

U.S. Army FY14 Acquisition Education and Training Announcement

U.S. ARMY ACQUISITION SUPPORT CENTER

The FY14 schedule for the Acquisition Leadership Challenge Program (ALCP) follows. Please contact your command or organization acquisition career management advocate or organizational acquisition point of contact.

DATE TION	OFFERING TYPE COURSE LEVEL	LOCA-
May 19-21	ALCP I	Atlanta, Ga.
May 21-23	ALCP II	Atlanta, Ga.
June 9-11	ALCP I	Warren, Mich.
June 11-13	ALCP II	Warren, Mich.
June 23-24	ALCP B	Huntsville, Ala.
July 28-30	ALCP I	Huntsville, Ala.
July 30-Aug. 1	ALCP I	Huntsville, Ala.
Aug. 18-20	ALCP I	Atlanta, Ga.
Aug. 20-22	ALCP II	Atlanta, Ga.
Aug. 25-26	ALCP B	Atlanta, Ga.
Aug. 27-28	ALCP B	Atlanta, Ga.

FY14 Acquisition Certification Changes

U.S. ARMY ACQUISITION SUPPORT CENTER

DoD Acquisition, Technology & Logistics career field certification standards are implemented on Oct. 1 of each fiscal year. FY14 changes are outlined in a table at <http://asc.army.mil/web/access-acquisition-education-and-training-corner-3-10/>. For career fields not listed, there are no approved changes to date. To view the most current career field certification standards required for your current acquisition position, please access DAU's iCatalog at <http://icatalog.dau.mil/>.

AF Chief Scientist Visits Hanscom AFB, Shares Direction with Workforce

66TH AIR BASE GROUP PUBLIC AFFAIRS (FEB. 3, 2014)

Patty Welsh

HANSCOM AIR FORCE BASE, Mass.—The Air Force's chief scientist talked about the unique technological challenges and value of work completed by specialists here, during her visit to the base and neighboring MIT Lincoln Laboratory Jan. 23 and 24.



Dr. Mica Endsley speaks with Col. Greg Barnhart and Garry Gagnon during an open discussion Jan. 23, 2014, at Hanscom Air Force Base, Mass. During her visit to the base, Endsley received program briefings at Hanscom AFB and MIT Lincoln Laboratory, learned about development planning work, and visited STARBASE, a DoD-initiative to get youth interested in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Endsley is the chief scientist for the Air Force, Barnhart is Hanscom AFB's deputy associate director for Engineering, and Gagnon is the Battle Management engineering director.

U.S. Air Force photo by Walter Santos

CONTRACT MANAGEMENT LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

(MARCH 28, 2014)

Calling all applicants! NCMA will be accepting applications for the 2014-2014 Contract Management Leadership Development Program (CMLDP). This program is designed to help develop the next generation of contract management leaders through an intensive yearlong educational experience.

Submit your applications starting May 1- June 30, 2014.

The CMLDP is designed to help develop the next generation of contract management leaders through an intensive yearlong educational experience. Program participants will receive 180 hours of top-quality education in fundamental leadership, association volunteerism, NCMA governance, and contract management. The program is quite relevant to contract management professionals regardless of their employer, location, or industry.

The CMLDP was created to quickly close the gap in leadership progression by accelerating the preparation of a select group of contract management professionals. Candidates will have demonstrated a level of commitment to their professional development unmatched in the field and, as a result, will carry with them a unique, meaningful credential that will open doors to new challenges and professional opportunities.

Visit <http://www.ncmahq.org/ProfessionalDevelopment/Content.cfm?ItemNumber=2777&navItemNumber=10558> to learn more.

Dr. Mica Endsley said she was impressed with the work done locally and its impact on the Air Force at large. She emphasized that planes and satellites are tangible capabilities, but that integration work done at Hanscom AFB is vitally important.

"Aircraft and satellites produce information, but being able to move and integrate that information to be understandable is an incredible force multiplier," she said. "How we integrate across space, cyber, and air is where the future is, and you at Hanscom AFB are right in the middle of it."

Endsley highlighted a paradigm shift to the concept of cyber in warfare, now a known tactic used by adversaries.

While people may often think of cyber as what happens at their desks, Endsley noted that cyber is in the Air Force's satellites, command and control systems, and just about everywhere—making cyber defense her No. 1 priority in science and technology.

"We need to ensure the systems we field are cyber-resilient, and that [resiliency] is built into every one of the systems we procure."

Endsley encouraged the use of the science base in the acquisition process, especially regarding human systems integration and the way users interact with new technologies. Over the past few decades the Air Force has gotten away from this, she said, highlighting the need for science-based acquisition.

"HSI can affect the number of errors, the time it takes to do tasks, and how good your situation awareness is in order to make decisions," Endsley said. "It's a critical capability that needs to be built into system design and incorporated into the procurement process."

She said she knows that can be challenging when working with the customer.

"The user frequently either wants a Band-Aid for what they already have or something from a sci-fi movie," she said. "We need to do cognitive task analyses and software prototyping, and provide a visualization of what it realistically can be."

Endsley said the Air Force is looking at smart modernization—where projects are more agile—to enable it to transfer from the research and development side into the acquisition

process more quickly. This includes modular open system architectures, allowing new technologies to rapidly be added or changed out. She also mentioned total life-cycle costs are being looked at right from the start of a project.

Further, Endsley discussed the development of test platforms for experimentation on programs at low-technology readiness levels, so the research and development side can involve the users to come and “kick the tires.”

The chief scientist of the Air Force said she sees this as an area where the Life Cycle Management Center can make an impact.

“You can help translate operational requirements into effective detailed technical requirements.”

Regarding the workforce, Endsley lauded their professionalism and dedication in dealing with the challenging limited fiscal environment, sequester, and the government shutdown. Now that the Defense Department finally has a budget, she said, there is hope for reduced burden on employees, allowing for improved personnel planning.

During her visit, Endsley also took the opportunity to see Hanscom AFB’s STARBASE program, a DoD initiative to involve youth in the areas of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. She said she had a great time interacting with the kids and seeing what they were working on.

“STEM is critically important, so I was glad I got the opportunity to visit STARBASE,” Endsley said. “We’re not only making sure we support the workforce of today, but we’re encouraging the workforce of the next generation.”

Senior Civilians Selected for Strategic Leadership Program

AIR FORCE PERSONNEL CENTER PUBLIC AFFAIRS (FEB. 7, 2014)

JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO-RANDOLPH, Texas—A nine-member Air Force board selected 12 senior civilians to participate in an Air Force Civilian Strategic Leader Program.

CSLP is the Air Force senior corporate career broadening program designed to develop multiskilled GS-14 and GS-15 leaders to enable them to navigate through complex environments, said David Van Steenburg, the AFPC Force Renewal and Development Division chief.

CSLP is an experiential assignment program and participants normally work outside of their functional area of expertise for up to three years.

“The purpose of the program is to provide an avenue to develop our workforce through corporate experience, and then place the right people in the most challenging and critical leadership positions,” Van Steenburg said.

CSLP-selects will be vectored into one of three interrelated areas designed to enhance overall development and management of a specific segment of the civilian strategic workforce. Those areas include installation level, with positions such as the deputy director of installation support; headquarters Air Force level, with positions such as congressional liaison representative; and joint positions such as associate director of information and cyberspace policy, said Edward Vargas, the AFPC CSLP program co-manager.

CSLP has 70 worldwide enterprise positions, and selection for the program is very competitive, said Angela Cominetti, the AFPC CSLP program co-manager. Similar to the colonel command screening board, the CSLP board focused on selecting the most highly-qualified airmen.

“This program is one more tool to help us deliberately develop our airmen for the long term,” Van Steenburg said. “The board, major commands, AFPC, and stakeholders in the field all worked hard to ensure high-quality candidates were thoroughly assessed. Thanks to their efforts and this development program, the best and brightest leaders will now be in a position to help guide our Service into the future.”

The board assessed each candidate for high-quality leadership performance, progressive supervisory experience, advanced education, and other criteria. Following the board, the Air Force chief of staff approved the list of selected candidates, who are now available for installation, HAF, and joint-level positions.

Program selectees and their current assignments include the following:

- Angela Anderson, 424th Supply Chain Management Squadron, Tinker Air Force Base, Okla.
- Daniel Bell, 18th Force Support Squadron, Kadena Air Base, Japan
- Neal Dollar, Headquarters Air Force Operations, Plans and Requirements, Pentagon, Washington, D.C.
- Gina Gammick, Headquarters Air Force Manpower, Personnel and Services, Pentagon
- Robert Graham, Space and Missile Systems Center, Los Angeles Air Force Base, Calif.
- Mark Hornbostel, Air Force Life Cycle Management Center, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio
- Lori Lloyd, Air Force District of Washington, Joint Base Andrews, Md.



Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Installations Timothy K. Bridges mentors Giselle Gonzales of Hayfield Secondary School, Alexandria, Va., during the Black Engineer of the Year Science, Technology Engineering, and Mathematics Conference Feb. 7, 2014, in Washington, D.C.

U.S. Air Force photo/Scott M. Ash

- Mark Nunn, Air Force Safety Center, Kirtland Air Force Base, N.M.
- Patricia Poole, Air Force Personnel Center, Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph, Texas
- Randall Rowland, 96th Civil Engineer Group, Eglin Air Force Base, Fla.
- Laita Snapp, Air Combat Command Maintenance and Logistics Directorate, Joint Base Langley-Eustis, Va.
- Carol Zelczak, Air Force Life Cycle Management Center, Wright-Patterson AFB

The 2015 CSLP call for nominations will be released in February with nomination packages due to AFPC by May 1. Candidates must be nominated by their local leadership.

For more information about CSLP and other civilian personnel opportunities, go to the myPers website at <https://mypers.af.mil> and enter "CSLP" in the search window.

Air Force Leaders Step Outside Service Branch to Mentor Students

*AIR FORCE PUBLIC AFFAIRS AGENCY, OPERATING LOCATION - PENTAGON (FEB. 10, 2014)
Air Force Staff Sgt. David Salanitri*

WASHINGTON—Uniformed and civilian Air Force leaders volunteered their Friday evening to mentor black high school and college students during the 2014 Black Engineer of the Year Science, Technology Engineering, and Mathematics conference Feb. 7.

During the two-hour mentoring sessions, the airmen passed down life lessons to 360 students from the Washington, D.C., metro area, who are interested in pursuing professions in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics.

The students, who were hand-selected by their school administrators, had the opportunity to peek into the life of their mentors' Air Force service, whether that service is as a military or civilian member.

Among the handful of senior executive service and general officer airmen attending was Timothy Bridges, the deputy assistant secretary of the Air Force for installations .

For the past few years, Bridges has taken an active part in the mentorship program. He said approaching the topic of growing youth is a responsibility he feels he has.

"I think all senior leaders should take the opportunity when they have it to engage with our youth and to motivate and encourage them," he said. "It is time well spent, part of our responsibility, and provides a forum to help make a difference in some youngster's life."

For Brig. Gen. Cedric George, the Warner Robins Air Logistics Complex commander, mentorship began at an early age.

George was the son of an enlisted soldier, whose 30 years of service took place during a challenging time for black men and women, he said.

"Needless to say, having a father who earned such longevity in the military provided me with a great example," George said. "I also had the priceless example of how a successful military man conducts himself. My dad's time had its share of inequities and difficulties. Nevertheless, he was undeterred in his loyalty and pride. My dad's stature ... the way he carried himself, the way he walked, the way he wore his uniform ... had a huge impact on me."

Children don't always have active role models in their lives. For Bridges, being a mentor is an opportunity to change a student's life.

"There are some great kids out there who want to do well," he said. "We need to help them, teach them, and inspire them."

According to the Air Force mentoring program, mentorship is an essential ingredient in developing well-rounded, professional, and competent future leaders, with the overall goal to help individuals reach their full potential.

Bridges said mentorship helped establish the frame work of the man he is today.

"I think for me, early mentors not only challenged me to do my very best, they held me accountable for my own actions and put their trust and faith in me," he said. "I felt if they thought I could do it, then it must be true. Most importantly though, they opened my eyes to my own potential and motivated me to go for it."

Throughout Bridges' career, mentorship came in many forms and at many stages.

"During my career mentors came at all levels, but I think I learned the most from a few key senior NCOs," he said. "They helped shape and mold me early, and I came to understand my role as a leader and as a role model. They re-

inforced integrity and accountability by what they did, and didn't do."

Mentorship isn't a one-way process for Bridges said. As a mentor, his goal is to develop students, but the students always manage to teach him something.

"I've been attending these sessions for the last few years, and I always come away rejuvenated and encouraged," Bridges said. "It's not just a 'give' for me, it's a 'get' too."

Bridges said growing and developing the upcoming generation of today helps ensure a positive and successful generation of tomorrow.

"If we don't invest in our future, we will become bankrupt," he said. "If we don't teach them the way in which they should go, they will be lost. The world is a very confusing and scary place—a little light in the darkness is a big help to those who seek it."

Even with the tremendous success George received, he said he hopes those he has mentored see greater success.

"I hope for all of the young people their experience can be as good, even better than mine," he said. "Hopefully then, they will pass it on down the line and be that best example for the next generations."

Air Force Launches Enhanced Civilian Development Site

IRA C. EAKER CENTER FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (FEB. 13, 2014)

MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, Ala. —The Ira C. Eaker Center for Professional Development recently made available a new tool to assist civilians with their professional development.

The Civilian Development Resource Center is an online clearinghouse providing access to development roadmaps, learning programs, and thousands of no-cost courses, books, videos, job aids, simulations, articles, and more.

Formerly known as the Supervisor Resource Center, the site offers easier navigation and a broader array of resources that support professional development for non-supervisory and supervisory career tracks.

The Eaker Center's Future Learning and Civilian Education Division designed the CDRC site to help users quickly target customizable learning programs that focus on their individual development needs. Additionally, students can access courses required for some professional certifications.

These assets can be accessed anytime and anywhere, thus providing flexibility and protecting members valuable time.

"The civilian workforce is one of the Air Force's greatest assets," said Russell Frasz, the director, directorate of Airman Force Development here. "Continuously developing oneself is a personal responsibility for all airmen. The Civilian Development Resource Center plays a key role in maintaining Air Force's innovative and competitive edge by assisting personnel to develop their professional competencies in an efficient and cost-conscious manner."

The site incorporates flexible learning programs that can be tailored to each individual's development pathway and includes building blocks that are typical of a civilian's career, such as "new employee," "developing to journeyman employee," "experienced employee," "new supervisor," and "experienced supervisor."

To help users focus on the most beneficial areas for development, an assessment tool is available on the site that provides feedback and identifies the skills development needed to improve performance. In addition to the career tracks listed above, topical learning programs are also available and are aligned with the Air Force institutional competencies. A monthly newsletter highlights selected courses, books, and learning tips, spotlighting various learning programs focused on competency.

The CDRC is a self-paced development tool available on demand to meet the needs of current and future Air Force leaders. It is accessible via the Air Force Portal main page (<https://www.my.af.mil/faf/FAF/fafHome.jsp>) under the Career and Training tab.

Navy E-Learning Now Offers Direct Access

NAVAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING COMMAND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

(FEB. 13, 2013)

Ed Barker

PENSACOLA, Fla.—Delivering on their goal of providing access to Navy training anytime, anyplace, the Navy Education and Training Command and the Sea Warrior Program Office announced Feb. 13 the availability of direct Internet access to Navy e-Learning (NeL) content.

"Most Navy learners were previously accessing NeL through Navy Knowledge Online," said Hank Reeves, NeL project director. "That was a multi-step process that is now significantly streamlined with the ability to access courses directly, without going through NKO."

Using the direct NeL link at <https://www.aas.prod.nel.training.navy.mil> will take you directly to the 'My Learning' and 'Course Catalog' tabs of the NeL learning management system after login.

"Going directly to NeL will make searching for their desired content much easier," said Brenda McCreary, NKO service desk manager. "If you enter through NKO and use the NKO search engine looking for courses, you may get numerous returns that aren't very helpful. Going directly to NeL lets you use their search engine, and that gets you strictly learning-related returns, streamlining finding the course you are looking for."

Although direct access to NeL is available through the Internet, a Common Access Card (CAC) is still required for NeL login. Courses on NeL have been standardized to run using the Internet Explorer (IE) browser.

"Many of our courses take advantage of the latest in multimedia content to improve the learning experience," Reeves added. "In order to ensure compatibility with these courses, NeL provides configuration guides for many of the latest versions of IE. NeL also provides a plug-in analyzer to help customers confirm they are able to access and run the multimedia content, and both of these services are on one page. To access them, customers may simply click on the 'Browser Configuration' link, located in the NeL Help section, on the right-hand side of the 'My Learning' page."

According to Reeves, NeL is the world's largest learning management system in terms of volume.

"Virtually every sailor, government civilian, and contractor uses NeL to keep current with required general military training, including the newly updated Department of Defense Cyber Awareness Challenge Course," said Reeves. "Last year, the Cyber Awareness Challenge course had more than 232,000 completions, and last year we had more than four million completions for all courses."

"From the beginning, it was a goal as we implemented our new Learning Management System to offer direct access to our NeL users in addition to access through NKO," added Reeves. "Although NKO was designed as a one-stop-shop portal for the lion's share of Navy electronic content, allowing access options for our customers only makes sense."

Since 2001, sailors have depended on NeL to help advance their careers and stay current with training requirements. Courses range from Privacy and Personally Identifiable Information Awareness Training—required of all sailors, Marines,



Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel visits airmen from the 90th Missile Wing Jan. 9, 2014, at F.E. Warren Air Force Base, Wyo.
U.S. Air Force photo by R.J. Oriez

civilians, and contractors—to specific training for individual units. Trainees using NeL complete between four and five million online courses annually from an offering of more than 8,700 courses. The Naval Education and Training Command relies on NeL for use in schoolhouses for individual skills and skill refresher training.

For more information about NETC, visit <https://www.netc.navy.mil/> and www.navy.mil/local/cnet/.

Hagel Signs Memos Laying Out Scope of Nuke Review Panels

AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE (FEB. 14, 2014)

Jim Garamone

WASHINGTON—Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel has signed memos for reviews of the military’s nuclear enterprise, and those will proceed apace, Pentagon Press Secretary Navy Rear Adm. John Kirby said today.

During a Pentagon news conference, Kirby said the memos represent no change to the missions of the two panels, but rather lay out the scope of their tasks.

Hagel wants the internal review, which is already underway, to examine both the Air Force and Navy nuclear missions, Kirby said. Specifically, he added, he wants the internal panel

to look at personnel, training, testing, command oversight, mission performance, and investments.

Madelyn R. Creedon, the assistant secretary of defense for global strategic affairs, and Navy Rear Adm. Peter Fanta, the Joint Staff’s deputy director for resources and acquisition, will lead the panel. They have a deadline of April 30 to conclude their work.

The independent review will be led by former Air Force Chief of Staff retired Gen. Larry Welch and retired Navy Adm. John Harvey, the former commander of Navy Fleet Forces Command. They will begin work March 3, and will submit their findings 90 days later.

The independent review will assess the action plan moving forward and the recommendations on the internal review.

“They will offer their own views of what, if any, changes need to be made in nuclear force personnel policies, training, testing, oversight, and management principles,” Kirby said.

Hagel also is examining the nomination packages of senior officers to join his staff to “advise and assist him with respect to issues regarding the leadership, conduct, and profession-

alism of the force,” the press secretary said. That will be done in close coordination with Army Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

“The chairman will be ... intimately involved in whatever changes or things we learn going forward on any decisions that the secretary might make on behalf of the department,” Kirby said. “But the secretary believes that it’s important for him to have somebody on his personal staff to help integrate and ‘synergize’ ... and help coordinate the efforts across the department to include the combatant commands, not just the Services.”

This will be the first post of its kind in the Pentagon, and the secretary wants to make sure he does this right, Kirby said. “This senior adviser for military professionalism will report directly to Secretary Hagel and will integrate and help coordinate the actions of the Joint Staff, the Services, and the combatant commands, all of whom he knows are invested in this and equally as committed as he is to helping ensure that as a department, we better understand the scope of the problem before us and, to the degree we have systemic issues, that we solve them,” the admiral said.

Hagel hopes to make the announcement soon, Kirby said.

AF Announces Change to Reduction in Force Board Schedule

SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE PUBLIC AFFAIRS (FEB. 20, 2014)

Rose Richeson

WASHINGTON—Air Force leaders announced a change Feb. 20 to the officer reduction in force board, or RIF, originally scheduled to convene June 16 at the Air Force Personnel Center.

Air Force officials are adjusting the timing of the board until later in calendar year 2014 due to legal limitations governing RIF boards. The delay is necessary for the Air Force to meet required force management reductions, but prevents airmen from having to meet multiple boards in a short time span. The remaining officer and enlisted force management boards have not changed as there are no legal limitations impacting the timing of those boards.

The delay moves the RIF board into October with separations effective no later than April 30, 2015.

“When we initially announced these force management programs in December, we knew the dynamic nature of the programs would result in some changes,” said Lt. Gen. Sam Cox, the deputy chief of staff for manpower, personnel and services. “While the change is necessary to ensure we oper-

ate within the law, it was equally important for us to keep our word and minimize the impact on airmen.”

Changes to the scheduled RIF board date will result in changes to the eligible population. Some officers initially eligible to meet the June board will no longer be eligible as adjustments are made to year groups. Likewise, some officers who were not initially RIF-eligible could now be eligible. In keeping with previous policy, all eligible officers will still receive at least six months’ notice prior to meeting the board. Specific details are being finalized and further guidance will be published by AFPC officials in the coming weeks.

Because the vast majority of officers remain eligible regardless of the board date, the voluntary separation pay, or VSP, application window will remain open to all officers in an over-age Air Force Specialty Code or year group as indicated on the force management matrices.

Officers who have already submitted a VSP application in anticipation of being eligible for the June RIF, will have the option to withdraw their application if they are no longer eligible. The officer temporary early retirement authority application window remains unchanged.

For more information on force management, force shaping, reduction in force, and other personnel programs, go to the myPers website at <https://mypers.af.mil>.

Air Force Continues Force Management Programs

AIR FORCE PUBLIC AFFAIRS AGENCY, OPERATING LOCATION - PENTAGON (MARCH 15, 2014)

WASHINGTON—Air Force leaders announced a resumption of all force management programs March 15 following a recently discussed strategic pause.

“After providing senior leadership a chance to evaluate the programs and assess our early progress, we are ready to resume immediate processing of voluntary applications in most categories and begin notifying airmen of their status,” said Lt. Gen. Sam Cox, the Air Force deputy chief of staff for manpower, personnel and services. “We expect to receive final approval authorities early next week for a select few categories, like rated and health professions, at which point we will be actively processing all voluntary applications.”

Notifications to airmen could start as early as next week, the general added.

Cox also confirmed previously announced force management boards would proceed as currently scheduled. The eligible populations for those boards will remain the same

with the exception of a small group of about 500 airmen who will no longer be eligible for the current voluntary or involuntary programs. Those individuals will be personally notified of their eligibility status by the Air Force Personnel Center.

“Resuming the current programs on the previously announced schedules and under the same basic criteria means minimal changes for our airmen,” Cox said.

One item assessed during the pause was the pace of the programs and whether or not the Air Force could achieve required reductions on the original schedule. The analysis revealed the need to include a second round of programs in 2015.

“Airmen who were eligible for programs during the first round in 2014 will not be eligible for the retention boards in 2015, unless they have specific negative quality force indicators,” Cox said.

Ensuring well-performing airmen are not subject to multiple involuntary programs is key, according to the general.

Details on the nature and timing of the second round of programs will be announced in the coming weeks.

The general continues to encourage eligible officers and enlisted airmen to apply for the Temporary Early Retirement Authority and Voluntary Separation Pay programs. The current TERA application window remains open to March 26 and the VSP application window is open to May 1.

For more information on force management, force shaping, reduction in force, and other personnel programs, go to the myPers website at <https://mypers.af.mil>.

Hagel Orders Review of Military Decorations, Awards Program

AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE (MARCH 20, 2014)

Jim Garamone

WASHINGTON—Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel has ordered a comprehensive review of the military decorations and awards program, Pentagon Press Secretary Navy Rear Adm. John Kirby said here today.

The secretary wants to capture the lessons learned from 13 years of combat to improve the program, Kirby said. The review will begin in June under the direction of Jessica L.



Pentagon Press Secretary Navy Rear Adm. John Kirby briefs reporters at the Pentagon, March 20, 2014, saying Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel ordered a comprehensive review of the military decorations and awards program. Kirby also discussed a telephone call between Hagel and Russia's defense minister about the situation in Ukraine.

DoD photo by Glenn Fawcett

Wright, acting undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness. It is due to be completed in June 2015.

Wright will consult closely with Army Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, as well as the military department secretaries and chiefs and the combatant commanders, Kirby said during a Pentagon news conference.

“Secretary Hagel believes this is a solemn obligation for the Department of Defense, one that we can never take lightly,” the admiral said. “The review will focus on ensuring that the awards program appropriately recognizes all levels of combat valor, as well as the service, sacrifices, and actions of all our service members.”

The review will examine how the awards program is structured to make sure that it fully reflects the joint nature of warfare, the admiral said. “It will examine the processes and procedures of how medals for valor are nominated in order to determine whether they can be improved or streamlined, and help make the overall awards process more timely,” he

added, "and it will determine the best way to recognize service members who use remote technology to directly impact combat operations, such as through cyber and remotely piloted aircraft."

Some awards and decorations are Service-specific, and others cut across the military. The secretary recognizes joint military operations have become the norm, Kirby told reporters. "You don't have to look any further than what we accomplished in Iraq and Afghanistan to see how joint the Services have become," he said, "and I think it's a fair question to ask: do we need to look at the kinds of awards that we give, particularly for combat valor, in a more joint nature than perhaps some of them are? It doesn't mean that there will be changes, but I think he wants to look at everything across the whole scope."

Hagel wants the panel to examine how the Services submit and evaluate and decide on major combat awards, Kirby said. "I think he would like to get a better sense of what discrepancies there may be between the Services, and do those discrepancies need to be closed?" he added. "The answer may be no. But I think he wants to ask those questions."

'Boots to Business' Helps Troops Become Entrepreneurs
AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE (MARCH 24, 2014)

Terri Moon Cronk

WASHINGTON—When Sandra Gonzales and Tony Turin were enrolled in the Defense Department's Transition GPS course, they found their career calling through an optional entrepreneur track called "Boots to Business."

The Transition GPS assists service members with re-entering the civilian sector and offers three optional tracks after the basic week-long program for transitioning troops and spouses who are interested in going to technical or vocational schools, attending college, or starting a business. Transition GPS replaces the former Transition Assistance Program.

The Small Business Administration sponsors the optional Boots to Business track with a two-day introduction to the program, followed by an eight-week online course through Syracuse University for students to develop their business plans.

Gonzales, a former Army nurse, is also a military spouse. Married to an artillery Army officer, Gonzales knew she needed a practical business that would offer her family stability.

"I chose the entrepreneurship track because I really needed a career that would offer me flexibility, as well as portability to juggle the roles of spouse, mom, and entrepreneur," she said.

Gonzales is in the start-up phase of her business, Docere eLearning Solutions LLC, in Lawton Okla. It's an educational consulting group that creates interactive learning programs for children from kindergarten through 12th grade, the corporate sector, and health care organizations.

With a master's degree in nursing leadership and a graduate certificate in health care education, she said, she was not able to find a job in health care information technology that allowed her the flexibility she needed to home-school her children and make the military's frequent moves.

"I [created] my own opportunities to have some longevity with a company and use my degree to help communities I really care about: the military community and the special needs community," Gonzales explained.

Her military training gave her the leadership experience to take on her own business, she said. "I felt very well prepared to become an entrepreneur," she added.

Her classmates shared similar goals and aspirations in the two-day introductory portion of the track, she said, and the eight week online course helped her break down the "formidable task" of writing a comprehensive business plan into smaller, more manageable parts.

Gonzales said her instructors gave her feedback on her assignments and helped her when she needed it.

"Boots to Business really opened a lot of doors for me," she said, adding that she had a lot of mentoring through her local business counselors and access to a lot of resources.

"You're surrounded by a very good network of entrepreneurs looking to help you."

Through Boots to Business, Gonzales also received an unexpected boost to her business. She learned during her training that she could enter competitions to earn seed money for her venture. As she focused on her business plan, she kept the competition in mind, she said.

"It not only prepared me to compete, it gave my venture a blueprint of how I'm going to [proceed]," she added.

Gonzales won first place in the initial and final competitions for the best business plan, earning \$25,000 at each level for a total of \$50,000 as startup money for eLearning Solutions. Using every resource made available to her in Boots to Business, she said, it's surprising what's available through the SBA's entrepreneurial program.

It's vital to use mentoring help and other resources in the Boots to Business program, she said.

"It's just like the military, [where] we couldn't do it alone, and the same holds true for starting a new business," she said. "You need to surround yourself with people who are going to help you and are invested in helping you succeed."

Army Capt. (Dr.) Tony Turin is an optometrist at Womack Army Medical Clinic at Fort Bragg, N.C., who knew he wanted to establish his own clinic when he separates from the military April 18. Like Gonzales, Turin took the mandatory week-long transition GPS course and said the program gave him peace of mind about transitioning back into the civilian sector.

"You're with a group of people in the same situation," he explained. "So much of our military lives have been planned out for us, and it can be a pretty intimidating time, knowing you're going to transition and be on your own."

Through Boots to Business, a wealth of knowledge is available to people, he said.

"It opens your eyes to what's available and lets you know as a veteran you won't be left out there on your own," he added. "Those five [Transition GPS] days are worthwhile, [because there is] a network of people there to help you during your transition."

Now in his seventh week of the eight-week online class, Turin said, Boots to Business is helping him refine his business plan for his soon-to-open Mount Hood Eye Care practice in Sandy, Ore., which will open two days after he separates from the Army.

While he had a general business plan in mind before he took Boots to Business, he said, the entrepreneurial track helped him solidify his plan and get rid of unnecessary fluff.

"I thought the online course would be a cookie-cutter [format]," he said. "When you submit assignments, you get personal feedback. It was a very interactive course."

Turin called the Boots to Business track phenomenal. "I went into it thinking I had a good established business plan and ideas about how I wanted to market my business, and the seven weeks has really helped guide and refine it," he said.

Because he's "clinically minded," Turin said, it's helpful to have a professional in marketing, for example, take a look at one's marketing plan. "It's just worth your while to get an expert's opinion, and they're available to us for free."

Turin said students in Boots to Business begin with a concept and build a business plan while they learn about demographics, legal issues, retail, hiring employees, insurance, and many more topics essential to starting a business. "If anyone has inclinations to start a business down the road, do it," he said.

He called the initial two-day exposure to starting a business "laid-back," and while a person could have 10 ideas, they're examined in class. A weeding-out process begins to determine what's pertinent to starting a business.

The eight-week online course, he added, "Gets more refined and helps guide and prepare you for the real world. And start early—it's a great opportunity."

Hagel Discusses Military Professionalism with Leadership Team

AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE (MARCH 24, 2014)

WASHINGTON—Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel met with his leadership team today to discuss military professionalism, Pentagon Press Secretary Navy Rear Adm. John Kirby said.

Civilian and military leaders met to discuss ways to foster ideas for how the institution can continue ensuring professionalism across the force, Kirby said during a news conference.

Hagel values the inputs, opinions, and perspectives of his leadership team, which includes senior DoD civilians, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the combatant commands, Kirby said. Hagel "is taking advantage of this opportunity today to seek those perspectives," he added. "He will continue to make this a priority in the weeks and months ahead."

Kirby noted that Hagel and Army Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, have released a public service announcement on this issue.

The meeting today is one of many that senior leaders in the department hold, Kirby said, adding that he will have an an-

nouncement soon on Hagel's selection of a senior advisor for military professionalism.

"The secretary said it himself when he was here with you not long ago: 'Ethics and character are the foundation of an institution and a society. They must be constantly emphasized every level of command: top to bottom,'" Kirby told reporters. "He and his leadership team remain committed to that end."

Additional FY14 Civilian Workforce Shaping Now Parallel With Military Programs

SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE PUBLIC AFFAIRS (MARCH 26, 2014)

WASHINGTON—Air Force officials announced additional civilian workforce shaping initiatives March 26 in compliance with mandatory funding targets and continuing civilian workforce rebalance to meet skill demands for fiscal 2014 and beyond.

The programs will run in parallel with military programs, said Lt. Gen. Sam Cox, the Air Force deputy chief of staff for manpower, personnel, and services.

The initiatives are part of ongoing military programs designed to maintain a smaller, more streamlined, ready, and capable force in the future, Cox said.

"We recognize the invaluable contributions of our civilian workforce but must manage within [Defense] Department fiscal constraints to meet the mission needs of the years to come," he said.

The Air Force will continue maximizing its Voluntary Early Retirement Authority and Voluntary Separation Incentive Pay in the second round of programs to entice employees who are eligible to leave federal service to do so voluntarily. These programs offer early retirement for employees who are considering life outside of federal service and up to \$25,000 for employees whose voluntary separation would save another employee from being involuntarily separated.

"The Defense Department is going through an intense period of budgetary challenges, and we are using every force shaping tool available on both the military and civilian side

to lessen the impacts on our force," said Col. Brian Kelly, the director of force management policy for the Air Force. "And, while aggressive, the plan to reduce the size of the force provides long-term stability beyond [fiscal 2015]."

Following the same basic criteria for the earlier round of VERA/VSIP programs announced in December, surveys will again be distributed to a number of employees targeting specific occupations and locations. Additionally, these surveys will expand to reach a broader number of employees potentially impacted by the Secretary of Defense-directed 20 percent headquarters staff reductions.

The Air Force is committed to fully exhausting all voluntary workforce rebalancing and shaping programs, including the special authorities associated with a reduction in force, to help avoid involuntary separations, Kelly said.

Reduction-in-force authorities allow reassignment flexibility for civilians to be placed at their installations while retaining their grade or pay, or both. The authorities also permit managers and hiring authorities to waive qualifications and expand the number of potential placement opportunities for employees currently assigned to abolished positions.

Implementing RIF procedures also permits eligible employees who cannot immediately be placed in local vacancies to be registered in the Priority Placement Program to assist in placement in other job positions where they qualify.

Kelly noted that the Air Force's strategy to meet civilian pay budget targets does not include a furlough and that involuntary separations from federal service will only be sought as a last resort, if required.

"We simply cannot accomplish the mission without our civilian airmen, and that won't change even after reductions," Kelly said.

For information about civilian employment, reduction in force, and other personnel issues, visit the myPers website at <https://mypers.af.mil>.