



# Inside SWCS

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## Leader education: going beyond battlefield tactics and techniques



The Special Forces Warrant Officer Institute at Fort Bragg, N.C. trains experienced Special Forces Soldiers to lead operational detachments as assistant commanders.

By Caroline Goins

USAJFKSWCS Public Affairs Office

**A**n IED blast survivor spoke with students in the Special Forces Warrant Officer Technical and Tactical Certification Course in August at Fort Bragg, N.C. about the support he received from the Special Forces community while recovering from combat injuries.

SWCS is where Special Forces Soldiers prepare for assignment to the operational force where they will conduct important and sometimes dangerous missions, said Chief Warrant Officer 3 Jean Guidry, a WOTTC instructor. Part of their training involves learning about resources available to them and their Soldiers.

"At SWCS, we recognize we're not just preparing our Soldiers to go to war; we're also preparing them to come home from war," Guidry said.

Special Forces warrant officers serve as assistant detachment commanders, and interim commanders, for Special Forces teams, and are selected from pools of senior noncommissioned officers with at least three documented years of service as NCOs on one of these teams.

After commissioning as warrant officers and graduating WOTTC, these leaders return to the same Special Forces battalion where they served as NCOs, although they rarely return to their same operational detachments.

The WOTTC, as the first step in a Special Forces warrant officer's education, teaches and refines the students' ability to plan and execute tactical Special Forces operations.

Furthermore, this course is where already-successful Army leaders gain an additional appreciation for the responsibility and leadership required to lead America's Special Forces Soldiers on and off the battlefield.

On Sept. 15, 2009 while returning from an operation near Ghur Ghuri, Afghanistan, Chief Warrant Officer 2 Levi Rodgers's vehicle was bombed by an IED hidden on the side of the road.

Rodgers was the incident's only survivor; the explosion killed four members of his team.

Rodgers was in a coma for 45 days. He sustained second- and third-degree burns on 25 percent of his body and suffered traumatic brain injury. Rodgers said almost every bone in his body was broken, including nine fractures to his spine.

"Losing my team was the hardest time in my life. It's like losing your kids," Rodgers said. "But you have to move on, to honor those lost and remember that there are so many people out there to help."

Less than 36 hours after the accident, Rodgers was in a hospital bed at Brooke Army Medical

Center in San Antonio, Texas.

"Once I woke up from my coma, I was truly amazed," said Rodgers. "My family and I were treated phenomenally."

Rodgers was quick to remember that the U.S. Special Operations Command Care Coalition hosted a birthday party, with children from the community, for Rodgers's son's eighth birthday because the family had moved to San Antonio to be Rodgers.

"There were pictures all over my hospital room from that day of him smiling, having a great time," Rodgers said.

Because of his firsthand knowledge of supportive organizations for Special Forces Soldiers, Rodgers has been asked

by the Special Forces Warrant Officer Institute to continue coming back to share his story with future classes and to inform them all on agencies available to help in times of need.

Rodgers said he hopes sharing his experience will better the force because he has so much pride in the Special Forces community and wants to help in any way possible.

"This community is strong, this community is here for you, and this community will take care of you," Rodgers said.

"We're not just preparing our Soldiers to go to war; we're also preparing them to come home from war."

**Chief Warrant Officer 3 Jean Guidry**  
Special Forces Warrant Officer Institute instructor

# NCO Academy keeps Soldiers educated, available

By Command Sgt. Maj. David Randall  
Commandant, Noncommissioned Officer Academy

I have recently assumed the duties as the 11th commandant of the NCOA. I served here in the mid-'90s as a senior small group



**Randall**

leader, and the differences between the NCOA of today and back then are as different as night and day.

The NCOA has developed rapidly in the past few years from a traditional resident-based learning academy to a more dynamic distance-learning environment combined with a shorter resident course to better serve our Soldiers who are currently engaged in operations globally.

SLC distance-learning allows deployed Soldiers to continue with advanced education online, from anywhere in the world.

This has enabled thousands of our Soldiers to complete portions of their advanced education training without leaving their units. This has kept detachments manned for current operations without sacrificing Soldiers' education requirements.

The next step is now being developed. While successful NCO education completion is still the key requirement for continued promotion at all levels, NCOs are now going to have additional civilian education possibilities available which were unheard of previously.

This includes the potential to earn an Associate's and potentially a Bachelor's degree in a variety of areas of study.

During a recent USASOC command sergeant major conference, the current NCOA initiatives were briefed to the entire force and were met with optimism and support. Many of the command sergeants major commented that SWCS NCOs has been lagging behind our officer counterparts, and this is an opportunity to close some of those gaps.

All levels of NCO education will continue to be one the most important requirements an NCO needs to meet for continued promotion and opportunity for advancement and assignment in the Army.

My goals as the NCOA Commandant are to enhance our curriculum, make it more relevant than ever and offer all NCOs the ability to further their civilian education up to, and including, earning a college degree. The possibility is now available to finally educate our enlisted force to a level that was only available once a Soldier was a student in the sergeants major course.

The future of NCO education is brighter than ever and I will endeavor to support the force with every capability at my disposal.

# Mind your manners. It's not just proper protocol.

By Diane Rowlett  
USAJFKSWCS Protocol Officer

Remember when you were about 4 or 5 years old and you wanted a cookie?

You told your parents, "I want a cookie," or, "Give me a cookie," and your parents replied, "What's the magic word?"



**Rowlett**

Do you remember those magic words?

"Please" and "Thank you."

What we were taught as children to be common courtesy seems to have all but disappeared in many workplace environments, not to mention in our relationships with family and friends.

When was the last time you thanked your spouse for doing your laundry? Do you think those dirty socks just magically washed themselves, walked into your room and jumped into your dresser all on their own?

When was the last time you asked your spouse to visit a vacation spot and they went online and planned a wonderful vacation for the two of you? Did you show your appreciation with even a simple "thank you?"

Listen to a conversation between your colleagues. Is someone asking or demanding an action or information from another party? Was the Asker courteous, and did they say "please"?

Did the Asker convey through their body language that they understood that asking for something in particular required an effort on someone else's part to stop what they are doing to accommodate them? Did the Asker thank the individual for complying with the request or providing the information?

Supervisors, when was the last time you thanked your subordinates for all the work they performed that day?

Although it may not be in your job description, your "other duties as assigned" should include serving your subordinates by ensuring they

have everything they require to get the job done and to do it well. Sometimes, just acknowledging a job well-done is all it takes to improve morale.

Employees, when was the last time you thanked your supervisor for the job they do, most of which you are unaware?

One evening I worked late and when I left, I noticed that the Judge Advocate General's office door was still open. It was 9 p.m.

I walked in to find him plugging away at projects he needed to get done. Like most of us, he is interrupted numerous times during the day to serve customers so he doesn't have enough time in a day to get the "must do's" done.

Thanks, JAG, for the extra effort and personal sacrifice you do to get the mission accomplished.

What about the guards at the door in the morning who greet you with a pleasant hello? When was the last time you expressed your appreciation to them for ensuring our work environment is safe and secure?

What about that budget analyst who was able to correct that illegal procurement you made?

What about that cashier at the commissary? The next time you go through check-out line, tell the cashier "Hey, I really dislike grocery shopping, but I sure appreciate that you came to work today to make it easier on me." Watch the expression on their face. Priceless!

I was watching Andy Stanly on my computer one morning. He said something that struck me. He was talking about time and how we spend it.

How our days are numbered, and if we knew how many days we had, we would use our time better and make better decisions.

"There is a cumulative value to investing small amounts of time in certain activities over a long period," he said. "There is no cumulative value to the random things we opt for over the important things."

Bottom line: it only takes a second of your time. Please use your magic words. Thank you.

Sometimes, just acknowledging a job well-done is all it takes to improve morale.

## Upcoming Events

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
19	20	21	22	23 Robin Sage ends	24 Robin Sage Recognition Ceremony, Camp Mackall	25
26	27	28 Community Information Fair 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Fort Bragg Club	29	30 Regimental First Formation 4 p.m. JFK Plaza	31 SFQC Graduation Ceremony 11 a.m. Crowne Coliseum	2
3	4	5	6	7	8 Training Holiday	9