

**780th MILITARY INTELLIGENCE BRIGADE (CYBER)**

# THE BYTE

**Vol. 10, Issue 4**



**NONCOMMISSIONED OFFICERS:**

Enlisted Leaders and the Profession of Arms





## Creed of the Noncommissioned Officer

No one is more professional than I. I am a noncommissioned officer, a leader of Soldiers. As a noncommissioned officer, I realize that I am a member of a time honored corps, which is known as "The Backbone of the Army". I am proud of the Corps of noncommissioned officers and will at all times conduct myself so as to bring credit upon the Corps, the military service and my country regardless of the situation in which I find myself. I will not use my grade or position to attain pleasure, profit, or personal safety.



Competence is my watchword. My two basic responsibilities will always be uppermost in my mind—accomplishment of my mission and the welfare of my Soldiers. I will strive to remain technically and tactically proficient. I am aware of my role as a noncommissioned officer. I will fulfill my responsibilities inherent in that role. All Soldiers are entitled to outstanding leadership; I will provide that leadership. I know my Soldiers and I will always place their needs above my own. I will communicate consistently with my Soldiers and never leave them uninformed. I will be fair and impartial when recommending both rewards and punishment.



Officers of my unit will have maximum time to accomplish their duties; they will not have to accomplish mine. I will earn their respect and confidence as well as that of my Soldiers. I will be loyal to those with whom I serve; seniors, peers, and subordinates alike. I will exercise initiative by taking appropriate action in the absence of orders. I will not compromise my integrity, nor my moral courage. I will not forget, nor will I allow my comrades to forget that we are professionals, non-commissioned officers, leaders!





# Reflections of the Spirit

By CSM Ronald Krause, 780th Military Intelligence Brigade (Cyber)



**T**HE NONCOMMISSIONED OFFICER CORPS is the embodiment of our culture, our diversity, our strengths, and our weaknesses. Each year we evolve a bit more with the advancement of our training and technology, as well as the changing of our leaders and our nation. We continue to develop professionally as we grow technically and tactically. We are more educated and better trained than we have ever been; yet the core concept of success relies on the relationships and trust we have in each other, the people.

Over the last two and a half years I have been blessed to work with and watch our organization as it continues to advance in a time of extreme isolation. The pandemic has created several significant and unforeseen challenges, as our adversaries continue to ramp up capabilities and aggression. Yet, every time I am amazed at the resiliency and tenacity of our Soldiers, Civilians, and Families as they overcome great odds to take care of each other and the mission at hand.

Each success and failure comes at a cost in our efforts to serve the people. Learning from our mistakes and building upon our success is paramount to positive progress. None of this, however, can be accomplished if we do not look after ourselves and each other in a holistic fashion. Building cohesive teams, supporting each other, and understanding each other allows us to

better integrate work and life into a more cohesive environment.

For me, I strongly believe that the key to our holistic health and fitness comes from a spiritual connection, building upon a realization of why we are here and what we are for. The fundamental strength in our being, as we face challenges time and again, is the belief in our connection to something greater and investment into that purpose. Though this is an individual, or internal, realization it is critical to our personal health. This spiritual connection becomes your personal armor and self defense.

Many of us suffer alone, for too long. Often, losing sight of who and what we are. Losing connection to our Family, our team, and the key spiritual link, such that our armor falls into disrepair. In these times we must remember that though this internal struggle seems like a battle only we can fight... It is our Family and friends who help us rebuild and maintain our armor and fighting skills and aid us during our weakest moments, enabling us to fight and overcome the darkest and hardest challenges.

We are brothers and sisters in arms, and capable of fighting on many battle fronts together, as a team, a squad. So, during the battles you face in the darkest hours, when your armor is dented and your strength is failing, you should once again look to your left and right to reach out for your battle buddies, just as they will for you. Remember, we each face our own demons, but we do not have to do it alone. We find strength in our spiritual connection, enhancing our personal armor allowing us to fight our demons, but we reinforce that with the army we call forth in our friends and family, our brothers and sisters in arms.

We, the people, are ourselves the key to success and a better life. The spiritual purpose and motivation is a lynchpin in guiding and protecting us. To continue our success from small teams to large ones, I challenge those that read this to reflect on

you and your spiritual connection, reflect on how you ask for help and help others. Then, it is up to us to develop ourselves and others so that our armor and strength in others are as stalwart as the praetorians of old.

CSM Ron Krause  
Praetorian 7 ■







**780th MI BDE**  
"STRENGTH AND HONOR"

COL Benjamin Sangster  
Commander  
CSM Ronald Krause  
Command Sergeant Major

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**Reflections of the Spirit**  
CSM Ronald Krause, 780th MI BDE (Cyber)

**The Army's Talent Management Strategy and You**  
CSM Samuel Crislip, 782d MI BN (Cyber)

**A Different Perspective**  
CSM Marlene Harshman, 1SG Adam Brege, HHC; 1SG Adam Rhodes, A CO; and 1SG Nicholas Davis, B CO, 915th CWB

**NCOs and the Human Dimension**  
1SG Rafael Ortiz, HHC, 780 MI BDE (Cyber)

**Organizational Improvement**  
MSG Joel Z. Aguilar, 780 MI BDE (Cyber)

**The significant Contributions, Expertise, and Experience of the Noncommissioned Officer Corps**  
SGT Kyle Mcfarlane, HHC, 781st MI BN (Cyber)

**The Transition to Noncommissioned Officer**  
SGT Adam Alim, B CO, 781st MI BN (Cyber)

**Why does the number of sexual assaults continue to increase throughout your unit/organization/Army?**  
SGT Delroy Scott, C CO, 781st MI BN (Cyber)

**NCOs in Intel/Cyber Commands**  
SSG Kristina Houchin, E CO, 781st MI BN (Cyber)

**Fork in the Road: Senior Noncommissioned Officers in Cyber and the Decision to Lead**  
1SG Byron Armstead Jr., A CO, 782d MI BN (Cyber)

**US Army Benefits from Experience and Expertise of the Noncommissioned Officer (NCOs) Corps**  
1SG Anastashia Harris, B CO, 782d MI BN (Cyber)

**Noncommissioned Officers: Providing Mentorship to all Ranks**  
1SG Michael Thiel, C CO, 782d MI BN (Cyber)

**NCOs are driving the Force**  
1SG David Strohacker II, D CO, 782d MI BN (Cyber)

**Backbone of the Army**  
1SG Brian Fife, E CO, 782d MI BN (CYBER)

**Ohana!**  
1SG Eric Cullipher, DET-Hawaii, 782d MI BN (Cyber)



**Talent and Innovation – Keeping an Open Mind**  
1SG Omar Otero, DET-Texas, 782d MI BN (Cyber)

**Deployment of an ECT: Support to USAREUR-AF**  
SFC Austin Moss and SSG Alexander Lecea, ECT 01,  
915th CWB

**Seven years in the making: CPT 170's journey from  
induction to validation**  
CPT Darian Metz, TFE VI, 127 CPB (INARNG)

**CYBER SNAPSHOT: CPT Linnea Wright**  
Task Force Echo VI, 127 CPB (INARNG)

**CYBER SNAPSHOT: CPT Robert Saffell**  
Task Force Echo V, 176 CPT (WIARNG)

**Task Force Echo VI: NCO Reflections**

**Tool Developer Qualification Course Graduation  
Ceremony for Class 22-10**

**CYBER SNAPSHOT: SGT Rudy Esterberg**  
780th Military Intelligence Brigade

**CYBER SNAPSHOT: SGT Austin Harris**  
780th Military Intelligence Brigade

**Ready and Resilient - Scrapbook**

**Cork Board**



### On the Cover

FORT GEORGE G. MEADE, Md. – The 780th Military Intelligence Brigade (Cyber) change of command whereby COL Matthew J. Lennox relinquishes his command to COL Benjamin F. Sangster in a ceremony hosted by MG Michele H. Bredenkamp, commander of the U.S. Army Intelligence and Security Command, on the McGlachlin Parade Field, June 28. Praetorians “Everywhere and Always...In the Fight!”

20

21

23

25

27

29

30

31

32

33

39

**I**N MY TIME SERVING WITH CSM Ronald Krause, the 780th Military Intelligence brigade's senior enlisted leader and “Keeper of the Colors”, I have been humbled by his thoughtfulness, sacrifice, and leadership. Moreso than any other command group leader, during my six years within the brigade, he would come by to check on my well-being, ask about what was going on, and offer his sage advice and counsel – on work and personal matters. It means a lot to an Army Civilian and public affairs officer.

My office is outside the brigade headquarters, and on more than one occasion, the brigade commander, the other CSMs, deputy commanders, and senior Civilian and Technical Advisor have come to visit; however, CSM Krause made the trek out to the “trailers” dozens of times and not always to talk about work-related issues.

CSM Krause selected the theme for this edition of The BYTE magazine: *Noncommissioned Officers: Enlisted Leaders and the Profession of Arms*, reviewed every article, and to me and others, he embodies the Creed of the Noncommissioned Officer: “*No one is more professional than I...*”

I can sincerely state that I will miss him when he departs for his next assignment as the Regimental Command Sergeant Major, US Army Cyber and Electromagnetic Warfare School, on October 3. Best wishes and success in your new position!

Praetorians! Strength and Honor

v/r,

Steve Stover

Public Affairs Officer

780th MI Brigade (Cyber)

Editor, The BYTE







# The Army's Talent Management Strategy and You

By CSM Samuel Crislip, 782d Military Intelligence Battalion (Cyber)

RECENTLY, TWO INDIVIDUALS in the unit experienced very different realities in how a person can let life happen to them or a person can make their life happen. Individual A had a personnel action, necessitating several levels of signatures and a multitude of packets that were languishing in the Army's bureaucracy of processes. That individual's insistence and focus ensured their action continued forward through the chain, never accepting patience as an appropriate response from leadership. While individual A may have created some consternation, ultimately, they met their goal. Meanwhile, individual B, while in a slightly different situation, was comfortable with their space in life and did not question whether they could go after a program they were interested in, until it was too late. The Army made a decision for them, closing the opportunity they were hoping to be their future.

These examples are likely repeated daily across the Army, and no one should discount them as anecdotes that are non-applicable. Instead, these scenarios should urge us to learn from them and understand that we, as individuals, are the best advocates for our careers and our futures, not just in the Army, but across our lives. The Army expects our leaders to manage talent across the organization, but each individual must be a part of their own talent management. As we all navigate our lives in and out of the Army, we can benefit from understanding the Army's methodology for talent management, seeking out those opportunities the Army offers, and being our own advocate in achieving goals.

As early as 2016, the Army was looking to revitalize how it was managing talent for every cohort, moving from "filling empty billets with available personnel, to talent management, which considers the

knowledge, skills, and behaviors (KSBs) of an individual who is a part of a more strategic workforce" (Gamble, 2021). With this concept, the Army aims to invest in individuals while maintaining its vast mission requirements, empowering workforce members to feel the Army is interested in them as a true asset to any and every formation. The Army has created Strategic Goals for The Army's Talent Management Strategy which include Ready, placing the right person in the right place at the right time; Professional, encouraging lifelong education and training; Diverse, selecting a talented workforce across all demographics; and Integrated, removing barriers amongst the many cohorts inherent in the military service (Department of the Army, 2016).

The Army is working diligently to get after these goals as is evident with its creation of the Assignment Inter-active Module and Assignment Satisfaction Key – Enlisted Marketplace that are now available for Officers, Warrant Officers, and Enlisted. This new methodology of an Enlisted Marketplace allows our Non-commissioned Officers true insight and involvement into their movement cycle and duty location potential by giving members the opportunity to prioritize assignments across Army's mission requirements. This system highlights a NCO's need to be an active participant if they want to shape their future. They must preference their potential duty locations and force utilization in the system or the Army will choose their next assignment for them. With this, our case study above would likely find that Individual A would find themselves at their duty assignment of choice while Individual B would allow the Army's system to place them in a slot that best meets their KSBs and the needs of the Army, potentially disregarding what is best for the individual, their family, and their desired future.



While this one highlight only provides a glimpse at the Army's work to improve talent management, it enforces the idea that we must actively participate so that the Army and the NCO get the most out of the Talent Management Strategy. We can further this by better understanding some of the opportunities that Soldiers and our Non-commissioned Officer Corps regularly underutilize.

In the words of Wayne Gretzky, "You miss 100 percent of the shots you don't take." As of writing this, the Army is offering our Non-Commissioned Officers five different shots (programs) that will further their careers, increase their professionalization technically, and make them more marketable within the intelligence and cyber communities both in and out of the service. These programs, all of which are offered annually for applications, are: National Security Agency/Central Security Service (NSA/CSS) Military Intern Signals Intelligence Analyst Program (MILPER 22-183); NSA/CSS Middle Enlisted Cryptologic Career Advancement Program (MILPER 22-185); NSA/CSS Military Language Analyst Program (MILPER 22-186); NSA/CSS Cybersecurity Operations Development Program (for 35Ns) (MILPER 22-188); and Computer Network Operations Development Program (MILPER 22-305) (Department of the Army, n.d.). The Army further offers other programs of interest throughout every year, including, but not limited to, the Training with Industry program and the National Intelligence University program offering options to achieve either a Bachelor's or Master's degree. All one needs to do to get into these programs is to apply as they often



have more slots than available applicants, giving every single Noncommissioned Officer the opportunity to manage their own talent and open doors that they may find otherwise closed if they leave the Army to decide their future. Moreover, our Soldiers often find themselves as their own road blocks to achieve all the Army has to offer.

The one person that cares about the most about your career in and out of the Army is you, no one else. Do you want to go to Airborne School, Ranger School, Air Assault School, Drill Sergeant School, the Battle Staff Course, a highly sought after SANS course, Project Management Professional course, Security+, Network+, or Certified Information Systems Security Professional course? If so, what is stopping you from asking the Army to pay for the course and send you? If your answer is your Squad Leader, Platoon Sergeant, First Sergeant, Company Commander, or a Staff Section, then you have asked the

wrong person. Interested applicants need only apply and refuse to accept “NO” or constant replies of “Maybe later” as the answer. Those individuals listed above have the job of supporting their Soldiers and assisting them throughout their career, facilitating the Soldier’s ability to accomplish the Commander’s and the Army’s missions, which include putting people first. Every NCO should seek out every opportunity the Army has to offer at all times, actively managing their own talent and ultimately achieving their own goals while simultaneously achieving the Army’s Talent Management Strategy.

The Army’s Talent Management Strategy encourages every member of our organization to be a participant in their own talent. Ask yourself, “Who better to manage my talent than myself?” Be your own talent manager and seek out the opportunities. To get the most out of what the Army offers, you must be Individual A and ask, “Where is my packet / Why are

you saying no to this training opportunity / What else can I do?” When it is time to step away from the Army, do not make yourself the reason that you were not able to achieve the goals you set for yourself. Understand, the NCO corps needs and wants you to be as knowledgeable and experienced as possible to train the next generation’s corps. We cannot do that if we sit on the side lines and let the Army happen to us. ■

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Gamble, D. A. (2021, February 16). *Talent Management: Enabling Total Army Readiness*. Retrieved from [https://www.army.mil/article/242952/talent\\_management\\_enabling\\_total\\_army\\_readiness](https://www.army.mil/article/242952/talent_management_enabling_total_army_readiness)



FORT DRUM, N.Y. – 14 of the 41 graduates of the U.S. Army Air Assault Course, earning the coveted Air Assault Badge on April 19, 2019, were from the 780th Military Intelligence Brigade (Cyber), We are the Praetorians! Strength and Honor!





# A Different Perspective

By CSM Marlene Harshman, 1SG Adam Brege, HHC; 1SG Adam Rhodes, A Company; and 1SG Nicholas Davis, B Company, 915th Cyber Warfare Battalion

**W**ITH OVER 80 YEARS of active-duty Army experience, we collectively wanted to share perspectives from the most senior NCOs in the 915th Cyber Warfare Battalion (CWB). We are each from diverse backgrounds and experiences which lend to a diverse group of professionals. We wanted to share our perspectives on Noncommissioned Officers (NCOs) preparing our Cyber Force for different responsibilities, collectively working with peers, building a symbiotic relationship with our officer counterparts, and understanding when we need time.

## Take the Time

By CSM Marlene Harshman, 915th CWB CSM

We know from TC 7-22.7, The NCO Guide, that every Soldier in the Army has a Sergeant. It is engrained in us from the very first time we put on chevrons and take a section or team that we will train, lead, and take care of our Soldiers. By taking this responsibility as a leader comes high levels of stress, anxiety on what is coming at us full force on a daily basis, and there is a misconception that we have to shoulder this by ourselves. The stress only multiplies with the increase in rank and responsibility, making that ruck sack awfully heavy until it becomes unbearable. Do not let it get to that point.

### *Take the time:*

Take the time for yourself and loved ones. When you go home, be home; do something you enjoy. Figure out what is a problem for today verse a problem for tomorrow. Some problems cannot be helped and will be a late night to work through it, but if it becomes something to tackle tomorrow, get mentally prepared to get after the problem with a fresh start and outlook. Leave work at work.

Take the time to look at your leaders, peers, and subordinates. It is impossible to gauge what is going on under the surface

if you do not ask the questions and stay involved. Remembering and following up on life events like a birthday, a child going to college, or a favorite video game will not only show that you care but that they are not alone.

Take the time to seek guidance or mentorship. No one has all the answers; do not pretend you do. With the increase of rank and responsibility, you learn more and share more, but remember that we are all products of our environments. Each of our backgrounds plays a large factor on what we ask and how we respond, but do not be afraid to ask questions or share lessons learned.

Take the time to seek help. We all need help – a friend that listens or relates, a peer or leader that gives honest feedback, a mentor that shares different perspectives, a counselor for the life problems, etc. We all need to ask for help, so do not be afraid to seek it. Make sure you are getting the help that is right for you and gets you back on track.

Individual or team responsibility will grow, whether you want it to or not – We owe it to ourselves and our Soldiers to be ready for it.

## Mutualistic Symbiotic Relationships: NCOs and our Officer Counterparts

By 1SG Adam Brege, HHC, 915th CWB

I'm not a biologist, in fact in place of 'Biologist' it was considered briefly if the term scientist would work better; surly it does not take one of either to understand the context herein. A Mutualistic Symbiotic Relationship, in short, Mutualism, is a type of interaction between two species that benefit both of them. Categorically there are two other types of symbiosis: Commensalism, where one species attains benefit from another without harm to the host, and Parasitic, where the symbiont harms the host. Though there are others, we will focus on the aforementioned two as our

comparatives.

Twenty-one years of service and observation, or perhaps the belief that the two cents of a First Sergeant implicitly matter is what predicated an introduction as such. The primary observation that prompted a shallow glimpse into symbiosis are the changes I have observed in the NCO and Officer relationships over the past 20 years. Those of us nearing retirement, or who have likewise spent a considerable amount of time in this business, have seen the changes. They are not problematic, at least not yet, but they may be in the future.

Full stop: Finding 'Nemo' – Did you know a clown fish maintains a mutualistic symbiotic relationship with sea anemone? A clown fish lives amongst the tentacles of the sea anemone. They are safe from nematocyst strikes, protected by a layer of mucus, which are a triggered reaction caused by physical contact with the tentacles that results in the release of a barbed stinger meant to paralyze a threat. Safe from predators, clown fish in turn clean the anemone, gaining nutrients, as well as providing it nutrients. An anemone provides an ecological utopia for the clown fish.

So why is understanding mutualism important? It is simple. Our Army will have a new breed of Officers and Noncommissioned Officers whom risk lacking the inherent need for mutualism that two decades at war has shown to be pivotal in leading organizations.

The changes in leadership experiences will differ greatly from this generation to the next. This is likely to be more impactful in the Cyber Corps. Our leadership experiences will most likely never be comparable to that of an Infantry Platoon Leader or Platoon Sergeant. United States Army Forces Command (FORSCOM) grows Soldiers differently, not just in the experiences, but also in lifestyle. This generation of Cyber Soldier

or perhaps all Soldiers, may never fully understand the deepest sense of teamwork – the type of teamwork gained from trust, discipline, and bullets flying nearby.

The value in seeing the importance of mutualistic symbiotic relationships between an Officer and NCO and understanding the art of effective communication will help fill the gap once filled by the ecology of Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom. The collective climate of any section or team stems from the success of the relationship between the Officer and NCO charged with the care of that team. There is not a one size fits all solution. It is very easy to say that each Officer or NCO should be a clown fish or a sea anemone, but that will not fill the gap by itself. Placing into practice the methods, communication skills, and goals that result in a mutually beneficial team structure is the key.

Commensalism, within the relationship, will stagnate the ecology of the team. Each Officer and NCO in this type of relationship will neither flourish nor flounder. Each day will be a 'Met Standard' day. The climate will suffer, as will every other variable by which we measure success. The result of a parasitic relationship is obvious.

The level of sentience a clown fish has is enough for it to adapt to the benefits of mutualism. Officers and NCOs can certainly recognize this benefit as well. Junior Officers must recognize the wealth of knowledge that comes from their NCOs. NCOs must recognize that the creed still matters and that new and effective ways of building communicative, mutualistic relationships with your Officer is priority one.

### **Endeavors of Working with Peers**

By 1SG Adam Rhodes, A CO, 915th CWB

Throughout my time in the military, I have witnessed the changes in maturity and aptitude in performance as I climb through the ranks. As a senior NCO, the roles and positions become more solidified causing Service Members (SMs) to either become more competitive or utilize the opportunities to learn.

Upon promoting to a Sergeant First

Class (SFC), that is a Soldier's first moment in which a feeling of achieving a status not easily attained has settled in. You feel accomplished and proud to be able to call yourself a senior NCO. In that same instance, these same SFCs are susceptible to learning the duties and responsibilities inherent in that role. It is the need or want for further advancement that can shape a Soldier's career and leadership style.

As a First Sergeant working in the 915th CWB, I've only experienced a close working relationship with my peers. This is something that I have not always seen or experienced while being a Master Sergeant. There have been multiple instances in which competitiveness as a MSG has driven Soldiers to become "lone rangers" to set themselves apart from their peers. I've also seen the complete opposite that highlights senior NCOs building each other up to achieve the same goal.

The mutual understanding defined in 915th CWB is one team, one fight. With this shared understanding, I continue to grow as a professional and as a leader. This methodology empowers me and gives me the confidence that I need in moments of uncertainty.

Ultimately, there are different leadership styles and methodologies that conforms to the individual's personality, but I find it to be more effective to use the methodology that allows peers to work together coherently.

### **Preparing our Soldiers and NCOs for Different Responsibility**

By 1SG Nicholas Davis, B CO, 915th CWB

Are we developing and preparing our Soldiers to appropriately handle increased levels of responsibility as they quickly progress through the ranks?

Are we giving our Soldiers and NCOs the opportunities to not only succeed in the Cyber workforce, but to also succeed in the mythical and scary place known as the 'Big Army'?

It should be no secret that FORSCOM units conduct their daily operations vastly different from what most of our junior Cyber Soldiers and NCOs have become accustomed to. They have a much different culture and way of doing things that many

of us have never experienced.

We must recognize that the level of responsibilities of a Staff Sergeant 17C in the Cyber Mission Force is vastly different from a Staff Sergeant 17E at the 82nd Airborne Division. Some may not know that a small number of 17Cs are already serving in units that focus on Multi-Domain Operations across the 'Big Army'. Many do not know that 17Cs and 17Es will begin to merge at the Sergeant Major level starting in fiscal year 2023 (FY23) and become 17Zs. In fact, the most recent Master Sergeant Evaluation Board (19APR2022) was the first to compare all 17Cs and 17Es across the Army together.

Are we developing and preparing our Soldiers (and ourselves) to thrive in organizations whose culture and operational focus differs so vastly from ours? Are we helping our Soldiers create Individual Development Plans that make them competitive at our centralized selections boards? While the levels of responsibility may be polarized between our peers across the Army, the core tenets and values of what makes an NCO is ubiquitous.

General James McConville said, "Winning matters and People are my number one priority... We win through our people and we must take care of them..." It does not matter what your MOS is, what your work role is, what unit you are in or where you are stationed; an NCO's #1 priority will always be the health and welfare of his or her Soldiers. NCOs are the backbone of the Army because of the immense weight of responsibility placed upon our shoulders every day.

As long as we place our people first and develop others to do the same, everything else will fall into place. ■

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1. <https://academic.oup.com/book/27600>
2. <https://asknature.org/strategy/intricate-relationship-allows-the-other-to-flourish/>





FORT GORDON, Ga. – The commander of the 915th Cyber Warfare Battalion presented the Saint Isidore Bronze-level awards to 1SG Adam Brege, MSG Carlos De La Cruz, and 1SG Nicholas Davis, July 28, for their individual contributions to the Cyber Mission Force ranging in their expertise of offensive cyberspace operations, defensive cyberspace operations, and electronic warfare. The Armed Forces Communications and Electronic Association (AFCEA) Saint Isidore award recognizes individuals who demonstrate exceptional initiative, leadership, insight, and cyber excellence within their area of expertise. The medallion recognizes government civilians or uniformed members of the armed forces who have demonstrated the highest standards of integrity, moral character, professional competence, and selflessness, while contributing significantly to the promotion and betterment of the Army Cyber Command.



# NCOs and the Human Dimension

By 1SG Rafael Ortiz, Headquarters & Headquarters Company, 780th MI BDE (Cyber)



**N**ONCOMMISSIONED OFFICERS (NCOs) have acclimated to different aspects of the human dimension through the passing of the years. What exactly do I mean by this? Are NCOs using technology to be more effective? Perhaps, NCOs today are more aware of changes in the work environment. Maybe, NCOs focus on meeting human needs versus mission first. In today's Army, NCOs provide a more combined leadership style, mixing human leadership skills in combination with technology, generating better efficiency from their Soldiers.

One of the key characteristics of NCOs today is their utilization of human skills and their ability to comprehend human behavior. These leaders are having genuine conversations with their Soldiers versus jumping to a conclusion when suddenly something changes in a Soldier's behavior. Today's NCOs focus more on building a human relationship with their Soldiers and creating a positive environment. Soldiers perform better when superiors treat them positively. When a positive relationship or work environment exists, it enables the Soldiers to provide their full potential. How do NCOs create a technology-driven workplace? Especially in today's world,

dealing with a world pandemic on top of all the other challenges. NCOs use a diversity of different ways to maintain an effective level of engagement. The utilization of varying applications helps mitigate the struggles of not having Soldiers physically present in the workspace. NCOs are determined to create and implement contingency plans for unexpected situations such as COVID-19.

In summary, NCOs contribute to maintaining and focusing on meeting Soldiers' needs for more significant motivation and engagement to increase effectiveness. ■



FORT GEORGE G. MEADE, Maryland – Headquarters & Headquarters Company (Hastati), 780th Military Intelligence Brigade (Cyber) Change of Responsibility whereby 1SG Edgar O. Morales relinquished his authority as the senior enlisted leader and “Keeper of the Colors” to 1SG Rafael A. Ortiz in a ceremony hosted by CPT Alvaro A. Luna, at the DeKalb Army Reserve Center, April 22.





# Organizational Improvement

By MSG Joel Z. Aguilar, 780th Military Intelligence Brigade (Cyber)

**M**Y FIRST STRIPES were the chevrons of a Corporal, many years ago in my Infantry days. From that moment I began preparing for that first board, to present day, I have always focused on the Army definition of Leadership that we find in ADP 6-22. Somewhere along this the way though, the last four words of that definition lost it's meaning: I became so focused on accomplishing the mission that I forgot about improving the organization.

As enlisted leaders in a unique

organization like ours, we have to think outside the box to find different and unique ways of improving our organization, and it can be done! In 2018, our Brigade provided junior enlisted and senior NCOs to U.S. Army Recruiting Command in support of a recruiting mission to Las Vegas, Nev. The mission was simple: go to a STEM fair, tell your Army story, and show the next generation of Americans, what the Army can do for them in a Cyber career.

The event was a massive success.

Today, the 780th Military Intelligence

Brigade collaborates with multiple recruiting units from around the United States and provides various community engagement resources. The payoff of these events is tangible. We currently have a (very high speed) Soldier in the 780th MI BDE, who joined the Army and went into Cyber because he was present at that STEM fair back in 2018.

NCOs at all levels: it's on us to keep providing that purpose, direction, and motivation to accomplish the mission; just don't forget to keep improving the organization too. ■



*ODENTON, Md. – Soldiers and Army Civilians from the 780th Military Intelligence Brigade (Cyber) partnered with Anne Arundel Community Public Library to host a 'Hackathon' event at the Odenton Regional Library on October 8 and November 12, 2019. The Maryland STEM Festival event was organized to encourage teens' interest in STEM activities. Interested teens can register for the next event which takes place on October 25, 2022, at the Odenton Library or online through the AACPL website.*



*ST. LOUIS – Soldiers from the 780th Military Intelligence Brigade (Cyber) and Cyber Protection Brigade, U.S. Army Cyber Command, supported the Meet Your Army – St. Louis event, which coincided with the Army's 247th Birthday, at St. Louis Ballpark Village, June 14. They joined other Active, National Guard and Reserve Soldiers, to encourage young people to pursue careers in STEM and consider joining the U.S. Army.*

# The significant Contributions, Expertise, and Experience of the Noncommissioned Officer Corps



By SGT Kyle Mcfarlane, HHC, 781st Military Intelligence Battalion (Cyber)

**A** NONCOMMISSIONED OFFICER (NCO) in my eyes, is first and foremost a leader, someone that has his or her Soldiers back. They are there to protect and defend them, mentor them, and guide them into being NCOs themselves. As an NCO, you need to be able to share your knowledge with younger Soldiers and teach them the ways of the Army. Also, to let them not only learn from their mistakes, but from the ones we have made along the way as well. An NCO needs to be able to trust in their Soldiers, but more

importantly, Soldiers need to be able to trust their NCOs. How can a Soldier follow us into battle if they cannot trust us with the smaller things? How can a Soldier turn to you in confidence with an issue they have if they can't even trust you? And, as an NCO, to have their back about something small or petty. As an NCO, it is our job to instill that trust and to earn that trust from our Soldiers. We do that day in and day out. Not just by how we treat them, but by the things they see us do and the way that they see we handle adversity. In many ways being an NCO is

like being a parent. Soldiers look up to us for guidance, much like our children do. I am grateful to experience being a great follower because when it was time for me to become a leader, I knew how to become one. The importance of NCOs is derived directly from the NCO Creed. "All soldiers are entitled to outstanding leadership; I will provide that leadership." Every day I strive to take care of my Soldiers and consistently find ways to build trust, (Leads) create a positive environment, (Develops) and gets results (Achieves). ■



FORT GEORGE G. MEADE, Md. – Soldiers from the Headquarters and Headquarters Company (Guardians), 781st Military Intelligence Battalion (Cyber), conducted a back-to-school drive for Pershing Hill Elementary from August 8 to 19. "It was a great opportunity to give back to those in the Fort Meade Military community," said CPT Natalie Herbert, the HHC commander. "The drive was a success with the items delivered yesterday (August 22). Herbert recognized SPC Caleb Scott, the primary POC, with assistance from SGT Brett Quarry, delivery of supplies, and SPC Nakoya Washington, for planning the drive.





# The Transition to Noncommissioned Officer

By SGT Adam Alim, B Company, 781st Military Intelligence Battalion (Cyber)

I recognized the need to transition from a civilian to a military lifestyle after graduating from Basic Combat Training (BCT). To ensure the Soldiering process, civilians endure a brutal six to eight weeks of vigorous training and ego bruising. A Soldier realizes, “I am becoming part of a larger community.” They should have eliminated the individual self and merged to become a force by the end of training. In my opinion, there should be a similar philosophical transition as an individual moves from junior Soldier to junior Noncommissioned Officer (NCO).

As a Specialist, I sought leadership opportunities that would place me closer to NCOs. I recognized that NCOs have a direct impact on Soldier’s lives. In this vein, I volunteered to become a representative for the Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers program and participated in Sergeant Major lead discussions with NCOs from the Sergeant Audie Murphy program. As I recognized how seasoned NCOs conducted themselves, it lit a fire within me to become a well-rounded Soldier and leader. Upon my promotion in December 2021, I began seeking one-to-one mentorship from my unit’s Senior NCOs. I firmly believe that I can pin my success as a Sergeant to my inquisitive nature and undying passion for the Army.

There is an assumption of knowledge as NCOs rise within the ranks of the 781st MI BN. An NCO should already know the Troop-Leading Procedures, effective communication, how to apply for financial aid, marching in formation, Army Regulations, DA Pamphlets. Unfortunately, there is no spontaneous combustion of knowledge upon promotion. Senior NCOs relay their military experience to provide guidance and wisdom; however, a Sergeant must seek that pass-down of expertise. My personal experiences as an NCO taught me that if I want to succeed and grow as a leader, it is up to me to seek both leadership opportunities and counsel

from senior leaders.

Upon becoming an NCO, there is an immediate shift of responsibility and duty from self to others. This often takes time, training and experience to fully grasp. While I have yet to receive a dearth of formal training nor even been through an NCO Induction ceremony, I have had the fortune of holding impactful leadership roles within both my Task Force and the Battalion. My early interaction with senior NCOs has driven my interactions with junior Soldiers. Senior NCOs have had a substantial impact on my career path. I realize the importance of doing the legwork, for only the hungry get fed.

We recite the following line in the Creed of the Non-Commissioned Officer: “My two basic responsibilities will always be uppermost in my

mind—accomplishment of my mission and the welfare of my Soldiers” This line is critical to the mentality transformation from a junior enlisted Soldier into a junior NCO – for one cannot accomplish the mission effectively without their Soldiers being fit to fight, healthy, and in good morale. It is my NCO philosophy that if my Soldier has a place to sleep, is fed, has transportation, and communicates desires, ambitions, and gripes freely – I have fostered a relationship that will promote maximum operational output and efficiency. The transition is not easy to complete on one’s own. However, seeking Senior NCO counsel and opportunities to lead can facilitate a smooth transition by providing purpose, motivation, and direction. ■



# Why does the number of sexual assaults continue to increase throughout your unit/organization/Army?



By SGT Delroy Scott, C Company, 781st Military Intelligence Battalion (Cyber)

## Introduction

**S**EXUAL HARASSMENT/ASSAULT RESPONSE AND PREVENTION (SHARP) program is the integrated, proactive effort employed by the Army (If You've Been Sexually Assaulted, Know It's Not Your Fault & It's Never Too Late To Get Help, 2022). It is intended to end sexual harassment and sexual assault within our ranks. This program is an effective tool through which both victims and bystanders can make a report. Victims receive needed support while perpetrators are held accountable. Every member of the service is required to go through annual training as a part of the program. According to the DOD's annual report on sexual assault there was a one percent increase in FY21 over FY20 (Department of Defense Releases Fiscal Year 2020 Annual Report on Sexually Assault in the Military, 2021). The question is, "Why does this continue given all the training and education?"

## Fighting the Culture with Our Culture

The Army has a tradition and culture of discipline, and professionalism espoused within our Army values. Unfortunately, within this culture exist another that threatens to erode the foundation of what we believe. It's the culture of male dominance that often validate inappropriate behavior leading to sexual harassment/assault. We need to draw the line between comradery among the fellows and actions the runs counter to our values. Sexual jokes and conversations which creates a toxic work environment needs to be eliminated. This culture threatens the progress of the SHARP program.

There is a stigmatism that is known across the formation. The "Blue Falcon" stigma, potentially silencing the bystander. This is the indirect retaliation

that ostracizes bystander who would otherwise intervene. Bystanders play a critical in ending sexual harassment/assault in our Army. The workplace must foster an environment in which all of us takes responsibility and act.

## Proactive not Reactive

A collaborative approach with other programs will strengthen the SHARP program. One of the key factors resulting in sexual assaults is alcohol and drug usage (Why Sharp Increase in The Army, 2022). The Army Substance Abuse Program must adapt a proactive strategy to combat such occurrences. This is another example of the culture within that glorifies alcohol consumption. There is significant focus placed on underage drinking, and rightly so, but it should be holistic. Resources must be directed towards proactively combating substance abuse as a mean of preventing sexual misconducts. A training and education campaign in concert with the SHARP program would be a first step.

This is My Squad is another effective tool to support the SHARP mission. Personnel within our ranks and across the formation must continue to ambassadors of the Army values. In each foxhole there are to be zero tolerance for sexual harassment/assault. As one family, we should continually strive to maintain a safe and connected space for all. Unless there is effective collaboration among these programs, we will lose the battle.

## Conclusion

We must be deliberate to consistently communicate the impact and importance of the SHARP program. Defeat the culture that provide a platform to sexual harassment and sexual assault. Bystanders must feel liberated to speak up or intervene. This will prevent such incidents, as well as hold us all accountable. We must ignite the fire of change through our collective actions. ■

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## DoD Safe Helpline

DoD  
**Safe Helpline**  
.....  
Sexual Assault Support for the DoD Community

CALL: 877-995-5247

TEXT: 55-247 (INSIDE U.S.)

TEXT: 1-571-470-5546 (OUTSIDE U.S.)

CHAT WITH STAFF MEMBER





# NCOs in Intel/Cyber Commands

By SSG Kristina Houchin, E Company, 781st Military Intelligence Battalion (Cyber)

**T**HE NONCOMMISSIONED OFFICER (NCO) CORPS was established in 1775 however it wasn't until 1778 that they standardized the roles and responsibilities of NCOs. NCOs were charged with conducting missions and making snapshot decisions without having to relay everything to a commanding officer. This made the fighting force efficient in battle as there were various responsible parties taking care of Soldiers and ensuring the missions were completed. Many of the roles of NCOs have adapted over the decades to fit the changing environment we operate under; however, are the values of the NCO Corps applicable in an office setting? Is the role of NCO transferable to becoming an effective manager in Intel/Cyber missions?

Many of the leadership attributes and competencies fall right in line with management teachings and strategies. The role of NCO is a manager in every sense of the word and the teachings and regulations applied in today's NCO Corps are producing more effective managers for Intel and Cyber commands. When working in a joint service environment, today's Army is producing more NCOs that can take on mission projects and are better equipped to manage a mission and the personnel assigned to it. NCOs are constantly learning to communicate more effectively, act as liaisons between echelons, mentor and provide resources to our Soldiers, find answers, and share resources, network, and develop skills to resolve conflict in our teams. These skills translate well in an Intel/Cyber environment. Oftentimes our missions have customers asking for intelligence or outcomes that our capabilities may not be able to provide. As a manager in this setting, it's the NCO's job to help the customer understand the shops' capabilities and limitations. This takes effective clear and concise communication. With Intel/Cyber missions, analysts require guidance

and communication on the standards and requirements to complete the objective. NCOs are equipped with the skills to effectively mentor these analysts, resource training, communicate expectations, and evaluate performance and adjust as needed. Our NCO Corps must continue to be trained in providing effective counseling sessions with their Soldiers, these valuable skills need to continue to be developed and can be applied in a mission setting to various services. However, are the regulations and standards enough to make effective leaders translate to managers in an office?

As we see in Intel/Cyber settings, some individuals are great analysts, but when made managers, they are unable to adapt and can cause more harm to mission success and morale. This parallels with many Soldiers who are great analysts and competent individuals but cannot grasp a manager's role. This begs the question if there should be a different promotion system? Should the Specialist ranks be reintroduced back to keep a selective efficient NCO Corps while retaining talented individuals? Some may argue that is the purpose of Warrant Officers, but to get there, Soldiers are expected to become NCOs first and transfer over. It is difficult for some individuals to maintain technical proficiency while also managing a group of Soldiers, one element will suffer. As we approach a time where technical expertise is desired in the military, it may be time to consider the NCO Corps an extension of management that may not be fit for everyone. The NCO Corps is comprised of mission leaders, with adaptable capabilities, communication proficiency and organizational abilities, and time management. Perhaps it's time to recognize that while some Soldiers may be great at executing tasks and are extremely technical analysts, they may not be the best fit to manage and instead of hindering these individuals' careers, the military can retain their technical abilities by allowing

for promotions that are not within the NCO Corps. The environment of our military is once again changing. The core principles of the NCO remain the same and as the Corps adapts to challenging complex times, they are producing more effective managers, which fit well into Intel/Cyber commands. However, can the military adapt once again and bring back or modify a system to ensure the NCO Corps remains strong with individuals able to fulfill their duties without being forced into the position if their talents are better served elsewhere? This will be the change to watch for in the next decade. ■

# Fork in the Road: Senior Noncommissioned Officers in Cyber and the Decision to Lead



By 1SG Byron Armstead Jr., A Company, 782nd Military Intelligence Battalion (Cyber)

## *Time spent as Technical NCO (Network Analyst):*

**I** MADE THE TRANSITION from the Signal Corps as a 25B (Information Systems Operator and Analyst) to the Cyber Corps in 2014. After completing the 25D (Cyber Network Defender) transition course, I served on a National Cyber Protection Team (N-CPT) in the Cyber Protection Brigade (CPB). While on the team, I performed the work role of a Network Analyst and served as a Mission Element NCOIC. I spent just over three years in this position and became one of the most experienced Network Analysts on the team. Due to my technical ability, I was often the only enlisted analyst sent with the advance team to conduct site surveys during mission preparation and primarily tasked with training all incoming Network Analysts on the team. Additionally, towards the end of my time with the team, I had the opportunity to lead the network analysis mission during a real world operation. Although I was successful as a Network Analyst, I never considered myself to be a "technical NCO". Instead, I pride myself on being a well-rounded NCO, capable of performing my duties, be they technical or not. I do feel however, that I was good at what I did and enjoyed doing it.

## *Time spent as Staff/Platoon SGT:*

Following my time on the N-CPT, I served as the Battalion (BN) S3 Operations Sergeant, and as a Platoon Sergeant. Although the assignment was very demanding, it was equally rewarding, and helped me grow tremendously as a Noncommissioned Officer. While serving as the Operations Sergeant, I assisted with the battalion's task force operations, planned and executed the BN change of command, coordinated and tracked BN training, managed personnel taskings in support of higher headquarters and Garrison's Borrowed Military Manpower

(BMM), as well as supervised and evaluated DA Civilians. I took on the opportunity to mentor both junior officers and enlisted personnel assigned to the BN staff. I coordinated the planning/execution of range operations, worked side-by-side with the company command teams, and observed and participated in the execution of MDMP for real world operations. All things of which I had either never done before or had not done at that level. Had I just remained on the team as a Network Analyst, I would not have gained these experiences. Serving as a BN Operations Sergeant helped me understand how vital Senior NCOs are to the workforce and prepared me for future assignments of greater responsibility.

## *Time Spent as a Training Developer:*

After completing my assignment with the CPB, I transitioned to the Cyber Training Battalion's (CTB) Cyber School, where I served in the Cyber Training and Education Directorate, as a Training Developer. As a training developer, I developed a technical block of instruction for the 17C Advance Leaders Course. As previously stated, the time I spent on staff prepared me for the level of planning and coordination efforts required of a training developer with limited personnel support and resources. I was primarily responsible for developing a cumulative 80-hour lesson plan, which included writing course content, designing network infrastructure and developing cyberspace operations scenarios, lab development and validation, determining evaluation methods, and creating and validating grading rubrics. The goal for the course focused on how to educate the Cyber Corps junior NCOs on the full spectrum of cyberspace operations and on the Cyber Corps as a whole. In other words, Soldiers whom may have only served in a unit such as the Cyber Protection Brigade could gain a better understanding of how their peers

in other cyber units, like the 780th MI BDE (Cyber), are conducting Offensive or Electromagnetic Warfare focused cyberspace operations. The time I spent in TRADOC was a great opportunity; one that I hope helps train and prepare the force, positively influencing the Cyber Corps for the next 5 to 10 years.

## *Future of NCOs in Cyberspace Operations:*

Currently, I serve as the Alpha Company First Sergeant in the 782D MI Battalion (Cyber). As First Sergeant, I am primarily focused on the manning, training, and equipping of a company supporting Combat Mission Team and Combat Support Team operations. I have successfully navigated the challenges of being a technician on a National-Cyber Protection Team, enabled cyberspace operations while serving on staff, and developed training on behalf of TRADOC to enable the next generation of Cyberspace operation NCOs; a path that prepared me to be a First Sergeant in the Cyber Corps. I believe, for the corps of the NCO to remain successful and relevant within the Cyber branch, leaders must guide NCOs on a path that benefits organizations, maximizes their potential, and capitalizes on their strengths in traditional leadership roles or as technicians. NCOs that desire to remain technical, or that are qualified to serve in cyber work-roles such as Operator or Exploitation Analyst, must be encouraged and groomed to transition to transfer to Warrant Officers as Staff Sergeants, or understand the expectations and accept the responsibilities that come with being a Senior NCO. NCOs that show a propensity as capable technicians in addition to being outstanding leaders must be encouraged to pursue a path requiring a greater desire to lead Soldiers. The Army promotes NCOs to Sergeant First Class and beyond based on the individual's potential to take on greater levels of responsibility and are ready





to serve in positions such as Platoon Sergeant, Operations Sergeant, and First Sergeant. In the future, Senior NCOs in Cyber must have the capacity to take on the responsibilities and positions expected of them once promoted to Sergeant First Class, and beyond, as these duties are what separate Senior NCOs from Junior NCOs. As a Company First Sergeant, I understand the ability to influence change at the lowest level begins with the reliance on Senior NCOs fulfilling traditional leadership roles and enforcing standards. Ultimately, I believe a conscious choice has to be made to either pursue greater levels of responsibility and influence as a Senior Non-Commissioned Officer (with the capacity to be technical when required), or choose to progress as technicians in the Warrant Officer Corps. ■



# US Army Benefits from Experience and Expertise of the Noncommissioned Officer Corps



By 1SG Anastashia Harris, B Company, 782nd Military Intelligence Battalion (Cyber)



*Air Force SSgt. Gaberial Solazzo, 701st Munitions Support Squadron, leads a dismounted patrol at Baumholder, Germany Oct. 9, 2019. The airmen practiced mounted and dismounted patrol tactics, and reaction procedures to indirect fire and improvised explosive devices during a four-day exercise. Photo By: Ismael Ortega, Army*

EVERY YEAR, IN THE UNITED STATES, millions of Americans join the U.S. Army for various reasons, from patriotism, education, occupational opportunities, and job stability. Noncommissioned Officers (NCOs) offer the most significant benefit to the country's military, as they are often considered the standard barrier for their organization. NCOs are also groomed to be well versed throughout the military to understand the different environments and situations they are usually placed in. Accordingly, NCOs who serve their subordinates understand the orders they receive from Commanders and set objectives, working efficiently with the available resources. Furthermore, the NCO Corps provides inspiration, motivation, discipline, and responsibility to subordinates on their assigned duties.

Therefore, the significant contributions made by NCOs comprise leadership demonstrated through courage, loyalty, decisiveness, dependability, and accountability, aligning with the Army Values (Ramchand et al., 2015). NCOs facilitate the availability of personnel to respond to terrorism, promoting a better understanding of the Commander's vision and enhancing the mission's attainment.

NCOs have a wide range of experience and expertise. NCOs prepare for military operations through self-development, training, education, and experience. Accordingly, NCOs oversee and strengthen their formations daily by being innovative, adaptive, and resilient. Additionally, NCOs are engaged in daily indirect leadership and work hand in hand with their Commanders in implementing policy changes to facilitate attaining security objectives (Bricknell & Cain, 2020). In the

same way, NCOs maintain and enforce the standards and performance of Soldiers and equipment. Despite the necessary formal training and development that NCOs receive, it is also imperative that leaders continue learning from their peers and Soldiers who have served in the military for an extended period. They are essential to Officers as they ensure that orders are correctly received and carried out.

NCOs are the vital link between command guidance and execution, ensuring that each task is fully understood and supervised through completion. The trust granted by Commanders relies on the conduct and character of their trusted leaders. NCOs are today's and tomorrow's leaders. NCOs at different levels are often delegated duties of responsibility, accountability, and leadership, becoming a point of reference for their subordinates. They are the first-line supervisors who have intimate knowledge of the abilities of their troops. They have performed years of service to get where they are and have a better view of the "little picture" than many Officers. The Non-commissioned Officer Corps is ultimately responsible for the training, coaching, and mentoring all junior Soldiers.

By executing the role of protecting the nation within several domains, NCOs offer high potential for protecting against any level of terrorism by ensuring improved security within and beyond the United States of America. Increased availability of NCOs protects the global interest of the most developed nation in the world by having a high number of military. Looking into the future, the role of NCOs through their proactive enforcement of security standards and improving communication with their subordinates it is easier to maintain and enforce outlined standards. NCOs support and implement policies



outlined in the Chain of Command, attaining the operational and strategic levels. ■

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U.S. Army SGT Robert Fluellen of Alpha Company, Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division pulls security during a route clearance foot patrol in Paktiya province, Afghanistan, March 19, 2014. Photo By PFC Dixie Rae Liwanag, Army

# Noncommissioned Officers: Providing Mentorship to all Ranks



By 1SG Michael C. Thiel, C Company, 782nd Military Intelligence Battalion (Cyber)

**N**ONCOMMISSIONED OFFICERS (NCO) directly impacted the U.S. Army Cyber Corps through significant contributions, experiences, and expertise since its creation in 2014. At every echelon, NCOs are present, providing mentorship and direction to all ranks. The best example to showcase the influence of the NCO is easily seen at the U.S. Army Cyber School. NCO Instructors integrate their skills, knowledge, and experiences into the course's Program of Instruction (POI) for a better educational understanding of the courses provided. Students of all ranks received not only the academic knowledge, but also how that knowledge is applied into their upcoming positions. The experiences and knowledge the NCO Corps provides at the academic level will ensure the success of the Cyber Corps well into the future.

NCOs provide a significant contribution to the Cyber Corps by injecting their experiences to give a comprehensive scope of knowledge and competencies from an ever-expanding battlefield throughout the Cyber domain. By updating and integrating real-world

experience into the courses at the Cyber School, Cyber Soldiers (Enlisted, Officers or Warrant Officers) are introduced into a digital world of both offensive and defensive planning and execution of operations. The planned and in-depth curriculum that our Cyber Soldiers receive is the pivotal aspect of their growth in becoming Cyber Warriors. The continued expertise from NCOs, in understanding the vast array of threats, will enable the Cyber School to produce well-trained Soldiers that can be developed into Subject Matter Experts (SME).

Upon graduation, the newly trained Cyber Soldiers will be integrated into the huge assortment of units and assignments competing in cyberspace. Through coaching and mentorship, NCOs will ensure that our Cyber Soldiers continue and maintain their knowledge base and progress to become the next generation Cyber SMEs. As the Soldiers progress as a SME through their Cyber careers, they gain responsibility, knowledge, and leadership skills that will develop them into the next Cyber leader. To ensure continuity of the development and mentorship programs are not lost, Cyber leaders are incorporated

into all ranks of the Cyber Corps.

From all levels of the Cyber Corp, only the highest rated Cyber NCOs are selected to be the first impression of the Initial Entry Trained (IET) Soldiers entering into the U.S. Army Cyber School. Currently, the NCOs serving as instructors started their Cyber careers as IET Soldiers from the inception of the Cyber School. These NCOs can bring the most recent knowledge and experience from the Cyber mission to be integrated into the curriculum and the POI. The integration of real-world knowledge and experience perpetuates the growth of future Cyber leaders within the Cyber Corps. Those future leaders or NCOs will assume the responsibility of carrying on the mentorship and development of the subsequent generations to come. With that understanding, the NCO Corps contributions consistently impact the Cyber Corps for the foreseeable future. ■



*FORT GORDON, Ga. – Students at the Army's Cyber School at Fort Gordon, Georgia, work on a project. (Photo by Clifford Kyle Jones / NCO Journal).*





# NCOs are driving the Force

By 1SG David Strohacker II, D Company, 782nd Military Intelligence Battalion (Cyber)

**N**ONCOMMISSIONED OFFICERS (NCOs) LAID THE FOUNDATION required to build the Cyber Force. We have prepared all Soldiers to be successful in institutional training and while serving on cyber teams. In addition, we have served as the primary manager for programs and systems used to drive readiness and inform senior leaders across the Army. We are the driving force behind action.

NCOs are driving the cyber force into the future. Within the 780th MI BDE (Cyber), NCOs are assigned as a Platoon Sergeant without a Platoon Leader. They have served as the vehicle for commanders and team leads to achieve balance in requirements and economy of force. NCOs are charged to balance operational and administrative needs in order to meet readiness standards and enable cyber operations. These NCOs, at a point, were the single source of bottom-up feedback and drove prioritization of manning, training, and even the operations tempo. They have served as the primary managers for programs of record that drove executive level decisions and priorities during the establishment of the Cyber National Mission Force (CNMF).

NCOs have been critical in identifying talent and ensuring maximum potential is met by each Soldier in the formation. Since the inception of the 780th MI BDE (Cyber), NCOs have taken on the challenges to identify the technical aptitude of each Soldier and drive talent management. SFC Craig Seiler, SFC Brian Genzale, SSG (RET) William Ryan, and a handful of other NCOs from the 781st MI BN (Cyber) established a program known as the Vanguard Assessment during the build of the CNMF. The assessment was a computer-based program consisting of technical questions that mirror what we use today as a job qualification requirement. Each Soldier's answers allowed technical aptitude to be assessed and for every newly

arrived Soldier to be aligned against a work role during their reception and integration. These NCOs laid the foundation of how we assess Soldiers today in the operator program and cyber capability developer selection.

NCOs have guaranteed the success of the cyber force by driving priority of training, resourcing, and overall management of cyber teams. They have driven the success of each Soldier through on the job training prior to entering individual training pipelines. It is without a doubt that the future formation will be led by resilient Senior Noncommissioned Officers that have the experience and ability to meet operational needs and win the nation's wars. ■

# Backbone of the Army

By 1SG Brian Fife, E Company, 782nd Military Intelligence Battalion (Cyber)



**T**HE ARMY'S BIRTHDAY is fast approaching 250 years and during that time the Army has seen a vast metamorphosis of rank structures. Our formation began with only a few enlisted roles that expanded greatly over each century into the current strata we see today. There are few militaries in the world as professional and self-sustaining due to the inherent discipline and expected resourcefulness of each Noncommissioned Officer. One only needs to look across the sea at adversaries such as the Russian military, an extreme 'top-down' structure, to glean the importance of disciplined initiative that each NCO is empowered to use.

Surely everyone has heard of Baron von Steuben and the 'Blue Book.' One comment he made about the NCO while on General Washington's staff was, "the officer should be the father of the Company while Sergeants should be the mother." As a Company First Sergeant I realize more each day how this concept is true. At each level of the NCO you are progressively challenged with more responsibility in the tactical, technical or administrative realms. Traditionally, it is the NCO that grooms junior enlisted Soldiers on how to manage their finances, maintain cleanliness, or

even how to hold a rifle. They are at the front of the pack in formation and in the field conducting troop movements. More importantly, NCOs are indispensable for training and enforcing standards. As 780th MI BDE Soldiers, some routine tasks that are associated with the NCO Corps are not a heavily relied upon as others. However, there are many other talents and technical skills that NCOs have to be prepared to impart. For example, infantryman need to be well-versed in troop movements or use of weapons systems. Similarly, our BDE is at war in the cyber domain every day and we need experts that are adjunct faculty certified. Baron von Steuben thought that all NCOs should be capable of learning a task and teaching said task to others around them. Adjunct faculty and aspirant knowledge are a shining example of his vision for the NCO Corps.

Finally, to understand the future of NCOs in the Army one has to look at the past. During the time of the Revolutionary War there were only a few ranks: Corporal, Sergeant, Quartermaster, First Sergeant and Regimental Sergeant Major. There was not nearly as much expectation of NCOs except that they are capable of reading and writing. Gradually over the centuries more would be expected of NCOs. In

1907, the notion that NCOs were equally capable in the private work force as they were in the military was not lost on the War Department. The War Department stated, "The noncommissioned officer are men who in civil life would be skilled workmen, foremen, chief clerks and subordinate officials. If the Army cannot offer them inducements that civil institutions are glad to offer, it cannot hope to secure or retain them." If one looks to the last few decades one will find that America has constantly tried to retain the best and provide pay commensurate with equivalent, outside employment. Although there were minimal expectations of NCOs in the Continental Army of the 1700s; the NCOs of today attend professional military education at every rank. In fact, in only the last several years the Master Leader's Course was reinstated to prepare Senior Non-Commissioned Officers for future leadership positions. Going forward, it is apparent that strategic leaders and policy makers at all echelons of American society are deeply invested in a professional and highly educated NCO Corps! ■



*Baron von Steuben drilling American recruits at Valley Forge in 1778, painted by Edwin Austin Abbey. (Image courtesy of Army News Service).*





# Ohana!

By 1SG Eric Cullipher, Detachment Hawaii, 782nd Military Intelligence Battalion (Cyber)

IT IS A DREAM COME TRUE to step into the unknown and fulfill the role of a First Sergeant. My change of responsibility was just a few months ago. May 2022 to be precise. Prior to my current assumption of responsibilities, I was operating as a Counterintelligence (CI) Special Agent assigned to United States Army Special Operations Command (USASOC) for the past five years. While I have mostly focused my efforts on the human domain, there was a time that I might have chosen the CI-cyber path, but alas I did not get to take advantage of that opportunity. In hindsight, I wish I had as I now see the countless advantages of being able to affect the adversary from leagues away. But as luck would have it, here I am now assigned as a First Sergeant among such an outstanding and professional group of cyber warriors.

As a First Sergeant, I have the honor of witnessing junior enlisted Soldiers transition into members of the “Backbone of the Army” – Noncommissioned Officers (NCOs). Each one attempting to put their best effort into their personal development, military training, and the mission. At first, some may experience difficulties finding a balance between being a friend and a leader. Admittedly, newly promoted NCOs may have just been a barracks mate to a subordinate the day prior. Others naturally fill the role and thrive in a new and challenging environment filled with unknowns. As a parent, I see the role of NCOs as like parenting: First, there is no fix-it-all, troubleshoot guide; Second, the surrounding environment will change, but adapting to these challenges is key to success. In short, parents and NCOs alike are teachers of resilience and

problem-solving.

Three months have passed since I assumed my First Sergeant duties and responsibilities. However, in this brief time, there is no substitute for the experience I have gained while serving alongside these great Soldiers in my Detachment. Our NCOs are relatively young with

is muddled, confounding, and chaotic as only war, and specifically cyber warfare can be. This is an isolating, lonely profession – the fifth domain, cyber space – for many of them. Yet their resilience and grit are admirable to me, and I am honored, proud and humbled to be their First Sergeant.

I certainly paint a rosy picture. But I promise you, it is without exaggeration making it even more fantastical sounding. Do they fail from time to time? Yes! Do they succeed more often and learn from their mistakes? Resoundingly and emphatically, they do. These NCOs inspire, persevere, and embody determination and do so regularly and loudly. They are a testament to the embers of freedom that are reflected in the people they serve.

They are at once Warriors, Technicians, Operators, Analysts, but most importantly, Americans! We are a family at arms. I have an example of late. Recently, I witnessed an NCO slow his run pace during an ACFT to motivate another Soldier to complete the 2-mile run in time. This NCO bore the loss of points to promote another. And as I bore witness to this NCO's sacrifice and willingness to aid a fellow Soldier, I thought to myself, “I am blessed to be part of this family.” Kopiana NCOs are the future that will help lead our nation to many more victories. And should this be my last assignment as a senior NCO in the US Army, I have much to be thankful for. Ohana! ■



*Leave it all in the sand. The Kopiana family demonstrating will to win, strength to stand ground, and a sense of community.*

many of them serving in their first and early second-term of enlistment. Yet, the responsibilities levied upon them in their day-to-day dealings are greater than what most people of their youth experience. I applaud Army Recruiters for encouraging some of the brightest minds America has to offer to volunteer to serve and fight in the cyber domain against complex and morally flexible adversaries that we face to defend the American public and its great institutions from daily. When we are successful against such nefarious and dastardly foes, it is, in small way, a direct result of our cyber-warrior NCOs and the discipline these great men and women impart to our future leaders of all grades and ranks. These Soldiers, these NCOs, these Leaders are expected to adapt and achieve in an environment that at times

# Talent and Innovation – Keeping an Open Mind

By 1SG Omar Otero, Detachment Texas, 782nd Military Intelligence Battalion (Cyber)



**I** WILL EXERCISE INITIATIVE by taking appropriate action in the absence of orders.” This declaration is something all aspiring NCOs know intimately. It is part of our NCO Creed, and it is drilled into us early in our careers. But what does it mean? To some, it may sound like an obligation to lead when a superior is absent, however, others may see it as an opportunity to demonstrate potential and implement new ideas. Some of the best advances in our tactics, techniques and procedures have come from NCO and Soldier innovation. Sweeping changes in Army policies have been driven by lessons learned throughout the past two decades of conflict. Conflicts led in part by our corps of NCOs. Their feedback, but more specifically their ideas, have provided senior leaders with solutions to complex and strategic problem sets. Their incredible innovation can be observed all the way from our junior NCOs to our most senior leaders. This can be as simple as SSG Owen (now 1SG Owen) creating a tool that streamlined the output of a collection platform, or as monumental as SMA Michael Grinston spearheading the implementation of the biggest change in our physical fitness strategy in the last 30 years.

I have always tried to keep an open mind throughout my 18 years of service. This includes never making a decision in a vacuum, especially when it affects the mission, our Soldiers, civilians or their families. Obviously, this is not always sensible and at times a “command” decision is required, however, in most instances my NCOs will have an idea to optimize or refine whatever it is I was trying to implement. This was not always the case in my experience rising through the ranks. Many times, excellent ideas were ignored or dismissed because of who was proposing them, by leaders too stubborn to embrace technology, or an change that they deemed unattainable. To quote the great Ted Lasso, “you know

how they say that youth is wasted on the young? Well, I say don’t let the wisdom of age be wasted on you.” As leaders, we owe it to our Soldiers to remember where we came from, and at times, how powerless we felt to influence change. We need to incorporate our NCOs in our discussions when appropriate and continue to encourage that critical thinking they are so eager to share and implement. Not only can we all gain from their ideas, but it also affords them an opportunity to grow professionally and develop into confident leaders.

Talent and innovation are evident across our entire organization. I truly believe our Brigade employs the brightest minds currently serving in any career field or branch of service. I am often awe-struck with our young NCOs technical skills and their expert ability to problem solve. Their invaluable operational experience, although unconventional, will be critical when growing our Cyber Mission Force. Gone are the days when we must rely on external agencies for training and certifying our workforce. Our NCOs should be at the forefront of lesson plan

development and course curriculum for our operational training requirements. If we trust them to execute some of the most sensitive missions our nation has ever seen, we should trust them to teach and mentor our workforce.

I have no doubt that long after we are gone and no longer serving, our contributions and ideas will persist in perpetuity. Whether by being implemented into policy or by being carried and brought forward by young NCOs. By keeping an open mind, we ensure their ideas have a chance to develop into something valuable and useful. ■







# Deployment of an ECT: Support to USAREUR-AF

By SFC Austin Moss and SSG Alexander Lecea, ECT 01, 915th Cyber Warfare Battalion

**I**N JANUARY 2022, THE 915TH CYBER WARFARE BATTALION (CWB) was notified of a short-notice deployment of Expeditionary Cyber Electromagnetic Activity (CEMA) Team (ECT) 01 to Germany to support United States Army Europe-Africa (USAREUR-AF) and XVIII Corps (A) in response to the Ukraine Crisis. To share context on ECT 01 – ECT 01 was established in 2019 when the battalion executed multiple Combat Training Center rotations and a handful of other exercises. In the summer of 2021, we went to Guam to support 1st Multi Domain Task Force (MDTF) and United States Army Pacific (USARPAC) in Defender Pacific 21. Shortly after returning, we began preparation for the multi-weeklong validation exercise in December 2021. The team had successfully accomplished validation and had just returned from

holiday block leave when the team was given the order to deploy.

## *Getting Out the Door*

With the first deployment of an ECT, the team hit the ground running. With little time to prepare, the ECT managed to complete all deployment requirements thanks to the Battalion staff's arduous work, Fort Gordon's support, and members of the ECT with the experience and knowledge of what needed to be accomplished. Whether it was the personnel at the Central Issuing Facility working diligently to get us all the gear we needed or the medical personnel at Huber Clinic working overtime, this was truly a team effort. It became apparent that the team's success resulted by having a mature and well-developed team where our Officers gave orders, and the NCOs took charge and made things happen. Our NCOs get results!

## *On the Ground in Wiesbaden*

While ECT 01 features a variety of MOSs and backgrounds, all Soldiers showed motivation and a common hunger for a mission. Once ECT 01 landed in Germany, the plans cell was quick to embed with the USAREUR-AF G39 staff and XVIII Corps (A). Being the first expeditionary CEMA team to support an Army Service Component Command (ASCC) and below came with its challenges but having the right people, in the right places, made it easy. ECT 01's Team Leader did an outstanding job communicating with the different staff sections, ensuring the theater knew how to best employ the ECT. Under the Team Leaders guidance, the ECT's planners were able to get the ECT's first mission staffed and approved. Due to workspace that we had, limited number of NCOs and



Soldiers could be involved in the planning process. Thus, requiring the team to pull in members throughout so they knew what to expect and prepare for. The team paved the road for the Army on how to plan, staff, and execute missions utilizing the ECT. These processes will also help other units like the MDTF execute future missions.

#### *Keeping the Soldiers Sharp and Ready*

In the background, while ECT leadership was working with the staff, ECT 01 NCOs led the preparation for the mission. This included physical training, internal team training on equipment, cross-training with 2nd MDTF, and rehearsals. These NCO led rehearsals were instrumental to the synchronization of the team, configurations of vehicles, and the identification of any issues not addressed in the planning process. Smaller expeditionary crews were constructed that were led by an officer and NCO counterpart where the officer led planning and the NCO focused on

mission preparation for the crew that included Expeditionary Cyber Operators (ECOs). The ECOs led training ranged from radio frequency fundamentals to exploitation. They became the Subject Matter Experts of their equipment by stress-testing and deconstructing their equipment allowing for the identification of gaps and the development of solutions, ultimately making their equipment more efficient. The expeditionary crews were also in charge of conducting cross-training with the CEMA Soldiers of the 2nd MDTF. Classes were held on Electronic Warfare, exploitation, and network analysis. Physical training did not fall by the wayside and was also a priority for the team. Several Soldiers made the 1000 lb. club at Clay Kaserne and others were featured on Armed Forces Network for participating in the CrossFit Hero Work Out of the Day (WOD) honoring Michael B. Riley.

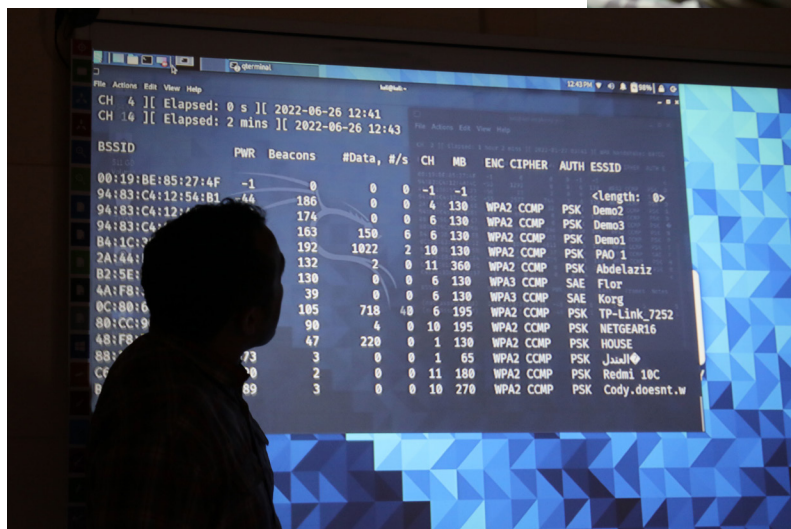
The planning, training, and

preparation paid off in a series of successful ECT missions conducted supporting USAREUR-AF requirements and priorities.

#### *Moving Forward*

There were many lessons learned from the deployment to Germany. Mainly it served as validation for the readiness of the team and as an opportunity to refine our tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs), develop standard operating procedures (SOPs) and most importantly inform leadership across the ASCC and Army on how to employ the ECT based on the real-world experience of the team. We are proud of all that was accomplished and hope to see our continued presence in the European theater. In July, ECT 01 conducted a rotation-in-place (RIP) with ECT 05, and we look forward to seeing the progress that will be continued by ECT 05 in the theater. ■

*TIFNIT, Morocco – U.S. Army Soldiers with 3rd Special Forces Group (SFG) Tactical Information Support Center, Expeditionary Cyber Team 2, and Royal Moroccan Special Operations Forces (SOF) teamed up to conduct prototype cyber effects training during African Lion 22, June 26, 2022..*



*TIFNIT, Morocco – African Lion 22, U.S. Africa Command's largest, premier, joint, annual exercise hosted by Morocco, Ghana, Senegal and Tunisia, June 6 - 30, is a critical opportunity for members of the joint team to build and test their strategic readiness to deploy, fight and win in a complex, multi-domain environment. The cyber training collaboration was the first of its kind and sought to discover how low equity cyber solutions can expand options for key decision makers at the tactical, operational, and strategic levels.*



# Seven years in the making: CPT 170's journey from induction to validation

By CPT Darian Metz, Task Force Echo VI, 127 Cyber Protection Battalion (INARNG)

**L**AST SUMMER AT CYBER SHIELD 2022, Cyber Protection Team (CPT) 170 completed their validation exercise, making them the final team in the 91st Cyber Brigade to do so. The team, based out of Forest Park, Georgia, is one of 11 Cyber Protection Teams in the National Guard. A demanding challenge of technical aptitude, tactical proficiency, and team cohesion, this 14-day event validated the team's ability to accomplish both their United States Army and Georgia Army National Guard missions. The thing that is odd about this team's validation is that for the last seven years they have already been performing and exceeding the standard in those missions. How does a team deploy on two rotations of Task Force Echo, their active-duty cyber mission, and respond to three real world incident response missions, assisting Georgia state government agencies, without ever being validated? I had the pleasure of speaking with members of Cyber Protection 170, current and former, to find out.

## *If you build it, they will come*

The Cyber MissionForce was established in 2014, and the National Guard wasted no time in establishing their teams. For Georgia, this started with Chief Warrant Officer 3 Sam Blaney, who has since retired from the Guard. During the summer of 2015, Chief Blaney began recruiting to stand up a cyber protection team for the Georgia Army National Guard. Calls were being made both within and outside the state to find the best soldiers the National Guard had to offer.

"Sam called me that summer [2015], and I immediately knew this was going to be a huge opportunity," Chief Warrant Officer 3 Walker, of CPT 170, told me during one of my interviews, "I spent 15 years in the Delaware Guard, so I had to do an interstate transfer." This was not uncommon with what would become CPT

170, as soldiers from both Louisiana and Florida would also make the same leap of faith into the Georgia Army National Guard in order to build this team.

In just a few short months, the team was assembled, the first M-day unit of its kind. Their first drill was in October 2015, and just two months later, the team received their notification of sourcing (NOS) - it was already time to deploy.

## *Pack your bags, we are going to Maryland*

Task Force Echo started as sort of an ad hoc solution pioneered by what would become Cyber Protection Team 169, "to engineer, operate, and maintain critical network infrastructure" for the 780th Military Intelligence Brigade. Their presence was never meant to be permanent, so a more sustainable solution was enacted. That solution was Task Force Echo, a task force made up of National Guard units from the states of Georgia, Virginia, California, and Michigan.

Previous infrastructure solutions were in place at the time, but Task Force Echo created a new standard for what was expected by their customers. What the task force created offered a holistic solution to infrastructure needs, based on customer requirements, that provided assurances of quality and compliance all while providing over watch during its use.

Chief Warrant Officer 4 Dustin Lee, of CPT 170, was the Lead Grayspace Developer for the first iteration of this task force and talked to me about what made this deployment so impactful. "What Task Force Echo delivered provided a bespoke, white-glove service to teams with a critical need for reliable operational infrastructure; the quality was unlike anything else previously offered."

The work done by this task force carried on to future iterations and became more formalized and structured with each iteration. Soldiers from the first task force laid the groundwork for future iterations

by creating qualification standards that would ensure that the torch was passed on to capable and trained teams. With this graceful transition, CPT 170's first mission was complete, and they could return home to Georgia knowing that their hard work was in good hands.

## *The long night*

Soon after the successful year at Task Force Echo, CPT 170 was ready for the next challenge, which would take them across both the State of Georgia, and the world.

Partnering with the Georgia Technology Authority, CPT 170 played an instrumental role in the response of multiple cyber attacks on state agencies. In July of 2019, the team commander received a direct phone call from the Adjutant General - a state partner was under attack in the cyber domain, and the Cyber Protection Team was the only line of defense. This type of response had never been done before, so just like with Task Force Echo, there was no playbook or standard operating procedure to be relied on. It would have to be written later.

"Always ready, always there", the National Guard motto, became CPT 170's unofficial motto during this period. What started as one cyber response turned into many, and the team's success with each one resulted in more state agencies requesting their aid when faced with a cyber attack. Each time the team answered, often with less than 12 hours' notice.

In between these incident responses, the team had another Georgia agency requesting their help, this time from across the world. The Republic of Georgia and the State of Georgia share more than just a name, they share a strong bond via their State Partnership Program. It was through this program that the team shaped the national policy of the Republic of Georgia in preparation for their NATO application and strengthened their cybersecurity

posture through regular engagements.  
*Déjà vu: Task Force Echo 6*

While the team was engaged with state partners and defending local agencies from cyber attacks, the Task Force Echo mission was ongoing. In 2021, the task force was approaching its sixth rotation, and CPT 170 answered yet another call to duty, to continue the same mission they left behind in 2017. Some of these soldiers were approaching their third rotation on this task force, and their experience would be much appreciated.

There was an air of familiarity when soldiers of CPT 170 returned to their previous office. Integration into this rotation was much more seamless since the team had experience from the previous iteration. At the same time, the organization had been noticeably improved. Seeds that were planted during Task Force Echo 1 had now grown significantly over the years. Processes and tasks had become much more automated and efficient. Instead of building the ship, the team simply had to drive it.

It was on this tour that the team had the opportunity to execute their validation exercise. CPT 170 would take a brief leave of absence from Task Force Echo 6 to conduct their validation exercise.

#### *The finish line*

After 8 months of working the Task Force Echo 6 rotation, the arrival of CPT 170 at the validation exercise site was a sort of reunion. There was not much time for reconnections, however, as the team had to quickly start planning on how to complete their validation exercise.

The exercise itself simulated a cyber attack on a state partner, and CPT 170 was responsible for responding to the attack, conducting initial analysis, performing remediation actions, and leaving the partner with recommendations on recovery. For some teams, this may be the first time they ever assemble in such a manner and execute a large operation. For CPT 170, however, this exercise was a repeat of the many operations done in the past, the only difference being that those previous responses were for live attacks.

CPT 170's performance at the validation exercise was exemplary, leaving

no question to the assessors that they were qualified to accomplish their mission. As a result of their performance, CPT 170 received a "GO" on all evaluation criteria, thus earning them the status of being fully operationally capable.

Cyber Protection Team 170 was qualified to accomplish their assigned missions well before any validation exercise. The team that was so hastily assembled before the first Task Force Echo quickly formed into a well-organized and highly

successful team. That initial success laid the foundation for what would become a seasoned team, which continues to build upon their skillset. The ability for the team to react to local cyber threats quickly and efficiently, while also building international teams shows this. Their validation exercise proved to be a mere formality that put onto paper what was already recognized at the state, federal, and international level. ■



Members of Cyber Protection Team 170 performing intrusion analysis during their validation exercise. (Photo Credit: Chief Warrant Officer 2 Carlos Whitfield)







# CYBER SNAPSHOT: CPT Linnea Wright

By 780th Military Intelligence Brigade (Cyber)



FORT GEORGE G. MEADE, Md. – CPT Linnea Wright, a cyber operations officer (17A) with Task Force Echo (TFE) VI, 780th Military Intelligence Brigade (Cyber), received a direct commission from master sergeant to captain under the Army National Guard (ARNG) Direct Appointments PPOM 20-045 (Personnel Policy Operational Memorandum) process. Wright hails from Topeka, Kansas, and is assigned to the 127th Cyber Battalion, Indiana ARNG.

*Hometown:* Topeka, Kansas

*Graduated from* Shawnee Heights High School, Kansas

*Duty position:* Captain Linnea Wright is a Cyber Operations Officer (17A) serving as a team leader in the 137th Cyber Security Company, 127th Cyber Protection Battalion (CPB), Indiana Army National Guard (ARNG). She is currently serving with Task Force Echo (TFE) VI, 780th Military Intelligence (MI) Brigade (Cyber).

#### QUICK SKETCH:

– CPT Linnea Wright, TFE VI, 127 CPB, is the third TFE Soldier to receive her direct commission through the ARNG Direct Appointments PPOM 20-045 (Personnel Policy Operational Memorandum) process. CPT Robert Saffell, TFE V received his direct commission after serving as an Army specialist with a Bachelor's degree in Applied Nuclear Engineering from Thomas Edison State University, Trenton, New Jersey; and MAJ Waldon Jue, TFE IV, was the first to cross over in July 2020 (<https://www.nationalguard.mil/News/Article/2314654/virginia-national-guard-soldier-marks-cyber-1st/>).

– CPT Wright enlisted in the Kansas Army National Guard in August

2004 as an All-Source Intelligence Analyst. After graduating AIT in Fort Huachuca, Ariz., she deployed with the 731st Transportation Company of Larned, Kan. in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom through April 2008.

– CPT Wright has an Associate of Applied Science in Intelligence Operations from Cochise College of Sierra Vista, Ariz.; an Associate of Science from Allen Community College of Iola, Kan. (Burlingame Campus); a Bachelor of Science in Legal Studies from American Military University (APUS-AMU) of Manassas, Va.; a Master of Science in Computer Science from Colorado Technical University (CTU) of Colorado Springs, Colo.; and is currently working on her Doctor of Philosophy in Computer Science from Northcentral University (NCU) of La Jolla, Calif.

– CPT Wright maintains 62 IT industry certifications including six from ISC2, seven from GIAC, two from Cisco, two from AWS, three from ISACA, 13 from Microsoft, 13 from CompTIA with another 12 stackable certs from CompTIA, two from OpenEDG, EC Councils Certified Ethical Hacker, and AXELOS ITILv4 Foundations

## WHY DID YOU JOIN THE ARMY NATIONAL GUARD AND CHOOSE CYBER AS YOUR CAREER FIELD?

I joined the Kansas ARNG as a 31B (Military Police), but changed to 96B/35F (Military Intelligence) prior to departing to basic training. I joined to do MP/MI work based on my experience with the Topeka Police Departments Cadet program where I worked with the Crime Stoppers team and a few Detectives who were excellent mentors. I was a “Plank Owner” of the Shawnee Heights High School’s Navy JROTC program where I got my first taste of military life and training to include JROTC/Sea Cadet Damage Control Familiarization training at the Center for Service Support Learning Site in Norfolk, Virginia, while still in High School. I felt the Kansas ARNG was the best way to be able to both support my community while serving in the military. I initially served as an All-Source Intelligence Analyst (96B/35F) where I was subsequently trained in OSINT (open source intelligence), SIGINT (signals intelligence) and some GEOINT (geospatial intelligence). I later began working as an IT Solutions Consultant and picked up the IT Specialist (25B) MOS (military occupational specialty) before Cyber was established as a branch in the Army. I completed an interstate transfer to the Indiana ARNG to join the 127th Cyber Protection Battalion where I subsequently received my direct commissioned.

## HOW DID THIS HAPPEN/ WHAT WAS THE PROCESS YOU HAD TO GO THROUGH?

It is a lengthy process, but the guidance is provided in the Army National Guard (ARNG) Direct Appointments PPOM 20-045 (Personnel Policy Operational Memorandum), which includes a flow chart the Army National Guard folks go through. Basically the process is to apply through proponent with the packet in the format they required. They will screen the packets from candidates then select individuals to conduct phone interviews with. If approved by the board from the phone interview, the candidates are advised if they are continuing to the in-person interview at Fort Gordon, Ga. Once selected by that panel the packets move forward for review and approval by another board, then to DMPM (Director of Military Personnel Management) for approval of the boards selections. The flow diagram is better overview as there are a lot of pieces which differ for those already serving and those who are civilians who have never served. The clearance, commissioning physical, and any waivers etcetera are done at the State-level for those in the guard, they can be worked in parallel to the packet processing with proponent though must all be ready to go before the candidate can appear before the State FEDREC (Federal Recognition) board (See pages 8 and 9 of the PPOM file).

– Cyber Commands Fact Sheet for Cyber Direct Commissioning:

– <https://www.arcyber.army.mil/Info/Fact-Sheets/Fact-Sheet-View-Page/Article/1440683/army-cyber-fact-sheet-army-cyber-direct-commissioning-program/#:~:text=What%20is%20the%20Cyber%20Direct,ranks%20of%20lieutenant%20through%20colonel>.

– Army Direct Commissioning Link: <https://talent.army.mil/direct-commissioning/>

– Army Cyber Direct Commissioning Link Army National Guard: <https://talent.army.mil/job/cyberng/>

– Army Cyber Direct Commissioning Link Active Duty Army: <https://talent.army.mil/job/cyber-officer/>

## WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO OTHER SOLDIERS OR FOLKS CONSIDERING THE ARMY?

I would rather give advice on those seeking to go down this path of Cyber Direct Commissioning. Do not use my background as a gauge on whether to apply or not to apply. If you have a Bachelor’s degree and years of experience, but not a post graduate degree, continue to apply. If you are not selected, don’t give up; if you need more experience, get it then try again after the one-year waiting period, or go through the traditional route of OCS and BOLC to get into Cyber. The training, opportunities and mentorship along the way really help you hone in your skills and passion for the work. If you have a Bachelors in Computer Science or other STEM field and are looking for a way to break into the Cyber industry to get the experience many companies want even for their entry level roles, the Army is a great way to get immersive training and build experience, and if you would rather do it part-time the Army National Guard in your State or a neighboring one is a great avenue as well.

## WHAT ARE YOUR FUTURE GOALS?

Complete a PhD in Computer Science and continue to mentor and grow the Cyber community.

## IS THERE ANYONE YOU'D LIKE TO RECOGNIZE? A ROLE MODEL? OR A FAVORITE QUOTE?

I would like to recognize LTC Rose Gilroy, my 127th CPB commander, and the Indiana Army National Guard command who were instrumental in making the pieces fall into place to allow me to commission especially while on a mobilization. I also would like to recognize Booz Allen Hamilton, my civilian employer, who has continually gone above and beyond to support their Reserve and National Guard service members. Booz Allen has over 5,000 cyber-focused experts and expansive list of opportunities to service members coming off active duty and military spouses with their skill bridging and upskilling opportunities, for those looking to start or continue their Cyber journey (<https://www.boozallen.com/markets/commercial-solutions.html> cite for the Booz Allen numbers if needed). ■





# CYBER SNAPSHOT: CPT Robert Saffell

By 780th Military Intelligence Brigade (Cyber)



FORT GEORGE G. MEADE, Md. – CPT Robert Saffell earned a direct commission from the rank of specialist to the rank of captain to serve as a commissioned cyber officer in the Army National Guard. (Courtesy photo).

*Hometown: Lakeview, Mich.*

*Military Occupational Specialty: Cyber Operations Officer (MOS 17A)*

*Unit: Detachment 1, 176th Cyber Protection Team, Wisconsin Army National Guard.*

#### *QUICK SKETCH:*

- Received a direct commission from the rank of specialist to the rank of captain to serve as a commissioned cyber officer
- Has served in the U.S. Navy and the U.S. Army
- Initially enlisted as a Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Specialist and completed U.S. Navy basic training at Great Lakes, Ill., and U.S. Army Basic Training at Fort Jackson, S.C.

- Graduated from Lakeview High School, Lakeview, Mich.
- Has earned a bachelor's degree in Applied Nuclear Engineering from Thomas Edison State University
- Has earned 13 industry cyber certifications, most notably Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP) and the Global Information Assurance Certification (GIAC) Penetration Tester (GPEN) and Response and Industrial Defense (GRID) certifications
- Previously served on Task Force Echo V, 123rd Cyber Protection Battalion, with the 780th Military Intelligence Brigade (Cyber) in 2021.

## WHY DID YOU JOIN THE ARMY NATIONAL GUARD AND CHOOSE CYBER AS YOUR CAREER FIELD?

I initially joined the guard because I missed the service. I had gone to college after being active duty Navy in 2006 and made the call to come back in six years later. I chose the cyber field because I was getting ready to get out of the military after spending a few years in a CBRN unit and my battalion told me about a Cyber Protection Team they were standing up. I was already working as a developer in my civilian career and when I met the unit, I knew I wanted to be a part of it.

## HOW DID THIS HAPPEN/ WHAT WAS THE PROCESS YOU HAD TO GO THROUGH?

The direct commissioning process is long - my packet took over a year from start to finish, and that's faster than many since I already had a clearance.

- Cyber Commands Fact Sheet for Cyber Direct Commissioning:

- <https://www.arcyber.army.mil/Info/Fact-Sheets/Fact-Sheet-View-Page/Article/1440683/army-cyber-fact-sheet-army-cyber-direct-commissioning-program/#:~:text=What%20is%20the%20Cyber%20Direct,ranks%20of%20lieutenant%20through%20colonel>.

- Army Direct Commissioning Link: <https://talent.army.mil/direct-commissioning/>

- Army Cyber Direct Commissioning Link Army National Guard: <https://talent.army.mil/job/cyberng/>

- Army Cyber Direct Commissioning Link Active Duty Army: <https://talent.army.mil/job/cyber-officer/>

## WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO OTHER SOLDIERS OR FOLKS CONSIDERING THE ARMY?

Take every opportunity to develop yourself – no one will push you to do it. You will always have every reason not to. Time is always precious. But we have so many development resources available that you can use. I see too many people who just left the military, then ask for help finding a good job, and the reality is - the work of finding a job outside starts right after you join the Army. Use every benefit you can get and by the time you are ready to leave, you are prepared to take on a great career immediately.

## WHAT ARE YOUR FUTURE GOALS?

I plan on taking on a CISO role sometime in the next few years and continuing to get better at breaking and building networks..

## IS THERE ANYONE YOU'D LIKE TO RECOGNIZE? A ROLE MODEL? OR A FAVORITE QUOTE?

"Fear is the mind killer." - Dune

A lot of people have really helped me over the years. My parents both set examples with an amazing work ethic and a strong sense of independence. One of my first NCO's in the Navy, MM1/SS (machinist's mate petty officer first class/steamship) Tad Rathbun, taught me volumes about what a good leader looks like. MAJ Clark, MAJ Jongewaard and SFC Gilane all helped me a

ton over the years. CPT Wright is an amazing example and I am fortunate to have met her in this process. MAJ Morgan, CPT Wurzel, CW4 Ben Stephensbailey and CW2 Steven Rivera made this last deployment a fantastic experience. ■





# Task Force Echo VI: NCO Reflections

***SSG Cortell Shaw:***

Joining the Army National Guard was one of the best career decisions I could make. Upon leaving Active Duty in 2007; I was looking for a way to continue to serve my country while growing my technical career. I eventually learned that my State of Georgia implemented a Cyber Protection Team. This team was charged to work in two main capacities; Cybersecurity Incident Response and remediation for State Agencies and Federal Cyber Security support when activated to Active Duty. Being a Computer Forensic Examiner at the time, the opportunity to join a unit capable of this type of mission was strongly aligned with my civilian professional goals. Upon joining the unit, I was able utilize training pipelines and certifications taught by industry leaders that are not easily accessible to the public. This training and real-world missions that I was a part of in the Guard allowed me to have a tactical advantage above my peers. Most recently, I attained my Master's degree in Information Security and Assurance that was paid for by the National Guard.

***SGT Brian Lockwood:***

When I first joined the Indiana National Guard at nineteen years old, I had no idea what I wanted to do for a career in the private sector, or the opportunities and experiences that the Guard has to offer. I enlisted as a 35T, Military Intelligence Systems Maintainer/Integrator and was soon off to fourteen months of training at Fort Sill, OK and Fort Huachuca, AZ. During my training I would receive my security clearance, earn two IT industry certifications, CompTia Network + and Security +, and learn how to maintain and troubleshoot everything from basic electronics to operating systems like Windows and Linux, to networking devices and complex intelligence systems. After returning from my training, I was put on full-time orders at the Indiana Intelligence Center in Indianapolis, IN where I was able to put my new skills to use and support the training of intelligence soldiers from all three components of the Army. Soon after I was offered a position as a DoD contractor

for Army National Guard G2 (ARNG G2), the highest intelligence directorate in the National Guard, where I would get to travel the country and set up classified networks and systems in secure facilities for National Guard units. After the contract was up, I returned to full time orders at the Indiana Intelligence Center where I was able to get certified to be an Army instructor and teach an advanced course on an intelligence system for other 35T's from around the Army. However, soon after starting that position I was offered another contract position with ARNG G2 that I couldn't pass up. In this position, I again get to travel the country and support National Guard units directly, in the field or at their home station, at exercises and other training events, to help them get their intelligence systems operational and mission ready. This position has been extremely fulfilling as I get to help facilitate meaningful training on intelligence systems that soldiers in these units often would not be able to receive without contract support.

Many people join the National Guard for benefits like TriCare Reserve Select, the GI Bill, and the Student Loan Repayment Program, or to challenge themselves physically and academically, and for the chance to serve their country in the armed forces. Being in the National Guard is what you make of it and there are plenty of opportunities that can be taken advantage of to set yourself up for success in your civilian life. There are opportunities to improve leadership skills, challenge yourself, earn your degree, and attend training for civilian credentials at the Professional Education Center (PEC) in Little Rock, AR or through the Army Credentialing Assistance program. This Program offers up to \$4000 a year for soldiers to earn credentials like industry certifications, commercial driver's licenses, a private pilot's license, and college tuition support. These are only some of the benefits afforded by the Guard and after serving for over six years now, I can say that the direction, the opportunities, and the experiences that the Guard has provided me, has certainly set me up for success, both in

and out of the military.

***MSG Harold Brantley:***

Rejoining the National Guard in 2004 was one the best decisions I ever made for my family and my career. The civilian company I worked for at that time was "consolidating" locations and I choose not to move to another state to maintain my job. I always "tinkered" with computers during my off time, but I didn't have any industry recognized experience that I could transition into a good job. At that point I decided I wanted to pursue that interest and turn into a profession. I had two options to accomplish that goal. Pay for college and certifications out of my own pocket or join the National Guard and have them pay for it all. I chose that latter option.

This decision has worked out better than I had hoped. Not only did I get training, certifications, and experience, it all transitioned into good paying jobs in the civilian sector. After my initial 25B MOS training I got a job at the Department of Finance and Accounting Services (DFAS) in 2007 as a contractor. The position was a Tier 3 support/engineer which I held for 6 years.

I then volunteered for the first National Guard Cyber Protection Team in 2013. This assignment lasted 3 years and during that time I acquired the "new" 25D Cyber Network Defender MOS, which allowed to get a better paying contractor position at DFAS, where I serve as the Team Lead for the Cyber Security Service Provider team.

I have acquired my bachelor's degree, multiple industry certifications (SANS, Cisco, CompTIA, Microsoft) all because I rejoined the National Guard at the age of 37 after a 12 year break in service. This in turn has led to improved employment opportunities, better quality of family life and not to mention the Soldiers I have worked with throughout the years. The network of friends, mentors and other IT professionals all started because of a decision I made back in 2004. I will be retiring from the Army very soon and the journey has been worth it and I would do all over again. ■

# Tool Developer Qualification Course Graduation Ceremony for Class 22-10



By 780th Military Intelligence Brigade (Cyber)



**F**ORT MEADE, Md. – Soldiers, Family and Friends celebrated the accomplishments of Class 2022 after they successfully completed the graduation requirements for the 780th Military Intelligence Brigade (Cyber) Tool Developer Qualification Course (TDQC) in a ceremony hosted by Major Charles Suslowicz, Brigade Cyber Solutions Development, at the Post Theater, July 13.

The ceremony recognized the achievements of seven enlisted Soldiers from the 780th MI and 704th MI Brigades, and a Marine captain representing U.S. Marine Corps Forces Cyberspace Command (MARFORCYBER) who each completed the 11-month TDQC program taught in partnership with University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC).

TDQC is an intense 35-and-a-half-week education program that was originally designed within the 780th Military Intelligence Brigade. The goal behind the development of the TDQC was to design a progressive education curriculum where students were evaluated based upon how well they could complete individual programming assignments. This

thought process ensures that a graduate of the program has enough training and experience to allow them to integrate into a work center and be a productive member of a team with minimal oversight and mentorship being required. Its purpose is to educate individuals who have little to no computer programming experience that have been identified through an assessment as having an aptitude and desire to become a computer programmer.

The Brigade partnered with the UMBC Training Center to build out the course curriculum and provide the instruction. The course was designed to be taught using a phased approach of three training blocks that span approximately 11-months. Administrative time is scheduled between each phase to provide the students an opportunity to decompress, take leave, and maintain their general military standards.

Graduates of the TDQC are proficient to an intermediate level in creating programs using the C and Python computer programming languages. The TDQC provides an education path for individuals to become experienced at approximately 90 percent of the identified critical developer requirements that an

individual must be able to articulate and demonstrate through practical application to be certified as a Cyberspace Solution Engineer.

A Cyberspace Solution Engineer is a versatile, highly trained individual responsible for the analysis of system vulnerabilities, product research, cyberspace solution development, documentation, and implementation of software and hardware solutions that operate in and through cyberspace and serve as a force multiplier for maneuver forces.

This graduation marks the tenth successful iteration of the TDQC.

#### **Cohort 10 TDQC Graduates:**

SGT Davis Preston, D Co, 781st MI BN  
SGT Johan DeJesus, D Co, 781st MI BN  
SGT Rudolph Esterberg, B Co, 781st MI BN \*

SGT Austin Harris, B Co, 781st MI BN \*\*  
SGT Kameryn Knight, E Co, 782nd MI BN

SGT Adam Matthes, A Co, 741st MI BN  
SSG Mark Workman, HHC, 780th MI BDE

Capt Jon Butler, MARFORCYBER

\* Distinguished Honor Graduate

\*\* Honor Graduate

For more information on TDQC visit <https://news.umbc.edu/u-s-army-cyber-center-of-excellence-selects-umbc-training-centers-to-design-a-cyber-curriculum-for-soldiers/>. ■





# CYBER SNAPSHOT: SGT Rudy Esterberg

By 780th Military Intelligence Brigade (Cyber)



FORT GEORGE G. MEADE, Md. – Sgt. Rudy Esterberg is a Cyber Operations Specialist (Military Occupational Specialty 17C) assigned to B Company, 781st Military Intelligence (MI) Battalion (Cyber), 780th MI Brigade (Cyber). Esterberg was named Distinguished Honor Graduate for the Tool Developer Qualification Course (TDQC), Cohort 10. TDQC is an 11-month education program taught in partnership with University of Maryland Baltimore County Training Center. Graduates of the TDQC are proficient to an intermediate level in creating programs using the C and Python computer programming languages.

Hometown: Oregon City, Ore.

Military Occupational Specialty (MOS): Cyber Operations Specialist (MOS 17C)

Unit: B Company, 781st Military Intelligence Battalion (Cyber), 780th Military Intelligence Brigade (Cyber), Fort George G. Meade, Md.

## QUICK SKETCH:

- Was named Distinguished Honor Graduate for the Tool Developer Qualification Course (TDQC), Cohort 10. TDQC is an 11-month education program taught in partnership with University of Maryland Baltimore County Training Center. Graduates of the TDQC are proficient to an intermediate level in creating programs using the C and Python computer programming languages.

- Graduate of Oregon City High School
- Completed Basic Combat Training at Fort Jackson, S.C.
- Completed Advanced Individual Training at the Joint Cyber Analysis Course at Information Warfare Training Command Corry Station in Pensacola, Fla. JCAC trains personnel from all services to a common joint standard in the skills and knowledge needed to perform technical network analysis in cyberspace operations.

## ON WHY HE CHOSE THE ARMY:

“I’ve been interested in computers since I was a kid. Once I learned about cyber being a career field within the Army, I researched it and decided it would be an awesome job.”

## ON WHAT HE LIKED MOST ABOUT THE TOOL DEVELOPER QUALIFICATION COURSE:

“I think the best part about the course is the instructors. They were very knowledgeable and would always do their best to help the students, which created a great learning environment.”

## ON HIS INTERESTS:

“Coding and information theory are fundamental to computation and I enjoy learning about them. Specifically, cryptography and data compression are very interesting topics to me.” ■

# CYBER SNAPSHOT: SGT Austin Harris

By 780th Military Intelligence Brigade (Cyber)



FORT GEORGE G. MEADE, Md. – Sgt. Austin Harris is a Cyber Operations Specialist (Military Occupational Specialty 17C) assigned to B Company, 781st Military Intelligence Battalion.

*Hometown: San Antonio, Texas*

*Military Occupational Specialty: Cyber Operations Specialist ( MOS 17C)*

*Unit: B Company, 781st Military Intelligence Battalion (Cyber), 780th Military Intelligence Brigade (Cyber), Fort George G. Meade, Md.*

*Duty position: Cyber Operations Specialist.*

## QUICK SKETCH:

- Earned the title of Honor Graduate for the Tool Developer Qualification Course (TDQC), Cohort 10. TDQC is an 11-month education program taught in partnership with the University of Maryland Baltimore County Training Center that provides students with intermediate-level proficiency in creating programs using the C and Python computer programming languages.
- 2011 graduate of James I. O'Neill High School, West Point, N.Y.
- Completed Basic Combat Training at Fort Jackson, S.C.
- Graduated from Advanced Individual Training at the Joint Cyber Analysis Course, taught at the Center for Information Warfare Training at Corry Station in Pensacola, Fla. The JCAC is designed to train members of all services to a common joint standard in subjects such as computer fundamentals, programming, forensic methodology and malware analysis.

## ON WHY HE CHOSE THE ARMY:

"I joined the Army primarily because my father was in. Coming from a military family, I had a lot of insight into the opportunities and the proud tradition the Army represents. It was something I was excited to be a part of for myself. I chose a Cyber career (though at the time, it wasn't Cyber but rather a subset of Military Intelligence) because I considered myself to be technically inclined and hoped to find a role that I was strong in. I ended up finding a lifelong passion in the field."

## ON WHY HE CHOSE TO ATTEND THE TOOL DEVELOPER QUALIFICATION COURSE:

"I found myself reaching and researching programming more and more in the course of my regular duties and enjoyed it far more than the other work I was doing. I decided that I wanted to pursue the opportunity to develop myself more in that area and do work that I had come to enjoy immensely."

## ON WHAT HE LIKED MOST ABOUT THE TOOL DEVELOPER QUALIFICATION COURSE:

"I loved the depth the course provided. The instructors were all highly skilled and taught not only the 'how' of programming but also the mechanics happening underneath. The weekly projects were technically demanding and required a solid understanding of the material rather than surface-level knowledge. It was a rigorous course that challenged me and gave me the depth and breadth of knowledge I would have trouble acquiring anywhere else."

## ON HIS FUTURE GOALS:

"I plan to finish my BS in Computer Science and work on an MS in Machine Learning and AI. Beyond that, I want to qualify as quickly as possible, so I can start working on Army projects and continue developing myself further as a programmer." ■



## Ready and Resilient

"People are the Army. They are our greatest strength, our most important weapon system." GEN James C. McConville, Chief of Staff United States Army.

<https://www.armyresilience.army.mil/>

Ready and Resilient is the Army's strategy for strengthening individual and unit personal readiness by providing training and resources to the Army Family.

"For those who haven't heard me say this, creating a climate and culture where you all look forward to coming to work every day is my top priority. I truly believe if we can accomplish that, it makes everything else we want/need to do that much easier." COL Ben Sangster, Commander, 780th MI BDE (Cyber)



FORT GEORGE G. MEADE, Md – Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 780th Military Intelligence Brigade (Cyber) supported the U.S. Army's Vigilant Wellness, a program which promotes holistic wellness by bringing everyone in the organization together, at Burba Lake Park, July 29.



FORT GEORGE G. MEADE, Md – The Brigade chaplain and Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC) co-led a discussion on Trust and Forgiveness as part of the U.S. Army #INSCOM Holistic Wellness program at Argonne Hills Chapel, August 12.





AUGUSTA, Ga.- Soldiers and Family members in the 782d Military Intelligence Brigade (Cyber) participated in a kayak trip on the Augusta Canal and, along with plenty of time for fellowship, received a resiliency message from Chaplain (CPT) Josh Calmes, battalion chaplain, as part of the U.S. Army's Vigilant Wellness program, August 5.





BELLOWS AIR FORCE STATION, Hawaii – Aloha! More than 100 Kopiana Soldiers, Civilians and Family members from Detachment Hawaii, 782d Military Intelligence Battalion (Cyber), participated in an organizational day, July 29. Great fun was had by all on one of the best beaches O'ahu has to offer where the white sands and Ohana created lasting memories!





LACKLAND AFB, Texas - Detachment Texas, 782d Military Intelligence Battalion (Cyber), participated in a morale building event at Stillman Park as part of the U.S. Army Vigilant Wellness Program. This month's event focused on Family members in preparation for going "back to school" and included Family games, school supply donations, potluck style meals, and a brief on resiliency from our MFLC liaison, Ms. Cobb.



HALETHORPE, Md - The 780th Military Intelligence Brigade (Cyber) Unit Ministry Team hosted a senior/key leaders' resilience training event at Patapsco State Park, September 9, to enable the leaders to engage in physical, mental, and spiritual activities for their overall wellness.





FORT GEORGE G. MEADE, Md – Congratulations to J.R, SSG Cottrille, SGT Shingara, SPC Lantchible, SPC Peterson, and PFC Adams from the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 780th Military Intelligence Brigade (Cyber), for completing the Basic Combatives Course conducted by the 741st Military Intelligence Battalion from August 21 to 26.



FORT GEORGE G. MEADE, Md. – Congratulations to SSG Wesley Smith, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 780th Military Intelligence Brigade (Cyber), on his promotion to staff sergeant, August 5.



FORT GEORGE G. MEADE, Md. – Soldiers and Civilians with the 780th Military Intelligence Brigade (Cyber) support the U.S. Army Intelligence and Security Virtual Civilian Career Fair from the Brigade Annex, August 11.







FORT GEORGE G. MEADE, Md. – First Sergeant Marcel Gonzalez, the senior enlisted leader and 'Keeper of the Colors' for D Company (Daemons), 781st Military Intelligence Battalion (Cyber), stands in front of his unit formation during a change of command ceremony at the Army Reserve Center, June 16.



FORT GEORGE G. MEADE, Md. – Sergeant First Class Luis Osejo, the senior enlisted leader and 'Keeper of the Colors' for E Company (Eternals), 781st Military Intelligence Battalion (Cyber), stands in front of his unit formation during a change of command ceremony on the Parade Field, August 2.



ELKRIDGE, Md. – Soldiers and Civilians from the 781st Military Intelligence Battalion (Cyber), 780th MI Brigade (Cyber), hosted Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) Cadets Aaron Hale (black shirt) from Virginia Tech and David Nayback from Michigan Tech University as part of the U.S. Army Cyber Command ROTC Summer Internship program. The battalion team mentored the cadets in their headquarters complex during the internship from July 30 to August 19. Nayback and Hale said they plan to branch Cyber in the Army and are interested in serving in the only active-duty offensive cyberspace operations brigade.







FORT GEORGE G. MEADE, Md. – The 781st Military Intelligence Battalion (Cyber) Commander's Cup is an annual event where the battalion's companies compete in various events. Points for each event are added up at the end of the year and the company with the most points wins the Commander's Cup trophy, Streamer, and bragging rights for the year – and the bragging rights for 2022-2023 is awarded to... Bravo Company (Immortals)!





FORT GORDON, Ga. – Before and after photos of Command Sergeant Major Sam Crislip, the senior enlisted leader of the 782d Military Intelligence Battalion (Cyber), and his daughter from the run Fort Gordon Color Run 5k, August 13. Cyber Legion Silent Victory!



FORT GORDON, Ga. –The 782d MI BN (Cyber) conducted close out activities prior to the Labor Day holiday weekend that included participating in the cyber school birthday run, a barrack walkthrough, safety brief and awards ceremony. Conducted at Freedom Park, the battalion awarded civilians, junior enlisted, NCOs, warrant officers and officers awards that included Army and Civilian Achievement Medals, Army and Civilian Commendation Medals, Air Force Achievement Medals, Brigade and Battalion Coins and Certificates of Achievement. The Cyber Legion continue to conduct cyberspace operations in support of United States Cyber Command objectives. Cyber Legion, Silent Victory!





FORT GORDON, Ga. – Alpha Company, 915th Cyber Warfare Battalion Change of Responsibility Ceremony from outgoing Company First Sergeant, 1SG Carlos De La Cruz to incoming Company First Sergeant, 1SG Adam Rhodes at Signal Theater, May 24.



AUGUSTA, Ga. – The 915th Cyber Warfare Battalion hosted a redeployment reception for SSG Tadd Hooks, B Company, 915th CWB at the Augusta Regional Airport, June 1.



AUGUSTA, Ga. – The 915th Cyber Warfare Battalion hosted a redeployment reception for SSG Alexander Lecea and SGT Austin Kaplan, A Company, 915th CWB at the Augusta Regional Airport, June 8.





FORT GORDON, Ga. – The 915th Cyber Warfare Battalion hosted a reenlistment ceremony for SSG Joshua Massey, B Company, 915th CWB; a promotion ceremony for SGT Jonathan Brochinsky, A Company, 915th CWB; an award presentation for 1LT Guibel Marino, A Co., 915th CWB, for saving a service member's life at the Georgia Cyber Center; at the 915th CWB Headquarters, July 8.



FORT GORDON, Ga. – SFC Jonathan Lowe, 915th Cyber Warfare Battalion, was presented with the Order of Thor by CW3 Reginal Hall, 3rd Security Force Assistance Brigade, August 2. SFC Lowe, a 25D Network Defender, was awarded this distinguished award for his vast contributions to the Army and Cyber Corps. The Order of Thor is an individual award given by the Military Cyber Professionals Association recognizing service and contributions by members of the community that demonstrate values of duty, loyalty, and excellence, as well as has made special contributions to the military cyber profession.





Hephzibah, Ga. – CPL Alexander Reed and a team of BOSS volunteers worked with the 915th Cyber Warfare Battalion and Company SFRGs (Soldier, Family Readiness Groups) to put on a Back-To-School School Supply Drive for the children at Diamond Lakes Elementary School. On August 1, there were over 2,000 items donated from Soldiers and Family Members that went directly to the elementary school.





## *Charge to the Newly Promoted Noncommissioned Officer*



*I will discharge carefully and diligently the duties of the grade to which I have been promoted and uphold the traditions and standards of the Army.*



*I understand that Soldiers of lesser rank are required to obey my lawful orders. Accordingly, I accept responsibility for their actions. As a noncommissioned officer, I accept the charge to observe and follow orders and directions given by supervisors acting according to the laws, articles and rules governing the discipline of the Army. I will correct conditions detrimental to the readiness thereof. In doing so, I will fulfill my greatest obligation as a leader and thereby confirm my status as a noncommissioned officer.*





**N**EXT QUARTER'S BYTE IS focused on the Army Civilian. As in other issues of the BYTE magazine, the command encourages your contribution to drive the Cyber and Information Advantage conversation. If you have an article to share, write a synopsis and send it to [steven.p.stover.civ@army.mil](mailto:steven.p.stover.civ@army.mil) NLT November 15, 2022. Final articles are due November 30.

