



Vol. 4, No. 12  
March 27, 2013

# NEWSBLAST

U.S. Army Contracting Command

*"Providing global contracting support to war fighters."*

## Acquisition award nominations

By Teresa Mikulsky Purcell  
Acquisition Support Center

FORT BELVOIR, Va. - Nominations for individuals and teams are now being accepted through June 21 for the U.S. Army Acquisition Annual Awards.

This year marks the 37th anniversary of the awards, which honor and recognize excellence among those military and civilian members of the Army acquisition workforce who go above and beyond what is expected to provide Soldiers with the weapons and equipment they need to execute decisive, full-spectrum operations in support of their missions.

"These awards allow us the opportunity to highlight our many successes," said Heidi Shyu, assistant secretary of the Army for acquisition, logistics, and technology. "Our acquisition professionals continue to provide needed capabilities at best value to the Soldier in the field, consistent with the department's better buying power initiative."

For more information go to:  
[http://www.army.mil/article/99248/Nominations\\_now\\_open\\_for\\_37th\\_Army\\_Acquisition\\_Annual\\_Awards/](http://www.army.mil/article/99248/Nominations_now_open_for_37th_Army_Acquisition_Annual_Awards/)



## Input to Afghanistan retrograde

(Left to right) Commanding generals Maj. Gen. Robert S. Ferrell, Communications-Electronic Command; Maj. Gen. Camille M. Nichols, Army Contracting Command; and Brig. Gen. Kevin G. O'Connell, Joint Munitions Command (not shown); traveled to various U.S. military bases in Afghanistan March 18-21. The three visited Southwest Asian military facilities to look at the current drawdown procedures and to make recommendations on future operations. The retrograde of more than 50,000 coalition military and approximately 100,000 coalition shipping containers began in September 2012 and will continue through 2014. (U.S. Army Photo by Capt. Jeremy Brown)

## DOD delays sending furlough notices to civilian employees

By American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON - Pentagon officials have put off sending furlough notices to civilian employees until they've had a chance to analyze how pending legislation that would fund the federal government for the rest of the fiscal year will affect the Defense Department.

Officials now estimate that furlough notices will go out on or about April 5, said Navy Cmdr. Leslie Hull-Ryde, a Pentagon spokesperson.

"The legislation could have some impact on the overall number of furlough days, but no decisions have been reached," Hull-Ryde said. "The number of furlough days at this point remains at 22."

Pentagon Press Secretary George Little said the delay makes sense.

"We believe the delay is a responsible step to take in order to assure our civilian employees that we do not take lightly the prospect of furloughs and the resulting decrease in employee pay," he said.

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# Spotlight on...

For Spotlight submissions, click on the icon.

## Sgt. 1st Class DeLeon Kelly 724th Contingency Contracting Team Fort Carson, Colo.

A former recruiter and communications specialist, Sgt. 1st Class DeLeon Kelly is now enamored with the mechanics of military contracting.

"I love my job because it's very rewarding," said Kelly, a contracting specialist with the 724th Contingency Contracting Team, Fort Carson, Colo. "I am able to see how big of a part that contracting plays not only in training missions but in day-to-day operations as well."

Kelly's path to becoming a 51C noncommissioned officer began while on recruiting duty.

"I love to talk to new people," he said. "I feel that by talking to strangers, you might not only brighten someone's days, you could also change a life. That's how I initially found out about 51C. I was in Philadelphia (Pa.) and was talking to a stranger with an Army lanyard around his neck. I asked him how his day was going and he began talking about his job."

It turns out the stranger was a military contracting officer.

"I asked him about it and that's when he told me about 51Cs and what the job was all about. He also told me that NCOs were being accepted into the career filed. The rest, as they say, is history," he said.

According to Capt. Jerrick Hunter, 724th CCT team leader, Kelly's ability to understand contracting while applying sound contracting principles and his capacity for forward thinking has been a remarkable enhancement to the unit.

"Kelly quickly established his competency in contracting by taking on some of the most challenging contracting actions typically reserved for a more seasoned contracting specialist," Hunter said. "He has served as the lead contracting specialist for the acquisition planning, stationing and activation of the 918th Contingency Contracting Battalion in only his second month as part of Team Carson.

"He's smart, articulate and a demonstrated team player. Sgt. 1st Class Kelly is the exemplar of a 51C NCO."



### Sgt. 1st Class DeLeon Kelly

Kelly, who calls Lake City, Fla., home, is married and has two children. He enjoys attending sporting events with his family and playing football on his gaming console.

**NewsBlast readers now have a feedback tool to provide input about the weekly newsletter. Click on the mailbox icon to the right and submit your comments or suggestions. Responses will assist the editorial staff in producing a publication to better meet readers' expectations and information needs.**



## U.S. Army Contracting Command

**Commanding General**  
Maj. Gen. Camille M. Nichols

**ACC Command Sergeant Major**  
Command Sgt. Maj. John L. Murray

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.

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# REACHING GREAT HEIGHTS

## MICC director climbs Mount Kilimanjaro

By Daniel P. Elkins  
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**JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO-FORT SAM HOUSTON, Texas** – The contracting director at White Sands Missile Range recently achieved one of the greatest physical challenges only a relative few can ever say they've accomplished.

Finding the time to squeeze in vacation plans in a contracting environment might lend most to consider a tranquil beach where the BlackBerry is replaced with a fruity cocktail. For Bev Stotz, those plans took her to Africa where she climbed Mount Kilimanjaro.

Already active in Pilates, cycling and hiking, Stotz was contacted last summer by a friend whose cousin was planning to climb Kilimanjaro but didn't want to go alone. Knowing Stotz as being adventurous with a current passport, her friend recommended she join her cousin on the once-in-a-lifetime excursion.

"I thought it sounded like fun, and I always wanted to go to the 'real' Africa," said Stotz, referring to her several trips to Egypt. "So I figured, why not?"

They were part of a group of eight that brought together climbers from Cleveland, Canada and Hong Kong on a guided climb, which covered 42 miles with a 12,000-foot elevation change. Their climbing skill levels were as varied as the group itself, which included adventurers in their 20s, 30s and 40s.

"I fit right in. Some of these folks run marathons, so suffice it to say I wasn't as fast," Stotz said, adding that she was the oldest in the group at fifty-something. "The guides do a very good job of pacing the group; they don't let you go crazy."

The 29-year contracting professional lives at an elevation of 4,000 feet in Las Cruces, N.M., and has hiked many elevations, but can't recall hiking anything higher than 10,000 feet.

"I was a bit apprehensive as my



(Courtesy photo)

**Bev Stotz pauses to take a photo in front of Mount Kilimanjaro during her climb in January. (For more photo, go to: [http://www.army.mil/article/98892/Great\\_heights\\_MICC\\_director\\_climbs\\_Kilimanjaro/](http://www.army.mil/article/98892/Great_heights_MICC_director_climbs_Kilimanjaro/))**

choosing to rely on a fellow church member from Tanzania who has completed four climbs to help alleviate my worries. He put my mind at ease that I was certainly able to do this."

Arriving in Tanzania in mid-January, she started her eight-day trek of scaling the highest free-standing mountain in the world two days later. Her final ascent to the summit of Kilimanjaro began at midnight in the light of a full moon and took six hours, 40 minutes. She describes it as surreal.

"It was like, what did I just do and why?" Stotz said. "Then thinking the tallest mountain in Africa, the highest free-standing mountain in the world and I'm standing at the top of it; OMG!" Stotz said. "It is still weird to hear the words 'I climbed Mount Kilimanjaro' come out of my mouth. In the grand scheme of things, not many people can say that, nor do they know people who can."

Along the way, she admits to experiencing emotional highs and lows. Having lost her father in 2010, she is confident she felt his presence at many points throughout the climb.

"He was with me up there," she said. "Everyone I talked to that did this has had that same surreal feeling, like you were somehow detached and watching from somewhere else. It's hard to describe."

The toughest part of the climb was the descent. The MICC-WSMR director has had one knee replacement surgery and suffers from the degeneration of cartilage in the other knee, leading to bone-on-bone pain.

"Nothing prepared me for that. It was excruciating. One stretch (of the descent) was nothing but large rocks and stream bed," Stotz recalled. "It took most people about three-and-a-half hours to go down that stretch. It took me over six hours and two meltdowns. At the end of summit day, I was exhausted."

Despite the pain, she most treasures the bonding between complete strangers throughout her entire experience.

"It was amazing to see people from all over the world and from different cultures, religions and backgrounds find one common thread to bind them together. Not just our little group of eight plus guides and porters, but everyone on the mountain at that time.

"All of us with one goal to reach the summit proved that differences can most certainly be overcome, and people really can be kind to each other," she continued. "We all cheered for each other as we climbed and prayed for those being taken down. The humanity was the greatest part of the whole adventure."

# Legislation reinstates military tuition assistance

By Jim Garamone  
American Forces Press Service

**MARINE CORPS AIR STATION  
BEAUFORT, S.C.** - Tuition assistance was a hot-button issue during a town hall session between Marines and their families and the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff here March 21.

The first question for Army Gen. Martin E. Dempsey was about the program. The Marine Corps, Army and Air Force had eliminated the program due to the demands of sequestration

Congress has passed legislation requiring the services to reinstate the program, but provides no extra money for it.

DOD officials agree that the tuition assistance program is important, Pentagon spokeswoman Navy Cdr. Leslie Hull-Ryde said March 25 in a written statement. The program enables service members to further their education, benefiting both themselves and their branch of service, she said.

The legislation has been sent to the

White House for President Barack Obama's signature and the department will, of course, comply with the act, Hull-Ryde said. Still, "this legislation would require the services to make difficult and very thoughtful decisions on how to fund tuition assistance throughout the remainder of fiscal year 2013 without impacting readiness," she said.

Dempsey told the Marines and their families that the joint chiefs' decision to cut the program was not taken lightly. They made the decision because readiness accounts - which include tuition assistance - are already nearly empty. "We're halfway through the (fiscal) year and we are 80 percent spent," he said. "Frankly we are struggling to get to the end of the year."

Dempsey said how to get to the end of the year is his problem, not the Marines', "but you do have to understand that there's going to be some things done in the last half of this year that are going to be difficult to understand, but necessary," he said.

These decisions, he said, need to be made so the United States can send the

carriers, send the Marine air wings, send the Army combat teams or Air Force squadrons where they are needed. "We're on that much of an edge," the chairman said. "It will get better in (fiscal) '14, and by (fiscal) '15 it'll be manageable."

Tuition assistance throughout the services is a \$700 million investment, Dempsey said. "What we said was we would continue to fund it for people in it, but if someone wants to join they are going to have to wait, because for the rest of this year we can't afford it," he said. That alone would save \$200 million.

Officials are going to have to examine all programs - including tuition assistance - carefully for savings, the chairman noted. It is an excellent program, "but it may be dialed back," he said.

He reminded the Marines and their families that they do have access to the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill. "Our commitment to education is sincere," he said. "We're just going to have to do some things in the short term to get through the year."



Helping local senior citizens - (Left to right) Master Sgt. Robert Yanez, 410th Contracting Support Brigade, Brig Gen. Orlando Salinas, deputy commanding general, United States Army South, and Col. William A. Sanders, 410th CSB commander, spend time with a San Antonio, Texas resident. The 410th CSB supports the San Antonio area Meals on Wheels program by delivering meals every other Friday to senior citizens near Joint Base San Antonio - Fort Sam Houston. In the last two years, more than 300 meals have been served by unit members as part of their community support initiatives. (U.S. Army Photo)

# Battalion enhances readiness with field training exercise



(Left to right) Sgt. 1st Class Darry Buckner, Sgt. Maj. Marlon Cooper, Maj. Mark Corn, Staff Sgt. David Humfleet and Lt. Col. Lynda Royse perform a functions check on their M16 rifles as part of the field training exercise. (U.S. Army Photo)

**By Rachel Clark**

409th Contracting Support Brigade  
[Rachel.d.clark4.civ@mail.mil](mailto:Rachel.d.clark4.civ@mail.mil)

## GRAFENWOEHR, Germany -

The 903rd Contingency Contracting Battalion pulled its teams together here for a field training exercise to analyze and discuss tactical procedures used to support expeditionary and contingency environments.

“It’s critical for us to ensure our battalion is ready to deploy at a moment’s notice. This exercise gives us an opportunity to train and learn in a controlled environment,” said Lt. Col. Lynda Royse, 903rd CCBN commander.

The week-long exercise, March 17-22, included contracting scenarios, warrior tasks and battle drills. Royse said the training led to increased camaraderie and cohesion between the 903rd’s Grafenwoehr and Kaiserslautern teams.

“Our Grafenwoehr teams got to see how others work within the 903rd’s Theater Contracting Center and our Kaiserslautern teams got to learn about the 903rd’s regional contracting offices’ best practices,” said Maj. Armando Corral, team leader, 642nd Contingency Contracting Team.

“One of my favorite parts of this experience was the overall team building and unit cohesion. I loved getting out there and doing Solider stuff and getting back to basics,” said Master Sgt. Albert Lee, 903rd CCBN operations noncommissioned officer-in-charge.

Part of the exercise included working specific contracting scenarios such as post-award orientation, delivery issues, termination for cause and protests. The FTX was a new experience for many of the Soldiers.

“I’m pretty new to contracting and Maj. Corral took the time to share knowledge and mentor me on aspects of a contract I was working,” said Staff Sgt. Philip Bouffard, 644th CCT contracting specialist. “I can’t tell you how valuable this was for me.”



(Left to right) Maj. Jessica Kovach, Sgt. 1st Class Joshua Medley and Sgt. Maj. Marlon Cooper work on contracting scenarios during the 903rd Contingency Contracting Battalion field training exercise in Grafenwoehr, Germany. (U.S. Army Photo)



Maj. Kelley Smith operates the .50-caliber gun during the virtual convoy training session during the 903rd Contingency Contracting Battalion’s field training exercise. (U.S. Army Photo)



# ACC in the News

These articles mention Army Contracting Command.

## Columbian visit strengthens military sales process

By Michelle Harlan  
USASAC Public Affairs

*(Published in The Redstone Rocket, March 20, 2013)*

A delegation from the Colombian Army met with members of the Army Security Assistance Enterprise in Huntsville Feb. 28 to review the status of Colombia's foreign military sales program.

[http://www.theredstonerocket.com/tech\\_today/article\\_0812a97a-916f-11e2-a011-001a4bcf887a.html](http://www.theredstonerocket.com/tech_today/article_0812a97a-916f-11e2-a011-001a4bcf887a.html)

## Army Contracting Command website named Army's top site

By Leada Gore

*(Posted on AL.com, March 20, 2013 and other websites)*

Armyhire.com, a recruiting website developed by Army Contracting Command, has been named the Army's best website. The website is a collaborative effort by the staffs of the ACC chief information officer G6, deputy chief of staff, Human Capital G1 and Public Affairs. Army Contracting Command is based at Redstone Arsenal.

[http://www.al.com/business/index.ssf/2013/03/army\\_contracting\\_command\\_websi.html#incart\\_river](http://www.al.com/business/index.ssf/2013/03/army_contracting_command_websi.html#incart_river)

## Faces of the Force

### Soldier makes a point of helping somebody every day

*(Posted on ASC.Army.mil, March 20, 2013)*

FOTF: What do you do in the Army? Why is it important?

SAORRONO: I am currently the 904th Contingency Contracting Battalion NCOIC at Fort Knox. My daily routine revolves around procuring supplies and services for a variety of customers, units and Soldiers that can range in number from 10 to 100. I'm also responsible for 51C, military contracting and classification training, where I teach individuals acquisition procedures and how to be a contracting officer representative.

<http://asc.army.mil/web/saorrono-faces-of-the-force/>

## Company Command: Building combat-ready teams

*(Posted on www.asua.org March 25, 2013)*

(Capt. Jeremy Brown, HQ ACC, remarks are included in this article) Have a plan before taking command. I pulled some bits from the book Taking the Guidon: Exceptional Leadership at the Company Level about building a vision and command philosophy prior to taking my first command.

[http://www.asua.org/publications/armymagazine/archive/2013/04/Documents/CompanyCommand\\_April2013.pdf](http://www.asua.org/publications/armymagazine/archive/2013/04/Documents/CompanyCommand_April2013.pdf)



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ACC safety messages.



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