

# THE NCO JOURNAL

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A MONTHLY FORUM FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



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New Basic  
Combat  
Training**  
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**SMA Gates:**  
It's all about  
the training  
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## ON THE COVER

Pvt. Kyle Hiura, an infantry recruit with D Company, 2nd Battalion, 58th Infantry Regiment, 198th Infantry Brigade, Fort Benning, Ga., takes aim with the M4 during Basic Rifle Marksmanship pre-qualification.

Photo Credit: Kristin Molinaro



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*sacrificed their lives in current operations*  
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**THE NCO**  
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## From the SGM

# The Leader's role in removing mental health stigma

Sgt. Maj. Sheldon W. Chandler  
Task Force Marne

“What do you mean, first sergeant? You're kidding me; there are military police and an ambulance in front of his house right now? I'll be right there! I can't believe it; Specialist Jones just killed himself. How did I miss it? I knew he had some issues when we redeployed, but he was one to suck it up and drive on. He was a good Soldier; I didn't want to screw him over and let the commander think he was some 'nutcase.'”

Unfortunately, scenarios like this play out in the Army almost every day, leaving leaders and fellow Soldiers filled with guilt.

The impact of combat, multiple deployments, family separations and a lack of coping skills is taking its toll on our Soldiers and their families. It is the obligation of leaders across the Army to dedicate our collective efforts to remove the stigma associated with seeking out behavioral health treatment. While there is no magic answer to preventing suicide, as leaders, we can mitigate the possibilities by concerning ourselves with primarily three things: develop a meaningful relationship of trust with our subordinates; be aware of the indicators of suicide and not be timid in asking the hard questions like, “Are you thinking of killing yourself?”; and foster an organizational climate that is free of criticism for those seeking assistance.

The three greatest barriers Soldiers face in seeking out mental health treatment are shame, fear of jeopardizing their careers and lack of trust in their leadership when their personal issues are shared outside the chain of command. It is imperative leaders across the Army at all levels inculcate the fact that it is encouraged to seek assistance. To coach, teach and mentor Soldiers to ask for help should be no different than teaching Warrior Tasks and Battle Drills.

In order to reduce the stigma we must embrace the fact that Soldiers' mental health is equally as important — if not *more* important — as their physical readiness. To remove the stigma of seeking out assistance, we must first eliminate the bravado associated with normal Army life. Leaders have heard it all: “Hooah, sergeant; I'm good.” “You know me, I don't sweat the small stuff.” Or my favorite, “See the shrink? I'm not nuts.” It is crucial we don't accept these kinds of responses, that we sit down and listen to our Soldiers and know unequivocally when something is out of place.

Senior leaders within the Army are leading the charge, from fundamental policy changes and revising regulatory guidance, to reducing the stigma associated with mental health issues. Although leaders at all levels of the Army are implementing change, the most critical change needed is to our culture. It is imperative we change the misconceptions associated with Soldiers seeking assistance and reaching out to their leaders and fellow Soldiers

for help. Unless we shift the misguided belief and make positive strides in our Army culture, “stigma can render suicide prevention efforts ineffective unless elements are incorporated into the program to counter these destructive attitudes” (AR 600-24).

The Army is committed to decreasing the stigma associated with seeking help, to improving access to care and to incorporating suicide prevention training into all training programs.

In fiscal year 2009, 239 Soldiers from the active and reserve components took their own lives. More staggering, another 1,713 Soldiers attempted suicide. Over the last three years, there have been more than 450 confirmed suicide cases in the Army, according to CNN statistics.

In October 2008, the Army partnered with the National Institute of Mental Health to begin a five-year, \$50 million research program into the factors behind Soldier suicides and how to prevent them. In addition to hiring new mental health experts, the Army focused its efforts on the creation of the Comprehensive Soldier Fitness and Master Resilience Training programs. For it to be successful, organizational leadership must be willing to let our best leaders, with the right skill sets and the right personalities, take the time to attend this training. We cannot afford to simply give up any name for another Army tasking; we must send our very best.

In 2009, we passed the line of departure in moving out for this important mission by sending 150 extremely capable sergeants and family members to the University of Pennsylvania as the inaugural class of master resilience trainers. The Army's goal in 2010 is to have a master resilience trainer in every battalion across the Army. Master resilience trainers will be extremely valuable tools in sharing the knowledge and wisdom of this specialized training and be the lead echelon of a full-frontal attack on preventing suicides in our Army.

As leaders, our Army needs us now more than ever in order to combat one of the most catastrophic challenges of our careers. We must come armed not with a basic load of ammunition, but the knowledge and empathy necessary to support and lead our Soldiers in their time of need. Educating our formations on the importance of behavioral health and removing stigma can save a Soldier's life.

Compassionate leadership, support and education will result in our Soldiers seeking help without the worries of shame, criticism or negative impacts on their career. Vehicles, such as NCO and officer professional development programs and family readiness group meetings, not only train our Soldiers, but also our Army families. Leaders provided with the opportunity to attend any level of resilience training should seek out the opportunity and pass on the knowledge to their seniors, peers and subordinates. It is critical we learn and grow together in order to maximize our effectiveness within our ranks and overcome this critical issue.

## Our Thoughts

# Honor the past, support the future: Vote.

We as a nation are quickly coming upon the midterm elections, where many states will elect senators, congressmen, governors, state and local representatives, and city leaders. One cannot turn a television on these days without seeing some sort of paid political ad espousing one candidate or another. By the time of the actual election, many of us will be happy to see those ads go away – what with all the bashing, grandstanding and calculated twists of the English language. But, that is the way we do things in America. Fortunately or unfortunately, these candidates don't get elected just by placing their name on a ballot or spending millions of dollars in advertising. They get elected by citizens exercising their right to vote.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt, the 32nd president of the United States, once said, "Nobody will ever deprive the American people of the right to vote except the American people themselves; and the only way they could do this is by not voting."

The latter part of his quote is exactly what many Americans do today with their fundamental right – that is, not using it to its fullest potential.

We as Americans have had the freedom to vote for the person(s) of our liking since the beginning of our great nation. Sure, there were some adjustments that had to be made to guarantee everyone the right to vote – the 15th and 19th Amendments made sure of that. But as a general rule, Americans have been able to exercise their right to vote freely.

That is not the case in other countries. Considering the audience reading this opinion piece, how many of you were part of the security force in Iraq during the recent elections? Can you say unequivocally that the elections would have gone smoothly without your presence?

Think of the people of China, North Korea, Cuba and other countries where military regimes have a stronghold on the law of the land and intimidate voters through terrorism or other threats of violence in order to stay in power. How many other countries are affected by election and voter fraud?

Things like that are not the norm in the United States; the people won't stand for it. Americans know the price of freedom and their right to vote and they will not give that up without a fight. Unfortunately, it sometimes takes something along the lines of denying someone the right to vote to get the populace to stand up and be counted these days.

Americans often take this right for granted and fail to exercise it more times than not. Looking at national voter turnout statistics between 1960 and 2008, one can clearly see that the right to vote

is not exercised by many. The last time America saw more than 60 percent of its citizens vote in a presidential election was in 1968. Since then, the best we have been able to muster is 56.8 percent in 2008 when our current commander in chief was elected.

Turnout is even worse for midterm elections, many times dropping nearly 20 percent. That means, at best, 37 percent of registered voters are making the choices for the rest of the country. That's nowhere close to a majority, yet we live in a nation where the majority rules when it comes to establishing laws and policies.

If voters are this unconcerned about presidential and midterm elections, what does that mean for state and local elections? Are these statistics comparable in these elections as well?

I was recently in Maryland and had the opportunity to view the primary election results for a small county located on the western shores of Chesapeake Bay. They were choosing who would run for governor, comptroller, county commissioner, sheriff and other county positions of trust. This county has a population of more than 55,800 registered voters. However, only 22.66 percent of them exercised that right. Where does your state stand?

Those who serve in the military have helped protect Americans' right to vote for more than 235 years. As such, I believe it is your inherent duty to ensure you exercise your right to vote. It may be too late to cast an absentee ballot. But for those who are stateside and can do so, you should cherish your ability to make your voice and your choices heard by casting that precious vote.

The same goes to all of our civilians. Your service as a Department of the Army civilian, or working for Morale Welfare and Recreation or the Army and Air Force Exchange Service, makes you part of the guardians of freedom; your voice is just as important.

So, don't give away your right to vote by not going to the polls on Election Day, or not casting your absentee ballot ahead of time. If you don't, you will rob yourself of your voice, allow others the ability to choose for you and lose your ability to speak out with the authority of your registered vote.

The time is quickly fading away for those of you who have not registered to vote. Soon, those who have taken the steps to make their voices heard will choose for you. Do you really want others to make the decision for you?

Abraham Lincoln once said, "Thanks to our good old Constitution, and organization under it ... the country only needs that every right thinking man shall go to the polls, and without fear or prejudice, vote as he thinks."

Voting keeps the Army Strong. 



*David Crozier*  
Editor

# Female-only combat uniform coming in 2014

## Army News Service

Female Soldiers may be wearing a more form-fitting version of the Army Combat Uniform by 2014, according to developers at Program Executive Office Soldier.

PEO Soldier, which develops and tests new equipment for the Army, held focus groups of female Soldiers in 2008. The women reported several features of the ACU bothered them, including oversized shoulder seams, baggy overall shape and its non-curve-friendly fit.

“Women have so many different shapes and sizes. We’re not as ‘straight’ as men are,” said Maj. Sequana Robinson, assistant product manager for uniforms at PEO Soldier, who is currently testing one of the female-only ACUs.

Robinson admitted that when she first heard of the new test uniform, she doubted the need for a female fit.

“Once I put the uniform on, I immediately loved it,” she said.

Changes being evaluated in PEO’s re-designed uniform include 13 sizes in both the jacket and trousers, an elastic waistband, a more spacious hip area, a shortened crotch length, a more tailored jacket and re-positioned rank and name tapes.

About 500 women were measured to determine needed adjustments, and 600 female Soldiers are slotted to receive the uniform for a user evaluation starting in January, said Kelly Fratelli, the project engineer responsible for the women’s ACU.

Once the uniform has been evaluated, it will need to be approved by the Army Uniform Board before being issued.



# 16 new primary care clinics to bring health care to families

## Army News Service

Active-duty family members who live near some Army installations soon will have an additional option for health care.

Medical Command will open 16 community-based primary care clinics near 11 installations: Fort Bragg, N.C.; Fort Hood, Texas; Fort Campbell, Ky.; Fort Jackson, S.C.; Fort Leonard Wood, Mo.; Fort Lewis, Wash.; Fort Sam Houston, Texas; Fort Sill, Okla.; Fort Shafter, Hawaii; Fort Stewart, Ga.; and Fort Benning, Ga.

Twelve clinics are expected to open for patient care between early November and late January, with the remainder opening later in 2011. If the concept proves beneficial, clinics may be added at other locations in the future, officials said.

The clinics will be in leased space staffed with civilian employees. They will be an expansion of available care, not a shifting of care from the post hospital.

“We expect to improve access, reduce emergency room visits, improve patient and provider satisfaction, and improve the quality of care both on- and off-post,” said Col. Marcus Cronk, deputy chief of staff for resource management for Medical Command. “This effort will improve the readiness of our Army.”

Each clinic will be able to enroll more than 8,000 active-duty family members.

“Beneficiaries who are enrolled in TRICARE Prime won’t have to re-enroll, just say they want to get care at that clinic. It is totally their option, they can still get care at the post medical treatment facility or can go to a TRICARE network provider,” said Maj. Chad Rodarmer, who is working on the project in Medical Command’s directorate of resource management.

Rodarmer said the clinics will provide pharmacy and laboratory services focused on a primary-care setting. Obstetrics, gynecology and pediatric services may be provided when needed, with a specialist from the installation’s medical treatment facility coming to the off-post clinic.

The clinics will be part of the Army direct-care system, an extension of the medical treatment facility on the installation, he said. One advantage is that when a family transfers to another post, electronic medical records will be forwarded to the facility at the new assignment, facilitating continuity of care through the move.

The community-based clinics will employ a patient-centered medical home model of health care.

“The concept emphasizes continuity of care and a culture of trust through developing a strong patient-provider relationship,” Rodarmer said.

# Wanted: Junior NCOs as Rangers

## The Bayonet

The Ranger Training Brigade is looking for a growth spurt in the ranks.

Facing critical shortages across the Army, the unit has cranked up a recruiting campaign to lure more candidates to Ranger School, especially at the junior noncommissioned officer level.

Lt. Col. Kyle Feger, the RTB's deputy commander, said the brigade needs more staff sergeants to serve as Ranger instructors. So, it's seeking out junior NCOs to volunteer for Ranger School in an effort to create better-trained combat leaders and fill Armywide vacancies.

"The RTB is currently filling just over half of its authorized number of Ranger-qualified staff sergeants and having to rely more heavily on sergeants first class for Ranger instructors," he said.

Command Sgt. Maj. Dennis Smith, the RTB's command sergeant major, said the Army has only 850 infantry staff sergeants with Ranger tabs — and about 2,100 slots available. Excluding the RTB and 75th Ranger Regiment, that gap is even more pronounced, he said.

Ranger candidates must be highly motivated, extremely physically fit, pos-



sess solid baseline knowledge of small-unit tactics and must pass a medical screening.

He said "high-risk training" takes place nearly every day within the RTB, including airborne, air assault, mountain and waterborne operations.

Rangers get only three to five hours of sleep at training, depending on their performance, and eat just two MREs a day about — 2,000 to 3,000 calories. They also must deal with extreme weather conditions.

"Becoming a Ranger-qualified leader in our Army today is an awesome achievement," Feger said.

Male Soldiers in the ranks of specialist and above are eligible. The combat exclusion clause remains in effect, so female Soldiers cannot attend.

Personnel in the grade of E-3 not assigned to the 75th Ranger Regiment or Ranger Training Brigade must submit a request for waiver through his chain of command. While it's not mandatory for Ranger School, about 80 percent of each class is Airborne-qualified.

Ranger training runs 61 days, and includes a Ranger Assessment Phase featuring a physical fitness test, combat water survival instruction, obstacle course, land navigation and 15-mile marches. Candidates must also demonstrate technical and tactical competence on graded patrols such as reconnaissance and ambush.

**Information:** <https://www.benning.army.mil/rtb/>

# Program helps wounded continue to serve

## Army News Service

The Army's Continue on Active Duty or Active Reserve programs provide an opportunity for many severely wounded, injured and ill Soldiers to continue to serve in the Army on active-duty or on active reserve.

*Stand To!*, a daily compilation of news and information for Army leaders, provides the following background on the program:

The Army wants Soldiers to have the option of continuing their service, despite severity of wounds, injury or illness. Soldiers who are severely wounded in action and later found unfit for duty by a physical evaluation board or medical evaluation board may still apply for Continuation on Active Duty or Active Reserve regardless of the extent of their injuries.

**To be eligible for COAD/COAR, a Soldier must meet at least one of the following requirements:**

- Has served 15-20 years of service for COAD or 15-20 qualifying years of service for non-regular retirement for COAR
- Is qualified in a critical skill or shortage military occupational specialty

- Has a disability as a result of combat or terrorism

### Why is this important to the Army?

The Army recognizes the skills, strengths and sacrifices that severely wounded, injured and ill Soldiers have contributed to the Army and realizes that these wounded warriors can continue to contribute their numerous skills and talents to the fight.

The Army is stronger when inclusive of our wounded warriors.

### More about AW2 and COAD/COAR

More than 180 AW2 advocates assist and support an expanding population of 8,000-plus severely wounded, injured and ill AW2 Soldiers, veterans and their families 'for as long as it takes.'

Advocates are located throughout the country and overseas where there are large concentrations of AW2 Soldiers at VA polytrauma centers, VA facilities, military treatment facilities and most Army military installations. Advocates provide assistance with day-to-day issues in recovery, as well as longer-term decisions, such as choosing to remain in the Army or to medically retire.

**Information:** Army Wounded Warrior Program Call Center, 1-800-237-1336.

# First class of UAS maintainers graduates

Army News Service →

The Unmanned Aircraft Systems Training Battalion graduated its first class of 15E UAS maintainers Sept. 24, adding a new military occupational specialty to the Army.

Fort Huachuca, Ariz., is now home to the MOS 15E. Soldiers in the new MOS maintain UASs, such as the Shadow, Grey Eagle (EMRP) and Hunter (MQ-5B).

The 17-week course consists of seven different modules, after which Soldiers take their training to the flight line.

“They learn how to use the basic tools and all that the job requires ... and learn the whole system as well as the aircraft itself,” explained Sgt. 1st Class Jeff Jenkins, Headquarters and Headquarters

Company, UASTB instructor.

“We’re pretty much like a back up for the 15W (operators),” added Pvt. Stephan Thomas, Company A, UASTB. Thomas is part of the first class to graduate from the course. “We help them out on the line and make sure everything is going smoothly.”

Soldiers learn about the Shadow, which is currently the base system. Depending on the Army’s needs, the Soldiers can move on to other courses at Fort Huachuca that teach the other systems.

Before the Army developed the 15E MOS, Sgt. 1st Class Jimmie Jones, HHC, UASTB instructor, said 52D power-generation equipment repairers, 35T military intelligence system repairers and other 15 series MOSs maintained the UASs.

**Information:** [www.army.mil/huachuca](http://www.army.mil/huachuca)



U.S. Army Photo

Soldiers from the Unmanned Aircraft System Training Battalion inspect a Shadow UAS before its launch during a field training exercise at Fort Huachuca, Ariz.

## ACE: Ask, Care, Escort

ACE cards and other suicide training materials are available to all units.

**USAPHC online shopping cart:**  
<http://phc.amedd.army.mil/home/>

**Military One Source:**  
 1-800-342-9647

# ACE suicide prevention listed on ‘best practices’

Army News Service →

The Army ACE Suicide Intervention Training Program, developed by U.S. Army Public Health Command (Provisional) behavioral health experts, was evaluated by a panel of suicide prevention experts and is now listed in the Suicide Prevention Resource Center and American Foundation Best Practice Registry for Suicide Prevention.

The best practices registry is an independent organization supported by a grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Three suicide prevention experts reviewed the ACE suicide intervention program and found that it met standards of accuracy, safety, adherence to prevention program guidelines and likelihood of meeting the goals and objectives of the National Strategy for Suicide Prevention.

ACE was created in response to an Army leadership request to develop a Soldier-specific suicide intervention skills

training support package for Armywide distribution, according to James Cartwright, a social worker with the USAPHC Directorate of Health Promotion and Wellness.

ACE is a four-hour training that provides Soldiers with the awareness, knowledge and skills necessary to intervene with those at risk for suicide. It includes suicide awareness, warning signs, risk factors and intervention skills development.

ACE stands for “Ask, Care and Escort.” It encourages Soldiers to directly and honestly question any battle buddy who exhibits suicidal behavior. The Soldier should *ask* the battle buddy whether he or she is suicidal, *care* for the battle buddy and *escort* the battle buddy to the source of professional help.

ACE program materials include a trainer’s manual, PowerPoint slides with embedded video messages, suicide prevention tip cards listing risk factors and warning signs for suicide, and ACE wallet cards (with simple directions for identifying and intervening with those at risk).

# AIT Platoon Sergeant of the Year Named

## TRADOC Public Affairs

Staff Sgt. Amanda Kokkonen has been named the 2010 Advanced Individual Training Platoon Sergeant of the Year.

Kokkonen is an AIT platoon sergeant with Alpha Company, 344th Military Intelligence Battalion, Goodfellow Air Force Base, in San Angelo, Texas.

"I'm very taken aback ... there were a lot of good competitors and it was great to know that I was competing against AIT platoon sergeants who strive for excellence every day," she said.

Kokkonen was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal during a military ceremony in September hosted by Command Sgt. Maj. John R. Calpena, senior enlisted

adviser for Initial Military Training, and Lt. Gen. Mark P. Hertling, deputy commanding general for Initial Military Training, U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command. The victory came on the same week of Kokkonen's birthday and her seventh anniversary of entering the Army.

The August competition featured dozens of events, including Warrior Tasks and Battle Drills testing, written exams, physical exercises, combatives and a board interview by senior noncommissioned officers.

"I'm going to make an active impact on AIT platoon sergeants and be an active voice of a standard and what should change and what should improve about our AIT environment," she said.



Photo by Frank Brown, TRADOC Public Affairs  
AIT Platoon Sergeant of the Year 2010 Staff Sgt. Amanda Kokkonen, center, with Lt. Gen. Mark P. Hertling, deputy commanding general for Initial Military Training, left, and Command Sgt. Maj. John R. Calpena, Initial Military Training senior enlisted adviser.

# Iraq clinic dedicated to fallen NCO

## Army News Service

The new Combat Stress Clinic on the American base at Basra International Airport in Iraq has been named in honor of Sgt. Brandon Maggart, who was killed in a rocket attack in August.

Maggart was killed in action at the age of 24 while serving with Battery A, 5th Battalion, 5th Air Defense Artillery Regiment. Posthumously, he was awarded a Bronze Star Medal, Purple Heart and many other medals.

The clinic, which was recently refurbished, provides a place for Soldiers to meet with mental health professionals to deal with the stress that comes with operating in a combat zone. Controlling stress is an important part of the military's overall fitness, and the support center aims to help Soldiers cope.

The renovations, under the direction of Sgt. Sonja Young, a behavioral health technician with the 162nd Area Medical Support Group, were completed the day before the attack.

Lt. Col. Pamela Breedlove, the commander of the Combat Stress Clinic, said Maggart's leadership was the reason behind his name being placed on the clinic.

"Sgt. Maggart truly exemplifies the Army Values, Soldier resiliency and the tenets of combat stress control," she said.



Photo by Sgt. Cody Harding, 1st ID Public Affairs  
Maj. Gen. Vincent Brooks, rear left, U.S. Division-South commanding general; Lt. Col. Pamela Breedlove, center, Combat Stress Clinic commanding officer; and Capt. Lloyd Sporluck, right, commander of Battery A, 5th Battalion, 5th Air Defense Artillery Regiment, unveil a placard dedicating a combat stress clinic to Sgt. Brandon Maggart in September.

Before the renovations, the CSC was an unattractive place for Soldiers to visit. The building would often become too hot inside to be comfortable, and thin walls kept many discussions from being confidential. The building was improved by adding new air conditioning units, increasing the thickness of the walls and remodeling the inside of the clinic.

Sgt. Jose Carrera, a 1st Infantry Division behavioral health NCO, said the improved atmosphere helps Soldiers open up to the staff.

"Just by improving the environment of the clinic helps improve the Soldier's [ability] to open up and be able to disclose

more things the staff can use to help," Carrera said.

Breedlove said the renovations to the clinic help her and her Soldiers do their jobs more effectively.

"We're here for all Soldiers," Breedlove said. "It is our role to do what we can to help Soldiers and return them to duty." Carrera described the CSC and caring for the needs of the Soldiers under stress as a force multiplier.

"When you have Soldiers coming in and are able to receive the treatment they need, they go back to their units and become more resourceful, more effective and therefore able to carry out the mission," Carrera said.

# SMA Gates:



IT'S  
ALL  
ABOUT  
THE  
TRAINING

Story by  
Linda Crippen

"The first time I saw him walk down the hallway at the Pentagon," quipped an old colleague in a slow, southern drawl, "I thought . . . 'He looks like one mean [S.O.B.]!'"

And if you have the pleasure of talking with the former sergeant major of the Army, you'll realize he still has that edge. But underneath the tough exterior is a kindred Soldier whose loyalty remains dedicated to training the troops.

Julius William (Bill) Gates, who now serves as a liaison officer at the Joint Readiness Training Center at Fort Polk, La., for the Army Research Institute, still manages to spend time with Soldiers during unit rotations at JRTC — and the Soldiers love seeing him. At every site visit, star-struck Soldiers of all ranks come pouring out from makeshift shacks and marketplace stores that so closely resemble the real thing down-range — just to get a chance to speak with the former SMA, or better yet, take a photo.

His role at the training center includes coordinating projects for ARI, assisting with data collection and interviews for particular studies. ARI's main objective in their JRTC research is identifying leadership problems throughout each rotation. Once critical training issues have been identified, ARI designs and executes a study that typically runs the course of eight rotations through JRTC, allowing the group to gather data from more than one unit. In turn, the gathered data then serves as a catalyst in developing "intervention" methods, which are manifested in the form of Army training tools to help improve the discovered deficiencies.

For Gates, it's still all about the training. In almost every conversation, he emphasizes, "Tough, realistic training is the best way to prepare Soldiers and units for combat." And he's definitely still in the business of training Soldiers. Typically working eight to 10 hours a day, he observes each rotation at JRTC firsthand, sometimes staying out in the field all night.

Serving as the eighth sergeant major of the Army from July 1987 to June 1991, Gates witnessed a great deal of change and served as a catalyst for several important initiatives, some of which are still in effect. Gates led the Army's NCO Corps during several conflicts and skirmishes, to include Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Iraq; Operation Just Cause in Panama; and Operation Golden Pheasant in Honduras.

Gates grew up working on the family farm and at his father's service station in the Piedmont region of North Carolina. Born on June 14, 1941, Gates was the sixth child out of nine. He said his parents, especially his father, believed in hard work and attributes some of his success in the military to this work ethic.

In order to help support the family, Gates dropped out of high school at 16 to work in the service department at a local Ford dealership. He said he had "always wanted to join the military as he was impressed by the uniforms when Soldiers returned from World War II." So, after working a year at the dealership, he sought his parents' consent to join the Army. "My father was all for it, but my mother took some convincing."

After Initial Entry Training, Gates was sent to the 6th Infantry Division in Berlin, Germany. One of his assignments there was guarding Nazi war criminals at Spandau Prison, which at the time housed Rudolph Hess, Albert Speer and Baldur von Schirach. When American Soldiers took charge of their monthlong stint and exchanged guard duty with the Russians, the changing of the guard stands out in Gates' memory.

He was assigned to the second guard tower for duty. The guard towers had ground entrances that were locked, and the towers themselves had trap doors that were also locked. Essentially, the Russian soldiers were locked in from the outside. During the shift change, Gates said, the Russian soldier he was to relieve insisted that all doors must be locked. Gates' commander of the relief refused to lock his Soldiers inside, saying, "That ain't the way we do business in the United States Army."

"That almost caused an international incident," Gates said. "But it's a good example of the differences in the two societies."

Gates got out of the Army at the end of his three-year enlistment and returned to work at the Ford dealership. But, he soon realized that he missed Army life. He decided to "make the Army a career" and re-enlisted. This time around, he requested an airborne assignment at Fort Campbell, Ky. "The 101st Airborne Division left an everlasting impression on me," he said.

Gates attributes a great deal of his growth and success as a Soldier and leader to one of his most influential NCOs, his platoon sergeant, Victor G. Franco, whom Gates described as "one of the finest NCOs I ever had the opportunity to serve with. He tried to make you learn stuff and took a hell of a lot of time developing his NCOs."

"Every Soldier in that platoon did well," which Gates attributed to Franco's efforts. "I will never forget this individual. When you'd go to the field, he would rotate squads as the point squad for the platoon during movement. Every man in the platoon had a map, and they all had to land navigate from point A to point B. It wasn't just the squad leader looking at his map or following his compass."

Because of Franco's tutelage, Gates says he can navigate anywhere across the world.

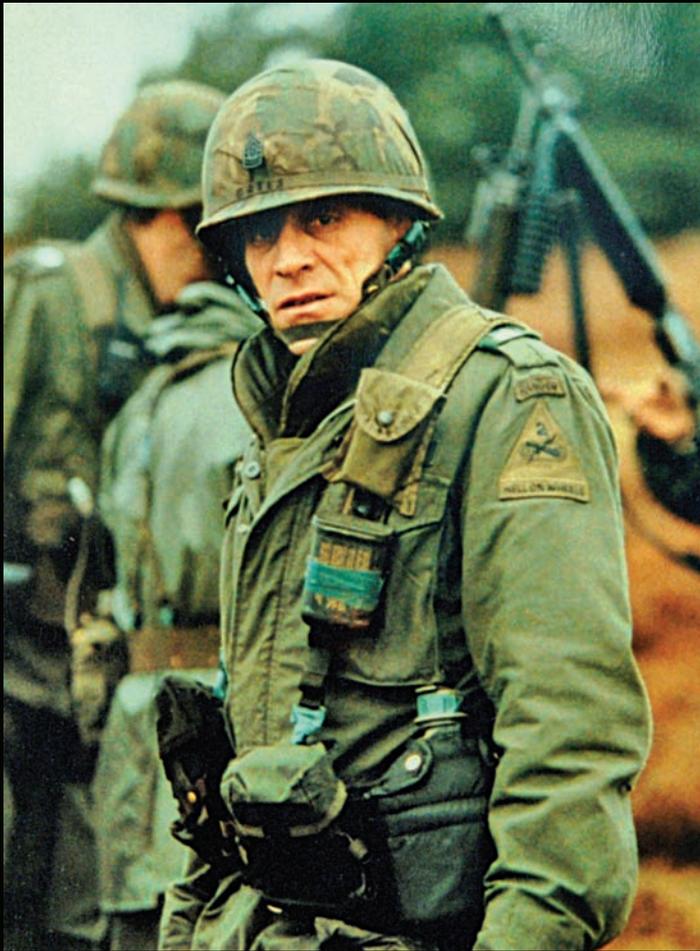


Photo courtesy of USASMA

Command Sgt. Maj. Julius W. Gates when he was command sergeant major of the 2nd Armored Division (Forward) from 1979 to 1981.

It was Franco who ordered Gates to Ranger School. “Same thing with Jumpmaster School; the 3rd Army NCO Academy; Aerial Delivery School; Air Transportability School; Chemical Biological, Radiological School; Pathfinder School; and completing the GED,” he said.

The former SMA may be reluctant to discuss his own accomplishments and experiences, but at every opportunity, he gladly shares memories about Soldiers he served with.

## RANGERS LEAD THE WAY

“Ranger School is probably the most intense course you’ll ever attend in the Army.” But Gates said the 101st Airborne Division prepared its Soldiers for Ranger School with the infamous Recondo School. That “school was, beyond a doubt, the toughest school I attended. It is two weeks of pure hell,” he said. But it prepared him well for Ranger School.

Later in his career, while assigned to the Ranger Department as an instructor, Gates taught Ranger students the basics during their first few weeks of the course. As a sergeant first class in 1967, he was the senior instructor for bayonet training and assistant senior instructor for land navigation. “We administered a vigorous training program. Every morning we executed long and fast runs and took Rangers on forced road marches.” From there, they went out to Camp Darby for about a week or so and learned basic patrolling skills, after which they were transported to the Mountain Ranger Camp in the Dahlonega Mountains in northern

Georgia. After his second tour in Vietnam and an assignment in Bamberg, Germany, Gates went to the Mountain Ranger Camp in 1973, where he served as chief instructor for the patrolling committee.

He says the people were the best thing about the assignment, as his unit was “a tightly knitted group of NCOs, officers and young Soldiers. Everybody there was sort of like a family. That was the unique part of the assignment.”

After Dahlonega, Gates was assigned to several different Ranger commands, including another stint at the Ranger Department at Fort Benning as the 3rd Ranger Company first sergeant. In 1977, he took his third first sergeant assignment at the 1st Ranger Battalion, Fort Stewart, Ga., after graduating from Class 8 of the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy, in 1977.

He vividly recalled leading company physical training shortly after arriving to 1st Ranger Battalion. “I decided I was going to run the heck out of them,” he says while chuckling. “I was in the best shape of my life then, because I used to run so much while at USASMA. I needed to set an example for my new unit and the run was one way to do that. I took off at a very fast pace, and we ran for about five miles. None of the Rangers complained, and everyone gave it their all. I did that to gain their respect, so that they knew I could do it, too. One of the traits of good leadership is never asking your Soldiers to do something you wouldn’t do yourself.”

Later, Gates would describe these same men with the utmost respect, as he recounted a training exercise with the same battalion, conducting an emergency deployment to rescue a hijacked aircraft. The company-sized element jumped into a Nevada training area at night, but as many an old airborne paratrooper will tell you, “The Air Force doesn’t always drop you directly on the drop zone,” he said.

“This training mission was executed prior to a Special Operations unit being formed for such missions,” Gates explained. Hence, the 1st Ranger Battalion was the Army’s special reactionary force at that time.

Once on the ground, the unit converged upon the aircraft, rescued the hostages and was immediately extracted. Gates said the training was executed perfectly, but little did he realize several of his Rangers sustained injuries from the airborne assault. They had landed on rocks near a mountain range instead of on the designated drop zone.

“Not one of those Soldiers complained or had any type of medical assistance until that operation was complete. I think the quality of Soldiers in the 1st Ranger Battalion at that time was probably the best in the world. There’s no doubt about it; they were the best Soldiers in the world. We had very high standards, not only physically and mentally, but also emotionally.”

## VIETNAM

Gates, who served two tours in Vietnam (1966-67 and 1969-70), was hesitant to discuss his experiences in combat, specifically the Vietnam War. “I don’t really have much to say about that. Yes, I have bad dreams like everyone else, but we already know what happened there,” he said.

In the most humble of ways, Gates will instead discuss freely and openly his Soldiers. “Draftees were some of the finest Soldiers I ever served with,” he exclaimed.

He recalled how one of his Soldiers selflessly put himself in harm's way in order to take out a Viet Cong machine-gun point. "They had us pinned down, and I will never forget how one of my Soldiers, without hesitation or a second thought, rushed that bunker and took out the machine gun. He never questioned anything, and he did it for his battle buddies," Gates said.

"It was never too bad, the first tour. I think the morale and esprit de corps of the Soldiers were fine. They were well trained, well disciplined, no problems," he explained. "I didn't have any discipline problems at all. None." Gates, who still has a notebook from that tour with all of his Soldiers' names in it, said his squad could do just about anything he asked of them. "All those great Soldiers were just that, and they saved my life! I think my biggest job was holding them back at times."

As the former SMA points out, "There's been a lot said, a lot written and a lot of photographs about Vietnam, the things we did over there ... good, bad or indifferent. All I'll say is that in my experience, I did not have any Soldiers with disciplinary problems in Vietnam. I never had a Soldier not do what I asked of him."

Recalling one of the missions while on his second tour with Company K, 75th Rangers, Gates said his unit carried out a successful platoon-sized ambush. Intelligence sources indicated a North Vietnamese Army high-value target was planning to link up with local enemy forces on a trail located between Pleiku and An Khe.

"Our platoon was given a mission to emplace a night ambush at the intersection, neutralize the enemy forces and, if possible, capture the high-valued target. We sent in a team to recon the site, and the platoon moved cross-country and established an area ambush along the trail network. We destroyed the enemy unit and captured a logistics officer who controlled the enemy logistics for that area. That ambush was probably the most successful area ambush that I had in the two years I spent over there," he said.

## SERVING THE SOLDIERS

Under his tough exterior, and with formidable sincerity, Gates says that what occupied his time the most, "more than anything, was training the Soldier and doing what we could to influence the training, conduct training and ensure that NCOs were trained as best we possibly could. And we trained some officers, too. We enforced the standards of the Soldiers who served in the organization, and there are a lot of ways you can do all those things."

Gates' list of accomplishments in initiating or implementing programs to enhance training or the lives of Soldiers is rather lengthy. During his tenure as command sergeant major of 8th Army and U.S. Forces in Korea, 1985-1987, the former SMA recalls several rewarding things he helped kick off.

"We had one of the best Soldier of the Quarter programs in the world. The Association of the U.S. Army totally supported that awards program," which included an all-expense-paid trip to Hawaii for the NCO and Sol-

Left to right: TRADOC CSM David M. Bruner, retired SMA Julius W. Gates, retired SMA Glen E. Morrell and SMA Kenneth O. Preston at the Sergeants Major Nominative Conference, Fort Bliss, Texas, January 2010.

Photo courtesy of USASMA

dier who won the 8th Army competition.

Gates and his command were also responsible for refurbishing the 8th Army NCO Academy. But the former SMA wasn't the only one pushing for change in order to improve the conditions in Korea. Gates' first wife, Margaret, was responsible for the renovation of a local orphanage.

"She was involved with an orphanage, with Asian-American kids who were orphans," he explained. With around 40 children living in a very small building with one bathroom and one sink, "that girl went up to that orphanage, and she came back crying and mad as heck. She got CSM Art Garcia, who at the time was commandant of the NCO academy, to go look at the orphanage, and he took over as sponsor of the orphanage. He spent a lot of his own money and time to renovate the facility. Margaret, the NCO wives, officer wives and everybody else she could get money out of contributed to that orphanage." Gates also said that his wife was instrumental in developing the child-care and family support centers throughout the Army community.

Gates describes their time in Korea as a lot of fun. "The morale and esprit de corps were just fabulous over there." He's proud to have had the opportunity to have a large input into the development of the NCO Evaluation Report "as we know it today, and the same thing with family support. The opportunity to serve with joint forces in Korea prepared me to assume my next assignment in the Pentagon."

Once Gates took his post as sergeant major of the Army, he worked diligently with his chief of staff, Gen. Carl E. Vuono, with many of the priorities that focused on training and quality of life issues. Emphasizing that the priorities were really those of the chief of staff, Gates said he merely made suggestions and offered points of view from the field. Their command was responsible for many of the Morale, Welfare and Recreation programs that are still in effect today, for example, Family Readiness Groups and Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers.

We can also thank the former SMA for *The NCO Journal*. Initially, it was his idea to begin a magazine specifically focused on NCOs and NCO issues.



Improving uniforms was also a highlight for Gates. He and Vuono approved about 150 uniform changes. “We would take the uniform items to the field and allow Soldiers to wear the shirts or jackets and then bring input back to the chief of staff. We were concerned about the quality of the materials used in the uniforms; we didn’t want to change the colors or anything,” he said.

One of the things Gates said he’s very proud of is the uniform raincoat. “The raincoat didn’t have a belt with it, nor did it have the military appearance. So, we put a belt with it, we put epaulets on the shoulders. Then on the back, there was an opening, which has some historical significance to it, so we re-established that,” he explained.

Changes were also made to the length and cut of the Class A and Battle Dress Uniforms so they would fit Soldiers better. Gates said the command worked extensively on boots, “trying to get a boot that was conducive to Soldiers in all parts of the world. In fact, we adopted a new desert boot, which was issued to the troops, in some cases, when they were deployed to the Middle East.”

The former SMA credits Vuono for institutionalizing the Installation of Excellence, a program that specifically looks to improve living conditions on installations. Gates recalled sitting in a meeting with top officials discussing extensive projects within the Installation of Excellence program, when one of the



Photo by Linda Crippen

John O. Marsh Jr., Vuono and Gates were walking down the hallway in the Pentagon for a meeting to close out “The Year of Training,” Vuono asked Marsh what the following year’s theme should be. Marsh said he would have to think about it, and that’s when Gates saw his opportunity.

“Sir, you know, we have just completed ‘The Year of Training,’ and what better way to continue that emphasis on training than make this the year of the first-line trainer ... ‘The Year of the NCO,’” Gates said.

Marsh said, “Bill Gates, you’re always talking about NCOs and Soldiers,” which Gates happily took as a compliment. “I don’t care what [may be happening], that is always your interest. You never say anything else, except Soldiers and NCOs.”

“Every once in a while I talk about officers and civilians, too,” Gates quipped. And it was this interest, this constant push for the NCO and Soldier, that gave way to Marsh institutionalizing The Year of the NCO.

## STILL CARING FOR SOLDIERS

When Gates isn’t working the grind at JRTC, he’s very involved within the local community as a member of the Beauregard Parish Chamber of Commerce, where he sits on the military affairs committee.

About a year ago, Gates was instrumental in arranging a ceremony for pinning the Purple Heart on a local Vietnam vet-



**Above:** Gates speaks with a 1st Cavalry platoon sergeant during the unit’s rotation at the Joint Readiness Training Center, Fort Polk, La., in June.

**Right:** Gates (far right in desert BDUs) and Gen. Carl E. Vuono, chief of staff of the Army, visit with Soldiers in Desert Storm.

**Opposite page:** Gates pays a visit to an injured Soldier during Desert Storm.

Photos courtesy of USASMA

eran. During the Vietnam War, the man received a Purple Heart, but it was never officially awarded to him. He merely received orders for it after his discharge.

Gates recommended to the deputy commander of the JRTC operations group, Col. Eric Conrad, that they travel to Merryville, La., and hold a long-overdue ceremony for the veteran.

“We went down and pinned it on him, and that place was packed with people,” Gates explained.

Through tears in a heartfelt speech, the medal recipient expressed his appreciation for those Soldiers who allowed him to survive the war. He said that in all reality, those Soldiers deserve this award. The award, the ceremony, wasn’t really for him. “It was for my buddies,” he expressed.

Gates said the veteran shared his gratitude for everyone attending and taking time out to recognize, not necessarily his efforts, but those ultimate sacrifices made by his buddies.

Additionally, Gates is involved with the local chapter of the Veterans of Foreign Wars in Deridder, La. “In fact, they voted me in as a trustee for that chapter. We’re involved in community activities and certainly veterans’ activities.”

One of the accomplishments the former SMA is very proud to have assisted with is bringing in a permanent Veterans Administration representative to Deridder. “The number of retirees and active duty veterans in Deridder has increased tremendously over the last four or five years,” he explained. “They had a VA representative who would come [in the office] from 1 p.m. until 4 p.m., one day a week. Veterans, their spouses, even dependants of veterans who have passed away, would go up there, wait for hours and never get to see anyone.”

Pushing the issue through state and federal levels of the VA, Gates’ VFW members managed to get a representative to staff the local office three days a week, eight hours per day. “Now the representative is able to take care of the people who come in, and I’m really proud of that [accomplishment].”

But Gates’ influence is more than peripheral; he is still very much in the game. Having almost daily contact with Soldiers participating in JRTC rotations, even conversing with Soldiers he runs into on Fort Polk, his presence is very much felt throughout his community.

Gates remains humble in his role serving the Army through ARI and JRTC. His main mission is still training troops and is always willing to share advice and experience with any anyone, no matter rank or position.

When asked what stands out as the most important things he learned from the Army, Gates’ answers come easily and without hesitation. “I learned to work with other people and perform extreme duties with others under extreme circumstances, whether it was training or the reality of combat. You see how individuals react in different situations, and you learn some very good lessons from them.”

But above all else, he says that learning how to motivate and influence people has been the most important gift from the Army. And of course, he said he was influenced by some very outstanding Soldier-leaders.

“I think being able to form a team and be a team member, then to be able to influence individuals under very tough circumstances and in different situations — that’s the most critical thing I learned while I was in the Army. And at the same time, having a real care for others, to make sure that my Soldiers were taken care of the best they possibly could,” he said.

Gates explained that caring for Soldiers is not the same as coddling them or spoiling them. “If it’s tough, realistic training, which is the most important thing, make sure they have their equipment and the equipment is ready to go to war — and Soldiers know how to operate their equipment. Those are the things that are important.”

“Try to develop your Soldiers,” the former SMA advises.

“You always want to develop Soldiers, get them to move forward instead of backward. I’ve always said you have three categories of Soldiers: the outstanding Soldiers (Soldiers of the Quarter/Year, get promoted rapidly); then you have the mediocre Soldiers who meet all the standards, but they just merely meet the standards, don’t exceed them; then you have those who are just below the standards.”

“If the leader is a real leader, he or she will do everything possible to move those Soldiers up a notch. And if you do that, then

you’re an effective leader in my opinion.”

Gates also says that a good leader never stops learning. Regardless of rank, leaders should continue to learn. This sentiment includes learning from the lowest enlisted, because even “they do things that sometimes you’ll learn from. Even if it’s something that’s out of the ordinary, you can still learn something if you want to. So, keep an open mind.”

Dubbed the “canteen cup-level sergeant major of the Army” because he replaced Pentagon china with canteen and Styrofoam cups, Gates is a Soldier’s Soldier. His time in the field no longer requires rucking and running, but the mission remains the same: training Soldiers. “I think that’s the most important thing,” Gates explained, “how to manage people. I call it leadership. I like to go out in the field and lead Soldiers by example,” and he continues to do so today.

“The fellowship you build in the Army is much, much different from our civilian society,” said the former SMA. “Once you build a friendship or relationship with a Soldier, it stays forever.” 

*Editor’s note: Some information taken from an oral history interview with Sgt. Maj. Erwin H. Koehler in 1994, part of the Sergeants Major of the Army History book project.*

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*Story and photos by  
Linda Crippen*

# Learning, Execution & Evaluations Division

## Leading the current fight for INCOPD

Final article of a five-part series on the INCOPD. Read the rest of the series at <https://usasma.bliss.army.mil/NCOJournal/leadershiparch.asp> and <https://usasma.bliss.army.mil/NCOJournal/trainingarch.asp>

As the Institute for NCO Professional Development approaches its one year anniversary, it has managed to implement several initiatives to help improve educational opportunities for the NCO Corps. While the other divisions within the institute — the Learning Innovations and Initiatives Division and the Learning Integration Division — are devoted to managing future battles, the Learning, Execution and Evaluation Division focuses on the immediate fight.

“We handle anything current, anything ongoing,” said Christopher Pickett, LEED’s division chief and a retired sergeant major. “If it involves working with the NCO academies or additional Army components to improve training and efficiency, that’s what we do for the NCO Corps.”

With a mixed staff of civilian and Army personnel, LEED helps implement approved projects from the other two divisions. Once projects are no longer simply initiatives, they cross over into execution, which is where LEED steps in.

One specific project that LEED plays an integral part in is making sure the mobile training teams for the Advanced Leader Course are conducted to standard. “We look at the programs of instruction. We did the ALC and Senior Leader Course transformations, working with the Training Operations Management Activity to make sure it all got vetted properly and put in the system so the academies could start the transformation on 1 October 2009,” Pickett explained.

LEED often works closely with TOMA, which according to its website, “plans, coordinates, and manages documenting, programming, scheduling, logistic management and training management operations for Army courses conducted in the Army

school system during peacetime and mobilization.”

Since 2007, TRADOC has had MTTs out in the field conducting ALC MTTs for Soldiers in critical military occupational specialties with high deployment rates. Officials have identified 20 MOSs most often deployed in combat, for example 11B infantryman. Since these MOSs have difficulty making it to professional military schools in between deployments, TRADOC, TOMA and LEED work together to address backlog by taking the courses to Soldiers. There are several benefits in using the MTTs: The Soldier stays home, and the Army saves money with only the MTT personnel traveling. Instead of 150 students travelling to an academy for temporary duty assignment, only a team of trainers travel to the critical location.

“We also help ensure all proper equipment is available for training needs. Units aren’t always fully supplied with the necessary equipment,” Pickett said. “So, we’ll conduct the search to find it. LEED can also serve as a conduit in tracking down necessary items, especially for those units whose equipment may still be en route from overseas. “If they have issues in getting the equipment, we’re here to help,” he said.

“Gaining efficiency through initiative” should be LEED’s motto. And that’s exactly what’s going on at Fort Carson, Colo. “We’re combining our resources to establish a multicomponent NCOA at Fort Carson — for active Army, Reserve and National Guard. We’re about 90 percent down the road from making that thing happen,” Pickett said.

Officials identified a large population at Fort Carson that needs a noncommissioned officer academy where there is currently not one. The Army has had to be creative in getting some Soldiers to school for training, especially since the beginning of

the Global War on Terrorism. Pickett said that for some time, Soldiers from Fort Carson have been sent to Camp Williams, Utah, to go to school. So a typical scenario might be: Soldiers spend 12-15 months overseas. When they return, they go through their 45-day integration training and block leave. Then, they come down on orders for WLC at Camp Atterbury for 15 days. "Two weeks may not seem like a long time, but to that young Soldier it's significant," he explained.

Aside from the obvious advantages, training the different components together will improve their performances in real time operations. "We fight together, so we need to train together," Pickett said.

The new academy falls under the Colorado National Guard and began teaching classes in 2009. New facilities are

expected to be constructed in 2012, and class sizes will then increase to help address backlog.

LEED is currently researching other installations that may benefit from this same effort, as John Sparks, director of the INCPD, reported to the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee, House Armed Services Committee on July 28th.

"The intent behind chartering this study is threefold: 1) Examine the feasibility, benefits, limitations, and cost-effectiveness of creating multicomponent noncommissioned officer academies throughout the Army to conduct the Warrior Leader Course; 2) provide recommendations on the best method to develop and assess options for implementing a multicomponent organizational structure to align WLC student loads; and 3) assess the implications for NCOES more broadly," Sparks reported.

"Upon full implementation," he continued, "the One Army School System will provide increased training and education by leveraging the available resources of all three Army components and establish multicomponent facilities to train future warriors."

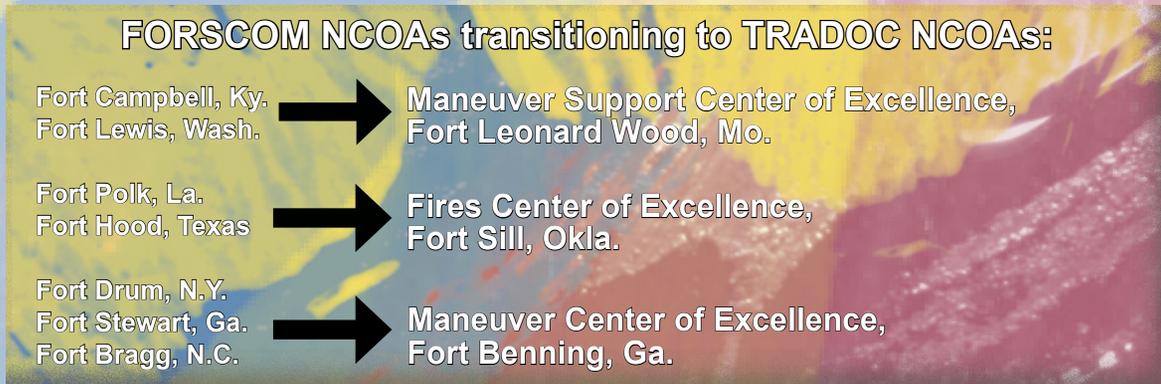
Another major undertaking for LEED is moving the remaining NCO academies that are currently under U.S. Army

Forces Command and transferring them to Training and Doctrine Command. A total of seven academies will be restructured to be subordinate units to specific Centers of Excellence.

The decision was made in 2006 that the academies should be institutional entities, which means TRADOC entities. Pickett said that it makes sense these NCOAs are located on predominantly operational installations: Fort Bragg, N.C.; Fort Lewis, Wash.; Fort Stewart, Ga.; Fort Campbell, Ky.; and Fort Hood, Texas. "These are war fighting installations. It doesn't make sense for FORSCOM, which is the operational side of the Army, to run the academies," he said.

One transition was completed last year: Fort Leonard Wood

picked up the academy at Fort Lewis. The remaining transitions will take place over the course of the year, aligning



each academy under a TRADOC Center of Excellence. These transitions will enhance the NCO education system by relieving FORSCOM from the institutional requirement. "By moving these NCOAs underneath TRADOC, the institutional arm of the Army will now fill the instructor slots; whereas before, those FORSCOM units were required to fill the slots but couldn't always afford to lose the personnel since they are operational units.

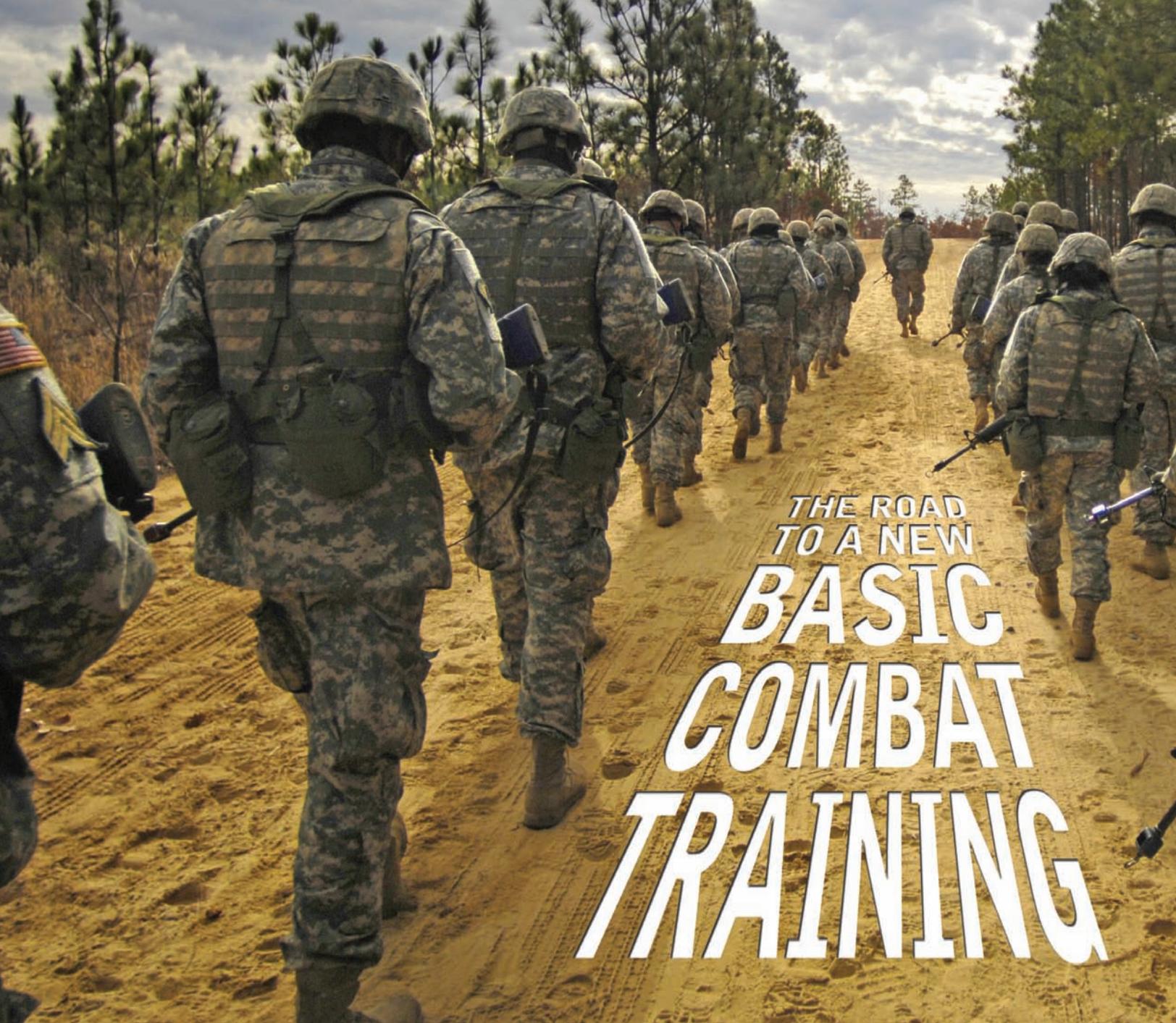
After transitions are completed and all is finalized, Pickett hypothesizes that instructors from a FORSCOM unit at the 82nd Airborne Division or XVIII Airborne Corps who may be chosen to work at the NCOA at Fort Bragg will actually PCS to their new teaching assignment, which may very well lead to some happy families. After a two-year stint at the NCOA, the Soldier could PCS back to their unit, which turns out to be very cost effective as well.

"This is one of the ways we can take care of the Soldiers, and the process to be an instructor will probably become quite competitive," he said. "It will definitely set the bar higher." ❏

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Christopher Pickett, far right, Learning, Execution and Evaluations Division chief, along with members of U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command's G-3/5/7, prepare to conduct a virtual meeting in October 2009 with NCO academies that are scheduled to transition from U.S. Army Forces Command to Training and Doctrine Command.





The new POI adds better training in rifle marksmanship, combatives and first aid.

BY  
MICHAEL L.  
LEWIS

**T**heir days still begin long before dawn and end in exhaustion. They still must memorize the Soldier’s Creed and the values and skills required to be worthy of putting on the uniform. And, more than ever, their every move is still scrutinized by drill sergeants demanding nothing less than perfection.

But, since the summer, trainees in Basic Combat Training have been learning under a different program of instruction than their drill sergeants did — an overhauled POI that, like other recently revised Army curricula, more closely relates to the way Soldiers are fighting now.

“We are making Initial Military Training more relevant and harder, adapting to not only the operational environment, but to the young Soldiers who are coming into the force,” said Lt. Gen. Mark Hertling, the deputy commanding general for IMT at the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command. Responsible for training all new enlisted Soldiers and officers, including those in Basic Combat Training and Advanced Individual Training, Hertling began the process of retooling the basic training POI last October.

“We eliminated some things, and we said, what’s the right thing to train in basic training versus



Basic trainees go on a foot movement during Basic Combat Training at Fort Jackson, S.C., in early 2009. A new program of instruction rolled out this summer preserves quintessential training such as this, while modifying or eliminating other lessons deemed no longer relevant.

Photo by Air Force Staff Sgt. Shawn Weismiller

To transform greenhorn civilians into qualified Soldiers, the POI still focuses on inculcating military bearing, the Army Values, and basic skills like how to shoot, how to move and how to engage in hand-to-hand combat. But, those tasked with revising the program observed that the former POI had grown overstuffed.

“We had been adding things to basic training for a while. We hadn’t taken an overall, complete look at what we really needed,” said Col. Craig Currey, who formerly led the Directorate of Basic Combat Training at Fort Jackson and is now the post’s deputy commander. “A lot of things we added because somebody said, ‘Add this.’ It was time to do a collective look — we’ve been at war a long time, what are some things we really need to do and what are some things that are marginal? Everything can be good training, but you can’t do everything in *basic* training.”

### SHORTER, TIGHTER, BETTER

Overall, the new program is slightly shorter, shaving more than 15 hours — from 771 hours to 754.5 hours — across the 10-week course. The new POI is also written tighter, reducing the number of training support packages from 117 to 89 and the number of pages in drill sergeants’ lesson plans from more than 4,000 pages to less than 2,700.

“How’s it different? It’s better,” Currey said. “In the aggregate, when you add up all the changes, it is shorter by some, but not a whole lot. It’s not like we overwhelmingly cut tons of things out. We cut things out, then we added other things in so that in the end, drill sergeants can train folks better. That’s the name of the game; we could have a fancy POI with tons of things in it, but if they don’t execute it well, then it’s not as good as we want it to be. We want something that’s executable, and that the drill sergeants can sink their teeth into.”

A panel convened in Hampton, Va., last October was the first to review the old POI. It comprised Soldiers from every basic training site — Fort Benning, Ga.; Fort Knox, Ky.; Fort Leonard Wood, Mo.; Fort Sill, Okla.; and Fort Jackson — as well as from Forces Command units and the reserve component. The team was a cross-section of today’s Army, said Thriso Hamilton Jr., the BCT course manager at the Directorate of Basic Combat Training and a former drill sergeant.

what should be trained in the first unit of assignment? Given that, what should we add? I need to keep beating the drum that we only have 10 weeks in basic training.”

Revised alongside the new list of Warrior Tasks and Battle Drills, a team of Soldiers from throughout the Army looked to trim basic training to its most basic elements — those fundamental skills needed by every Soldier regardless of rank or military occupational specialty.

“Basic Combat Training involves those basic Soldier survival skills that everyone, from the newest E-1 to the oldest O-10, better know,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Brian Stall, the command sergeant major of the U.S. Army Training Center, Fort Jackson, S.C., where the new POI was developed. “Even more basic than the Warrior Tasks and Battle Drills, I’m talking about things like putting the uniform on the right way and tying your boots so you look like every other person in the Army.”



This photo: Basic trainees engage each other using pugil sticks at Fort Jackson in July. This lesson in the new POI replaces rifle bayonet training against a dummy or tire, as shown below.

Photo by Michael L. Lewis; Below: File photo



“When we decided what groups needed to be associated with the workshops, we made sure that every Army training center sent a company commander rep, a first sergeant rep and a drill sergeant rep. Those three individuals have the most interaction with Soldiers of anyone in the chain of command and were totally involved with this process. Their peers can look at [the new POI] and realize it wasn’t just a bunch of civilians or other folks writing this — ‘The individuals involved

are out here training just like me and took my considerations into account when making these decisions.”

Equally important was the input generated by the representatives from the operational Army, Hamilton said.

“We got feedback from FORSCOM units — our customers — to look at this and say, what can we reasonably train our Soldiers and expect them to know when they come out of IET?”

“It wasn’t so much, ‘When I was in

basic training, we did this or that,’” Currey said. “The people who sat on the panels were more about, this is what we’re doing now in combat. I heard several people say that.”

## LOST RELEVANCE

The experienced group identified several lessons previously considered fundamental that were either outdated or no longer relevant to today’s fight. Rifle bayonet training, a basic training staple since World War I, was one such group of lessons removed.

“The last time the U.S. had a bayonet assault was in 1951, and the rifle we now use in combat isn’t meant for bayonet charges,” Hertling said.

Instead, planners incorporated head-to-head pugil stick training that’s far more dynamic and energetic, he said.

“We’ve replaced the bayonet assault course, which was relatively boring, with a pugil obstacle course. Now, Soldiers are not fighting a big round tire or a dummy; they’re actually fighting their buddies with a pugil stick. It is intense, and for the drill sergeants, it’s a lot of fun to watch. For the Soldiers, they come off that new course and they’re fired up. It’s very different from how they came off the bayonet assault course.”

Basic Rifle Marksmanship training

## BASIC COMBAT TRAINING ADDITIONS

- +
3.7
HOURS

Basic Rifle Marksmanship
More time on fundamentals, grouping and zeroing
- +
21.2
HOURS

Advanced Rifle Marksmanship
Reflexive night fire, barrier shoot and more virtual training
- +
5.2
HOURS

Combat Certification Fire
Soldiers demonstrate ability to apply previous combat marksmanship training without coaching or assistance
- +
11
HOURS

Revised Combatives
Basic tactical and defense movements are practiced, including while wearing a full kit
- +
1
HOUR

Anti-Terrorism Level 1
A new AR 350-1 requirement
- +
1
HOUR

Culture
What it is, how it works and the cultures of other societies where Soldiers are deployed or assigned
- +
1
HOUR

Global Assessment Tool
Soldiers are required to take the GAT survey in support of the Comprehensive Soldier Fitness program

was also improved, starting with trainees' earliest introduction to their weapon.

"We were loading up men and women with equipment in basic training before they fired their weapon for qualification," Hertling said. "The neophyte would say, that's what we've got to do because that's how they're firing in combat — with all their gear on. That's true, but you've got to get used to that when it's the first time you've ever fired that weapon. You've got to have some kind of introductory period where you can get comfortable with your weapon, before you start piling on the vest and the helmet and all that other stuff.

"One of the things we did in the new POI is we said, let's fire 'slick' — without equipment — up through qualification to the point where we get people comfortable with their weapon. Once they know they can hit the target, once they feel confident in their abilities and their skills and once we get them qualified in Basic Rifle Marksmanship, then we can start loading on equipment for the second phase, what we call Advanced Rifle Marksmanship. There, they're doing things like reflexive fire, barrier shoots, moving to the targets and knocking down targets with multiple hits."

"The new strategy allows the Soldiers to slowly move toward that level, so they are able to focus on the fundamentals



Photo by Kris Gonzalez

Sgt. Danielle Ayers, a drill sergeant for Company C, 3rd Battalion, 60th Infantry Regiment, Fort Jackson, gives a run down of the daily schedule for Soldiers in Basic Combat Training. While the new POI shaves a total of 15.5 hours over the 10-week course, the day-to-day experience for trainees will be largely the same.

instead of worrying about how heavy something is or how hot they are out on the range," Hamilton said. "I think we made the right decision there."

Currey said feedback regarding the new BRM training has been overwhelmingly positive.

"We're hearing definite thankful-

ness on the new marksmanship approach, especially in terms of the shooting 'slick' aspect. That's almost universally been received well. Let's teach the basic training Soldier without worrying about [body armor], until ARM."

Also heavily revised was trainees' instruction in first aid techniques. Specifi-



Top: Secretary of the Army John McHugh and other dignitaries observe basic trainees in their final days of training at Fort Benning, Ga., in June. "I was amazed these folks were in their 10th or 12th week," McHugh said.

Photo by John Helms

Below: Pvt. Abby Anthony of Company C, 2nd Battalion, 39th Infantry Regiment, kneels behind an L-shaped barrier at Fort Jackson in 2008 during a demonstration of the then-experimental Combat Certification Fire course.

Photo by Mike A. Glasch

cally removed was teaching every basic trainee how to administer an IV.

"The saline lock was eliminated by the Army's medical experts," Currey said. "It was doctors who said, we need to stop doing this in combat because we're bleeding people out. I mean, if someone loses a limb, apply the Combat Application Tourniquet and get the guy out of there. Don't pump more fluids into him that, in essence, force him to bleed more."

"Don't worry about the IV. Stop the bleeding!" Stall said. "A medic will administer an IV. We just need basic trainees to be proficient in stopping the bleeding."

Training in the Army Values was also modified, in part to standardize instruction that sometimes devolved into drill sergeants simply relaying anecdotes.

"In the past, drill sergeants were really training war stories about personal courage, or integrity or loyalty," Hertling said. "Now, we've worked with the Center for the Army Profession and Ethic and established a program that trains our values to standard."

"The values instruction was there, but we're trying to upgrade that," Currey said. "CAPE is developing a whole series of films right now — garrison examples, combat examples and off-duty examples — to see if they are a better teaching method. That way, the drill sergeant

## BASIC COMBAT TRAINING DELETIONS

<b>Daytime Defensive Fire</b>		<b>4</b> HOURS	—
Training event was not being executed as written; training now provided in ARM			
<b>Nighttime Defensive Fire</b>		<b>4</b> HOURS	—
Limited training value since all tasks were trained during other tactical lessons			
<b>.50 Caliber M2 Weapons Training</b>		<b>2.4</b> HOURS	—
Limited training value (Soldiers only fired two bursts) and not every Soldier needs proficiency			
<b>Sniper Countermeasures</b>		<b>2</b> HOURS	—
Lesson was trained during other tactical lessons			
<b>Rifle Bayonet Training</b>		<b>12.5</b> HOURS	—
Pugil and non-attached bayonet training has been incorporated into combatives lessons			
<b>Operating the Precision Lightweight GPS Receiver</b>		<b>2</b> HOURS	—
Outdated equipment			
<b>M18A1 Claymore Mine Training</b>		<b>2</b> HOURS	—
Assessed as not relevant or critical to every basic trainee			
<b>Crew-Served Weapons</b>		<b>1</b> HOUR	—
Not every Soldier had a clearance and adequate vehicles were not available at every training center			
<b>Reception and Integration Day Procedures</b>		<b>2</b> HOURS	—
Lesson was written for cadre and not designed for IET Soldiers			
<b>Battle Focus Mental Readiness</b>		<b>1.6</b> HOURS	—
Time added to resilience training			
<b>Intravenous Saline Lock</b>		<b>4.2</b> HOURS	—
Task assessed as detrimental in combat and not beneficial for heat injuries			

doesn't have to try to make up a story or have one from personal experience, which some do and some don't. It will breed a more consistent training product, which is what we're trying to do."

### BETTER QUALITY

Making the BCT POI easier to teach and more standardized across the Army were important overarching goals of the development team.

"Part of this is to improve the quality of [how we teach]," Currey said. "We get a lot of good NCOs. They have combat experience, they're smart, and we want to turn them loose. We want to give them a right and a left limit, and we don't want anyone to have to make anything up and start from scratch.

"I think, to a degree, it was sort of overwhelming before. But, a big part of this was to make something that, in the end, an NCO could pick up and say, 'I can train from this. I understand what these

lessons are all about and it's very clear.'"

Those who embrace the new POI will reap rewards down the line, Stall said.

"I sit in on the end-of-cycle after-action reviews and I recently heard a [basic training] brigade commander say what made things so different in the last cycle was that they actually followed the POI. 'We actually held our feet to the fire and we put out a hell of a product,' he said. When you hear company commanders and first sergeants say these are probably the best Soldiers they've seen in a long time, that sends a heck of a message."

In an era of persistent conflict, the need to produce well-trained, ready-to-fight Soldiers has never been greater, Currey said.

"Times have changed, and [our drill sergeants] want to impart as much as they possibly can to Soldiers because a good percentage of our Soldiers will leave IET and go straight to a deploying unit. They have to go augment the force that is de-

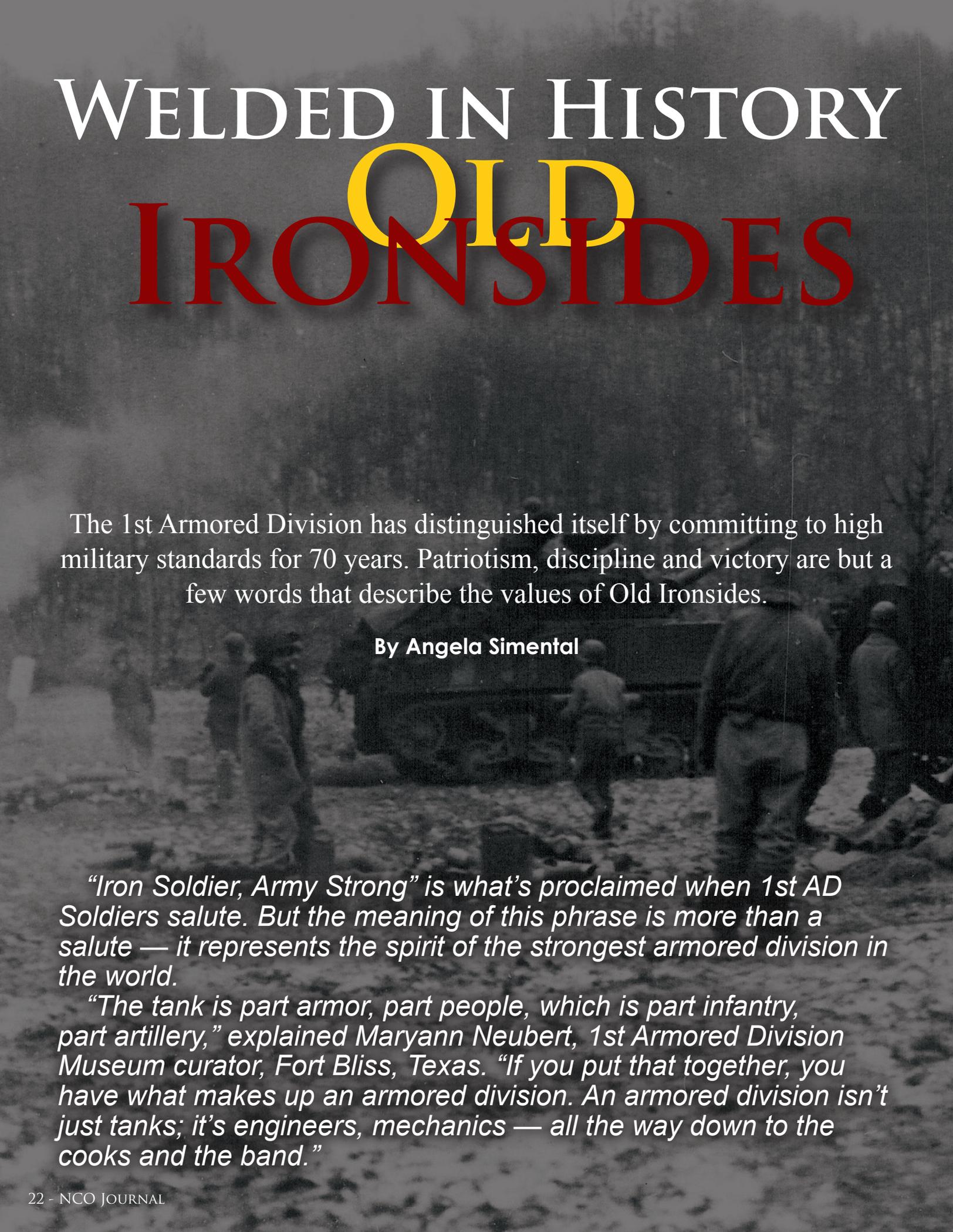
ploying right now. So, whatever Pvt. Jones learned, that drill sergeant and AIT platoon sergeant better have taught him well. That's why this is so serious to us. We've got to get it as good as we possibly can."

Hertling said the new POI is better for both new Soldiers and the drill sergeants who train them, and is part of an overall investment in tomorrow's Army.

"I'm interested in the future of the Army, not only from the standpoint of the Soldiers we're training today to be the sergeants major of 2030, but the drill sergeants we're helping retrain today to be the sergeants major and first sergeants of next year.

"The new POI is a sequenced and relevant approach to what our Soldiers are seeing on the modern battlefield. It's smart in terms of preparing Soldiers for what they are going to face." 🇺🇸

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# WELDED IN HISTORY OLD IRONSIDES

The 1st Armored Division has distinguished itself by committing to high military standards for 70 years. Patriotism, discipline and victory are but a few words that describe the values of Old Ironsides.

**By Angela Simental**

*“Iron Soldier, Army Strong” is what’s proclaimed when 1st AD Soldiers salute. But the meaning of this phrase is more than a salute — it represents the spirit of the strongest armored division in the world.*

*“The tank is part armor, part people, which is part infantry, part artillery,” explained Maryann Neubert, 1st Armored Division Museum curator, Fort Bliss, Texas. “If you put that together, you have what makes up an armored division. An armored division isn’t just tanks; it’s engineers, mechanics — all the way down to the cooks and the band.”*



The 1st Armored Division traces its origins to the 7th Cavalry Brigade, commanded by Col. Daniel Van Voorhis, in 1932. The brigade was restructured and reorganized to form the 1st Armored Division, which was officially activated at Fort Knox, Ky., in 1940.

“The Army had steadily been working from being a cavalry to having a small armored vehicle. They were the first ones to bring the tanks,” Neubert said. “At that time, they really didn’t look like tanks. They were coming up with these armored vehicles that offered heavy firepower.”

After becoming the first armored division in the Army, its first commander, Gen. Bruce R. Magruder, looked for a fitting nickname.

More than 200 names were submitted, but suggestions such as “Fire and Brimstone” or “Kentucky Wonders” didn’t seem to embody the qualities of the division.

Sitting in his study, Magruder happened to glance at a painting of the USS *Constitution* warship he had bought a few years back, and noticed the ship’s nickname — Old Ironsides.

“He was impressed with the parallel between the early development of the tank and the Navy’s Old Ironsides spirit of daring and durability. He decided the 1st AD should also be named Old Ironsides,” as described on the 1st AD history website.

The division’s insignia became as memorable as its nickname. At first, a simple green flag with a white number one in the middle represented the 1st Armored Division. The triangular insignia, as it is known today, was issued later, and became the template for all U.S. armored divisions and the U.S. Armor School.

“The insignia is designed from the triangular coat of arms of the American World War II tank corps,” according to 1st AD’s museum records. “Superimposed on the triangle is the insignia of the former 7th Cavalry Brigade: The tank track represents mobility and armor protection, the gun denotes firepower and the chain of lighting symbolizes speed and shock action.” Yellow represents armor, blue represents infantry and red represents artillery.

## From Africa to Italy

On Nov. 8, 1942, Old Ironsides was the first division to see combat action as part of Operation Torch, invading northwest Africa during World War II.

“They have a long history in World War II,” Neubert said. “They fought their way from North Africa to Italy. It was their first war. They were a new division, so they had to prove themselves.”

After fighting opposition forces for three days, the division advanced to Tunisia, a journey that would later lead it to Italy and challenge its strength.

In January 1943, the 1st AD received orders to defend central Tunisia against Axis forces. A month into the mission, an attack by enemy forces at Kasserine Pass caused the division to withdraw. Battered, the division fought for three more months until victory was declared in North Africa.

Pvt. Nicolas Minue of Company A, 6th Armored Infantry, 1st Armored Division, was awarded the Medal of Honor for gallantry and intrepidity at the loss of his life above and beyond the call of duty for his actions in Tunisia. Minue killed 10 enemy soldiers and “gave his company the offensive spirit that was necessary

for advancing and driving the enemy from the entire sector,” as stated in his Medal of Honor citation.

From 1944 to 1945, the 1st Armored Division fought its way through Italy until it reached the rugged mountains of Po Valley. Defying the harsh winter, the division fought until German forces surrendered, claiming victory for its first war.

## Korea, Cuba and social unrest

After World War II ended in 1945, the division was transferred to Germany as part of the Allied Occupation Forces, returning to U.S. soil in 1946, where it settled in its new home at Camp Kilmer, N.J.

It wasn’t long before the 1st AD found a new home. In an effort to build up an Army force in support of the Korean War, the division moved to Fort Hood, Texas, in 1951.

That year, the armored division, continuing its tradition of firsts, became the first in the Army to integrate black Soldiers as well as the first to receive the M48 Patton tank.

As the possibility of a nuclear threat filled the minds of Americans in the mid-1950s, the 1st AD conducted the largest joint exercise since World War II — testing the Atomic Field Army at Fort Polk, La., which became its new home in 1956.

The 1960s brought a social revolution as well as major reorganizing of the Army.

In 1962, the division was strengthened and “brigades replaced combat commands and the division’s aviation assets doubled,” as stated in the 1st AD history website. In response to the Soviets stationing missiles in Cuba, the division deployed to Fort Stewart, Ga. The division’s response during the Cuban Missile Crisis lasted only 18 days, and President John F. Kennedy personally congratulated the Soldiers victory.

Although the 1st AD did not participate in the Vietnam War, it did not stay dormant.

In 1968, the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. brought a major upheaval to the streets of Chicago, where part of the division was deployed to restore order.

In the early 1970s, rumors that the division was on the list to be inactivated prompted a movement of the division’s veterans. According to the division’s history website, the veterans organized a letter-writing campaign to save Old Ironsides. The division was saved, and once again, it gathered its tanks and moved back from Fort Hood to Germany.

## Former Sgt. Maj. of the Army William A. Connelly

**Connelly started his military career in 1954, serving as a tank crewman and tank commander. In 1976, he became sergeant major of the 1st Armored Division. From that position, he was selected as the sergeant major of the U.S. Army Forces Command in July 1977. He was sworn in as the sixth sergeant major of the Army in 1979.**



## Storm in the desert

Old Ironsides went through the next half of the century participating in victorious battles, contributing to its long history of patriotism and self-sacrifice.

Just years after the end of the Cold War, the 1st Armored Division faced another challenge in 1990. Iraq invaded Kuwait, and the division was deployed to the Middle East, taking 17,400 Soldiers and 7,050 pieces of equipment in support of Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, according to the division's website.

In 1991, the 1st AD's mission was to destroy the Iraqi Guards Division. "In its 89-hour blitz across the desert, Old Ironsides traveled 155 miles, destroyed 768 tanks and other equipment and captured 1,064 prisoners of war," as stated on its website. Victorious, the division returned to Germany at the end of the war.

### Former Sgt. Maj. of the Army Jack L. Tilley

**Tilley started his military training in 1966. In 1992, he became the command sergeant major of the 1st Armored Division in Germany and Bosnia. Throughout his 37-year Army career, he served as tank commander, attended the NCO Academy at Fort, Knox, Ky., in 1985 and became chief instructor in 1988. From 2000-2004, he served as the 12th sergeant major of the Army.**



## Peace in times of war

The 1st Armored Division is better known for its imposing tanks and fire power, but it has also been called to restore peace around the world.

"They have done peacekeeping missions people don't even think of," Neubert said. "They are a multinational and versatile force. It's not just about how much fire power they have; they are also peacekeepers."

In 1995, the Old Ironsides was deployed to Bosnia-Herzegovina in support of Operation Joint Endeavor. There, it formed Task Force Eagle, "one of the most powerful formations ever fielded," according to its history website.

Joined by 12 allied nations, Task Force Eagle "enforced the cease-fire, supervised the marking of boundaries, enforced withdrawal of combatants and movement of heavy weapons ... also supported the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe's efforts to administer the country's first democratic elections," according to historical accounts.

In response to the ethnic cleansings in Kosovo in 1999, the 1st AD deployed to Albania as part of Operation Allied Force to restore peace in Kosovo. Among the chaos, in 2001, the 1st AD celebrated its 60th birthday along with its namesake, the Navy's Old Ironsides.

### Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth O. Preston

**Preston entered the Army in 1975. In 2000, he was selected as the command sergeant major of the 1st Armored Division in Germany. Throughout his 35-year career, he has served in every enlisted leadership position from cavalry scout and tank commander to his current position as the 13th sergeant major of the Army.**



## Freedom in the Middle East

The division deployed to Iraq in 2003 for a 15-month assignment, the longest deployment of any division up to that date, according to the division's website.

Task Force 1st Armored Division, the largest division task force in the Army's history, "secured some of Baghdad's roughest neighborhoods and brought stability to the city and its surrounding countryside. The task force also captured 700 criminals and former regime insurgents," as stated on its website.

In addition, division Soldiers trained Iraqi police, renovated schools and established neighborhood councils. Some of the division Soldiers are still deployed in Baghdad. They are nine months into their 12-month deployment.

"We're leading by example here in Baghdad," said Command Sgt. Maj. William Johnson, command sergeant major of the 1st Armored Division. "We came into this war with firepower, tanks, Bradleys, Apache helicopters and everything that represents the 1st Armored Division. What's unique about the 1st AD today is that some of the same Soldiers we fought, we are now training, coaching and mentoring."

In 2005, Old Ironsides packed its belongings once again to move to a new home — this time, to Fort Bliss, Texas.

"Our division headquarters is stationed in Weisbaden, Germany, but all of our brigades are at Fort Bliss. In April 2011, we will case our colors in Germany after we complete our 12-month rotation here in Baghdad, and then they are going to send down our colors to Fort Bliss," Johnson said. 🇺🇸

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### Fomer 1stAD Command Sgt. Maj. Roger P. Blackwood

**Blackwood reported to active duty in 1978. Throughout his 31-year military career, Blackwood served as a gunner, tank commander and first sergeant for the 1st Armored Division before assuming his position as the division's command sergeant major in 2004 and again in 2008, becoming the longest-serving command sergeant major of the 1st AD.**



# 1932



A provisional armored-car platoon was established by the 7th Cavalry Brigade, paving the way for the establishment of the 1st Armored Division.

# 1942

The 1st AD was the first division to see combat during Operation Torch, the Allied invasion of North Africa, during World War II. It would eventually make its way to Tunisia.



# 1944



The 1st AD liberated Rome, Italy, after repelling repeated attacks from German forces.



# 1ST ARMORED

1. For the purposes of service test, an Armored Force is created. The Armored Force will include all armored corps and divisions, and all GHQ Reserve tank units.

3. The duties of the Chief of the Armored Force include the development of tactical and training doctrine for all units of the Armored Force, and research and advisory functions pertaining to development and procurement of all special transportation, armament and equipment used primarily by armored units. As the Chief of the Armored Force, his relationship to all armored elements of the I Armored Corps and GHQ Reserve tank units,

July 20, 1940.

Organization of Armored Force

Commanding Generals of all Armies,  
 (Army Areas, and Training Command Department);  
 Chiefs of Staff and Services; and  
 Commanding Officers of Inspected Stations.

1. For the purposes of service test, an Armored Force is created. The Armored Force will include all armored corps and divisions, and all GHQ Reserve tank units.

2. The I Armored Corps will consist of a Corps Headquarters and Headquarters Company and the 1st and 2d Armored Divisions (see paragraph 7). Brigadier General John L. Chaffee, United States Army, is designated as the Chief of the Armored Force and the Commander of the I Armored Corps.

3. The duties of the Chief of the Armored Force include the development of tactical and training doctrine for all units of the Armored Force, and research and advisory functions pertaining to development and procurement of all special transportation, armament and equipment used primarily by armored units. As the Chief of the Armored Force, his relationship to all armored elements of the I Armored Corps and the Reserve tank units, except the Field Artillery, Engineers, Signal, Ordnance, Quartermaster and Medical Corps elements, will be essentially those of a chief of a subordinate, as prescribed in Army Regulations 70-5, April 30, 1937, as modified by this directive.

4. The following active units of the Regular Army will be utilized in the initial organization of the Armored Force.

All Cavalry elements of the 7th Cavalry Brigade (less)  
 Separate Combat Car Squadron, Fort Riley, Kansas  
 2d Battalion, 48th Infantry (1st Div)  
 56th Infantry (1st Div)  
 67th Infantry (1st Div)  
 4th Infantry  
 7th Signal Troop (less)  
 17th Engineer Group (less)  
 48th Field Artillery (less)  
 17th & 19th Ordnance Companies (less)  
 20th Quartermaster Company, 1st Div  
 4th Medical Troop (less)

IMMEDIATE ACTION



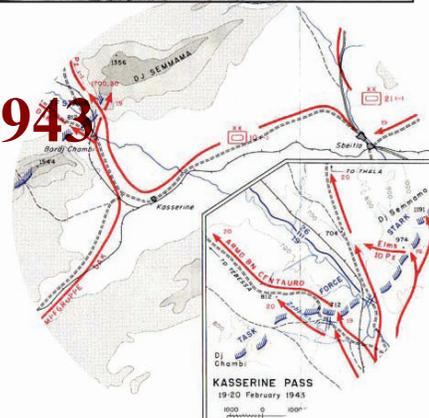
The 1st Armored Division was activated at Fort Knox, Ky., and nicknamed "Old Ironsides" by Gen. Bruce R. Magruder.

# 1940

The Old Ironsides withdrew its mission to take Tunisia after a counterattack from German Forces at Kasserine Pass.



# 1943



German forces surrendered in Italy after being defeated by the 1st AD and Allied forces.

The division was transferred to Germany as part of the Allied Occupation Forces. It returned to the United States the next year.

# 1945

## 1951

The Old Ironsides was the first division to integrate black Soldiers.

The division was reactivated at Fort Hood, Texas.

## 1968

After the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr., the 1st AD was deployed to Chicago to settle public unrest.

## 1990



The division deployed to Kuwait in support of Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm.

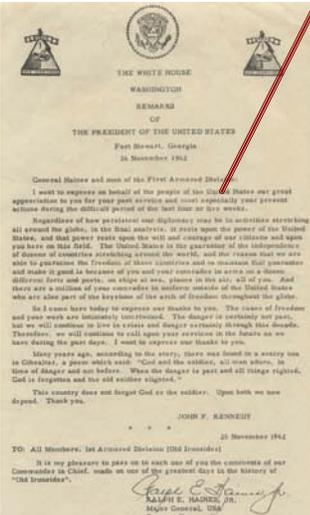
## 2003

The division deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.



# DIVISION HISTORY

General Haines and men of the First Armored Division:  
I want to express on behalf of the people of the United States our great appreciation to you for your past service and most especially your present actions during the difficult period of the last four or five weeks.



The division responded to the Cuban Missile Crisis, and received a visit from president John F. Kennedy to thank the troops for their actions.

## 1962

The Old Ironsides was rumored to be on the list of divisions to be inactivated. Veterans of the division organized a campaign to save the 1st AD. The division kept active and was sent to Germany.

## 1971

The division was the first to deploy to Kosovo in support of Operation Joint Guardian to restore peace in response to ethnic cleansing.



## 1999

The 1st AD began relocating to Fort Bliss, Texas.

## 2005



# Bootprints *through* History

U.S. Army Museum  
of the Noncommissioned Officer

Story and photos by Cindy Ramirez





Opposite page, clockwise from top left: Typical Continental Infantry sergeant uniform, circa 1781; Infantry sergeant, War of 1812, with a mural of the Battle of Chipewa in the background; A Sergeants Major Course Class 61 student walks by a wall-size portrait of engineer NCOs from Fort Belvoir, Va., during the early 1900s. This page, from left: Class 61 students during a tour of the museum, with a Desert Storm exhibit in the background; NCO rank insignia, 1872 to 1884; Infantry sergeant from the Spanish-American War.

*There's something striking about the expression on the small-unit leader's face. His eyes bulge. His skin creases deeply. His jaw opens widely, leaving one to wonder if he's barking an order or desperately warning a fellow Soldier of oncoming danger.*

*A nameless noncommissioned officer during the Korean War, the kneeling Soldier is one of numerous mannequins whose expressions are frozen in molded plastic at the U.S. Army Museum of the Noncommissioned Officer at Fort Bliss, Texas.*

Strolling through the museum, thousands of visitors each year notice the expressions, the Soldiers' uniforms, insignia and weapons.

And then there are the boots: a reminder that since the 1700s, U.S. Army NCOs have led the frontlines and worked behind the scenes to accomplish their mission and protect the welfare of their Soldiers — leaving their bootprints across 235 years of our nation's history.

With new and updated exhibits, an expanded oral history collection and an online video tour, the NCO museum is



tion of artifacts, as well as new cooling and heating systems.

*“These are the stories of NCOs through history — through their eyes and their experiences.”*

taking visitors from across the globe on a journey through time, following the footsteps of the noncommissioned officer.

The museum was recently expanded and refurbished under a program of the Army's “Year of the NCO” initiative in 2009. The renovation included expanded capacity for storage to increase its collec-

Established in 1975, the museum displays items from its collection of insignia, uniforms, weapons, equipment and paintings.

Displays provide information about the history of pay and rank structure, while others examine daily life in the 1830s, female NCOs, prisoners of war and the development of the NCO Education System, among others.

“These are the stories of NCOs through history — through their eyes and their experiences,” said museum cura-



tor Larry Arms, author of *A History of the NCO*, a widely used booklet in Army schools.

The museum averages about 10,000 visitors annually, mostly Soldiers. This summer, a museum tour was incorporated into the lesson plan of the Battle Staff Noncommissioned Officer Course at the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy, Fort Bliss, which will bring in hundreds more to visit.

“There’s a lot of interesting details you would never find out unless you go see a museum like that, interesting facts that people don’t know when it comes to the NCO contributions to our nation. This is the place to find that,” said Master Sgt. Philip Eville, BSNCOOC course manager.

“You can see how we’ve transformed as NCOs over the years,” he said. “And, you realize your contributions to the nation throughout history.”

However, the new online virtual tour will expand that reach even further, including those Soldiers enrolled in the BSNCOOC via video teleconference.

“Every NCO out there needs to know and take pride in that this is their museum,” said Leah Smith Jr., a retired master sergeant and BSNCOOC developer.

“But, a lot of Soldiers won’t ever have the opportunity to come here to Fort Bliss to see the museum first hand. With the virtual tour, Soldiers in Alaska, Germany,

*“You can see how we’ve transformed as NCOs over the years ... and you realize your contributions to the nation.”*

Kuwait or anywhere in the world, will have that opportunity.”

Among the exhibits are a collection of World War II cartoons by Pulitzer Prize-

winning artist Bill Mauldin; model 1840 NCO swords; and war bond posters.

Uniforms on display include those worn by Sgt. Maj. Dennis Thompson, a



Opposite page, clockwise from top: A small-unit leader during the Korean War; World War II khaki uniform for women; Civil War-era uniforms and insignia; Uniform worn by Sgt. Tracy McMillan, 626th Support Battalion, Kandahar, Afghanistan. This page, top: NCOs during the Lewis and Clark Expedition and a showcase of the fur factories’ products; American Revolution mural showing Gen. George Washington presenting the military Badge of Merit to Sgts. Elijah Churchill and Daniel Bissell.



.....  
“Every NCO  
out there needs  
to know and  
take pride in  
that this is  
their museum.”  
.....

prisoner of war for more than seven years in both North and South Vietnam, as well as by Sgt. Tracy McMillan of the 626th Support Battalion during her tour in Kandahar, Afghanistan.

The museum is also home to the 18 original paintings by Army artists Spcs. Anita Y. Sonnie, Theresa L. Unger and Manuel B. Ablaza, which were commissioned for the series during the first Year of the NCO in 1989.

The NCO Oral History program, which features interviews with NCOs from World War I to the present, is housed at the museum. Among the collection are oral histories of former sergeants major of the Army, part of the Army History Book Project in conjunction with the Center of Military History. A number of the interview transcripts are available for reading online.

“These histories are terrific because they contain the stories and experiences of some of our greatest NCOs in their own, vivid words,” curator Arms said. “There’s no better way to understand the history of the NCO. ... These are the Soldiers, the NCOs, who have put their boots to the ground.”

To contact Cindy Ramirez, e-mail [cindy.ramirez1@us.army.mil](mailto:cindy.ramirez1@us.army.mil)

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.....

Opposite page: **The modern NCO.** This page, clockwise from top left: **Operation Desert Storm uniform and captured Iraqi equipment;** **Operation Iraqi Freedom, 89th MP Brigade Military Police uniforms, with Iraqi police uniform in the center and a photo of Medal of Honor recipient Sgt. 1st Class Paul Ray Smith in the background;** **Museum curator Larry Arms with NCO rank insignia and photos of NCOs through history in the background.**



# Individual Training

**S**panning all echelons of the Army, NCOs are the primary trainers of enlisted Soldiers, crews and small teams. As the most experienced trainers in an organization, NCOs provide indispensable input when developing a unit's overall training strategy and are a crucial component in the Army's preferred two-way, "top-down/bottom-up" approach to training.

Based on the Army's foundational doctrine on training, FM 7-0, *Training for Full-Spectrum Operations*, the Warrior Leader Course lesson on individual training focuses on five key tenets that support NCOs as they conduct training of individuals, crews and small teams:

### **NCOS TURN GUIDANCE INTO**

**ACTION:** Based on their leaders' broad guidance and intent, NCOs identify the necessary tasks, standards and resources needed to train, lead and care for their Soldiers.

### **NCOS IDENTIFY INDIVIDUAL TASKS AND HELP IDENTIFY COLLECTIVE TASKS:**

To determine crew and small-team tasks, NCOs begin with individual Soldier tasks. Then, individual, crew and small-team tasks are identified that link to or support the unit's mission-essential task list. NCOs also help officers identify collective tasks that support the unit's METL.

### **NCOS PROVIDE AND ENFORCE STANDARDS-BASED, PERFORMANCE-ORIENTED, MISSION-FOCUSED TRAINING:**

Disciplined and effective training ensures Soldiers are proficient in the individual tasks that support the organization's METL. It is up to NCOs to prepare, conduct, recover and assess training to accomplish this goal, providing feedback to commanders and other leaders throughout the process



Photo by Spc. Ian Boudreau

Sgt. James Reynoso, rear, observes Spc. Latrell Sellers, left, as he demonstrates a step in replacing the breach of an M119A2 howitzer during annual training at Camp Blanding, Fla., in March. Pfc. Matthew Olivari, center, and Pvt. Ali Hedhili, right, await their turn. The artillerymen are members of the New York Army National Guard's Battery A, 1st Battalion, 258th Field Artillery Regiment.

and identifying and solving problems on their own initiative.

As training is a primary duty of every NCO, knowing the process to conduct an individual-training event is essential. Adequate preparation ensures resources are used optimally, standards are maintained and potential distractions are eliminated. Conduct of training begins with pre-execution checks and ends only when the designated training objectives have been met to standard. Recovery concludes a training event with equipment maintenance and an after-action review. Finally, a proper assessment honestly evaluates the team's proficiency, and need for further training if necessary.

### **NCOS FOCUS ON SUSTAINING**

### **STRENGTHS AND IMPROVING**

**WEAKNESSES:** NCOs quickly assimilate new Soldiers into the organization, continuously coach and mentor them, and hone their newly acquired skills. While helping each Soldier grow and develop, NCOs foster initiative and agility in their subordinates.

### **SENIOR NCOS DEVELOP JUNIOR NCOS AND HELP OFFICERS DEVELOP JUNIOR OFFICERS:**

All NCOs train and coach Soldiers; senior NCOs train junior NCOs for the next higher position. Senior NCOs also help form high-performing officer-NCO teams, clarifying the different roles of officers and NCOs and helping junior officers develop their professional competencies.



1

PREPARE

**Select the tasks:** Identify tasks based on bottom-up feedback and the commander's assessment.

**Plan the training:** Identify *who* will receive the training and *what* the training objectives and types of training events will be. Link training objectives to the METL with specific collective, leader and individual Soldier tasks. Specify *when* – the sequence of the training tasks and events. Coordinate *where* – the ranges, training areas, simulators and other equipment needed.

**Train the trainers:** Identify leaders, trainers, evaluators and observer/controllers and allocate time for pre-training and rehearsing prior to the main training event.

**Recon the site:** Conduct a reconnaissance of the range

and/or training site. Execute walk-throughs for trainers and other assisting personnel.

**Conduct risk management:** Complete a Composite Risk Assessment worksheet.

**Issue the training plan:** Clearly identify the responsibilities for the training. Issue the training plan as an operations order, training directive or training schedule.

**Rehearse:** Conduct rehearsals for trainers, evaluators, OCs and the opposing force.

**Conduct pre-execution checks:** Confirm responsibility for pre-execution checks. Ensure all planning and prerequisite training is complete prior to the training event.

2

CONDUCT

**Conduct pre-execution checks:** These are the final checks of equipment, assisting personnel, training aids and location, performed immediately before the training.

**Supervise hazard controls:** These were identified on the Composite Risk Assessment worksheet.

**State task, conditions and standards:** It is critical Soldiers being trained understand exactly what to do, the necessary equipment available and how well they must perform.

**Brief the Composite Risk Assessment:** Explain the hazards and how to mitigate them.

**Demonstrate each step:** This may be done by you or an assistant. After all steps have been explained by the numbers, a presentation at full speed may be helpful.

**Restate conditions and standards:** Also ask if those being trained have any questions prior to their evaluation.

**Evaluate performance:** Evaluate each Soldier's ability to perform the task to standard: "GO" or "NO GO."

**Record results:** This is not a formal document but merely notes detailing the who, what, when, where and results of the training.

3

RECOVER

**Conduct "after" checks:** Ensure all equipment is clean, complete and serviceable.

**Account for equipment:** Check equipment back in as required.

**Close out training site:** Ensure the site is clean, serviceable and ready for inspection.

**Conduct AAR:** Review what was supposed to happen and

what did happen, identify strengths and deficiencies, and determine how the task could be performed differently.

**Conduct final inspection:** Ensure no items were left behind, the site is clean and all equipment has been powered off as required.

**Review risk assessment:** How effective was your assessment? If new hazards were noticed, they will need to be taken into account next time.

4

ASSESS

**Determine squad's proficiency:** There is no easy formula to determine an entire squad's proficiency rating, which could be "T" for trained, "P" for needs practice or "U" for untrained. Although the proficiency rating is subjective and based on your personal assessment, be prepared to explain the rating to your supervisor.

**Report assessment:** Your assessment report should be an honest appraisal of your team's readiness regarding the training objective. An honest assessment allows your superiors to provide you and your Soldiers with the appropriate training in the future. Indeed, the Army Values of duty, honesty and integrity demand that you "tell it like it is."

# Keep it simple, the stupid falls off here

By Master Sgt. Martin McCarty  
Fort Leavenworth, Kan.

Often heard are the phrases, “Keep it simple, stupid,” or the more polite version, “Keep it short and sweet.” Their key goals are that simplicity rules and unnecessary complexity should be avoided.

This bit of jargon has been part of military leadership through the ages. Most of us remember someone saying, “If it doesn’t pass the KISS principle, forget it!” Why then, do we write, teach, demonstrate, instruct or impart leadership knowledge in such a complex and complicated way? And why is our United States Army the producer of outstanding leadership traits found in our past and present Soldiers?

Ask your high-speed noncommissioned officer who leads everyday, from the start of the day to the time the mission is complete: More is not necessarily better.

I want to show each and every Soldier that keeping it simple with

our leadership traits is the key to success. Ready for a little history lesson, mixed with jargon?

The ages have proven well-led armies had simple, well-instructed and -communicated plans. Roman generals had a simple means of communication through use of flags, signals and personnel. One key Soldier was the centurion. This officer was noncommissioned, and to hold this title, would have had to previously been a sergeant. Centurions suffered heavy casualties in battle, fighting alongside the legionaries they commanded. They led from the front, occupying a position at the front right of the formation, leading and inspiring their men by example. They also sought to display the skill and courage that got them to their rank in the first place. How often have we heard the simple phrases, “lead from the front” or “lead by example”? Hooah.

Want to keep it *more* simple? Look at the Standing Orders of Rogers’ Rangers. The first rule is the most important: don’t forget nothing (maybe that is spelled *nuthin*)! Maj. Robert Rogers knew to keep his list of rules simple and mission oriented. Could he be the first to have published a Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL) for the U.S. Army? His leadership and ability to communicate effectively to those in his charge during the French and Indian wars lead to the success of British forces in the area. In recent history, then-Lt. Col. Leuer and Command Sgt. Maj.

Neal R. Gentry started crafting the Ranger Creed. It was re-drafted by the battalion XO, Maj. “Rock” Hudson, and finalized at Fort Stewart, Ga., in 1974 when the original cadre deployed there on July 1, 1974.<sup>1</sup> Our forces today follow this heritage and high esprit de corps as the U.S. Army Rangers “lead the way.”

During the American Civil War, a still-young military tested its leadership practices again in a brother-on-brother war. The best generals used tactics, weapons and technology that would be used throughout the 20th century. One such leader, Gen. George Thomas, whose Army of the Cumberland was known as the effective fighting force of its day, followed simple principles. Thomas Buell, in his book, *Combat Leadership in the Civil War*, called Thomas, a “Southerner and career soldier who remained loyal to

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**“Duty, Honor, Country—those three hallowed words reverently dictate what you want to be, what you can be, what you will be. They are your rallying point to build courage when courage seems to fail, to regain faith when there seems to be little cause for faith, to create hope when hope becomes forlorn.”**

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— Gen. Douglas MacArthur in a speech at West Point Military Academy, N.Y.

the Union, a ‘Roman,’ because his innovations created an army that, like the ancient legions at their peak, differed in kind from its outmoded opponents.”<sup>2</sup> Gen. Thomas won every battle in which he fought.

An example of one of Gen. Thomas’ military breakthroughs was found by Buell in the Library’s Prints and Photographs Division collection. It was a Mathew Brady photograph showing Gen. Thomas and his staff in a mobile field headquarters, working there because the accelerated developments on the battlefield needed them closer to the action. He understood the simple leadership principle that an effective leader could no longer afford to command their troops from the rear. Lead from the front, lead by example, lead the way and learn from history.

During World Wars I and II, we continued to learn the same valuable lesson of KISS. “*A good plan violently executed today is better than a perfect plan executed next week,*” so said Gen. George S. Patton Jr. And he’s absolutely right — with one exception. Who has ever heard of such a thing as a perfect plan? And why do we try to get one perfect plan by spending money or effort toward that means? We have always communicated our plans and orders, making them understood from the junior enlisted to senior Soldier in the simplest terms. And we quickly adapt, learning from our mistakes and taking advantage of our enemies’ mistakes decisively. NCOs were those key leaders that kept “Joe” informed and ensured the officers understood to effectively communicate with the troops. Keeping it simple has got to be the answer, I just know it.

As we moved into more recent history, our senior leaders saw the wisdom of instructing our young leaders in this simplistic style. Gen. Douglas MacArthur's farewell speech, given at West Point, must be one of the most famous, heartfelt and simple. "*Duty, Honor, Country—those three hallowed words reverently dictate what you want to be, what you can be, what you will be. They are your rallying point to build courage when courage seems to fail, to regain faith when there seems to be little cause for faith, to create hope when hope becomes forlorn.*"<sup>3</sup> Ask any Soldier from that era and to them, *duty, honor, country* were their simple watchwords, their keys to successful leadership. This speech by one of our country's greatest military leaders is timeless and as important today as it was in 1962. Many Americans have devoted their lives to following the ideals of *duty, honor* and *country*, and too many have made the ultimate sacrifice so that the United States may enjoy freedom and prosperity. Leadership by example and simple words to live by, to follow, to take to heart.

And in today's military mind-set, we still see the hope of simple ideals — learning from history and not trying to reach the perfect plan — grow and take root in a new generation of Soldiers. Our military generals recently visited the site of Alexander the Great's successful conquest of ancient Persia. The land occupied by modern Iraq has been, in centuries past, the kingdoms of Ur, Sumer and Akkad, and the empires of Assyria, Chaldea, Babylonia and Persia. It has been ruled by Semiramis,

Sargon, Sennacherib, Hammurabi and Nebuchadnezzar, Ashurbanipal, Cyrus the Great, Xerxes and Darius, not to mention Tamerlane, the Mongol hordes, Turks and Ottomans, British, French, Germans and Russians. But the most famous conqueror of all was a 25-year-old king of Macedonia, who subdued Iraq in 331

B.C. and died there eight years later, a few months shy of his 33rd birthday. How did Alexander overcome Iraq? What can we learn from his campaigns and his victories? Are there parallels between the challenges he faced in his era and those the United States and its allies confront today? What can our contemporary Soldiers learn from the campaign of 331 B.C.? These are questions for a different paper. But the fact remains, we are doing the good, solid, simple process of learning from the past to benefit the future. Leadership skills are at their highest when Soldiers are willing to learn from their or others' past mistakes and successes. Keeping it simple should be the goal of every Soldier.

Ok, so you say, "Thanks for the history lesson, but what does this all mean? You talk about keeping it simple, but what are you getting at?" Communication, simple common sense and understanding the leadership manuals that have been written with time-proven events should be our rallying point, our tip of the spear. We know the results of effective leadership and we have great examples throughout history of effective leaders. These were not complicated, intricate Soldiers with designs of ingenious

intention, rather they were effective communicators, learned historians, and simple Soldiers that led well. And, simple leadership skills are not limited to only the military.

Even our civilian counterparts know the value of simple leadership skills in their business plans and practices. When you become a leader, your influence goes up. The people who work for you pay attention to what you say and do. They adjust their behavior accordingly. The result is that you use your behavior, what you say and do, to influence the behavior of the people who work for you to achieve a defined objective. Achieving the objective is part of your job as a leader. The other part is caring for your people. I *know* you have heard that before: mission first, Soldiers always. Many new leaders struggle in the beginning with the paradox of when to exert "strong leadership" in missions versus when to "empower" their personnel to make a particular decision. Exert too much direction, and they are accused of being domineering or of micromanaging. Empower too much and they run the risk of being called indecisive. Even our civilian leaders struggle daily with leadership issues. But, the most successful business models were based on a simple plan and a simple idea. The simplest of those plans is to ask six questions: who, what, when, where, why and how. I know this is sounding very familiar to you now.

Some of you might remember the story of some school, military academy, OCS or ROTC class that had a test one day. The future officers were presented by their instructor with a simple task of

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**"Communication, simple common sense and understanding the leadership manuals that have been written with time-proven events should be our rallying point, our tip of the spear. We know the results of effective leadership and we have great examples throughout history of effective leaders. These were not complicated, intricate Soldiers with designs of ingenious intention, rather they were effective communicators, learned historians, and simple Soldiers that led well."**

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—Master Sgt. Martin McCarty

placing a telephone pole into the ground with a NCO, three Soldiers and various tools and equipment. The question was open-ended: "How would you get the pole into the ground?" The future officers worked hard at the problem, designing plans, instructions and graphs. The instructor collected and reviewed the exams, but found only a handful

that had the answer he was looking for. It was so easy and simple. The answer struck them and made them angry or laugh that they had missed it. The instructor read one young officer's correct answer, "Sergeant, I need the pole placed here in one hour and will be back to inspect shortly after that." This is the epitome of simple. Hopefully, they learned a valuable lesson that day.

So, as we tie this all together and bring this thought to the final conclusion that our military leadership skills have a simple, well-worn path to success, we need to keep in mind that no plan is perfect. We have changed our manuals and doctrine, but we have not changed the basic, simple tenet for a successful leader: *Be, Know, Do*. Those words continue to echo back to history and our simple roots of leadership development. We do not need to look further. History shows us time and time again how victory has been won with simple ideals. *Be, Know, Do* provides much to think about for leaders who want to create and sustain nimble, responsive units. In the Army, leadership is the ability to manage for the mission and mobilize people around the mission. Leadership is a matter of *how to be*, not *how to do*. The Army disperses leadership

throughout the organization. You never know when someone will be required to step up and take charge. Thus, everyone is trained to be a leader. That is, everyone is trained in not only what to do, but more importantly, in *how* to be. *Be, Know, Do* shows how this is being done — and how it can be adapted by the nonmilitary: businesses, colleges and universities, nonprofits, and churches. So I challenge our NCO leadership today to get back to the basics of mission first, Soldiers always; and *Be, Know, Do*.

Be a Soldier of strong and honorable character with determination, a role model for other Soldiers to follow. Be committed to the Army ethic, understand it, and know that *duty, honor and country* are its watchwords and integrity its sword. Be an example of individual values, to have the moral, personal courage to persevere and the candor to give honest opinions and answers in the face of adversity. Be able to figure out difficult, complex dilemmas and choose the best course of action that fits the mission and Soldiers, with respect to the nation and no thought of personal gain.

Know the standards of the nation, Army and unit. Know the situation and keep lines of communication open and simple. Know yourself: Where are you strong and where do you need improvement? Know the skills and attitudes you need for each event and plan your communication within the scope of your Soldiers so you are developing your subordinates. Know your unit, its capabilities and limitations; understand the systems at your disposal and use them as effectively as possible.

Do explain the purpose of your missions and the “why” of your intent so Soldiers understand and want to be led. What’s so important about a compelling “why”? Most people need and want to understand how what they are being asked to do connects to some bigger picture. The fact that a small percentage of Soldiers don’t care or want to know is no excuse for dismissing this step. Bottom line, when people don’t have a compelling “why,” they won’t sustain their effort. Do give them direction, set goals and train them as a team. Do motivate and take care of Soldiers so that Soldiering has meaning. Do correct poor performance and ensure you reward those that exceed your expectations. Do fairly and rapidly punish those Soldiers who purposely fail to meet the standards or follow orders.

We now have the Warrior Ethos and LDRSHIP (loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity, personal courage), along with a new manual. The path is the same and the simple principles are still there. We have just created it to improve the foundation of our core leadership competencies. We must be careful that we do not try to build that “perfect plan.” Keeping it simple has been proven time and time again.

We can rewrite our manuals, put different labels on our roadmaps, and recreate the wheels with new terminology, but it does not change the fact that leadership skills have a simple, time proven, U.S. Army-tested route to success. So no matter at what rank, level of competence or skill you might have Officer Corps, remember the NCO Corps has been maintaining the KISS principle for years beyond your wisdom. If we apply the principles discussed here and have the will to lead, we can develop ordinary Soldiers who are capable of doing extraordinary things. It is an absolute requirement for success in war and demands your expert leadership. Have the personal commitment and determination. Lead by example. Lead from the front. Lead the way. Use

the simple tools of *Be, Know, Do*, the Warrior Ethos. History demands that we keep it simple, Soldiers!

1. Wikipedia, *Rangers Lead the Way*
2. *Combat Leadership in the Civil War*, by Thomas Buell
3. Gen. Douglas MacArthur’s Farewell Speech, given to the Corps of Cadets at West Point, N.Y., May 12, 1962

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# Our Warrior Ethos: An essay

1st Sgt. Tammy Treat  
119th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment →

I started this journey alone. I walked in to a recruiting station and joined the largest organized force this planet has to reckon with. The magnitude of it is awe-inspiring in its own right. Our nation is the great masterpiece in which we enlisted to protect.

Just the sight of an American flag or the sound of our anthem is enough for me to feel that rush of adrenaline, which is so many things mixed into a singular concoction of emotion that I can only try at best to dig deep within my soul to verbalize it all.

When I see our flag, I feel strength. When I raise my right arm to render a salute to it, the feeling is one of such intense respect; it is a phenomena which I cannot fully describe. I look at those who stand beside me. I think the emotions they feel are the same. We are not connected to each other by marriage or birth. We come from different backgrounds, cities, faiths and cultures. We do not look alike nor do we sound alike. We have varying degrees of social standing and education. So how is it that you can take the everyday, common American and turn that body and soul into a warrior who is willing to give up his or her life for that of a fellow Soldier?

We are a family of fighters. We become proficient in our Warrior Tasks, our Battle Drills and even our occupational specialties. We drill muscle memory into every inch of our being so we can maneuver as one. It is a single thread that binds us — a value and belief system average Americans have come to trust as a sacred protector of their land. That thread is so complex, stubborn and strong that I cannot imagine it ever being broken.

Our Army values guide our way on every journey, every mission in which we set out to tackle. That is why it is so important for our successors to fully understand the stepping stones we have laid before them. The history and the progression of the noncommissioned officer should be ever-prevalent in our subordinate's minds as they are the future leaders, mentors, and coaches.

Those leaders before me shared their knowledge and skill in order to see that I, too, would be there for the next generation. If

I do not ensure those who follow in my place know the things I know, and live the same values as I live, then I have failed.

The relative rank I wear on my chest is not that of power, but of wisdom and experience. I am an enforcer of standards. As a first sergeant, my mission is Soldiers. I am to keep those under my care physically and mentally fit and willing to fight the fight. My mission is to train my team so that they can take my place once I am gone, to mentor them in to well-rounded, trustworthy leaders who genuinely care. I am to coach them into becoming experts in all that they do. By doing all of this, I will know that they have not been left behind and have been given what they need to succeed.

I believe the Army values entail essential qualities of character needed to build an effective team of warriors. When I see someone walk by me wearing our uniform, I judge that Soldier. I assume the nature of the person wearing it is that of a trusted, dignified, tough and loyal individual. I feel that silent, unspoken understanding between us, that we are brothers and sisters in arms and that we are here to protect one another no matter the circumstance.

When I look at each and every member of my team, the emotions that run through my blood make my chest extend out in pride. I have memories of pre-mission prayers or crying with a fellow Soldier on the anniversary of our brother-in-arm's death. In my heart I know these sacrifices were for the betterment of our nation. We must drive on and strive for excellence so the losses we have suffered won't be for naught.

The Warrior Ethos is an attitude and a state of mind. It takes a special internal strength that only a warrior can understand. That is what we are: warriors. The loyalty, enthusiasm, and inspiration of those before me will never be forgotten. I have internalized the values they instilled upon me, and it is all now part of my nature; part of my own existence.

Through the heat of the battle or the calm of the storm, the lessons I have learned toughened my soul and the bonds I have built will be forever. I can truly say I will never accept defeat. I will never quit, and when I look back on my career I will know that I gave it my all and I will stand proud.



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NCO Net is an Armywide NCO Network designed to support the flow of knowledge throughout the Noncommissioned Officers Corps. As part of BCKS, NCO Net members can share thoughts, ideas, lessons, and experiences up to the FOUO level with other NCOs and subject matter experts. Your participation will help you become a better NCO and ultimately support the professional growth of your fellow NCOs and the Army.

There are great discussion about timely and relevant issues and topics. Go to <https://nconet.bcks.army.mil> and become a member to participate in these discussions as well as to ask your question or to find certain content that our members have contributed over the years to help you as a leader in your day-to-day activities.

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# NCO Stories

*A selection of Valor*



## *Sgt. 1st Class Jack White* *Citation to award the Distinguished Service Cross*

*The President of the United States of America, authorized by Act of Congress July 9, 1918, takes pleasure in presenting the Distinguished Service Cross to Staff Sgt. Jack E. White, United States Army, for extraordinary heroism in action.*

*Staff Sgt. White distinguished himself by acts of gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty while serving as a squad leader with Company A, 1st Battalion (Airborne), 503rd Infantry Regiment, during combat operations against an armed enemy in Khost province, Afghanistan, on June 29, 2008.*

*That night, Staff Sgt. White's 19-man observation post was assaulted by a 105-man anti-Afghanistan force employing rocket-propelled grenades and coordinated small-arms fire. As the attack commenced, Staff Sgt. White was awoken by a rocket-propelled grenade impacting less than 20 meters from his position.*

*He immediately low-crawled out of the sleeping area in order to lead the observation post's defense. Maneuvering through heavy enemy fire, Staff Sgt. White quickly adjusted his men to repel the brunt of the attacking force.*

*With no regard for his own safety, he worked his way from Soldier to Soldier in order to interlock all fires and mark targets, all while engaging and being engaged by the enemy. He ordered multiple danger-close fire missions through his forward observer and incorporated lethal mortar and artillery fire on the enemy elements.*

*His leadership and fearless tactical maneuvering allowed his men to interdict all attacking forces attempting to overrun their position, ultimately leading the enemy to break contact and retreat.*

*Staff Sgt. White's selfless leadership, courageous actions, and extraordinary devotion to duty are in keeping with the finest traditions of military service and reflect great credit upon himself, the 1st Battalion (Airborne), 503rd Infantry Regiment, and the United States Army.*



# NCO awarded Army's second-highest decoration

By Vince Little  
Fort Benning Public Affairs Office

On the night of June 29, 2008, Sgt. 1st Class Jack White and 18 other Soldiers were awoken by the sound of rocket-propelled grenades near their tiny observation post in Afghanistan, close to the Pakistan border.

One of the grenades landed less than 20 meters away, and more than 100 Taliban fighters were attacking the Soldiers with small-arms fire and RPK machine guns.

Quickly taking action, White crawled out of his sleeping area to head the observation point's defense against the insurgents.

Maneuvering through heavy enemy fire, White engaged and quickly adjusted his men to repel the attacking force, his award citation states. With no regard for his own safety, he ordered multiple "danger-close" fire missions, called in airstrikes and directed lethal mortar and artillery launches.

For his leadership, White, now an airborne school instructor, was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, the military's second-highest decoration. The honor was presented during a ceremony on the hallowed ground of the 173rd Airborne Memorial at the National Infantry Museum, Fort Benning, Ga. White was surrounded by his family, fellow Soldiers from the 173rd Airborne Brigade and the Fort Benning community.

White's unit also earned seven Army Commendation Medals and a Bronze Star, all with "V" devices for valor.

During the ceremony, White spoke of the unity and strength of his small tactical unit and squad, and of the human dimension of combat.

"You don't really think. You just think about what you have to do at the time," said White, who was a staff sergeant when the incident occurred. "It ain't like the movies; it ain't fun. It's the last place you want to be, honestly. But your training takes over, and you start thinking about the guy to the left and right of you, and [you want to] make sure everybody gets out of there safe. If it weren't for my guys that were up there ... I wouldn't be speaking to you today."

Command Sgt. Maj. Rick Weik, who was the battalion's command sergeant major and now heads the 198th Infantry Brigade, said the attack on the Soldiers that night could have turned bad very easily, but White's leadership helped them prevail.

The fight lasted more than an hour, and the enemy eventually broke contact and retreated, said Col. Michael Fenzel, then a lieutenant colonel who led White's battalion in Afghanistan and is now commander of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, at Fort Bliss, Texas. He said the Taliban fighters attacked in waves on the main combat outpost below them and emanated from six other directions.

"The other attacks were designed to isolate OP East so it could be destroyed, but the enemy hadn't taken into account the



Photo by Lori Egan

Col. Michael Fenzel, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division commander, pins the Distinguished Service Cross on Sgt. 1st Class Jack White, an Airborne School instructor with 1st Battalion (Airborne), 507th Parachute Infantry Regiment, Sept. 7 at the National Infantry Museum, Fort Benning, Ga.

expertise, the cool and violent response under the direction of one man. ... Jack's own personal actions, bravery and leadership are the reason why 18 other American Soldiers are alive today," he said. "Jack White became a hero to those who served with him long before the evening of June 29 on Observation Point East. Heroes are made long before events thrust them into a position to have to act."

Maj. Gen. Michael Ferriter, the Maneuver Center of Excellence and Fort Benning commanding general, called White the epitome of inspired leadership. He said heroic actions can serve as lessons learned.

White has been on four deployments — three to Afghanistan and one to Iraq. The Distinguished Service Cross wouldn't be possible without the actions of his comrades, he said.

"All my guys who were up on the OP with me, I wish they were here today," he said. This is "mainly for them. That's how I see this award, not for me, but for everybody."

# Soldiers receive Silver Stars for battlefield valor in Afghanistan

By Sgt. Tony Hawkins  
USASOC PAO

Thunderous applause filled the John F. Kennedy Auditorium at Fort Bragg, N.C., as seven Soldiers, decorated with the nation's third-highest honor, took the stage at the end of a 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne) valor award ceremony Aug. 16.

The Soldiers were each awarded a Silver Star for heroic acts of valor displayed during the group's deployment to Afghanistan from 2007 to 2008. One of the medals was posthumously awarded to Sgt. 1st Class David Nuñez, which was presented to his brother, Spc. Rene Nuñez of the 82nd Airborne Division.

These men "laid it all on the line and risked absolutely everything they care about in life for the sake of the mission at hand, their partners and Afghan forces teammates on their left and right," said Col. James Kraft, the unit's commander. "Ladies and gentlemen, that's true honor."

Lt. Gen. John F. Mulholland, commanding general of the U.S. Army Special Operations Command, was the host of the ceremony. He spoke of the pride and honor he felt in leading the men and women of Army Special Operations.

"Every day in Iraq, Afghanistan and in other countries around the world, American Special Operations Soldiers routinely and consistently exhibit enormously powerful acts of valor and courage on the field of battle," Mulholland said.

As each of the seven Soldiers took the stage to be presented with a medal, vignettes were read about the astonishing actions they took to stop the enemy and protect their comrades.

"When confronted with danger in the fog and friction of close combat, without hesitation you went to the sound of the guns," Kraft said. "You took care of business first rather than taking care of yourself. Each of these Soldiers has a story to tell, but quite frankly, they're too modest to tell it."

Kraft spoke of the valor the men exhibited in the heat of battle, though he said words alone could not do them justice.

"Mere words cannot adequately express and describe one's willingness, one's decision to charge a numerically superior enemy force," he said, "or to maneuver into the jaws of a sophisticated enemy ambush to recover his Afghan brothers. To continue forward at all cost when hit by enemy fire, or to continue to engage the enemy and protect the lives of his teammates, even when engulfed in flames."

However, if you were to ask any of these Soldiers if they did anything special, the typical response would be, "I was just doing my job."

"I didn't really think about doing it; I just did it," Staff Sgt. Mario A. Pinilla, a Special Forces communication sergeant with 1st Battalion, 7th Special Forces Group, said about his actions on Aug. 20, 2008. "If I had to do it again, I definitely would."

While conducting a combat reconnaissance patrol in the Khaz Oruzgan district of Afghanistan, his team was ambushed by



Photo by Trisha Harris

Seven Soldiers from the 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne) were awarded the Silver Star during a ceremony at Fort Bragg, N.C., Aug. 16, for their valorous actions while deployed to Afghanistan between 2007 and 2008. From right to left the recipients are: Sgt. 1st Class Mario Pinilla, Staff Sgt. Daniel Gould, Sgt. 1st Class Jonathan Clouse, Master Sgt. Julio Bocanegra, Sgt. 1st Class Antonio Gonzalez, Chief Warrant Officer Mark Roland and Spc. Rene Nuñez, a member of the 82nd Airborne Division who accepted the posthumous award for his brother, Sgt. 1st Class David Nuñez.

anti-Afghan forces. During the ensuing firefight, Pinilla sprinted 75 meters across open terrain into incoming enemy fire to a wounded teammate, Staff Sgt. Daniel Gould, a Special Forces engineer sergeant, who was pinned down. When Pinilla reached his teammate, he dove in front of him, providing his own body as cover for his wounded comrade as he proceeded to suppress the enemy ambush line.

After 10 minutes of returning fire, Pinilla suffered two gunshot wounds and was critically wounded. His teammates fought to return him to safety, all the while Pinilla continued to return fire with his 9 mm Beretta handgun. Due to the severity of his wounds, he was evacuated from the battlefield and eventually sent to Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C., where he is slowly recovering.

"It's about trusting the man to your left and right and knowing that he will do the right thing and watch your back," he said. "That's what I was doing for (Gould), and he did the same for me. I wouldn't be here today if not for him."

Gould said it was the closeness his team shared that enabled them to risk their lives for each other.

"When you have the camaraderie that we have, the actions become instantaneous," Gould said. "The cohesion that is built within the team is key."

It is that camaraderie and familiarity within the team that allows its members to perform such acts of heroism.

# Army Reservist receives Silver Star for heroism in Afghanistan

By Donna Miles  
American Forces Press Service

Sgt. Gregory S. Ruske is quick to call himself an ordinary Soldier, but he has already been distinguished as one of the Army's heroes in the war in Afghanistan.

In October 2008, the Army reservist met Army Reserve officials, attended the Association of the U.S. Army's annual meeting in Washington, D.C., and was presented with a Silver Star. He told the officials he didn't see the actions he took when his platoon was attacked by a much larger Taliban force as anything exceptional.

"I don't consider myself a hero," he said. "I was just an ordinary guy put in an extraordinary situation. I reacted based on my upbringing, training and compassion; and thankfully, it worked out in the end."

On April 21, 2008, Ruske was assigned to Combined Joint Task Force 101, operating in Afghanistan's Kapisa province, when the incident that led to his award took place. He and his fellow Soldiers from 3rd Platoon, A Company, Task Force Gladiator, were on a patrol in a remote area not accessible by vehicle when Taliban operatives attacked them with heavy grenades, machine guns and rifle fire.

"There was no way our gun truck support could get to us, so we were kind of out (there) by ourselves when all Hades broke loose," he said.

Trapped with his unit in an exposed position, Ruske returned fire so most of the platoon could move to protective cover. Ruske then moved to a rooftop and continued laying fire even after taking a bullet to the hip.

At that point, Ruske realized that two Afghan National Police officers were still pinned down in the open, taking fire from Taliban attackers. One ran for cover, but the other officer – the one Ruske had worked with at vehicle checkpoints and chatted with through an interpreter – had been shot and was trying to crawl to safety through a hail of bullets.

"Seeing that dirt kick up no more than six inches from his head, I said, 'Man, this is jacked up,'" Ruske recalled thinking. "They are still shooting at this guy. He is still bleeding and shot. And I said, 'We have to go get him.'"

Ruske said he didn't take time to think about his own safety, but simply reacted to the training he learned to prepare him for combat.

Ruske credited his mentor, Sgt. 1st Class Glen Boucher, with

instilling the discipline and skills he drew while under fire.

"He was fair, but if you stepped across that line, he would check you, and that was good," Ruske said of his former squad leader, then a Bradley infantry fighting vehicle commander. "He could joke with you and mess around with you, but when it came down to work, it was time to work."

A stickler for soldiering skills, Boucher taught Ruske tactics he said enabled him to assist the fallen Afghan police officer.

"He's the one who taught me all the ins and outs of dismounted and mounted techniques, and actually it was the 'Z' pattern he taught me that I had my [squad automatic weapon] gunner do to suppress [enemy fire] and buy us a little time when they were shooting at us," Ruske said.

Ruske ordered his SAW gunner, Spc. Walter Reed, to spray the enemy in a Z-shaped pattern, expending a whole box of 200 rounds to give Ruske and his buddy, Spc. Eric Seagraves, time to run out to retrieve the officer.

The two dodged bullets as they grabbed the Afghan police officer's arms and dragged him toward a wall that provided protective covering.

Only when Ruske and Seagraves went to lift the man behind the wall did they realize that Ruske's leg had been shattered.

Later that day, after Ruske was taken to Bagram Air Base to receive treatment for his gunshot wound, he checked on the Afghan officer and

was relieved to see that he had survived and would keep both legs.

Almost six months later, Ruske said he finds it amazing that he received a Silver Star for his actions. "I still don't really believe it," he said. Ruske deflected attention from himself, emphasizing that he acted as part of a team.

"I had help the whole time. It's not like it was just me," he said. "None of it would have been possible without Reed with the SAW and Seagraves helping me with the guy. It was the one plan that turned out all right."

Ruske is a juvenile corrections officer in Denver. After returning to his assignment, Ruske said he hoped to be like the combat veterans in the Army Reserve who helped him get ready to deploy by sharing what they learned about roadside bombs, search techniques and other combat techniques.

"I picked their brains, and they passed their experience and lessons learned to me," Ruske said. "Now that I'm back, it's my turn to pass on my knowledge and experience to some of the newer guys, just like the other guys did for me."



Courtesy photo

Sgt. Gregory S. Ruske was the fourth Army Reservist to receive the Silver Star for heroism demonstrated after he and his fellow Soldiers were ambushed in Afghanistan's Kapisa province April 21, 2008.

# PHOTO JOURNAL





Pfc. Kevin B. Mettler (front), and Pvt. Jason R. Pompa (rear), mortar gunners for Mortar Platoon, L Troop of the 4th Squadron, 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment based in Vilseck, Germany, cover their ears as a long-range training round is fired out of a 120 mm mortar, which has a maximum range of 6,800 meters.  
*Photo by Sgt. Marla R. Keown*

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# PHOTO JOURNAL

► Spc. Joe Cordaro, 108th Military Police Company, practices coming to a stop while swerving to the right at the last minute, simulating avoiding an obstacle during the Police Motorcycle Operator Safety Course at Simmons Army Air Field, N.C., in July.

*Photo by Eve Meinhardt*

▼ Sgt. Brenna McAllister of Destin, Fla., explains how to check a pulse to Afghan National Police combat medics assigned to the Nazyan Police Station in Nangarhar province, Afghanistan, in May.

*Photo by Sgt. Matthew C. Moeller*



► Sgt. Pedro Marcis of Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry Regiment, loads .50-caliber rounds for an M2 heavy machine gun mounted on his M1126 Stryker Infantry Carrier Vehicle at Rodriguez Range, South Korea, prior to a live-fire training during the Reception, Staging, Onward movement and Integration / Foal Eagle exercise.

*Photo by Petty Officer 1st Class Daniel N. Woods*





▲ A Soldier from the 153rd Military Police Battalion, Delaware Army National Guard, secures a doorway in the mock city of Balad during mobilization training at Fort Dix, N.J., Aug. 7, 2007.

*Photo by Staff Sgt. Russell Lee Klika*



▲ Soldiers from 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division paddle their zodiac watercraft three and a half miles in Cow House Creek during a physical training challenge at Fort Hood, Texas.

*U.S. Army photo*

▼ A paratrooper with 1st Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, fires a training round from the new M320 grenade launcher in its standalone configuration while learning to use the weapon on a range at Fort Bragg, N.C.

*Photo by Spc. Michael J. MacLeod*



# Roll call

o f t h e f a l l e n

## Operation New Dawn

*Sgt. John F. Burner III, 32, Baltimore, Md., Sept. 16, 2010* ♦ *Spc. John Carrillo Jr., 20, Stockton, Calif., Sept. 24, 2010*  
*Sgt. Philip C. Jenkins, 26, Decatur, Ind., Sept. 7, 2010* ♦ *Pvt. James F. McClamrock, 22, Huntersville, N.C., Sept. 7, 2010*  
*Pfc. Gebrah P. Noonan, 26, Watertown, Conn., Sept. 24, 2010* ♦ *Spc. Marc C. Whisenant, 23, Holly Hill, Fla., Sept. 24, 2010*

## Operation Enduring Freedom

*Staff Sgt. Vinson B. Adkinson III, 26, Harper, Kan., Aug. 31, 2010* ♦ *Sgt. Raymond C. Alcaraz, 20, Redlands, Calif., Aug. 31, 2010* ♦ *Lt. Col. Robert F. Baldwin, 39, Muscatine, Iowa, Sept. 21, 2010* ♦ *Maj. Paul D. Carron, 33, Missouri, Sept. 18, 2010* ♦ *Pfc. Chad D. Clements, 26, Huntington, Ind., Aug. 30, 2010* ♦ *Pfc. William B. Dawson, 20, Tunica, Miss., Sept. 24, 2010* ♦ *Pfc. Matthew E. George, 22, Gransboro, N.C., Aug. 31, 2010* ♦ *Capt. Dale A. Goetz, 43, White, S.D., Aug. 30, 2010* ♦ *Sgt. 1st Class Ronald A. Grider, 30, Brighton, Ill., Sept. 18, 2010* ♦ *Staff Sgt. Casey J. Grochowiak, 34, Lompoc, Calif., Aug. 30, 2010* ♦ *Spc. Joshua A. Harton, 23, Bethlehem, Penn., Sept. 18, 2010* ♦ *Staff Sgt. Jesse Infante, 30, Cypress, Texas, Aug. 30, 2010* ♦ *Spc. Timothy L. Johnson, 24, Randolph, N.Y., Sept. 16, 2010* ♦ *Staff Sgt. Kevin J. Kessler, 32, Canton, Ohio, Aug. 30, 2010* ♦ *Sgt. Aaron K. Kramer, 22, Salt Lake City, Utah, Sept. 16, 2010* ♦ *Chief Warrant Officer Jonah D. McClellan, 26, St. Louis Park, Minn., Sept. 21, 2010* ♦ *Capt. Jason T. McMahon, 35, Mulvane, Kan., Sept. 5, 2010* ♦ *Pfc. Diego M. Montoya, 20, San Antonio, Texas, Sept. 2, 2010* ♦ *Spc. Donald S. Morrison, 23, Cincinnati, Ohio, Sept. 26, 2010* ♦ *Staff Sgt. Jaime C. Newman, 27, Richmond, Va., Sept. 17, 2010* ♦ *1st Lt. Mark A. Noziska, 24, Papillon, Neb., Aug. 30, 2010* ♦ *Pfc. James A. Page, 23, Titusville, Fla., Aug. 31, 2010* ♦ *Pfc. Jaysine P. S. Petree, 19, Yigo, Guam, Sept. 24, 2010* ♦ *Staff Sgt. Joshua D. Powell, 25, Pleasant Plains, Ill., Sept. 21, 2010* ♦ *Sgt. Mark A. Simpson, 40, Peoria, Ill., Sept. 26, 2010* ♦ *Spc. Deangelo B. Snow, 22, Saginaw, Mich., Sept. 17, 2010* ♦ *Pfc. Clinton E. Springer II, 21, Sanford, Maine, Sept. 24, 2010* ♦ *Pfc. Barbara Vieyra, 22, Mesa, Ariz., Sept. 18, 2010* ♦ *Chief Warrant Officer Matthew G. Wagstaff, 34, Orem, Utah, Sept. 21, 2010* ♦ *1st Lt. Todd W. Weaver, 26, Hampton, Va., Sept. 9, 2010* ♦ *Staff Sgt. Matthew J. West, 36, Conover, Wis., Aug. 30, 2010* ♦ *1st Lt. Eric Yates, 26, Rineyville, Ky., Sept. 18, 2010*

*You are not Forgotten*

*Editor's note: This is a continuation of a list that was started in the October 2003 issue of The NCO Journal and contains those names released by the Department of Defense between Sept. 1, 2010, and Sept. 30, 2010.*

# gear UP!

## FOR CAMPFIRE STORIES



- Be sure to clear away brush and dead or dry vegetation in a 10- to 20-foot circle around your fire.

- Don't place your fire pit under low hanging trees where sparks and heat might ignite dry foliage and branches.

- Never leave a fire unattended. Keep a fire extinguisher or a garden hose with a sprayer nearby.

- Always make sure fires are completely out when finished.



ARMY STRONG



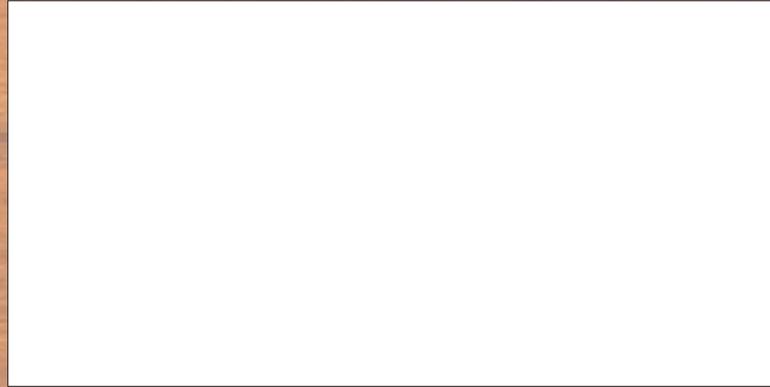
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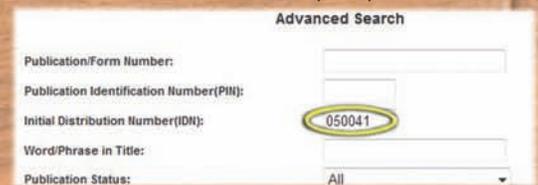
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