

### **OSD Announces Availability of Rotational Assignments (Currently Accepting Applications in 2011)**

The office of the secretary of defense requests nomination of individuals to consider for a one-year developmental assignment in the office of the deputy assistant secretary of defense, developmental test and evaluation (DT&E), within the office of the assistant secretary of defense, research and engineering. The immediate supervisor will be the deputy assistant secretary of defense, DT&E. The trainee's assignment will involve a variety of duties designed to broaden his/her perspective on the policy and management of issues related to the department's DT&E program. The assignment has been identified at the GS 13/14/15 level (or equivalent).

This developmental assignment announcement is a standing open announcement. The period of each assignment will be one year from the date of arrival to office of the assistant secretary of defense, research and engineering, with the possibility of a one-year extension. Once required application and supporting documentation are received, the trainee will be contacted to establish an ideal arrival date. To be considered for this assignment, nominations are to be forwarded through appropriate channels and e-mailed to [Meghan.Kline@osd.mil](mailto:Meghan.Kline@osd.mil).

### **DoD Makes Progress in Civilian Hiring Reform**

*AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE (MAY 18, 2011)*

*Donna Miles*

WASHINGTON—Until very recently, applying for a civilian job at the Defense Department was an exercise in endurance and patience. Applicants had to navigate through a byzantine federal hiring process and amass thick application packets, then often waited as long as a year for any word on their applications.

Pasquale "Pat" M. Tamburrino Jr., deputy assistant secretary of defense for civilian personnel policy, said the practice left defense offices short of critical skills for extended periods and discouraged the best candidates from even considering federal service.

"If you are going to be in the marketplace, competing for the best and brightest—which is what we want—we want to be the employer of choice," he said. "And if you make it hard to apply, you are going to lose in the marketplace."

Committed to attracting the best job candidates, the Defense Department is making good on President Barack Obama's mandate last year to improve the federal hiring process.

DoD launched its own hiring reform initiative two years ago, and it's revolutionizing the way the department processes about 250,000 hiring actions a year, Tamburrino said.

The typical timeframe for hiring new employees already has been cut from an average of 155 days to 116. "We're pretty happy with that, but we are not stopping there," Tamburrino said. His goal is to reduce that to the administration's goal of about 80 days.

The broad, 10-step DoD hiring reform initiative covers the full spectrum of the hiring process to make it not only faster, but also simpler, less bureaucratic, and more transparent, he explained. It makes applying for a DoD job more in line with what the private sector offers, he added, and ensures hiring managers have the tools they need to advertise and fill vacancies.

It builds a closer partnership between hiring managers and human resources personnel to expedite the hiring process and make it a better experience for everyone involved, Tamburrino said.

For applicants, gone is the burdensome Standard Form 171, the official federal resume that could run 15 to 20 pages. Also gone is the requirement that job-seekers write essays proving they have the proper knowledge, skills, and abilities—called KSAs—for the job.

Applications have gone electronic, filed through the Office of Personnel Management's governmentwide "USAJobs" portal. And once applicants enter their profile into the system, detailing their education, work history, and skills, that information propagates all of their other job applications.

After they press "send," applicants are no longer left wondering if their application has gone into a "black hole," Tamburrino said. "People are getting feedback when they submit their application," he said. "They are getting a response: 'Your application is in the queue. It has been received by the [human resources] office. It is being processed.'"

Any questions that need to be cleared up are addressed early on to ensure they don't slow down the process.

DoD's hiring reform initiative doesn't stop with the application process. Hiring managers are adopting new, streamlined methods to advertise their positions and interview the best-qualified candidates.

The days of "convoluted vacancy announcements that were almost unique to every individual job we advertised" have

## **Congressional Fellowship Program Accepting Applications**

### **ARMY NEWS SERVICE (MARCH 22, 2011)**

WASHINGTON—Applications are now being accepted for soldiers and Army civilians to apply for fellowship positions with members of the 113th Congress. Active duty and Reserve Component soldiers as well as Department of the Army civilians all have the opportunity to participate in the Fiscal Year 2013 Army Congressional Fellowship Program.

The program educates selected Army officers and civilians on the importance of the strategic relationship between the Army and the Congress. The three-year program includes pursuit of a master's degree in legislative affairs at George Washington University, service on the staff of a member of Congress, and duty on the Army or Joint Staff in a legislative liaison position.

Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates recently commented on the value of the program during a visit to the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, Feb. 25.

"The Army has always needed entrepreneurial leaders with a broad perspective and a diverse range of skills, in addition to the essential troop command and staff assignments, you should look for opportunities [that] include being a congressional fellow," Gates said.

Each year, the Army selects up to 25 congressional fellows. For those chosen to participate, the program begins with a headquarters Department of the Army orientation that runs May-December 2011. Participants also begin the educational portion of their fellowship in May, with the goal of earning a master's degree in legislative affairs by the end of summer 2013.

As part of the program, congressional fellows will also serve on the staff of a member of Congress or on a congressional committee during the 1st session of the 113th Congress. That session runs January through December 2013.

As part of this portion of the program, fellows are typically given responsibility for drafting legislation, arranging congressional hearings, writing speeches and floor statements, and briefing members of Congress for committee deliberations and floor debate.

The one-year Capitol Hill experience concludes the fellowship. Fellowship participants are then assigned to a two-year position in the Washington, D.C., area. There, former fellows will work as Army legislative liaison officers interacting directly with Congress in the Office of the Chief of Legislative Liaison or Army Budget Liaison, or doing congressional-related duties in another Army staff agency.

The former fellows typically serve as principal liaison for portfolios valued in the billions of dollars, as well as become experts on a wide range of Army policy issues. Fellows gather information, prepare strategies, organize briefings, and arrange worldwide congressional fact-finding travel aimed at educating members and staff on Army programs.

Over the years, members of Congress and senior defense officials have grown to appreciate the service and experience of having defense fellows serving on congressional staffs.

"And it's been a privilege to have a chance to dialogue with those folks, one on one, about what really is happening out there, which, in addition to the great service they provide from an information standpoint, committee-wise, just personal-wise, they're just such an asset," said Sen. Saxby Chambliss of Georgia, during a March 3 meeting of the Senate Armed Services Committee. "So it's a very valuable program."

Full details on criteria for participation in the fellowship and program requirements are detailed in Milper message number 11-045 at <http://ocll.hqda.pentagon.mil/documents/CY2013%20Congressional%20Fellowship%20MILPER%20MESSAGE.pdf>.

*The deadline for submission by active duty and Army Reserve officers is July 8, 2011. For Army National Guard officers, the deadline for submission is Aug. 1, 2011. For Department of the Army civilians, the deadline for submission is Aug. 12, 2011.*

fallen by the wayside, Tamburrino said. Now, rather than custom-writing every vacancy announcement, hiring managers are encouraged to use standardized templates that cover basic job functions at the designated occupational series and grade level. Minor edits to those templates ensure they properly describe the particular job being filled.

"We think that makes it go a lot faster," Tamburrino said. "We are teaching managers how to do structured interviews and how to write better job opportunity announcements."

Much of that instruction is provided through the new online Hiring Managers Toolkit, which DoD started rolling out about eight months ago and continues to refine. The toolkit offers guides, tip sheets, and checklists to help hiring managers better partner with their human resources servicing centers, Tamburrino said.

The toolkit has become the gold standard among federal agencies, receiving raves from OPM and others wanting to adopt it as well.

"We routinely get feedback on that toolkit, that it is one of the most forward-leaning, innovative tools in the federal government," Tamburrino said. "We are unaware of any other executive agency that has a toolkit with as many tools in it and as many information pieces in it to help hiring managers. ... We think we have a lock on the market."

Another key to DoD's hiring reform initiative are the human resources professionals themselves.

"You are responsible for providing the very best in customer service," Tamburrino tells his HR professionals. "If an organization comes to you seeking advice, you must give clear, plain-language advice on how to address their challenge."

As subject matter experts who understand the nuances of sometimes daunting federal hiring regulations and know what it takes to attract and recruit good talent, HR professionals are valuable partners in helping hiring managers navigate the hiring process, he said.

As DoD starts realizing the benefit of its hiring reform initiative, Tamburrino said, he's seeing a lot of enthusiasm about its possibilities.

Feedback, garnered through surveys, gives job applicants and hiring managers alike an opportunity to weigh in on the improvements. Tamburrino said it also helps to uncover shortcomings in an effort to further refine the process.

Regardless of how much the process improves, Tamburrino said he never expects to be able to declare "mission accomplished."

"I don't think this is ever going to be over," he said. "This is continuous process improvement, and I don't think we are ever going to be satisfied with where we are." In the meantime, Tamburrino said, he's satisfied with the direction the process is taking DoD's hiring process.

"It's timeliness and quality, balanced," he said. "It's success for the applicant and success for the manager, balanced."

These initiatives have eliminated barriers to attracting the broadest, most talented workforce for the department's work in caring for military members and their families, conducting research, running depots and shipyards, and even developing the next-generation weapons systems, Tamburrino said.

"Where else are you going to do that?" he asked. "We think we are a great place to work, and we give people at every level of experience a great opportunity to do really unique stuff. So we want people to gravitate to us, and we want an ability to really pick out the crown jewels that exist out there in the workforce and say, 'Come work with us.'"

Ultimately, Tamburrino said, he'd like to see the hiring reform initiative expand its focus to "employment reform." He describes that as an effort to improve the way the Defense Department manages the careers of the civilian employees it recruits.

"To me, it is a whole life-cycle event," he said. "Getting you in is just one step."

### **DoD Civilians Assist Afghan Defense Agencies**

*AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE (JUNE 7, 2011)*

*Cheryl Pellerin*

WASHINGTON—Civilians who work for the Defense Department are on the ground in Afghanistan, collaborating with counterparts there to build effective defense institutions, a defense official who heads the program said yesterday.

Kelly Uribe, who directs the two-year Ministry of Defense Advisors Program pilot effort established in 2010, works for the under secretary of defense for policy in the partnership strategy and stability operations office.

Thirty-two advisors are in Afghanistan, and 27 more are in training and will deploy in July, she told American Forces

Press Service. Ultimately, the program seeks to have 100 senior defense advisors in Afghanistan, Uribe added, with expertise in logistics and infrastructure management, personnel and readiness management, doctrine training, defense policy, acquisition, education, and other areas.

The advisor program, Uribe said, “is designed to make sure that we’re developing well enough at the institutional and ministry levels [to sustain] all the investments we’ve made at the operational and technical levels.”

It’s systems that keep things going, she said, echoing the words of Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates in a May/June 2010 *Foreign Affairs* magazine article.

“The United States has made great strides in building up the operational capacity of its partners by training and equipping troops and mentoring them in the field,” Gates wrote.

“But there has not been enough attention paid,” he added, “to building the institutional capacity [such as defense ministries] or the human capital [including leadership skills and attitudes] needed to sustain security over the long term.”

Four elements of the advisor program make it unique in the Defense Department, Uribe said. One of these is training. A seven-week course includes five weeks in Washington for professional advisor training, cultural awareness, country familiarization, language instruction and senior-level consultations and briefings, and two weeks at Camp Atterbury in Indiana for an evaluated exercise.

Three other elements are:

- Backfill: The program has funding to pay the parent organization to hire a temporary replacement for the deploying senior manager;
- Reachback: Advisors can use their own contacts and call on experts from their parent organizations to help with the mission in Afghanistan; and,
- Partnership: The long-term goal is to establish an ongoing partnership between the Defense Department in the United States and Afghanistan’s defense ministry.

“At the same time that we’re undertaking to build these effective and accountable defense institutions for our partners,” Uribe said, “we’re expanding professional opportunities for our senior DoD civilians, providing them a lot of additional training that we believe they’re going to bring back to their own organizations.”

Richard A. Pollitt, one of those senior civilians, is director of logistics at the U.S. Army Garrison in Bamberg, Germany.

He is a logistics expert who has been on the ground in Afghanistan for 11 months and who just extended his stay for another four months.

“I wanted to see some of these processes and systems that we worked so hard to put in place come to fruition,” he said. Pollitt is the senior civilian advisor to Afghan Maj. Gen. Timor Shah, chief of logistics at Afghanistan’s interior ministry.

“The program is all about developing capacity at the ministerial level,” he said, “and I’ve had a significant impact on the ministry of interior logistics system, which sustains a police force of just under 150,000.”

On a strategic level, he added, “we’ve been able to build capacity in the logistics department for developing a budget and a spend plan.”

For the first time, Pollitt said, the department has been able to identify and prioritize its requirements for the logistics department.

On an operational level, the logistics expert said, a test of a logistics readiness tool recently took place in Panjshir Province. “That is a computer program that tracks unit readiness and asset visibility,” making sure all the equipment, weapons, and vehicles are identified in the system’s database and accounted for, he explained.

“We worked with the Afghans, collaborated with them from the beginning, got their buy-in, and asked simple questions—what do you need, what do you want?” Pollitt added.

Such impact and success, Pollitt said, is possible only if the Afghan counterpart accepts the program advisor—a time-consuming but critical process he learned about during his seven weeks of predeployment training.

“It was very, very helpful coming into this type of position to have background training, particularly in the cultural area, on dealing with senior-level Afghans,” Pollitt said.

Success in Afghanistan involves building relationships, he added.

“My first six weeks, even though I’m a functional expert in logistics, I didn’t go in and start demonstrating what I knew about particular programs. I would sit there and when I was addressed I would respond,” Pollitt said. “After about six weeks, [the Afghans] started communicating and opened up dialogue and then opened up a relationship.”

"Sometimes an advisor will go in and they're not accepted," Pollitt added. "The Afghans will be very friendly, cordial, and amenable. But when it gets down to producing results or trying to set a process or procedure in place, it won't advance very far. That relationship is critical."

Pollitt said he knew he was accepted when Shah invited him to his home for dinner.

The successful and growing program in Afghanistan, Uribe said, has "demonstrated a proof of concept and hope that we can use lessons learned to take the program global."

The scope of the program for other countries will depend on each country's needs, she said.

"We are sending a large number of civilian advisors to Afghanistan," the director said, but only one or two advisors might be sent to help another foreign partner.

"For example, a partner country might say, 'We're reworking our logistics system and would welcome an advisor from the Defense Logistics Agency to consult with us in the coming year,'" she explained.

The advisors, Uribe said, would work in close coordination with the country team on the ground.

"The main impediment right now to taking the program global is legislative authority that would allow us to operate globally," she said. "We are seeking that."

In the meantime, Uribe said, there are more opportunities for advisors in Afghanistan.

"The next class has to have its applications in by Sept. 1," she said. "We're moving into our big recruitment season over the summer to build our next class. Advisors will start training in September and deploy into Afghanistan at the beginning of November."

*Find more information or apply for the Department of Defense Ministry of Defense Advisors Program at [www.defense.gov/home/features/2011/0211\\_moda/](http://www.defense.gov/home/features/2011/0211_moda/).*

### **DLA Manager Sets Himself Up for Success, Future Opportunities**

DEFENSE LOGISTICS AGENCY NEWS RELEASE (JUNE 14, 2011)  
Beth Reece

Hellion Flowers doesn't question whether he'll one day become a senior executive. It's just a matter of when, said the

39-year-old process integrator for DLA Logistics Operations' Business Integration Division.

With what he figures will be another 18 years before he can retire from federal service, Flowers said he is always charting his next career move. His latest step was attending the Senior Executive Fellows program at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government, in Cambridge, Mass.

"While I was reviewing my individual developmental plan last year, this course stood out as an excellent opportunity to learn something different and prepare myself for the next level," Flowers said.

The four-week program teaches participants how to build coalitions, improve results and performance, and guide organizational change, according to Harvard's website. It's also one of several developmental programs available for DLA employees who want to reach their full potential or maintain a competitive edge, and supports the workforce development initiative outlined in the 2011 Director's Guidance.

Three weeks after returning from the Harvard program, Flowers said he is already using some of the skills he learned.

"One of the professors taught us that there are things that are so hot they are a 'triple A priority,' and leaders must figure out what those priorities are. That means there will be things we can do at just a C- level, but we can refocus on those things after completing tasks that need immediate attention."

As a process integrator for the Business Integration Division, Flowers, a GS-15, ensures functions ranging from procurement and order fulfillment to policy are incorporated into the Enterprise Business System, which the agency uses to conduct daily business.

He began his federal career in 1990, working as a GS-2 in inventory management at what was then known as Defense Supply Center Richmond, Va., and is now DLA Aviation. He eventually climbed the ranks to become a senior inventory manager and was promoted to a GS-12 team lead before accepting a lateral transfer to a supervisory supply systems analyst.

"I gained leadership experience at the GS-12 level, and that was important because here at the headquarters level, it can be difficult to get experience managing people," he said.

When DLA began modernizing its information technology backbone in 1999, Flowers saw an opportunity to broaden

his skill set, he said. He took a position working on the Business Systems Modernization program, eventually becoming a part of the change management team that ensured users had the training they needed to operate the new system.

“That job allowed me to try a different career venue and work on a challenging project with set deadlines,” he said. It also helped him understand the roles of DLA Headquarters and its relationship with primary-level field activities, he added.

The experience inspired him to apply in 2005 for a GS-14 business process analyst position at DLA Headquarters, and he has since taken several other positions that have kept him there.

The career steps Flowers has taken, along with his technical expertise and ability to deal with employees at every level, make him a good candidate for executive service, said his boss, Steve St. John, deputy executive director of DLA Material Policy, Process and Assessment.

“I think he’s in a position now where he could compete for the next level very easily,” St. John said. “Guys like me who have 30-some years in aren’t going to be around forever, so I think it’s part of my job to mentor and recruit replacements for the future.”

### More Vets Gain Federal Employment

*AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE (JUNE 16, 2011)*

WASHINGTON—Thanks to President Barack Obama’s Veterans Employment Initiative, more veterans are now federal employees.

Federal agencies hired 72,133 veterans in fiscal 2010—about 2,000 more than in 2009, U.S. Office of Personnel Management officials said in a news release.

“Through the president’s Veterans Employment Initiative, OPM and our agency partners are helping tens of thousands of veterans and their families continue their legacy of service,” OPM Director John Berry said.

The OPM report, *Employment of Veterans in the Federal Executive Branch for Fiscal Year 2010*, also states that 25.6 percent of new hires across the federal government in fis-



Hellion Flowers spent the past 21 years climbing the ranks at the Defense Logistics Agency, rising from a GS-2 at DLA Aviation to his current position as a GS-15 in DLA Logistics Operations’ Business Integration Division.

Photo by Beth Reece

cal 2010 were veterans. This is a 1.6 percent increase from fiscal 2009.

Of the veterans hired in fiscal 2010, 23,140 are disabled veterans, compared to 20,448 in fiscal 2009. This is a 1.2 percent increase.

“These are some of the best, brightest, and hardest working Americans in the federal government,” Berry said. “While we’ve accomplished a lot in the first year, too many veterans are still unemployed, and we’re going to keep pushing to do even better going forward.”

### Members of Acquisition Workforce Given Insider’s Perspective of Congress

*U.S. ARMY ACQUISITION SUPPORT CENTER (JUNE 20, 2011)*

*Marques Chavez*

WASHINGTON—Civilian members of the U.S. Army Acquisition Support Center workforce were presented with an exceptional opportunity to learn about the unique dynamics of Congress by those with intimate knowledge of the workings of Capitol Hill at the 2011 Congressional Operations Seminar held June 13-17.

The seminar, hosted by Georgetown University’s Government Affairs Institute (GAI), was conducted at the Rayburn

House Office Building on Capitol Hill and has been offered to employees across the government on nearly a monthly basis for several years. It primarily focuses on training executive branch employees and officials how Congress works so they are prepared to facilitate the interaction between their agencies and Congress.

“There’s a lot of misunderstanding in the executive branch about how Congress works—and vice versa—because the branches are organized so differently. The folks on Capitol Hill are in a totally different world and although they work on all of the same issues as the agencies, they have a completely different viewpoint,” said Chuck Cushman, Senior Fellow at the GAI.

According to USAASC, members of the acquisition, logistics, and technology workforce who are identified by their supervisors as having job-related duties in understanding Congressional action, appropriations, and the budget are eligible to attend. Those who attended the seminar were trained on a variety of topics of government ranging from the makeup of Congressional staff, to the extensive appropriations process. Attendees were also permitted to observe floor debate and attend committee hearings.

“You could end up getting in this line of work and only have the vaguest idea of the internal workings of the other parts of the government. For someone who is a professional working in the field, you have to have an intimate understanding of not only what your agency does, but also what the other ones around you do so you can understand how they interact. That just makes you better at your job,” Cushman said.

William V. Hilleary, a Republican from Tennessee who served in the House of Representatives from 1995-2003, offered his perspective to the group as a former member of Congress. He explained that the pre-eminent partisan divide most associated with Congress today not only dates back to the government’s origin, but is an essential aspect of it.

“Congress is the court of public opinion and even the founders believed it had to be adversarial,” Hilleary said. “It should be civil, but if you think people are going to be singing around a campfire, it was never meant to be that way. It is a healthy part of the system designed to get a better product.”

Those at the seminar were also privy to the perspective of a current sitting member of the House of Representatives. Congressman Charles A. Gonzalez, a Democrat serving from Texas, addressed the group on the undertaking of public service.

“I really just want to talk about you and how we are all part of this thing we call government. This is an opportunity for you. Be proud of what you do and never underestimate the good that you are doing for all of your fellow Americans,” Gonzalez said.

At its core, the five-day seminar shaped up to be an in-depth look at government with the purpose of helping those in attendance gain a better understanding that will help them effectively perform their duties.

“At the end of the day, we hope we have built this mosaic of little bits of insight from all the different possible angles,” Cushman said. “The participants who have come to do this course walk away with a much broader perception of what makes Congress tick. I think we do a pretty good job coming close to striking the balance that gives the agency folks a deep understanding of all the things that go on up here.”

### **SMART Scholars Visit D.C. to Learn About their New Jobs**

*AIR FORCE PERSONNEL, SERVICES AND MANPOWER PUBLIC AFFAIRS (JUNE 21, 2011)*  
Debbie Gildea

RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE, Texas—Students ranging from undergraduates to Ph.D. candidates will visit Joint Base Andrews, Md., in July, to learn more about their future with the Department of Defense.

The students, as Science, Mathematics, and Research for Transformation program scholars, represent a \$50 million investment in the DoD science and engineering workforce, according to SMART Air Force liaison Ed Bujan, of the Air Force Personnel Center.

The program is funded under the National Defense Education Program, with scholarships offered to the nation’s best and brightest students in the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics disciplines.

SMART scholars will attend a four-day orientation July 11-14, during which they plan to visit a DoD static aircraft display featuring Air Force, Army and Navy aircraft. They also plan to attend seminars and participate in Service-specific breakout sessions, and meet with service security managers to initiate the security clearance process.

The scholars also are scheduled to meet some of DoD’s most senior science and engineering experts, including DoD’s assistant secretary for research and engineering, Zachary Lemnios. Air Force featured speakers include Dr. Steven Walker, the deputy assistant secretary for acqui-

sition; Dr. Jacqueline Henningsen, the director for studies and analyses, assessments and lessons learned; and Russell Howard, the engineering and technical management director for Air Force Materiel Command.

According to Bujan, more than 3,000 students applied for the SMART program in 2010, and the science and engineering board accepted the top 50 percent for interviews.

Of those 1,500 applicants, 300 made the final cut, he said. Of the 240 who attend this year's orientation, 98 will matriculate to three Air Force major commands: AFMC, Air Force Space Command, and Air Combat Command.

The SMART scholarship program is a workforce development program created to address the need to bridge the science, technology, engineering, and research gap.

"SMART scholars receive full tuition, an annual living allowance and summer internship, health insurance, book allowances, mentorship by senior DoD representatives, and post-graduate employment," Bujan said. "They pay that back by working for their DoD agency on a 1-to-1 ratio, so if we pay for four years of education, they agree to work for four years."

Ultimately, the purpose of the program is to increase the number of civilian scientists and engineers working in DoD laboratories and research facilities, Bujan said.

"So far, we have had 24 students complete their initial commitment, and 19 of those stayed with us," he said. "Four of the five who left are pursuing higher education, and one left for a corporate America position.

"But that's going to happen, and it's not a bad thing," he said. "The fact is, nearly 80 percent chose to stay, and that tells us we have a good program and it's working."

High school and college students interested in STEM disciplines can get more information about the SMART scholarship program, and apply for the 2012 program, at <http://smart.asee.org>.

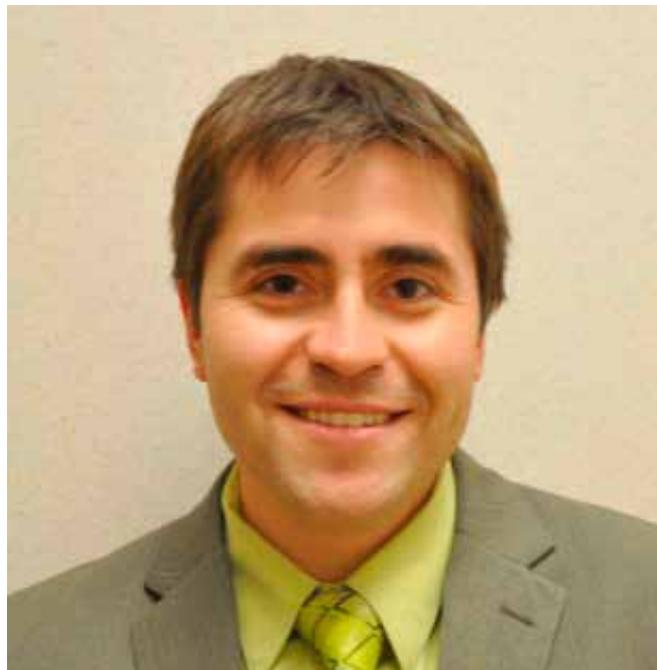
For information about Air Force civilian career opportunities, go to [www.afciviliancareers.com](http://www.afciviliancareers.com).

### **DoD Adopts Personnel Form Developed by HR Specialist**

ARMY NEWS SERVICE (JUNE 30, 2011)

Daniel P. Elkins

FORT SAM HOUSTON, Texas—An automated form developed practically overnight by a human resources specialist



Victor Gallegos developed an intuitive form, which is being adopted by the Department of Defense, to track performance by the Defense Acquisition Workforce. Gallegos is a human resources specialist assigned to the Mission and Installation Contracting Command at Fort Sam Houston, Tex.

U.S. Army photo

here in a search of a more intuitive tool to track performance planning and the appraisal process for the Army's acquisition workforce is being adopted by the Department of Defense.

In March, Department of the Army officials conducted training for the Mission and Installation Contracting Command leadership in preparation for the May 22 transition of appropriated fund employees from the National Security Personnel System to the Acquisition Workforce Personnel Demonstration Project, or AcqDemo. It was during this training that Victor Gallegos, the MICC AcqDemo program manager, learned the millions of dollars required to develop a process to capture appraisal actions were simply not in the budget.

Instead, individuals were to document performance management actions in a Microsoft Word document as an interim solution, which struck Gallegos as a move in the opposite direction given the ever-growing importance of documenting appraisals and maintaining records.

"It posed a challenge since the document offered no tracking and no signatures," Gallegos said, "and seemed we are taking a step back" in technology.

He promptly decided to brush up on his programming skills to see if he could build a better tool that enhanced the proposed Microsoft Office Word form due to its limitations.

While under NSPS, Gallegos said employees had access to the online Performance Appraisal Application tool as part of the Defense Civilian Personnel Data System. Through the application, employees, rating officials, and higher-level reviewers could create performance plans and monitor and rate performance.

Gallegos, who holds a bachelor's degree in computer information systems from Grambling State University, said he set out that same evening to build a form similar to the PAA using Adobe Pro and more than nine pages of Javascript.

"I was wondering if I could create a form accessible by everyone from a shared drive that still allowed tracking," he said. "By the next morning, I had about a 70 percent solution."

Gallegos spent countless hours of personal time over a few days developing the form that incorporates a PDF format offering extended features and from which reports can be extracted. Each section of the form is expandable, and the employee and rater sections are digitally locked by signature. The common access card-enabled program also offers a secure element allowing employees to access their respective objectives and appraisal data from a shared network location.

"This is significant," insists Maria Allen, the chief of the MICC Civilian Personnel Division. "The Microsoft Word document was an antiquated solution while the new form not only makes documenting performance easier for employees, but also for managers as well."

The HR specialist presented his program during the visit by the Department of the Army team, which quickly recognized the form was in fact the greatest leap in capturing AcqDemo performance data since the personnel program's implementation in February 1999.

Department of the Army officials staffed the new program among other Army AcqDemo managers at the end of May and also recognized its potential application for the almost 14,000 DoD acquisition employees transitioning from NSPS.

After sharing the appraisal program with Jim Irwin, the DoD program director for AcqDemo, earlier this month, a few adjustments to meet DoD requirements were added, and implementation should come soon.

"This is a form essential to the performance management process of AcqDemo, so it was a red hot priority to get out to everyone with our recent conversion of some 13,000-plus folks from NSPS," Irwin said. "His quick and careful support enabled that to happen in a few short days."

NSPS is a human resources pay and performance management system for federal civilian employees intended to replace the longstanding General Schedule system. The 2010 National Defense Authorization Act called for the repeal of NSPS and transition of employees back to the General Schedule and other pay systems by Jan. 1, 2012. Since its repeal, more than 214,000 have transitioned out of the personnel system.

The number of personnel transitioning out of NSPS includes approximately 6,100 federal employees in the Army who transitioned to AcqDemo last month. Among those were about 150 members of the MICC who are responsible for planning, integrating, awarding, and administering contracts in support of Army commands, direct reporting units, U.S. Army North, and other organizations to provide the best value for the mission, soldiers, and their families.

*Elkins writes for the Mission and Installation Contracting Command Public Affairs Office, Fort Sam Houston, Texas.*

### **Career Development Programs Shape Future in Unique Field of Foreign Military Sales**

ARMY NEWS SERVICE (JULY 1, 2011)

*Elisabeth Sikes*

REDSTONE ARSENAL, Ala.—The Army's "Face to the World" just got a little younger. By utilizing a number of internship and career development programs, the U.S. Army Security Assistance Command (USASAC) is fostering a new age of government employee. These programs, available to college students and recent college graduates of all ages, are helping to prepare participants for a career with the government. Programs currently in effect at USASAC include the Student Temporary Education Program (STEP), Student Career Experience Program (SCEP), Students Working at the Army in Parallel (SWAP), and the AMC Fellows Program. USASAC's unique security assistance (SA) and Foreign Military Sales (FMS) mission do not fall into a traditional job category, so many employees gain their experience through specific security assistance training courses and on-the-job experience. This makes the command the perfect organization for developmental programs, according to Gale Fenwick, chief, training division, USASAC G1/8.

Robert Anderson, who is currently working at Headquarters USASAC in G1/8 (Resource Management), is one employee utilizing a developmental program. Anderson graduated from the University of Nevada-Reno with a bachelor's degree in economics and finance in 2008, and after hearing about the AMC Fellows Program from a family member, decided to apply. Following a "long, rigorous interview process," he was accepted into the program just a few months shy of the birth of his first child. "It was a pretty crazy time," Anderson said.

After his graduation, Anderson moved to Texarkana, Texas, with his family and earned a master's degree in business administration before beginning his on-the-job training rotations here at Redstone Arsenal, Ala. After working at Headquarters, Army Materiel Command G8, and at the Program Executive Office Missiles and Space for his first two rotations, Anderson came to USASAC G1/8. In this position, Anderson said he has learned a lot about basic FMS administration processes, customer accounts, and billing processes as a part of USASAC's mission.

Once finished with his rotational assignments, Anderson will settle into his permanent duty location in HQ AMC G8 Systems Account and Policy Division. Because FMS requires customer funding, learning the regulations and processes is crucial to executing cases in a timely manner, so his time in G8 proved to be a valuable experience.

From Anderson's point of view he believes the development programs and their new generation of government employees "offers a different approach, a different view of how to do things, instead of just doing them a certain way because 'that's the way it's always been done,'" he said.

And for Anderson, the benefits of his developmental program are not limited to the training. "One of the nicest things about this program is the networking. If I have a question, say, involving HR [Human Resources], I can call up one of my classmates from Texarkana working in HR somewhere and get the answer I need," Anderson said. "It's a great program. I feel very lucky."

### **Education Program Promotes Relationships, Partnerships**

*AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE (JULY 1, 2011)*

*Donna Miles*



Robert Anderson is learning the Foreign Military Sales process through a developmental career program with U.S. Army Security Assistance Command at Redstone Arsenal, Ala.  
U.S. Army photo

WASHINGTON—Walk into just about any U.S. professional military schoolhouse, and you're likely to see a surprising number of foreign officers and noncommissioned officers mixed among the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps students.

They're a testament to the popularity of the International Military Education and Training program, something officials say provides a huge bang for the buck as it fosters relationships and military-to-military partnerships around the globe. IMET is a State Department security assistance program, managed by the Defense Department's Defense Security Cooperation Agency, to provide professional military training and education to U.S. allies, Kay Judkins, DSCA's program policy manager, told American Forces Press Service. Last year, IMET provided training to more than 7,000 students from 130 countries.

"That is building a lot of influence," Judkins said. "And that is really what this program is all about: influencing minds and hearts. It's about cooperation, forming relationships, and building partnership capacity."

Because most students who receive the highly coveted IMET training slots are rising stars within their respective militaries

or governments, Judkins said the impact of the program runs far deeper than the numbers might indicate.

With an annual budget of about \$110 million, IMET provides a great return on investment, she said. Nations that can afford it, pay their students' education costs, and the United States picks up the tab for those that can't. For some of these nations, IMET represents their only source of professional military education.

This education has a more lasting impact than any weapons system or military hardware ever could, Judkins said. "You could give a military a helicopter, but how much is that helicopter going to make an influence on that country?" she said. "That helicopter will come and go. But education and training could influence someone who becomes the next president of that country . . . and remembers his relationships with the United States and with other countries," she added.

Among the thousands of IMET alumni around the world are Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and Jordanian King Abdullah II bin al-Hussein.

Yudhoyono attended the Army's Airborne and Ranger schools, as well as the Infantry Officer Advanced Course at Fort Benning, Ga., and the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kan. Abdullah attended the Defense Resource Management Course at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, Calif.

Other IMET graduates have gone on to become leaders in their armed forces.

"IMET is an investment," Judkins said. "It's not one of those things where you can always see the rewards after the very first course." Sometimes the payoff takes time, as students who first participate in IMET as young lieutenants return for more advanced courses as they rise through the ranks to become military and government leaders in their home countries.

"We have an investment that takes years to develop and mold, but generally pays off in dividends," Judkins said.

Those dividends demonstrate themselves in ways big and small. Judkins pointed to the responsible way the Egyptian military—a longtime participant in the IMET program—has responded to protest movements there, as one indicator.

Another dividend can be seen in Afghanistan and previously in Iraq, where many nations that benefited through IMET sent troops to support international coalitions working together in support of operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom.

IMET students who attend classes side-by-side with their U.S. counterparts get exposure to the U.S. professional military establishment, from military procedures to how the armed forces operate under civilian control. This, Judkins explained, forms the foundation for strong military-to-military relations, increased understanding, and closer defense cooperation that enhance regional stability.

But IMET education extends beyond the classroom as students get exposure to the American way of life and ideals: democratic values, respect, individual and human rights, and belief in the rule of law, among them, Judkins said.

IMET has roots dating back to the post-World War II period when the military assistance program grew from its focus predominantly on Western Europe. That concentration has morphed over the decades to meet changing world situations.

During the 1990s, IMET reached out to former Soviet bloc countries, offering new courses on defense resource management, military justice, civil-military relations, and internationally recognized human rights. This led to the establishment of some of IMET's specialty schools, including the International Defense Acquisition Resource Management program and Center for Civil-Military Relations at the Naval Postgraduate School; the Defense Institute of International Legal Studies in Newport, R.I.; and the Defense Institute for Medical Operations at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio.

Today, IMET's focus has extended increasingly to the Middle East and northern Africa. Judkins called this outreach a way to address vulnerabilities to terrorism and other regional threats.

"The emphasis is on the Middle East and Africa because we know that terrorism will grow, and we know that vulnerable countries are the most targeted," she said.

### **Army Organizations Recognized for Civilian Education Efforts**

*ARMY NEWS SERVICE (JUNE 16, 2011)*

*Skye Marthaler*

The top three winners of the Army Management Staff College (AMSC) Excellence in Education Award were

recognized June 15 for their organizations' achievements in Civilian Education. The top winner was the Center for Army Analysis (CAA) on Fort Belvoir, second place went to the U.S. Army Communications Electronics Command (CECOM), Software Engineering Center, and third place winner was the U.S. Army Materiel Command, Lake City Army Ammunition Plant.

The AMSC Excellence in Education award is awarded annually to the top three Army organizations that strengthen the core attributes of the Army civilian workforce through innovation in education and aggressive and creative professional development programs.

The award, in partnership with the Army Civilian University and the Association of the United States Army, was designed to promote a philosophy that education is a lifelong pursuit and can be influenced and enhanced by Army organizations.

Volney J. Warner, president of ACU, stressed the importance of education for the Army Civilian Corps during the awards luncheon at the Fort Belvoir Officers Club.

"Once you get into a professional workforce, it does not mean you stop learning; in fact, your experiences are generally increasing your learning and total knowledge. For soldiers, everything they wear, use, the doctrine they employ, the support systems that provide their sustenance and repairs—all of those things are products of Army civilians. They find the right answers for the things that soldiers need. They literally help build the Army to do what the nation asks," said Warner, "For all of those things we have to educate our Army civilian workforce and continue their professional development to improve our soldiers' capabilities."

The top two winners emphasized the importance of their organizations' development programs.

"You can't get the job done without the right people. Once you recruit a qualified person, it is an investment; you have to follow through and sustain and train them. That is the key. You have to invest and train your people to give them the skills and equipment they need," said Dale DeBruler, Chief of Resources Division, CAA.

Mark Hosson, Director of the Enterprise Solutions Directorate, CECOM Life Cycle Management Command Software Engineering Center said, "One of the unique things we have implemented is our leadership orientation; when we see potential leadership ability in people, we put them through a four-month program to travel around and understand the entire organization. They see the interoperability and capa-

bilities, so they get an understanding of the wide variety of what the Software Engineering Center does and how it can help them develop their leadership skills."

The Army organizations that submitted entries for the Excellence in Education Award had to have a minimum of 25 percent of their workforce as Army civilians. The entries themselves also had to provide documentation supporting their education efforts.

"Each submission was screened by two selection panels: one consisting of AMSC and ACU leadership and personnel, the other composed of members from the Army Training and Doctrine Command Senior Executive Service," said Gene Arthur, AMSC director of educational services and one of the panelists. "The panels reviewed submissions based on established criteria that are indicative of quality organizations using education and training best practices and promoting an organizational culture encouraging lifelong learning."

For more information on the AMSC Excellence in Education Award, visit the AMSC website at [www.amsc.belvoir.army.mil](http://www.amsc.belvoir.army.mil).

*Marthaler is with the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command.*