



Vol. 3, No. 14
April 11, 2012

NEWSBLAST

U.S. Army Contracting Command

"Providing global contracting support to war fighters."

Installations to celebrate Month of Military Child



Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, left, and retired Army Sgt. 1st Class Sammy L. Davis, a Medal of Honor recipient, pose with a military child at the 2012 Military Child of the Year award ceremony held in Arlington, Va., April 5.

Photo by Staff Sgt. Sun L. Vega

Since 1986, throughout the month of April, Army installations around the world recognize the honor and courage of military children, by celebrating the Month of the Military Child.

The Army Contracting Command and the Expeditionary Contracting Command at Redstone Arsenal, Ala., will host a Bring Your Child to Work Day, April 26, as part of the Month of the Military Child celebration.

ACC and ECC employees wishing to participate must RSVP by April 13 to Michael Holcomb, ACC commandant, at (256) 955-7095 or via email message at michael.d.holcomb@us.army.mil.

Approximately 2 million children have experienced deployment of one or both parents since 2010. These children bravely endured the effects of more than ten years of conflict, and even as Soldiers are transitioning home from the wars, many challenges remain for military families, and their children.

During the month, Army installations sponsor various fun and educational events to recognize the service and support military children provide the nation. Army leaders take part in recognizing the unique challenges that military children face and reinforce the Army's commitment to maintain the quality of life for both Soldiers and their families.

See MILITARY CHILD, page 4.

Spotlight on...

Deborah Van Heest

Lifelong dream fulfilled with book publishing

By Larry D. McCaskill
ACC Office of Public & Congressional Affairs

These days Deborah Van Heest finds inner peace and contentment filling blank pages with words that create images and emotions.

She has followed her childhood dream of becoming a published author with the recent publication of a fantasy/science fiction novel.

"I started writing when I was in fifth grade," said the executive assistant to the Army Contracting Command executive director. "I started out writing poetry and soon began making up short stories in junior high involving my friends. I like to write. I write every chance I get and when I'm not writing I'm thinking about writing. I suppose if I were a serious writer I would quit my job to follow my dream, but I can't do that so for now writing is a hobby."

Van Heest said growing up was difficult. Admitting to having a hard time working through her feelings of being adopted, she took her self-worth and turned it inside. Writing for her turned out to be therapeutic and enjoyable.

"I live mostly in my head and writing helps me feel normal," she said with a chuckle. "I wrote then and now for the fun of it. I'd have my friends taking these crazy adventures in foreign lands and it always made us laugh. I suppose my goal was entertaining people with my stories and that's still my goal."

Reading the diverse works of writers such as Dean Koontz, Anne Rice, Patricia Cornwell and James Patterson, the main thing Van Heest discovered is to stay true to herself and write about something she loves.

"I know the popular genres today are politics, war, terrorism, financial planning, and health and fitness, but I veer far away from real life. Reality is brutal, unkind and something we have no choice but to

face every day. When I read my favorite authors, they take me away from all that and that's what I try and do with my writing," said the Chapin, Ill., native.

After not writing for years, Van Heest began developing her recent work after going through a series of life-changing events.

"I went through a divorce and finding out more about my birth family really opened my eyes and changed my life. I learned more about myself and decided I needed to start making decisions based on what I felt was truly in my best interest.

"My writing was a juvenile pastime that I never took seriously, but the older I got, the more I wondered what was holding me back. Why was I not going for my dream when it was something I've kept with me all these years? Finally, I decided to go for it and put my book out there. After all, you never know what will happen. I write because I love doing it and even if no one ever reads these stories I would still continue to write them," said Van Heest.

The result of her new self-discovery was "Secret of the Kings," a more than 400-page e-book that can be found on the Internet.

"I created the characters in this book when I was back in college and the storyline kept coming back to me. I started writing it in the spring of 2009 and finished the fall of 2011," said Van Heest, who decided to publish her book online after a friend's suggestion.

One day she hopes her books will be published by a publishing house, but for now she's content that it is out there for people to read.

"I have submitted my book to several different publishing companies and to date, have received two rejection letters, but I am still hopeful," she said. "I haven't come this far to stop now. I've a story to tell and I am going to tell it."



Deborah Van Heest
*Executive Assistant
to the ACC Executive Director
Redstone Arsenal, Ala.*



U.S. Army Contracting Command

Executive Director
Carol E. Lowman

Office of Public & Congressional Affairs Director
Art Forster

Public Affairs Team Chief
Ed Worley

Editor
David San Miguel

The *NewsBlast* is a weekly newsletter authorized and produced by the U.S. Army Contracting Command's Office of Public and Congressional Affairs editorial staff in accordance with AR 360-1 (The Army Public Affairs Program) to inform, educate and entertain the ACC community on people, policies, operations, technical developments, trends and ideas of and about the Department of Defense, the Department of the Army and this command.

The views and opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. government, the U.S. Army or this command.

Send submissions and correspondence to the Office of Public and Congressional Affairs, ATTN: Editor, *NewsBlast*, 3334A Wells Road, Redstone Arsenal, AL 35898-5000. Telephone: (256) 955-7634, DSN 645-7634 or email at acc.pao@us.army.mil.

Tool ensures contracting dollars efficiently spent

By Rob McIlvaine
Army News Service

WASHINGTON -- The Senate wanted to hear how the Army maintains oversight over contractors vs. DOD civilian employees and an Army senior leader explained a tool that was developed seven years ago to monitor the contract workforce.

Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army for Force Management, Manpower and Resources Jay Aronowitz testified March 29 before the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs' subcommittee on Contracting Oversight.

CMRA developed to manage costs

"To serve as effective stewards of public funds, the Army must ensure that we are managing our workforce in the most effective and cost-efficient manner possible," Aronowitz said. "To that end, we developed our Contract and Manpower Reporting Application tool, or CMRA in January 2005, to increase the visibility of the Army's contract workforce, in terms of labor, hours and costs."

As part of the development process, he said, the Army worked with more than 50 corporations to design a system that would minimize the reporting burden on them

and the cost to the government.

"The reporting process is so streamlined that most contractors cannot even separately bill the government for reporting this data," Aronowitz said.

The Army, he said, uses CMRA to collect direct labor hours and labor dollars associated with each service contract as well as the function, location of performance, requiring activity, funding source, and type of contract vehicle.

"The DOD comptroller recently issued guidance that the service's inventory of contract services would be used to inform the budget process, and we have started to work with the Army comptroller to ensure Congress would have the most accurate data on contract services in the future," Aronowitz said.

CMRA has helped the Army, Aronowitz said, to improve management of its total force by identifying inappropriately contracted functions and by collecting cost information to help the Army make informed decisions on the most appropriate workforce mix.

"In addition to service contract data, CMRA allows us the ability to ensure adequate oversight of service contracts by our organic workforce, a statutory requirement, and ensure there are no dependencies between the contracted functions and the organic government

workforce."

The Army's contractor inventory process has potential benefits, he said, not only for the rest of the Department of Defense, but also for government-wide application.

"I can tell you some of the challenges and how we can address those, going forward."

For instance, he said, civilian pay for fiscal year 2009 was \$20 billion, compared to \$32 billion spent on service contracts; in fiscal year 2010, it was \$22 billion in relation to \$36 billion spent on service contracts; and in fiscal year 2011, \$24 billion on civilian pay, compared to \$40 billion on service contracts.

Three years ago, though, service contract dollars went down significantly, from \$51 billion in 2008 to \$32 billion in 2009. Aronowitz said this resulted from the Army not programming and budgeting for the service contracts.

"And so the Army's intent, going forward, is to ensure that we integrate these service contracts in our program and budget," he said, adding that this period of 2008 to 2009 was a voluntary in-sourcing program that had no undue outside controls or influence pressurizing another component of the total force.

See OVERSIGHT, page 5.

ACC accepting applications for School of Choice Program

The School of Choice Program is currently open for application. This program provides funding for completion of a bachelors or masters degree for eligible Army Acquisition, Logistics and Technology workforce members. The application window closes May 7.

Applicants must be full-time career, civilian AL&T workforce members in pay grades GS-11 through GS-15, according to Alexis Holden, Army Contracting Command's office of the deputy chief of staff, Human Capital.

In addition, applicants must have met position certification in their current assignment, she explained. Application procedures and additional program information can be found at [http://](http://live.usaasc.info/career-development/programs/school-of-choice/announcements/)

live.usaasc.info/career-development/programs/school-of-choice/announcements/.

The SOC program application is an automated process using the Army Acquisition Professional Development System. To access AAPDS, log into the Career Acquisition Management Portal at: <https://rda.altess.army.mil/camp/>. (Please note that logging into the CAMP portal may require you to create an account.)

Once logged into CAMP, select "CAPPMS" then "AAPDS" and "Apply". At the next window, select the "2012 SOC program announcement".

Questions regarding the application process should be directed to Veronica

Gonzalez, School of Choice program manager, by email at veronica.gonzalez1.civ@mail.mil; or by telephone at (703) 805-1238, DSN 655-1238.

ACC career managers must provide the names of subordinate commands and center applicants to ACC's Strategic Human Capital Division by emailing Jennifer Funderburk at jennifer.funderburk@us.army.mil or Mary Dubose at mary.e.dubose@us.army.mil.

For additional information on upcoming acquisition and non-acquisition funded competitive opportunities, <https://acc.aep.army.mil/G1/Shared%20Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx>.

MILITARY CHILD

continued from page 1

This year's theme Military Kids: Heroes for the Future was developed by the Army Teen Panel. Activities will include teen forums aimed at addressing challenges military children face at school and at home, concerts, fairs, picnics, art shows

and other events designed to highlight the resiliency of military children.

The Army is committed to providing military children with a quality of life commensurate with their service to this nation. The Army is delivering on these

promises through services provided by child, youth and school service programs, increased emphasis on school support and school transition services and standardizing and funding programs worldwide that support the military child.

Reporting suspicious behavior may prevent workplace violence

By **Kenneth Purdin**

ACC/ECC Force Protection Division

Watching the evening news or reading the local daily newspaper, one doesn't need to look hard to realize ours is a dangerous world and that violence has entered into our workplaces.

Whether it's job-related stress, problems at home or simply ill intent, individuals will cross "the line" and chose to act out in violence.

In the law enforcement circles, these individuals are called "active shooters." The active shooter is defined as "one or more subjects participating in a random or systematic shooting spree with the intent to continuously harm others."

According to the Department of Homeland Security publication, "Active Shooter – How to Respond," (Feb. 15, 2012), these individuals do not just snap. Often, they display violent or other suspicious behavior prior to acting out.

Recognizing these signs and taking the appropriate actions is the first step in preventing workplace violence.

These signs include:

- Noticeable decrease in attention to appearance and hygiene.
- Depression and/or withdrawal.
- Increased severe mood swings, noticeably unstable, emotional responses or rage.
- Suicidal comments about "putting things in order."
- Behavior which is suspect of paranoia, i.e. "everyone is against me."
- Increasingly talking about problems at home.

Ignoring these signs can escalate into a serious situation and may put co-workers at risk. Recognizing and reporting them to a supervisor and/or security personnel can lead to the employee receiving the proper counseling or other appropriate assistance.

For additional information about how to respond and recognize potential signs of an active shooter, check out the DHS website at http://www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/active_shooter_booklet.pdf.

To report violent or suspicious behavior, contact your local security personnel or call the Army Contracting Command Protection Division staff at (256) 955-8202 or (256) 955-8203.

Anonymous Email Program

The Commander's Anonymous Email Program was established so employees can voice their concerns or ideas freely and confidentially.

Concern/Suggestion: Employee Evaluation System

Response: Thank you for your inquiry regarding the Employee Evaluation Systems. The Performance Management Program is required by DOD 1400.25-M (Department of Defense Civilian Personnel Manual), subchapter 430. This requirement is promulgated by AR 690-400 (Total Army Performance Evaluation System) Chapter 4302, which sets

forth policy for civilian personnel performance management programs of the Department of the Army. Army components implement this directive receiving advisory services from the Civilian Personnel Action Centers and local Human Capital (G-1) offices.

Leadership is responsible, and will be held accountable, for the effectiveness of the performance management program. Supervisors and managers are charged to develop performance objectives that are measurable and definitive. If the current TAPES program is managed effectively then the achievers', as well as the underachievers', are singled out and recognized accordingly.

TAPES is designed to improve Army performance management and is an inherent responsibility for all those in positions of leadership. Commanders and other equivalent leaders at all activity levels are responsible for the success of the performance management system. The G-1 office provides policy guidance on those issues within their purview bringing clarity to solutions on problematic issues. The Army Contracting Command G-1 office does not have authority to establish a new program for performance management. Nor is one needed. What is needed is accountability and that is required by all involved in the process.

OVERSIGHT

This was the first time, he said, that the department seriously began looking at ensuring that the Army integrates service contracts in program and budget.

Directive-type memorandum

"In DOD, there's a directive-type memorandum, which is titled, 'Estimating the Cost of Military and Civilian Manpower and Service Contracts.' So within DOD, we basically have a cost-benefit analysis tool to ensure we've got the fully burdened cost of our workforce.

"I would say that before I signed up to a one-size-fits-all for the government, that there are some nuances to DOD that would have to be considered going forward," Aronowitz said.

This directive, DTM 09-007, set to expire Oct. 1, 2012, established business rules for use in estimating and comparing the full costs of military and DOD civilian manpower and contract support. The full costs of manpower include current and deferred compensation costs paid in cash and in-kind, as well as non-compensation costs.

Defense Department business rules will also be used to decide whether DOD civilians can perform functions that are currently being performed by contractors.

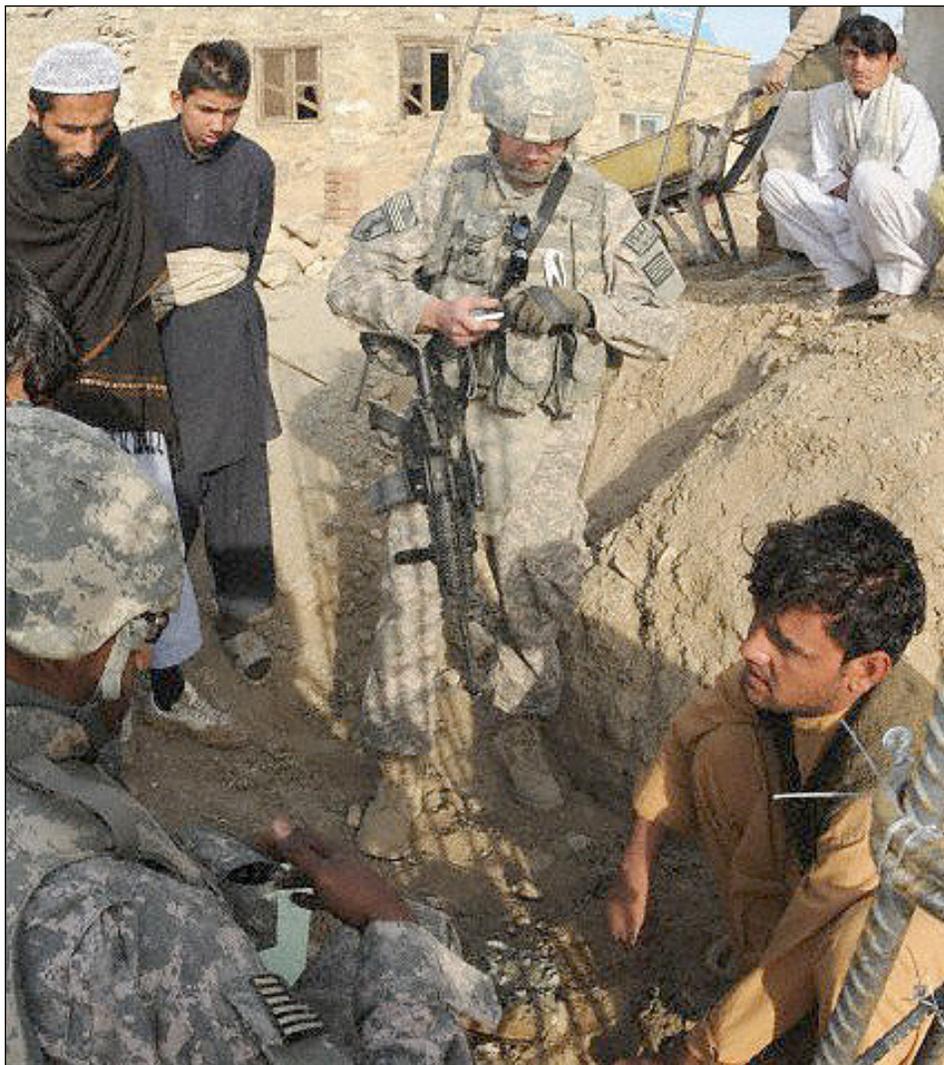
When the Army did insourcing in 2008 to 2009, Aronowitz said it achieved about a 30 percent cost savings.

"When DOD directed and took \$400 million out of our budget, their assumption was that there'd be a 40 percent savings and this was in about the FY 2010 time frame," he said.

The senators asked about the legislation before the Senate committee and the implementation of the many recommendations from the Commission on Wartime Contracting, and cited that \$60 billion was lost to waste, fraud and abuse in Iraq.

When asked by the senators if the recommendations from this commission will have a positive effect on the way that the Army and the Defense Department

continued from page 3



U.S. Navy Chief Petty Officer David Zahm, (center), Kunar Provincial Reconstruction Team engineer based at Asadabad, Afghanistan, and Brandon Toliver, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers representative to Kunar PRT, speak with Safiullah, construction site foreman, about the proper rock and sand mixture for concrete footings at the Nowabad School. Once complete, the \$219,000 school will support 20 of 26 classes of more than 2,000 local area children.

do business with contractors, or if it would hurt their ability to achieve a savings, Aronowitz responded.

"I know that the legislation is now being reviewed back in the Pentagon, and we will get a response back through DOD on that. The secretary of the Army takes this very seriously, and he has directed the Army staff to basically expedite the hiring

initiative we had to grow the acquisition workforce and also to increase the military by about a thousand Soldiers in the acquisition field to build an expeditionary acquisition capability. And again, I know this is a reaction to the Commission on Wartime Contracting, but again, we take it very serious in the department," Aronowitz said.

