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# NCO JOURNAL

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**ON THE COVER:** Staff Sgt. Anthony R. Purnell of E Company, 51st Infantry Regiment, V Corps, wears a ghillie suit during a September 2004 demonstration in Heidelberg, Germany. The U.S. Army Sniper School at Fort Benning, Ga., teaches Soldiers how to create ghillie suits to match their surroundings. PHOTO BY MELVIN G. TARPLEY

# NCO JOURNAL

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# Not wearing a seat belt is indiscipline

BY COMMAND SGT. MAJ. RICK STIDLEY U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center

One of the things I look forward to most in my job is talking with leaders and Soldiers across our Army. It's great to see firsthand the tremendous job our Soldiers are doing every day, while also helping leaders at all levels address the safety challenges within their formations. But there's one thing about these conversations that sticks with me after every trip: Almost without fail, they focus on the issue of indiscipline and seat belt use in privately owned vehicles.

During all my years as an NCO, I've heard every excuse imaginable from Soldiers who willingly choose not to wear their seat belts. Here are a few of them, followed by some facts on why buckling up is so important.

"Sergeant Major, I have an air bag, so I don't need to wear my seat belt." Fact: Air bags only supplement the protective effects of seat belts; they do not replace them. Driver and passenger air bags, as well as new iterations of curtain and side-impact bags, are not designed to be used alone. In fact, unbelted vehicle occupants can be seriously injured or killed by the force of activated air bags, which deploy at speeds greater than 100 mph.

"Well, Sergeant Major, I drive a truck, so I'm safe. It sits so high no car can hurt me." Fact: This excuse is apparently pretty popular, since National Highway Traffic Safety Administration statistics show seat belt use by pickup drivers lags significantly behind those in other vehicles. But in reality, pickups are three times more likely to roll during crashes, and rollovers are the single-greatest cause of injuries and fatalities on American roadways.

"But Sergeant Major, I only need my seat belt when I'm driving long distances. I'm just going a few miles around post now." Fact: According to the state of Florida's "Click It or Ticket" campaign, most fatal vehicle accidents occur within 25 miles of home and at speeds below 40 mph. Whatever speed you're traveling is the speed at which your body, led by your head, will hit

the windshield or dash should you be involved in an accident unbelted. For every 10 mph in a traffic accident, crash forces are roughly equivalent to the fall from a one-story building.

"You know, Sergeant Major, I'm a safe driver, so I don't need a seat belt." Fact: Not everyone takes pride in their driving. Bad drivers are everywhere, and bad things happen to good drivers. You also can't control the weather, mechanical malfunctions or events like tire blowouts, either on your vehicle or on someone else's. You don't want to be remembered as that "safe" driver who died because you failed to buckle up.

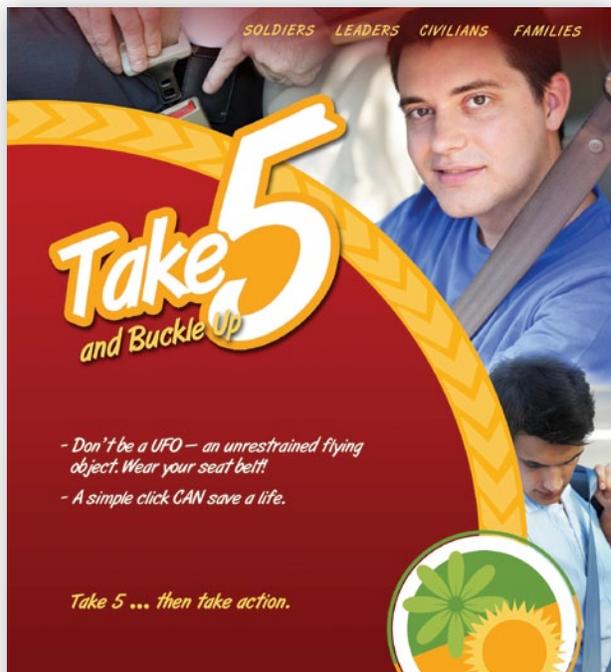
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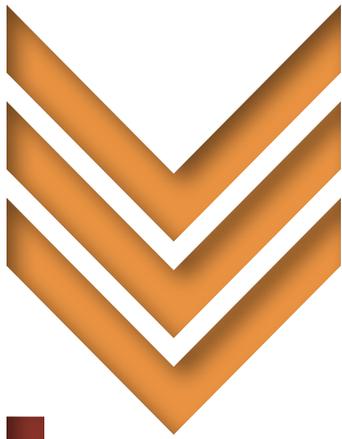
"Uh, Sergeant Major, I just forgot to put my seat belt on." Fact: It takes about three seconds to buckle a seat belt, according to the U.S. Department of Transportation. If you can remember to grab your cellphone or music player before hitting the road, you have both the time and the memory to reach back for your belt and snap it into place. Make it a priority, and you'll be surprised how quickly buckling up becomes an automatic habit.

Still not convinced? Here are two more facts. First, Soldiers are required by regulation to wear seat belts at all times in POVs, whether as a driver or passenger. It's not a choice, and it doesn't matter whether the state in which they live has a seat belt law. Second, enforcing standards saves lives and engaged leadership works. Driving is a privilege, not a right, and as leaders, we have the power

of both corrective action and corrective training. Use that power wisely and every time it's needed. We can't risk losing even one of our Soldiers because we didn't take the time to make an on-the-spot correction or have a conversation on indiscipline behind the wheel. ♡

Command Sgt. Maj. Rick Stidley is the command sergeant major of the U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center at Fort Rucker, Ala.





# IN FRONT

News and  
information  
NCOs need to

**BE,  
KNOW,  
DO**

NCO JOURNAL



## Early separation program widens

Army looks to ID non-deploying enlisted Soldiers

**BY C. TODD LOPEZ**  
Army News Service

In an effort to enhance readiness for deploying units, the Army will expand its Enlisted Involuntary Early Separation Program for some Soldiers.

Under the program, enlisted Soldiers who elect to not re-enlist or extend in order to deploy with their unit could be subject to involuntary early separation. Officers are not affected.

“This is a readiness program, not a force reduction program,” said Jim Bragg, chief of the retention and reclassification branch at Army Human Resources Command. “It is all about unit readiness as a unit deploys. That’s what it comes down to.”

By identifying Soldiers who will not deploy with their unit and having those Soldiers leave the Army early, a unit can bring more Soldiers into the unit. Those new Soldiers will deploy and will be able to train alongside the other Soldiers they will deploy with.

“From a readiness point of view, this is the decision that has to be made,” Bragg said.

In the past, Soldiers who would be affected by this program might have been kept involuntarily past their expiration term of service in order to deploy with their unit, through the implementation of “stop loss.” That is no longer the case.

“Now we are asking for volunteers to meet the deployment, and we are not forcing them to go,” Bragg said.

The program affects Soldiers who have more than three years active duty service, but less than six years total of service. Who is affected is determined by a unit’s “latest arrival date” in theater, or LAD.

During Phase 1 of the program, Soldiers in units with an LAD on or before Jan. 31, 2013, and who have an ETS that falls between

**SEPARATIONS CONTINUES ON PAGE 7 →**

▲ Soldiers returning home from deployment in Iraq wait to board a C-17 Globemaster III on Nov. 17, 2008, at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. PHOTO

BY TECH. SGT. ERIK GUDMUNDSON

# Traumatic brain injury blood test trial under way

BY ROB McILVAINE  
Army News Service

The Army is now running trials on a blood test, similar to one used to test blood sugar, that can be used by medics on the battlefield to determine if a Soldier has sustained damaged brain cells, especially from a mild traumatic brain injury, also known as TBI.

“We’ve actually found some unique products, proteins in the blood that are only present when brain cells are damaged,” said Col. Dallas Hack, a doctor who is the director of combat casualty care at Medical Research & Materiel Command, Fort Detrick, Md.

The proteins they’ve found to be the most sensitive and specific for acute brain injury are called UCHL1, or ubiquitin carboxyl-terminal esterase L1, and GFAP, or glial fibrillary acidic protein. Hack said the more serious the brain injury, the more of those proteins get into the blood.

One of the problems with brain injuries, Hack said, has been knowing if somebody has damage to their cells.

“We have ongoing clinical trials right now in patients, and we have some articles that have now been published in peer-review literature that show a really good sensitivity and specificity,” Hack said. “This test is both specific [in that] it measures that brain cells are damaged, and it’s sensitive enough to be able to find when even mild brain injury occurs.”

One challenge in developing the test is doing studies on the battlefield.

“We actually have a current study going on with a limited number of troops out there in Afghanistan,” Hack said. “We’re assessing them immediately after an exposure to a blast and comparing those individuals with others who haven’t been exposed to a blast over there, and comparing them to people in our civilian trials back here in the United States.”

Right now, Hack said, there is no objective way to diagnose if a Soldier has mild TBI. Tests now for

TBI might involve asking a patient questions and seeing if they are able to answer properly. Also, patients can be asked to do a balance test, or to repeat some words, or to follow an object.

“All of those require your active participation, and there’s a variety of things that make those relatively inaccurate,” he said.

The Army is also working to develop new rehabilitation strategies, including neuroplasticity, the brain’s ability to form new neural connections. That, combined with rehabilitation, can accelerate recovery from TBI.

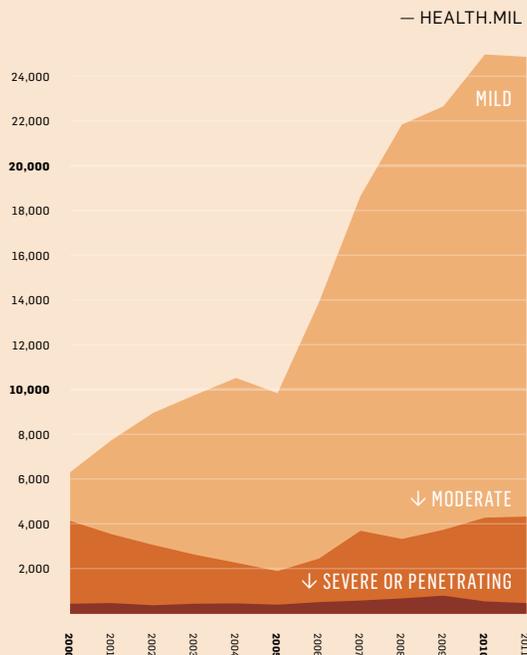
“One of the things we traditionally thought in the medical community was that you’re basically born with all the cells you’re going to get in your brain, and you don’t grow cells as time goes along, and at a certain point the connections stay very static in the brain,” Hack said.

That understanding of the brain is not proving to be completely true, Hack said.

“What the Army is finding are ways to re-wire the brain, combined with advanced rehabilitation techniques,” Hack said. ♡

## BY THE NUMBERS

The number of diagnosed traumatic brain injuries among all U.S. forces since 2000:



## DoD tightens spending on travel, conferences

Deputy Defense Secretary Ashton B. Carter has directed Defense Department managers to reduce spending on travel, conferences and other agency operations. In a June 3 memo, Carter directed travel expenses for fiscal year 2013 be reduced by 30 percent from the fiscal 2010 baseline, excluding national security exemptions and without harming agency missions. Carter also directed a review of coming conferences and temporarily suspended new conference obligations. The deputy secretary will personally review conferences that will cost more than \$500,000. The department’s deputy chief management officer will review conferences whose costs exceed \$100,000. More: <http://j.mp/jul12conf>

## AER awards \$6.6M in scholarships

The Army Emergency Relief program announced the award of 2,614 scholarships under the Maj. Gen. James Ursano Scholarship Program. This year, scholarships awarded to the children of active-duty and retired Soldiers totaled \$6.6 million. “We received 2,781 compete applications,” said Diann Evans, manager for AER’s scholarship programs. “That’s a 94 percent [approval rate] and shows that if the students complete the process, they have a very high probability of receiving an award.” AER began accepting applications in December with a deadline of April 1. More: <http://j.mp/jul12aer>

## DoD combats threat of counterfeit parts

The Defense Department is resolute in its fight against counterfeit parts and has implemented steps to stop them from entering the supply chain and eliminating those already in, a Pentagon press secretary told reporters May 22. The military has been combating counterfeit parts for

BRIEFS CONT. ON PAGE 7 →

# HR, payroll systems to be streamlined

Plan will create one comprehensive record for each Soldier

BY STAFF SGT. JASON STADEL  
NCO Journal

The Army is developing a new human resource and pay system that will improve the way it manages Soldiers' administrative information and pay.

The Integrated Personnel and Pay System—Army, or IPPS-A, will eventually subsume more than 50 current personnel systems, such as the Electronic Military Personnel Office (eMILPO), and will create a comprehensive personnel and pay record for each Soldier from “hire to retire,” said Sgt. Maj. Ronald Walker, the IPPS-A senior enlisted advisor at the Pentagon.

When fully operational, IPPS-A will allow human resource specialists to manage many aspects of personnel data, including Soldier pay, assignments, in- and out-processing, awards, benefits, personnel and pay reports, personnel transactions, separations and retirements, accessions information, strength management, personnel accountability, and promotion information.

“What I think is really great for all of our Soldiers, regardless of the component they are in, is when we hire them into the military, we will have them in one system until they retire or [separate],” Walker said. “What we are developing is a multi-component HR and personnel system, something the Army doesn't have today. For the HR professionals, commanders and leaders out there in the field, it will make our world a lot better down the road.”

IPPS-A should eliminate human resource problems that are common when active-duty units have National Guard

or Army Reserve Soldiers attached to a task force while deployed.

“Currently, an active-duty deployed command sergeant major with attachments from both the Guard and Reserve would have to have his S-1 section look through at least three different HR systems,” said Sgt. 1st Class Stephen Roach, the NCO in charge of organizational change management for IPPS-A. “Those systems right now can't transfer data back and forth to see how many Soldiers are in the unit as well as attached organizations. Someone would have to take all of the data from various spreadsheets and compile it into one document so the [command sergeant major] could see every Soldier assigned to his organization. IPPS-A will enable sergeants major and first sergeants to query all Soldiers in their formation, regardless of Army component.”

The new system will also assist Soldiers who leave active duty and join the Guard or Reserve, and vice versa. Because all three components will be using IPPS-A, Soldiers' records are less likely to be lost in the shuffle in changing components.

“I was in the Minnesota National Guard for five years before I joined the active-duty Army,” Walker said. “I did a complete out-process of the Guard with their systems, then came on to active duty, and they used completely different systems. None of my information transferred.”

Walker added that he had to hand-carry some of his paper records from his Guard unit to his first active-duty unit because the active component had no way to access the Guard's system.

Walker said this streamlining of systems should also help with Soldier care. When a Soldier goes to an NCO for a question about his or her pay or if an administrative change is needed in that Soldier's record, the NCO will be able to help that Soldier quickly and efficiently.

“Senior NCOs will be able to go to one place to get a lot of things done. I think this system will give a lot of control to those senior NCOs, [with system access and permissions] to be able to retrieve data on personnel,” he said. “We need to be able to effectively give service to Soldiers, from private to four-star.”

Sgt. 1st Class Christopher Rivers, a human resources NCO at the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy at Fort Bliss, Texas, said the IPPS-A system will allow him to provide better service to Soldiers assigned to the academy and students enrolled in the Sergeants Major Course.

“It's 100 percent about Soldier care,” Rivers said. “Because the Guard and Reserve are [at USASMA], the

## IPPS-A goals

- ▶ Create one personnel and pay record for each Soldier for his or her entire career.
- ▶ Allow personnel actions to drive associated pay events.
- ▶ Feature self-service capabilities that will allow Soldiers to access their personal information 24 hours a day.
- ▶ Ensure access to accurate and timely military personnel data and delivery of benefits to all levels of management.
- ▶ Serve as the authoritative database for personnel and pay data, subsuming many antiquated and disjointed systems.
- ▶ Be delivered in five releases over the next five years.
- ▶ More information: [www.ipps-a.army.mil](http://www.ipps-a.army.mil)

IPPS-A system will be able to access their records, and we'll be able to update their information and actually be their S-1. Right now, we can only partially help them because [the Guard and Reserve] use a different system."

Staff Sgt. Luis Delgadillo, an Army Reserve NCO assigned to the Headquarters and

Headquarters Company, 143rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), in Orlando, Fla., has felt the troubles reserve component Soldiers feel when attached to an active-duty unit. His unit was activated and attached to the 3rd Infantry Division in Iraq from 2007 to 2008. He was subsequently attached to a brigade headquarters in the division.

"I dealt with lengthy delays in updating personnel information while I was attached to an active-duty unit," Delgadillo said. "With [IPPS-A], I could update and have access to all my records through an S-1 representative anywhere.

Such streamlining translates to a better focus on my mission."

Delgadillo said the IPPS-A system will allow an activated Soldier to keep schools, promotion and assignments on a steady, upward pace.

"Because the Army Reserve remains an operational reserve, Soldiers getting activated

and assigned to active-duty units will have a better chance of keeping pace with their active-duty peers when it comes to career progression," he said.

Unless a Soldier works in an S-1 or finance office, he or she may not notice the changes as IPPS-A is phased in. The most obvious

**“I think this system will give a lot of control to those senior NCOs to be able to retrieve data on personnel. We need to be able to effectively give service to Soldiers, from private to four-star.”**

**— SGT. MAJ. RONALD WALKER**

change will be the elimination of the Enlisted Record Brief and Officer Record Brief. ERBs and ORBs will be replaced with the Soldier Record Brief, a document very similar to the ERB and ORB, but intended to be updated and accessed with IPPS-A. The ERB and ORB are maintained on separate systems, but hold the same types of information.

The SRB will be part of IPPS-A Release I that will take place next spring. That phase will allow leaders of multi-component units to update, view and track the records of the Soldiers attached to them. It will create a multi-component database

for all Soldiers that will contain interfaces to 14 personnel systems to create HR reports and queries.

Eliminating the more than 50 personnel systems the Army currently uses will take about five years, Roach said. Five releases of IPPS-A will culminate with the final release planned for 2017. ♡

**← SEPARATIONS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4** their unit's LAD and 179 days after the LAD, are subject to the current 90-day involuntary separation program.

Phase 2 of the program applies to Soldiers in units with an LAD between Feb. 1, 2013, and May 31, 2013. Soldiers in those units who have an ETS that is between the LAD and 179 days after the LAD, are subject to involuntary early separation up to nine months before their ETS.

In Phase 3 of the program, Soldiers in units with an LAD that comes June 1, 2013, or later and who have an ETS that falls between 180 days before deployment to 179 days after deployment, will be subject to involuntary early separation up to 365 days before their ETS.

Soldiers who could be affected by this

program will first be offered the opportunity to reenlist in the Army, or to extend their enlistment so they can deploy with their unit.

Additionally, Soldiers who are separated involuntarily from the Army will retain Veterans Administration benefits. It's expected the program will affect about 2,000 to 2,500 Soldiers annually, and the program currently has no projected end date.

Bragg said that the best way for Soldiers and commanders to learn more about the Enlisted Involuntary Early Separation Program is to talk to their unit's career counselor. The career counselor, Bragg said, is the subject-matter expert within battalions and brigades, and will be the one who does extensions for Soldiers who opt to extend, and who additionally identifies the population subject to the program. ♡

**← BRIEFS CONT. FROM PAGE 5**

years, George Little said. "We have stepped up, over time, our aggressive action to address this problem," he said, "and we've stepped it up on many fronts. We're unaware to date of any loss of life or catastrophic mission failure that has occurred because of counterfeit parts. That doesn't mean we should stop addressing the issue. We will not stop until we strengthen our efforts to identify, prevent and detect these pieces of equipment from entering our supply chain."

More: <http://j.mp/jul12parts>

## **U.S. Army Europe dedicates new HQ**

Soldiers, civilian employees, families and citizens from across the U.S. forces in Europe gathered in Wiesbaden, Germany, on June 14 for a series of ceremonies signaling the transformation of U.S. Army Europe as it transitions to a new headquarters. The ceremonies featured the naming of the Wiesbaden Army Airfield as Clay Kaserne; a ribbon cutting for the newly constructed Newnan Village Housing Area; and the dedication of the Gen. John Shalikashvili Mission Command Center. The airfield was named in honor of Gen. Lucius D. Clay, who was the military governor of the U.S. occupation zone in Germany from 1947 to 1949.

More: <http://j.mp/jul12eur>

## **6th ADA Brigade becomes 30th ADA**

The 6th Air Defense Artillery Brigade changed designations to the 30th ADA in ceremonies May 18 at Fort Sill, Okla. The reason for changing designations came out of a surprising discovery that the brigade had no official colors and no historical lineage or wartime honors. Thus the decision was made to redesignate the 6th brigade to be the 30th ADA Brigade, which has a rich military history going back to World War I.

More: <http://j.mp/jul12ada> ♡



# Military skills to get civilian certification

Initiative aimed at helping Soldiers get jobs after the Army

BY CLAUDETTE ROULO  
American Forces Press Service

President Barack Obama announced June 1 a new initiative aimed at preparing service members for civilian employment.

Obama provided details about the military-to-civilian certification program during his visit to a Honeywell International Inc. plant in Golden Valley, Minn. Defense contractor Honeywell reportedly has hired hundreds of military veterans at its plants and facilities since early 2011.

“Let me tell you something — if you can save a life on

you’re working on complex machinery, you should be able to take those skills and find a manufacturing job right here — right here at home.”

Unfortunately, Obama said, many returning veterans with such advanced skills “don’t get hired simply because they don’t have the civilian licenses or certifications that a lot of companies require.”

At the same time, the president noted, business leaders often say they can’t find enough workers with the skills necessary to fill open positions.

“Eighty percent of manufacturers say this, according to one survey,” Obama said. “So think about it — we’ve got all these openings and all these skilled veterans looking for work, and somehow they’re missing each other.” That doesn’t make any sense, he said, noting it’s time to fix it.

“Today, I’m proud to announce new partnerships between the military and manufacturing groups that will make it easier for companies to hire returning service members who prove they’ve earned the skills our country needs,” Obama said. “Soldiers, sailors, Marines, airmen, Coast Guardsmen — if they’ve got skills in machining or welding or weapons maintenance, for example, you’ll have a faster track to good-paying manufacturing jobs.”

The initiative will enable up to 126,000 service members to obtain civilian credentials and certifications in a number of high-demand industries free of charge, Defense Department officials said. The services will also explore how credential-

ing opportunities can be integrated into existing military training programs and expanded to include everyone with relevant skills and training.

One such partnership will begin this summer, officials said. The partnership, among the Army, the American Welding Society and the National Institute for Metalworking Skills, will provide unlimited certification testing at the U.S. Army Ordnance School at Fort Lee, Va., for Soldiers in certain machinist and welding specialties.

The school trains about 20,000 service members each year to develop, produce and maintain weapons. Service members who acquire these specialties will automatically receive the equivalent civilian credentials. ♣



the battlefield, you can save a life in an ambulance” Obama said. “If you can oversee a convoy or millions of dollars of assets in Iraq, you can help manage a supply chain or balance its books here at home. If you can maintain the most advanced weapons in the world, if you’re an electrician on a Navy ship, well, you can manufacture the next generation of advanced technology in our factories like this one. If

▲ Sgt. Michael Detrick, a welder with the 215th Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, uses a plasma cutter July 14, 2011, at Contingency Operating Base Basra. Under a new presidential initiative, Soldiers can earn civilian certifications for skills such as this that they learn in the Army. PHOTO BY PVT. ANDREW SLOVENSKY

# Panetta: Cyber threats require urgency

BY JIM GARAMONE

American Forces Press Service

The increasing threat of attacks against the nation's computer networks requires a commensurate growth in resources dedicated to protecting them, Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta told Congress on June 13.

"I think there has to be a greater sense of urgency with regards to the cyber potential, not only now but in the future," Panetta told the Senate's appropriations subcommittee on defense. "Obviously, it's a rapidly developing area."

Enemies launch hundreds of thousands of attacks every day on U.S. computer networks, government and non-government alike. "I'm very concerned at the potential in cyber to be able to cripple our power grid, to be able to cripple our government systems,

to be able to cripple our financial systems," Panetta said. "It would virtually paralyze this country. And as far as I'm concerned, that represents the potential for another Pearl Harbor ... using cyber."

Testifying alongside Panetta, Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said the nature of cyber attacks has changed quickly. Today, sophisticated users, criminal groups and even nations have progressed to destructive cyber attacks. "I can't overstate my personal sense of urgency about that," he said.

The chairman said the department has the authority it needs in the cyber world, but must develop rules of engagement that work at network speed.

"This is not something where we can afford to ... convene a study after someone has knocked out the East Coast power grid," he said. ♡

# Vietnam opens new sites to U.S. POW/MIA investigators

BY JIM GARAMONE

American Forces Press Service

The Vietnamese government will open three areas to help resolve the fate of Americans missing in action from the Vietnam War, Vietnamese Defense Minister Phùng Quang Thanh announced June 4 in Hanoi. The areas were previously off limits to American personnel.

The Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command's Detachment 2 based in Hanoi has conducted 107 field searches for Americans missing in Vietnam. The Vietnamese government has fully supported these efforts with personnel and information, said Ron Ward, a casualty resolution specialist with the detachment.

The three sites Vietnam opened to exploration are in the central part of the country. The first site is in Quảng Bình province and involves the crash of an Air Force F-4C Phantom II jet in 1967 with two personnel aboard. Detachment specialists located the site in 2008, but now will be allowed to examine it, Ward said.

The second site is in Kon Tum province and involves the loss of an Army private first class in January 1968 during the Tet Offensive.

The third site is in Quảng Trị province and involves

the loss of a Marine F-4J Wild Weasel aircraft. One of the crew of two ejected from the aircraft and was rescued.

U.S. Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta said during his trip to Vietnam that the efforts are important to troops serving today, because they need to know the military means that it will leave no man behind.

To date, the command has repatriated and identified 687 remains in Vietnam. A total of 1,284 Americans remain missing. Of these, 586 cases are in the category of "no further pursuit," meaning there is conclusive evidence the individual perished but it is not possible to recover remains. ♡

► Soldiers from B and C Companies, 1st Battalion, 8th Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, assemble on top of Hill 742 in November 1967 northeast of Dak To in the Kon Tum province of Vietnam. U.S. ARMY PHOTO





**Top:** An instructor at the Fort Bliss NCO Academy leads WLC students through land navigation instruction.  
**Above:** WLC students at Fort Hood plot points on a map.  
**Right:** A WLC student at Fort Hood makes his way through the land navigation course.

# Updating WLC

## Proof-of-concept tests at Fort Hood and Fort Bliss reintroduce land nav

STORY & PHOTOS BY CLIFFORD KYLE JONES

NCO Journal

The Army is conducting a proof-of-concept for possible changes to the Warrior Leader Course that would reintroduce land navigation training. They were conducted over several months this spring at WLC sessions at two posts in Texas: Fort Hood and Fort Bliss.

The course conducted at Fort Hood was expanded to 22 days. The pilot at Fort Bliss maintained the current WLC schedule of 17 days and dropped the situational awareness training exercise currently part of the WLC to make up the time needed to conduct the land navigation training.

Specialists and sergeants who attended the pilot courses were given six hours of training in map reading at Fort Bliss, and 10 hours of such training at Fort Hood.

During the land navigation test, students were given three and a half hours to identify three out of four points correctly.

Sgt. Maj. Lawrence Lunsford, chief of the Warrior Leader Course in the Directorate of Training, Doctrine and Education at the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy at Fort Bliss, oversaw the proof-of-concept.

During a May session at Fort Hood, Lunsford walked the range, talking to instructors and students to see what they thought of land navigation instruction returning to WLC after a five-year absence.

“Do you think land nav is important to learn in WLC?” he asked a group of about 10 students at Fort Hood.

“Hooah!” they replied in unison.

“Why?” he asked.

One of the students replied, “It’s just basic soldiering, Sergeant Major.”



**Above left:** An instructor at the Fort Bliss NCO Academy checks a student's compass.

**Above:** Students at Fort Hood turn in their results from the land navigation test as a clock counts down the remaining time behind them.

**Far left:** A WLC student at Fort Hood checks his azimuth.

**Left:** A WLC student at Fort Bliss looks for his next checkpoint.

TOOLKIT

# Payday activities reinforce standards

BY JENNIFER MATTSON NCO Journal

Before the age of electronic transfers, the Army would issue Soldiers a monthly check for their services. To receive the check, the Soldier would have to appear in a Class A uniform and pass an inspection before receiving pay.

If the Soldier wasn't up to standard, the pay or a portion of it might be forfeited. Today, Soldiers receive their pay on the first and the 15th, and it automatically appears in their bank account.

Some units have lost the other traditions that went along with a Soldier receiving a paycheck: in-ranks inspections, barracks checks and checking the Soldiers' Army Service Uniforms.

Payday activities allow leaders and NCOs the opportunity to designate that first Friday of the month for these types of activities that they might not have time to do otherwise.

Command Sgt. Maj. Brian M. Stall, command sergeant major of the 4th Infantry Division and Fort Carson, Colo., has implemented his commander's vision for payday activities at his unit.

"Soldiers arrive to this installation every month," Stall said. "So it's a check on: one, does the Soldier have the uniform? Two, does it fit appropriately and do they have the right awards that fit to their new unit? It reinforces for our junior NCOs and leaders that this is what a uniform should look like. They have a responsibility of inspecting the Soldiers. We want them to have pride, and we want to make sure that their uniform isn't balled up and thrown in a corner somewhere. There is some discipline that comes with it."

Though technology has often been blamed for the lapse of payday activities, many commands still conduct them, including the 82nd Airborne Division, 4th Infantry Division and 25th Infantry Division. Many see the surge in payday activities as a getting back to the basics of in-garrison leadership, Stall said.

"Some units use the war as an excuse not to conduct it," Stall said. "But we are founded on certain traditions. Technology has changed, people don't report to the pay officer anymore, but it reinforces pre-combat checks and pre-combat inspections. It develops leaders at all levels — regardless of whether they are an NCO, warrant or commissioned officer. It is a check on systems. For example, an operations system NCO can go down to a company and check training records: APFT, warrior task battle drills, training schedules."

Many Soldiers rush to the post exchange or local uniform stores when they arrive on post, Stall said.

"It is a culture shock," Stall said. "The



◀ Sgt. 1st Class Larry Hoedebeck conducts in-ranks inspections as a part of the 4th Infantry Division's payday activities May 4 at Fort Carson, Colo. PHOTO BY

JENNIFER MATTSON



▲ The 2nd Infantry Division staff leads the Division Special Troops Battalion in a four-mile run at Camp Red Cloud, Korea, in celebration of the Army's 233rd Birthday June 13, 2008. PHOTO BY CPL. JOON HYUNG SOHN

Army has survived for 237 years, and a guy named von Steuben started this process of putting discipline in the Army and the NCO Corps by which we derive all the authority from our officers to enforce this.”

By conducting payday activities, especially those that include the in-ranks inspections, NCOs and junior leaders are being accountable to standards and re-learning how their uniform should look, Stall said.

“It’s enlightening people on the importance of enforcing standards,” Stall said. “It makes them look at stuff. We want people to get into the regulations — look at what the proper order of precedence is, the placement — because the female uniform is different than the males. It is an education; it is an attention to detail that reinforces discipline, reinforces standards.”

In addition to educating and training their junior leaders, it helps those leaders with their follow-on assignments and classes, Stall said.

“We introduce this to Soldiers well before their Warrior Leader Course,” Stall said. “When they get there, they should already have a firm foundation of ‘This is how I look in uniform.’ They already know what an in-ranks inspection looks like.

“Now they’re conducting in-ranks inspection. They shouldn’t have to learn that at the school,” he said. “The goal behind NCOES, you want to throw more challenging things at them. They should show up to school already having knowledge. So you throw them challenging things that are getting them ready for that next level, ideally.” ♡

► NEXT MONTH: OPERATIONS SECURITY

## Types of payday activities

Though the commander is in charge of designating which payday activities will take place in a unit, it is up to the NCOs to ensure the unit conducts those activities. “It’s commander’s policy, but we run it,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Brian M. Stall, command sergeant major of the 4th Infantry Division and Fort Carson, Colo., where payday activities occur every first Friday of the month following payday. “And we are educating not only junior enlisted, but we’re educating the officer corps as well.”

Payday activities vary; however, common activities include:



**AWARDS AND PROMOTIONS** are presented to Soldiers in front of the whole battalion. These might include Army Commendation medals or promotions to sergeant or higher.



**IN-RANKS INSPECTIONS** are conducted by commanders, battalion sergeants major and company first sergeants to ensure that their Soldiers’ uniforms are being kept up to standard.



**BATTALION-LEVEL RUN** is used to build esprit de corps among the unit as a whole. Payday activities will usually start with a battalion-level, brigade-level or division-level run.



**TRAINING RECORDS CHECKS** ensures all Soldiers have met their requirements including the Army Physical Fitness Test, warrior tasks and battle drills, training schedules, and counseling packets.



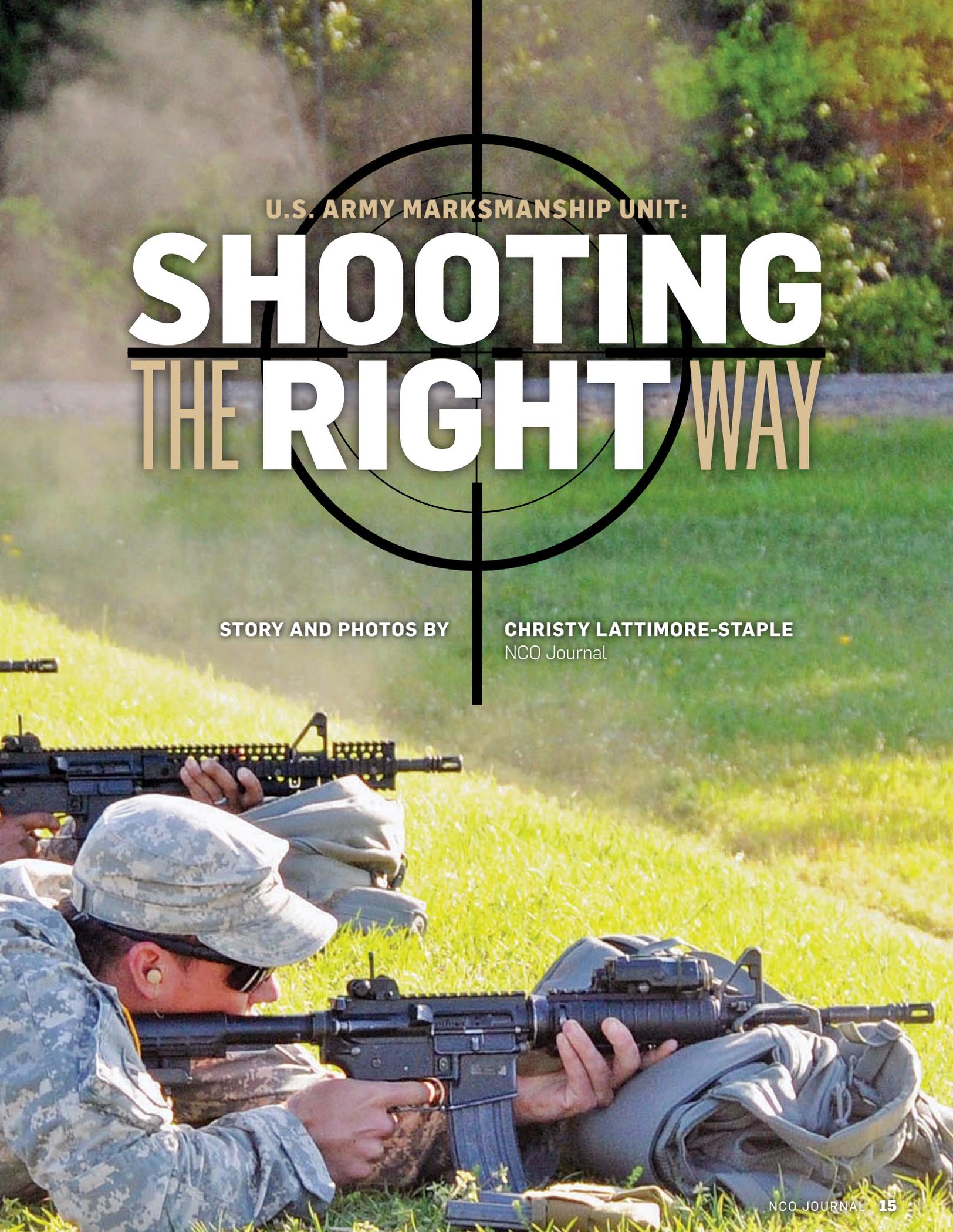
**BARRACKS’ INSPECTION** might take place to ensure that the Soldiers’ living quarters are being kept up to standard. These are usually conducted after the run and in-ranks inspections.



**ESPRIT DE CORPS EVENTS**, including picnics, sporting events or other unit activities, usually open to family members might take place on payday to help build esprit de corps among Soldiers.



Students fire their weapons at Easley Range during the Squad Designated Marksmanship Course at Fort Benning, Ga.



U.S. ARMY MARKSMANSHIP UNIT:

# SHOOTING THE RIGHT WAY

STORY AND PHOTOS BY

CHRISTY LATTIMORE-STAPLE  
NCO Journal



A student looks for his target at the Squad Designated Marksmanship Course.

**C**ombat readiness and equipping Soldiers with fundamental shooting skills is the mission of the U.S. Army Marksmanship Unit at Fort Benning, Ga. Through its Squad Designated Marksmanship Course, Close Quarters Marksmanship Course, and mobile training teams, the goal is to have Soldiers Armywide shoot the right way.

“Marksmanship has been streamlined, so a lot of Soldiers are forgetting the fundamentals of shooting and are missing steps that the Army has in place to make sure they can hit a target,” said Sgt. 1st Class David Steinbach, NCO in charge of the U.S. Army Marksmanship Unit. “The biggest lesson we teach is doing it the proper way.”

“We teach the fundamentals of marksmanship,” said Staff Sgt. Joel Micholick, the unit’s service rifle instructor. “Everything a Soldier trains for in the Army stems from the basics. But we build a good foundation with the fundamentals of the basics, which will make every Soldier in the Army a better marksman.”

“We teach by using repetition and a lot of one-on-one coaching,” he said. “We ask students a lot of questions, and we make the training as difficult as we can. We lead them through the process step-by-step, and that seems to really help.”

Some Soldiers have a harder time with the USAMU courses.

“With any school, you will always have students who will excel and pick up material quicker than others,” Micholick said. “The good thing is at some point during the course, a light will go off. Even if they had a rough time at the beginning of the course, by the end of the class, everyone seems to be where they need to be.”

Many of the fundamentals of shooting at far and close range or at moving targets has been forgotten by some Soldiers because they’re out of practice, USAMU instructors said.

“Moving and shooting is one of the most fundamental things we teach in close-quarters marksmanship — getting guys away from being static and becoming a static target,” Steinbach said. “A Soldier knowing how his or her weapon system

works will allow them to pinpoint and solve operational problems.”

“The most important lesson that we teach Soldiers is how the weapon system works,” said Sgt. 1st Class Lester Case, a service rifle section instructor. “So when the weapon is doing something they don’t want it to do, they know how to make it do what it needs to do.”

The instructors say anyone can learn to shoot and hit a target if everything is lined up correctly.

“Shooting is pretty simple: The bullet goes where the barrel is pointing,” Lester said. “Line the sights up, and make it match up. Really the easiest lesson we teach them is there’s no magic trick to shooting. The bullet’s going to do what the bullet’s going to do.”

### Teaching challenges

USAMU instructors say their students overcome many challenges on the path to learning how to shoot the right way.

“I am very surprised at the number of Soldiers who do not understand the capabilities of their rifle and who have a low

comfort level with their rifle,” Steinbach said. “In CQM, when the weapon fails to fire, the common thing for a Soldier to do is to stop what they’re doing and look at their gun. Most students just start charging the weapon again. You have to pull that Soldier back and rework the basics with them again before you can get into any kind of close-quarters shooting.”

Steinbach and his instructors sometimes encounter roadblocks before any teaching begins.

“We show up for a mobile Advance Rifle Marksmanship training, and the Soldiers can’t hit paper at 25 meters,” he said. “So before we start hitting things at 500 or 600 meters, we need to focus on the fundamentals, so they can hit consistently at 300 meters first.”

“When I really need more time to address the basics, if I have one or two Soldiers who need help in that area, I can take care of it,” he said. “Now, if we had a whole unit come to the course and they were completely unfamiliar with their weapons, I would not have the time to meet the course objectives. But I would have the time to train them to a much higher level than they came here with.”

USAMU instructors said many Soldiers have misconceptions about the right way to shoot when they arrive.

“Everyone says they know how to shoot in the Army, even though that’s not always true,” Case said. “Some Soldiers don’t want to admit they do not know everything about shooting. What happens is we spend the first two days with that person, convincing them that I might know something that they may not know, and that’s the hard part.”

Once Soldiers get out on the range, they often start to understand that they do not shoot as well as they thought, he said.

“After a few days on the range, Soldiers start to accept the instructors may know what they’re talking about,” Case said. “You want to say that you can’t tell who will have a hard time. But 90 percent of the time that student who is in the back of the class staring up at the ceiling, texting on their phone — I know that Soldier will most likely have a problem. That Soldier is usually the one who thinks that there’s nothing the instructor can teach them.”

New Soldiers are often the best students, Case said.

“Usually it’s their attitude, willingness to work, willingness to listen to someone



## THE U.S. ARMY MARKSMANSHIP UNIT'S COURSES

The U.S. Army Marksmanship Unit offers various courses at its home at Fort Benning, Ga. However, the unit also runs multiple mobile training teams throughout the Army that are tailored to the requesting unit’s needs and limitations, said Sgt. 1st Class David Steinbach, the unit’s NCO in charge. The standard courses USAMU offers include:

**SQUAD DESIGNATED MARKSMANSHIP COURSE** is a 10-day training program. “The SDM focuses on the Soldier’s need to rapidly and accurately engage targets at 300 to 600 meters,” Steinbach said. The 600-meter known-distance range “allows the Soldier to focus on the fundamentals of shooting while receiving feedback for every shot fired,” he said. “We teach correctly zeroing iron sights at 25 meters, sight picture, trigger control, theory and method of grouping shots and of zeroing, understanding external ballistics at extended ranges, rapid and effective manipulation of individual weapon systems for reloads and positioning, supported and unsupported position shooting while wearing full combat gear, single- and multiple-target engagements, and effective employment of barricades.”

**THE CLOSE QUARTERS MARKSMANSHIP COURSE** is also a 10-day training program. “Our CQM focuses on addressing the Soldier’s need to rapidly and accurately engage targets measured from 0 to 150 meters. The program begins with the fundamentals of marksmanship and progresses to rapid and accurate target engagements employing both the individual rifle and the pistol, Steinbach said. “In our CQM, we teach Soldiers understanding ballistics at close range, weapons and equipment set-up, individual immediate action drills, rapid and effective manipulation of individual weapon systems for reloads and positioning, supported and unsupported position shooting, single- and multiple-target engagements, shooting on-the-move from close to intermediate ranges, effective employment of barricades, pistol marksmanship as it applies to CQM, and transitioning from the rifle to the pistol,” Steinbach said.

**RIFLE MARKSMANSHIP FUNDAMENTALS COURSE** is 5 days, and the focus is on the Soldier’s need to accurately zero and engage threats from 25 to 300 meters with iron sights and optics. “The outcome of this course leaves the student with a solid foundation of marksmanship skills and how to build a stable position, proper sight alignment and trigger control, external ballistics and how to compensate for environmental effects to external ballistics,” Steinbach said.

**ADVANCED RIFLE MARKSMANSHIP COURSE** is a 5-day program that focuses on the Soldier’s need to accurately engage threats at distances up to 600 meters. “With iron sights and optics, this course builds on marksmanship fundamentals and teaches Soldiers alternate firing positions, effective utilization of barriers, engagement of moving targets, and rapid engagements at targets of unknown distances,” Steinbach said.

**CLOSE QUARTERS MARKSMANSHIP TRAIN-THE-TRAINER PROGRAM** is conducted for 5 to 10 days. “Our CQM MTT program focuses on the Soldier’s need to accurately engage targets at ranges of 5 to 75 meters,” Steinbach said. “This program, unlike the others, allows leaders to plan, resource and execute selected training.”

# Wounded warrior instructor is first selected for program

In the Wounded Warrior Instruction program, recently instituted at the U.S. Army Marksmanship Unit at Fort Benning, Ga., the USAMU is seeking to hire wounded warriors to showcase the Army at the Paralympic Games and to work as instructors in the unit's wounded warrior program.

"We are still in the beginning phase, and we are working on recruiting," said Sgt. 1st Class Joshua Olson, an instructor with the wounded warrior program. Olson, who deployed to Iraq in 2003 with 1st Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, was struck with a rocket-propelled grenade while on patrol and lost his right leg from the hip down. After spending 18 months at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C., Olson received his assignment to the USAMU. Olson is the first



Sgt. 1st Class Joshua Olson

marksman instructor recruited for the wounded warrior program. "Soldiers interested in staying on active duty, who still want to work, NCOs who want to still train Soldiers — they might not be able to go on patrol anymore, but they have an opportunity here," Olson said. "They might not be able to take the fight to the enemy, but they can train the Soldiers who are. They can still serve and be in the fight that way.

As an NCO, my most important job here is to take the things I have learned in competition and the experiences I have encountered on my previous deployments, take all that knowledge and be able to teach my fellow Soldiers and NCOs those skills," he said. "Then they can turn around and teach it to their Soldiers."

Olson said he is proud to continue to serve. "I feel very proud to be part of the Army," he said. "Even after I was injured, I was still able to serve and still make a difference and make a great impact."

Instructor positions are limited, and the ability to completely master the training is required. Members of the USAMU Paralympics rifle or pistol teams must have a strong desire to represent the United States in international shooting competitions and will spend five or six hours a day on the range in a competitive marksmanship environment, including many weekends. Showcasing the Army as a Paralympian also requires an ability to maintain intense concentration for long periods of time and high levels of self-discipline, self-motivation and initiative.

For more information about the Wounded Warrior Instructor program, contact Sgt. 1st Class David Steinbach, USAMU instructor NCOIC, at 706-545-3893/5416, or by email at david.steinbach@usaac.army.mil.

and learn new techniques," he said. "That is why some of the inexperienced Soldiers will sometimes do better than the ones who have been in the Army for some time. Though some Soldiers may start off in the course kind of rocky, a private first class who has not touched a gun since basic can, by the end of the course, outshoot an infantryman."

"Relearning everything about the weapon has been the most challenging for me, because I have not fired in almost a year," said Spc. Shantel Arispe of Fort Benning's CONUS Replacement Center Battalion. "The first day was pretty hard for me, because I had to relearn everything I had learned in basic training three years ago. But I have become a better shooter."

"So far the most challenging for me has been shooting at long distances with iron sights," said Sgt. Jeffery French, a student from B Company, 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry Regiment, 25th Infantry Division, at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii. "In the regular Army, we normally don't do that. I have become a better shooter, and I will take the knowledge and skill I've gained from this course back to my unit to increase our readiness for combat."

"When I got here, I was not expecting to have to do calculation for the wind, or leading a moving target," said Spc. David Broome of F Company, 3rd Battalion, 7th Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, at Fort Stewart, Ga. "All are things that I never had to deal with before. The two basic fundamentals I've learned here were trigger control and sight alignment — both strong points of mine."

## Changing the courses

This year, changes have been made to the Squad Designated Marksmanship and the Close Quarters Marksmanship courses.

"The courses here have been revamped," Steinbach said. "Now we have added more combat application to it. We spend most of our time on the long-distance range. Some of the associated problems with that are most long-distance ranges in the Army are measured in yards, and you go to a pop-up range somewhere, and it's in meters. So a Soldier's understanding of ballistics is off a little bit, and here we can address it yard-by-yard and meter-by-meter."

Understanding the ballistics matters when Soldiers have to identify a threat at a distance, identify environmental

Sgt. 1st Class Lester Case, an instructor at the U.S. Army Marksmanship Unit, teaches zeroing techniques to a student at the Squad Designated Marksmanship Course.

conditions, and put accurate rounds on a target. “It matters a whole lot,” he said.

Many changes have also been made to CQM. “We have introduced pistols into our one- and two-week courses,” Steinbach said. “So the first week is static rifles. The second week is pistols, introduction to pistols and transitions between the two.”

The CQM 25-meter flat range offers units many training opportunities.

“There’s so much more a unit can do with a 25-meter flat range,” Steinbach said. “Something you’re going to do in a shoot-house — whether it’s moving through a breach point or moving to a point of domination — all the drills we do on the flat range support that. The shoot-house supports a fight we are, or could find ourselves, encountering in the future. It’s a building block.

“Soldiers who come to the course are starting to get it, and are like, ‘Wow. This is one of the greatest courses I have been to,’” Steinbach said. “That is good for us. That is the greatest validation to hear from Soldiers.”

### Returning to the unit

Case says the Marksmanship Unit teaches Soldiers the fundamental steps they need to remember to shoot effectively downrange. “They are supposed to start close, work their way out, make sure they know what they’re hitting. Then they can focus on training for combat. I think that is the important part: doing it the right way,” he said.

The ultimate goal of the U.S. Army Marksmanship Unit is to be a force multiplier.

“We want the Soldiers to get the information taught during this class, return to their unit and teach what they have learned here to their entire unit,” said Staff Sgt. Nicole Allaire, NCOIC of operations. “This course is not a ‘come here and learn how to shoot’ course. It’s more of ‘let’s get you to shoot long-range.’”

“Soldiers should be able to go back to their unit and convince their command that there may be more ways to train their command,” Case said. “If you just go out and shoot a target at 300 meters, you don’t



know what you’re hitting or where you’re aiming. You know that you are hitting the target. But you could be anywhere 20 inches off left or right of the target.”

“Implementing what Soldiers have learned when they leave here to return to their unit depends on each Soldier’s rank and what their purpose is for attending a course,” Steinbach said. “But we give students a copy of our classes, all the notes we have taken, and they receive a copy for their unit. On top of that, we reinforce our website, so they are free to contact us, and we will help in any way that we can.”

### Affecting the Army

“The role of the NCO in the Marksmanship Unit is to guide our Soldiers, mentor them and train them up the right way, so they can have a positive impact on the United States Army,” Allaire said.

“I like to think what we do here im-

pacts the Army hugely,” Micholick said. “We spend a lot of days on the range, a lot of days outside. Some days can be frustrating, some days aren’t. But in the end, we are all very happy with whoever we trained. We are always willing to train.”

“I like to think that what we do here is going to impact the Army by that trickle-down effect,” Case said. “Every Soldier we train here is going to have that impact at whatever level he or she is at. At their unit, that Soldier will go back and will be in charge of four Soldiers and will train them to shoot properly.”

“What we do here has a great impact on the Army,” Steinbach said. “At the end of the day, we are making American Soldiers more lethal.” ♡

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U.S. ARMY SNIPER SCHOOL:  
**TAKING**  
TARGETS **OUT**

STORY BY

**CHRISTY LATTIMORE-STAPLE**  
NCO Journal

Students practice at the U.S. Army  
Sniper School's known-distance  
range at Fort Benning, Ga.  
PHOTO BY JOHN D. HELMS

**A**rmy snipers have long carried the mystique that they are a band of brothers chosen to be the select few who can make important, undetected moves of skill. At the U.S. Army Sniper School at Fort Benning, Ga., potential snipers become proficient in watching, waiting, then taking targets out.

“The goal is to train regular Soldiers who have been selected by their chain of command to learn a degree of proficiency in sniper skills and sniper tasks,” said Sgt. 1st Class Tomas N. Eggers, NCO in charge of the U.S. Army Sniper School, which is formally designated as C Company, 2nd Battalion, 29th Infantry Regiment, 197th Infantry Brigade. “The mission of the sniper is to collect and report battlefield information, locate and watch a target, and to deliver long-range, precision fire.”

The Sniper School’s instructors accomplish that goal by putting select Soldiers through a five-week course. “The first eight days is nothing but field craft target detection, range estimation and stalking,” Eggers said.

“The importance of the USASS is to be a force multiplier, and a sniper is the perfect asset to use when it comes to places like Afghanistan,” said Staff Sgt. Samuel Acevedo, an instructor at the Sniper School. “We help gather up information, provide battlefield analysis and help the commander make decisions on the spot. Our long-range capabilities, as well as our call for fire, have helped out in Afghanistan.

“The best skill snipers offer to any unit ... is the psychological impact he has on the enemy,” Acevedo said. “If an enemy combatant is trying to place an improvised explosive device or is trying to coordinate an attack, they have no idea that there is a trained sniper 600 meters away, concealed and observing their every movement. As soon as that enemy combatant shows any kind of hostile act or hostile intent, his life is ended. The buddy next to him all of a sudden sees his counterpart fall dead on the ground with a bullet in his head. That is the biggest impact I see, that psychological impact.”

Snipers often winnow away an enemy’s will to fight, Eggers said.

“The enemy doesn’t know where the sniper is going to be,” he said. “They do not know where that next shot will come from. That is a sniper’s job during combat situations, being able to sneak up on a target and take it out.”

### The course

Three field skills are taught at the beginning of the USASS session, and students must pass those skills to continue the course. In “target detection,” a Soldier learns how to lay down with binoculars and scope an area. The Soldier looks for target indicators — objects that look out of place in the distance. The next field skill is “stalking.” During that lesson, Soldiers try to conceal themselves in plain sight while instructors try to spot them. The third field skill is “range estimation.” Soldiers learn to scope, using basic math formulas, to detect hidden military equipment placed in plain sight.

“In target detection, we are trying to teach scanning techniques,” Eggers said. “Students have to learn how to have an area of operation, and be able to scan the area and pick out what looks like a target. The instructors will get in a lane that is 200-meters deep and 50-meters wide, and we will put in irregularly shaped military objects. The student’s task is to scan that lane and find those targets.

“Stalking is an exercise that tests camouflage, concealment, route selection, patience, situational awareness and land navigation — knowing where the target is, being able to find your way to that target, and having a lane you can shoot the target at without being under observation,” Eggers said. To test student’s ability to stalk, two instructors get on the back of a bus with binoculars and try to find students sneaking up on them.

“Each student makes their own ghillie suit. It is a suit used by snipers to break up their outline so any hard edge

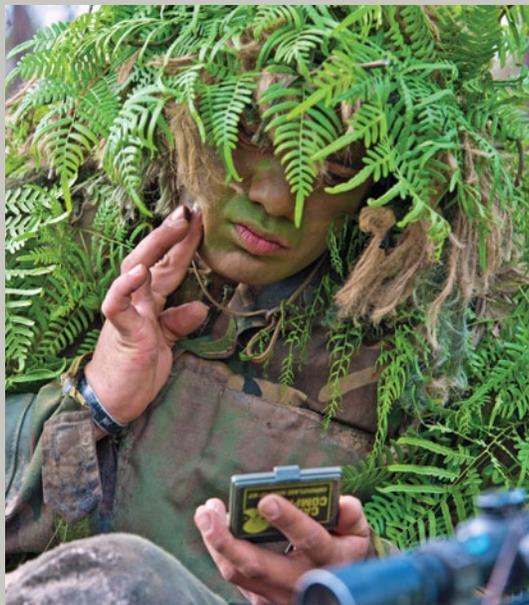
## STALKING & THE GHILLIE SUIT

For students at the U.S. Army Sniper School at Fort Benning, Ga., the most challenging part of the course is learning to stalk. Students build and use a ghillie suit to camouflage themselves during the exercise.

“Stalking is something that is hard to teach. It’s hard to teach how to camouflage the right way,” said Sgt. 1st Class Richard Vest, an instructor at the Sniper School. “I always tell them if I can do it, then anybody should be able to do it, because I am a big-size guy.

“The base of the suit is made out of cloth material, and the outer part of the suit is made out of a net mesh,” Vest said. “Snipers make their own ghillie suit out of brush in their environments so they can conceal themselves from the enemy in combat situations.

“But no matter the environment the suit is hot,” he said. “It can reach over 100 degrees inside the suit.” To enhance safety, a fire-resistant ghillie suit fabric has recently replaced the old jute fabric material, he said.



A student puts on camouflage makeup during a stalking practice exercise at the U.S. Army Sniper School at Fort Benning, Ga. PHOTO BY SUSANNA AVERY-LYNCH



A Sniper School student adjusts the scope on his M110 Semi-Automatic Sniper System rifle. PHOTO BY CHRISTY LATTIMORE-STAPLE

on their body will not be seen," he said.

Math is a skill set "important to snipers during the range estimation portion of the course," Eggers said. "The way the sniper determines the range to a target is by using our scope. Inside our scope, we have a mil-dot reticle. Using a formula, the sniper can actually figure out the size of a target."

"Each section teaches the students what they need to know step-by-step," said Sgt. 1st Class Richard Vest, an instructor at the school. Students are paired and act as a team — one is the shooter and the other is the spotter. They continually switch positions and are graded individually.

"The spotter is the most important person," Vest said. "Anyone can pull a trigger, but the guy who can tell what the wind is doing and the range is the most important part so the shooter can hit the target."

"When the class starts, Soldiers have six days of nothing but stalking, target detecting and range estimation before there is a graded event," Vest said. "By then, most get it; if not, then they ask for help. We always have an instructor that stays at the school house all night, every single night. So if students are having trouble, then they can ask for help."

By day six, students take their initial tests in each of the three events.

"The first thing I tell students when they show up is if they fail to meet a standard, I will not send them home," Eggers said. "In my opinion, they do not get better training at their unit than what they will get here at the course."

On day seven, students who have failed retrain, and day eight is the retest. That is the student's final opportunity to pass those three events. Any students who fail their retest are encouraged to talk to their chain of command about continuing with the course even though they cannot graduate. "Students will get better training if they are allowed to stay, and I forward them an opportunity to come back to the next class," Eggers said.

The last three weeks of the course are devoted to marksmanship. Students are trained on the M107 rifle, the M110 Semi-Automatic Sniper System and the M24 Sniper Weapon System.

"The most important part of this class is shooting," Acevedo said. "In the marksmanship portion of the class, we train them enough that they should be able to engage targets out at 800 meters."

"When a class starts, I do not know who will pass and who will fail, because the tasks that students have to complete during this course as far as field craft, it's

up to the individual," he said. "We teach the students as much as possible, but when it comes down to it, it's all individual."

The fifth week is a field training exercise event, followed by graduation.

"Successful students implement everything we have taught them, and they use those lessons during the field training exam to their advantage against the instructors who are grading them. It's hard. This is a specialty skill."

Sniper School students said they anticipated the course would be a challenge, but they had one goal in mind — becoming snipers.

"The most challenging part for me is hitting a moving target consistently. But I am here because I want to be a sniper," said Sgt. Charles Wilson of the 2nd Ranger Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment, at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash. "Targets move at different speeds. No one can lock the same speed every time. The more I shoot, the more I get used to it."

Many students said practicing constantly helped improve their overall marksmanship skills.

"The only way to train is to keep shooting," Wilson said. "Knowing how to read the wind can make hitting the target easier most of the time."



Staff Sgt. Samuel Acevedo (left) and another instructor watch to see which students are hitting targets during a graded event at the U.S. Army Sniper School at Fort Benning, Ga. PHOTO BY CHRISTY LATTIMORE-STAPLE

“We practice by taking turns,” said Sgt. Micah Hitchcock, also of the 2nd Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment. “It’s a sniper team consisting of a spotter and a shooter; you just switch off and trade places. The spotter can see the rounds as they are going out, then he will trace the round to make adjustments to hit the target.”

Staff Sgt. Erin Hill of the Ranger Special Troops Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment, at Fort Benning, Ga., said, “Since being here, I learned range estimation and have improved my trigger time. The more time I have here, it will improve even more.”

Sniper School instructors strive to mentor and serve as the example for their students.

“The role of the NCO at the USASS is to instruct and instill and maintain standards and discipline,” Acevedo said. “NCOs are vital to any training; they lead the way in training. As NCOs, the students look up to us as mentors and how we uphold the standards. That’s why it’s important for an NCO to lead by example. That’s the most important thing.

“A sniper is a specialty,” he said. “All we ask of the students is to have a lot of patience, and this is something they will learn and grow to do.”

Once a student graduates from Sniper School, that Soldier receives a diploma and returns to his unit as a basic sniper.

“Depending on what their unit’s mission is, they might be deploying or they might just be getting ready to start a training cycle,” Eggers said. “They go right back into the flow of their unit.”

USASS instructors say they invest a lot of knowledge in their students.

“Students leave here with a great understanding of what they need to do as far as how to engage, how to inform their commander, as well as how to plan,” Acevedo said. “Communication is a vital part of being a sniper.”

A sniper’s military career path in the Army depends on his rank.

“E-3 or E-4 Soldiers will go back to their unit as part of a sniper team, and usually they are the observer,” Eggers said. “Then the Soldier is promoted to being the team leader of a sniper team, and the sniper will have a section like a sniper squad. Once they are promoted again, they will be that section’s squad leader. That is the basic progression as a basic sniper in the U.S. Army.

“By the time a sniper has made the rank of staff sergeant, he has promoted himself out of a job,” Eggers said. “But they have gained a tremendous amount of experience as snipers and as NCOs.

“If an E-3 or E-4 sniper Soldier attends the Sniper Course, by the time he reaches the rank of staff sergeant, he has been a

sniper team leader, sniper section leader, maybe a reconnaissance platoon sergeant or a scout platoon sergeant. They offer a wealth of experience and knowledge to young snipers and sniper students.”

### Characteristics of a sniper

The everyday duties of a sniper are different than how they are often portrayed in television and movies.

“Being a sniper is not glamorous,” Eggers said. “If people think being a sniper is like being in the movies, where it’s all action-packed, they are very mistaken. A sniper has to have patience.” A sniper can go days, even weeks, without actually engaging somebody, he said.

“The shooting aspect of a sniper’s duties is only 10 percent,” Eggers said. “The majority is observing and collecting information, and sending that information to the unit the sniper is supporting.”

“Most snipers in the community have a different way of thinking,” Acevedo said. “We are not all push-forward. We are calmer and think. We process information, then we act.”

“The sniper team may be over-watching an assault unit, and the team is not in the action; they are observing everything,” Eggers said. “A sniper has to be able to look at a village, pick out the threat and focus in on that. So patience and good analytical skills

# TAKING THE SNIPER SCHOOL ON THE ROAD

The U.S. Army Sniper School offers mobile training across the country and overseas.

“I have been here eight months and we have completed four mobile training classes,” said Sgt. 1st Class Richard Vest, an instructor at the school. “We go all over; sometimes we have two mobile classes going and a class here at the USASS all at once, every five to six weeks. Our mobile classes are the same courses we do here at the USASS.”

He said that the USASS works with whatever environment a location has to offer.

“We make sure the ranges are good, the land is good for stalking,” he said.

Technology is constantly changing, and with the ever-

present threat of terrorism, the USASS instructors want to stay ahead of the game. “We are in the middle of revamping our course,” said Sgt. 1st Class Tomas N. Eggers, the NCO in charge of the school. “Right now, I have two instructors going through Advanced Situational Awareness Training, and we are going to try to get as much of that as we can so we can take and improve our target-detection course.

“The last six to eight months we have begun a huge paradigm shift in how we train snipers. There’s new technology, new training methods, new formulas that we have incorporated, so the snipers we are training and sending to the force right now are some of the best basic snipers that are in the military,” Eggers said.

are the characteristics of a sniper.”

Vest said the best candidate to attend the Sniper School is a Soldier who enjoys being in the woods. “Someone who grew up in the country, who can hunt and shoot,” he said.

“Soldiers who have a good attention span are the best candidate for the USASS. The ideal student is a Soldier who is physically fit and mentally strong. Everyone has to go through a psychological evaluation,” Vest said.

“A definite benefit is someone who is mentally mature; the mission of a sniper requires that, because a commander entrusts a lot of responsibility to a sniper team,” he said.

## Pride of the Sniper School

The instructors at the U.S. Army Sniper School say they take immense pride in their work and their students.

“I am most proud of the USASS community and how students will leave here and still stay in touch with each other,” Acevedo said. “Here at the USASS, we are always gaining knowledge, and we have a tie-in with the snipers and community as well. The students leave here with that brotherhood feeling, knowing that they are part of a community.”

“The skills learned here at the USASS help the students to be more professional Soldiers. They give them greater confi-

dence,” Vest said. “I am very proud about what snipers do for the military.”

“Right now, I am proud of the direction the course is going,” Eggers said. “When I first arrived here, we were still teaching very old formulas and techniques, not using all of our equipment to its potential. In the last eight months, we have totally started to embrace the new technology we have; a lot of the instructors are on board.”

Eggers said that even as the school’s graduation rate has gone up, its standards continue to increase.

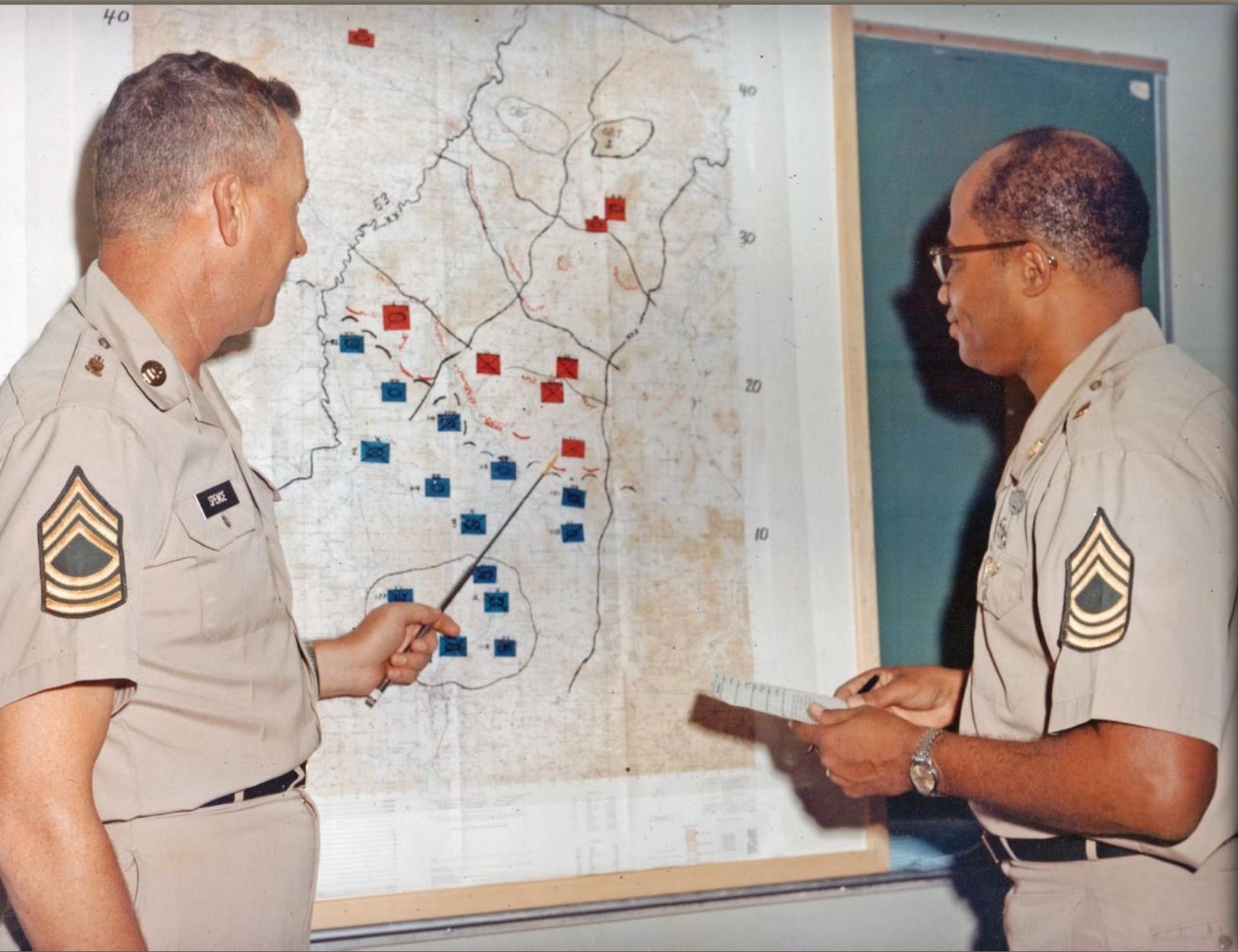
“The methods of the instructors and testing have improved. This is a very professional course,” he said. ♡

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Sniper School instructor Staff Sgt. Matthew Hammond leans over to offer help to students during the marksmanship course.

PHOTO BY CHRISTY LATTIMORE-STAPLE



# USASMA AT



# 40

The U.S. Army Sergeants  
Major Academy celebrates  
40 years of educating NCOs

**BY STAFF SGT. JASON STADEL** NCO Journal



**B**y the early 1970s, the idea of an Army senior noncommissioned officer academy had been in the works for years, but constant conflicts and the mindset of an officer-led Army pushed the idea to the backburner. Nonetheless, more than four decades ago, officers at the highest levels of the Army said it was time to turn the Army NCO from an often-uneducated draftee into a professional, motivated leader of Soldiers. Today, that idea has turned into an Army success story that has molded the Army NCO into someone who has helped create the world's most powerful and professional fighting force.

This year marks 40 years since Gen. Ralph E. Haines, then the commander of the Continental Army Command (the predecessor to U.S. Army Forces Command and U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command), issued General Order 98. That order, with an effective date of July 1, 1972, created the U.S. Army Ser-

**Right:** The original U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy headquarters building was built in the 1960s as part of a Vietnamese language school. When the school shut down, the buildings were used as the first USASMA campus.

PHOTO COURTESY OF USASMA

geants Major Academy at Fort Bliss, Texas.

The first USASMA Sergeants Major Course class started in January 1973 with 105 students. Forty years later, Class 63 is expected to surpass 800 students, one of the largest classes ever.

### The birth of USASMA

USASMA, the most senior NCO academy in the U.S. Army, has its roots in post World War II Europe.

The Army had tried to set up noncommissioned officer academies throughout Europe and the United States. But in the

early- to mid-20th century, the number of Soldiers in the Army was in a state of flux due to heavy, but relatively brief, U.S. involvement in wars across the globe.

During the end of World War II in 1945, for example, troops were allowed to go home based on the amount of “points” they had accumulated, said Robert Bouilly, USASMA’s historian. Points were tied to combat experience, which meant many senior NCOs were the first to go home.

“[The Army] said we have got to have some kind of training to compensate, because we’re losing all our experience,”



**Left: Sergeants Major Course students from Class 1 work in a small group in 1973.**

**Previous page, left: Students from Class 1 work together to complete an assignment.**

**Previous page, right: Sergeants Major Course student Master Sgt. Dexter Robertson speaks with a survivor of the Bataan Death March during the annual Bataan Memorial Death March on March 23 at White Sands Missile Range, N.M.**

PHOTOS COURTESY OF USASMA

said Bouilly, who has been the USASMA historian for more than 20 years.

To fill the training void, NCO academies began popping up around Europe to provide NCOs with the training they needed to serve in post-war Europe. Some schools operated for less than a year, while others still exist today.

In 1950, the Korean War started, and with the need for Soldiers to fill the front lines rather than the cadres at NCO academies, many NCO academies closed down. Twelve years after fighting in Korea ended, the U.S. switched its focus — and troops — to Vietnam. There was yet again a need for troops on the front lines.

As the Vietnam War began winding down, Gen. William Westmoreland, then the Army Chief of Staff and a former commander in Vietnam, sought advice from retired Gen. Bruce Clarke on how to retain senior NCO knowledge.

Bouilly said Clarke had seen the benefits of NCO academies. He was a tank commander in World War II and helped start the 7th Army NCO Academy after the war. It still operates today at the Grafenwöhr Training Area in Germany. He also urged the Army to set up an official NCO academy system.

In 1957, due in part to Clarke's persistence, the Department of the Army published AR 350-90, *Noncommissioned Officer Academies*.

Bouilly said Clarke advised Westmoreland to establish a senior NCO academy.

Westmoreland took that advice and tasked Haines with setting up an NCO academy for senior NCOs. In 1972, Haines and his staff established USASMA at Fort Bliss.

"[Haines] was one of those officers at a high level who believed in training for NCOs, and he believed in having a senior NCO academy," Bouilly said.

The area around Biggs Army Airfield

at Fort Bliss was chosen as USASMA's home for a variety of reasons, the biggest being that it had the facilities to accommodate the academy.

"There was a Vietnamese language school here," Bouilly said. "We could see that we're not going to need Vietnamese language training for a whole lot longer. There was student housing, you had an auditorium, you had classroom buildings. You could get up and running fairly fast."

## More than the Sergeants Major Course

With more and more students coming to each new class, buildings and other NCO courses were added to USASMA's offerings. During USASMA's first eight years of existence, only the Sergeants Major Course was offered. But in 1981, the U.S. Army First Sergeants Course was added.

In 1989, a two-week Command Sergeants Major/Pre-command Course was added to train newly appointed command sergeants major. The Battle Staff Noncommissioned Officer Course started in 1991. As a supplement to the NCO Education System, the online, self-paced, Structured Self-Development program began as a pilot in 2007. Most recently, the Advanced Leader Course-Common Core began

to operate out of USASMA in 2010. The Warrior Leader Course curriculum is also developed at the academy.

By 2007, the Army had changed the curriculum for the Senior Leader Course (formerly the Advanced NCO Course), and the First Sergeant Course was discontinued in 2010 for active-duty NCOs. The National Guard and Army Reserve First Sergeant Course will end this year.

In 2005, the Command Sergeants Major/Pre-command Course was moved to Fort Leavenworth, Kan. because the Army believed the command sergeant major training should be co-located with training for newly appointed battalion and brigade commanders.

Today, Army leaders are setting a new path for NCO professional development at USASMA. The current commandant, Command Sgt. Maj. Rory Malloy, wants the academy to build not only strong leaders, but strong members of society.

"We lay out a model, a vision, of how we want our Soldiers and leaders to develop throughout their career, and it doesn't stop when they retire," he said. "They will continue to contribute no matter when they leave the military. As a young sergeant or as a really old sergeant major, they'll contribute to society as a whole and

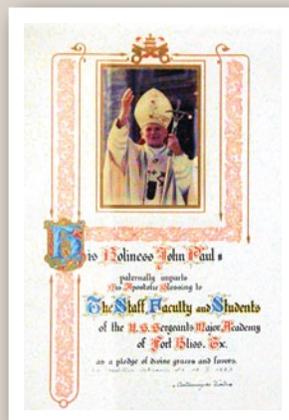
## 'A PLEDGE OF DIVINE GRACES AND FAVORS'

The history of USASMA is rich with stories of Army NCOs. But USASMA's history is not only about NCOs. The Vatican has also left its touch on the USASMA grounds. Pope John Paul II blessed USASMA in May 1983. The blessing document is displayed in the USASMA Learning Resource Center.

Col. Joseph Ostrowidzki was the fifth USASMA commandant, and like Pope John Paul II, he was born in Poland. Ostrowidzki's assistant commandant was Lt. Col. Thomas Hoffert. Hoffert and his family often made contributions to the Roman Catholic Church. In recognition of their donations, the Hoffert family received an apostolic blessing.

Instead of having the blessing in his family's name, Hoffert requested the blessing be given to USASMA. He thought the blessing would be appropriate for the academy because of Ostrowidzki's and the pope's shared Polish heritage.

The blessing reads: "His holiness John Paul II paternally imparts his apostolic blessing to the staff, faculty and students of the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy of Fort Bliss, Texas as a pledge of divine graces and favors."



“It has taken 40 years, but you have the most professional NCO Corps of any army, anywhere in the world, that can do things I’m not even sure those visionaries thought we would be capable of.”

— SGT. MAJ. OF THE ARMY RAYMOND F. CHANDLER III

will demonstrate that they are the type of leader any organization would want.”

Sgt. Maj. Scott Denson, director of ALC-CC at USASMA, said the academy’s influence on NCO development has created the best group of NCOs in the world.

“Being a noncommissioned officer in my eyes is like being a professional athlete,” Denson said. “Today’s Army is looking for world-class noncommissioned officers, and I think we are just that — world-class noncommissioned officers. The way we’ve been able to get to that point is by leadership and the training we provide noncommissioned officers.”

ALC-CC has more than 2,500 students enrolled via distance learning at any given time, and on Oct. 1, the Structured Self-Development courses will become mandatory for all NCOs to complete before they enroll in the residential courses for the Warrior Leader Course, Senior Leader Course, and Sergeants Major Course.

Sgt. Maj. of the Army Raymond F. Chandler III, USASMA’s first enlisted commandant, said that in the past 40 years, the academy has exceeded the founders’ initial expectations.

“If you understand how this place was established and why — some very vision-

ary and strategic people setting the conditions to rebuild our Army after Vietnam to institutionalize noncommissioned officer education — the impact is the success of our Army today,” Chandler said. “It has taken 40 years, but you have the most professional NCO Corps of any army, anywhere in the world, that can do things I’m not even sure those visionaries thought we would be capable of.”

In 1991, the *NCO Journal*, the Army’s monthly magazine dedicated to NCO professional development, started production at USASMA.

### ‘We train our own’

USASMA’s cadre of instructors is today made up of NCOs and civilians. Most of those civilians were at one time NCOs themselves, with a large number being academy graduates. But that wasn’t always the case. Class 1 in January 1973 had instructors who were majors, captains, and senior NCOs.

In the mid-1980s, NCO academies across the Army began to be led by NCOs, with USASMA being the notable exception; its commandant was a colonel, Bouilly said. Over the next 20 years, the officers were slowly replaced by NCOs or

civilians. But it wasn’t until June 2009 that the academy became fully NCO-led, when Col. Donald Gentry relinquished command and Chandler assumed the responsibilities of USASMA’s commandant.

“It took a little longer to get that change made,” Bouilly said. “Basically, like the formation of the academy, the decision [of having an enlisted commandant] was dependant on getting an officer at a very high level who was receptive to the idea.”

In the past 40 years, NCOs have become more educated and now have the ability to teach and train at the academy’s high educational standard, Malloy said.

“Almost all of my instructors here have a college degree at the bachelor’s level, more than one third of them have a master’s degree, and we’ve got about seven instructors with doctorates,” he said. “Forty years ago when this program started, the reason there was such officer involvement was the average level of education an NCO had was maybe around the ninth-grade level. The fact that we do train our own is a heck of an accomplishment and [reflects] the sacrifices and efforts our NCO Corps has made during the past 40 years.”

### International students arrive

In its 40 years of NCO education, USASMA has hosted more than 700 international students from more than 70 countries. International students have been enrolled in the Sergeants Major Course, First Sergeant Course, Battle Staff NCO Course, Warrior Leader Course and Non-Resident Sergeants Major Course. The first such student was Australian Warrant Officer Robert May. He enrolled in Class 6 of the Sergeants Major Course in 1975 and graduated in 1976.

There are a limited number of seats available to international students in each SMC class. Mike Huffman, a former command sergeant major, is the International Military Student Office director. He served more than 28 years in the Army, is a former SMC instructor and a former student company commander.

There is an attraction to USASMA from the world’s armies because they have seen the success of the American NCO profes-



As part of their enrollment in the Sergeants Major Course, international students participate in a variety of field studies programs, like this one in 2010 at the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colo. PHOTO COURTESY OF USASMA



USASMA's current campus was completed in 1987. PHOTO COURTESY OF USASMA

sional development system over the past four decades, Huffman said. When he was an SMC student, the international student presence changed his perception of some American allies, he said.

“What the international student mainly brings to the classroom is culture,” he said. “The first time I had a Muslim student in my class, I was an instructor in Class 56, and I’ll tell you what, I learned a lot from that Jordanian student. It broke down a lot of barriers and disproved a lot of stereotypes that I had, and I was a sergeant major already. After I came back from Afghanistan, after I had already been in Iraq, I was schooled on culture and tolerance by this Jordanian sergeant major, and I had thought I had known it all. So having them in the classroom with their American counterparts is invaluable.”

More than 40 international students have become the sergeant major of the army in their respective countries, Huffman said.

One of Huffman’s classmates was a Croatian named Goran Turk. He is now the sergeant major of the Croatian army’s land forces. Turk was inducted into the USASMA International Student Hall of Fame in 2010.

“A lot of times, he and I talk about the development of their noncommissioned officer education system and growing their duties and responsibilities of the partner nation’s NCO corps to be somewhat equivalent to ours,” Huffman said.

With the international students attending USASMA, Huffman said USASMA’s history now goes beyond the history of

the American NCO. The academy has now become a global institution with world-wide reach.

“When you think of USASMA, but you don’t talk about international students, you centralize USASMA here at Fort Bliss; it becomes an island isolated to our own Army,” Huffman said. “But when you talk about the international students attending the courses, then going back to their countries and implementing some of the techniques, some of the lessons they learned here, and implementing those practices and those procedures in their own Army, we reach out across the globe.”

Denson, a Class 59 graduate of the academy, said he enjoys every moment at USASMA and realizes that, as a staff member, he contributes a small part to the academy’s history.

“Whether you are a sergeant major assigned here, a sergeant first class or a staff sergeant, everybody plays an important part, and at the end of the day, everyone is part of the team,” Denson said. “In my eyes, this is not just another assignment. Everybody that is assigned here should view this as a special assignment, because we are the highest academy in the land.”

With 40 years of USASMA history in the book, its commandant sees more history yet to be made as the academy contributes to the ongoing improvement of NCO professional development.

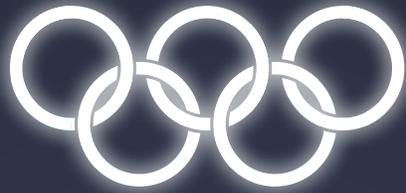
“We try to capitalize on experiences...,” Malloy said. “Our business is education.”

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## USASMA TIMELINE

- 1969** NCO Education System concept approved
- 1972** USASMA established as the top school for NCOs
- 1973** Class 1 of the Sergeants Major Course begins
- 1976** First international student graduates the SMC
- 1981** Non-Resident Sergeants Major Course begins
- 1987** New USASMA campus complex is completed
- 1991** First issue of the *NCO Journal* is published
- 1995** 9-month Sergeants Major Course begins
- 2006** First international student attends the First Sergeant Course
- 2007** Structured Self-Development established
- 2009** First NCO assumes role as commandant





# MISSION: WIN THE OLYMPICS

Soldiers and NCOs compete in London's 2012 Olympic Games  
with the **World Class Athlete Program**

**BY JENNIFER MATTSON** NCO Journal

**S**ervice members have participated in the Olympics since 1896 as athletes and as coaches in both the summer and winter games. In 1997, the Army created the World Class Athlete Program with the explicit goal of competing — and winning medals — in the Olympic Games. Since its founding, 40 WCAP Soldiers have brought home gold, silver and bronze Olympic medals. ★ This summer, the Army's World Class Athlete Program will send eight NCOs to London; four of them have competed in the Olympics in previous years, and four of them stand ready to show what it means to serve in WCAP. These NCOs are charged with one task: to bring home medals. ★ After the games, these NCOs will continue to serve the Army by supporting U.S. Army Recruiting Command, hosting clinics and promoting the Army. Then, they will either serve in WCAP by training for national and international competitions, or they will return to the operational Army to serve in their military occupational specialty.



U.S. Army Soldiers compete alongside other Americans at the Olympics. They wear the Team USA gear, and when they win, they step up to the podium to hear “The Star-Spangled Banner” play. But these Soldier-athletes continually represent the Army on and off the field — through their discipline and determination.

Sgt. 1st Class Daryl Szarenski, an air pistol Olympian, will return to the Olympics for the fourth time in the shooting event. Previously, Szarenski has gone to the Olympics with the Army Marksmanship Unit, which also sends Soldiers to the Olympics. The difference, Szarenski said, is that the World Class Athlete Program’s focus is solely on the Olympics.

“Our mission is to go to the Olympics and win the Olympics,” Szarenski said. “Not everyone here will make the Olympic team, but we’re all pulling together to try to get the mission ac-

complished. We’re there to win.”

Szarenski started shooting in the sixth grade and started competing in the eighth grade. He earned a full scholarship to Tennessee Tech Rifle University after winning state and national competitions.

He was recruited by the Army Marksmanship Unit out of college to compete. After 21 years of service, Szarenski will retire from the Army after

**“This victory is our victory. Sometimes when we’re overseas, and I know I’m going to be the one on top of the podium, I love seeing the flag and love hearing our anthem being played. It feels good.”**

**— SGT. 1ST CLASS DREMIEL BYERS**

this year’s Olympics.

“I was in ROTC and had a chance to be an officer, and I turned it down in college because I wanted to be an NCO,” Szarenski said. “I wanted to be in with the troops, and I wanted to be

more in with the guys and leading and helping the guys out.”

Szarenski said representing the Army means even more when it comes to the Olympic shooting events.

“The importance of the Army competing in the Olympics, especially in shooting, is we’re showcasing,” Szarenski said. “I came in during the Cold War, and [when] you would beat the Russians and Chinese in shooting,

it was peace through sports. You look and say, ‘Those guys can shoot and those guys are competitive; let’s not poke the bear.’ The strength that I give back to the Army is when I win something that makes everyone say, ‘OK, he’s from the

Army and the rest of those guys can probably do that, too.’ It makes them realize we are on top, and we’re not slacking. And don’t test us, because we do have the strength.”

Staff Sgt. John Nunn has served

**Left:** Former U.S. Army World Class Athlete Program bobsledder Steven Holcomb glances at teammates WCAP Sgt. Justin Olsen, Curtis Tomasevicz and Steve Mesler after the quartet won the gold medal in four-man bobsled at the 2010 Winter Olympics in Whistler, British Columbia, Canada. PHOTO BY TIM HIPPS

**Previous page:** U.S. Army World Class Athlete Program racewalker Staff Sgt. John Nunn celebrates earning a berth in the London Olympic Games after winning the 2012 U.S. Olympic Team Trials in the 50 km racewalk with a time of 4 hours, 4 minutes, 41 seconds on Jan. 22 in Santee, Calif. PHOTO BY JEFF SALVAGE

in the Army and the Army Reserves for 11½ years. Originally an infantryman, he has since changed his MOS to dental hygienist with hopes to one day be an Army dentist. He will compete in the 50-kilometer racewalk event in the Olympics, an event he has only competed in three times. He won the Olympic trials for the 50 km racewalk and has competed in the 20 km racewalk in the 2004 Olympics. He puts in 100 miles a week in training, and says he supports the other WCAP athletes as they head to London later this month.

“Within the Army, everyone is striving for success and being the best that they can be in whatever the Army is asking them to do,” Nunn said. “This is a situation with the program when we make the Olympic team. It’s an honor, one, to make an Olympic team and represent your country. But for us, it’s even more of an honor because we get to represent the Army along the way. It gives you something to cheer on and be a part of something bigger than just yourself.”

### Olympian and NCO

The World Class Athlete Program has benchmarks for those hoping to compete in the Olympics. If Soldiers fail to meet those benchmarks, they are sent back to the operational Army to serve in their primary MOSs. When the program begins to recruit, usually two years before the Olympic trials, NCOs in the program are charged with setting the example for younger Soldiers. The unit, which serves under Installation and Management Command’s Morale, Welfare

U.S. Army World Class Athlete Program then-Staff Sgt. Dremiel Byers wrestles to a 1-1, 2-0 victory over Oleksandr Chernetskyi of Ukraine in their opening match of the Olympic Greco-Roman wrestling 120-kilogram tournament Aug. 14, 2008, in Beijing. PHOTO BY TIM HIPPS

and Recreation department, consists of a company with a commander and support staff.

“You’re still an NCO, and still in the absence of orders or the absence of leadership, take charge,” Szarenski said. “There’s not a squad or teams, but you’re still an NCO, and how I carry myself influences those younger guys. You have to maintain your military bearing.”

Sgt. 1st Class Dremiel Byers has served on and off with WCAP since 1997, when it was stood up at Fort Carson, Colo. Byers, who competes in Greco-Roman wrestling in the 120 kg weight group, said being professional and disciplined is a part of his training. Byers and other wrestlers also teach combative clinics for other Soldiers.

“It’s soldiering all around,” Byers said. “There’s discipline that you have to have to be a highly competitive athlete and even more discipline to be a Soldier. The two go hand in hand, and they complement each other.”

Byers said he sees bringing home

## WCAP FACTS

# 15

U.S. Soldiers will compete in the London 2012 Olympic Games

# 40

Soldier-athletes have competed in the Olympics with WCAP

# 142

Olympic medals have been won by Soldiers since 1948

# 615

U.S. Army Soldiers have participated in the Olympics as athletes or coaches



the medal on the international stage as a win for Soldiers everywhere.

“This victory is our victory,” Byers said. “Sometimes when we’re overseas, and I know I’m going to be the one on top of the podium, I love seeing the flag and love hearing our anthem being played. It feels good.”

As NCOs and competitors, many Soldiers in the program compete against one another when it comes to Army standards and tests — especially the Army Physical Fitness Test.

“The Soldiers in this program are some of the cream of the crop that the

Army has to offer,” Nunn said. “Every Soldier in this program is not working to just get the bare minimum on their PT test or the bare minimum to pass so they can get a promotion. Everyone is striving for perfection. With that, it carries over into the Army aspect of being a Soldier. We’re constantly going to competitions, working to beat each other at PT tests and who can become Soldier of the month or NCO of the quarter and who maxes their boards when they go. It provides a great asset to the Army itself as far as deploying Soldiers and giving them opportuni-

ties to train for the Olympics. But then those Soldiers are put back into regular units and are incredible assets to those units by the discipline and things that they’ve learned being part of the World Class Athlete Program.”

### Training brings home medals

Most WCAP Soldiers come into the Army with the explicit intent of serving the Army by winning Olympic medals. Most, though, say that Army training has helped them compete at the higher level by teaching them mental strength.

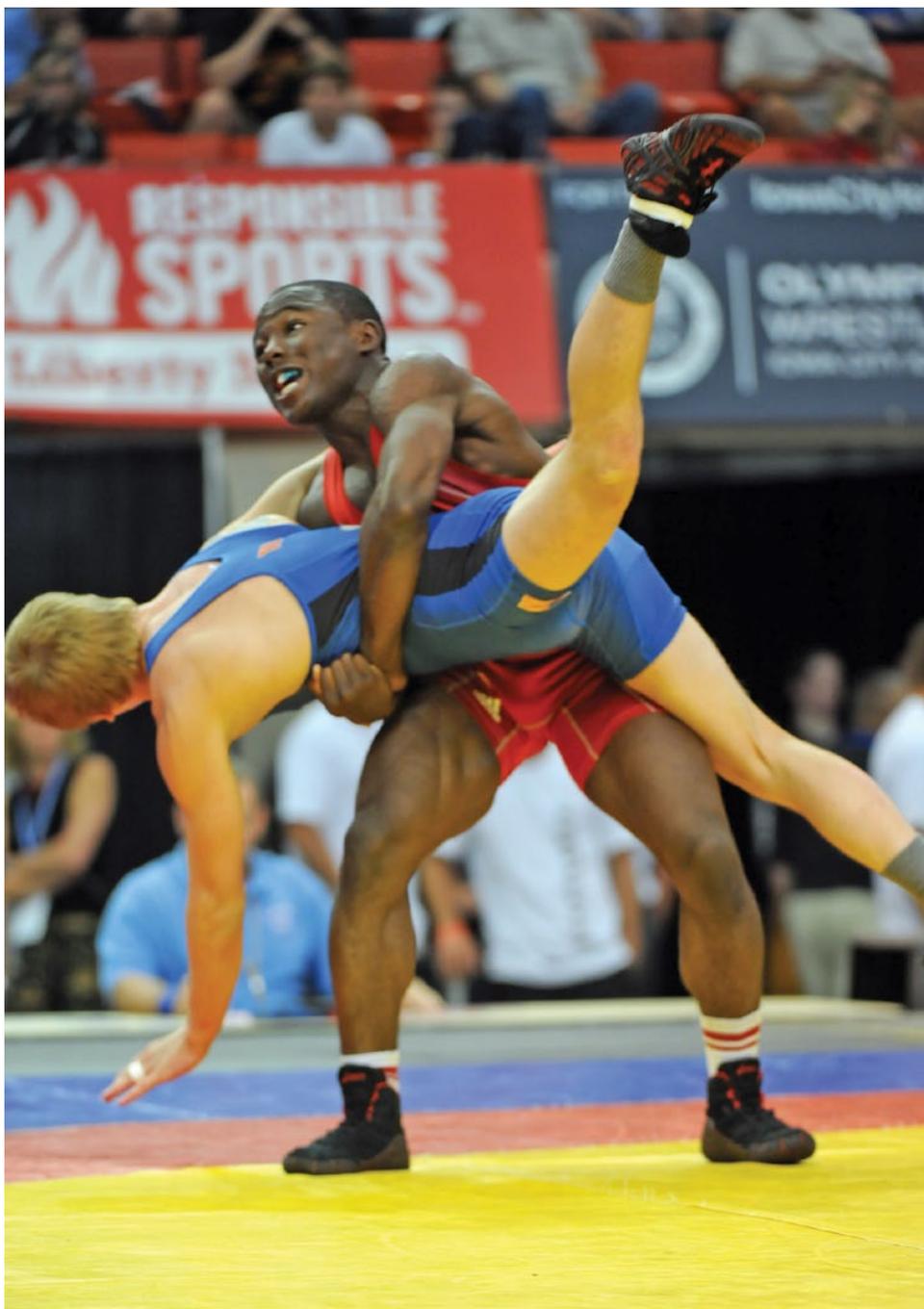
“The Army has taught me with discipline and being able to train every day,” Szarenski said. “With periodization, many people will taper down to 20 or 40 shots. With me, I’ve learned through the Army drilling and doing something over and over again until it’s second nature. Like anything you do in the Army, you do it until you can’t. It’s just second nature. The Army has taught me that if you think you have it down, you’re about halfway there and you just need to keep beating it down to the ground.”

Staff Sgt. Keith Sanderson served in the Marine Corps for eight years before joining the Army Reserve. He served for 12 years as an infantryman before he started to compete nationally in shooting events. Sanderson credits the Marines for his ability to shoot; before he joined the Marine Corps, the only thing he shot was a sling.

“WCAP is the ultimate expression of leadership by example that you can have in the Army for both physical fitness and shooting ability, which is the most fundamental skill anyone can have in the Army,” Sanderson said.

The techniques used to win gold medals at the Olympics are the same tools Soldiers use when under stress of combat, Sanderson said.

“I’m an infantryman,” Sanderson



**U.S. Army World Class Athlete Program wrestler Spc. Spenser Mango lifts Minnesota Storm’s Paul Tellgren en route to earning his third berth in the World Wrestling Championships with a victory in the 55-kilogram/121-pound Greco-Roman division of the 2011 U.S. World Team Trials on June 10, 2011, at Cox Convention Center in Oklahoma City.**

PHOTO BY TIM HIPPS



said, “Because [the Olympics is a] competition, the will to fight is very important.

“In the Olympic Games, it can get kind of stressful and the ability to deal with that stress is critical to be successful,” he said. “The things you learn to deal with stress in competition are the same ways you deal with stress in combat — it’s the same techniques.”

Nunn said his time during basic training has helped him mentally prepare for competition.

“Physically, basic training was very easy for me,” Nunn said. “I actually got out of shape going through basic training since I was training at such a higher level. Mentally, I’d never been in a situation where they break you down by being mean and angry and building you up the way they want you to be.

“After I got out of basic, it really helped with my training. I was already a decent athlete, but racewalking requires so much mentally of you.”

Nunn said basic training allowed

**U.S. Army World Class Athlete Program pistol shooter Sgt. 1st Class Daryl Szarenski practices at Fort Benning, Ga. He will compete in his fourth Olympics this year in London in the air pistol event. PHOTO BY TIM HIPPS**

him to understand the bigger picture of what he was doing and why he was there. Those lessons, he said, are important when it comes to competing on the international stage.

### **Lessons learned**

Though their primary goal is to bring home medals, Soldiers with the World Class Athlete Program also make time to give back to the Army. They support recruiting efforts in which they can tell their Army story and inspire athletes to join, and they host wrestling and shooting clinics to make Soldiers more proficient in their warrior tasks.

“People should know we’re the same,” Byers said. “We learn from everybody around us; I’m truly humbled in the presence of every Soldier.

“The people who are out there

doing it every day cast a shadow over anything that I do.”

Their mission to win the Olympics makes them unique among Army units. It also means that many of them will come in and out of the program every two or three years. When not training for the Olympics, they maintain proficiency in their primary MOSs and work within the operational Army.

“Every job you can train a Soldier to standard and hold them accountable for failure,” Byers said. “There’s a handful of jobs where you just have to have it or you don’t. How many Soldiers can you pull out of the ranks and say, ‘Go get a gold medal?’ We can be number one in the nation and bring home world medals.”

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# IN ACTION

Stories of NCOs  
**LEADING,  
TRAINING,  
MAINTAINING,  
& CARING**

**NCO**JOURNAL

# ‘Undaunted drive’ awarded

NCO is among two Green Berets to receive Distinguished Service Cross for heroic actions

**BY STAFF SGT. MARCUS BUTLER**  
U.S. Army Special Forces Command

**T**wo Green Berets from the 3rd Special Forces Group (Airborne) were awarded the Distinguished Service Cross on June 14 in a ceremony held at the John F. Kennedy Auditorium at Fort Bragg, N.C.

Staff Sgt. Corey M. Calkins and Chief Warrant Officer 2 Jason W. Myers received the U.S. Army’s second highest award for valor for two separate missions in Afghanistan in 2010. The Distinguished Service Cross is second only to the Medal of Honor.

“I am extremely honored and humbled to receive this award,” said Calkins, a senior weapons sergeant. “I was just the one called on that day, but I know any other guy on my team would have done the same thing.”

Calkins distinguished himself Feb. 18, 2010, as part of a dismounted patrol consisting of U.S. Soldiers, Marines and Afghan

National Army soldiers. During this patrol, Calkins faced a formidable enemy force in fortified positions. Calkins assaulted his way through the area, successfully suppressing the enemy force to allow the safe evacuation of three injured Marines.

“Corey Calkins constantly exposed himself to effective [rocket-propelled grenade, machine-gun] and mortar fire as he almost single-handedly routed the entrenched Taliban in order to regain the vital terrain and to save the lives of his fellow Americans and Afghan partners,” said Adm. William H. McRaven, commander of U.S. Special Operations Command.

During the ceremony, McRaven referenced the vignette of Calkins’ actions when describing the staff sergeant’s ability to rally troops to action.

“The ANA, spurred on by Sgt. Calkins’ undaunted drive towards the enemy, hurled themselves against the enemy in an apparent



effort to match their mentor's bravery and aggression," McRaven said. "Undaunted drive ... that says it all."

Only two months after Calkins' valorous actions, Myers distinguished himself March 27 along a single-lane road in the mountains of Afghanistan, where his patrol was ambushed by an enemy force of approximately 75 to 100 insurgents. During this ambush, Myers took command of the situation by directing movement, returning fire and providing medical aid, all while exposing himself to the enemy.

Also at the ceremony, Sgt. 1st Class Matthew Brown received the Bronze Star with "V" device and the Purple Heart, and Staff Sgt. Bentura Orosco received the Bronze Star with "V" device, the Army Commendation Medal with "V" device and the Purple Heart.

"You are sharing a historic moment as we recognize these incredible operators," said Col. Mark C. Schwartz, the 3rd Special Forces Group commander. "In the case of our Purple Heart recipients, they have given more of themselves than most who fought alongside them, so often of their own volition rather than from unanticipated events that occur on the battlefield."

Toward the conclusion of the ceremony, McRaven put into perspective the actions of both Myers and Calkins and what it means to be a Green Beret.

"The Green Beret isn't just a piece of headgear; it is a symbol of all that is good and right about America. It represents the finest Soldiers ever to take the battlefield. Jason Myers and Corey Calkins represent all that is good about the men who wear the Green Beret," McRaven said. "For those who witnessed the actions of Chief Jason Myers and Staff Sgt. Corey Calkins on those fateful days in Afghanistan, they will forever be in awe.

"I want to thank you again for your incredible service to the regiment, the Army and this great nation. To the men of 3rd SFG, your reputation continues to grow. Your legacy will be found not in the wars that you fought, but in the men who fought them." ❧

◀ **Staff Sgt. Corey M. Calkins of the 3rd Special Forces Group (Airborne) shakes the hand of Adm. William H. McRaven, commander of U.S. Special Operations Command, June 14 after receiving the Distinguished Service Cross.** PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. MARCUS BUTLER



## NCO receives national award for quality control

BY AMY PERRY Fort Lee

An NCO from the Petroleum and Water Department at the U.S. Army Quartermaster School at Fort Lee, Va., earned the Army's first award from the National Petroleum Management Association.

Staff Sgt. Ricardo Hamlin, the PWD Laboratory Training Division team chief, earned the Outstanding Quality Manager Award on May 30 from the national association during the Army's first year as a member.

"I didn't know I was even nominated," Hamlin said. "When I received the award, I was really humbled. I didn't think I deserved it. I was happy the Army received the recognition."

Hamlin's boss, Jose A. Hernandez, the PWD Laboratory Training Division chief, said Hamlin was selected because his efforts as the facility's quality manager were worthy of recognition.

"Staff Sgt. Hamlin is a true subject-matter expert," Hernandez said. "His expertise is demonstrated daily. ... An ever-present zest for quality made him the right choice. The qualities he embodies are hard to find."

Fort Lee keeps a reserve of fuel to be prepared if ever a nearby location needs fuel — such as bad fuel at another organization or a national disaster — and it's part of Hamlin's job to continually test the fuel for quality.

"I also test every fuel truck that comes in or out," he said. "I need to make sure our fuel stays on specification and doesn't get contaminated — that we are ready for every situation.

"I really do believe in quality, and I've seen what happens if quality isn't met," he said. "This is a behind-the-scenes job, and most don't understand this type of work. When you go on an aircraft, the passenger shouldn't have to worry about the fuel." ❧

▲ **Staff Sgt. Ricardo Hamlin discusses fuel testing with Advanced Individual Training student Pfc. Tationna Rockwood during a laboratory session. On May 30, Hamlin earned the Outstanding Quality Manager award from the National Petroleum Management Association.** PHOTO BY AMY PERRY

# Battle buddies march 100 miles for charity

BY T. ANTHONY BELL Fort Lee

Sgt. 1st Class Patrick Kelly, a cancer survivor, possesses only a fraction of the physical abilities he once had. A weakened immune system and removal of his gall bladder have slowed him down, not to mention the side-effects of a drawer-full of medicines required to keep him healthy.

But none of those obstacles stopped him from completing a four-day, 100-mile road march June 4 in support of cancer research. The M Company, 244th Quartermaster Battalion, 23rd QM Brigade, Soldier said it was a mental and physical beast of a challenge.

“In my mind, I thought it (100 miles) was a feasible number and an obtainable goal,” said the Advanced Individual Training platoon sergeant. “After day one, I thought it was going to be a lot rougher than I originally thought. Day two was worse. We pushed through day three. Coming into day four, it was all over but the crying. We just pushed through it.”

The “Road March for Cancer” began at 4 a.m. June 1. Kelly and Sgt. William Strickland, an old battle buddy from Fort Carson, Colo., each set out with 50-pound ruck sacks and marched in a circular route on the installation. The pair covered 25 miles each day and raised more than \$15,000 for the American Cancer Society.

“Everyone did their part to support the cause,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Clarence Richardson, command



sergeant major of the 244th QM Battalion, who helped to oversee operations for the event. “People in the housing areas (along the march route) were asking if we needed anything and offering their help. It’s great to see the community come together.”

Kelly was diagnosed with a rare cancer in 2010. He has since undergone chemotherapy and other treatments. While his cancer is currently in remission, Kelly said he sought to use his good fortune to help others and make a statement about resilience. ♡

▲ Sgt. 1st Class Patrick Kelly (in the black hat at far right) and Sgt. William Strickland (left of Kelly) lead Soldiers, friends and family June 4 on the last segment of a 100-mile road march at Fort Lee, Va. PHOTO BY T. ANTHONY BELL

## THIS MONTH IN NCO HISTORY

### July 18, 1863

William Harvey Carney was born a slave in Norfolk, Va., but later escaped to New Bedford, Mass., via the Underground Railroad. At the onset of the Civil War, he joined the 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry — one of the first units comprising black Soldiers and white officers — as a sergeant.

On July 18, 1863, as the 54th attempted to capture Fort Wagner at Charleston, S.C., Carney saw his color sergeant killed by enemy fire. Before the flag could touch the ground, Carney grabbed the colors and carried them to the parapet of the fort. There, he was wounded in both legs, his chest and right arm. But when the unit’s losses became too heavy and it came time to retreat, Carney insisted on carrying the colors himself as comrades led him to safety. Upon reaching a Union field hospital, still clutching the flag, he collapsed, saying, “Boys, I only did my duty. The flag never touched the ground!”

For his gallant actions, he received the Medal of Honor nearly 40 years later on May 23, 1900. Though not the first African-American to receive the medal, his actions were the earliest deemed to warrant the medal. Carney went on to work in a post office in New Bedford and frequently spoke at public events until his death in 1908. An elementary school in New Bedford was named in his honor, and an account of the 54th’s actions was told in the 1989 film *Glory*.



Carney after the war holding the flag he carried at Fort Wagner.

— COMPILED BY MICHAEL L. LEWIS

## BY EXAMPLE

# 'The basics of discipline'

Sgt. 1st Class Daniel Bush explains the importance and tough challenges of leading from the front

*Sgt. 1st Class Daniel Bush, an 11B infantryman, was in the Sinai peninsula for a mission with the Multi-national Force and Observers on Sept. 11, 2001. Since then, he has deployed to Iraq and twice to Afghanistan. He currently serves as an operations sergeant for 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, at Fort Carson, Colo.*

### Why did you join the Army?

From my youngest days of painting my face and wearing camouflage and playing Army in the backyard, I knew I wanted to serve. We talk a lot of times how a minister or pastor has a calling. I just felt I had a calling, and this is what I was supposed to do.

### How do NCOs make an impact on Soldiers?

We're always training for combat. So our interaction with our Soldiers is "Go do this, because if you don't and we do it for real, you could get killed." That level of mentorship and the reward of knowing that I've never personally lost a Soldier in combat, that is something I have more pride in than anything else.

### What is good leadership?

I was a scout squad leader from Fort Campbell, Ky., and we went out in five-man teams. We took a few improvised explosive devices dismantled. I thought, as an infantry leader, I'm supposed to go out in front. If something happens, it's going to happen to me; it's not going to happen to my guys. I set that standard and had some close calls myself, but to me, it saved my guys. Two years later, Staff Sgt. Shaun Whitehead, one of my previous Soldiers, was an infantry squad leader doing the exact same thing, and he got killed by an IED. I beat myself up over that one, because I taught him that. But then I thought about it, and that one guy gave his life to protect his Soldiers. That's what I taught him.

### What advice do you have for other NCOs?

I'd like to see more NCOs lead from the front, set the standard and enforce the standard, not pick and choose. I think we need to get back to some of the basics. We've been an Army at war for the past 11 years, we've gone away from the things I had to do when I initially came in.

### What challenges does the Army have that NCOs can help solve?

Being able to communicate with this new gen-



eration is important. And a good way to do that is to maintain our Army culture. I'm not saying we need to be antiquated, but we can't forget the traditions we have in the Army. It's just a generation gap. When I came into the Army, I was scared to death of E-7s, and I would walk the other way. Now, you'll walk into the post exchange, and an E-4 will look at you and say, "What's up, man?" I'll say, "Hey, Johnny, see this? I'm an E-7; I worked hard for it." We just need to get back to the basics of discipline, and it's going to take the whole NCO Corps time to accomplish it.

### What advice do you have for junior NCOs?

The best thing for junior NCOs to do is to immerse themselves in learning everything and anything they can — not only about their job, but the Army as a whole. I think placing an emphasis on civilian education is important to the development of all NCOs. The Army is a short part of your life. If you live to be 80, it's only 25 percent of your life.

— INTERVIEW BY JENNIFER MATTSO

▲ Sgt. 1st Class Daniel Bush demonstrates how to conduct preventive maintenance checks and services on a humvee May 2 at Fort Carson, Colo.

PHOTO BY JENNIFER MATTSO

# NCOs test the latest Army equipment

Operational Test Command NCOs ensure Soldiers get the best

BY JENNIFER MATTSON NCO Journal

When Soldiers sign for and receive equipment, many don't realize the extent to which that equipment has been tested to meet the Army's stringent standards.

"I didn't know anything about how the Army got equipment," said Sgt. 1st Class Kenneth Carbon, an Avenger Air Defense System crewmember with the U.S. Army Operational Test Command. "I thought they just went out and bought stuff. But it's this huge testing arena that ensures we get the best piece of equipment for our Soldiers."

Carbon said he is a subject-matter expert during tests the Army uses to decide whether a piece of air defense artillery equipment is ready for the battlefield.

The process to decide whether any item is ready or needs updating is overseen by the U.S. Army Test and Evaluation Command.

Command Sgt. Maj. Allen Fritzsching, the command sergeant major of ATEC, to which OTC reports, said the process of testing equipment is extensive. It starts as ATEC receives equipment and tests it within controlled environments, then tests it in combat-like scenarios.

"After it's been tested at our test ranges and by our engineers and by all our great folks, we transfer that piece of equipment to Operational Test Command," Fritzsching said. "They put it in the hands of Soldiers using various scenarios that replicate how that piece of equipment will be used by units in our Army. They get the feedback from the Soldiers, they combine that information with the information from our test centers and developmental testing, and that information goes to the Army Evaluation Center, which writes the final report for our senior leaders and decision-makers to make a decision on the fielding of that equipment."

Operational Test Command is where NCOs give the equipment to Soldiers to use it as they would on the battlefield. OTC's unique mission has NCOs conduct a variety of tests and sends them downrange to listen to Soldiers' issues with the equipment. OTC is one of the last stops a new or upgraded piece of equipment will go through before being passed to Soldiers in-theater.

NCOs who work at OTC are responsible for the final tests these systems undergo, said Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Bobb, the former command sergeant major for OTC.

"Once it gets to an operational test, it's almost ready to be fielded," Bobb said. "Once we get that piece of equipment, we'll go out and break it. We'll take it out to the environment that replicates what the piece of equipment is going to be fielded into. We'll take it through the bumps and bruises, and treat it the same way as it's designed to work. We'll give it to an actual unit that has probably deployed, and they'll take it out and use it. We'll then collect data from them and see how it operates."

Finding NCOs to fill slots at OTC is often a challenge, Bobb said. OTC needs Soldiers who have deployed and are proficient in their military occupational specialty.

◀ Sgt. 1st Class George Parrott (left), a research, development, test and evaluation NCO with the Maneuver Test Directorate, U.S. Army Operational Test Command, brings body armor to a Soldier on the fire/direction control team. The mortar platoon was participating in an operational test of the Accelerated Precision Mortar Initiative cartridge at Fort Bliss, Texas. PHOTO

COURTESY OF OPERATIONAL TEST COMMAND



► Sgt. 1st Class Kenneth Carbon (left) conducts an interview with a 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, Soldier who was participating in the operational test of the Handheld Manpack Small Form Fit radio system during a network integration exercise at Fort Bliss. PHOTO BY DENNIS MCELVEEN

“When we recruit our noncommissioned officers, we make sure that they have a combat background experience,” Bobb said. “Their background experience is very important to the testing of that piece of equipment. That NCO has more knowledge and experience to provide the best input.”

NCOs are the subject-matter experts, depending on their backgrounds, on how the equipment might be used downrange. They are also responsible for running gunnery tables and for ensuring the ranges aren’t affecting the results of the test, Bobb said.

“What we do is make sure the Army sets down a standard, and the product needs to meet that standard,” Carbon said. “We conduct the test and record it as accurately as possible. We then provide that information to the individuals who make the choices.”

Master Sgt. Jay High, a satellite microwave systems chief with OTC, said NCOs act as unbiased observers to ensure the Soldiers on the ground are getting the best equipment.

“We are the independent testers of the Army,” High said. “When the Army Test and Evaluation Command has something, we don’t care if it’s good or bad — we don’t have stock in any company.

“We just want the best product in the hands of my battle buddies who are out there — who will be using that equipment when it matters the most.”

Network Integration Exercises are a series of semi-annual tests, in which three Army commands, including ATEC and OTC, place emerging systems in the hands of Soldiers and conduct combat-like scenarios. NIEs allow the Army to save money by deploying multiple systems and observing how they work together early on in the acquisition process. Where five separate tests could cost the Army more, the Army streamlines the process by integrating the systems to save on resources, manpower and costs, Bobb said.

OTC also conducts limited-user tests, which are designed for systems and equipment that are particular to one function or MOS.

These short scenarios allow for a simple test — mostly used for systems that are already fielded but require a software update, Bobb said.

In addition, customer tests allow units to request certain equipment or upgrades from the Army. OTC NCOs will then conduct the necessary tests to ensure that equipment is up to the Army’s standard.

Master Sgt. Travis Wheat, a research, development and test NCO for the U.S. Army Evaluation Command, which falls under ATEC, said AEC conducts rapid fielding initia-



tives, which works to put the latest equipment into the warfighters’ hands as fast as possible.

“The expertise that the NCO Corps provides to ATEC provides a better product to our Soldiers,” Wheat said. “Everything we do on a daily basis is seen on the battlefield immediately. The improvements we make save lives. Every day we’re doing something that’s helping the warrior.”

OTC, as part of ATEC’s mission, deploys NCOs overseas to ensure that the equipment that was rapidly fielded is working the way it was designed to.

High recently deployed to Afghanistan with this mission and was the NCO in charge at ATEC’s forward operating site. With 14 people — NCOs, officers and a civilian

— High assisted in evaluating 35 systems over a six-month period. The team members attach to deployed units and collect assessments on the equipment in-theater. They then write the test report, which is looked at by one-, two- and three-star generals who decide whether a piece of equipment is needed or requires an upgrade.

“We take the voice of the individual Soldier all the way to the highest levels of the Army — to the decision-makers,” High said. “If we have an assessment that only needs 10 or 12 people’s input, it makes that individual Soldier’s input and voice very important.”

Though the process of testing equipment is complex and often takes about a year to learn, NCOs at ATEC and OTC say they will see their efforts when they go back to the operational Army.

“I have deployed, and I’ve seen this process work,” Carbon said. “I work to provide Soldiers for years to come with reliable and proven equipment.

“I’ll see these products again; my Soldiers will use these products later in their career.”

**“We just want the best product in the hands of my battle buddies who are out there — who will be using that equipment when it matters the most.”**

— MASTER SGT. JAY HIGH

# Continuing to serve despite injuries

NCOs overcome medical obstacles, give back to Soldiers

BY JENNIFER MATTSON NCO Journal

After three deployments and a training accident, Sgt. 1st Class Landon Ranker, an infantryman, had sustained multiple traumatic brain injuries. In 2006, he was serving in Afghanistan when an improvised explosive device detonated in front of his vehicle.

The vehicle went directly into the IED-formed crater, and it was the last straw for Ranker's multiple TBIs. He was medically evacuated and put onto the path of medical retirement. But after 17 years in the Army, Ranker said he didn't want to get out.

"I want to stay in as long as I can," Ranker said. "I want to continue to help Soldiers in some capacity and to make a difference. If I'm helping at least one Soldier every couple of days or more, I'll be happy."

Ranker learned about the Continuation on Active Duty Program. The program would allow Ranker to stay in and contribute to the Army until he could retire. He applied at the end of his medical board.

"It's given me a whole new purpose in the Army," Ranker said. "I didn't know that I would find anything that would make me happy after they told me I couldn't be an infantry guy anymore. A couple of months into the job, I realized that I could help other Soldiers who are going through similar situations."

Ranker has now been in the program for two and a half years. He serves in the Warrior Transition Unit at Fort Campbell, Ky., helping Soldiers with adaptive sports. He helps other wounded warriors learn adaptive sports and compete in them, sometimes on a national stage.

The COAD program was designed for Soldiers like Ranker who were wounded in combat and needed a couple more years of service to retire. COAD is an exception-to-policy program governed by AR 635-40, *Physical Evaluation for Retention, Retirement or Separation*, and is designed to retain skills and experience the Army needs.

It is targeted to Soldiers who are deemed by the Physical Disability Evaluation System to be unfit for duty because of a disability that is not related to misconduct or willful negligence or incurred during an unauthorized absence.

Staff Sgt. Curtis Winston, a cavalry scout, was injured in Salman Pak, Iraq, in 2008 by an IED. After applying for the COAD program, he now serves in the retention office for the 25th Infantry Division at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii.

"Everybody is supposed to have a plan if they get out. I just wasn't ready to get out," Winston said. "I enjoy the military, and there's still stuff I can do with the military even though I couldn't do my old job."

Any Soldier may apply to the COAD program, though combat-wounded and combat-related Soldiers are more often approved if they meet the medical requirements. To apply for the COAD program, a Soldier needs to submit an application with a letter from his or her commander that shows the command team supports the decision to retain the Soldier on active duty.

The COAD board reviews the application and considers the Soldier's physical limitations, ability to function within the Army, ability to function within current MOS and the Army's staffing requirements. Overall, the Soldier



▲ The Army's team competes in the May 2 wheel chair volleyball event during the Warrior Games, defeating the Air Force team 57-6. Many Soldiers who serve in the Continuation on Active Duty Program are involved in alternative sports programs at Warrior Transition Units. PHOTO BY JENNIFER MATTSON

## Fire training



▲ Cpl. William Lamm, a supply NCO with 8th Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, directs Soldiers on June 6 during an incipient fire exercise at Camp Nathan Smith, Afghanistan. Soldiers who complete the course act as first responders to fires that can occur on the camp. PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. BRYAN DOMINIQUE

must be able to work in a military environment and the disability must be stable enough that the Soldier is going to medical appointments no more than 50 percent of his or her time.

“Even though you were hurt and the military might want to retire or discharge you, if you choose to want it, you can still stay in,” Winston said. “The Army was the life for me; it was all I wanted to do. I got hurt and thought I couldn’t stay in. But the program came up, and that’s when I knew it was for me.”

The COAD program requires Soldiers to create a five-year plan, which is revisited each year to ensure the Soldier is performing according to the plan. In the COAD program, Soldiers are still subject to time-in-grade requirements; they can remain on active duty until their retention control point, retirement date or age 62, whichever comes first.

Soldiers must also re-enlist if their continuation period extends beyond their current contract. Soldiers in COAD may be denied re-enlistment if their disabilities have deteriorated or if they have new medical issues.

The COAD program allows Soldiers to give back to

### Entering the COAD program

**Any Soldier who is going through the medical board retirement or medical discharge process can go through the COAD program, but preference goes to:**

- ▶ Soldiers who have served 15 to 20 years
- ▶ Those qualified in a critical or shortage MOS
- ▶ Those who became injured or disabled as a result of combat or terrorism

other wounded warriors and to provide an example to all Soldiers, Winston said.

“Just because you’re hurt doesn’t mean you don’t have anything left to offer,” he said. “You might not be able to do your job anymore, but you can do something else if you do want to be in the military.”

“You can show other Soldiers that you can perform to a high standard, and your injuries can’t hold you back,” Winston said. ♡

# ‘Everyone learns what right looks like’

WLC small group leaders mold the next generation of NCOs

BY SGT. KATRYN TUTON  
50th Public Affairs Detachment

“Black Monday” — a day that takes place in every cycle of the Warrior Leader Course — is the second Monday of the course when the first assignments are due and the first evaluations take place. Though it may not be the longest day of the cycle, it is one of the most demanding for small group leaders — the course instructors.

Staff Sgt. Jim McKinzie, an SGL at the Fort Bragg, N.C., NCO Academy wakes up on Black Monday at 4:30 a.m. Trying to not wake up his wife, he leaves the lights off as he makes his way to the kitchen for his first cup of coffee. Once there, he uses the light from the refrigerator to add cream and sugar, and he takes a sip.

As his wife, daughter and dog continue to sleep, McKinzie quickly showers before putting on his shorts and his black SGL T-shirt. His name and rank are stitched across the chest above the crest of the academy.

He finishes the coffee and heads for his truck. Fort Bragg is still dark and quiet as he pulls into the parking

lot, and the only other cars moving are his fellow SGLs. He makes it to his office door within an hour of his alarm.

As an SGL, McKinzie works with eight Soldiers during each 18-day cycle. They are current and future NCOs whom he must train, lead and mold into the “backbone of the Army.”

Outside, the students fall out of their barracks into formation, ready to perform the Army’s Physical Readiness Training for a grade.

“A lot of these NCOs have seen PRT before. But it’s our job to teach them the standard,” McKinzie says. “Whether they’re familiar with it or not, everyone learns what right looks like.”

The eight Soldiers in his squad fall in around him to get their initial instruction.

“OK, 209 and 210; you’re up,” he says, referring to the first two Soldiers’ roster numbers.

Sgt. Andrew Fadley, number 209, an infantryman with 1st Battalion, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division, jogs away from the group, turns to face them in the position of attention and yells, “Fall in!”

During the next 50 minutes, McKinzie evaluates his squad members, focusing on the individual’s positioning, execution and attention to detail. The Soldiers lose points for calling a command incorrectly or not moving through the exercises appropriately.

“My unit just came home from deployment, so this is the first time I’ve ever seen PRT,” said Sgt. Mike Raichel, a medic with 1st Battalion, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment. “All the exercises contain dynamic stretching, which prevents injuries.”

After speaking with each graded Soldier, McKinzie releases them to the platoon formation and walks back to his office. He sits down at his computer, grading sheets next to him, and begins to enter the grades onto electronic forms.

“I’m weak at admin stuff, so I hit my addendums as quickly as I can,” he says.

He heads downstairs to shower again before changing into his Army Combat Uniform. As he leaves the building, he can see the platoon marching toward the chow hall and follows them, taking a shorter path to close the gap.



▲ Sgt. Mike Raichel, the mission squad leader, explains his planned avenue of approach to Staff Sgt. Jim McKinzie, a small group leader for the Fort Bragg, N.C., NCO Academy’s Warrior Leader Course, May 20 during a field training exercise. PHOTO BY SGT. KATRYN TUTON

► McKinzie reads an operational order to Sgt. Andrew Fadley, the squad leader for the first mission of the field training exercise, May 20 as the rest of the squad pulls security. PHOTO BY SGT. KATRYN TUTON

Inside, he sits down at a table full of SGLs. As his Soldiers get ready to leave, he cleans his tray and again follows them outside. It isn't his turn to march the platoon until dinner, so the walk back is quiet, though he hears the Soldiers calling cadence in the distance.

It is now 9 a.m., and the students have their writing tasks due, which include writing an award, an oral statement and a memorandum, and McKinzie collects eight of each. For the next three hours, McKinzie focuses on grading the pile of homework in front of him.

"It's daunting sometimes," he admits. "You have to go back over each to make sure you don't miss anything, because they all start to look the same."

After grabbing lunch from a nearby shopette, he returns to the office to eat and prepare for the next graded assignment of the day — oral presentations. Each student is given an Army-related topic to prepare a 5- to 7-minute brief on, so McKinzie brings his computer downstairs into the classroom.

The students return from lunch, and again Fadley is first in the squad to be evaluated.

"He really knew how to engage the audience," McKinzie said. "He stood out as someone who wasn't nervous to get up and speak in front of people — one of the best I've had in a while."

When the last of the class finishes their presentations, the students get a 10-minute break. At 3 p.m., they go back into the classroom for instruction. It is McKinzie's turn to teach, and the subject is one of his favorites.

"Training management — that's a good class. It's our foundation and mission, knowing how to train people," he says speaking of both SGLs specifically and Army NCOs in general. "It's what we do."

For nearly two hours, McKinzie circles the room, engaging the students on how to plan, execute and assess training for their future Soldiers.

Just after 5 p.m., McKinzie pauses the class and gives the students a break before dinner. This time, it is his turn to march the platoon, so he joins the student platoon sergeant in front of the Soldiers.

There is a high number of non-military personnel in line, causing the group to fall behind schedule. McKinzie grabs iced tea and an orange while encouraging the students to eat faster than usual. The Soldiers are marched back into the academy without a break, still a couple minutes behind schedule.

McKinzie uses the remaining two hours of classroom time to finish the training management class before releasing the students at 8 p.m. He heads upstairs to the office



to finish some last paperwork before checking on the students assigned to clean the classroom and bathroom.

"Everything looks good," he says as he makes one last walk around the room.

"Thanks, Sergeant. Have a good night," says a Soldier from another squad.

McKinzie grabs his PT clothes from the morning and heads home. It's 8:37 p.m. when he pulls his truck into the spot next to his wife's gold van.

Angela has left a plate in the microwave for him. He calls hello to his wife as he passes her to change, the food still reheating in the microwave. It is the first time he has spoken to his family all day. He sits down on the sofa with his food and tells Angela about his day.

"Good, but long. How was yours?" he asks, taking another bite. They talk until he finishes eating. But as soon as he leans back into the sofa, his eyes are closed and he starts to snore softly.

"Jim, go to bed," Angela tells him. "I'll get the plate."

He smiles at his wife of 19 years and obeys. Once in bed, he tries to read a chapter in his Bible, but can only manage half a chapter before turning off the lights and falling asleep. It's 9:17 p.m., and his alarm is already set to go off again at 4:30 a.m. tomorrow.

"I still enjoy what I do," McKinzie says later that week. "It's tiring because of the long hours, but I like the challenge it presents, and I really enjoy seeing the light bulb go on when they 'get it.'"

"Yeah, it's a hard job, but I wouldn't want to do anything else." ♡

“It's our foundation and mission, knowing how to train people. It's what we do.”

— STAFF SGT. JIM MCKINZIE

# Old Guard horses help warriors heal

Caisson Platoon program achieves results with equine therapy

BY SGT. LUISITO BROOKS

3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment (The Old Guard)

Approximately 175 wounded warriors suffering from physical wounds, traumatic brain injuries and post-traumatic stress have been treated by a unique form of therapy at Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall, Va., called the Therapeutic Riding Program.

The program uses Soldiers and horses from the U.S. Army Caisson Platoon, 3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment (The Old Guard), to provide equine-assisted therapy for wounded warriors and military veterans. Those enrolled in

Platoon Equine Assisted Program. “The facts don’t lie; this is a great program. The physical, emotional and therapeutic benefits for these wounded warriors are great as they continue in the process of their rehabilitation.”

Adam Porras, a Soldier in the Wounded Warrior Program, agrees with how beneficial the program is to service members.

“I was referred by the [traumatic brain injury] technician a while back,” Porras said. “I deal with constant headaches and dizziness on a daily basis, and since I came out here a month ago, it has helped with them. It is really relaxing and calming out here.

“I like to ride, but my favorite part is when I groom the horses. [Instructors] don’t try to push me to ride if I don’t think I can do it. They really just encourage me because I like connecting with these animals.”

Porras grew up on a small farm in Pecos, Texas, and says the benefits of being around animals are obvious to him. But he encourages others who have never tried it to give it a shot.

“This program is great for those Soldiers who want something different than usual. It’s a great atmosphere with a great staff and volunteers to help with whatever you need,” Porras said while petting one of the horses. “I like all these horses out here, but I especially like Duke.”

He said that he has been working with Duke, an all-white pure Percheron, for about a month, and there are many things to like about him.

“For one thing, he was never mean to my service dog,” who accompanies Porras and assists with his dizziness. “[Duke] is always nice and likes to be groomed. What I like most about Duke is his demeanor. He is real calm. I would say that he laughs at my jokes, but he may not get them,” he said with a laugh.

Porras said that even when he comes out to the stables with his head or back hurting, all he has to do is link up with Duke and eventually it will all go away.

“I won’t get mad anymore because he will keep me entertained when I am grooming him,” he said. “As long as they will have me, I will continue to come out here. It is my therapy.”

Pence also agrees that the program creates strong rela-



the program groom horses, conduct ground work, or ride horses.

During these once-a-week lessons, Soldiers from The Old Guard serve as horse leaders and side walkers.

“When we started this program in 2006, we did many studies on the effects of this treatment,” said retired Command Sgt. Maj. Larry Pence, co-founder of Caisson

▲ Retired Command Sgt. Maj. Larry Pence (left), co-founder of Caisson Platoon Equine Assisted Program, gives a Therapeutic Riding Program lesson May 31 to Adam Porras, a Soldier in the Wounded Warrior Program, at the Caisson Platoon barn and stable at Fort Belvoir, Va. PHOTO BY SGT.

LUISITO BROOKS

tionships between wounded warriors, Soldiers and horses in a way that can't be replicated in any hospital.

"It is both strategically and tactfully important that we have Soldiers helping Soldiers," Pence said. "It really has been one of the greatest blessings of the program."

The program is specifically tailored for the individual needs and well-being of wounded warriors. For the last six years on Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall, the program has thrived, serving 25 to 30 service members each year. In 2012, the TRP was relocated to a newly built barn and stable that sits on nearly 10 acres minutes away from the nearby Fort Belvoir Community Hospital.

"When Walter Reed Army Medical Center closed its doors, its Wounded Warrior Program was stationed [at Fort Belvoir, Va.,] and it's just really convenient for every-

one because now everything is so close," Pence said. "With all this space, the Soldiers get to enjoy bright sunshine and a peaceful setting."

Part of the effort is to get the wounded warriors from a clinical setting into a situation where they can relax and get better, Pence said.

"This is our first year on Belvoir, and I already see that we have a more complete program here," he said. "I have already had wounded warriors tell me that they can feel a calmness and serenity just simply driving up the driveway.

"It is a process and sometimes a long one. But as long as we are helping one Soldier, then it is all worth it," he said. "For me, it is a pleasure to watch the character and courage of these young men and women in this program. It is really remarkable." ♡

## 5-4-5 enhances communication

BY SPC. AMY LANE  
4th Sustainment Brigade

Good leaders understand the importance of knowing what is going on in their Soldiers' lives, and they are often looking for ways to improve communications with them.

In 2010, the 5-4-5 program was developed within the 4th Special Troops Battalion, 4th Sustainment Brigade, at Fort Hood, Texas, as an experimental means to enhance communications between Soldiers and their leaders. Capt. Mark Lee, the battalion chaplain, and Lt. Col. John Hickey, then the battalion commander, developed the program.

Lee and Hickey believed that small, informal discussion groups would help Soldiers open up more with their leaders, rather than one-on-one conversations that can seem more formal and intimidating. The 5-4-5 program is a guided conversation, with small groups participating in short, weekly discussions.

"The topics and quotes are provocative," Hickey said. "They sometimes provoke disagreement from Soldiers and that's important. I bet in every session, leaders have learned something new about their Soldiers."

Lee provides small pamphlets with thought-provoking statements or questions in five subject areas. Each subject is discussed for four to five minutes.

"The key is 20 minutes," Hickey said. "It keeps things simple and straight to the point."

Staff Sgt. Gabriel Hamilton, a platoon sergeant with

► Spc. Andrew McAllister, an ammunition stock control specialist with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 4th Special Troops Battalion, 4th Sustainment Brigade, participates in a 5-4-5 session May 15 with his NCOs, Staff Sgt. Michael Kingsland and Cpl. Ramiro Sanchez, both ammunition specialists at the unit's motor pool at Fort Hood, Texas. PHOTO BY SPC. AMY LANE

Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 4th Special Troops Battalion, 4th Sustainment Brigade, said he's found the program useful in getting to know his Soldiers, even during busy times.

"It's a good way to dialogue with your Soldiers if you don't have the opportunity during the week," he said. "It helps give you some awareness of what's going on in their lives and how they approach problems."

First Sgt. Rogelio Rodriguez, also of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 4th Special Troops Battalion, said he has found 5-4-5 benefits Soldiers because it gives NCOs the opportunity to share some knowledge and experience in an informal setting.

"Soldiers can hear you better in a casual conversation," he said. "Soldiers are more receptive and they learn more when you talk *with* them instead of *at* them."

Lee said his program is functional in deployed environments as well as in-garrison.

"As we share our own story, we find the greatest resource we have is each other," Lee said. ♡



# Flight medics getting smarter

Program will teach more paramedic and critical-care skills

BY SGT. 1ST CLASS JON SOUCY  
National Guard Bureau

**M**edics from the Army National Guard are among those taking part in a pilot program designed to revamp the training that flight medics throughout the Army will receive.

Taught at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, the program will provide flight medics with additional paramedic and critical-care training and certifications.

“A paramedic provides a higher level of care,” said Master Sgt. Kym Ricketts, chief medical NCO with the Army National Guard. “It’s advanced, pre-hospital medical care.”

Currently, to be a flight medic, a Soldier must be a qualified combat medic and be in a flight medic slot. But because flight medics operate under different conditions, those requirements are changing.

“The medics need additional training as flight medics as they do a higher standard of care and in a different envi-

ronment than a line medic on the ground,” Ricketts said.

The program is designed to emphasize that fact and focus on training Soldiers on those additional skills needed as flight medics.

As part of the pilot program and proposed changes, Soldiers go through three phases of training specific to flight medic duty.

“The first one is the flight medic phase,” Ricketts said, adding that it can be waived in lieu of on-the-job training. “Phase two is the nationally registered paramedic [course], which is the longest phase. And phase three is the critical-care transport piece.”

The push for making changes to flight medic requirements came from a number of elements, including a study done on a California Army National Guard medical evacuation unit that deployed to Afghanistan with full-fledged paramedics in flight medic positions.

The study found that with “flight paramedics in the back of an aircraft, there was a 66 percent higher survivability rate than with a straight [combat medic] that wasn’t paramedic trained,” Ricketts said.

Additionally, proposed changes to the flight medic requirements also mean that graduates of the program receive national certifications as paramedics. That provides additional benefits including a greater flexibility integrating with local, state and other agencies in a disaster situation, she said.

“A citizen-Soldier can do their wartime mission as well as their peacetime mission of taking care of their community,” Ricketts said, adding that those certifications are the same received by civilian paramedics.

But the important part, she said, is simply providing the best care possible.

“The benefit is the best battlefield medicine and care that a Soldier can get,” she said.

“With the forward surgical teams that are out there, casualties are actually having surgical intervention on the ground at the point of injury,” Ricketts said.

“Combined with these medics that are able to have this training ... the [casualty] will be getting the best standard of care.”



▲ Sgt. Cliff Aughe, a flight medic with C Company, 1st Battalion, 171st Aviation Regiment, New Mexico Army National Guard, watches over an Afghan soldier during a medevac flight in March. PHOTO BY SGT. DANIEL SCHROEDER

# Roll Call

## OF THE FALLEN

### *Operation Enduring Freedom*

FINAL SALUTES

**CAPT. JOHN R. BRAINARD, 26**  
*Dover-Foxcroft, Maine, May 28, 2012*

**SPC. GERARDO CAMPOS, 23**  
*Miami, Fla., June 2, 2012*

**PFC. LEROY DERONDE III, 22**  
*Jersey City, N.J., May 27, 2012*

**PFC. VINCENT J. ELLIS, 22**  
*Tokyo, Japan, June 4, 2012*

**1ST LT. MATTHEW G. FAZZARI, 25**  
*Walla Walla, Wash., June 6, 2012*

**SPC. ARRONN D. FIELDS, 27**  
*Terre Haute, Ind., May 21, 2012*

**PFC. BRANDON D. GOODINE, 20**  
*Luthersville, Ga., June 7, 2012*

**SPC. ALEX HERNANDEZ III, 21**  
*Round Rock, Texas, May 12, 2012*

**SPC. VILMAR GALARZA HERNANDEZ, 21**  
*Salinas, Calif., May 26, 2012*

**PFC. KEDITH L. JACOBS, 21**  
*Denver, Colo., May 27, 2012*

**SGT. MICHAEL J. KNAPP, 28**  
*Overland Park, Kan., May 18, 2012*

**SGT. JABRAUN S. KNOX, 23**  
*Fort Wayne, Ind., May 18, 2012*

**STAFF SGT. ROBERTO LOEZA, 28**  
*El Paso, Texas, May 25, 2012*

**PFC. RICHARD L. McNULTY III, 22**  
*Rolla, Mo., May 13, 2012*

**PFC. CALE C. MILLER, 23**  
*Overland Park, Kan., May 24, 2012*

**2ND LT. TRAVIS A. MORGANDO, 25**  
*San Jose, Calif., May 23, 2012*

**STAFF SGT. ISRAEL P. NUANES, 38**  
*Las Cruces, N.M., May 12, 2012*

**CPL. NICHOLAS H. OLIVAS, 20**  
*Fairfield, Ohio., May 28, 2012*

**CAPT. SCOTT P. PACE, 33**  
*Brawley, Calif., June 6, 2012*

**STAFF SGT. ALEXANDER G. POVILAITIS, 47**  
*Dawsonville, Ga., May 31, 2012*

**CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 5**  
**JOHN C. PRATT, 51**  
*Springfield, Va., May 28, 2012*

**SPC. TOFIGA J. TAUTOLO, 23**  
*Wilmington, Calif., May 27, 2012*

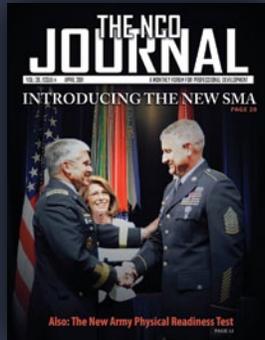
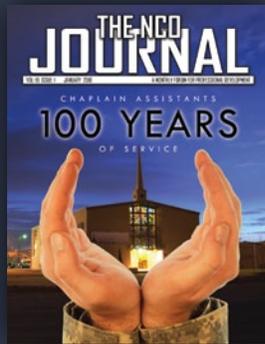
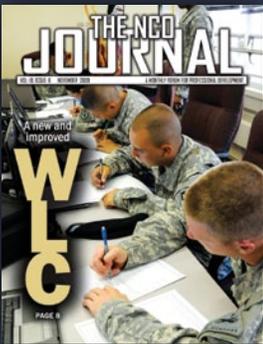
**1ST LT. ALEJO R. THOMPSON, 30**  
*Yuma, Ariz., May 12, 2012*

**SGT. BRIAN L. WALKER, 25**  
*Lucerne Valley, Calif., May 13, 2012*

**SPC. SAMUEL T. WATTS, 20**  
*Wheaton, Ill., May 19, 2012*

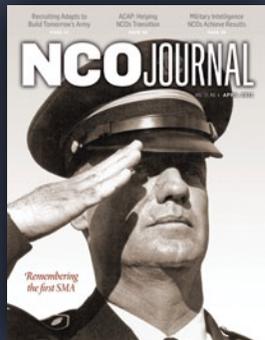
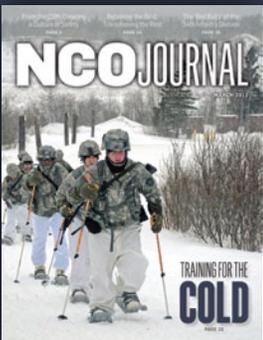
## YOU ARE NOT FORGOTTEN

*This is a continuation of a list that began in the October 2003 issue of The NCO Journal and contains names released by the Department of Defense between May 12, 2012 and June 12, 2012.*



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