

### Transition from NSPS to AcqDemo for Selected AT&L Populations

The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010 (NDAA 2010) requires DoD to transition all employees from the National Security Personnel System. NDAA 2010 required NSPS positions to be returned to the personnel system that last applied. For approximately 14,000 employees across all DoD Components, that system was the DoD Civilian Acquisition Workforce Demonstration Project (AcqDemo). In addition, AcqDemo authority was due to expire on Sept. 30, 2012, but the recent signing of the NDAA 2011 provided extension of AcqDemo until Sept. 30, 2017, so the stage is set for demonstrating the value of this personnel system design in the acquisition business environment.

The AcqDemo Program Office stood up early in 2010 and has been working diligently with the NSPS Transition Office and DoD Component program managers to coordinate transition plans and reestablish policies and procedures. The program office, which is within the office of the director, Human Capital Initiatives, office of the under secretary of defense for acquisition, technology and logistics, is a part of the Fort Belvoir Defense Acquisition University community.

The AcqDemo Program Office is prepared to convert affected employees across the DoD Components and the 4th Estate from NSPS to AcqDemo on May 22, 2011. Transition guidance and transition readiness checklists have been distributed to affected transition teams. Several vehicles for communicating transition guidance are in place. The AcqDemo website at [www.acq.osd.mil/dpap/ops/acqdemo.html](http://www.acq.osd.mil/dpap/ops/acqdemo.html) continues to be updated to contain both the information on AcqDemo basics from years ago as well as current updates on transition information. Also hosted at the AcqDemo website is (1) a tutorial along with other resources for gaining a greater knowledge of AcqDemo's initiatives, and (2) a monthly newsletter, *AcqDemo Contributions*, which provides transition updates along with articles of interest to the acquisition workforce.

In addition, the AcqDemo Program Office has established a training plan to reach all affected populations before the May 22, 2011, conversion date. The office is providing training on-site throughout the DoD Component organizations. Targeted training for employees, supervisors, human resources professionals, and senior leaders is ongoing. Look for future training to be offered covering AcqDemo's performance management system and the Contribution-based Compensation and Appraisal System (CCAS).

The AcqDemo Program Office's ultimate goal is to demonstrate the value of the AcqDemo design and prove that it

should become a permanent alternative personnel system. The office's immediate goal, however, is to effect a smooth transition from NSPS to AcqDemo.

For answers to questions about transitioning to AcqDemo, contact Human Resources or the local transition team. For additional assistance, e-mail the AcqDemo Program Office helpdesk at [AcqDemo.Helpdesk@dau.mil](mailto:AcqDemo.Helpdesk@dau.mil).

### Classes Aim to Spark Interest in Science, Technology

AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE (MARCH 30, 2011)

Elaine Sanchez

WASHINGTON—From robotics engineering to gaming technology, Defense Department school officials are hoping their new, cutting-edge courses will spark a lifelong passion for science and technology in their students.

Under a new science, technology, engineering, and math initiative, Department of Defense Education Activity officials will roll out four innovative classes in a limited number of DoD high schools in the fall, with plans for a wider scale launch to follow if the program proves successful.

The courses are robotics engineering, biotechnology engineering, gaming technology, and green technology engineering.

"We want to give our kids the best opportunities possible when they leave our organization," said Mark Bignell, DODEA's chief of arts information and careers branch. "At least to say, 'I have the background and I have the desire to go into one of these fields of study that is of national importance.'"

Bignell said he's excited to see this initiative come to fruition after a nearly two-year effort. In 2009, a task group brought together teachers, administrators, and counselors from throughout DODEA to revitalize 60 courses. They determined that to make students more competitive in this job market, officials needed to fill a large gap.

"This was the entire STEM [science, technology, engineering, and math] collection," he said.

Since that time, STEM education has gained traction in the media through high-profile efforts such as the president's "Race to the Top" initiative, Bignell noted. Officials also have come forward and called the lack of potential candidates a national emergency. Yet, the fastest growing occupations through 2018 are engineering and computer and technology professions, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

## **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.*

"We need to put more kids in STEM fields," Bignell said. "We're not keeping up with engineers and scientists, as they are in other competitive countries."

One of the main goals of DODEA's STEM initiative is to give underserved populations and females more opportunities to get involved in these types of courses, Bignell said, noting this mirrors a national goal.

"You have to start very early," he said. "Data show that if you haven't reached a girl in the 6th grade in science, you've lost her; she's not going to have the interest."

Bignell said DODEA's STEM initiative will be a truly collaborative effort, causing teachers to reach beyond classroom walls to draw from expert knowledge within the military community.

"The whole philosophy behind a proper STEM education is an integrated approach," he said. "We have a military community with members who are experts in every one of these fields on practically every one of our bases."

Teachers also will draw on one another's knowledge to help, he noted. For example, a biotechnology engineering teacher in Quantico, Va., and a teacher in Vicenza, Italy, already have established a working relationship through avenues such as e-mail and an electronic blackboard, he said. The Quantico-based teacher has a background in professional technical studies, but is lacking the biology knowledge that the Vicenza-based teacher can provide.

"We're expecting teachers to integrate and do some true team teaching—even if it's across the ocean," Bignell said.

"This is very forward-thinking methodology," he added. "We're really trying to break down walls and get people to understand that communities are the ones that are going to make this program successful, and it can't be done when confined to classroom alone."

Courses also will remain as flexible as possible to enable teachers to tackle topics that may not be within their immediate realm, Bignell said, citing the biotechnology course as an example. The course can be taught by a math, biology, career, technical, or science teacher, he explained.

Course content also remains flexible, he noted. For example, rather than dictate the games to create, gaming technology course teachers have the flexibility to decide which game, whether math or problem solving, will best equip their students with 21st century skills.

"Obviously, it won't just be kids having war games with each other," he said.

Course flexibility also enables students to follow different pathways or career clusters, Bignell said. Some students, for example, can choose a hands-on track while others can take on more of an academic approach, setting their sights on college readiness or a medical career field.

While this initiative is designed for high school students, Bignell said, the long-term goal is to stretch the preparation for this type of coursework down to pre-kindergarten students.

"The way we would do that is by allowing our kids the opportunity in the future to have a different kind of rigorous instruction where they work more with a problem-based education," he said. "We have to train students to have that kind of flexibility where they can adapt to different, changing situations."

"We are going to be experimenting with contemporary methodologies that we believe have to be implemented in order to give our kids chances of success in the 21st century," he added.

Bignell said he hopes DODEA's example will spread to public schools and positively affect military children attending school there. The majority of military youth, he noted, attend public schools.

"Education has to change," he said. "And the way we educate kids has to change. We're hoping to be a leader and a model if someone chooses to look."

Based partially on the available talent pool, officials will chose 11 schools worldwide to initially test the program, Bignell said. The following courses will be available at the high schools listed:

- Robotics engineering: Lakenheath High School in England, Wiesbaden High School in Germany, and Kinnick High School in Japan;
- Biotechnology engineering: Vicenza High School in Italy and Quantico High School in Virginia;
- Gaming technology: Kinnick High School, Daegu High School in South Korea and Aviano High School in Italy; and
- Green technology: Kubasaki High School in Japan, Baumholder High School in Germany, and Fort Campbell High School in Kentucky.

"We really have to do something, and I'm really proud we're stepping up to the plate," Bignell said.

### **EBIS Launches Online Retirement Tool**

*AIR FORCE PERSONNEL, SERVICES AND MANPOWER PUBLIC AFFAIRS (APRIL 4, 2011)*

RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE, Texas—The Employee Benefits Information System launched a Web tool March 31 that will allow Air Force appropriated fund civilian employees to accomplish additional benefits-related actions online, such as retirement planning.

The eRetirement tool is the latest of many tools implemented by the Air Force Personnel Center Benefits and Entitlements Service Team to improve the customer service experience. The tool will help retiring civilian airmen complete and print retirement applications online.

“The eRetirement tool will eliminate the worry and the guesswork often associated with completing a retirement application,” said Kathryn Lapichino, an AFPC human resources specialist. “It auto-populates the retirement form, prompting users to complete sections such as health and life insurance eligibility, military service, and marital status.

“It also helps prevent re-work because eRetirement will not allow a user [to continue to] a new screen until all required fields are complete,” she added.

Employees will be able to access the eRetirement module in EBIS through the Air Force Portal or the Air Force personnel services website (enter 4872 in the keyword search).

In addition, members can contact the Total Force Service Center at 800-525-0102. Employees in foreign locations will first dial the toll-free country-direct access number and then 800-525-0102. Hearing impaired employees can call the toll-free TDD number: 800-382-0893 or commercial 210-565-2276. Counselors are available (Central Standard Time) Sundays 3 p.m.- 11 p.m.; Mondays through Thursdays, 7 a.m.- 11 p.m.; and Fridays 7 a.m.- 6 p.m.

For information on other personnel issues, go to the personnel services website or call the Total Force Service Center at 800-525-0102.

### **Air Force Officials Announce Civilian Strategic Leader Program Assignments**

*AIR FORCE NEWS SERVICE (APRIL 18, 2011)*

WASHINGTON—Air Force officials here April 18 announced the placement of the Air Force’s newest senior leaders into command-equivalent positions as part of the Civilian Strategic Leader Program.

The CSLP creates multi-skilled GS-14, GS-15, or equivalent-level civilian leaders who navigate complex environments in the most challenging and critical leadership positions, officials said.

According to Angela Kravetz, the Air Force CSLP chief, the program is composed of four interrelated, but separate areas.

“The areas of director assignment, senior leader education, senior leader experiential management, and senior leader execution and program support synchronize to enhance the overall development of a segment of the civilian strategic workforce,” Kravetz said.

The CSLP director assignment process is used to select candidates with the best performance records and the highest potential for success for command-equivalent leadership positions throughout the Air Force, Kravetz explained. Director assignment provides a systematic, merit-based process for filling wing and group director and deputy director positions.

The inaugural CSLP Director Screening Board, consisting of civilian and military senior leaders, convened Sept. 16, 2010, and identified candidates for current command-equivalent positions.

Aside from the stringent eligibility criteria, the DSB screened for high-quality leadership performance, progression, quality of supervisory experience, and advanced education, Kravetz said.

The Air Force chief of staff approved the screened applicants to advance to the major command bidding process, Kravetz said, adding that screened applicants were then matched to command-equivalent positions.

“The process is similar to the colonels’ command selection board process for the O-6 force,” Kravetz said. “This will enable total force succession planning for all director and command-equivalent positions.”

Like the command selection board, DA positions are highly selective and are filled only with candidates who demonstrate they have potential to serve in more challenging jobs, said Tim Beyland, the assistant deputy chief of staff for manpower, personnel, and services.

“As chair of the DSB, I commend the efforts of the [major commands], the Air Force Personnel Center, and the career field stakeholders for making this year’s board a success and

laying the groundwork for a successful recruitment campaign,” Beyland said.

The senior leaders and their new assignments are:

- Joann Berrett, the 327th Aircraft Sustainment Wing deputy director at Tinker Air Force Base, Okla.
- David E. Edwards, the deputy director for installation support at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev.
- Ellen Griffith, the 402nd Commodities Maintenance Group director at Robins Air Force Base, Ga.
- Albert Griggs Jr., the 350th Electrical Systems Wing deputy director at Hanscom Air Force Base, Mass.
- Paul D. Kube, the 508th Aerospace Sustainment Wing deputy director at Hill Air Force Base, Utah
- Edwin P. McDermott, the 866th Aeronautical Systems Group director at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio
- Steven T. Rose, the deputy director for installation support at Cheyenne Mountain Air Force Station, Colo.
- Tanya L. Strauss, the deputy director for installation support at Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii
- Jackie R. Tillery, the deputy director for installation support at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas
- Scott D. Warren, the enterprise information systems deputy director at Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala.
- Steven M. Zuniga, the deputy director for installation support at Misawa Air Base, Japan.

### **Civilian Career Tips Are Focus of Upcoming Webcasts**

*AIR FORCE PERSONNEL, SERVICES AND MANPOWER PUBLIC AFFAIRS (APRIL 25, 2011)*

*Debbie Gildea*

RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE, Texas—Civilian airmen will learn how to plan for their next job, how education affects their careers, and more during webcasts in May and June tailored for specific grade-groups.

Hosted by representatives of the Air Force Personnel Center civilian force integration directorate, the webcasts support the Air Force commitment to developing airmen, said Loretta Brown, the leadership development program office chief.

“The Air Force deliberately develops all airmen to ensure they are able to fully contribute to the mission and achieve their own career goals,” Brown said. “These webcasts will help civilian airmen understand their growth options and enable them to plan their careers.”

Civilian institutional development programs exist at every leadership level in a “continuum of learning” created in 2009 to ensure civilians have opportunities to achieve necessary proficiency levels. In support of that continuum, the webcasts will focus specifically on what people in three grade groups need to know.

May 12 webcasts will be tailored to GS-14 and GS-15 employees. May 26 information will be for GS-12 and GS-13 employees, and June 21 webcasts will be for GS-7 through GS-11 airmen. Supervisors also are encouraged to listen in so that they are able to assist and support their employees’ development plans. Subject matter experts will be online to provide real-time answers to questions during the 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. central time webcasts.

To join the webcast, go to <https://connect.dco.dod.mil/dpi>. Those registered with the Defense Connect Online tool will use their user names and passwords to log in, but participants can log in as guests as well. Login will be available 30 minutes prior to the webcast, and those who log in as guests must provide their names and bases to be invited to the session.

Some computers may not run the program, which requires Adobe® Flash Player 8. To ensure they have access, those who plan to participate should test their configuration at [https://connect.dco.dod.mil/common/help/en/support/meeting\\_test.htm](https://connect.dco.dod.mil/common/help/en/support/meeting_test.htm).

For more information about civilian education and development opportunities or other personnel issues, visit the Air Force Personnel Services website at <https://gum-crm.csd.disa.mil/app/home>, or call the Total Force Service Center at 800-525-0102 or DSN 665-5000.