

CONNECTION

NEWSLETTER

MEDIATING CRISIS

Capt Evgenia Peduzzi tells her story of taking LEAP training into Syria for Russia/US coordination pg 7

#LRECYOURSELF

AFCLC hosts LREC Symposium at Air University pg 4

FROM FIELD GUIDES TO FOREIGN SOIL

This issue is packed with our newest products in culture education and language training



CONTENTS



ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

6 SPCs
LEAP's Special Project Course
Spotlight: Romanian

10 FROM THE BENCH
LEAP selects members from its bench to attend international academy in South American partnership

ABOUT THE COVER - DESIGN BY LUKE EASLEY

Master Sgt. Erick Lizarraga, 18th Civil Engineer Squadron structural maintenance craftsman, Kadena, entertains students in Quang Ngai Province, Vietnam during an engineering project on March 25, 2015. (US Air Force Photo by Staff Sgt Tong Duong)

UPCOMING DATES

- **LEAP Application Deadline:** 1 Aug. 2016
- **LEAP Fall Board Convenes:** 14- 15 Sept. 2016
- **CCAF Course Enrollment:** See page 6

FROM THE DIRECTOR

COL HOWARD WARD



Greetings from Maxwell, home of the Air Force Culture and Language Center and one of the most important airpower-enabling missions in our Air Force. Wait a minute...did he just call culture and language training "operational?" Yes he did; definitively, culture and language training represents a strategic investment in the application of airpower that can secure the future of our nation, our allies, and our valued partners.

One way that culture and language training enables the application of airpower is through enhanced interoperability. Typically, the Air Force applies airpower as part of an allied or coalition action but doing it successfully doesn't just magically happen. A successful operation where US and international air force crews are working together requires lots of

training, preparation, exercises, and above all mutual trust and respect for the capability of the entire team. This can be incredibly difficult when partners can't communicate. It can be nearly impossible when teammates don't understand each other's beliefs, values, and customs.

Thanks to the great work of the entire LREC community, and with an inventory of expertise in 92 languages, our experts can quickly communicate and build relationships of trust to apply airpower in any situation.

Another way that culture and language training enables the application of airpower is helping overcome access challenges. Not every theater is like the one we've experienced for the last two decades where we've been able to operate from secure bases and use

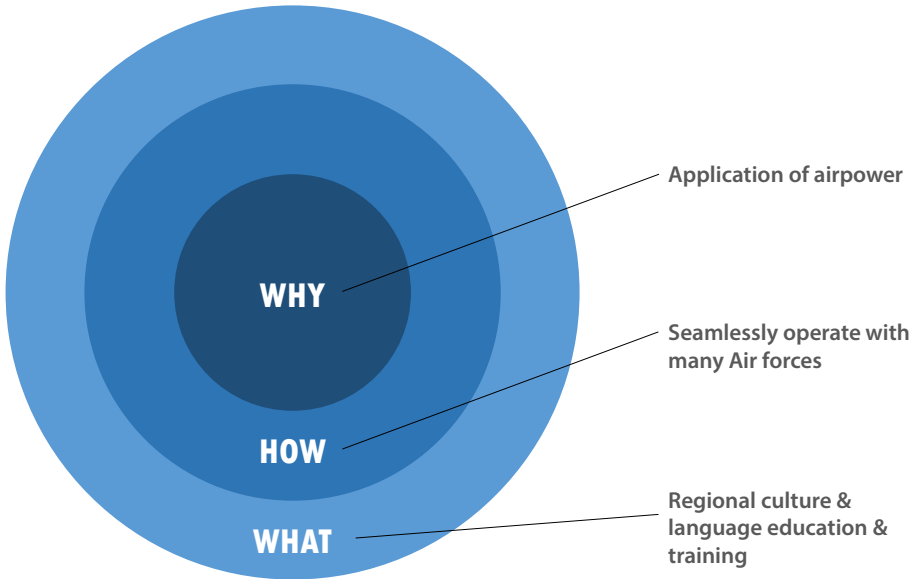
short range assets effectively. Many potential adversaries are now creating access challenges through military capability and also with political agreements to deny an effective supply chain, bases for air refueling, and secure runways.

Understanding culture can make an invaluable contribution in forging relationships built on respect. A partner nation is more likely to align with a nation that respects their sovereignty, way of life, and can communicate on their terms than a nation that demands conformity with their own values and culture.

In a very real and tangible way, the AFCLC is growing airpower leaders that can operate with many air forces around the globe.

I urge commanders to fully support their Airmen of all ranks who have language skills when they express a desire to enter the LEAP program. The investment in time will be well worth it when an operation with our international partners succeeds thanks to the relationships and interoperability that result from culture and language expertise. Culture and language...essential and operational!

- Col Howard Ward



CULTURAL KNOWLEDGE AT YOUR FINGERTIPS!

Access all of the AFCLC's culture general and specific expeditionary field guides in our mobile app.

Now available: *United Arab Emirates*



Learn more at culture.af.mil



AFCLC HOSTS FIRST LREC SYMPOSIUM AT AIR UNIVERSITY

STORY AND PHOTOS BY SETH MAGGARD, AFCLC

Military cross-cultural excellence congregated under a single roof on April 22nd. Local service members and civilians were in attendance at the Air University's first annual Language, Regional Expertise, and Culture Symposium hosted by the Air Force Culture and Language Center.

The AFCLC coordinated the event with Defense Language Institute instructors from Professional Military Education schools here. The event was created to give the Maxwell/Gunter community a chance to present original research, share experiences, and establish connections with like-minded interest communities. Participants with knowledge and first-hand experiences in various countries presented a multitude of topics as they lectured, listened, and discussed important global military roles.

The day's activities began with opening comments from MGen. Timothy Leahey, commander of the Curtis E. LeMay Center for Doctrine Development and Education, and a keynote speech from Dr. Mark

Conversino, professor of military strategy at the School of Advanced Air and Space Studies. "Handling Germany's Refugee Crisis," "Culture, Traditions, and Beliefs in Japan," and "What Does Religion Have to Do with Boko Haram?" were just a few of the topics covered in discussion panels, presentations, and roundtable conversations throughout the event.

Events like the LREC Symposium are opportunities for individuals of all levels of culture knowledgeability

to gain familiarity and awareness about relevant topics of global societies.

The AFCLC's mission responds to a growing focus and requests for cross-culturally competent Airmen to be present worldwide with an understanding of the history, language, and social mannerisms of any country at any time. Dr. Patricia Fogarty, the symposium's co-coordinator, said "I am thankful to see all of these supporters that came to enhance their mission readiness



Opening Remarks at Air University



Dr. Suzy Steen, AFCLC presents a topic at the LREC Symposium

by developing their cultural understanding. This is all possible through Air University's support, and I look forward to expanding this event in future years."

The environment was extremely productive and respectful as attendees were allowed time to relax and share a common interest in national beliefs. Officers and enlisted personnel from each branch of the US and international forces took time from their studies at the Air War College in order to provide input and gain insight on regional issues.

"I think that this was [a] great time to get people together that truly cared about African events," said Group Captain Kelvin Aneke, a Nigerian Air Force student at the Air War College. "Often times, it is hard to connect and be concerned with what is going on over there, and this helped do that."

This is the first event of this nature

hosted by the AFCLC staff and many more are expected following the positive turnout. The primary focus was to create an opportunity for service members to network with other culturally competent individuals from around Air University, as well as the center's far-reaching programs, such as the Language Enabled Airman Program. Several LEAP participants were able to attend, share, and even present their international experiences.

One LEAP participant, Maj Shai Tziony remarked, "There are a great deal of educational opportunities provided by the AFCLC. This symposium is a cornerstone of cultural communication and a great opportunity to showcase what we do to like-minded individuals."

"Often times, it is hard to connect and be concerned with what is going on over there, and this helped do that."

The AFCLC plans to continue its mission in culture education and readiness by offering events and programs that highlight this in an active calendar.

"I believe that each of us has a diverse background of international experiences and understanding," remarked Dr. Sandra Schoder, a DLI instructor at the Air Command and Staff College and co-coordinator of the symposium.

"The only way to truly connect and share this knowledge is with events like this. I'm glad that this is now available in addition to the many other ways we support LREC education and training at Maxwell and for the Air Force."

SPECIAL PROJECT COURSE

eMentor Program

Spotlight: Romanian

by SrA Adrean McMillion, AFCLC

Unique language training opportunities are just one way that participants of the AFCLC's Language Enabled Airman Program are strengthening their multi-faceted knowledge of cultures and language.

Lt Col Scott Morgan, Commander of the 12th Combat Training Squadron at Fort Irwin, California, and TSgt Alexander Nastas, the NCO in charge of Combat Arms at Schriever AFB, chose topics relative to Romanian current affairs as part of their Special Project Courses through LEAP's synchronous online language program, eMentor. As part of eMentor, participants with higher-level language proficiencies who successfully complete a 16-hour Advanced Assessment course, such as Lt Col Morgan and TSgt Nastas, are eligible to undertake LEAP's self-directed SPCs, where they choose relevant cultural, military, political, or security topics and over the course of four months research and develop a thesis. At the conclusion of the SPC, participants deliver a live presentation of their research through the eMentor Virtual School online platform.

Lt Col Morgan chose the topic "Russia, Ukraine, and European Security," while TSgt Nastas chose "Romanian Police Training."

Lt Col Morgan, a former Romanian Olmsted scholar noted, "This special

project class was helpful in regaining currency in foundational aspects of Romanian culture and politics, something that certainly has degraded slowly over time since I moved away from Bucharest."

"I chose my subject because I was interested in the current state of Romanian law enforcement, and I wanted to compare and contrast their policies versus my experience in the Air Force," Nastas remarked.

Raluca Negrisanu, their Romania eMentor instructor, believes that the SPCs offer LEAP participants a unique opportunity to develop and enhance their linguistic and cultural knowledge without spending hours in a classroom.

"Lt Col Morgan has been able to refine and enrich his vocabulary from the politics, social relations and economic domains and his writing became more and more analytical during the course of the class," she said of her students. "TSgt Nastas has also benefited greatly from this class, where he was able to research best practices in a successful police training in Romania and thus to expand and deepen his knowledge on this subject."

The Air Force saves both training dollars and hours and the participants grow both personally and professionally. LEAP's SPCs are a win-win for all—the USAF benefits from a language-enabled force ready and able to further its building partnerships mission and LEAP participants are able to grow into competent, fully trained International Airmen.

"Maintaining an appreciation and knowledge of a partner's perspective—something which takes constant maintenance—is the ticket to get in the door. Lasting and meaningful partnerships can only be built on such a foundation," Morgan remarked.



Upcoming Course Dates

The Air Force Culture and Language Center offers two online courses that provide college credit through the Community College of the Air Force (CCAF). These courses are currently only available to enlisted members of the US Armed Forces.

Introduction to Culture

Enrollment Window:
20 Sept. - 3 Oct. 2016

Class Dates:
13 Oct. 2016 - 18 Jan. 2017

Introduction to Cross - Cultural Communication

Enrollment Window:
18 Oct. - 31 Oct. 2016

Class Dates:
10 Nov. 2016 - 15 Feb. 2017

If you'd like to receive updates, links, and room passwords to view future SPC presentations, please contact AFCLC Outreach at:

afclc.outreach@us.af.mil

MEDIATING CRISIS

A LEAP experience

by Capt Evgenia Peduzzi

Over the last decade, the dynamic and multicultural nature of combat operations demonstrated a critical Air Force need to develop Airmen who not only know their job, but are culturally aware and language capable. The Air Force Culture and Language Center stood up the Language Enabled Airman Program to advance this cause, and today this program “sustains, enhances and utilizes the existing language skills and talents of Airmen” across the total force.

From its inception, LEAP presented a multitude of success stories in which language integration yielded overwhelmingly positive results in Air Force operations.

One of such recent stories began in November 2015, when LEAP empowered commanders to immediately identify and direct language capable Airmen to support a historical operational mission in a one of a kind exchange between the United States and the Russian Federation. In September 2015, Russian Federation Air Forces arrived in Syrian airspace per the request of the Syrian regime.

As the Russians entered Syrian airspace, the Coalition had already conducted a successful air campaign against Islamic State of Iraq and Syria for a year. From an airspace deconfliction aspect, the presence of Russian Air Forces presented a new challenge for safety of flight:

neither of the sides shared any operational information, coordinated strikes, or spoke the same language.

To lessen the chances of a mid-air collision or a dangerous misunderstanding, the United States Department of Defense and the Russian Ministry of Defense signed the Memorandum of Understanding in October 2015, establishing safety procedures for aircraft flying over Syria. This was the first military to military engagement between the United States and the Russian Federation since 1998. As a key provision of the MoU, a hotline linked the command centers of both the Coalition and the Russian forces.

This hotline allowed for real-time operational communication between the respective senior commanders, allowing for the first time to pass advanced warning of impending operations and establishing a safer operational environment for both sides.

With the establishment of this hotline, the Combined Air Operations Center now required immediate Russian language support. Thanks to the LEAP resources and the career fields of Russian Linguist and Cultural Advisor, a team of Russian interpreters was assembled to create the first-ever Air Force Central Command Russia Analysis Division. Led by myself, LEAP Capt Evgenia Peduzzi, the RAD served as liaisons to daily high level real-time negotiations between Coalition leadership and Russian general officers in Syria. In November 2015, I personally assisted CAOC commanders in negotiations to ease tension between Russia and the Coalition directly after a Russian aircraft was shot down.

The capability provided by LEAP, along with the work accomplished by the Russia Analysis Division was recognized by commanders and leaders across the Air Force.

Both the Combined Forces Air Component Commander Lt. Gen. Charles Brown, and the Deputy Combined Forces Air Component Commander, Major Gen Scott Zobrist

recognized the team and stressed the significance of the cultural perspective RAD brought to the fight. Also, when speaking with the Russian Analysis Division, the Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force James Cody emphasized the importance of developing language capable Airmen within the Air Force.

He stressed the criticality of quickly identifying and directing these Airmen into an ad-hoc vital mission such as that of the Russia Analysis Division. “The expertise you provided directly impacted and drove the de-escalation process during such a historical time”, said Cody.

Language support provided by LEAP for this integral mission resulted in a pivotal strategic military engagement, bolstering Coalition theater security in Syria. This situation highlighted the importance of



Capt Evgenia Peduzzi (right)

having language capable Airman on hand from across the Air Force who can forward deploy on short notice and support commanders facing similar challenges.

It also showed that investing in the development and sustainment of language in the Air Force is no longer just optional, but has become a necessity.



MEET OUR NEW PROFESSOR:

Dr. Scott M. Edmondson, Assistant Professor of Regional and Cultural Studies (Africa)

Dr. Edmondson holds a Ph.D. in Culture and Performance from the University of California, Los Angeles, with over five years of teaching experience in both university (UCLA, Univ. of Michigan) and military settings. Dr. Edmondson has conducted ethnographic field research in West Africa on popular media production and religious praxis, and has worked as a sociocultural intelligence analyst for the 4th Military Information Support Group and USAFRICOM. His teaching and research interests include: African religious, media, and security studies; cross-cultural competence; historiography and ethnography; semiotics and narrative analysis; cultural heritage protection in conflict; and youth cultures, social media, and radicalization.

Dr. Edmondson recently returned from field research in West Africa, to support the development of his course offerings and AFCLC's immersive language programs. He also met with US Country Team and Host Nation partners regarding cultural heritage protection efforts and potential research collaborations in the region.

ACCULTURATION CULTIVATION

General officers prep for Mid East assignments at the AFCLC

by Seth Maggard, AFCLC

Expeditionary culture training for members of any rank is a paramount focus of the Air Force Culture and Language Center. That vision is only accomplished with full accountability of premier learning opportunities for all Airmen, including general officers. The AFCLC ensured that vision with its 2016 schedule of General Officer Pre-deployment Acculturation Courses.

These courses are designed to provide individualized culture education to senior officers and detailed preparation in language, cultural attitudes, and current events. The center's staff make it a point to highlight these service members' specific needs in country and provide applicable instruction so that their skills are relevant from the moment of arrival.

"There is a great deal of training to be

completed before deploying anywhere," said Col. Charles Corcoran after his April graduation, "but this is one opportunity that stands out. Every graduate that I have spoken to made sure to tell me not to miss this course and its amazing training." Col. Corcoran attended GOPAC en route to the United Arab Emirates.

Several cultural experts are involved in training each GOPAC student through rigorous hours of culturally focused coursework. The officers were introduced to language courses and regional analysis from the first day and led to increasingly more advanced topics as the course progressed. The cumulative event of the course, the Key Leader Engagement, places participants in a room with a native of their future destination, as they negotiate important decisions and enact social mannerisms.

The event also presents the challenge of dealing with ambience, interruptions, and other concerns during their assessment. It is a real-time



assessment of the acculturation that they received here.

"The training was a perfect mixture of subject matter and professionally delivered lessons that constantly built on my confidence," said Brig Gen David Hicks, a recent graduate of the course.



FROM THE BENCH

Selection board sends LEAP participants to international academies

by Seth Maggard and Rebecca McKenzie, AFCLC

Retired Brig. Gen. Gunther Mueller, Lt. Col. Steven Combs, Executive Assistant with Secretary of the Air Force for Manpower and Reserve, Lt. Col. Mark Holmes, Vice Commander of the Career Development Academy, and Maj. Wilfredo Ruiz, Director of Operations for 437th TRS Inter American Air Forces Academy, formed a board in support of the Air Force Culture and Language Center's Language Enabled Airmen Program on April 14th.

This board convened to designate 10 of the best Spanish-speaking LEAP captain and technical sergeant applicants to attend the Inter-American Squadron Officer School and Inter-America Noncommissioned Officer Academy in Bogota, Colombia.

In each location, these select participants will be afforded the opportunity to hone their language proficiency and cultural skills through interacting with military officers and NCOs from Latin America while

also receiving professional military education.

The chosen officers and NCOs represent a bench of participants who had previously been selected into LEAP and provided structured language, regional expertise and culture, or LREC, education as part of the program's requirements.

ISOS and INCOA curriculum focuses on inter-Americanism, leadership, language, and cultural immersion as Airmen serve as ambassadors and gain tools for future engagements.

"Utilizing LEAP Airmen to fill these positions is a benefit for everyone involved," said Ruiz, "This program enhances the proficiency and credibility of the AFCLC, Air University, and the Air Force mission."

The rigor of LEAP is designed to increase competence in LREC skills before sending Airmen to international programs such as ISOS and INCOA,

global Language Designated Positions and other language-required missions worldwide. The LEAP training provided to these seven ISOS and three INCOA selectees prepared them with the Spanish language and cultural skills required of this experience.

LEAP supports the USAFs global building partnerships mission by ensuring the highest quality of participants come from its enabled bench. This international PME opportunity with host nation counterparts is one of many methods the AFCLC is putting into place to create venues for its LEAP participants to help build these global partnerships.



Holmes remarked, "Choosing our Air Force's most qualified candidates to represent our nation outside its borders is an extremely important job. I was honored to be asked to help do this."



LEAP PARTICIPANTS EARN GERMAN AWARD WITH AIR UNIVERSITY STAFF, STUDENTS

STORY AND PHOTOS BY SETH MAGGARD, AFCLC

Groans, cries of physical exertion and shouts of encouragement in both English and German echoed off the walls of the Maxwell AFB gym; sweat pouring over the faces of service members.

The sufferers were Army, Navy,

and Air Force students from Air Command and Staff College as they agonized with one goal in mind: to pin on the German Armed Forces Proficiency Badge to their uniforms.

Nothing says partnership quite like earning another nation's

prestigious armed forces badge. That is what these members from organizations such as the Language Enabled Airman Program, ACSC, and Defense Language Institute did as part of their cultural and language-building capabilities April 27 – May 4, 2016.

"It doesn't get any better than this," said Maj. Michael Loy, a student at ACSC, after diving in to an algae-filled pool at the Prattville, Alabama, YMCA for his swim test. "What a great way to test yourself and build on our experiences in this course."

The service members wore Army black, Navy gold, and Air Force blue PT gear onto the track, into the pool, and through the pistol firing range in order to test their mettle against German Bundeswehr standards and a chance to wear the badge in uniform.

The events began with a timed shuttle run and quickly moved into flexed arm hang, 1000 meter sprint, uniformed swim, 12 kilometer ruck march, and pistol firing qualifications. The students were evaluated by a German liaison officer and awarded based on their performance.

"For Germans who see an American wearing the badge, it provides an instant level of credibility for building instant relationships between armed forces," said Maj. Ross Dotzlaf, an Army officer attending ACSC.

Maj. George Chapman and Maj. John Casey, German speaking LEAP members attending ACSC, are no strangers to international relationships and jumped at the opportunity to become even more immersed in German culture. Their contributions to the Air Force's global mission are rooted in their ability to seek out partnership opportunities, as described in numerous government publications.

Chapman noted, "Shared experiences build bridges, and my German culture experiences here have a deeper meaning to me as an American military member."

One such mantra is stated in The Need for Cross Cultural Competence, a publication on

"...it provides an instant level of credibility,"

cultural education in the military, as it "value[s] how officers who build their cross-cultural competence are more successful making decisions and working operationally with individuals from other cultures."

The GAFPB's inception into American doctrine was created with this goal in mind. The participation by both organizations creates an opportunity to bond over hardship for the common goal of respectful competition.

Casey remarked, "To come out here and exercise as a single team with German soldiers caps off my experiences with my classmates that has included a lot of cultural training in both Germany and back here at ACSC has been a great opportunity, and I'm excited to build on these experiences in the future."

"This is a fantastic turnout from a joint group of service members that are reaching out to connect with German services and build relationships," said Lt. Col. Bernd Claus, a German liaison officer at Fort Rucker, Alabama. "I did this as a young soldier in Germany, and this is a great expression and continuation of all of the hard work

that German soldiers do in order to wear this badge."

This badge represents a great addition to the uniform and career of these service members as well as provided them with a fantastic opportunity for complete immersion into both language and culture.

Gold and silver badges were pinned onto the qualifying members' uniforms in an official ceremony held by the German liaison officers. The service members are allowed to wear the badges on their American uniform as a symbol of their partnership with German military culture.

Chapman remarked after receiving his medal, "These shared common bonds build bridges and bring communities closer together. This is one way we can become cross-culturally competent Airmen!"





Connecting Cultures. Enabling Airmen.

CONNECT WITH US



Air ForceCulture and Language Center



@AFCLC



culture.af.mil

551 E. Maxwell Blvd. | Maxwell AFB, AL 36112