clerk in Germany. Myers came into the company when it was lacking leadership and discipline. “He really came in with standards and discipline that got enforced, and there wasn’t any negotiating – you did it or you suffered the consequences,” Mellinger said. “None of us get to where we are because we are geniuses. We get to where we are because someone helped us along the way – leaders who have learned to grow better Soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines.”



Priv. Mellinger - 1973



Spec. Mellinger re-enlists - 1974

“The people I work with everyday, the places I get to go, the things I get to do, that’s what kept me around. It’s the people, the Soldiers – it’s always been about the Soldiers.”



Staff Sgt. Mellinger as a drill sergeant

“At the end of the day, Soldiers will always do well when they have good leadership. The best thing senior leaders can do is pass on [their experiences].”

The Army Mellinger joined was different than the one that stands today, he said. “In 1972, the Army wasn’t in real good shape,” he remembers. Racial, gender and drug issues were as present in the Army as they were in American society. “The military is a reflection of society,” Mellinger said. “It’s hard to imagine what it was like if you weren’t there at that time. You look around now and, still, we are not without our issues. But as a whole, Soldiers are treated as Soldiers without regard to where they’re from, what they do, who their daddy is or how much money they have in their bank accounts.”

Mellinger believes the future of the Army and the NCO Corps depends on leadership and education. “I see the NCO Corps continuing to do well in leadership and its two basic responsibilities – accomplishing the mission and the welfare of the troops. I don’t see that ever changing. The other thing I see throughout our NCO development in the not-too-distant future: Soldiers will have a degree.”

On Leadership and Being a Soldier

“At the end of the day, Soldiers will always do well when they have good leadership,” Mellinger said. “Followers are a reflection of their leaders.” He firmly believes that leaders should approach their Soldiers and peers and teach them from their own experiences. “The best thing senior leaders can do is pass on [their experiences],” Mellinger said.

With 18 years of experience as a command sergeant major, Mellinger understands the importance of connecting with Soldiers. He advises senior NCOs to “put on their helmets, and go out the door.” He said it is easy to get too comfortable, sit back at the office, drink coffee and go to meetings instead of taking care of Soldiers. Staying true to this conviction, he spent several months in Alaska speaking to units and groups about his Iraq experiences after his 34-month deployment in 2007.

As for young NCOs starting their careers as leaders, he advises they face leadership challenges by spending time with their Soldiers to better understand them. “Those in leadership positions who don’t spend some time of their day trying to pass things on to their subordinates or their peers, they’ll see things sliding the other direction,” Mellinger said.

He advises every Soldier to be an expert in their military occupational specialty and go beyond the call of duty. “Take the hard jobs,” he said. “Too many people focus on what they need to do next. Get good at where you are right now. If you can’t do the things that your MOS says



Mellinger (right) with Sgt. Stirret in Iraq, 2007



In Abu Ghraib, Iraq - 2007



you are supposed to do – why are you worried about what’s next? Worry about what’s now and next will come.”

On Education

Mellinger said he foresees education becoming the biggest change for the Army’s future. “The days of somebody finishing a career as an enlisted Soldier without a degree are probably going to be few and far between, because the opportunities will exist to [finish a degree] while taking care of your Soldiers and accomplishing your mission,” he said. This is possible, he

explains, because Soldiers can now continue their education with online courses even when deployed.

The career maps, structure and assistance offered to Soldiers give them an opportunity to find a balance and achieve an education while maintaining responsibility as a Soldier and warrior. Mellinger leads by example. He has three years of college education and will soon earn his bachelor's degree in business and English while still maintaining his responsibilities as AMC's command sergeant major.

"If you focus on your bachelor's degree and not on the next deployment or helping your peers, or if your focus is on just being the best squad leader in the world and say, 'I don't need any civilian education,' then your focus is still wrong. You've got to find balance," he said. "If you look at the things that we [NCOs] do nowadays, a high school diploma or a bachelor's degree isn't good enough to do a counterinsurgency operation or nation building. You have to understand people and the dynamics of interaction – you don't get that in [the Warrior Leader Course]. The key is finding a balance to continue to learn and grow."

Mellinger points out the importance of Soldiers developing the academic skills needed to succeed in their military career. "Going back to [the Baron] von Steuben, he talks about the choice of NCOs – none can be qualified that cannot read or write in a tolerable manner – that's pretty important; I have read some pretty atrocious things," Mellinger said, rephrasing von Steuben's words. "If you can't communicate clearly, you have a problem. You can learn through those self-development courses and college courses. Continue to develop yourself. Take courses and continue your civilian education."

In reference to the overhaul of the NCO Education System, Mellinger said, "Every Soldier needs to know how to do basic Warrior Tasks and Battle Drills, and that's the importance of NCO education and leader development we've done over the years. If you look at what we ask sergeants to do now, that is at par with what we expected from a sergeant first class or a captain, maybe a major, not too many years ago."

Mellinger said that 2009 was the second time the Year of the NCO has come around during his career. He said this time around, a better job was done highlighting

the contributions of NCOs and looking at what can be done to enhance the Corps. "The educational opportunities are the key," he said of what the Corps needs to keep growing. "A lot of my peers never got their degrees. In the future, I think every sergeant will have an opportunity to complete one degree and maybe more by the end of their [military] career. So, that life-long learning notion is really going to come to fruition; I think we are doing so much better this time around."

On Toys and Retirement

As AMC's command sergeant major, a position he has held since 2007, his job requires

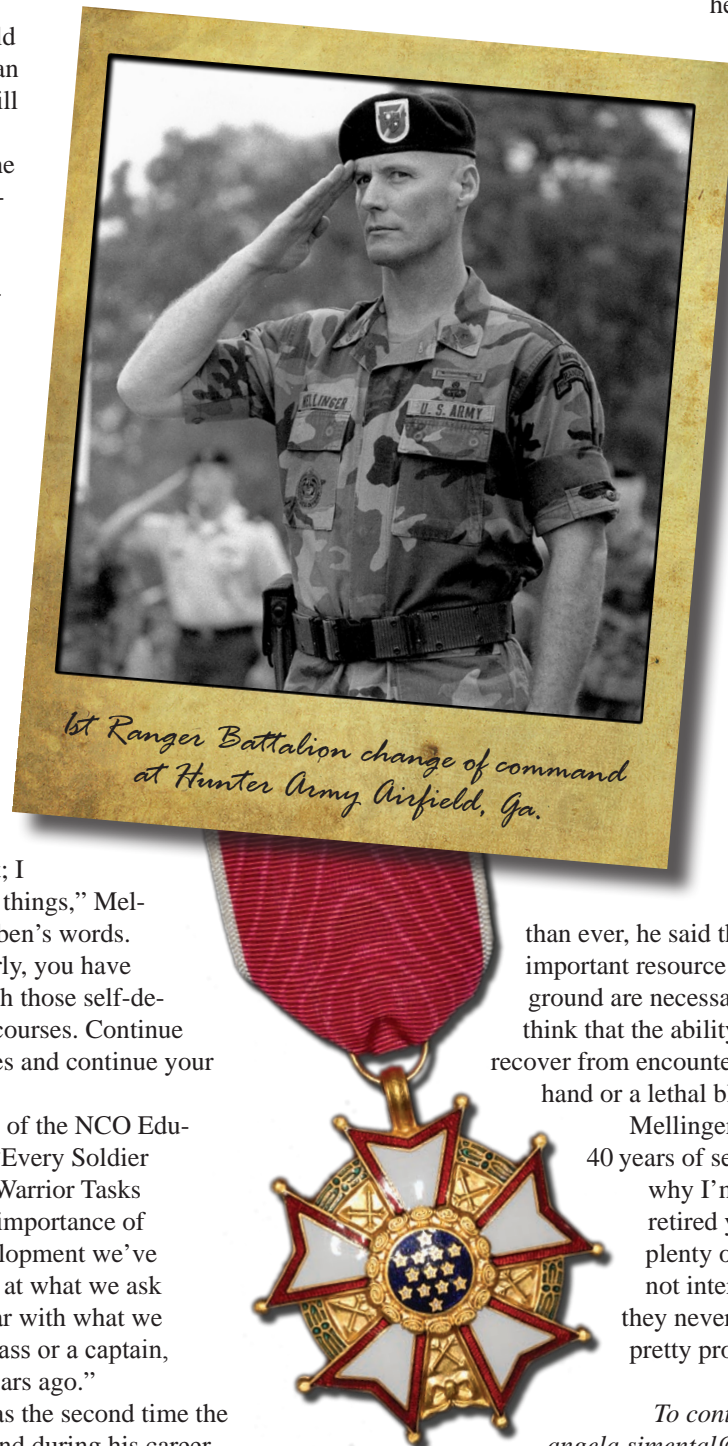
him to provide Soldiers the best equipment, a job he takes very seriously. Mellinger knows firsthand the importance of having reliable equipment and through his military career has seen it evolve, develop and become more sophisticated. His familiarity with Army equipment stems from serving as a machine-gun squad leader, rifle squad leader, rifle platoon sergeant, weapons platoon leader. He has accumulated more than 33 hours of freefall in more than 3,700 jumps.

"No kidding, our toys are a lot better now," he said. "As Soldiers, we are much more survivable. You think about some injuries Soldiers sustain now in combat; there's no way that even 10 years ago a lot of them would have survived."

Although Mellinger believes the Army's equipment is better than ever, he said that at the end of the day, the most important resource is the Soldier. "Boots on the ground are necessary to secure things," he said. "I think that the ability of [the military] to survive and recover from encounters and be able to deliver a helping hand or a lethal blow really is the biggest thing."

Mellinger will leave the Army with nearly 40 years of service. "I love what I do; that's why I'm still here. I could have certainly retired years ago," he said. "There's plenty of other things I can do, I'm just not interested in doing them yet. And, if they never come, I'll be OK, because I'm pretty proud of having been a Soldier." ❏

To contact Angela Simental, e-mail angela.simental@us.army.mil.



SERGEANTS' CORNER

BY MICHAEL L. LEWIS

Army Correspondence

Being an effective leader is dependent upon being able to communicate your ideas and intentions in a clear and succinct manner. During an in-person conversation, you can discern whether people understand and comprehend you based on the questions they ask or their body language. However, in writing, you receive no such immediate feedback; your message must be clear and complete the first time to avoid confusion or errors.

To help budding NCOs improve their skills with the written word, a class on Army correspondence was added to the new Warrior Leader Course program of instruction. Based on Army Regulation 25-50, "Preparing and Managing Correspondence," the class explains how to master the Army's style of writing. Leaders without such skills will be limited in their success, said Sgt. Robin Mitchell, a small group leader at the Seventh Army Warrior Training Brigade's NCO Academy, Camp Normandy, Grafenwöhr, Germany.

"Not being able to write up an award or an NCO [Evaluation Report] is going to hurt a Soldier. If you're in the position of being a leader, you are going to have to know how to write and communicate. And, if you can't communicate effectively – written or verbally – your career is going to be short."

Specifically, effective Army writing transmits a clear message in a single, rapid reading; is generally free of errors in grammar, mechanics and usage; is concise, organized and to the point; places the main point at the beginning and uses active voice. In many cases, students learning this correct way must first "unlearn" the way they had been writing, Mitchell said.



Staff Sgt. Kurt Fehrenbacher, a military intelligence specialist at Fort Huachuca, Ariz., practices completing an award recommendation during the Warrior Leader Course pilot at the Fort Bliss NCO Academy last September.

"They have it pretty much set in their mind, this is how [my unit] does it. But, now they're learning the right way – Army [standard operating procedure] versus unit SOP."

While leaders will find themselves writing often in their careers, these four, common scenarios are tested in WLC:

MEMORANDUMS: A formal memorandum – used for correspondence that is sent outside the command, for notification of personnel actions and for showing appreciation or commendation to Soldiers – is written on official Department of the Army letterhead, a template of which is available online (at <http://www.army.mil/usapa/corporate/letterhead.htm>). An informal memo – used for internal correspondence – is

written on plain white paper. For both, writers should use 1-inch margins, print on only one side of the sheet and employ the standard address and signature-block configurations. Many examples of memo formats can be found in AR 25-50.

AWARD RECOMMENDATIONS:

Recognizing Soldiers for their achievements and service is a vital part of leadership, and perhaps the most important step in this process is the initial one, DA Form 638, "Recommendation for Award." In completing this form, leaders convince superiors that a Soldier's prospective award is justified. If written poorly, however, the Soldier may not be recognized because the leader failed in his or her duties. Due to limited space on the form, statements must be concise and persuasive. However, for some awards, especially those related to valorous or heroic actions, additional support documentation may be required, such as...

SWORN STATEMENTS: Typically used by military police and judicial personnel in the course of investigations or as evidence at trial, DA Form 2823 is also used to provide information to substantiate recommendations for awards. It should begin with, "I (name) want to make the following statement under oath," and can be written either as a narrative or in a question-and-answer format. In any case, the statement should be sequential – a series of facts concerning the who, what, when, where and why of the event.

Course instructors suggest that students brush up on their writing skills by becoming familiar with AR 25-50 and reviewing WLC course materials. The latter can be found on Army Knowledge Online at <https://www.us.army.mil/suite/files/19954312>.

A monthly spotlight on the knowledge junior NCOs need to grow as professionals



KEYS TO THE ARMY WRITING STYLE

The goal of all Army correspondence is to aid effective and efficient communication and decision-making. Leaders who keep in mind the following tips will make their writing both clear and concise and get their message across in a professional manner:

- ✓ **Put the main point at the beginning:** State your main idea or purpose up front. In other words, tell the readers what you are about to tell them.
- ✓ **Use active voice:** Passive voice hides the doer of the action, blocking communication, while active voice emphasizes the doer of the action. Using active voice, like, "SGT Jones counseled PVT Smith," is also often shorter (five words) compared to passive voice, "PVT Smith was counseled by SGT Jones," (seven words).
- ✓ **Keep it short:** People are busy and do not have extra time to read and study long, complicated correspondence. Use simple words and short sentences to aid comprehension.
- ✓ **Avoid jargon and slang:** Jargon words are specialized terms that few people may know; slang words are informal and unclear. Both are confusing and should be avoided.
- ✓ **Use correct spelling, grammar and punctuation:** Errors or mistakes not only detract from your writing, they can create a negative impression in the reader. Take advantage of the spelling- and grammar-check features of your word-processing program, or consult a dictionary when not using a computer.
- ✓ **Make it personal:** Use "I," "you" and "we" as subjects of sentences instead of "this office," "all individuals" and so forth. Using personal pronouns like these not only makes your writing more direct, it usually makes it shorter as well.
- ✓ **Keep it to one page:** By writing short sentences and short paragraphs, you should be able to say what you want to say in one page. That keeps the amount of paperwork down and conserves supplies.

Form & function: NCOs' most common paperwork

SWORN STATEMENT
For use of this form, see AR 190-45; the proponent agency is PMG.

PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT
Title 10, USC Section 201; Title 5, USC Section 2951; E.O. 9397 Social Security Number (SSN).
To document potential criminal activity involving the U.S. Army, and to allow Army officials to maintain discipline, law and order through investigation of complaints and incidents.
Information provided may be further disclosed to federal, state, local, and foreign government law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, courts, child protective services, victims, witnesses, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and the Office of Personnel Management. Information provided may be used for determinations regarding judicial or non-judicial punishment, other administrative disciplinary actions, security clearances, recruitment, retention, placement, and other personnel actions.
SSN and other information is voluntary.

PRINCIPAL PURPOSE: To document potential criminal activity involving the U.S. Army, and to allow Army officials to maintain discipline, law and order through investigation of complaints and incidents.

ROUTINE USES: Information provided may be further disclosed to federal, state, local, and foreign government law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, courts, child protective services, victims, witnesses, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and the Office of Personnel Management. Information provided may be used for determinations regarding judicial or non-judicial punishment, other administrative disciplinary actions, security clearances, recruitment, retention, placement, and other personnel actions.

DISCLOSURE: 1. LOCATION 2. DATE (YYYYMMDD) 3. TIME 4. FILE NUMBER 5. LAST NAME 6. ORGANIZATION 7. GRADE/STATUS 8. SSN

RECOMMENDATION FOR AWARD
For use of this form, see AR 600-8-22; the proponent agency is DCS, G-1.
For valor/heroism/wartime and all awards higher than MSM, refer to special instructions in Chapter 3, AR 600-8-22.

1. TO 2. FROM 3. DATE (YYYYMMDD)

4. NAME (Last, First, Middle Initial) 5. RANK 6. SSN

7. ORGANIZATION 8. PREVIOUS AWARDS

9. BRANCH OF SERVICE 10. RECOMMENDED AWARD 11. PERIOD OF AWARD
a. FROM b. TO

12. REASON FOR AWARD 12a. INDICATE REASON 12b. INTERIM AWARD YES NO 12c. POSTHUMOUS YES NO 13. PROPOSED PRESENTATION DATE (YYYYMMDD)

DA FORM 2823
The sworn statement is used in investigations, judicial proceedings and for awards related to acts of valor or heroism.

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
ORGANIZATION NAME/TITLE
STANDARDIZED STREET ADDRESS
CITY, STATE AND ZIP+4 CODE

REPLY TO ATTENTION OF

OFFICE SYMBOL Date

MEMORANDUM FOR Commandant, US Army Sergeants Major Academy (ATSS-CD),
11291 SGT E Churchill Street, Fort Bliss, TX 79918-8002

SUBJECT: Using

DA FORM 638
The award recommendation must be written well or the Soldier may not receive the award he or she is due.

FORMAL MEMORANDUM
This is reserved for corresponding outside the command, personnel actions or for commending Soldiers.

1. Paragraph
2. Single-s
3. When a
When par
and indent them

a. When a paragraph is subdivided, there must be at least two subparagraphs.
b. If there is a subparagraph "a," there must be a "b."
(1) Designate second subdivisions by numbers in parentheses; for example, (1), (2) and (3).
(2) Do not subdivide beyond the third subdivision.

NCO Stories

A selection of Valor




Master Sgt. Woodrow Wilson Keeble

Citation to award the Medal of Honor

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty:

Master Sgt. Woodrow W. Keeble distinguished himself by acts of gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty in action with an armed enemy near Sangsan-ni, Korea, on Oct. 20, 1951. On that day, Master Sgt. Keeble was an acting platoon leader for the support platoon in Company G, 19th Infantry, in the attack on Hill 765, a steep and rugged position that was well defended by the enemy. Leading the support platoon, Master Sgt. Keeble saw that the attacking elements had become pinned down on the slope by heavy enemy fire from three well-fortified and strategically placed enemy positions. With complete disregard for his personal safety, Master Sgt. Keeble dashed forward and joined the pinned-down platoon. Then, hugging the ground, Master Sgt. Keeble crawled forward alone until he was in close proximity to one of the hostile machine-gun emplacements. Ignoring

the heavy fire that the crew trained on him, Master Sgt. Keeble activated a grenade and threw it with great accuracy, successfully destroying the position. Continuing his one-man assault, he moved to the second enemy position and destroyed it with another grenade. Despite the fact that the enemy troops were now directing their firepower against him and unleashing a shower of grenades in a frantic attempt to stop his advance, he moved forward against the third hostile emplacement, and skillfully neutralized the remaining enemy position. As his comrades moved forward to join him, Master Sgt. Keeble continued to direct accurate fire against nearby trenches, inflicting heavy casualties on the enemy. Inspired by his courage, Company G successfully moved forward and seized its important objective. The extraordinary courage, selfless service, and devotion to duty displayed that day by Master Sgt. Keeble was an inspiration to all around him and reflected great credit upon himself, his unit and the United States Army.



Medal of Honor awarded to first Sioux Indian

By Staff Sgt. Jim Greenhill
National Guard Bureau

Calling him a “mentor, teacher and legend,” President George W. Bush awarded the Medal of Honor posthumously to Master Sgt. Woodrow “Woody” Wilson Keeble on March 3, 2008.

Keeble is the first full-blooded Sioux Indian to be awarded the Medal of Honor and the 121st member of the National Guard to be awarded the nation’s highest military award for valor, according to National Guard Educational Foundation records.

“It’s taken nearly 60 years for ... Keeble to be awarded the medal he earned on the battlefield in Korea,” Bush said.

Russell Hawkins, Keeble’s stepson, accepted the medal. His stepfather had enlisted in the North Dakota National Guard in 1942.

The president described the former North Dakota National Guard member as “strong, courageous, a great Soldier, a good Samaritan.” The White House ceremony was attended by Vice President Richard Cheney; Secretary of Defense Robert Gates; the Joint Chiefs of Staff; Lt. Gen. H. Steven Blum, chief of the National Guard Bureau; and numerous other civilian and military leaders. The president recognized the 17 members of Keeble’s surviving family present and dozens of Sioux Indians, many of them uniformed veterans.

“His nominating paperwork was lost, and then it was resubmitted, and then it was lost again,” Bush explained. “Then the deadline passed, and Woody and his family were told it was too late. Some blamed the bureaucracy for a shameful blunder. Others suspected racism. ... Whatever the reason, the first Sioux to ever receive the Medal of Honor died without knowing it was his. A terrible injustice was done to a good man, to his family and to history. ... On behalf of a grateful nation, I deeply regret that this tribute comes decades too late.”

His voice lowered, the commander-in-chief became storyteller-in-chief as he honored Keeble by telling of his exploits as a Soldier on the battlefield and of the respect he earned as a citizen in his community.

“There are some things we can still do for him,” Bush said. “We can tell his story. We can honor his memory. And, we can follow his lead – by showing all those who have followed him on the battlefield the same love and generosity of spirit that Woody showed his country every day.”

Keeble’s Medal of Honor was awarded for action near Sangsan-ni, Korea, Oct. 20, 1951. The medal was awarded for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity, at the risk of his life, above and beyond the call of duty.

Prior to Oct. 20, Keeble’s company had taken heavy losses, and the master sergeant himself had more than 83 grenade fragments in his body, Bush said. Defying his doctor, he returned to the battlefield.

“Communist forces still held a crucial hill,” Bush said. “They had pinned down U.S. forces. ... One Soldier said the enemy lobbed so many grenades ... that they looked like a flock of blackbirds. ... Nothing seemed to be working. ... American boys were dying. But our forces had one advantage: Woody was back, and Woody was some kind of mad.

“He grabbed grenades and his weapon and climbed that crucial hill alone. Woody climbed hundreds of yards through dirt and rock, with his wounds aching, bullets flying and grenades falling. Someone remarked, ‘Either he’s the bravest Soldier I have ever met, or he’s crazy.’ Soldiers watched in awe as Woody single-handedly took out one machine gun nest and then another. When Woody was through, all 16 enemy Soldiers were dead, the hill was taken and the Allies won the day.”

The president credited Keeble’s heroism with saving many American lives.

But Keeble’s life wasn’t defined by that act alone. The president described the man who won the affection and respect of those with whom he served, of his fellow Sioux and of those who came into contact with him.

He was already a decorated veteran of World War II for actions at Guadalcanal. The Chicago White Sox scouted him, but he would throw grenades, not baseballs. He led Soldiers through a minefield and fought on despite two shots to the arm.

On the platform behind the president were two empty chairs, honoring a Sioux tradition by representing Woody and his wife Blossom and acknowledging their passing into the spiritual world.

The president called the master sergeant “an everyday hero,” who despite his war injuries and strokes, was a devoted veteran who never complained about his missing medal.

“The Sioux have a saying: ‘The life of a man is a circle,’” Bush said. “Today we complete Woody Keeble’s circle – from an example to his men to an example for the ages.”

Hawkins talked about his stepfather after the ceremony. “His honor will continue by the honor that his country gave him by recognizing him with the Medal of Honor,” he said.

“It means a lot to the Sioux nation,” Hawkins said. “The traditional values that we had were ones of bravery, humility and generosity, and when you look at Woodrow’s life as a Soldier and as a civilian, you can see that he exemplified all those qualities.”

Secretary of the Army Pete Geren called Keeble an extraordinary American hero. He quoted Keeble’s own writings about his combat experiences: “There were terrible moments that encompassed a lifetime, an endlessness when terror was so strong in me that I could feel idiocy replace reason. Yet, I never left my position, nor have I shirked hazardous duty. Fear never made a coward out of me.”

The Defense Department posthumously inducted Keeble into its Hall of Heroes the day after Bush bestowed on him the Medal of Honor.

Medic who rescued troops from flames earns Distinguished Service Cross

By Don Kramer
Fort Lewis Guardian

The deep boom of an explosion shook the ground and awoke Staff Sgt. Christopher Waiters from sleep on April 5, 2007. The 3rd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division Soldier had just bedded down after a nine-hour guard-duty shift in Old Baqubah, Iraq.

A vehicle-borne improvised explosive device detonated on a street nearby, engulfing a Bradley Fighting Vehicle and its crew in flames, leading Waiters to perform actions that earned him a Distinguished Service Cross in December 2008.

At the time of the incident, Waiters was a specialist and senior line medic attached to A Company, 5th Battalion, 20th Infantry Regiment. Waiters readied his medical evacuation Stryker vehicle for casualties while on the ride to the site of the burning Bradley.

The medical vehicle drove in tandem with another Stryker, which included 1st Lt. Timothy Price, the company executive officer. "We pulled around the corner," Waiters said, "and the whole street [was] on fire. People [were] running. People [were] shooting."

The Stryker vehicles pulled up to form a makeshift security perimeter about 80 meters from the burning Bradley, Price facing west and the MEV east. Both started firing at enemy gunmen. Waiters said he saw two "trying to hook quick right" and engaged them with his M4 rifle. But his mind was on the Soldiers trapped in a Bradley across the field. He turned to fellow medic, Sgt. Joseph Miller.

"I gotta go," Waiters replied. He remembers his friend warning him as he sprinted into the chaos.

"You might not come back," he heard Miller say.

"All I could think of was burning truck, casualties, American Soldiers injured," Waiters said.

As Waiters dashed into the open street, an insurgent truck came at him with a U.S. 50-caliber machine gun firing, hitting a nearby vehicle. He dodged the wreckage and sprinted to the burning Bradley.

"[I] start[ed] thinking 'What am I doing?' But part of me just said keep going. I thought, 'I'm already in hell, might as well keep going.'"

He attracted small-arms fire from all directions as he pulled the first American crewman out of the vehicle. Waiters helped him regain his breath and wrapped his burned hand. When another Bradley rolled up to help with security, he loaded the wounded Soldier on board and went back to the burning vehicle.

Waiters saw the gunner's hand snake out of the turret. Despite the flames, he grabbed him and pulled out the gunner. He shielded the victim's body as he dragged him to the same Bradley, getting him oxygen.

As he gasped for breath, the Soldier told Waiters of a third crewman in the crippled

Bradley. Without hesitation, the medic went back to the vehicle, now almost completely in flames. He realized there was no way the Soldier could have survived. Suddenly, 25 mm rounds began bouncing around the inside of the vehicle. "I couldn't breathe, and I lost sight of the Soldier," he said.

With his clothes charred and the bottoms of his boots melted, he ran back to his vehicle to get a body bag. He returned once more and pulled out the deceased crewman.

Soon afterward, another medical team arrived to take control of the scene, and Waiters, Miller and crew sped the casualties to the nearest forward operating base for medevac.

Another medic on the scene, Sgt. Jeffrey Anello, said he was shocked when he surveyed the wreckage.

"Seeing the Bradley smoldering and knowing [Waiters] was able to retrieve two of the Soldiers in it alive was amazing," Anello said.



Photo courtesy U.S. Army

Specialist (now Staff Sgt.) Christopher Waiters attempts to climb into a burning Bradley to rescue a Soldier trapped in the vehicle after he had treated and safe-guarded two other casualties back to his Stryker Medical Evacuation Vehicle.



Airborne NCO awarded Silver Star Medal for heroism in Afghanistan

By Rick Scavetta
U.S. Army Africa

Hundreds of maroon-bereted Soldiers from the 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team gathered Nov. 30, 2009 to honor Staff Sgt. Matthew Matlock from Company C, 1st Battalion, 503rd Infantry Regiment, for actions he took under fire to save Soldiers in Afghanistan.

Paratroopers stood at attention at the post theater at Caserma Ederle, Vicenza, Italy, as Maj. Gen. William B. Garrett III, commander of U.S. Army Africa, fastened the Silver Star to Matlock's uniform.

During the ceremony, Matlock's thoughts turned to the Soldiers who were with him that day and what they endured, he said.

"They were wounded and couldn't fight back. I was going to make sure they made it out of there," Matlock said. "They would have done it for me, so I did it for them."

He says a day seldom passes when Matlock doesn't think about when his convoy was moving through Zerok in Afghanistan's Paktika province June 20, 2008.

"We were on our way back to Orgun-E from our last mission. We were getting ready to go home," he said.

Just a few miles from its destination, the patrol drove into enemy fighters who attacked Matlock's patrol with small arms and rocket-propelled grenades.

"Everything broke loose. We kept trying to push through, but they targeted our truck with RPGs and disabled it," Matlock said. "They just kept hitting us, until finally the truck caught on fire, and I had to get everybody out of there."

An RPG struck an external fuel tank, sending flames and shrapnel inside, seriously wounding three Soldiers from Matlock's squad. Under direct fire and wounded himself, Matlock evacuated his injured comrades and treated them with first aid. He fired back and directed his squad to shoot at enemy positions.

But RPGs poured in, sending hot metal fragments through



Photo by Barbara Romano

Maj. Gen. William B. Garrett III, commander of U.S. Army Africa, attaches the Silver Star to Staff Sgt. Matthew Matlock's uniform.

the air. Each time, Matlock used his body to shield fellow Soldiers, receiving shrapnel wounds in the process.

"That's where training pays off, allowing instincts to take over," Matlock said. "You don't really think about anything else except getting your guys out of there. That was all that was going through my head – these guys are going to make it home. I made sure of that," Matlock said.

Eighteen months had passed since that day in Afghanistan when Matlock listened on as Garrett spoke of his actions.

"Staff Sgt. Matlock fought with such incredible bravery, deliberately putting himself at risk time and time again to save the lives of his men," Garrett said. "He stepped forward without hesitation and did everything we expect of a seasoned combat leader of any rank."

Matlock, 26, followed in the footsteps of his father, William Matlock, a retired U.S. Army Special Forces master sergeant. In 2002, the young Matlock joined the infantry and underwent airborne training before joining 1-503rd, the battalion known as "First Rock," where he served in the scout platoon sniper section. In March 2003, Matlock served a yearlong tour in Iraq. In 2005, he served a year in Afghanistan. Afterward, Matlock joined Company C, 1-503rd, rising from team leader to squad leader. In 2007, Matlock deployed again to Afghanistan. It was during that second Afghanistan tour when his actions merited the Silver Star, given only for valor and gallantry in combat.

Matlock currently serves as a weapons squad leader with Company C. He returned to Afghanistan with his unit in December 2009. He's said he is inspired by young volunteers filling the ranks, "ready to learn and ready to fight," still knowing they will be sent into

harm's way.



Roll call

o f t h e f a l l e n

Operation Iraqi Freedom

Spc. Brushaun X. Anderson, 20, Columbus, Ga., Jan. 1, 2010 ♦ *Spc. David A. Croft Jr., 22, Plant City, Fla., Jan. 5, 2010*
Pfc. Gifford E. Hurt, 19, Yonkers, N.Y., Jan. 20, 2010 ♦ *Pfc. Michael R. Jarrett, 20, North Platte, Neb., Jan. 6, 2010*

Operation Enduring Freedom

Sgt. Lucas T. Beachnaw, 23, Lowell, Mich., Jan. 13, 2010 ♦ *Spc. Brian R. Bowman, 24, Crawfordsville, Ind., Jan. 3, 2010*
Pvt. John P. Dion, 19, Shattuck, Okla., Jan. 3, 2010 ♦ *Spc. Robert Donevski, 19, Sun City, Ariz., Jan. 16, 2010*
Staff Sgt. David H. Gutierrez, 35, San Francisco, Calif., Dec. 25, 2009 ♦ *Sgt. 1st Class Jason O.B. Hickman, 35, Kingsport, Tenn., Jan. 7, 2010*
Spc. Jason M. Johnston, 24, Albion, N.Y., Dec. 26, 2009 ♦ *Sgt. Joshua A. Lengstorf, 24, Yoncalla, Ore., Jan. 3, 2010*
Staff Sgt. Daniel D. Merriweather, 25, Collierville Tenn., Jan. 13, 2010
Staff Sgt. Thaddeus S. Montgomery II, 29, West Yellowstone, Mont., Jan. 20, 2010
Capt. Paul Pena, 27, San Marcos, Texas, Jan. 19, 2010 ♦ *Staff Sgt. Anton R. Phillips, 31, Inglewood, Calif., Dec. 31, 2009*
Sgt. 1st Class Michael P. Shannon, 52, Canadensis, Pa., Jan. 17, 2010 ♦ *Staff Sgt. Ronald J. Spino, 45, Waterbury, Conn., Dec. 29, 2009*
Sgt. Albert D. Ware, 27, Chicago, Ill., Dec. 18, 2009 ♦ *Pfc. Geoffrey A. Whitsitt, 21, Taylors, S.C., Jan. 13, 2010*
Spc. Kyle J. Wright, 22, Romeoville, Ill., Jan. 13, 2010

You are not forgotten

Editors note: This is a continuation of a list that was started in the October 2003 issue of the NCO Journal and contains those names released by the Department of Defense between Dec. 16, 2009, and Jan. 25, 2010.

GEAR UP! FOR COLD WEATHER



GETTIN' COLD FEET

Cold Weather clothing:

- Keep it Clean
- Avoid Overheating
- Wear it Loose and in Layers
- Keep it Dry

WATCH FOR EFFECTS TO THE SKIN,
SUCH AS:

- SWOLLEN RED OR DARKENED
- PAIN, TENDERNESS, HOT OR ITCHY
- NUMBNESS OR TINGLING
- BLEEDING OR BLISTERED
- GRAY, WAXY FEELING OR "WOODEN"
TO THE TOUCH
- DIZZINESS, WEAKNESS OR BLURRED VISION
- VIGOROUS SHIVERING
- LACK OF COORDINATION AND IMPAIRED
JUDGMENT
- PAINFUL, RED, WATERY OR GRITTY FEELING
IN THE EYES (SNOW BLINDNESS)



ARMY SAFE
IS ARMY STRONG



OFFICIAL BUSINESS



How to get the NCO Journal at your unit.

1. Go to Internet Explorer and type "www.apd.army.mil" in the address bar



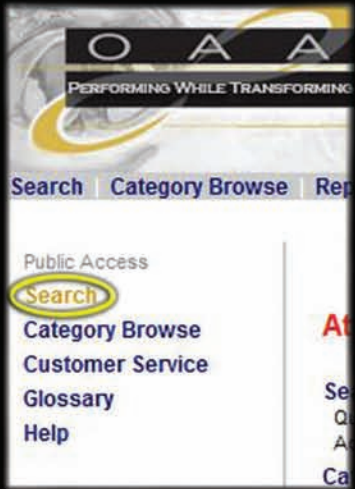
2. Click on the "Ordering" link



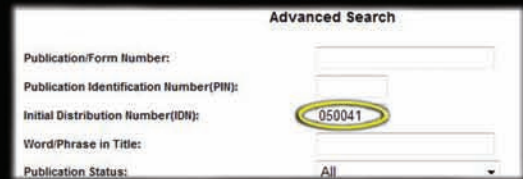
3. Log in via AKO Password or CAC



4. Find and click on the "Search" link



5. Type **050041** in to the Initial Distribution Number(IDN):



6. Find the Latest Issue, then click "Available"

THE U.S. ARMY, COMMANDANT,	EA	000	07/01/2009	Available
THE U.S. ARMY, COMMANDANT,	EA	000	09/01/2009	Available
THE U.S. ARMY, COMMANDANT,	EA	000	10/01/2009	Available
THE U.S. ARMY, COMMANDANT,	EA	000	12/01/2009	Available
THE U.S. ARMY, COMMANDANT,	EA	000	01/01/2010	Available
THE US ARMY, COMMANDANT,	EA	000	00/00/1992	Available
THE US ARMY, COMMANDANT,	EA	000	07/01/1992	Available
THE US ARMY, COMMANDANT,	EA	000	09/01/1992	Available
THE US ARMY, COMMANDANT,	EA	000	01/01/1993	Available

7. You will need to set up an account if you don't have one with OAA to continue the ordering process.

Individual subscriptions to *The NCO Journal* are available through the Government Printing Office. For information regarding subscriptions to *the NCO Journal*, call David Crozier at **915-744-1046** or e-mail at **ATSS-SCN@conus.us.army.mil**. The subscription program is open to all individuals and non-government organizations. To order online, visit the GPO Bookstore at **http://bookstore.gpo.gov** and type in "NCO Journal" at the search field. After the search completes, click on the shopping cart next to the title and follow the instructions. The GPO also accepts orders by calling toll-free at **866-512-1800**. Any unit with a publications account can update its 12-Series to request *The NCO Journal* using the same procedure it uses to request all other publications. Units can update their 12-Series at **http://www.usapa.army.mil**. The IDN for *The NCO Journal* is 050041.

Individuals can find a PDF version of each issue at either Web site

We now have a public Web site.
<https://usasma.bliss.army.mil/NCOJournal/default.asp>



We are also on AKO
<https://www.us.army.mil/suite/page/138349>