



# IN THE LOOP

ARMY ENTERPRISE MARKETING OFFICE NEWSLETTER  
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## Spring in Chicago

Spring is in the air! The snow has melted and the city of Chicago is bringing brighter days. Slowly but surely we are coming together in person and meeting teammates in real life. There is much to celebrate in the next couple months. AEMO will be on-boarding multiple new employees and moving into our new office building. Spring is looking to be the light at the end of our long awaited, quarantine tunnel.

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# Who's Who at AEMO

Get to know some of Team AEMO



## Maj. Lennox Morris

### Where are you from?

California

### What drew you to marketing?

I wanted the chance to do something different in the Army and make better use of my civilian education. Plus living in Chicago!!!!

### What's your role at AEMO?

Program Manager (National Media, Local Media and Talent & Furnishings)

### Fun Fact about yourself

I'm taller than I appear on Teams.



## Lt. Col. Erica Iverson

### Where are you from?

Vermillion, South Dakota

### What drew you to marketing?

One of the first AEMO newsletters on LinkedIn – I was drawn in by the bright gold banner, and just kept clicking to read on about the AEMO Mission and the people (all 6 people back in early 2020) – and once I saw the “What’s Your Warrior?” video, I knew I wanted to be a part of that organization.

### What's your role at AEMO?

Director of Strategy, Innovation & Data Directorate

### Fun Fact about yourself

I love music—I play the piano for official events/concerts and have been in several bands; also play the pipe organ, all the saxophones, the guitar, and the didgeridoo. #musicnerd





## **Sarah Parkington**

### **Where are you from?**

I grew up in Maryland then moved to San Diego at age 12. I've lived in Chicago now for 11 years.

### **What drew you to marketing?**

When I was young, I would watch Saturday morning cartoons and keep track of all the commercials and how often they'd repeat (reach, frequency). I knew I wanted to study the 'why' behind them at a very early age!

### **What's your role at AEMO?**

Data Scientist – looking into the data to determine what we're doing is working and what can be optimized.

### **Fun Fact about yourself**

In college in Central California, I studied Oenology, the study of wine, as my minor. I was an officer in the wine club on campus and got to meet several top winemakers in the California region during my tenure.



## **Francisco Arturo Morales**

### **Where are you from?**

I am native from Honduras. Completed HS in Long Island City, NY. Since then, have been supporting the Army worldwide.

### **What drew you to marketing?**

I had read about AEMO, its mission and location. I wondered how Army logistics could be applied in a city environment away from an Army post.

### **What's your role at AEMO?**

Supply and Logistics Support.

### **Fun Fact about yourself**

I don't know. I like myself a lot.





## **Felicia McGurren**

### **Where are you from?**

Portage, Indiana

### **What drew you to marketing?**

I love visual storytelling and creating communications that achieve the "aha" moments where people "get it".

### **What's your role at AEMO?**

Program Analyst and Contracting Officer Representative (COR)

### **Fun Fact about yourself**

My mother was the first female salesperson/territory owner for Little Debbie Snacks, and was my first teacher and mentor in understanding business.



## **Maj. Mark Boychak**

### **Where are you from?**

Frackville, Pennsylvania

### **What drew you to marketing?**

From 2016–2019, I served as the Far West Regional Commander in the United States Military Academy's admissions office, and I truly enjoyed assisting candidates as they considered attending West Point and serving in the Army.

### **What's your role at AEMO?**

Plans & Strategy Officer

### **Fun Fact about yourself**

I enjoy learning about and collecting artifacts from the American Civil War, and I recently purchased a sword identified to a captain in the 48th Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry Regiment which was recruited from my hometown area of Schuylkill County and best known for digging the mine at Petersburg that led to the Battle of the Crater.





## 2nd Lt. Phil Pittsford

### Where are you from?

I grew up in Wheaton a suburb of Chicago.

### What drew you to marketing?

I wasn't drawn to marketing in general necessarily but rather Army marketing in specific and that's because AEMO is a unique union between a traditionally private sector function and the Army. Also, in my opinion, there's a growing divide between civilian understanding of the Army and the Army itself which AEMO could help remedy as Soldiers are becoming the stewards of the Army brand.

### What's your role at AEMO?

My official title is operations officer but the full scope of my responsibilities range from operations to admin and HR.

### Fun Fact about yourself

Nearly all of my extended family is from El Salvador and until very recently I'd go down to visit at least once a year.

# What is the Leads Task Force?

Lt. Col. Cecil E. Wolberton III

The mantra of the Leads Task Force is “Many small improvements make huge results.” To help understand the context surrounding this phrase, it’s important to understand how the task force came to be. When the Army Enterprise Marketing Office (AEMO) began operations in 2019, much of the focus was launching the new “What’s Your Warrior?” campaign, maintaining the legacy GoArmy.com website, and building our world class social media program (@GoArmy). Our target audience responded terrifically to these initiatives indicating tremendous success in our upper funnel metrics. However, in conversations with our accessions partners, we observed they were not experiencing a downstream lift in performance from our success. Upon investigation, we discovered that AEMO was generating a lot of leads, but those leads were not actually resulting in people signing contracts to join the Army. Once this problem was discovered, AEMO established the Leads Task Force to increase the rate at which leads convert to contracts.



The Leads Task Force is composed of a small group of Army Marketing Officers, partnered with Army Civilian Data Scientists, and supported by DDB, the Army’s prime marketing contractor and their subcontracting companies. Since inception, the task force has worked closely with all AEMO marketing officers and accessions partners to bring about positive change using the Data and Digital Infrastructure (DDI) task order which also encompasses the Central Performance Hub (CPH). Over the past year, the Leads Task Force has improved AEMO effectiveness and efficiency by modernizing digital infrastructure, fixing processes, and optimizing user experience for the customer.

One of the first initiatives the Leads Task Force implemented was modernizing digital infrastructure to update legacy systems and leverage modern technology. The systems AEMO inherited were largely ineffective. For instance, there were many sources in which leads were produced such as the website eBRC, the contact center, recruiter generated, acquisition emails, and lead information obtained through Joint Advertising Market Research and Studies (JAMRS). All of those leads resided in different databases and were managed by different contracting agencies. This made it virtually impossible to understand lower funnel performance and answer rudimentary questions such as, how many leads do we have.

So, one of the first projects was establishing connections between systems to direct all AEMO leads into a single data base in the Enterprise Marketing Management System (EMMS), and putting the responsibility for leads management under a single sub-contracting company. Once complete, we then established connections between the myriad of software and systems so that applications were interacting with each other and we measure our marketing impact on each point of the customer journey from impressions to accessions.

# What is the Leads Task Force?

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Implementing these connections gave us the ability to conduct robust assessments of the data we collected. We began producing the Quarterly Marketing Mix Modeling (MMM) Report. This flagship measurement report assesses effectiveness and efficiency of all marketing efforts using all-in costs and juxtaposing it against exogenous factors using a fairly complex linear regression model and large data sets. The end result gives us a true understanding of how our marketing activities result in leads and contracts. It informs us of what is working well and should be scaled further, and what is not working and should either be optimized or discontinued. Another very important report is the Monthly Leads report that uses an attribution logic to help us understand our universe of leads and contracts, and the activities responsible for producing them. These reports, and numerous others reports under CPH, have enabled AEMO to perform at a higher efficiency and significantly increase our lead to contract conversion rate.

**Lead:** A person interested in joining military service who's contact information was obtained through a marketing interaction.

**Appointment:** The next stage in the customer journey after becoming a lead.

**Contract:** The final stage in the customer journey before accessing into the Army.

**Army Marketing Funnel:** The consumer-focused marketing model that illustrates the theoretical customer journey towards joining the Army.

Moreover, the Leads Task Force fixed current processes and established new ones to increase effectiveness. One of the first things we did was map out the customer journey from start to finish for U.S. Army Recruiting Command (USAREC) and U.S. Army Cadet Command (USACC). We were able to understand the conversion rate at each step of the customer journey by layering in the data from the aforementioned infrastructure improvements. For example, when someone engages with a piece of digital Army Marketing creative content, we can understand each point in the journey and gain insights to why they did or did not move to the next step. When we applied this approach to USACC, we found they had many generated ROTC leads that were not being actioned. Put simply, the leads were being routed to USACC Headquarters, and were not being sent to the recruiters on college campuses. In discovering this, we added a field for ROTC leads that indicated a school of choice so we could route directly to the recruiters at the college. Simply mapping out the process and breaking each part down to component parts then analyzing how to optimize each portion is a cornerstone technique of the Leads Task Force.



# What is the Leads Task Force?

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Additionally, the Leads Task Force has increased AEMO performance by optimizing the user experience for the customer. Essentially, we look at everything through the eyes of our customer. One of the more successful programs along the customer journey is the contact center which accepts inbound calls and also inbound chats from the website. The conversion rate of leads from the contact center is significantly higher than leads from other sources. This can be attributed to the engagement that occurs at the contact center since the majority of the agents are either prior service military or currently serving in the U.S. Army Reserve or Army National Guard. Most recently, we have implemented a process where leads are asked a series of qualifying questions, and that information is then shared with recruiters. Partnering with recruiters has resulted in a 10% lift in the conversion rate from lead to appointment.

In fact, the Leads Task Force has assessed every part of the customer journey and, on an ongoing basis, works to increase conversion rates from one point to another. Most recently, we created an email nurture campaign designed to convince leads to make an appointment with the recruiter. The emails are based off research and include a link where the lead can make an appointment online. In a preliminary test, this activity had a 45% lift on appointment rates from leads. As a result, we have named this the “Make Campaign” and have expanded to all USAREC Battalions.

Nonetheless, the Leads Task Force must implement many more improvements. One of the biggest advancements will come when we successfully migrate the EMMS data base into the cArmy cloud environment. This will provide us an environment where we can use cutting edge technology to model the entirety of our data so we can make the best marketing decisions. We can also share that information with our accessions partners and provide them with maximum information as we hand over leads.



**AEMO visits USAREC at Fort Knox, Ky**  
**Left to Right: Command. Sgt. Maj. Steven Laick, Tim Baird, Lt. Col. Cecil Wolberton, Mr. Nati Mavridis, Col. David Doherty, Bubba Wood.**

Another needed advancement is adding a lead refinement capability to the contact center. This will give the contact center the ability to further engage with prospects and create the very best user experience. Both of these will have a significant impact in the ability to increase the lead to contract conversion rate. The improvements that the Leads Task Force can make are practically limitless. We try to prioritize our efforts to those improvements that will make the most impact relative to the level of effort and resources required.



# What is the Leads Task Force?

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Modernizing digital infrastructure, fixing processes, and optimizing user experience has enabled increased AEMO's performance. Collating all leads data in EMMS, and connecting all digital systems have enabled our organization to conduct robust analysis on our marketing efforts. Also, the technique of mapping out each the customer journey and breaking each part down to component parts then solving for each section has had a significant positive impact. The addition of the contact center, and email nurture, are examples of how AEMO is continuously improving the customer experience. All that said, the Leads Task Force works furiously in concert with our DDB partners and accessions partners to find problems and rapidly implement solutions. The solutions to those problems many times are generally quite practical and it takes a lot of energy to implement them. However, when we add up those small improvements– they result in big movements.



## Cecil E. Wolberton III

Lt. Col. Wolberton is a Marketing Officer (FA58) currently serving in the Army Enterprise Marketing Office since 2020. Cecil is the lead of the Data and Digital Infrastructure Cross-Functional Integration Team within the Strategy, Innovation and Data Directorate.

# "The Calling"

Launched May 4, 2021

"The Calling" is our new animated film series designed to close the relatability gap between Gen Z and the U.S. Army by offering a rare look at the lives and motivations of the people behind the uniform.

The series chronicles the deeply emotional origin stories of five Soldiers as they make the most important decision of their lives, for reasons as diverse as they are. This campaign communicates that Army Soldiers are all of us with its detailed look at the formative years before they were Soldiers and how their unique upbringings and experiences led them to answer the call to serve.



Research tells us that young people today see the Army as a "distant star," a place that requires a nearly superhuman level of discipline and excellence with little relevance to their daily lives. Similarly, many youth can't necessarily connect with Soldiers or see any commonalities in terms of interests, abilities, and goals. "The Calling" addresses this recruiting challenge of relatability, while the "What's Your Warrior?" continues to build awareness of the breadth and depth of Army careers.

Animation was a clear creative choice for "The Calling" because of its visual interest, narrative flexibility, and Gen Z appeal. Animation also provided the opportunity to give each Soldier's story a unique style and tone that underscored just how diverse each story is from the next.

YouTube was selected as the streaming platform for its appeal among Gen Z and its precision specific to audience targeting and measurement. Hosting the campaign on YouTube continues our efforts to meet Gen Z where they are, including the channels they frequent for content and entertainment.

Last summer, we conducted a worldwide search for Soldier stories to support this campaign, receiving nearly one hundred entries. A shortlist of potential stories were tested to assess their resonance not only with Gen Z prospects, but also their parents and other influencers, and Soldiers, and were found to be memorable, relatable, encouraging, and inspiring.

It was important that the Soldiers featured in the campaign reflect the incredible diversity of both the Army and the American public – and not just ethnic diversity, but diversity of influences, upbringings, and experiences. The Army is its people, each of whom have their own unique background and story to tell. Providing an honest, unfiltered account of their experiences is essential to this effort.



