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NEWSBLAST

U.S. Army Contracting Command

"Providing global contracting support to war fighters."

Contracting NCOs help Pacific mission succeed

By Sgt. 1st Class Howard Reed
10th Regional Support Group
Okinawa, Japan

KADENA AIR BASE, Japan – Vince Lombardi was quoted as saying: "Individual commitment to a group effort - that is what makes a team work, a company work, a society work, a civilization work."

Army contracting soldiers of the 680th Contingency Contracting Team, who work alongside their Air Force and civilian counterparts at the 18th Contracting Squadron on Kadena Air Base, Japan, understand the importance of being a valued member of a team.

Army Capt. William Roberts, team leader, 680th CCT, explained the unit has a total of five soldiers who share the workload to purchase items to procure services for the 18th CONS throughout the Pacific Command.

"We're embedded with the Air Force to conduct operational contracting," said Roberts. "That's everyday services that need any type of contract that involves things like maintenance and services."

See PACIFIC, page 6.



(Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Howard Reed)

Air Force Master Sgt. Chad Obermiller (left), contracting team leader, 18th Contracting Squadron, goes over a contract with Army Capt. William Roberts, contracting team leader, 680th Contingency Contracting Team. The 680th Soldiers work alongside airmen and civilians to form a united and cohesive contracting team that executes \$1.4 million worth of contracts annually for the Pacific Command.

Westphal: Small businesses critical to Army readiness

By C. Todd Lopez
Army News Service

WASHINGTON – The Army must "widen that aperture" to allow easier access for small business to find opportunity with the largest of America's military services.

During a discussion Oct. 21, at the 2013 Association of the U. S. Army Annual Meeting and Exposition, in

Washington, D.C., Undersecretary of the Army Joseph W. Westphal met with dozens of small business owners and representatives to hear their success stories on working with the Army as well as the challenges they face.

"How do I as the undersecretary and the chief management officer of this department do something, at least in the Army, to help small businesses compete

better?" Westphal asked.

The AUSA annual meeting and exposition typically consists of three days of briefings and presentations by Army and command senior leaders. But before a room of small business representatives, Westphal opted instead to let the audience speak, saying he wanted instead to have a "dialogue" with business representatives.

See SMALL BUSINESS, page 6.

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Spotlight on...

For Spotlight submissions, click on the icon.

ACC runner takes passion to another level state-to-state

By **Betsy Kozak-Howard**

ACC-Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md.

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Running has always been a favorite pastime for Tanya Peel, supervisory procurement analyst with the Army Contracting Command – Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md. Two years ago she took her passion to a new level and established a goal to run a half-marathon in every state.

“I’ve completed 13 states toward my goal and by doing the math, I estimate that I will reach my goal in approximately five years,” said the Maryland native. “There are so many half-marathon races in the U.S. I have to pick and chose the ones that I want to participate in. It gives me a sense of well-being to support races that have a worthy cause such as the Wounded Warrior Program. I also look for races with a course that has beautiful scenery near water.”

In early October she took a break from her position as chief, Information Systems and Technology Branch, Special Security, Logistics and Technology Division, to run a half-marathon held in Portland, Maine. A half-marathon is 13.1 miles and her finish time was a little under two hours, according to Peel.

“My normal running rhythm for a half-marathon is 1 hour, 57 minutes which equates to an average pace of 8 minutes, 56 seconds per mile,” stated Peel. “Through more training, I’m hoping to improve my overall time by lowering my pace per mile. So far, I’ve placed in two races, taking third in my age group.”

Peel receives a participant T-shirt for each race she competes in and has accumulated more than 40 T-shirts. “I not only run in half-marathons, but I participate in a variety of other races such as the APG Turkey Trot 5K Run, Fire Cracker 5-Miler, and the Army 10-Miler. I wanted to capture the memories from each run, so I had a quilt made with the T-shirts. It’s beautiful.”

See SPOTLIGHT, page 4.



Tanya Peel

U.S. Army Contracting Command

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NEWSBLAST

Speaker focuses on importance of leaders, followers

By **Cassandra Mainiero**

Picatinny Voice

“Leader.” The word in itself demands attention and though you may know of someone deserving of its title – a supervisor, a family member, or a friend – chances are you’re forgetting another important leader: You.

At least that’s the perspective of Command Sgt. Maj. Angel Clark.

“Everyone in here might not be in a supervisor position, but everyone is a leader whether you realize it or not,” Clark explained. “Whether it’s at work, at home, in church, or community – we all have a little bit of a leader in us.”

Clark is the command sergeant major of the Expeditionary Contracting Command headquartered at Redstone Arsenal, Ala.

During a recent presentation at Picatinny Arsenal, N.J., Clark spoke about her personal experiences as an Army leader, sharing what skills make an effective leader and the importance of followers.

She has more than 30 years of military experience and has held a number of leadership positions during her career. She has served as a squad leader, first sergeant, a battalion command sergeant major and fulfilled several other leadership roles throughout her deployments and missions, to include a series of joint training exercises by American and Egyptian forces.

However, while her list of achievements is significant, Clark said the characteristics and skills behind an effective leader are more commonplace than one may think.

Finding the leader in you

“Leadership is all about getting people on board to get our mission accomplished in a successful manner,” Clark said.

“Because whether you’re in uniform or you’re wearing a suit and tie every day, we have to get the job done.”

According to Clark, a leader needs a range of characteristics for success, but the most important characteristic is standing up for what’s right.

If something is wrong or could be improved, for instance, it’s important for leaders to be honest and share their thoughts with others, whether it’s a new idea or addresses a specific issue, she said.



(Photo by Cassandra Mainiero)

Command Sgt. Maj. Angel Clark, Expeditionary Contracting Command, gives her perspective on what makes an effective leader at a Picatinny Arsenal, N.J., presentation held recently.

This is especially true when leaders face adverse situations, such as a furlough, the sergeant major added. By knowing about the different programs that are available, and demonstrating a concern for one’s co-workers and subordinates, a leader has a greater chance of understanding others and providing guidance on how to cope with the situation.

For example, when she was deployed to Iraq during Desert Storm, Clark was a team leader for her platoon. When one of her convoys came to a halt in the middle of a battlefield, Clark and her team had to adjust to the situation and respond. When the enemy had ceased fire, she delegated tasks to her platoon. They remained there for the next four days.

Clark also explains that a leader should plan for the future and set goals, trying to grow and learn about themselves, their job and their life, every day. By investing the time to do this, a leader sets a positive example and then can encourage others to do the same as everyone makes a collective effort to complete the mission.

“When we get everyone invested in what we are doing, we will have better

results at the end of the day, at the end of the week, month and year,” Clark said.

But what’s the most challenging skill for leaders to learn? Relaxing.

“Good leaders have to take time off to rejuvenate,” said Clark. “So, give an opportunity for another person to be in charge and let them grow and learn from that experience, too.”

Cultivating and motivating followers

Without good followers, though, the sergeant major emphasized that becoming a good leader is difficult.

For Clark, good followers are people who understand their roles in the mission and strive to fulfill their responsibilities each day by getting to work on time and remaining positive and productive.

Like their leaders, followers should be willing to speak up and share their opinions and ideas, even if in agreement with the leader, she said. Followers should also take care of their subordinates and their group by encouraging everyone to share their ideas and never accept the “can’t, don’t, or won’t” concept.

See LEADERSHIP, page 5.

CID urges caution when using myPay or No Pay apps

By U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command
Public Affairs

QUANTICO, Va. – The U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command, commonly referred to as CID, is warning the greater Army community about the potential dangers of using non-DOD sanctioned applications to access Defense Finance Accounting Services, or DFAS, accounts.

On July 13, the free mobile application “MyPay DFAS LES” was released on the Google Play Android app store. Google estimates that between 10,000 to 50,000 individuals have already downloaded and installed this app on their personal mobile device. The app purportedly allows users the ability to control their individual military pay account after they enter their myPay login information.

In addition to this app, there are several

other third party non-DOD sanctioned mobile applications available for Android and iPhone devices designed around DFAS payment processes for DOD military and civilian personnel, retirees and annuitants, as well as other government agencies.

CID is cautioning that using non-DOD sanctioned applications to access myPay accounts can potentially lead to one’s personal account information being compromised and possibly the theft of funds.

Tips to help protect yourself:

Before downloading, installing, or using an application, take a moment to research and review the software developer. This helps in getting an idea about other apps the developer has previously published.

Apps that imply to allow access to military or government sites should

only be installed if they are official apps sponsored by the DOD or another U.S. Government agency.

Review the user ratings and reviews from previous and current customers as to the accuracy of the application’s claims.

Inspect your device’s application permissions screen to see what other information and applications will be accessed by the app. Some apps may be able to access your phone and email contacts, call logs, Internet data, calendar data, data about the device’s location, the device’s unique ID, and information about how you use the app itself. If you’re providing information when you’re using the device, someone may be collecting it.

For more information regarding cyber crime and staying safe online, visit the CID Lookout or the Computer Crimes Investigative Unit webpage page at www.cid.army.mil.

SPOTLIGHT

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(Photo by Betsy Kozak-Howard)

Tanya Peel captured memories of each run on a quilt. Thus far, she has accumulated more than 40 T-shirts from races she’s run in just two-years time.

The mother of two also completed a full marathon – all 26.2 miles. The race was the inaugural Savannah Rock ‘n’ Roll Marathon in Savannah, Ga., in November 2011.

“The Savannah race will always stand out as my favorite, as well as my most difficult,” Peel pointed out. “It was both mentally and physically challenging. I completed the marathon in 4 hours, 33 minutes and it took a lot out of me. I hit what runners refer to as the wall between miles 22 and 24 but I connected with the runners around me and we encouraged each other to the finish. This was my most memorable race because my entire family travelled to Savannah to watch me cross the finish line – that was priceless.”

Peel tries to incorporate her running schedule with family vacations.

In February she will travel to Texas for a half-marathon followed by races scheduled in Massachusetts and Rhode Island. Peel is also a member of the Renaissance All Sports Athletic Club in Harford County, Md., a non-profit running club that promotes amateur sports competition and physical fitness.

“I find running very gratifying and I hope to inspire others to take part in the sport,” Peel concluded.

Prototype proposals sought for 'Iron Man' suit

By David Vergun
Army News Service

WASHINGTON – U.S. Special Operations Command wants its operators to be protected with what it informally calls an Iron Man suit, named after the fictional superhero.

In September, U.S. Special Operations Command, known as SOCOM, made a Broad Agency Announcement for prototype proposals of the Tactical Assault Light Operator Suit, or TALOS.

The goal of TALOS is to provide ballistic protection to special operations forces, along with fire-retardant capability, said Michel Fieldson, TALOS lead, SOCOM.

“We sometimes refer to it as the Iron Man suit, frankly to attract the attention, imagination and excitement of industry and academia,” he said. “We’re hoping to take products we’re developing in several technology areas and integrating them into a consolidated suit to provide more protection for the (Special Operations forces).”

Other technologies include sensors, communications, energy and material that can store and release energy to prevent injuries and increase performance.

Materials that can store and release energy might be similar to the Intrepid Dynamic Exoskeletal Orthosis, now used by some wounded warriors for lower leg limb injuries.

So TALOS would be something that wounded warriors might benefit from, he said.

Besides wounded warriors, Fieldson said Homeland Security and firefighters have expressed an interest in this



(U.S. Army photo)

Sgt. 1st Class Matthew Oliver suits up in a futuristic combat uniform with a Tactical Assault Light Operator Suit-like look at the 2012 Chicago Auto Show.

technology. Also, it might eventually become available for other Soldiers.

“Our goal right now is to try to get the word out and bring industry partners together,” he said, since the technologies that will go into its development are varied and it is unlikely one contractor would be able to specialize in the entire ensemble.

The traditional approach, he said, was to pick a prime contractor, usually a traditional defense partner, give them the design requirements and let them come up with the solution. That would take a long time, he noted.

“In this case, the government will be the lead integrator and we’ll look to work with traditional or non-traditional partners in industry and academia who are

innovative,” he said. “We’ll leave no stone unturned.”

The goal, he said, is to begin integrating capabilities over the next 12 months and have the first suit ready for full field testing in four to five years.

Fieldson thinks TALOS will become a reality because “it protects the war fighters and has the backing of SOCOM’s commander, Adm. William H. McRaven.

“I’m committed to this. I’d like that last operator that we lost to be the last one we ever lose in this fight or the fight of the future; and I think we can get there,” McRaven said. “At the end of the day, I need you and industry to figure out how you are going to partner with each other to do something that’s right for America.”

LEADERSHIP

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“I really don’t like the people who live in the land of can’t, don’t and won’t. ‘We can’t do that. We don’t do it that way and we won’t do it that way,’” said Clark. “If you can’t do something, and it’s not legally wrong, come up with a way we can get this done. Don’t just tell me what I can’t do. Tell me what we can do together.”

To achieve these skills, Clark recommends finding at least three mentors.

One mentor should be successful in the position you’d like to attain, she said. The second one should be someone who is still working toward that position. And the third mentor should be a co-worker who has the drive to be a leader and is in your current position.

Three mentors in separate stages of leadership, says Clark, provide a follower with different perspectives.

Clark cited one of her mentors, retired Command Sgt. Maj. Larry Taylor.

“I’ve known him since 1986. I was only in the Army about three years when I met him and he’s been one of my great mentors that I still call to this day.

“Mentors are important because we’re supposed to be training and coaching for the future. We won’t be in our positions forever.”

SMALL BUSINESS

The undersecretary said he wants to “find better and more significant ways to open that aperture for small businesses in the Army.” That would include, he said, more than just Army websites that point out how well the Army is doing with small businesses. It would include finding ways to help small businesses engage better with the Army.

One small business owner said he thought that the Army might hold more “regular and useful advance briefings to industry.” He told the secretary that some of the Army commands “do a really good job” in presenting advanced planning briefings for industry, known as APBIs, to small business owners.

Those APBIs spell out upcoming business opportunities that small businesses may opt to take advantage of. Other commands, he said, offer little more than “org charts.”

Westphal acknowledged that the Army must do a better job of providing more meaningful and substantial APBIs to industry.

“No org charts. We’ll put a memo out on that,” he said, drawing a laugh from the audience.

During the short engagement, one Army civilian who works in a small business office said that the Army’s small business workforce is too small. That

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(Photo by Staff Sgt. Bernardo Fuller)

Undersecretary of the Army Joseph W. Westphal (left) talks with retired Lt. Col. David Viens, a small business representative, at the 2013 AUSA Meeting and Exposition held in Washington, D.C., Oct. 20-23.

workforce helps the Army interface with small businesses. In some places, she said, small business offices are “one deep.”

“We do need your help with a couple of things,” Westphal said. “Did you ever meet a politician who didn’t say ‘I’m for jobs?’”

“We need you to remind them to help push us to be more aggressive with

small businesses,” he said. “And what that means is that if they ask us those questions at hearings and they demand more information from us, then I think that will help us. It will help us to be able to put the dollars in the right place as well.”

At the AUSA conference, hundreds of defense contractors have displays showcasing their business offerings. Many of those defense contractors, though, are small businesses. Their displays are eclipsed by the displays of the larger defense contractors who manufacture Army helicopters and combat vehicles.

During an interview with Army Broadcasting, Westphal said he likes to walk the display floor alone – separate from the entourage of handlers and military officers that usually accompany him – and talk to small businesses to see what they offer and how the Army can help them. He said these businesses are critical to both the nation and to the Army.

“What can we do to increase the opportunity for small businesses?” Westphal asked. “They are the heart of our nation’s economic strength. Most jobs are in small business. Small businesses are the core and essence of our communities. The more we can persuade the big contractors to do more work with small businesses, and keep them viable, the better our country is.”

PACIFIC

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The opportunity for Soldiers of the 680th CCT dates back to 2012 when both services signed a memorandum of agreement that afforded Army contracting personnel the opportunity to learn the business alongside airmen. As a result, Air Force contracting units host Soldiers for the general purpose of training in operational contracting. The training allows them to gain valuable experience in day-to-day operations to prepare for contingency missions while supporting the host unit’s mission.

Air Force Lt. Col. Calvin Hodgson, 18th CONS commander, says developing a joint team allows for a greater understanding of the art of contracting.

“The Army has a great way of developing leaders,” said Hodgson.

He said another benefit his airmen gain from the joint environment is that the

Army primarily assigns noncommissioned officers to the assignment. The NCOs bring a wealth of military experience to help his leaders guide and mentor younger airmen.

The 680th CCT Soldiers work in three different sections to include services, commodities and construction. The 18th CONS is a busy and active member of the Pacific Command’s team. The unit provides contracting support, not only to Department of Defense activities on Okinawa, but also provides worldwide contingency contracting support across the Pacific region estimated at more than \$1.4 million worth of contracts annually.

Army Staff Sgt. Daunte Graves, an acquisition, logistics and technology contracting NCO who works in the commodities section, said having an opportunity to represent the Army in a

joint environment is what he looked for when he decided to change his military occupational specialty to contracting.

“I was looking at a career and future outside the military, so I chose to reclassify,” said Graves. “It’s great the Army decided to support and build a contracting NCO base a few years ago because it develops a great corps of contracting professionals and I’ve really enjoyed it.”

Roberts said Soldiers of the 680th CCT have contributed greatly to the team of professionals at the 18th CONS and his Soldiers stay motivated not only to represent themselves but the Army as a whole.

“We have a great group of Soldiers that represent the Army well in this joint environment,” said Roberts. “What’s motivating is we really believe in one team, one fight.”

Officials announce overseas mail delivery deadlines

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON – Military Postal Service Agency officials recommend that parcel post packages for service members overseas be mailed by Nov. 12 for delivery by the holidays.

Officials at MPSA, an extension of the U.S. Postal Service, have published a chart at <http://hqdainet.army.mil/mpsa/xmas.htm> that shows deadlines for various mailing options, broken down by the APO/FPO/DPO numbers of various destinations.

USPS is offering a discount on its largest Priority Mail Flat Rate box at \$14.85. The price includes a \$2 per box discount for military mail being sent to APO/FPO/DPO destinations worldwide, officials said.

Priority Mail Flat Rate boxes are available free at local post offices, or can be ordered from USPS online. Postage, labels and customs forms also are available online.



(Photo by Rachel Clark)

409th CSB supports, highlights drug prevention effort

Friends and family of the 409th Contracting Support Brigade, Kaiserslautern, Germany, participated in the 2013 Red Ribbon Run at Rheinland Pfalz, Germany. Hosted annually by the U.S. Army Garrison's Army Substance Abuse Program, the run highlights the Army's campaign against drug abuse.

According to the program's website, this particular run is thought to be the oldest and largest drug prevention campaign in Germany.



(Photo by Larry D. McCaskill)

ACC staffs help raise breast cancer awareness

The Army Contracting Command G-6 Information Technology and G-1 Human Capital directorates at Redstone Arsenal, Ala., joined their military and civilian counterparts nationwide Oct. 23 to observe National Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

Angela Sims (second row, center), management analyst and dual-cancer survivor, coordinated the wear pink event.

"Cancer is not gender or race specific, it can affect man or woman," Sims said. "For those who receive annual screens, there is a better chance of survival."