



# NewsBLAST

U.S. Army Contracting Command

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



*(U.S. Army Photo)*

Brig. Gen. Ted Harrison passes the Army Contracting Command colors to ACC Command Sgt. Maj. John L. Murray during the organization's change of command Oct. 2 at Redstone Arsenal, Ala. He assumed command from Maj. Gen. Camille M. Nichols (center) who had served as its commander since May 2012. Gen. Dennis L. Via, commanding general, Army Materiel Command, (far left) officiated the ceremony.

## ACC welcomes new commanding general

By Larry D. McCaskill

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REDSTONE ARSENAL, Ala. – Brig. Gen. Theodore "Ted" Harrison accepted command of the Army Contracting Command and Bryan R. Samson accepted responsibility as the acting director of the Expeditionary Contracting Command before more than 200 Soldiers, civilians and guests here.

Gen. Dennis E. Via, Army Materiel Command commanding general, welcomed Harrison during the Oct. 2 ceremony and charged him with continuing the tradition of contracting excellence within the organization.

See NEW LEADER, page 3.

## Ribbon-cutting signifies relocation of ACC, ECC headquarters

By David San Miguel

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HUNTSVILLE, Ala. – In one of her last acts as commanding general of the Army Contracting Command, Maj. Gen. Camille M. Nichols hosted a ribbon-cutting ceremony at the new temporary location of the ACC and Expeditionary Contracting Command headquarters here Sept. 30.

This is the second time the ACC headquarters has moved since it was established as a provisional command in 2008 at Fort Belvoir, Va. ACC and ECC relocated to Redstone Arsenal, Ala., in 2010. The ACC and ECC headquarters staffs will occupy the 106 Wynn Drive location until renovations at the command's permanent facility, building 4505, located across the street from the Army Materiel Command headquarters on Redstone Arsenal, Ala., are completed.

According to Nichols, the move to a temporary location was needed to ensure the safety and well being of the command's workforce.

"The tornadoes that hit Alabama in April of 2011 – some not very far from our affectionately named 'trailer park' – are a constant reminder that we must do all we can to ensure our workforce is safe at all times," she said. "We owe that to you. Your safety is something that cannot be compromised and we have and continue to take that responsibility very seriously.

"When the command stood up in the trailers in 2010, we were all excited to be in Huntsville and were eager to accomplish our essential mission supporting war fighters around the world," Nichols said. "The command began operations in trailers that were below the standard that we owe our workforce, but we knew it would only be temporary."

See RIBBON-CUTTING, page 3.

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# Spotlight on...

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## ACC-RI executive director appointed to SES rank

By Liz Adrian

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### ROCK ISLAND ARSENAL, ILL. –

Looking back at her 32 years of government service during the Senior Executive Service appointment ceremony held here at Heritage Hall Sept. 19, she made it clear that this achievement was not hers alone.

Melanie A. Johnson, the newly appointed SES, Army Contracting Command-Rock Island, attributed this accomplishment to her family, her contracting mentors, a little bit of luck and a lot of hard work.

Johnson was appointed executive director of ACC-RI on Sept. 8 and assumed her SES role just 11 days later. As ACC-RI's new leader, she heads a center of approximately 600 contracting professionals who support joint forces worldwide.

"As an organization within this great Army, I believe we are going to face challenging times in the very near future," said Johnson. "Sequestration and budget cuts will continue, and we may have some lean years ahead of us, but I have been with this organization through thick and thin and there is nothing that we can't do when we pull together and work together."

In this position, Johnson has overall executive responsibility for ACC-RI, a center that falls under Army Contracting Command, Huntsville, Ala.

During her remarks, Johnson recalled her humble beginnings at RIA.



Melanie A. Johnson

Thirty-two years ago, I started as a GS-2 clerk typist summer hire," said Johnson. "At that time summer hires were hired based on the lottery system, and it was based on the last digit of your social security number. Lucky for me it was number eight and I was hired. If that wouldn't have been the case, I might not be here today."

During that first summer, Johnson said she was fortunate to be assigned to procurement, working for Harry Hyman in the weapons division.

"He saw something within me and decided to make me a permanent hire,"

said Johnson. "Again, someone else had a plan other than me."

Over the years, Johnson said she gained not only a formal education – she obtained three degrees going to school part-time taking night courses over a stretch of 20 years – but she also received an invaluable on-the-job education.

"I was very fortunate and had great mentors and supervisors that provided me with great opportunities to grow," said Johnson.

During the ceremony, Johnson recalled several of her assignments and the lessons she learned from each of the leaders in those areas, including her time serving as (retired) Maj. Gen. Robert Radin's executive officer, during his time as commanding general of Army Sustainment Command.

"I lived through the long days, especially Thursday evenings preparing the ASC SITREP (situation report) for (Army Materiel Command)," said Johnson. "I knew I had succeeded when he told me on my last day that my stint as his (executive officer) turned out much better than he thought it would."

In addition to luck, hard work and role models, Johnson said her family was instrumental in helping her along the path to become an SES.

She said that even early on, her mom enforced the importance of a college education and her mother-in-law and father-in-law made that education possible for her and her husband, Tim, by watching their children, fixing dinner and doing laundry while they took classes.

See SPOTLIGHT, page 4.

## U.S. Army Contracting Command

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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.

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NEWSBLAST



# NEW LEADER

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“What you just observed was a simple, yet very symbolic ceremony and it represents more than a change of responsibility between two outstanding general officers and a member of our senior executive service,” said Via. “It symbolizes the rich heritage of our great Army. It reaffirms the unique authority and responsibility vested by our Army and our nation in the commander and represents continuity as the colors of ACC and ECC were passed from one leader to another.”

Harrison is no stranger to ACC. He takes over the ACC commanding general position after having served as the ECC commanding general here since April 2012.

“I’m proud of the performance and accomplishments of the Soldiers and civilians of the Expeditionary Contracting Command during my tenure and I expect

them to provide that same level of support to the command’s future leaders. For your outstanding dedication to duty, I say thank you,” said Harrison. “Sitting so close to the ACC headquarters, I’ve already had the privilege to work closely with many of the ACC staff. I vow to continue to be your advocate, to be your voice among the Army’s senior leaders and to continue working to provide you the resources you need to do your job.

“ACC will continue to work to provide capable and professional contracting teams and support the nation’s war fighters with expert contracting support around the globe.”

Nichols, the first ACC commanding general, has been selected to be the deputy commanding general for support/ chief of staff, Installation Management Command, San Antonio, Texas.

“It has been an honor to serve in the

ACC,” Nichols said. “The Soldiers and civilians are inspirational in their total commitment in support of our Army. I thank them all for their unconditional support and know they will give Brig. Gen. Harrison the same. There is no better choice to replace me than Ted.”

Samson previously served as Harrison’s deputy to the commanding general. He was appointed to the Senior Executive Service in November 2010.

“I have been privileged to serve with exceptional contracting leaders – civilian, officer, noncommissioned officer and foreign local nationals during my career and I thank them all for their service and sacrifice,” said Samson. “To the members of the ECC, I promise to give my best and do my part to keep us effective, efficient and relevant to our Army. With your help, we will remain engaged, capable and committed.”

## RIBBON-CUTTING

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According to John Nerger, AMC executive deputy to the commanding general, the relocation of the ACC and ECC headquarters was not coincidental.

“Relocations don’t happen or don’t happen very well without deliberate planning, careful execution and old fashioned hard work,” he said.

Nerger added that this relocation was largely due to the “priority, perseverance and passion of Gen. Nichols, in particular, along with Gen. (Dennis L.) Via (AMC commanding general) and Brig. Gen. (Ted C.) Harrison (former ECC commanding general and now ACC commanding general) coupled with a bit of luck in the end.”

“Leaders are judged by many things,” he said, “but in the end the most important measure is in how they stand up for and look out for their workforce. By that measure ACC and ECC are blessed.”

The original plan was to build a permanent ACC headquarters on Martin Road at Redstone but that plan was halted when military construction priorities were changed as a result of falling military construction budgets.

“Realizing that the trailers couldn’t



(Photo by Ed Worley)

Assisting Maj. Gen. Camille M. Nichols, ACC commanding general, with the ribbon cutting are (from left) ACC Command Sgt. Maj. John L. Murray; John Nerger, AMC executive deputy to the commanding general; Nichols; Brig. Gen. Ted Harrison, former ECC commanding general, now ACC commanding general; ECC Command Sgt. Maj. Angel Clark; and Maj. Gen. Darrell K. Williams, AMC chief of staff.

last much longer, we aggressively sought alternatives,” Nichols said. “We decided to renovate building 4505 across the street from AMC headquarters. Renovation

has begun on this building, but it won’t be ready for occupancy until 2016; a long time to remain in temporary, unhardened spaces.”

# Furlough raises questions on civilian leave, pay

By Jim Garamone  
*American Forces Press Service*

WASHINGTON – Only those Defense Department civilians recalled from furlough under the Pay Our Military Act may take annual and sick leave, a Pentagon spokesman said here Oct. 8.

“Employees who remain on furlough are in a nonpay, nonduty status, so there is no leave to take,” Navy Lt. Cmdr. Nate Christensen explained.

So a civilian employee who had leave planned and is now furloughed can still take that vacation. It will not count as

leave as long as the furlough lasts.

Once the president signs an appropriation or Congress passes a continuing resolution, furloughed employees will report back to work. Further legislation is necessary for employees to receive retroactive pay for days lost to the shutdown. If that happens, employees will be paid for the furlough time, and will not be charged for any leave that had been approved for days that became furlough days.

On DOD civilian pay, the situation is a bit different. The next civilian pay date is Oct. 17, and under the Pay Our Military Act, Defense Department

civilians will receive paychecks.

Excepted employees – those who continued to work – will receive the full 80 hours of pay. Those furloughed will receive 48 hours of pay for the pay period covered by that payday, up and to and including Sept. 30. Furloughed employees will receive pay for the four hours they worked Oct. 1 to implement the orderly shutdown once there a new appropriation or continuing resolution is in effect.

DOD civilian employees called back to work Oct. 7 will receive their paychecks for the current pay period Oct. 25.

## SPOTLIGHT

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“Last, but not least, I definitely could not have accomplished any of this without my wonderful husband, Tim Johnson,” she said. “Without his unfailing support I would not be standing here today. He unselfishly put his career on the back burner so I could pursue my dreams within Army contracting. He has been my strongest supporter and there are not many men who would graciously do what he has done and for that, I thank him.”

Maj. Gen. Camille M. Nichols, then ACC commanding general, presided at the ceremony. Nichols said she is confident that Johnson will be a senior leader who will help the Army acquisition field achieve its goals, and serve as a professional who will use her problem-solving skills in addressing the complexity of modern military contracting.

“Melanie brings to ACC a tremendous wealth of contracting experience, and unequaled knowledge of the skills and requirements our contracting team must master in order to provide the best value for our customer – the Soldier – and our supplier – the American taxpayer,” Nichols said.

Beyond serving the nation’s war fighters and taxpayers, Nichols said that Johnson and her husband, who is also the chief of ACC-RI’s Information Technology

Division, make service to the community a priority.

“What is not known to many is the extensive volunteer and civil service work Melanie and her husband, Tim, do,” said Nichols. “Melanie has always held true to her faith and determination by aiding those in need. Her long list of local and nationwide charitable services proves her to be a selfless leader and humanitarian.”

During the ceremony, Nichols swore in Johnson and her husband placed the SES pin on his wife’s lapel.

Nichols presented the SES flag to Johnson with assistance from Master Sgt. Sol Nevarezberrios, ACC-RI senior NCO, and Staff Sgt. Elvon Dixon, ACC-RI contract specialist, who helped unfurl the SES flag.

The Senior Executive Service was established in 1978 and is a corps of federal executives appointed to key leadership positions just below the level of presidential appointees, and includes most managerial, supervisory and policy positions in the executive branch of the federal government classified above general schedule grade 15 or its equivalent. SES members serve as the major link between presidential appointees and the federal civilian employees.

For protocol purposes, SES members

within the Department of Defense are considered the equivalent of flag officers such as generals and admirals. Johnson’s appointment brings the total number of SES members at Rock Island Arsenal up to seven.

Prior to her current position, Johnson served as the ACC-RI director for Field Support Contracting, in which she oversaw approximately 200 people in the Sustainment, Reachback and Logistics Civil Augmentation Program contracting divisions, and the Enhanced Army Global Logistics Enterprise Contracting Office.

Johnson, a Quad Cities native, earned her bachelor’s degree from Western Illinois University, Macomb, Ill., and her master’s of business administration from the University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa.

She is an Army Acquisition Corps member, Level III certified in contracting and Level I certified in program management. She is a graduate of the Brookings Institute Leadership Training program and a graduate of the first ASC Journey to Leadership Tier III program. Johnson is also the recipient of the Ordnance Order of Samuel Sharpe award and the Commander’s Award for Civilian Service as an ACC Small Business Champion under the EAGLE Program.



# ACC professionals, units earn Army awards for excellence in contracting

Army Contracting Command individuals and units were recognized in nine of the 11 fiscal year 2013 Secretary of the Army Awards for Excellence in Contracting categories.

In announcing the award winners, Harry P. Hallock, deputy assistant secretary of the Army (procurement), said the awards are presented annually to recognize exemplary contracting organizations and individuals, specifically contracting organizations and individuals that excel in customer satisfaction, productivity, process improvement and quality enhancement.

"Congratulations to the award winners," said Brig. Gen. Ted Harrison, ACC commanding general. "Their selection is indicative of the superb performance by ACC personnel. I look forward to individually congratulating each of our award winners and thanking the ACC leaders for their support for this awards program and for nominating our ACC superstars. No doubt there were many worthy nominees to choose from."

This year, 47 nominations were received and 12 awards were presented.

The winners in the Special Awards category were:

**Barbara C. Heald:** Irvin G. Bonus, 413th Contracting Support Brigade, Regional Contracting Office-Hawaii, Expeditionary Contracting Command, Fort Shafter, Hawaii

**AbilityOne:** New England Soldier Systems and Individual Equipment Team - ACC-Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md.

**Outstanding Contract Specialist/Procurement Analyst:** Linda M. Finman - 409th Contracting Support Brigade, ECC, Kaiserslautern, Germany

The winners in the Outstanding Contracting Officer Awards category were:

**Outstanding Contracting Officer Installation Level-Directorate of Contracting:** Thomas R. Guyer - 409th Contracting Support Brigade, ECC

**Outstanding Contracting Officer Specialized Services & Construction Contracting:** Sonya DeLucia - ACC-

Aberdeen Proving Ground.

**Outstanding Contracting Officer Contingency Contracting:** Maj. William J. Griffin - 413th Contracting Support Brigade.

The winners in the Outstanding Unit/Team Awards category were:

**Outstanding Unit/Team Award for Systems, Research and Development, Logistics Support (Sustainment)**

**Contracting:** Family of Heavy Tactical Vehicles Evaluation Team - ACC-Warren, Mich.; and the CH-47 Multi Year II Contract Team, ACC-Redstone, Redstone Arsenal, Ala.

**Outstanding Unit/Team Award for Installation Level-Directorate of Contracting:** ECC Fiscal Year 13 Virtual Procurement Management Review Team - ECC Headquarters, Redstone Arsenal.

**Outstanding Unit/Team Award for Specialized Services and Construction Contracting:** Supply, Expeditionary and Construction Team - 414th Contracting Support Brigade, ECC, Vicenza, Italy.



(Photo by Rachel Clark)

## 409th CSB welcomes new quality assurance specialists

Following their graduation from a two-year quality assurance intern program through the Expeditionary Contracting Command, four interns were presented their certificates of completion Sept. 27.

Holding their certificates, the graduates include: (from left to right): Mary Smith, Amparo Sherrill, Mary Easley and John Workman.

Now certified as quality assurance specialists, the graduates will serve with the 409th Contracting Support Brigade at Kaiserslautern, Germany.

On hand for the presentation were 409th CSB leadership representatives from left: Paul Michaels, deputy to the commander; Col. William Bailey, brigade commander; and Command Sgt. Maj. Bentura Fernandez.

# Army contracting team helps support Bosnian schools

By Rachel Clark

409th Contracting Support Brigade

Kaiserslautern, Germany

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**KAISERSLAUTERN, GERMANY** - In Bosnia-Herzegovina, a primary school for kids with special needs is getting a facelift thanks to the initiatives of the 409th Contracting Support Brigade here.

A contracting team from the unit is supporting the local community by overseeing the management of the renovation of two Bosnian schools. The Soldiers, currently deployed at Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo, saw an opportunity to help the communities of Glamoc and Sarajevo.

Maj. Marc Nguyen, 409th CSB contracting officer, understood the need for school repairs. He attended a small elementary school in a village in Chu Hai, Vietnam, where the buildings were in dire need of repair after the Vietnam War.

"I can relate to the children yearning to have the opportunity for an education in a safe and welcoming environment to learn and thrive," he said.

The Mjedenica School for children with intellectual disabilities in Sarajevo and the Fra Franjo Glavinic Elementary School in Glamoc received renovations that included the repair and replacement of their existing metal roofs, insulation, new energy-efficient thermal façades as well as new windows, doors and interior paint.

"It is certain that the works will significantly improve the quality of everyday work of our teachers and other staff," said Mirsad Asimović, principal, Mjedenica School.

Nguyen agrees.

"This is going to provide a stronger structure that is safer and more comfortable for the special needs children and the school staff," said Nguyen.

The Sarajevo school educates more than 400 children and the Glamoc school educates more than 300.

"Della Hodges, the Area Support Team Balkans director for Camp Bondsteel, encouraged us to contact the U.S. Embassies in our area of responsibility and to seek out humanitarian assistance projects," said Nguyen.

The team reached out to the American Embassy in Bosnia and got in contact with the Office of Defense Cooperation.

"We found out that there were two humanitarian assistance projects scheduled and we were told to contact the U.S. European Command," remarked Nguyen.

After coordination with EUCOM, the project was approved and funded in June 2013.

After approval of the project, the contracting team began its work.

"We are on the ground doing site visits, talking with the contractor and making sure the work is being done in accordance with the contract," said Nguyen.

"Because the facade was so degraded, every day there was a threat of falling shards that could injure students, teachers, parents and visitors," he added. "The local government had no funds for such a large volume of work to be carried out.

"Seeing the excitement in the children's eyes and the warm welcome of their smiles during site visits, I feel truly blessed and I am full of gratitude to have been a part of these projects," said Nguyen.



(Courtesy photo)

**Maj. Marc Nguyen, 409th Contracting Support Brigade, contracting officer, and a Glamoc School student hold a sign illustrating the unit's support of the local community education program.**



(Courtesy photo)

**Maj. Marc Nguyen, 409th CSB contracting officer, (left) meets with members of the Glamoc community to identify renovation projects needed. The 409th recently contracted for renovations to the schools for children with intellectual disabilities in Sarajevo and Glamoc, Bosnia-Herzegovina.**



## Contracting battalion runs to commemorate POW/MIA Recognition Day

Members of the 926th Contingency Contracting Battalion run in formation during a post-wide 5K run/walk held at the Edgewood Area of Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md., Sept. 20.

The run was led by Lt. Col. Derek Draper, battalion commander, and was held to commemorate Prisoners of War and Missing in Action Recognition Day, which is observed on the third Friday in September.



(Photo by Maj. Alan J. Zero)



# ACC in the News

These articles mention Army Contracting Command.

## Brig. Gen. Theodore Harrison takes over command of Army Contracting Command

By Leada Gore

(Posted on AL.com Oct. 2, 2013)

Brigadier Gen. Theodore Harrison has deep roots in Army contracting.

Throughout his time in the service, Harrison said almost every assignment he's had has been with or in support of Army Materiel Command. Now, as he's poised to take over command of AMC subordinate command Army Contracting Command at Redstone Arsenal, Harrison said that experience will serve him well.

[http://blog.al.com/breaking/2013/10/brig\\_gen\\_theodore\\_harrison\\_tak.html](http://blog.al.com/breaking/2013/10/brig_gen_theodore_harrison_tak.html)

## Army Contracting Command's new commander, Brig. Gen. Ted Harrison, sends welcome message to personnel (video)

By Leada Gore

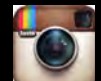
(Posted on AL.com Oct. 2, 2013)

Brig. Gen. Ted Harrison's first week on the job as head of Army Contracting Command was memorable for more than one reason. Change of command ceremonies for Harrison, who formerly served as commander of Expeditionary Contracting Command at Redstone Arsenal, were held Oct. 2, just a day after the government shutdown sent thousands of Department of Defense civilians home.

[http://www.al.com/business/index.ssf/2013/10/army\\_contracting\\_commands\\_new.html](http://www.al.com/business/index.ssf/2013/10/army_contracting_commands_new.html)



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ACC safety messages.



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