

## U.S. Army Acquisition Leadership Challenge Program

U.S. ARMY ACQUISITION SUPPORT CENTER (NOV. 8, 2012)

The “Acquisition Leadership Challenge Program” (ALCP) is the newest program to the Acquisition Education and Training Portfolio for the Army. Based upon the huge success the Air Force has enjoyed with ALCP, the Army piloted multiple offerings of the 2-1/2 day course in FY12. For FY13, the Army is bringing the course to you. For more information on how to apply, please visit the U.S. Army Acquisition Support Center website: <http://asc.army.mil/web/career-development/programs/acquisition-leadership-challenge-program/>.

Below are the FY13 ALCP training dates (by location):

DATE TION	OFFERING TYPE (ALCP I or II)	LOCA- TION
March 11-15	Level I & Level II	Huntsville, Ala.
April 29-May 3	Level I & Level II	Aberdeen, Md.
May 20-24	Level I & Level II	Atlanta, Ga.
June 10-14	Back-to-back Level I offerings	Warren, Mich.
July 29-Aug. 2	Level I & Level II	Huntsville, Ala.
Aug. 19-23	Back-to-back Level I offerings	Aberdeen, Md.

## Website Informs Employers Seeking to Hire Veterans

Army Sgt. 1st Class Tyrone C. Marshall Jr

AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE (DEC. 3, 2012)

WASHINGTON—The Labor Department, in concert with two other federal agencies, has provided a tool to guide potential employers seeking to hire disabled veterans, a Labor Department official said today.

John K. Moran, deputy assistant secretary of labor for veterans’ employment and training service, said the “America’s Heroes at Work” website provides resources to organizations looking to hire veterans with or without disabilities.

“What it does for the employer is it gives them some information about—and demystifies, quite frankly—a lot of the issues around the disabilities that many veterans might have—particularly, traumatic brain injury [and] post-traumatic stress disorder,” he said. “It advises and helps an employer understand what those issues are, what they’re not, and how they can effectively recruit and hire veterans who may have those issues into their workforce without any particular problems.”

This website guides employers to understand the disabilities and potential accommodations that may be necessary, and how they can be made, he added.

“In fact, [it] points out that many of the accommodations that might need to be made can be made very, very simply and easily,” Moran said. “So it’s really a guide for the employer [on] how to hire the veteran who has these issues.”

The website, originally launched in 2008, was down recently for a short period as the three agencies involved—the Labor, Defense, and the Veterans Affairs departments—considered who should manage the website.

“We went through a few discussions this past summer,” Moran said, “which resulted in a decision that since we, the Department of Labor, are the employment arm, if you will, for the federal government, it rightfully should stay where we are.”

Moran also noted contracting issues and “a couple of technical glitches” also caused the website to go down for a short period, but as of Nov. 26, the website has been back online and fully accessible.

Moran said Labor Department officials believe the toolkits for employers that the website provides have factored into declining veteran unemployment.

“One of the indicators that we look at, that we believe lends itself to the fact that this website is working well for the employers, is that veteran unemployment continues to go down,” he said. “So there are many factors behind that, but one of the factors is, we believe, that employers are using this toolkit [and] they’re learning from it,” Moran said. “They’re more willing and able, then, to bring on the veterans, which is probably why we’re seeing the decline in the veteran unemployment rate.”

Moran noted that nonveterans also experience PTSD and other brain injuries, but that doesn’t preclude them from being effective contributors to the workforce.

In addition to giving employers toolkits and information about veteran disabilities, Moran said, the website also emphasizes the advantages of hiring veterans, whether they have these disabilities or not.

Officials are updating all of the information so there is one “holistic place for an employer to go,” Moran said.

“They’ll simply come to the DOL website,” he added, and “they’ll access this information, and they’ll learn about everything there is for the value of hiring a veteran, period.”



Officer Training School trainees participate in a baseline expeditionary leadership problems exercise during their third week of training at Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala., Oct. 3, 2012. This exercise required trainees to move as a group without verbally communicating. U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class William Blankenship

Whether a veteran has a disability won't be germane at that point, he said. "If they want to drill down further into 'Now, what do I need to know about the veteran who has disabilities?' then they can further access this information," he said. "So we are kind of putting it all in one place."

### **OTS Shortens Course Length, Increases Efficiency**

*Airman 1st Class William Blankenship*

*AIR UNIVERSITY PUBLIC AFFAIRS (DEC. 4, 2012)*

MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, Ala.—Beginning in January, the Air Force Officer Training School's Basic Officer Training course will be shortened by three weeks, officials announced Dec. 4.

Cutting the course from 12 weeks to nine weeks was the result of finding efficiencies in the course's scheduling processes and curriculum, said the OTS commandant.

"Our staff was able to adapt its operations and curriculum in several innovative ways to save money and airmen's time while still producing fully qualified and capable second lieutenants," said Col. Thomas Coglitore. "We've also beefed up our total force academics in order for our trainees to better understand the cultures between the active, Reserve and Air National Guard components."

The commandant said, shortening the course falls in line with Air Education and Training Command's cost-conscious culture initiative, or C3, which challenges AETC units to seek more efficient ways of using available resources.

"By developing and delivering qualified second lieutenants in a new way, we preserve our resources," he said.

Coglitore said estimated savings of about \$1.9 million may be gained from the change.

"There is a potential for much larger savings as the result of the decreased course length and an increase in the number of classes offered annually by allowing for a more efficient training pipeline flow," he said.

In fiscal 2012, OTS officials graduated 642 second lieutenants from its basic officer training course and are expected to graduate 1,055 new officers in fiscal 2013. BOT graduates both active-duty and Reserve line officers. OTS's officer production numbers fluctuate in response to variations between projected and actual Air Force Academy and Air Force ROTC accessions, and Air Force end-strength requirements.

"If we get hit with a national emergency and need to commission more officers quickly, OTS gives our nation the surge

capacity to do it, and this new construct increases our maximum capability," said Coglitore.

The syllabus is now pared down to the minimum necessary to fulfill federal commissioning standards.

"There are 116 tasks directed by Air Force instructions to commission someone as an officer and 10 more from the Joint Chiefs of Staff," he said. "I am comfortable that we are not lowering standards, but becoming more efficient with how we schedule and conduct the training."

Producing motivated officers of character who embody the American warrior ethos and are culturally aware, expeditionary minded, and prepared to lead is the mission of OTS. Blending those principals with the culture of cost consciousness in today's Air Force assures the future of air power, said Col. Scott Wiggins, OTS vice commandant.

"When things have been done a certain way for a long time, and while tradition is important, sometimes you have to weigh tradition versus progress," he said. "We always need to be willing to ask why do we do something a certain way and how can we do it better."

### **AF Names PhD Program Participants**

*Debbie Gildea*

*AIR FORCE PERSONNEL CENTER PUBLIC AFFAIRS (DEC. 4, 2012)*

JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO-RANDOLPH, Texas—Six Air Force company grade officers have been selected for the Chief of Staff's prestigious PhD program, Air Force Personnel Center officials said Nov. 4.

Three captains have been named primary selectees and are expected to begin their education program this fall, said Master Sgt. Teresa Dixon, Officer Developmental Education superintendent.

"Three alternates—two captains and a captain-select—have also been identified in case the primaries are unable to attend," she explained.

#### **Primary Selectees**

Capt. Paul Latour, Air Force Space Command

Capt. Craig Neuman, Air Force Special Operations Command

Capt. Paul Tisa, Air Mobility Command

#### **Alternate Selectees**

Capt. Joseph Brown, U.S. Air Force Academy

Capt. Levi Thomas, Air Force Research Laboratory

1st Lt. Erik Lin-Greenberg, Air Force Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Agency

Selections were based on academic experience and job performance, said Dixon.

"The program exists to identify promising officers early in their careers and begin the development that will help them become strong Air Force and joint leaders capable of broad strategic and critical thinking and decision-making," said Dixon.

For more information about this and other officer development opportunities, go to the myPers website at <https://mypers.af.mil>.

### **Leader Engagement Key to 'Bridging Basics,' Battaglia Says**

*Claudette Roulo*

*AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE (DEC. 4, 2012)*

WASHINGTON—Service members of all ranks and experience should know that they are the ones with the institutional knowledge needed to build a bridge between generations and develop the force of the future, the senior enlisted advisor to the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff said here today.

With the end of the war in Iraq and the ongoing drawdown in Afghanistan, the military is transforming itself into a leaner, more garrison-centric force, Marine Corps Sgt. Maj. Bryan B. Battaglia said in a roundtable discussion with reporters. That force—called "Joint Force 2020" in Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Army Gen. Martin E. Dempsey's Capstone Concept for Joint Operations—also will be highly agile and technologically capable.

These profound changes mark a return to military life that more closely resembles the pre-9/11 era, Battaglia said. However, he added, the idea that a "back to the basics" approach is necessary to address the transformation might be catchy, but it's incomplete.

"It removes ... a whole generation that has just a great source of innovative thinking ... that can help us be a better force," he explained.

A military of the future that relies solely on the training methods and standards of earlier generations won't be successful, he said. Rather, service members should "bridge the basics" by fusing those fundamentals that remain unchanged—for example, customs and courtesies and active leader engage-

ment—with ideas and technologies that have been proven over the past 11 years.

“Back to the basics implies ... that we’re taking you somewhere you’ve once been,” he said. It also implies that the knowledge of post-9/11 service members isn’t working, he added, or that it’s not as effective as it could be and therefore can be ignored.

Neither of these things is true of today’s military, Battaglia said. “We can’t just step back in time,” he added.

The way a peacetime military functions is very different from what service members who enlisted in the years following 9/11 have experienced, Battaglia said.

“Our military lifestyle and day-to-day living [consisted of] exercises and maybe peacetime sorts of operations, but for the most part, it was aboard the bases and the garrison,” he said. “We were able to keep ourselves occupied, proficient, ready, and relevant as a force.”

Service members of Battaglia’s generation trained for a war that they never fought, he said, as they served in a military built during the Cold War. “And that obviously changed in September of 2001,” he noted.

Practically overnight, the normal operational tempo transformed from “reset and dwell” to “over and back,” Battaglia said.

“Dwell time [at home stations became] nothing more than getting ready for the next deployment,” he said.

That caused some basic military skills to be temporarily shelved, Battaglia said.

Battaglia said he’s convinced that the military leaders of his generation can use their experience in a peacetime military to guide the current generation of warfighters through the transformation into Joint Force 2020. “It makes so much sense that instead of taking one ‘back to the basics’ or returning to the basics, we need a bridge,” he said.

“We feel that today’s generation of innovative thinkers and technologies allow both ‘basics’ to be very applicable to ... bringing our force to Joint Force 2020,” he said. Leaders need to use the knowledge of today’s generation of service members rather than alienating them, he said.

Key to the “bridging the basics” concept is active leadership engagement, something that can’t be replaced by technology, Battaglia said. Leaders at all levels must spend time

talking to their troops to not only evaluate what skills and knowledge they can contribute to the unit, but also to assess their well-being, he explained. The military needs to stay leadership-centric and technology-enabled, not technology-centric and leadership-enabled, he added.

“While we live with the e-mail and social media—that can still be utilized and utilized very effectively—[that] doesn’t have to be the sole source and sole way [to communicate],” he said.

As a doctrine, bridging the basics is still in its infancy stages, Battaglia said, noting he is working with the senior enlisted advisors from each Service and from the combatant commands to further develop and spread the idea.

“We have a generation of service members who have operational experience. ... I’m convinced that that’s going to bring more value to keeping our force trained and educated for whatever contingency may come up next,” he said. “Where we need to take it is into the educational institutions and the academies that our [service members] attend.”

### **Secretaries Seek Integrated Military, Veteran Support System**

*Terri Moon Cronk*

*AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE (DEC. 6, 2012)*

WASHINGTON—The secretaries of Defense and Veterans Affairs are partnering to build an integrated military and veteran support system, Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta said at a joint DoD-VA press conference at the Veterans Affairs Department here today.

Calling their departments’ collaboration “a national security issue in many ways,” Panetta said the agreements between DoD and VA “go to the heart of taking care of the people who fight for us, and ensure that we can recruit the very best force possible.”

He added that if service members, veterans, and their families are to get the kind of “seamless experience they deserve,” the jobs of the secretaries of Defense and Veterans Affairs are to “make clear that there has got to be good cooperation” at all levels.

“Our close partnership has never been more important than it is today,” Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric K. Shinseki said of his meeting with Panetta.

Based on guidance from President Barack Obama, the two departments are working on a revamped Transition Assistance Program, a joint electronic medical records system,

joint acquisitions decisions, better access to mental health programs, and disability claims, among other issues, the secretaries said.

"Today, our veterans wait too long for the benefits they deserve and that's why, together, we're streamlining our processes ... between our departments," Shinseki said.

Overall, the DoD and VA collaboration for building an integrated support system is not about turf, but about serving the nation's veterans.

"I'm very encouraged that the level of collaboration between our two departments is better than it ever has been in the past," Panetta said.

"Yet we still have to reach much deeper," he said. "We owe it to [service members and veterans] to give them the tools to put their lives back together and pursue their goals, whether it's getting a good education, the best health care, excelling in a new career, serving in our government, or starting a business.

"Today, we discussed a number of steps to try to get our departments to work together in a further enhanced DoD-

VA collaboration," Panetta continued. "In particular, our discussion focused on a redesigned Transition Assistance Program. The VOW to Hire Heroes Act of 2011 mandated that all service members participate in TAP [Transition Assistance Program] to prepare them for life after the military."

Shinseki said his department's support of DoD's revamped TAP, a presidential initiative, will create a "seamless and productive program that provides a warm hand-off from service member to new veteran status, to ensure all who have served are prepared to transition to civilian life and have access to the VA benefits and services they've earned."

Panetta said the new TAP is progressing well.

"We've got a large number of individuals in the military, and as we transition in these next few years in terms of our force structure, we will have a lot of people going into this system," the defense secretary said. "I'm delighted to report we are very satisfied with the requirements of the VOW Act having been fully tested in terms of effectiveness at all 206 installations, [it] is ready to go. We're on track to implement additional tracks for service members interested in education, technical training and entrepreneurship by October 2013."



Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta, right, holds a joint press conference with Veteran Affairs Secretary Eric K. Shinseki at the Veterans Affairs Building in Washington, D.C., Dec. 6, 2012. Panetta and Shinseki met before the press conference to discuss ways to help facilitate veteran disability claims and other issues.

DoD photo by Erin A. Kirk-Cuomo

Disability claims will also become more streamlined as the two departments work together, Panetta said.

“DoD has agreed in principle to conduct more detailed exit physicals for departing service members who are not immediately filing a VA disability claim,” he said. “That helps expedite the process so that we don’t have to go far back to their past to try to determine whether that claim is valid or not.”

With this information sharing, VA will have the health information it needs from DoD to more quickly process a claim, Panetta explained.

“Today, Secretary Shinseki and I agreed to develop a joint DoD-VA plan for accelerating the program to try to integrate our health care systems. We want to meet or beat the schedule we’ve established as targets,” the defense secretary said. “We’ve asked for the plan to be presented to us by early January. We’ve got to do everything we can to move this on a more expeditious path.”

Improved mental health service access is expected to be presented to the president as a joint recommendation by the two departments by the end of February 2013, he said. Panetta expressed his concern over the rate of suicide among military members and veterans.

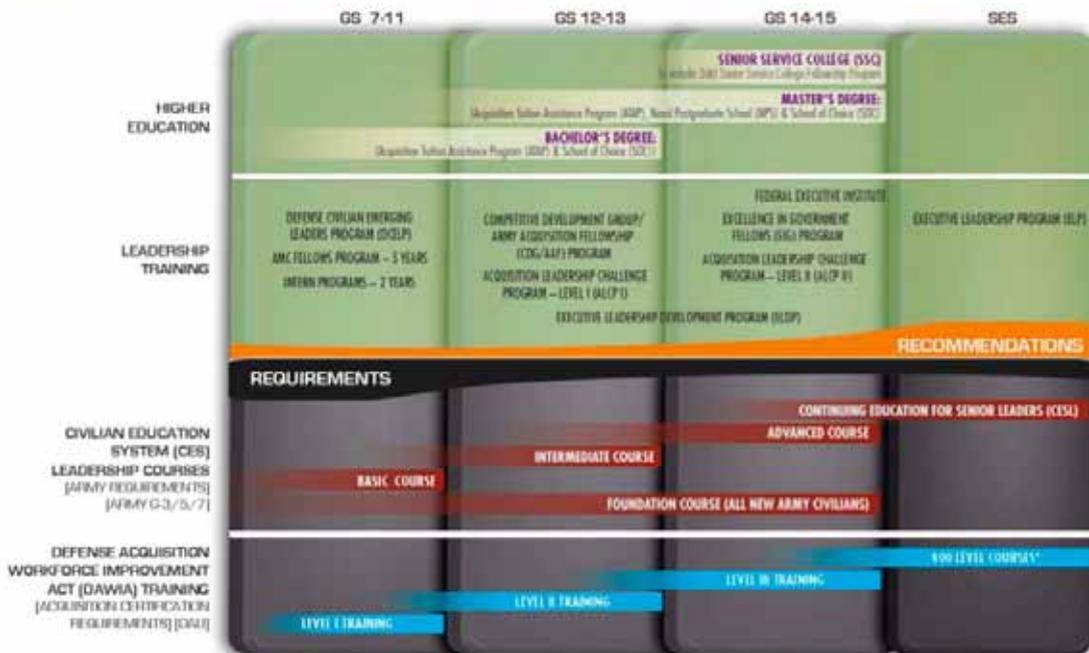
“It’s a terrible challenge that we are dealing with, and we have got to do everything we can between DoD and the VA to ensure our systems are equipped to give our people the help they need to deal with these unique circumstances,” he said.

Panetta applauded the work of health care professionals who treat service members, veterans, and families, and also recognized warfighters.

“America’s men and women in uniform put their lives on the line every day to keep this country safe. We owe it to those who fight for us to fight for them,” the defense secretary said. “Programs to help our warriors were developed out of the best intentions, but too often they fall victim to red tape, bureaucracy, and intransigence.”

## ARMY ACQUISITION CIVILIAN LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PLAN

VISIT THE ACE CAREERS FOR MORE INFORMATION:  
<http://vac.army.mil/web/careerdevelopment/programs/qualifier-education-training-and-experiences/>



U.S. Army image

"We, as secretaries of Defense and Veterans Affairs, deeply believe that we can and we will do better," he continued, "and we will accept nothing less than the best services that we can provide for those who serve this country."

### **Army Acquisition Civilian Leadership Development Plan**

*U.S. ARMY ACQUISITION SUPPORT CENTER (DEC. 10, 2012)*

The Office of the Army Director of Acquisition Career Management (DACM) recently published its first leadership development plan for civilians. Unfortunately, there is not one clear path for civilians. Unlike the military, civilians can/will take hundreds of different routes in their quest for upward mobility. This plan is meant to serve as a guide for all levels of the Army acquisition workforce. Using this model, each workforce member may see what the training requirements are at each level. In addition, they may also use this plan to identify desired training opportunities available at upper levels. Take some time to review programs of interest to you, include those programs of interest on your Individual Development Plan (IDP), and discuss with your supervisor.

The model is broken into four sections (from bottom to top):

1. Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act/Defense Acquisition University (DAU) Training—functional REQUIRED training from left to right from Level I through 400 Level courses.
2. Continuing Education System (CES) Leadership Courses—Army G-3/5/7 REQUIRED courses from left to right from Foundation Course, Basic, Intermediate, Advanced, and Continuing Education are for Senior Leaders depending on your rank.
3. Leadership Training—Includes all the leadership opportunities available in the Army Education, Training and Experience (AETE) portfolio as well as a few DoD and U.S. Army Materiel Command programs.
4. Higher Education—Bachelor, Master's Degrees as well as Senior Service Colleges (SSC) and SSC Fellowships (SSCF). Shown on the preceding page is an image of the Development Plan; however, you may view the full version and download a hyperlinked copy at: <http://asc.army.mil/career-development/civilian/career-planning-steps/>.

### **DoD Releases Revised Tuition Assistance Memorandum of Understanding**

*DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE NEWS RELEASE (DEC. 6, 2012)*

The Department of Defense (DoD) released a revised Tuition Assistance Memorandum of Understanding (TA MOU) today, which includes input from universities and reflects many of the president's Principles of Excellence.

DoD will implement the policy March 1, 2013, requiring an institution to have a signed DoD MOU in order to be eligible to participate in the TA Program. After March 1, 2013, schools without a signed DoD MOU will not be able to enroll service members under the TA program until they have signed the MOU. Institutions with a currently signed DoD MOU can compare both versions and select to retain the original DoD MOU or sign the revised DoD MOU.

The current version of the MOU provides information, support, and increased protections to service members; strengthens oversight, enforcement, and accountability; and provides guidelines for educational institutions receiving military TA funding. The MOU ensures all service members participating in off-duty, postsecondary education programs receive quality education programs uniformly via the classroom or distance learning, on or off military installations. During fiscal 2011, approximately 549,000 service members participated in voluntary education programs, which included tuition assistance, adult-based education, and counseling. More than 325,000 service members were enrolled in postsecondary courses earning almost 45,000 college degrees and approximately 530 certifications and licenses.

DoD's voluntary education program consists of 245 education sites worldwide, including Afghanistan.

To view the MOU, go to <http://www.dodmou.com>.

### **DoD Clarifies Post-secondary Education Expectations**

*Amaani Lyle*

*AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE (DEC. 6, 2012)*

WASHINGTON—The Defense Department has issued new policy guidelines intended to provide better protection for members of the military and veterans who seek tuition assistance for post-secondary degrees.

The department's revised voluntary education partnership policy specifies the expectations and agreements that colleges, universities, and technical schools must adhere to in order to receive DoD underwriting, said Carolyn Baker, chief of voluntary education for DoD's military community family and policy office.

The guidelines, part of a new memorandum of understanding, "ensure certain protections for military members [so] that they have a quality education," she added.

Tuition assistance is a benefit available to Guardsmen, Reservists, active duty members, and veterans allowing a degree from a Department of Education-accredited college or university.

To receive it, participating institutions must sign the MOU, and provide the student with clear information about financial procedures, course information, and graduation rates.

"[The MOU] protects service members in providing them with information so a service member can make a wise choice as to the institution [they attend]," Baker said. "We ask that all institutions provide service members with an education plan that states [course requirements] and evaluates credits earned at other schools [so] the service member can move forward and actually obtain their degree."

The new guidelines clarify oversight, enforcement, and accountability for educational institutions receiving military tuition assistance, Baker said.

Currently, about 2,000 institutions participate in the tuition assistance program, and Baker said she encourages more to do the same.

The overall initiative supports the executive order establishing the President's "Principles of Excellence," Baker said. Those were issued in response to reports of aggressive and deceptive targeting of service members, veterans, and their families by some educational institutions after the Post-9/11 GI Bill became law.

The guidelines pertain only to institutions accepting Title 4 funding, Baker said.

### **AFMC Continues Education Focus with "Year of the Graduate"**

*AIR FORCE MATERIEL COMMAND PUBLIC AFFAIRS (JAN. 17, 2013)  
Kim Dawley*

WRIGHT-PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Ohio—Building on the success of its "Year of the Community College of the Air Force" campaign in 2011 and "Year of Continuing Education" campaign in 2012, Air Force Materiel Command rolled out a plan for the "Year of the Graduate" Jan. 1, 2013.

The Year of the Graduate, or YoGrad, will still emphasize continuing education across the command, but will also recognize those who have completed degrees during this three-phase education campaign.

Efforts from the Year of the CCAF resulted in 1,685 graduates at AFMC bases, the most in the history of the command. The number of AFMC's enlisted airmen with a CCAF degree went from 24 percent to nearly 30 percent in just one year—more than double the command's goal of a 10 percent increase. With the Year of Continuing Education, the command achieved another 10 percent overall increase, this time at all levels of education rather than just CCAF degrees.

The goal of YoGrad is to inspire those considering or currently working on an education plan to start, continue, or complete that plan. Along the way, the campaign will recognize members of the AFMC workforce who have completed a degree program during the two previous campaigns—or do so during YoGrad.

Chief Master Sgt. Michael Warner, AFMC command chief, describes the YoGrad campaign as an excellent way to conclude the three-year focus on education initiatives.

"The first two campaigns were very successful," he said. "We want to follow through on that momentum, and we also want to recognize the outstanding efforts of the AFMC workforce."

According to Senior Master Sgt. John Parris, MAJCOM Secretary of Education, the same structure developed for the previous two campaigns will continue to be used.

"Degree completion at all levels will be the focus, with the goal of an overall 10 percent increase across the command," he said. "Peer mentoring will be a key aspect of YoGrad, the Secretaries of Education will continue to guide and monitor the campaign at their respective installations, and Voluntary Education personnel will work with the on-base schools."

For more information about the Year of the Graduate campaign—and to read the monthly "My Educational Journey" series—visit [www.afmc.af.mil/library/featuredtopical-archieve/YoGrad.asp](http://www.afmc.af.mil/library/featuredtopical-archieve/YoGrad.asp).