

UNITED STATES MILITARY ENTRANCE PROCESSING COMMAND

# Messenger

SHARING INFORMATION TO REACH A VISION

VOL. 35, NO. 2

*Breaking*

# **Barriers**



*to*

**Reasonable**

**Accommodations**

# Messenger *Sharing information to reach a vision*

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## Director of accession policy visits



Jeffrey R. Mayo, director of accession policy, speaks with Rebecca Boellhoeffer, a processing technician, during his visit to the Milwaukee MEPS. Mayo also met with USMEPCOM headquarters staff and toured Great Lakes Naval Training Center. Page 20.

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## U.S. Military Entrance Processing Command

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## Commander's Commentary

I would like to take this opportunity to share my philosophy of command. I cannot over-emphasize the importance of a clear command philosophy. It will help me – and hopefully you – focus on the key elements of our vital mission.

This philosophy of command is intended to guide the actions of every service member and civilian employee in USMEPCOM. While not all-inclusive, it contains my views on some of the things that are important to me and define how I will conduct business.

**Mission.** USMEPCOM evaluates applicants by applying established DoD standards during processing in order to determine eligibility for military service.

**Commander's Intent.** We are an integral part of the Accession Triad, and the first stop on the journey through "Freedom's Front Door." We ensure a consistent standard is applied to ensure the quality of men and women who protect and defend our great nation in the future. We do this while providing command excellence as outlined by the Red Carpet Policy.

**Vision.** We will be America's elite source for military and federal employment screening.

**Integrity is the foundation.** Your character is who you are. It's how you're seen, known, and remembered. Integrity is non-negotiable – do the right thing morally, ethically and professionally ... *always*. Remember, integrity is doing the right thing even when no one is watching.

**Mission first, people always.** These are not competing requirements – neglect of one will inevitably harm the other. The USMEPCOM mission is more important than an individual's goals and ambitions. We will support and enable our personnel and their families to be successful, happy and productive. Take care of your people and the mission will take care of itself.

**Professionalism in all we do.** Most people share the same good intentions; successful people act on them. Desire, discipline and adherence to directives and standards will

equal success. Compare yourself to the standard, look for the best in your co-workers and demand the best of yourself. Never forget who you are and what you represent – maintain the highest standards in and out of uniform. Your conduct, bearing, personal appearance and fitness are a reflection of USMEPCOM and your respective military service.

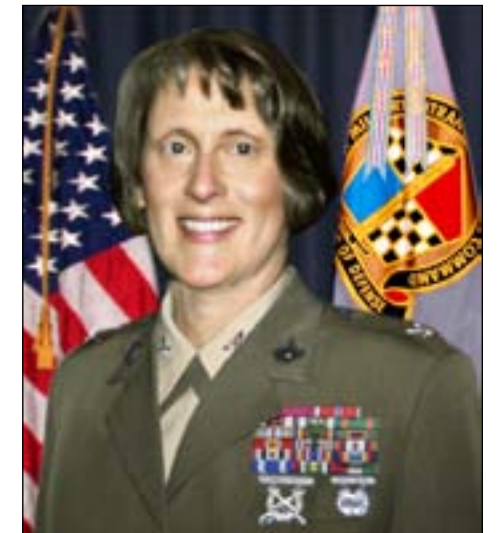
**Service-based leadership.** Simply put, leaders work for their subordinates. No one of us has all the answers; successful leaders provide subordinates a safe and positive work environment, value their input, and help subordinates master their responsibilities and reach their full potential. Good leaders know who is struggling and get them the help they need; they also know who is exceeding standards and ensure they are recognized.

**Manage change and challenge the routine.** Contrary perspectives can be critical to our growth as an effective organization. Foster innovative thinking and critical analysis of plans and ideas. Change is a way of life – we must not remain static in our approach to problem-solving. Remember, every member of this team has a stake in its success. As such, every member of this command will be heard. No member of this command has ownership of all of the "good ideas."

**Share the wealth.** Communicate, coordinate, collaborate and cooperate with each other and higher headquarters to share good ideas, best practices and lessons learned. We are all on the same team.

**Learning implies that mistakes will occur.** Leaders at all levels must provide an environment where subordinates can make mistakes and learn from them. Anticipate and prevent mistakes when possible, correct those not preventable, but always ensure we tolerate honest mistakes. Most critically, ensure we learn from our mistakes and from those of others, incorporate training to eliminate mistakes and share the lessons from both.

**Discipline.** Focus must be on prevention of misconduct rather than



Col. Kathy J. Maloney

reaction. Stay "left of the incident" and ensure all personnel understand expectations. Enforcing our standards ensures that all personnel enjoy the greatest benefits from their service in USMEPCOM. However, we compound our problem if we fail to enforce standards once they are violated. Do the harder "right" over the easier "wrong" and *never* walk away from a deficiency.

**Zero Tolerance.** Sexual assault, sexual harassment, discrimination, hazing, alcohol/drug abuse and fraternization will not be tolerated ... period.

**Risk Management.** Safety does not compete with mission accomplishment; it is an essential component. Compare the risks with the anticipated benefits and use controls to mitigate our exposure to risk that can't be eliminated – this is the simple, common sense foundation of Operational Risk Management.

**Take time to reflect, have fun and maintain a sense of humor.** What you do for a living is important to our country. It ensures our nation has a ready force of military professionals to protect U.S. interests throughout the globe. Take pride in knowing you make a difference.

It is my honor and privilege to serve as your commander.

*KJ Maloney*  
K.J. Maloney  
Colonel, USMC  
Commander

# Be Reasonable

Reasonable accommodations not only help workers with disabilities be productive,

## It's the Law

By Danielle Lieber  
Messenger Associate Editor

Reasonable accommodations can enable employees to work more efficiently and comfortably. A simple accommodation could be the difference between an effective, proficient employee and an employee who is unable to work up to his or her full potential. It could also be the difference between a comfortable or intimidating work environment. Communication is key.

One USMEPCOM employee approached Andrea Walton, USMEPCOM disability program manager, with a request for accommodations for anxiety. He was nervous about asking for accommodations and telling his supervisor he had a mental impairment. He did not want his supervisor or his co-workers to look at him differently.

Walton assured him it is far better to receive accommodations for his disability than not. Walton also assured him his case would be kept confidential and only she and the supervisor needed to know his impairment.

This employee asked his supervisor to meet with Walton to discuss his disability and the accommodations he needed. He requested frequent breaks to calm himself if he was anxious at work and ad hoc telework,

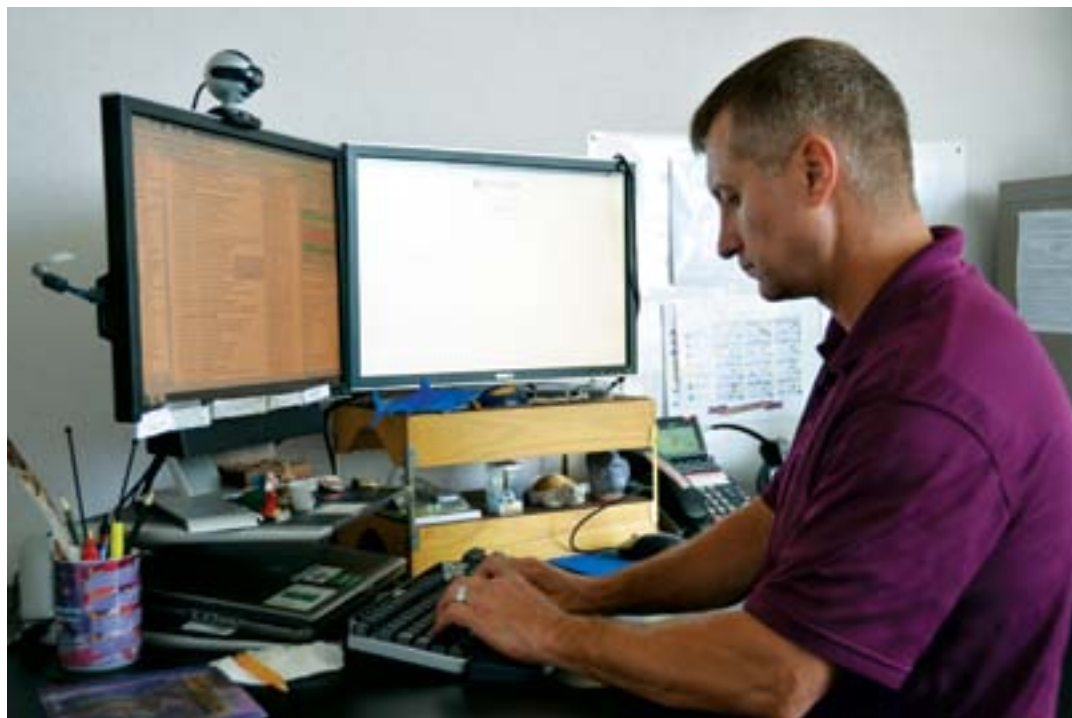


Photo by Art Heintz

**John Butler, Eastern Sector operations group supervisor, types at his desk, which allows him to stand, rather than sit. Back problems make it difficult for him to sit for long periods of time. The desk, a reasonable accommodation, can be lowered for meetings so all parties can be seated.**

so he could stay home if he was feeling too anxious to come into work.

His supervisor was understanding and approved the accommodations. He was asked to furnish medical documentation annotating his diagnosis of anxiety.

After their meeting, the employee was more comfortable at work and the supervisor better understood the employee's behaviors and needs.

People with mental or physical disabilities are protected by the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, among other regulations and laws. Reasonable accommodations make it possible for many disabled, or differently abled, USMEPCOM employees to do their jobs.

One goal Walton has for the USMEPCOM Disability Program is "if a person comes in and they mention

they have a disability, the first question we ask is: 'Do you need an accommodation?'"

The first step to accommodating a disability is for the employee to make it known that an accommodation is needed.

According to Walton, around three-fourths of the requests for accommodations are due to physical disabilities. Physical disabilities include, but are not limited to, deaf or hard of

hearing, blind or low vision, amputees, people with back impairments and people whose disabilities require them to use wheelchairs.

Someone who is deaf may request a video phone or a sign language interpreter. Someone who is blind may request a screen reader or a Braille embosser. Someone with a back impairment may request an ergonomic chair or a cart to move supplies. A wheelchair user may request a height adjustable desk or flexible scheduling.

While some disabilities obviously need to be accommodated, others may not be as apparent.

According to Walton, among those who may receive accommodations are women with postpartum depression or temporary high blood pressure due to pregnancy, people with alcoholism or drug addictions, though "they have to



Photo by Art Heintz

**Danielle Lieber, Messenger associate editor, uses a closed circuit television to read copy. She also has a tent-like structure over her desk to limit the amount of external light that reaches her computer screens.**

be getting treatment," even those with side effects from medication.

Accommodations can be simple and unobtrusive.

### There are consequences for denying accommodations

Supervisors who do not approve an employee's request for accommodations must show approving the accommodations will cause undue hardship to the command and the Department of the Army.

If this statement of undue hardship is found false, an employee can file a disability discrimination complaint with the USMEPCOM Equal Employment Opportunity Office.

Failure to accommodate is a violation of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

If the complaint is not resolved at the lowest level, the complaint has the potential to end up in district court.

Supervisors must take a request for accommodations seriously, as dismissing it could be costly. However, there is room for discussion.

If a supervisor does not approve an accommodation request, he or she can suggest another accommodation rather than dismiss the request entirely.

— Danielle Lieber

Disclosure of a disability to a supervisor is paramount. It is not required for an employee to disclose his or her disability to the supervisor if the employee is not requesting accommodations. However, it may be beneficial for a supervisor to know in case any complications arise.

Ideas for accommodations are only limited by the imagination. Supervisors do not have to pay for accommodations.

Accommodations used by those with physical disabilities can often be useful to those with mental disabilities.

"If the disability is not obvious, the supervisor can request medical documentation," Walton said.

If the supervisor decides to request medical documentation, "they have to have a diagnosis from a doctor. We don't want to know the specifics. We just want to know what you have and how we can accommodate you," she said. However,

employees must remember "it has to be reasonable," she said

"There needs to be that conversation," Walton said. "If you don't talk you won't understand."

"Be open with your supervisor," Walton said. "Mental impairments can be accommodated in a physical way," such as though flexible scheduling or a private office.

While discussing mental impairments, Walton said it is important for supervisors to remember "one size doesn't fit all."

Two people with the same mental impairment may need different accommodations. Even while taking medication and receiving therapy, mental impairments are still there. She encourages employees with mental impairments to request needed accommodations.

"It's not that they're hard to accommodate, but people don't want to come forward. They don't want to talk

about it." Walton said of people with mental impairments, "The stigma is what's the hardest for people. We don't have to have a stigma," she said. "One in four people has a mental impairment."

While Walton is a resource to consult on reasonable accommodations and the process, employees and supervisors should also see the Computer/Electronic Accommodations Program at [www.cap.mil](http://www.cap.mil), and the Job Accommodation Network at [www.askjan.org](http://www.askjan.org).

The Computer/Electronic Accommodations Program was established by the Department of Defense to provide accommodations to disabled employees. This is the first resource to check for assistive technology, such as screen readers or

video phones. Many accommodations requested by employees can be provided through this service at no cost to the supervisor or the command.

The Job Accommodation Network provides information about a number of disabilities and creative ways to accommodate them.

"It's educational, research based, but it's all these experts that you can call or email related to any disability questions. Also, the website itself is really great," Walton said of the Job Accommodation Network.

Contact Walton with questions or concerns about reasonable accommodations or the process at 847-688-3680, Ext. 7536, or [andrea.g.walton.civ@mail.mil](mailto:andrea.g.walton.civ@mail.mil).



Photo by Skip Wiseman

**Andrea Walton, USMEPCOM disability program manager, sits on a yoga ball. She uses it to prevent back pain.**

## Need help? Here's where to find it

There are a number of handy references on the requirements and proper steps for providing a reasonable accommodation, outlining the laws and resources for acquiring needed supplies and equipment, sometimes at no cost to your organization.

- **Rehabilitation Act of 1973**
- **U.S. Army Procedures for Providing Reasonable Accommodation for Individuals with Disabilities**
  - **[www.ada.gov](http://www.ada.gov)**  
(Americans with Disabilities Act and related resources)
  - **[www.eeoc.gov](http://www.eeoc.gov)**  
(Equal Employment Opportunity Commission)
  - **[www.cap.mil](http://www.cap.mil)**  
(accommodations for disabled Department of Defense employees)
  - **[www.askjan.org](http://www.askjan.org)**  
(information on disabilities and how to accommodate them)
  - **[www.access-board.gov](http://www.access-board.gov)**  
(United States Access Board: A federal agency committed to accessible design)

## 'Disability doesn't means I'm not capable'

By Danielle Lieber  
Messenger Associate Editor

Growing up, I never thought of myself as disabled or different until I was compared to other children. I always found a way to do everything I wanted to do, even run hurdles with my middle school track team.

Even now, I often forget I am blind. It sounds funny, but I am always surprised at what other people can see.

I would like to say that everyone I have ever met has been understanding and provided me with the accommodations I needed freely and graciously. Unfortunately, that is just not true.

My biggest difficulty when dealing with people was always that I do not look blind. Before I had Samwise, my guide dog, I only carried a white cane occasionally to identify myself to others.

I would go out to eat and be holding my menu close to my face and someone would walk by and sarcastically ask "What are you blind?" I would smile and respond "why yes, I am." Most people felt terrible, but sometimes, they argued with me. They would say I was lying or faking and I would have to defend myself.

I was worried when I got Sam because people would be able to tell I am blind without me telling them. While he helps me become more independent, I did not want to be treated as someone who is disabled.

The benefits far outweighed the costs when I discovered that it is safer to be treated as completely blind while having some vision than to have it assumed that I am completely sighted and have low vision.

One example is when people throw something without warning me and they think I am going to catch it, but it hits me in the head. Yes, being treated as completely blind is safer.

Now, however, I have to deal with people assuming I am helpless or incapable. One very important concept

to remember when dealing with anyone who is disabled: if we want or need help, we will ask for it. Some people get pretty adamant about this subject. Do not be too offended if they snap at you, they just want you to know they are capable.

I always have to remind myself that, while I deal with being disabled every day, people I interact with do not even think about it until they come into contact with me.

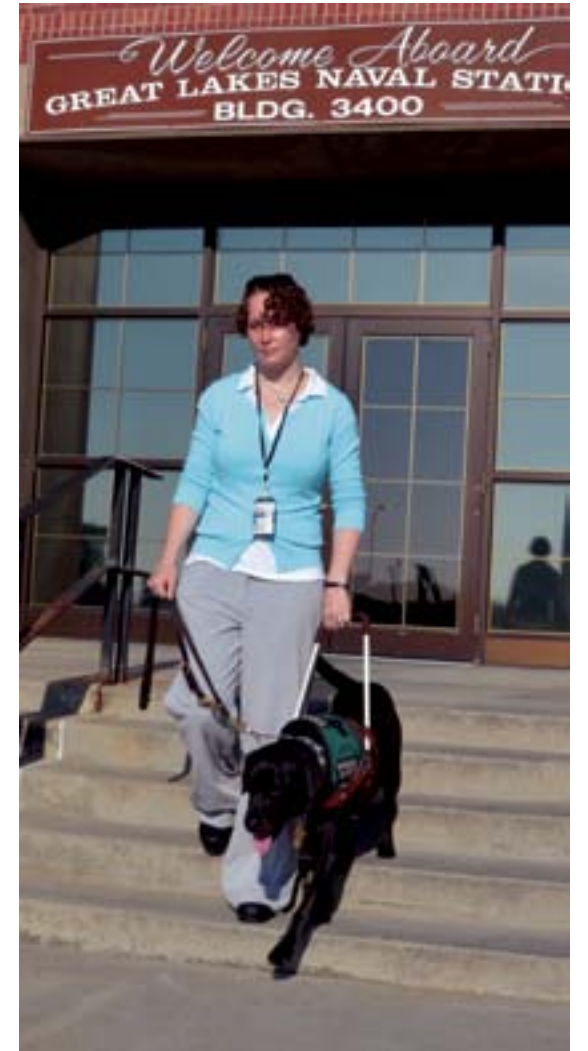
I have to keep my cool and kindly tell the twelfth person who tried to pet Sam at a festival, "I'm sorry but you cannot pet him while he is working." That person does not know that they are the twelfth, so I have to treat them just as kindly as I treated the first person. That certainly does not mean I am always successful.

I came to USMEPCOM as a Workforce Recruitment Program intern. This program essentially gives disabled college students and recent graduates a chance to intern with the Department of Defense.

Andrea Walton, USMEPCOM disability program manager, was there for me from the very beginning. Before I even stepped into the building, she asked me what accommodations I would need and helped me get them. Anything I did not understand about the process of requesting an accommodation was explained to me.

She even helped me educate my team on how to interact with someone who is blind.

When I was offered a full-time position with USMEPCOM, Andrea helped me through my transition. She made sure my new supervisor



**Danielle Lieber and her guide dog, Sam, walk down the front steps at USMEPCOM headquarters.**

understood the process and helped us both figure out what new accommodations I would need with my new duties.

When I was offered a promotion, my current position, Andrea was ready to be there if I needed her. She is always ready to answer my or my supervisors' questions and help us work through any difficulties that may arise.

I have the honor of showing my coworkers that disabled workers can excel in the workplace with the right accommodations.

## Budget cuts hurt DoD model program for hiring disabled

By Cheryl Pellerin  
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON – One victim of defense budget cuts this fiscal year and into uncertain times ahead is a program cosponsored by the departments of Defense and Labor to recruit disabled college students and recent graduates into the workforce.

Andrea Walton, USMEPCOM's disability program manager, said although student eligibility has narrowed slightly, the command is still hiring under the program.

The current DoD hiring freeze doesn't impact Workforce Recruitment Program, she said. The command has also used the program successfully in the past.

Both Walton and Danielle Lieber, Messenger associate editor, began their federal careers as Workforce Recruitment Program interns.

Managers should not shy away from the program, because it is still a viable way to find talented young people, Walton said.

DoD's Office of Diversity Management and Equal Opportunity, or ODMEO, facilitates and supports the placement of more than 450 WRP participants every year.

At least until this year, Stephen King, director of disability programs for the ODMEO, said.

"We're quite proud of this program at the Department of Defense and we've had very aggressive growth goals for the program for the last four years or so. And we've met all of our growth goals until this year," he said.

Automatic defense spending cuts and six unpaid furlough days for DoD civilians have caused some challenges for many defense programs, King said, including the WRP.

"Although we take our responsibility to be a model employer of people with disabilities seriously, we also have to keep in mind how sequestration is going to impact our current DoD family," King said.

The original effort to employ people with disabilities began more than 30 years ago in the Navy and expanded in 1995. Since the expansion, more than 6,000 students and recent graduates have received temporary and perma-

nent jobs through the program.

In July 2010, President Obama signed Executive Order 13548 to increase federal employment of people with disabilities.

In response to the order, the Office of Personnel Management released strategies to help agencies meet their obligations, King said. OPM highlighted WRP as a model program to attract young people with disabilities to federal service.

The Department of Defense employs about 52,000 individuals with disabilities, King said, defining them as current employees who have elected to identify themselves as an individual with a disability using the Office of Personnel Management's Standard Form 256, the self-identification disability form.

DoD also employs more than 60,000 veterans who have a 30 percent or greater disability rating, he said.

"You may be wondering how we can have 52,000 individuals with disabilities employed at the Department of Defense when we know that we also have over 60,000 veterans with a 30 percent or greater disability rating on our rolls. That is because they are on separate reporting systems," King said.

Veterans who have a disability rating of 30 percent or greater may use that rating to increase the likelihood that they will get a position in federal service, he said.

"You can indeed be a veteran who has identified as one who has a 30 percent or greater disability rating to come on board with a preference," he said, "and then elect not to disclose (the disability) on the Office of Personnel Management form, so there is a discrepancy in this."

One program participant is a management analyst who works for the Navy's Customer Service Division at the Pentagon.

Anne Ng is legally blind and enthusiastic about the program. She has master's degrees in Chinese history and library information science from San Jose State University in California. She moved to Washington in June 2012.

From the WRP program, Ng said

she's has gotten interesting and challenging employment options.

"I do take every opportunity I can to tell people I came from this program," she said. "And then if I happen to come across other handicapped students ... if they don't know about WRP I tell them get yourself on it."

Ng's boss is Rodman Sansone, director of the Customer Service Division in the Department of the Navy. He knew nothing about the WRP before working with Ng.

"In simple terms, Anne is a rock star," he said. "She was hired through the program that hires people with disabilities and Anne, disability or not ... is the most competent person that you would ever want to have on your staff."

Sansone added, "When you look at Anne, you don't look at a disability, you look at how competent and what a great person she is. It really opens your eyes. You say, wow, this program is a huge success. If it's hiring people like Anne, I'll take 100 Annes."

King said DoD has central funding in place to support placement of hundreds of WRP participants each year. But due to the uncertainty of sequestration and its impact, the Office of the Secretary of Defense decided to freeze funding in January.

"The action was necessary to lessen the impact of sequestration on our existing personnel and their families," he said.

"Although we do not yet know if the WRP will be impacted in the 2014 hiring season, which begins in December, we remain committed to the program and to becoming a model employer of individuals with disabilities," he added.

King said his office has recommended to DoD components that if they're hiring at all to remember DoD has committed to hiring more people with disabilities than ever and to try to do their fair share in this area, "like I think our nation expects us to as the Department of Defense."

MEPS or headquarters staff interested in employing interns under the program should contact Walton 847-688-3680, Ext. 7536, or andrea.g.walton.civ@mail.mil.

(Note: The Messenger staff contributed local information to this article.)

## MEPS' National Guardsmen 'Make the force stronger'

By Danielle Lieber  
Messenger Associate Editor

The National Guard provides essential support to USMEPCOM's mission. The Guard currently fills 53 positions throughout the command. Seven of the positions are operations officers and 15 are assistant operations officers. In fiscal 2014, the Guard has authorized 62 positions for USMEPCOM.

National Guardsmen at the MEPS are doing their part to "make the force stronger," Spc. Iliana Carr, a human resources assistant at the Fort Dix MEPS said.

Lt. Col. Walter Woodring, National Guard liaison to USMEPCOM, and his team manage the Active Duty for Operational Support Program for the command.

"We are an additional source of manpower for the headquarters up here. We are the conduit for all staffing actions between USMEPCOM and the National Guard at all levels," he said.

Capt. Vernessa Morris, assistant National Guard liaison, explained how the Guard helps the command perform its mission.

"We offer that support. When they fall short (of personnel), we offer that additional assistance needed to get the mission done," she said.

"If the MEPS have a special project or task and need additional assistance to accomplish the mission, then they would contact their sector. Sometimes they may fall short at the MEPS, such as during summer surge. They can have supporting staff. But with summer surge, they are going to require probably an additional 100 people at the MEPS," Morris said.

"Normally when a service mem-



ber comes to the MEPS, they are to fill a billet because they're going to be short. If they are to fill that billet, they are going to have that person there. They can pull them to do other things, but would that leave them short in that section? It's a possibility. Whereas, if they bring the National Guard in to do a special project, when they finish that special project they could put

them in any other area, which makes it convenient," Morris said.

Spc. David Humphrey, human resources specialist at USMEPCOM headquarters, said the duties of a guardsman assigned to the command can vary widely.

"You don't know what you are going to do the next day. Whatever the needs of USMEPCOM, wherever I am needed, they are going to put me there. We are support. It's pretty difficult. I have many supervisors, but I am pretty blessed to be here. There is a tremendous amount of knowledge. I see a lot of potential since I walked in here. I see this as being a key assignment for me. I learn so much here, every day," he said.

The National Guard can fill important billets assigned to other branches when they cannot be filled.

Woodring explains the process. If the MEPS commander needs a Na-

“ If they bring the National Guard in to do a special project, when they finish that special project, they could put them in another area, which makes it convenient. ”

Capt. Vernessa Morris  
Assistant National Guard Liaison

tional Guardsman to fill a position, he or she “would have to go through his or her sector and say, ‘we need a position filled.’”

“The sectors submit their requirements to me,” he said. “For instance, Eastern Sector would say, ‘We need 32 positions’ and Western Sector would say, ‘We need 27 positions filled.’ They would give us the positions and tell us where they are.”

“I take that list and send it up to the National Guard Bureau for authorization or approval. Then they will come back and say we are only going to get 50, or whatever,” Woodring said. “We decide to give 25 to Eastern Sector and 25 to Western Sector. And they figure out where their most pressing needs are.”

“Then the National Guard posts the positions on a website called Tour of Duty and people who are interested in an Active Duty for Operational Support job go to the Tour of Duty website and apply for the posted positions,” he said.

The Tour of Duty website can be accessed through the [mobcop.army.mil/](http://mobcop.army.mil/) website.

“It was fairly simple actually,” Humphrey said. “It’s a small process. I just made sure everything was up to date for me to be able to go onto Active Duty for Operational Support – all my paperwork, my medical, my physical fitness test, all that type of stuff – to make sure I come in without any discrepancies.”

The liaisons are standing up the first Hometown Physical Program test site in Guam.

Woodring explained that applicants in Guam currently have to travel

“I just made sure everything was up to date for me to go onto Active Duty for Operational Support – all my paperwork, my medical, my physical fitness test, all that type of stuff – to make sure I come in without any discrepancies.”

**Spc. David Humphrey**  
on applying for an ADOS assignment

“I take that list and send it up to the National Guard Bureau for authorization or approval. They come back and say we are only going to get 50. We decide to give 25 to Eastern Sector and 25 to Western Sector. And they figure out where their most pressing needs are.”

**Lt. Col. Walter Woodring**  
National Guard Liaison to USMEPCOM

to Honolulu, which can cost \$1,100 per person. To save the National Guard money and time, the program will allow approved applicants to go to local doctors for physicals.

Recruiters will send an applicant’s prescreening questionnaire to the USMEPCOM National Guard Liaison Office, where Lt. Col. (Dr.) Edith Fraleny, medical National Guard liaison, determines whether the applicant is eligible for the program.

“Not every applicant is going to be eligible,” Woodring said. “It’s going to be restricted because in Guam you are very limited by what kind of doctors they have. If you don’t have a psychiatrist and they have some kind of psychological issue then they might have to go to Honolulu to go see a psychiatrist.”

“Basically, the people who are going to be eligible for the program are those who don’t have any major medical issues or they only need one or two consults, like an eye exam or ear exam

or something like that,” Woodring said. “If they have something that is unique, then we are going to say ‘you are going to have to go the MEPS in Honolulu to see the doctors down there.’”

Woodring estimates that 150 applicants a year will be able to participate in the Hometown Physical Program in Guam “based on the previous year’s accession data.”

The trial will last six months. “If it goes well, we would like to get it in places like Montana or Wyoming,” Woodring said.

The liaisons address any problems that arise. “I would say that is a big part of our job,” he said.

They do “a lot of troubleshooting for applicants who are having problems with medical issues or orders or whatever issues that come up when they interact with a MEPS,” he said. For instance, “we had a person shipped out to Fort Jackson who was missing some paperwork in his folder and he needed to go back to a MEPS for a physical. I’m the one who talked to the right people up here to get it approved,” he said.

The liaisons process any exceptions to policy or waiver requests submitted due to low Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery scores.

Woodring highlighted promoting “communication and relationships.”

“Anytime USMEPCOM sends something out to its MEPS, I take the information and I send it to the National Guard headquarters so they know what’s going on at the MEPS.”

“If it affects the MEPS it’s going to affect the National Guard,” he said.

## National Guard, Reserve: What’s the difference?

What is the difference between the Army National Guard and the Reserves?

Lt. Col. Walter Woodring, USMEPCOM National Guard liaison, explains: “The National Guard has a dual mission. You have a state mission, which is called the Title 32 mission, which means if there is a tornado or a hurricane the governors control their state National Guards.

“For all intents and purposes, these people join up and they belong to their state and the governor controls them,” he said. “However, if there is a war, like Afghanistan or Iraq, the units from each state can be federally mobilized into the Title 10 pool.”

“The Title 10 pool means the state, let’s say Illinois, says ‘We are going to provide 2,000 soldiers to go to Iraq,’” Woodring said. “They become mobilized soldiers and now they fall under the federal government, which is Title 10.”

“Now these folks that are Title 10 will be assigned to a division or brigade or whatever,” he said. “They don’t belong to the state anymore; they belong to the federal government. There is a time limit by law for how long they can mobilize. It depends on

what kind of emergency.

“The Reserves are all Title 10 folks,” Woodring said. “Though they are similar in training and duration, one weekend a month and two weeks in the summer. But they belong to the federal government. States have nothing to do with those folks.”

The Reserve would not be called for a natural disaster such as a tornado. However, something as big as hurricane Katrina may warrant a response from the Reserves.

“If the federal government wants to mobilize them for that, they can do that,” Woodring said. “The National Guard had somebody from every state there (for Katrina). I was part of that project. For the Reserve, that was (Lieutenant) General (Russel L.) Honoré. He was down there.”

“The Reserves are broken down by regions. But they have to be federally mobilized.”

They would call on the National Guard in wartime over the reserve “because of different types of jobs. A lot of reservists work in, for instance, the hospitals or a lot of support roles that the Army doesn’t need every day,” Woodring said. “We don’t need a hospital every day for the military unless

there is a war. So just like the TV show M\*A\*S\*H\*. Those guys would have been reservists where they were only called up if there was a war and they needed a hospital.

“National Guard has all kinds of troops,” he said. “We are kind of more rounded. Not every state has every type of troop.”

“What they did a while back, for instance, was tell Illinois ‘We are going to give you a bunch of infantry positions and Indiana you are going to get a bunch of aviation positions.’ They spread it around. They balance it out.”

“You can’t have every type of unit in Illinois. There is no way you could do that. It’s impossible.”

If someone wants to join the National Guard in Illinois “they have to find a job that suits them. Like if Illinois has an infantry battalion, then you have to be infantry,” Woodring said. “You do not have another choice. If they don’t have the jobs you want, then you can go to Indiana or Wisconsin or Missouri.”

“You don’t have to live in the state that you are affiliated with. It happens all the time. I’ve got buddies who live in Virginia and come out to Wisconsin for their drills.”

### Testing Talk

## Georgia governor commends Atlanta testing staff

**By Harriet Blakely**  
Atlanta MEPS Education  
Services Specialist

Georgia Gov. Nathan Deal presented the Atlanta MEPS testing personnel with a commendation recognizing the participation of Georgia students in the program for the 2012-13 school year.

For the third consecutive year, the Atlanta MEPS has tested the highest volume of recruiter leads in USMEPCOM.

Georgia’s schools and the Department of Defense have administered the Student ASVAB to thousands

of high school students annually.

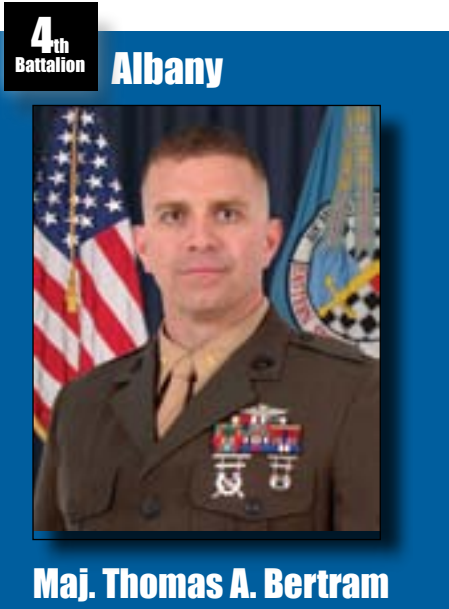
As students explore careers, the program provides information to help determine their academic and occupational pursuits.

The student testing program helps open doors to many technical and competitive career fields in the private sector and the military.

With the computerized resources provided through the Career Exploration Program, Georgia students can access cutting-edge career resources and keep pace with the world around them.



**Senior Master Sgt. Harvey Bennett, Atlanta MEPS senior listed advisor, Georgia Gov. Nathan Deal, Maj. Stephen Vensor, Atlanta MEPS commander, and Capt. Donvier Labrew, Atlanta MEPS operations officer, pose with the commendation the governor presented to the station’s testing staff.**



Maj. Thomas A. Bertram

**Hometown:** He was born Rochester, N.Y., and grew up in Phoenix. "It's a big metropolitan city. It is very hot. It has about three weeks of spring, no winter to speak of."

**Fond childhood memories:** "We spent most of our summers at the public pools. I enjoyed it so much I ended up being a life guard in Phoenix for six years."

**What was your favorite toy when you were a kid?** "My toy gun. We had a toy M-16. It was fun to run around pulling the trigger making a lot of noise and acting crazy."

**Education:** Started out at Northern Arizona. "I left school to enlist in the Marine Corps." He graduated from the State University of New York-Brockport with a Bachelor of Science degree in political science and criminal justice.

**Enlisted time:** He was in the infantry as an enlisted man. "I was a scout sniper. Basically they are the eyes and ears of the battalion commander, out forward reporting on enemy activity."

**Why did you join the Marine Corps?** "First to fight and they had the best reputation for military discipline and being where the action's at."

**Previous assignment:** Operations officer of the Marine Corps Embassy Security Group and officer in charge of the Marine Security Guard School, Quantico, Va. "We trained Marines for security duties at embassies

at 154 locations in 137 countries."

**Favorite assignment:** 2nd Force Reconnaissance communications officer for Operation Iraqi Freedom 1. "I was able to do the things I trained for for 10 years. I was in a very cohesive, specialized unit and we got to do a lot of cool stuff."

**Future military career plans:** "I am either going to return to the operating forces or go to career level professional military education."

**What do you want to be when you grow up?** "I am interested in going into business for myself and having a veteran-friendly work force that understands vet culture." He plans on getting into security consulting or business consulting.

**What do you do when you're not a commander?** "I'm a Marine 24/7. I enjoy physical fitness. I like to read. I go to night school."

**What's your leadership style?** "Leadership by example."

**What do you like best about your job?** "Getting to interact with the next generation of America's military and their families. This is also the first opportunity I've had to work with a lot of civilians. It's been an amazing experience for me. Of course it's a joint command, so I get to work with all branches of the military, which I've done in the past but not to this extent."

**What do you order when you eat out?** "I try not to eat too much bread, so I go with grilled chicken and a vegetable. On 'cheat days,' I'll get a loaded baked potato."

**What is your least favorite sport?** "My least favorite sport to play is basketball. I just never developed the skill for it."

**Tell me something people would be surprised to know about you.** "I take bagpipe lessons." He started a little over a year ago.

**What's the best present you ever got?** "I got a chanter and a gift certificate for four bagpipe lessons. That's what got me playing." A chanter is the pipe on a bagpipe that has finger holes on which the melody is played.

**What's your guilty pleasure?** "Pretty much anything sci-fi. I like the Star Treks and all that tech geek stuff."

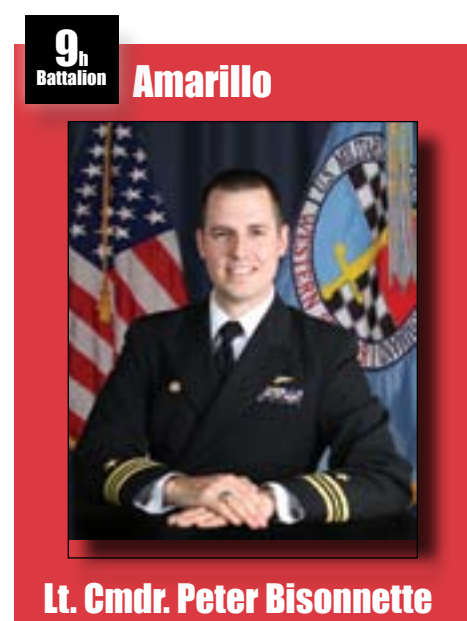
**What is your favorite all-time movie?** "'Braveheart.' It encompasses the human experience really well. I

think anybody in the military can relate to it. It correlates to what we do as professionals. My second favorite is 'Tombstone' because there are so many great one liners in that movie."

**It's 2 o'clock Sunday afternoon. What are you doing?** "Probably starting to think about what I've got to do for the upcoming week."

**What is the last book you read?** "'Unbroken. It is about Louis Zamperini, the Olympian who was shot down during World War II and spent three years as a POW in a Japanese camp."

**What is your ideal vacation?** "I want to climb Mount Kilimanjaro. It's somewhat far away. It's not quite Mount Everest. That takes a lot more planning. I think I could roll out of bed one morning and climb Kilimanjaro, but I've got to get there first."



Lt. Cmdr. Peter Bisonette

**Hometown:** Sebastian, Fla. "It is a small seaside town with a little bit of redneck flair."

**Fond childhood memories:** "I remember going dirt biking with my dad. It was pretty neat going around the sand dunes. And fighting with my brothers and sisters."

**Full house:** He has 10 brothers and sisters. "It was crazy, but it was a world of fun. It helps you gain an appreciation for a lot of different personalities."

**What was your favorite toy when you were a kid?** "The Optimus Prime action figure. A Transform-

er. It was cool. All the kids wanted an Optimus Prime."

**Education:** Bachelor of Science in computer science from the United States Naval Academy; Master's of Business Administration from Jacksonville University; Master of Science degree in human systems integration from the Naval Postgraduate School.

**Why did you join the Navy?** "At that point in my life, I thought the uniforms were cool and wanted to be near the water, which brings me to Amarillo."

**Previous assignment:** Student at the Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, Calif.

**Favorite assignment:** "This has actually been the best one. I've progressively enjoyed each assignment. It just keeps getting better."

**Future military career plans:** "I don't really have a specific long-term focus. I just try to do the best I can in the job I'm in. I don't have a big strategic career plan."

**What do you want to be when you grow up?** "I haven't really thought about it. I'm focused on my Navy career."

**What do you do when you're not a commander?** "I spend time with my wife and five kids. That's the best thing in my life."

**What's your leadership style?** "I like to try to see what each person brings to the table and try to bring out the best in them and do what I can do to help them do their jobs. Remove obstacles. And when necessary, provide guidance."

**What do you like best about your job?** The people here at Amarillo MEPS. All the people here on the staff are fantastic.

**What do you order when you eat out?** "A lot of food, because it takes a lot to feed us. We like Thai food or pizza."

**What's the best present you ever got?** "A Super Nintendo when I was about 13."

**What's your guilty pleasure?** "Chocolate. All kinds."

**What is your least favorite sport?** "Curling. Something about the brooms bothers me."

**Tell me something people would be surprised to know about you.** "My personality is classified as

an introvert."

**What is your favorite all-time movie?** "'The Ultimate Gift.' It is about a man who is a rich kid. His grandpa dies and leaves him a fortune, but it is contingent on him going through a process. In the end, he learns what is important in life."

**It's 2 o'clock Sunday afternoon. What are you doing?** "I'm not at the beach any more. Probably playing a game with my kids, checkers or something silly."

**What is the last book you read?** "'Ten Steps to Truth' by Peter Kreeft. It is about reasoning to God."

**What is your ideal vacation?** "A cruise. Destination doesn't matter. The cruise in itself is fantastic."



Lt. Cmdr. Channing Burgess

**Hometown:** "Greensboro, N.C. It's a low key town, not a small town, a medium sized city for North Carolina."

**Fond childhood memories:** "Skinny dipping in the creek" when he was about nine. The creek was about a mile away from his house.

**What was your favorite toy when you were a kid?** "A Tonka dump truck. I liked the feeling of power of being able to haul large loads of dirt to construct things like a track for my Hot Wheels cars."

**Education:** Dual Bachelor of Science degree in biology and sociology from North Carolina A&T State University, Greensboro. He is nearing completion of a Master of Business Administration degree from Columbia

Southern University.

**Why did you join the Coast Guard?** "I started off in the Army, I did the Army mission. I was not really aware of the Coast Guard mission. My girlfriend when I got out of the Army joined the Coast Guard. I used to visit her at Cape Hatteras, N.C., and I loved what the Coast Guard did. I was in field artillery in the Army and I couldn't believe they paid (Coast Guardsmen) the same amount as the Army personnel."

**Previous assignment:** "Coast Guard Headquarters in Washington D.C. I was a ship inspector and environmental crimes investigator."

**Favorite assignment:** "Being an education services officer in New Orleans. I love helping people. I administered DANTEs and promotion tests to dependents and service members. I could test any service. The Coast Guard was the only one that provided it to dependents, so a lot of Navy family members came to us. To watch a person come into the base and having no interest in college and then have a degree in their hand when they leave is very rewarding."

**Future military career plans:** "I want to take over a supervisory position in one of the Coast Guard national centers of expertise dealing with cruise ships." It's located in Fort Lauderdale.

**What do you want to be when you grow up?** "I want to hit the lottery." Then he will be a man of leisure.

**What do you do when you're not a commander?** "Help my son in college right now. He's going to Nova Southeastern University. He wants to be an orthodontist, so he's going premed. I hope he sticks it out. A lot of people change majors after a year or two because the work is too hard."

**What's your leadership style?** "I'm a solution-oriented type person. I don't stick too much on the complaint part of it. I look at how we can fix it. I hate empty rhetoric where someone doesn't have any actions with their words."

**What do you like best about your job?** "Working with people. I love people. This job is particularly interesting."

**What do you order when you eat out?** "Shrimp and steak fajitas."

**What's the best present you ever got?** The one I remember is my

Atari I got from my grandfather. It was one of the first home game consoles." He was about 12.

**What's your guilty pleasure?** Chocolate cake.

**What is your least favorite sport?** "A lot of people love it, but golf is real boring to watch. I'll play it, but I like putt putt more because it's a faster pace."

**Tell me something people would be surprised to know about you.** "I can see words in multiple ways real fast. I can spell things backward quickly. I can see other words within a word pretty quickly."

**What is your favorite all-time movie?** "Shawshank Redemption' because of the careful planning Tim Robbins put into his plan. A lot of people would've given up because it wasn't a quick plan. It had to occur over time. I liked his perseverance."

**It's 2 o'clock Sunday afternoon. What are you doing?** "Probably doing homework for my classes. I take breaks and take a swim in the neighborhood pool that's right in back of my home."

**What is the last book you read?** "I'm reading 'Execution' by Larry Bossidy. Its about the discipline of getting things done."

**What is your ideal vacation?** "I want to go to New Zealand. I like the mountains and beaches."

9th  
Battalion

Fargo



1st Sgt. Cathy Lazo

**Hometown:** Shelby, Mich. "Shelby is a small rural town where everybody knows everybody."

**Growing up as a migrant worker:** Her family members were migrant workers when she was a child. "I worked out in the fields. I was a migrant worker. It taught me some things, like to get an education and go somewhere else."

**What was your favorite toy when you were a kid?** "One thing my mother did every Christmas was give us a doll she had made. I definitely cherish those."

**Education:** Bachelor of Arts degree in psychology with a minor in sociology from Saint Leo University

**Why did you join the Army?** "I think I went to the Navy office first, but they told me I would have to cut my hair short for basic training. I went straight to the Army recruiting office and asked the question. They said I didn't have to cut my hair. I was also trying to go to school and work at the same time. The Army offered way too much to pass up the deal."

**Previous assignment:** "I worked in the Pentagon in the Department of Defense Operations Military Secretariat."

**What was your favorite assignment:** "As a basic training drill sergeant. To see the transformation from when we got the recruits and how they were walking and talking and being so much more disciplined at the end. The parents always asked how we could do it in nine weeks and they couldn't do it in 18 years."

**Future military career plans:** "To retire. I think I'll be dropping my papers shortly."

**What do you want to be when you grow up?** "Right now the focus is junior ROTC because I enjoyed being a drill sergeant so much. I saw the effect you could have on a young mind. I really want to teach military science."

**What do you do when you're not a senior enlisted advisor?** "I like to travel. We just took a trip out to Mount Rushmore and the Crazy Horse Memorial and the Cosmos Mystery Area." The Cosmos is an area where no one stands straight, balls roll uphill, and so on. "There is a shift of gravitational pull. Everything seems to be diagonal. It's something that everyone should experience."

**What's your leadership style?** "I don't think you can put it into one word. I like to hear people out, to

understand them. I like to bring a consistency and be approachable. I'm easy to talk to."

**What do you like best about your job?** "The best part of my day is talking to the shippers. I like to give them my two cents, my experience from my years on active duty and how they can be successful during their term of service or possible careers."

**What do you order when you eat out?** "Typically, something healthy. I love pasta as well and Mexican food. I try to do my best to eat healthy."

**What's the best present you ever got?** "I just bought a GMC Terrain."

**What's your guilty pleasure?** "Anything milk chocolate."

**What is your least favorite sport?** "Golf. I just think it's boring."

**Tell me something people would be surprised to know about you.** "A lot of people are really surprised when I say I grew up as a migrant worker. They have no clue of how hard I've worked and how the Army comes easy to me because of how I grew up. And that I have son who just finished his third year of college and a daughter who just finished kindergarten."

**What is your favorite all-time movie?** "'The Wizard of Oz' because I grew up watching it and it brings back memories."

**It's two o'clock Sunday afternoon. What are you doing?** "It varies. Probably being lazy, watching a movie, or the opposite – doing laundry and cleaning the apartment."

**What is the last book you read?** "I am reading a couple different books. One is 'How to be a Positive Mom' to see how I can improve myself and what I could change. The last book I thoroughly enjoyed was 'The Shack.' It's about a man who loses his daughter. She gets kidnapped and killed. In the midst of trying to find her, he works on his relationship with Jesus. He meets God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit in different forms."

**What is your ideal vacation?** "A friend of mine and I are looking at going to the Turks and Caicos, just go to the beach and relax. Usually on vacation, there are a lot of things to do on the list and it's not very relaxing because you are so busy."

8th  
Battalion

Nashville

Senior Chief Petty Officer  
Arnulfo J. Garcia Jr.

**Hometown:** Harlingen, Texas. "It's a small town. Not much to do there. Go the beach, go fishing. It's about 15 minutes to the Mexican border. I used to leave high school, go get tacos and come back."

**Fond childhood memories:** "My fondest memories are camping and fishing with my family. I also remember doing that with my kids."

**What was your favorite toy when you were a kid?** "My Evel Knievel windup. You'd put the little cord in there, pull it and let it go. And my Green Machine."

**Education:** He is pursuing a Bachelor of Science degree in logistics and transportation through American Military University.

**Why did you join the Navy?** "I had no intention of joining. A friend of mine needed a ride to the recruiter. I was about to graduate from high school. The recruiter threw some numbers on the table and I said this is good. The rest is history."

**Previous assignment:** "I was on the USS Tortuga, a dock landing ship in Sasebo Japan. I was the operations department leading chief petty officer."

**Favorite assignment:** "The Tortuga and being in Japan. The job was challenging. When you have a tough job it brings a lot of satisfaction. It was a high operations tempo I liked working with the young sailors."

Having my family overseas and being able to travel with them was great."

**Future military career plans:** "I retire next June."

**What do you want to be when you grow up?** "I would like to stay engaged with some type of job that works with the services."

**What do you do when you're not a senior enlisted advisor?** "I try to spend time with my family. We do a little fishing around here. I do some weightlifting and some running. Spend time with kids and grandkids when I can."

**What's your leadership style?** "I can't put my finger on one. It depends on the type of person I'm dealing with. I have to approach every person differently. I would like people to think I'm fair but firm. I have high expectations and I expect people to achieve them."

**What do you like best about your job?** "The day to day, dealing with the applicants. It amazes me that we process so many people every day who are willing to join. It's outstanding. It's great."

**What do you order when you eat out?** "My favorite plate is a ribeye steak." He prefers it cooked medium.

**What's the best present you ever got?** "When I got my first car. It was a 1970s Midget. I don't remember the exact year. It broke down a lot, but I enjoyed it." He was 16 or 17.

**What's your guilty pleasure?** "I like to eat Cheetos and ice cream at night. Not together. One or the other. I need to stop."

**What is your least favorite sport?** "Cricket. I don't know anything about it."

**What is your favorite all-time movie?** "'Pale Rider' with Clint Eastwood. It's an older movie where he's a preacher."

**It's two o'clock Sunday afternoon. What are you doing?** "If its football season, the grill is out and there's a cold beer somewhere in the vicinity."

**What is the last book you read?** "'Lone Survivor.'" It is the story of the only survivor of Operation Redwing, SEAL fire team leader Marcus Latrell and the firefight that led to the largest loss of life in SEAL history.

**What is your ideal vacation?**

"My family disagrees because they always want to go to Disney. That's what we'll probably do now that we have grandkids. I just want to go to the mountains and hang out for a few days."

7th  
Battalion

Fargo



1st Sgt. Vincent L. Shack

**Hometown:** Mount Clemens, Mich. "There's not really a lot to say. We're not famous for anything. We have a festival every year called Farm City Week the last week of August. Some people set up little stands. The fire department is there." Mount Clemens has about 16,000 people.

**Fond childhood memories:** "The Fourth of July. They have fireworks. They come up right over downtown. Every time the Fourth of July comes around, I remember the fireworks."

**What was your favorite toy when you were a kid?** Tonka trucks – an eighteen wheeler with a flatbed trailer. I could drop it off the roof. I tried to destroy it and never could. That's how it became my favorite."

**Education:** Pursuing a Bachelor of Business Management degree from the University of Maryland.

**Why did you join the Army?** "I went to all the other services. The Army was the one that let me enlist the fastest."

**Previous assignment:** "Force Command Madrid. It was part of the NATO Brigade. I was the NCOIC of administration. They go out to all the countries that apply to join NATO, we sent teams to those countries and



they evaluate them and then train them or just say yes or no if they'll be able to join."

**Favorite assignment:** "Professionally, it was being a drill sergeant at Fort Jackson, S.C. It gave me enough confidence that I could stay in the military, be promoted and be successful. It taught me so much."

**Future military career plans:** "This is my first opportunity to be a first sergeant and hopefully I'll get promoted and go the Command Sergeants Major Academy and go to a battalion or brigade and be a command sergeant major."

**What do you want to be when you grow up?** "I like the human resources field. I would definitely like to find a place where I'm working in human resources and be able to reach back and help some of the younger soldiers and provide my experience. The location isn't that important."

**What do you do when you're not a senior enlisted advisor?** "I love to run. I'm a runner. I like to find straightaway space where I can just run. A good 10-miler on the weekends

lets me relax."

**What's your leadership style?** "It has evolved. I went from a stubborn rock. I think I've evolved and the rock has softened. I've learned everything is not black and white. I've learned to be more objective and that I don't know everything."

**What do you like best about your job?** "With the command team we have here, being able to feel like I have the ability to affect change."

**What do you order when you eat out?** "Pizza. Little Caesars deep dish with pepperoni and bacon."

**What's the best present you ever got?** "When I was in NATO, I had an assignment in Tblisi, Georgia. They were struggling in the training. I thought they hated us and just wanted us to leave. At the end they had a nice little ceremony and gave me a knife in a sheath."

**What's your guilty pleasure?** "TV. I love police series. I love 'Law and Order.'"

**What is your least favorite sport?** "Cricket. I have no idea why I said that, but it is."

**Tell me something people**

## Special Visitors



## Welcome

Cmdr. Steve Milinkovich, Seattle MEPS commander, welcomes Brig. Gen. John Horner, Air Force Recruiting Service commander, to the station. Horner visited the Seattle MEPS Aug. 6.



Brig. Gen. John Horner, commander of Air Force Recruiting Service, chats with Master Sgt. Damon Montagano, Seattle MEPS senior Air Force liaison during his visit to the Seattle MEPS. Horner also traveled to the Anchorage MEPS. Horner thanked the staff at each MEPS for their support of Air Force recruiting during his visits Aug. 6-7.

**would be surprised to know about you.** "I'm learning Spanish. I want to be able to travel and be able to interact and embrace the culture. You can't really embrace the culture if you don't speak the language."

**What is your favorite all-time movie?** "The Rock' with Sean Connery and Nicholas Cage." A group of rogue Force Recon Marines led by a disenchanting brigadier general seize a stockpile of chemical weapons. They seize Alcatraz during a tour and threaten to launch the rockets on San Francisco unless they get \$100 million to distribute to the families of Marines who died on clandestine missions. "The loyalty he showed to his men and his determination to get them the benefits they deserved stuck with me."

**It's two o'clock Sunday afternoon. What are you doing?** "Watching DVRs of 'Law and Order.'"

**What is the last book you read?** "I read different things about cultures. I'm a browser on the internet. I pull up different countries and news. I like to see what's going on in the world."

**What is your ideal vacation?** "Rio de Janeiro for the 2016 Olympics."

## Charlotte hosts grand opening ceremony for new facility

Charlotte MEPS hosted a grand opening ceremony April 19 at its new location.

More than 80 guests including Interservice Recruitment Council members and service liaisons, building managers, contract hotel staff, building tenants, Charlotte MEPS staff and families attended.

Col. Neal F. McIntyre, Eastern Sector commander, was guest speaker. He told the audience of the MEPS' many locations over the last 72 years. His story revealed how the MEPS has evolved.

The only person who recalled many of the locations was Mary T. Honeycutt, MEPS lead human resources assistant. She celebrated 50 years of federal service, 48 of them at the Charlotte MEPS.

McIntyre administered the oath of enlistment to eight applicants during the ceremony. The oath of enlistment ceremony included applicants from the Air Force, Marine Corps, Army and Navy. McIntyre congratulated the applicants on their decision to enlist.

McIntyre and Maj. Sonja Y. Stribling, Charlotte MEPS commander, conducted a ribbon cutting ceremony to represent the official opening of the facility. A cake cutting, reception, and tour of the MEPS followed the ceremony.



Col. Neal F. McIntyre, Eastern Sector commander, and Maj. Sonja Y. Stribling, Charlotte MEPS commander, cut the ribbon to officially open the new station.

## Diversity

### Different perspectives make Defense Department stronger

By Senior Master Sgt. Ray Anderson  
Equal Opportunity Advisor

I heard a great quote the other day, "We are who we are" and you know, it brings up a good question – just who are we?

The Defense Department and other federal agencies are remarkable organizations that have bright, talented people from all walks of life.

Not bound by race, gender, ethnicity, religion or even our political beliefs, we are a diverse institution of equal opportunity – that's who we are.

I am proud to call myself an airman. However, I belong to an organization where not everyone is exactly the same or looks like me.

Instead, we are a unique group

with different perspectives. We're not robots concerned with nothing but the "bottom line."

We are part of a team where no matter where we come from, our varied perspectives can, should and do make a positive contribution to our mission to always win.

As leaders, it is our responsibility to cultivate a climate where perspectives can take shape. Different perspectives mean new ideas. From new ideas come positive changes, and those changes keep us from stagnating.

Change triggers growth and we should strive to continually "grow" our people and establishments.

It is imperative to create an atmosphere where different ideas and per-

spectives are not stifled but welcomed and developed.

Diversity is good and is a welcome part of why being who we are is exciting and rewarding. Different means fresh, not stale.

No two people are alike and different people contribute in different ways. By embracing differences we allow, even encourage, everyone, to offer their perspectives, so they can contribute and help us flourish. Whether we realize it or not, we're growing tomorrow's leaders when we do that.

We are who we are. And who are we? One of the greatest, most diverse enterprises in the world – "Freedom's Front Door."

## Accession policy director visits Great Lakes, Milwaukee

Story and photos by Skip Wiseman  
Messenger Editor

Jeffrey R. Mayo, director of accession policy, visited USMEPCOM headquarters, the Milwaukee MEPS, Selective Service and Great Lakes Naval Training Center June 11-14.

During his visit to Milwaukee, he was briefed on the station's operations, toured the MEPS and met with service liaisons and MEPS staff.

At USMEPCOM headquarters he met with senior staff and the Eastern and Western Sector commanders and toured the building, including Selective Service.

Mayo met with Rear Adm. Dee Mewbourne, commander of Naval Service Training Command,

took an extensive tour of Recruit Training Command and attended a recruit graduation.

Mayo toured the "Golden Thirteen" building where recruits arrive for basic training. The name refers to the first 13 African-American enlisted men to be commissioned as Navy officers and warrant officers.

During his tour of RTC, Mayo was escorted by Capt. John T. Dye, RTC commanding officer.

A member of the Senior Executive Service, Mayo is responsible for policy, planning and program review of active and reserve recruiting and accessions. He is also responsible for standards and policies related to enlistment and officer commissioning across the Defense Department.



Jeffrey R. Mayo, director of accession policy, checks out the chair used for drawing blood at the Milwaukee MEPS.



Mayo speaks with Rebecca Boellhoeffer, a processing technician, during his visit to the Milwaukee MEPS.



Mayo visits with Master Sgt. Randy Phillips, an Army liaison, during his tour of the Milwaukee MEPS.

## Distance doesn't stop mother from administering oath of enlistment for daughter

Being away from your family during a combat deployment is difficult, especially when you miss out on significant moments in life such as birthdays and holidays. One Army applicant would not let the fact that her mother is nearly 7,000 miles away get in the way.

Angela Buegel entered the Army's Delayed Entry Program June 26 when she enlisted as a UH-60 helicopter repairer, at the Cleveland MEPS. Buegel was set to ship July 16 for basic training at Fort Sill, Okla.

The only missing piece was Angela's mother, Capt. Sharonda Smith.

Smith is assigned as the commander of the 580th Signal Company, 25th Signal Battalion, which is deployed to Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan.

The Cleveland MEPS staff worked with the Army liaisons and USO to make Buegel's enlistment ceremony more complete, even though her mother was half way around the world.

Thanks to technology, Buegel and her mother were brought together using Skype and an iPad. Smith administered her daughter's oath of enlistment along with some parental advice as Buegel embarked on her new career.



A Skype screen capture shows Angela Buegel holding the iPad she and her mother, Capt. Sharonda Smith, used for her enlistment. Smith conducted the ceremony via Skype despite being deployed to Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan.

"It was a great opportunity to make Angela's send-off to basic training special. We jump at the chance to provide Red Carpet Treatment for all

of our applicants here at Cleveland MEPS," 1st Lt. Dexter Dugan, Cleveland MEPS' assistant operations officer, said.



## Senior enlisted advisor visits New York

Marine Corps Sgt. Maj. Brian B. Battaglia, senior enlisted advisor to the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, administers a ceremonial oath of enlistment to applicants at the New York MEPS. Battaglia also toured the station during his visit. Battaglia is the principal enlisted military advisor to the chairman and the secretary of defense on all matters joint and combined total force integration, use, health of the force and joint development for enlisted members.

### Honolulu hosts enlistment ceremony in Micronesia

Thirty young men and women from three of the four states of the Federated States of Micronesia enlisted in the U.S. Army June 13 at a ceremony at the U.S. Embassy in Kolonia.

Ambassador Doria Rosen, an Army veteran, gave opening remarks and commented on the great honor it is to serve and the unique opportunities the military affords young men and women.

The Micronesian president's chief of staff, Leo Falcam Jr., a native of Pohnpei and also a United States Marine Corps veteran, touched on the idea that great responsibility comes with enlistment.

"What you may not realize at the



Photo by Charles Thomas

**Capt. Octavia Heard, Honolulu MEPS operations officer, swears in Army applicants in an enlistment ceremony in the Federated States of Micronesia.**

moment is that you have chosen to belong to an elite organization whose purpose is to serve something greater than yourself," he said. "That is an extremely honorable choice. And a

choice that you should be proud of. "Please know that all of us here today, along with the rest of your fellow FSM citizens, respect and support the choice you have made."

### Retired general enlists Marine applicant

*Retired Marine Corps Lt. Gen. Hank C. Stackpole II, former commander of Marine Forces Pacific, administers the oath of enlistment to Marine Corps applicant Travis Gershaneck as his parents look on in the Honolulu MEPS.*



### Hockey players visit Syracuse, watch applicants swear in

Two members of the Syracuse Crunch hockey team visited the Syracuse MEPS March 13 at Hancock Field Air National Guard Base to witness local young men and women take the oath of enlistment.

The event allowed the players to witness the enlistment oath ceremony and meet with the new service members and their families.

It was part of the Syracuse Army Recruiting Battalion partnership with the Syracuse Crunch and represents community involvement by the MEPS.

The players, right winger J.T. Brown and defenseman Matt Taomina, enjoyed meeting the newly enlisted service members and their families. It was an opportunity to show their support and appreciation for the men and women serving in the armed forces.



**Syracuse Crunch hockey players J.T. Brown and Matt Taomina watch applicants take the oath of enlistment.**

The Syracuse Crunch is a professional team in the American Hockey League. They play in Syracuse's War Memorial at Oncenter. They are the primary development affiliate of the National Hockey League's Tampa Bay Lightning.

### Community

### Chicago supports community events

Members of the Chicago MEPS present the colors during the city of Chicago's Memorial Day observance. The MEPS supported the city's Armed Forces Day and Memorial Day events in May. Military members supported Chicago's Memorial Day wreath laying ceremony and Memorial Day parade. The MEPS Joint Service Color Guard team presented and retired the colors and marched in the parade. For Armed Forces Day, the color guard presented and retired the colors at Chicago's Navy Pier. Earlier in the year, staff members visited the Jesse Brown VA medical center. During the visit to the medical center, MEPS staff members distributed gift bags donated by a pharmaceutical company and the Chicago Chapter of the American Red Cross to veterans. MEPS members spent time with almost every inpatient, sharing stories and thanking them for their service as part of Salute Week activities.



## Syracuse staff helps veterans' organization raise funds

By Capt. Emmet Gariepy  
Syracuse MEPS Executive Officer

Usually, members of the Syracuse MEPS deal with young applicants who are just about to begin their careers in the military.

Fourteen service members, civilians

massage, acupuncture, Polarity and Reiki – all at no charge to the veteran.

Each month, Clear Path also hosts members of the Traumatic Brain Injury Clinic from Fort Drum.

At the heart of Clear Path's mission is offering veterans social and economic



First Sgt. Lisa Rivera, Syracuse MEPS senior enlisted advisor, Roxanne McMaster, Clear Path for Veterans, and Capt. Brad Whiting, Syracuse MEPS operations officer, greet guests at Clear Path for Veterans' annual barbecue fundraiser.

and family members took time out of their weekend schedule June 22 to volunteer at the local veterans' organization, Clear Path for Veterans, during its annual Red, White and Blue BBQ Fundraiser.

The event gave members of the local community an insight into the programs the organization provides.

Clear Path hosts a weekly canteen day where veterans from World War II to today's conflicts can swap war stories and enjoy lunch while taking in the scenic views from the organization's lodge.

It also has a weekly Warrior Reset program which aims to help manage pain, stress and sleep problems through

tools for reintegration and to bring returning service men and women into the center of a caring community.

Much of the organization's success can be attributed to sisters Melissa Spicer and Melinda Sorrentino who established the facility together with retired Air Force Col. Steve Kinne.

They wanted to create a community-based place that helps veterans make the transition from the military back into civilian life.

Only two years after its founding with personal funds, they have turned a former country club lodge and its 75 acres into a gathering place for veterans.

The formal portion of the evening

began with Brian Pidkaminy, MEPS education services specialist and a National Guard chaplain, who gave the invocation.

Guests learned how much of a role Clear Path for Veterans has played in the lives of many veterans who have served over the last 12 years of war.

For instance, Justin, a young veteran who recently separated from the military, described how hard the transition back into civilian life was for him.

He described his difficulty of facing crowded places and his anxiety that would sometimes not allow him to leave his apartment.

That was until he entered Clear Path's Dogs2Vets program which provides professional support, instruction and advocacy for veterans with PTSD who wish to train their own service dogs.

With support from Clear Path, he turned his life around. With his new black Labrador companion, Justin is now a successful college student able to speak in front of more than 300 people.

The day of the barbecue started with an autograph session with former Syracuse University head football coach and current Buffalo Bills head coach Doug Marrone, who has helped to champion Clear Path for Veterans since its beginning.

Members of the MEPS staff managed the parking lot, greeted guests, prepared food and guided tours for nearly 325 guests.

All proceeds went directly to the organization's operations

At the end of the night, members of the MEPS and their families joined the fun, food and festivities.

Clear Path staff members expressed their gratitude for the support from the Syracuse MEPS and promoted a partnership with the station.

## Buffalo shows its colors in two ceremonies

The Buffalo MEPS took part in two ceremonial ceremonies.

The MEPS staff took part in the dedication of a veterans' wall in March and held a Memorial Day ceremony in the station May 24.

The wall, located at a western New York company, honors company employees who are veterans or have family members who are veterans or currently serving.

The theme of the dedication was "All Gave Some, Some Gave All."

The wall is made up of four panels. The first panel contains the names of those currently serving. A yellow ribbon indicates that the person is currently deployed to a war zone.

The second and third panels have the names of living veterans.

The final panel lists those who made the ultimate sacrifice.

Service flags are permanently displayed above the wall.

The MEPS command team worked with the company to develop the ceremony, provided guidance on the dedication and coordinated support from other military commands in the area.

Lt. Cmdr. Keith Archibald, then MEPS commander, posted the American flag on the wall.



Members of the 914th Air Wing Honor Guard, Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station, fold the American flag during a presentation at the Buffalo MEPS Memorial Day ceremony.

Staff Sgt Ashley Smith, medical specialist, posted the Air Force flag.

Staff Sgt. John Rodrigues, noncommissioned officer in charge of testing, posted the Army flag.

Sgt. Christopher McNeill, operations NCOIC, posted the Marine Corps flag.

First Sgt. Dwayne Wood, MEPS senior enlisted advisor, coordinated the event

Members of Coast Guard Sector Buffalo and the Buffalo Navy Operational Support Center also took part in the ceremony.

Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station's 914th Airlift Wing Honor Guard rendered military honors.

Active duty members, veterans, family members, and representatives from the Marine Corps League and Navy League and the Niagara Air Reserve Station commander attended the MEPS' Memorial Day ceremony.

The ceremony highlighted the men and women from the Buffalo MEPS area of responsibility who made the ultimate sacrifice.

The 914th Air Wing Honor Guard conducted a flag folding presentation timed with the reading of a Memorial Day poem.



Military members prepare to post the American flag and service flags to a memorial wall in honor of those currently serving in the military, veterans and those who died in defense of the nation.

**Do you have a story to tell? Contact the Messenger Staff.**

Skip Wiseman  
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### Cleveland Browns players visit service members at MEPS

Six members of the Cleveland Browns football team visited the Cleveland MEPS May 19 to meet and thank the uniformed staff for their efforts.

Linebackers L.J. Fort and Craig Robertson, defensive linemen John Hughs and Billy Winn, running back Brandon Jackson, and offensive lineman Alex Mack, posed for photographs, signed autographs, played bean bag toss and played catch with service members.

Some recruiters' and MEPS staff's families attended, but most of the focus was on the service members.

A Browns' media crew and photographer interviewed several people during the visit.

Mack spoke of his visit to deployed troops with a USO



Six members of the Cleveland Browns pose for a photo with military members during their visit to the Cleveland MEPS.

tour to Afghanistan and Kyrgyzstan, calling it an "amazing experience." He

also accepted a certificate from the MEPS on the team's behalf.

Northern Ohio's "Bob Hope" USO organized the event.

### Portland, Maine makes clean sweep with broom ball game



Staff and family members from the Portland, Maine, MEPS pause after a spirited game of broom ball. They are, bottom row left to right, Kris Wood, Lynn Wallingford, Maj. Pete Perzel, Marine Sgt. Jelomie Agpaoa, Cooper Watson. Top Row left to right Nina Wallingford, Paul Witten, Cade Violette, Glenn Wood, Senior Master Sgt. Phil Eckenrod, Capt. William Hague, Amanda Perzel, Jonah Rogers, Andy Rogers, Joe Webber and Mike Watson.

The Portland, Maine, MEPS hosted three periods of broom ball action April 20 for employees, families and local veterans at the Portland Ice Arena.

The event included the exclusive use of the entire arena ice rink, an all-you-can-eat "wings" buffet, followed by attending that evenings season closing American Hockey League Portland Pirates game.

The event helped boost morale, enhance the relationship with the community and kept the MEPS staff and families in positive action.



### Boston MEPS reaches out

Memorials sprang up in Boston after the Boston Marathon bombing in April. Shady Mansour, human resources assistant, and John Peterson, medical technician, were both activated by the Massachusetts National Guard to support the marathon and remained on active duty after the bombing to assist with securing the crime scene. Above, Lt. Cmdr. Richard Schmitt, Boston MEPS commander, and 1st Sgt. Rebia Parker, then the MEPS' senior enlisted advisor, take part in the Run to Home Base, the first road race held in the Boston area after the bombing. The event is held to support Wounded Warriors. The National Guard was recognized during the race for its support of the marathon and its actions in the aftermath of the bombing.

## Hagel announces reduction in civilian furlough days

WASHINGTON (AFPS)—Hundreds of thousands of Defense Department civilian employees who have had to take an unpaid day off from work every week since July 8 got some relief, as the number of furlough days was reduced from 11 to six.

Here is the complete text of the secretary's announcement:

"When I announced my decision on May 14 to impose furloughs of up to 11 days on civilian employees to help close the budget gap caused by sequestration, I also said we would do everything possible to find the money to reduce furlough days for our people.

"With the end of the fiscal year next month, managers across the DoD are making final decisions necessary to ensure we make the \$37 billion spending cuts mandated by sequestration, while also doing everything possible to limit damage to military readiness and our workforce.

"We are joined in this regard by managers in non-defense agencies who are also working to accommodate sequestration cuts while minimizing mission damage.

"As part of that effort at the Department of Defense, I am announcing that, thanks to the DoD's

efforts to identify savings and help from Congress, we will reduce the total numbers of furlough days for DoD civilian employees from 11 to six.

"When sequestration took effect on March 1, DoD faced shortfalls of more than \$30 billion in its budget for day-to-day operating costs because of sequestration and problems with wartime funding. At that point we faced the very real possibility of unpaid furloughs for civilian employees of up to 22 days.

"As early as January, DoD leaders began making painful and far reaching changes to close this shortfall: civilian hiring freezes, layoffs of temporary workers, significant cuts in facilities maintenance and more.

"We also sharply cut training and maintenance. The Air Force stopped flying in many squadrons, the Navy kept ships in port and the Army cancelled training events. These actions have seriously reduced military readiness.

"By early May, even after taking these steps, we still faced day-to-day budgetary shortfalls of \$11 billion. At that point I decided that cutting any deeper into training and maintenance would jeopardize our core readiness mission and na-

tional security, which is why I announced furloughs of 11 days.

"Hoping to be able to reduce furloughs, we submitted a large reprogramming proposal to Congress in May, asking them to let us move funds from acquisition accounts into day-to-day operating accounts.

"Congress approved most of this request in late July, and we are working with them to meet remaining needs.

"We are also experiencing less than expected costs in some areas, such as transportation of equipment out of Afghanistan. Where necessary, we have taken aggressive action to transfer funds among services and agencies. And the furloughs have saved us money.

"As a result of these management initiatives, reduced costs and reprogramming from Congress, we have determined that we can make some improvements in training and readiness and still meet the sequestration cuts.

"The Air Force has begun flying again in key squadrons, the Army has increased funding for organizational training at selected units and the Navy has restarted some maintenance and ordered deployments that otherwise would not have happened.

"While we are still depending on furlough savings, we will be able to make up our budgetary shortfall in this fiscal year with fewer furlough days than initially announced.

"This has been one of the most volatile and uncertain budget cycles the Department of Defense has ever experienced.

"Our fiscal planning has been conducted under a cloud of uncertainty with the imposition of sequestration and changing rules as Congress made adjustments to our spending authorities.

"As we look ahead to fiscal 2014, less than two months away, the Department of Defense still faces major fiscal challenges. If Congress does not change the Budget Control Act, DoD will be forced to cut an additional \$52 billion in fiscal 2014, starting Oct. 1.

"This represents 40 percent more than this year's sequester-mandated cuts of \$37 billion.

"Facing this uncertainty, I cannot be sure what will happen next year, but I want to assure our civilian employees that we will do everything possible to avoid more furloughs.

"I want to thank our civilian workers for their patience and dedication during these extraordinarily tough times and for their continued service and devotion to our department and our country. I know how difficult this has been for all of you and your families.

"Your contribution to national security is invaluable, and I look forward to one day putting this difficult period behind us. Thank you and God bless you and your families."

“ I want to thank our civilian workers for their patience and dedication during these extraordinarily tough times and for their continued service and devotion to our department and our country.

Chuck Hagel, Secretary of Defense ”

## MEPS of Excellence

Second Quarter, Fiscal 2013

### Category 1 Baltimore Jacksonville Tampa

The MEPS of Excellence Program acknowledges military entrance processing stations that obtain a level of excellence based on criteria related to USMEPCOM's core processes (medical, testing and applicant processing) and general military readiness.

The two requirements to become a MEPS of Excellence are:

- To be one of the top three MEPS in each category
- To meet the overall threshold

The 65 MEPS are divided into three categories, based on historical data. MEPS remain in the designated category the entire fiscal year.

### Category 2 Knoxville Lansing Portland, Ore.

The MOE points system measures up to 10 criteria per quarter. The criteria are:

- Timeliness of military evaluations and awards.
- Total students tested goal.
- Drug and HIV specimen processing.
- Clinical Laboratory Improvement Program.
- Physical fitness readiness.
- Height and weight standards.
- Electronic fingerprint capture station (unclassifiable fingerprints).
- Incidents of serious misconduct by military or civilian employees.
- Test loss compromise.
- Citibank travel card delinquency rates.

### Category 3 Portland, Maine Spokane Syracuse

## Applause

### Albany

**Petty Officer 2nd Class Lajuane S. Lindo**, selected for promotion to petty officer first class.

### Baltimore

**Staff Sgt. Samantha R. Bryant**, selected for promotion to technical sergeant.  
**Petty Officer 2nd Class Evangelia L. Mavrogiorgos**, selected for promotion to petty officer first class.

### Cleveland

**Senior Chief Petty Officer Lewis C. Jackson**, selected

for promotion to master chief petty officer.  
**Staff Sgt. Laina J. Angel**, selected for promotion to technical sergeant.

### Dallas

**Petty Officer 2nd Class Tawan Throngkimpola**, selected for promotion to petty officer first class.

### Houston

**Staff Sgt. Craig P. Moore**, selected for promotion to technical sergeant.

### Jacksonville

**Staff Sgt. Keisha M. Cooper**,

selected for promotion to technical sergeant.

### New Orleans

**Senior Chief Petty Officer Nick A. Francis**, selected for promotion to master chief petty officer.

### Los Angeles

**Petty Officer 2nd Class Henry M. Mejia-Martinez**, selected for promotion to petty officer first class.

### Louisville

**Tech. Sgt. Elizabeth J. Stone**, selected for promotion to master sergeant.

### Milwaukee

**Petty Officer 2nd Class Brandon J. Purtee**, selected for promotion to petty officer first class.

### St. Louis

**Petty Officer 2nd Class Joshua A. Goeken**, selected for promotion to petty officer first class.

### San Antonio

**Staff Sgt. Magda L. Andino**, selected for promotion to technical sergeant.



# Antiterrorism Active Shooter Community Response



ARMY  
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## Coping with an Active Shooter

- Be aware of your environment & possible dangers
- Take note of the two nearest exits in any facility you visit
- If in an office at time of shooting, stay there & secure the door
- If in a hallway or common area, get into a room & secure the door
- As a last resort, attempt to disarm/disable the shooter

**Evacuate • Hide • Take Action**



Always Ready, Always Alert  
*Because someone is depending on you*

