

THE NCO JOURNAL

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MONTHLY FORUM FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Drill Sergeant of the Year

PG 14

SMA Connelly

PG 8





ON THE COVER

Staff Sgt. Timothy Sarvis, left, and Staff Sgt. Melissa Solomon, right, were named active-duty and Reserve Drill Sgt. of the Year during ceremonies at Fort Monroe, Va.

Photo illustration by Sgt. Russel Schnaare



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*We honor the men and women who have
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around the world.*



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Our Thoughts

Participate in DADT survey

Earlier this month, Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Adm. Mike Mullen urged military members to provide their input for a survey being distributed throughout the services about the possible repeal of the Don't Ask, Don't Tell law.

The secretary and chairman are seeking honest comments on what military members see as challenges in repealing the law.

To obtain this, 400,000 surveys have been sent out randomly, 200,000 to active duty and 200,000 to the reserve-component members. The DoD has also set up a website for those who don't get a survey but would like to comment. Anyone with a Common Access Card can submit their comments and concerns at <https://dadt.csd.disa.mil/>.

"I would say that this survey is a very important element of this effort, in part because while Gen. [Carter] Ham and General Counsel Jeh Johnson have talked to thousands of troops in dozens of military facilities, we have gotten several tens of thousands of comments and views by e-mail in response to the request for people's thoughts on this," Gates said during a July 8 press conference at the Pentagon. "The size sampling is obviously the most significant element of getting the views of the troops."

Getting those views requires people to speak up. Without your voice, your views, the end state is made less, the decision(s) are somewhat empty, yet those are the decisions that you will have to live by.

Recently, the *NCO Journal* broached the question concerning the repeal of DADT on our Facebook page and got back a few comments. Those who responded had very candid comments ranging from gays and lesbians are already serving, so what is the big deal, to having concerns about how the military is going to take care of housing and other programs. Others believe the military should not be a "social playground" for society; that those who volunteer do so knowingly of the rules and standards in effect. Some believe that our core values are enough and everyone should be judged by their dedication, accomplishments and commitment — not their personal lives.

Everyone knows, however, that regardless of the end state, the law is what we as a military will abide by. It is as simple as that. But unless you, as individuals, provide the secretary and chairman our thoughts on if this affects us as a military, then whether the repeal is done and how changes are made, will be without your voice. It is like voting: Unless you cast your vote, your voice isn't heard. If you don't vote, you shouldn't comment or complain about who got into office. The same applies to commenting on DADT. If you don't voice your opinions or concerns, then you shouldn't be surprised at how the secretary and chairman reach their decision.



David Crozier

Regardless of one's personal beliefs or prejudices, military members should look at this issue in a professional manner. The survey is totally confidential and takes about 30 minutes to complete. It begins with general questions about a member's status,

thoughts on their leaders and current unit of assignment and so on. From there, the survey begins to ask the tough questions that need real answers, not personal prejudices. The first questions get right to the point — "Do you currently serve with a male or female servicemember you believe to be homosexual? In your career, have you ever worked in a unit with a leader you believed to be homosexual? In your career, have you ever worked in a unit with a co-worker you believed to be homosexual?"

The questions continue with concerns about unit and individual performance, unit morale and unit performance in combat. Then, it shifts to questions about your thoughts on how difficult it will be for leadership to repeal DADT and implement required changes to military policy and administration. Finally,

you are asked to answer questions about attending military social functions, your willingness to re-enlist or leave the military, how it affects your family and so on. At the end of the survey, there is an area for additional comments.

So, if you received a survey via e-mail, take the time to fill it out. The deadline for returning the survey is Aug. 15. Another survey will be sent to 150,000 family members in August asking them similar questions. Just because you don't get a survey request via e-mail doesn't mean your voice is not needed. You can go to the DoD's website and participate in the Online Inbox. It is open to military members and family members who have a CAC card.

The main page of this site shows how important this issue is: *The Department must develop an implementation plan for repeal of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," should repeal occur. We must also understand the issues and potential impacts associated with repeal of this law. As an important part of this, the Secretary of Defense directed us to reach out to you to identify issues that we should consider in our implementation planning.*

In this Online Inbox, we ask that you provide your views on these issues, and we urge you to be open and honest with your responses. We look forward to hearing from you!

As a reminder, please don't use your name or the names of others when you post to the Inbox. The "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" law is still in effect.

The bottom line — it is everyone's responsibility to ensure that DoD knows how you feel and what you see as issues or concerns dealing with the repeal of this law. Do your part; participate in the survey.

Webmail 2 brings changes to AKO

AKO/DKO

Members of the Defense community who use Army Knowledge Online/Defense Knowledge Online webmail now have better ways to communicate online.

A new interface, Webmail 2, upgrades AKO secure e-mail messaging with improved calendar and task functions, enhanced address book access, and 1 gigabyte of mailbox storage for Common Access Card users.

With nearly 2.3 million users, AKO/DKO is the nation's largest organizational intranet. Nearly 70 percent of AKO account holders use webmail on a regular

basis, with many using AKO/DKO as their only business e-mail. In a typical month, more than 300 million e-mail messages are sent through AKO/DKO.

"This is a significant e-mail upgrade since we are providing users with a drag-and-drop web interface that will make using e-mail, calendar, tasks and contacts much easier," said Kenneth Fritzsche, product director for AKO/DKO.

"Webmail 2 gives our users the same types of capabilities that they would have if they were in an office using popular desktop clients such as Outlook or Thunderbird on an exchange-type e-mail server," said Patrick O'Brien, chief engineer for AKO Enterprise Mail.

The main benefits of AKO/DKO webmail are secure portability and availability.

"Users can log on and manage their e-mail or their calendars anywhere there's an Internet connection," Fritzsche said.

Knowledge Based Authentication strengthens security by requiring users to click on the correct responses to three secret questions. AKO/DKO randomly generates these questions based on a larger set of questions answered by users during the KBA set-up process.

AKO/DKO users will notice a tabbed interface and right-click functions similar to Windows-based products.

Webmail 2 even offers a built-in instant messaging feature with presence awareness that allows users to see colleagues or buddies online and chat with them right away. This feature is connected to the AKO/DKO IM chat application.

"We've worked with our vendors to make improvements based on feedback from users and are implementing this product upgrade in an attempt to satisfy their needs," Fritzsche said.

"You will notice a huge improvement in our calendar, which streamlines processes that were more difficult in the previous version. Plus, Webmail 2 just looks better."

A significant upgrade is

a feature that allows AKO/DKO users to share calendars with other users, anywhere in the world.

Previously, calendars between AKO and non-AKO users could only be shared within the same network domain.

Webmail 2 provides drag-and-drop convenience to allow users to organize and make changes to meetings and other events.

Users can find AKO/DKO colleagues more quickly with enhanced search capabilities and better access to the massive AKO/DKO global address list or GAL. Users can access the same address book at work, home and on their government-issued mobile devices.

Go Mobile is an initiative to further develop technology that puts the capabilities and security of AKO/DKO in the palm of the user's hand.

Through Go Mobile, AKO/DKO will host a growing portfolio of applications similar to those available through commercial wireless providers.

Another e-mail option is Outlook Connector, a third-party e-mail client that allows users to access AKO/DKO e-mail and its resources through Microsoft Outlook on a laptop or PC without logging into the AKO/DKO portal and without accessing a Microsoft Exchange server.

Try Webmail 2 at
<https://webmail2.us.army.mil>



Celebrating the 'Strength of the Nation'

U.S. Army

Two hundred and thirty-five years ago, the United States Army was established to defend our nation. From the Revolutionary War to the current operations taking place around the world, our Soldiers remain "Army Strong" with a deep commitment to our core values and beliefs.

This birthday commemorates America's Army – Soldiers, families and civilians – who are achieving a level of excellence that is truly Army Strong.

Being Army Strong goes beyond physical endurance and mental preparedness. It encompasses an indomitable spirit, and high ethical and moral values.

These are not only desirable traits in a person, but also in a nation that wishes to live up to the ideals and vision of its founders.

We are "America's Army: The Strength of the Nation."

For stories, photos, videos and more, including birthday messages from President Obama and Army senior leaders, please visit:

<http://www.army.mil/birthday/235/>

Upload your own Army birthday video, too!

Army building, buying 'green'

Army News Service

Saving the environment and saving money at the same time are not incompatible goals, as highlighted in the recently released *2009 Army Sustainability Report*.

"The Army is building green, buying green and going green to reduce our total life-cycle costs, logistics tail and energy bills," Tad Davis wrote in a letter to close the report. As the deputy assistant secretary of the Army for the environment, safety and occupational health, much of his focus has been on sustainability.

"The Army is working hard to apply the benefits and cost savings imparted by sustainability across the entire enterprise," Davis said. If water consumption and energy consumption can be reduced, he said, costs will be cut. If debris from the demolition of old barracks can be recycled or re-used, then construction costs might be cut as well.

The Army's sustainability report "looks at how we're doing across the board from a natural resources standpoint," Davis said. "But it also addresses how well we're doing in terms of safety and our recruiting programs as well, in terms of sustaining the force."

One of the big efforts this past year has been to "operationalize" sustainability, meaning to synchronize efforts across multiple lines — planning, training, equipping and operations — to make it a way of life, as Davis states.



Photo by Todd Plain

Workers install solar electricity panels at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Sacramento District's Stanislaus River Park headquarters in Oakland, Calif., with funds by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

The section titled "The Army's Triple Bottom Line-Plus" discusses mission, environment and the community, but ends with the plus of economic benefit. "The Army recognizes that sustainable practices reduce the true cost of doing business."

For instance, the Army has reduced water usage by 31 percent since fiscal year 2004, according to the report.

The Army is also looking at ways to re-use water, such as for bath and laundry purposes, Davis said.

The latest report looks at trends over the past two years, during which time the number of Army installations with sustainability plans increased by 30 percent. Today, every post has an environmental management plan in place, according to the report.

The report is available at www.aepi.army.mil.

Army Forces Cyber Command formed

Army News Service

The new Army Forces Cyber Command will soon be responsible for defending Army information networks from threats around the globe, said Maj. Gen. Steven W. Smith, director of the Army Cyberspace Task Force.

The new command will reach full operational capacity before Oct. 1.

The general said the command will operate in the "cyber domain." That domain includes such things as the laptop, desktop, routers, servers, network switches and both the short- and long-distance connections between Army information systems. He also said that domain can include the networked systems aboard Army combat vehicles.

"Anything with an Internet Protocol address," he said.

The ARFORCYBER command will be built by integrating existing Army cyber resources, not by creating new ones, Smith said. U.S. Army Network Enterprise Technology Command/9th Signal Command and portions of the 1st Information Operations Command will be subordinate units to ARFORCYBER, for instance. Additionally, the Intelligence and Security Command will be under the operational control of ARFORCYBER for cyber-related actions.

While each of those units currently performs cyber-related missions, Smith said integrating them under one command provides an increased benefit.

"Today, we have individuals, teams and units doing the cyber fight, but they work for different people," he said.

"At the Cyberspace Operations and Integration Center at Fort Belvoir (Va.),

for instance, all of these forces will work for one dedicated command whose primary mission is to direct the operations and defense of the network," Smith said. "This clearly brings that unity of effort."

The ARFORCYBER command will be built using existing facilities and existing manpower.

It is not expected that the Army will need to recruit new Soldiers, civilians or contractors to man the 21,000-person command.

The center is a 24/7 operation, the general said.

"That is the front line of defense for defending the Army network worldwide."

Smith said the new command will be headquartered at either Fort Belvoir or Fort Meade, Md., near the headquarters for U.S. Cyber Command and the National Security Agency.

Puerto Rico extends birth certificate validity

Army News Service

Puerto Rico has extended the validity of current birth certificates until Sept. 30, giving U.S. citizens born on the island more time to apply for and receive the new security-enhanced certificates.

“Our goal with the three-month extension is to provide a smooth transition, especially to assist Puerto Ricans born [on] the island who currently reside stateside, as they apply for the new, more secure birth certificates,” said Nicole Guillemard, executive director of the Puerto Rico Federal Affairs Administration.

New birth certificates began being issued July 1. After the Sept. 30 deadline, all

APPLY ONLINE

Puerto Rico-born citizens can apply for new birth certificates through the Puerto Rico Health Department's Vital Statistics Office online at:

<https://serviciosenlinea.gobierno.pr/SALUD/Login.aspx?ReturnUrl=%2fsalud%2f>

previous birth certificates will be invalid.

The change came after law enforcement uncovered a criminal ring which had stolen thousands of Puerto Rican birth certificates from schools and were selling them on the black market.

This is a concern for the Department of Homeland Security, as any person possessing a birth certificate from Puerto Rico can obtain a U.S. passport, Social Security

benefits and other federal services.

Soldiers and their families of Puerto Rican descent will be required to apply for new birth certificates, but benefits enrolled for with old certificates will still be valid.

For example, as of July 1, Defense Eligibility Enrollment System offices accept only new birth certificates for initial family enrollment.

However, those who originally used an old Puerto Rican birth certificate to enroll will not be dropped from DEERS.

Service members not needing a new birth certificate for immediate official purposes are encouraged to delay in applying to avoid the initial rush of applicants, officials said.

Human Resources moves to Knox

Army News Service

Two Soldiers with ceremonial rifles flanked three others, each carrying a flag important to the U.S. Army Human Resources Command: the American flag, the Army flag and a third, covered flag.

That olive-drab sheath had protected the HRC colors on its journey from its former headquarters in Alexandria, Va., to its new home at Fort Knox, Ky.

As a result of the base realignment and closure process, HRC has moved into the Human Resource Center of Excellence in the Lt. Gen. Timothy J. Maude Complex.

The uncasing of the colors ceremony in June symbolized the start of operations in a new location.

HRC commander Maj. Gen. Sean J. Byrne and Command Sgt. Maj. John F. Gathers took their places on each side of the sheathed flag. The cased flag was lowered, parallel to the pavement, and they solemnly slid off the casing. Byrne and Gathers unfurled the gold and blue HRC command flag, and the honor guard Soldier slowly raised it again.

Then, the HRC commander addressed the audience.

“This nearly 900,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art facility is the largest office building in the Commonwealth of Kentucky and will be a great readiness multiplier,” Byrne said.

Having all HRC elements in one location will allow the command to more efficiently provide life-cycle career management to America's Soldiers.

“As part of the congressionally-directed base realignment and closure movement, we became not only a command at war and in transition, but also a command in the throes of change.

And all were changes for the good,” Byrne said.

Those changes were designed to incorporate the best of what HRC did with the potential to make it better, the HRC commander said.

This move is more than just people and equipment moving into a new facility, Byrne said.

“Our lineage, history, purpose and mission have moved. We are now a key part of the Human Resource Center of Excellence. We are now truly organized to support the Army — active duty and reserve,” he said.

“This is all about people ... the people we support, the people in our organization, the people coming into and leaving our organization, and the people who make up our Army. All actions will be to standard. Those we support deserve nothing less.”



Photo by Master Sgt. Christina Steiner
Command Sgt. Maj. John F. Gathers assists Maj. Gen. Sean J. Byrne at the uncasing of the colors ceremony at the Human Resource Center of Excellence at Fort Knox, Ky., in June.

Stamp honors 'God Bless America' singer

Army News Service →

With help from the Army, the U.S. Postal Service unveiled its newest 44-cent stamp, honoring the late singer Kate Smith during a May ceremony on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington. Smith, who made famous Irving Berlin's composition "God Bless America," was a radio and TV star popular during World War II.

"Kate Smith meant so much to our military members and the country that supported them during some of the nation's most turbulent times," said Joseph W. Westphal, undersecretary of the Army, who spoke during the unveiling. "Kate Smith did that for our country through her music. The single song 'God Bless America' became an unofficial national anthem."

Westphal said the patriotic song is just as meaningful today as it was during World War II. In 1973, Smith sang the song at the opening of the Philadelphia Flyers' hockey season, and was considered a good-luck charm for the team: They won games when she sang. Smith recorded almost 3,000 songs during her career and made more than 15,000 radio broadcasts. In 1982, President Ronald Reagan presented Smith with the nation's most prominent civilian award, the Medal of Freedom.

"One of the most inspiring things our GIs in World War II, Europe, the Pacific, and later in Korea and Vietnam ever heard, was the voice of Kate Smith," said Westphal, quoting Reagan.



Photo by Alexandra Hemmerly-Brown

Sgt. 1st Class Leigh Ann Hinton, a member of the United States Army Band, sings "God Bless America," in tribute to the song made famous by Kate Smith, who is now immortalized on a U.S. postage stamp.

Westphal explained that people pick stamps for the message they convey, and Smith's stamp will connect a face with the voice that so many Americans know.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt referred to Smith as a "national treasure," and introduced her to King George VI and Queen Elizabeth of England in 1939, saying "Ms. Smith is America."

Substance abuse services realigned

IMCOM Public Affairs →

The Army has implemented improvements in the way it delivers alcohol- and drug-abuse services on its installations, combining all clinical services with testing, education, counseling, prevention and training under the oversight of the Installation Management Command.

The Army Substance Abuse Program, whose offices are located at all IMCOM-managed installations, serves Soldiers and units with substance abuse prevention services and provides federally mandated drug testing to civilian employees.

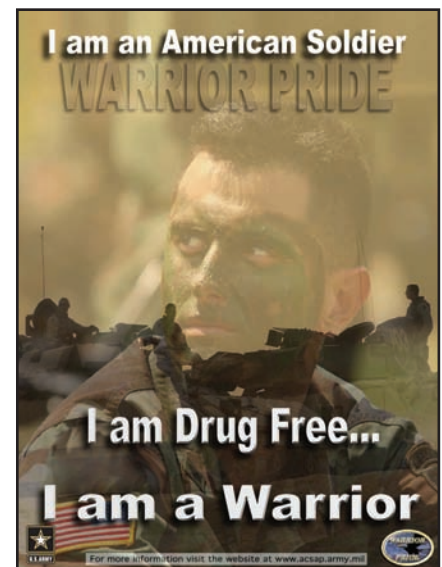
Since 1994, ASAP has been a divided function, with clinical services residing in the Army Medical Command and all

the other services consigned to Human Resources under the garrison command and ultimately IMCOM.

The integration of services was directed by the secretary of the Army to make the program more effective in addressing a surge in substance abuse, domestic violence and suicide among Soldiers.

Phase I of the realignment will proceed through January 2011. Garrison commanders will provide the facilities and equipment, recruit and train staff where needed, and carry out effective communications to ensure ASAP patients understand the changes.

IMCOM will refine and improve the program over the next couple of years as lessons are learned and clinical research is studied, officials said.



\$58 million to help homeless veterans

Army News Service

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development will provide \$58.6 million to get homeless veterans off the streets this year, officials announced.

Vouchers will be provided to some 8,000 displaced veterans and their families across the country through the HUD Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing Program, offering long-lasting support to the housing needs of veterans, HUD Secretary Shaun Donovan said in June.

"Though they served and sacrificed so much for our country, too many of our veterans find themselves on the streets and in homeless shelters," Donovan said. "These vouchers will provide a more permanent solution."

The program is in its third year and is a joint endeavor between HUD and the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Ending homelessness among veterans is a top priority for the VA, said Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric K. Shinseki, who took helm of the department in January 2009.

In November 2009, Shineski announced a plan to help end homelessness among veterans within five years, outlining his desire to attack homelessness at the top of the "downward spiral," addressing mental health, substance abuse and unemployment.



VA estimates that more than 131,000 veterans and their families are without homes. Without the help of other federal departments, government agencies and community outreach, Shinseki's goals can't be met, he said in a statement released by HUD.

However, efforts like HUD's program are "a critical, long-term investment" toward helping those already homeless, Shinseki said. The program is the largest permanent housing initiative in the nation.

Homeless veterans can receive the rental vouchers through their local VA medical center. Case managers at each hospital refer eligible veterans to local housing authorities, which will then assist veterans in finding adequate homes.

Eligibility for the vouchers is determined on a case-by-case basis, and requirements vary by metropolitan area.

The dollar amount allocated to each local housing agency is based on the number of reported homeless veterans and the fair market rental system. The individual vouchers will cover at least 70 percent of a veteran's rent. Once veterans are deemed eligible for the voucher, they stay in HUD's voucher system until they are financially stable.

HUD plans to announce the distribution of another \$17 million for an additional 1,355 rental vouchers next month as well as 400 project-based vouchers later this summer.

Fire, EMS award winners named

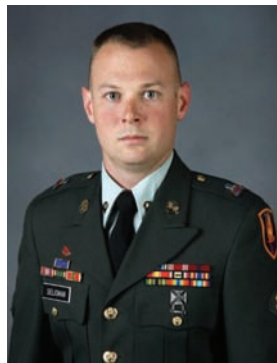
IMCOM Public Affairs

The Army has announced the winners of the 2009 Fire and Emergency Services Awards.

"I am thankful for all of our fire and emergency services professionals who put their own lives on the line while protecting those who defend America," said Cheryl Hess, chief of installation logistics, Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff for Installation Management.

The awards are based on customer service, accreditation, certifications, innovativeness, firefighter health and safety and other initiatives.

The winners are: **Military Fire Officer of the Year** - Sgt. 1st Class Darrin Shiplett, Fort Leonard Wood, Mo. As liaison at the U.S. Army Engineer School for active-duty members, reservists and National Guard firefighters, he researched, coordinated and disseminated information to Army firefighters on a daily basis. Shiplett was selected as the school's senior



Spc. Joshua Seligman



Sgt. 1st Class Darrin Shiplett

writer/instructor, responsible for providing equipment, training manuals and doctrinal literature to firefighters. He delivers training opportunities to some 450 firefighter students annually.

Military Firefighter of the Year - Spc. Joshua Seligman, Fort Rucker, Ala. As a driver/operator and rescue specialist, he responded to more than 100 precautionary landings in the past year. Seligman voluntarily supported the South Carolina National Guard with live fire and driver operator training. Having worked on

numerous types of aircraft assigned to the U.S. Army Aviation Center of Excellence, he used his technical knowledge to mentor and enhance the skill level of assigned firefighters. Seligman has provided more than 60 hours of classroom instruction to fellow firefighters on various subjects.

Other winners are: David Lewis, Fort Sam Houston, Texas, Civilian Fire Officer of the Year; Timothy Massey, Fort Meade, Md., Civilian Firefighter of the Year; and Gerald Schiedewitz, Fort Knox, Ky., Fire Service Instructor of the Year.

Honored programs include: Fort Detrick, Md., Fire and Emergency Services, Fire Prevention Program of the Year; and the Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md., Fire and Emergency Services, Heroism Award for its response to a remote training and testing range incident on base.

Fire Departments of the Year are: Army Blue Grass Depot, Ky., (small); Fort Detrick, Md., (medium); and Fort Hood, Texas (large).

Catching up with SMA Connelly

His life, career and thoughts on current issues

By Linda Crippen

Born June 2, 1931, in Monticello, Ga., William A. Connelly served in the U.S. Army more than 33 years. His career began as a National Guardsman in Americus, Ga., and he subsequently served in various positions worldwide as a tank crewman, tank commander, platoon sergeant and command sergeant major while on active-duty status from 1954 to 1983. During the Vietnam War, Connelly served as first sergeant from October 1969 to November 1970. His service included four tours in Europe as well as a tour in the Dominican Republic.

As the sixth sergeant major of the Army, Connelly witnessed many changes within the service as well as American society. He also contributed innumerable to the Army, effecting change on many different levels.

Opposite page: Retired Sgt. Maj. of the Army William A. Connelly at his home in Monticello, Ga. Among his awards is the prestigious Doughboy Award, which he “was surprised to receive since he had always been in the armor field.” The award typically is exclusive to infantry. **Right:** Connelly is sworn in as SMA in 1979, as his wife, Bennie Newton Connelly, and Chief of Staff of the Army Gen. Edward Meyer witness the ceremony.

At 79 years old, he is still very active within the military community, attending various functions throughout the year, especially for the Association of the U.S. Army as well as the Nominative Sergeants Major and Senior Enlisted Advisor Conference held each year at the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy, Fort Bliss, Texas.

Recently, Connelly sat down to discuss his stellar career and issues that are close to his heart. “Magnanimous” seems to describe him perfectly, and his Southern charm, humor and modesty truly make him a treasure, as is apparent by the talk of the local community. “We are very proud to have the sergeant major here in Monticello,” a local businessman said.



Photo courtesy of USASMA



Photo by Linda Crippen

CAREER TRACK

“When I joined the Army, we didn’t have a sergeant major of the Army, and I never heard that term until I was already a senior first sergeant,” Connelly said.

The position was not established until 1966, when William O. Wooldridge was sworn in as the first SMA.

When Connelly first joined the National Guard in 1949, and then was drafted into active duty in 1954, he entered under the presumption to do his time and then get out. But, that turned into a long and lustrous career. Setting him apart from his contemporaries, he already had two years of college under his belt, catapulting many promotions rather quickly until the centralized selection process began in 1969.

After Basic Training and Advanced Individual Training, Connelly was held back so that he could help train others. Consequently, he became platoon sergeant and then first sergeant of the same training unit. “I thought it was a great job because I was not a ‘diamond’ first sergeant. I was an E-6,” he said, adding that he was young and had “the least experience of anybody there.” He would remain a first sergeant and operations sergeant for quite a while. “I’m the only guy I know to have gone through a 10-year war and not get promoted. I was a first sergeant when Vietnam started, and I was a first sergeant when it ended.”

Connelly would go on to be the 7th Army Training Com-

mand Brigade sergeant major and from there was selected as 1st Armored Division sergeant major, then U.S. Army Forces Command sergeant major, ultimately reaching the pinnacle of the enlisted ranks — sergeant major of the Army from 1979 through 1983.

“I was in a leadership position the entire time I was in the Army, and my wife says I still think I’m in it,” he joked. But good leaders, good noncommissioned officer leaders were a little scarce after the Korean and Vietnam Wars, he said.

MAJOR CHALLENGES

“I had a lot of challenges before I got to sergeant major of the Army,” Connelly said. One of the challenges he refers to was enlisting qualified Soldiers after Korea and Vietnam. “When I became SMA, we had been having a problem with what my chief of staff termed a ‘hollow army.’”

Connelly’s chief of staff of the Army was Gen. Edward C. Meyer, whose term coincided with Connelly’s own. Meyer once testified before Congress regarding the shortfall of qualified personnel throughout the Army. He termed the dilemma “hollow army” since retention rates were dismal, and many Soldiers at the time lacked formal education. Many served their required time and then left the Army, leaving more gaps in experienced leadership and training. Meyer went on to state in a 1994 report by the Defense Science Board Readiness Task Force that the military



Photo courtesy of USASMA

of the late 1970s and early 1980s were “hollow forces,” and the Soldiers were not prepared to respond to most incidents without ample warning and preparation.

Connelly said neither the combat arms nor the Table of Organization and Equipment positions were fully filled. “Manning the force and retaining the force was a big challenge to my chief of staff. That was a challenge for the Army.”

After realizing his vocation as a professional Soldier, Connelly knew he wanted an Army that was more selective. “I wanted an Army where more people were trying to get in it than we could take. The last two years as sergeant major of the Army, I was beginning to see that. We didn’t have to accept every Soldier who wanted to join. We implemented certain criteria they had to meet, and we were more selective. The Army has continued to do that. I think right about then is when

Above: Connelly as a sergeant first class in 1961. **Right:** Connelly said, “There’s not a person up there [on my walls], who I can’t tell a story about. I loved every one of them and learned a lot from all of them.”

the Army started on the track of real professionalization of the Noncommissioned Officer Corps,” he said.

But, Connelly refuses to take sole credit for the improvement. “When I left the Army, it was in much better shape than when I came in it, but not because I did anything. Manning the force with quality Soldiers was one of my major challenges. I did everything I knew to improve that. And I know Gen. Meyer and his staff — which I was a part of — I know we did a good job. And it’s been carried on by every sergeant major of the Army since,” he said.

RIBBONS

Soldiers can thank Connelly for four of the ribbons they pin to their dress uniforms. His subtle suggestion during a Department of the Army staff meeting contributed to the creation and authorization of four ribbons that most enlisted, first-term Soldiers pin on their chests.

“When it came my time [to speak], I said to the staff, ‘In the Air Force, by the time an airman completes his AIT and spends three or four years in service, he or she could conceivably leave with two rows of ribbons. We [Army Soldiers] leave with the National Defense Ribbon, and if we’ve gone overseas then we may have gotten an Army Commendation Ribbon, which was very difficult to get in those days. It seems like we could have a ribbon for completing basic training and being awarded an MOS. We ought to have something between the Army Commendation Medal and the Bronze Star.’ But, that’s about all I said. I just planted the seed to the DA staff.”

His seed planting led to the Army Cohesion and Stability Study in 1980, which established the Army Achievement Medal,



Photo by Linda Crippen

Overseas Service Ribbon, Army Service Ribbon and the NCO Professional Development Ribbon. The Institute of Heraldry was commissioned to design the awards in April 1981.

“In about six months, those ribbons had been designed by TIOH. Every line, every color means something,” he said, explaining that it wasn’t just up to him to make the changes. “I know I was instrumental in it, but a sergeant major of the Army can’t really do anything that the chief of staff doesn’t support. So, I would like to think that I planted the seed.”

Connelly explained that the ribbons and medals help with retaining Soldiers. “When a civilian out here sees a couple of rows of ribbons on a Soldier — they don’t know what they’re for, but they think it’s for something. It’s for something better than a good footlocker,” he quipped.

VIETNAM

“I was first sergeant of Troop B, 9th Cavalry, 1st Cavalry Division. [The Army] had replaced the tank with the helicopter, which initially was a challenge for me since I had spent all my time in armor. Of course, I had never been in a helicopter except to go from point A to point B, very few times. I came off of civilian component duty from Georgia on a Thursday, and Friday morning with the change of time, I was being flown by helicopter to Quan Loi, Republic of Vietnam.” Troop B would become one of the most highly decorated units in Vietnam, flying almost continuous combat missions.

“The helicopter had to fly around because it was being attacked by mortars, and they couldn’t land. My unit was located in a rubber orchard in Quan Loi, and there was a larger unit there with us, the 29th Infantry Brigade. Somebody in our unit went to battle every day. There wasn’t much I could do as far as going to battle with a helicopter, except fly scouts, and every time I tried that, I got sick.”

Connelly spent a lot of time with the infantry platoon in his unit, even going out on missions with them. “Of course, I was responsible for everything when they came back from battle. The Army didn’t send me there to be an infantryman; I was a first sergeant. I had to make sure we had water. I had to run the mess, maintenance — all that kind of took care of itself, because I had good NCOs. But the first sergeant is ultimately responsible. I went out on missions to gain their respect. That’s what a good leader does; he shows his Soldiers he can do what they do.”

Vietnam was a challenging 12 months, he said. “I didn’t



Photo courtesy of USASMA

Connelly (far right) relaxes with fellow NCOs at the 7th Army NCO Academy in Grafenwoehr, Germany, 1959. The academy is the oldest and largest in the U.S. Army.

realize how much I enjoyed it until it was all over. It was a tough tour, and I saw a lot of combat. The unit I was in had a very high record of battle and battle streamers. Had a few people killed, had a lot of planes that crashed. A lot of them were in bad weather ... a challenging tour, as any combat tour is.”

As history shows, when Soldiers returned from Vietnam, some were treated poorly by the public. “A lot of young people did a lot of fighting over there, and they lost a lot of comrades. But, when they came back, they couldn’t get a job; they got on drugs. A lot of them experienced what we now call post-traumatic stress disorder, but they didn’t know what that was then. I had my problems with it, too.”

Connelly said he was lucky that he had a family, a new house and a new first sergeant position at Fort Knox, Ky., when he came back. “I came back and got busy with moving my family and being a first sergeant with another unit. I had challenges that would not lend itself to me sitting around and thinking a lot about the war. But, I thought about it at times, and I still do. I sleep in a bed back here that’s got safety railings on it,” he said, pointing to a back bedroom down the hallway. “I still have a lot of nightmares.”

As his voice grew quiet and eyes filled with tears, Connelly whispered, “I don’t like to talk about that. I wouldn’t give anything for the experience, but I certainly don’t want to go through it again. War is hell, and I don’t care what part of it you’re in.”

Those Soldiers serving in Iraq and Afghanistan shouldn’t be ashamed of serving. If they have a problem now, they can do something about it with the Army’s help. The resources and facilities have improved, so Soldiers need to take advantage of the help, he advised.

Connelly said those Soldiers who have completed multiple tours in Iraq and Afghanistan have had it tougher than most, and

the American public, Army and Department of Veterans Affairs need to do more for the returning Soldiers.

“We should take care of Soldiers because of the trauma they’ve been through. I’m glad I didn’t have to come back to the states for 12 months and then go back over there. Some of these men and women are going back over there for the fourth and fifth time, and the law of averages begins to catch up with you. You’re away from your family. I don’t know how they stand it. And I think America should do everything it can to take care of Soldiers. We should monitor them; leaders should keep up with them when they come back and see to it that if they need help then they get it,” he said.

Connelly knew of no other time that Soldiers were routinely engaged in combat for 12 to 15 months, came back home to stay a year or two and then go back. “It happened some in World War II and some in Vietnam but nothing like Iraq and Afghanistan.”

WORDS OF WISDOM

The former SMA emphasizes training for new and experienced Soldiers. “If I can share anything without being emotional about it, it would be along the lines of, training never ends. You’ll have to continue to train during the war, and when you come back, you know you’re going to have to go again. Approach that training with diligence, and get prepared to go back over there.

Every NCO has a tremendous responsibility to the people he or she is leading.”

Connelly said Soldiers should know how to do one or two jobs ahead of their grade, because the time may come when they have to do it. “You got to know your job, the job ahead of you, and maybe the second one ahead of you, and be prepared to take over. Training never stops.”

Some Soldiers came back from Vietnam thinking they already knew how to do everything, but the real issue was training those who didn’t have experience. An NCO “is leading people who have never done it. He’s got to take his knowledge and ensure his men know what to do. It’s the same thing as training an officer, first and second lieutenants. They don’t know as much as a platoon sergeant, master sergeant or first sergeant. But the NCO’s job is not to impress the lieutenant that he knows more. The NCO’s job is to pass on the experience and knowledge, because the officer has an adaptability to be better in that position. The NCO should find a way to do it without the officer knowing he’s doing it. He should be able to transfer his knowledge and experience to that lieutenant and make the lieutenant think it was his own idea. That [approach] helps you all the way up to general officers. That’s the way you get things done,” he explained.

Diplomacy is sometimes a necessity. “NCOs don’t know it, but they have to use a little bit of diplomacy, too,” he said. “Diplomacy is not just for general officers and diplomats. We all have to use a little every now and then.”

SPECIALIST 4-9

A specific change for which Connelly can be credited is eliminating the specialist 4–9 ranks. “I’m the daddy of the elimination of the specialist ranks, and a lot of them didn’t like it. But, I’m so proud of it,” he said. In fact, he’s the first SMA to make the cartoons of the *Army Times*. “It shows me standing there with a Soldier, and I have a chop ax, cutting the specialist rank off.”

Around 1955, “in the Army’s infinite wisdom, they decided to enhance the subordinate/leader relationship by creating the specialist ranks.” In the process of doing so, many NCOs lost their authority. Since the force was top-heavy, those NCOs who did not actually lead or supervise Soldiers became technicians. “But the way it was implemented was boneheaded,” Connelly said.

“When it first came out, I had a sergeant who was a gunner on a platoon leader’s tank. This sergeant had won the Silver Star in Korea and had two Purple Hearts. He was a great guy, and I’ll never forget him. When the regulation was implemented, it went by TOE positions, and the sergeant’s position



Photo courtesy of USASMA

Connelly (right) shakes hands with Meyer (left) during a ceremony.



Photo by Sgt. Russell Schnaare

Connelly (left) and retired SMA Glen Morrell (right) answer questions during the 2008 Nominative Sergeants Major and Senior Enlisted Advisor Conference's SMA panel.

was to become a specialist 5, which meant he could no longer go to the NCO Club. I said, 'By God, this is wrong.' I was a platoon sergeant then and said if I ever get into a position to change that, I will. I spent the next 15 years mad as hell about that."

Connelly said he might as well have called Soldiers in and told them, "Son, I'm going to promote you. It does raise your pay, which is well-deserved, but you don't have enough rank to tell anybody what to do, and you've got too much rank to do it yourself. So take your pay raise, and God bless you." But the technical specialists were in a catch-22: when NCOs weren't around, responsibility would fall to them; when privates were in short supply, they would have to pull those lower duties.

The elimination wasn't completed until two months after Connelly's retirement. "I sat down with [my successor, the seventh Sergeant Major of the Army] Glen Morrell, a U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy classmate of mine, and said, 'If you do anything for me, make sure that gets taken care of.'"

NCO DEVELOPMENT

Another issue close to Connelly's heart is NCO development. "NCOES is the best thing that has happened to the Army," he said. He had never heard the term until the early 1970s. Until then, NCO education was informal and certainly not a requirement. NCOs typically conducted training at the unit level, but nothing was ever officially scheduled on the training calendar. With the creation of the NCOES program, enlisted Soldiers were

provided with a glide path for their professional development.

In addition to NCOES, Connelly would later help develop the regulation for the Noncommissioned Officer Development Program, as requested by Meyer. The regulation not only officially established the program, but it also delineated education requirements and strengthened performance standards.

He's proud to have been a part of everything, he said. "Of course, every sergeant major of the Army does something to improve it. None of us can claim to be the daddy of it. It's been a work in progress, and all of us [SMAs] have contributed in some way. Those before us took the hard knocks, never

having the opportunity to go to the few schools available but were great heroes and leaders during war and peacetime."

Connelly is the first sergeant major of the Army to have graduated from USASMA. There was a pilot course of about 100 Soldiers before him, but his class, number 2, had the full curriculum that was approved and set. He said attending the course was perhaps one of the best things he ever did, despite his commander offering to get him out of it.

He describes today's NCOs as being much more informed and better educated. "They speak well; they use proper English. They aren't big smokers and drinkers like we used to be," he said.

Connelly said he and his cohorts used to go to the NCO Club and "solve more problems than the Army had. We got a lot done over there. Back then, everybody smoked and drank. Even during conferences, everybody smoked. Those days are past. Now, I go to a conference, and nobody smokes. They have a break, and everybody drinks orange juice. When the conference is over, nobody goes to the club. They go get their wives and play tennis or golf. I like that. That's the Army the public would respect if they knew it as well as I do. I'm very proud of the Army, and I'm proud to have been part of it all."

Connelly says his career has indeed come full circle. He is scheduled to be inducted into the Georgia National Guard Hall of Fame on Aug. 15. 🎪

Contact Linda Crippen at linda.crippen@us.army.mil.

Read the full interview and view more photos of retired Sgt. Maj. of the Army William A. Connelly at <https://usasma.bliss.army.mil/NCOJournal/default.asp>

On the trail with the

DRILL SERGEANT 2010 OF THE YEAR

Story and photos by Spc. Samuel J. Phillips

Every Soldier remembers the first day they got off the bus at basic training. Drill sergeants circling in what many refer to as the “shark attack” – those hats breaking above the crowd like a fin above water. Like sharks, they look for any reason to strike, and the slightest mistake is like blood in the water that draws the drill sergeants’ attention and fury.

At first, many recruits think drill sergeants are just there to make their lives a living hell. Sometimes it takes years for them to realize the drill sergeants’ true intentions. But drill sergeants devote themselves to training Soldiers. They work day after day to mold young citizens into disciplined Soldiers who model the Army values. Not a single Soldier today would be where they are without the guidance of their drill sergeants.

For the last 40 years, the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command has recognized these mentors by pitting them against each other to find who is the best of the best.

This year was no different.

After winning competitions at their respective installations and divisions, eight drill sergeants were given the chance to face off for the title of 2010 U.S. Army Drill Sergeant of the Year.

The participants arrived at Fort Monroe, Va., on June 13 for weigh-ins, photos and briefs on safety and media. The drill sergeants also learned about the 2009 Drill Sergeant of the Year winners, who were the masterminds behind this year’s competition along with Command Sgt. Maj. David M. Bruner, the TRADOC command sergeant major.

On June 14, the participants drew their gear and weapons at 6 a.m. and headed to the range at nearby Fort Eustis.

This was no ordinary range: drill sergeants competed in a stress shoot where they had to fire from behind two L-shaped barriers. Their target was a terrorist who had a hostage. To make things more interesting, each participant had four magazines and had to move to the other barrier between magazines, using a different firing stance at each.

The next event was marksmanship qualifying on a pop-up range followed by a combat-fire qualification where the competitors had to fire from behind one of the same barriers as before.

They were graded not only on their ability to hit targets, but also on their skill in correcting weapon malfunctions.

“Each magazine the drill sergeants used during the range had dummy rounds [blanks] in them,” said Staff





Sgt. 1st Class Philip Richards III, an active-duty drill sergeant assigned to Fort Benning, Ga., fires at a terrorist who had a hostage during a stress shoot at a Fort Eustis, Va., range. The stress shoot was the first official challenge of the 2010 Drill Sergeant of the Year Competition.

Sgt. Michael Johnston, the 2009 Drill Sergeant of the Year. “This forces the drill sergeants to react and adds an unexpected twist to the competition.”

The entire competition was riddled with twists and surprises. The drill sergeants had no idea what was coming next, Johnston said. The events were closely guarded from the drill sergeants, who were kept in the dark until each event started.

“The competition is designed to be physically and mentally challenging,” said Sgt. 1st Class Edwin Hernandez, an active-duty drill sergeant assigned to Fort Jackson, S.C. “But, not knowing what’s coming next adds a whole new level of stress.”

After the range, the competitors road-marched across Fort Eustis for a brief lunch. Before the meal could settle in their stomachs, the drill sergeants had to prepare for their next task – leading a squad of young Soldiers in a physical fitness training session.

Once the drill sergeants finished the exhausting PT session, they headed straight to the Fort Eustis Dojo, where they were taken one by one to face their next task. In the dojo, each participant was given five minutes to change into the proper combatives uniform – removing all footwear, rings, dog tags and belts.

Each competitor then had to give a block of instruction on Army combatives. They explained and demonstrated how to escape the mount [the opponent straddling their waist and chest], and how to escape the guard [the opponent lying on their back with their legs wrapped around the drill sergeant’s waist]. The drill sergeants also had to explain every step to completely

reverse the situation and get their opponent in their mount and demonstrate an arm-bar submission.

In their final move of the block of instruction, the participants had to show a takedown from the rear clinch – their hands clenched with a thumbless grip around their opponent’s waist with their head pressed against their opponent’s back. Although this marked the end of the block of instruction, it was not the end of the task.

The drill sergeants were given one minute to gather their thoughts and insert mouthpieces. They would be facing an attacker armed with 12-ounce boxing gloves entering from a door across the room. Their task: within one minute, close the distance with their attacker and achieve a clinch, one of the holds taught in modern Army combatives that gives Soldiers control over their opponents.

When the drill sergeants let the grader know they were ready, the attacker – silent and focused – burst out of the doorway swinging furiously at the competitors. The blows didn’t stop. The attacker kept fighting, swinging and trying to break free until the grader stopped the event.

Battered and winded, the competitors still didn’t get any time to rest. They were given five minutes to gather their gear and head to the next room where yet another task awaited them. In this room, there were three Soldiers – a male and female in Class A’s and another Soldier in ACUs. The task was to find more than 100 uniform deficiencies among the three.

“You are standing there trying to concentrate on the task in front of you, but you are still feeling the hits that landed dur-



Left: Sgt. 1st Class Philip Richards III, an active-duty drill sergeant assigned to Fort Benning, Ga., watches his Soldiers to ensure they are executing their exercises correctly as he leads a physical fitness session.

Right: Sgt. Scott Sinclair, a reserve drill sergeant assigned to the 98th Reserve Division, Rochester, N.Y., demonstrates how to properly execute an arm-bar during a graded block of combatives instruction.

“If I had to do it again, I would probably take more time to choose my routes,” said Staff Sgt. Timothy E. Sarvis, an active-duty drill sergeant assigned to Fort Leonard Wood, Mo. “It was dark out there, and all of a sudden you find yourself trying to navigate around a marsh that seemed to never end.”

With no time to reflect on the land-navigation course, the competitors headed to the starting point for the next task, urban orienteering. Competitors split into teams of two, and road-marched around Fort Eustis to find four stations where the teams conducted various tasks.

One of the stations consisted of a combat life saverstest and a care-under-fire exercise. But what the drill sergeants didn’t know was that they would be the ones under fire. Each participant stood on a path in the woods receiving the task, conditions and standards from a grader. In the distance, there was a clearing with a lone Soldier lying face down.

When the drill sergeants were given the command to begin, they rushed to the Soldier’s side and tried to get a response. When that failed, their CLS training kicked in, and they instantly started checking the wounded Soldier for injuries. The drill sergeants, however, were cut short by enemy fire and had to seek cover and return fire.



ing combatives,” Hernandez said. “Since you don’t have time to shake off the blows and clear your head, you just have to do your best to ignore them and focus on finding as many of the uniform deficiencies as you can.”

After each drill sergeant went through this gauntlet, they road-marched to a dining facility for dinner before heading back to the makeshift forward operating base. The base consisted of tents that were called home during the competition.

Two more tasks faced the competitors before they could call it a day. They had to take a test on drill sergeant history and then write an essay on what they thought about the changes taking place in TRADOC.

“This was just day one,” Johnston said. “We still have a lot of tasks in store for the drill sergeants and quite a few more surprises.”

Day two started at 3 a.m. when competitors had to get ready and move to the land-navigation site. Once there, they had half an hour to complete a land navigation terrain brief and plot their five points before heading out on a five-mile course that forced them to navigate dense woods, hills and marshes in the early morning darkness.

Right: Staff Sgt. Timothy Sarvis, an active-duty drill sergeant assigned to Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., explains how to react to a near ambush to a squad of Soldiers using a crude rock table that he constructed with pine cones.



Below: Staff Sgt. Kyle Drube, a reserve drill sergeant assigned to the 95th Reserve Division, uses three- to five-second rushes to advance on an enemy position while conducting a care-under-fire exercise.



Below: Staff Sgt. Melissa Solomon, a reserve drill sergeant assigned to the 108th Reserve Division, Charlotte, N.C., adjusts a Soldier's hand while teaching how to properly salute during a drill and ceremony exercise.



Once enemy forces were suppressed and the area was cleared, the participants returned to the wounded Soldier and finished providing aid. Upon inspection, they discovered the Soldier had a severe gash on his right leg and immediately tried to stem the bleeding.

Once they stopped the bleeding, drill sergeants had to move the wounded Soldier to a more secure location to continue their evaluation and call for a medical evacuation.

Drill sergeants were also tested on disassembling and reassembling an M16 rifle, firing an AT4 anti-tank weapon, teaching a Soldier how to handle and throw a grenade, demonstrating how to react to a chemical attack, teaching a squad how to react to an ambush and teaching Soldiers proper communication skills.

"The urban orienteering was probably my favorite part of the competition," Sarvis said. "It added a whole new aspect, instead of just grading us on different tasks. We actually had to find the stations."

They wrapped up the day with an M203 grenade launcher range, a written test on squad physical fitness, an after action review and noncommissioned officer professional development training session.

On day three, the competitors, again, woke up at 3 a.m. – this

time to clear the FOB and take another written test before heading to the Engagement Skills Trainer 2000, a simulated range accommodating multiple weapon systems. Here, the drill sergeants were tested on their skills with the M16 rifle, M249 light machine gun and M240 machine gun.

Another round of urban orienteering followed. This set of stations included two surprise tasks, situations drill sergeants may face during their time on the job such as a suicidal Soldier and a Soldier who refuses to train.

Competitors were given the task, conditions and standards to teach Soldiers how to execute a rear march. Upon commanding the demonstrators to fall in, one of the Soldiers did not respond, seemed to be distressed and not fully aware of his surroundings.

At this point the task changed and the drill sergeants had to properly handle a Soldier who no longer wanted to live. Immediately, the participants confronted the Soldier in a non-aggressive manner to help him and find out if he showed any immediate risk to himself or others.

In the end, the drill sergeants convinced the Soldier to continue training until they could get him proper care from mental health professionals and placed

Right: Staff Sgt. Benjamin Brady, an active-duty drill sergeant assigned to Fort Knox, Ky., prepares to descend a rope after climbing over a wall on an obstacle course.



Above: (From top to bottom) Sgt. 1st Class Edwin Hernandez, Staff Sgt. Benjamin Brady and Staff Sgt. Kyle Drube rest and drink water after finishing an obstacle course.



Left: Sgt. Scott Sinclair, a reserve drill sergeant assigned to the 98th Reserve Division, Rochester, N.Y., low crawls under an obstacle.

him on a 24-hour watch.

In the next situation, a Soldier refused to train because he had financial problems and wanted to go take care of them. Each drill sergeant assured the Soldier that any pay issues would be taken care of.

“These are tasks drill sergeants might not think would be in the competition,” Johnston said. “However, they are things drill sergeants regularly run into and have to know how to handle when they come up.”

Other tasks included in the day were a media interview, numerous drill and ceremony movements and teaching Soldiers how to do the prone row exercise, in which the Soldiers lie on their stomachs and flex their back, raising their heads off the ground while pulling their arms back in a rowing motion.

The competitors had one more major task that would test their endurance more than anything else they had already faced. Having no idea what was coming, drill sergeants boarded vans and soon found themselves staring at the Fort Eustis obstacle course.

With a delayed start, they charged onto the course, which consisted of dozens of obstacles such as vaults, a rope climb, a low crawl pit and a net ladder. As the drill



Staff Sgt. Kyle Drube, a reserve drill sergeant assigned to the 95th Reserve Division, Oklahoma City, Okla., (front) and Sgt. Scott Sinclair, a reserve drill sergeant assigned to the 98th Reserve Division, Rochester, N.Y., participate in the push-up event during the physical fitness test in the 2010 Drill Sergeant of the Year Competition.

sergeants crossed the finish line, Soldiers they had been working with for the last three days cheered them on. One could see they had left every ounce of energy on the course.

Exhausted, the drill sergeants ended day three with a packing list layout and another AAR. What the competitors didn't know was that they would have to muster as much strength as they could to face the task that was going to greet them the following morning.

On day four, the drill sergeants woke up at 4:30 a.m. and headed to Fort Monroe, where they faced one of their hardest challenges yet – a PT test. “By the time of the PT test, I had bleeding blisters on my feet, and all I could do was just give it my best,” Sarvis said.

Despite exhaustion and injuries, drill sergeants pushed through the PT test, proving to all those watching that they truly were the best of the best, Johnston said.

Next, the drill sergeants had to shift gears and change into Class A's to attend a mock promotion board. Each competi-

tor was bombarded with questions from sergeants major who forced them to prove themselves mentally after their bodies had already been pushed to the edge.

“I had some low moments during the competition,” said Staff Sgt. Melissa C. Solomon, a reserve drill sergeant assigned to the 108th Training Division. “However, the important part is to bounce back, and keep giving it everything you have. The board is what gave me my biggest glimmer of hope.”

After all was said and done, Sarvis outshined four fellow active-duty drill sergeants to be named the active-duty Drill Sergeant of the Year, and Solomon bested two other reserve drill sergeants making her the reserve Drill Sergeant of the Year.

No one knew who the winners were until their names were announced during the official ceremony at Continental Park, Fort Monroe, Va., June 18.

“Honestly, I was a little surprised when I won,” Sarvis said. “It was an honor and a privilege to compete against the best of each respective organization.”

Solomon had a similar reaction when

her name was announced. “I was in shock when I heard my name called. I thought I was going to pass out, and I just wanted to call my mom and let her know,” she said.

Sarvis and Solomon's determination is what saw them through to the end, Johnston said. Now the 2010 Drill Sergeants of the Year have to get ready for yet another challenge – becoming the drill sergeant liaisons for the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command.

In a ceremony at the White House later this year, Sarvis will receive the Stephen Ailes Award and Solomon will receive the Ralph Haines Jr. Award. Ailes was secretary of the Army from 1964 to 1965 and was instrumental in originating the first Drill Sergeant School at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo. Haines was commander of the Continental Army Command (the forerunner of TRADOC) from 1970 to 1972. **■**

To contact Spc. Samuel J. Phillips, e-mail samuel.james.phillips@us.army.mil.

"We ask everyone to take ownership of the risk-management process and to be your own best battle buddy. Whether you are taking a family vacation, road trip, riding your motorcycle or boating on the lake, be aware of potential hazards. Take responsibility for your own safety. Wear your seat belts, obey speed limits and wear your personal protective equipment as required. You owe it to your fellow Soldiers and your families to be safe."

Summer Safety Message, U.S. Army Leadership

in the heat of the summer

By Cindy Ramirez

MARCH 30: A 27-year-old specialist fell from a tree onto a fence and died. Alcohol is reported as a factor.

MAY 28: A 38-year-old sergeant first class riding an all-terrain vehicle drove off the gravel road and was thrown from the vehicle after crashing into a tree. He wasn't wearing a helmet and died at the scene.

MAY 29: A 23-year-old private first class who had been boating with other Soldiers disappeared under the surface of a lake after trying to retrieve an object floating in the water. He drowned.

These incidents, unfortunately, are true and make up only a few of the type of off-duty accidents that are taking the lives of Soldiers across the Army — particularly in summer when fatality rates inevitably increase, officials said.

"Many Soldiers understand where Composite Risk Management fits into mission planning, but seldom do they use that tool off duty. As a result, we keep seeing accidents taking Soldiers' lives," said Command Sgt. Major Michael Eyer, the senior noncommissioned officer for the U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center, Fort Rucker, Ala.

"Accidents happen year round, but the summer is often when Soldiers feel more free, more invincible and tend to get themselves into trouble."

Eyer said many accidents could be prevented if Soldiers incorporate CRM within their everyday activities. CRM is the Army's primary decision-making process to identify hazards, reduce risk and prevent accidental and tactical loss.

Statistics from the Safety Center show Soldier accidents and fatalities are on the rise this fiscal year. Although the majority continues to be from incidents involving privately owned vehicles and motorcycles, accidents such as falling from an elevation are also of concern.

As of June 24 in fiscal year 2010, the Army reported 10 off-duty fatalities — not including vehicle or motorcycle deaths. That compares to a total of 12 in fiscal year 2009 and 22 in 2008.

Play Safe in the Heat

The 2010 Safe Summer Campaign, "Play it Safe," reminds Army leaders, Soldiers, families and civilians the most critical days of summer are between Memorial Day and Labor Day.

The initiative provides articles, posters and videos to promote proactive prevention on everything from swimming to boating to heat-related illnesses.

The Safety Center reports that about

250 Soldiers have been treated for clinically severe heat-related injuries during the past two years, including heat stroke and heat exhaustion.

New in this year's campaign is an interactive activity which promotes water safety through messages intertwined within online games. An interactive activity on gun safety intended to reduce off-duty firearms accidents is now also online. Home and driving safety activities are coming soon.

"We are going to where the Soldier is," Eyer said, referring to the Internet. "Soldiers go online during their time off and spend a lot of time there. We are using that as an avenue to send our messages."

Eyer said the campaign materials allow installations to tailor their message to their needs.

As he visits installations across the nation to make presentations or review safety programs, Eyer said he's noticed safety offices becoming increasingly involved in the planning of recreational activities provided through programs such as the Army Family Morale, Welfare and Recreation and Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers.

"We need to continue to push for more involvement in the planning stages and throughout, and not consider safety offices separate entities that provide only mandatory training," Eyer said.

R. Keith Lane, director of installation safety at Fort Knox, Ky., said the Depart-



ment of Public Works, family readiness groups and the FMWR program play key roles in delivering safety messages.

“A host of other folks have gotten safety built into their programs,” Lane said. “And that’s very important. When you have multiple organizations thinking and talking about safety, it’s like everybody is talking at once, so somebody is bound to get the message. Safety offices are here to help, to provide resources, but it can’t all rest on us.”

Water Safety

Fort Knox has had Soldiers drown the past few years, making water safety awareness especially important, Lane said.

An incident in May is still under investigation, but Lane said he believes the death hit the Fort Knox family hard. A few years ago, another Soldier died after he and his buddies went for a swim in a nearby river. The Soldier tried to rappel into the river and the rope broke.

“He went down at about 4 p.m. They didn’t find him until 9 a.m. the next morning,” Lane said. “I can only imagine how those other Soldiers must have felt. Nobody wants to feel that way; nobody should have to.”

Richard Scott, a safety specialist at the Fort Rucker Safety Center, points to the “Too List” from the American Red Cross as a starting point for things Soldiers should consider when mitigating risks associated with water fun.

“The list reminds people to never get ‘too tired, too cold, too far away from safety, too much sun or too much strenuous activity,’” Scott said.

“Sometimes, just being around a lot of people isn’t enough when it comes to staying safe in the water,” he added. “Being a buddy and actively watching for signs that someone is struggling can make the difference between a fun day in the water and a terrible tragedy.”

Avoiding tragedies is at the heart of a train-the-trainer water and boating safety course offered at Fort Hood, Texas. Offered by the Army Corps of Engineers, the course has been offered at the installation for about five years.

The training trickles down to battalions and brigades, as well as families across the installation, said Ronald Deshotel, acting director for III Corps Safety at Fort Hood.

Driving, Riding, Walking

While boating and other swimming activities increase during the summer months, Deshotel said that as in installations Armywide, Fort Hood’s biggest off-duty concern is privately owned vehicle and motorcycle accidents.

“Our motorcycle and POV safety courses go on all the time because we have motorcycle-riding weather year round,” Deshotel said. “Unfortunately that continues to be our biggest problem in terms of accidents, but we’re also seeing a lot more Soldiers come through our program.”

Eyer said while more Soldiers are heeding the message of motorcycle safety, another troubling trend is forming: pedestrian fatalities.

“Those numbers are going up,” said Eyer. “The Soldier decided not to drive, which was a good decision. But unfortunately, they’ve been drinking heavily in some cases, and decide to walk alone, sometimes along dangerous roads.”

Eight pedestrian deaths were reported over 2008-09, while another eight have been reported so far in fiscal year 2010.

Guns and Alcohol

Also of note, Eyer said, are accidents involving privately owned weapons.

“Since we’ve spent the last eight years in conflict, our Soldiers are coming back feeling comfortable with weapons,” Eyer said.

“We have had incidents of Soldiers wounded with personally owned weapons or injuring others with them, because they don’t know how to operate them safely off duty, or they buy weapons on which they haven’t been trained,” he added.

A common factor in most accidents of all categories, Eyer said, is alcohol.

“Our best recourse is to ensure that Soldiers are counseled so they drink responsibly,” he said. “And that we take precautions: Know your limit, have a designated driver, and always have a battle buddy to look out for you.”

Eyer said having a support system is important, encouraging private party hosts and public establishments to serve non-alcoholic beverages and watch how much alcohol they serve. Soldiers should always have a designated driver or a designated walker, someone who can ensure they get home safely, he said.

'I Made It'


Fort Hood’s Deshotel said it’s especially important for NCOs to serve as mentors who Soldiers can trust and turn to for information and leadership.

“These messages are extremely important to the younger Soldier,” said Deshotel, a retired chief warrant officer. “We [thought we] were invincible at that age, and these young Soldiers today are no different.”

Like Eyer, Fort Knox’s Lane said families and civilians also play a major role in keeping their Soldiers safe. As such, safety programs are increasingly reaching out to those audiences.

“We work to make sure that the Soldiers and the civilians who support them are able to do their job and still go home to their family at night and say, ‘It was a rough day, but I made it.’”

Contact Cindy Ramirez at cindy.ramirez1@us.army.mil



HEAT INJURY PREVENTION TIPS

- **Dress for the heat:** Wear lightweight, light-colored clothing. Wear hats, and use an umbrella.
- **Drink water:** Carry water or juice, and drink continuously even if you don't feel thirsty. Avoid alcohol and caffeine.
- **Eat small:** Eat small meals, and eat more often. Avoid foods high in protein which increase metabolic heat.
- **Slow down.** Avoid strenuous activity, or do it between 4 and 7 a.m.
- **Stay indoors** when possible.
- **Take regular breaks** in a cool place when engaged in physical activity.

For safety information and interactive games, visit:
<https://safety.army.mil/>

The site of Operation Market Garden, the largest airborne operation of all time. The objective of this WWII operation was to use airborne forces to secure bridges over the main rivers in Nazi-occupied Netherlands in order to allow a rapid advance for allied armored units into northern Germany.



NCO TRAINING

European Style

NCOs from across Europe gather in the Netherlands to share ideas and build durable international partnerships

STORY & PHOTOS BY MASTER SGT. ANTONY M.C. JOSEPH



A Dutch NCO instructs a soldier on how to correctly hold his firearm during a pistol firing demonstration at one of the ranges in the Netherlands.

When noncommissioned officers gather together at one place, it usually benefits a nation's military as a whole and all service members in general. When these NCOs are the senior most representatives of armies from around Europe and North America, the benefits such a conference brings to the respective armies take on greater importance.

Hosted by the Royal Netherlands Army, the fourth annual Conference of European Armies for Noncommissioned Officers was held in Garderen, Netherlands, May 9-12. The three-day event included various training activities such as firing Dutch rifles at pop-up ranges and in virtual simulators, multiple training presentations, group discussions, various field trips and a visit to the site of Operation Market Garden, which saw the largest airborne operation of World War II.

The conference is part of a program by U.S. Army Europe to build and foster partnerships among military forces and nations in Europe. The goal is to improve

military and security capabilities and build interoperability between the United States and partner nations.

Though the theme of this year's conference was "Train the Trainer," it achieved much more — from building familiarity and camaraderie among Soldiers to understanding policies and how to better execute the Global War on Terrorism. "Communication is the best part and an essential part of coalition forces," said Warrant Officer Class 2 Tony Gordon, the British Armed Forces' deputy liaison to USAREUR. "If we are going to work together, we need to talk to and understand each other. Here, we have a perfect platform for the exchange of ideas."

Different hues and colors were scattered among the conference attendees' uniforms, different languages were being spoken during breaks and many cultural differences were readily apparent. But, the honor and pride of being a Soldier were always evident in the manner attendees spoke and the respect they showed to each other. Most nations represented at the

conference have fought alongside American troops as part of the coalition since the start of Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom; in fact, European nations make up the majority of the countries involved in Operation New Dawn in Iraq.

"The interaction we are having here will be very useful to me and my army in the future," said Command Sgt. Maj. Richard Fabricius, command sergeant major of the Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic. "[This conference] is a great opportunity to strengthen personal relationships and take the interaction to a higher level. The better the relationships, the better the cooperation. It is like building up a wolf pack — live together, hunt together and stay in all environments together. This way, a lot of trust is built up, and we can always rely on and call on each other for advice and to make suggestions."

"This world is small; nobody is [going to be successful] standing alone," said Command Sgt. Maj. Roger Blackwood, the interim USAREUR command sergeant major. "As it has been shown around the



Top: Senior NCOs from many of the European armies get a chance to shoot at a rifle range after watching a demonstration by soldiers from the Royal Netherlands Army.

Bottom: NCOs from the Royal Netherlands Army brief NCOCEA conference attendees before a demonstration by Dutch soldiers at the pistol range.

world, and especially in Iraq and Afghanistan, it takes a coalition of forces [to prosecute a war], and in the future that is how it is going to be done — together.”

Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth O. Preston said, “Combined and joint operations that bring forces from two or more nations and two or more services together is a fixture of modern warfare.” Thus, the understanding of the mission by all parties is the way to future success.

He said that some of the sergeants major from the different countries represented at the conference are graduates of the United States Army Sergeants Major Academy, Fort Bliss, Texas, who are renewing friendships they made while in school, and are now getting a chance to discuss how they have put what they learned into practice. They also conferred with NCOs from other nations on how to build a strong NCO corps.

The conference participants are from nations in various stages of building a professional NCO corps within their armies. Some nations only have conscripts as enlisted soldiers, while other nations, such as Slovakia, have embraced the idea of a professional NCO corps. However, some countries’ officer corps still have not completely embraced the concept of the NCO as a vital, professional part of their



nations’ armed forces.

“One of my jobs as sergeant major is to show the officers that we are here to help and not to threaten their positions,” Fabricius said.

“We have to show where we are in the hierarchy and how NCOs can enhance the capabilities of the military. It takes a lot of patience — patience and tolerance with both junior soldiers and officers to make a professional army.”

Command Sgt. Maj. of the Royal Netherlands Army T.J.A. Witlox echoed Fabricius’ comments and added that “NCOs are the guys who make things work. To make a comparison, there’s a big body — there’s a brain, there’s a backbone and the legs. The legs are the soldiers. We have to prepare them; we have to train them and equip them; we have to take care of them (so they can carry us), and as NCOs, it is our job to do that. The NCOs



Top: Command Sgt. Maj. of the Royal Netherlands Army T.J.A. Witlox addresses the assembled senior enlisted soldiers of the respective European and U.S. Armies during the fourth annual Conference of European Armies for Noncommissioned Officers.

Bottom: Soldiers prepare to participate in the training provided by the Royal Netherlands Army at the simulator center.



make things happen. So, the NCO is the cog, the backbone that makes it all work, and I think it is the same in all professional armies.”

The “Train the Trainer” aspect of the conference was very beneficial to many of those assembled. Attendees were able to see another aspect of training which could help the fledgling NCO corps in their nations’ militaries.

According to Command Sgt. Maj. János Zsótér, senior enlisted leader of the Hungarian Ground Forces, “Training is a hot subject in the army. It is important to establish academies in places like Afghanistan, but it is also important that we allow

the Afghan soldiers to train their own. We can’t ask Hungarian cooks to teach the Afghan soldiers to cook Hungarian food,” he said. “It would be better if we teach the Afghan [soldiers] how to cook; they in turn can then teach others to cook, and so on. That is why the Train the Trainer program is important. You allow the trained to go on and teach others, and it will not be left up to one or two individuals to train the whole army.”

Through all the group discussions, training events and site visits, one talking point reverberated: bettering the NCO corps — how to improve the image of an NCO in the armies where they have little

or no say. This conference allowed many of the senior leaders a chance to bounce ideas off each other regarding that aspect.

“NCOs have to gain the respect of the soldiers and the superiors,” said Sgt. Maj. Fabrice Brousse, the senior enlisted leader for the French Ministry of Defense. “This can only be done by performing at a higher moral level and always being aware that we have an ethical responsibility in the development of not only our own soldiers, but also the soldiers of other countries such as Afghanistan, whom we mentor. How we as NCOs handle ourselves on a daily basis will affect how others follow.”

With each iteration, the conference’s themes and talking points have evolved, adapting to the attendees’ needs and incorporating lessons learned in-theater.

“I have been coming to the conference since the beginning,” Fabricius said. “The first conference was more of an orientation on how to work in a joint environment and how NCOs work through difficult times such as combat. Now we deal with more involved subjects such as active and passive learning, counter insurgency etc. All the conferences have been invaluable to me, and I look forward, each time, to take what I have learned and educate my force.”

To contact Master Sgt. Antony M.C. Joseph, e-mail tony.joseph@us.army.mil.

Going Global



The Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center, Presidio of Monterey, Calif., teaches members of the armed forces foreign languages and culture.

Story and photos by Angela Simental

Knowing the language and culture of the enemy has proven to be crucial for successful missions in support of the Global War on Terrorism, Army officials said.

This movement is expanding well throughout the Army, as top officials recognize the importance of warriors learning other languages and understanding different cultures as part of their pre-deployment education. Last year, in support of the Global War on Terrorism, Gen. Stanley A. McChrystal, former commander of U.S. troops in Afghanistan, required each platoon-size unit to have one Soldier who speaks Dari or Pashto (languages spoken in Afghanistan) and understands the Afghan culture.

The Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center at Presidio of Monterey, Calif., the Department of Defense’s center for language studies, has been dedicated to teaching and distributing language instruction to the armed forces since the 1940s.

“I’m ecstatic with the emphasis the Army is putting on language,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Kenneth R. Clark, the institute’s installation command sergeant major. “Clearly, Gen. McChrystal knew the importance of not just running around shooting things and trying to solve the problem that way. The importance lies in understanding the people, relating and helping them move forward, not just trying to destroy the enemy. A change of mentality has quickly been adopted in what service members should be doing in Afghanistan. Language and culture are a paramount endeavor.”

DoD’s requirements for language programs have shifted focus to include cultural awareness as part of the curriculum stating in the DLIFLC mission that culture “is important to the language learning process and an integral part of our language programs.”

“The recognition that [understanding language and culture] is a force multiplier and it is making a difference — it is not just

for the intelligence field anymore; it is for everybody,” Clark said.

Historic overview

The institute was established as a secret school with four Japanese-language instructors and 60 students at the Presidio of San Francisco after the United States entered World War II. It wasn’t until 1946 that DLIFLC, which was named the Military Intelligence Language School, was moved to its present location. Major changes came after the end of the Vietnam War, in 1979, when DLIFLC acquired academic accreditation and its expansion began.

In the 90s, an agreement with Monterey Peninsula College allowed students to earn up to 27 credits toward an associate of arts degree. Since 2002, the institute has awarded more than 4,000 diplomas after Congress gave DLIFLC federal authority to grant an associate of arts in foreign language degree.

The institute also has a branch in Washington, D.C., where a contract foreign language training program is administered. The program provides “full-time resident instruction for military linguists in low-enrollment languages,” as stated on the institute’s website.

DLIFLC now boasts over 3,000 in-resident students from all services and 1,700 international faculty members, of whom 98 percent are native speakers of the language they teach.

“And, that’s where culture and language come together — you can’t teach them separately,” Clark said of having native-speaking instructors. “Exposing students to the culture is part of the curriculum. This creates a better foundation and understanding of the language instead of just teaching words and how to place them in sentence structures.”

Remaining warriors

At a glance, life as a DLIFLC student could be mistaken for

that of a regular college student. They gather in cafes throughout the campus during breaks, and the library is filled with laptops during study time. But DLIFLC ensures its students remain warriors, and reminds them that education is part of the warfighting mission.

A rigorous schedule and self-discipline play a big part in students' success at the institute, Clark said. Balancing military standards and academics is part of their everyday lives.

"As soon as we are done with physical training, we belong to the schoolhouse until the end of the day. After that, we can go back to doing our military activities," said Sgt. Janice Marquez, a Pashto language student.

A typical day for a DLIFLC student starts at 5:15 a.m. with PT, followed by breakfast and service-unit formation. Classes start at 7:55 a.m. and end at 3:45 p.m. Students have three hours of homework every night in addition to weekend assignments and two to three hours of instructor-led study hall, two days a week. Students must also develop and sustain common task training and physical readiness.

"Learning a language as a DLIFLC

student takes up your entire life because languages aren't like any type of study. This is like learning a new way of thinking and seeing the world around you," said Sgt. 1st Class Matthew Edwards, a military language instructor of Persian Farsi. The language is spoken primarily in Iran and some areas of Iraq.

Military language instructors, most of whom are NCOs, help students balance their military discipline and academic standards.

"We help them maintain their military proficiency with quarterly military days," said Sgt. Naser Rokni, a Persian Farsi language MLI. "Because military training is part of their graduation requirements, they go to the range and shoot, do land navigation and military operations in urban terrain. To practice, they use their language during the military training."

Rokni added that NCOs are crucial as MLIs because they bring their military experience along with the knowledge of language.

"The 100 MLIs have been recently deployed, are senior leaders and have a background and experience in what it is to be a professional linguist," Clark said. "It

takes an NCO to teach them how important their role is going to be in the future as they get ready to become professional military linguists and understand the enormous impact on our mission in support of Global War on Terrorism."

Because students must always keep in mind that they are warriors, MLIs exemplify how academic skills can be combined with military expertise.

"It is better to have students in the hands of those NCOs, who are MLIs because they set the example," Rokni said. "Having only civilian teachers can hinder students from continuing to be Soldiers. We keep reminding them that what they are learning will be used in the military. The ultimate goal is not just to provide a linguist, but a warrior linguist."

NCOs who are MLIs also benefit from the experience.

"Being a platoon sergeant, I am managing between 60 to 80 Soldiers, so that is a lot of experience for me to build on my leadership skills," said Sgt. Jason Fisher, a Korean language MLI. "In different ways than my deployments, I would say my leadership skills as an NCO developed at DLI because I really had to work to relate



Students of different branches of the military gather to review notes before class. Aside from their class notes and handouts, they use study materials and resources available online as well as on their iPods.

to a broad span of people with very different backgrounds in the military and outside.”

Language and learning

A total of 24 languages are taught at the institute.

Languages are divided into four categories that increase in difficulty. The length of each course is determined by how long it will take students to reach a level-two proficiency; category one takes 26 weeks, category two takes 35 weeks, category three takes 48 weeks and category four takes 64 weeks.

Proficiency levels are categorized as:

- **0+:** Memorized proficiency
- **1:** Limited practical capabilities; simple greetings and courtesies
- **1+:** Reads simple materials and grasps some main ideas
- **2:** Gets main ideas and satisfies routine social and working environments
- **2+:** Understands most factual material
- **3:** Professional proficiency; able to read between the lines and follow conversations of native speakers

“I see a lot of people come here and say, ‘Oh, Spanish is an easy language.’ But, they don’t take into account that they have roughly six weeks to learn 2,000 words plus grammar. So, we should not discredit someone just because they are going to Spanish (category one) versus Arabic (category four),” said Platoon Sgt. James Riddick, an Arabic language student.

Clark said 85 percent of students at DLIFLC are in a category three or four language, and 30 percent of graduates leave with a 2+ level of proficiency, even in newer language courses such as Pashto or Dari, where books and study materials had to be developed at the institute since both are



Students practice speaking during a cultural discussion in a Korean language class. Teacher instruction is merged with online resources.

mostly oral languages. He added that DLIFLC has a commitment to following up with the students and ensuring they maintain their proficiency level, requiring annual mandatory tests and providing materials for professionals to continue developing their language skills.

From the beginning of their studies at DLIFLC, students are prepared to face the challenges of learning a language. Prior to enrolling, students must take the Defense Language Aptitude Battery test to determine if they can attend.

The institute recognizes that every student learns differently and provides the resources to set them up for success, said Leah Graham, dean of the institute’s Student Learning Center.

Every incoming student enrolls in the Introduction to Language Studies, a five-day orientation to language learning, said Graham.

“We focus on study strategies, language learning style, how to read and listen critically and how to function when there are gaps in comprehension,” she said. “We also talk about the idea of metacognition, which is making people aware of their thinking. In this case, we want students to become very aware of how they are learning and how they are thinking and monitor that.”

This introductory program helps students throughout their studies at DLIFLC because they learn to recognize when problems arise.

“We want them to understand that they will have problems,” Graham said. “Students who come here are typically very bright, and they are not used to having to study or worry about academic success. But here, it’s a completely different setting when you are expected to be in intermediate Arabic in 64 weeks. Most people get to that level after years of in-country living, so the proficiency level these students are expected to achieve is quite daunting.”

Students are also given an overview of the two exit-level tests, which consist of the written Defense Language Proficiency Test, which tests language and listening, and an oral proficiency test, which consists of an interview.

Throughout the school year, there are 1,500 supplementary workshops and tutoring is always available.

Students nearing graduation also attend language enhancement after DLI, a program designed to help them transition from classroom-based learning to field-based learning. For language sustainment, continuing education and culture-focus resources can be accessed from DLIFLC’s website.

“Learning how to learn was the most important skill I have learned here at DLI,” said Staff Sgt. Ben Rand, who graduated from the Arabic language course in 2009.

After graduation, Army regulations allow for Foreign Language Proficiency Pay. To qualify, students need to graduate with level-two proficiency — pay depends on military occupation specialty and branch of service — to receive the bonus every month. Students who graduate with a lower proficiency can work up to the level of proficiency required to receive pay, Graham said.

Learning with technology

Technology has transformed the way language education is distributed throughout the armed forces and has made a myriad of resources available for DLIFLC students, Clark said. Any information or study material is virtually a click away.

A wireless network covers the entire Monterey campus, giving students the opportunity to access study resources from their laptops in classrooms and other campus facilities. They also have access to all learning material on their MP3 devices, tablet PCs and interactive white boards, among other devices.

“There are different computer programs students can use to study a language,” Edwards said. “For example, the Rapid Road program has flash cards, written and oral tests. Students can record their voice to practice pronunciation. There are different methods and programs to meet individualized studies because every student learns differently.”

Rand has witnessed the major technological changes at the institute.

“I have seen the full transformation in the last seven years. It changed from cassettes to CDs and now the iPod,” he said. “It was wonderful because anybody

can access hundreds of sites and are not just limited to listening to what is the CD or even iPod. Students now have free range to choose what is going to challenge them.”

Immersion

Although technology can be a very useful tool in learning a language, DLIFLC officials recognize that students need to live and experience the culture they will face as professional linguists.

As part of the institute’s curriculum, students are required to have some language immersion experience, but not all immersion happens at the campus. Many students travel in the United States and to the countries of their target language for a three- to six-week immersion course.

With different activities throughout the school year, students experience the food, arts and crafts and general culture associated with the languages taught at DLIFLC. The halls are filled with shops and vendors where students learn money exchange and the importance of partnering with the locals.

“Because our teachers are all native, that is a cultural experience in itself,” Marquez said. “We have an immersion class in Sacramento, Calif. There’s a mosque over there and an Afghan store, so we are going to practice our speaking skills.”

Many students also travel off-post to Fort Ord, Calif., where they dress in typical attire and practice language skills and cultural awareness. Their knowledge is put to the test with different scenarios.

“It starts with a one-day immersion during the first semester, and it builds up; two days during the second semester and a three-day immersion during the third semester, which requires military operations, drills and language,” Edwards explained. “The instructors and the MLIs are all involved in the scenarios and practices.”

Students also practice their language and cultural awareness skills by assisting deploying units at the National Training Center, Fort Irwin, Calif.

“We take 12 DLIFLC instructors and 12 students to facilitate key leader engagements at Fort Irwin during the first week of training for each rotation,” said retired Master Sgt. Neil Matteson, DLIFLC operations specialist. “The students act as interpreters, one for the instructor and one for the Soldier being interrogated.”

During an immersion course at Fort Ord, Calif., students and instructors discuss in Arabic the activities planned for the day. Students dress in typical attire and enjoy Arab food and coffee before going into an interrogating scenario taken from a real-life situation.



Both students and rotational units reap the benefits. Students get speaking practice, while units learn about language and cultural differences that can impact the outcome of the mission, a critical issue downrange, Matteson said.

Taking it to the field

Once they graduate, students must be prepared to face the challenges downrange, and learn how to use their skills once the structure of a classroom is taken away.

Eighty-five percent of DLIFLC graduates will work in intelligence-related missions. The majority work as cryptologic linguists, which consists of translating information for analysts. Others work as interrogators, translators, interpreters, MLIs, or become part of a special forces group.

“On the ground, a linguist is the biggest asset the ground forces commander has. Even if it’s a linguist embedded as an infantryman in a unit, he is an invaluable asset when you are downrange; he is a force multiplier,” Rand said. “When you are fighting an enemy that is embedded in the civilian population, if you don’t know the general culture and language you can’t effectively target the enemy.”

Edwards, who has been an interrogator most of his military career and deployed to Iraq twice, said that “when you know the language, even if you just pick up a little bit, it is a big deal for them [the civilian population]. Downrange, every unit needs some type of interpreter to communicate with local people. Hearts and minds are nothing if you can’t cross the language barrier. It’s vital.”

Language skills for all forces

DLIFLC is making sure every service member gets some language and cultural education; from students stationed at

Monterey to every deploying force in the armed forces.

Aside from the classes taught at the DLIFLC campuses, the institute has extended instruction with four programs:

- **Mobile Training Teams:** DLICertified teachers travel where language instruction is needed and teach language and culture familiarization and survival for one to 16 weeks.

- **Headstart:** Eighty hours of self-study introductory language material. The materials can be downloaded at <https://lmds.dliflc.edu/home.aspx>.

- **Familiarization CDs:** Service members can learn history, culture and language pronunciation. Materials can be downloaded at www.dliflc.edu.

- **Language Survival Kits:** Language familiarization and pronunciation guides that include medical terms and phrases. Materials can be downloaded by any military member at <https://lmds.dliflc.edu/home.aspx>.

Mobile training teams from DLIFLC help deploying units learn how to read, write and learn vocabulary. In June, 73 Soldiers from Fort Campbell, Ky., and 300 Soldiers from Fort Carson, Colo., graduated from a Pashto and Dari language course prior to their deployment to Afghanistan.

“One of our goals is to support deploying units with training detachments and mobile training teams all over the Department of Defense — teams going to Iraq or Afghanistan or anyone who needs language-support material for performance in support of the Global War on Terrorism,” Clark said. 🇺🇸

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

SHOULDER TO SHOULDER

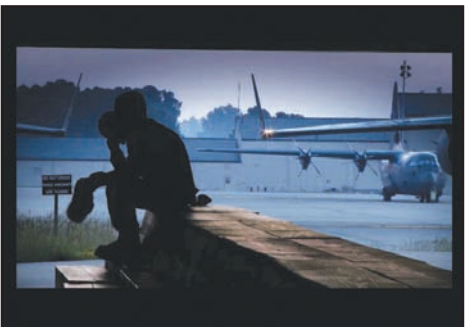


I WILL NEVER QUIT ON LIFE

Screen shots from the 2010 "Shoulder to Shoulder: I Will Never Quit on Life" video, courtesy U.S. Army Suicide Prevention Task Force

By Cindy Ramirez

"I grabbed the rifle off the wall, put my rifle up to my chin, put it on semi; I pulled the trigger. ... I tried to kill myself."



Those are the words of Spc. Joseph Sanders, speaking bravely into a video camera as he tells of his suicide attempt after his marriage ended following deployment.

"The only thing I thought was my world was over. ... Something took over, and I couldn't control it."

Sanders tells of going into Soldier mode, immediately dismantling his rifle to find out why it didn't fire. The firing pin was missing.

Fearing that his battle buddy might hurt himself, Spc. Albert Godding had removed it.

"I'm not that guy that intervenes. I'm not that guy that does stuff like this," says Godding as he speaks into the camera.

"But for some reason, I was; for some reason, I did," Godding says. "I didn't believe it myself, but I'm glad I did it."

Sanders later asked Godding if he had removed the pin. Godding admitted doing so, telling Sanders he had noticed a change in his behavior and was concerned for his safety.

"I believe that he acted appropriately," Sanders says. "I mean, he took charge of the situation. He manned up and he did what he needed to do."

He saved Sanders' life.

TRUE STORIES

This true story opens the video, “Shoulder to Shoulder: I Will Never Quit on Life,” the Army’s latest suicide awareness initiative aimed at helping reduce the number of Soldiers who take their own lives.

Soldiers, leaders and families talk candidly about their roles in preventing a suicide, their suicidal thoughts or suicide attempts, and how they’re overcoming times of hardship and heartache with the support of their Army peers, leaders and family.



“Through the awareness video, we are trying to get Soldiers to understand first and foremost that it’s okay to reach out for help,” said Walter Morales, a retired sergeant major and member of the Army Vice Chief of Staff’s Suicide Prevention Task Force. “But we also want the Army family to recognize that when somebody is in need of help, they should reach out and give it.”

Released in July, the video is an update to last year’s. Like its predecessor, the video is now available at Army Knowledge Online and the Army’s suicide prevention website. It includes a training manual and materials for NCOs and other leaders to spread the message to all Soldiers and their families across the Army. An accompanying video features stories by and for Army civilians.

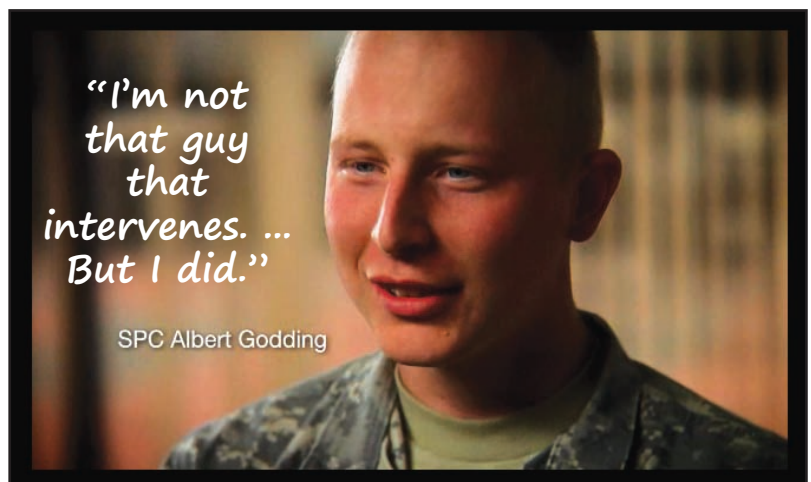
“I thought the success stories were great,” said Fort Bliss, Texas, Chaplain (Col.) Thomas Wheatley, who previewed the video. “There are a lot of success stories that never get heard. You hear about suicides, but you don’t hear about the [stories] where a buddy was successful in talking somebody out of it.”

Morales said the 17-minute video should be used as part of in-processing training, pre- and post-deployments, professional development training and anywhere leaders deem necessary to help create awareness.

Family readiness groups and other community organizations are also encouraged to use the video, he said.

“I’m urging my fellow NCOs to look at the video and heed the messages in order to help our fellow Soldiers,” Morales said.

“He took charge of the situation, he manned up and he did what he needed to do.”



“They’re good stories from real Soldiers, real family members, real civilians, who overcame their obstacles because they were resilient and had somebody brave enough who had the courage to speak up and help.”

Sanders’ story is not uncommon.

But unlike Sanders, many other Soldiers die by their own hand, leaving behind distraught families, friends and colleagues.

ONE TOO MANY

The Army this summer reported a decrease of about 30 percent in suicides among active-duty Soldiers so far this calendar year. However, an increase in suicides among reservists has also been reported.

During the first half of 2010, 80 suicides among active-duty Soldiers have been reported, compared to 88 at the same time in 2009. Among reserve component Soldiers, the numbers are 65 and 42, respectively.

But no matter the number or the reason, officials repeatedly say, one Soldier suicide is one too many.

“We continue to look at different ways to reduce suicides and suicidal behavior among our Soldiers,” Morales said, adding that the primary causes of suicide include relationship and financial issues and alcohol abuse.

Trouble adapting to life following deployments has also been found to be a

factor, although statistics show about 30 percent of Army suicides occur among those who have never deployed, Morales said.

Providing access to mental health professionals is another challenge in improving behavioral and mental health and preventing suicides, officials said.

Vice Chief of Staff of the Army Gen. Peter Chiarelli recently told members of the Senate Armed Services Committee that the Army is experiencing a shortage of mental health professionals — mirroring a national shortage.

In fact, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has identified more than 3,200 communities nationwide that have



shortages of mental health professionals and reports it would take more than 5,300 practitioners to meet the need. Telehealth resources — a virtual net of professionals who provide services via telephone, online and through videoconferencing — have been a popular option among Soldiers, Chiarelli said.

Maj. Brad West, a Fort Bliss chaplain, said that's a reality with which the Army has to cope.

"There's not enough behavioral health professionals to go around," he said. "That's why it's all the more important for buddy care and chaplain care to be at the top of priorities when it comes to preventing suicides. ... There will never be enough [professional care] to meet the demand, but you will always have a buddy and a chaplain nearby."

Morales agrees, saying that although the Army is working to improve Soldier care, these obstacles are why he stresses the importance of awareness and the need for peer and family involvement.

LENDING A SHOULDER

"Shoulder to Shoulder" is but one of the numerous initiatives the Army is using to get its messages out: You're not alone; it's okay to ask for help; and it's your duty to provide help.

On the prevention side, programs like Comprehensive Soldier Fitness and its related resilience courses focus on teaching Soldiers how to be emotionally strong and bounce back from adversity to keep from reaching the point of desperation.

Awareness initiatives such as the Real Warriors Campaign promote resilience and aim to combat the stigma associated with seeking mental health care and treatment. Real Warriors features stories of service members who have sought

treatment and are maintaining successful military or civilian careers.

Suicide intervention programs such as the Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training and the Ask, Care, Escort training have been widely embedded in the Army to teach Soldiers how to intervene when a person is considering taking his or her life.

The video will augment these programs, said retired Staff Sgt. Debra Wiggins, a consulting trainer with the ASIST program at Fort Bliss.

"I'm already thinking of ways to incorporate this video into my training," Wiggins said. "When the story [of Sanders and Godding] came out, I printed it out and now I use it when I

teach ASIST. But to actually hear them talk about it, it's very touching and very impacting."

WE ALL BLEED

"Shoulder to Shoulder" aims to reinforce the message that when faced with adversity, Soldiers should not be afraid to seek help, and leaders, peers and families have an obligation to intervene.

Perhaps most importantly, the video makes it clear that these issues should not impact a Soldier's record, and they should not fear retribution or negative stigmas.

"These Soldiers, they're not broken," Command Sgt. Maj. Michelle Fourier says in the video. "Sometimes they just need a little bit of help."

That's a message John Fortunato, chief of the Fort Bliss Restoration and

Resilience Center, reiterates in the video.

"When major life changes happen, yeah, we're all about being tough," says Fortunato, a clinical psychologist who runs the renowned treatment facility for Soldiers with post-traumatic stress disorder. "On the other hand, we bleed. And it's okay for a Soldier to bleed emotionally."

*"We bleed.
And it's ok for a
Soldier to bleed
emotionally."*



FAMILY MATTERS

In another impacting story, the video touches on the importance of family through Maj. Jeff Hall and his wife, Sheri.

"I started feeling a little off of my game," says the major about his stress after a deployment. "I've always kinda held a high standard for myself; I couldn't keep that standard. ... I was not who I was; I couldn't recognize myself anymore."

"He needed more than love."

Sheri feared the worst. "I lay on the floor of my bedroom while my wife pleaded with me not to take my life," the major says.

Like many suicidal people, the major in the video may have felt those he

loved would not miss him, said Chaplain (Maj.) Don Van Alstyne of Fort Bliss.

"That is one of the rationales why Soldiers want to end their life," he said. "I think the bottom line of what was said there is, 'My family would be better off without me.' That was mixed with emotions. If you want to capture a statement about why a Soldier considers taking his life, it's that they think, 'My family will be better off without me.' And that couldn't be more wrong."

Wiggins said incorporating family into the video was a must because "it's also the people you go home to who notice that something is not right with their spouse."

Sheri Hall knew this was a problem she and her husband couldn't handle alone.

"He needed more than love. And he needed care that I obviously couldn't give," she says, telling how the major was referred to Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Washington, D.C., and received help.

"I think that gave him hope," Sheri says. "It gave me hope."

"Shoulder to Shoulder" also stresses the key role chaplains play, emphasizing they are there to listen, and not always to talk about religion. The Fort Bliss chaplains who viewed the video said they appreciated that message, as well as a first-hand account of a chaplain who talks about his own struggles with thoughts of suicide.



"In the Army, we're not just co-workers; we're family."

View the video at www.armyg1.army.mil/hr/suicide at Army YouTube or www.facebook.com/USArmy

FOLLOW YOUR INTUITION

Van Alstyne said among the many messages the video delivers is that Soldiers should go with their gut as Godding did.

"One thing that struck me is it gives encouragement to Soldiers to use their intuition," he said, "to trust your intuition in terms of caring for someone when you feel they may need it. Take that risk and get involved."

A gut feeling also came over Maj. Catherine Black, who in the video credits her supervisors for allowing and encouraging her to go to the aid of a friend and comrade, who she believed was suicidal.

"I just knew I had to be there," she says. "I don't know that she would have been able to reach out to another person."


Black touches on the topic of another kind of family — the Army family. She said the support of her leaders had a "powerful impact on her as a person and as a commander," re-enforcing the message "in the Army, we're not just co-workers, we're family."

That's a message Sanders and Godding now take to heart.

"He saved his own life."

A sense of relief resonating from his voice, Sanders says he felt more at ease once he opened up to friends and mental health professionals.

"As soon as I started talking, I immediately felt better," he says, a smile forming on his face.

For Sanders to agree to get help and not quit on life was as important as taking the firing pin out of the rifle, says Godding, adding that by doing so, "he saved his own life." 

Contact Cindy Ramirez at cindy.ramirez1@us.army.mil



MASTERS OF RESILIENCY

Course teaches skills to bounce back

By Cindy Ramirez →

Resilient Soldiers don't break; they bounce back.

That's the message the Army Master Resilience Training Course works to get across to noncommissioned officers and other leaders, who'll in turn take the message back to their Soldiers and families.

But more than sending a message, the intense 10-day course gives participants the skills to build their resilience – the ability to bounce back after adversity.

One of the Army's newest programs to strengthen Soldiers' mental well-being, the Master Resilience Training Course is based on the positive psychology program developed at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia.

"In the past, the Army hasn't really focused on the emotional development of the Soldier," said MRT Course Manager Alvin Shrum, a retired major and chaplain. "This is what this course focuses on and teaches our Soldiers, our leaders — to be emotionally strong, to be much more resilient with everyday events."

Already, more than 1,000 Soldiers have taken the course at the University of Pennsylvania or at Fort Jackson, S.C., the new home to the Army's MRT School. The school began with a pilot group in April and graduated its first official class in May. Fort Hood, Texas, and Fort Campbell, Ky., also offer the course.

The majority of those who have taken the course are Soldiers who have just completed Advanced Individual Training at Fort Jackson. Officials said the goal is to have one MRT-trained officer and NCO in each brigade and one NCO in each battalion in the near future.

"A lot of programs that we've had in the past are great, but they were reactive programs," said Sgt. Maj. Brian D. Washington, who took the course in May and now serves as the sergeant major of the Fort Jackson resilience school. "What I like about this one is that we're giving NCOs the skills to train other Soldiers with a very proactive program."

MRT is a component of the Comprehensive Soldier Fitness program, which takes a holistic approach to wellness by improving Soldiers' social, emotional, spiritual, family and physical strength.

Curbing a Dangerous Trend

One of the goals of CSF is to empower Soldiers to be more resilient, and in doing so, improve their behavioral and mental health and reduce the Army's suicide rate.

The first half of calendar year 2010 saw a small decline in active-duty Soldier suicides over 2009, but the overall statistics remain of concern. From January to June 2010, 80 suicides were reported among active-duty Soldiers and another 65 among reserve component Soldiers. That compares to 88 and 42, respectively, during the same time period in 2009.

About 30 percent of Soldiers who commit suicide have never been deployed, Army officials said, indicating that everyday life and stressors other than war are contributing to the problem.

"We still have, obviously, a challenge," said Walter Morales, a retired sergeant major and member of the Army's Vice Chief of Staff Suicide Prevention Task Force. "We're looking at ways to effectively bring down that trend. The numbers are at a point that none of us want to see."

Among those efforts, Morales said, are the Comprehensive Soldier Fitness program, the MRT Course, awareness and intervention campaigns, a long-term study by the National Institute of Mental Health, and the recent creation of a Specialized Suicide Augmentation Response Team.

The response team is a group of subject matter experts that will be deployed to any given installation to assess its risk reduction and suicide prevention programs,

especially if the installation experiences a spike in suicides or a traumatic event, such as the mass shooting at Fort Hood last November.

Morales said the Suicide Prevention Task Force "will not be around forever." In fact, he said, the task force is looking for an agency to take over its campaign plan and implement the programs outlined in its upcoming report.

"The ultimate goal is to increase awareness and education and reduce suicide rates across all categories," said Morales, who emphasized that NCOs need to lead by example and embrace resiliency as more than a course to check off their list. "This is big, and the end result is having a healthier Army of Soldiers."



Photo courtesy Fort Jackson

Instructor Dave Shearon leads a small group exercise as part of the pilot Master Resilience Training Course at Fort Jackson, S.C., in April.

A Life Worth Living

Soldiers need to be both physically and mentally strong, and the latter begins with resiliency. Master Resilience is a “train the trainers” course whose lessons will expand to Soldiers of all ranks, military families and Department of the Army civilians, officials said. For example, some of Fort Jackson’s Army Community Service staff will take the course this summer under the Armywide rollout of the program.

“The course was awesome,” said Carla Atkinson, director of Fort Jackson’s ACS, who attended the course at the University of Pennsylvania last November. “It’s easy to understand and the information was put in a way that people really get it.”

Atkinson said parts of the course will be taught to family readiness groups and through other relevant venues: “It’s a very powerful concept, and one of the key things I took from the course is that it’s teachable.”

The Positive Psychology Center at the University of Pennsylvania was created in 2003 and promotes research, education, training and application of positive psychology, which argues that psychology entails more than the undoing of problems, its 2009 center report states. Positive psychology looks at the impact that positive experiences, strengths and institutions have on people to make their lives most worth living.

Before beginning the MRT Course, participants take a 240-question Values in Action assessment, which measures 25 character strengths. The course aims to strengthen six areas: self-awareness, self-regulation, optimism, mental agility, strength of character and connection to others. Soldiers learn skills to help them be proactive when it comes to adversity through the acronym ACT: activating event, thoughts and consequences. Participants are taught to understand the event, identify their thoughts and analyze the consequences of their thoughts and actions.

“We believe all consequences come from our thoughts,” said Shrum about the positive psychology theory. “We have to understand those thoughts in order to have different emotions and reactions that are healthy and positive.”

Among the skills to do this effectively, Shrum said, are avoiding “thinking traps,” or jumping to conclusions; overcoming “icebergs,” deep-seated beliefs that hold Soldiers back from performing their duties successfully; and energy management, or using mediation, prayer or breathing techniques to optimize performance. Soldiers also learn to put events into perspective to reduce anxiety; problem solve by accurately identifying the problem; and shut down counterproductive thinking.

“Going through this course and being more resilient doesn’t mean you’ll be perfect or won’t blow a gasket from time to time,” Shrum said. “But, it’ll remind you that you can bounce back and use the tools to do so successfully.”

Other skills involve learning to see the positive in life: identifying strengths in oneself and others; appreciating beauty, love and kindness; and understanding “active constructive responding and praise,” the acts of responding to good news or a compliment positively and praising oneself and others in the same manner.

“These skills set the tone for positive psychology, which helps us see life in a whole different light when bad things happen,” Shrum said, adding one key technique is called “hunting the good stuff,” looking out for, recording and reflecting upon the good things that happen daily.



Photos courtesy Fort Jackson

Soldiers in the Master Resilience Training Course at Fort Jackson participate in small group discussions.

Positive Life Influence


Both Shrum and Washington said they employ the MRT skills daily, and have already imparted what they’ve learned to other Soldiers and their families.

“In my own life and military career, I’ve used many of these skills without knowing it,” said Shrum. “But now I can see how they apply to our everyday lives, and I am more aware of them and the positive influence they’ve had in my life.”

Washington said he encourages NCOs to learn about resiliency and employ the techniques to better their careers and their lives.

“It helps you identify some things you may have handled differently in the past; it makes you stop and think about your thoughts and actions, and gives you options — skills to deal with those moments of adversity,” Washington said. “I would tell NCOs how much the course has added value to you as a leader, as a husband or family member. It teaches you to cope in both arenas, as an Army leader or a family man.”

Shrum emphasizes the course builds life skills, not just military know-how.

“These Soldiers will not always be Soldiers,” he said. “We’re not just building a resilient Army; we’re building a resilient nation.” 

To contact Cindy Ramirez, e-mail cindy.ramirez1@us.army.mil

The After-Action Review

After the medics finished their training event at the Combat Medic Advanced Skills Training program at Fort Sill, Okla., last February, observer/controller Staff Sgt. Jeff Leger was there to conduct an after-action review, helping the Soldiers discover for themselves what happened during their training, why it happened and how to improve in the future.

A candid, professional discussion of performance, the AAR is a critical assessment tool during training, guiding Soldiers to improve by figuring things out on their own. Far more effective than a critique — one-way communication that offers only one point of view — the AAR is designed to be a forum for feedback, where all participants are actively engaged in offering suggestions to correct deficiencies and reinforce strengths.

“The AAR allows us to discuss what students did well and what areas they could improve on,” Leger said after the exercise. “And, the information shared here goes both ways, because instructors learn from the different ways students approach the scenario.”

The new Warrior Leader Course program of instruction offers some salient advice for NCOs preparing to conduct an AAR:

NOT A LECTURE, NOT A CRITIQUE: Whereas a critique features only one perspective, usually that of the unit leader or senior observer/controller, an AAR is designed to help Soldiers

discover on their own where they can improve and how to do so. Similarly, success or failure is not determined during an AAR; instead, comments, discussions and varied viewpoints combine to help Soldiers learn from their mistakes.

FORMAL & INFORMAL: *Formal* AARs are typically conducted at the company level and above. Thus, they are much more resource intensive, requiring more detailed planning and preparation. On the other hand, junior NCOs will mostly participate in *informal* AARs for individual Soldiers and during crew-, squad- or platoon-level exercises. Indeed, informal

AARs are often on-the-spot reviews of Soldier and collective training performances, allowing lessons learned to be immediately applied when an exercise is repeated.

OBJECTIVE: PROMOTE LEARNING:

The goal for any AAR is to help Soldiers learn how they can improve their performance. This cannot be achieved if everyone present does not participate and offer insightful observations or pertinent questions to help build understanding. The AAR cannot become a “love fest” either, where deficiencies are neither acknowl-

edged nor discussed. Instead, an honest discussion should be encouraged to provide the opportunity for learning — from both the mistakes made and the jobs done well.

The overall purpose of the discussion is for participants to discover their strengths and weaknesses, propose solutions and adopt a course of action to correct any problems.

James Brabenec of the Fort Sill Cannoneer contributed to this story.



Photo by Spc. Monica K. Smith

A team of Soldiers from E Company, 4th Battalion, 3rd Aviation Regiment, Combat Aviation Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, conducts an after-action review after completing a military operations on urban terrain live-fire exercise at the shoothouse at Fort Stewart, Ga., last August.



A successful AAR: The 4-stage process

1

PLAN

The AAR plan — the foundation of a successful review — outlines who will **observe** the training, who will **conduct** the AAR, **what trainers should evaluate, when and where** the AAR will occur, and what **training aids** will be used. The plan covers things like **when stopping points are scheduled** during training events and **who should be present**. At the squad and platoon levels, all members should attend and participate in the AAR.

2

PREPARE

Since the AAR reviews how a team responded to training objectives, the observer/controllers should **review those objectives** before training and again immediately before the AAR. OCs **identify key events** for observation during the training event, **determine the best place to observe** without becoming a distraction, and **take good notes** about the team's performance during the event. After the training event, OCs **collect others' observations, organize** the AAR presentation and **rehearse**.

3

CONDUCT

The OC introduces the AAR by **explaining its purpose** and reviewing the **objectives and intent** of the training. Since Soldier participation is directly related to the atmosphere created during this introduction, the OC should make a special effort to draw in Soldiers who may seem reluctant to participate. Then, **what was supposed to happen** is discussed — the mission and intent. The OC guides the discussion of the events that transpired, encouraging participation by asking open-ended questions. As more Soldiers add their perspectives, **what really happened** and **how to improve** becomes clear. The AAR **concludes with a summary** of what was discussed, linking the review's conclusions to future training.

4

FOLLOW UP

Since the lessons learned during the AAR are **fresh in the minds** of the participating Soldiers, retraining should not be delayed, if at all possible. Leaders can use the information gleaned during the AAR process to **plan future training** that is focused on sustaining the proficiency demonstrated and correcting any deficiencies.

DOS & DON'TS

After-action reviews are the dynamic link between task performance and execution to standard. Here are some dos and don'ts to keep in mind when conducting an AAR:

What not to do:

- ✗ **Lecture or critique:** Encourage participation from all those involved. Establish an environment where a frank, professional discussion can occur and where disagreement is permissible.
- ✗ **Ask yes or no questions:** It is better to ask open-ended questions, which allow Soldiers to learn from each other instead of being fed the answers.
- ✗ **Dominate the conversation:** Guide but don't monopolize the discussion. Enter to facilitate only when necessary.

What to do:

- ✓ **Organize:** Structure the AAR by presenting a chronological order of events, the warfighting functions, or the key events, themes or issues identified by the chain of command before the training.
- ✓ **Focus on what went wrong and what went right:** The AAR discussion should cover both the weaknesses needing improvement and the strengths to sustain.
- ✓ **Use visual aids:** They need not be elaborate. In an outdoor environment, for example, pinecones or other found material can represent the players in the training scenario.
- ✓ **End on a positive note:** The AAR is not the appropriate time to determine "winners" or "losers." Instead, conclude with a forward-focused statement that ties the conclusions learned in the discussion to future training.

"We would be much better served if we could do a better job of accentuating the positive — pat that young NCO on the back when he [or she] does right. Better yet, have the guts to underwrite NCO mistakes and back up our junior NCOs. Finally, look for solutions and suggest them instead of problems to our commanders."

— SGT. MAJ. OF THE ARMY WILLIAM A. CONNELLY

NCO Stories

A selection of Valor



Staff Sgt. Jon Cavaiani

Citation to award the Medal of Honor

Staff Sgt. Jon Cavaiani distinguished himself by conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of life above and beyond the call of duty in action in the Republic of Vietnam in 1971 while serving as a platoon leader to a security platoon providing security for an isolated radio relay site located within enemy-held territory.

On the morning of June 4, 1971, the entire camp came under an intense barrage of enemy small arms, automatic weapons, rocket-propelled grenade and mortar fire from a superior size enemy force. Cavaiani acted with complete disregard for his personal safety as he repeatedly exposed himself to heavy enemy fire in order to move about the camp's perimeter directing the platoon's fire and rallying the platoon in a desperate fight for survival.

Cavaiani also returned heavy suppressive fire upon the assaulting enemy force during this period with a variety of weapons. When the entire platoon was evacuated, Cavaiani un-

hesitatingly volunteered to remain on the ground and direct the helicopters into the landing zone. He was able to direct the first 3 helicopters in evacuating a major portion of the platoon. He was forced to remain at the camp overnight because of intense enemy fire.

Throughout the night, Cavaiani calmly directed the remaining platoon members in strengthening their defenses. On the morning of June 5, a heavy ground fog restricted visibility. The superior size enemy force launched a major ground attack in an attempt to completely annihilate the remaining small force. The enemy force advanced in two ranks, first firing a heavy volume



of small arms automatic weapons and rocket-propelled grenade fire while the second rank continuously threw a steady barrage of hand grenades at the beleaguered force. Cavaiani returned a heavy barrage of small arms and hand grenade fire on the assaulting enemy force but was unable to slow them down. He ordered the remaining platoon members to attempt to escape while he provided them with cover fire.

With one last courageous exertion, Cavaiani recovered a machine gun, stood up, completely exposing himself to the heavy enemy fire directed at him, and began firing the machine

gun in a sweeping motion along the two ranks of advancing enemy soldiers.

Through Cavaiani's valiant efforts with complete disregard for his safety, the majority of the remaining platoon members were able to escape. While inflicting severe losses on the advancing enemy force, Cavaiani was wounded numerous times.

Cavaiani's conspicuous gallantry, extraordinary heroism and intrepidity at the risk of his life, above and beyond the call of duty, were in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself and the U.S. Army.

Medal of Honor recipient's life at war

By **Stephanie Sanchez**

Retired Staff Sgt. Jon Cavaiani almost didn't make it into the Army – he was allergic to bee stings.

But he jumped through hoops, joined the Special Forces and four years later earned a Medal of Honor for his actions during the Vietnam War. In an interview with PBS, Cavaiani briefly described his life as a Soldier.

He was 26 when he inquired about joining the Army, he said. "I was 4-F, which politely meant they'd take my mother before they'd take me. And I kind of had a doctor ... I had a talk with him about it, and he decided I wasn't 4-F anymore."

Cavaiani, who was born in England and became naturalized in 1968, was married with two children when he enlisted. He then entered the Special Forces out of pride.

"[I] went to heavy and light weapons and basic training, then advanced individual training. Then this gentleman walks up with his beret gently cocked off to one side, and asked me if I was man enough to be in Special Forces. Well, question anything you want, but don't question my masculinity," he said. "So I had to prove I was."

Deployed to Vietnam in 1970, Cavaiani said he was ordered by a sergeant major to be a veterinarian and agricultural advisor for I Corps, and work with children. He said some of his tasks were to deliver children and treat animals for rinderpest.

"The war was just passing me by, and it just so happened some people had been chasing the North Vietnamese in this one

area. We were walking down the trail and these guys ran across the trail, shooting the Vietnamese sergeant major and mortally wounding him," he said. "And so he wants me to adopt his son. So I adopted his son, and I kind of built an orphanage up around him."

In between his work at camps in Vietnam, Cavaiani said he would go back to Namsang and see his adopted son. But during one visit he learned his son had been killed.

"Chopped up and hung from the ceiling; and the message was, 'Tell *baksi* Jon to stay out of the area (*baksi* meant doctor). And most all of my other friend were dead – six of the monks. One of the monks they [let live], told me not to operate in the area anymore. So it kind of turned my perception of the war completely around."

Soon after, Cavaiani organized one firefight and directed the evacuation of several Soldiers. He and another Soldier, however, were left stranded. The Soldier was killed by insurgents and he managed to escape until he was captured by a 70-year-old peasant.

"All my worst nightmares came true. ... They taped my hands and they taped my face. I had almost 120 shrapnel holes in me. And a couple of bullet holes," he said. "They moved me back, and they finally got me to my first interrogation camp."

Cavaiani was held captive until 1973. President Gerald Ford presented him with the Medal of Honor the following year.

To read more of Cavaiani's interview, visit http://www.pbs.org/weta/americanvalor/stories/cavaiani_interview.html.



Courtesy graphic

Staff Sgt. Jon Cavaiani was featured in *Medal of Honor: Portraits of Valor Beyond the Call of Duty*. Cavaiani earned the Medal of Honor, which is the nation's highest medal of valor, for his actions in the Vietnam War. The photograph was taken by Nick Del Calzo.

Smith earns Silver Star

By Spc. Luther L. Boothe Jr. →

A 101st Airborne Division Soldier received the Army's third-highest award for valor April 11 for running through enemy fire in Afghanistan, eliminating two anti-coalition militants, refusing treatment for his own wounds and saving the life of a teammate.

Sgt. 1st Class John I. Smith Jr., of Troop C, 1st Squadron, 61st Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, received the Silver Star Medal at Fort Campbell, Ky., for his gallant actions in August 2008 while on a recovery mission in Afghanistan during Operation Enduring Freedom.

"I saw one of our own Soldiers get hit, and I would not stop, no matter what the cost, to get him out of harm's way," said Smith. "That is what we Soldiers do. The Warrior Ethos states, 'I will never leave a fallen comrade.'"

Smith, serving as a dismounted reconnaissance platoon sergeant, led his Soldiers to conduct a quick-reaction-force mission to aid an Afghan National Police station in danger of being overrun in Paktika province, Afghanistan.

"As we approached the scene, we heard the gunfire taking place; Smith immediately drove his truck up the hill to get a better picture of what was going on," said Capt. Kevin Bell, the platoon leader.

After the quick reaction force arrived at the scene, they secured the area and began to treat the Afghan wounded. At that point, the enemy resisted with rocket-propelled grenades, machine-gun fire with armor-piercing rounds and AK-47 small-arms fire.

When enemy fire was suppressed, Smith and a small team went to check on a casualty, said Bell.

"As one of that team's Soldiers was inspecting what we thought was a wound-

ed Afghan policeman, they were hit with a grenade and small-arms fire," he said.

The Soldier was wounded, stranded and needed immediate aid.

"The enemy had a machine-gun team approximately 250 meters away engaging our element, and they had an additional two-enemy combatant team pinned down in a ditch approximately 10 meters away from the location of the wounded American Soldier, who was lying in the open dirt road," Smith said.

Without hesitation, Smith refused

"I had to silence the enemy in order to evacuate the wounded Soldier," Smith said.

Smith does not see his actions as heroic or brave, merely a culmination of training and doing the right thing.

"I don't feel like I am a hero. I was just doing my job as an infantry platoon sergeant. I signed up to be a Soldier. Few get into situations like this, but I believe that everyone in my platoon right now is willing and able to do what I did," Smith said. "All my years in the Army prepared

me to do my job. The most important detail for me is that all my men made it out alive."

Despite his feelings about that day, those around Smith recognize his heroic efforts.

"He says he is not a hero, but he is definitely a hero," Bell said. "He did not hesitate or question himself; without indecision, his first thought was 'someone is wounded and in a bad situation, and I have to help him.' The example he set is what I remember most from that day. His reaction was, 'Do not think about myself, but help save someone in need.'"

His humble approach, discipline and commitment to doing what is right began at an early age as a Boy Scout.

"We were not surprised by his actions; he is a natural-born leader," said Donna Eames, Smith's mother. "As a boy scout, he was always in the woods – it seems as though his whole life he was preparing for a situation like this."

Jerry Eames, Smith's stepfather, said it was not an accident Smith was there. It was a situation where preparation met opportunity, and he did what he was trained to do.

"Where some kids wanted to play piano or be a musician, he wanted to be a Soldier," Eames said.



Photo by Spc. Luther L. Boothe Jr.

Maj. Gen. John F. Campbell, commanding general of the 101st Airborne Division, awards Sgt. 1st Class John I. Smith Jr. of 1st Squadron, 61st Cavalry Regiment, 506th Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division the Silver Star Medal during a ceremony at and Fort Campbell, Ky., April 22.

treatment for his own wounds, gathered a two-man medic team and led them through incoming grenades and enemy fire as they crossed open ground to reach the Soldier.

"I had to get face-to-face with the enemy to get the Soldier," Smith said. "We got into a shooting match while I was trying to evacuate the Soldier to get him medical attention."

Unable to get a clear shot, Smith threw two grenades at the enemy to defuse the threat.

Medic earns Distinguished Service Cross

By Jerry Harben
Army Medicine

An Army medic's heroism during a firefight in Afghanistan led to his recognition with the U.S. military's second-highest decoration for valor.

Sgt. Joseph L. Lollino received the Distinguished Service Cross and the Purple Heart from Lt. Gen. Eric Schoomaker, surgeon general of the Army, on May 17 during the Army Medical Symposium in San Antonio, which was organized by the U.S. Army Medical Command and the Association of the United States Army.

Lollino, a native of Hoffman Estates, Ill., retrieved and treated five casualties when his convoy was ambushed June 20, 2008, in the Paktika province of Afghanistan. He was serving with Company C, 1st Battalion (Airborne), 503rd Infantry Regiment, on his second deployment to Afghanistan.

"One vehicle was very badly disabled. The RPG (rocket-propelled grenade) blew up a fuel can in back, starting a massive fire," Lollino said. "There were two mountainsides on both sides of the road, with a small dip on the left side of the road, so that made it very difficult to maneuver around. It was very rocky with some trees."

Lollino drove his armored Humvee through enemy machine-gun and small-arms fire to reach the disabled vehicle, returned fire with his weapon, extracted the casualties from the vehicle and began treatment.

"As the [casualty collection point] started taking fire, I returned fire," he said. "I used a couple of magazines until the truck got behind us, then the .50-cal [machine gun] and the Mark 19 [grenade launcher] took over."

"They shot RPGs at us, and I got down to cover one of the wounded who had very bad shrapnel wounds. I got

wounded myself," he added.

Despite shrapnel in his upper arm, Lollino treated four Soldiers with shrapnel wounds to the neck, legs, arms and shoulder, plus a case of smoke inhalation. He loaded them into another vehicle and continued treatment as they escaped the four-kilometer-long ambush.

"We got them out. I just wanted to make sure the guys were safe; they were good friends of mine," he said. "I had a goal: I didn't want anybody in my unit to die. We came back with casualties, but nobody died."

"They're all doing good now. I get to talk to them every once in a while," Lollino said. "One, Sgt. Matlock, got the Silver Star, and he's actually deployed again to Afghanistan."

Lollino now is assigned to Tripler Army Medical Center in Hawaii as a licensed practical nurse, working with

patients recovering from anesthesia.

His wife, parents, siblings and several former comrades in the airborne unit attended the award ceremony.

"He's a great guy; he always has your back. I have never had a more dependable friend," said Sgt. Cayleb Lee, who has now left active duty after serving with Lollino from basic training through assignment in Italy.

"I just wanted to do my job, fix the guys and make sure no one died," Lollino said. "Everybody's got a family, we all want to get back to."



Photo by Ed Dixon

Sgt. Joseph Lollino receives the Distinguished Service Cross from Lt. Gen. Eric Schoomaker on May 11, as family and friends observe at the MEDCOM/AUSA Army Medical Symposium. His wife, parents, siblings and several former comrades in the airborne unit were at the ceremony.

The NCO Corps: Service, professionalism, leadership

By Sgt. Shawn E. Pelletier
Fort Lewis, Wash.

Being a noncommissioned officer can mean different things to different people. All NCOs follow the same standards and discipline, but the way they internalize them may differ significantly.

We know the everyday rigors and stresses of taking care of our troops and we welcome the responsibility. The Corps is not just some words on a piece of paper; it's a way of life. As the NCO Creed says, "I will not forget, nor will I allow my comrades to forget that we are professionals, Noncommissioned Officers, leaders!"

We are professionals. We would not be in this position if we were not. We are proficient in our jobs but strive to learn something new every day. While we are responsible for many things, our most precious task is the well-being of our Soldiers. We cultivate things like good leader development and Soldier-NCO relationships. We teach, train and lead our Soldiers. Knowing how to take constructive criticism and turn it into something one can learn from, is the hallmark of the NCO.

We are *Noncommissioned Officers*. As NCOs, we live by a creed and hold ourselves to a higher standard in all that we do and say. Anyone can be an E-5, but not everyone can be an NCO. E-5 is just a grade, a pay level. But a "sergeant" is a vocation, a calling of trust and responsibility.

The NCO is what all Soldiers strive to be because they live the NCO Creed and maintain higher standards. NCOs train and lead their Soldiers as well as their peers. It's not just about having "stripes." It's about the pride and satisfaction that we as Soldiers have accomplished, filling the boots of past NCOs, spanning back to the times of medieval knights and sergeants of the guard. As we have heard time and time again, we are part of something bigger than ourselves.

We professionals, we noncommissioned officers, are first and foremost *leaders*. Leaders set the example. We train our Soldiers to be leaders so that one day, they may fill our boots. Leaders ensure that training is implemented and administered, not to time, but to standard. We instill in our Soldiers the importance of Army values and what they mean. We treat Soldiers as we want to be

treated – with respect. We set the example on a daily basis from basic customs and courtesies, to basic soldiering skills. We are here to ensure the Soldier is taken care of and is mentally and physically capable to defend this country. We are the best. For Soldiers and NCOs who struggle, we police them and help them out. We take care of our own and never let them fail.

Today's NCOs should look at the past and toward the future to realize that we are the next "Greatest Generation." The great armies of history had brilliant NCO leadership, but no army is greater than today's U.S. Army. And no NCO is more knowledgeable, proficient or well-versed as today's American NCO. Our NCOs are the go-to people, the confidants. They bring up the morale of the troops and keep Soldiers in line and disciplined.

The NCO is what all Soldiers strive to be because they live the NCO Creed and maintain higher standards. NCOs train and lead their Soldiers as well as their peers. It's not just about having "stripes." It's about the pride and satisfaction that we as Soldiers have accomplished, filling the boots of past NCOs, spanning back to the times of medieval knights and sergeants of the guard. As we have heard time and time again, we are part of something bigger than ourselves.

We have a lot to look back on and be proud of. The historic NCOs' boots are big, but we fill them. As the times change, so does the Army. We are a different Army than the World War II Army, but NCOs' values still remain. We take from the past and learn.

The corps of non-commissioned officers is a sturdy platform.

From the Warrior Leader Course to the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy, we have the best training, the best support channel and a set of core values that no other organization comes close to reproducing.

As NCOs, we are committed to service and do so freely.

We did so when we raised our right hand and swore to support and defend this great nation during peacetime and war. We have done this for years – hundreds of years. We volunteered to defend this country and to eliminate the enemy, foreign or domestic. Service is when civilians come into the military entrance processing station and join the Army, entering active duty and leaving behind their civilian lives. They leave for Basic Combat Training and are trained by the most proficient NCOs in the Army. They train, train some more, deploy to war, and set forth to do what they were trained to do: To be the best.

Service is a sense of belonging. It's serving something greater than yourself. Service is all about pride in achieving goals and serving your country. We as Soldiers can look back and be grateful for the past generations. They set the example for what we do in today's Army, and they were the founders of the values by which we live.

Service in today's NCO Corps

By Sgt. Robert J. Harter
Fort Lewis, Wash.

What makes an NCO different from a Soldier? We, as noncommissioned officers, are the first-line supervisors, leaders, advisors and mentors. We are the ones who use not only doctrine, but also experience, to make leadership decisions. We are truly the “backbone of the Army.” When you think of the reach of the NCO within the scope of the Army, it's staggering. Whatever story is being told around the water cooler – the experiences of Basic Combat Training or a recent deployment – there is one figure who stands out in the Army and that is the noncommissioned officer.

As emphasized in the Baron von Stueben's *Regulations for the Order and Discipline of the Troops of the United States*, NCOs, with their varied roles, are charged with the duties and responsibilities of not only the execution of the mission, but also the good order and discipline of their Soldiers. It is as true now as it was then; the NCO sets the standard by his or her example, strictly adhering to Army regulations. The noncommissioned officer earns subordinates' respect through deeds and discipline, encouraging them to attain that higher standard while holding them responsible for their actions and performance in their daily duties. This awesome responsibility should be the motivating factor for any leader, the NCO in particular.

While the NCO wears many hats, our heavy workload guides and motivates us to continue to strive and encourage those around us. Our professional discipline and sense of duty are noticed

by our subordinates, and they, in turn, emulate this through the performance of their duties. When something needs to be corrected, an NCO corrects it. When the mission needs to get done, a noncommissioned officer ensures it is executed on time and to standard. When someone falls behind, it is a noncommissioned officer who makes sure they get the help, support and encouragement they need. When the deadline approaches, it is the noncommissioned officer who not only burns the midnight oil to get the job done, but also ingrains the same values in his or her subordinates.

The peer network for NCOs covers the entire globe. We know that by simply working and talking with our peers, the answer to almost any dilemma can be found. I say “almost,” because when our peer network can't find an answer, we look it up; this is where the senior noncommissioned officer comes into view. By utilizing the senior NCOs within our support channel, there truly is no challenge that can't be met.

Serving as an NCO means that we are professionals and do what it takes to complete the mission, take care of our subordinates, advise our officers, and enforce Army standards and discipline. It means we are the ones who step forward when asked to volunteer. We are the ones who say, “too easy,” when given a mission.

Bottom line: Noncommissioned officers have the biggest impact on the mission. They are the ones who look to get the job done and make sure others know how to do theirs. And, I look forward to doing it again tomorrow.

PLAY IT SAFE ON A HIKE!

**LEADERS
SOLDIERS
FAMILIES**

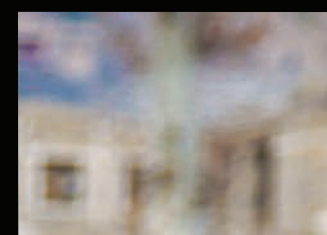
- Hike with a friend or family member
- Tell someone where you are going
- Have a plan
- Take plenty of water
- Don't walk off the trail
- Bring a hat and sunscreen
- Know your limitations

SAFE Summer

ARMY SAFE IS ARMY STRONG
X BAND BROTHERS & SISTERS

ARMY STRONG
U.S. ARMY COMBAT READINESS SAFETY CENTER
<https://safety.army.mil>

PHOTO JOURNAL





Staff Sgt. Bryan Jones and fellow Soldiers assigned to 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, walk back to their vehicles after meeting with the local population during a key leader's engagement in the village of Lachey in the Shigal district of Kunar province, Afghanistan.

Photo by Sgt. Teddy Wade

GOT A PHOTO TO SUBMIT?

SEND IT TO ATSS-SCN@US.ARMY.MIL

PHOTO JOURNAL

▶ Soldiers with 3rd Battalion, 17th Field Artillery Regiment, conduct a fire mission using a M-777 105 mm howitzer at Forward Operating Base Ramrod, Afghanistan.

Photo by Air Force Staff Sgt. Dayton Mitchell

▼ Master Sgt. Amor Bostwick, assigned to the 160th Signal Brigade, attempts to flee from a military working dog during a demonstration at Camp Slayer, Iraq. The demonstration showcased how dogs' skills are applied in military operations in Iraq.

Photo by Sgt. Phillip Valentine



▶ Senior enlisted paratroopers of the 82nd Airborne Division run past a palm grove on Camp Ramadi, Iraq, during a four-mile run in the early morning.

Photo by Spc. Mike MacLeod





▲ A Special Forces Soldier scans the terrain after a short-night's sleep during a three-day mission through the mountains of Bagwa, Farah province, Afghanistan.
Photo by Staff Sgt. Nicholas Pilch



▲ A Soldier with 5th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division lends a helping hand to a fellow Soldier, while crossing a river during a joint patrol of the Arghandab River Valley, Kandahar province, Afghanistan.
Photo by Air Force Master Sgt. Juan Valdes

▼ A mini-mushroom cloud billows behind Army engineers from the E Company, 1st Battalion, 77th Armor Regiment "Steel Tigers" and Explosive Ordnance Disposal technicians attached to 4th Brigade, 1st Armored Division. The detonation was designed to eliminate loose unexploded ordnance and illegal munitions seized by Iraqi security forces in Dhi Qar province.
Photo by 2nd Lt. Chad Cooper



Roll call

o f t h e f a l l e n

Operation Iraqi Freedom

Capt. Michael P. Cassidy, 41, Simpsonville, S.C., June 17, 2010 ♦ *Spc. Jacob P. Dohrenwend, 20, Milford, Ohio, June 21, 2010*
Pvt. Francisco J. Guardado-Ramirez, 21, Sunland Park, N.M., June 2, 2010 ♦ *Pfc. Bryant J. Haynes, 21, Epps, La., June 26, 2010*
Sgt. Israel P. Obryan, 24, Newbern, Tenn., June 11, 2010 ♦ *Spc. Christopher W. Opat, 29, Spencer, Iowa, June 15, 2010*
Pfc. Alvaro R. Regalado Sessarego, 37, Virginia Beach, Va., May 30, 2010 ♦ *Sgt. Steve M. Theobald, 53, Goose Creek, S.C., June 4, 2010*
Spc. William C. Yauch, 23, Batesville, Ark., June 11, 2010

Operation Enduring Freedom

Spc. Scott A. Andrews, 21, Fall River, Mass., June 21, 2010 ♦ *Spc. Christian M. Adams, 26, Sierra Vista, Ariz., June 11, 2010*
Spc. Brian M. Anderson, 24, Harrisonburg, Va., June 12, 2010 ♦ *1st Sgt. Robert N. Barton, 35, Roxie, Miss., June 7, 2010*
Spc. Matthew R. Catlett, 23, Houston, Texas, June 7, 2010 ♦ *Spc. Nathan W. Cox, 21, Fremont, Calif., June 16, 2010*
Sgt. 1st Class Robert J. Fike, 38, Conneautville, Pa., June 11, 2010 ♦ *Spc. David A. Holmes, 34, Tennille, Ga., June 26, 2010*
Staff Sgt. Bryan A. Hoover, 29, West Elizabeth, Pa., June 11, 2010 ♦ *Pfc. Gunnar R. Hotchkjin, 31, Naperville, Ill., June 16, 2010*
Staff Sgt. James P. Hunter, 25, South Amherst, Ohio, June 18, 2010 ♦ *Spc. Charles S. Jirtle, 29, Lawton, Okla., June 7, 2010*
Spc. Joseph D. Johnson, 24, Flint, Mich., June 16, 2010 ♦ *Pfc. Anthony T. Justesen, 22, Wilsonville, Ore., June 23, 2010*
Sgt. Erick J. Klusacek, 22, Calcium, N.Y., June 8, 2010 ♦ *Spc. Andrew R. Looney, 22, Owasso, Okla., June 21, 2010*
Staff Sgt. Edwardo Loredó, 34, Houston, Texas, June 24, 2010 ♦ *Sgt. Joshua A. Lukeala, 23, Yigo, Guam, June 7, 2010*
Pfc. Russell E. Madden, 29, Dayton, Ky., June 23, 2010 ♦ *2nd Lt. Michael E. McGahan, 23, Orlando, Fla., June 6, 2010*
Pfc. David T. Miller, 19, Wilton, N.Y., June 21, 2010 ♦ *Spc. Brendan P. Neenan, 21, Enterprise, Ala., June 7, 2010*
Spc. Benjamin D. Osborn, 27, Queensbury, N.Y., June 15, 2010 ♦ *Pfc. Benjamin J. Park, 25, Fairfax Station, Va., June 18, 2010*
Spc. Jonathan K. Peney, 22, Marietta, Ga., June 1, 2010 ♦ *Spc. Jared C. Plunk, 27, Stillwater, Okla., June 25, 2010*
Spc. Blaine E. Redding, 22, Plattsmouth, Neb., June 7, 2010 ♦ *Pfc. Robert K. L. Repkje, 20, Knoxville, Tenn., June 24, 2010*
Sgt. Mario Rodríguez, 24, Smithville, Texas, June 11, 2010 ♦ *Sgt. John M. Rogers, 26, Scottsdale, Ariz., June 27, 2010*
Staff Sgt. Eric B. Shaw, 31, Exeter, Maine, June 27, 2010 ♦ *Staff Sgt. Brandon M. Silk, 25, Orono, Maine, June 21, 2010*
1st Lt. Joseph J. Theinert, 24, Sag Harbor, N.Y., June 4, 2010 ♦ *Spc. David W. Thomas, 40, St. Petersburg, Fla., June 27, 2010*
Spc. Blair D. Thompson, 19, Rome, N.Y., June 25, 2010 ♦ *1st Sgt. Eddie Turner, 41, Fort Belvoir, Va., June 22, 2010*

You are not Forgotten

Editor's 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 May 29, 2010, and June 30, 2010.

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around.**

Give your buddy a lift.

**Take the keys
and be the
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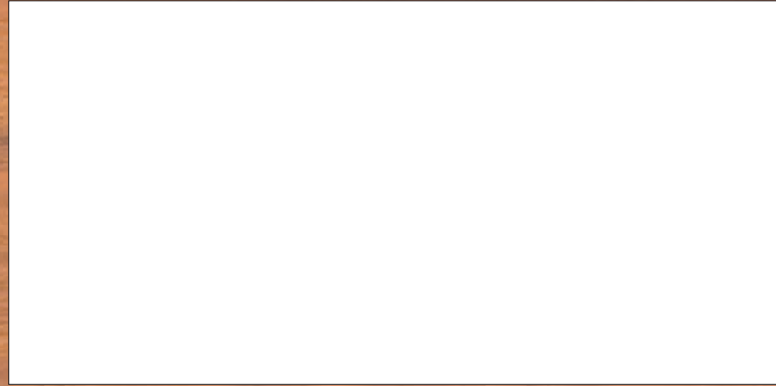
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DESIGNATE!**



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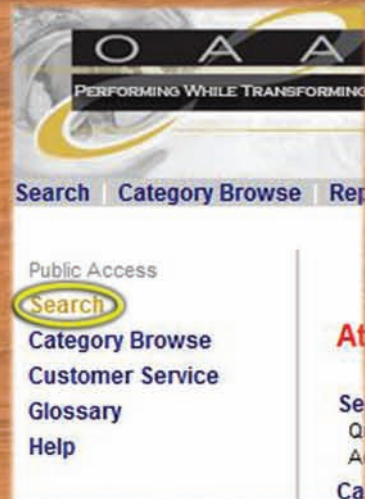
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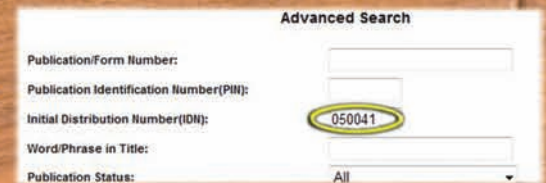
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