

THE NCO JOURNAL

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A MONTHLY FORUM FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



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NCOs

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ON ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

CAPITOL HILL



pg **20**



ON THE COVER

Some of the first NCOs to work on Capitol Hill stand in front of the East Front of the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C.

Photo illustration by Michael L. Lewis and Spc. David M. Gafford

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



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From the CSM

Reducing NCOES backlog requires boots-on-the-ground leadership

By Command Sgt. Maj. Daniel A. Dailey
4th Infantry Division and U.S. Division-North

Not since the U.S. Army first identified the need for NCO academies after World War II has there been a greater demand to broaden the professional knowledge of the noncommissioned officer.

Since the beginning of the Global War on Terrorism, the high deployment rate of Army units has created a breed of Soldiers who have accumulated more real-world experience, more promotion points and a faster changeover from enlisted Soldier to noncommissioned officer.

This high operational tempo, combined with the necessary training and preparation required to sustain nearly 10 years of war has resulted in an influx of newly promoted sergeants and a backlog of NCOs in need of formal education.

Realizing the problems that arise by having a large number of Soldiers without the proper training required of an NCO, the Army chief of staff directed U.S. Army divisions to find solutions for this forecasted NCO Education System backlog. Commanders were ordered to identify unit requirements and develop resources to get their NCOs the appropriate education and training, despite high deployment rates and operational demands.

As predicted, the ensuing NCOES backlog resulted because of both high optempo and the simultaneous restructuring of brigades from legacy force formations to modular units of action.

In the spring of 2009, the 4th Infantry “Ivy” Division, after completing a 15-month deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom — the division’s third rotation to Iraq since 2003 — about 4,000 Soldiers were waiting for the opportunity to acquire the requisite NCOES training for their ranks. Fort Carson, Colo., which received three 4ID brigade combat teams and the Ivy Division’s headquarters in the summer of 2009, did not have an NCO academy for active-duty Soldiers and inherited the NCOES backlog.

With no specific guidance or mandates on how to correct the NCOES backlog, the division adopted an approach that effectively reduced the NCOES backlog while simultaneously maintaining readiness for deployment rotations.

As the brigades began planning for their fourth deployment,

division and Fort Carson leaders moved to establish the Army’s first tri-component training academy.

The Ivy Division established this new NCO academy, hosting its first rotation of students in the Warrior Leader Course, the first level of education for junior sergeants, in October 2009. The branch-immaterial course provides basic leadership training that allows Soldiers in the ranks of private first class through staff sergeant the opportunity to acquire the skills, knowledge and experience needed to lead team- and squad-sized units.

Working with the 1st Battalion, 68th Regional Training Institute, Fort Carson leaders developed a plan to open the academy at initial operating capacity by October 2009. Instructors certified by the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy were identified from the active and reserve components to lead the course run by the academy. Command Sgt. Maj. Edward Macias was recommended by the Colorado National Guard to become the first commandant of the Fort Carson NCO Academy, assuming responsibility for allocating and funding the resources necessary to house and train junior NCOs.

Currently, the Fort Carson NCO Academy is the Army’s only multicomponent WLC, teaching active-duty Soldiers, Reservists and National Guard members during each course cycle.

Initially, the school had a capacity to train 120 students per class because of limited classroom availability and housing, but Fort Carson rapidly allocated space to accommodate up to 200 Soldiers per course.

To augment the WLC classes, the 4th Infantry Division also coordinated with U.S. Forces Command to bring mobile training teams to train junior NCOs at their units. Synchronizing the BCT deployment cycle with the Army Forces Generation training cycle, BCTs began identifying Soldiers in need of basic NCO instruction and scheduled MTTs to match their units’ redeployment and reset cycles. This maximized Soldiers’ opportunities to attend school after returning from deployments or as their units prepared for the next mission.

While the Ivy Division and Fort Carson are making great strides reducing the NCOES backlog, the issue of Soldiers needing education while deployed must also remain a priority. In response, Fort Carson prioritized attendance at the school for redeploying units, allocating priority slots in the first four NCO



Command Sgt. Maj. Daniel A. Dailey



Photo by Sgt. Craig Cantrell

Spc. Phillip O'Brien of Company A, 2nd Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, pulls security during a Warrior Leader Course training exercise March 1 at Fort Carson, Colo.

Academy classes for NCOs promoted during their deployment.

Since adding more instructors to the academy and incorporating MTTs into the division, Fort Carson has graduated approximately 1,200 junior leaders through the NCOES classes. However, building a school, increasing the size of classes and surging MTTs to educate junior Soldiers was not enough to eliminate the backlog and concurrently provide training for newly promoted NCOs.

To tackle the problem, Fort Carson leadership had to take a hard look at the ranks, inspecting NCOs line by line to identify those who were deferred or denied training for being overweight or for having failed Army Physical Fitness Tests, or who were flagged due to discipline problems.

Maj. Gen. David G. Perkins, commanding general of the 4th Infantry Division and Fort Carson, implemented policies redefining NCO schools as nonnegotiable, no longer allowing Soldiers to defer NCO schools for just any reason, to include major unit exercises. Emergency leave and extreme hardship are the only deferments currently considered at Fort Carson. The new policy resulted in zero deferred slots in 2010.

Priority was also allocated to Soldiers leaving Fort Carson, so the departing NCOs would arrive at their next duty assignment current on all training requirements. The same priority was also given to Soldiers in-processing at Fort Carson.

Command also took advantage of open school slots at academies on other installations, sending Soldiers to Fort Hood, Texas, and Fort Campbell, Ky.

During the following year, the combined initiatives reduced the NCOES backlog at Fort Carson by an additional 1,000 Soldiers. Fort Carson's goal is to have the backlog reduction completed by the end of fiscal year 2011. Yet, because of the nature of deployments and continuing operations, there will likely remain a backlog of NCOs waiting to attend the next available course.

The challenge for leaders is to lean forward, remain proactive and maximize the available resources, identifying and prioritizing Soldiers before they deploy again.

Real-world experience is not a substitute for education. Not



Photo by Sgt. Craig Cantrell

Staff Sgt. Dennis Cline, a small group leader assigned to the 168th Regional Training Institute at Fort Carson, mentors a WLC student during the training exercise.

ensuring our future leaders get the proper NCOES schooling is detrimental to the NCO Corps and the U.S. Army. If we are not training our Soldiers, we are failing our Soldiers and the future of our Army.

Deployments build Soldiers' ability to train and lead, but Soldiers also need professional development — learning new doctrine and different tactics, techniques and procedures as taught at the academies. Our Soldiers need a balance between deployment experience and institutional knowledge.

The actions of the 4th Infantry Division and Fort Carson have set the standard in solving this complex and relevant problem facing today's NCOs. As leaders, we are not asking for a solution; we are committing the resources and the manpower to fix the problems ourselves. Boots-on-the-ground problems require boots-on-the-ground leadership.

Command Sgt. Maj. Daniel A. Dailey is the command sergeant major of the 4th Infantry Division and U.S. Division-North. He is currently deployed to Contingency Operating Base Speicher, Iraq.



Photo by Michael L. Lewis

Sgt. Maj. of the Army Raymond F. Chandler III looks on as Sgt. Maj. of the Marine Corps Carlton W. Kent testifies at a Senate Armed Services personnel subcommittee hearing April 13. It was Chandler's first appearance before the subcommittee and Kent's last before retiring this year.

In first congressional testimony, SMA discusses 'right-shaping,' resilience

By C. Todd Lopez & J.D. Leipold
Army News Service

As part of a "right-shaping" of the force, the Army will adjust retention-control points for Soldiers this fall, said Sgt. Maj. of the Army Raymond F. Chandler III during his first appearance on Capitol Hill on March 30. He also discussed the Army's temporary end-strength initiative and ensuing force reductions before the House Appropriations Committee's defense subcommittee.

In July 2009, the secretary of defense authorized a temporary increase of up to 22,000 active-duty Soldiers. This temporary end-strength increase reduced stress and strain on the force by ensuring deploying units were filled appropriately.

"One of the things we've taken in to account is that in order to draw the Army down and reduce that temporary end-strength initiative, we're going to have to do some right-shaping, or shaping of the force," Chandler said.

The Army's senior enlisted adviser told lawmakers the service had accelerated promotions to create the noncommis-

sioned officer corps needed to serve as the backbone of a force that has expanded over the past 10 years while fighting wars on two fronts.

"We accelerated promotions and we were way ahead of our normal promotion rates," Chandler said. "We're now starting to see those slow down, which is actually a good thing for us, because it helps us to better develop that leader at their current grade instead of being put in a position where we have to accept some risk and move them ahead to be able to properly man the force."

In the fall, Chandler told lawmakers the Army would implement the force-shaping tools needed to help reduce the size of the Army by 22,000 by the fall of 2013.

"We will actually introduce some retention-control-point reductions for our NCOs to actually reduce the amount of time they can serve in the force," he said.

Retention control points specify how long a Soldier may stay in the Army at a particular rank before having to either leave the Army or be selected for a promotion.

Chandler also said the Army would adopt initiatives similar to the Navy's, such as selective early-release boards.

"Some of our marginal achievers will be looked at and considered for separation from the service," he explained.

Lawmakers also asked Chandler about the Army's use of mental-health providers and about the availability of mental-health care. Chandler told them he had used those programs himself.

"I sit before you as a beneficiary of the Army's behavioral-health program," Chandler said. "I myself have had the last two years of behavioral-health treatment, and it has made a difference in my life and my wife, Jeanne, who is with me today."

He said the Army has benefited from an increase in mental-health providers.

"I believe without the increases we've had over the last several years that we would be in much worse shape than we are now," Chandler said. Though the service faces a shortfall in providers, he said the Army is continuing to recruit.

"It has made a difference in my life and I know in Soldiers' lives," Chandler said.

Two weeks later, Chandler told the Senate Armed Services personnel subcommittee that maintaining a combat edge while reconstituting the force and building resilience in Soldiers and their families continues to be the Army's top priorities.

Speaking at an abbreviated session of the subcommittee April 13, Chandler added that the Army "had made significant progress in restoring balance to our four imperatives to sustain, prepare, reset and transform."

"Increasing dwell time between deployments is the single most important component of restoring balance," he said. "Most of our active-duty Soldiers deploying in October of 2011 have the expectation that after one year of deployment, they will be able to spend two years at home. Most of our Army National Guard and Army Reserve Soldiers will be home for four years before possibly deploying again."

Subcommittee member Sen. James H. Webb of Virginia said that it was comforting to hear about the changes in dwell time, noting that when he first came to the Senate in 2007, he'd been told by the Army chief of staff that deployments were moving up to 15 months with 12 months at home.

"Our focus continues to be improv-

ing predictability and to enhance support for our wounded, families of our fallen, victims of sexual assault and those with behavioral health issues," Chandler said.

Webb voiced concern over what the services were doing to help non-career military members move from the service into civilian life. He said many people assume that because the country has an all-volunteer force that translates to an all-career force. According to the senator's data, 75 percent of first-term Soldiers leave the service on or before the end of their enlistment.

Chandler said the Army Career and Alumni Program assists Soldiers in making the transition to civilian life by providing résumé-building and job interview experience, while introducing veterans to alternative options, including continuance of service with the government.

He added that Gen. Peter W. Chiarelli, the Army's vice chief, had directed a comprehensive review of the Army Career and Alumni Program to ensure the service is meeting the needs of Soldiers opting out.

Providing testimony alongside Chandler at both hearings was Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy Rick D. West, Sgt. Maj. of the Marine Corps Carlton W. Kent and Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force James A. Roy.



Photo by C. Todd Lopez

During his first appearance on Capitol Hill on March 30, Sgt. Maj. of the Army Raymond F. Chandler III discusses the Army's temporary end-strength initiative and ensuing force reductions before the House Appropriations Committee's defense subcommittee.

HRC outlines transfer of Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits

By Master Sgt. Christina Steiner
Human Resources Command

Soldiers wanting to transfer their Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits to dependent children must do so before they retire, and their children will need to be full-time college students enrolled in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System by age 21.

The benefits must also be transferred by the time the dependent is 23, and the dependent has until age 26 to use them, said Teddi Embrey, a human resource specialist who works in the Education Incentives Branch of the Adjutant General Directorate, U.S. Army Human Resources Command.

Failures to comply with the transfer before retirement and transfer by the time the dependent is 23 are the top two reasons Soldiers are denied transfer benefits, said Sarah Rowley, chief of the Education Incentives Branch. Soldiers are filing erroneous congressional inquiries based upon this, she said.

Dependents must take an active interest in college yearly because the DEERS staff regularly checks their enrollment status; they will be dropped from DEERS if they're not full-time students, Rowley said.

"We're not having many problems with the Post-9/11 GI Bill itself," Rowley said. "It's with the transferring process and people not getting all the information correct."

Requests to transfer benefits begin by using the Department of Defense's Transferability of Education Benefits website at <https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/TEB/>.

For more information on the Post-9/11 GI Bill transfer process or other education services, call 1-888 AR-MYHRC (276-9472) or email hrc.tagl.post911gibill@conus.army.mil.

THE ARMY'S NEW CHIEF

Dempsey outlines his tenure's themes and focus

By Jim Garamone
American Forces Press Service

Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates wanted an Army chief of staff willing to challenge the status quo, and he believes he has one in Gen. Martin E. Dempsey.

Dempsey succeeded Gen. George W. Casey Jr. as the Army chief of staff during a ceremony April 11 at Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall, Va. Because of a family tragedy, Casey and his family did not attend the event.

"Whatever challenges confront us in the future, your Army will respond with the same courage and resolve with which it has responded over the past 235 years," Dempsey said.

Gates extolled the new chief of staff, saying that he was impressed by Dempsey's "keen mind, strategic vision, quiet confidence and the energy he brings to every assignment."

Dempsey served as the commander of the 1st Armored Division in Baghdad in 2003. He then helped put in place the Iraqi army and police. He served as the deputy commander of U.S. Central Command and stepped in as acting commander when Navy Adm. William Fallon resigned.

"While serving as acting CENTCOM commander, Gen. Dempsey reorganized the headquarters, published new theater strategy and campaign plans, all the while managing the rotations and deployments of tens of thousands of troops throughout his command's [area of responsibility]," Gates said.

He moved to the Army's Training and Doctrine Command where he "spread the gospel of adaptation in a world, where, as he is fond of saying: 'Uncertainty is the only certainty in life in this century,'" the secretary said. "He has pushed the Army to become more versatile and decentralized, and overhauled its approach to warfighting."

Today, the Army is in transition, which is not a new phenomenon, Dempsey said in his remarks. The Army is always in



Photo by D. Myles Cullen

Secretary of the Army John M. McHugh swears in Gen. Martin E. Dempsey as the 37th chief of staff of the Army on Apr. 11 at Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall, Va. Dempsey succeeds Gen. George W. Casey Jr., the 36th chief of staff of the Army.

transition, but this time is unique because the Army is entering its 10th year of war with an all-volunteer force. The general called that an "incredible testament to America's Soldiers and their families."

The way ahead will be tough, and the service must "center its sights on who we are as an Army."

Dempsey spoke about themes important to him and the service moving forward.

"We will provide whatever it takes to achieve our objectives in the current fight," he said. "We will win in an increasingly competitive learning environment — that's the domain in which we must prevail."

The service must develop a shared vision of what the Army will be in 2020, he said. "We will design units and prepare leaders to over match their adversaries," he said. "We will master our fundamentals and develop deep global expertise."

He said that the Army will continue to change but that the service will change only when it contributes to the versatil-

ity and relevance of the nation's military instrument of power.

In an era of constraint, the Army must maintain a reputation as a good steward of America's resources, Dempsey said.

"We will remain connected to America, and we will succeed because we will reconnect, engage, empower and hold our leaders accountable," he said.

Between now and June 14, the Army's birthday, Dempsey said, he will engage the senior military and civilian leaders of all services. He will publish "a document that charts our way ahead, including a portfolio of initiatives that chart our way ahead to deliver on the themes."

Trust is the heart of the military, Dempsey said.

"My commitment and expectation is that we will work on strengthening the bond of trust among those with whom we work, among whom we support and among those who march with us into battle," he said. "On the foundation of trust, we will overcome any challenge we confront in the future."

Army to inactivate Accessions Command

Army News Service →

U.S. Army Accessions Command will be inactivated as part of Defense and Army efficiency reviews, officials announced April 20. The decision is a result of a comprehensive study to develop appropriate options for the alignment of commands that fulfill human resource functions, said Mark Davis, director of the Strategic Initiatives Group, Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs.

“This decision will lead to the streamlining of the Army’s accessioning process and will produce economic savings by delayering the command structure without increasing the risk to the Army,” Davis said.

In his memorandum to Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, Secretary of the Army John McHugh outlined five decisions: inactivating Army Accessions Command; realigning Army Recruiting Command and Cadet Command under the Army Training and Doctrine Command; continuing to align Human Resources Command under the deputy chief of staff, G-1; establishing an Army Marketing and Research Group in Washington, D.C.; and retaining the Accessions Support Brigade at Fort Knox, Ky.

Over the next year to 18 months, the Accessions Command inactivation is expected to create economic savings through manpower reductions, including the elimination of two general-officer and 65 other military positions, about 130 civilian positions, and 290 contractor man-years.

DON'T ASK, DON'T TELL

Leaders: Repeal training proves military’s caliber

By Lisa Daniel
American Forces Press Service →

Two months into training to allow gays and lesbians to serve openly in the military, the leaders of all four services say implementation is going smoothly — something they attribute to the caliber of today’s service members.

“Our training is going very well,” Adm. Gary Roughead, chief of naval operations, told the House Armed Services Committee on April 7. “In those areas that we detected may be at moderate risk — the expeditionary forces — it is not at the level we had originally forecast.

“The types of questions we are getting reflect the maturity, professionalism and decency of our people,” he added.

The Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps in February began training the nation’s 2.2 million service members to prepare for repeal of the law — known as “don’t ask, don’t tell” — that precluded gay men and lesbians from serving openly in the military. While signed into law in December, the change will not take effect until 60 days after the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the secretary of defense and the president certify the military’s readiness to implement the repeal.

Army Vice Chief of Staff Gen. Peter W. Chiarelli, Marine Corps Commandant Gen. James F. Amos and Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Norton A. Schwartz joined

DADT training app available

Training materials on the repeal of “don’t ask, don’t tell,” or DADT, continue to be the most-downloaded information on the Army Training Network website, with more than 85,000 total downloads as of late April.

The DADT video, a summary of top things you need to know, presentation slides and other DADT tools have also been added to the downloadable ATN2GO app. The app allows anyone with a Common Access Card or Army Knowledge Online login ID to choose the training materials they want to download to their iPad, iPhone or Android mobile device. You can download ATN2GO at <https://atn.army.mil>.

Roughead in reporting to the committee about how implementation is going. All said training is going well.

The leaders described the training as being three-tiered, beginning with professionals such as chaplains and lawyers, followed by leaders, and completed with the force at large.

Success of the training “rests on the shoulders of our leaders,” Chiarelli said. It follows the “chain teaching” method, which places responsibility on commanders to ensure that “all are properly and sufficiently educated on this important policy change, its potential impact on them, and

our expectation of them,” he said.

Chiarelli said Casey’s directive on the repeal is clear: “Training matters most.”

Casey, flanked by four other four-star generals, personally led the first training session in February, Chiarelli said.

“I can attest that this process works,” Chiarelli said. “The Soldiers’ response so far has been generally positive, but we must assume there will be some resistance.

“We are mindful that if we are to mitigate risks to readiness, recruitment and retention, we must continue to do this deliberately,” he added. “The entire process, done properly, will take time.”

Training is expected to be complete by early summer, the leaders said.

The Marine Corps, the smallest service, has completed all of Tiers 1 and 2 and has more than 40 percent of Tier 3 people trained, Amos said.

A department survey last year showed that about 60 percent of Marines in combat units had concerns about the repeal, Amos said, but those concerns seem to be waning.

“I’m looking specifically for issues that might arise out of Tier 1 and Tier 2 and, frankly, we just haven’t seen it,” Amos said. “There hasn’t been the recalcitrant push back, the anxiety about it” from forces in the field.

Amos said one Marine commander told him, “Quite honestly, they’re focused on the enemy.”

New HR codes will identify right talent for senior NCO positions

By Jasmine Chopra
Army News Service

Ask business professionals and they will likely tell you that having the right talent, at the right time, in the right quantity and at the right location is vital to victory in the marketplace.

The same holds true for the Army as it establishes command sergeant major and sergeant major professional development proficiency codes to better identify and develop its top enlisted talent for success in today's operational environment, said Gerald Purcell, a personnel policy integrator for the Army deputy chief of staff, G-1.

The Army is pushing forward with processes to identify high performers and provide them with additional opportunities for assignments that prepare them for senior leadership positions all the way up to the national stage.

Fostering leader development is the primary goal of the Army Leader Development Strategy, which defines the characteristics desired in Army leaders as they progress through their careers. It establishes eight imperatives:

- Encourage an equal commitment by the institution, by leaders and by individual members of the profession to lifelong learning and development.
- Balance commitment to the training, education and experience pillars of development.
- Prepare leaders for hybrid threats and full-spectrum operations through outcome-based training.
- Achieve balance and predictability in personnel policies and professional military education in support of Army Force Generation.
- Manage the Army's military and civilian talent to benefit both the

institution and individuals.

- Prepare leaders by replicating the complexity of the operational environment in the classroom and at home station.
- Produce leaders who are mentors and are committed to developing their subordinates.
- Prepare select leaders for responsibility at the national level.

Details about significant changes were outlined in a memorandum issued Oct. 21. It included the establishment of new codes for additional skill identifiers, or ASIs, and the new expert "skill level 6."

Some of the more than 75 revisions include the establishment of "ASI 8C" (general-officer level command sergeant major), "ASI 8S" (senior-level sergeant-major experience), "ASI 7C" (brigade-level command sergeant major), "ASI 7S" (primary-level sergeant major), "ASI 6C" (battalion-level command sergeant major) and "ASI 6S" (initial-level sergeant major).

The codes will tell human resource managers what level of experience the senior noncommissioned officers have and, as a result, will make future assignment decisions highly effective, Purcell said.

Human resource managers were authorized to begin personnel classification changes as early as April 1.

The Army G-1 worked in concert with each proponent to identify and group all E-9 positions into three distinct groups beginning with entry-level sergeant-major positions. Next, these senior NCOs will be eligible to compete for selection as battalion command sergeants major.

The intent is to make follow-on assignments at primary- and mid-level E-9 positions or brigade command sergeant major/sergeant major positions.



Smartphone app helps troops, vets manage stress

Armed Forces Press Service

Veterans dealing with symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder can turn to their smartphones for help any time with the PTSD Coach app created by the Veterans Affairs and Defense departments.

"This is about giving veterans and service members the help they earned — when and where they need it," said Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric K. Shinseki. "We hope they, their families and friends download this free app. Understanding PTSD and those who live with it is too important to ignore."

PTSD Coach allows users to track their symptoms, links them with local sources of support, and provides accurate information and helpful strategies for managing symptoms. The free app is now available for download from the iTunes Store and will be available for Android devices by the end of the spring.

"This application acknowledges the frequency with which our warriors and veterans use technology and allows them to get help when and where they feel most comfortable," said Dr. Jonathan Woodson, assistant secretary of defense for health affairs.

PTSD Coach, the first in a series planned by the VA and Defense departments, is primarily designed to enhance services for individuals who are already receiving mental-health care. But, it may be also helpful for those considering entering mental-health care and those who just want to learn more about post-traumatic stress, officials said.

First lady launches ‘Joining Forces’ campaign

By Elaine Sanchez
American Forces Press Service →

The first lady, Michelle Obama, and Dr. Jill Biden, wife of Vice President Joe Biden, launched a national initiative April 12 that calls on all sectors of society to join forces to support and honor service members and their families.

Flanked by their husbands, the first and second ladies announced the “Joining Forces” military-support campaign, which aims to raise awareness of military families and spark all Americans — citizens, communities, businesses and nonprofit groups — to take action to ensure troops and their families have the support they need and deserve.

“This campaign is about all of us, all of us joining together as Americans to give back to the extraordinary military families who serve and sacrifice so much every day so we can live in freedom and security,” the first lady told a packed audience at the White House.

Military families are strong and resilient, and “they don’t complain,” she said. But this same strength may cause Americans to overlook families’ sacrifices.

Military families, she continued, are neighbors, co-workers and children sitting



DoD photo by Linda Hosek

Vice President Joseph Biden; his wife, Dr. Jill Biden; and President Barack Obama listen as the first lady, Michelle Obama, speaks at the April 12 White House ceremony launching the “Joining Forces” initiative.

in classrooms across the nation. Many are National Guard members or Reservists, serving in civilian jobs one day and in uniform the next. And just about every town in the country has a veteran, the first lady said.

Obama said a series of public service

announcements — from organizations including NASCAR and celebrities Oprah Winfrey and Tom Hanks — soon will help shine a light on military families.

People can learn more about supporting military families on the campaign’s new website, www.joiningforces.org.

President awards 2 posthumous Medals of Honor

By Jasmine Chopra
Army News Service →

Two Soldiers who died as a result of their gallant and intrepid actions during the Korean War were posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor during a May 2 ceremony at the White House.

The families of Pfc. Anthony T. Kaho’ohanohano and Pfc. Henry Svehla received the medals from President Barack Obama on behalf of the two Soldiers.

Kaho’ohanohano displayed extraordinary heroism Sept. 1, 1951, near Chopra-Ri, Korea, while assigned to Company H, 17th Infantry Regiment, 7th Infantry Division. Because of the enemy’s overwhelming numbers, friendly troops were forced to execute a limited withdrawal. As the men fell back, Kaho’ohanohano ordered his squad to take up more defensible positions and provided covering fire for them.



Pfc. Anthony T. Kaho’ohanohano (left) and Pfc. Henry Svehla.

Although painfully wounded during the initial enemy assault, Kaho’ohanohano gathered grenades and ammunition and returned to his original position to face the enemy alone. Kaho’ohanohano delivered deadly accurate fire into the ranks of the onrushing enemy. When his ammunition was depleted, he engaged the enemy in hand-to-hand combat until he was killed.

Svehla distinguished himself June 12, 1952, near Pyongony, Korea, while serving as

a rifleman with Company F, 32d Infantry Regiment, 7th Infantry Division. During intense enemy automatic weapons and small-arms fire, Svehla leapt to his feet and charged the enemy positions, firing his weapon and throwing grenades as he advanced.

Fragments from a mortar round exploded nearby, seriously wounding Svehla’s face. Despite his wounds, he refused medical treatment and continued to lead the attack. He was mortally wounded when an enemy grenade landed near him.



The setting sun illuminates the West Front of the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C.

The **NCOs** *on* **CAPITOL HILL**



Once open only to officers, the Army's congressional liaison program now includes senior enlisted Soldiers, too

STORY & PHOTOS BY MICHAEL L. LEWIS





the Army; a congressional inquiry division that responds to members' inquiries and requests for information; and a division each in charge of operations and logistical support. A separate office, aligned under the assistant secretary of the Army for financial management and comptroller, serves as a liaison to the House and Senate appropriations committees.

Up until two years ago, however, the opportunity to work as a congressional fellow was exclusively the realm of officers. But, as part of 2009's Year of the NCO initiatives, then-Secretary of the Army Pete Geren and then-Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth O. Preston developed a plan to include noncommissioned officers in the Army's congressional efforts. Two NCOs — Master Sgt. Barbara Rubio and Sgt. Maj. Scott Martin — were selected to serve that year as the first enlisted Army Congressional Fellows, who work directly on the staffs of members of Congress.

BEING A FELLOW

The fellowship program typically lasts three years. After fellows are selected, they begin studies toward a master's degree in legislative affairs in May at George Washington University in Washington, D.C. The following January, fellows begin a year working in a senator's or representative's office, acting as an ambassador on the Defense Department's behalf to the Congress member and his or her staff. There, fellows draft legislation; brief members and their staffs on Army policy issues and budgetary matters; and respond to constituents' concerns.

However, prior to the Year of the NCO, the program was largely unknown in enlisted circles.

"My command sergeant major called me up and said, 'I just heard about this program. I think you'd be great for it. Can I nominate you?'" said Rubio, who was placed in the office of Sen. Mark Udall of Colorado. "He said he didn't know anything more except that I'd be working for Congress for about a year. Within a week, I got an email from the SMA's office and was asked to send in my packet. And when you get an email from the SMA's office, it just about floors you — that's when reality kicked in."

In 60 days, Rubio went from never having heard about the fellows program to working on a senator's staff on Capitol Hill. Martin had a similarly quick turnaround before being placed in the office of Sen. Mark Warner of Virginia. Once they were part of the senators' staffs, they served as subject-matter experts for all things military — not just Army topics.

"The senators rely on the staff to be very in-

The news reports about the political machinations involved in narrowly averting a government shutdown last month exposed the ins and outs of Congress to many Americans. Normally, what the legislative branch of the United States does isn't given a second thought by many service members, unless politics appears about to put a Soldier's paycheck in peril.

But, the work of the Senate and House of Representatives impacts Soldiers every day. From appropriating money needed to keep the Army running to making rules for the military to oversight of the armed services, the decisions of Congress affect every unit.

To formulate and coordinate its congressional policy and strategy, the Army established the Office of the Chief Legislative Liaison at the Pentagon. Today, it comprises seven divisions: two liaison divisions — one each for the House and Senate — that serve as the primary point of contact between the Army and members of Congress, their staffs and relevant committees; a programs division that facilitates Congress' support for Army needs; an investigations and legislative division that coordinates congressional investigative actions involving

Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison of Texas consults with her Army congressional fellow, Sgt. Maj. Jesse Boettcher, in the corridor outside her office in the Russell Senate Office Building on Capitol Hill.



“What an NCO says is listened to very carefully. They just don’t see us very often, and when they do, they equate us to the troops on the ground.”



formed so they can make an informed decision when it comes time to vote,” Martin said. “Congress was looking for the Soldier’s perspective. Sen. Warner would ask, ‘Do you guys really want this or need this?’ I was the NCO’s voice.”

“What an NCO says is listened to very carefully,” Rubio said. “They just don’t see us very often, and when they do, they equate us to the troops on the ground.”

Transitioning from being an NCO leading Soldiers to being one worker among dozens of staffers can be challenging, said Sgt. Maj. Jesse Boettcher, a fellow currently working in the office of Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison of Texas. While a fellow, the NCOs are essentially on loan to the senator’s or representative’s office. But, they don’t stop being Soldiers, despite usually wearing business attire instead of their uniforms.

“My job as a sergeant major in the Army is not to be the decision-maker, it’s to be an advisor to the commander. So, by definition, my job is to be the senior enlisted advisor. And that’s what I’m doing in the office. I’m not in there making decisions on policy and legislation. But I’m giving opinions — the best advice I can give.”

“In the Army, you’re worried about the Soldiers in your unit and your mission,” Rubio said. “It’s very narrow for an NCO because this is your world that you take care of. You don’t worry about the big picture. Well, members of Congress worry about the big picture. So, I had to learn that I was there to figure out how things affect the state, how things affect Congress, how things affect the Army.”

Fellows get hands-on experience with how the nation’s laws are made. Boettcher, for example, worked the phones last month to line up 75 co-sponsors for a Senate bill Hutchison proposed that would pay Soldiers, Army civilians and contractors if



the government had shut down. While ultimately unneeded, the process was illuminating, Boettcher said.

“I enjoy the idea of being right in the middle of all this legislation that’s being created,” he said. “Even though my role in the process is miniscule, it’s still going on around me. If I hand in a resolution to the cloakroom, there are 30 senators around me. These are the leaders of our country, who are making all our laws. These are the people who handle the trillions of dollars in our nation’s budget. So, it’s kind of exciting being in the middle of that.”

Whatever political leanings a fellow might have when entering the program must be left at the door.

“It’s pretty easy to stay above politics,” Boettcher said. “I’ve had zero issues with it. The Army’s fellows are split pretty evenly between the House and

In her office, Madeleine Bordallo, Guam’s delegate to the U.S. House of Representatives, shows Sgt. Maj. Tammy Coon (left), a liaison in the House Liaison Division, combat boots she once received as a gift.



Above: Sgt. Maj. of the Army Raymond F. Chandler III and his legislative assistant, Master Sgt. Barbara Rubio, meet with Sen. Mark Udall of Colorado in his office in the Hart Senate Office Building. Rubio previously served in Udall's office as his Army fellow.

Right: Chandler testifies before the Senate Armed Services Committee's personnel subcommittee on April 13. Rubio, who helped Chandler prepare for his testimony, sits behind him.

Senate, and also between Republicans and Democrats. But, we all do the job the same. We give our professional, honest opinion, but we don't get too involved in politics. We are told to put our political views aside while here, and I think everyone's professional enough to do that."

"We have to remain neutral," Rubio said. "It's like when you're writing a note to a member of Congress. You don't say, 'Congratulations on your re-election,' because that means you're happy he won versus his opponent. Instead, you say, 'I look forward to continually working with you.' You see how that's neutral? You learn that in this job."

As politically charged as the atmosphere on Capitol Hill may appear in the news, the reality is much less polemic, Boettcher said.

"The way a bill becomes a law isn't necessarily the way you learned in school; a lot of things happen behind the scenes that aren't covered in textbooks. One of the biggest surprises is the amount of bipartisanship and compromise that happens off-camera. You might think that Republicans and Democrats don't get along so well because that's the way they're portrayed in the news. But in reality, they have to come to some sort of compromise; otherwise the government would come to a standstill."

The fellows' time on Capitol Hill has left a



lasting impression on the members of Congress they serve. Udall, during a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing on March 3, praised the program in general and Rubio, his former fellow, specifically.

"I had the great privilege of having [her] serve for a year in my office in the first year of the NCO fellowship. It was phenomenal. And, I want to just underline the importance of that approach."

Sen. Saxby Chambliss of Georgia reiterated the fellowship program's value during the same hearing.

"I had just been blessed, going back to my days in the House, with outstanding young men and

women serving in my office. And, it's been a privilege to have a chance to dialogue with those folks, one on one, about what is really happening out there. ... They're just such an asset."

A LIAISON TO ALL MEMBERS

While the first NCOs were beginning work as fellows within the senators' staffs, NCOs were also joining the two Army liaison offices, which interact with the entire membership of the House and Senate.

Sgt. Maj. Olivia Warner, who works in the Senate Liaison Division, said she uses the leadership, communication and interpersonal skills she's developed throughout her career to tell the Army's story on Capitol Hill. The qualities needed to be an outstanding NCO are the same qualities that make for an outstanding legislative liaison, she said.

"What I learned during this assignment is that it's largely about the relationships you make. Capitol Hill is a great place to work, and you establish lasting relationships with the members of Congress and their staffs. NCOs on the Hill have instant credibility because of their rank and experience. That says a lot about the respect that NCOs have rightfully earned."

Sgt. Maj. Tammy Coon, who works in the House Liaison Division, has more than 60 members of the House with whom she is the liaison, representing an area that spans from Guam to the Pacific Northwest. She also coordinates visits to and queries regarding Walter Reed Army Medical Center for all House representatives.

"It is amazing to me the relationships that form when members of Congress visit wounded warriors," Coon said. "The members keep in touch and want to be provided with updates. Numerous members have made repeat visits because they truly want to see how people are progressing and the welfare of their loved ones. They truly care about the Army family."

Explaining the lesser-known facets of Army life to members of Congress and their staff members is her greatest reward, Warner said.

"When I was selected to work on the Hill, expectations were for me to interact with Congress and tell the Army story from an NCO's perspective.



That meant I needed to highlight the rigors of serving and also the sacrifices that our families make. These are the things you don't normally see on television," Warner said.

Coon and Warner also coordinate visits by congressional and staff delegations to installations at home and abroad. But having experienced such visits themselves as Soldiers, they know the visits are not always understood as well as they should be.

"When a presidential delegation goes out, everybody says, 'It's good to have him here,'" Coon said. "But, when a congressional delegation goes out, I don't think most Soldiers understand what that means. We are not trained to understand the significance of their roles."

On the other hand, members of Congress glean much about Soldiers's service when they travel, Warner said.

Prior to departing for an event, Chandler discusses his April 13 testimony with Sgt. Maj. Olivia Warner, currently an Army liaison in the Senate Liaison Division. Warner will become Chandler's legislative assistant this summer.



“I’m not concerned if you’re Democrat or Republican. I’m concerned about what is being done to take care of Soldiers.”



★ THE PROGRAM ★

An NCO interested in becoming a congressional fellow should have a bachelor's degree, combat deployment experience, a stellar record of service and superlative interpersonal skills. According to MILPER Message 11-043, those applying for the next class will follow this general timeline:

SPRING & SUMMER 2011: Applications are accepted for the next class of fellows, who will work during the first session of the 113th Congress. NCOs must be sergeants major or command sergeants major with at least four years remaining until separating from the Army.

NOVEMBER 2011: Fellows are announced. Up to 25 are selected by the Army, with up to two slots reserved for senior NCOs.

MAY–DECEMBER 2012: New participants begin an orientation course that teaches Army headquarters operations and the Army's position on various issues. Fellows also complete courses at George Washington University in Washington, D.C., toward a master's degree in legislative affairs. Two-thirds of the students in the rigorous program are congressional staffers, allowing Army fellows a unique opportunity to network with people they will be working with on Capitol Hill.

JANUARY 2013: Fellows begin their experience on Capitol Hill, working in the office of a member of Congress. Fellows are typically given responsibility for drafting legislation, writing speeches, briefing members and preparing members for congressional hearings.

SPRING & SUMMER 2013: Fellows complete their study at GWU by taking comprehensive exams.

DECEMBER 2013: Fellows conclude their fellowships on Capitol Hill.

2014 & 2015: Fellows are assigned to a two-year utilization position in the Washington area, putting to use the in-depth knowledge of the legislative process they acquired.

For more information, visit the Army Congressional Fellowship program's website at <http://ocll.hqda.pentagon.mil/confellowship.aspx>.

“It’s awesome to see members talking to Soldiers who’ve been wounded in combat, and the Soldiers are able to tell their own story. You hear them saying, ‘I hit an IED and was injured, but I still want to go back to the fight,’ and the member is like, ‘Wow. Really?’ ‘Yes, I want to go back to the fight. I want to go back and serve with my team,’ or ‘I want to go back and take care of my Soldiers.’ That’s something you can only experience from being boots-on-the-ground — actually sitting in a room with a wounded warrior telling his or her story.”

As the first NCOs in their offices, both sergeants major relish providing a special perspective on behalf of their counterparts throughout the Army.

“What the NCO really brings to the table is the boots-on-the-ground reality,” Warner said. “Because, you’re out there with the Soldiers wearing that equipment, wearing that uniform, using that equipment. Does it work or doesn’t it work? PowerPoints can’t tell you that. So, when members visit deployed environments and installations, they get to see the equip-

ment they’ve championed being used. It’s a different reality from being briefed in an office.”

Like their counterparts in the fellowship program, the House and Senate liaisons say they remain politically neutral. “You are a Soldier first. We have no political affiliation,” Coon said.

“I’m not concerned if you’re Democrat or Republican,” Warner added. “I’m concerned about what is being done to take care of Soldiers, family members and the Army. Everything else, I’m nonpartisan. It’s about the interaction you have and how you tell the Army’s story.”

PREPPING THE SMA

After fellows complete a year of working in a congressional office, they are typically placed in other divisions of the Office of the Chief Legislative Liaison to put their new expertise to work for the Army. One prominent role is becoming a legislative assistant to one of the five senior leaders of the Army — the secretary of the Army, undersecretary, chief of staff, vice chief and sergeant major of the Army.

After Rubio’s stint in Udall’s office, she became the first enlisted legislative assistant in the SMA’s office, a job previously held by a civilian.

“Basically, anything that deals with Congress, I’m his go-to person,” Rubio said. “It’s no different than any other senior leader who has a travel coordinator or a scheduler. If it’s writing a note, making a telephone call, making sure the person on the other end is available at that time for a phone call, an office call or preparing for a hearing — the whole gamut of anything to do with Congress, that’s my job.”

When Sgt. Maj. of the Army Raymond F. Chandler III began his tenure in March, the House and Senate committees dealing with the Army called him to testify regarding the quality-of-life issues affecting Soldiers. To prepare him for the hearings, Rubio had to anticipate what the committee members might ask.

“When someone is called to testify before Congress, my job is to predict what questions those members will ask the sergeant major. I contact the Army staff to get information on the topics I think will be asked and provide that information to the SMA so he can incorporate it when he answers a question, if he’s asked. The hardest work is this preparation. You don’t always know what Congress’ concerns are, and the SMA wants to provide Congress with current and accurate information. It’s a prediction game.”

Warner will take over for Rubio this summer, and Rubio is already waxing nostalgic.

“For me, I always go back to a colonel who once told me I needed to come into the program for the right reason — ‘You’re here to learn and to take that knowledge back to the Army.’ So, I really look at it as you are here to learn, and then to educate the rest of the force. Every member the SMA meets, he



“We are there to help Congress understand how NCOs actually are the backbone of the Army.”



is educating them about the Army. Likewise, when I meet Soldiers, I want to educate and teach them about Congress and what I’ve seen.”

Indeed, all those among the first contingent of NCOs to work on Capitol Hill hope their leadership will inspire others to follow in their footsteps.

“NCOs on the Hill are a must; this should be an aspiration for NCOs. The whole opportunity has been an eye-opener for me,” Coon said.

“We are there to help Congress understand how NCOs actually are the backbone of the Army,” Martin added.

“This is a unique and awesome experience,” Warner said. “It’s unique because it’s the first time the Army has allowed NCOs into the program. It’s

awesome because you get to see from a different perspective, looking at the big picture from the congressional perspective. So, when you go back down to an operational unit, you’ll have a different perspective. You’ll be able to understand the congressional process, including inquiries, the budget process and the oversight function of Congress — it’s just an enlightening experience.”

“That’s what I’ve learned from this program: Across the Army, NCOs are capable of a lot,” Rubio said. “We need to keep opening the doors and bring somebody through with us, behind us.” 🇺🇸

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Rubio, Boettcher, Sgt. Maj. Scott Martin and Warner walk outside the East Front of the Capitol building.





An instructor at the Military Working Dog School at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, demonstrates the combat tracker dog's capabilities. In an effort to combat the prevalence of improvised explosive devices downrange, these dogs are trained to go from a location where an ambush or IED detonation took place and track back to the perpetrator.

Photo by Linda Crippen

MILITARY WORKING DOGS

GUARDIANS OF THE NIGHT

STORY BY LINDA CRIPPEN

Inscription on the Monument of a Newfoundland Dog

Written by Lord Byron shortly after his dog, Boatswain, died

When some proud son of man returns to earth,
 Unknown to glory, but upheld by birth,
 The sculptor's art exhausts the pomp of woe
 And storied urns record who rest below:
 When all is done, upon the tomb is seen,
 Not what he was, but what he should have been:
 But the poor dog, in life the firmest friend,
 The first to welcome, foremost to defend,
 Whose honest heart is still his master's own,
 Who labours, fights, lives, breathes for him alone,
 Unhonour'd falls, unnoticed all his worth —
 Denied in heaven the soul he held on earth:
 While Man, vain insect! hopes to be forgiven,
 And claims himself a sole exclusive Heaven.
 Oh Man! thou feeble tenant of an hour,
 Debased by slavery, or corrupt by power,
 Who knows thee well must quit thee with disgust,
 Degraded mass of animated dust!
 Thy love is lust, thy friendship all a cheat,
 Thy smiles hypocrisy, thy words deceit!
 By nature vile, ennobled but by name,
 Each kindred brute might bid thee blush for shame.
 Ye! who perchance behold this simple urn,
 Pass on — it honours none you wish to mourn:
 To mark a Friend's remains these stones arise;
 I never knew but one, — and here he lies.

They make this job look easy. But make no mistake, without extensive and continuous training, the Army wouldn't have any military working dogs.

Many consider the dog-handler profession to be an art form as there are so many nuances that the human must be able to interpret. Indeed, not just anyone can step in and perform the job. The hours are long, and the missions require the kind of autonomy that not everyone is mature enough to handle. Then, there are the dogs, which have distinct personalities just like humans do.



"The Wounded Comrade"—From a Painting by J. O. Tordella.

The practice of using dogs for hunting is not a modern concept. Ancient cave hieroglyphics depict the animals alongside humans. Surviving Persian and Assyrian documents demonstrate those civilizations' use of the animals during battle. Archaeological digs have even uncovered armor worn by dogs. And, Napoleon used them as guard dogs chained to the walls of Alexandria to ward off attackers.

According to *War Dogs: Canines in Combat*, by Michael G. Lemish, during the Spanish-American War of 1898, the commander of a cavalry troop took a dog named Don with him on every patrol, preventing any ambush. The commander said, "Dogs are the only scouts that can secure a small detachment against ambush in these tropical jungles."

The idea of specific military working dog-training programs did not become popular until World War I. Germany and the United Kingdom both implemented dog-training programs in the early 20th century. Aside from the sentry and messenger roles they provided for military units, dogs aided the Red Cross in helping locate wounded soldiers on the front lines. Known as "mercy dogs," these animals would find incapacitated wounded soldiers and alert handlers by bringing back a piece of clothing or

displaying other signals.

By World War II, the U.S. military was officially training dogs as well. The War Dog Program was stood up in 1943 with the building of a training center in Front Royal, Va., and the requisition of 11,000 dogs. The program supported almost every major subsequent conflict and eventually evolved into training dogs for law enforcement.

In 1965, the Air Force prepped 40 handler-and-dog teams at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, for missions in Vietnam. The success of these teams, combined with those working in U.S. law enforcement agencies throughout the United States, would prompt the formation of the Air Force Security Police Dog Training School in 1967 at Lackland AFB. Throughout the next four decades, the program would grow into its current configuration as the Air Force Security Forces Center, Army Veterinary Corps and the 341st Training Squadron, the proponent for all things associated with military working dogs, to include a breeding program.

The squadron also implemented an adoption program in 2000 after Congress introduced the Robby Law. Until its passage, working dogs that could no longer provide service due to injury or age were euthanized, regardless of their temperament or loyal service. The Robby Law changed this procedure to allow service dogs to be adopted by private citizens, provided the dogs pass particular behavior assessments. However, the law prohibits adopted former service dogs from being used in a service capacity again.

With a second kennel facility located on Medina Annex about a mile away, Lackland AFB has approximately 900 dogs at any given time. The

squadron's school trains about 270 multipurpose dogs a year, according to school officials. Not only does the school train new dogs, but it trains handlers and supervisors as well.

The school, which trains all the Department of Defense's K-9 personnel, offers the Specialized Dog Course (for dogs dealing with explosives or narcotics), Dog Handler's Course, Kennel Master Course and Combat Dog Tracker Course. The ultimate goal, explained Air Force Maj. William Roberts, the commander of the 341st Training Squadron, USAF, is to produce a dog that patrols and detects, either narcotics or explosives.

"You never want to confuse the two materials. When the dog alerts to a detection, you want to know exactly which material you're dealing with, because you handle those situations very differently," he said.

In the Dog Handler's Course, for new working-dog handlers, experienced dogs help train the students. Instructors said they use dogs, known as training aids, that already understand commands. Once handlers graduate from the course, they go out into the force and are assigned a dog at their unit.

The Specialized Search Dog Course is a 93-day program that trains students and dogs together. Seventy-six days are conducted

at Lackland AFB, and the other 17 days are at Yuma, Ariz. The training ultimately teaches the dogs off-leash capabilities to search for and detect explosives. This capability gives the handler increased standoff distance in the event of a detonation. It also allows for faster search time, as the dog is not constrained by the handler.

The Kennel Master Course is for management and supervision of programs. The 17-day course trains those who are responsible for running kennels and supervising training.

The Combat Tracker Dog Course is relatively new, having graduated its first class — five Marines and their dogs — in April 2010. In an effort to combat the prevalence of improvised explosive devices downrange, these dogs are trained to go from a location where an ambush or IED detonation took place and track back to the perpetrator. The ultimate goal is to locate the person who planted the IED or conducted the ambush and neutralize the threat from happening again. This course is expected to produce 10 teams per year.

DOG TRAINING

To keep up with the demand for trained dogs, the school uses a variety of procurement methods, including its own breeding program. The suitability rate runs around 50 percent. In other words, to produce 100 serviceable dogs per year, the program will attempt to train about 200.

Roberts said school personnel look for several characteristics and traits in potential military working dogs. “Some lines of dogs might have problems with their hips, spine, elbows, etc.,” he said, adding that personality characteristics are also important.

Tech Sgt. Michael Iverson, an instructor at the training school, explained that all the dogs go through a training assessment to ensure they have the right kind of temperament and acumen to be a working dog. The training program uses “clear signals training,” meaning dogs don’t always need a physical reward. Furthermore, the timing of that physical reward isn’t so critical.

“Just with the simple use of the word ‘yes,’ the dog knows what it’s being rewarded for, rather than [the handler] worrying about giving a tangible reward to the dog at the immediate moment it performs the task properly,” Iverson said. Essentially, the verbal reward becomes as effective positive reinforcement to the dog as a tangible reward.

“The use of verbal rewards expedites training and really focuses on the critical parts, so the dogs know exactly what they’re being rewarded for. For example, when a handler tells a dog to sit and it sits, immediately the handler verbalizes the ‘yes’ reward when the dog reaches a full sit position,” he said, adding that the single word takes the place of a treat or toy.

All of the dog training is based on positive reward or feedback, the epitome of the classical conditioning model developed by Ivan Pavlov. When the dogs maneuver through one obstacle successfully, they are rewarded. Then, they maneuver two obstacles and are rewarded, so training builds upon previous lessons. Iverson said that eventually, the dogs will do the entire obstacle course without a reward until the end, which is how trainers develop the dogs’ instincts to want the reward.

This instinct or desire is crucial to the dogs’ motivation, he explained. “When dogs get assigned to field units, they want a dog that’s motivated, really wants to do the task and is really happy to do it — all through reward-based systems. Of course, all these rewards must be instinctive prior to their certification. They have to be able to do this without any reinforcement — other than the handler’s praise and affection.”

A UNIQUE BOND

Every military working dog is an NCO — in tradition at least. Some say the custom was to prevent handlers from mistreating their dogs; hence, a dog is always one rank higher than its handler.

“That’s out of respect,” said Sgt. 1st Class Regina Johnson, operations superintendent at the Military Working Dog School. “I see it all the time, especially in these young handlers. They make the mistake of thinking they’re actually in charge. You’ve got to tell them, ‘Hold up. That dog has trained 100 students. That dog is trying to tell you something.’ I think the tradition grew out of a few handlers recognizing the dog as their partner.”

Johnson said some “non-dog people” get offended when animals receive honors normally reserved for humans, but the tradition seems to be growing stronger. A quick search on the Army website will yield several recent stories about military working dogs receiving promotions, medals and funeral ceremonies with military honors.

The fact is these dogs and handlers save lives. “The more we’re out there with the combat commanders, they see. They see



Photo by Linda Crippen

An instructor at the Military Working Dog School at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, rewards one of the training dogs after completing a task successfully. The dog-training school produces about 270 multipurpose dogs a year, according to school officials.

A team member with the 72nd Military Police Detachment, 93rd MP Battalion's K-9 unit, Fort Bliss, Texas, wears an attack sleeve to assist during a training session with Elvis. K-9 handlers train extensively with their dogs to remain efficient and effective.

Photo by Linda Crippen

that the dog just saved their Soldiers' lives. That dog just saved that entire platoon," Johnson emphasized.

"I think the rank is just a tradition. Of course, it's not recognized by the Army, but it's always something nice to be able to say this is something my dog did," she said.

Instructors say that handlers are there to make sure the dog gets food, water and rest. The handlers are there to motivate the dog when it's tired and ready to quit. The dog is the worker bee of the team. Perhaps the most important part of the bond is that handlers are there to translate what the dog is saying.

Johnson said that the dogs aren't just U.S. government property. "These dogs are our partners. I remember trying to get into the K-9 program, and I had a human partner working in law enforcement at the time who commented to me that he couldn't believe I would choose to work with a dog over a human partner, a big strong guy as a partner."

For example, responding to a call about a guy with a knife, a human partner might think, "Oh, it's just a guy with a knife. But, I've got a gun." Johnson said a dog partner doesn't make those kinds of judgments. The dog is listening to its handler, who may tell it to bite the guy or not. What's actually occurring is irrelevant to the dog.

"There's no doubt about my dog: Number one, he will protect me. Number two, he will find a bomb," she said.

She said other dog lovers understand. "That bond between you and the dog, there's nothing else like it. I would totally trust my life with a dog."

When she was leaving for a new duty station and saying her goodbyes, Johnson said one of her Soldiers became emotional. Johnson patted her on the back and told her that it wasn't a big deal. The next day, Johnson went to the kennel to tell her dog goodbye.

"It was the dog I deployed with in Iraq. I walk out, and I'm bawling — bawling like a baby! My husband was like, 'What's wrong with you? Your Soldier was crying because you're leaving,



and you showed little emotion. You tell your dog goodbye, and you're a basket case."

IN THE FIELD

"It's awesome!" said Spc. Augusto Gil Gonzales-Ruiz, a relatively new dog handler at the K-9 unit, 72nd Military Police Detachment, 93rd MP Battalion, Fort Bliss, Texas. "Most people wake up and think, 'Ugh, I have to go to work.' I wake up excited about going to work. We clean our dogs' kennel areas, feed them, give them any medicine they might need and from there get ready to train. It's nonstop excitement."

Having just graduated the handler's course in January, Gonzales-Ruiz was partnered up with an 8-year-old Belgian Ter-

“ The capability that military working dogs bring to the fight cannot be replicated by man or machine. By all measures of performance, their yield outperforms any asset we have in our inventory. Our Army would be remiss if we failed to invest more in this incredibly valuable resource. ”

— Gen. David H. Petraeus, commanding general, Multi-National Force, Iraq, Feb. 8, 2008

The more we're out there with the combat commanders, they see. They see that the dog just saved their Soldiers' lives. That dog just saved that entire platoon.

— Sgt. 1st Class Regina Johnson,
operations superintendent at the Military Working Dog School

vuren named Elvis. But, the initial bond is already there between the two, he explained.

“We clicked pretty fast. His previous handler was a good friend of mine. The rapport was somewhat easy to build. Now, we’re getting to know each other in-depth. For example, if I’m having a bad day, then he’s having a bad day. He feels what I do. Alternatively, if he doesn’t feel like working, I can tell.”

Reading the slight nuances in the dog’s behavior is key to a successful team, he said. “I’m getting to know his signals. If Elvis has a slight change in behavior when he’s searching an area, I need to be able to read that. Little by little, I’m getting to know that and recognize if he smells a pizza or 8 grams of cocaine. More scenario-based training will help strengthen us as a team,” Gonzales-Ruiz said.

K-9 teams in the Army provide a variety of support, from patrol work around base to searches during health-and-welfare inspections and sweeps for explosives when VIPs arrive. Granted, while most handlers will say they love “playing with their dogs” every day, their jobs necessitate extensive training just to keep the dogs’ skills current and efficient.

Staff Sgt. John J. McClintock, training NCO at Fort Bliss’s K-9 unit, is responsible for training the new handlers as well as getting the dogs certified in their particular areas of specialty: narcotics or explosives.

“As a trainer, you’ve really got to be astute when it comes to human psychology and animal behavior. You have to teach the handler how to do the task ... and teach the handler how to get the dog to do the task.”

McClintock, who has been working K-9 for 12 years, said a typical day consists of loading the dogs in a trailer and heading out to train in real-world settings. “I’ll set up the training area and set out the explosive or drug aids. Each dog usually has its own set of problems. One might have trouble searching high places; another might have trouble searching low areas, like behind a couch. So, I’ll target those problem areas and plant the aids to push the dogs and handlers to improve.”

Training can also be challenging because new handlers are required to certify within 90 days of their arrival to a unit. Certification gives authority to the team so it can work as a legal entity as it pertains to law-enforcement activities.

Gonzales-Ruiz and Elvis are a certified narcotics team and can do official searches in barracks. If they find something, Gonzales-Ruiz can testify in court, and his training records are also official documents. Essentially, his testimony can put people in jail. If the team is not certified, however, then the evidence isn’t admissible, and the case can be thrown out of court.

According to Johnson, the dog must maintain, at a minimum, 95 percent accuracy to pass the certification. Simply put, if the dog misses too many planted aids or responds falsely too many times, the team will fail. The certifying official must be certain that the team is capable of conducting searches to protect the president of the United States if need be.

McClintock, who misses working out in the field with a dog, said he worked riot control in Kosovo in 2000, among other assignments. “I’ve performed searches for every person in the chain of command, except the vice president — almost every single four-star general, congressman, senator, secretary of state, the president,” he said.

The Fort Bliss K-9 unit provided support when President Barack Obama visited the installation in August 2010. One of the handlers, who has since left the Army, had a specialized search dog, and that team provided searches for the president’s motorcade and along the driving route.

“When we work presidential missions, we wear a suit and tie. So, we’re all dressed up with our dog next to us, which makes a lint roller a necessity,” McClintock joked. “It’s nice to do that kind of mission, and then go home and see the president walking along exactly where you just searched. It puts what we do into perspective. I’m hoping the new guys realize the potential and how important their job is.”

Typically, the U.S. Secret Service provides stateside support. But, the agency doesn’t normally take its dogs overseas. That’s when the mission falls on the military. So, when the president travels outside the United States, the military provides that support. But, these high-profile missions aren’t typical. In fact, when K-9 teams deploy downrange, it’s just them — the handler and the dog.



U.S. Air Force photo by Master Sgt. Adrian Cadiz

Edy, an explosive-detection dog, gives an indication sign that he has sniffed out explosive-making materials during a training session Feb. 18 at Forward Operating Base Lagman, Afghanistan.



Regular MP teams train and deploy as a team. They train to look out for their buddy. But in K-9 teams, McClintock said, “You’ve got this dog to worry about. Everywhere you go, you get put off somewhere, and it’s just you and your dog.”

“I was let out of a chopper in the middle of nowhere, Afghanistan. I looked around, wondering, ‘Where is everybody?’ It was probably only two or three minutes, then the squad came around the mountain to come pick me up. It felt like forever that I was alone, just me and my dog. I just kept wondering, ‘Where am I?’ I wasn’t near any civilization, just the middle of the desert.”

Staff Sgt. Orm Jenkins Jr., kennel master at the Fort Bliss K-9 unit, said he had a young Soldier deploy to Afghanistan with an infantry unit a few years ago. He and his dog went through and cleared a building. But when they walked out, the infantry unit was gone. It had left them.

“As a kennel master or a trainer, you have to train these young Soldiers, young dog handlers, to go out by themselves,” Johnson said. “They have to be able to articulate to an infantry company commander what the dog’s capabilities are. Imagine as a young specialist, you’re being handed your equipment, your documents and being told to get on a plane. Someone will pick you up when you land in Afghanistan. That’s what we’re asking these young Soldiers to do.”



Photos by Spc. Howard Alperin

Above: Military working dog teams from throughout Victory Base Complex, outside Baghdad, attended an April 13, 2010, ceremony to honor Kevin, a military working dog who died unexpectedly because of complications from cancer. His death underscored the intense bond between dog and handler.

Left: A memorial for Kevin sits at the front of the ceremony. “It was a good memorial. They don’t happen often for the dogs,” said Sgt. Matt McCummins, a military dog handler, attached to Division Special Troops Battalion, 1st Cavalry Division.

IMAGE BUILDING

McClintock said the biggest misconception others have about military working dog teams is that handlers don’t really work a lot. In truth, he said, “There’s a great deal that goes into our training. Literally, we are out training every day. Most other people never see that. When we work the road shift, that’s usually at night, so again, our hard work is not always visible to those outside our unit,” which gives the impression that it’s all too easy, he said.

Jenkins, who has worked in the K-9 field for 16 years, said some infantry units are beginning to understand that dog teams are a major force-multiplier on the battlefield. “In a way, I understand how K-9 got a bad reputation years ago. The way it used to work, commands sent their underperformers to K-9. They sent their bad Soldiers to work the dogs.”

Getting “sent to the dogs” was more of a punishment instead of a privilege. Since a great deal of training occurs at awkward times, commands would send their sub-par Soldiers to the K-9 unit. If a Soldier was overweight or couldn’t pass physical training, Jenkins said they would send him to work with the dogs.

Luckily, that mind set seems to be evolving. Jenkins and many of his colleagues have fought hard to change this way of thinking. “When they would try to send us the poor quality Soldiers, we said, ‘No, send them back home.’ We started weeding them out,” he explained, adding that there is now a competitive interview process just to be considered for a school slot.

Because K-9 teams deploy alone — just handler and dog — Soldiers must be stellar. There is no squad leader making sure the job gets done. Handlers must be able to operate independently in a professional manner.

“It’s difficult to teach someone to go out and work on his own, especially if he’s used to someone always telling him what

to do and when to do it. I need Soldiers who will not only take the hill when told to do so, but take the hill on their own because they know it needs to be done.”

The truth is, handlers spend a great deal of personal time working, Jenkins confessed. “There were many times I would spend the night in the kennels because my dog was sick and I needed to administer medicine. Yes, we had a charge of quarters, but my dog didn’t want anyone else to touch him, so I’m the only one who could do it.”

Furthermore, if a handler gets matched with a dog that’s substandard or has issues, training Monday through Friday isn’t going to be enough, Jenkins said. That handler will have to come in on his own time to get the dog up to par.

A lot of the old sentiment came from the regular Military Police Corps, Jenkins said. “It’s hard for them to understand. They have a tendency to think of the dog like they would a weapon. Remedying deficiencies in a service dog should be as simple as more training, but it doesn’t always work that way.”


McClintock said some dogs just might not be strong on some odors, no matter how many times you train. The dog may still take a while to alert on that scent. “You just can’t fix it. You just can’t make the dog do it. There are different training techniques, and experienced handlers will have many different solutions for that training deficiency. They may need to try out many different solutions before they find one that works. It’s not a fixed science; there is never a single solution that works across the board for every dog or every handler,” he explained.

It’s not as simple as adjusting the windage on an M4 weapon and getting back on target. Both Jenkins and McClintock pointed out the obvious: “Dogs don’t have a windage knob. You can’t just move the sight posts, and everything’s good to go.”

Undoubtedly, change resonates from top leadership. In an address given Feb. 8, 2008, Gen. David H. Petraeus, the commanding general of Multi-National Force, Iraq, said, “The capability that military working dogs bring to the fight cannot be replicated by man or machine. By all measures of performance, their yield outperforms any asset we have in our inventory. Our Army would be remiss if we failed to invest more in this incredibly valuable resource.”

Jenkins, who used to be an instructor at the Lackland AFB dog-training school, said momentum seems to be building. He

lauds his commander and first sergeant for taking the initiative and supporting his changes to improve the program at Fort Bliss. He said funding has been approved to break ground on new kennels sometime this year, which will improve logistics, training and morale.

“My philosophy is there’s only one place in the world where success comes before work — the dictionary. If you ain’t about the work, then I don’t need you. This job requires a lot of work,” Jenkins said. 

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Photo by Sgt. David Hodge

Above: Sgt. James Bowhay of Troop C, 7th Squadron, 10th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, helps Carla over a wall and into the hands of her handler, Sgt. Craig Walker, Dec. 30, during a combined cordon-and-search operation in Abu T’shir, Iraq.

Left: Sgt. Craig Walker, part of the K-9 team assigned to the 40th Military Police Detachment, attached to the 1st Special Troops Battalion, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, leads his partner, Carla, through an abandoned house Dec. 30 during combined operations in the Abu T’shir community.

Photo by Sgt. David Hodge



Anyone who has recently visited Fort Lee, Va., can clearly see that the post is in the process of major change. There are new buildings everywhere, and many more are still being constructed. Soon, the post's facilities will more than double in size, and the post will be the third-largest training installation in the Army.

This is all part of Fort Lee's transformation into the U.S. Army Sustainment Center of Excellence. In 2005, Congress endorsed recommendations of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission to stand up the SCoE combining the Quartermaster, Transportation and Ordnance Schools. Today, the installation is well on its way to fulfilling that mandate, according to the SCoE officials.



Sustainment

The new home

Story by
Sgt. Samuel J. Phillips

Photos by
T. Anthony Bell

nt Center of Excellence: me of ARMY LOGISTICS



Left: Students in the petroleum supply specialist course at the Quartermaster School stand in a cloud of white as they extinguish a fire during fire-suppression training.

Below: A public works department instructor adjusts his mask as a fire burns in the background during fire-suppression training. The training is part of the petroleum supply specialist course taught at the Quartermaster School.

With almost 5 million square feet of facilities – 1 million more square feet than the Pentagon – the SCoE will house the Ordnance Center and Schools, previously at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md., and Redstone Arsenal, Ala.; the Transportation Center and School (minus certain specialized elements), previously at Fort Eustis, Va.; and the Quartermaster Center and School, already located at Fort Lee.

In addition, the SCoE will expand the Army Logistics Management College into the Army Logistics University with the construction of a new education building and state-of-the-art training facilities. Overall, 185 – or 54 percent – of Combined Arms Support Command’s 341 training courses will ultimately find their home at Fort Lee.

With 35 contracts costing more than \$1.3 billion, the transformation of Fort Lee into the SCoE is one of the largest of the 2005 BRAC moves. Facilities being constructed include new barracks, dining facilities, a Soldier Support Center, training facilities and the campus of the Army Logistics University. The last of the construction is scheduled to be completed by September 2011.

The SCoE Headquarters building was one of the first to be completed and was ready for occupation in March 2009.

“From a planning perspective, the move had three key phases: detailed pre-movement planning, movement execution and post-movement operations,” said Col. Gwen Bingham, former CASCOM and SCoE chief of staff and the current commandant of the Quartermaster School. “The imperatives that governed the move included the safety of personnel and uninterrupted mission support.”

The first phase started in October 2008, when the BRAC office ordered CASCOM, a major subordinate command of the Training and Doctrine Command, to begin operations to occupy the new building. In response, the CASCOM command group, representatives from the CASCOM and Fort Lee Garrison BRAC offices, and other key players like “move czars” assembled to discuss plans of action.

Through their combined efforts, a movement plan was

developed that permitted CASCOM to maintain simultaneous operations in two locations, manage the use of more than 975 reusable shipping crates and conduct walkthroughs of the CASCOM and SCoE buildings with prospective contractors. The timeline chosen for the move was 6 weeks, said John R. Weber, the BRAC movement czar for the SCoE assigned to CASCOM.

In the second phase, the move itself, officials quickly realized that the most difficult task was sustaining simultaneous operations at both the new and old facilities. Maria Dane, a member of the CASCOM BRAC office, said, “‘Train the load to standard,’ meaning that all students receive training that meets all requirements. This is the Army Training and Doctrine Command’s edict and its number one mission.”

This task was accomplished through the flexibility and ability of the move team, Weber said. Each of CASCOM’s directorates kept the lines of communication open between CASCOM command group and the CASCOM and garrison BRAC offices.

Each directorate also participated in data calls, which were used to gather information on equipment inventories, information on personnel relocations and their future areas of assignment, and current Internet protocol addresses and phone numbers in an effort to streamline connectivity. These data calls allowed CASCOM to adopt a “plug and play” transition, under which each directorate could keep its current phone numbers and maintain active email accounts. Weber said this strategy was successful in maintaining operations at both the new and old facilities without any degradation of mission support.

The final, post-movement phase began with solving chal-



allenges concerning security, connectivity, warranties, construction issues and facility limitations. This phase also involved the use of after-action reviews to document lessons learned, such as the success of the data calls, during the move.

With all major objectives completed, CASCOM's move into the SCoE headquarters was deemed a success by TRADOC and CASCOM officials. However, this marked only the first of many challenging movement operations. With courses moving from multiple locations and a tight timeline on construction, the SCoE still has much more work to do.



But all the effort is worth it, CASCOM Command Sgt. Maj. C. C. Jenkins Jr. said. "The intent is to get all of your sustainment as close as possible under one umbrella," he said. "What that does is give that commander an opportunity to leverage his resources to ensure that all facets get trained."

At the SCoE, training resources are abundant. The Ordnance School alone will have a 300 acre-plus campus and another 200

acres reserved for the school's North Range. Col. Edward Gully, former deputy garrison commander for transformation, said the combined SCoE now boasts facilities such as engine laboratories, laser training laboratories, several classified open-storage-capable classrooms and laboratories, an explosive ordnance disposal range, indoor firing range, a training area for welders and a simulation and training support center.

"Everyone used to have their own center and school," Jenkins said in reference to the Ordnance, Transportation and Quartermaster Corps. "Now you only have one [Sustainment Center of Excellence] that's responsible for ensuring that the schools train to standard. By having that one-stop shop, we can maximize the utilization of all of our equipment and instructors."

This combined location is the key to having consolidated, integrated-type training, Jenkins said. "We have to take advantage of our ability to cross-leverage," he said. "Say, for instance, we conduct a [field training exercise]... [Soldiers training in different military occupation specialties] will go out together, work their particular piece out, move on out, do what they need to do and execute. Then we conduct an AAR, retrain if we need to and we're done."

This style of training is vital in today's military, Jenkins said. With the conflicts the United States is involved in, Soldiers must know how to work with those around them. For logistics Soldiers, the SCoE will provide the skills to complete their missions more effectively, increasing their ability to support the warfighters on the front lines, he said.

However, with so much coming together in one location, the SCoE is experiencing some growing pains, Jenkins said. "It's just like gelatin; we've thrown everything in the pot, and we're mixing it up. It's just going to take time for everything to jell."

There is no better proof the process is going well than the SCoE being hailed as the first TRADOC Center of Excellence Institution of Excellence by Lt. Gen. David P. Valcourt, TRADOC's deputy commanding general, during a ceremony in February 2010. Additionally, 11 of SCoE's 14 subordinate organizations also achieved an Institution of Excellence rating.

At the grand opening of ALU, Rep. J. Randy Forbes of the 4th Congressional District of Virginia told the assembled crowd, "This is not just a university... You are sitting right now on the logistics capital of the world. If we don't realize that, we will come to realize it as each day passes."

And as each day passes, everyone involved will come to realize that Forbes' words did not just apply to ALU, but all of the SCoE. **J**

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A student and instructor in the Sling Load Inspection Certification Course ready themselves as they await a slowly approaching UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter. The sling operation is the final segment of the course and teaches students how to properly inspect cargo for transport by helicopter.

Resilience

Equipping Soldiers with the tools they need to be mentally prepared and emotionally robust — despite high operational tempo and short dwell times — begins with properly trained leadership. Front-line supervisors must be educated in how to develop the skills and abilities their Soldiers require to be resilient when confronted with the stress and adversity inherent in the profession of arms.

As part of its development of the Comprehensive Soldier Fitness program, the Army is now building lessons into its institutional courses that help train leaders to build resilience in their troops. One such lesson will soon replace “Junior Battlemind Principles” in the Warrior Leader Course, said Master Sgt. Patrick Ciferri, the WLC course chief at the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy at Fort Bliss, Texas.

“This is just a refined version of the older lesson, one that gives leaders new ways to teach Soldiers to think about how to get themselves out of a difficult situation,” he said.

“Army leaders need to be aware of the tools available to aid and assist Soldiers,” said Carl Carlson, a WLC course developer. “They also need to be aware that what they say and do will affect the Soldiers subordinate to them.”

HOW COMBAT IMPACTS RESILIENCE: Multiple deployments, separation from one’s family, bad experiences in combat or financial difficulties can affect the 21st-century Soldier’s resilience in multiple ways. Indeed, the more times a Soldier deploys, the more likely he or she is to report anxiety, depression or post-traumatic stress disorder.

Unfortunately, leaders often notice only behavioral problems in their Sol-



U.S. Army photos

diers, missing the cognitive, emotional or physical symptoms that indicate a need for help. As such, leaders are tasked with keeping an eye out for tiny indications of larger problems and ensuring that their Soldiers know they will not have to deal with their problems alone, even if difficulties surface months after returning from downrange.

HOW LEADERSHIP AFFECTS RESILIENCE: As junior enlisted Soldiers mature into junior NCOs, they must adopt a leadership style that promotes healthy resilience skills. Effective leadership makes a big difference; one study found that when Soldiers reported having good leaders, they were less likely to have behavioral health problems.

Leaders can start by demonstrating resilient thinking skills like seeing things in a different light, maintaining a good sense of humor and practicing an optimistic attitude. Such skills can become

contagious, helping reduce negative thinking in the entire team or squad.

COMPREHENSIVE SOLDIER FITNESS: The CSF program is not a single course, event or requirement. Just as proper physical fitness requires numerous training sessions, good behavioral health requires leaders to learn, practice what they learn, see the results and then learn more. This is a continuous process throughout an individual’s career, not something the Army “does” only after a crisis.

Leaders at every level are responsible for their Soldiers’ mental fitness and well-being. Leaders can affect not only the tactical and technical success of their Soldiers, but also their health and morale.

With good resilience skills, leaders build more effective units while developing Soldiers who are able to bounce back no matter the stressors they experience.



COMPREHENSIVE SOLDIER FITNESS

Comprehensive Soldier Fitness is a long-term strategy for Soldiers, family members and Army civilians to better prepare them to thrive in the face of protracted warfare and the everyday challenges of life. It comprises four major pillars:

- ✓ **Global Assessment Tool:** This confidential online survey identifies areas in which individuals can build resilience. Completing the GAT is an annual requirement for Soldiers.
- ✓ **Comprehensive Resilience Modules:** These optional, online training modules are determined by GAT performance and focus on specific resilience skills in each of the four CSF dimensions: social, emotional, spiritual and family.
- ✓ **Master Resilience Trainer Course:** A 10-day train-the-trainer course offered at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia; at Fort Jackson, S.C.; or via mobile training teams. Local commanders typically select NCOs serving in platoon sergeant or brigade staff positions to attend, and upon graduation, these NCOs serve as the commander's primary resilience trainers for the unit.
- ✓ **Institutional Resilience Training:** Resilience training is being incorporated into every level of the NCO Education System, such as the resilience lesson of the Warrior Leader Course. Thus, resilience training will occur across a Soldier's entire career, at every major career milestone.

Resilience skills: What junior leaders can do



ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION

Assertive communication helps **build connections** with others and solve problems through **confident, clear** and **controlled** interaction. The goal is to **understand another individual's perspective** and **move together** toward a positive outcome — an attitude of “we can work it out.” Often, the **IDEAL** model can be helpful: **Identify** and understand the problem, **Describe** the problem objectively and accurately, **Express** your concerns and how you feel, **Ask** for the other person's perspective, and **List** the outcomes.



PUT IT INTO PERSPECTIVE

This skill helps **stop catastrophic thinking, reduces anxiety** and **improves problem solving** by focusing on the implications of an adversity; it identifies the **worst, best** and **most likely outcomes** of a situation. Catastrophic thinking can waste critical energy when Soldiers ruminate about the irrational worst-case outcome of a situation. Putting things into perspective helps Soldiers and leaders **avoid going in circles, move beyond ruminating, assess the problem** and **look for viable solutions.**



ACTIVE CONSTRUCTIVE RESPONDING AND PRAISE

Responding **actively and constructively** to others' positive experiences can **strengthen relationships.** When a person makes a mistake, effective criticism names the **process, strategy** and **behavior that led to the problem** and pinpoints how to correct the problem. Effective praise identifies **what the person did to bring about the positive outcome** and sets up “**winning streaks,**” when positive outcomes follow one another.

NCO Stories



Fort Polk Soldiers awarded highest noncombat medal for heroism

By Chuck Cannon
Fort Polk Guardian

The early morning hours of April 25, 2010, were like most Louisiana spring mornings. There was a bit of a chill in the air, but it wasn't frosty, and most area residents were either asleep, heading home from a date or, if a member of Fort Polk's 1st Battalion (Airborne), 509th Infantry Regiment — the "Geronimos" — heading to the field for another day of playing opposing forces to Soldiers preparing to deploy.

Michael Skinner, a 21-year-old from nearby Hineston, had just dropped off his girlfriend at her house and was headed home down South Boundary Road in the Hineston area about 3 a.m.

"It was my first time in the area, and I wasn't familiar with the road," Skinner said. "I guess I fell asleep at the wheel. The next thing I remember was waking up in the hospital."

When Skinner dozed off, his truck left the roadway, crashed and caught fire, leaving him knocked out in the burning cab. His



list of injuries reads like a MASH unit's casualty lineup: broken ribs, broken femur, third-degree burns, shards of glass in his eyes, broken jaw, broken wrist, internal injuries and other things Skinner said he doesn't recall.

"They didn't know whether I would ever walk again or see out of my left eye," Skinner said. "I was in pretty bad shape."

It could have been worse but for the heroic deeds of three Geronimo Soldiers.

Shortly after Skinner's accident, Sgt. Stuart Fredieu, Sgt. Coty Clare and Spc. Ryan Guillot, all of A Company, 1st Battalion, 509th Infantry Regiment at Fort Polk, were headed down South Boundary Road for another day of playing OPFOR. Their actions that morning led to the three Geronimos receiving the Soldier's Medal during a Fort Polk ceremony Dec. 15.

"We were on our way to STX (situational training exercise) lanes for training," Guillot said.

"We saw the truck and thought at first that they were doing a controlled burn."



Guillot said the trio, traveling in two trucks, decided to stop and make sure there were no casualties.

“When we got to the vehicle, we saw there was a guy trapped inside,” Guillot said.

Fredieu said it was one of the worst wrecks he’d seen.

“I didn’t think anyone could be alive,” he said.

Brig. Gen. James Yarbrough, commander of the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk, explained the wrecked vehicle’s condition as it was described to him.

“The young man was pinned in the cab, undercarriage was ripped off, front end crushed and in flames,” Yarbrough said.

Clare, the ranking Soldier among the three, said he told his fellow Soldiers that they needed to move Skinner away from the burning vehicle.

“I had to dig his legs from under the truck,” Clare said.

Yarbrough described what the three Soldiers did next.

“They manually pried the steel frame of the door off of the vehicle and freed Michael Skinner after lots of difficulty, even when flames continued to build,” he said. “They got him out, unconscious, and evacuated him to a hospital. His (Skinner’s) mother agrees — it sure beats the alternative.”

Fredieu said he didn’t think about what he was doing.

“We just did what we needed to do,” he said. “I wasn’t afraid. The front of the truck was on fire, but we’d all been deployed and seen stuff like that before.”

Clare agreed.

“We’re trained not to think, just react,” he said. “I never gave it a second thought. I don’t think I did anything heroic; I was just doing what any Soldier would do. A lot of guys in the military do this every day and don’t get recognized for it.”

Yarbrough likened the Soldier’s Medal — the highest award given for valorous actions outside of combat — to the Silver Star. “The key point is personal risk of life,” Yarbrough said. “In 32 years in the Army, I’ve seen three Soldier’s Medals awarded. The bar is set high. In the last 12 months, the Army has awarded 45 Silver Stars and 43 Soldier’s Medals, so it’s actually more difficult to receive a Soldier’s Medal.”

Yarbrough said the best part of the story is that the Soldiers never gave it a second thought.

“It is a great reflection on the values of today’s Soldiers,” Yarbrough said. “They won’t quit, never give up and never leave a fallen comrade behind.”

Fredieu’s mother, Tina Myatt, said her family is proud of him.

“I’m in awe that God put Stuart and his friends there that night and that he reacted the way he did,” she said. “I’ve always felt that Stuart had the favor of God in his life.”

Jared Myatt, Fredieu’s younger brother by 10 years, said he wasn’t surprised by his big brother’s actions.

“That’s the kind of person he is,” Myatt said. “That’s how he always was growing up.”

Fredieu said he believes there was divine intervention involved.

“I thank God for putting us in the right place at the right time,” he said.



Photo by Chuck Cannon

Sgt. Stuart Fredieu (left), Sgt. Coty Clare (center) and Spc. Ryan Guillot, all of A Company, 1st Battalion (Airborne), 509th Infantry Regiment, receive Soldier’s Medals during a ceremony Dec. 15 at Fort Polk’s Bayou Theater. The Soldiers saved the life of Michael Skinner, who was trapped in a burning vehicle April 25, 2010.

JRTC and Fort Polk’s command sergeant major, Command Sgt. Maj. Jeffrey Hof, said the actions of Clare, Fredieu and Guillot were a reflection of the Soldiers stationed at Fort Polk.

“With the commanding general presenting the awards, I think this represents the goodness and contributions the Soldiers at the ‘Home of Heroes’ have made over the past eight to 10 years,” Hof said.

Yarbrough closed the ceremony by complimenting the three awardees.

“That night, these three Soldiers were magnificent,” he said. “Fort Polk and the entire Army are proud of you.”

Skinner’s mother, Angela Pitre, agreed.

“These three men went above and beyond what most people would have done and saved my son’s life,” she said. “I pray for them and their families, and thank God for them every night. God put those Soldiers there.”

Training saves lives

American Forces Press Service

Practice makes perfect, and for Army Reserve Staff Sgt. Clayton Gorton, cross-training with NATO coalition troops while serving together in Afghanistan is one of the most important aspects of their mission.

“Working with foreign troops is a unique experience because we all have different ways of approaching situations,” Gorton said. “They are all very professional. They know what they are doing, but training together is really important to ensure that we respond to situations in the same way.”

In July 2009, Gorton was leading 15 German and American Soldiers through a grenade-training session in Afghanistan. His group was situated behind a five-foot berm, and the throwing line was 50 meters away.

“I told them when we were training that if any grenade didn’t make it over the berm, we were to get down to the ground quickly” Gorton said, to avoid lethal injuries from the shrapnel.

As they came to the line, he instructed them to release the grenade and throw it over the berm. After the first 14 soldiers successfully detonated the grenades, Gorton watched as the last grenade was released and then hit the top of the berm, sending the live grenade back toward the throwing position. The German soldier who threw the grenade turned to run, but Gorton jumped on the soldier and threw him to the ground.

As the grenade exploded about 15 feet away, sending shrapnel flying, Gorton protected the soldier from possible lethal injuries.



Photo by Sgt. Teddy Wade

Staff Sgt. Clayton Gorton, assigned to the Remote Basic Warrior Training team, 95th Training Division, out of Fort Sill, Okla., stands next to an Afghan drill sergeant during the Afghan National Army basic training at Camp Darulaman in Kabul, Afghanistan, on July 27, 2009. Gorton was a drill sergeant with the Army Reserve, and his job was to mentor the Afghan Army cadre and Afghan drill sergeants, and to supervise and help with training.

“When I tackled him to the ground, I was just taking my own advice,” he said. Gorton’s quick thinking might have saved the German soldier’s life. “I got up and thought that was a close one. Then, I felt warm liquid running down my legs and the medical team was running toward me.”

Gorton had silver-dollar sized wounds in his legs that were two centimeters deep. He spent the next month recovering from his injuries, serving on restricted duty, but



stayed with his unit in Afghanistan and completed his deployment.

Since the incident, Gorton and the German soldier have become good friends. Gorton said he hopes to visit him when he’s back in Germany.

For demonstrating courage and risking his own life, Gorton was awarded the Soldier’s Medal in June 2010.

Gorton’s experience highlights an aspect of deployment that is often overlooked: Service members face danger not just when engaging the enemy. In a war zone, training exercises and routine missions require utmost attention and, at times brave choices.

During his nine-month deployment to Afghanistan, Gorton’s primary responsibility was to mentor and train the Afghan National Army. Gorton’s responsibilities in Afghanistan were similar to his 2005 mission in Iraq, where he served on a military transition team as an advisor to the Iraqi army.

Since returning from Afghanistan in February 2010, Gorton has focused on his studies. He is pursuing a bachelor’s degree in accounting at the University of Kentucky and plans to join ROTC to be commissioned as a second lieutenant. Gorton joined the Army directly after high school, following in the tracks of his father and grandfather.



21D Soldier honored

By Don Kramer
Joint Base Lewis-McChord

Staff Sgt. Jarrett D. Brown received the Army's third-highest award for valor July 22 during the welcome home ceremony for 5th Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division, at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash.

Brown, of the brigade's 1st Battalion, 17th Infantry Regiment, received a Silver Star at the beginning of a busy ceremony, which included the brigade's redesignation as the 2nd Stryker



Photo by Lester Hovey

Maj. Gen. John D. Johnson pins the Silver Star on Staff Sgt. Jarrett D. Brown during a July 2010 ceremony.



Brigade Combat Team and change of command. The acting commanding general of I Corps, Maj. Gen. John D. Johnson, took a moment during the proceedings to pin the medal on Brown's chest and congratulate him for his conspicuous bravery on Aug. 24, 2009.

On that day, Brown was serving as an assistant M240 machine gunner during a patrol in Afghanistan's Arghandab River Valley, a hotbed of Taliban resistance. The patrol was ambushed and hit by a combination of fire from machine guns, small arms and rocket-propelled grenades.

While firing his rifle, Brown exposed himself to enemy fire and directed his machine gunner to cover a fire team caught in the open. He then directed suppressive fire on the enemy's heaviest weapons.

As the platoon consolidated, Brown's gunner collapsed in the 100-degree heat. Brown grabbed the machine gun and dragged the gunner to a concealed position, where he delivered accurate fire support.

When it became clear the platoon's situation was untenable, the platoon sergeant ordered the squads to break contact. Brown alternately provided covering fire and moved, dragging his gunner with him. When he saw an enemy fire team creeping to within 30 meters of the platoon, he threw his gunner behind the last concealment available, abandoned his own cover and engaged the enemy, killing one and wounding another.

Brown set up the M240 and provided suppressive fire as the rest of the platoon began a fast egress. He followed after them, still carrying his gunner.

The platoon came under heavy fire once more before making it back to the joint district coordination center. Brown returned fire and identified multiple targets for other platoon members to engage. His response created space for close-coordination aircraft to be called to neutralize the enemy and allow the platoon to finally return to safety. Brown's first action once the platoon was safe was to find medical assistance for his gunner.

The brigade's commander, Col. Harry D. Tunnell IV, attributed the success of the "Destroyer" Brigade during its deployment to the countless, unselfish acts of individual Soldiers like Brown in dangerous situations.

"The success of the brigade has been due to the willingness of individual Soldiers to be so untiring as they got ready for war and so staunch in their desire to do their duty in harm's way," Tunnell said.

FIRST IN DRILL

Fort Jackson's first female Drill Sergeant of the Year set the standard



Photos courtesy Galen Grant

Galen Grant was the first woman to win the post's Drill Sergeant of the Year title when she was stationed at Fort Jackson, S.C., in 1983.

By Chris Rasmussen
Fort Jackson Leader

There was a time when female drill sergeants could not lead basic trainees through the Bayonet Course and were not allowed to perform some of the same duties as their male counterparts.

Galen Grant, a drill sergeant at Fort Jackson, S.C., in the late 1970s and early 1980s, remembers those times. In fact, she helped break down those barriers, becoming the post's first female Drill Sergeant of the Year in 1983.

"It was thought that female instructors could not instill the spirit of the bayonet, which was to kill," she said of the lesson eliminated from the Basic Combat Training program of instruction last year. "It was a shock and kind of a slap in the face."

Women were first allowed into the drill sergeant program in 1972, when six NCOs from the Women's Army Corps were enrolled at Fort Jackson.

Grant, who had worked at West Point, had 18 months of service when she enrolled in the program in 1977. She was assigned as a drill sergeant to the 2nd Infantry Brigade at Fort Jackson and served in the 10th and 6th Battalions.

"I loved getting up and going in because I never knew what the trainees were going to do next. I had a lot of fun," Grant said. "The really great thing about being a drill sergeant was every nine weeks you got to see the results of your work."

Back in those days, each company usually had only one female drill sergeant. Despite the challenges, Grant excelled at her job. During her second stint as a drill sergeant at Fort Jackson in 1983, she won the post's Drill Sergeant of the Year competition. She then represented Fort Jackson in the Army Drill Sergeant of the Year contest.

"The best part of winning [at Fort Jackson] was that all female drill sergeants felt like they had won something," Grant said. "It was also a big deal in Columbia. All of the local news



stations did a segment, and the national media even covered it. Winning this recognition for women was an amazing feeling.”

Jill Duffee, a training NCO and friend of Grant during her time as a drill sergeant, said it wasn’t easy for women in the Army at that time.

“[Women] were treated a lot different all around back then. It was a boy’s club, and women were just coming into the regular Army,” Duffee said. “It took a lot for Grant to get where she got.

“There were not very many female drill sergeants at the time. Just a handful,” she said. “But Grant was one of the best. She was very dedicated and loved her job.”

Today’s Drill Sergeant of the Year competitions, which are filled with hands-on events such as a road march in full “battle rattle,” reassembling an M16 or performing first aid, are nothing like they were in the early 1980s.

“It was nothing like it is now,” she said. “They took our records like PT and basic rifle marksmanship and sent us before a board of sergeants major. There was no obstacle course or any hands-on portions.”

Grant didn’t achieve her successes with a stereotypical tough-nosed drill sergeant attitude.

“I don’t think you have to lead through intimidation. You can instill discipline and still have a good time doing it,” she said. “Trainees want to have a sense of belonging, and they want to be successful. The drill sergeant has an obligation to help them achieve those goals.”

In this undated photo from about 30 years ago, Grant instructs a Soldier in Basic Combat Training. Grant served two tours of duty as a drill sergeant at Fort Jackson.

Despite the long hours and challenging duties, Grant said she looks back fondly on her career as a drill sergeant.

“I would go home at 10:30 p.m. and go back at four in the morning,” she said. “The hours were tough, and you had to put your family and personal goals aside. But quite frankly, I don’t think there is a more important job in the Army.”

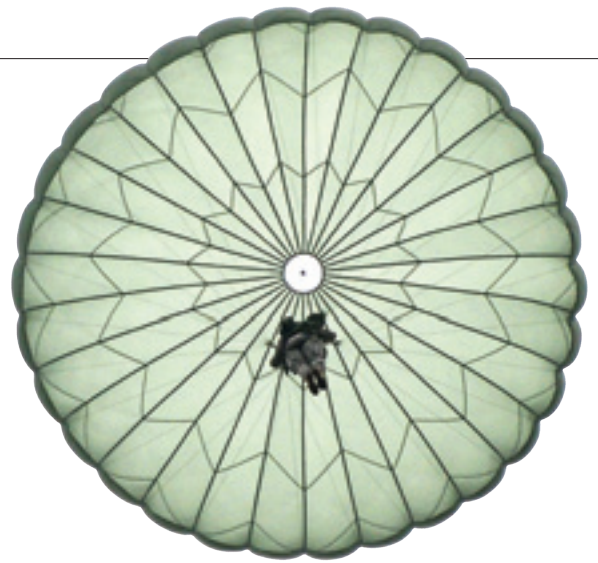
But being a drill sergeant was only part of Grant’s Army career. Coming into the Army with a bachelor’s degree, she pursued a master’s degree in clinical psychology, eventually obtaining a doctorate in psychology. Grant re-entered the Army as a captain and psychologist.

She retired from the Army in 1998 and was hired by the Defense Department as a civilian psychologist, where she specialized in suicide prevention and post-traumatic stress disorder.

“I did some really cool things helping Soldiers returning from active duty downrange,” she said.

Grant now volunteers her time at Fort Jackson with the 165th Infantry Brigade, giving quarterly classes to drill sergeants and their spouses on how to survive drill sergeant duty.

She was also recently hired by the University of South Carolina to teach an Introduction to Psychology course for Soldiers at Fort Jackson’s Warrior Transition Unit.



MTT COURSE PINS 29 NEW PATHFINDERS

By Marisa Petrich &
Sgt. Cesar Padilla
Joint Base Lewis-McChord

It's satisfying to know that you're one of the best. Getting a cool new badge doesn't hurt, either.

The most recent graduates at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash., of the Army's Pathfinder School know about both. After a three-week course run by a mobile training team from Fort Benning, Ga., 29 out of the 80 JBLM Soldiers who began the training can now call themselves pathfinders.

Army pathfinders have been used since World War II to establish and operate landing and drop zones. They were the first American Soldiers on the ground on D-Day in 1944 and, despite evolutions in doctrine and tactics, continue to lead the way in operations today.

"Pathfinders are more relevant than ever on today's battlefield," explained Command Sgt. Maj. Joseph Dallas of 5th Battalion, 20th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, who is a 2001 graduate of the Pathfinder School.

"The pathfinder gives our country a significant advantage over our enemies. It gives a unit a unique capability to perform airborne and air assault operations. Their skills are critical to our nation's success. A unit would be hard-pressed in Afghanistan



without helicopter resupply or air-assault capabilities, all of which are managed by pathfinders."

Though JBLM's most recent Pathfinder MTT course was organized by Troop C, 38th Long-Range Surveillance Company, 201st Battlefield Surveillance Brigade, some slots were filled by the best Soldiers other units had to send.

Students learned to navigate cross-country on foot to establish and operate day and night helicopter landing zones and

parachute drop zones; conduct medical evacuation procedures; rig and inspect sling loads; and provide air traffic control and navigational assistance to aircraft.

It's a course that demands 100 percent from students. Students go through multiple exams, hands-on tasks and one final field training exercise — not to mention the hours of off-duty time spent studying. All told, prospective pathfinders must memorize and retain a huge amount of information in a short amount of time.



Opposite page, top: A student in the Mobile Training Team Pathfinder course descends under an open canopy from a CH-47 Chinook helicopter to Rogers Drop Zone on March 18 at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash.

Photo by Ingrid Barrentine

Opposite page, bottom: A Soldier sports his just-awarded Pathfinder badge. The wing suggests flight and airborne capabilities, while the torch symbolizes leadership and guidance — all pathfinder combat skills.

Photo by Ingrid Barrentine

Left: Soldiers conduct airborne operations out of a C-130 aircraft March 23. The jump was the beginning of the course's culminating two-day field training exercise.

Photo by Sgt. Cesar Padilla

most college courses just because of that,” said Sgt. 1st Class Bill Long, one of the MTT instructors.

Typically, Pathfinder School has a graduation rate of 50 to 60 percent. The March JBLM class lost more than half its students by the end of the first week. Most of them dropped after the first sling-load exercise, traditionally the toughest part of the course.

“You really don’t realize how much work and how much detail go into it [until you do it],” said Spc. Scott Angell of the 38th LRS Company. “If you’re going to put 10,000 pounds in the air over somebody’s head, you want to make sure it’s secured properly.”

“I had no idea what to expect when I started the course,” said Spc. Jonathan Peace of the 38th LRS Company. “Knowing that I’m coming up on promotion, I wanted to be able to lead my future squad or team from the front.”

After being pinned with their shiny new badges, the graduates were glad to have completed the course and looked forward to the chance to sleep again. But, they also understand the responsibility they now have to their fellow Soldiers.

“Today we’re going to issue you the cool-looking Pathfinder badge, which you earned,” Dallas told them.

“The badge represents more than you having the skill set of a pathfinder. You have the responsibility to retain the pathfinder knowledge that has been crammed into your brain the last few weeks,” he said.

“You also have an obligation to pass the torch.”

“I never had to remember so much in two days, turn around and take a test on that knowledge, and then learn something else,” said Sgt. Jonathan Everett, a team leader in the 38th LRS Company.

A graduate of the Airborne School and Ranger School, Everett considered the pathfinder course more mentally challenging and believes it is rewarding for those who think outside their comfort zones.

“We catered the FTX to more thinking outside the box, to think outside of

doctrine, because the manuals have not been updated to fit the new mission the Army has,” said Staff Sgt. Mike Patraw, an MTT instructor from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 507th Parachute Infantry Regiment at Fort Benning.

“We catered our training [for] the students to think like that and to show them a different way that would benefit the mission, the pilots and themselves.”

“This course is more challenging than

U.S. ARMY SMALL ARMS CHAMPIONSHIP

A record number of shooters participate in the Army's premier marksmanship competition

By Michael Molinaro
U.S. Army Marksmanship Unit

IMore than 300 Soldiers from across the Army descended on Fort Benning, Ga., March 19–28, to take part in the 2011 U.S. Army Small Arms Championship, the Army's preeminent marksmanship training and competition event.

Reservist Sgt. 1st Class Russell Moore of the 91st Small-Arms Readiness Group, Camp Bullis, Texas, won the overall individual championship, his third championship in a row.

Though winning the title is a significant accomplishment, the ultimate goal of the event is to raise the overall combat readiness of the Army, he said.

“The ‘All-Army’ Small Arms Championship not only provides the training every Soldier needs to excel in marksmanship, it also provides a means in which to test their skills among their peers as well as some of the best shooters in the world,” Moore said.

“When we all signed up to be Soldiers, we volunteered to take on innumerable challenges and new experiences. This should be one of those experiences for every Soldier. Come out with a desire to learn and do your best, and it will be a great time.”

Hosted by the U.S. Army Marksmanship Unit, the competition featured Soldiers competing in rifle, pistol, and combined-arms matches.

The training and competition is like no other Soldiers experience in the military, said Lt. Col. Daniel Hodne, commander of USAMU.

“Gen. Douglas MacArthur’s words, ‘Upon the fields of friendly strife are sown the seeds that on other fields, on other days, will bear the fruits of victory,’ put this one-of-a-kind training event in the proper context,” Hodne said. “The seeds have been sown here at the All-Army. The responsibility now lies with those Soldiers who took part to incorporate what they learned

into the training of their units. Their efforts will bear the fruits of victory in Afghanistan, Iraq, or wherever the requirements of national security take us.”

The field of Soldiers was the most numerous in 18 years. Superb weather welcomed Soldiers from as far away as Alaska, Guam and South Dakota.

While many All-Army veterans, such as Moore, found their way back to Fort Benning, a large contingent of first-timers embraced the challenges and uniqueness of the championship.

“This is the best thing in the Army,” said Sgt. 1st Class Daniel Byler of 1st Battalion, 335th Infantry Regiment,

THE WINNERS

Service Pistol Champion:

Sgt. 1st Class Russell Moore, 91st Small-Arms Readiness Group, Camp Bullis, Texas

Service Rifle Champion:

Staff Sgt. Matthew Waechter, 132nd Fighter Wing, Iowa Air National Guard

Combined-Arms Champion:

Cadet Matthew Ray, U.S. Military Academy, West Point, N.Y.

Long-Range Champion:

Sgt. 1st Class David Perdew, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 44th Chemical Battalion, Illinois National Guard

High Drill Sergeant:

Sgt. 1st Class George Pickowicz, Regional Training Center-East, Fort Dix, N.J.

High Cadet:

Cadet Matthew Ray

High Novice:

Sgt. 1st Class David Perdew

High Active-Duty Soldier:

Sgt. 1st Class Nelson Ashbrook, 75th Ranger Regiment, Fort Benning, Ga.

High Active-Duty Soldier (E1-E4):

Spc. Kevin Kelley, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, Fort Benning, Ga.

High Reservist:

Sgt. 1st Class Russell Moore

High Reservist (E1-E4):

Spc. Benson Munyan, 2nd Battalion, 91st Small-Arms Readiness Group, Fort Douglas, Utah

High National Guard:

Sgt. 1st Class David Perdew

High National Guard (E1-E4):

Pfc. Jason Parsons, 507th Engineer Battalion, Michigan National Guard



Above: Soldiers compete in a rifle match March 21 on McAndrews Range at Fort Benning, Ga., one of several matches conducted during the 2011 U.S. Army Small Arms Championship.

Right: A Soldier negotiates around obstacles while shooting his rifle on one of four combined arms courses at Fort Benning's Krilling Range.

Photos by Michael Molinaro

205th Infantry Brigade, First Army-Division East, Camp Atterbury, Ind. "Marksmanship is a perishable skill. Soldiers should really make it a point to come here for this event. It's great."

Byler came with seven others from his unit on their first trip to the All-Army. They spent two weeks on Fort Benning late last year taking part in a Close-Quarters Squad Designated Marksman course conducted by the USAMU. Between the advanced training they received at the course and competing here all week, they are more confident than ever in their marksmanship ability.

"I prefer the service rifle, but it's cool to shoot some pistol, and the run-and-gun stuff is an absolute blast," said Byler, an 18-year Army veteran. "You don't get to do that anywhere in the Army. We made a lot of good friends here and got a lot of good pointers on shooting from guys who have been here before. We'll definitely be bringing the team back again next year."

Soldiers were split into four main categories: novice, open, pro and cadet. Winners received plaques, coins, guns and trophies. The overall high novice shooter for the week was awarded a Secretary of the Army M1 Garand Trophy Rifle, and the top pistol shooter won a Secretary of the Army pistol built by the gunsmiths of the USAMU Custom Firearms Shop.

Five cadets from the Reserve Officer Training Corps earned scholarship money provided by the Civilian Marksmanship Program. Cadet Matthew Ray of the U.S. Military Academy received a new trophy, the Lt. Gen. Benjamin C. Freakley Award, given to the cadet with the highest aggregate score of the two Excellence in Competition matches.

The retired Col. Ralph Puckett Excellence in Marksmanship



award, given to the Soldier in the novice class who achieved the highest aggregate score of the two EIC matches, was won by Staff Sgt. Matthew Waechter of the 132nd Fighter Wing, Iowa Air National Guard.

"The competition is designed to test the entire depth of a Soldier's shooting ability," said Command Sgt. Maj. Chris Hardy, command sergeant major of the Maneuver Center of Excellence at Fort Benning. "No matter where you ended up, participation in this event makes the Army much stronger. For a competitive marksman, consistently applying the fundamentals and achieving success on the range translate to achieving success on anything that you do, whether on the battlefield or other walks of life."

CHAPLAIN ASSISTANT

Mentorship

PROGRAM

Enhancing personal and professional development

By Staff Sgt. Shawn Morris
99th Regional Support Command

More than a dozen chaplain assistants from across the country attended the first-ever Chaplain Assistant Mentorship Program hosted by the Army Reserve's 99th Regional Support Command March 12–13 in Bethesda, Md.

The two-day event offered training and mentorship by senior chaplain assistants in subjects as varied as unit ministry team cohesion, confronting death on the battlefield and obtaining religious supplies on a limited budget.

"I felt there was a huge need for chaplain assistants to have a place and a way that they could come to get some training and engage each other," explained Master Sgt. Daniel Roberts, NCO in charge of the 99th RSC's chaplain section. "In the Army Reserve, chaplain assistants are not being mentored because, a lot of times, they're kind of remote from the next higher chaplain assistants.

"I wanted to give folks an opportunity to come to

get trained, to get mentored, to grow as noncommissioned officers and to grow as people," he added.

Chaplain assistants hold an important military occupational specialty, providing various types of support to the chaplains and other Soldiers with whom they serve.

"A chaplain assistant has a couple of roles; he's a minister, he's an administrative guy for the chaplain, but he's also supposed to be able to handle a weapon," said Roberts, who deployed as part of Op-

erations Desert Shield and Desert Storm in 1990–91, to Haiti in 1997 and to Kosovo in 1999.

"The unit ministry team — the chaplain and the chaplain assistant — is a very integral part of any unit, and our job is very unique in the fact that what we are called to do is nurture the living, care for our wounded and also honor the dead," said Master Sgt. Lorenzia Henderson, chapel NCOIC at Fort Dix, N.J. "Our mission is very important to supporting our Soldiers."

It was a desire to support the unique mission of chaplain assistants that led Roberts, with the support of 99th RSC Chaplain (Col.) Kenneth Kirk, to implement the 99th RSC Chaplain Assistant Mentorship Program, or CAMP.

"This is where the rubber meets the road, right here ... taking care of



Sgt. Maj. Jesus DeJesus, acting command sergeant major for the 99th Regional Support Command, delivers the opening remarks during the first-ever Chaplain Assistant Mentorship Program, hosted March 12–13 by the 99th RSC in Bethesda, Md.

Photos by Staff Sgt. Shawn Morris



Soldiers,” said Sgt. Maj. Jesus DeJesus, acting command sergeant major for the 99th RSC. “CAMP is not only going to make us stronger, it’s also going to make this organization stronger. That’s why we need it.”

CAMP is the brainchild of Roberts and former 99th RSC chaplain assistants Henderson and Sgt. 1st Class Fred Cohen. All three served as trainers and mentors for the event.

“The most important aspect of this training is cohesion — training chaplain assistants to understand the importance of cohesion because the Reserve units are so spread out, meeting all those other chaplain assistants who are in the region, sharing ideas, success stories and best practices,” said Henderson, an Operation Iraqi Freedom veteran and former Marine.

“There is a serious lack of MOS-specific mentorship from the senior level just because we are so spread out, and we don’t operate in units with other people in our MOS,” explained Cohen, the chaplain section plans and operations NCO for First Army Division East, headquartered at Fort Meade, Md.

Cohen said the idea for a chaplain assistant mentorship program originated

with Henderson during his time with the 99th RSC, then grew into a two-day chaplain assistant workshop last year during Cohen’s service with the 99th RSC. It blossomed into CAMP under Roberts.

“Master Sgt. Roberts has taken it to a whole new level, taking what we did last year, building on it and really expanding the program into something we didn’t even think was possible,” said Cohen, who deployed to Afghanistan in 2008.

Roberts has expanded the program beyond the 99th RSC’s 13-state northeastern region, accepting Soldiers from around the country who fall within the other three RSC’s areas of responsibility. This is because the operational, functional and training commands that sent their chaplain assistants to CAMP are not constrained by the same geographical limits as the RSCs, but rather have chaplain assistants serving in units scattered across the nation.

“If they want to come, they’re welcome to come,” Roberts said. “My goal is to provide the training they need.”

According to several of the Soldiers attending CAMP, they’re getting exactly the kind of training and mentorship they need to become better chaplain assistants.

“For the chaplain assistant corps to

Master Sgt. Daniel Roberts, NCO in charge of the 99th Regional Support Command chaplain section, instructs a class during CAMP.

launch its own training strictly for chaplain assistants was very much needed,” said Sgt. 1st Class Jose Montes, chaplain assistant NCOIC for the Mobilization and Deployment Brigade, Fort Bliss, Texas. “This is definitely long overdue.”

“We hadn’t heard of training like this specifically for chaplain assistants, so I think it’s a great training opportunity,” said Staff Sgt. Cynthia Thomas, chaplain assistant NCOIC for the 158th Infantry Brigade, Camp Shelby, Miss. “As a whole, chaplain assistants need to take advantage of training opportunities.”

“Even from a junior-enlisted perspective, they cover so many areas that are applicable all the way up to sergeant major,” added Pfc. Rebecca Holzmann, chaplain assistant with 4th Brigade, 95th Division.

A second CAMP weekend was held March 18–20 in Pittsburgh, and Roberts plans to expand the program in the future using lessons learned from this inaugural iteration of CAMP.

“I love training. It’s where my heart is,” Roberts said.

PHOTO JOURNAL





First Sgt. Kermit L. Joseph, the 39th Transportation Battalion's headquarters company first sergeant, reads a book, *Sky High: The True Story of Maggie Gee* by Marissa Moss and Carl Angel, with William Jones, 9, during the Women's History Month Read-To-Me program at Vogelweh Elementary School, in Kaiserslautern, Germany. During the event, the volunteers read books about famous women throughout history.

Photo by Staff Sgt. Michael J. Taylor

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PHOTO JOURNAL



▲ Master Sgt. Raymond Geoghegan, a jumpmaster with the 782nd Brigade Support Battalion, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, signals that the plane is one minute from the Luzon Dropzone, Fort Bragg. Thirty seconds later, jumpers shuffled to the doors and prepared to jump.

Photo by Spc. David L. Nye



► Sgt. Kevin Jenkins of the Individual Replacement Training Company, 4th Infantry Division, is greeted by a survivor of the Bataan Death March at White Sands Missile Range, N.M., March 27. A record-breaking 6,357 people registered for the 22nd Annual Bataan Memorial Death March in honor of World War II prisoners of war.

Photo by Judith Jenkins



◀ Staff Sgt. Ryan Knight, a Soldier with U.S. Army Japan, shakes hands with a displaced Japanese citizen during the relief efforts of Operation Tomodachi at Toho Junior High School, March 31. The high school is being used as a shelter for displaced citizens following the recent earthquake and tsunami that hit the area on March 11.

Photo by Jose Sanchez Alonso

▶ Cpl. Roswell McLarin of the Warrior Training Center at Fort Benning, Ga., demonstrates the low crawl to prospective air assault students.

Photo by Alexandra Hemmerly-Brown



◀ Command Sgt. Maj. Marvin Hill, International Security Assistance Force command sergeant major, speaks with Soldiers from Company A, 1st Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division in Panjwa'i, Afghanistan. Hill said he was thankful for each and every Soldier around him because he relied on them to keep each other safe.

Photo by Spc. Edward A. Garibay

Roll Call

OF THE FALLEN

Operation New Dawn

*Cpl. Brandon S. Hocking, 24
Seattle, Wash., March 21, 2011*

*Staff Sgt. Quadi S. Hudgins, 26
New Orleans, La., April 2, 2011*

*Sgt. Christian A. S. Garcia, 30
Goodyear, Ariz., April 2, 2011*

*Sgt. Jorge A. Scatliffe, 32
St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands, April 3, 2011*

*Maj. Wesley J. Hinkley, 36
Carlisle, Pa., April 4, 2011*

*Spc. Gary L. Nelson III, 20
Woodstock, Ga., April 5, 2011*

*Sgt. Vorasack T. Xaysana, 30
Westminster, Colo., April 10, 2011*

Operation Enduring Freedom

*Cpl. Donald R. Mickler Jr., 29
Bucyrus, Ohio, March 19, 2011*

*Pfc. Rudy A. Acosta, 19
Canyon Country, Calif., March 19, 2011*

*Master Sgt. Jamal H. Bowers, 41
Raleigh, N.C., March 18, 2011*

*Staff Sgt. Mecolus C. McDaniel, 33
Fort Hood, Texas, March 19, 2011*

*Staff Sgt. Joshua S. Gire, 28
Chillicothe, Ohio, March 22, 2011*

*Pfc. Michael C. Malir, 26
Homosassa, Fla., March 22, 2011*

*Cpl. Justin D. Ross, 22
Green Bay, Wis., March 26, 2011*

*Staff Sgt. Bryan A. Burgess, 29
Cleburne, Texas, March 29, 2011*

*Pfc. Dustin J. Feldhaus, 20
Glendale, Ariz., March 29, 2011*

*Sgt. 1st Class Ofren Arrechaga, 28
Hialeah, Fla., March 29, 2011*

*Staff Sgt. Frank E. Adamski III, 26
Moosup, Conn., March 29, 2011*

*Spc. Jameson L. Lindskog, 23
Pleasanton, Calif., March 29, 2011*

*Pvt. Jeremy P. Faulkner, 23
Griffin, Ga., March 29, 2011*

*Spc. Dennis C. Poulin, 26
Cumberland, R.I., March 31, 2011*

*1st Lt. Robert F. Welch III, 26
Denton, Texas, April 3, 2011*

*Capt. Wesley J. Hinkley, 36
Carlisle, Pa., April 4, 2011*

*Staff Sgt. Scott H. Burgess, 32
Franklin, Texas, April 4, 2011*

*Staff Sgt. Michael S. Lammerts, 26
Tonawanda, N.Y., April 4, 2011*

*Sgt. Keith T. Buzinski, 26
Daytona Beach, Fla., April 7, 2011*

*Sgt. Jose M. Caraballo Pietri, 32
Yauco, Puerto Rico, April 10, 2011*

*Sgt. Keith T. Buzinski, 26
Daytona Beach, Fla., April 7, 2011*

*Staff Sgt. Jose M. Caraballo Pietri, 32
Yauco, Puerto Rico, April 10, 2011*

*Pvt. Brandon T. Pickering, 21
Fort Thomas, Ky., April 10, 2011*

*Sgt. Brent M. Maher, 31
Council Bluffs, Iowa, April 11, 2011*

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 March 19, 2011, and April 11, 2011.

SOLDIERS
LEADERS
CIVILIANS
FAMILIES



Take 5

before getting
on the boat!

Ship-Shape

- Always wear a life jacket
- Get the boat checked
- Watch the weather to prepare for local conditions and electrical storms
- Communicate trip details in event of an emergency
- Do not swim or wade near a boat's exhaust pipe, sit on the swim platform when the engine is running or hold onto the deck when the boat is moving
- Have CPR instructions and local emergency numbers on the boat



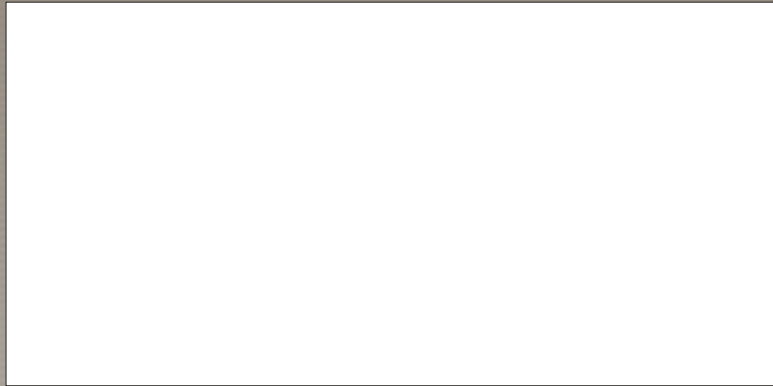
What Have You Done
to Save a Life Today?



ARMY SAFE
IS ARMY STRONG

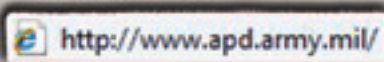


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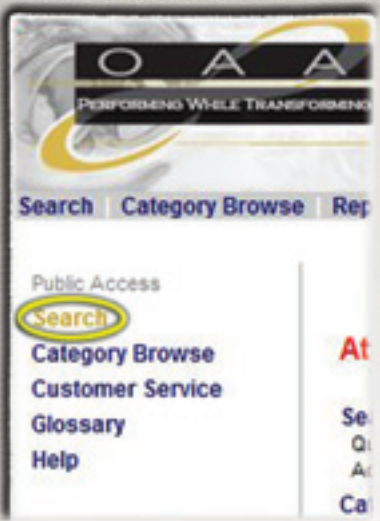
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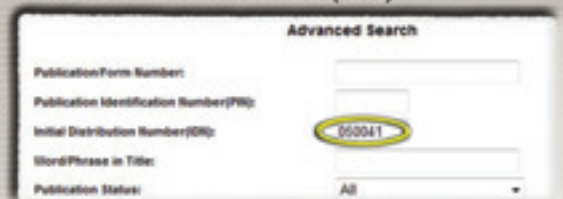
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