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ASC Commander visits 401st AFSB

By Summer Barkley 401st Army Field Support Brigade Public Affairs Officer

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan—Maj. Gen. Patricia E. McQuistion, Army Sustainment Command commanding general, and ASC Command Sgt. Maj. James E. Spencer visited the 401st Army Field Support Brigade May 4-7 to see brigade operations and to promote one of the original AFSB commanders to the rank of brigadier general.

McQuistion's visit began at brigade headquarters at Bagram Airfield where she toured and was briefed on many of the brigade's missions including mine resistant ambush protected upgrades being conducted by Joint Program Office MRAP; Allied Trades, Mobile Parts Hospital; RDECOM's Field Assistance in Science and Technology Center prototype integration facility; Logistics Civil Augmentation Program, Redistribution Property Assistance Teams; and flew north to view the northern distribution network. She travelled to Kandahar to see RPAT operations there; the Joint National Maintenance Facility still under construction; and Stryker double v-hull fielding.

While visiting the various work areas, McQuistion was looking for ways to create linkages and partnerships to provide the best possible support to the maneuver units. She brought the mobile parts hospital site lead to the RFAST-C PIF each could gain a better understanding of the other's capabilities so they could refer customers to the most appropriate resource for their needs.

While in Kandahar, McQuistion promoted Brig. Gen. Kristin K. French to her current rank. French was the first commander of the 406th AFSB located at Fort Bragg, N.C. The next day, McQuistion attended a transfer of authority ceremony in which Brig. Gen. French, as the 3rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) commander, assumed command of Joint Sustainment Command-Afghanistan from the 4th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary).









Clockwise from above: Maj. Gen. Patricia E. McQuistion, Army Sustainment Command commanding general, affixes the rank of brigadier general to Brig. Gen. Kristin K. French's uniform during a promotion ceremony held at Kandahar Airfield May 6. French was the first commander of ASC's 406th Army Field Support Brigade in 2006. **Top:** Maj. Gen. Patricia E. McQuistion, Army Sustainment Command commanding general, views some products designed and fabricated at the Bagram Mobile Parts Hospital as Harrison R. Walker MPH site lead explains their uses. **Middle:** Master Sgt. Brent D. Wipperman, noncommissioned officer-in-charge redistribution property assistance team quality assurance team, briefs Maj. Gen. Patricia E. McQuistion, Army Sustainment Command commanding general, on processes put in place at the AFSBn-Bagram, 401st Army Field Support Brigade's Redistribution Property Assistance Team yard that will be used as the unit moves equipment out of theater to support surge recovery. **Bottom:** Command Sgt. Maj. James E. Spencer, Army Sustainment Command Command Sgt. Maj. James E. Spencer, Army Sustainment Command Command Sgt. Maj. James E. Spencer, Army Sustainment Command, looks on as Jon E. Thom, material fielding team operations supervisor, at the Stryker double v-hull yard, briefs Maj. Gen. Patricia E. McQuistion, Army Sustainment Command commanding general, on the vehicle.



Task Force Sabre Command Group



"Trust and Loyalty"

Here we are at the beginning of summer and the "120 Days of Wind". I am truly hopeful that this summer fighting season brings no sorrow to our Brigade; but it is always up to us to remain vigilant and steadfast as we continue to support this theater. We have a very busy three months coming with all the various missions and theater events about to begin. So I ask you all, just hold on tight as we approach every challenge as an opportunity and every opportunity as a potential victory

We've said our farewells to many valuable Team Sabre members, but we will soon hail our new BDE CSM, CSM Charlie Chavez. After 11 months in command, I have seen two detachments and numerous civilians/contractors come and go, but this is the nature of our business. However, we wish all those that have served with us and their families a very

healthy and prosperous 2012.

As we look back on the last four months, we have briefed and entertained numerous high level distinguished visitors. Of all these individuals, we have had the opportunity to show theater, Army, Joint, and OSD leadership what the 401st AFSB brings to the fight. They have all marveled at what we do and how well we do it. This is a testimony to how proficient, competent, and technologically savvy we are.

As a Brigade, we gave pause on Memorial Day to not only remember all those that have fallen in combat but our civilians and contractors that have also made the ultimate sacrifice as they continue to serve our country's national interests. I ask that all 54,000 of us always remember the heroes that have gone before us and have inspired us to continue on in their absence.

Now on a lighter note. Father's Day is right around the corner...so neckties are good but 70 inch flat screen plasma televisions are way better ... We also prepare ourselves to celebrate our Army's 237th birthday on June 14th. I hope you all get a slice of an Army birthday cake and take a moment to reflect on the good that our organization does every day to help our country provide security to our shores.

Now, I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge that my upcoming change of command will be in July. I have enjoyed the opportunity to be your Brigade Commander more than I can verbally or physically express. But what I will say about my experience being your leader is that if asked, I would do it again! However, I am still in command and will be in command until I pass on my colors. So, let us all continue with focus and determination as Team Sabre breaks new ground and conquers all challenges.

Once again, I thank each and every one of you for your loyal and dedicated service to our country, our teammates, and our leaders.

As always, remain value added and always be first to make a difference.

Sabres Up...Trust & Loyalty!

Empathy as a Leadership Trait



Our Army's tragic spike in suicides has caused me to reflect on why we are having this problem and possible solutions. It also reminded me of an article a colleague and I wrote back in 2000 – "Humility as a leadership trait" (*Military Review*, Oct 2000). Soldiers who commit suicide are silently screaming for help. They are lonely, in great pain (be it emotionally, psychologically, physically, socially, or spiritually) and looking for a way to relieve their pain. Our Army, as a people focused profession must become more effective in seeing, feeling, and mitigating this pain. We can and should be better than this.

A solution to this problem is to add "empathy" or "emotional intelligence" into our daily lexicon. Our leaders, especially at the battalion level and below, need to understand, internalize, and practice having empathy for their Soldiers. What do these words mean? In layman's terms they mean - "genuine caring" "feeling someone's pain" "truly understanding something from the other person's point of view" and "perspective taking"

One of the ways I try to teach people what it means to truly understand something from another's perspective is by presenting the topic in the opposite extreme by stating that, "I will NEVER be able to completely understand something from a female's perspective." Why is that? – because I am a male. Or, for example, in the movie Ghost when Patrick Swayze's character was actually transformed into the skin of Whoppi Goldberg 's character. These "unreal" examples should help explain what empathy is – literally trying to put yourself in someone else's shoes.

To truly understand something from someone else's perspective the leader must genuinely care for the subordinate – and not just from a mission accomplishment perspective. The leader must care for the subordinate as a person. Ways to work on or improve empathy include:

Active listening techniques - "this is what I hear you saying" or "let me just try to explain how I think you are feeling."

Encourage the person to open up to you - "If something is really bothering you, you've got to talk to someone about it. It doesn't have to be me, but how about the Chaplain or someone from social services or a friend, etc.

Working to let the Soldier express how they are feeling and why they are feeling that way – "What are you feeling right now? Depressed? Anxious? Lonely? Why do you think you are feeling this way? Others in the unit may be feeling the same way." If you as a leader have even the slightest inkling that one of your Soldiers is having a problem, DO NOT let "I'm fine" be an answer to "How

are you doing/feeling?'

Actively try to monitor Soldiers' feelings and emotions. Don't simply view your subordinates as a means to accomplish the unit's mission. Take the time to think about what your subordinates are feeling. Ask yourself, "when was the last time I thought about how _____ is feeling?"

Conversely, empathy <u>does not</u> mean agreeing with another person. Empathy is not part of winning an argument or proving you are right (and the other person is wrong). Empathy has nothing to do with "one-upsmanship" or showing you are better than someone else. It simply means understanding something from another person's foxhole.

It goes without saying that some in our Army who label a Soldier who asks for "help" as being weak, soft, a wimp, and other worse and more derogatory names. There is no place in our Army for this label or for people who do this labeling. Obviously the necessity of our Army to produce Warriors for a very complex battlefield means we need tough, confident, and competent Soldiers. Adding empathy to that list will only improve the force.

401st holds Commander's Conference

By Summer Barkley 401st AFSB Public Affairs Officer

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan—The 401st Army Field Support Brigade hosted a Commander's Conference here Apr. 25 designed to bring battalion and logistics task force commanders and brigade leadership together to discuss the state of the brigade and plans for missions to retrograde thousands of pieces of rolling and nonrolling stock while simultaneously completing missions to field new equipment and sustain equipment still being used by the maneuver units.

"I have two goals for this conference," said Col. Michel M. Russell, Sr., 401st AFSB commander in his opening remarks. "First to coordinate and synchronize retrograde of equipment; and to have 3rd Expeditionary Sustainment Command understand us and how to facilitate our missions."

"My hat is off to you," said Brig. Gen. Les J. Carroll, commanding

general of 4th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary). "Know that the 401st is a key player in sustainment and logistics. Step back and look at what you accomplished during the harsh winter of 2011-12 with the Pakistan ground lines of communication closed – incredible stuff."

"Every month you surprise us," said Maj. Gen. William Rapp, United States Forces-Afghanistan deputy commanding general for support, referring to the number of vehicles the 401st has been able to retrograde.

Rapp noted that sustaining the campaign is the top priority of International Security Assistance Force commander, Gen. John R. Allen, Jr. He added that his top priority is to "make it easier for the company commander to do the right thing."

The remainder of the conference was devoted to briefings by key staff sections, the battalion and LTF commanders and providing time for the widely scattered 401st elements to network.



Left: Maj. Gen. William Rapp, United States Forces-Afghanistan deputy commanding general for support, addresses the 401st AFSB Commander's Conference Apr. 25. Center: A significant portion of the 401st AFSB gathered at Bagram Airfield Apr. 25 for the Commander's Conference to discuss the state of the brigade and plans for missions to retrograde thousands of pieces of rolling and non-rolling stock while simultaneously completing missions to field new equipment and sustain equipment still being used by the maneuver units. *Right:* Brig. Gen. Les J. Carroll, commanding general of 4th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), presents his coin to Lt. Col. Joyce B. Stewart, acquisitions, logistics and technology director, during the 401st AFSB Commander's Conference Apr. 25.

401st BLST chiefs meet at Bagram

By Summer Barkley 401st AFSB Public Affairs Officer

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan—Many of the 401st Army Field Support Brigade's Brigade Logistics Support Team chiefs met at Bagram Airfield for a one-day BLST Chief conference Apr. 26.

The BLST chiefs are the direct link from the 401st and the Materiel Enterprise to the supported brigades on the ground. In his opening remarks, 401st Commander Col. Michel M. Russell, Sr., told the chiefs "you are our sensors, our be-all and end-all out there." Russell said the chiefs need tell him two things – how are we, the 401st, doing in supporting you and "are our materiel solutions meeting your needs?" He said the 401st provides the BLST chiefs and their supported units with "tactical, operational and strategic reach back" to the entire Materiel Enterprise.

Briefings were presented by members of the 401st and focused heavily on redeployment, retrograde, reset, return and disposal of non-mission essential equipment from the theater of operations.

"My unit is about to go through reset and there were still some questions," said Maj. Kenneth Thompson, 3rd Stryker Brigade 2nd Infantry Division BLST chief. "Now I know who to contact. I know exactly what I'm looking for."

Thompson said he appreciated hearing the brigade commander's priorities and focus areas as well as the overall exchange of information and capturing lessons learned.

Maj. Matthew Vining 25th Combat Aviation Brigade BLST chief, agreed that hearing the commander's intent was important as well as the face-to-face interaction with other BLST chiefs, battalion and brigade staff.

Vining said he works with a very tight knit organization of 12 professional aviation logistics assistance representatives who are very responsive to the unit needs.

Maj. Erin L. Harkins, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, BLST chief said

her unit is unique in that they have a short deployment. The biggest takeaway for Harkins was making a connection with the brigade Acquisition, Logistics and Technology directorate.

"Making contact with ALT-D was worth my whole trip here," Harkins said.



Above: Maj. Erin L. Harkins, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, Brigade Logistics Support Team chief, talks to Maj. Mark L. Brodhage, 401st systems acquisition officer, during a break at the 401st BLST Chief's conference Apr. 26. Harkins said making contact with the brigade acquisition, logistics and technology team was the highlight of the conference.

Brigade set fielded in days following months of work by 401st AFSB

By Summer Barkley

401st Army Field Support Brigade Public Affairs Officer

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan—The 401st Army Field Support Brigade issued a brigade set of equipment in 13 days to support Task Force Devil Hammer.

Behind the fielding effort was a complex series of maneuvers across both battalions of the 401st that included four task forces; turn-in of rolling and non-rolling stock from redeploying units; maintenance of the turned-in equipment to bring it to a fully mission capable status; storage of the equipment until Devil Hammer arrived; building a temporary Redistribution Property Assistance Yard; staging equipment in several locations; and finally issuing equipment at Bagram Airfield and several forward locations by standing up mobile RPAT missions.

The mission began in November 2011 with equipment being identified and gathered from across the battle space. Equipment issue began in late March 2012 and was completed on Apr. 9.

"The MRPAT fielded equipment on the FOB during bad weather," said Maj. Erin L. Harkins, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, brigade logistics support team chief. "Some equipment was missing the basic issue items, but we went to the 401st and they got the items to the FOB."



Above : A Soldier assigned to 1st Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, Task Force Devil Hammer, looks over information provided by AFSBn-Bagram, 401st Army Field Support Brigade, to assist the unit hand receipt holders in accounting for equipment being issued to the unit.

Support for TF Devil Hammer didn't end with fielding the equipment.

Harkins said the 1/82 has four logistics assistance representatives who are 'awesome'. She said they are living in austere conditions, but all have great attitudes and support the Soldiers of 1/82any way possible.





Above top: Soldiers assigned to 1st Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, Task Force Devil Hammer, inspect equipment that is being issued to them.

Above bottom: A piece of equipment destined for 1st Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, Task Force Devil Hammer, is ready to be loaded onto a truck from transport from Bagram Airfield to Forward Operating Base Warrior.

"We're a short deployment and our focus in on taking care of the equipment to Army standards and then turn it over to another unit or back to the 401st," she said.

Harkins also noted the support to the 1/82 Soldiers provided by the Logistics Civil Augmentation Program contractors who work in the dining facility.

"Good food and really friendly staff in the DFAC who are constantly making improvements are a big morale boost," she said.

401st Army Field Support Brigade on the web Stay up-to-date on the latest happenings in the 401st AFSB and battalions by checking our Facebook and Flickr pages frequently. We're branded as /401stAFSB on both sites. Facebook: http://www.facebook.com/401stAFSB. Flickr: <a href="http://www.faceb

And, if all else fails, just Google us.

METCOP debuts in Operation Enduring Freedom

By Summer Barkley

401st Army Field Support Brigade Public Affairs

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan— An automated tool to help manage the eventual drawdown of the Materiel Enterprise's personnel and equipment in the Combined Joint Operations Area-Afghanistan that was developed by Lt. Col. Joyce B. Stewart, and Majs. Christopher M. Byrd and Mark L. Brodhage debuted on March 31 and will enable planners both in theater and in the United States to plan and track the drawdown of personnel and equipment.

Stewart, Acquisitions, Logistics and Technology director, 401st Army Field Support Brigade, was tasked by Col. Michel M. Russell, 401st AFSB commander, to develop an automated tool similar to one he saw being used by the 402nd AFSB in Operation New Dawn in Iraq. Stewart leveraged Systems Acquisition Officers Byrd and Brodhage, and other assets within and external to the 401st to refine the Iraq model to track a greater range of personnel and equipment and delivered the initial product, the Materiel Enterprise Transition Common Operating Picture database, within a little more than seven months.

"METCOP is a database that uses the previously existing ARCENT Theater Common Operating Picture platform, business rules and functionality to present metrics, reports and common operating pictures, said Stewart. "A-TCOP is a web-based business intelligence tool that aggregates data from various and disparate databases and reports, and applies specific business rules to present the information as a common operating picture."

Stewart said finding A-TCOP was critical because it was already funded and approved to operate on the Department of Defense computer network used in both Kuwait and Afghanistan. Once that hurdle was cleared, the team needed to understand the requirements, the existing business rules established by the 402nd AFSB and to develop the database.

"The requirements included the capability to routinely pull information from the Standard Army Management Information System and Personnel Status Reports and other enterprise level databases," she said. "It includes unclassified information that is pushed into the SIPR domain and aggregated with relevant classified data."

Stewart said the 401st identified a need for a more robust solution that led the team to include pulls from databases that specifically track theater-provided equipment; non-standard equipment fielded by ASA/ALT (Assistant Secretary of the Army/Acquisition,



Above: Maj. Christopher M. Byrd, systems acquisitions officer, 401st Army Field Support Brigade, Acquisitions, Logistics and Technology Directorate, briefs Gen. Ann E. Dunwoody, Army Materiel Command commanding general, Heidi Shyu, acting assistant secretary of the Army for acquisition, logistics and technology, Command Sgt. Maj. Ronald T. Riling, AMC command sergeant major, and Brig. Gen. Edward F. Dorman, Materiel Enterprise director, on the capabilities of the Materiel Enterprise Transition Common Operating Picture database during a visit to Bagram Airfield Jan. 20. METCOP will track Program Executive Office and Program Manager personnel and equipment as the number of troops and equipment is reduced in theater.



Above: Maj. Mark L. Brodhage, systems acquisitions officer, 401st Army Field Support Brigade, Acquisitions, Logistics and Technology Directorate and Lt. Col. Joyce B. Stewart, ALT-D director, discuss data that has been input into the Materiel Enterprise Transition Common Operating Picture database that will enable planners both in theater and in the U. S. to plan and track the drawdown of personnel and equipment of the 401st AFSB.

Logistics and Technology) Program Executive Offices and Program Managers; the military, Department of the Army civilians and contractor personnel who support the ASA/ALT equipment.

"The business rules incorporated in ATCOP and METCOP will provide commanders, staffs, and now stakeholders with authoritative reports." Stewart said. "The vision is that other organizations OP-CON and ADCON [under the operational and administrative control] to the AFSB Commander adopt METCOP to provide asset visibility of personnel, containers, and equipment present during the drawdown in order to calculate their personnel and equipment lift [transportation] requirements. It's very much an evolving thing."

Stewart said tracking and calculating personnel, equipment, and containers from the different communities in theater during the drawdown process is important to ensure the proper transportation capabilities and logistical support is on ground for an effective and timely drawdown.

"The accuracy that the transportation folks will achieve when trying to ensure we will be supported by air, sea, or land lines of communication is largely dependent on the data we provide," she said.

Also nested within METCOP is the ability to calculate the volume of non-standard equipment the maneuver units will process through the RPAT yards when throughput velocity is the name of the game.

Future plans for the 401st METCOP are to also track Logistics Civil Augmentation Program personnel, equipment and services. LOGCAP-provided services run the gamut from dining facilities, laundry, water production, power generation, material handling, fire fighting and fire prevention, bulk fuel storage and distribution to redeployment staging base operations, fixed wing air movement control operations and passenger terminal support.

Finally, METCOP will track field service representatives who are employed by the program executive offices and program managers to service PM and PEO fielded systems.

Tracking the last two areas will ensure that the PM and PEO systems are operationally ready until the end of the fight and that the last Warfighters have a meal.

Another benefit of METCOP is that planners and stakeholders in Army Materiel Command's life cycle management commands have an additional tool to plan workloads for the depots that will receive the equipment being returned.

Full operational capability for 401st METCOP is expected in July 2012 and will be accessible by both classified and unclassified networks.

Bagram's first ammunition amnesty day a success

By Summer Barkley 401st AFSB Public Affairs Officer

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan— The first official ammunition and explosives amnesty day at Bagram Airfield was held Mar. 29 and resulted in more than 120,050 ammunition and explosives items valued at more \$142,517.92 being turned in by units and individuals.

The amnesty day was coordinated by Theresa Smith, Joint Munitions Command senior command representative to the 401st AFSB, who began planning the event in February 2012. It was a joint effort by Joint Munitions Command, 401st Army Field Support Brigade, Bagram Installation Safety Office, Explosive Ordnance Disposal, 10th Sustainment Brigade and the 395th Ordnance Company. The amnesty day was designed to allow individuals and units turn in A&E in any condition to ensure maximum recovery of military A&E items outside of the supply system.

Smith said the amnesty day was not intended to be a way to

circumvent the normal turn-in procedures, but was in support of an ammunition management policy to conduct amnesty days on a regular basis. She noted that ammunition and explosives amnesty turned in is exempt from investigation requirements.

Smith was assisted by Rick Vice, JMC senior systems technical representative (Quality Assurance Specialist Ammunition Surveillance), James Zaleski, chief of surveillance (QASAS), and Todd Quintin, ammunition inspector. The team took in magazines, loose ammunition, and assorted other A&E items during the six-hour amnesty day.

"We took in a plethora of foreign ammunition too," said Smith.

Ammunition amnesty boxes can be found in many locations and the items turned in that way amounted to a cost savings for JMC of nearly \$18.5 million in fiscal year 2011. New ammunition amnesty boxes are on order and will be at all 401st RPAT yards as well as other locations around the installations.

Two additional Bagram ammunition amnesty days have been scheduled for the rest of fiscal year 2011- June 28 and Sept. 27.



Left: Theresa Smith, Joint Munitions Command senior command representative to the 401st AFSB, Rick Vice, JMC senior systems technical representative (Quality Assurance Specialist Ammunition Surveillance), and James (Zeke) Zaleski chief of surveillance (QASAS), sort through some of the more than 120,050 ammunition and explosive items valued at more \$142,517.92 turned in during the first official Bagram Ammunition Amnesty Day Mar. 29. Center: Todd Quintin, ammunition and explosive items valued at more \$142,517.92 was turned in by units and individuals. Right: Some of the more than 120,050 ammunition and explosive items valued at more \$142,517.92 was turned in by units and individuals. Right: Some of the more than 120,050 ammunition and explosive items valued at more \$142,517.92 turned in during the first official Bagram Ammunition Amnesty Day Mar. 29.

Mac Franklin named LAR of the Year

By Summer Barkley 401st AFSB Public Affairs Officer

Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan—Mac Franklin received the 2011 Linda J. Villar Logistics Assistance Representative of the Year award during a ceremony at the AFSBn-Bagram, 401st Army Field Support Brigade headquarters May 23.

Franklin, a logistics management specialist assigned to the 405th AFSB in Kaiserslauten, Germany, is deployed as a Sustainment LAR with the 172nd Brigade Logistics Support Team. He has been a LAR since 2003 and has deployed six previous times to Afghanistan and Iraq.

"I didn't even know about it [being nominated for LAR of the Year] until I was selected," Franklin said. "It's a pretty big honor whey your commander picks you and says this is the person I want to send forward. There are a lot of great LARS in ASC [Army Sustainment Command]."

Franklin said one of the greatest rewards as a LAR is to "meet a Soldier you had a desk-side training with years back and he comes up and asks if you remember him and tells you your training 'made me a hero'."

His advice to new LARS is to "pick your mentors well, develop

comradeship with the supported unit and focus on what you do to support the Soldiers."

The Linda J. Villar Logistics Assistance Representative of the Year award is named in honor of a LAR who was killed during an insurgent attack at Camp Liberty, Iraq on June 3, 2005.



Left: William H. Rutherford, deputy to the commander, 401st Army Field Support Brigade, presents the Linda J. Villar LAR of the Year award to Mac Franklin, a Sustainment LAR supporting the 172nd Brigade Combat Team, during an awards ceremony at Bagram Airfield May 21.

Photo by Clayton Harrington

Customs Sailors support Army mission

By J. Elise Van Pool 401st AFSB Public Affairs Officer

KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan—"When the Army called, we answered," said Petty Officer 2nd Class Trini Casto.

Castro and approximately 20 members of a U.S. Navy customs team from Kuwait are now assisting the 401st Army Field Support Brigade in their retrograde mission. The sailors who serve as customs agents help ensure that the vehicles are ready for shipment back to the United States.

"Our mission is to stay here as long as the Army needs us," said Senior Chief Petty Officer John Matuza, who is attached to the Army Field Support Battalion-Kandahar. "We basically make sure everything is good to go back to the United States."

The team ensures that vehicles that have been in theater for years are free of contaminates such as biological hazards, ammunition, bird nests, moths and larvae. They also provide training to the workers who clean the vehicles showing them the places most often missed.

The process to clear vehicles for shipment back to the States starts long before it gets customs cleared. First, the unit who had the vehicle cleans it and ensures that it is free of any biological material and ammunition. After determining there is no longer a use for the vehicle in theater, it is turned into a redistribution property assistance team yard. At the RPAT yard, it is thoroughly cleaned and processed.

At the final stages the vehicles are inspected by the Navy customs agents to ensure the vehicles are totally clean before they are shipped back to the States.

"We are the last stop," said Matuza, "when it departs Afghanistan it's completely clear of anything that might harm the United States."

To meet President Obama's goal of bringing home combat forces from Afghanistan by 2014, the Army has already begun to remove excess equipment from the country.



Above: Petty Officer 3rd Cass Jeffery Zielgler, from San Antonio, Texas, does an inspection on a fuel tanker being prepared for shipment back to the United States. He is part of a Navy Customs team assigned to the Army Field Support Battalion-Kandahar, 401st Army Field Support Brigade. The team is helping to expedite the shipping of excess equipment back to the U.S. in preparation for the reduction of U.S. Forces in the coming year. *Right:* Petty Officer 3rd Cass Jeffery Zielgler and Petty Officer 1st Class Edward Yoshikawa (from left to right) are part of a Navy Customs team assigned to the Army Field Support Battalion-Kandahar, 401st Army Field Support Brigade.



Left: Petty Officer 2nd Class Trini Castro, from Pheonix Ariz., speaks with workers responsible for customs cleaning equipment returning to the United States. He is pointing out areas that need extra cleaning. Castro is part of a Navy Customs team assigned to the Army Field Support Battalion-Kandahar, 401st Army Field Support Brigade. The team is helping to expedite the shipping of excess equipment back to the U.S. in preparation for the reduction of U.S. Forces in the coming year. *Right:* Senior Chief Petty Officer John Matuza, from Omaha Neb, does an inspection on a fuel tanker being prepared for shipment back to the United States.

"The Navy Customs Team has been an invaluable resource and has helped to ensure that the battalion met its retrograde goals during the past two months," said Lt. Col. Nathan Acree, support operations officer for the AFSBn-Kandahar. "We have learned a lot from them and as a result we are better prepared to meet the demanding future requirements of retrograde."

Before coming to theater the sailors went through a five week training course back in the States. Then additional training was provided in Kuwait.

For many on the team this is the first experience doing a joint mission.

"At first it was [challenging] learning their lingo [and] how they do business," said Castro.

"It's nice to interact with another branch of service," said Petty Officer 1st Class Edward Yoshikawa. "A lot of people don't get that opportunity, to interact with another branch of service in their career."

Many of the sailors were also glad to be helping another service. "Coming back here was a priority," said Matuza, "to do something to help them [the Army] because they are doing multiple missions, going outside the wire all the time."



ANA Maintenance mentorship program graduates 17 Soldiers

By Summer Barkley

401st Army Field Support Brigade Public Affairs Officer

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan—The largest group of Soldiers to complete the 401st Army Field Support Brigade's Afghan National Army Maintenance Mentorship Program received certificates and coins during a ceremony held here Mar. 3.

Seventeen Afghan Soldiers worked alongside vehicle maintainers and Allied Trades professionals from AFSBn-Bagram, 401st AFSB, for 45 days to increase their skills in vehicle maintenance, welding and painting. Seven vehicle maintainers gained hands-on experience working on the types of vehicles being sold to the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan under a foreign military sales case being handled by U.S. Army Materiel Command's U.S. Army Security Assistance Command. Ten Soldiers in the Allied Trades programs worked on welding and painting skills.

This was the fourth group of Afghan Soldiers to complete the program that began Mar.1, 2011 and is a joint effort of 401st AFSB, 10th Sustainment Brigade, the ANA 201st and 203rd Corps Logistics Kandaks.

Each Soldier received a certificate of completion from Sgt. Maj. Mark E. Phillips, command sergeant major for 10th Sustainment Brigade Troop Battalion, and coins from LT. Col. Peter J. Koch, commander, AFSBn-Bagram, and Command Sgt. Maj. Travis W. Williams, command sergeant major for Joint Sustainment Command-Afghanistan. Upon receiving their certificates, each Soldier proclaimed "I serve Afghanistan."

The 401st, one of the brigades under Army Sustainment Command, is USAMC's single face to the field and serves as the entry point for integration, synchronization and execution of Combined Joint Operations Area –Afghanistan acquisition, logistics and tech-



Left: An employee at AFSBn-Bagram, 401st Army Field Support Brigade Allied Trades checks the practice welds of one of the Afghan Soldiers working in the shop during a Maintenance Mentorship program. The program is a joint effort of 401st AFSB, 10th Sustainment Brigade, the ANA 201st and 203rd Corps Logistics Kan-daks. Right from top: An Afghan Soldier

holds his certificate from a 45-day maintenance mentorship program over his head after proclaiming "I serve Afghanistan" while other Soldiers who completed the program look on. Lt. Col. Peter J. Koch, commander, AFSBn-Bagarm, 401st Army Field Support Brigade, addresses 17 Afghan Soldiers who completed a 45-day maintenance mentorship program. Afghan Soldiers from the ANA 201st and 203rd Corps Logistics Kandaks hold their certificates following a graduation ceremony Mar. 3 marking the completion of a 45-day maintenance mentorship course that is a joint effort of 401st AFSB, 10th Sustainment Brigade, the ANA 201st and 203rd Corps Logistics Kandaks. Afghan Soldiers are improving their vehicle maintenance skills during a Maintenance Mentorship program. The program is a joint effort of 401st AFSB, 10th Sustainment Brigade, the ANA 201st and 203rd Corps Logistics Kandaks.







QASAS aim for a clean sweep

By Summer Barkley

401st Army Field Support Brigade Public Affairs Officer

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan—Eleven Quality Assurance Specialists (Ammunition Surveillance) from commands across the U.S. deployed to Afghanistan for several months in support of the U.S. Forces-Afghanistan led Operation Ammunition Clean Sweep 2012 designed to coincide with surge recovery efforts.

The QASAS, who are from commands under the U.S. Army Materiel Command, are working with units under the 10th and 45th Sustainment Brigades across the combined joint operations area – Afghanistan to support the USFOR-A Operation Ammunition Clean Sweep 2012 mission. The 401st Army Field Support Brigade, part of Army Sustainment Command's global network and the USAMC Materiel Enterprise, provides logistics support for the teams.

The teams are supporting draw-down efforts, retrograde operations, combat readiness and explosives safety said Theresa A. Smith, Joint Munitions Command senior command representative at 401st AFSB.

The efforts of OACS 2012 will result in a safer operational environment by performing a full inspection of munitions at sites ranging in size from ammunition support activities to unit level holding areas. This will be done by removing and reclassifying the unserviceable or unsafe ammunition at each location and educating the service members on the proper way to store and handle munitions, Smith said.

"This effort will significantly reduce the explosive hazards to which our personnel are exposed to in the CJO-A," Smith said.

Smith noted that five of the 11 OACS 2012 members deployed in support of OACS 2011 last year and that one of the team members, Kyle Voelcker, was her predecessor as the JMC SCR.

Ayvazian awarded Combat Action Badge

By Summer Barkley

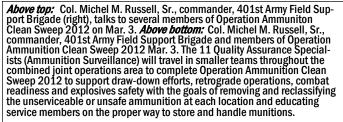
401st Army Field Support Brigade Public Affairs Officer



BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan—Maj. Brett A. Ayvazian, a New York City native currently stationed at Fort Knox, Ky. and deployed with AFSBn-Bagram, 401st Army Field Support Brigade, was awarded a Combat Action Badge by Col. Michel M. Russell, Sr., 401st AFSB commander, in an awards ceremony May 23.

The CAB was awarded in recognition of combat action Ayvazian was involved in at Forward Operating Base Warrior Mar. 21 when the FOB came under a rocket attack.

Ayvazian was the Mobile Redistribution Property Assistance Team officer-in-charge leading the Task Force Devil Hammer 1st Brigade



82nd Airborne Division, equipment fielding. On the evening of March 21, he was having dinner and the Counter Rocket, Artillery, and Mortar (CRAM) system alerted an incoming indirect fire attack. Following procedure, he hit the ground and waited.

"I wasn't comfortable in the mess hall tent," Ayvazian said. "I walked to the work area to get accountability of the team and a few seconds later a second CRAM alarm went off."

Ayvazian said he again hit the ground and when he looked up he saw the round explode.

"It landed in a crater that contained the shrapnel," he said.

He estimated that he was about 50 meters from the point of impact.

Ayvazian said he went to the battle tactical operations center to report that he saw the point of impact and escorted Explosive Ordnance Disposal personnel to the site where they were able to identify the type of round and the point of origin. With that information, the FOB quick reaction force went to the point of origin where they found and seized the weapon used to launch the attack

"My initial reaction was, 'Wow, that was pretty close'," he recalled. "A few hours later the gravity set in."

"People think that as logistics officers, we're 'in the rear with the gear', but that's not always the case," he added. "We're right out there with the Warfighter."

The Combat Action Badge was approved by the Chief of Staff of the Army on May 2, 2005 to provide special recognition to Soldiers who personally engage, or are engaged by the enemy. The CAB consists of an oak wreath supporting a rectangle bearing a bayonet surmounting a grenade. In keeping with the spirit of the Warrior Ethos, the CAB provides special recognition to Soldiers who personally engage the enemy, or are engaged by the enemy during combat operations. The bayonet and grenade are associated with active combat. The oak wreath symbolizes strength and loyalty.

PIF delivers materiel solutions to the Warfighter

By Summer Barkley 401st ASFB Public Affairs Officer

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan— Forty-five senior noncommissioned officers assigned to units under the 18th Engineer Brigade learned how the scientists, engineers, machinists and technicians working at the only prototype integration facility in the Combined Joint Operations Area-Afghanistan can help provide the best possible advantage to the Warfighter Apr. 8.

The PIF was built and staffed by Research Development and Engineering Command personnel deployed to the RDECOM Field Assistance in Science and Technology Center to provide an embedded engineering capability and prototype fabrication capability to develop rapid engineering solutions for operational requirements. The RFAST-C is embedded in the 401st Army Field Support Brigade, part of Army Sustainment Command, which forms Army Materiel Command's operational arm to deliver integrated logistics solutions to the maneuver units.

RFAST-C had a petting zoo of sorts where the Soldiers could see, touch and ask questions about some of the more than 150products designed and fabricated by PIF personnel and to provide the senior NCO leadership of the 18th Eng. Bde. an overview of the RFAST-C capabilities.



Above: Soldiers assigned to the 18th Engineer Brigade look at a light shroud designed to prevent headlight beams reflecting off RPG nets back into the eyes of the driver and vehicle commander of mine-resistant ambush-protected all-terrain vehicles attaches to the vehicle.

"Give us something you need," challenged Kevin Brady, RFAST-C executive officer as he began explaining some of the items on display. "We will give you what you want – something that does the job."

First Sgt. Timothy McDaniel, 713rd Engineer Company, an Indiana National Guard unit from Valparaiso, Ind., characterized his Soldiers as "a bunch of tinkerers" who are always looking for a better way to do their jobs.

"We absolutely will use the PIF," McDaniel said. "We'll have better tools for better tinkering."



Left: Soldiers assigned to the 18th Engineer Brigade see how a light shroud designed to prevent headlight beams reflecting off RPG nets back into the eyes of the driver and vehicle commander of mine-resistant ambush-protected all-terrain vehicles.



Above: Soldiers assigned to the 18th Engineer Brigade look at a display of some of the more than 150 products developed and produced at the by Research Development and Engineering Command Field Assistance in Science and Technology Center prototype integration facility during a visit to the facility Apr. 8.

First Sgt. Stephon McAfee with the 841st Engineer Battalion, a Miami, Fla., reserve unit, was interested in light shrouds for his unit's mine-resistant ambush-protected all-terrain vehicles. The simple design will keep headlight beams from bouncing off the RPG nets into the eyes of the driver and vehicle commander.

"This definitely will help our Solders," McAfee said. "The light reflections slowed us down."

The hybrid hook, the first item produced by the PIF, was of interest to 1st Sgt. Richard E. Hinkle, 42nd Clearance Company. He said he was looking for the "best possible advantage" for his Soldiers.

"We use technology, any tool that allows stand-off [from a suspected improvised explosive device] is a plus," he said.

Brady said RFAST-C works very closely with Rapid Equipping Force and the Regional Command Science and Technology Teams to meet Warfighter needs in a rapid manner.

"We mutually support each other," said Lt. Col. Doug Mayzel, Afghanistan REF team chief. "Units come to us with needs, issues or problems and we have the guys, RFAST-C, that can make the solution."

Mayzel said REF helps PIF get the finished product to the unit by coordinating transportation or shipping.

"REF is a middleman," he said

Maj. Shannon McCrory, REF operations officer said in addition to getting the finished products into the Soldier's hands, REF can also help the PIF acquire materials and provide more linkages to solutions.

"The demonstration to the 18th Eng. Bde. was very successful," said Brady. "We conveyed RFAST-C capabilities and the many ways the PIF can support the brigade in their day-to-day missions."

Right: 1st Sgt. Richard E. Hinkle, 42nd Clearance Company, looks at a hybrid hook designed to allow Soldiers to manipulate suspected improvised explosive devices from a distance. The hybrid hook is the first materiel solution designed and produced by the RFAST-C prototype integration facility.



White House "Champion of Change's" work continues to reap benefits in OEF

By Summer Barkley

401st AFSB Public Affairs Officer

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan—Lt. Col. Alan C. Samuels was named a "Champion of Change" by the White House on Apr. 19 in recognition of his work while deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Samuels was the director of Research, Development and Engineering Command's Field Assistance in Science and Technology Center during his deployment. The facility is located at the 401st Army Field Support Brigade and provides an embedded engineering capability to develop rapid engineering solutions for operational requirements and coordinate materiel solutions with units, the 401st and the Assistant Secretary of the Army/Acquisitions, Logistics and Technology community.

He was recognized as a "champion of change" for his work with the Afghan Micro-grid Project, which was led by Project Manager Mobile Electric Power, the military's procurement and support agency for electric power generation on tactical battlefields. The micro-grid project resulted in a 17 percent reduction in fuel consumption according to Samuels. The project's other impacts were more efficient usage of generators and reduction of the number of fuel convoys required to provide fuel to distribution points across the area of operations.

The micro-grid project is part of the Energy Initiative Proving Ground, funded by the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Operational Energy Plans and Programs to provide real usage statistics in actual conditions Samuels said

Samuels was also involved with a second project, an energy efficient base camp that has been set up at Bagram Airfield for some of the Soldiers of Task Force Muleskinner. The energy efficient base camp is funded by the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Installations, Energy and Environment and is designed to look at savings at an aggregate level for both energy and water.

To the casual observer, the energy efficient base camp doesn't look much different from other base camps. It consists mainly of green or tan-colored tents, generators, fuel bladders, and LSS (latrine, shower and shave) systems.

The green tents are basic Army Force Provider tents said Donald E. Jones, RFAST-C executive officer. These basic tents are the control tents and have no energy efficiency modifications. Monitoring the energy consumption of these tents will provide the baseline against which measurements taken from the energy-efficient tents will be compared.

Both sets of tan tents have improved environmental control units, insulated tent liners and energy efficient LED lighting said Gregory S. Dogum, RFAST-C power and energy expert. These tents are also using shower water reuse systems can treat up to 12,000 gallons of water per day and return 75 percent of it for reuse. The main difference is the use of solar shades over one set of tents.

"Some FOBs [forward operating bases] are not near accessible water supplies and have to be constantly resupplied," said Dogum. "If the SWRS is used to its fullest capacity, the Army could realize a potential saving of millions of dollars per unit each year."

Sensors in all the tents measure energy consumption. RFAST-C is assisting with data collection by providing data logging. Data is submitted to U. S. Army Materiel Systems Analysis Activity and Project Manager Force Sustainment Systems. The proving ground at Bagram Airfield is similar in set-up to the PM FSS Base Camp Systems Integration Laboratory at Fort Devens, Mass. The main differences, according to Jones, are the true day-to-day use of the tents by Soldiers engaged in real-world missions, the weather and altitude conditions at the TF Muleskinner site and the fully-burdened cost of fuel.

"You can't make good decisions with bad data," said Jones.



Top row from left: Gregory S. Dogum, RFAST-C power and energy expert, explains a shower water reuse system to Paul Kakert and Jon Connor from Army Sustainment Command Public Affairs Office. The system can treat up to 12,000 gallons of water per day and returns 75 percent of it for reuse. If the system is used at its full capacity, 9,000 gallons of water are saved per day. Gregory S. Dogum, RFAST-C power and energy expert, shows the insulated liner in one of the energy efficient tents at the energy efficient base camp housing Soldiers from Task Force Muleskinner. The interior of an energy efficient tent housing TF Muleskinner Soldiers shows how the tents are loaded with personnel and equipment in real-world usage. **Bottom row from left:** Solar shades cover energy efficient tents at TF Muleskinner energy efficient base camp. Basic Force Provider tents are seen on the left. Lt. Col. Alan C. Samuels (second from right) during the White House ceremony naming him as a Champion of Change based on his work while deployed with Research, Development and Engineering Command to the 401st Army Field Support Brigade.

By Summer Barkley 401st ASFB Public Affairs Officer

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan— One of LOGCAP-Afghanistan's contractors is continuing an initiative to hire trained Afghan workers through a partnership with the Korean Vocational Training Center at Bagram Airfield.

The KVTC, under the sponsorship of the Korea International Cooperation Agency, trains Afghan students in five fields. Logistics Civil Augmentation Program-Afghanistan contractor Fluor Corporation and KVTC established a partnership where Fluor would hire all the graduates. Fluor, one of two contractors providing services under LOGCAP IV, works in the northern and eastern areas of Afghanistan. LOGCAP, managed by Army Materiel Command and executed by Army Sustainment Command, AMC's logistics arm, is a way to leverage civilian contractors to support and augment United States and coalition forces in both wartime and humanitarian missions.

An entrance ceremony for the third and largest class of 135 students was held Mar. 7. Among those in attendance were Ahn Seong-doo, Korean Ambassador to Afghanistan; Kim II-woong, acting Korean PRT representative; Canadian Brig. Gen. Karl D. McQuillan, deputy commanding general – coalition for Combined Joint Task Force 1, Regional Command East; Baek Doo-yong, KOICA representative; James E. Allen, LOGCAP deputy program director – Afghanistan; Col. Gary W. Rangel, LOGCAP-A assistant program director; and George Rabb, country manager, LOGCAP-A Fluor.

"LOGCAP-A performance contractors are committed to creating and sustaining a strong, well-trained local national workforce, both men and women," said Allen. "Local nationals make up 25 percent of the contract workforce and LOGCAP-A directly contributes to the Afghan economy through payroll and local purchases."

"KVTC brings accredited training by highly skilled instructors to the table," said Rabb. "KVTC gains motivation for their students to attend class and succeed while Fluor benefits by the addition of highly trained Afghans to the local national LOGCAP work force." KVTC also provides two week advanced training for current Fluor Afghan employees with 345 Fluor employees completing the advanced training so far. Fluor volunteers provide tutoring in English and other requested topics in both the initial and advanced courses.

The five skill areas are construction, welding and plumbing, electrical, automotive and computer training. There are 700 hours of instruction spanning nine months. More than 500 students have completed the 700-hour and advanced courses since the program began in March 2010.

"With no cost to the client [LOGCAP] or to us, this training partnership is a hard bargain to pass up," said Pete Coogle, Fluor, deputy project manager, operations.

The COIN or counterinsurgency strategy was outlined by Gen. David H. Petraeus and Marine Corps Gen. James F. Amos in Army field manual 3-24 in December 2006.



The 135 students enrolled in the Korean Vocational Training Center and guests listen to a speaker during an entrance ceremony held Mar. 7. This is the third and largest class to attend the 700-hour program. The skill areas are construction; welding and plumbing; electrical; automotive; and computer science.

AFSBn-KAF SPO receives support from home

By J. Elise Van Pool

401st ASFB Public Affairs Specialist

KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan –The Army Field Support Battalion- Kandahar Support Operations (SPO) Cell received special care packages from Jason's Box, a non-profit organization in Rock Island, III., that sends care packages to deployed U.S. Forces.

The SPO cell coordinates maintenance and sustainment support for units in the southern and western parts of Afghanistan. They work around the clock to help U.S. and Coalition forces maintain their equipment.

"This support means so much," Lt. Col. Nathan Acree, SPO officer in charge said. "Having a little taste of home really boosts morale here. It's very nice to know that people back home are thinking of you and are supporting you."

Jason's Box was founded by Teri L. Johnson in honor of her son Jason, who was killed in Iraq. At Jason's Box, volunteers make customized care packages for troops serving overseas. They also help service members access emotional/behavioral health resources in their community. For more information visit jasonsbox.com.



Chief Warrant Officer 2 Kristen Davis, Lt. Col. Nathan Acree and Sgt. Josh Brown (left to right), all part of the Army Field Support Battalion-Kandahar, 401st Army Field Support Brigade, open care packages sent by Jason's Box. Davis, Acree and Brown all serve in theAFSBn-Kandahar Support Operations Cell. They provide sustainment and maintenance support to U.S. and Coalition forces in the southern and western parts of Afghanistan.

Sailors receive Army Achievement Medals

By Summer Barkley

401st AFSB Public Affairs Officer

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan—Twelve Sailors from Navy Expeditionary Logistics Support Group working under Army Central Command in Kuwait who were temporarily assigned to AFSBn-Bagram, 401st Army Field Support Brigade received Army Achievement Medals during a ceremony held April 21.

The Sailors were part of a 'bridging strategy' to help the 401st AFSB move non-mission essential equipment from Afghanistan. They were on short-term orders and worked directly with Soldiers, Army civilians and contractors at the Redistribution Property Assistance Team yard at Bagram. Another group of Sailors performed the same functions at AFSBn-Kandahar and are profiled in a related article.

"We were on a 90-day rotation, and arrived in two waves" said Lt. Cmdr. Kendall B. Kalstad, U.S. Navy customs team officer-in-charge. "We performed U.S. customs duties to inspect cargo bound for the United States to make sure it is free of contaminants, contraband and ammo."

"It was my honor to be the first warrant officer to stand up Navy customs in Afghanistan," said Chief Warrant Officer Duc V. Vu, officer-in-charge of the first wave. "There were some frustrated vehicles. The purpose of our team was to establish procedures to prevent this from happening in the future.

"The Navy customs agents refined how the battalion conducted customs inspections and established a standard operating procedure for the CENT-COM Material Retrograde Element customs agents to fall in on," said Capt. Eric B. Kuyper, AFSBn-BAF S3 officer. "Their superb attention to detail and meticulous inspections of retrograding rolling and non-rolling stock were instrumental in quality velocity production of Army Field Support Battalion-Bagram over the four months they were a part of the team."



Above: Lt. Col. Peter J. Koch, AFSBn-Bagram, 401st Army Field Support Brigade commander, (back row far right) stands with U.S. Navy customs agents following an awards ceremony Apr. 21. The Sailors were awarded Army Achievement and Afghanistan Campaign medals in recognition of their contributions to sent to the 401st AFSB on short term orders as a bridging strategy until the CENTCOM Materiel Recovery Element's U.S. Army customs agents arrived to take over the job of inspecting equipment prior to being sent back to the United States.

227th QM Soldiers volunteer for duty with the 401st

By Summer Barkley

401st AFSB Public Affairs Officer

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan—Fifty-two Soldiers from Fort Campbell, Ky. hit a trifecta of sorts by working in three separate theaters during a one-year deployment.

The Soldiers from the 227th Quartermaster Company, 129th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 101st Airborne Division, were originally assigned to the 402nd Army Field Support Brigade shortly before the brigade completed its mission in Operation New Dawn and moved their headquarters to Camp Arifjan, Kuwait. They volunteered to deploy to the 401st ASFB to support equipment redistribution and fielding missions in Operation Enduring Freedom.



Soldiers from the 227th Quartermaster Company, temporarily assigned to the 401st Army Field Support Brigade, move a tow-bar in the Redistribution Property Assistance Yard at Bagram Airfield. Fifty-two Soldiers from the 227th volunteered to deploy to the 401st AFSB for several months to assist with RPAT and fielding missions.



Sgt. 1st Class Brent D. Wipperman, officer-in-charge redistribution property assistance team quality assurance team, attaches identifying information to a vehicle in the Redistribution Property Assistance Yard at Bagram Airfield. Fiftytwo Soldiers from the 227th volunteered to deploy to the 401st AFSB for several months to assist with RPAT and fielding missions.

"I'm proud of every one of them," said Sgt. 1st Class Brent D. Wipperman, noncommissioned officer-in-charge redistribution property assistance team quality assurance team. "These 52 Soldiers are the best we have. They volunteered twice – they volunteered to join the Army and they volunteered to come to Afghanistan."

The quartermasters are working with the 401st at opposite ends of the logistics spectrum. Some of the Soldiers are working to assemble equipment sets for an emerging mission, while others are working on the task of retrograding equipment out of the combined joint operations area.

The 227th was a 'bridge strategy' designed to provide additional assets for a short term until the CENTCOM Materiel Recovery Element could be put into place to provide longer term assistance with the 401st AFSB's missions.

Editor's note: Sgt. 1st Class Wipperman was promoted to Master Sgt. during his deployment with the 401st AFSB.

Does Character Still Matter?

By Chaplain (MAJ) Edward R. (Ted) Baccich 401st Army Field Support Brigade Chaplain

Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary; Character - 2 c: the complex of mental and ethical traits mark-

ing and often individualizing a person, group, or nation <the character of the American people>

Character is the bedrock on which the edifice of leadership rests ... Without character, particularly in the military profession, failure in peace, disaster in war or, at best, mediocrity in both will result.

- General Matthew Ridgeway

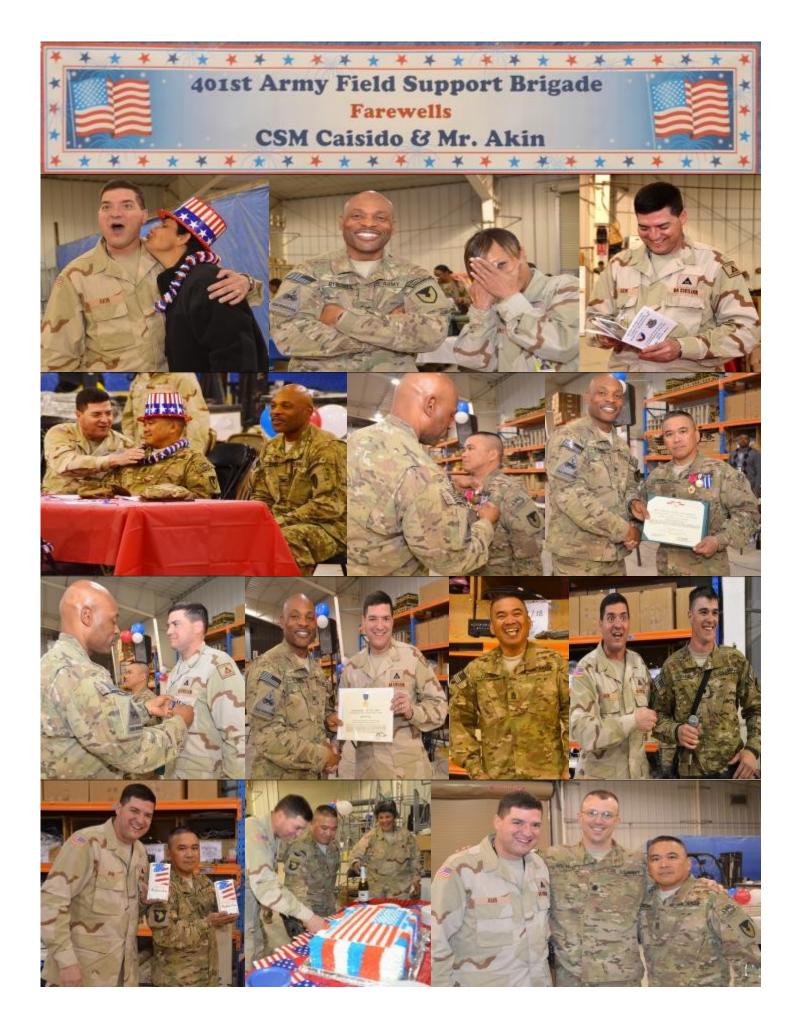
Does character still matter? Many may find shocking that the Nation has collectively asked that very question – especially in regards to our Nation's leaders. It's like asking if it suddenly became "ok" to lie, cheat and steal. And the answer to that character question varies greatly depending on who you might ask. We live in a world that is increasingly given to random personal subjectivism (AKA moral relativism). Therefore there is a lack of consensus about the value of character. Why does society at large seem to disagree about something so fundamental as character? There are many plausible answers, but one of them is a societal philosophical shift in ethical reasoning. Stated more simply, over the past 40 years, blanket tolerance and egalitarianism have been strongly promoted by our institutions of higher learning, the mainstream media, and by various national organizations.

Character is the virtue of those brave souls who have the audacity to believe; it is the virtue of men and women who esteem to higher ideals. And tolerance, said GK Chesterton, "is the virtue of people who don't believe anything." So the issue of whether character truly matters springs directly from an issue of belief. Specifically, if God exists, then honesty, integrity and honor matter in this world and in the age to come. However, if God does not exist, then there is no higher truth and therefore character, honor and integrity really don't matter because they can never be objectively defined. If there is no God, then there are no standards, no higher truths, and no one's lifestyle choices could really be deemed more virtuous than someone else's.

Does character really matter? It is an important question and one that I never thought I'd ask, because where I grew up, it always seemed so patently obvious that character was everything. Character *makes* men, and men of character built our Nation. Leadership descends from character. Character makes families and it protects children. It binds the covenant of marriage to a lifetime of love and loyalty. Character is our identity, our integrity, our honesty; it is the very innermost part of who we are. If we do not have good and honorable character, we cannot and should not be trusted. Character is linked with our spiritual life because it is enhanced by our faith in something, or someone greater than ourselves. In many ways, character *is* our spiritual life; it is our heart and soul. General George C. Marshall was right when he said, *"I look upon the spiritual life of the soldier as even more important than his equipment....The soldier's heart, the soldier's spirit, the soldier's soul are everything. Unless the soldier's soul sustains him, he cannot be relied upon and will fail himself and his country in the end."*

General Marshall grew up in a generation that was inculcated with intrinsic and timeless values that are often forgotten today. In his day a man's word was his bond. A man could sometimes get a loan based upon the strength of his character and his reputation for integrity *alone*. In that Greatest Generation a man would swear to his own hurt if necessary, because society understood that a man's word was the man – a man's word was his soul. Today, in 2012, we actually have to be reminded that character matters. In 1987, the Michael Josephson Institute was founded to simply remind America of the importance of good and ethical character, and it is still going strong today. Why? Because of a societal shift in ethics. Because the value of character and integrity have been repeatedly dissuaded and deterred, and these values have been deemed as entirely secondary in importance to pragmatism and economic gain. Because there is no lie that is repeated so often or so absurd that men will begin to believe it – if it is simply repeated often enough.

It is time to remember the eternal and Divine truths that built the Greatest Nation on earth. If we lose our individual or collective character as a people, then we lose our collective soul. Let the good people of America rise up in chorus and demand leaders with good and honorable character, and let us demand the same of ourselves. Let the good people of America rise up and chorus and demand that we collectively acknowledge the truth that the nation was founded upon, namely that our Inalienable Rights (life, liberty, pursuit of happiness, etc.) descend directly from the Creator, and they are secured by our character and integrity toward Him and one another. Let the good people of America rise up in chorus and demand ruthless and unvarnished truth from themselves and from their leaders at every level. William Shakespeare once wrote, "This above all: To thine own self be true, and it must follow, as the night the day, Thou canst not then be false to any man." Jesus reminds us that the "truth will make you free." Let's remember that without truth and without character, the liberties of a nation can never be fully secure.



401st Army Field Support Brigade

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J. Elise Van Pool Public Affairs Specialist *Forward Deployed* is an authorized publication under the provisions of AR 360-1 for members of the Department of Defense. Contents of *Forward Deployed* are unofficial views of, and are not necessarily the views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Army or the Department of Defense. The editorial content of *Forward Deployed* is produced, published and distributed by 401st Army Field Support Brigade, APO AE 09534.

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Trust and Loyalty

GFE University gets right equipment to Soldiers

By J. Elise Van Pool 401st AFSB Public Affairs Officer



The Class CVII warehouse team established GFE University (government fumished equipment) to expedite equipment issue to Soldiers. GFE University is a small demonstration area where customers can learn about the equipment they are requesting or find the type of the equipment they need if they don't know the item's name.

KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan—If a Soldier moves with it, shoots it or uses it to communicate chances it will be issued by the Class VII warehouse located on the Army Field Support Battalion-Kandahar's compound. Literally serving as Army Materiel Command's face to the field, the team who runs the warehouse distributes the equipment that gives Soldiers the edge on the battlefield.

"We are where the rubber meets the road," said Steven Kinzer, the warehouse lead. The team at the warehouse works with the Ready for Issue Office in the AFSBn-Kandahar to issue nearly everything a Soldier needs to outfit his vehicle or herself for missions outside the wire.

The team also works with Soldiers, logistics assistance representative, and field service representatives to ensure that the equipment issued is in working order and ready to go when the Soldier signs for it.

"We won't let you leave without serviceable equipment," said Kinzer.

The warehouse not only issues equipment to Soldiers, they also bring equipment found on the installation back to record,

saving the tax payers millions of dollars every week. They spend several hours each day researching items in various databases to identify what they are, who they belong to and returning those items to the right unit. If a rightful owner cannot be identified the item is put on to the theater property book and issued to the next unit who needs it.

Kinzer and his team, nearly all of whom are former service members, work hard to make the process of issuing equipment as seamless as possible. To that end, the team established GFE University (government furnished equipment). GFE University consists of a small demonstration area where customers can learn about the equipment they are requesting or find the type of the equipment they need if they don't know the item's name.

"We took for granted that everyone knew," said Kinzer. "Pictures are great but hands on is better."

At the end of the day Kinzer and the team who operate the Class VII warehouse are here to help Soldiers.

"This is what we do. This is why we are here," said Kinzer. "We don't tell Soldiers no."



The team that runs the Class VII warehouse works hard every day to assist Soldiers in signing out the equipment to help give them an edge on the battlefield. The warehouse is located on the Army Field Support Battalion-Kandahar compound and serves at Army Materiel Command's face