

Broadening Continuous Learning Opportunities for the Defense Acquisition Workforce

DAU Reaches Out to Strategic Partnerships, Alliances

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Globalization is rapidly changing the social, political, economic, and cultural paradigms in the Defense acquisition system. This swift change brings with it an acute need for quick and effective strategies to competently meet the challenges facing the knowledge-based business of corporate universities such as the Defense Acquisition University (DAU).

Here at DAU, and indeed throughout the entire Defense acquisition education and training community, *adaptability*, *speed*, and *customer focus* are qualities shared and greatly valued by those of us who are responsible for the education and training of the Defense acquisition workforce. However, no one agency or institution alone can achieve all three without cultivating strategic alliances and partnerships with other government agencies, allied nations, educational institutions, the private sector, and professional associations. Toward that end, DAU is actively fostering and entering into mutually beneficial arrangements to facilitate interaction among *all* DoD and industry providers of acquisition education.

This article explains why strategic alliances and partnerships are beneficial, gives examples of those institutes and agencies with which DAU has partnerships, and emphasizes the future direction of DAU alliances and partnerships.



Signing of DAU, FTI Letter of Intent, Feb. 16, 2001. Seated from left: Spiros G. Pallas, Principal Deputy to the Director, Strategic and Tactical Systems, OUSD(AT&L); Frank Anderson Jr., DAU President; and Lavon Jordan, CEO Frontier Technology, Inc. Standing from left: Scoop Cooper, Retired Air Force Col.; Paul McMahon, Director of Strategic Partnerships, DAU; and Ron Schroder, Vice President, Frontier Technology, Inc.

Fostering and Sustaining Long-Term Professional Growth

The Defense Acquisition University was chartered in 1991, assigning the Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition) statutory authority for DAU. In 1993, the Under Secretary transferred oversight of DAU to the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition Reform), or DUSD(AR). As Stan Soloway, former in-

cumbent of that office, stated: "Strategic alliances to support the mission of DAU are essential to provide the acquisition community with the right learning products and services to make smart business decisions."

Responding to strong motivation and support from Dave Oliver, Acting Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition, Technology and Logistics), and Donna Richbourg, Acting DUSD(AR), DAU President Frank Anderson accepted and acted

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GWU, ESI, and DAU offer DAU course graduates credit toward a Joint Master's Certificate in four functional areas: Project Management, Information Technology, Government Contracting, and Commercial Contracting.

develop better business practices, and provide a full range of developmental skills, knowledge, and abilities to sustain long-term professional growth.

More Than Mere Certification Training

The Revolution in Business Affairs has driven DAU's approximately 140,000 customers to demand more than mere quality certification training. In fiscal 2000, DAU trained 40,723 civilians and military from DoD's acquisition workforce — more than any previous year. Still, demand continues to grow due to rapid policy and legislative changes in acquisition practices, processes, and procedures. Such rapid changes, coupled with customer demand, highlight the need for DAU to respond quickly by generating robust continuous learning opportunities to support core training, and providing job performance tools and resources between courses. A key enabler to this expansion of the learning envelope is the pursuit, creation, and leveraging of strategic partnerships with other colleges, universities, and commercial learning institutions.



Signing of GWU, ESI, DAU Letter of Intent, Sept. 5, 2000. Seated from left: J. LeRoy Ward, Senior Vice President of Client Programs, ESI, Intl.; Chris Stelloh Garner, Functional Advisor, Program Management Career Field; Anderson; former DUSD(AR) Stan Soloway; and Deidre "Dee" Lee, Director of Defense Procurement. Standing from left: McMahon; Charles W. Clark, Vice President Contracts Programs, ESI, Intl.; Kimberly A. Elibuyuk, Business Development Manager — Government Markets, ESI, Intl.; and Karen Barley, Vice President, Corporate University Enterprise, Inc.

on Soloway's challenge by committing DAU to provide robust continuous learning opportunities for the acquisition workforce while they adapt to DoD's new

ways of doing business. Such opportunities, Anderson envisions, will motivate acquisition professionals to stay current in a rapidly evolving work environment,

GWU, ESI, DAU Partnership Expanding Continuous Learning

ESI Intl., an international training and consulting firm, was founded in 1981 and has enjoyed a longstanding affiliation with The George Washington University School of Business and Public Management (GWU). Over 6,000 professionals have earned their Master's Certificate in Project Management since 1991 when ESI Intl., initiated the *Project Management Professional Development Program* as a corporate training program.

ESI now offers Defense acquisition workforce personnel with the opportunity to credit their DAU training certificates toward a Joint Master's Certificate in one of four areas: Project Management, Information Technology, Government Contracting, and Commercial Contracting.

Project Management

The DAU/ESI Joint Master's Certificate in *Project Management*, designed for members from all acquisition career fields, presents streamlined, systematic

approaches to complex tasks associated with project management. The curricula address the Project Management Institute's entire Project Management "Body of Knowledge" – considered by many experts as a foundation for modern project management.

Information Technology

The DAU/ESI Joint Master's Certificate in *Information Technology* is a cohesive program of study that focuses on the unique aspects of managing information technology projects from a practitioner's perspective. The program explores the concepts that underlie information technology and provides practical guidance to achieve project success in a risk-driven arena.

Government Contracting

The Joint Master's Certificate in *Government Contracting* was designed to meet the growing need for professional development training in the government's contracting community.

Commercial Contracting

The Joint Master's Certificate in *Commercial Contracting* covers a wide range of issues and skills needed for effective contract management, including such topic areas as proposal preparation, financial management, accounting, performance measurement, and electronic commerce.

Level III Courses for DAU Certification in the Program Management Career Field

Master's Certificate in Project Management

- Any Three Courses from ESI's PM Catalog

*Value Added \$5,990 per student

Master's Certificate in Commercial Contracting (Take all five)

- Commercial Contract Management
- Financial Management of Commercial Contracts
- Negotiation of Commercial Contracts
- Administration of Commercial Contracts
- Winning New Business

Each of these Master's Certificates is jointly issued by GWU, ESI, and DAU. Graduates from DAU courses will be offered credits for their completion and prescribed a schedule of ESI courses to be taken for the Certificate. The number and specific courses to be taken will vary depending upon the Career Field Training Certification levels cited in the DAU Catalog and the Joint Master's Certificate being pursued. The Value Added for a DAU graduate and the increased Return on Investment by DoD in previous DAU courses can be significant, depending upon the numbers of students that participate in the program and at which certification levels they apply.

For example, the chart below depicts the courses to be taken for each of the Joint Master's Certificates given a Level III Certification in the Program Management Career Field. An applicant with Level III Certification in the Program Management Career Field, can earn a Joint Master's Certificate in Project Management by taking only three courses (*any three*) from ESI's Program Management catalog.

Given that each five-day course costs about \$1,497.50, and four of the seven courses normally required for the Certificate have been credited under the partnership program, the market value of-

Master's Certificate in IT Project Management (Choose five)

- Either Software PM/Managing IT Projects
- Software Risk Management
- Managing Software Quality
- Software Testing
- Telecommunications Principles
- Systems Integration
- Scheduling and Cost Control
- Leadership

Master's Certificate in Government Contracting (Take all four)

- Contract Pricing
- Negotiation Strategies and Techniques
- Operating Practices in Contract Administration
- Any Course from ESI's CM Catalog

*Value Added \$3,580 per student

ferred the DAU course graduates is \$5,990 per Level III-certified student under this scenario. The same student would be offered the market value of two courses, or \$2,995 if pursuing a Joint Master's Certificate in Commercial Contracting (More of the benefits to partnership charters with corporate universities will be addressed at the end of this article.)

For more information on The Joint Master's Certificate Program, call ESI at (888) 374-4682 or visit the company's Web site at www.esi-intl.com. For more information on DAU's courses and this program, visit the DAU Web site at www.dau.mil.

A Partnership That Benefits Certification Training

Frontier Technology, Inc. (FTI) is another company with which DAU has negotiated a strategic partnership. FTI is engaged in delivering applied information technology software products and services focused on systems acquisition, decision support planning, analysis, simulation, training, and engineering services for the Federal Government as well as commercial customers. Under this relationship, FTI will teach an elective on cost estimating for DAU's premier course offering, the *Advanced Program Management Course* (APMC) at the DAU Fort Belvoir campus. The course is based on a flexible system of cost analysis software tools from FTI called ICE™ (Integrated Cost Estimation), enabling users to estimate Return on Investment or ROI.

This new elective course introduces automated tools to replace the more time-consuming process of estimating costs by hand as explained by Lavon Jordan, CEO for FTI. Jordan expressed that most of the credit for this training program belongs to DAU President Frank Anderson, for his vision in recognizing the need to reduce operating costs and reliably assess system life cycle costs and affordability before committing funds.

The Santa Barbara-based Company has regional offices in Boston, Mass.; Dayton, Ohio; and Washington, D.C. For

more information on FTI, visit www.fti-net.com.

Future Benefits from Strategic Partnerships

Strategic alliances and partnerships will leverage the DAU tradition of innovative and pioneering work such as e-learning. Since DAU continues to pursue the expansion of continuous learning opportunities that target Acquisition Reform training topics such as those listed in Dave Oliver's recent memorandum, expect to see the number of course offerings grow at a rapid pace.

Offerings such as the Performance Based Services Contracting Incentives Course and the DoD 5000 Series Update can be found on the DUSD(AR) and DAU Web sites. The DoD Knowledge Management System will provide even more opportunities through various portals such as the Project Management Community of Practice currently under development. Learning modules will also be made available from certification courses such as the PMT 250 "Tools Course," wherein Risk Management modules are currently under development.

Also expect to see a growing abundance of benefits from strategic alliances such as the ones described with ESI-GWU

and FTI. Because DAU is a government agency, it offers these opportunities at large and must adhere to provisions in the charters that expressly prohibit offering these opportunities exclusively to any of DAU's partners.

Calling All Potential Partners

The primary reason that DAU creates partnerships and alliances with other academic institutions, corporate universities, and industry is the synergy and leverage of capabilities that, with little or no capital investment, greatly increase the value of past and existing DAU courses (greater ROI). However, other reasons for such partnerships and alliances are worth noting:

- Motivate the acquisition workforce toward pursuit of more continuous learning activities.
- Increase the skills, knowledge, and abilities of the acquisition workforce.
- Stimulate recognition of achievements by acquisition workforce members via commercial and academic certifications and degrees.
- Leverage creation of continuous learning opportunities by other institutions.
- Enable more opportunities for members of the acquisition workforce to earn Continuous Education Units (CEU) – now required by acquisition policy.

For all of these reasons, DAU has established dialogue with other institutions such as the Northern Virginia Community College, the Florida Institute of Technology, George Mason University, Johns Hopkins University, the University of Maryland University College, Cardean University, and others. DAU remains open to discussions and inquiries from other corporate universities and anticipates that not only will continuous learning opportunities for the acquisition workforce expand greatly, but Certification Training will also be enhanced significantly through strategic partnerships.

This is the first of a series of articles that will address the progress of the DAU Strategic Partnerships Program. If your organization fits the profile to participate in a strategic partnership with DAU, contact:

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Editor's Note: McMahon welcomes questions or comments on this article. Contact him at paul.mcmahon@dau.mil.

OLIVER RELEASES NEW GUIDE TO PERFORMANCE BASED PAYMENTS

Acting Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition, Technology and Logistics) Dave Oliver signed and released for online publication *The Guide to Performance Based Payments*, effective Jan. 22. Performance Based Payments (PBP) is a new financing tool that strengthens the government-industry relationship and furthers DoD's commitment to revolutionize its business affairs.

For the first time on fixed priced contracts, a program manager can make financing payments to the industry partner based on actual work accomplished instead of using traditional progress payments for that purpose. The joint government-industry team develops the events that will be validated through

out the period of performance so each will have a thorough knowledge of both program and financing requirements. This works to the benefit of the entire team.

"I strongly encourage program managers, contracting officers, and industry to use this guide," said Oliver, "to help change the existing paradigm and to use PBP as their preferred fixed price contract financing method."

The new guide is available at <http://www.acq.osd.mil/ar/whatsnew.htm> on the Office of the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition Reform) Web site.