



NEWSBLAST

U.S. Army Contracting Command

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"Providing global contracting support to war fighters."



(Photo by Larry D. McCaskill)

ACC-Redstone executive director joins SES ranks

Michael R. Hutchison, Army Contracting Command deputy to the commanding general, congratulates Rebecca "Becky" Weirick, executive director, ACC-Redstone, upon her promotion to the Senior Executive Service ranks Aug. 14.

Weirick joined Team Redstone from the U.S. Air Force Rapid Capabilities Office where she served as the chief of contracting.

ACC headquarters to host dining out, celebrate 5th anniversary

By David San Miguel
ACC Office of Public & Congressional Affairs
David.sanmiguel.civ@mail.mil

Army Contracting Command will celebrate its fifth anniversary with a formal dining out at the Summit on Redstone Arsenal, Ala., Oct. 2.

All ACC and Expeditionary Contracting Command headquarters military, civilian and contractor staff members and their guests are invited to attend.

ACC was established on Oct. 1, 2008 at Fort Belvoir, Va., as a subordinate command of the Army Material Command.

According to Art Forster, ACC Public and Congressional Affairs director and

chairman of the dining out committee, the event is based on the traditional military dining in which traces its roots back to ancient times. The dining out includes spouses and other guests from outside the military unit.

Dress for the evening is the Army Service Uniform with bow tie or Blue Mess for military attendees; dark business suit or tuxedo for men; and formal evening

attire for women. Military retirees may wear their formal uniforms. Veterans attending the event are encouraged to wear their miniature medals on their civilian coat or tuxedo.

See **DINING OUT**, page 3.



DOD announces same-sex spouse benefits

Armed Forces Information Service

The Department of Defense announced its plan Aug. 14 to extend benefits to same-sex spouses of uniformed service members and DOD civilian employees.

After a review of the department's benefit policies following the Supreme Court's ruling that Section Three of the Defense of Marriage Act is unconstitutional, and in consultation with the Justice Department and other executive branch agencies, DOD will make spousal and family benefits available

no later than Sept. 3, 2013, regardless of sexual orientation, as long as service member-sponsors provide a valid marriage certificate.

DOD remains committed to ensuring that all men and women, who serve in the U.S. military, and their families, are treated fairly and equally as the law directs.

Entitlements such as TRICARE enrollment, basic allowance for housing and family separation allowance are retroactive to the date of the Supreme Court's decision. Any claims to entitlements before that date will not be

granted. For those members married after June 26, 2013, entitlements begin at the date of marriage.

We recognize that same-sex military couples who are not stationed in a jurisdiction that permits same-sex marriage would have to travel to another jurisdiction to marry. That is why the department will implement policies to allow military personnel in such a relationship non-chargeable leave for the purpose of travelling to a jurisdiction where such a marriage may occur.

See **SAME-SEX**, page 3.

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Spotlight on...

For Spotlight submissions, click on the icon.

ACC-NCR employee ends job search, discovers Alabama sunshine

By **Larry D. McCaskill**
ACC Office of Public & Congressional Affairs
Larry.d.mccaskill.civ@mail.mil

All it took for Amy Mariano to accept her position at the Army Contracting Command headquarters was a few long drives and support from her husband.

A former ACC-National Capital Region employee and the current executive assistant to the ACC deputy to the command general, Mariano began searching for a job in the Washington, D.C., area after learning the ACC-NCR would be closing.

"I didn't want to be away from home as much as I had been for the past three years," said the Front Royal, Va., native. "My commute was a minimum of four hours each day and that didn't include the times when I had to get up three hours earlier during bad weather so I could shovel myself out to be at work on time."

With questions about her future employment, Mariano decided to re-establish her hair styling business locally in hopes of limiting her commute and continue to make money.

"Frankly, I was tired, physically tired all the time," she said. "Things with the business weren't moving as fast as I needed them to. My husband and I were getting pretty nervous."

When things began getting unnerving and her future looked cloudy, Mariano

discovered a bit of Alabama sunshine.

"I got word of a possible position at ACC headquarters. My first instinct and answer to myself was absolutely not. I was not moving away from my home and away from all of my family," said Mariano, who lived near her grandparents, parents, siblings and extended family members in Front Royal.

"After I had time to think about it, including the 2 1/2-hour drive home, I told my husband. His response was 'thank God' and 'yes you're taking it.' After that, it didn't seem so bad."

Accepting the position in Huntsville, Ala., came at a price. Initially, she had to temporarily leave her husband, Aaron, and her 6-year-old son, Caleb, in Virginia.

"My biggest challenge is being away from my family," said the 28-year-old. "Until my husband finds a job, it's just me and my son."

"My family is very close, so not being able to hop over for a visit or a last-minute dinner request at my mom's or grandparents will be very hard," she said. "The plane tickets and drives back and forth for my husband to attend interviews are putting a bit of strain on the wallet as



Amy Mariano

well. But I know it will be worth it once everything falls into place. I just hope it falls in place soon."

Mariano said she looks forward to when her family will be reunited with her in the Huntsville area.

"I'm happy to see my son awake during the day and not just give him a kiss while he is asleep at 4:30 in the morning before leaving or tucking him into bed 30 minutes after I get home," said the 4-year federal employee. "My commute is short enough that our family will actually get to have a life together. This is very important because this is my son's first year in elementary school."

"It will be nice to finally get to carry out my role as mom better and not have to rely on everyone else," she said. "No longer will I have to make the routine calls on my way to work to make sure things needed to run the house have not been forgotten and are on schedule."

U.S. Army Contracting Command

Commanding General
Maj. Gen. Camille M. Nichols

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

Director, Office of Public & Congressional Affairs
Art Forster

Public Affairs Team Chief
Ed Worley

Editor
David San Miguel

Public Affairs Team
Larry D. McCaskill, Giselle Lyons, Beth E. Clemons

The NewsBlast is a bi-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 U.S. Army Contracting Command, 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.



ACC/ECC headquarters' move like giant puzzle

By Ed Worley

ACC Office of Public & Congressional Affairs

Edward.g.worley@us.army.mil

REDSTONE ARSENAL, Ala. – Moving the Army Contracting Command and Expeditionary Contracting Command headquarters staffs to their new temporary home is like putting together a giant puzzle, according to relocation planners.

“All the pieces have been dumped on the table and everyone has a piece,” explained Mike Holcomb, ACC commandant, whose office is managing the move’s logistics.

The move to 106 Wynn Drive in nearby Huntsville will take place in three phases, according to Kevin Bursleson, engineer and project manager for the relocation, Deputy Chief of Staff Installation and Logistics G-4.

He said phase one will begin Sept. 15, phase two on Oct. 15, and phase three on Nov. 15. He expects the puzzle to be completed in early January.



(Photo by Ed Worley)

Brian Wood, field services technician with Alutiq LLC, assists Vaneesa Peeden, ACC protocol officer, during her move to her new temporary location.

Bursleson said the command is using its existing furniture to save money. He estimated it would cost about \$3,500 per

person, or about \$1.4 million, to buy new furniture.

See MOVE, page 4.

DINING OUT

Guest speaker will be Gen. Dennis L. Via, AMC commanding general. Maj. Gen. Camille M. Nichols, ACC commanding general, will serve as the host and President of the Mess. Entertainment will be provided by the AMC band.

Headquarters volunteers will host a series of fundraisers between now and October to help defray some of the event costs, Forster said.

“We want as many members of the workforce as possible to attend this special event. The dining out enhances unit esprit de corps and gives the commander an opportunity to meet socially with subordinates,” he said. “It enables military and civilians to strengthen friendships and working relationships in an atmosphere of good cheer and fellowship.”

The origin of the dining out can be traced to Roman times when military commanders would host banquets to honor military units and their warriors. These gatherings were often victory celebrations where past feats were recognized and treasures of recent

conquests were paraded.

The dining in eventually spread to non-military groups, such as the Saxon nobles of the 10th century and medieval monasteries where the clergy spread the custom to academies and universities. The British officer corps, with many graduates at these centers of learning, carried the tradition back to military units. Americans, taking many of their traditions from the British, held formal mess dinners in the 18th and 19th centuries.

SAME-SEX

This will provide accelerated access to the full range of benefits offered to married military couples throughout the department, and help level the playing field between opposite-sex and same-sex couples seeking to be married.

For civilian benefits administered government-wide to federal employees, the Department of Defense will follow the Office of Personnel Management and the Department of Labor’s guidance to ensure

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During World War II, the custom was revived in the U.S. military, initially in the U.S. Army Air Forces 8th Air Force based in Great Britain. There, the AAF officers were invited to participate in the Royal Air Force Mess Nights and then were obligated to reciprocate.

“ACC is continuing that tradition,” Forster said, “and we’re confident this will, indeed, be a memorable evening.”

Formal invitations with additional information will be distributed soon.

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that the same benefits currently available to heterosexual spouses are also available to legally married same-sex spouses.

Read the implementation memo from Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel [online](#) as well as further guidance on extending benefits to same-sex spouses of military members from Acting Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness Jessica Wright.

Readers are encouraged to submit comments or suggestions to the editorial staff via the mailbox icon to the right. Responses will assist the NewBlast staff in producing a publication to better meet readers' expectations and information needs.



Hagel announces new anti-sexual assault initiatives

By Jim Garamone
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON – Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel announced seven new initiatives to strengthen and standardize the department's sexual assault prevention and response effort.

In a memo to the field dated Aug. 15, Hagel called the elimination of sexual assault in the military as one of the department's top priorities.

"This effort requires our absolute and sustained commitment to providing a safe environment in which every service member and DOD civilian is free from the threat of sexual harassment and assault," he wrote in the memo. "Our success depends on a dynamic and responsive approach. We, therefore, must continually assess and strive to improve our prevention and response programs."

On May 6, the secretary directed the services and defense agencies to strengthen the program in commander accountability, command climate, victim advocacy and safety.

The secretary's initiatives include:

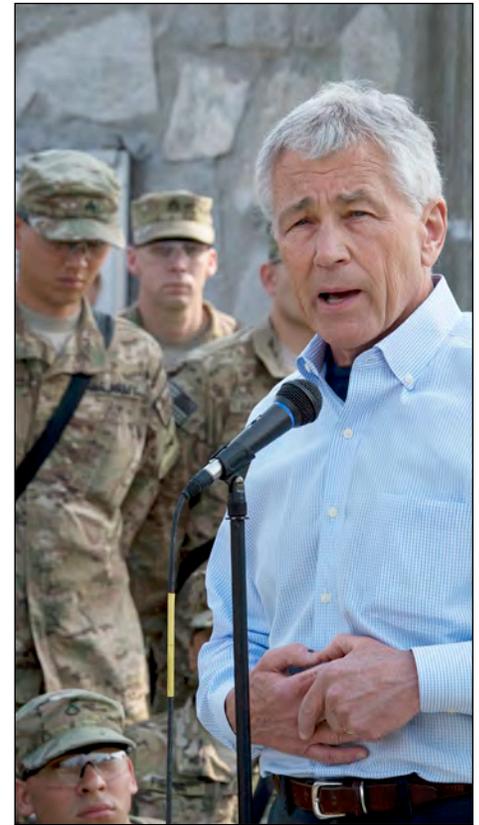
- Improving victim legal support. He directed the service secretaries to create a legal advocacy program to provide legal representation to sexual assault victims throughout the judicial process.

He set Nov. 1 as an initial operating capacity for this and for it to be fully functional by Jan. 1.

- Pre-trial investigative hearings of sexual assault-related charges to be conducted by judge advocate general officers.
- The reassignment or transfer of members accused of committing sexual assault or related offense. Hagel wants this done in order to eliminate continued contact while respecting the rights of both victims and the accused.
- Timely follow-up reports on sexual assault incidents and responses to be given to the first general or flag officer within the chain of command.
- The DOD inspector general to regularly evaluate closed sexual assault investigations.
- To standardize prohibitions on inappropriate behavior between recruiters and trainers and their recruits and trainees across the department.
- Changes to the Manual for Courts-Martial that would allow victims to give input during the sentencing phase of courts martial.

The new measures should strengthen the department's sexual assault prevention and response programs, the secretary said.

"Remember, we are all accountable and responsible for eliminating this crime from our ranks," Hagel said.



(Photo by Erin A. Kirk-Cuomo)

Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel speaks before a group of Soldiers at Jalabad, Afghanistan. He recently sent a memo outlining initiatives to strengthen and standardize DOD's sexual assault prevention and response effort.

MOVE

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"That's why we're doing this move the way we are," he added.

Holcomb credited Ray Gray of the Commandant's office for developing the move plan to ensure the puzzle pieces fall when and where they should. Gray is working with the moving company and duty sections to coordinate the moves.

Specific moving dates will be scheduled by relocatable building and duty section, Gray said. Occupants will get their moving boxes two days prior to their scheduled move.

"On moving day, the movers will show up and load all packed boxes for that section and relocate them to the new facility, completing the move that day," he explained.

Burleson and Holcomb agreed that the plan is manageable, but one problem could

delay the process.

The move is like lining up dominoes, then knocking them down, Holcomb explained. "If one domino doesn't fall in place, then we have a problem."

One of their chief concerns is whether the information technology equipment will be ready for people on Sept. 15. Once the contract is awarded, the equipment must be configured by the Redstone Network Enterprise Center.

Ed Stayton, operations chief, ACC Chief Information Officer G-6, said the IT contract was awarded Aug. 20.

"We will put pressure on the supplier to ship as soon as possible. Based on my experience, I fully expect to have the building ready for IT equipment on Sept. 15," he said.

Both campuses will have video

teleconferencing and desktop support throughout the move, Stayton said. He does not expect any degradation of service at either location. As the population shifts, so will the number of technicians at each site.

"Our plan is sound," he added, "and support can be adjusted quickly."

Stayton said everyone will get new, voice over internet protocol telephones, which will allow the staffs to keep their current telephone numbers. VoIP telephone calls are transmitted over an IP network such as the Internet rather than traditional telephone lines, he said.

ACC and ECC headquarters staffs will remain at the Wynn Drive location until their permanent home at 4505 Martin Road, Redstone Arsenal, is ready for occupation in fiscal year 2016.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE!

Soldiers volunteer services, help Good Neighbor Program

Ready to give a helping hand, Soldiers assigned to the 902nd Contingency Contracting Battalion at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash., have formed a team of volunteers as part of the Good Neighbor Program.

In the last month alone, the Soldiers contributed countless hours collecting and packaging necessity kits for the Fisher House Foundation and volunteering assistance to the Special Olympics.



Staff Sgt. Delwayne C. Kirkland, contract administrator (left), and Staff Sgt. Marisol Rodriguez, contract specialist, 902nd CCBn, Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash., tape up boxes ready for shipment.



(Courtesy photos)

Sgt. 1st Class Edwin L. Berry, contracting NCO, collects several boxes ready for shipment. He and other members of the 902nd CCBn volunteer their services to support the Good Neighbor Program.

Soldier completes 102-mile road march

Sgt. 1st Class Ivan Luckett, contracting specialist, 409th Contracting Support Brigade's 903rd Contingency Contracting Battalion, Kaiserslautern, Germany, recently participated in the 97th International Four Days Marches.

Established in 1909 and based at Nijmegen, the Netherlands, since 1916, the event draws military units from throughout the world.

Luckett's team completed more than 102 miles and earned the "Groepsmedaille van der Vierdaagse", or group medal, as well as the individual "Vierdaagsekruis" medal.



Sgt. 1st Class Ivan Luckett



(Courtesy photos)

The team was comprised of Soldiers from the 21st Theater Sustainment Command, the 266th Financial Management Support Center and the 106th Finance Detachment.



ACC in the News

These articles mention Army Contracting Command.

Army looking for companies that have secret facilities able to do cyber warfare research work

By John Keller

(Posted on Military & Aerospace Electronics August 9, 2013)

ABERDEEN PROVING GROUND, Md. – U.S. Army electronic warfare experts are reaching out to industry to find companies able to develop future offensive and defensive cyber warfare technologies while operating with top-secret facilities and procedures.

<http://www.militaryaerospace.com/articles/2013/08/army-cyber-warfare.html>

Want to do business with the Army? Better head to Huntsville, professor advises

By Leada Gore

(Posted on AL.com August 12, 2013)

A blogger writing on the logistics of the defense industry is advising those wanting to do business with the Army not to go west, but to go to Huntsville instead.

http://www.al.com/business/index.ssf/2013/08/want_to_do_business_with_the_a.html

Proving Ground to Activate Contracting Battalion

By Tyler Waldman

(Posted on the Aberdeen Patch August 13, 2013)

A new unit will be activated later this month at Aberdeen Proving Ground.

The 926th Contingency Contracting Battalion will be activated in a ceremony at 10 a.m. on Aug. 27 in Mallette Auditorium at the proving ground.

<http://aberdeen.patch.com/groups/politics-and-elections/p/proving-ground-to-activate-contracting-battalion>

99 Google Plus Accounts Military Servicemembers should follow

(Posted on Military Online Colleges Aug. 20, 2013)

Being away from friends and family while on a tour of duty with the armed forces can be tough, and coming back is sometimes even tougher. Maintaining social connections, building a career outside the military, and coping with the major transition from military to civilian lifestyles is difficult and draining.

<http://militaryonlinecolleges.org/google-plus/>

Leadership changes hands at DCMA Afghanistan

By Nick D'Amario

Defense Contract Management Agency

(Posted on the Defense Video & Imagery Service Aug. 20, 2013)

KABUL, Afghanistan - Army Col. John Jones passed the Defense Contract Management Agency Afghanistan flag to Army Col. D.D. Mayfield during a recent ceremony officiated by Army Brig. Gen. James Simpson, commander of the Central Command Joint Theater Support Contracting Command.

<http://www.dvidshub.net/news/112274/leadership-changes-hands-dcma-afghanistan#.UhOnx3eGfcM>



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ACC safety messages.



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