



NEWSBLAST

U.S. Army Contracting Command

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"Providing global contracting support to warfighters."



(U.S. Army photo)

916th CCBn Soldier recognized, awarded SMA coin

Sgt. Maj. of the Army Raymond F. Chandler III (left) recently recognized Sgt. 1st Class Jason R. Levi, 916th Contingency Contracting Battalion, Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston, Texas, with an SMA coin during an awards presentation at Fort Sam Houston.

An acquisition, logistics and technology contracting non-commissioned officer, Levi was awarded the coin for exemplary achievement in the preparing, planning, conducting and executing all aspects of the 410th Contracting Support Brigade's senior non-commissioned officer change of responsibility ceremony.

Hagel initiatives take aim against sexual assault

By Jim Garamone
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON – Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel is vowing to change the culture that allows sexual assault to be a serious problem for military services.

In a memo released May 7, Hagel announced a number of initiatives to eradicate sexual assault.

"While the department is putting in place important new programs to combat this crime, it is clear that we must do much more to eliminate this threat to the safety and welfare of our men and women in uniform, and the health, reputation, and trust of this institution," he wrote.

Army Maj. Gen. Gary S. Patton, the

director of the Pentagon's sexual assault prevention and response office, discussed the secretary's initiatives. He said the secretary's initiatives will work to change the culture in the armed forces.

The first initiatives deal with the command climate and enhancing commander accountability, requiring that command climate survey results be provided to the next higher echelon of command.

"Second, the service chiefs have been directed to develop methods to assess the performance of military commanders in incorporating sexual assault prevention and victim care principles into their commands," Patton said.

See **SEXUAL ASSAULT**, page 5.

NCMA leader meets with ACC-RI employees

By Liz Adrian
ACC-Rock Island, Ill., Public Affairs

ROCK ISLAND ARSENAL, III. - Michael P. Fischetti, executive director, National Contract Management Association, met with approximately 50 Army Contracting Command-Rock Island employees April 23 to discuss NCMA's role in advocating for the contracting profession.

"We are very excited that Mr. Fischetti could come speak," said Gerry Haan, NCMA Quad Cities chapter president. "We appreciate that a speaker of his caliber came to Rock Island."

Haan said Fischetti's 30 years of diverse acquisition experience, including leadership, management, policy and contracting officer positions provides him with a unique

perspective. Prior to coming to NCMA, he was in the Senior Executive Service as the component acquisition executive and head of contracting within the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs)/TRICARE Management Activity, managing more than \$55 billion per year for DOD's Military Healthcare System.

"As executive director of NCMA, he meets regularly with senior leaders in both government and industry which allows him to have great insight into the current happenings of contracting," Haan said. "It was an honor that he shared many of those insights with us here at Rock Island."

During his speech, Fischetti discussed the challenges facing contracting professionals during austere times.

See **NCMA**, page 4.

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Spotlight on...

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Kerry L. Luke

413th Contracting Support Brigade, Schofield Barracks, Hawaii

Kerry K. Luke is a 413th Contracting Support Brigade contract specialist assigned to the Regional Contracting Office – Hawaii at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii.

Describe your current position.

I just completed my temporary promotion to GS-13, contracting officer and team lead, Contracting Division Alpha, Regional Contracting Office-Hawaii. This opportunity was a result of the team leader volunteering for a temporary assignment to support the 408th CSB in Kuwait. The team's responsibility was mainly to process requirements for Tripler Army Medical Center and various tenant activities for the U.S Army in Hawaii.

In my current capacity as contracting officer, Utilities Privatization Team, I am entrusted with issuing awards and ensuring contract actions are properly executed on behalf of the government, providing support and advising team members, and managing workload assignments and project deadlines.

Describe your passion for the job.

I take great pride and experience a feeling of accomplishment in completing a requirement, resolving problems that arise or assisting an activity in achieving its desired actions.



Kerry L. Luke

Where do you call home? Tell us about your family. What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?

Hawaii has always been my home. My wife is a registered nurse. We have a son who is currently in the 10th grade and a daughter in the 5th. They are both involved in many extracurricular activities which keep my wife and me extremely busy, ushering them to and from their functions. In my spare time, I enjoy watching episodes of NCIS, Duck Dynasty, Hawaii 5-0 (both past and present), as well as any Elvis Presley movie.

How does your job support the Soldier?

My job as a contracting officer directly provides Soldiers with services and supplies needed to accomplish their missions. It also provides support services for their families.

What would you like others to know about you?

Being a contracting officer is an extremely challenging position which requires a great deal of knowledge and discipline. But it is also very rewarding, knowing you are supporting Soldiers who are continually engaged in maintaining our freedom and liberty.

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.



U.S. Army Contracting Command

Commanding General
Maj. Gen. Camille M. Nichols

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

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Fort Knox team saves customer millions on contract

By Ryan Mattox

MICC Public Affairs Office

Ryan.l.mattox2.civ@mail.mil

JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO-FORT SAM HOUSTON, Texas

– The innovative thinking of a team of contracting professionals at the Mission and Installation Contracting Command-Fort Knox, Ky., is saving more than \$4.5 million annually on a multimillion dollar contract.

With funding cuts in base operating budgets this year, contracting officers dug deeper to find savings without losing the quality of service provided to the Army.

The requirement calls for a contractor to provide all services, materials, plant supervision, labor and equipment necessary to operate, maintain, repair and perform alterations to real property facilities, including unaccompanied and troop personnel housing at Fort Belvoir, Va. MICC-Fort Knox contracting professionals recently completed the Fort Belvoir Garrison's base operations services source selection process.

"The incumbent was receiving \$1,987,577 per month," said David Shuck, a MICC-Fort Knox contracting officer. "The succeeding contract monthly amount of \$1,607,542 provides a savings of \$380,035 per month, or a total annual savings of \$4,560,420. This is a savings of slightly more than 23 percent. During this time of significant fiscal constraints, this is of great benefit to the customer and the Army. The team was very pleased and excited that our revised strategy resulted in such significant savings."

Shuck and his teammates were tasked to find a solution to bridge the gap between the expiration of the current contract and protest resolution. They worked closely together and with the Small Business Administration and identified an innovative solution for the bridge contract. A bridge contract is an interim action to prevent interruption or termination of critical services or supplies.

After careful analysis, the team made a determination to revise the solicitation and request a revised proposal from each offeror. The revisions placed the primary focus on staffing and eliminated the use

of an ineffectual evaluation software program. The analysis evaluated the entire contract process – beginning with the ongoing process, amendments, receipt of revised proposals and evaluation of offers. The award was completed in less than 90 days, resulting in a contract at significant savings to the government.

With funding cuts in base operating budgets this year, contracting officers dug deeper to find savings without losing the quality of service provided to the Army.

"The primary cost driver on this contract is labor," Shuck said. "Analysis of the original solicitation and source selection plan appeared to divert focus from labor to other less important aspects of the defined requirement. We issued an amendment, revising proposal submittal requirements to place primary focus on the labor and staffing. This was a highly competitive requirement. The revised proposals reflected better understanding of the requirement and lower pricing."

The team determined that the incumbent contractor was not eligible and its affiliate was not a proper solution. The requirement is in the SBA's 8(a) business development program, and the incumbent is no longer an 8(a) certified small business. Contracting officers are encouraged to work closely with MICC small business specialists to identify 8(a)

firms that could provide needed services or supplies. The team and SBA officials came to the same conclusion that the bridge contract should be awarded to an affiliate of the apparent winner of the longer-term contract, another 8(a) certified small business.

The incumbent contractor, which graduated from the 8(a) program, had been performing services on a sole source basis for approximately 3 to 4 years. An affiliate of the incumbent submitted a proposal for the new competitive acquisition and ultimately protested the award, causing delay of performance of the new contract.

The apparent winner of the longer term contract, its affiliate and the SBA worked closely with the Fort Knox team to quickly negotiate and put in place a bridge contract. Once the protest was resolved, the affiliate agreed to the same price and contract terms as those that are in the longer term contract.

"It was very challenging and rewarding," Shuck said. "Being located at Fort Knox and working with the contracting office and customer located at Fort Belvoir required a significant amount of communication via email and phone. Bringing the Fort Belvoir source selection board to Fort Knox was one of the keys to our success. We were able to evaluate revised proposals in less than two weeks, versus the previous method that was in its fifth month with no end in sight."

In the end, the contract calls for a phase-in base period of 11 months and four one-year option periods for a total amount of \$94,844,955. This equates to \$1,607,542 per month payment. This requirement is for operation, maintenance and repair of real property facilities at Fort Belvoir in the following functional areas: dining facility appliances and equipment; electrical systems; heating plants and systems; water system; storm drain system; air conditioning and refrigeration plants and system; maintenance and repair; buildings and structures; grounds; surface areas; unaccompanied personnel housing operations and maintenance; fire detection and suppression; environmental services; and building operations and maintenance.



(Photo by Walt Johnson)

Estella Juarez prepares for her 500-mile trek across Spain later this month.

Contracting specialist readies for 500-mile trek across Spain

By Walt Johnson
Fort Carson Public Affairs Office

FORT CARSON, Colo. – Sometimes reaching to achieve a major milestone can lead a person to even greater accomplishments.

That's the case for Estella Juarez, a contracting specialist with the Mission and Installation Contracting Command here. Juarez began an effort to get into shape four years ago while stationed in Germany to participate in the Camino de Santiago, or the Way of St. James, pilgrimage across Spain.

Juarez knew that her physical condition would be the biggest obstacle to complete the approximately 500-mile pilgrimage. She has since dropped 65 pounds.

"I really wanted to do the walk four years ago ... I saw a number of things that talked about the race, but it didn't seem feasible to me to take on an event like that in the physical condition I was in," she said. "But the idea stuck in my head ... so this year I'm going to go and do it."

The four-year odyssey to prepare for the pilgrimage hasn't been easy for Juarez. She said she had to dedicate herself to losing

as much weight as possible and getting fit enough to walk across Spain.

When Juarez first told her son about doing the event, he was concerned because he witnessed the strain hikes put on her body when she was overweight. She assured him that she would get in shape to complete the journey.

"When I began to train to get the weight off, I was actually so embarrassed because I felt I had gone so far off the wagon, and I didn't know where I wanted to start to get back into shape," Juarez said. "I remember looking at myself in the mirror and feeling like I was so far gone; so far out of shape that there was nothing I could do about it.

"I wanted to go to the gym but I had to get in shape first. Then I remembered I heard once that someone said 'you don't have to be great to start, but you have to start in order to be great,' and that is what I use for motivation," Juarez said.

She said staying faithful to her desire to get in better shape played a large role in her getting ready to take on the biggest challenge she has faced since losing 65 pounds and is confident she is ready to complete her mission.

NCMA

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He believes that there is an impression among contracting professionals that the drawdown of the wars and the sequester are affecting the budget situation much "faster and harder" than in the past.

Fischetti believes that government contracting has been through similar situations and that, in the long-term, the need for high-quality government contracting will probably increase, particularly in the services area, due to fewer federal workers and increased reliance on contractors.

He said creating and fostering professional relationships can be valuable not only for a person's career, but the profession at large. Fischetti said NCMA has the interest and support from entry-level employees through senior leaders, which is helping to enhance communications that lead to effective contracting solutions.

"We are the interface between the government and the contractors and almost nothing gets done in the government anymore that isn't done through contracting," said Fischetti. "We are the ones making those relationships effective. We can talk all day about our problems and difficulties, but at the end of the day, when we, as contracting professionals, act in concert on whatever issue it is that we are working, (it) will raise the stature of our profession."



(Photo by Liz Adrian)

Pictured from left are: Col. John P. Hannon, acting executive director, ACC-RI; Michael P. Fischetti, executive director, NCMA; and NCMA Quad Cities Chapter representatives Gerry Haan, president; Joan F. S. Wysoske, treasurer; Michelle Breitbach, vice president; and Chioma Ezeugwu, secretary. The group met with ACC-RI employees as part of an effort to help foster professional relationships.

Army focuses on motorcycle safety in May

By Julie Shelley

U.S. Army Combat Readiness Safety Center

FORT RUCKER, Ala. – May is Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month, and while the nationwide campaign sponsored by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration urges drivers to share the road with motorcyclists, Army officials are placing greater emphasis on personal responsibility while riding.

In general, motorcycle accidents within the Army do not follow national trends, according to Brig. Gen. Timothy J. Edens, director of Army Safety and commanding general, U.S. Army Combat Readiness Safety Center.

“Historically, most fatal motorcycle accidents involving Soldiers are single vehicle,” Edens said, explaining that nationally, many riders are killed when other drivers do not allow them room to maneuver in time to prevent a collision. “Even when we’ve lost Soldiers in multi-vehicle accidents, it’s often been the direct result of indiscipline on the Soldier’s part: alcohol use, excessive speed or lack of personal protective equipment.”

Army accident data show that speeding and other forms of reckless riding, neglecting to wear PPE, and failure to complete required training are among the most common indiscipline-based errors Soldier riders make. Alarming, leaders and Soldiers over the age of 25 have comprised the majority of rider fatalities during the past several fiscal years.

Although motorcycle fatalities have fallen markedly in 2013 – current statistics indicate a 59 percent decrease as compared to this time last year – officials expect numbers to rise through the end of summer.

“We’ve had a great year so far, but it’s also been a long winter in many places,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Richard D. Stidley, USACR Safety Center. “As the weather warms and more riders hit the road, their risk is going to increase. Managing it is key to staying alive for another riding season.”

The Army-mandated Progressive Motorcycle Program, which promotes lifelong learning through staggered riding courses based on proven practices from the Motorcycle Safety

Foundation, is now in its second year and has received positive reviews from Soldiers. A complement to that training, the Motorcycle Mentorship Program, is already well established and boasts chapters in 48 states. The MMP pairs novice riders with experienced motorcyclists to foster an environment where enthusiasts continually learn from and keep one another safe.

“The PMP and MMP are just two of the great programs the Army has in place,” Edens said. “It’s incumbent upon leaders to ensure their riders know about them, get the proper training and ride responsibly. We now have an entire month dedicated to motorcycle safety, so there’s no excuse for not getting a head start on summer.”

Stidley said leaders should also remember their Soldiers are watching.

“Discipline and responsibility are not a function of rank,” he said. “Leaders are just as accountable to the standard as their Soldiers, and they should be setting the example.”

For more information on motorcycle safety, visit <https://safety.army.mil>.

SEXUAL ASSAULT

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“We’ve asked the service chiefs to look at methods to incorporate this into annual assessments – what would be appropriate ways to tie sexual assault prevention and response accomplishments into an evaluation or assessment system?” he added. “It’s an open-ended task.”

The chiefs have to report back to Hagel with their conclusions Nov. 1.

Hagel directed the services and defense agencies to conduct a comprehensive visual inspection of department workplaces, including the service academies, by July 1. This is similar to an inspection the Air Force conducted late last year to ensure workforces do not display “degrading, offensive materials.”

The defense secretary’s initiative looks at preventing sexual assault in the recruiting and early training process, Patton said.

“This includes DOD-wide recruiting organizations, the military entrance processing centers (and) ROTC to assess them on their sexual assault prevention programs,” he said. This follows recent assessments conducted by the services of their military academies and initial entry training programs.

Another initiative looks to improve overall victim care and trust in the chain of command, to increase reporting of the crime, and “to reduce the feelings victims have of being ostracized,” Patton said.

On the military justice side, Hagel

asked for the acting DOD general counsel to incorporate the rights afforded to victims through the Crime Victims’ Rights Act into military justice practice. He also wants to evaluate the Air Force Special Victims Counsel pilot program “to ensure victims of sexual assault are provided the advice and counsel they need to understand their rights and to feel confident,” Patton said.

Finally, the defense secretary is asking a congressionally mandated panel to speed up its work on an independent review of the systems used to investigate, prosecute and adjudicate sexual assault crimes. The legislation gives the panel 18 months to finish its review. Hagel is asking them to finish in a year.

Contracting specialists complete 2-year Smart Buyer training program

By **Wendy M. Weissner**
ACC – New Jersey

Maj. Gen. Camille M. Nichols, commanding general, Army Contracting Command, presided over an award ceremony during her visit to the ACC-New Jersey Arsenal April 8.

During the ceremony, Nichols recognized Gherin Fracasso, John Swift, Vincent Turco, Mark Bobitka, Jason Melofchik, John Vince Fox and Thomas Howes for completing the center's two-year Ammunition Enterprise Smart Buyer Program training.

"These individuals form a present and future cadre of contracting officers and leaders of ACC-N.J.," said Paul Milenkowic, deputy director ACC-N.J.

Milkenkovic said this program combines formal training and on-the-job experiences in a comprehensive manner to further develop highly qualified contract specialists into becoming smarter buyers. Participants are assigned for one year working to support an assigned program manager in the acquisition process. The second year they receive specialized training and hands-on assignments in cost and pricing, source selection and in the office of the Principal Assistant Responsible for Contracting. This is the center's initial rotation of

trainees and its first graduating class.

He said the training provides ACC-N.J. personnel with a better understanding of the user, requirements, markets, proposals, cost and price principles, competition and the role of small business while also building relationships and enhancing career development.

Nichols, along with Brig. Gen. John J. McGuiness, program executive officer, Ammunition and senior commander, Picatinny Arsenal, N.J., presented the graduating class with their certificates of completion.

Milkenkovic said Nichols has been aware of this program since her last visit and is very supportive of continuing it.



(Photo by Wendy M. Weissner)

Maj. Gen. Camille M. Nichols, ACC commanding general, joined Brig. Gen. John J. McGuiness (far right), program executive officer, Ammunition and senior commander, Picatinny Arsenal, to recognize recent graduates of the Ammunition Enterprise Smart Buyer Program. Pictured from left to right are Nichols, Gherin Fracasso, John Swift, Vincent Turco, Mark Bobitka, Jason Melofchik and McGuiness.



ACC in the News

This article mentions Army Contracting Command.

Army completes armed helicopters' delivery to Iraqis

By Targeted News Service

(Posted on Avionics Intelligence website, May 4, 2013)

The U.S. Army issued the following news:

The Army completed a milestone in helping to maintain stability in Iraq now that the U.S. military has departed.

The Armed Scout Helicopters Project Office, along with several representatives from different organizations on Redstone Arsenal, made the eighth delivery of the Iraqi Armed 407 Bell helicopters to Iraq.

<http://www.avionics-intelligence.com/news/2013/05/04/army-completes-armed-helicopters-delivery-to-iraqis.html>



Click on the image for ACC safety messages.

