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to Begin in January

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COMPETITION

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ON THE COVER: Sgt. Maj. of the Army Raymond F. Chandler III gives instructions to those competing in the 2012 Army Best Warrior Competition at Fort Lee, Va., before their board appearance Oct. 18. PHOTO BY MICHAEL L. LEWIS

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Seeking help doesn't make you less strong

FROM THE CSM

BY COMMAND SGT. MAJ. ALONZO J. SMITH 101st Airborne Division

On June 13, 2010, when Command Sgt. Maj. Alonzo J. Smith was in Afghanistan with the 1st Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, his vehicle was struck by a round from an 82 mm recoilless rifle, severely injuring his leg. In this edited transcript of a YouTube video, Smith describes his struggle with depression during his recovery.

I went from medical treatment facility to medical treatment facility — from Kandahar to Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C. Along that path, I started to get more emotional. Then, other things started to become a factor: job security. Would I continue to serve? How healthy would I be? Would I even keep my leg?

All this was starting to manifest and grow in my mind, and as I'm thinking about these things, it's starting to distract me. Even when my wife was with me at Walter Reed, I found myself at times being irritated that she was there. I just wanted to be left alone. And I knew, then and there, that I was developing signs of depression. ...

At first, I thought I could solve this myself, that time would heal all wounds. It was a combination of "I don't need anyone's help" and "This is something I can deal with and treat myself." That was mistake number one.

The more I thought about it every night, I found myself becoming so emotional that I would actually cry. I'd ball up with my pillow. After this went on for several nights, I told myself, "Hey, you've got to talk to somebody." That's when I reached out. I wasn't worried about a stigma attached to it. I wasn't worried about whether I would get to continue to serve. I just wanted my mind to get right so I could continue to lead a normal life.

I used what I call a "cocktail" of resources to assist me — chaplains, behavioral health professionals and some of the other agencies that are available. To my amazement, one of the things that really helped me the most was just talking about it.

I left Walter Reed eventually and came back to Fort Campbell, Ky. I continued with my physical therapy and mental therapy, but didn't conceal it, because I knew I was dealing with things — the fidgetiness, the irritability, the post-traumatic stress.

But it's curable. That's my message to anyone: You might not know that you need help, but when the signs and symptoms are there and are being detected by coworkers, friends, family or whomever, you may need some help.

Just get it looked into by a professional.

There's no weakness in saying you need help. I've always considered myself a mentally strong guy, and I *am* a mentally strong individual. Just because there is something that I'm dealing with, because of something that happened to me at a certain point in my life, does not make me any less strong.

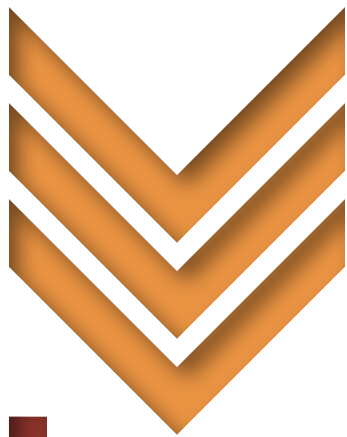
You have to be educated in order to be able to identify the signs and the symptoms. You have to know the different resources out there. Leaders have to understand that



Command Sgt. Maj. Alonzo J. Smith was severely injured during his 2010 deployment to Afghanistan with the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE U.S. ARMY

they can really weigh in when they talk with their Soldiers. Assure them, "Hey, I'm here for you to assist you and your family with these needs and concerns." But show some genuine concern, that you really truly do care. ♡

Command Sgt. Maj. Alonzo J. Smith is the command sergeant major of the 101st Airborne Division and Fort Campbell. This video is available at youtube.com/watch?v=IZRWa078_vA



FRONT IN

News and
information
NCOs need to

**BE,
KNOW,
DO**

NCO JOURNAL



SMA: 'This is our business'

Discipline and standards focus of NCO forum

BY STAFF SGT. JASON STADEL
NCO Journal

Culminating a year of visits to troops throughout the force, Sgt. Maj. of the Army Raymond F. Chandler III addressed the NCOs attending the Association of the U.S. Army's annual meeting and convention Oct. 22 in Washington, D.C., and reiterated that the main job of every NCO is to show "what right looks like" in every facet of Army life.

"Our focus as we enter the next year, as far as the Army profession is concerned, is discipline and standards," Chandler said. "We own this. That's our business. My expectation is that you will focus on what that really means beyond PT, beyond the things we consider to be the standard, and focus on the areas that are a challenge for us right now."

Chandler then outlined his views on some of those challenges to the NCO Corps:

On separations: "We're going to have to recruit more people next year because of your emphasis on professional conduct and behavior."

"In the month of August, we eliminated about 450 Soldiers under the Army Weight Control Program; that's a small battalion's worth of folks. So what? That's more than we got rid of in 2011. So in one month, your focus on discipline and standards resulted in about 450 people who were unwilling or unable to meet the Army standard to leave."

"We doubled the amount of separations for misconduct and unsatisfactory performance. That's because of you. You focused on this profession. That creates opportunities for our deserving Soldiers to stay in the Army or for us to recruit the best and brightest."

On suicides: "What does suicide have to do with discipline and standards? Because it takes committed Soldiers and leaders to look out for each other all the time."

"Can you think of any profession, any line of work that is asked to do what you do? You are asked, as American Soldiers, to close in

▲ Sgt. Maj. of the Army Raymond F. Chandler III speaks with NCOs during a forum Oct. 22 at the Association of the U.S. Army's annual convention in Washington, D.C. PHOTO BY MICHAEL L. LEWIS

and destroy the enemy. That's what you do, and we ask you to do that repeatedly, over and over.

"If you were a police officer, and you fired your weapon — you wouldn't even have to hit anything — you would be directed to see behavioral health. We need to change our culture so that it is acceptable, that it is encouraged, that it is expected to seek help when we are challenged with life.

"This issue with suicide is going to be with us for a long time — until we decide that we own this, that our profession requires, demands, that we look out for each other and that we're committed to one another. We throw words around like this all the time, but our actions speak louder than words. We can do this. We just have to have the will and commitment our profession requires."

On sexual assault: "How is it that we would tolerate crimes against one another? That's what we're talking about when we talk about sexual assault between two Soldiers.

"Again, it takes commitment, it takes character, and it takes competence. Those things are what define our profession. We say this in the NCO Creed all the time: 'No one is more professional than I.' Well, if you are professionals — and I know you are — then you are committed to this, which is eliminating sexual assault in our Army. Again, this is preventable. This is our business.

"How many people have had something stolen from them in the barracks, or have had a Soldier who had something stolen from them in the barracks? You were probably really upset that a Soldier would steal something from another Soldier. So why aren't we upset about sexual assault between two Soldiers?"

On tattoo regulations: "Over the course of more than a year, we've listened, we've talked, we've briefed, and we've come up with a feasible, affordable and reasonable recommendation on tying the Army profession to how we look. We do have some challenges in the American people's perception of us.

"We've gotten over the top in some instances. When you get a tattoo on your knuckles that says 'eat s---,' that Soldier — an NCO, by the way, who got that tattoo while he was in the Army — has chosen to tell everyone whom he comes into contact that.

"Is that a reflection of you? It sure isn't of me. And it's not what we want the American people to see. We don't want them questioning why we would tolerate that.

"Or the worst one, a noncommissioned officer in a division headquarters representing you and I with 'f---' tattooed on the side of his neck. Is that OK? How do we get so busy that none of us would notice that and say, 'You need to get that removed.' That's our profession, that's discipline, that's commitment, and that's where I need your help.

"We're going to look at this policy, and we hope to have that policy to you by the beginning of January. We're going to tell some folks that they're going to have to get tattoos that everybody can see removed. And they're going to have to pay for it, because it's not in line with the Army's professionalism. If you're not willing to do that, we're going to separate you from the Army."

On the new physical fitness uniform:

"We're not going to the old yellow, 'banana suits!' Here's where we are: About 20 months ago at the Army uniform board, a decision came in about the PT shorts. We've been trying to figure out how we're going to meet Soldiers' needs for modesty with them.

"We decided to take a look at the entire uniform, which was first established in 1997.

CHANDLER CONT. ON PAGE 8 →

VERBATIM

“We stand at a place where some are more interested in the self than they are about the organization. This is about discipline — the word comes from the word ‘disciple.’ What’s a disciple? A follower. Commitment is about following the Army’s policies and programs. So, if you’re committed, if you’re disciplined, you’re going to do what the Army says.”

— **SGT. MAJ. OF THE ARMY RAYMOND F. CHANDLER III** at the AUSA annual meeting and convention Oct. 22.

Chen case: SGT found guilty of dereliction

Sgt. Jeffrey Hurst was found guilty Nov. 9 of one specification of dereliction of duty in relation to the death of Pvt. Danny Chen in Afghanistan. Chen reportedly shot himself Oct. 3, 2011, after alleged hazing from fellow infantrymen at Combat Outpost Palace. Hurst was sentenced to reduction in rank to E-4 and hard labor without confinement for 45 days by a panel of eight officer and enlisted members following the five-day trial at Fort Bragg, N.C. Hurst was the sixth Soldier to appear in court in relation to Chen's death. Five others were either convicted through court-martial or entered plea bargains. Two Soldiers still face charges.

Female body armor named a best invention

An innovation that will leave female Soldiers safer and more comfortable on the battlefield was named one of *Time* magazine's "Best Inventions of the Year 2012." A collaborative effort between the Natick Soldier Research, Development and Engineering Center and Program Executive Office Soldier resulted in an improved outer tactical vest designed specifically for women. The 101st Airborne Division's 1st Brigade will be the first unit to test the new female body armor, which was designed to offer better protection and to prevent bruised hip bones that women experienced when wearing IOTVs meant to fit smaller men.

Fiscal 2012 among Army's safest years

Data recently compiled by the U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center at Fort Rucker, Ala., show fiscal 2012 was the second-safest year for Soldiers on record, with a 9 percent annual decline in accidental fatalities continuing a downward trend first begun in fiscal 2007. A total of 161 Soldiers died in

BRIEFS CONT. ON PAGE 7 →

New WLC to launch

Longer course limits hours, adds days; land nav returns

BY CLIFFORD KYLE JONES
NCO Journal

When implemented Armywide in January, the Warrior Leader Course will be a little bit longer and a little bit better, said the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy commandant, Command Sgt. Maj. Rory L. Malloy.

After a thorough examination of the 17-day WLC that included surveys from the previous 12 months' course attendees, interviews with NCO academy commandants and cadre, feedback from students in the Sergeants Major Course and input from Soldiers who attended the existing WLC and proof-of-concept courses, Training and Doctrine Command feels it has a course that will produce better NCOs, Malloy explained.

"I personally led a team to three of the posts and collected data on what they thought should be in WLC, what might need to be removed and what was missing," he said. "The question I would ask is, 'What do you think a sergeant should know?' If we can answer that question, that will tell us how to build the course."

Using that feedback, TRADOC in October unveiled a 22-day WLC that incorporates land navigation training, several hours of new instruction and shorter academic days. The new WLC also reflects new Army directives that require Structured Self-Development 1 as a prerequisite to WLC enrollment and mandates passing an Army Physical Fitness Test and meeting height and weight requirements as conditions of staying enrolled.

ACADEMIC HOURS

Going to a 22-day schedule allows the WLC's **academic day to be limited to 8.5 hours**.

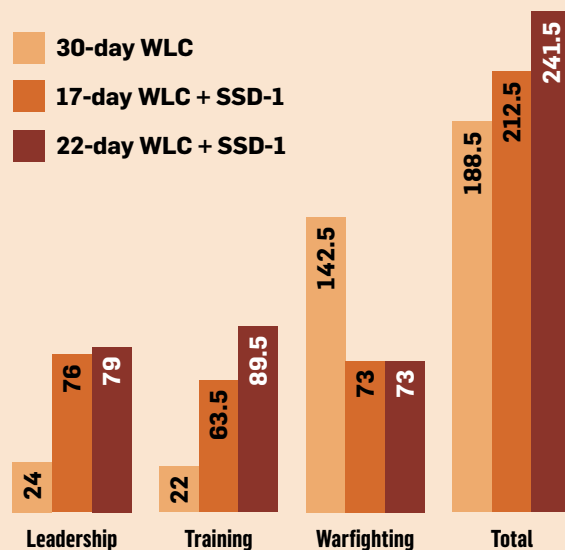
"Right now, students will be in the classroom up till 2100 after starting at 0500," Malloy said. "And I'll tell you, after dinner, they stop learning anything. They did not have time to reflect, they didn't have time to digest information, they didn't have time to prepare for the next day, and there certainly wasn't any time left to do any reinforcement training for somebody who might not be up to the same standard as the rest of the class."

Instruction will go **no later than 1700** every day, and the new hours coincide with the Army Learning Model.



WLC instruction

In 2010, the Warrior Leader Course was cut from 30 days to 15 to accommodate the Army's high operational tempo. Later that year, two days were added back to WLC, as was Structured Self-Development instruction before the course. The new 22-day course will begin Jan. 1. A look at instructional hours by subject in the three iterations:





◀ WLC students at Fort Bliss, Texas, take part in a proof of concept last spring that reintroduced the land nav curriculum to the course.

PHOTO BY SPC. ASHLEY K. ARNETT

PHYSICAL FITNESS

The new WLC will require students to **pass the APFT and meet height and weight requirements** to graduate.

The APFT "will be done up front, within the first 72 hours," Malloy said. "If they don't pass the APFT or height and weight, they can re-test. If they fail the second time, then they're dismissed from the course."

LAND NAV

One of the most visible changes to WLC will be **reintroducing land navigation**.

"There's a big desire in the Army to do land navigation," Malloy said. "It's something that should be taught at units, but it's not. So now, we're including it into the course."

Six proof-of-concept cycles at Fort Hood, Texas, and at Fort Bliss, Texas, included land navigation exercises. At one post, the entire course was extended by a few days while at the other, the situational exercise was dropped to accommodate land nav instruction. The Army later decided that the STX lanes were too valuable to drop, so the longer course was adopted.

In addition to the land nav exercises, instruction will include **four hours of map-reading basics in SSD-1** and eight hours in WLC itself to prepare students.

"Traditionally, [map-reading] was a 10-hour class," Malloy said. "But the feedback from the students was, 'We're getting the information too late.'"

NEW LESSON

"NCO Initiatives" will familiarize Soldiers with new Army programs that affect the NCO Corps — "things like the **Army Career Tracker, College of the American Soldier, how to better utilize AKO** as an asset, transition — anything that's new and emerging," Malloy said. The 2-hour block of instruction is designed to be updated regularly so that the most relevant information is taught to students who in turn can take it back to their units, he said.

COUNSELING & NCOERS

Additional hours have been added to help new NCOs learn skills related to counseling and NCO Evaluation Reports by giving Soldiers some hands-on experience.

"The feedback we received from the students was that we do a pretty good job of teaching the purpose of counseling, the counseling form and how to fill it out," Malloy said. "What was missing was the opportunity to **actually deliver some counseling**."

Two extra hours of counseling training now lets students counsel their peers in a role-playing exercise. "We give them different scenarios and they write it out. Then they actually deliver the counseling, and we talk about the technique in which they delivered it and some challenges they may face when presenting counseling," Malloy said.

An additional hour for NCOER training gives students a chance to learn the **importance of counseling before writing an NCOER** and how to write proper bulleted items. ♡

← BRIEFS CONT. FROM PAGE 5

accidents during fiscal 2012, a tie with numbers recorded in fiscal 2000. Fiscal 1997 was the Army's safest year, with 150 accidental fatalities reported both on- and off-duty. "Our leaders, Soldiers, safety professionals and Family members should be very proud of what they've done for safety," said Brig. Gen. Timothy J. Edens, director of Army Safety and commanding general of the USACR/ Safety Center. "The fact we're back at peacetime accident levels ... demonstrates the commitment our leaders and Soldiers have to safety, and to one another."

Warrior Games clinics under way across U.S.

The U.S. Army Warrior Transition Command Warrior Games assessment and selection clinics are being held throughout the United States to find the best athletes to represent the Army during the annual Warrior Games.

"The clinics are really good because it gives me a chance to get active and be a part of a team again," said Sgt. Jeremy Bowser, assigned to B Company of the Fort Drum, N.Y., Warrior Transition Unit. "I feel I'm getting involved and not just sitting around doing nothing." The first multi-sport event was held at Fort Belvoir, Va., the last week of October and the second multi-sport event, Nov. 4–9 at Fort Bliss, Texas.

'Bayonet' brigade inactivates in Germany

The 170th Infantry Brigade Combat Team conducted a casing of the colors ceremony



Oct. 9 on Smith Barracks at Baumholder, Germany. The ceremony marked the end of an era which saw the presence of combat Soldiers in Baumholder for more than 50 years. Brigade Soldiers have been preparing for the deactivation since their return from Afghanistan earlier this year. ♡

Panetta to review senior officer culture

BY CHERYL PELLERIN
American Forces Press Service

Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta has ordered a review to determine how the armed forces can better foster a culture of stewardship among senior military officers, the Pentagon announced Nov. 15.

Panetta directed Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to work with other members of the Joint Chiefs on the review, said George Little, the Pentagon's press secretary.

Little said the timing of the ongoing process — amid recent reports and investigations of potentially improper behavior by several general officers — is coincidental. The review, he said, "was going to happen anyway."

The process, Little noted, is intended to reinforce

and strengthen the standards that keep the military well led and disciplined.

"[Panetta] believes that the vast majority of our senior military officers exemplify the strength of character and the highest ethical standards the American people expect of those whose job it is to provide for the security of our nation," Little said.

"The majority of these officers lead by example, which is one of the reasons the United States military stands without peer."

Over the past several months, Panetta has spoken with the service secretaries, service chiefs and combatant commanders about instances when senior officers have not lived up to the standards expected of them, Little said.

"This has been an ongoing discussion reflecting shared concerns," Little said. ♡

← CHANDLER CONT. FROM PAGE 5

What we came back with was the survey we had in February — what did you want to see changed?

"Soldiers said they wanted to see antimicrobial fabric, moisture-wicking material, better sizing. They weren't sure if the color scheme was meeting our needs, maybe something different that was more modern and fit better.

"So we've got 36 different changes that the chief of staff of the Army has approved to the current uniform — everything from the stretch material on the collars, waist and legs to eliminating zippers.

"People have asked, 'What about the cost?' We can actually do this for about a \$1.76 increase, and we'll compensate for that in the clothing allowance. So, I think we've got something that is better than what we've got now, that is affordable and that is reasonable and is feasible.

"Why is it that we're making all these uniform changes?

It's because the field — you — have voiced some concerns.

"You do amazing things every single day. The Army should be able to listen to what you have to say to make an informed decision about whether we can afford it, whether it's feasible, whether it's reasonable and then apply it.

"Rather than make all those decisions at the Department of the Army level, we want to know what you think about it. That doesn't mean we're running a democracy. But we're interested in what you have to say. If we can do something that meets the Soldiers' needs, meets the Army's customs and courtesies, is something we can afford, and is a reasonable request, we ought to at least consider it, and that's what we're doing."

On energy and sustainability: "One of the things that we sometimes lose sight of is that everything we've been given is really a gift from the American people. We've got to be good stewards of the taxpayers' dollars.

"One of the areas we're challenged with is the cost of fuel, electricity and water. We've had enormous increases in fuel costs. So if you're at your post, camp or station, and everybody is at the motor pool with their vehicles running for four hours, what's that doing? Really, why?

"We've got this village set up in Afghanistan that is a demonstration of how to save energy. You're going to see more hybrid vehicles. And all that stuff is great. But you can make a difference with the Soldiers under you by just turning the lights off, or call in a work order because the faucet is dripping, or turning the vehicles off, or driving the speed limit. Those basic things are going to make a difference in reducing costs." ♡

◀ Former Sgts. Maj. of the Army Kenneth O. Preston (from left), Jack L. Tilley and Robert E. Hall listen to Chandler's comments Oct. 22 on the first day of the AUSA convention.

PHOTO BY MICHAEL L. LEWIS



Early retirement a new option for some

TERA an alternative for Soldiers facing involuntary separation

BY DAVID VERGUN Army News Service

Soldiers with at least 15 but less than 20 years of service may be eligible for early retirement under a new Army policy released in October.

According to Army Directive 281/2012, “Temporary Early Retirement Authority,” or TERA, noncommissioned officers denied continued service as a result of an approved Qualitative Service Program centralized selection board, and officers and warrant officers who have twice failed selection for promotion to the next grade are eligible for the program.

“Soldiers who elect to retire under TERA and are approved will receive full retirement benefits at a slightly reduced annuity,” said Gerald Purcell, the enlisted personnel policy integrator with Army G-1. He emphasized that TERA is not an entitlement.

TERA is one of the tools the Army is using to reduce the force in the coming years, Purcell said. He said the reduction affects active-status Soldiers serving in the active and reserve components.

The Army’s plan is to reduce the active component from about 570,000 Soldiers to about 490,000 by the end of fiscal year 2017.

The Army has reduced the force before. But the force drawdown in the 1990s, for instance, was much different than the most current effort, said Albert Eggerton, the deputy chief of the officer division with Army G-1.

“Now, the Army is making the call on who stays, and the programs are different,” Eggerton said.

Purcell said a priority with the latest drawdown is precision, care and compassion.

“Our goal to do this in a compassionate, caring way, and ensure Soldiers and their families are taken care of during the transition,” Purcell said.

The Qualitative Service Program is tasked with identifying NCOs by military occupational specialties and pay grade who are excess to the future force structure mission requirements of the Army, Purcell said.

“We [then] tell the selection board to rank the Soldiers [with their peers] based on potential future contributions,” Purcell said. “Those identified would be quality Soldiers we’d otherwise retain. But because their grades and skills are excess to the Army’s needs, we have to let them go.”

Purcell said Soldiers notified they have been selected for involuntary separation will have about a year to request TERA.

“TERA is a good thing for Soldiers to take if they have



already been identified for involuntary separation,” he said, explaining that the involuntary separation bonus would not have the value of early retirement in terms of pay and benefits. ♡

► For more information about the TERA program, visit www.dfas.mil/retiredmilitary/plan/retirement-types/tera.html.

▲ A Soldier salutes the flag at Wheeler Army Airfield, Hawaii, in October 2011. The Temporary Early Retirement Authority offers a new option to those preparing to salute the flag for the last time as they transition out of the Army. PHOTO

BY STEPHANIE BRYANT

New network helps extend troops' reach

Leaders credit Soldiers' feedback during evaluation exercises

BY CLAIRE HEININGER Army News Service

As Soldiers ready for deployment with the Army's new tactical communications network, the Network Integration Evaluations that shaped that capability are now aiming to take it to the next level.

After less than two years of Soldier-driven evaluation and integration through the Network Integration Evaluations, or NIEs, two brigades of the 10th Mountain Division are now training on Capability Set 13 — the Army's first fully-integrated package of radios, satellite systems, software applications, smartphone-like devices and other network components that connect Soldiers and leaders at all levels within a brigade combat team.

"We were able to use the NIE to define a greater capability for Soldiers who are going into combat," said Lt. Gen. Bill Phillips, military deputy to the assistant secretary of the Army for acquisition, logistics and technology, who visited NIE 13.1 operations in November. "At the end of the day, that's going to save Soldiers' lives."

"We've made some incredible progress because of Soldier feedback," Phillips said. "We have to continue to utilize the NIE to enhance our systems, to bring on new

systems that improve our capability, and we'll do that with Capability Set 14 to continue fielding the best products we can to units and Soldiers and commanders."

Launched in June 2011, the NIEs are semi-annual field exercises designed to quickly integrate and mature the Army's tactical communications network, the service's top modernization priority. NIE 13.1 in November involved the more than 3,800 Soldiers of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, who are conducting rigorous, realistic mission scenarios at Fort Bliss, Texas, and White Sands Missile Range, N.M., to evaluate the operational value of various systems developed by the Army and the private sector.

"What I've seen as a result of coming out here today is how agile and adaptive our Soldiers are," said Lt. Gen. Patricia McQuiston, deputy commanding general of Army Materiel Command. "They can take these systems, make sense of them and see how to use them for the best capability."

A major focus of this NIE is to assess network capability at the lowest echelons — how platoons, squads, teams and dismounted Soldiers can pass information to make better decisions, said Col. Thomas Dorame, commander of the 2nd BCT, 1st Armored Division.

"We're not just taking the network to another command post, but we're also now using that capability to push it into vehicles and to the individual Soldier," he said. "If you're in contact with the enemy and you're trying to figure out how to maneuver, being able to identify where your Soldiers are down to the individual Soldier is incredible."

Soldiers from the 10th Mountain Division's 3rd BCT at Fort Drum, N.Y., and 4th BCT at Fort Polk, La., were the first to receive Capability Set 13, which began fielding in October. The 4th BCT, 4th Infantry Division, at Fort Carson, Colo., will be the next to get the new gear starting early in 2013.

◀ Soldiers from 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, dismount from a Stryker vehicle during the Network Integration Evaluation 13.1 at Fort Bliss' Dona Ana Range in New Mexico. PHOTO BY LT. COL.

DEANNA BAGUE





Power provider

▲ Sgt. George Miller of the 249th Engineer Battalion (Prime Power), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, attaches cables to a generator being supplied to a fuel depot Nov. 6 in Carteret, N.J. The depot was one of many left without power after Hurricane Sandy tore through the area in late October. More than 4,000 active-duty service members were sent to assist from U.S. Northern Command along with more than 6,600 National Guard members. PHOTO BY E.J. HERSOM

The new network will arrive in Afghanistan as U.S. forces continue drawing down and turning over many of their bases and other infrastructure to local forces, thus gradually losing fixed network locations. Capability Set 13 systems provide mobile satellite and better radio capabilities, allowing commanders and Soldiers to take the network with them in vehicles and while dismounted as they conduct security assistance and some combat missions.

“As we do the drawdown and we continue to work on our training with the Afghan National Army ... and other agencies, we will be able to maintain a state of communications with our higher headquarters with data and voice — which is really what you’re looking for to maintain situational awareness,” said Maj. Ernest Tornabell, the S-6 for the 2nd BCT, 1st Armored Division.

As the Army continues to re-balance its resources from

the Middle East to other areas, including the Asia-Pacific region, the NIE events can be used to evaluate technologies that meet potential new requirements and capability gaps, McQuiston said.

Future NIEs will also offer further opportunities for the Army to leverage industry innovation to meet its network technology needs. More than 115 industry solutions have been evaluated during NIEs to potentially fill capability gaps, leaders said.

While the NIE continues to evolve with each event, its core premise — to address capability gaps by obtaining Soldier feedback and rapidly fielding equipment to meet their needs — is still what makes it so valuable to the Army, Phillips said.

“When you put systems in the hands of Soldiers, incredible things happen,” he said. ♡

TOOLKIT

Bridging the generational gap

BY JENNIFER MATTSON NCO Journal

Connecting with Soldiers is one of the primary responsibilities of every noncommissioned officer. However, many new Soldiers come from a generation with a culture and expectations that differ greatly from that of the NCOs they will be working for. To bridge that gap, NCOs must learn how to connect with the younger generation of Soldiers as they mold them to be tomorrow's leaders, said Command Sgt. Maj. George Stopper, the command sergeant major of the Wisconsin National Guard.

"What we have to do is maintain a relationship similar to what we've always done," Stopper said. "And that's senior-to-subordinate — making sure our Soldiers know we're their leaders and we're there to help them.

All Soldiers coming in today are just a reflection of society. It might take a while for them to get indoctrinated or used to the military lifestyle."

The Soldiers have already done their part by volunteering to enlist in the Army. It is now up to their noncommissioned officers to take the lead in understanding their Soldiers, Stopper said.

"The simple fact that they enlisted means they're looking for something," he said. "Being an all-volunteer Army, people don't come here because they need a paycheck. They're coming here to be mentored, led and to be part of the team. Simply by walking through that door and raising their right hand, they've taken the first step. We need to recognize that and give them what they came here for."

NCOs who know their Soldiers and the different mindsets they have toward work and life will be better NCOs, Stopper said.

"There are very subtle differences between the generations, and if you recognize those, you can use them to benefit the team," Stopper said. "It's huge to know what it takes to make your Soldiers learn. And it's huge to make them feel like they're part of a team.

"They look for different rewards than the Baby Boomers do," Stopper said. "They take their approach to work very different from what we do. Us old dudes, we're workaholics; we work long hours. That was really our work ethic and our reward. But you go down one generation, and they don't believe in working harder; they believe in working smarter. It's not so much about work, it's more of a work-life balance. They work, so they can enjoy their time off.

◀ Sgt. Lenwood Stewart, a Soldier with the Ranger Training Brigade, talks with retired Lt. Col. John Hort, a graduate of the RTB's Class 4 in 1958, after a demonstration Oct. 23, 2009, at Fort Benning, Ga. PHOTO BY

CHERYL RODEWIG



Different generations of Soldiers

The Army now has three distinct generations serving in its ranks. To better connect with their Soldiers, NCOs must understand each generation's typical characteristics and motivations.

Baby Boomers

Born 1943–1960

TYPICAL TRAITS:

- ▶ Believe in **growth and expansion**. They were fascinated by the promise of the last great frontier, and for them, this was space.
- ▶ Think of themselves as **stars of the show**.
- ▶ Tend to be **optimistic**. They look at the world with infinite possibilities.
- ▶ **Learned about teamwork**, both at home and at work.
- ▶ Pursued their own **personal gratification** uncompromisingly and often at a high price to themselves and others. When unhappy with a marriage, a job or an arrangement, they simply **find a way to move on** (divorce, change jobs, etc.).

Generation X

Born 1960–1980

TYPICAL TRAITS:

- ▶ **Seek a sense of family**. With their parents always away, this generation learned to create a family from their circle of friends.
- ▶ Want balance. This generation wants to **"work to live"** as opposed to their parents who "lived to work."
- ▶ Do not feel they need to be in the workplace from 9-5 as long as they are getting their work done. They believe in **working to standard, not to time**.
- ▶ **Like informality**. They want to see things lighten up, they enjoy being casual, and actually believe that they work better in an informal setting.

Millennials

Born 1980–2000

TYPICAL TRAITS:

- ▶ Because they have grown up in an era of relative economic prosperity, they are much more **motivated and optimistic** about the future.
- ▶ Extremely **comfortable with technology**.
- ▶ **Relatively inactive**; prefer to watch TV and surf the Internet rather than engage in physical activity.
- ▶ **Extremely confident**. This may make them appear brash or arrogant, but this comes from their parents who put them at the center of the universe.
- ▶ They are **extremely adaptable** and **innovate constantly**.

Source: "Generational Theory Implications for Recruiting the Millennials" by Col. James Drago, March 15, 2006. To read the full report, visit: <http://1.usa.gov/Generational>

"The youngest generation is very similar. They work so they have more time off; but they're just go-go-go, always looking forward to the next task, always multitasking," Stopper said. "As senior noncommissioned officers, what appears to us as a distracted Soldier is just the way that they do business. And if you understand that, it won't be eating at you constantly; you can use that as a talent to enhance the team."

By bridging generational gaps, NCOs help create a positive culture for their Soldiers and that leads to better effectiveness and mission readiness, Stopper said.

"You really need to build a bond of trust between the leader and the subordinate to make them feel like they're a part of the team. That's the very first step," Stopper said. "No matter which generation we're talking about — Baby Boomers, Millennials or Gen Xers — everyone wants to be a part of the team. If we can build that bond of trust, that's the first step, and it pays big dividends in the long run."

By addressing these gaps in-garrison, NCOs can help build up their teams more efficiently so generational gaps won't come into play when they're downrange, Stopper said.

"The challenge is to identify what those gaps are and what motivates the team. Then you really need to perfect the management of those assets in training," Stopper said. "If you get down to the combat environment, where there's already all these additional stressors, you don't need to be figuring it out. We need to master that in training, so it's all second nature in combat."

Understanding generational gaps can be a powerful tool for NCOs as they lead their Soldiers, Stopper said.

"It's important for us as leaders to know what makes our Soldiers tick," Stopper said. "Leadership is pretty simple; it's providing purpose, direction and motivation to get people to accomplish the mission. The purpose and direction are pretty simple, we're all trained how to do that. But the motivation piece is different for the different generations."

"If you know what makes your Soldiers tick and know the things that will make them feel better about themselves, they'll work harder to accomplish the mission," he said. ♡

▶ NEXT MONTH: FINANCIAL READINESS

TESTING



24 competitors battle it out to determine

STORY BY STAFF SGT. JASON STADEL NCO Journal

THE BEST



the Army's NCO and Soldier of the Year

PHOTOS BY MICHAEL L. LEWIS NCO Journal

Sgt. Jesse Jacklyn begins the final lap of the Army Physical Fitness Test on Day 2 as more than 1,500 Advanced Individual Training students cheer the competitors on.



It all started Oct. 14, the eve of competition, with a welcome from Sgt. Maj. of the Army Raymond F. Chandler III. He told his audience of 12 NCOs and 12 junior-enlisted Soldiers — the competitors in the Army's 2012 Best Warrior Competition — they would be challenged mentally as well as physically during the next four days to see who would be named the Army's NCO of the Year and Soldier of the Year.

Opposite page: Spc. Richard Shepard converses with Staff Sgt. Matthew Senna before the computer-based exam begins on Day 1 as a portrait of Sgt. Audie Murphy looks on.

Previous pages: Competitors line up to conduct a pace count before they set off in the night urban orienteering event on Day 2 of the competition.

None of the 24 competitors took his words lightly, as they all had arrived at Fort Lee, Va., with their own expectations. During the next four days, those expectations were put to the test, 24 hours a day.

In the last six months or more, the competitors had taken various paths to get to the Army's top competition. Though there is no standard template, most had to win at the battalion, brigade, division, corps, and major command levels. As the winner's of their MACOMs competi-

tions, they advanced to the Armywide competition.

If a competitor in the Soldier category was promoted to sergeant during the course of the competitions, that newly promoted sergeant continued to compete in the Soldier of the Year category.

After four days of exhausting competition, the winners



U.S. ARMY EUROPE

NCO OF THE YEAR

STAFF SGT. MATTHEW SENNA

MOS: 11B infantryman **UNIT:** 7th Army NCO Academy at Grafenwöhr, Germany **AGE:** 34 **TIME IN SERVICE:** 10 years **HOMETOWN:** Sacramento, Calif.

ON WHAT HE'LL TAKE FROM THE COMPETITION: "We'll take some training things from here — things that we can use to improve our Army — and take that back to our Soldiers to make them stronger. All we do is just continue on to make a better, stronger Army."



SOLDIER OF THE YEAR

SPC. RICHARD SHEPARD

MOS: 35F intelligence analyst **UNIT:** Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 21st Theater Sustainment Command, at Kaiserslautern, Germany **AGE:** 22 **TIME IN SERVICE:** 21 months **HOMETOWN:** San Diego, Calif.

ON THE EXPERIENCE OF COMPETING AT BEST WARRIOR: "I've had an awesome time throughout the competition and it's just a good learning experience overall. I'm honored just to be here and compete at this level."



U.S. ARMY FORCES COMMAND

NCO OF THE YEAR

SGT. DARIUS KRZYWONOS

MOS: 13T field artillery surveyor **UNIT:** 2nd Battalion, 12th Field Artillery Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash. **AGE:** 43 **TIME IN SERVICE:** 2 years (also served in the U.S. Marine Corps from 1991 to 1995) **HOMETOWN:** Przeworsk, Poland (immigrated to the United States when he was 20)

ON LEARNING FROM HIS FELLOW COMPETITORS: "These guys are terrific, and by just observing them, you learn. ... You learn not just specific tasks but different manners of leading Soldiers. Their conduct has been something I will remember and pass on."

SOLDIER OF THE YEAR

SPC. JEREMY SHIVICK

MOS: 11B infantryman **UNIT:** C Company, 2nd Battalion, 505th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division at Fort Bragg, N.C. **AGE:** 21 **TIME IN SERVICE:** 2 years **HOMETOWN:** San Diego, Calif.

ON SUCCEEDING AT BEST WARRIOR: "You have to be adaptive and you have to be able to work in a given situation. I really think it's a good test, and it tests you on your Soldier skills as well."

were announced Oct. 22 during a luncheon at the Association of the U.S. Army's annual meeting and convention in Washington, D.C. The competitors' families were there to hear the announcement.

The Army's 2012 NCO of Year is Staff Sgt. Matthew Senna, an 11B infantryman assigned as a small group leader at the 7th Army NCO Academy in Grafenwöhr, Germany, who represented U.S. Army Europe. The Soldier of the Year is Sgt. Saral Shrestha, a 91D power generation equipment repairer assigned to the Group Service Support Company, Group Support Battalion, 3rd Special Forces Group, at Fort Bragg, N.C., who represented U.S. Army Special Operations Command.

During the announcement, Chandler said fractions of a point separated the winners from the rest of the field.

"This is absolutely rewarding," Senna said. "Not only was it rewarding for myself, but rewarding for my unit."

Shrestha said he was surprised to hear his name called.

"I just went blank," he said. "I was looking at my wife, and she was looking at me and we were both thinking the same thing, 'How did that happen?' I started shaking hands, and then they rushed me to the stage."

The announcement of the winners ended a long, tough four days that tested the Army's "best of the best."





U.S. ARMY INSTALLATION MANAGEMENT COMMAND

NCO OF THE YEAR

STAFF SGT. RANDY ROSCOE

MOS: 68X behavioral health specialist **UNIT:** Headquarters and Headquarters Company, U.S. Army Garrison–Fort Huachuca, Ariz. **AGE:** 24 **TIME IN SERVICE:** 4½ years **HOMETOWN:** Tucson, Ariz.

ON THE SMA'S PRESENCE AT THE COMPETITION: "It's very motivating to see the sergeant major of the Army here. Every great leader needs to observe and assess the training of their Soldiers, so I think it's very important and vital for him to be involved. It shows that he really cares about us and shows he's here for all the Soldiers in the Army."

SOLDIER OF THE YEAR

SGT. KEVIN MULLOY

MOS: 88M motor transport operator **UNIT:** Headquarters and Headquarters Company, U.S. Army Garrison–Fort Bliss, Texas **AGE:** 29 **TIME IN SERVICE:** 3 years **HOMETOWN:** Albuquerque, N.M.

ON REPRESENTING IMCOM AT BEST WARRIOR: "I'm here to really show people that Soldiers in garrison have a lot to offer, to shake that stigma that garrisons only have 'broken' Soldiers, and break that negative impression of us."



U.S. ARMY MATERIEL COMMAND

NCO OF THE YEAR

STAFF SGT. MARKUS WHISMAN

MOS: 94R avionics system repairer **UNIT:** Army Research Laboratory at White Sands Missile Range, N.M. **AGE:** 27 **TIME IN SERVICE:** 8 years **HOMETOWN:** Palm Bay, Fla.

ON PREPARING FOR THE COMPETITION:

"We did a lot of training for this; [my unit] really helped me out a lot along with my sponsor. It's been very challenging, unexpected events that I enjoyed, but wore me out, a little bit."

SOLDIER OF THE YEAR

SPC. JAMES CONKLIN

MOS: 88H cargo specialist **UNIT:** 690th Transportation Detachment, 597th Transportation Brigade, at Fort Eustis, Va. **AGE:** 24 **TIME IN SERVICE:** 4 years **HOMETOWN:** Forked River, N.J.

ON ALREADY BEING A "SOLDIER OF THE YEAR": "I start off with just taking pride in putting on the uniform every single day. To have people tell you that you are the best of their peers is humbling ... I love soldiering stuff, I love being dirty. There is something about being stressed out. I can think better when I'm stressed out."



Day 1: 'They wanted specifics'

The competition started in the classroom, where competitors tackled a computer-based military knowledge exam and wrote an essay focused on current events.

The competitors weren't given much information about the schedule of events, so they had to rely on previous competition experience to prepare and hoping the Army-wide competition would follow a similar model.

"Preparing for the essay was just keeping up with current events, so if you knew your current events you could do well on the essay," said Sgt. Christopher Dettor, the U.S. Army Medical Command Soldier of the Year who is a 68W medic assigned to the U.S. Army Health Clinic at Hohenfels, Germany.

The written exam was a true test of military knowledge, said Staff Sgt. Markus Whisman, a 91R avionics system repairer assigned to the Army Research Laboratory at White Sands Missile Range, N.M., and the U.S. Army Materiel Command NCO of the Year.

"The essay wasn't very difficult, but the multiple-choice test was a different story—that was much more difficult," he said. "I was just caught a little off guard by some of the questions they asked. They wanted specifics, such as what chapter in a [field manual] to find an answer, not just what FM."

When preparing for promotion boards for NCO and Soldier of the Year competitions, Soldiers often use commercial or online study guides to help them prepare. But the Best Warrior military knowledge exam went far beyond what most online guides can offer, said Sgt. Darius Krzywonos, the U.S. Army Forces Command NCO of the Year and a 13T field artillery surveyor/meteorological

“The higher the level, the more difficult everything should be. That’s how you separate the good from the very good. It was challenging, but that’s how it should be.”

— SGT. DARIUS KRZYWONOS

crewmember with 2nd Battalion, 12th Field Artillery Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, at Joint Base Lewis-McCord, Wash.

“There were a number of questions that resembled the study guide, but dug much deeper than that,” he said. “The higher the level, the more difficult everything should be. That’s how you separate the good from the very good. It was challenging, but that’s how it should be.”

The first day ended with competitors zeroing their M4 carbines. Though not a graded event, an accurate weapon would be vital on Day 3 during the “stress fire” event.

Day 2: ‘These are things we need to know’

Day 1 of the Best Warrior Competition focused on the mental tasks, but Day 2 was a different story.

The day kicked off before dawn with the standard Army Physical Fitness Test. However, the competitors had a cheering section comprising of 1,200 Soldiers from Fort Lee’s Advanced Individual Training units and the NCO Academy.

“The energy from the [AIT] Soldiers and the NCO Academy was motivating, very contagious,” said Sgt. 1st Class Alissa Guzman, a senior drill sergeant with A Company, 1st Battalion, 61st Infantry Regiment at Fort Jackson,



Opposite page: Staff Sgt. Randy Roscoe readies to take the computer-based exam, which was followed by a written essay.

Above: A competitor looks for his next checkpoint during the night urban orienteering event, held throughout Fort Lee’s cantonment area late on Day 2.

Left: Staff Sgt. Kevin Wayman builds a female Soldier’s Army Service Uniform shirt on Day 2 of the competition. Competitors were given an Enlisted Records Brief, assorted ribbons and badges, and 30 minutes to complete the task.



Top left: Staff Sgt. Neal Lang measures the distance between components on a uniform assembled by Spc. Jose Figueroa.

Top right: Sgt. Matthew Howard puts on his mask as "gas" enters the area where he and his team are searching for an insurgent during the urban operations event on Day 3.

Above: Sgt. 1st Class Jeremy White asks questions to a "wounded" Soldier during a mass casualty exercise that woke competitors early on Day 3.



“These are things that we need to know as noncommissioned officers. ... The Army is diverse, so we need to learn all the aspects of it.”

— STAFF SGT. MATTHEW SENNA

S.C., and the U.S. Training and Doctrine Command NCO of the Year. “The motivation gets you amped up.”

“It was motivational, so much so that it was the highest PT score I ever got,” said Spc. Richard Shepard, a 35F intelligence analyst with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 21st Theater Sustainment Command, at Kaiserslautern, Germany, and the U.S. Army Europe Soldier of the Year. “It was a 334 on the extended scale; I’d never even got a 300 before.”

The extended scale score was unofficial. For grading purposes, competitors received a maximum score of 300.

The next graded event was the daytime land navigation. Competitors had to find five grid points spread out over several kilometers of dense forest using only a map, protractor and compass; no GPS devices were allowed.

“Being a drill sergeant, I get involved in these skill-level-one tasks, and it helps get me ready for a competition



U.S. ARMY MEDICAL COMMAND

NCO OF THE YEAR

STAFF SGT. CRAIG WAYMAN

MOS: 68W medic **UNIT:** U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases at Fort Detrick, Md. **AGE:** 28 **TIME IN SERVICE:** 7½ years **HOMETOWN:** Thurmont, Md.

ON THE RIGHT ATTITUDE TO HAVE AT BEST WARRIOR: "My secret to all of this is just having fun; that's what it's all about. We're always professionals when we go to work and when we train and learn these tasks. When you get to come out here and use these tasks, it should be fun. When you're just having fun with something like this, things will always turn out great."

SOLDIER OF THE YEAR

SGT. CHRISTOPHER DETTOR

MOS: 68W medic **UNIT:** Hohenfels Army Health Clinic, Hohenfels, Germany **AGE:** 26 **TIME IN SERVICE:** 4 years **HOMETOWN:** Dallas, Texas **ON USING WHAT HE'S LEARNED AT THE COMPETITION:** "I'll take all the training I've received at Best Warrior and try to pass it on to my Soldiers. Best Warrior has trained me almost better than anything I've ever done in the Army. The competition pushes you to do more studying and more training."



MILITARY DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON

NCO OF THE YEAR

STAFF SGT. TYLER TURNER

MOS: 35M human intelligence collector **UNIT:** 297th Military Intelligence Battalion, 513th Military Intelligence Brigade, at Fort Gordon, Ga. **AGE:** 29 **TIME IN SERVICE:** 5 years **HOMETOWN:** Chardon, Ohio

ON COMPETING AT THE ARMYWIDE LEVEL: "It's just a great experience overall and you learn a lot, not only about yourself but about the Army. It's been great."

SOLDIER OF THE YEAR

SPC. PAUL WELTE

MOS: 92G food service specialist **UNIT:** 529th Regimental Support Company, 3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment (The Old Guard), at Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall, Va. **AGE:** 20 **TIME IN SERVICE:** 2 Years **HOMETOWN:** Enola, Pa.

ON PREPARING FOR BEST WARRIOR: "It's focused a lot on individual leadership and decision-making, and also adapting to the rapid changing schedule and events. It's an outstanding experience, which is one of the main reasons I decided to pursue it in the first place."

like this," Guzman said. "It helps build confidence."

Land navigation was followed by a mystery event. Competitors had no idea what the event was until they walked into Fort Lee's Field House and were briefed by the competition's organizers. Their task: put a Class B uniform together, with an Enlisted Record Brief, a short-sleeve shirt, assorted ribbons, rank insignia, branch insignia and rulers.

The NCO of the Year competitors had an additional wrinkle. The males had to put together a female class B uniform, while the lone female competitor had to put together a male class B uniform.

Both the NCOs and the Soldiers were given 30 minutes to complete the task.

"We walked in, we grounded our gear, we had a couple minutes to rest, and then we met on the bleachers. They told us the mystery event, and two minutes later we started," said Sgt. Anthony Moore, the U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command Soldier of the Year and a 14H air defense enhanced early warning operator assigned to A Detachment, 1st Space Company, 1st Space Brigade in Stuttgart, Germany.

Though it was a graded event, assembling the uniforms was also good training, Senna said.



Above: Sgt. Kevin Mulloy (foreground) and other competitors check the ID cards and gear of the members of their teams during the pre-combat inspection and pre-combat check event on Day 3.



ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

NCO OF THE YEAR

SGT. MATTHEW HOWARD

MOS: 13B artillery crewman **UNIT:** C Battery, 2nd Battalion, 142nd Fires Brigade, Arkansas Army National Guard, at Ozark, Ark. **AGE:** 36 **TIME IN SERVICE:** 17 years **HOMETOWN:** Clarksville, Ark.

ON SUPPORT FROM HIS UNIT: "The Guard has been a huge supporter. It started at my battery level, and it's just gone from there. As soon as I moved on from the state competition, my state was just behind me 100 percent, pushing me on to regionals. When I won regionals, they were there. Then at the national level, it was just a tremendous amount of support that has been great."



SOLDIER OF THE YEAR

SPC. MARK FUGGITI

MOS: 79T recruiting and retention NCO **UNIT:** C Company, Recruiting and Retention Battalion, Pennsylvania Army National Guard, at Anville, Pa. **AGE:** 29 **TIME IN SERVICE:** 2½ years **HOMETOWN:** Orwigsburg, Pa.

ON HOW THE COMPETITION WILL HELP HIM: "The way [Best Warrior] will help me as a recruiter is with the recruit sustainment program. We actually train our recruits before they ship to basic training. Some of the training I've received here I can bring back to my unit and show to them before they go to basic training."



U.S. ARMY PACIFIC

NCO OF THE YEAR

STAFF SGT. NEAL LANG III

MOS: 13M multiple launch rocket systems crewmember **UNIT:** B Battery, 1st Battalion, 38th Field Artillery Regiment, 210th Fires Brigade, at Camp Casey, Korea **AGE:** 34 **TIME IN SERVICE:** 7 years **HOMETOWN:** Winston-Salem, N.C.

ON LEADERSHIP: "It's an honor to represent my Soldiers and my mentors. NCOs mentor people, and I've had some really great mentors and I take a lot of pride in knowing they are proud of me. Because of their hard work, I hope I can be the same type of leader as them."



SOLDIER OF THE YEAR

SPC. JOSE FIGUEROA

MOS: 92A standard Army maintenance system operator **UNIT:** 536th Support Maintenance Company, 524th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 8th Theater Support Command at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii **AGE:** 25 **TIME IN SERVICE:** 2 years **HOMETOWN:** Lawton, Okla.

ON HIS EXPECTATIONS: "I was looking forward to this, because it's on a whole new level. It's helping me to think of more interesting ways to train Soldiers."



Above: A competitor and his team enter a building to search for a suspected "insurgent" during the urban operations event on Day 3.

"These are things that we need to know as noncommissioned officers," he said. "We need to know the standards, not just for males or females. The Army is diverse, so we need to learn all the aspects of it."

Spc. Michael Swan, the U.S. Army Reserve Soldier of the Year from the 326th Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear Company in Huntsville, Ala., said his key to success in the event was just remembering what he's done during his entire Army career.

"For the most part, it was just going back to book smarts to remember the measurements," he said.

Day 2 continued into the hours of darkness with night land navigation in the urban area that is the Fort Lee garrison. Competitors were given 2 ½ hours to find points spread throughout the post. During this event, however, the competitors were able to use Army GPS systems to complete the task.

Day 3: 'You don't know what to expect'

After the night land navigation event, the competitors slept on cots at the Field House. Already exhausted, they didn't know what the next event would be. But at 4 a.m., they quickly found out as they awoke to the sounds of simulated gunfire and explosions. The next event was a



U.S. ARMY RESERVE

NCO OF THE YEAR

STAFF SGT. JEFFERY RIOS

MOS: 31E internment and resettlement specialist **UNIT:** B Company, Regional Training Center–East, 78th Training Division, at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J. **AGE:** 30 **TIME IN SERVICE:** 8 years **HOMETOWN:** Queens, New York City, N.Y.

ON WHAT THIS COMPETITION MEANS TO HIS SOLDIERS: “It looks good making it to this level. It helps my Soldiers if they want to do these types of competitions; I can be that sponsor for them. We get a lot of good training out of it. We have to know basic skills plus NCO skills because you now have to work both angles.”



SOLDIER OF THE YEAR

SPC. MICHAEL SWAN

MOS: 91H tracked vehicle repairman **UNIT:** 326th Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Company; 490th CBRN Battalion; 415th CBRN Brigade; at Huntsville, Ala. **AGE:** 34 **TIME IN SERVICE:** 10 years combined active-duty and Reserve **HOMETOWN:** Gurley, Ala.

ON WHAT IS TESTED AT THE COMPETITION: “I think it’s the adaptability that they are testing here. Can this Soldier deal with this change? Can he deal with the event that’s happening right after this event? All of these Soldiers you can put anywhere in the world now, and they’ll have more of an advantage to succeed.”



U.S. ARMY SPACE & MISSILE DEFENSE COMMAND

NCO OF THE YEAR

SGT. BRANDON KITCHEN

MOS: 25S satellite communications operator/maintainer **UNIT:** B Company, 53rd Signal Battalion, 1st Space Brigade, at Fort Meade, Md. **AGE:** 22 **TIME IN SERVICE:** 4 years **HOMETOWN:** Colorado Springs, Colo. **BEST WARRIOR FACT:** Kitchen competed in the 2011 Armywide Best Warrior Competition in the Soldier category.

ON WHAT IT TAKES TO COMPETE AT THE ARMYWIDE LEVEL: “Getting to this level is already a great accomplishment. In FORSCOM, they go through a ton of Soldiers to get here, so you are truly the best of the best. I come from a smaller MACOM, so if I don’t win, that’s OK because I went out there and I tried and I can come back again.”

SOLDIER OF THE YEAR

SGT. ANTHONY MOORE

MOS: 14H air defense early warning operator **UNIT:** A Detachment, 1st Space Company, 1st Space Battalion, 1st Space Brigade, at Stuttgart, Germany **AGE:** 23 **TIME IN SERVICE:** 4 years **HOMETOWN:** Flint, Mich.

ON LESSONS LEARNED AT THE COMPETITION: “We’ve been training [for Best Warrior], but this in itself is a training event. You kind of take a step back from these scenarios that seem realistic and realize there are Soldiers downrange experiencing this for real. We’re simulating it to get the best training experience so that when we go downrange, we can provide the best care for our Soldiers.”

mass causality exercise in an outdoor athletic field. After their abrupt awakening to the sounds of war, the competitors were given a quick brief by the organizers before they each rushed outside to evaluate an assigned Soldier, one of dozens lying on the grass, screaming in pain from their injuries.

Though sleep-deprived and wary when the event started, Krzywonons said, instinct and training soon kicked in.

“Things happened so quickly, with such noise, I just don’t remember it,” he said. “I was thinking what day it might be when I was filling in the [causality identification] cards, but I couldn’t even recall what month it was.”

There was little time for a break after the mass causality event. Competitors soon had to move on to pre-combat inspections and pre-combat checks, which were followed by the Warrior Tasks and Battle Drills event.

Each competitor was given a fire team of three Soldiers to check, who were led through the WTBD lanes that consisted of stress fire, CBRN response, detaining a high-value target and leading a mission through an area with a high risk of improvised explosive devices.

“It was good, there were a good amount of role players,” said Staff Sgt. Jeffery Rios, the U.S. Army Reserve NCO of the Year, who is a 35E internment and resettlement



Above: Sgt. Saral Shrestha leads his team members in inspecting their vehicle during the pre-combat inspection and pre-combat check event on Day 3.

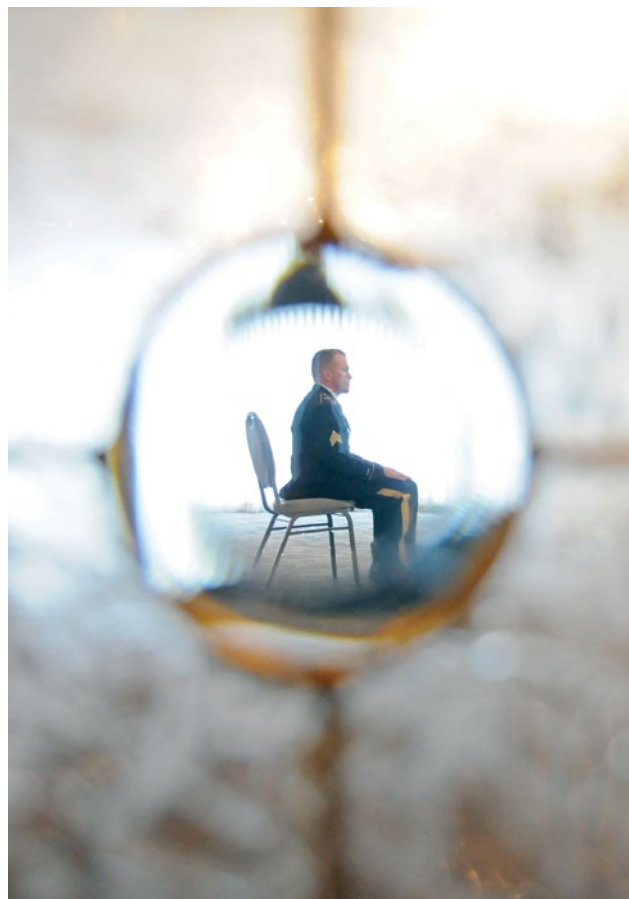


Top left: Mulloy stands at the start of his appearance before a board comprising Sgt. Maj. of the Army Raymond F. Chandler III as its president and the seniormost command sergeants major from throughout the Army.

Top right: Sgt. Anthony Moore is seen through a beveled glass window answering the board's questions at Fort Lee's Lee Club on Day 4 of the competition.

Above: Sgt. 1st Class Alissa Guzman is congratulated by her sponsor for a job well-done after her board appearance, the final event of the competition.

Opposite page: Senna congratulates Shrestha after they were announced as the Army's 2012 NCO of the Year and Soldier of the Year on Oct. 22 at the Association of the U.S. Army convention in Washington, D.C.



specialist assigned to Regional Training Center-East, 78th Division, 84th Training Command at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J. "It was stressful, you didn't know what to expect."

Day 4 and announcing the winners

Day 4 had only one graded event, the formal board appearance. Chandler served as the president of the board and command sergeants major from the Army's MACOMs were the board's members.

To prepare for the board, competitors repeatedly practiced saying the Creed of the Noncommissioned Officer, the Soldiers' Creed and "The Army Song." Many also studied notes and regulations with their sponsors.

When the board was complete, so was the competition, though the competitors had to wait through the weekend to see who would be named the Army's Best Warriors.

Both Senna and Shrestha said the support of their units and families were a big part of their success at the Best Warrior competition. Danielle, Senna's wife, and Elisha, Shrestha's wife, were in attendance when their husbands were named the competition's winners, as were many of the MACOMs' senior enlisted advisors.

Command Sgt. Maj. David Davenport, command sergeant major of U.S. Army Europe, said he expects his NCOs and Soldiers to be "fit, disciplined and well-trained." Senna said that motto helped him excel and become the Army's NCO of the Year.

"That is what we're trying to embody and really teach, too," he said. "From where I'm at, at the [7th Army] NCO



U.S. ARMY SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND

NCO OF THE YEAR

SGT. 1ST CLASS JEREMY WHITE

MOS: 18B weapons sergeant **UNIT:** Small group leader at the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School NCO Academy, at Fort Bragg, N.C. **AGE:** 30 **TIME IN SERVICE:** 10½ years **HOMETOWN:** St. Clair Shores, Mich.

ON COMPETING AT BEST WARRIOR: "The competition has been pretty rapid fire. It's been event after event with very little down time in between. The competitors have been very tough and I've had a good time doing it. That was my goal, to come here and do my best, but have fun doing it."

SOLDIER OF THE YEAR

SGT. SARAL SHRESTHA

MOS: 91D power generation equipment repairer **UNIT:** Group Service Support Company, Group Support Battalion, 3rd Special Forces Group, at Fort Bragg, N.C. **AGE:** 24 **TIME IN SERVICE:** 3 years **HOMETOWN:** Kathmandu, Nepal

ON COMPETING AT BEST WARRIOR: "I want to set an example. The Army is all about competition so you can set the example. I take a lot of pride [competing]; there are not enough words to explain it."



U.S. ARMY TRAINING & DOCTRINE COMMAND

NCO OF THE YEAR

SGT. 1ST CLASS ALISSA GUZMAN

MOS: 25P microwave systems operator/maintainer **UNIT:** Senior drill sergeant in A Company, 1st Battalion, 61st Infantry Regiment, 165th Infantry Brigade, at Fort Jackson, S.C. **AGE:** 31 **TIME IN SERVICE:** 9 years **HOMETOWN:** San Antonio, Texas

ADVICE FOR FUTURE COMPETITORS: "Prepare mentally and understand there is a lot of constraints on your body. There is plenty of fatigue and, because it seems like such a short period of time, you're thinking 'Oh, it's only a couple days.' But when you get on that bus on that last day, you're [physically] done. So prepare yourself mentally and come in here as prepared as possible."

SOLDIER OF THE YEAR

SGT. JESSE JACKLYN

MOS: 92R parachute rigger **UNIT:** E Company, 1st Battalion, 507th Parachute Infantry Regiment, U.S. Army Infantry School, at Fort Benning, Ga. **AGE:** 34 **TIME IN SERVICE:** 3 years **HOMETOWN:** Lapeer, Mich.

ON THE VALUE OF COMPETING AT BEST WARRIOR: "There are a lot of lessons to be learned here on training, the importance of training, the importance of rehearsing and being able to step out on a limb and try to separate yourself from the pack and don't be afraid to do something different."

Academy, that's what we're giving our next leaders, and that's why I'm hoping a lot of them will see that same drive, to help drive their own Soldiers."

Senna had praise for his fellow competitors and advice for all the Army's leaders.

"If those are our future leaders, then I think our Army is going to be in a very good place," he said. "Leaders need to take care of their Soldiers. Taking care of Soldiers will help your unit and everything around you. Be that positive change you want to see in the Army."

Shrestha said he would not have had been so successful if it hadn't been for the support of his unit.

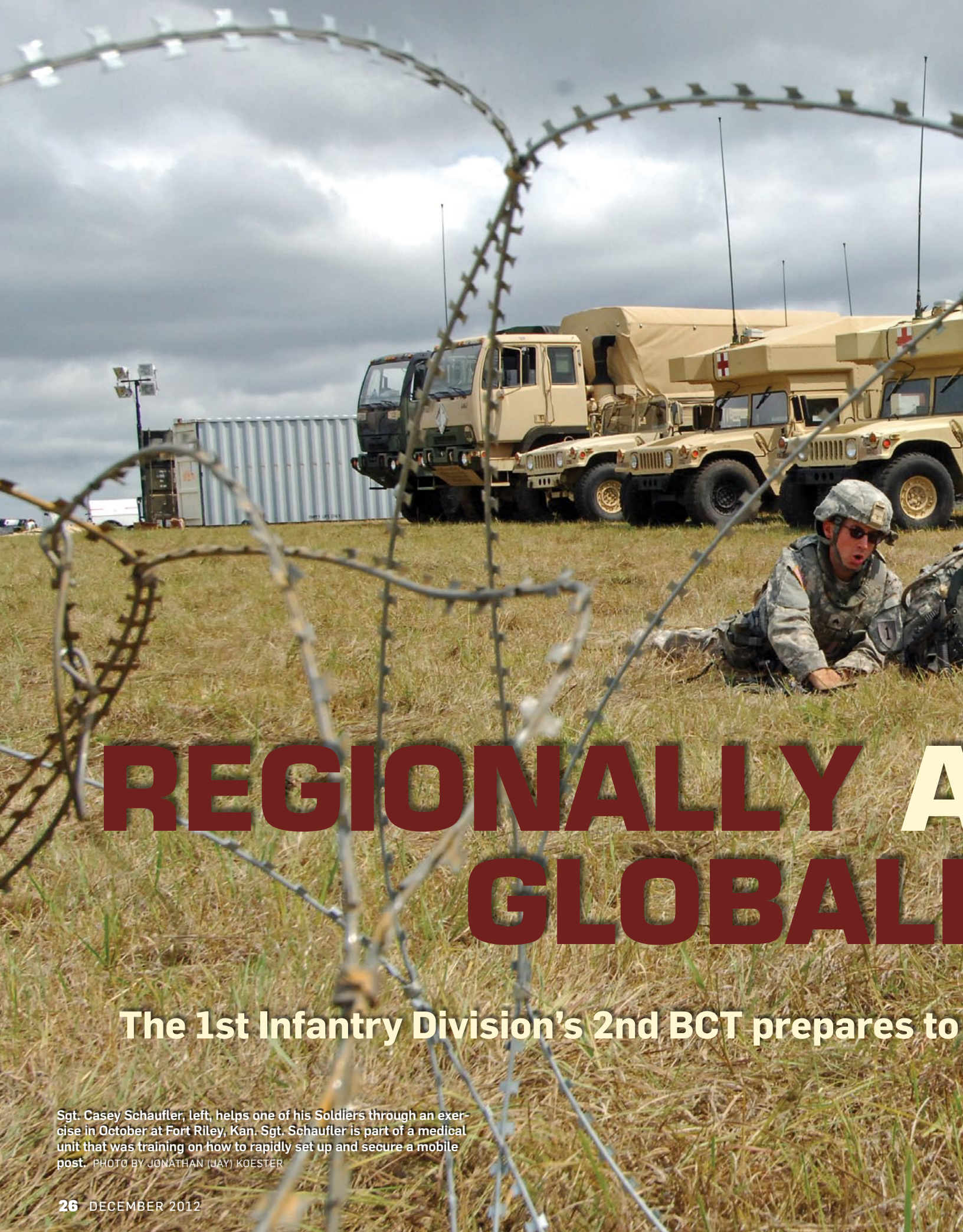
"I'm really happy to represent my company," he said after being named Soldier of the Year. "If you really think about a Soldier, they are a product of their environment. At my company, we always start the day with the motto: 'Mission first, Soldiers always.' That's how I live my life."

Shrestha said every competitor had a chance to win and acknowledged the high caliber of Soldiers who competed in 2012.

"They are the best of the best." ❖

To contact Staff Sgt. Jason Stadel, email Jason.b.stadel.mil@mail.mil





REGIONALLY AND GLOBALLY

The 1st Infantry Division's 2nd BCT prepares to

Sgt. Casey Schaufler, left, helps one of his Soldiers through an exercise in October at Fort Riley, Kan. Sgt. Schaufler is part of a medical unit that was training on how to rapidly set up and secure a mobile post. PHOTO BY JONATHAN (JAY) KOESTER



ALIGNED, LY AVAILABLE

be the first unit to take on a new Army strategy

BY JONATHAN (JAY) KOESTER NCO Journal



Sgt. 1st Class Grady Hyatt of U.S. Army Africa leads an after-action review with soldiers of the Ghanaian Army. In March, the Army will align the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, with U.S. Africa Command and will serve, for a year, as the go-to force for the command. PHOTO COURTESY OF U.S. ARMY AFRICA

As the Army transforms to become a more rapidly deployable force that can keep the peace anywhere in the world, “regional alignment” is the strategy coming to the forefront.

Regional alignment is meant to help Army units build stronger relationships with other nations, assisting their security forces through combined exercises and training, participating in humanitarian missions, and assisting with peacekeeping efforts, said Lt. Gen. John F. Campbell, the Army’s deputy chief of staff, G-3/5/7, during an October forum at the Association of the U.S. Army annual convention in Washington, D.C.

“Regional alignment is all about provid-

ing the combatant commander with the right force at the right time to better shape [the region], maybe preventing something like an Iraq or Afghanistan,” Campbell said.

Chief of Staff of the Army Gen. Raymond T. Odierno also recently spoke about the strategy, saying the effort will align forces to specific combatant commands, like those in Europe, the Pacific region and Africa.

“By aligning unit headquarters and

rotational units to combatant commands, and tailoring our combatant training centers and exercises to plan for their greatest contingencies, units will gain invaluable expertise and cultural awareness, and be prepared to meet the regional requirements more rapidly and effectively than ever before,” Odierno said in October.

Odierno said regionally aligning forces will put “squads with precise information and overmatched capability at the decisive time and place to achieve dominance of the operational environment.”

Like Campbell, Odierno stressed the role the regionally aligned forces will play in preventing small conflicts from spiraling into major operations.

“The Army represents one of America’s most credible deterrents against future hostility,” Odierno said. “We prevent

miscalculations from erupting into war. And we defeat an adversary when it does. No other nation can match the U.S. Army's ability to rapidly deploy a large number of troops over extended distances, sustain them, and deliver precise, discriminate results."

Leading the way

The first unit to become regionally aligned will be the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division. The BCT, based at Fort Riley, Kan., will be regionally aligned with U.S. Africa Command and has begun preliminary preparations for the mission. Small groups will begin deploying to Africa in March.

Command Sgt. Maj. Christopher Gilpin, command sergeant major of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, said the BCT's training will involve basic Soldier work before getting into the specifics of learning the culture of where they will be deployed in Africa.

"I don't think the mission changes things in terms of how we go about training and preparing our Soldiers for combat or contingency operations," Gilpin said. "It gives us a focus, as in a regional focus for the commander to focus his training events. But in terms of changing our mission set, or changing the way we go about preparing our Soldiers, absolutely not.

"Because we still have to be ready for decisive action," Gilpin said. "We've been going to Iraq, we've been going to Afghanistan, basically a counterinsurgency fight, and now we're trying to get back to ensuring that the basic things that the Army does well in decisive operations are maintained. We're training the basic building blocks of what we do as an Army. So it doesn't really change how we go about doing business. We're still the 2nd Brigade of the 1st Infantry Division, and whatever mission we're given, we're prepared to execute. Right now we're regionally aligned, and we're prepared to execute that mission."

Command Sgt. Maj. Toney Smith, the command sergeant major of the 2nd BCT's 5th Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, agreed that much of his unit's preliminary training is about focusing on the basics of conventional warfare after spending a decade in a counterinsurgency fight.

"The big statement is: We're regionally aligned, but globally available," Smith said. "So, yes, our alignment is with Africa. But



Staff Sgt. John McAdoo, a combat medic with the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, puts together a radar system during a three-day training event in October at Fort Riley, Kan., during which his medical team trained on establishing an outpost. The training is an important part of preparing to be regionally aligned with Africa and traveling in areas where there aren't permanent U.S. Army posts. PHOTO BY JONATHAN (JAY) KOESTER

we still have to be trained and ready to go anywhere else where conflict will be, because our primary mission is to fight this nation's wars if we have to."

Acquiring skills

Smith said his battalion was working on such Soldier skills as Bradley gunnery. For some of his Soldiers and NCOs, it had been a long time since they had been in a Bradley Fighting Vehicle because humvees were the vehicle of choice in Iraq and

Afghanistan.

"As we get ourselves back into our vehicles and doing this gunnery, there are a lot of guys who have not done it in 10 years," Smith said. "We're not starting over. But the experience level in the squadron of people who have shot gunnery, we're trying to harvest that because there are a lot fewer.

"It (the Africa mission) is going to diversify us more. It's going to get us out of the 'going to Iraq, going to Afghanistan'

pattern,” Smith said. “This training we’re doing right now is already doing that; it’s getting us back in our Bradleys, back in our tanks. And the Africa mission is going to add more skills.”

NCO training

As part of regional alignment, the 2nd BCT will not be deploying as a whole and its Soldiers’ deployments will not last a whole year. Instead, smaller groups will deploy to African countries for shorter periods of time.

“It (the Africa mission) is going to diversify us more. It’s going to get us out of the ‘going to Iraq, going to Afghanistan’ pattern. This training we’re doing right now is already doing that; it’s getting us back in our Bradleys, back in our tanks. And the Africa mission is going to add more skills.”

— COMMAND SGT. MAJ. TONEY SMITH

British Army Col. Andrew Dennis, the division chief of the U.S. Army Security Cooperation Policy and Concepts Division in the Army G-3/5/7, told Army News Service that teams as small as a squad will deploy to Africa for weeks or months, not years.

“It’s worth stressing at this point. ... This does not mean that [the 2nd BCT] is going to deploy en masse,” Dennis said. “Not at all. What it does mean is that [the BCT] is going to be the sourcing solution of preference to provide troops for U.S. Africa Command to carry out their security cooperation requirements – security force assistance. They will task-organize the teams as required to meet mission requirements.”

Though not all of the brigade’s Soldiers may deploy during the yearlong alignment, all will be trained, Gilpin said.

“Every Soldier, you have to have the contingency of ‘you may deploy,’ so all the

requirements for training – whether it’s language, cultural or specific mission set – we’ll train every Soldier to that standard,” Gilpin said. “He or she may not deploy, but they will be trained, ready and available to deploy.”

Soldier focus

Soldiers, and the NCOs training those Soldiers, are inspired by the mission and appreciate focusing on basic Soldier tasks, said Sgt. Stan Matlock, a combat medic with the 2nd BCT.

“I love this as an NCO, because our focus is on individual Soldiers, not on that weapons platform or that medical platform. We’re focusing on the Soldier,” Matlock said.

Matlock and Sgt. Tyler Allen, also a combat medic with the 2nd BCT, were conducting a three-day training event at Fort Riley during which their team set up a night jump, established an outpost at night, then changed its perimeter the next night. It was all part of training on the skills needed for rapidly deploying missions, Allen said.

“In Iraq, we arrived at already designated areas; we didn’t have to set up anything,” Allen said. “It’s more back to basics with setting up fighting positions. This is the first time a lot of our Soldiers have dealt with the concertina wire.”

During the gunnery training, Staff Sgt. Jeffrey Thompson, a Bradley master gunner for the 2nd BCT’s 5th Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, said he also appreciated the chance to train Soldiers on deployment skills.

“We haven’t done a gunnery in a long time,” Thompson said. “We’re getting back out into the field, getting used to not living in buildings when we go out to the field, getting back to what we’re supposed to do in the Army – preparing for combat.”

Stepping up

The NCOs of the 2nd BCT said they were excited by what the mission entailed and were proud to be leading the way for the Army. Staff Sgt. Ezra Glover, a motor sergeant in the 5-4 Cav, said NCOs and Soldiers in the brigade were excited to be training for a new, important mission.

“It’s always good. You always take pride and feel important when you’re the first person to do something different in the Army,” Glover said. “You set the stage; you set the standards for everybody else to



follow out there. The Soldiers are excited about it.”

Fort Riley is already steeped in the history of the 1st Infantry Division leading the way for the Army. This first adds to that history, Gilpin said.

“Historically, as we look back in time, we can say, ‘We were the first,’” Gilpin said. “Being the first takes pride in wanting to do it right, and for us it’s significant that we’re the first brigade chosen to do this type of mission. So it comes with a lot of anticipation. We’re eager to get a chance to execute those missions, as well as having pride in the fact that we’re the first brigade to do it. All around I think it’s a good thing for us and our Soldiers.”

C. Todd Lopez and David Vergun of the Army News Service contributed to this story.

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A cloud of dust blows back over the turret of an Abrams tank during a gunnery exercise June 20 at Fort Riley's Douthitt Range Complex. Soldiers from the 1st Infantry Division's 1st Combined Arms Battalion, 63rd Armor Regiment, and 1st Combined Arms Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment, tested the capabilities of the new tanks during the monthlong exercise, the first of this type that the 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team had conducted in more than two years. PHOTO BY MOLLIE MILLER

Soldiers with 1st Battalion, 7th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, trained recently in M1096 Paladin self-propelled howitzers. They conducted dry-fire training during a weeklong field exercise meant to certify gun crews. PHOTO BY SGT. DANIEL STOUTAMIRE

A close-up photograph of a soldier in a digital camouflage uniform. He is looking down with a focused expression at a metal structure he is working on. His uniform features an American flag patch on the right chest and an "AIRBORNE" patch with a paratrooper logo on the left chest. The background is blurred, suggesting an outdoor training environment.

PHYSICAL ADAPTABILITY

CULTURAL ADAPTABILITY

**HANDLING CRISES
& EMERGENCIES**

INTERPERSONAL ADAPTABILITY

**DEALING WITH CHANGE
& AMBIGUITY**

HANDLING STRESS

THINKING CREATIVELY

**LEARNING TASKS,
TECHNIQUES &
PROCEDURES**

A Soldier uses adapt-
ability skills while par-
ticipating in the Asymmetric
Warfare Adaptive Leader
Program at Fort A.P. Hill Va.
PHOTO BY MAJ. SONISE LUMBACA

8 WAYS TO BE AN ADAPTIVE LEADER

BY CHRISTY LATTIMORE-STAPLE NCO Journal

AWALP trains NCOs to enhance their capabilities and defeat asymmetric threats

Adaptive Soldiers are critical and creative thinkers, innovative problem solvers, confident, and in possession of the skills needed to operate in an asymmetric warfare environment, where strategy and tactics differ significantly from what most Soldiers learn about conventional warfare.

The 10-day Asymmetric Warfare Adaptive Leader Program, conducted four times a year at Fort A.P. Hill, Va., teaches eight dimensions of adaptability. By learning how to better interpret their commander's intent and learning how to observe, operate, analyze, predict, counter and defeat asymmetric threats, AWALP graduates help enable their units to overcome the challenges inherent in modern battlefields.

AWALP is heading into its third year, and the program — the only one of its kind in the Army — centralizes many of the lessons the Army has absorbed during the past decade of war.

"The big thing we saw in Afghanistan and Iraq: The enemy created challenges, and sometimes as a military, we were slow

to adapt," said Command Sgt. Maj. Cordell Ackley, squadron command sergeant major of C Squadron at the Asymmetric Warfare Group. "So the motivation here at AWALP is to be able to expand the comfort zone of the students and expand their horizons. When they look at problems at various angles, then with some analysis, they will be able to apply various methods to solve the problem."

The AWALP staff comprises active-duty Soldiers, Department of the Army civilians and contractors who are subject-matter experts in asymmetric warfare. The group falls under the Asymmetric Warfare Group, headquartered at Fort Meade, Md. The AWG reports to the U.S. Army Training & Doctrine Command.

Operating in an asymmetric environment "is not all kicking down doors and shooting people," said Hugh Roberts, a retired command sergeant major who is now an AWALP senior civilian advisor. "It's also engaging with people, finding out who can help, who can hurt, what a population of people values and what the key infrastructures are in that community.

It takes a certain level of interpersonal adaptability to be able to do that. We want the Soldiers to complete the task, but we also want them to think about the 'so what' of the problem."

Adaptability 101

Before Soldiers can successfully operate in an asymmetric environment, they must learn how to be adaptable.

"One of the main concerns that the Army has right now is resiliency — the power or ability to return to original form or position, the ability to recover readily from adversity," Ackley said. "What makes a Soldier resilient against internal or external stressors? The program answers those questions. If the Soldier is more adaptive, maybe those external stressors won't be as effective."

Senior leaders frequently talk about Soldiers being "adaptable." But when a Soldier is asked, "What is adaptability?" Soldiers will give a range of answers, Roberts said.

Most Soldiers will say being adaptable means "being able to react to something." But it's more than that, Roberts said. "It's

Top left: Two Asymmetric Warfare Adaptive Leader Program students try to question a “foreign national” to gather information about the area during a training scenario Aug. 21 at Fort A.P. Hill, Va.

Top right: An AWALP student and his translator are given a tour of a village that had been under attack during the training scenario.

Bottom right: AWALP students work together to evaluate the information they gathered earlier in the day.

PHOTOS BY CHRISTY LATTIMORE-STAPLE



critical, creative thinking, innovate problem solving; it's being confident.”

Part of being adaptive is being familiar with the threats you face.

Whether involving the enemy or the environment, Soldiers need to know what the threats are and understand how to handle the enemy's capabilities.

“The enemies we face are very adaptive,” Roberts said. “How do you train Soldiers to consider the asymmetric environment in an adaptive manner? We start with what we call Adaptability 101. We bring the students to the same page, knowing what adaptability is, and then we build from there.”

Students are taught what an adaptive leader is and how to build an adaptive team. Then they are taught how to integrate and teach adaptability at their home station.

Threshold of failure

AWALP pushes Soldiers out of their comfort zones, but the education is intended to systematically build confidence in their ability to manage uncertainty.

“The threshold of failure is a scale,” Ackley said. “One end is simplicity, and the other end is chaos. If Soldiers are constantly trained in the simplicity side, then there's no thinking involved. They're always doing the crawl, walk, run. The conditions never change. But if Soldiers operate too far in the chaos side, then it becomes too confusing.

“So we have to find that spot in between the simplicity and the chaos that promotes adaptability — the critical, creative thinking and problem-solving,” he said. “When Soldiers become more experienced during the training event, then we can move toward that spot on the chaos side. How can a Soldier improve if they are

not challenged and pushed a little further than what they're used to? How can our Soldiers get better if they are used to everything being the same, the task, conditions and standards? AWALP pushes them further.”

Operating in an asymmetric environment

The AWALP course focuses on what the AWG has identified as the eight dimensions of adaptability: physical adaptability; cultural adaptability; handling crisis and emergency situations; interpersonal adaptability; dealing with change or ambiguity; handling stress; thinking creatively; and learning task, technology and procedure. Only about a quarter of the program is in the classroom; the rest of the training takes place in a field environment.

“The classroom training really focuses on teaching the actual tasks,” said Master Sgt. Michael Crosby, AWALP's NCO in charge. “When we take the students in the field, it's really focusing on how to apply that task to a dynamic scenario or situation.”

The course is conducted in two phases. In Phase 1, the first five days, students learn and demonstrate an understanding of adaptive team performance and leader attributes.

“We first teach Soldiers what adaptability is, what the eight dimensions of adaptability are,” Crosby said. “Then we teach about

what the different inhibitors are. There is a build incentive — train to build confidence — then everything is tied together by accountability,” Crosby said.

In Phase 2, students bring all the skills they've learned during Phase 1 into scenario-based exercises.

“In the end, training

“A SOLDIER WILL NOT ALWAYS HAVE THEIR COMMANDER THERE OR THEIR SENIOR LEADERS TO TELL THEM WHAT TO DO. SOLDIERS WILL HAVE TO THINK FOR THEMSELVES — THINK CRITICALLY, THINK CREATIVELY. THEY WILL HAVE TO BE INNOVATIVE PROBLEM-SOLVERS. THE BENEFIT TO THE ARMY IS IT WILL HAVE SOLDIERS WHO ARE THINKING MORE, NOT JUST WAITING AROUND TO BE TOLD WHAT TO DO.”

— HUGH ROBERTS, AWALP SENIOR CIVILIAN ADVISOR



this way will make the Soldier more confident, and we want to build those intangible attributes,” Crosby said.

Soldiers who have taken part in the training saw immediate benefits.

“My thought process is now completely different in regarding how I would approach any mission,” said Staff Sgt. Oral Pierce, a student in AWALP’s program from B Troop, 1st Squadron, 38th Cavalry Regiment, 525th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade, at Fort Bragg, N.C. “In the traditional Army, we are told what to do and how to do it, but here at AWALP, I have been taught to step out of the box of traditional problem-solving and to take a look at all the options of what I can do to approach a problem.

And Staff Sgt. Eliezer Morales, a student from the 525th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade at Fort Bragg, N.C., is ready to take the lessons he’s learned at AWALP back to his unit.

“As a group leader, the training I have received here at AWALP will help me teach my Soldiers how to perform well in battlefield situations they are not normally used to encountering,” he said. “Also this training will help my Soldiers to be more proactive on a daily basis when doing their duties.”



Encouraging individual responsibility is built into the structure. During the program students are divided into teams, but the teams change each day.

"What is unique about this training is we do not appoint a leader," Crosby said. "This is how we teach the adaptive team processes method. If there's a designated leader then everyone turns to that leader and waits for that leader to make a decision. If no leader is appointed, then they have to figure it out."

Roberts said this creates an interesting dynamic in the teams.

"You have the type-A personalities: staff sergeant, sergeant first class, first sergeant and lieutenants. "They all have been in leadership positions," he said. "So here you have this group of leaders in a team together, and they all have ideas and think they have the best ideas. We want that conflict, and during the review process we will bring that out. They will say that there was no leader appointed and everyone wanted to do it their way."

When students return to their units, they often have much to think about regarding their own leadership style, Roberts said.

"Are they the type of leader that no other input is allowed?" he said. "What does that do to their team? Does it promote incentive? Your leadership style may have a negative impact on confidence."

Adaptive Soldiers are able to look at all options to solve a problem, Pierce said.

"I have learned that even though someone's perspective of approaching a mission or a problem may be different than how I would handle that situation, their perspective can work for me also," Pierce said. "There's more than one way something can work. I would say interpersonal adaptability — working with others and accepting their plan aside from mine — is the skill I will benefit most from."

During the student selection process, AWALP advises units to send Soldiers ranking from staff sergeant to major — "those who have an influence in training," Crosby said.

"That's so that at the end of the course, these students can go back and are able to inject and tweak the training so it can produce those attributes that make their Soldiers more adaptable in the end," he said.

Students are also asked to bring their units' training schedules with them to the course.

"We help the students look at their long-range training schedule and how they can integrate the methods and competencies they have learned," Crosby said.

25th ID models their own adaptive leader program

To prepare its Soldiers for asymmetric threats, the 25th Infantry Division plans to incorporate Asymmetric Warfare Adaptability Leader Program methods into its own program at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii. In August, the division sent senior NCOs who have graduated from AWALP to observe the course in order to develop a similar program at home.

"When we return, we can take the principals of the course and develop it for our leaders on a smaller scale," said Sgt. 1st Class James Falls, the operations sergeant major of the 225th Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division. "Our plan is to develop a five-day course designed for our Soldiers. Our intent is not to copy AWALP. Our goal is to teach our leaders adaptability. We are going to look at those key important things that bring out those intangible qualities in our Soldiers that will give them some critical thinking skills and make them better leaders."

AWALP instructors will help the division get the course started, Falls said.

"As we get the course going and more established, then we will stand on our own," he said.

The 25th Infantry Division's course is intended to teach its senior leaders adaptability skills without the expense of sending them to AWG's facilities in Virginia.

"We want our Soldiers to break the habit of being so rigid with their decision-making," Falls said. "We want to give our Soldiers some critical-thinking skills so that when they're on the ground and something happens, any decision is better than no decision. We want our Soldiers to process what's going on around them and make the best decision based on their situational awareness."

Falls said the adaptability training is important because the division's Soldiers are operating in an ever-changing and ever-evolving battlefield.

"We are dealing with urban terrain and mountainous terrain, and the enemy is looking at what we do and, in some cases, mimicking us or changing their normal procedures to combat what we normally do. It's important to our leadership to have the perspective of almost planning for the unknown."

Ambiguity can lead to adaptability

A big part of AWALP's training success is because students are kept in the dark about the exact curriculum.

"Ambiguity is key to this program," Crosby said.

Morales said, "From day one during the course, I never knew what was going to happen. Before I arrived here, I tried to look the course up online, but there was no information about the program. I just had to adapt to whatever the situation was on any given day. That's why I love the course. I never knew what would happen next."

"We encounter so many situations that we are never prepared for," he said. "AWALP has trained us to be adaptive to any environment by using the eight dimensions of adaptability, to think outside the box when we find ourselves dealing with the unknown."

Crosby noted that the course is designed to create that ambiguity.

"It is a scenario-driven event, where Soldiers can find themselves anywhere in the world — places other than Iraq and Afghanistan," he said. "They have to figure out what they are supposed to do. They are not given a direct mission; they build their own mission, based on who they talk to, by using key-leader engagement skills. Through the information they gather, they can identify what's going on in the scenario"





This page: AWALP students use physical adaptability skills during the August training exercise at Fort A.P. Hill. PHOTOS BY MAJ. SONISE LUMBACA

“AWALP assists the warfighter in looking at problems at a slightly different angle,” Crosby said. “Those problems could be IEDs; it could be an enemy ambush; it could be the local partner force.”

The training is so important, because at any time, Soldiers can be deployed to unpredictable situations around the world.

“To be an adaptive Soldier means that I can deal with any situation given to me and make the decisions needed to get to the commander’s intent, even without having all the information I need,” said Sgt. 1st Class Reggie Fox, a student from the 203rd Infantry Battalion, 158th Infantry Regiment, at Camp Shelby, Miss. “I can use my interpersonal adaptive skills to get missing information I can use to help piece together key facts I can pass on to my commander.”

Roberts said that initiative and self-reliance is exactly what the Army needs and what the course conveys.

“A Soldier will not always have their commander there or their senior leaders to tell them what to do,” he said. “Soldiers will have to think for themselves — think critically, think creatively. They will have to be innovative problem-solvers. The benefit to the Army is it will have Soldiers who are thinking more, not just waiting around to be told what to do.”

The program builds confidence so that when Soldiers are placed in those unpredictable environments, they will perform well, Ackley said.

“If we can shorten the distance between threats and resiliency, and shorten the distance it takes the Army to adjust, then I think that’s success.” ♡

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ACTION IN

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

NCOJOURNAL



‘Being a Ranger is just who he is’

Sergeant's selfless dedication protects assault force, earns him Distinguished Service Cross

NCO Journal staff report

Sgt. Craig Warfle became the second-most decorated Soldier in the 75th Ranger Regiment on Oct. 26 at Hunter Army Airfield, Ga., when Chief of Staff of the Army Gen. Raymond T. Odierno presented Warfle with the Distinguished Service Cross, the Army's second-highest award for valor.

During the ceremony, Odierno awarded three other Soldiers Silver Stars for valor and presented the regiment's 1st Battalion with the Presidential Unit Citation for extraordinary heroism during the battalion's combat actions in Afghanistan.

"This is surreal and very humbling," Warfle said.

Warfle was cited for his actions Aug. 18 and 19, 2010, during a firefight in which he and other Rangers were dropped in to assault a group of Taliban fighters planning an attack in Logar Province, Afghanistan.

Then a specialist, Warfle was "instrumental in the death of at least 16 Taliban fighters, the removal of two Taliban provincial commanders and the recovery of a large cache of weapons," the citation reads.

After being dropped off, Warfle opened fire to suppress the Taliban fighters and to allow elements from his battalion to maneuver into their positions. He sustained fire from multiple enemy locations and was shot in the shoulder. Disregarding his injury, he put himself in the line of enemy fire to protect his injured squad leader and the Soldiers trying to evacuate him for medical help. Instead of leaving to receive medical treatment, Warfle applied a tourniquet to his own arm and continued to fire on the enemy.

Warfle engaged the Taliban fighters from a position between the enemy and his platoon for more than 20 minutes while the assault force reconsolidated.

"Spc. Warfle's actions allowed the assault

◀ **Army Chief of Staff Gen. Raymond T. Odierno presents the Distinguished Service Cross to Sgt. Craig Warfle of C Company, 1st Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment, during an award ceremony Oct. 26 at Hunter Army Airfield, Ga.** PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. TEDDY WADE

force to break contact, drop ordnance on the enemy positions, and safely move to the exfiltration hot landing zone,” the citation reads. “By repeatedly risking his life for others, Spc. Warfle’s purposeful gallant actions, selfless dedication to the safety of his teammates, and demonstrated extraordinary heroism were distinctive and exemplary.”

Warfle credited his training for his battlefield heroics.

“The training was so ingrained in us from shooting paper targets that it seemed natural,” he said. “At the time, the seriousness of the events were not registering to me; everything that was happening seemed like run-of-the-mill training.”

Those present to see Warfle be honored with his award included his mother, father and wife, Rebecca, who flew in from Ohio.

“I wasn’t surprised that he received this award; I knew he had it in him,” she said. “Being a Ranger is just who he is.”

In the 75th Ranger Regiment, only Medal of Honor recipient Sgt. 1st Class Leroy Petry is more decorated.

Staff Sgt. Dominic Annetchini was one of three Soldiers who received the Silver Star during the ceremony. He also received a Purple Heart for injuries sustained during an encounter May 16, 2010.

As a squad leader, Annetchini placed himself in the line of fire from multiple barricaded shooters to rescue a wounded Afghan special operations soldier. Although critically wounded with a gunshot wound to his head, he killed several enemies and prevented further casualties.

“I woke up in a German hospital and couldn’t move my right side,” he said. “My nose was cut and I had fragments in my right brow and frontal cortex. I’m still in physical therapy, but I’m much improved. This award is humbling.”

Odierno also presented Sgt. Christopher Coray and Sgt. Michael Ross with Silver Stars and awarded Bronze Star Medals with “V” devices to three Soldiers; Joint Service Commendation Medals with “V” devices to nine Soldiers; Army Commendation Medals with “V” devices to three Soldiers; and the Purple Heart to 12 Soldiers. ♡

Army depot dedicates equipment to fallen leader

BY LINDSAY M. BRYANT Letterkenny Army Depot

The new route-clearance vehicle welding positioner at Letterkenny Army Depot in Chambersburg, Pa., was dedicated to the memory of Master Sgt. Benjamin F. Bitner, a Special Forces Soldier who grew up in nearby Greencastle, Pa., during a ceremony at the maintenance facility Oct. 10.

“The piece of equipment that you see behind me from this day forward will be known as the Bitner Positioner and will serve as a daily reminder for our work force that our Soldiers are relying on Letterkenny to ensure we remain the best equipped Army in the world,” said Col. Victor Hagan, the depot’s commander.

Bitner joined the Army in 1991 before graduating from Greencastle Antrim High School. On his tenth operational deployment, Bitner was serving with C Company, 2nd Battalion, 3rd Special Forces Group (Airborne), in Afghanistan when he was killed by an improvised explosive device April 23, 2011.

Sgt. 1st Class Julian Kitching spoke about his experience serving alongside Bitner in the 3rd Special Forces Group. He was a leader by his example and had energy, focus and commitment to excellence every day, Kitching said.

“When I met Ben in 2007, he became my mentor,” Kitching said. “Ben got us ready and we trained hard. He wasn’t just the builder on the team, he was the glue. When I took over for Ben as team sergeant I realized the massive responsibility I had. But I knew what to do by Ben’s example, not by anything he told me.”

The Bitner Positioner will perform work on route-clearance vehicles, which are equipped to detect, analyze and dispose of any explosively formed penetrator or improvised explosive device and will protect Soldiers from similar dangers that took Bitner’s life.

“Let us never forget all that Master Sgt. Bitner did and stood for,” Hagan said. “May all who work in the shops, tour our facility and receive the product be touched and encouraged by his sacrifice.” ♡



▲ Col. Victor Hagan, Letterkenny Army Depot’s commander; Master Sgt. Joseph Schall; and Roger and Beverly Bitner unveil a plaque Oct. 10 dedicating a piece of equipment to Master Sgt. Benjamin F. Bitner. PHOTO BY DON BITTNER

AUSA awards exemplary NCOs

Four lauded for work in educating Soldiers and in public affairs

BY MICHAEL L. LEWIS
NCO Journal

The NCOs who best exemplify the Army's efforts to educate its future leaders and to tell the Army story were recognized Oct. 22 at the 2012 Association of the U.S. Army annual convention in Washington, D.C.

Sgt. 1st Class Jesus Serrano, Sgt. Maj. Michael Thompson and Staff Sgt. Jean-Hubert Cadet were presented with the 2012 Sgt. Maj. Larry L. Strickland Educational Leader-



ship Award, and 1st Sgt. Laurence Lang received the Sgt. Maj. Dawn Kilpatrick Memorial Scholarship Award.

Named after the sergeant major for the Army's deputy chief of staff for personnel, who died in the 9/11 attack on the Pentagon, the Strickland Award recognizes NCOs who best "mobilize others in shaping our future leaders."

"Sgt. Maj. Strickland was an outstanding Soldier who cared deeply about mentoring members of the enlisted force," said retired Command Sgt. Maj. Jimmie Spencer,

▲ Sgt. Maj. Michael Thompson, Staff Sgt. Jean-Hubert Cadet and Sgt. 1st Class Jesus Serrano were awarded the 2012 Sgt. Maj. Larry L. Strickland Educational Leadership Award on Oct. 22 at the Association of the U.S. Army annual convention in Washington, D.C. PHOTO BY MICHAEL L. LEWIS

AUSA's director of NCO and Soldier programs, who presented the awards along with Sgt. Maj. of the Army Raymond F. Chandler III. "This award honors those who are stewards of the Army's most precious resource — Soldiers."

Serrano, a senior instructor at the 7th Army NCO Academy in Grafenwöhr, Germany, was selected to lead a "What Right Looks Like" task force that trained more than 100 National Guard Soldiers and foreign soldiers working as part of Kosovo Forces 15, Multinational Battle Group-East. As the team's leader, Serrano was charged with developing and supervising the instruction of the course, and creating its practical exercises and exams.

"It's really an honor to receive this award," Serrano said. "Education is extremely valuable. Any time you get the chance to seek self-improvement, you're not only bettering yourself, but also the people you reach and touch. Making a difference that way is huge."

Thompson, as a battalion sergeant major in the Warrior Transition Brigade at Fort Knox, Ky., motivated the wounded warriors under his care to further their civilian education. Despite the challenges of rehabilitating mentally and physically, Thompson urged his Soldiers to push themselves ever further, seeking educational improvement for personal and professional development. He also served as the senior mentor for the 19th Engineer Battalion's Junior Leaders Development Course, reminding its participants of the benefits of civilian and military education.

"This award is really because of my Soldiers," Thompson said. "They really allowed me to be part of their life and guide them in the right direction. I told them to be that leader who has the formal education a step beyond what people think you should have."

Cadet, as a military policeman in the 529th Military Police Company, 95th MP Battalion, 18th MP Brigade at Wiesbaden, Germany, designed and led a law enforcement certification program and a patrols supervisor course after noticing an educational weakness that needed correcting. As he encouraged Soldiers to achieve educational goals that supported their military career pursuits, he led by example by completing a bachelor's degree in criminal justice and beginning work on a master's degree.

"My hope is to develop young Soldiers and junior NCOs and empower them to teach others," Cadet said. "Don't short-change it; don't take shortcuts. It may be long days and long hours, but you shouldn't be doing it just for your [NCO Evaluation Report]. Do it because it's the right thing to do. It will definitely help you in your career."

The Kilpatrick Scholarship is awarded each year to an

THIS MONTH IN NCO HISTORY

December 17, 1944

Born in California, Roy H. Matsumoto was a *Nisei*, a second-generation Japanese-American, who at the start of World War II was held with his family at an internment camp in Jerome, Ark. After volunteering to join the Army, Matsumoto served as a Japanese interpreter in the 5307th Composite Unit (Provisional), famously known as “Merrill’s Marauders,” the forerunner of today’s 75th Ranger Regiment.

In mid-December 1944, as they battled Japanese troops in Nhpum Ga, Burma, Matsumoto’s battalion became trapped. By this time a master sergeant, Matsumoto crawled close to the Japanese lines in an attempt to glean their plans.

On Dec. 17, after overhearing the Japanese plans to cut off part of the battalion’s perimeter, Matsumoto helped set up an ambush that eliminated the first wave of the Japanese attack. Confused and in shambles, the second wave stalled until Matsumoto yelled, “Charge!” in Japanese. The Japanese troops then ran straight into the waiting Marauders, who dispatched

them as quickly as those in the first wave.

For his actions at Nhpum Ga, Matsumoto received the Legion of Merit and, by the end of the war, he and every other Marauder would receive the Bronze Star.

After the war, Matsumoto worked at the headquarters of China Command in Shanghai and later performed undercover missions in Japan. He retired in 1963 after 20 years of service.

Matsumoto was inducted into the Ranger Hall of Fame in 1993 and into the Military Intelligence Hall of Fame in 1997. In November 2011, he and other *Nisei* veterans of World War II collectively received the Congressional Gold Medal. Matsumoto, now 99, lives in Friday Harbor, Wash. — COMPILED BY MICHAEL L. LEWIS



Matsumoto in 2011



Lang

Army public affairs NCO in memory of Kilpatrick, who in her 20 years on active duty, held numerous public affairs assignments, including as the first NCO to serve as the public affairs officer for the secretary of the Army. After a two-year battle with cancer, Kilpatrick passed away in 1999, just eight days after retiring from the Army.

Lang, the 1st Cavalry Division G-7 senior public affairs NCO, said he too was honored by the award.

“It represents what the public affairs Soldier is,” he said. “It’s not just about being a Soldier, it’s about education — being a well-rounded Soldier. It’s about doing the right things at all times.”

The Army’s chief public affairs sergeant major said the scholarship is not only a way to recognize excellent public affairs NCOs, it also pays tribute to Kilpatrick’s legacy in the career field.

“Her influence as a senior NCO, first sergeant and sergeant major was generational,” Sgt. Maj. Richard Puckett said. “Many of our troops are better because of the leaders who learned from her, who passed those lessons down to the leaders of today.”

NCO Journal reporter Staff Sgt. Jason Stadel contributed to this story.

We Were Soldiers SGM dies at age 92

NCO Journal staff report

Retired Command Sgt. Maj. Basil L. Plumley, a veteran of World War II, Korea and Vietnam whose wartime tales were told in the movie *We Were Soldiers*, died Oct. 10 at a hospice in Columbus, Ga. He was 92.

Nicknamed “Old Iron Jaw” by his troops, Plumley was one of only 325 Soldiers to have earned the Combat Infantryman Badge with two stars and was the recipient of a Silver Star and the Master Combat Parachutist Badge with gold star. He retired in 1974 after a 32-year Army career and then worked at Fort Benning’s community hospital.

The 2002 movie tells the story of 1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment, at the Battle of Ia Drang in Vietnam, with its commander played by Mel Gibson and Plumley’s sergeant major played by Sam Elliot.

“Plumley was a true American hero who spent much of his life placing his nation and its greatest ideals ahead of his own well being,” said Maj. Gen. Anthony Ierardi, commanding general of the 1st Cavalry Division. “He will be deeply, deeply missed.”



Plumley in 2010

BY EXAMPLE

'Best training is hands-on'

Sgt. 1st Class Quincy Rice's fair but firm discipline helps set his Soldiers up for success in the Army and in life

Sgt. 1st Class Quincy Rice is a truckmaster with the 215th Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, at Fort Hood, Texas. He joined the Army in 2001 from St. Louis, Mo., and deployed four times to Iraq.

What role have NCOs played in your professional development?

NCOs have played a important role in my career development. They are the reason I am the NCO I am today. Without their guidance, mentorship, training and personal dedication, I would be nothing.

How do you set the example for your Soldiers?

I prepare myself both mentally and physically on a daily basis to be the leader they all want to strive to be like. I take a interest in them personally and show them ways to meet goals and be successful.

How has Army training helped you be a leader?

Army training has helped me with being a leader, but I honestly believe that the best training is hands-on, stressful, realistic training that you cannot capture

in a classroom.

What does leadership mean to you?

Leadership means leading by example with total confidence and competence. It means caring for your Soldiers, both on- and off-duty — taking an interest in their lives. It means being that firm disciplinarian all Soldiers need to ensure they are able to perform in combat. It means pushing your troops to excel in all aspects of the military and life.

What is important for junior NCOs to know about progressing in their Army career?

The most important thing for junior NCOs and Soldiers to understand is to seek a strong mentor. The Army is filled with great leaders, but not all are mentors; there is a difference. Seek those tough assignments; get some brigade combat team time; seek successful leaders in your MOS; know your career path based on your MOS career map; read your MOS's portion of DA Pam 600-25, *The U.S. Army Noncommissioned Officer Professional Development Guide*; study those comments from senior NCO promotion boards. Most of all, seek all the knowledge you can.

What does it take to be a good leader?

More than anything, you must care; caring is half the battle. The other half is developing your subordinates, yourself and having a no-fail attitude. You have to be firm but fair across the board, and never compromise yourself and violate the Army Values. As an NCO, if you follow the NCO Creed, you can never go wrong. It tells us everything we as NCOs need to do in order to be successful.

What advice do you have for other NCOs?

The best advice I have for NCOs is to always give 100 percent in everything you do. Take pride in yourself, your Soldiers and your units. Always lead by example, and give your troops the tough love they all need; they will thank you later. Constantly remind yourself that the Army is a profession that requires your commitment 24 hours a day, and the United States ultimately depends on us for defense against all enemies.

— INTERVIEW BY JENNIFER MATTSON

◀ Sgt. 1st Class Quincy Rice briefs Soldiers during his deployment to Iraq. PHOTO COURTESY OF SGT. 1ST CLASS QUINCY RICE



Medics save life in clinic's parking lot

Two receive award for helping rescue colleague in distress

BY LISA R. RHODES
Fort Meade Soundoff

The U.S. Army Safety Guardian Award was presented to Staff Sgt. Timothy Matz and Spc. Derek Miller of the Kimbrough Ambulatory Care Center on Oct. 10 at Fort Meade, Md., for helping to save the life of a fellow Kimbrough employee in January.

The award is given by the Office of the Director of Army Safety to an individual who, through extraordinary individual action in an emergency situation, prevents an imminent dangerous situation, minimizes or prevents damage to Army property, or prevents injury to personnel.

This is the first time that the award has been presented to Kimbrough personnel, and the first time in three years that the award has been presented within the Northern Regional Medical Command.

"You ought to be proud of yourselves," said Brig. Gen. Joseph Carvalho Jr., commanding general of the Northern Regional Medical Command. "On behalf of the surgeon general, thank you for a superb job."

Matz, the clinic's NCO in charge of primary care, and Miller, the acting NCOIC of internal medicine, were recognized for helping to save Jesse John Warren Booker III, a licensed practical nurse who worked at the clinic, Jan. 30.

On the day of the incident, Matz noticed that Booker was a little late for work. A nurse saw Booker sitting in his SUV in the parking lot and thought it was a bit odd.

Soon after, Matz went out to the vehicle, waved at Booker and asked if he was OK.

"He nodded his head 'yes,'" Matz said. "Then I went back inside."

When another nurse went out to the parking lot, she saw that Booker was having a seizure and ran back to Kimbrough screaming for help.

Miller heard the nurse's screams and got Matz. The two Soldiers ran out to the parking lot with an automated external defibrillator. But when they found the vehicle's doors were locked, Matz tried to pry open a window with his pocket knife. When that didn't work, he got a tire iron from his car to break open the back window of the SUV.

"I climbed into the back of the vehicle and unlocked the front door," Miller said.

He said he gave Booker a rapid trauma assessment and checked his vital signs. Booker was breathing and had a pulse. Emergency medical services personnel arrived shortly later and removed Booker from the vehicle. He was taken to a local hospital.



"You guys really took to heart what you were trained to do," said Col. Danny B.N. Jaghab, commander of Kimbrough and the U.S. Army Medical Activity-Fort Meade. He said the Soldiers "remained calm in a situation that was full of panic and full of excitement."

Maj. Richard Rickley, head nurse of Kimbrough's primary care department, nominated the Soldiers.

"I am proud of the initiative these Soldiers took that morning," Rickley said. "Staff Sgt. Matz and Spc. Miller displayed the Army Values as they applied their 68W medic training."

"You just do what you've been taught to do in terms of medical procedures," said Miller, who like Matz had served as a line medic in Iraq.

"When you're treating someone and your emotions get in the way, you can miss something," Matz said. "You set your emotions aside."

Although Booker, 63, returned to visit Kimbrough to thank those who had helped him, he later died on March 6 at a hospice in Washington, D.C.

Miller said that when a combat medic is deployed and treating service members in the field, "you don't really know them." But for him, this incident was different.

"When it's someone you consider a close friend, it hits home," Miller said. ♡

▲ Brig. Gen. Joseph Carvalho Jr. presents Staff Sgt. Timothy Matz with the U.S. Army Safety Guardian Award as Spc. Derek Miller waits to receive his award Oct. 10 at the Kimbrough Ambulatory Care Center at Fort Meade, Md.

PHOTO BY JEN RYNDA

'Only so many people are willing'

Artilleryman's volunteerism is driven by sense of duty

BY SGT. CHRISTOPHER M. GAYLORD
5th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Bouncing from duty station to duty station in the Air Force with his father, Staff Sgt. Patrick Malone grew up fairly certain what he would do with his life.

"I always remember seeing him come home in uniform, and I just remember looking up to him, and that was always just stuck in my head," he said. "I knew I wanted to serve."

"When you have that gut feeling about something you enjoy or you like doing, you just know it; it just feels right. And I just enjoy doing it," said Malone, who for the past five years has given at least 24 hours of his time each month to the station, which is located about a mile down the road from his home in Yelm, just south of Joint Base Lewis-McChord.

"I never thought I would get into this field," he said.

Soon, Malone will retire from the Army and expects to start an entirely different career as a paramedic. But the two aren't as different as one might think.

"Being in the military, that wanting to serve — it's the same aspect," Malone said. "It's an honorable job, people look up to it, and only so many people are willing to do that job."

Malone best sums up his dedication to volunteer with a scary thought that sometimes crosses his mind.

"It would be horrible if there were certain jobs people just didn't want to do," he said. "There are things in this world that wouldn't get done. If no one wanted to be a firefighter or emergency medical technician, who would do that job? Who would be the people to come?"

Malone, who serves as a High Mobility Artillery Rocket System section chief with 1st Battalion, 94th Field Artillery Regiment, 17th Fires Brigade, is an EMT for the Bald Hills station. The department, located miles from Interstate 5 in the rural southeast corner of Thurston County, serves just more than 4,000 people. Situated off the side of a winding

forest road — the only way in and out for most who live there — the station is the first line of defense for the area's residents.

Career firefighters, Malone said, make good pay to respond to incidents in their communities. But for him and the more than 40 other volunteers at Bald Hills, the only incentive is a sense of duty.

"Our only motivation is doing it because we like it and doing it for the community," Malone said. "When you're a volunteer, you're still committed. It's just that we're doing this of our own free will."

Of the approximately 45 firefighters and EMTs at the station, all but one are volunteers. Some of them are re-



The military was definitely in the cards for Malone's future. Becoming a first responder for his community, however — that never crossed his mind.

But nearly 20 years after committing to the profession he knew would fit him best, Malone's volunteer time with the Bald Hills, Wash., Fire Department is one of the things he enjoys most in life.

▲ Staff Sgt. Patrick Malone (right), a section chief with 1st Battalion, 94th Field Artillery Regiment, 17th Fires Brigade, and a volunteer emergency medical technician for the Bald Hills, Wash., Fire Department, helps his comrades care for an injured occupant during an October training exercise.

PHOTO BY SGT. CHRISTOPHER M. GAYLORD

tirees, and some, like Malone, have full-time jobs. Nonetheless, they respond at all hours of the day and night to suicide calls, vehicle wrecks and emergency births, among other alerts from area residents.

"Some just want to know we're there," Malone said.

"If we didn't enjoy doing it, we wouldn't be here," said Ronald Smith, a retired union worker who joined on with the station at the same time as Malone, in summer 2007. "If you didn't enjoy doing what you were doing, you wouldn't come."

He admires the commitment of volunteers such as Malone who already serve the nation, but also serve their local communities.

"They're dedicated to serving their country. But now that they're volunteering with the fire department, they're serving the community they live in, too," Smith said.

"That's the kind of people we like to leave the world behind with."

Malone is also working part-time with Olympic Ambulance in support of Thurston County as he prepares to attend paramedic school in the near future, so that even after retiring from the Army, he can dedicate his time to serving others.

"That general concept throughout the years of military training of the Army Values, integrity, commitment — yeah, that gets into you," Malone said. "That becomes part of you, especially after 19 years."

Still, he aims to stay under the radar.

"I don't want a parade," he said. "They know we're there, and that's good enough."

"You know it's me, and you know I'm doing it, but I don't want a big fuss." ❧

Reserve fills drill sergeant vacancies

BY MELISSA K. BUCKLEY

Fort Leonard Wood Guidon

When Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., found itself short on female drill sergeants, they turned to the Army Reserve.

"There needs to be a female role model in every platoon — not just for the safe and secure aspect of things, but to show that females are as equally important to our Army as males are. So we requested support from the 108th Training Command," said Sgt. Maj. Timothy Gates, the Maneuver Support Center of Excellence G-3 operations sergeant major and Fort Leonard Wood's Army Reserve senior enlisted advisor.

Fort Leonard Wood was short about 42 female drill sergeants, Gates said. To help Fort Leonard Wood fill the vacancies, 20 Army Reserve female drill sergeants will be on post for the next six months. They will be distributed across the engineer, military police and chemical brigades as needed.

Staff Sgt. Jessica Griffice of 2nd Battalion, 414th Infantry Regiment, 95th Division, at Salt Lake City, Utah, is one of those drill sergeants. She left her job at an Army equipment concentration site to mobilize.

"I am glad I get to actually do my job as a drill sergeant," she said. "I'm ready to put my long hours of training at drill sergeant school to good use. I want to get out on the trail and motivate all these new Soldiers."

Normally, drill sergeants from the Reserve are only on post for a couple of weeks as part of their annual train-

ing. Griffice said she is looking forward to spending more than a few days with Soldiers-in-training.

"This is a big deal to be able to be here for six months straight and see cycles go from the beginning all the way to graduation," Griffice said.

Gates said the Reserve drill sergeants have received the same certifications as those in the active component. He believes having Reserve and active-duty Soldiers working together emphasizes the One Army concept.

"It doesn't matter what component you are, whether it be active, Reserve or National Guard," Gates said. "We all serve the same purpose. We are all one team with the same mission." ❧



► Staff Sgt. Zandra Santana, an Army Reservist from Puerto Rico, packs her gear at the Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., Central Issue Facility. Santana was mobilized as part of a program to place more female drill sergeants into training units at the post. PHOTO BY MELISSA K. BUCKLEY

NCO-Soldier sniper team wins top title

Cops, airmen, foreign competitors make it a worldwide event

BY CHERYL RODEWIG
Fort Benning Bayonet

The world's premier snipers converged Nov. 2-5 on the U.S. Army Sniper School at Fort Benning, Ga., for the 12th annual International Sniper Competition.

The 36 two-man teams represented the active Army, Air Force, Army National Guard and Army Reserve; Los Angeles and Chicago police departments; and military units from the United Kingdom, Ireland, Germany, Denmark, Sweden and the United Arab Emirates.

In the end, a team from Fort Benning's U.S. Army Marksmanship Unit, Staff Sgt. Daniel Horner and Spc. Tyler Payne, was crowned the best sniper duo in the world.

"It feels awesome to win," Horner said. "I've wanted to compete in this event my whole life. We didn't have a slot to compete in the last few years, so when we got in this year, we trained hard the past few weeks to get prepared."

"There were some real challenges out there," Payne said. "Many of the events had tight time constraints. Finding the targets was tough, especially at night."

Despite USAMU having seven shooting teams, the unit doesn't have a sniper team nor teach sniper skills at any of its marksmanship training courses.

The teams competed in 14 events, including night fire, live-fire stalk, foot march, combat outpost defense, positive identification of moving targets, pistol shoot, stress fire, a one-shot event and urban target memorization. The 72-hour competition ran virtually nonstop, with only two four-hour rest breaks in the three days of competition.

"It's just a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity," said Sgt. Taylor Hutchins of the 101st Airborne Division at Fort Campbell, Ky. "You get to work with all these other foreign militaries; you get to learn from them. It's humbling. There's so many great shooters here that you just come out to do your best. It's a great learning experience as well as a competition."

Sgt. 1st Class Adam James, an instructor with the Sniper School, said learning is what it all came down to.

"At the end of the day, it's a big training event," he said. "You've got 36 of arguably the best sniper teams in the world right here. ... And it brings all these skill sets, all this huge knowledge base and experience together. What better way to get different snipers from different communities working together, training from each other, learning from instructors, learning from events, and ultimately taking stuff back and just continually improving?"

The competition closed with a summit Nov. 6, where teams were invited to share feedback and lessons learned.

James said it was great to have so many teams compete with such a positive attitude — motivated not just to win, but also to share tactics and techniques with the sniper community.

"Each year, we try to make the events more and more challenging, because we know that every year there's new technology, new tactics," James said. "The snipers who are coming here every single year are better than the previous year. The events are designed to push the limits and exploit any holes they may have in their skill sets. And there's nothing wrong with identifying any shortcomings in your training, because all it does is make you better."

Sgt. Josh Cavalier, a third-time com-



◀ A competitor fires at a target Nov. 5 during the 2012 International Sniper Competition, hosted at the U.S. Army Sniper School at Fort Benning, Ga. PHOTO BY ASHLEY CROSS



petitor in the competition, can attest to the quality of the training received while competing.

"You can't do this anywhere else," said the Georgia National Guardsman. "The stalk lane, which takes up this much of Fort Benning, is not typical. The scenarios we get presented out here are almost impossible to re-create in a regular training environment. The training you get while you're here working with other units, I would otherwise never even see. It's definitely a unique setup."

As an instructor at Fort Benning teaching Air Assault and Pathfinder courses, Cavalier said he rarely gets the chance to work on sniper techniques. But the competition helps develop the skill set that he uses when deployed, he said.

"I haven't picked up a sniper rifle since last year," said Cavalier, who competed in 2008 and again in 2011. "The last time I put this ghillie suit on was last year. So to get to come back into this community and see what the guys are doing on a daily basis, it helps us out a lot.

"The way we shoot at school and the way we generally train is a relatively high level of precision. But when we come out here, it's a whole different level of shooting farther away at smaller targets. We don't train to shoot one-inch targets. We train to shoot people-sized silhouettes. You shoot to a much tighter standard here," he said.

“When we come out here, it's a whole different level of shooting. ... You shoot to a much tighter standard here.”

— SGT. JOSH CAVALIER

The one-inch target Cavalier referred to was featured during an event Saturday called rapid precision fire. It was a timed exercise in which snipers had to hit a one-inch square at 200 meters as many times as possible.

The combat outpost defense event simulated a sniper team defending a forward operating base, James said. The positive-identification targets represented both enemy combatants and civilians in an environment that included buildings, vehicles and other obstacles. Urban target memorization built on that idea in a more complex environment.

"They'll see the targets before they start the event, so they have to memorize which targets they're supposed to shoot, and there are also no-shoot targets out there — all kinds of different faces," James said. "They have to move through the building, different positions, windows, doors, even on the roof. Certain targets can only be seen from select positions. ... So they have to constantly keep moving throughout the building scanning the whole lane and finding these tiny little loopholes and identifying targets." ♡

Michael Molinaro of the U.S. Army Marksmanship Unit contributed to this report.

▲ Soldiers compete Nov. 2 in the first event of the competition, the limited-visibility shoot. PHOTO BY ASHLEY CROSS

Combat medics battle to be best

32 teams showcase skills they use to save lives on battlefield

BY JEREMY O'BRYAN

Western Regional Medical Command

More than 60 Army medics faced a range of obstacles Oct. 26–28 at Camp Bullis, Texas, meant to test their best. In teams of two from units across the globe, Soldiers from the Army's various medical fields battled against the clock and one another in the 2012 Best Medic Competition.

After 72 hours of often-grueling competition, Staff Sgt. Andrew Balha from Evans Army Community Hospital at Fort Carson, Colo., and Staff Sgt. Alexander Folsom from Madigan Army Medical Center at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash., surfaced as winners.

Among the 32 teams were Soldiers assigned to all manner of units — from major Army medical centers and small clinics to infantry, Airborne, Ranger and Special Forces units that represented every Army division and every U.S. Army Medical Command region.

"The combat medic is the spearhead of Army medical care — the first step in keeping wounded Soldiers alive," said Lt. Gen. Patricia Horoho, the Army surgeon general and MEDCOM commander. "Our Soldier-medics may be competitors today, but they will be heroes tomorrow."

"It's hard to believe. I think it's still sinking in that we won," said Folsom, who has been the NCO in charge of the audiology clinic at Madigan since May. "It's really a validation of what I've done as a medic."

Folsom, who deployed to northern Iraq with the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment from 2007 to 2009, said the pace and endurance demands during the competition were challenging.

"The first day was physically exhausting," Folsom said. "A 5-mile road march with everything you'd need for the day [on your back], then an obstacle course and stress firing, then no sleep. It's all meant to break you down."

In addition to events that tested typical Soldier skills — the Army Physical Fitness Test, an obstacle course, pistol and rifle firing, and urban assault actions — the competition featured combat medic-specific events, such as mass casualty, day and night combat, and evacuation and extraction exercises.

Balha, Folsom's competition partner, was also surprised to have won. Currently the NCO in charge of labor and delivery at Evans, Balha has deployed with several units to locations all across Afghanistan.

"I didn't expect to win," Balha said. "This year the physical aspect of the event was grueling, and they stepped up the game on the medical tasks as well. The easy part was the treatment of patients. The hard part was keeping your head on."

"I just expected to show up, work hard and do my best," Balha said.

The winning duo are stationed nearly 1,500 miles apart and had less than two weeks to train together before the competition began.

"We decided to rely on each other's strengths," Balha said. "That was our policy going in. When one of us was stronger in an area, he took the lead and the other followed."

"A huge part in being physically ready was using CrossFit training to prepare," Balha said. He said the program gave him the physical and mental endurance to stay focused despite sleeping only around six hours during the competition. ♡



◀ Staff Sgt. Andrew Balha and Staff Sgt. Alexander Folsom (center), the winners of the 2012 Best Medic Competition, accept their trophies Oct. 29 from Lt. Gen. Patricia Horoho (third from left), the Army surgeon general, and Command Sgt. Maj. Donna Brock (far right), the senior enlisted advisor to the surgeon general. PHOTO COURTESY

OF U.S. ARMY MEDICAL COMMAND

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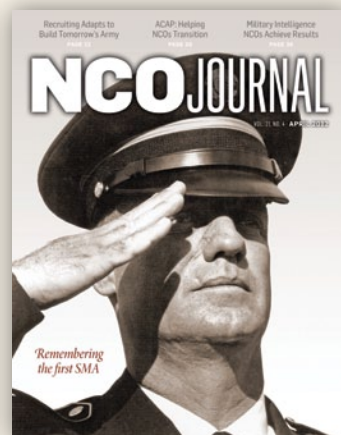
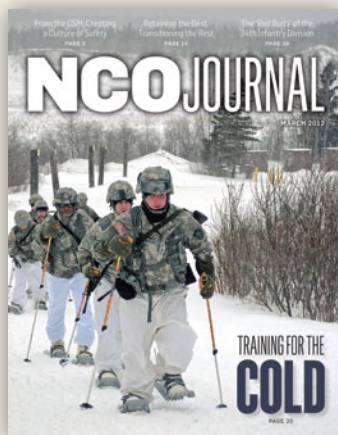
What we covered in the *NCO Journal* this past year

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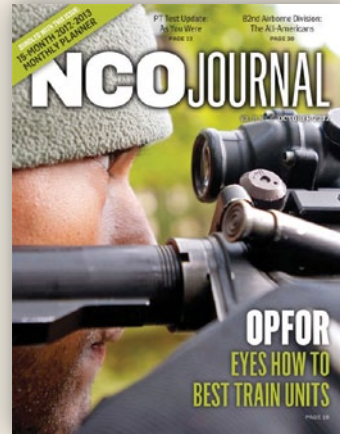


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STAFF SGT. KASHIF M. MEMON, 31
Houston, Texas, Oct. 25, 2012

SGT. CLINTON K. RUIZ, 22
Murrieta, Calif., Oct. 25, 2012

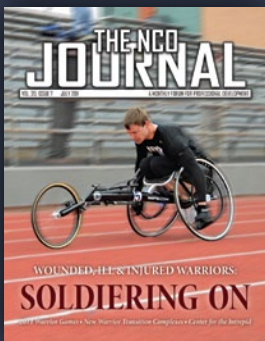
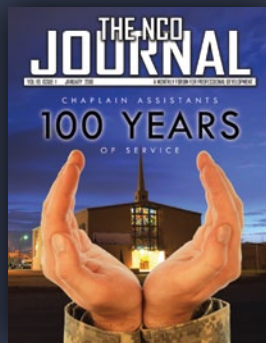
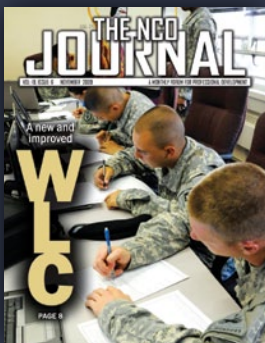
SGT. 1ST CLASS RYAN J. SAVARD, 29
Sierra Vista, Ariz., Oct. 13, 2012

STAFF SGT. DAIN T. VENNE, 29
Port Henry, N.Y., Nov. 3, 2012

PFC. SHANE G. WILSON, 20
Kuna, Idaho, Oct. 18, 2012

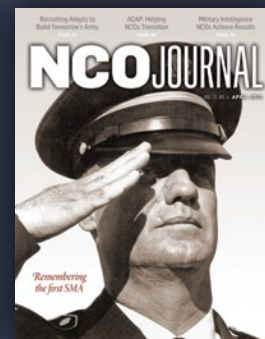
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