

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, 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	OFFERING TYPE (ALCP I or II)	LOCATION
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.

Naval Postgraduate School Master’s of Science in Program Management

U.S. ARMY ACQUISITION SUPPORT CENTER (MARCH 22, 2013)

The announcement for the Naval Postgraduate School Master’s of Science in Program Management will be open through May 13, 2013, to all eligible personnel in GS-11 through GS-15 or broadband/pay band-equivalent positions who have met their current position certification requirement. While it is not in Monterey, Calif., this distance learning program will provide required DAU training in program management (as well as other career field courses) to graduate with a master’s. For more information, go to: <http://asc.army.mil/web/career-development/programs/naval-postgraduate-school-master-of-science-in-program-management/>.

VETS2013

The Veteran Entrepreneur Training Symposium (VETS) will be held June 10-13, 2013, at the Silver Legacy Hotel in Reno, Nev. VETS2013 is a Business Development Conference created by Veterans for Veterans. The goal is to provide the knowledge and relationships needed for veterans to transition into business owners to service the federal government. The symposium agenda is crafted by veterans already doing business with the federal government—veteran entrepreneurs who have walked in your shoes. VETS2013 will bring together federal agencies, prime contractors, and veterans to discuss how to take full advantage of the federally mandated contracting opportunities set aside specifically for veteran-owned small businesses. VETS2013 is focused on one thing—the success of Veteran-owned Small Businesses.

Will you be a part of the conversation? Register online at <http://www.veterantrainingsymposium.com/index.php/event-hotel>.

Excellence in Government Fellowship (EIGF)

U.S. ARMY ACQUISITION SUPPORT CENTER (MARCH 22, 2013)

The Excellence in Government Fellowship (EIGF) announcement will be open from June 13 – July 15, 2013, to all eligible personnel in GS-13 – GS-15 or broadband/pay band-equivalent positions who have met their current position certification requirement. EIGF offers senior acquisition workforce members the opportunity to network and team with fellow senior leaders from across the government. This program focuses on benchmarking best practices and then returning to your organization to implement them. For more information, go to: <http://asc.army.mil/web/career-development/programs/excellence-in-government-fellows-program/>.

AF Implements Voluntary FY13 Force Management Programs

AIR FORCE PERSONNEL CENTER PUBLIC AFFAIRS (FEB. 4, 2013)

Debbie Gildea

JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO-RANDOLPH, Texas—The Air Force will implement several voluntary officer and enlisted force management programs for fiscal year 2013, Air Force Personnel Center officials announced today.

Announced in the January release of the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal 2013, the authorized active duty Air Force end-strength is 329,460—a reduction of 3,340 authorized personnel from fiscal 2012. In order to meet congressionally mandated end-strength by Sept. 30, the Air Force will continue executing its multi-year force management strategy, said Lt. Col. Letitia Marsh, Headquarters Air Force Separation and Retirement Policy Branch chief.

For officers, voluntary measures will be offered in certain year groups and overage career fields to allow for time in grade waivers for eligible lieutenant colonels, limited active duty service commitment waivers, Palace Chase transfers to the Air National Guard or Air Force Reserve, and the 10 to 8 Commissioned Years of Service Waiver program.

For enlisted members, voluntary programs open to airmen who are not in critical specialties include limited active-duty service commitment and time-in-grade waivers, waivers to enlistment contracts, and Palace Chase transfers to the Air National Guard or Air Force Reserve.

All applications must be submitted, via the virtual MPF, by Aug. 1, 2013. **Approved separations must be complete by**

Sept. 29, and those approved to retire must do so by Sept. 1, 2013.

Voluntary force management program applicants may be required to repay the Air Force for monetary value of an active duty service commitment incurring event, depending on the program.

"For example, airmen approved for Palace Chase transfers to the Air National Guard or Air Force Reserve will not have to repay the Service for such benefits as tuition assistance or transfer of Post 9/11 GI Bill benefits under most circumstances," said Maj. Michael Meek, Air Force Personnel Center Retirements and Separations Branch chief. "But airmen need to carefully read the information on each program to ensure they understand which active duty service commitment waivers require repayment."

Although all airmen may apply, some active duty service commitment waivers will not be approved, including those incurred for undergraduate and advanced pilot training, Meek said.

Force management programs enable the Air Force to reduce overmanned fields in order to better utilize Air Force resources.

"As we execute this year's voluntary force management strategy, the Air Force will continue to assess the need for additional voluntary and involuntary force management measures in order to meet authorized end strength levels in current and future fiscal years," Marsh said.

Airmen who transition through a force management program are eligible for, and highly encouraged to attend, the new five-day Transition Assistance Program workshop, Marsh said. The program offers significant assistance to help people prepare for post-military life. In addition to resume development, job-hunting tips, education counseling, and networking support, the new program offers one-on-one counseling to help airmen develop comprehensive individual transition plans.

Full eligibility requirements and application procedures for officer and enlisted programs are available on the myPers website at <https://mypers.af.mil>. Enter PSDM 13-09 in the search window for officer FM programs and PSDM 13-10 for enlisted programs.

USTRANSCOM Offers Civilian Exchange Development Program

U.S. TRANSPORTATION COMMAND PUBLIC AFFAIRS (MARCH 18, 2013)

Bob Fehringer

SCOTT AIR FORCE BASE, Ill.—Broaden your professional skills.

Enhance your leadership abilities. Get out of your daily grind, and experience a change of scenery. Accomplish all this while assuring the U.S. Transportation Command, its components, and the Department of Defense that you are truly worthy of the country's investment in your future.

Sound like a recruiting brochure?

Well, in a way it is, and if you are a GS 12 or GS 13 logistician at USTRANSCOM, Air Mobility Command, or Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command read on, for this could be your chance of a lifetime, or at least a chance to broaden your horizons.

USTRANSCOM has partnered with AMC and SDDC to create a local Civilian Exchange Development program. It offers a unique opportunity to non-supervisory GS 12/13 logisticians for voluntary one-year rotational assignments throughout the commands.

Barry Smithey, USTRANSCOM Strategy, Policy, Programs and Logistics directorate, is the Civilian Exchange Development program manager.

"The pilot program was developed in mid-2012 and announced in December," Smithey said. "It is for non-supervisory employees in either logistics or transportation series at GS 12 or 13 grade levels. After that, it is possible the program will open to other functional career fields."

According to Smithey, many highly qualified employees from USTRANSCOM and the components volunteered and seven were chosen for the initial program. It will run from March 2013 to March 2014.

Sue Kennedy from USTRANSCOM, Command Control, Communication and Cyber Systems directorate, is one of the participants. She will be working at SDDC as a logistics management specialist.

"I volunteered because I wanted to both refresh my logistics and transportation skills and expand my breadth of experience in the logistics and transportation arena," Kennedy said, "with knowledge of how SDDC solves logistics and transportation issues for the Army."

"My transportation career started in AMC before I took an assignment at USTRANSCOM," Kennedy continued. "The exchange program allowed me to complete the circle of knowledge by providing me the opportunity to learn SDDC's way of doing business from the inside. When I return to USTRANSCOM in a year, I will be better able to serve the command with this enhanced understanding."

Jennifer Meurer, originally from SDDC, likes the challenge of her new position and more.

"I enjoy learning new things, and discovering how everyone's role fits into the 'big picture,'" Meurer said. "I believe that working in a completely different environment will not only expand my skill-set, but will also help me realize the significance of my role and how everyone's contributions in USTC and the component commands are genuinely vital in achieving mission success."

Michael Clover, AMC air transportation operation specialist, now working at USTRANSCOM Operations and Planning directorate, summed it all up. "This is a super, once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to learn and grow professionally."

"Command leadership anticipates another announcement going out in October 2013 for next year's program," Smithey said. "All interested/qualified applicants are encouraged to apply when the job announcement is posted on SharePoint, USTRANSCOM Portal, SDDC website, and sent out by e-mail at AMC 90 days prior to the current exchange completion."

An announcement will be posted Oct. 1, 2013, for the next exchange."

Joint Service Transcript Replaces SMART
DANTES AND NAVAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING COMMAND PUBLIC AFFAIRS (MARCH 20, 2013)
PENSACOLA, Fla.—The Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES) announced March 20 that the Navy, Marine Corps, Army, and Coast Guard are moving to one standard academic transcript to reflect military academic credit recommendations.

The Sailor Marine Corps American Council on Education Registry Transcript (SMART), the Army American Coun-



Air Force Lt. Gen. Kathleen M. Gainey, deputy commander, U.S. Transportation Command confers with Brian Lilly, 618th Air and Space Operations Center (Tanker Airlift Control Center), and other participants in the Civilian Exchange Career Development Program Feb. 25.

Photo by Bob Fehringer, USTRANSCOM/PA

cil on Education Registry Transcript System (AARTS), and the Coast Guard Institute (CGI) were aligned to implement one collaborative transcript program, now called the Joint Services Transcript (JST). With this collaboration, service members and veterans have one officially recognized military transcript.

The JST is now the official transcript tool for Army, Marine Corps, Navy, and Coast Guard personnel that validates and documents the recommended college credits for professional military education, training courses, and occupational experience of service members and veterans. This unified and standardized document makes it easier for institutions to review and articulate these credits as appropriate to service members and veterans degree programs.

"Having a single officially recognized military transcript makes it significantly easier for colleges and universities to assess potential credits for service members," said DANTES Director Dr. Carol Berry. "This official transcript system is a huge development in the military higher education arena and will most certainly enhance the educational experience for service members and veterans as they pursue their college education."

The JST document will contain the following information for individual service members:

Career Development

- Military branch-specific seal (Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard) Note: The Air Force utilizes the Community College of the Air Force for its transcripts.
- Service member data
- Course completions
- Occupational affiliations
- Credentialing (certifications and or licenses)
- Military experience
- Summary page
- Academic course page (Coast Guard, Marine Corps, and Navy only)
- College Degrees (Coast Guard, Marine Corps and Navy only)

"The JST was officially announced at the recent Council of College and Military Educators conference," added Berry. "The merger of AARTS, SMART, and CGI to a 'purple' or 'joint' transcript under a single name and program is a major accomplishment for the Military Voluntary Education Program and was enthusiastically supported by institutions, conference attendees and other stakeholders."

The Navy, Marine Corps, and Army JST are currently available online at: <https://jst.doded.mil>.

"While the official transition date for Coast Guard is yet to be determined, we are confident that Coast Guardsmen will soon be able to order their JST too," said Berry.

Under contract with the DANTEs, the American Council on Education (ACE) conducts and facilitates the rigorous academic review of military courses and occupations. These credit recommendations form the academic basis for colleges and universities to consider toward degree requirements, with more than 2,300 colleges and universities recognizing the JST as official documentation of military training and experiences with applicable ACE credit recommendations.

ACE, along with JST Operations representatives from the participating Services and DANTEs, recently began the JST webinar series entitled: "Using the Joint Service Transcript (JST) to Help Build a Bridge to Success." Interested service members who would like to join upcoming webinar sessions can register at <https://acenetevents.webex.com/>.

For additional information and discussion about the JST, contact Laurine Anderson, JST Program Manager by e-mail: jst@doded.mil or call 850-452-1001, Opt 3, Ext. 1097. For more information about the Military Evaluations Program through ACE, contact Sandra Winborne, by e-mail:

DANTES_ace@navy.mil or by telephone at 850-452-1111 Ext 3213.

For more information about all of the programs offered by DANTEs, visit the website at http://www.dantes.doded.mil/DANTES_Homepage.html.

For more news from Naval Education and Training Command, visit <http://www.navy.mil/local/cnet/>.

Armyhire.com Named Army's Best Website

ARMY CONTRACTING COMMAND (MARCH 20, 2013)

Edward G. Worley

REDSTONE ARSENAL, Ala.—Armyhire.com, Army Contracting Command's recruiting website, has been named the Army's best website, the Army announced, March 19.

Armyhire.com is a collaborative effort involving the staffs of the Army Contracting Command, or ACC, chief information officer G6, deputy chief of staff, Human Capital G1, and Public Affairs.

"This is awesome," said Maj. Gen. Camille M. Nichols, ACC commanding general. "I'm especially proud because this award speaks volumes about the professionalism of our staffs and how they work together to produce amazing products in support of our mission. I couldn't be more thrilled."

The Armyhire.com team consists of Tracy Phillips and contractor Laura Lind, ACC G6; Chrissa Hall and Mary Woodward, ACC G1; and Beth Clemons, ACC Public and Congressional Affairs.

Armyhire.com will now compete in the Thomas Jefferson Award competition for Department of Defense military and civilian print and broadcast products. The annual contest is sponsored by the Defense Media Activity and the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs to stimulate and reward excellence and professionalism in DoD print and broadcast media.

The Maj. Gen. Keith L. Ware Public Affairs Awards communication competition recognizes soldiers and Army civilian employees for excellence in furthering the objectives of the Army public affairs program. The Secretary of the Army sponsors this competition annually. The Office of the Chief of Public Affairs conducts judging with a goal of ensuring the best internal information efforts receive recognition for professional excellence and outstanding achievement.

Ware, who as a lieutenant colonel was awarded the Medal of Honor in 1945 for combat action in Germany, served as

the deputy chief and chief of Information for the Army—now the Office of the Chief of Public Affairs—from September 1964 through November 1967.

New OER Means Fewer Boxes, More Accountability for Raters

ARMY NEWS SERVICE (MARCH 21, 2013)

C. Todd Lopez

WASHINGTON—By December, officers will be rated under a new evaluation system—one that is designed to both strengthen rater accountability and reflect current Army leadership doctrine.

The new system will affect officers in all branches and all components of the Army, said Maj. Gen. Rick Mustion, commander, Army Human Resources Command. Additionally, he said the new Officer Evaluation Report, or OER, system will be preceded by deployment of mobile training teams Army-wide to help officers become accustomed to the new system.

One change to the OER is emphasis on a clear delineation of responsibilities between raters and senior raters, Mustion said.

“Raters discuss performance, and senior raters discuss potential,” Mustion said. Right now, he added, that distinction is not being made.

There will also now be three separate evaluation forms based on grade. Those three “grade plates” include one for company-grade officers, warrant officers and chief warrant officers two; one for field-grade officers as well as chief warrant officers three through five; and one for “strategic leaders,” which includes colonels and brigadier generals.

The Army will also implement a rater profile for the company and field-grade officer plates; emphasize recommendations for future operational and career broadening opportunities on the field grade plate; redefine the senior-rater box check; and limit the use of intermediate raters to special branches and dual-supervision situations.

Gone from the OER will be the “outstanding performance, must promote,” “satisfactory performance, promote,” and “unsatisfactory performance, do not promote” boxes. Instead, raters will now choose from “excels,” “proficient,” “capable,” and “unsatisfactory,” Mustion said.

The online tool that will allow officers to rate other officers will limit the number of “excels” ratings they can offer a particular grade to less than 50 percent. During an officer’s

career, the system will ensure the rater rates less than 50 percent of captains, for instance, as “excels.” Such information about a rater’s rating history will be part of his or her “rater profile.” Right now, raters do not have a “rater profile,” while senior raters do.

For senior raters, the “above center of mass,” “center of mass,” “below center of mass, retain,” and “below center of mass, do not retain” blocks will be replaced with “most qualified,” “highly qualified,” “qualified,” and “not qualified” check boxes.

With those ratings, a senior rater will also be limited to less than 50 percent of rated officers being marked “most qualified.”

Mustion said the Army has no intention of restarting senior rater profiles with the change to the new system. The “mass”-based ratings will transition to the new “qualified”-based ratings.

For company grade officers, what Mustion calls the “Rubik’s Cube of attributes and competencies” will also disappear. The current DA Form 67-9 included about 16 “yes” or “no” check boxes for a rater to answer an array of questions about an officer’s mental, physical, and emotional characteristics; their conceptual, interpersonal, technical, and tactical skills; and, among other things, their ability to communicate, make a decision, or develop their subordinates.

In place of that matrix of yes and no check boxes, raters will instead evaluate an officer in six distinct areas—and it won’t be multiple choice to complete the section.

“What our raters will do is write three to four sentences, documenting the officer’s performance, not potential, in line with each of the attributes and competencies,” Mustion said. Raters will be asked to write about an officer’s character; “presence,” which includes professional conduct; intellect; leadership ability; ability to develop subordinates; and ability to achieve their mission.

For field grade officers, raters will instead provide narrative commentary that demonstrates an officer’s performance regarding “field grade competencies.”

“It reverts back to a narrative description, similar to what we have today, except it is a documentation of performance in line with the attributes and competencies,” Mustion said. “What it reflects are those things that our field grade officers and warrant officers should be able to accomplish.”

Mustion said among those attributes are the ability to adjust to an ambiguous situation, for instance, and the ability to manage resources.

Career Broadening

A key part of the new OER system will be to ask raters to make determinations about what an officer is capable of, and what suggestions there might be for how the officer can be better developed—both for his or her sake, and for the sake of the Army.

Mustion said the Army is asking leaders to identify future and broadening assignments for officers who are rated.

“In our Army we have a lot of requirements that are outside the operational Army,” he said. “We have opportunities that range from fellowships here in the [Pentagon,] to teaching at ROTC, to the operations controllers at our National Training Center, to joint staff positions—which are very important to building officers that can operate at the strategic level—and that’s the construct of broadening.”

Preparing for the New OER

The new OER system will start Dec. 1, 2013. All ratings that take place before that date will use the old system. Ratings with THRU dates after that date will use the new system. Mustion said there will be no close-out reports required before switching to the new system.

To prepare officers for the new OER system, Mustion said the Army will deploy mobile training teams this autumn. Additionally, he said the new version of Army Regulation 623-3, which explains the OER process, will be available 30 days before implementation of the new system. The regulation should be available from Army publishing sometime in November.

MilPDS Upgrade Complete

*AIR FORCE PERSONNEL CENTER PUBLIC AFFAIRS (MARCH 27, 2013)
Debbie Gildea*

JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO-RANDOLPH, Texas—The Air Force has successfully upgraded and transferred the Military

Personnel Data System to the Defense Information Systems Agency Defense Enterprise Computing Center, Air Force Personnel Center officials said March 25.

“We’re pleased that the MilPDS upgrade took less time than anticipated, and we are well on our way to getting information updated in the system,” said Joe Thele, the Air Force Personnel Operations Agency director. “The quick turn and successful upgrade is due to the meticulous planning and hard work of our Total Force team.”

MilPDS is the primary records database for personnel data and actions that occur throughout every airman’s career. MilPDS is also used to initiate pay actions, maintain Air Force accountability and strength data, and support a host of interactions with other Air Force and Department of Defense processes and systems that rely on personnel data.

AFPOA and Air Force Life Cycle Management Center teams worked closely with the Defense Manpower Data Center, AFPC, Air Force Reserve, Air National Guard, Air Force Space Command, and base personnel teams to develop a comprehensive plan to bring down the old personnel data system, upgrade it, and stand it back up. March 4, AFPC Commander Maj. Gen. A.J. Stewart hit the button to shut down MilPDS for what was expected to be 23 days. However, the upgrade was accomplished in 17 days.

Active duty, Air National Guard, and Air Force Reserve personnel agencies are working hand in hand with base force support squadrons and military personnel sections to update personnel data and transactions in MilPDS.

“This upgrade and transfer being accomplished in less time than expected is a testament to the strides we’ve made to work together for the good of all three components of the Total Air Force,” Thele said.

Additional information will be provided once updates are complete. For more information about this and other personnel issues, visit the myPers website at <http://mypers.af.mil>.