



THE PRIDE

Telling the Pacific Army Reserve story



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Commander's Corner



In July, CSM Yamamoto and I had the opportunity to attend two separate week-long conferences in Washington, D.C. The first was the Army Training and Leader Development Conference hosted by the Chief of Staff of the Army (CSA) Gen. Raymond Odierno, and the second was the United States Army Reserve Command (USARC) Commander's Conference. A lot of information came out of both of these senior-leader meetings.

The key areas of focus I took away from the CSA are: leader development and talent management, managing change, optimizing human performance, sustainable readiness, and realistic training with appropriate risk management and good stewardship of our resources.

The following week we attended the USARC Commander's conference hosted by the Chief, Army Reserve Lt. Gen. Jeffrey Talley. This conference focused on Army Reserve specific issues.

The bottom-line from these two conferences is the Army is facing a great deal of change and many challenges in the near future. With all the talk about budget, mission changes, mandatory training, manning, readiness, exercises, etc, it is very easy sometimes to lose our focus.

To help keep us on the right path, here again are our priorities. 1. Man our units. If there is ever a doubt on what to do first, it is those tasks that will increase the availability of our Soldiers and manning of our units. 2. Train our units. Train toward our units MET, supported with MOSQ and OES/NCOES qualification. 3. Maintain our units. We must get back to basics in our unit maintenance programs. Through the use of our new training cycles, units will be afforded more time to conduct equipment maintenance. 4. Produce a climate that is safe and productive for all.

Finally, this all rolls into the Army Reserves' new motto, "I am an Army Reserve Soldier and I am ready." Are you ready?

What makes the 9th MSC the best Army Reserve Command is our people. Take care of them, take care of yourselves. I want to thank you for all that you do for this command and the Army.

I am available to any Soldier. If you have an issue and you need help, you may contact me at john.e.cardwell2.mil@mail.mil.

Pride of the Pacific!

THE PRIDE

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British Army Reserve exchange officer trains with 9th MSC

Story by Brian Melanephy

“Speechless!”

That’s the word Maj. Charles Melley, a 30-year veteran of the British Army Reserve, used to describe his feelings when he found out he was accepted to the Military Reserve Exchange Program.

Melley applied for the program after hearing about it during one of his reserve weekends. He was on his way back from battlefield studies when he was told about being accepted to the program, “but he wouldn’t like where he was going.”

After a pause, Melley was told he was going to Hawaii.

An environmental health officer in the reserve and as a civilian, Melley arrived, June 12, to begin a whirlwind tour of the 9th Mission Support Command with his sponsor, Capt. Mary Kennedy, who is the 9th MSC safety officer. (Kennedy will go to the United Kingdom in September to spend two weeks learning about the U.K.’s army reserve.)

While here, Melley traveled to Kauai to see the Tropic Care health training, where he met Mayor Bernard Carvalho. He also participated in numerous briefings and met the 9th MSC commander and Hawaii’s governor.

He was surprised by the similarities and differences between the U.K. Army Reserve and the U.S. Army Reserve. He said the biggest difference between the two is their size. The British Army Reserve is just over 20,000 soldiers and the U.S. Army Reserve is close to 200,000.

Another difference Melley noted is the amount of time required to serve during the year. Melley serves two weeks a year, plus two weekends. He trains side-by-side with his active duty counterparts. In the American model, traditional Army Reserve Soldiers serve a minimum of one weekend a month, plus two weeks for annual training, which can be



Photo courtesy of Capt. Mary Kennedy

completed with fellow Reservists, the Active Component or National Guard counterparts.

The primary purpose of the Military Reserve Exchange Program is to provide National Guard and Reserve officers training associated with mobilization duties while enhancing their ability to work and communicate with the service members of the host nation.

“It is more than a military exchange,” said Melley. “It’s an opportunity to learn about a different culture.” Melley will reciprocate as host for Kennedy in September.

The British Army Reserve

Learn more about the similarities and differences between the U.K. and U.S. Army Reserve. For a look at how things are done on the other side of the Atlantic, visit www.army.mod.uk/reserve/31781.aspx.

If you would like to learn more about the Reserve Officer Foreign Exchange Program / Military Reserve Exchange Program visit the link below.
<http://www.usar.army.mil/resources/ForSoldiers/Pages/Reserve-Foreign-Exchange-Program.aspx>

Two jobs as chief make one great warrior

Story by Capt. Liana Kim

Photo courtesy of Lt. Col. Frederick Levine

HONOLULU — Staff and patients alike gathered at the Shriners Hospitals for Children-Honolulu to celebrate their new hospital chief of staff, Dr. (Col.) Craig M. Ono, June 5.

“Shriners Hospitals for Children is a very special place for me, and I’m proud to be part of a team that provides so much compassionate care to the children and families of Hawaii and the South and West Pacific islands,” Ono said.

When not in medical scrubs, Ono dons his uniform for Battle Training Assembly weekends as chief of staff for the 9th Mission Support Command at Fort Shafter, headquarters for all U.S. Army Reserve units throughout the Pacific region.



Dr. Craig Ono



Brig. Gen. John Cardwell (second from left), commander, 9th Mission Support Command congratulates Dr. Ono (with lei) on his appointment as chief of staff, Shriners Hospitals for Children-Honolulu, June 5.

He deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan three times while a member of the Shriners’ Honolulu medical staff.

“I’m honored to be able to serve this organization as the tenth chief of staff,” said Ono. “I’ve been given an opportunity to build on a legacy that began more than 90 years ago with Dr. R. Nelson Hatt, who served as the first chief of staff, and continued by Dr. Arabella Leet, who provided key leadership the past two years.”

Ono’s family, fellow Army Reservists, hospital staff, parents and patients attended the celebration, enjoying videos of humorous moments and sharing heartfelt speeches about his incredible care. One of his patients and a parent spoke about his compassionate care for children in Hawaii and throughout the Pacific.

“Dr. Ono talked about the great responsibility to our patients’ families, as they have entrusted their most valuable assets to us,” said Mahealani Richardson, Shriners director of public relations and physician liaison. “He told us that what links all of us is the commitment and dedication to providing the highest quality of compassionate care to the children and families of Hawaii and the Pacific. We all have the ability to be honest enough to effectively mentor and teach, and the curiosity to learn from our patients and families.”

The hospital announced Ono’s appointment May 28. Ono has served as acting chief of staff since December, and he’s served as assistant chief of staff, 2006-2013.

An orthopedic surgeon at Shriners since 1992, Ono has a particular interest in lower extremity reconstruction, club feet and sports injuries.

“I am pleased that Dr. Ono has accepted our offer to become the chief of staff,” said Zeke Schmus, chairman of the Board of Governors for the hospital. “The Board of Governors unanimously approved his promotion, and under his leadership, we look to him to grow this hospital in the next decade.”

Ono plays a vital role in providing leadership with hospital administrator John White. They oversee a team of physicians and other staff who provide pediatric orthopedic and neurodevelopmental care, and conduct research and training.

The doctors and staff members of Shriners Hospitals for Children-Honolulu are experts in bone, joint, brain, dental and sports therapies, delivering care in the heart of Honolulu to children with a variety of disorders and diseases.

“Craig Ono is perfectly suited to lead Shriners Honolulu in the chief of staff role,” said White. “He’s a talented, compassionate and driven physician leader who understands how to care for us families and children of Hawaii and the Pacific Basin — very, very well. On behalf of all the children we serve, congratulations on your new role and a warm welcome, Dr. Ono.”

Chaplains of 9th MSC offer MASCAL pastoral care

Story and photo by Chaplain (Col.) Charles E. Lynde

HONOLULU — Reserve chaplains and chaplain candidates from the 9th Mission Support Command provided pastoral aid and comfort to “casualties” as part of a Rim of the Pacific 2014 mass casualty (MASCAL) training exercise on Ford Island, Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam and at Tripler Army Medical Center, Friday.

Community volunteers in moulage special effects makeup acted as role-player “casualties” during the MASCAL.



Chaplain (Maj.) Kevin Gilbert, 124th Chaplain Detachment, provides pastoral care to Charlene Chase, who is role playing a medical casualty, during the Rim of the Pacific mass casualty exercise on Ford Island, July 11.

As medical personnel treated the simulated injuries, eight Pacific Army Reserve chaplains provided care in the form of prayer and brief pastoral counseling.

For the chaplains, the MASCAL exercise was a stark contrast to the hospital setting of their usual training. The eight are currently training at TAMC and Queens Medical Center in a clinical pastoral internship.

“This is different than working at Queens,” said Chaplain (Capt.) Keith Buczak, 302nd Transportation Terminal Battalion. “It is intimidating at first, even though role-playing.”

While the medical personnel responded to the physical needs of the casualties, chaplains were there to help the injured as they coped with the

spiritual aspects of significant trauma.

Buczak agreed, “Ministering to people in severe pain really brings home the necessity of bringing quick and timely pastoral care to the patient.”

Chaplain (Maj.) Kevin Gilbert, 124th Chaplain Detachment, was one of the chaplains training to provide pastoral care. For Gilbert, it was challenging, yet rewarding.

“This is a great experience with very intense trauma. We bring God to people at the worst point in their lives,” Gilbert said.

As a civilian, Gilbert is the 9th MSC Family Programs director. He is also a prior service enlisted infantryman. The casualty role-players also saw the value of the pastoral care during the exercise.

“Fabulous. It takes my mind off of my wounds and pain, and puts my psyche in God’s grace,” said Charlene Chase, a volunteer from Kapolei.

“This is both wonderful training for our chaplains and a great chance to support this important RIMPAC exercise,” said Brig. Gen. John Cardwell, commander, 9th MSC. “The joint experience is an excellent opportunity for our Army Reserve Soldiers to learn interoperability here in the Pacific.”

The chaplains’ clinical pastoral education at Tripler and Queens began June 1 and continues until their and continues until their graduation, Aug. 14.

The 9th MSC has chaplains across the Pacific Region in Korea, Guam, Saipan, Alaska, American Samoa and Hawaii.

New commander welcomed to 1984th Army Hospital

Story and photo by Brian Melanephy

FORT SHAFTER FLATS — On another beautiful day in paradise, friends, family and colleagues gathered, Sunday, to witness the passing of the 1984th U.S. Army Hospital's unit colors from Col. Casey Rogers to Col. Kiyotaka "Al" Yazawa.

"The 1984th is unique in its mission as the only reserve medical unit in the Pacific. Its makeup is unique, as they are almost exclusively health care professionals like nurses, doctors, pharmacists, dentists, X-ray techs, OR (operating room) techs (and) dieticians who work every day in our community ERs (emergency rooms), hospitals, clinics (and) pharmacies," Yazawa said. "These Soldiers have my admiration. They are indeed two times the citizen."

Yazawa graduated from West Point in 1989.

However, he did not start out in the medical field; he was commissioned as an Air Defense Artillery officer. In 1992, he transitioned to the Army Reserve where he served as a linguist and an interrogator.

In his civilian job today, Yazawa is chief of geriatrics and long-term care for Straub Clinic and Hospital. Outgoing commander Rogers proudly saluted his formation as he passed the three detachments in the field. During his three years, the 1984th took part in two missions to Malaysia, two to Indonesia and one to Japan. Additionally, his team of medical professionals trained at Tripler Army Medical Center, an annual training event in Wisconsin and one in Alaska.

Rogers spoke very highly of the unit.

"The 1984th came to me in excellent shape. It has improved over the last three years, and it is now Col. Yazawa's turn to reach even higher levels of greatness. I leave a great unit with a great commander," Rogers said.

The ceremony marked the end of a successful command for Rogers. He served as the commander for three years.

Yazawa had served as the 1984th USAH Det. 2 commander since 2012.

Brig. Gen. John Cardwell, commander, 9th MSC, presided over the ceremony.

The hospital took its current form in 1998. The unit is headquartered in Fairbanks, Alaska, with Det. 1 in Anchorage and Det. 2 on Oahu. The unit provides direct medical support to the Pacific Regional Medical Command and the Korea Medical Augmentation Program.

Later this year, the 1984th will send a team of medical professionals to Samoa to provide medical support and training.



(From left) Brig. Gen. John Cardwell, commander, 9th Mission Support Command; Col. Casey Rogers, outgoing commander, 1984th U.S. Army Hospital; and Col. Kiyotaka "Al" Yazawa, incoming commander, 1984th USAH, salute the flag as the national anthem plays during the unit's change of command ceremony, Sunday.



Editors Note: To see photos of the 1984th USAH mission in Samoa visit the 9th MSC Facebook Page. www.facebook.com/9thMissionSupportCommand

Army Reserve Soldiers serve ‘deceased’ at RIMPAC MASCAL

Story and photo by Chaplain (Col.) Charles E. Lynde

HONOLULU – Adaptability is a hallmark of the American Soldier.

Members of the 962nd Quartermaster Co. (Mortuary Affairs) exemplified adaptability during the mass casualty exercise (MASCAL) on July 11, that formed a part of Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) Exercise 2014 — the world’s largest international maritime exercise.

“We’ve been doing a static display this week to introduce our capability to the Navy and Marines,” said 1st. Lt. Janessa Strickland, 962nd operations Officer. “Today we’ve been integrated into the MASCAL exercise. It’s great training for us.”

That positive attitude was evident throughout the six members of the 962nd who were supporting the static display as they adapted to the new training opportunity.

They responded quickly as “deceased” casualties were brought to the Mobile Integrated Remains Collection System (MIRCS), the equipment that forms the basis of their support.



Mortuary Affairs units are responsible for searching, collecting, processing, and forwarding remains of U.S. service members killed in combat. The unexpected inclusion in the MASCAL exercise presented them with a different scenario.

“I’ll assume he’s American,” said one Soldier as remains were brought into the MIRCS. “But the exercise scenario has us in the country of Griffin. He’s a citizen of Griffin,” said another Soldier present.

The four mortuary affairs specialists began to develop a case file and process the “remains” of Derrick Visitacion, a college student from Mililani, Hawaii, who had volunteered to role play as a casualty.

“I wanted to role play something severe,”

Visitacion said. “Head trauma seemed like a good one.” He smiled as he lay on the stretcher, moulage of a head injury pasted to the right side of his head.

The simulated injuries added realism to the exercise.

Spc. Winlove Mabuti of Waikele, Hawaii, one of the mortuary affairs specialists said serving as a mortuary affairs Soldier “humbles me. It has made me wise and helpful. I am who I am today because seeing remains is an eye opener.”

He added, “I want to help the best way I can. It’s sensitive and heartbreaking to see a fallen comrade.”

The Soldiers of the 962nd adapted to the new mission and the unusual scenario because they appreciate their mission.

“Today’s training makes me want to do this more in the future, to become more proficient so we can process remains faster.” Mabuti said.

The 962nd has Pacific Army Reserve Soldiers stationed in Alaska, Guam, Saipan, American Samoa, and Hawaii. It is the only mortuary affairs unit in the Pacific.

4960th MFTB graduates ‘2 by 9’ CGSOC students

Story and photo by Brian Melanephy

TRIPLER ARMY MEDICAL CENTER — Fifty-one officers from the Army Reserve, active duty and National Guard crossed the stage, at the Kyser Auditorium, here, Saturday, to receive their diplomas after completing the final phase of the Command and General Staff Officer Course (CGSOC), formerly known as Intermediate Level Education.

The students began their academic journey in September 2013 and then took different paths to completion. The course traditionally has three phases. Phase I is two weeks of classroom study. Phase II is every Tuesday night (four hours) for eight months, and Phase III is another two weeks of classroom instruction.

All resident phases of the course are taught at the 4960th Multi-Functional Training Brigade (MFTB) schoolhouse at Fort Shafter Flats.

This iteration of the course was the first to initiate a pilot program called “2 by 9.” Students had the option after Phase I in September to choose the Tuesday night option or to complete Phase II during two nine-day blocks of instruction back on Oahu.

The new format option allowed students from the mainland and off-island locations to continue their coursework with students from the September class.

In the past off-island students had to opt for a distance learning track to complete Phase II.

The 2 by 9 format worked particularly well for one student, Maj. Brian Pierce, a Department of Justice attaché in South East Asia and deputy judge advocate for the 658th Regional Support Group (RSG), a 9th Mission Support Command, Pacific Army Reserve unit based in the Republic of Korea.



Maj. Brian Pierce, deputy judge advocate, 658th RSG, 9th MSC, based in Korea, exits the stage with a smile on his face and his CGSOC diploma in hand

“For me it has been nothing but a blessing.

My other option would have involved joining online, (and) with the time difference, it would have cut into my embassy work day,” said Pierce, a veteran of 12 years as a reservist.

Maj. Octavio Rivera, cost manager in the G8 at U.S. Army-Pacific, took the Tuesday night track.

“I was able to go to work every day; my job didn’t fall behind. At the same time, it was great for my unit. I didn’t have to travel TDY (on temporary duty) anywhere. I didn’t have to take off work,” Rivera explained. Rivera has been in the military for 19 years, seven years as an enlisted Soldier, three years active duty and four years in the National Guard.

He returned to active duty in 2002 as a commissioned officer.

The class includes common-core curriculum and career field, branch and functional area training and education.

Phase I of the 2014-2015 course will begin in September when a new batch of officers will begin their CGSOC journey.

The 4960th MFTB is a Training and Doctrine Command Accredited Institute of Excellence. Its motto is “Wisdom and Leadership – for Tomorrow’s Leaders.”

USARPAC-SU Change of Command marks retirement of veteran commander

Story by Sgt. 1st Class John Freese

Photos by Capt. Liana Kim

FORT SHAFTER FLATS — As Soldiers of the 9th Mission Support Command, families and friends looked on, the U.S. Army, Pacific-Support Unit said farewell to its beloved commander, retired Col. Jonathan Wung, Sunday, June 8.

The occasion was more than a change of command.

Wung retired June 1 and was honored for his decades of service as a commissioned officer in the United States Army Reserve.

“After 30 years as an officer, I have mixed feelings about it, of course,” Wung said, after the ceremony. “Saying goodbye is pretty tough. I’ve always been with the Soldiers ... involved in a leadership position. So, it will be a change, but I’m looking forward to it, especially (time) with my family,” he said.

Wung and his wife Jae Young have 6-year-old twins, Joshua and Jodie.

“It’s going to be great spending more daddy-time with them,” Wung added.

9th MSC Commander Brig. Gen. John Cardwell spoke at the event and gave much deserved kudos to Wung, not just for his years of service, but for his former role as commander of the 411th Engineer Combat Battalion, another 9th MSC unit he commanded in a 2004-2005 deployment to a then very dangerous Iraqi theater of operations.

Leading the 600 Soldiers of a battalion in a theater of war is a memory that Wung holds simultaneously as the most challenging and rewarding of his professional life. The deployment was then the largest 9th MSC mobilization during overseas contingency operations.

“It was a very challenging time there...we experienced some pretty serious injuries, but we were able to bring everyone home,” Wung remembered.

Cardwell presented Wung with the Legion of Merit, a Certificate of Appreciation from the President of the United States and several tokens of appreciation, celebrating his many years of dedicated service.

Of course, another experience that Wung sees as among his favorite was the honor of this most recent leadership of USARPAC-SU. It’s a different organization than his previous commands, a command staff with a very senior rank structure.

“I’ve had a chance to work with many of my peers who I grew up with over the number of years ... so to be able to see them out on the (parade) field today was a very rewarding experience for me,” Wung said.

Wung had perhaps his warmest words for Command Sgt. Maj. Eric Mitomi, whom he remembered as always at his side, the ever-present adviser and representative of the enlisted Soldiers under Wung’s command.

Wung’s replacement, Col. George Dixon, brings his years of technical and leadership experience to USARPAC-SU. He has been twice selected as battalion commander and looks forward to assuming the helm at this Honolulu based brigade staff headquarters.



Col. Jonathan Wung (right) receives the Legion of Merit Award for his service as commander of the U.S. Army, Pacific-Support Unit from Brig. Gen. John Cardwell, commander, 9th Mission Support Command during a change of command ceremony for the unit at Fort Shafter Flats, June 8, 2014

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1984th USAH hones skills during extended combat training period

Story and photos by 1st Lt. Amanda Wilson

Eighty-eight Soldiers from the 1984th U.S. Army Hospital (USAH) conducted their Extended Combat Training period (ECT) at Fort McCoy, Wisconsin from June 7- 27, 2014.

During the ECT, the 1984th USAH conducted intense training in support of their mission: be ready to provide medical personnel in support of contingency operations worldwide.



1984th Soldiers carry a litter with a simulated casualty during the nine-obstacle litter obstacle course during extended combat training.

The 1984th USAH consists of three detachments: Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment (HHD) in Fairbanks, Alaska, Det. 1 in Anchorage, Alaska, and Det. 2 in Honolulu, Hawaii. Soldiers spent 21 days training to enhance their medical and military skills in order to be mission ready.

The ECT began with the Army Physical Fitness Test (APFT) and a company run, led by the commander Col. Rogers and command sergeant major, Command Sgt. Maj. Oscar Diaz.

In the days following, the Soldiers participated in a variety of classes designed to enhance their basic Soldier skills. This included the High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle (HMMWV) Egress Assistance Trainer (HEAT) and the Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) rollover training.

Rollover training is designed to teach Soldiers the proper procedures for exiting different types of vehicles during a rollover. In addition to HEAT training Soldiers also received land navigation instruction before testing their skills on the land navigation course.

The Soldiers honed their weapons firing skills during a training session inside the Engagement Skills Trainer (EST) 2000 for both the M9 and the M16 prior to conducting live-fire.

Additionally, all of the Soldiers completed a rigorous nine-obstacle Litter Obstacle Course which Soldier teams had to negotiate the obstacles while carrying a live casualty on a litter.

Soldiers also had the opportunity for an orientation flight in a Black Hawk with the help of the Illinois National Guard and learned proper loading and unloading procedures for patients.

Military Occupational Skill (MOS) training included Medic Skills Levels 2 and 3 for Combat Medics. This included endotracheal tube intubation, advanced suturing, Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear (CBRN) training, acute ward management, International Trauma Life Support (ITLS) certification, and trauma care under fire.

1984th physicians and nurses completed Advanced Cardiovascular Life Support (ACLS) and Pre-Hospital Trauma Life Support (PHTLS) certification courses.

All non-medical personnel took the Individual First Aid Kit (IFAK) class, the Combat Life Saver (CLS), Basic Life Support (BLS), and Army Warrior Tasks which including convoy operations, reacting to direct and indirect fire, requesting a medical evacuation, calling in an unexploded ordnance, and how to properly use a Single Channel Ground and Airborne Radio System (SINCGARS).

— ECT Continued on Page 11 —

— ECT Continued from Page 10 —

The Field Training Exercise (FTX) during week three was the culminating event. During the FTX they occupied a field Combat Support Hospital (CSH) with mass casualty scenarios with patients received from both ground ambulances and helicopters.

Brig. Gen. John Cardwell, Commanding General of the 9th Mission Support Command (MSC) visited the 1984th, June 20.

During his visit Brig. Gen. Cardwell shared his vision for the 1984th USAH and gave insight into what he has planned for the unit, such as opportunities for the Soldiers to participate in future operations.

Trained and ready, the 1984th USAH completed another successful ECT. The motivated and confident Soldiers left the ECT feeling relevant and ready for any future operations, whether within the Pacific or deployed overseas.



Sgt. Luis Delgado Altamirano (left) and Spc. Juson Choe orient their map prior to going out on the land navigation course during the 1984th US Army Hospital's extended combat training period at Fort McCoy, Wisconsin.

— Change of Command Continued from Page 9 —



Jay Trinidad, a Honolulu Police Officer and Army Reserve Colonel thanks Col. Wung for his service to the nation after Wung's change of command and retirement ceremony, here, June 8.

“I look forward to meeting and working with every USARPAC-SU Soldier. We are undertaking a very important mission,” Dixon said.

That mission is one of increasing relevance, and it will more closely tie the 9th MSC with USARPAC, the name sake of the USARPAC Support Unit.

“We have a great opportunity to really work on active duty and Reserve Army synergy,” said Dixon. “USARPAC-SU brings a lot of capabilities that can add value to our active component counterpart’s mission.”



Did you Know? The 9th MSC is the most ethnically diverse, geographically dispersed command in the U.S. Army Reserve, spanning seven time zones, two states, two territories, a commonwealth and two foreign countries. Our Soldiers speak more than 26 languages.

“Pride of the Pacific!”



Bridging the Basics: Basics build strong, intuitive, comprehensive Soldiers

By Master Sgt. Shaunron Lee, 9th Mission Support Command Assistant IG



Master Sgt. Shaunron Lee

As a senior noncommissioned officer in the Army Reserve, I realized there has been an armchair quarterback mentality when it comes to soldiering and military leadership within the ranks.

Armchair quarterbacks are leaders who offer their advice on issues in which they are not — or prefer to not be — involved.

This scenario, among others, lays the issues within the NCO Corps. These issues are the weakened mortar between the bricks that are holding the bridge together. Bridging the basics to me is very BASIC: Building a Strong, Intuitive, Comprehensive Soldier.

Last year, I read an article by Kermit D. Johnson, “Ethical Issues of Military Leadership,” from 1974, which states two dangerous areas that create inefficiencies between the ranks: “ethical relativism” and “loyalty syndrome.”

Ethical relativism is a strong notion that nothing is impartially right or wrong, and the definition of right or wrong lies within the Soldier’s personal views or cultural background.

Loyalty syndrome is when a Soldier gives a superfluous amount of loyalty to his superior, whether he or she is right or wrong.

Johnson’s article mirrors my belief on the slow deterioration of basic soldiering, mentorship, military and civilian education, and military leadership in the Army, especially when it comes to enlisted Soldiers. These two elements are the Achilles Heel that creates blurred lines between right and wrong.

One example of this quandary is leaders blatantly carrying out orders in support of their chain of command. Here is an example: The rater is “directed” to change his comments on an NCO Evaluation Report or to write negative counseling statements in lieu of the chain of command’s feelings about the affected Soldier. This scenario does not help the cause of the NCO Corps.

So, how do we build a strong, intuitive, comprehensive Soldier? The easy answer is to change the mindset of “we’ve always done it this way.”

As NCOs, we must break free from our learned lackadaisical attitudes that limit basic soldiering, mentorship and military leadership within the ranks. Eradicating listlessness will aid in promoting better Army leaders, place the focus on military and civilian education, and dispel the two elements of ethical relativism and loyalty syndrome that promote weakness.

This weakness is not just within the Army ranks, but the military as a whole. Ethical relativism and loyalty syndrome subconsciously give birth to apathy and creates inefficient, disorganized leaders.

All Soldiers require the best training and military leadership to set them and the Army up for success. Building a strong, intuitive, comprehensive Soldier is not just finding the Soldier’s innate ability to bridge the gap to effectiveness, but his or her ability to sustain mortar between the bricks that makes our NCO Corps unshakable.

Building a strong, intuitive, comprehensive Soldier helps him or her promote leadership within self, therefore changing the status quo and promoting Army Values.

‘Ready and Able’ Battalion welcomes new leader

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Joseph Vine

FORT SHAFER FLATS — Lt. Col. Dragomir Marinkovich took command of the 411th Engineer Battalion, 9th Mission Support Command, from outgoing commander Lt. Col. Samuel Membrere, during a ceremony, here, May 18.

Pacific Army Reserve Soldiers, family members, retirees and guests gathered for the ceremony presided over by Brig. Gen. John Cardwell, commander, 9th MSC.

The unit colors were passed from Membrere to Marinkovich.

Marinkovich, a prior enlisted Soldier with 25 years of service, spoke with nostalgia after he took command of the battalion.

“I remember my first battalion formation,” he said. “I was a private first class, and it was a very humbling experience for me.”

“Fast forward 25 years, and I am equally humbled to be given the opportunity to command the 411th Eng. Bn. Not only am I humbled, but also honored to be selected to lead a battalion with such a long history of success. I am honored to be given the opportunity to continue those successes and to forage new ones.”

Cardwell welcomed Marinkovich and his family to the 411th Eng. Bn. and the 9th MSC.

“Soldiers of the 411th,” Cardwell exclaimed, “you are gaining one heck of a commander. Lt. Col. Marinkovich is a combat proven leader and a great engineer. He has excelled in leadership positions as a platoon leader, executive officer, company commander and operations officer.”

Marinkovich has served on five overseas training missions and one deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom during his Army Reserve career. He holds a bachelor’s, master’s and doctorate degrees in mechanical engineering, and currently serves as an associate dean in the School of Technology and Applied Sciences at the Milwaukee Area Technical College. He also holds a total of 13 patents.

Cardwell charged Marinkovich for the well-being of the Soldiers in the 411th Eng. Bn.

“Take care of their needs, train them for the challenges ahead and continue to build on their great legacy,” he said. “For everything we do, it is all about these great Soldiers, for it is upon their deeds that all of us as leaders must depend for our success.”

Marinkovich commended his predecessor during the ceremony, acknowledging that he had some very big shoes to fill. He congratulated Membrere on a job well done during his three-year stint as commander. Membrere will continue to serve in the Pacific Army Reserve and was recently selected to attend the resident U.S. Army War College at Carlisle Barracks, Pa.



Lt. Col. Dragomir Marinkovich (left), incoming commander, 411th Eng. Bn., 9th MSC, accepts the command colors from Brig. Gen. John Cardwell, commander, 9th MSC, during a change of command ceremony, May 18.

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