



The National Board of the **ROCKS**, Incorporated



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Chairman's Message



I would like to take this opportunity to wish each and every one of you a MERRY CHRISTMAS and a HAPPY NEW YEAR!!! Please carve out some quality time to spend with family and friends and reflect on the goodness that surrounds you. We have indeed been blessed this past year and look forward to the New Year with great anticipation of an even greater future. All this will be made possible through your continued commitment and focused energy toward self-growth and that of your contemporaries and those whom you lead.

We are delighted that this edition of the Rocket features some great articles on the General's Milley's speech on Readiness at the AUSA Eisenhower Luncheon, Leadership by General Perna and on Mentorship by Major General Hughes. These articles provide exceptional insight on these three topics. We greatly appreciate receiving information on the state and future of our Army as well as the time these two great leaders took to enhanced our awareness on these three topics. Additionally, you will also find an article on corrective training. We hope you find these topics beneficial. We would like your feedback and suggestions on future topics you would like to see.

Once again we were delighted to be a part of the 2017 Army Leadership/ROTC Cadet Mentorship Forum. The reception portion of the program afforded the Cadets an opportunity to meet and talk with senior leaders of the Army Staff in an informal setting. The program then moved to the panel discussion phase, where we and the ROTC cadets assembled were treated to remarks by the Acting Secretary of the Army and insights from senior members of the Army staff. See more on the program in this edition. I would like to provide a special shout out to LTC Archie Smith and the entire Howard University ROTC Staff for their exceptional planning and execution of this program.

I would also strongly encourage you to check out some of our suggested great reads in this edition. One of these great reads is a book that was recommended by MG Smith, the Deputy Inspector General in our Fall Edition and then General Milley mentioned the Secretary of Defense stated all leaders need to read this book as it address why Readiness is so vitally important.

Several items I would like to update you on and we continue making progress. We have finalized and published our Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives. I congratulate Ms. Delores and our entire team for their tremendous effort on this initiative. In addition, I like to extend a warm welcome to Chaplain Keys as he joins our National Board. Please read his Christmas message and his touching story on why your time is one of the greatest gifts you can give.

We continue our collaboration with AUSA. Our most recent session was with their marketing team which resulted in the introduction to tools and incentives for membership growth. Our access to these tools will greatly facilitate our recruitment for new members. These tools will be made available on a redesigned ROCKS website which we will launch in the spring. We fully expect our relationship in areas like this and others will continue to flourish.

Mark your calendars and make plans to attend our Training Conference and Spring Gala 20-21, April 2018. The training conference will be both engaging and informative. Also make plans to join us at the Spring Gala as we award scholarships to those who have demonstrated academic excellence and recognize individuals who are outstanding servant-leaders.

I close by asking for your prayers for all our Soldiers in harm's way and supporting hurricane relief efforts here at home and the Caribbean for their safe return home and to their loved ones.

Again, I wish you and your families A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!!

Earl Simms
BG USA (Ret.)
Chairman

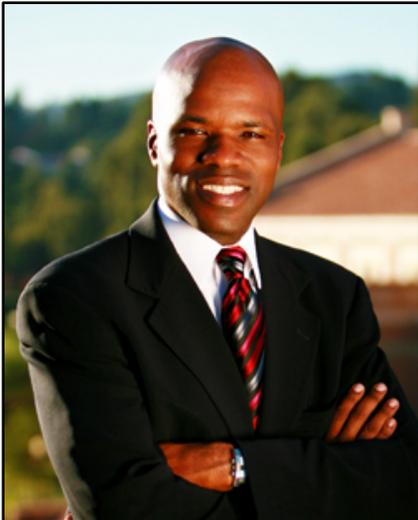


LTG(R) Arthur Gregg and LTG(R) Julius Becton at the 2012 ROCKS Leadership & Training Conference

THE ROCKS, INC.
BIENNEAL LEADERSHIP & TRAINING
CONFERENCE
APRIL 20-21, 2018
STAY TUNED FOR MORE DETAILS

Holiday Message from the National ROCKS Chaplain

The Greatest Gift You Can Give Someone Is Your Time



In 1973, I took time out of my busy third grade school schedule and made my grandmother, Sweetie Pie, a ceramic angel for Christmas. It was perhaps the most unattractive looking angel this side of heaven. Her hairline and wings were uneven and I neglected to give her a pair of eyes. Despite the imperfections of my angel I was, very proud of her. Family members strongly encouraged me not to give it to my grandmother but I held my ground and gave it to her anyway.

On Christmas day, Sweetie Pie slowly opened the gift and like a Soldier I stood at attention eagerly awaiting her response. When she saw the angel her eyes lit up like a bright morning star. "Oh my Lord, it's so beautiful. I'm going to put it in my china cabinet with the rest of my things." she said. For years my angel found a permanent resting place in her china cabinet amongst the other expensive cups, plates and dishes.

In retrospect, I now realize that for Sweetie Pie it was never really about

the value or quality of the gift. Instead, she realized that for two weeks I had devoted much time and effort to this project and that's what she really appreciated. Like Rick Warren, author of *The Purpose Driven Life*, I have come to discover that time is your most precious gift because you only have a set amount of it. You can make more money and more friends, but you can't make more time. That's why the greatest gift you can give someone is your time.

Two thousand years ago, Jesus, because there was no room for his parents in the inn, was born in a stable surrounded by farm animals. According to the book of Matthew (2:1-12), The Three Wise Men took the time to journey from the East, probably Persia or Arabia, to Bethlehem to present baby Jesus with gold, frankincense and myrrh. Whether these men were kings or astrologist, each one interrupted their daily routine to offer a gesture of love and support to a happy and yet troubled family.

While the holiday season may bring joy to some, this year far too many others are experiencing a different reality. Crowded clothing banks, soup

kitchens, and shelters remind me that there are still thousands of families who will not have a Merry Christmas or a happy New Year due to economic challenges.



Each of us knows someone who has lost a job, a house or even a spouse. Many military families will be without their loved ones — some serving in a distant land, others lost to the heavens. This holiday season, if you see a fellow American in need, reach out.

As I learned from Dr. Evans Crawford, a former professor at Howard University School of Divinity, as life unfolds, every day will not be full of sunshine; some will be dark and cloudy. But if we "count blessings," we'll discover, in time, that the good days will soon outnumber the bad.

In 2018, I pray that our political leaders and business executives use their time wisely and develop concrete strategies to make life better for the least of these.

And I pray that my fellow Americans remember the best gift we can give to others is more of our time. Sweetie Pie understood this lesson. No doubt, when these lessons becomes apparent to others, heavenly angels will smile once again on those troubled families...Keep the faith!

MAJ(P) James D. Key is a U.S. Army Chaplain at Fort Drum, NY. He is the author of *Touch and Go: From the Streets of South Central Los Angeles to the War in Iraq*.



TOP STORIES

CSA's Address at the Eisenhower Luncheon: If You Want Peace, Prepare for War

by Karen M. Wrancher



The 39th Chief of Staff of the Army (CSA), General Mark A. Milley delivered his address at the AUSA Eisenhower Luncheon on October 10, 2016. He thanked leaders: then Acting Secretary of the Army, Secretary McCarthy, former Secretaries of the Army, former Chiefs of Staff, former Sergeants Majors of the Army and the veterans in the audience acknowledging their accomplishments stating, "Today's Army appreciates your leadership over many years. We will continue in the footsteps you have put before us, we know full well we stand on your shoulders and we promise and commit to you, we will not let you down."

He thanked industry partners stating seven decades ago with General Eisenhower then leading our forces during World War II against Nazi Germany called on General Motors, General Dynamics, General Electric, Ford, Chrysler, Boeing, Lockheed Martin, Springfield Armory, Colt, US Steel and many others that turned automobile plants to tank and truck factories, rolled mountains of munitions off of civilian assembly

lines. We built a ship a day, turned out 300,000 aircraft and 62,000 tanks in a little less than four years. Gen. Milley stated in a very short time the Army was transformed from a hollow shell of only 200,000 Soldiers of the 1930s to a eight million Soldier, fully equipped 91 division, global force that defeated multiple enemies in nine theaters of war simultaneously. The American industry became an Arsenal of Democracy, Freedom's Force which produced equipment not only for the United States but two-thirds of equipment used by our Allies. The Army could not be the most powerful force without the support of industry partners. "Armies do not go war, nations go to war." he exclaimed. The Army fights as a key part of a joint force supported by a strong economy and powerful industrial base.

Gen. Milley acknowledged that while he and the audience were assembled in the ballroom, no one should forget the 182,000 Soldiers supporting combatant commander requirements worldwide in 140 countries. He also spoke of the 135,000 Soldiers who supported fellow citizens with hurricane recovery efforts in Texas, Louisiana, Florida, Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico as well as the shooting incident and the senseless mass murder in Las Vegas. He also recognized police, EMTs, doctors, nurses, firefighters, law enforcement, and first responders stating, "Our first responders are our first line of defense in all of our communities and they all deserve our total respect and support."

He stated Combat Readiness is our #1 priority and that will not change. The need for readiness has only become more apparent and more urgent. Gen. Milley outlined the reasons why we must remain ready. He said we must be ready because the global order over the last seven decades since the end of World War II had come under increasing stress. The world has become increasingly, more complex, more unstable and more dangerous as our Nation faces many security challenges around the globe. These challenges were likely to get more difficult before they get better. The

CSA then talked about the existing threats to our Nation and how we must strive to maintain readiness.



General Mark Milley at the Pacific Armies Chiefs Conference in September 2017.

In Europe, the adversary we face has increased its capabilities through modernization efforts and demonstrated their aggressive actions over the last decade. We can avoid open conflict only if we remain and maintain a robust combat capable deterrent posture against to prevent any further aggression. In Asia, we see a nation rapidly modernizing its military, steady trying increase its capability in an effort to be dominant regional power and a global coequal with the United States. Both countries he asserted have been studying our strengths and weakness, trying to exploit our vulnerabilities and steadily closing the capability gaps we have long enjoyed. Both openly challenged us in the gray zones of competition just below the level of war. He then went on to state in the Middle East there is a group trying to be regional hegemon seeking to overthrow the existing political order and to undermine key US interests using asymmetrical means. The Army will continue to fight terrorism working by, with and through its coalition partners. He emphasized that measures need to be taken to reverse the trends (losing our competitive edge and closing the capability gap) or we, the United States will be enablers, ushering in a much different more insecure world for the American people. Gen. Milley stated the US Army's #1 task is to remain ready for war and it has never been more important.

Continued on page 24

Recommended by MG Les Smith as a Great Read in Fall Edition
Mentioned by GEN Mark A. Milley at AUSA Eisenhower Luncheon

“Reveals the brave souls who have to bleed and die for mistakes made. A timely reissue of a military classic.” —Gen. Colin L. Powell

T. R. FEHRENBACH

THIS KIND OF WAR

THE CLASSIC MILITARY HISTORY OF
THE KOREAN WAR



“A nation that does not prepare for all the forms of war should then renounce the use of war in national policy. A people that does not prepare to fight should then be morally prepared to surrender. To fail to prepare soldiers and citizens for limited, bloody ground action, and then to engage in it, is folly verging on the criminal.”

- Quote from *This Kind of War*



GREAT READS FROM GREAT LEADERS

A great book engages you and provokes thought. Give the gift of reading, a book which is a great read to a friend, a loved one or just treat yourself during this holiday season. Some favorites from some senior leaders are:

We Were Soldiers Once...and Young by LTG(R) Harold Moore because he demonstrates the best example of a leader of character, commitment, and competence in combat, garrison, and life.

- General Gus Perna
Commanding General
US Army Materiel Command

Leaders Leader Eat Last! by Simon Sinek because leadership is about having moral character and sacrificing self for the better – ment of others and humanity!

- LTG Stephen Twitty
Commanding General
First Army, Rock Island Arsenal, IL

Hidden Heroism: Black Soldiers in America's Wars by Robert B. Edgerton. It reviews battles as far back as the American Revolution and follows Black Soldiers serving with distinction through WWI and beyond. A theme throughout (in my opinion) was that Black soldiers, despite challenges fueled by segregation and unequal treatment, fought with a sense of patriotism and purpose that debunked myths of inferiority.

- MG Gary Brito
Commanding General
Joint Readiness Training Ctr & Fort Polk

*Write to be
understood,
speak to be
heard,
READ TO
GROW.*

— Laurence Clark Powell

Leadership = Commitment, Competency, Character

*Submitted by Gen. Gus Perna,
Commanding General, Army Materiel
Command*



General Perna speaking about balance during the AUSA Exposition.

To hear the full interview visit our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/rocksinc>.

With the tremendous responsibility of leading Soldiers, the important traits of leadership leave no room for indifference. Commitment, competency, and character are all equally essential as we prepare our Soldiers to face unknown and upcoming challenges. These three “Cs” are the fundamentals I stress, whether I am addressing young leaders or reminding seasoned leaders of what it takes to be successful in our profession.

Commitment

Commitment comes early on, as we raise our right hand and take the oath to protect and defend the Constitution of the United States. That oath is a pledge to your team and your country. I have personally experienced – and watched others experience – that sense of commitment deepen as we come to fully understand the sacrifices required. Unwavering dedication creates the drive and determination needed to accomplish your critical responsibilities: Taking care of Soldiers and people; training and preparing for war; and leading Soldiers in war.

From our initial commitment stems a desire to serve others. We answered that noble calling that puts others first. Leaders must honor their commitment

to serve – their Soldiers, the Army, and the Nation.

Competency

Competency is a critical component of leadership, especially given the nature of our business.

- Because we bear the responsibility of training and leading Soldiers into combat, we must be proficient in our tasks.
- We gain that competence through education, training, and assessment. Time and again, Soldiers who perform heroically in the face of dire situations say, “My training kicked in.” That’s the intent and the proof that our training cannot be underemphasized.
- Our competency generates expertise.
- We grow leaders by sharing information and helping others find their own answers. Recognize those who challenge your own skillsets and lean on them as subject matter experts. They will be the ones who advise and inform our critical decisions.
- Challenge yourself throughout your career. You will experience the most growth when you are professionally uncomfortable and tested.

Character

A leader’s character will define them. The responsibility we have to our Soldiers and country requires our character to be beyond reproach. We are held to higher standards as Soldiers and professionals – guardians of our nation’s freedom.

Strong character always begins with trust and integrity. A leader’s first task is to establish trust. But trust goes up and down the chain of command, and as a rule, I trust others in this profession until or unless I have a reason not to. Integrity does not have to be difficult; it’s about right and wrong. Leaders must always take the hard right over the easy wrong.

Make no mistake, the Army is a profession and our people are professionals. As stewards of our profession we understand that commitment, competency, and

character are the bedrock of our foundation. We build upon that, with our service to others, expertise, and gaining trust.

We are all part of a great team and we have an awesome opportunity to continue to carry this profession forward. I challenge you to think bigger than yourselves and your own organizations while embracing the traits that earn us the trust of America’s sons and daughters and our nation.



Major General Hughes on Mentorship

*Written by LTC Chris Belcher and
Kathryn Fuller, USACC PAO*



Conventional wisdom and behavioral studies have long been advocates of mentoring. Still, future Army officers and presently-serving young officers sometimes choose to forego a mentor. Sometimes, experienced Army officers choose to pass on mentoring opportunities. In both cases, the chance to make an Army officer more ready to meet the challenges of leadership is lost.

With this in mind, Cadet Command Public Affairs sat down with Maj. Gen. Christopher Hughes, commanding general of U.S. Army Cadet Command, to get his thoughts and perspectives on mentorship. As the commander of the

Army Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC), Maj. Gen. Hughes understands the importance of Army leaders using their experience to mentor future Army officers into better leaders.

USACC PAO: Sir, you often talk about the importance of mentorship with Army and civilian leaders and ROTC cadre and cadets. What makes it so important?

MG Hughes: It's the foundation of leadership. I find it counter intuitive that people in positions of authority would pass on the responsibility to mentor those who are in their charge. When I hear leaders say, "I didn't have time to mentor," my first instinct is to disagree. It is not a matter of inconvenience to mentor others, it is a matter of necessity. Mentorship is an organic element of leadership. You cannot do one without doing the other, and you cannot become one without having been a recipient of the other.

USACC PAO: What behaviors or best practices support mentorship?

MG Hughes: First, humility. As a general officer, I've been told the opposite of what I believe: "Do not tell personal stories. Do not publicly admit mistakes. Do not place yourself in a position to be vulnerable to those you lead." Again, I think every one of those is incorrect. I think the best way to be a mentor is to explain that I've been there and I've made mistakes and I learned from them and persevered. Such admissions create empathy, which is elemental to mentorship and leadership.



MG Hughes, Commanding General US Army Cadet Command & Fort Knox at Fort Leavenworth opening the 2017 George C. Marshall Seminar.

As an empathetic leader, I want to help others through the same processes I struggled through. I have to be able to relate to them by saying, "I've had that happen to me before. Don't be so upset; it's not that big of a deal. Here's 14 ways to solve the problem that you think is not solvable." That element of empathy is critical to developing confidence and self-assurance in others.

Another best practice is to get out and see people so you understand the conditions in which they're working, operating or maneuvering. I cannot mentor from behind a desk. I can do some mentorship on a computer - I can vote somebody's file or I can give them advice. But it's not as valuable as being able to do it one-on-one, using the totality of emotional and social intelligence. I have found that people will always tell me they're fine but their non-verbal's tell me otherwise. Wandering around will tell me when something isn't right or isn't being done right. Remember, mentorship isn't always a nice warm fuzzy moment of putting an arm around somebody and walking into the woods and having a long conversation about contemplating the reality of life. Sometimes it's, "Hey you're not doing what I told you to do, and let me *again* tell you *why* I want you to do it." Putting a mentee back on the right path is critical to their development, but it's hard to do that unless I get out there and physically watch them perform.

USACC PAO: Sir, you've talked a lot about why and how Army officers can be better mentors, but what about the mentee? How does a young officer or cadet find a mentor?

MG Hughes: If you don't have a mentor, then you are not developing into the kind of leader the Army needs, in my opinion. People are naturally influenced by the environment in which they grew up. No matter where you came from or what walk of life, you're going to bring your own personal biases with you into an Army--we need you to shed any negative biases. We want young officers unhindered by personal, regional, and

familial biases that prevent them from assimilating into our organization and adopt our values. Understand, I'm not disparaging anybody's background; what I'm saying is that I don't think there's a parent out there that would be opposed to their child adopting the Army values. We epitomize everything the U.S. Constitution was designed to create in this country, so what I mean is this: "Welcome to one of the greatest teams in the Nation."



MG Hughes pictured with LTG Stephen M. Twitty, Commanding General of 1st Army during Hall of Fame induction ceremony for distinguished ROTC alumni.

Young officers and cadets should have a variety of mentors. Some of these mentors should be symmetrical: they look like you, talk like you and have similar backgrounds. This is good, because someone who has already walked the walk can help provide options that worked for them and may possibly work for you.

But to grow, to improve and to become the kind of leader our Army needs, young officers and Cadets have to look outside of what's familiar, what's comfortable. You have to find mentors who are asymmetric to your view of the world. You need to find a mentor of a different religion, different gender, different age, different profession, or different racial background or nationality. You need to find somebody with opposing and diametrically opposite views from you. These mentors will help you to see things from various perspectives, and such mentorship will broaden your ability to successfully solve complex problems

and better interact and identify with others—making *you* a better leader. The older mentors I’ve had have always beat me up about my lack of knowledge with history. So I’ve now become a history buff, and I’m a better leader because of it. My younger mentors, like my aide-de-camp, talk to me about what motivates young men and women today and why political correctness is important to his generation. His mentorship is important to me, and it’s also made me a better leader. And that’s the key about mentorship: it doesn’t naturally have to be someone who’s older than you. It can be a peer or sibling or someone who is much older or far younger than you—as long as it makes you a better leader.

Most importantly, you have to find a mentor who inspires you, who exhibits the traits you want to emulate--*and then* you need to pay attention to others who make your blood boil and upset your utopian view of leadership...much can be learned by observing a person you might consider a bad leader. Young officers and cadets will learn advanced leadership skills quicker when they have multiple mentors from all walks of life who look completely different and talk different and in some cases have different value sets than their own. That really gets after a future young leader’s ability to understand all sides of an issue or the true complexity of any given problem. USACC PAO: Sir, do you have anything you’d like to add?

MG Hughes: Yes...Just this—if you’re a leader, go mentor others; if you’re a young officer or Cadet, seek and find mentors. If they help you, then you’ve chosen wisely, if they don’t, then you’ve learned something about that leader that you didn’t know and you should adjust accordingly. Good Luck.



Understanding the Army’s Policy on Corrective Training

by *Dustin Perry, U.S. Army Inspector General Agency*



Corrective training is an effective tool all Army leaders can use to correct minor deficiencies during the course of their daily duties. When used correctly and fairly, corrective training allows everyone, from the most junior Army leader to the most seasoned general officer, to help teach their fellow Soldiers “what right looks like” and correct a deficiency. However, company commanders must ensure that all corrective training conducted in their unit is in accordance with Army Regulation (AR) 600-20 (Army Command Policy, 6 November 2014.)

One of the most effective administrative corrective measures is extra corrective training or instruction (including on-the-spot correction). For example, if a Soldier appears in an improper uniform, a leader may require them to correct it immediately; if a Soldier fails to properly maintain their

accommodations, a leader can require they immediately undertake corrective actions. If a leader believes a simple on-the-spot correction will not be adequately address a deficiency, they may require the Soldier to undergo additional corrective training directly related to the shortcoming. Soldiers can be required to attend corrective training and take corrective actions after normal duty hours, but such activities should only continue until the leader believes the Soldier has overcome the training deficiency or has adequately applied the appropriate corrective measures.

Leaders at all levels must ensure that they and their subordinates do not use corrective training in an oppressive manner (e.g., 30 minutes of intense physical training after final formation is not considered appropriate corrective training for littering in the company area) or to evade the procedural safeguards applying to imposing non-judicial punishment. Commanders who encourage or tolerate improper corrective training within their unit are in violation of AR 600-20 and can be subject to allegations of regulatory misconduct. Company commanders should have an active plan to monitor corrective training within their company and make it very clear to both their subordinate leaders and Soldiers that improper corrective training will not be tolerated. Army leaders are encouraged to refer to AR 600-20 or contact their local IG if they have any questions related to the proper use of corrective training.

SAVE THE DATE

2018 Spring Gala & Awards Ceremony

Saturday, April 21, 2018

Early Bird Registration Begins in January 2018



Pictured: GEN(R) Via, GEN(R) Austin, LTG(R) Austin, LTG(R) Becton, BG(R) Adams-Ender, GEN Milley, GEN(R) Wilson, GEN(R) Ellis, LTG(R) Ward at the 2017 Spring Gala

National Board of The ROCKS, Inc. Mentorship Program

Written by

COL (Ret) Austin D. Bell III, USA
VP, Mentorship



Notes from the Mentorship Corner

Hopefully, Chapters/Interest Groups have established or close to establishing your respective mentorship programs. To assist you in this important endeavor, I will continue to provide short informational tutorials to help you achieve success. This edition of mentorship notes provides tips to lead to positive mentoring outcomes.

Tips for Positive Mentoring Outcomes

1. Know what is mentoring and what it looks like. The biggest mistake that new mentors/mentees make is diving in without having any understanding of what mentoring is—and what it's not.

- Mentors/mentees know the ROCKS, Inc's mission and vision.
- The Mentorship Program and related resources are located at Rocksinc.org under the mentorship section.
- Review the previous editions of the ROCKET's Mentorship Corner for more tips. be successful.

2. Set goals and expectations right away. During the first meeting, mentors/mentees should discuss goals for the relationship. The mentor should lead this discussion. Sample questions

can include in what ways does the mentee want to grow and transform? Is this achievable, given the timeframe? Or should the mentee whittle down his or her list? It's best to set reasonable goals. Mentors/mentees should also discuss other details such as when and where they'll meet, how they will confirm meetings and cancellation protocol.



3. Communication, communication, communication. The key to any good relationship is effective communication. But effective communication goes beyond the face-to-face meetings between mentors and mentees. It includes emails, texts, voice mails. Always be clear and professional and avoid passive aggressive behavior. For example, don't complain to a friend about your mentor/mentee. If there's an issue, confront it head on with the other person. Another point: it's important that mentors/mentees communicate with their respective mentorship program POCs through good times and challenging times alike. And program POCs should take a proactive approach, meaning they should reach out to mentors/mentees on a regular basis.

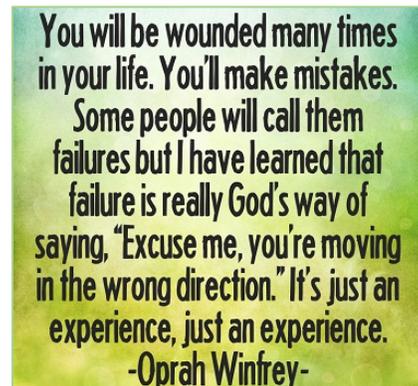
4. Conduct regular check-ins. For successful mentorship relationship, mentors/mentees should meet regularly. During those meetings, mentoring happens. Remember, to take time to evaluate where they are, what's going well, and what they can improve. Take time to conduct "check-ins" (loop in the program POC as well). Recommend doing check-ins at 90 days, six months, and nine month intervals.

5. Make adjustments, as needed. What you decide at the outset of your

mentoring relationship will likely change over time. That's OK (provided both parties agree). In fact, it's quite common to make adjustments after the check-in meetings.

6. Avoid comparisons. You can certainly borrow ideas from other mentors/mentees when/if they share their experiences. But remember: your dynamic is going to be different, simply because you and your partner are different from other pairs. And that's OK. Focus on your relationship and getting the most out of it. Don't worry about what other people are doing.

7. Promptly resolve issues. When two people work closely together over the course of 9-12 months, issues and challenges can come up. This isn't a bad thing; it's simply life. But if no one addresses the issues? THEN the real problems begin. So, if something comes up, address it right away. If you're uncomfortable doing so, reach out to your program POC for guidance (that's what he or she is there for).



News from Your Membership Development Team

By COL Angie Hemingway USA (Ret)



Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays to our ROCKS members and friends. Membership Development conducted a membership survey of our members in October through November 2017. Conducting the survey was eye-opening. It made me wonder what does membership mean to each of you? Are we just a group of card-carrying people who want our names associated to an organization without commitment or do we want to be “that person” who is a recognized mentor?

The National ROCKS Membership Survey was 15 multiple-choice questions. It took an average of seven minutes to complete. All local ROCKS Chapter members were surveyed as well as the Interest Groups who had members listed. The survey was conducted by email but our email addresses and other data is not current. Chapter Presidents, this is a great job for your membership chair. At the beginning of the meetings, members should sign in and update current information

Based on the initial results of the survey, it appears we may be card carrying members. Based on the response, 39% of those completing the survey fall in the Generation X (born 1965-1979) category followed by: 32% Baby Boomers (born 1946-1964),

individuals born 1945 or earlier, and Millennials (born 1980 to 1995). At this time, no Generation Z (born 1996 or later) responded. Analysis of the data is still underway. Let’s look at some of the preliminary findings. A summary of the survey response and a way ahead will be presented later.

The survey goal is to ensure The ROCKS’ Strategic Plan is on track and working. Membership Development is actively working to recruit and retain members. We want to know the best way to communicate with you. We cannot build a relationship and dedication in our organization without communication. While 81% of those taking the survey use Facebook, 65% LinkedIn, 57% YouTube and 34% Twitter/Google+, without a doubt, 100% of you taking the survey indicated you preferred email communication and 13% also want snail mail. You also stated a welcome email is important for onboarding or engaging new members who join ROCKS. The top reasons for joining The ROCKS, Inc. included:

- Networking with others in the military - (83%),
- Access to specialized and or current information about the military - (38%),
- To support the ROCKS - (69%)
- To mentor others - (55%).

Members have supported The ROCKS by attending events, local chapter meetings and reading/ responding to information in The ROCKET. As found in the survey, ROCKS’ biggest challenge in growing membership (69%) is the difficulty of communicating our message, that “ROCKS is a mentorship organization”. Many of you think we have some challenges attracting and maintaining younger members (48%) however, 79% of you responding to the survey are mentoring someone, and you as well are also being mentored (52%).

We have steep challenges in our way ahead. Our members recognize The ROCKS as a super organization with a

proud legacy who has always risen to the challenge. I too am confident we will rise to the challenge of addressing our membership concerns. Thanks for the honor to serve you. Blessings during the Holiday Season. If you have any questions, email me at angiehemingway@hotmail.com.



Pay Grade	Prorated December Dues
04 & Above GS13 & Above WO4 & Above	\$43.50
03 & Below GS12 WO3 & Below	\$24.75
Cadet	\$15.00



The ROCK'S Reframing, Reinvigoration, and Renewal

Written by

Ms. Karen M. Wrancher
VP, Communications & Publications



With the holiday season upon us, once we complete enjoying our time with loved ones and connecting with friends, we often start the New Year reflecting. We reflect on the year that just passed and sometimes we also assess and evaluate what areas of our lives we can improve in the next year that lays ahead of us. This year our ROCKS' community lost some great supporters, individuals who touched our lives whether we know it or not by making an impact in our military and an indelible mark in history. Individuals like Lt. Gen. Andrew Chambers, Lt. Gen. Emmett Paige, Maj. Gen. Harry Brooks and ROCKS Chartering Member, Colonel Clarence Barrens were trailblazers, opening doors for us in the military community and making the road we travel a bit easier. We are the benefactors of their hard work, sweat and toil. Yet there are still challenges that lay before us in a world marked with uncertainty, turbulence and volatility, domestically and internationally.

It was this year with the passing of two cousins who were loved by all the members of family and departed too soon, that I found myself deeply saddened but also evaluating my own life, path, and purpose. As result, I mourned, withdrew and just took time... to think. These losses made me pause and engage in introspection to think and reflect, how am I honoring their legacy on a personal level and on a professional level how do I continue to engage in service? How do I do my part to help with this organization, the

ROCKS Incorporated in being viable another four decades from now? What are some goals and objectives that will support our current operational environment? After observing, looking, listening, asking questions and soliciting opinions, I arrived at a starting point for the way forward:

1. Engage in reframing what individuals think of the ROCKS. Some individuals who have not taken the time to learn about the ROCKS, think it is an organization just for African American Officers. It is an organization that is here to serve a diverse population and support anyone who is hungry for knowledge and wishes to pursue excellence in their respective career field. The ROCKS do this by facilitating, executing and supporting events and platforms that mentor Soldiers and DA Civilians. Subsequently, we are partnering with AUSA and trying to improve the media platforms was used to disseminate that message.

2. Reinvigoration. There is a movement within the ROCKS, where we are defining what our strategic goals are and like the Army and successful corporations, we are the defining that path by identifying the ways, means and ends on how we will achieve our vision and bring it to fruition. The tangible outline of our vision is laid out in our strategic plan which is a living document as BG(R) Simms mentioned a few times during our National Board meeting this summer. Now the task is to put the energy and effort into making those concepts and objectives outlined in that document work. That takes time, reaching out to chapters and members to ensure they know about the strategic plan but more importantly, the resources and information is readily available to chapters and interest groups supporting ensuring success.

3. Renewal. That all sounds good but a vision is just a languishing, dying dream without placing the proper work, energy, intellect and human capital behind it. Consequently, we are moving forward building on the

foundation of the giants that came before us. We are leaning forward to finds ways to reconnect with our chapters, strengthen existing connections and to continue to serve a multigenerational population. We are going to redesign the ROCKS website and it will be launched this Spring; a new look unveiled during the season which is often associated with renewal. When we are done it will have a location to get templates for certificates, letters, event planning timeline and tips. In addition, it will have another area will serve as a repository of our most much engaging interviews and an area establishing links to all ROCKS chapters' landing pages or websites.

It is with great anticipation and excitement, I look forward to the New Year which holds the promise of change, renewal, reinvigoration and growth. It begins anew for all of us in January. January which comes from the Janus, the ancient Roman god of beginnings, transitions, doorways, passages and endings who is depicted having a head with two faces, one looking to past and one looking to future. A new year ushers in the possibility or promise of starting over or moving closer to your vision/plan for the future. Please join us and help us we reframe, reinvigorate and renew our vision for the ROCKS. Allow it to be a part of your vision and plan in the New Year by joining a chapter adding your gifts and talents to mentor and develop the next generation of leaders.

Ms. Wrancher is a Colonel serving as a Branch Chief in the Investigations Division of the US Army Inspector General Agency in the Pentagon.

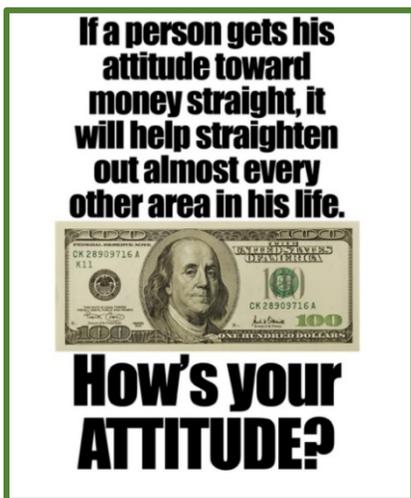


Guiding Your Investments – Three Fundamental Principles

By Col. (R) Mark D. Troutman and W. Kirk Taylor

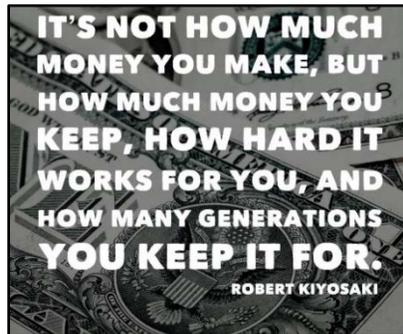
Good leaders know that strong systems are built on the application of fundamental principles. A system for managing your finances to achieve long term goals follows the same pattern – basic principles applied over time lead to great results. Your plan starts by using the predictability of your compensation to make a budget that meets your expenses and provides for savings. The first destination for your savings should be an emergency fund that protects you against unexpected expenses. Once you have taken inventory, created a budget and established an emergency fund, your savings can go toward an investment portfolio that serves your long-term objectives.

Many people think the process of investing is too complicated or that it takes place in a grand casino where participants “play the markets.” Either view could not be further from the truth. The process for constructing a sound investment portfolio is something you can and should understand. Knowledge of a few fundamental steps can guide you toward a portfolio that will support your long-term objectives.



First, building wealth requires that you make the principle of compound interest work for you. Albert Einstein

once identified compound interest as the “...eighth wonder of the world; he who understands it earns it...” Applied skillfully, the compound interest effect can make seemingly small differences in returns equal large sums over time. For instance, if you were to invest \$1,000 at 5% interest for ten years, compound interest would turn that initial investment into \$1,629. If you were to find a better investment opportunity that returned 6%, your investment would be worth \$1,791, almost 10% more.

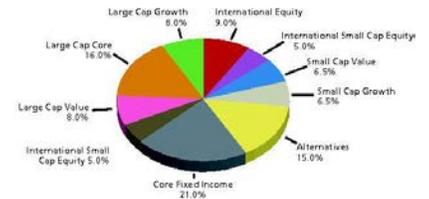


Now apply those small differences to a \$10,000 sum invested each year for a decade. Your 5% investment leaves you ten years later with \$149,171. The 6% investment option yields \$158,700, \$9,529 more that you can apply towards your long-term goals.

Where can you find these differences? One source is to understand that different asset classes generate different returns over time. One well known source for understanding the total returns of different asset classes over time is the classic reference “Stocks, Bonds, Bills and Inflation,” published yearly by the research firm Ibbotson and Associates. A recent issue cited by Morningstar Research identified the following average yearly returns over the period 1929 – 2015.

This short trip through investing history leads us to a first conclusion – where you invest makes a difference. Professional investors call this choice “asset selection,” and countless studies have established asset selection as the single most important factor that influences your portfolio’s return.

But like most choices leaders face, nothing in this life is free. Higher returns come with a price, the risk that returns will vary greatly from year to year. Cash is the most predictable – think of the interest you receive on a savings account. It’s predictable and in many cases guaranteed, but its return is also low. At the other end of the risk/return spectrum are stocks, with higher returns but also more variability in year to year returns. For example, from 1972-2017, large-cap stocks generated a maximum one-year annual return of 37.45% and a maximum one-year annual loss of 37.04%. During the same period, small stocks had a maximum one year return of 55.13% and a maximum one year loss of 36.07%. Bonds offered a maximum 18.18% one year gain and loss of 2.66%. The takeaway – stocks and bonds can be risky over short periods of time. They have a place in your plan, but not for the short term.



This chart depicts the allocation of investments to diversify one’s portfolio is only a graphic not to be taken as a finance or investment recommendation.

This leads us to a second principle – there is a tradeoff between risk and return. Leaders know that risk is something you can measure and take steps to reduce – you can mitigate risk. Are there steps you can take to reduce risk? Happily, the answer is yes, with a few simple steps.

Follow clear guidelines that place funds you need immediately into lower risk assets, and save funds in more risky assets for goals you can adjust over time. Stated another way, allocate your investments among asset classes to reflect the risk you are willing to bear. Make time and compounding your friends in this journey. Stocks held over ten year periods from 1929 to the present offered a maximum average return of nearly 20% and maximum loss of less than 1%. The two periods

of negative returns occurred during the Great Depression – surely the worst of times. Holding stocks and bonds over longer periods of time reduces your risk, but this principle requires patience and discipline to wait out market swings and an occasional year of negative returns.



This leads to a third principle – always think about risk and take common sense steps such as asset allocation and time to reduce your risk. Save more risky asset choices for long-term goals such as your retirement or a college education for your toddler, and change your asset allocation to something more conservative as goals move closer in time. In any one asset class such as stocks or bonds, hold a broadly diversified portfolio to reduce the risk that bad performance of any one investment will jeopardize your long term plans. Mutual funds or exchange traded funds are low cost, convenient ways to hold a diversified portfolio of stocks or bonds.

Small Stocks	12.0%
Large Stocks	10.0%
Government Bonds	5.6%
Treasury Bills (Cash)	3.4%
Inflation	2.9%

Will you have some risks always present? Yes – the last entry in the table above points out that inflation at 2.9% annually is fairly close to the return on cash. In some years, inflation has run at rates greater than “safe” investments in cash. The risk here is that inflation can reduce the purchasing power of your funds over time. Simply understood, the mere presence of inflation means that the “real” return on small-cap stocks in your portfolio is not really 12.0%, but 9.1%, after

accounting for the impact of inflation. Inflation is like a tax that in some cases can reduce your real earnings to zero.

Cost – the risk that you will pay too much for management – is also ever present. For instance, you could select a diversified large stock fund with an average management fee of 0.65% to represent the stock portion of your portfolio. To achieve the same objective, you could select a low-cost index fund that generates similar performance for a management fee of 0.1%. Think of the example that started this article. Small differences in return can result in thousands of dollars difference in performance. Both inflation and cost can reduce your returns over time. So figure these factors into your choice, to always look for a return over time that guards you against inflation and keep your costs as low as possible. The result – more return, compounded over longer time and more resources for you to use.

So in sum, three principles should guide your investment activity.

- Make compounding work for you and apply it over the long timeframe
- Understand that higher return is “bought” with higher risk – the unpredictable path of returns. Some risks such as inflation and paying too much for your management are always with you.
- Take simple steps to lower your risk. Mix your investments among asset classes; with funds you immediately need going into very safe assets. Use higher return asset such as stocks and bonds for long range goals, and let time work in your favor.

Follow these simple rules with discipline over time and you will be delighted with the results.

Col. (R) Mark D. Troutman, PhD., CFP® serves as the Director, Center for Infrastructure Protection at George Mason University.

W. Kirk Taylor, CFP® is an Executive Vice President at 1st Portfolio Wealth Advisors in Fairfax, VA

Editor’s Note: *The information provided in this article of the financial series is for informational purposes only. The ROCKS, Incorporated makes no guarantees in relation to the information provided in the article or any article in this financial series. You should consult an investment banker or certified financial advisor to determine what is best for your needs. To the maximum legal extent permitted by law, the ROCKS, incorporated disclaims and all liability for opinion and/or recommendations as well as savings and investment choices.*



The Art of the Pivot: Making the Transition from Military to Employee to Entrepreneur

By Ms. Diedre Windsor



Ms. Diedre Windsor, CEO, The Windsor Group

It’s often said Veterans make great Entrepreneurs – I agree.

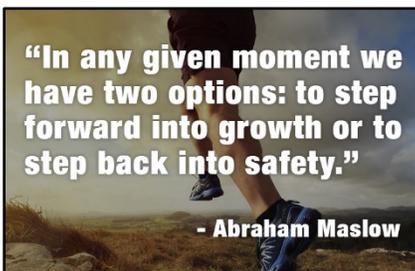
Last year I resigned my position in the career Senior Executive Service to pursue Entrepreneurship full time. It was no doubt a scary proposition. While I knew my military experience had prepared me to lead in most situations, I was keenly aware that, except for a brief foray into real estate,

I had very little experience running a business.

Starting the business was not a hard decision for me as I knew upon retiring from the military in 2009 that entrepreneurship was my goal. But, I was unsure how to get started *and* I lacked the financial stability I thought necessary to launch a business. Add to that I didn't have a concrete business plan, another "must" accordingly to industry experts who "know better".

Well, last year I had an epiphany: There is no perfect time or plan to pursue your dreams. There is just doing it! With that, I started planning my exit strategy from the federal government. Surprisingly, this caused the most angst for those around me who couldn't fathom me leaving my "good government job" for the uncertainty and instability of life as a start-up business owner.

So, I took a leap of faith and bet on myself. I've never been more professionally fulfilled.



By most accounts Windsor Group LLC has enjoyed a successful first year in business. With a focus on government contracting, Windsor Group has landed multiple prime and subcontracts in the areas of Training and IT Support Services, two of its core competency areas. And, one year in – it's still challenging, fun, scary and exciting.

As I reflect on past experiences from which I draw to help me in business, my military and federal government experiences certainly top the list.

There are many qualities, honed in the Military, that make Veterans ripe for

entrepreneurship. Of those my top three are, Integrity, Leadership and Discipline and here's why:

1. *Integrity* is paramount to the success of the business. Keeping in mind that *people do business with people they trust*, in business, your word is your bond. You do the right thing because it's the right thing to do. You bid and price accordingly and you make certain your company can deliver on your promises.

2. *Leadership*, in business, is invaluable. In addition to formulating and communicating the strategic direction of the company, the business leader must also motivate and inspire employees to ensure their dedication and commitment to the mission *and the company*. Great employees are hard to find and harder to keep in a competitive environment. So, business leaders must be able to tell a compelling story about their company.

3. *Discipline*, or, doing what needs to be done whether you feel like it or not, cannot be overstated in business. It requires a great deal of self-awareness, self-direction and self-control, all of which are hallmarks of military service.

Obviously, there are many other qualities synonymous with Military service that transfer well to entrepreneurship. But, right now I'll share a key skill I learned and refined in the civilian sector, which has served me well in both the federal government and in business. This skill, when maximized, is arguably one of the most critical to a growing a business – Networking:

1. *Networking* is a means to forming new relationships to help you grow your business. It's more than shaking hands and collecting business cards. It's making meaningful connections, forming relationships and cultivating those relationships. It's not about the quantity but rather the quality of the connections. The networking process must be very focused and strategic. It sometimes means spending eight hours at a conference to meet one panelist who is a decision maker at the company

to which you want to market and sell your product. Through networking business owners can, among other things, acquire new business leads, identify potential business partners and gain the needed confidence to regularly approach buyers. The right relationship can be potentially transforming for a small business.

I've shared a few of the qualities and skills I think are critical to running a successful small business. I am thankful everyday for my military experiences which certainly prepared me for this new phase of my life. I look forward to what the future holds for Windsor Group LLC as we chart a path for 2018 and beyond.

Diedre Windsor is the President and CEO of Windsor Group LLC based in Maryland. Windsor Group LLC is a Minority and SBA certified Economically Disadvantaged Woman Owned Small Business (EDWOSB) and a CVE certified Service Disabled Veteran Owned Small Business (SDVOSB). Check out Windsor Group LLC on the Worldwide Web at www.windsorgroupllc.net.



Post Military Career Opportunity

Written By COL(R) Lillian A. Dixon



So you're thinking of starting your own business when you leave the Army?

Chances are, if you've thought of striking out on your own and starting a business, somebody has suggested that you buy one. Odds are also good that someone you also know has urged you not to buy a franchise.

Essentially, a franchisee pays an initial fee and ongoing royalties to a

franchisor. In addition to a well-known brand name, buying a franchise offers many other advantages that aren't available to the entrepreneur starting a business from scratch.

Your opportunity to learn more about owning a franchise is right around the corner. Chick Fil A will partner with the ROCKS Inc during the 2018 Leadership and Training Conference from 19 - 21 April 2018. They will deliver a session called "Franchise 101" and will be available to do one-on-one consultations with interested future business owners.

Registration for the Conference will begin in January. So take advantage of your opportunity to join the ranks of business owners across America.

For more information contact:
COL (R) Lillian A. Dixon at bdds_land120@yahoo.com.



Shulkin's 13 Areas For VA Improvement: How Things Are Going



(Photo PAUL J. RICHARDS/AFP/Getty Images)
By Jonathan Kaupanger

Five months ago, VA Secretary David Shulkin gave his assessment of the state of the agency. He found 13 areas where VA needed to improve. These improvements would be a combination of legislative and administrative fixes.

So, what exactly has happened in the last five months?

Accountability

The Veteran Affairs Accountability and Whistleblower Protection Act was signed into law in June. Since then, the

VA has demoted 1,095 employees due to misconduct. 363 people have been suspended for at least 14 days and 57 people were fired. The Adverse Actions report has grown to 56 pages.

The whistleblower side of things has been getting bad press as recent as yesterday. The Washington Post reported that one whistleblower has said that retaliation under the current administration has become worse. An opinion piece in the Washington Examiner, written by a whistleblower, states that the Secretary isn't in a position to pass moral judgement on "other corrupt managers."

It's just too soon to tell if the VA's accountability problems are getting any better.

Staffing

It's estimated that there are about 49,000 open positions that affect veteran care at the VA. In August of this year, a local news station in Denver reported that 65 to 90 surgeries were either canceled or postponed at the Denver VAMC, due to a shortage of anesthesiologists and certified registered nurse anesthetist. VA employees in Salt Lake City held a rally earlier this month to bring attention to the vacant positions all over the country.

Last week, while testifying on Capitol Hill, Shulkin told the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs that Congress gave him the authority to hire 1,000 new mental health professionals. VA hired 900 new workers, but lost 945. During the hearing, the secretary stated that the agency paid nurses \$20 - \$30 thousand less per year than civilian hospitals. The secretary told Congress that legislation needed to change to help with this. Unfortunately, the VA doesn't have a position management system, so the department can't track which jobs are open.

Effort has been made, but nothing seems to be sticking.

Access

Secretary Shulkin describes 2014 as a near death experience for the VA. The Access to Care website at least lets veterans know how long the wait will be at each medical center. Congress, for its part, infused the VA's Choice Program with billions of dollars that is expected to run out by the end of this year.

The VA has proposed a new CARE program to replace the Choice Program, which will do away with the 30 day/40 mile problem, which will hopefully help get more veterans in to see a physician. It will also streamline the agencies seven separate community care programs into one.

There's been quite a bit of work to improve veteran access, it's just too early to tell on this one right now. Paying Providers

A letter was sent to Shulkin on Oct. 2 from healthcare providers in the Commonwealth of Virginia, asking for the more than \$2 million that VA owes to them for services provided to veterans through the Choice Program. One provider said that 227 of 504 claims are more than 120 days without payment. A clinic in the southern part of the state says that over the last year the debt the VA owes them went from \$28 million to \$58 million. One dentist office is owed \$203,000.

The VA's CARE program should take care of this issue. The legislation calls for the VA to pay claims no later than 45 days after receiving them.

The fix is there for this one, it just needs to become law.

Community Care

The VA lost its Deputy Under Secretary for Health for Community Care earlier this month. There's a lot riding on Community Care, the Choice Program being just one. The new CARE program will help simplify this some, but we all just need to hold our breath and wait to see what happens.

Continued on Page 25



Congratulations



to

The top-ranking Army ROTC Cadets who
are Seniors for fiscal year 2018:

1. Michael Orgeron, Louisiana State University
2. Andrew Gomez, University of North Georgia
3. Shane Neal, Michigan State University
4. Joseph Schroer, University of Kansas
5. Bryton Wenzel, University of North Georgia
6. Joseph McConnell, University of Kansas
7. Robert Wiegand, The Citadel
8. Benjamin Nelson, University of North Dakota
9. Ellis Johnson, Dickinson College
10. Cormac O'Halloran, Washington University

from

The ROCKS, Incorporated

The order-of-merit list is compiled based on several criteria, including grade point average, strong performance on the Army Physical Fitness Test, college athletic participation, and performance during college ROTC training and Advanced Camp at Fort Knox, Kentucky.

Cadet Command annually rank-orders its ROTC seniors, with the top 20 percent earning the designation of Distinguished Military Graduate. This year there were 1,102 DMGs out of the 5,536 seniors on the order-of-merit

CADET CORNER

2017 Association of United States Army ROTC Luncheon

by Mr. James "Mike" Maddox



Maj. Gen. Christopher Hughes, commander of U.S. Army Cadet Command and Fort Knox presents a scholarship check to Austen Eberhardt and his mother, Donna, during the AUSA ROTC luncheon held Oct. 9 in Washington, D.C. (Photo Credit: Mr. Michael Maddox (ROTC).

WASHINGTON (Oct. 9, 2017) -- Reserve Officers' Training Corps Cadets from across the country were in attendance at the AUSA ROTC luncheon held in Washington, D.C. Oct. 9. Along with a meal, they were also provided with words of wisdom from Gen. Gus Perna, commander of the U.S. Army Materiel Command.

After sharing the story of his journey through ROTC at Valley Forge Military Academy, Perna spoke on what he thinks defines a good leader -- pride in the Army profession. "ROTC was life changing for me. Whether you join the active component force, become a reserve component officer and future citizen leader, you are joining a profession. It's a profession like nobody else understands," he said.

Perna said there are five key characteristics of a profession that Cadets can use to be successful future leaders. The first being honorable service. "In order to have honorable

service, by definition you have to provide a service to your country, to your community, to your family that nobody else can perform. Only you future Soldiers can perform what we do for the country," he said. "Only you will be trained and ready to go fight the nation's wars. Only you can go in and provide relief for natural disasters. It's your profession that's called upon when our rights, our constitution, our way of life is challenged." He said trust is a benchmark for the Army profession.

"Nobody can do their mission like we do our missions -- we have always been successful, we will always be successful. We are counted on every single day to make sure that the enemy is always playing a home game and never in our country," said Perna. "This is so implicit that every year when Time Magazine does a poll of the most trusted professions in America our military is number one. That is earned trust, that is not paid for, that is not something that is given, we must earn it every day." Perna took time to reflect on his unit citations, and told the crowd that they represent the heart of esprit de corps to him.

"When you come home from war, this is what you reflect on -- those that you served with, those that you were so scared with while you were out on that battlefield that you knew you could count on them, and they knew they could count on you -- that's esprit de corps," he said.

Another thing that sets Soldiers apart according to Perna is stewardship of the profession. "We are responsible for self-regulating ourselves. We don't tolerate people being mistreated. We don't tolerate sexual harassment. We don't tolerate people not being treated as equals. We don't tolerate poor morals," he said. "We self-regulate and ought to be proud of that. Do it when you see it, do it when you're in a position of authority, and don't allow others to undermine our great Army. "We also educate and certify ourselves -- we do this our whole careers. No other profession will bring leaders, NCOs, Soldiers, back to be educated throughout their career. We have to be

the most competent people through it all," he added. Perna rounded out the characteristics of the Army profession be reminding Cadets to always keep the "why" in mind. "Why are competence and character so important? Why is your commitment so important? Because I will tell you, future leaders, you will be responsible for two main things," Perna explained. "You will be responsible for training and taking care of Soldiers to go into harm's way. Nobody else does that -- you're responsible. You are also responsible for training someone who might have to take somebody else's life in defense of your country. That's why the five characteristics of our profession are so important."

Maj. Gen. Christopher Hughes, commander of U.S. Army Cadet Command and Fort Knox, also spoke during the luncheon, as well as presented a scholarship check to Austen Eberhardt, who is attending Georgetown University.

Hughes reminded the Cadets of one other facet of the Army profession -- education. "Education is a profession. Army ROTC has a demanding and challenging curriculum that is an enhancement to your career field that makes you exceptional along with your college education. It's an enhancement that makes you better than a regular college student," he said. "You have to understand your mission is to ultimately be entrusted with the lives of the sons and daughters of the very citizens you are charged and sworn to defend as a United States Soldier."

He said providing students an opportunity to gain that education and serve the country has made his job one of the best he's had. "I have the best job in the United States Army. This is truly the most rewarding and personally challenging things that I've had the opportunity to do in 35 years, and it's because of the young men and women there who have raised their hands and said they want to do something greater than themselves," Hughes said.

The U.S. Army Cadet Command is the largest single source of new officers for the Army, commissioning the majority of the Army's new officers each year through the senior ROTC program.



2017 Army Leadership Mentorship Forum: Cadets Get Rare Access to Senior Leaders, Decades of Experience

(Photo Credit: U.S. Army photos by Sean Kimmons)



Assistant Secretary of the Army, Honorable Ryan D. McCarthy, speaks with Cadets

WASHINGTON -- When the Army Senior Leader Forum began four years ago, Cadet Karriem Davis was a freshman, new to Howard University's ROTC program. Ever since, the forums have allowed him to learn more about the Army by picking the brains of some of its top leaders.

Meant to produce a solid core of second lieutenants to lead the Army into the future, the annual forum has given Davis and other cadets exclusive access to high-ranking leaders they may not get elsewhere. Attending his last forum, the 21-year-old senior, who hopes to commission as a medical service officer, was linked up with the Assistant Secretary of the Army Honorable Ryan D. McCarthy as he escorted and introduced the service's most senior leader before his speech Tuesday at this year's event. "A lot of cadets might be hindered earlier on in their [military] career because they don't get to talk to the right people or just feel the presence of a senior leader

in the Army," the cadet said. "I'm lucky that Howard affords me that opportunity." This year, McCarthy and a dozen Army staff principal officers from an array of career fields provided mentorship to inquisitive cadets from Howard, a historically black university, and many other colleges.



Lt. Gen. Darrell K. Williams, director of the Defense Logistics Agency, speaks with cadets during a Senior Leader Forum at Howard University in Washington, D.C., Nov. 7, 2017. The annual event has some of the Army's top leaders mentor future commissioned officers to help produce a solid core of second lieutenants.

At the lectern, the Assistant Secretary spoke of his own experience as a young officer in the 75th Ranger Regiment, where a collection of Soldiers from various backgrounds worked as a team. "The Army has proven capable of forging the diverse communities of American life together because no matter where they come from, Soldiers are all here for the same core reason -- we want to make a difference," he said. Within his unit, he said, there was a Native American platoon sergeant from North Carolina, an African American team leader from a tough part of Detroit, and a squad leader from a rural Texas town, among other Soldiers from across the country. Then there was McCarthy, who grew up as a kid in a comfortable home on the north side of Chicago. He said back then that he never had to step outside his way of life or his view of the world. "I had no humility and no appreciation of what hard times felt like," he said. "That all changed when I joined the Army."

McCarthy said that as he experienced the joys and arduous times of military life alongside his fellow Soldiers, especially his NCOs, he learned from them what makes this country special. He told the cadets gathered at Howard

University that he still uses lessons he learned from his former platoon sergeant in his current role to make a positive impact for more than 1 million Soldiers and their families. "No one could have known it at the time, but think of what a difference [that sergeant] made just by taking the time to mentor Lieutenant McCarthy," he said. "That is making a personal difference. That is what you can do in the Army."

As commissioned officers, he explained, the cadets will meet Soldiers who may not think or behave the way they do. But it will still be their job to change their lives for the better as others did for him, he said. "Each of you had an inspiration that brought you here today, in our country's uniform," he said. "Be that inspiration in your platoons, in your schools, and in your communities. Be a trailblazer for those who are following after you." After his speech, a panel of senior leaders, ranging from a colonel to three-star generals, fielded questions from the cadets.



Assistant Secretary of the Army, Honorable Ryan D. McCarthy responds to questions from Army ROTC cadets during a Senior Leader Forum at Howard University in Washington, D.C., Nov. 7, 2017. McCarthy was the keynote speaker during this year's annual event, which has some of the Army's top leaders mentor future commissioned officers.

Lt. Gen. Gwendolyn Bingham, the Army's assistant chief of staff for installation management, offered some advice on what has helped her throughout her 36-year career. "If you keep a positive attitude, you read and learn your craft and be the very best officer as you can, you too will find success," she said. Bingham acknowledged that many cadets and Soldiers are hesitant, at least initially, to make a career of the Army. When

she first put on a uniform, for instance, she had only wanted to serve for four years. "But something happened along the way," she said. "I fell in love with this vocation called the U.S. Army and I've been better for it as a Soldier, wife, mother and citizen."



(L-R: Lt. Gen. Crawford, Army G-6; Lt. Gen. Luckey, Chief of Army Reserve; Lt. Gen. Charles N. Pede, TJAG; LTG Darrell K. Williams, DLA Director; Maj. Gen. Glenn A. Bramhall, National Guard Bureau; Maj. Gen. Hughes, CG, Cadet Command.) Lt. Gen. Charles D. Luckey participates in a panel discussion along with other general officers during a Senior Leader Forum at Howard University in Washington, D.C.

Before the panel, Cadet Catherine Lynch and other future officers had more opportunities to interact with the senior leaders during a lunch break. "This is invaluable experience," said Lynch, a 20-year-old junior from Mount St. Mary's University in northern Maryland who spoke in-depth with Bingham about her career. While both of Lynch's parents are Army officers, she thought the forum gave her a unique chance to rub shoulders and learn from the service's top brass. "It is huge to just have that experience and have that face-to-face time. They may not remember us, but I will certainly remember this forever," said Lynch, who is trying to be a military intelligence or quartermaster officer. Whichever career field they serve in, the acting secretary said once the cadets become commissioned officers they will be expected to make the force ready for combat.

"I am charging you to make us better in preparation for that day," he said. "Rise to the challenge -- you are the leaders."



How much money should I have saved by 30?

By Amy Fontinelle



Photo by William Stitt

Most people just guess when asked how much money one should have saved for retirement by the age of 30.

It can be difficult to provide a simple answer, due to factors like health, life expectancy and lifestyle. And if a person doesn't understand how compound investment returns and tax-advantaged retirement accounts help savings grow significantly over time, even modest goals can be daunting.

Rather than set a seemingly impossible savings goal, many people say they will keep working after retirement. Eighty-three percent of millennials — 18 to 34 year olds — say they plan to work through their retirement years for income, to stay busy or to pursue a passion, according to a study published by Merrill Edge in the fall of 2016.

A plan that anticipates working after retirement is risky because of the potential for health problems to make it difficult or impossible to hold a job, or the possibility of a weak labor market. Furthermore, you might just get sick of working, even if you love your job so much now that you can't imagine ever wanting to quit.



A better approach is to set short-term savings goals and long-term savings milestones. Decide to set aside a consistent and affordable percentage of your income every month, and also estimate the total amount you would like to have saved by the end of every decade until retirement.

The most important goal: Good financial habits

Robert Johnson, president and CEO of The American College of Financial Services in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, says that the most important goal for age 30 is to have a plan to pay down debt and save a meaningful portion of income — as much as 10 percent — in a retirement account.

How much you accumulate by age 30 depends on your career path and investments you make in your future earning potential.

"For instance, if you are 30 years old and are currently training to become a medical doctor, it's likely that you haven't saved anything and, in fact, have taken on a great deal of debt. That is appropriate, given that you are increasing your future earning power," Johnson says.



Emergency funds and paying down debt

How much money you should have saved by age 30 depends on many factors, says financial coach and planner Ryan Frailich, founder of Deliberate Finances, a fee-only financial planning firm based in New Orleans.

There are many variables, according to Frailich: costs of living, whether you're married or single, total debt

load, long-term earning potential and family obligations, to name only a few. But one goal he recommends that everyone meet by age 30 is having an emergency fund equal to three months' worth of expenses "so that when, not if, life throws you an unexpected twist, you're prepared," he says.

Make sure you're getting the most out of your emergency fund by keeping it in a savings account that earns interest. Start by looking for a high-rate savings account.



For people burdened by student loan debt, a better approach would be to determine by how much they have increased their net worth since they started working. According to Justin Chidester, a fee-only financial planner at Wealth Mode Financial Planning in Logan, Utah, someone who has reduced their debt by one year's salary by age 30 is on a good financial trajectory.

No magic savings number

Jamie Hopkins, a professor at The American College of Financial Services, says that there's no magic savings number you should try to reach by a certain age.

"Instead, you need to develop a savings plan that meets your specific needs and situation," Hopkins says. At age 30, the most important thing is to have debt under control, which means not carrying large credit card balances or missing payments, having a student loan repayment plan in place, and not buying a house that is beyond your means.

Getting started young is also a key factor. Hopkins points out that someone who has 40 years to save for retirement can safely save about 7 percent to 9 percent of their annual income, while someone who has 30 years to save for retirement needs to dedicate more like 15 percent to 16 percent of their income to savings.

"The longer you wait to start saving, the more you will have to save each year," Hopkins explains. "For instance, if you want to replace 50% of your income in retirement from your savings and only have 20 years to save for a 30-year retirement, you will have to be saving over 30 percent of your income a year to meet your goals."

Similar to workers in other age groups, less than a third of those in their twenties are saving at least 10 percent of their income for retirement, Transamerica found in a 2015 study. The study estimates that the median 20-something worker has saved \$16,000 for retirement, while the median 30-something has saved \$45,000.

How much can you save? Estimate the growth of your savings.

Given these numbers, it's not surprising that only 18 percent of workers in their 20s said they were very confident that they would be able to fully retire and live a comfortable lifestyle, and 46 percent said they were somewhat confident. If those workers had a better idea of how much they should have saved by age 30, they might be able to increase those confidence levels — though all the uncertainties that come with being decades away from retirement can't be eliminated.

What will Social Security look like? How will the markets perform? How much will a lifetime of health care cost? Will raising children make it difficult to save enough?

Catching up if you're behind

"If you are behind on your savings goals, don't get discouraged," says financial planner Matt Hylland of

Hylland Capital Management in Virginia Beach, Virginia. "No matter the amount in your retirement accounts, at age 30 there is still plenty of time to get caught up."

He offers these suggestions:

Contribute enough to get the full company match in your 401(k) or equivalent retirement account. Don't pass up this source of free money if it's available to you.

If you have extra money after contributing to your workplace retirement account, contribute to an individual retirement account. You can save an added \$5,500 per year in a tax-advantaged account this way, \$6,500 if you 50 or older.



Set up automatic annual increases to your workplace retirement contributions to help combat lifestyle inflation as you receive raises.



ROCKS ON THE MOVE

Ms. Jade Fulce has a New Position at DoD



ROCKS member Jade Fulce is now the new spokesperson for the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) Americas region. She is a Public Affairs Officer, who is responsible for the communication program at 52 schools in seven states, Puerto Rico, and Cuba. DoDEA plans, directs, coordinates, and manages pre-kindergarten through 12th grade education programs for school-age children of Department of Defense personnel who would otherwise not have access to high-quality public education.

Myles Caggins, III is Promoted to Colonel

On Sunday, December 17, 2018, Lifetime ROCKS Members, Myles Caggins was promoted to the rank of Colonel on the top floor of the National Press Club. Myles Caggins, a graduate of Hampton University, was commissioned as an Ordnance officer and later became a Public Affairs Officer. Caggins has had a series of challenging and successful assignments including serving as



LTG Piggee, COL Caggins III, COL Caggins, Jr. and Mrs. Caggins
Photo by Fred Black.

Company Commander in the 2003 invasion of Iraq. His most recent assignment he served in Pentagon and presently attends Senior Service College as a National Security Fellow at Harvard University's School of Government.

After Lieutenant General Aundre Piggee, Deputy Chief of Staff, G4 promoted Caggins to Colonel, he made his remarks expressing his gratitude. Colonel Caggins thanked his parents, his sister and her family, close relatives, Hampton ROTC classmates and the Soldiers that helped on his path to a successful career. Myles also took that opportunity to speak about his father, who was a United States Army Soldier and combat veteran during the Vietnam era who also attained the rank of Colonel. Myles talked about his father who took the oath to support and

defend the Constitution of the United States and stated that his father and his generation served a nation that did not serve them. It was a time before the Civil Rights era, when, as Myles Caggins stated individuals would cross the street or duck in doorways to avoid saluting and Officer who was not white. In addition, it was nation marked by Jim Crow laws when the freedom to vote was obstructed and not permitted. Myles now a Colonel and the son of a retired Colonel concluded his remarks by stating he would now use his eagles to help others soar and received a standing ovation.

To read the full story, go to the ROCKS, Incorporated Facebook page. LIKE us and more importantly SHARE the link on Colonel Caggins', a stalwart supporter of the ROCK's story.

CSA's Address continued from page 5

It was North Korea that our 36th Chief of Staff of the Army mentioned by name and declared North Korea is the most dangerous near-term threat with its nuclear and intercontinental ballistic missile capability that can reach the continental United States and potentially cost millions of Americans lives. They are developing devastating capability along with statements of their intent to use that capability against our allies and our homeland. General Milley said, "If history has taught us anything — do not ignore their words, when their words are combined with capability." He declared that Secretary of Defense (SECDEF) Mattis has tasked the Army to be ready for the intense combat of ground operations of any type, anywhere in the world. He mentioned that the United States entered both World Wars in a state of unreadiness. In addition, it was no accident that the SECDEF mentioned in his speech that we should reread T. R. Fehrenbach's book, *This Kind of War* which is a study of the unpreparedness as the United States entered the Korea War in the summer of 1950. That unreadiness resulted in a high costs in the form of blood of American Soldiers. Being combat ready deters enemies, it keeps the peace, it allows us to end the war on our terms in the shortest amount of time with the least amount of American casualties. "As soldiers, America's sentinels of freedom, we will pray for peace every day but at the same time the United States Army we will prepare for war." Gen. Milley stated.

He outlined the operational, modernization priorities to ensure we achieve the readiness of the future. He mentioned the increased quality and quantity of the rotations at combat training centers, the increased Army manning by 28,000 Soldiers, and AMC and its logisticians have increased sustainment readiness around the globe by increasing our pre-positioned munitions and stocks around the globe to support the fight. There will be six Security Force Assistance Brigades (SFABs) that will increase the

readiness of our conventional brigades by relieving them of advisory duties. The SFABs will consists of highly skilled handpicked individuals that can train forces of other nations in how to engage in light infantry operations. The CSA emphasized that we should not wait on orders, new regulations, manuals or force structure changes that commanders are directly responsible for the readiness of their units. He said commanders "must focus solely on what is essential that increases the lethality of their unit and get ready for what might come."



General Kim Young-Woo, South Korea's Army Chief of Staff; Japanese Army Chief of Staff, General Koji Yamazaki; and the 39th Army Chief of Staff, General Mark Milley at the Pacific Armies Chiefs Conference in September 2017.

He stated that Secretary McCarthy approved the establishment of a new Modernization and Futures Command to inform, consolidate, and streamline all modernization efforts under one roof. There are plans to a SOCOM-like model for acquisition from the Industrial Age linear model (which takes years) to accelerate emplacing a capability from the idea/concept to delivery. He stressed the need to rapidly modernize our under a six system tied to fighting and winning our Nation's wars:

- **Long Range Precision Fires** - modernizing Army rocket and field artillery with the capability to strike with land-based precision fires at very extended ranges beyond what our enemies expect
- **Combat Vehicles** - new tanks, infantry vehicles, new class of vehicles which will leverage new technology with firepower and maneuverability, with active protective systems

- **Vertical Lift** - rotary wing aircraft air defense, and increase individual lethality
- **Robotics** - systems that will allow the commander to do the mission over extended ranges in complex terrain, leveraging technologies with artificial intelligence to engage in quicker decision-making and targeting
- **Air Missile Defense** - protecting the force from direct and indirect fire, air and missile attack with modernized air defense assets
- **Individual and Collective Soldier Lethality** - better squad combat weapon, better body armor with individual sensors, improve small unit radios to improve Soldier endurance and survivability

All these elements are important but Gen. Milley stated **training** is the key; hard, realistic, rigorous, repetitive training in combat-like conditions to gain confidence and skill. "We must be ready to fight tonight and modernize as well as regain our competitive advantage." Gen. Milley stated. Preparation of war is very expensive but it is much cheaper than fighting a war. And the only thing more expensive than fighting a war, is losing a war. Our Army can maintain the peace by being prepared for war.



General Milley at Pacific Armies Chiefs Conference in Indonesia

He closed by addressing why we fight. We fight to support and defend the Constitution which upholds the idea that here in America we will have a government of the people, by the people and for the people. That government is for all people regardless of their gender, race, ethnic group, sexual orientation, your country of origin, religion and economic status and we will rise or fall based on our merit. This is the core organizing principle of the United States and that

is why we fight. We as Americans need to remember we only have a lease on liberty. We do not have the deed to it. So each generation has to be prepared to preserve that idea and pass it on to the next generation. Our enemies need to know the Army is willing to fight so this experiment of liberty does not perish from the earth.



13 Areas for VA Improvement
continued from page 17



(Photo BRENDAN SMIALOWSKI/AFP/Getty Images)

Quality

The VA’s internal medical center ratings were released last week. 11 facilities that received a one star rating last year – out of a total of five – are still at the bottom of the list this year. USA Today had an exclusive look at the department’s “Healthcare Improvement Center.” In the article, Shulkin is quoted saying, “it’s much like you would expect an air-traffic-control system to be – that’s what we’re doing in our health care system.” The center is staffed by over 80 nurses and can check several different data points, allowing the VA to respond with resources where they are needed. This looks like a GREAT idea. It’s new, so sit back and wait a bit to see if it’s going to work.

Disability Claims and Appeals

About a month ago, the VA unveiled its Decision Ready Claims initiative. The department is working together with VSOs so that some disability claims can be finalized within 30 days. In August the President signed the Veterans Appeals Improvement and Modernization Act which will give

vets more options on how to appeal benefits decisions.

Lawmakers say they want to make the wait time for these appeals to be less than a year. Check back with Connecting Vets next August and I’ll have a better answer for you on if this is working or not.

IT

About half of the agencies IT budget goes to keep the old systems running. The new electronic health record system will be up at the test site 18 months after the negotiations are finalized. After that it will take at least seven to eight years before the entire VA can access records electronically. It’s almost too early to even think about this one.

Capital Assets

It was reported this year that it will take \$18 billion to fix or upgrade the department’s buildings. There are about 400 vacant buildings and another 735 under-utilized facilities owned by VA. It costs \$25 million each year to keep up maintenance on these places. The secretary announced that there aren’t plans to close specific buildings right now, but he is working with Congress to develop a national strategy to modernize VA’s infrastructure.

Construction

There are currently 11 major construction projects on hold right now because the VA and the Army Corps of Engineers are working through the acquisition process. The projects are worth about \$1.4 billion. A 2016 law, the CHIP-IN Act, is a way the VA can get partners outside of the government to help build healthcare facilities. One project is already underway in Omaha, Nebraska. The best part about this is it doesn’t cost taxpayers a penny.

One of the biggest stories on this subject is the VA’s medical center in the Denver suburb of Aurora. It’s expected to finish next year but it’s already costing \$1.7 billion – triple original estimates.

This one is painful to watch, but that’s all we can do for now. Hopefully the CHIP-IN Act will pick up and more partner-built facilities can happen soon.



(Photo by Chip Somodevilla/Getty Images)

Bureaucracy

13 percent of the \$2.1 billion that Congress gave to VA for the Choice Program went to pay admin fees. That’s \$273 million bucks! That could have paid off the bill the agency owes to Virginia’s medical companies. There’s a big consolidation effort going on at the VA, as they are trying to slim down the 140 different program offices.

This one seems like it should be easy to fix, but remember it takes an act of Congress to make these changes. And lately, Congress isn’t the most functional body around.

Waste, Fraud and Abuse

An advisory committee on the subject was established this summer. According to the Government Accountability Office, VA’s improper payment estimate hit at least \$5.5 billion last year. This is not something that can be fixed quickly.

Recently, a VA Inspector General’s report identified a “significantly increased opportunity for payment errors.” A bulk payment of

\$1,987,442,668 for more than five million claims was made on Aug. 1. But the VA doesn't have a review process for these claims before the payment is made. The number of duplicate payments is thought to be in the tens of thousands.

This is another wait and see

Veterans Suicide

Combating veteran suicide is the Veteran Affairs' top clinical priority. This year, the VA released the most wide-ranging study of veteran suicide ever produced and the VA is working every angle on it.

Tele-mental health service is now provided through 10 regional hubs across the VA's healthcare system. There are now 13 mobile apps that veterans and their families can download and use the tools provided to help manage emotional and behavioral concerns. Readjustment counselors at the 300 community-based vet centers provide professional readjustment counseling to veterans and active duty service members. When veterans can't make it to the Vet Center, one of the VA's 80 mobile vet centers heads out to reach as many rural-living veterans as possible.

If any good news came from this report was the daily number of veterans who take their lives daily has dropped from 22 to 20. For more information, veterans currently enrolled in VA health care can talk to their VA mental health or health care provider. For a complete list of VA health care facilities, Vet Centers, local suicide prevention coordinator and other resources, visit VeteransCrisisLine.net

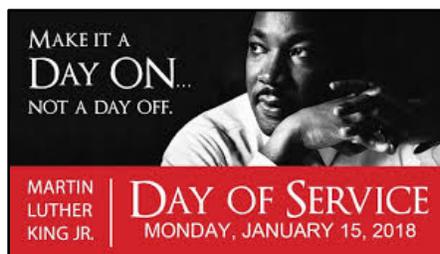
All in all, we can see that effort is being put into fixing the VA, but for the most part we are still in a holding pattern on if things are working or not. Stay tuned to Connecting Vets for more as things change. Connect: [@JonathanVets1](https://twitter.com/JonathanVets1) | Jonathan@ConnectingVets.com



The ROCKS, Inc. Needs You!



- ❖ Be accessible and become a mentor.
- ❖ Volunteer to serve on the Leadership Outreach and Cadet Enhancement Team.
- ❖ Attend chapter meetings.
- ❖ Volunteer to address chapters (General and Senior Officers are especially needed).
- ❖ Serve as a resource for referrals on branch peculiar and other professional development issues.
- ❖ Encourage mentoring/coaching for all officers and set the example.
- ❖ Volunteer to lead and/or participate in Committees.
- ❖ Donate to our scholarship funds and sponsor a cadet to attend various events.
- ❖ Volunteer to provide your expertise and guidance in assisting officer transitioning from military service and transitioning civilian members.



ROCKS' CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

Aloha ROCKS partner with the Hawaii Food Bank



Aloha ROCKS Chapter Members at the Hawaiian Food Bank community event.

One of the unique aspects of serving on Oahu is the concept of Ohana, or family. This past November members of the Aloha Chapter of the ROCKS Inc. gave back to their local Ohana by participating in a community service partnership with the Hawaii Food bank, whose mission is to ensure that no one in Hawaii goes hungry.

The Hawaii Foodbank is the only nonprofit in the state of Hawaii that collects, warehouses, and distributes mass quantities of both perishable and non-perishable food. Last year, they distributed over 12 million pounds of food from their locations. They support low income and homeless residents, along with local disabled veterans.

Their services are especially important in places like Oahu where the cost of living is extremely high. Hawaii assesses that about 1 in 5 of their residents are in need of some sort of financial assistance. As a result, the Hawaii Foodbank is constantly working to make sure that they all have food. During the holidays, the organization builds prepackaged food boxes for Senior citizens that include

holiday-themed items such as stuffing, cranberry sauce, and fruit juices.



The Aloha ROCKS were especially excited to participate in this year's Thanksgiving event, as many of our members have relatives on the mainland that receive similar assistance. Building these boxes was not easy task, but we accepted the challenge! To accomplish our goal of building over 2 thousand boxes, volunteers from all over the island formed a large assembly line, and worked for about 4 hours. Even though we are miles away from our loved ones, we enjoyed our time together giving back to our local community, and serving our homes away from home. Happy Holidays!



Morning Calm ROCKS – Ready and Capable Professionals!

Written by LTC Craig L. Evans



Peninsula Wide LPD with HQDA Deputy Chief of Staff, G4, LTG Piggee. LTG Piggee shared candid career advice and timeless insights on leadership.

Consistent with the focus on warfighter readiness across the Army and the Korean peninsula, the Morning

Calm Chapter of the ROCKS, Inc. is excited to conclude a year that by all measures enhanced the professional readiness and capabilities of its membership. When discussing professional readiness in the Morning Calm ROCKS, we visualize our aims along three Lines of Effort (LOEs) – Professional Growth, Mentorship, and Organizational Improvement. Every Leader Professional Development (LPD) session is designed to build or improve the capability of the membership across these LOEs.



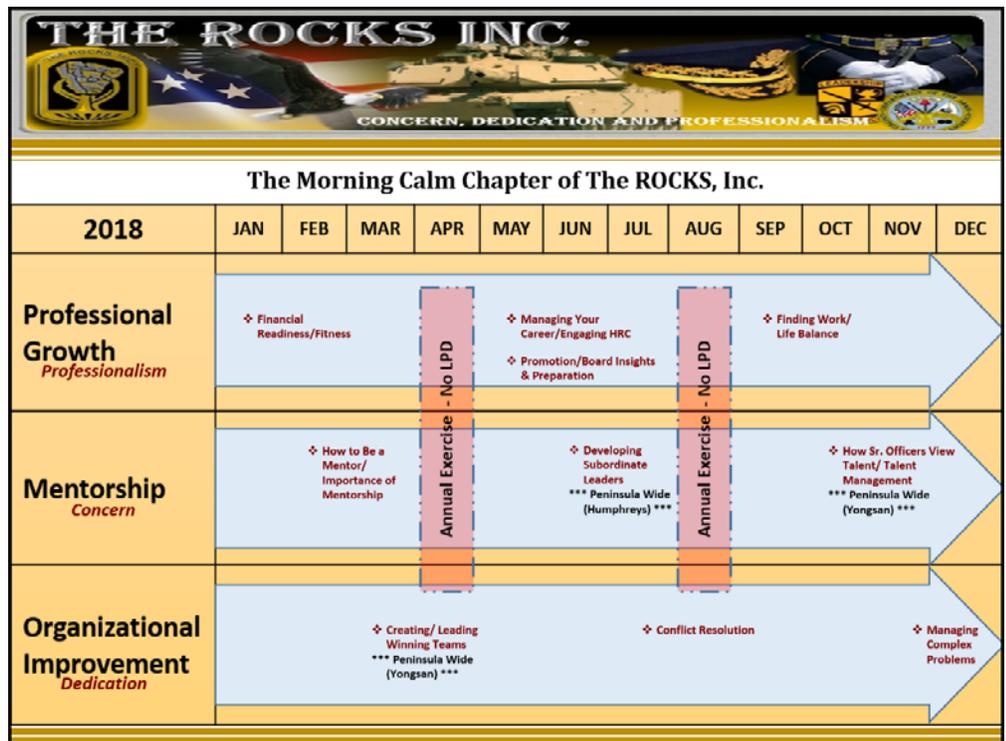
ROCKS members of the Morning Calm chapter during their Marshmallow Challenge.

First, Professional Growth. Every officer owes it to themselves to develop and grow as a “whole person”; in the words of the familiar adage – “anything healthy is supposed to grow.” We internalize this principle in the

Morning Calm ROCKS through LPD topics such as “Finding Work/Life Balance” and “Change and How to Make it Stick.” We realize that we’re better professionals when we take time to conduct honest self-assessments, and then enact action plans to yield the desired personal/professional growth.

Our Mentorship LOE is an acknowledgement that every officer has a responsibility to assist others in becoming better professionals. Sessions on Mentorship discussed “The Art of Mentorship” addressing both mentee and mentor responsibilities, “Why Officers Fail,” and “Words Matter – A Discussion on Evaluation Reports.” The intent here is to equip our members with knowledge to lead effectively, and also to train, teach, and coach others within their spheres of influence.

Our Organizational Improvement LOE emphasizes the duty every officer must embrace to leave our organizations better when we depart than they were when we arrived. Members are challenged to take the tips and tools discussed in the LPDs back to our



Morning Calm ROCKS Lines of Effort and LPD Topics for CY18.

formations to elevate and improve people and processes in furtherance of the unit mission. Noteworthy sessions supporting this LOE were “Conflict Resolution” and “Managing Complex Problems.”



Morning Calm ROCKS engage in the “Marshmallow Challenge” prior to a discussion on Managing Complex Problems.

Along the way, we’ve been fortunate to host Sr. Army Leaders during their official visits to the peninsula, notably HQDA Assistant Chief of Staff for Installation Management, LTG Gwen Bingham, BG Charles Hamilton (as CDR, Defense Logistics Agency-Troop Support) prior to his assignment to Korea as the USFK J4, HQDA Deputy Chief of Staff, G4, LTG Aundre Piggee, and CDR, Army Contracting Command, MG James Simpson. Each of these distinguished visitors shared timeless insights on leader imperatives, and advice for developing into the leaders our Profession needs and our subordinates deserve. We’re also privileged that the UNC/CFC/USFK CDR, GEN Brooks, purposefully offers his wealth of experience and knowledge to enhance our LPDs throughout the year.

2018 promises to be an exciting year, and we’re eager to step into it, and for the growth opportunities we’ll experience. Our path for the year maintains the same LOEs, and we intend to revisit topics with enduring relevance to the team. If you find yourself searching for a rewarding assignment, or traveling on official business to the peninsula, we invite you to connect with the Morning Calm Chapter of the ROCKS, Inc.

To complete the Marshmallow Challenge, teams must build the tallest

free-standing structure out of 20 sticks of spaghetti, one yard of tape, one yard of string, and one marshmallow, in eighteen minutes. The Marshmallow needs to be on top.



Happenings at Fort Knox (Golf Vault ROCKS)

By LTC Charles L. Montgomery



The Gold Vault Chapter - Fort Knox ROCKS Incorporated continues to make significant strides in the local Fort Knox area in regards to fostering key relationships designed to enable prolonged development of future Army officers. The membership in the chapter has increased by 33% since April 2017, and attendance has tripled over the last three months. The chapter will release a trifold in January, which expounds on the ROCKS Incorporated narrative in a professional presentation aimed to increase awareness and debunk miscalculated myths concerning the ROCKS organization. This quarter’s focus areas are: mentorship campaign, leadership outreach, and inaugural 5k run designed to raise funds to award three scholarships in the spring.

Mentorship is a powerful tool for personal and professional development. MAJ Lisa Turnerduddmatt serves as the Gold Vault Chapter Mentorship Campaign Chair, and she has developed a comprehensive plan designed to successfully pair mentees with mentors. The ROCKS organization defines mentorship as, “the voluntary developmental relationship that exists between a person of greater experience

and a person of lesser experience that is characterized by mutual trust and respect and is undertaken to advance the career of the mentee or protégé.” Mentoring young officers is truly the most effective investment into our organization, because it ensures prolonged success. Brigadier General Aaron T. Walter, Commanding General 100th Training Division (Leader Development), has volunteered to serve as our senior mentor. BG Walter served as our guest speaker in November, and the subject of his lecture covered leadership from a USAR perspective. Officers should strive to have multiple mentors, diverse in nature, to enhance their military experience. Establishing a productive mentorship relationship is paramount, and there are five essentials to make this successful. These essentials include: respect, trust, partnership building, realistic self-perception and expectations, and time. Mentors volunteer their time and energy to ensure success. Their efforts are truly appreciated at all levels of our organization.



BG Aaron T. Walter, Commanding General 100th Training Division (Leader Development)

The second focus, leadership outreach, is working to strengthen our relationship with the 7th ROTC Brigade commanded by Colonel Lance Oskey. Seventh brigade is composed of fifteen universities, one of which is a Historically Black College and University (HBCU). Based on COL Oskey’s vast area of operations, we divided the area into two regions.

Major Jeffrey L. Witherspoon has the Northern Region and Captain Sam Casella controls the Southern Region. Ohio State University (OSU) represents the break line, with OSU being in the Northern Region. The Gold Vault Chapter has established an outreach mentorship event in January 2018 to engage Kentucky State University (HBCU) and The University of Kentucky. The intent is to cover three subjects which include: officer development from the United States Army Human Resources Command perspective, teach one Master Resiliency Training (MRT) skill (how to identify and overcome icebergs), and execute a leadership officer professional development session hosted by a former brigade commander. This event is designed to enhance the cadet's outlook on a few branches of service, combined with learning a skill which can be applied in their life now. This event represents one of many planned in 2018 to increase our leadership outreach within the Gold Vault community area of operations.

The final quarterly focus for the Gold Vault Chapter is the 5k run on 24 March 2018 to raise funds to award three scholarships to potential cadets and high school students in the local area. One of the strategic initiatives of the National Board of the ROCKS Incorporated is to focus on the development of cadets and assisting them to effectively prepare for future challenges. Scholarships represent additional opportunities for students to excel during their pursuit of higher education, and we want to remain a relevant part of this process. The event will be hosted at Freeman Lake in Elizabethtown, Kentucky, and we encourage maximum attendance to make this event special for our cadets and high school students.

The Gold Vault Chapter at Fort Knox is just about to complete its third year of existence. The progress thus far is simply phenomenal. Often, leaders expect officers to arrive ready to achieve success from day one. However, the developmental process is frequently overlooked creating

leadership voids in our formations. There are many ways to provide mentorship, and the ROCKS organization is a prime example of committed leaders investing their most precious commodity into our Army organization. This commodity is time, and it will make all the difference in our quest to remain the most dominant military in the world. It is imperative that we continue to invest in our future to ensure the greatest Nation's safety is never compromised. The Fort Knox Gold Vault Chapter will continue to build on the ROCKS legacy through uncompromising support to developing future leaders. In October, we entered into a partnership with the Human Resources Command Mentorship Campaign. The HRC Mentorship Campaign focuses more on civilians; however, it affords our chapter the opportunity to offer additional resources to our GS-12s and above members. The last two events hosted by the HRC Mentorship Campaign were speed mentoring and elevator speeches; both events were attended by military and civilian members. The future is bright for our chapter, and this is made possible by the extraordinary members of our organization, who are committed to developing future leaders to achieve sustained success.



NEW ROCKS MEMBERS

LTC Courtney Abraham USA
 CPT John Alderete USA
 CPT Janelle Allong-Diakabana USA
 CPT William Allred USAR
 LTC Edgar Arroyo USA
 COL Amanda Azubuike USA
 CPT Christopher-Ace Baisa USA
 COL Bassey Bassey USA
 COL Kelvin Boone USAR
 2LT Madeline Boyd USA
 CPT Nikki Boynton USA
 CPT Nichole Braxton USA

COL Ted Bryant USA
 COL Donald Burton USA
 1LT Jennifer Bush USAR
 LTC Kendrick Cager ANG(Army)
 CPT Glenn Canty USA
 LTC Phyl Charity USA
 MAJ Tibu Cheh USA
 MG Phillip Churn SR USAR
 LTC Chani Cordero USA
 1LT Shantell Dixon USA
 Ms. Cynthia Dixon USA
 LTC Johnny Evans USA
 CPT LaCarla Fetzer USA
 CPT Sherilyn Fidelis USA
 LTC Alain Fisher USA
 COL Derrick Flowers, CPA USA
 Mr. Brandon Frazier
 MAJ Haneda Garner USA
 CDT Trevor Gillespie USA
 CPT Joshua Gotay USA
 1LT Nateisha Hall USA
 CDR Indira Harris USPHS
 MAJ Brandon Hathorne USA
 MAJ Cortney Hawkins ANG(Army)
 CPT Justin Hell USA
 CPT Irwin Johnson USA
 CPT Jonathan Kimble USAR
 MAJ Alicia King USA
 CPT Albert LeCounte USA
 MAJ Seung Lee USAR
 MAJ Eric Lightfoot USA
 WO4(R) Valerie Lubin USA
 LTC Fredric Maddox USA
 LTC Landis Maddox USA
 LTC Yolanda Maddox USA
 CDT Emily McGowan USA
 COL Anthony Mitchell USA
 MAJ Tamela Mitchenor USA
 COL Marcus Motley USA
 CPT Amanda Obley USA
 MAJ Jude Onwuanumkpe USA
 CPT Louis Ortiz USA
 COL Lance Oskey USA
 LTC Michael Patrick USA
 CPT LaToya Portee USA
 WO3 Roger Pringle USA
 CPT Kelvin Riddle USAR
 MAJ Sean Rose USAR
 CPT Sheena Rubin USA
 LTC Earl Schonberg USA
 LTC Stephanie Simmons USA
 CPT Michael Taylor USA
 CPT Trina Thompson USA
 LTC Willington White USA
 LTC John Whitfield USA
 Mr. Antonio Wiggins
 CPT Benjamin Williams USA

ROCKET SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

As you help us coach, promote mentorship, networking, leader diversity, and professional development to a world-wide readership please adhere to the following:

- ✓ Submit articles in **MS Word Document Format Only**
(Do not include photos within body of text: please add photos to the end of the article)
- ✓ Article Header should be in Times New Roman Font; Font Size=14 and Bolded)
- ✓ Author/contributor credit reflected in following format:
Written by _____ (Font=Times New Roman Italics; Font Size = 10)
- Page Margins = 1" Left, Right, Top and Bottom
- The text should be Font=Times New Roman; Font Size=10. No special formatting. Use left justification. Maximum number of words=600 words
- Maximum number of photos per article = 3 (Include at the end of the article)
- Include photo captions under photo (Font=Times New Roman; Font Size=8)
- PDF document will NOT be accepted.
- Links to web articles will NOT be accepted.
- Articles should be written in 3rd party tense.
- If would like an article from another publication to appear in the ROCKET, you must obtain written permission from the author and forward it to nationalrocket@gmail.com along with the article in MS Word format.

DEADLINE FOR SPRING EDITION: MARCH 10, 2018

SUPPORT THE ROCKS, INC. THE NEXT TIME YOU TRAVEL

The National Board of the ROCKS, Inc. has partnered with Imagine, Inc. to raise funds to support the operations of the organization. We are seeking your support as you begin your summer traveling.

Book your next hotel at www.StayFaster.com with the Promo Code **ROCKS**, the organization will receive **7% back** from every booking. Also, when a member from a local chapter books a reservation using the code, The National Board of the ROCKS, Inc. will send a percentage of the 7% to the local chapter. *(Be sure to add or update your chapter affiliation in the online membership directory).*

Steps:

1. Go to <https://www.stayfaster.com/>
2. Click the square box in the top right corner with three lines and select "Create an Account".
 - a. Enter Promo Code for your chapter (shown below)
 - b. First and last name
 - c. Email address
 - d. Password (must be 8-20 characters)
3. Once account is established, go back Login page. Login and fill in profile data.
4. Now go back to web link "Stay Faster- The Fastest Way to Book Your Next Hotel
5. Follow instructions by providing requested info, then hundreds of hotels to select from will appear. Select your hotel and Book your reservation.
6. A confirmation notice from "Front Desk" will be sent to the email address you provided.
7. The more you book through this site will increase the "royalty" to your Chapter.
8. Safe travels and remember this is a fundraiser. Encourage friends and family to use it as well using your chapter's promo code.



Location	Chapter Name	Chapter Promo Code
Carlisle Barracks, PA	MG Charles Rogers Chapter (AWC)	ROCKS22
Forsyth, GA	Patriot ROCKS	ROCKS23
Fort Bliss, TX	Fort Bliss Chapter	ROCKS03
Fort Bragg, NC	All American Chapter	ROCKS04
Fort Campbell, KY	Fort Campbell, KY	ROCKS17
Fort Carson, CO	Iron Horse ROCKS	ROCKS20
Fort Hood, TX	Phantom Warrior ROCKS	ROCKS06
Fort Knox, KY	Gold Vault ROCKS	ROCKS19
Fort Leavenworth, KS	Buffalo Soldier Chapter	ROCKS08
Fort Lee, VA	Central Virginia Chapter	ROCKS09
Fort Leonard Wood, MO	Harry S. Truman Chapter	ROCKS18
Hampton Roads, VA	Hampton Roads Chapter	ROCKS11
Oahu, HI	Aloha Chapter of the ROCKS	ROCKS16
San Antonio, TX	SAM Houston Chapter	ROCKS12
Washington, DC	DC ROCKS	ROCKS14
West Point, NY	The Henry O. Flipper Chapter	ROCKS15



Membership Application

Mail or Fax or Apply Online at www.rocksinc.org

Post Office 47435, Forestville, Maryland 20753

Phone: 301-423-5500 / Fax: 301-856-5220

Email: rocksnationalboard@gmail.com

PLEASE SELECT ONE: NEW MEMBER RENEWAL SPONSORED BY _____

Rank: _____ First Name: _____ Middle Initial: _____ Last Name: _____

Birthday: _____ (mm/dd/yyyy)-year optional Chapter Affiliation (if applicable): _____

Spouse Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell: _____ Cell: _____

Email Address: _____

Branch/Specialty: _____ Current Position: _____

College/University Attended: _____ Degree/Year: _____

Graduate School Attended: _____ Masters/Year: _____

National ROCKS Membership Dues (Prorated December 2018)

04, GS13 & Above (incl. SES)

1 Year - \$43.50

03 & Below, GS12

1 Year - \$24.75

Cadet Member - 1 Year = \$15.00

National Life Member = \$650.00

Payment Enclosed: \$ _____

Method of Payment: Check/Money Order Visa MasterCard AMEX (OR pay online at www.rocksinc.org)

Credit Card Number															

Expiration Date				CV # (from the back of the card)	

Make all checks payable to "National ROCKS, Inc." and mail to:
ROCKS, Inc.
c/o WSC Associates, LLP
Post Office Box 47435
Forestville, Maryland 20753

NOTES

- Local membership fees are not included.
- Life members are still required to pay local chapter dues.
- Current members** who are deployed personnel may send an email to rocksnationalboard@gmail.com to be exempt from membership fees during the period of deployment.

THE ROCKS, INC. ACTIVE CHAPTERS

Updated 12/20/2017

All American Chapter

Fort Bragg, NC

LTC Courtney Abraham, USA
courtney.l.abraham.mil@mail.mil

Aloha Chapter of the ROCKS

Oahu, HI

MAJ Brandon Grooms USA
aloharockschapter@gmail.com

Buffalo Soldier Chapter

Fort Leavenworth, KS

LTC Irvin Jackson, USA
irvin.w.jackson.mil@mail.mil

Central Virginia Chapter

Fort Lee, VA

CPT Michael Bennett, USA
cvcrocksinc@gmail.com

Fort Bliss, TX

MAJ Rebekah Jones

Rebekah.j.jones@gmail.com

Gator ROCKS

Fort Polk, LA

1LT Ariel Hall USA
arielseymone@yahoo.com

Gold Vault ROCKS

Fort Knox, KY

LTC Charles L. Montgomery
goldvaultchapter@gmail.com

Hampton Roads, VA

MG Frank Batts USA

frank.e.batts@nasa.gov;
tcmooney@cox.net

Harry S. Truman Chapter

Fort Leonardwood, MO

LTC Shawn Sumter, USA
shawn.sumter@gmail.com

Iron Horse ROCKS

Fort Carson, CO

MAJ Janet Vaughn USA
janet.vaughn5@gmail.com

Morning Calm, Korea

LTC Craig Evans, USA

craig.l.evans.mil@mail.mil

MG Charles C. Rogers Chapter-

AWC

Carlisle Barracks, PA

LTC(P) Kareem "Monty" Montague
Kmontague73@gmail.com

Patriot ROCKS-GA National Guard

Forsyth, GA

LTC B. David Hunter USA
bob.david.hunter.mil@mail.mil

Phantom Warrior ROCKS

Fort Hood, TX

LTC Aricai Berry USA, Ret.
amalbert1@aol.com

SAM Houston Chapter

San Antonio, TX

COL Richard "Flip" Wilson USA
flip2easy@earthlink.net

Screaming Eagles

Fort Campbell, KY

MAJ John D. Smith, USA
john.d.smith320.mil@mail.mil

The Henry O. Flipper Chapter

West Point, NY

LTC Winston Williams, USA
winston.williams@usma.edu

Washington, DC ROCKS

COL Sheila Howell-Flowers USA
washdcrocks@gmail.com