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Headquarters Department of the Army

Retention Newsletter

Forging the Future: Modernizing Army Retention for a Ready Force

The Army G - 1, DMPM recently introduced the new Army Retention Division —an important step forward in modernizing how we support and sustain our talent. With dedicated branches for Officer, Warrant Officer, and Enlisted Retention, this structure reflects a more unified and strategic approach to preserving the force. We're also proud to welcome a newly appointed Retention Division Chief who will help lead these efforts. These updates mark a renewed focus on targeted initiatives that enhance career longevity across all ranks.



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LTC(P) Angela Chipman
Chief of Army Retention Division



Team Career Counselors, the Army owes you a debt of gratitude. You have stood, quietly, in the gap where accessions fell short to ensure Army Readiness was always maintained to the highest possible standards. You reacted, when and where needed, to meet the needs on short notice – reinforcing the greatest fighting force the world has ever known. You are the quiet professionals, the magicians behind the curtain, who have made miracles occur. I see you, I thank you, and it is an honor to serve with you in this capacity.

We are going to ask a lot of you in this coming year, and it's going to be uncomfortable. How we measure success – especially how we've measured success in your arena – is changing with the changing nature of warfare. Our Army is innovating with the world around it so that we can meet and defeat our near-peer adversaries around the globe. This requires enhanced capabilities and emerging ones that can aid in our dominance across multiple domains. We are shelving older capabilities to welcome in the new, and it is our job to find our absolute best and brightest talent to lead those changes into the future.

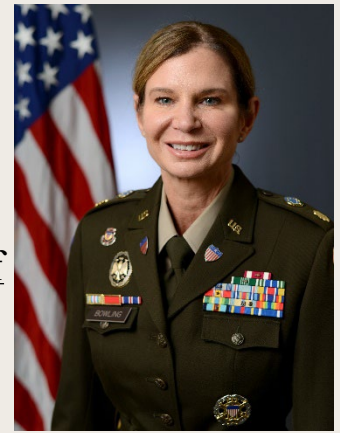
As the accessions mission potentially shifts, which will impact the retention requirements, we need you to be on the look out for those personnel who will readily take on the challenge of these new, emerging, or critical capabilities as leaders within that profession. All of you have already shown the propensity to serve and have done so admirably. We desire them to continue to do so in the areas where we will need them the most. This must be done holistically, inclusive of all ranks, all branches, all echelons of enlisted, warrant officer, and officer to ensure our teammates have the greatest talent available to them in the execution of their missions.

But this leads us to the most challenging part – which is how we define quality and talent so that we can execute our function with precision. How we look at our population will also change. We are developing programs that are meant to stratify the population, beyond simple evaluations which don't truly capture the whole-Soldier, to allow us to target and incentivize the best of us to stay, to innovate, to transform, and to elevate the organization.

There has never been a more exciting time to serve in this capacity. We stand at the forefront of this change, and it will not be possible without your help. I'm excited for what the future will bring, and I hope you are as well.



LTC Sherri A. Bowling
Warrant Officer Retention Branch Chief



The Army is at a critical inflection point regarding the retention of its Technical Warrant Officer cohort. These highly skilled technicians—integral to the operation and sustainment of our most complex systems—are increasingly departing at or near the 20-year mark. This early retirement trend is leading to significant gaps at the CW3 and CW4 levels, weakening promotion selectivity and placing force readiness at risk.

Unlike the enlisted ranks, where retention can be measured against clearly defined separation procedures, officer and warrant officer careers operate within a different framework. Once an officer has fulfilled their Additional Duty Service Obligation (ADSO), they transition into an indefinite status—where continued service becomes a voluntary choice. This flexibility, while beneficial in many respects, also complicates efforts to measure and define what successful retention looks like for our commissioned leaders.

The Army's Warrant Officer Retention Program is designed to address these unique challenges. Our mission is to identify targeted strategies to retain top-performing warrant officers, stabilize career progression, and ensure long-term expertise across our formations.

The Retention Branch is actively evaluating a range of targeted initiatives to strengthen warrant officer retention. These efforts, currently under discussion across key stakeholder groups, are aimed at shaping policies and support structures that reflect the unique contributions and career trajectories of our technical warrant officers. As we refine these solutions, continued dialogue and collaboration will be essential to ensuring we retain the talent our force depends on. The path forward begins with understanding the challenges—and committing to address them together.



SGM Enrique Rose
Army Retention Division SGM
Senior Army Career Counselor



I continue to be deeply impressed by how our career counselors rise to the challenge day in and day out. Your commitment, adaptability, and grit are the driving force behind our mission to modernize Army retention practices. We've taken deliberate steps to emphasize long-term reenlistments and quality-based retention, thanks to your efforts in shaping a stronger, more capable force. As we expand our focus to include Officer and Warrant Officer retention, it's going to require you to be even more engaged in your formations—building trust, forging connections, and ensuring our leaders stay Army Strong.

This year's upcoming Army Retention training will feature senior Army leaders who will clearly articulate their expectations for how we move forward. As we shift toward reenlisting Soldiers based on quality, not just quantity, it's vital that counselors at every level return to the basics of our profession—mentorship, career development, and honest dialogue. With new changes on the horizon in the next fiscal year, we're at a pivotal moment for shaping our retention culture with renewed clarity and purpose.

I want to personally thank every one of you for what you do daily. Whether you're having those tough conversations, celebrating a Soldier's choice to continue serving, or mentoring future leaders, your impact is undeniable. We'll keep spotlighting the amazing work being done by counselors and senior leaders alike. Stay engaged, stay informed, and keep leaning forward—your voice and your actions make all the difference.



SGM David Oduro-Boafo
Senior Army Reserve Career Counselor



As Army Reserve Career Counselors, we are entrusted with the vital responsibility of shaping the future of the Army Reserve. Our mission goes beyond merely meeting expectations; it is about striving to exceed them in every aspect of our work.

The Army Reserve Career Group (ARCG) has been actively seeking ways to lessen the paperwork burden on our Soldiers, particularly by proposing the use of modern solutions like Topaz signature pads for digital signature acquisition. We're thrilled to announce that the Army has granted authorization for the use of specific devices across all accession agencies, a directive that directly includes the ARCG. This is a significant breakthrough and a direct approval of our aim to implement technologies that mirror the successful practices already in place with USAREC.

ARCG will soon publish guidance to formally disseminate the information across all ARCG battalions to facilitate seamless implementation and execution.

An ETP has been approved to streamline the National Guard to Army Reserve enlisted transfer process. The established ETP significantly streamlines the direct transfer process for eligible enlisted National Guard Soldiers into the Army Reserve. The change eliminates the Memorandum of Agreement requirement. This approval also grants ARCG the authority to produce DD Form 4 to facilitate these direct transfers. Individual ETP requests must now be submitted on unit letterhead (using provided guidance) with only an approved conditional release. All requests require signature by an LTC/O-5 or above, or the ARCG SGM, with responses returned to ARCG for execution. This update greatly simplifies the transfer process, making it easier to integrate eligible National Guard Soldiers into our ranks.

Two exceptional counselors were recently awarded the prestigious Dr. Jerome Pionk Retention Excellence Award. This award presents a remarkable opportunity for us to make a meaningful impact in our field. It underscores the significance of our dedication and allows us to demonstrate that our efforts are noticed not only within our units but also at the HQDA level. The pursuit of this award may require hard work and perseverance, especially after a long grind, but the impact we can achieve is substantial. Let us embrace this opportunity to reflect on our contributions and aim for excellence in our roles as career counselors.



Career Counselor Spotlight



SSG Orlando Cuellar, assigned to 2-508th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, has demonstrated outstanding dedication to the Army's retention mission. He has successfully completed retention actions across five battalions and the Brigade Headquarters Company within 2nd BCT, contributing a total of 256 actions for credit in FY25 and FY26. His consistent performance has earned him recognition as the Weekly Top Producer across FORSCOM, and he was named the FORSCOM 1st Quarter Retention Competition Winner for reenlisting the highest number of Soldiers with FY25 ETS dates.



SSG Tara Rattanaovongsa is a standout leader who embodies the whole Soldier concept, providing vital support across all battalions in the Brigade, mentoring new counselors on overseas processes, and reenlisting over 100 Soldiers with zero errors. Her seamless performance in acting as Senior Career Counselor during key absences ensured continuity within the Division's largest Brigade. With unmatched drive, leadership, and precision in every mission metric—from DJMS accuracy to iPERMS uploads—SSG Rattanaovongsa continues to elevate the Army retention program and inspire excellence at every level.



Career Counselor Spotlight



SFC Venesha Mizer continues to set the standard as a quiet professional and trusted teammate at the 15th Signal Brigade, Cyber Center of Excellence. Her commitment to supporting Leaders, Soldiers, and families was instrumental in helping the Brigade meet and exceed retention missions by the third quarter of FY25. She completed 82 continued service actions and led the development of a Creditable Service Request process that improved 1506 processing times by 53%, streamlining pay issue resolution across the formation. Her attention to detail and leadership also helped one of her battalions earn a "Far Exceeded Standards" rating during a July CCOE inspection. SFC Mizer's impact is felt across every level she touches.



SSG Leopoldo Delgado is the Career Counselor serves as the HHBN USAREUR-AF. During his first year as a Career Counselor he has already made a lasting impact. SSG Delgado became the first to complete the FY25, FY26, and Reserve Component missions, securing the CG's Early Bird Award in the Tier 2 category. He's a consistent presence in every corner of the unit—leading PT, working alongside Soldiers in the motor pool, and participating in after-hours events. His hands-on approach fosters trust and builds connections, making him a reliable resource and mentor to all.



Dr. Jerome Pionk Award Recipient

MSG Monique Beck, 79V

MSG Monique Beck was selected to receive the prestigious Dr. Jerome Pionk Award in recognition of her exceptional contributions to Army Reserve retention and policy advancement. Over the course of her career, she has held key leadership roles in operational, instructional, and advisory capacities, consistently demonstrating innovation and impact.

Her recent efforts to streamline the backdated contract process via IPPS-A facilitated the retention of over 750 Soldiers—cutting processing times from six months to less than 30 days. She also led a critical revamp of the 79V Career Counselor training program, shaping doctrine and improving field effectiveness for future cohorts.

MSG Beck played a pivotal role in briefing over 600 Career Counselors and updating AR 140-111, influencing the retention and readiness of more than 175,000 Soldiers. Her leadership in resolving MAVNI discharge backlogs and her expert guidance on enlisted HR policy have strengthened force-wide compliance and cohesion.

The Dr. Jerome Pionk Award reflects MSG Beck's lasting impact and dedication to advancing Army Reserve readiness and retention at every level.



Current Initiatives

Share your Voices

Career Counselors, we want to see your Soldiers in action! Help us highlight the heart of service by submitting short videos featuring reenlistments and Soldiers sharing why they serve. These powerful moments inspire others and showcase the dedication that drives our force forward.

All Soldiers are welcome, but we especially encourage spotlights on those in priority MOSs —let's amplify their stories and impact.

Pictures are also welcomed! Whether it's a proud reenlistment ceremony or a candid moment in the field, your visuals bring these stories to life.

Send your submissions and help us celebrate the commitment, courage, and character of our Soldiers!

Your voice matters. White papers are a powerful way for Career Counselors to share insights, propose solutions, and shape the future of the profession. Whether it's a new strategy, a challenge you've overcome, or a fresh perspective on retention, your ideas deserve to be heard. Let's turn your experience into influence —submit a white paper and make your mark.

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