

# THE ROCKET

Summer 2019



4TH OF JULY  
INDEPENDENCE DAY



— *Save The Date* —  
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**OCTOBER 11, 2019**

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## ROCKET SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

- ✓ Submit articles in **Microsoft 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 (Author's name) (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](mailto:nationalrocket@gmail.com) along with the article in MS Word format.
- We do not accept podcast or video as stand alone submissions for this written publication. However, we do have other media platforms available to disseminate or distribute video or podcast material.

## Chairman's Message



The past few months have been exciting and very rewarding. Exciting from the perspective of all the positive activities being generated throughout the ROCKS organizations and rewarding from the perspective of all the people who are benefiting through the outpouring of mentorship and professional development coming from ROCKS personnel.

Particular thanks go to Major (Retired) Sean Lanier and Colonel Michael McLendon for their outstanding efforts in the scholarship arena. This ROCKS program has attained significant positive acknowledgement from the HBCU community and the United States Army. My sense is that if we stay on the same course, we should reach the goal of providing up to 500 Cadet Command co-sponsored, Army ROTC Scholarships within the next three years.



*BG Gillespie with Virginia Military Institute (VMI) Cadets at the ROCKS 45th Anniversary Sapphires and Stars Spring Gala*



*MG Rogers ROCKS Chapter pictured with ROCKS Chairman, BG(R) Gillespie and MG Charles R. Hamilton*

Colonel Karen Wrancher and her team have really set a high bar for our organization with the flawless execution of the ROCKS Forty-Fifth Anniversary Spring Gala. ROCKS board members are still receiving rave reviews for this wonderful program. Colonel Wrancher's professionalism and organizational skills were very apparent in this highly successful event.

Our gratitude is also extended to MG Charles Hamilton for his dedication and support of the Hawaii's Aloha Chapter and his willingness to mentor junior and senior officers. MG Hamilton and I recently addressed the ROCKS members graduating in the 2019 Army War College Class. It was a great event and interfacing with the new graduates; we look forward to pairing them with local Rocks Chapters as advisors in the coming future.

Colonel (Retired) Lucretia McClenney also deserves recognition for her outstanding leadership efforts in putting together the 2018 ROCKS Golf Tournament. She is currently at work in organizing this year's Golf Tournament and she needs everyone's help.

Colonel (Retired) Robert Warren and Colonel (Retired) Paul Patton have also volunteered their time to put together an HBCU "Outreach Program" that we are planning to implement in this fall. Those

of us who are old enough to remember our previous outreach efforts, can attest to the effectiveness this program had on mentoring young cadets in their respective HBCU ROTC programs.

Finally, I wanted to recognize the following individuals for their unselfish contributions to the betterment of our organization. There are few others like BG(Retired) Clara Enders and Colonel (Retired) Dorene Hurt who are involved on a daily basis in working to improve the ROCKS. Thank you for your commitment and dedicated service to the ROCKS.


The ROCKS are moving forward to reach the goals we all want to attain. We need every ROCK to lend their expertise, their energy and their participation for our organization to succeed. With God's blessing and your assistance, we will continue moving forward.

Lawrence Gillespie  
BG USA (Ret.)  
Chairman



The U.S. Army Military District of Washington  
presents

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**PERFORMANCES 2019**

	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>*Thursday</i>
<b>MAY</b> -	1, 8, 15, 22, 29	9, 16, 23, 30
<b>JUNE</b> -	5, 12, 19, 26	6, 13
<b>JULY</b> -	17, 24, 31	

*\*Special Note: Thursdays have been added to our performance schedule*



## President awards Medal of Honor to first living Iraq War recipient

By Joe Lacdan, Army News Service  
June 25, 2019



President Trump awards the Medal of Honor to former Staff Sgt. David Bellavia in a White House ceremony June 25, 2019.  
(Photo Credit: Sgt. Kevin Roy)

WASHINGTON -- One by one, 12 members of Third Platoon made their way to the podium in the White House's East Room on Tuesday afternoon, to join the Soldier who repeatedly risked his life on a fall night in Fallujah 15 years ago.

Each platoon member, including former squad leader retired Sgt. 1st Class Colin Fitts and former platoon leader Maj. Joaquin Meno, shook hands with President Trump and joined former Staff Sgt. David Bellavia after he accepted the Medal of Honor, as several more members of the 1st Infantry Division followed.

"It means a lot to me and it means a lot more so as a unit," Meno said. "(Bellavia) and the guys displayed so much professionalism and tenacity that everything complemented each other...the Soldiers on the ground, the team leaders, and the platoon sergeant. It really created a great brotherhood amongst us."

The first living recipient to earn the Medal of Honor for his bravery in the Iraq War, Bellavia was praised by Trump for placing his unit members' lives before his own. And Bellavia lauded the efforts of his fellow platoon members who each contributed to the fight that autumn night and during the vicious battles that followed.

"I served with some of the greatest men I've ever met in my entire life," Bellavia said after the ceremony.

The night of Nov. 10, 2004, during the onset of the Second Battle of Fallujah, Bellavia and his unit had been tasked to clear 12 houses of insurgents in an abandoned section of the Iraqi city. When they reached the 10th house, insurgents hiding behind barricades ambushed Bellavia's men. Several men suffered injuries to their faces as enemy rounds ripped through the walls as bricks and plaster flew through the air.

Without hesitation, Bellavia charged toward the enemy rounds, spraying bullets at the insurgents, allowing his wounded teammates to evacuate the house.

"The wall was ripped to shreds. David knew they had to get out," Trump said. "He just took over. He leapt into the torrent of bullets without even thinking. He provided suppressive fire, while his men evacuated, rescuing his entire squad at the risk of his own life. Only when his

men were all out did David exit the building."

Bellavia wasn't done as the staff sergeant once again placed himself in harm's way. As insurgents from the rooftop continued firing, a Bradley fighting vehicle could only force the enemy back into the house. The New York native decided then to summon his courage and re-enter the house to drive out the enemies to his waiting gunners. He first cut down an insurgent who had a rocket-propelled grenade launcher, and then he killed two more assailants hiding in the house.

Bellavia defeated a fourth after engaging in hand-to-hand combat; eventually stabbing the insurgent in the neck. Finally, he mortally wounded a fifth attacker, who fell from the rooftop and attacked him on the balcony.

"Knowing that he would face almost certain death, David decided to go inside the house and make sure not a single terrorist escaped alive," Trump said.

After placing the Medal on Bellavia's shoulders, President Trump honored the fallen members of the unit. Sgt. Maj. Steven Faulkenburg, the task's force's father figure, died from small arms fire. Bellavia's company commander, Capt. Sean Sims and 1st Lt. Ed Iwan would succumb to enemy fire in the days after the Nov. 10 battle. Late platoon members Sgt. J.C. Matteson and Sgt. Scott Lawson,



SSG Bellavia takes a picture with his family as President Trump and the audience at the White House applaud.



who was in the house when Bellavia re-entered, also received recognition.

"Our entire nation expresses our love, loyalty and everlasting gratitude," Trump said to the families of the late Soldiers who sat in attendance.

Retired Sgt. 1st Class Gustavo Reina, who recruited Bellavia into the Army, said he saw Bellavia's potential as a leader when he joined the service in 1999.

"I was incredibly proud of his actions because he helped save American lives," Reina said. "He became the man that he knew and I knew he could become."

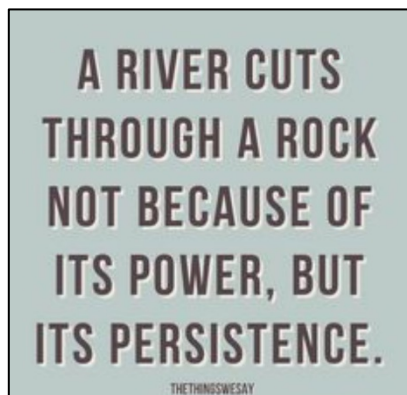
Bellavia served as a recruiter alongside Reina at the Buffalo recruiting station during a special duty assignment.

Reina praised Bellavia for his continued work with veterans. After leaving the Army, Bellavia founded Vets for Freedom, a political advocacy group that consists of former Iraq and Afghan war veterans.

"I want to thank my Army for giving me purpose and meaning and direction," said Bellavia to the media following the ceremony. "It's an absolute honor to serve in the U.S. military and serve with those fine men that you saw on that stage today."

For more information on SSG Bellavia and the actions that earned him the Medal of Honor go to

[https://www.army.mil/article/223467/inside\\_the\\_hornets\\_nest\\_soldier\\_earns\\_medal\\_of\\_honor\\_for\\_heroism\\_in\\_fallujah](https://www.army.mil/article/223467/inside_the_hornets_nest_soldier_earns_medal_of_honor_for_heroism_in_fallujah)



## U.S. Army's 244th Birthday Provided by the Office of the Chief of Public Affairs Friday, June 14, 2019



### What is it?

The U.S. Army was established June 14, 1775. This year marks 244 years of continuous service to the great nation while commemorating the 75th anniversary of D-Day.

This year's birthday theme is "America's Army: Honoring the Call to Service from D-Day to Today." This theme allows the Army to celebrate and honor the accomplishments of its total force. What are the current and past efforts of the Army?

Since its establishment, the Army has played a vital role in the growth and development of the nation. Readiness remains the Army's number one priority, and it has been the cornerstone of the Army's ability to serve wherever needed during its 244-year legacy.

The Army finds its strength not only in its diversity and inclusion, but also in its ability to bring together people of different backgrounds who share the Army Values. The Army amplifies the importance of serving the nation by celebrating the accomplishments of Soldiers and Army Civilians. The Army remains forever indebted to all veterans who demonstrated the selfless service and sacrifice that characterizes the Greatest Generation in defense of global peace and security.

The Army is: Modernizing (<https://www.army.mil/standto/2018-01-16?st>) to innovate and adapt concepts, equipment and training to be ready for the next challenge.

Developing a new Talent Management Strategy to acquire, develop, employ and retain the best officers.

Optimizing for interoperability with its allies and partners to strengthen alliances, attract new partners and deliver more effective coalition operations.

What continued efforts does the Army have planned?

The Army is the world's most lethal ground combat force in history and continues to evolve and change to preserve freedom for all Americans. The Army remains postured and ready to face an increasingly dynamic regional security environment around the globe.

Why is this important to the Army?

The Army is America's first national institution. It was established more than a year before the Declaration of Independence was signed. There is a deep and powerful bond between the Army and the nation. Soldiers and Army Civilians embody the Army Values: loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity and personal courage.



Observing the Army's Birthday provides an opportunity for Soldiers and Army Civilians to reach out and tell their Army story to the nation. Commemorating the 75th anniversary of D-Day provides an additional opportunity to highlight the contributions of Army heroes throughout its history.

Optimizing for interoperability with its [allies and partners](#) to strengthen alliances, attract new partners and deliver more effective coalition operations.



*U.S. Veteran Joseph Morettini, former with the 82nd Airborne Division 508, salutes as he attends a joined ceremony held in Picauville, northern France, on June 4, 2019, to commemorate the 90th Infantry Division and the US Air Force contribution to the liberation of Picauville, one of the first town liberated by the Allied forces after the D-Day landing in 1944. Morettini jumped during the night between the June 5 and 6, 1944 on La Fiere.*



*Soldiers from the U.S. 75th Ranger Regiment, in period dress, climb the cliff of Pointe-du-Hoc in Cricqueville-en-Bessin, Normandy, France, on June 5, 2019. During the American assault of Omaha and Utah beaches on June 6, 1944, U.S. Army Rangers scaled the 100-foot cliffs to seize German artillery pieces that could have fired on the American landing troops.*

What continued efforts does the Army have planned?

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an increasingly dynamic regional security environment around the globe.

## **As Army turns 244 years old, lessons of D-Day still relevant today**

*By Sean Kimmons, Army News Service  
June 12, 2019*

WASHINGTON -- As Army Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Milley spoke to veterans at the 75th anniversary of the D-Day invasion, he asked what lessons they had learned from hitting the beach in that deadly campaign.

birthday, Milley said that sacrifice should not be forgotten.

"I think that's the lesson of great power competition, great power war," he said. "Let us never forget that 75 years ago the world was amass in violence. And the way to keep that peace is to maintain an incredibly strong military for the United States."

### **CONGRESS FORMS ARMY**

On June 14, 1775, the Second Continental Congress formed the Continental Army under the command of George Washington to unify the 13 colonies in their fight against British forces.



*Secretary of the Army Mark T. Esper joins Army Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Milley and Sgt. Maj. of the Army Daniel A. Dailey in a full honors wreath-laying ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknowns at Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, Va., June 14, 2018. Senior leaders will again lay a wreath June 14, 2019, to pay tribute to the Army's 244th birthday. (Photo Credit: Staff Sgt. Brandy N. Mejia)*

"Never let it happen again," a 96-year-old veteran who earned two Silver Stars told the general.

Milley called it the "single most violent conflict in human history" when over 150,000 allied troops stormed the heavily fortified coast of France's Normandy region on June 6, 1944.

By the time the campaign ended in early August, nearly 37,000 ground troops had been killed.

On Wednesday, while at a cake-cutting ceremony at the U.S. Capitol to officially kick off events for the Army's 244th

When the Revolutionary War ended, the Congress of the Confederation created the U.S. Army to replace the disbanded Continental Army on June 3, 1784.

"We were born as the result of the United States Congress," Milley said. "The United States Army could not be the most powerful army in the world ... without all the great support that we get from the Senate and the House."

Throughout the years, Soldiers have played an integral part in the nation's wars as well as defending the homeland and conducting humanitarian assistance across the country and around the world.

Today, the Army's total force numbers about 1 million and some 180,000 Soldiers are deployed in over 140 countries at any given time.



Lawmakers join Secretary of the Army Mark T. Esper (3rd from left), Army Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Milley and Sgt. Maj. of the Army Daniel A. Dailey (right) in cutting a cake in honor of the Army's 244th birthday during a ceremony at the U.S. Capitol June 12, 2019. (Photo Credit: Sean Kimmons)

### ARMY'S RENAISSANCE

"Your United States Army has to be ready today for that future fight," said Army Secretary Mark T. Esper during the ceremony.

Esper also mentioned the Army should learn from the Greatest Generation, which fought and defeated Nazi Germany, imperial Japan and fascist Italy.

The Army is now in the middle of a renaissance, he said, as it changes the way it mans, trains and equips the force in order to stay ahead of near-peer threats.

"We will be ready and we are ready," he said. "That's our commitment to you, the American people. That's our commitment to Congress and that is our commitment to the country."

### BIRTHDAY EVENTS:

A Twilight Tattoo to honor the Army's birthday also took place Wednesday at Summerall Field at Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall, Virginia.

On Thursday, senior leaders plan to host another cake-cutting ceremony at the Pentagon.

On Friday morning -- the actual day of the Army's birthday -- Esper and Sgt. Maj. of the Army Daniel Dailey are slated to lead an Army staff birthday run with Soldiers

and members of Congress through Arlington National Cemetery.

Senior leaders will then lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknowns later that day at the cemetery.

The Army Birthday Ball, which about 1,600 personnel are expected to attend, will take place at the Washington Hilton on Saturday.

The Washington Nationals baseball team will host an Army Day at Nationals Park on June 18. Esper plans to throw out the first pitch and the game ball will be delivered by Milley.

There will also be a third-inning salute with senior leaders and the Army Chorus. The team's mascot presidents will even conduct their routine race in Army uniforms.

Army installations and communities are also holding their own local events during the Army's birthday week.

Editor's Note: there will be several Twilight Tattoo performance in the summer months. For full schedule of Twilight Tattoo performances visit The US Army Military District website, <https://www.twilight.mdw.army.mil/schedule>.

### Gen McConville Confirmed as Next Chief of Staff, 'people' to be His Top Priority

By Army News Release May 24, 2019



General McConville testifying on Capitol Hill.

FORT MEADE, Md. -- The No. 1 priority for the next Army chief of staff will be people, whom Gen. James C. McConville says are the Army's greatest strength.



Vice Chief of Staff addressing personnel in his office in the Pentagon.

"Winning requires unit cohesion, a cohesion built on a foundation of trained, disciplined, and fit Soldiers who treat each other with dignity and respect," McConville said, May 2, at his confirmation hearing.

On May 23, senators agreed and confirmed McConville to be the Army's top officer, a position he said will allow him to ensure the service remains the most lethal and decisive land force in the world.

"I am grateful for the opportunity to serve as the next chief of staff of the Army," he said after the announcement. "I look forward to the honor of having another opportunity to lead the Soldiers, civilians and Families serving our nation's Army."

A senior aviator who has qualified on several helicopters, McConville was the vice chief of staff under Gen. Mark A. Milley, who has been nominated for chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Prior to his assignments to the Pentagon as the Army's G-1 (personnel) and chief of legislative liaison, McConville was the longest serving commander of the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault).

"General McConville is an extremely accomplished Army officer and I'm supremely confident in his abilities as the next Chief of Staff," said Secretary of the Army Mark T. Esper. "He has played an instrumental role in almost every major decision the Army has made since becoming the Vice Chief of Staff and is the perfect leader to carry on our mission of preparing the Army for the future."

In his hearing before the Senate Armed Services Committee, the general said he



is committed to eradicating sexual assault and harassment among the ranks, reducing suicides, and making sure Families have quality housing, healthcare and childcare.

"The Army expects a lot from their Soldiers and Families and really to maximize the readiness of our Soldiers, they must know that the Army is caring for their Families," he said.

With 37 years of service, McConville also stressed the Army faces a critical point as it shifts from irregular warfare to great power competition.

"We will win by aggressively pursuing our priorities of readiness, modernization, and reform," he told lawmakers.

Among the Army's six modernization priorities, McConville highlighted long-range precision fires as a key to gaining overmatch against near-peer competitors.

An extended-range cannon that can shoot rounds at least 70 kilometers is being developed, he said, as well as a precision strike missile and a strategic long-range cannon and hypersonic missiles.

"Future chiefs will no longer have to say that they are outgunned or outranged as we go into the future," he said.

Modernization efforts, he added, will not only be about new equipment, but also implementing the multi-domain operations concept and a new talent-management system.

He said being part of a joint force, the Army can also effectively deter Russia and China, the two largest threats mentioned in the National Defense Strategy.

"The way we do that is working with our partners and allies," he said, "and also having forces present or an ability to react to any type of malicious behavior."

At the start of the hearing, McConville recognized his wife, Maria, a former Army officer herself, whom he said is responsible for all of his success.

"She is the foundation and strength of our Family," he said. "She often says to me, 'don't thank us for our sacrifice, thank us for our commitment.' And I want to thank all of the spouses for their commitment in serving."

The couple has three children -- all now serving as officers in the Army

## Five Things Army Officers and Units Should Know About the Assignment Interactive Module

*Submitted by Nicole Hawk*



FORT KNOX, Kentucky. -- If you're one of the more than 3,200 active duty officers or warrant officers identified to move, or a unit welcoming new talent to your ranks, you probably have questions about the new Assignment Interactive Module, or AIM.

AIM is a web based system designed to advance Army talent management, while ensuring readiness. AIM provides the data and tools to help the U.S. Army Human Resources Command (HRC) place the right officers in the right position at the right time.

The AIM marketplace encourages communication between officers and units and enables them to voice their preferences for one another. Officers get more control over their careers while taking into account family considerations. And, for the first time, units get a say in who fills which positions.

That said, we've come up with the top 5 things officers and units should know about AIM to make the system work for them.

### #1: GO EARLY AND OFTEN

The AIM marketplace is open to officers and units at the same time so that officers moving into their next assignment and units seeking to fill assignments can communicate. Units can filter potential candidates by whether or not the officer expressed interest in an assignment by filtering for officers who put the assignment in their top 10%. Officers scheduled to move should make their initial preferences early on in the process and check back frequently.

Reaching out to units you are interested in and asking questions about assignments could help you separate yourself from the crowd.

Even if you're not scheduled to move, the Army's 90,000+ active duty officers or warrant officers can login to AIM anytime to start learning. In addition to displaying recent and upcoming assignments, AIM increases transparency by allowing you to see every assignment in every career field across the Army.

### #2: RESUME. RESUME. RESUME.

Simply put, officers who have a resume in AIM are more likely to receive a positive vote from units than officers who don't have a resume. Units can filter officers by specific skills and talents, so take time to build a strong resume. Don't wait until you're scheduled to move to start working on your resume.

Officers should also read through their market's rules of engagement (ROE) prior to preferencing units. ROE is how HRC's Officer Personnel Management Directorate (OPMD) implements proponent and senior leader career guidance. Paying attention to the ROE helps officers figure out which positions they are actually qualified for and which ones best match their skill set.

### #3: PREFERENCING MAKES A DIFFERENCE

In the last moving cycle, 40% of officers who preferenced units got their most preferred assignment and 75% received an assignment in their top 10%. Remember #1? Go early and often. The

sooner officers preference assignments the sooner units will see that they are interested in them - and you can update your preferences any time until the market closes.

Among units who participated in the market, more than 50% of the officers they received were ones they had preferred. Do keep in mind, even if an officer and a unit are a possible market match, meaning the officer wanted to go to the unit and the unit wanted the officer (i.e., the officer and unit preferred each other), there are other considerations including readiness that go into the slating process.

#### #4: BE REALISTIC

How does hanging out on the sandy beaches of Hawaii or Florida sound to you? Or maybe you'd prefer hitting the slopes in the mountains of Colorado? Pretty good right? Well chances are there are plenty of other officers who are thinking that same exact thing!

And if you're a unit eyeing one particular officer, there are probably other units interested in them too. Within AIM officers can see how interested their peers are in the positions in their market. The bottom line is officers should preference multiple units rather than focusing on one specific location and units should build a candidate pool by ranking multiple officers.

#### #5: MARKETPLACE 101

As with any Army system, you're not going to learn everything you need to know about AIM the first go around. But every new system has a starting point, and for you that should be the Marketplace 101 video on the AIM landing page. It has simple instructions and tips to make the most of AIM including how to filter information, find good points of contact for both officers and units, and share special assignment considerations with your career coach.

OPMD can't guarantee officers will always receive their more preferred assignment or that units will receive all of their preferred officers. Career coaches have to take into account readiness and

key developmental opportunities, required skills, and programs like the Exceptional Family Member and Married Army Couples programs.

Look at it this way, would you prefer to have a say in your next assignment, or would you rather sit back and let others decide for you? AIM is your opportunity to highlight your strengths and influence what the right position at the right location and the right time means for you.

For more information on US Army Talent Management of to visit AIM, go to <https://talent.army.mil/>

### Six Triple Eight UK Documentary Tour: ROCKS Members Travel to the United Kingdom

*By COL (Ret.) Edna W. Cummings, US Army, Six Triple Eight Advocate/Producer*



*L-R, James Theres, Ambassador Robert W. Johnson, MSG (Ret.) Elizabeth Helm-Frazier, COL (Ret.) Edna W. Cummings, and Garry Stewart.*

From May 12-17, 2019, ROCKs members BG (Ret.) Clara-Adams-Ender (cast) and COL (Ret.) Edna W. Cummings, Producer, were in the United Kingdom as guests of U.S. Ambassador, Robert W. Johnson. Adams-Ender and Cummings were part of a four-person team that included Executive Producer, James Theres and Producer, MSG Elizabeth Helm-Frazier. The purpose of the trip was to screen the Six Triple Eight documentary in several locations in the UK in support of the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of D-Day celebrations. The team screened the documentary in Birmingham, New Castle, Cardiff, Cambridge American Cemetery, Manchester, and Glasgow, Scotland. While in Birmingham, England, Ambassador Johnson dedicated a Blue Plaque at King Edward's School for Boys. The Blue Plaque marks where

the 855-member African American Women's Army Corps unit, the 688<sup>th</sup> Central Postal Directory Battalion sorted more than 17 million pieces of mail in three months for the seven million Americans serving in the European Theater of Operations during World War II.

#### Related Links:

<https://distinctlybirmingham.com/blog/2019/05/14/us-ambassador-at-six-triple-eight-premiere/>

<https://connectingvets.radio.com/articles/kansas-senator-jerry-moran-introduces-legislation-award-congressional-gold-medal-members>

<https://www.wispolitics.com/2019/u-s-rep-moore-introduces-bipartisan-legislation-to-recognize-the-all-black-female-six-triple-eight-battalion-of-world-war-ii/>

<https://thegedsection.com/all-black-world-war-ii-womens-battalion-get-their-long-overdue-honor-at-memorial-day-parade>

**Confidence isn't walking into a room with your nose in the air, and thinking you are better than everyone else, it's walking into a room and not having to compare yourself to anyone else in the first place.**

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## GREAT READS

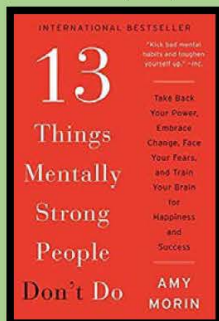


TO GROW, TO LEARN,  
TO ELEVATE YOUR MIND,  
TO GROW AS  
PROFESSIONAL, AND  
A MEMBER OF HUMANITY

Reading These 5 Books Will Change  
Your Life: Want To Feel More  
Satisfied With Life?  
by Sandra Wu

When Warren Buffett was asked about the secret to his wealth and success, he revealed that he read every day—500 pages, to be precise. Why not start with the 5 most-read titles on self-improvement and see if you don't feel a little more satisfied already.

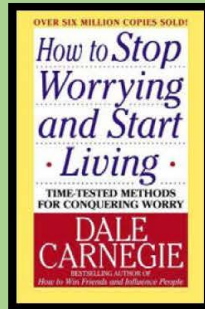
1. Thirteen Things Mentally Strong  
People Don't Do by Amy Morin



Do you struggle to get over your failures? Or dwell on things out of your control? Getting over these

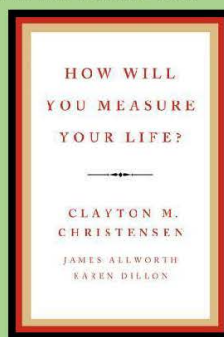
obstacles can have a profound influence on your everyday life. Morin shares how her most successful therapy patients overcame these difficulties.

2. How to Stop Worrying and Start  
Living by Dale Carnegie



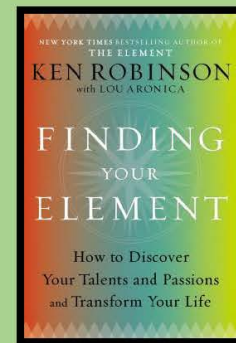
Ever wondered why you can't stop worrying about something? No matter how hard you try, are you fixated on the same issue? By defining the source of your stress, you can get over it once and for all. Carnegie came up with a timeless formula that helps you tackle any overthinking situation.

3. How Will You Measure Your Life?  
by Clayton M. Christensen, James  
Allworth and Karen Dillon



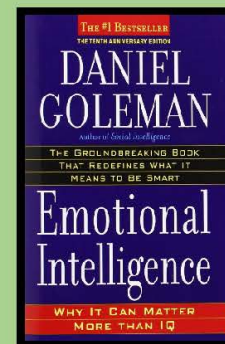
Are you making the right trade-offs in life? While career achievements can be satisfying, neglecting your family and friends can be detrimental in the long-run – in ways you can't even imagine.

4. Finding Your Element by Ken  
Robinson



Everyone has a passion. If you don't know what yours is, it just means you haven't discovered it yet. Or perhaps you have, but it was dismissed early in life. Find out how you can break free of society's strict rules and find your calling in life.

5. Emotional Intelligence  
by Daniel Goleman



Did you know if your pulse rate rises above 100 bpm, you're deemed too emotional to think rationally? You probably let feelings cloud your judgment more often than you know. Goleman explains how you can avoid letting your emotions rule you and make better decisions in life.

*This book was also identified as a GREAT READ by Major General Christopher Hughes, the former Commanding General of Cadet Command.*

## The BRS Opt In – An After Action Review

*COL. (R) Mark D. Troutman, PhD.,  
CFP® and W. Kirk Taylor, CFP®*

Some soldiers may be sorry down the road for not signing up for the Blended Retirement System during the “opt in” period that concluded on 31 December 2018. The results of the opt-in, a complex decision with difficult choices, will have researchers examining why more troops did not choose the new system. The answers will certainly impact retention and readiness. One question we might ask based on the early data available is whether soldiers missed out on a good deal.



BRS replaces the present High Three system in which individuals must serve twenty years active or equivalent reserve service to qualify for retirement benefits. BRS offers members a reduced annuity combined with automatic and government matched deposits to the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) which individuals can invest in a range of low cost investment funds. In addition, soldiers may take a lump sum distribution on retirement of up to 50% of the discounted value of their retirement in exchange for reduced annuity payments until full retirement age. While not part of BRS, the authorizing legislation also created a mid-career Continuation Pay for service members in which they may receive a minimum of 2.5 times monthly pay as a one-time bonus at mid – career (8 – 12 years of service) up to a maximum of 13 months’ pay, with the specific rate set by the needs of the service. We believe BRS clearly offers soldiers more choice.

So did service members miss a good deal if they did not opt for BRS? We believe

the answer is dependent on individual circumstances, as is often the case for financial decisions. But a few broad conclusions can focus our thinking and make sure this new system helps retention over time. For service members who know that life will call them out of the military altogether before the twenty year mark, opt in was clearly the better path. Under BRS, The government contributes 1% of the soldier’s basic pay to an individual TSP account and matches individual contributions up to 5% of basic pay. This translates to an immediate 100% return on service member contributions, with the added benefit that those contributions will grow tax-deferred at compounded rates within a chosen TSP fund. Matching contributions vest immediately, and the 1% automatic contribution vests in as little as two years.

If service members knew their intentions to remain in service and completely understood BRS, then opt in rates should have been much higher. Subsequent research will likely reveal that service members allowed uncertainty and “status quo bias” to leave them in a state of non-decision and locked into the legacy system. Should they decide to leave service prior to the twenty year mark, they may regret their indecision.

One service had a better opt in rate than others, which will likely be of interest to researchers. The Marines made each service member make a positive choice to opt in or remain in the legacy system following the training associated with BRS. The other services left the choice up to individual initiative. The dynamic of having individuals make a positive choice likely brought greater clarity of goals and plans to leave the service short of retirement. Subsequent research will likely show that education, counseling and leadership are key inputs necessary to bring about informed choice. But one clear conclusion is that the new system involves more complex and difficult choices.

For those who know the military is their calling and will likely serve for twenty or more years, the picture involves more complicated choices. For this population, the legacy system is often the better

choice on a present value basis. To its credit, the DoD provided financial calculators on its BRS website and examples in its education materials to walk service members through the use of personal factors in making a good decision. As always in financial models, the variables you include and assumptions you make in your model shape the results you generate. The DoD materials also encouraged service members to seek counseling as they made decisions, important resources as complexity and risk mark the path forward for this population.



Editor’s Note: For more about the Blended Retirement System or the Thrift Savings Plan visit [tsp.gov](https://tsp.gov).

A few simple scenarios generated through the DoD calculators demonstrated some broad comparisons. First, we ran an active duty O3 who intended to retire at the twenty year mark and earned due course promotions along the way. We did the same for an active duty E7 who was sure of E8 promotion and transition at the same twenty year mark. Each of our individuals received a 2.5 times basic pay continuation bonus along the way and deposited the proceeds in full to the TSP account. Finally, each of the individuals made the full 5% contribution to earn the full government match and earned a 7% nominal return on their TSP accounts, roughly in line with the results they could expect from a broad common stock fund based on the S&P 500 or the C Fund. We figured each of the individuals would live to ninety, not an uncommon expectation given life expectancy trends.

Briefly stated, the annuity portion of the BRS turns out to be about 20% less than the comparable present value of the annuity it replaces under High Three. Given the assumptions above, the legacy High Three system turned out to be about \$300,000 more valuable to the notional Captain and about \$150,000 more



valuable to the Sergeant First Class. Our example service members were able to make up the difference by taking more risk in their investment portfolio, at an assumed investment return of 8.35% to be exact. Returns in this range require a heavier weighting into more risky assets such as small or international stocks found in TSP's S or I funds. A more robust continuation pay invested in TSP would close some but not all of the reduced annuity value. With the size of continuation pay contingent on retention conditions at the time, service members can't predict what the number will be in advance. The findings are in line with most 401(k) arrangements in corporations. Mixed defined benefit and defined contribution plans achieve savings to the corporation in the annuity portion and give more choice to the individual. At the same time, it shifts risk and choice onto the individual in order to make up the haircut to the annuity provided by a defined benefit at retirement.

BRS is now the system of record, and with it come a host of choices that service members must make. Unanswered questions include whether the combination of choice, continuation pay and a reduced annuity will retain soldiers over the long term. The system was built on extensive research, so the pieces are in place to make good evaluations. What the experience of the open season does tell us is that managing your finances in the military – an already complicated endeavor – has entered a new age of complexity in which individuals will be much more responsible for their choices. Service members will have to educate themselves and find good advice from professionals who approach the question from an angle of considering the best outcome for the soldier. A new age of choice, opportunity and complexity is upon us.

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*W. Kirk Taylor, CFP® is the son of an Army veteran and passionately serves the military community both professionally and as a volunteer. He is Vice President at West Financial Services in McLean,*

*VA. You may contact Kirk with questions at [wktaylor@westfinancial.com](mailto:wktaylor@westfinancial.com)*

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## **The Twilight Tattoo, The Total Force (Army)**

*Submitted by Mr. Andre Foster*



On May 30, 2019 at 7:00 PM more than 2,500 people (Civilian, Military and DoD personnel) gathered at Fort Myer, Arlington Virginia's Military Installation to witness an honored tradition that harkens back more than four decades. What is the Twilight Tattoo, one may ask? It is an hour-long military pageant that is held in the Military District of Washington, whom stated:

"The Twilight Tattoo is one of the Army's most popular outreach programs that reinforces Army themes and messages and showcases the Soldiers' commitment to the nation. It communicates the Army's proud heritage and traditions to the American public by highlighting the Army's contribution to the history and development of the United States.

The program allows the Army to communicate senior leader priorities to key stakeholders through the entertaining demonstration of the Army's relevance to

the nation. It also preserves the trust, confidence and support of the American public. Twilight Tattoo highlights the Army's diverse and talented force through the history of the Army Soldier.

The hour-long, live-action military pageant featuring Soldiers from the 3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment (The Old Guard) and The U.S. Army Band "Pershing's Own." Experience a glimpse into American history through performances by The U.S. Army Blues, vocalists from The U.S. Army Band Downrange and U.S. Army Band Voices, The Old Guard Fife and Drum Corps, and The U.S. Army Drill Team."

The host for this Twilight Tattoo was Major General Charles W. Whittington, Acting Director Army National Guard. This is only the second year that the Army Guard has participated, which is a key directive of the Chief of Staff of the Army, General Mark A. Milley, who stated the event should showcase the "Total Force" (Active, National Guard and Reserves).

The Army National Guard is the oldest of the Ground Forces dating back to 1636, and in today's Army is comprised of more than 334,000 Citizen Soldiers. These Soldiers bring unique and needed skills to the force and they are not only Soldiers; they are Doctors, Lawyers, Teachers, Fire Fighters, Corporate Executives and more. The Army National Guard has been and will continue to be an integral part of the Total Force.

During this event many spectators were present to include but not limited to:

1. Director of the Army Staff, US. Army, Lieutenant General Walter E. Piatt
2. White House Representatives
3. Secretary of the Army Representatives
4. Employer Supports of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) Representatives
5. Employers that were recognized for their continued support of our Nation's Citizen Soldiers:
  - a. Peace Corps (DC)
  - b. Department of Environment and Energy (DC)

- c. Chesterfield Police Department (VA)
- d. Delaware Department of Corrections (DE)
- e. Shaw Industries Inc. (GA)
- f. Charleston Police Department (WV)



May 30, 2019 Twilight Tattoo; held in Conmy Hall, Fort Myer, Arlington, Virginia

The event is only 60 minutes that covers over 300 years of U.S. Army History, however, hundreds if not thousands of hours went into its' planning and execution. For each Tattoo, the host must ensure exacting coordination is executed between different parties (numerous States, Government officials, Military Personnel, Civilian Personnel) to include MDW leadership in order to have a seamless action pact 60 minutes. The Twilight Tattoo will continue to be a Centerstone event that showcases the Total Force (Army) in our Nation's Capital Region (NCR).



CPT Foster pictured with MG Charles Whittington, Acting Director Army National Guard

Mr. Andre Foster presently serves as the Vice President, Administration for the DC ROCKS. He is the Executive Officer for Acquisition Program Management Office. US Army National Guard Bureau

## Best for Vets: Employers — The Top Places to Land a Job in 2019



Mike Hansen (far right), national director of military affairs for Best for Vets company Power Home Remodeling, meets with his team of military affairs directors. (Gabriela Barrantes/Power Home Remodeling)

### Best for Vets: Employers 2019 rankings

- For-profit companies
- Government and nonprofit organizations
- Methodology: How we developed the rankings. For more information on the methodology go to (<https://rebootcamp.militarytimes.com/2019/05/06/methodology-best-for-vets-employers-2019/>)

Now is an excellent time to be a veteran looking for a civilian job. Unemployment rates are at historic lows, numerous groups are offering job search and training help to vets, and many of the country's biggest companies have rolled out major vet hiring programs.

At this point, there are so many options that it may seem overwhelming. If that's how you're feeling, the Best for Vets: Employers rankings are a good place to start. Nearly 200 employers across the country — more than have ever participated before — competed for a spot in this year's rankings, providing in-depth data on their culture, recruiting, policies and resources related to veterans, service members and military families. We carefully analyzed their responses. Here's who came out on top.

### Companies

#### 1. First Data Corp.

First Data has a team of eight recruiters dedicated either entirely or almost entirely to finding veterans and service

members to work at the company. Company representatives also attended 74 veteran job fairs over the course of the last year. Thanks to these large-scale vet recruiting efforts, as well as numerous other factors, First Data retains its spot atop our Best for Vets: Employers rankings. "Through a company-wide military engagement strategy called First Data Salutes, we provide the military community with career opportunities, best-in-class education resources, and premier business solutions for veteran-owned businesses," the company wrote in its survey response.

#### 2. Southern Company

This power company has many positions that align with military occupational specialties, including power system operators, information technology workers, even air traffic controllers. And if you've received military training in these fields, Southern Company will accept that training and let you get right to work, rather than forcing you to get additional, civilian credentials. The company also makes special efforts to recruit, support and train job candidates who are disabled veterans.

#### 3. Comcast NBCUniversal

One of the largest companies included in this year's rankings, Comcast hired nearly 2,700 veterans and service members in 2018. But the company's vet-related efforts don't end with recruiting. Comcast also has an 11-person team working to support the company's military-connected employees. In addition, the company spent nearly \$160 million at veteran-owned vendors and suppliers in the past year — about 5 percent of Comcast's vendor budget.



#### 4. Intuitive Research and Technology Corp.

Intuitive is one of the smallest companies in our rankings — but it has one of the biggest relative vet employee populations, with vets accounting for 30



percent of the workforce. The company dedicates 35 percent of its recruiting budget specifically to veteran recruiting. "Founded by two former Army civilian managers, Intuitive was built on a foundation of ethical principles and values that still radiate throughout the company today," the company's survey response said.

## 5. USAA

While every company on this list is focused on hiring veterans and military family members, USAA is one of just a few groups whose customer base is also veterans and military families. The banking and insurance powerhouse has veterans in the positions of chief executive officer, chief of operations and president of USAA Federal Savings Bank. USAA also offers its reservist employees their full civilian pay, on top of their military pay, for 12 months when employees must leave work for military commitments.

See the full rankings of for-profit companies here.

<https://charts.militarytimes.com/chart/13>

## Government and nonprofit organizations

### 1. Harris County Sheriff's Office



This sheriff's office, based in Houston's Harris County, gives its veteran applicants a significant hiring preference over nonveterans. Additionally, when calculating retirement benefits, the office will credit veterans with up to five additional years of employment, based on their time serving in the military. The sheriff's office views law enforcement as a natural extension of military service: "We want to put the troops back in the fight, making them mission capable to now serve their local communities."

### 2. The Exchange (AAFES)

Familiar to nearly every service member as the ubiquitous on-base (and online) place to buy consumer goods, electronics

and other essentials – including your favorite Military Times newspapers – The Exchange is a natural fit for military-connected employees. Military spouses accounted for three in 10 of the company's 2018 hires and about 18 percent of the company's total employee population. Representatives of The Exchange attended a whopping 695 veteran job fairs in the last year.



### 3. Orange County (Fla.) Sheriff's Office

Members of the National Guard and reserves whose military obligations force them to miss time working for this Florida law enforcement organization can count on receiving the full difference between their military pay and their sheriff's office pay, for an unlimited period of time. What's more, they receive these benefits even if they volunteered for active duty service. In addition, training with the office can be covered by the GI Bill.

See the full rankings of government and nonprofit organizations here.  
<https://charts.militarytimes.com/chart/14>



- ✓ Be accessible and become a mentor.
- ✓ 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 ON THE RISE



*Rocks Alumni Principle Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, Marshall Williams served as the North Carolina A&T commencement speaker for master's and doctoral degree recipients on May 9, 2019. The ceremony was held at 1:30 p.m. in the Greensboro Coliseum Special Events Center. A&T awarded about 400 graduate degrees to include active duty military officers.*

### D.C. ROCKS Mentor and Community Leader Major General (Ret) George A. Alexander Receives Harlem Fine Arts Show 2019 Salute to African Americans in Medicine Prestigious Award

*Submitted by COL (Ret) Dorene Hurt & LTC Michelle A. Jefferson, DVM, DACVP*



*MG (Ret) George Alexander with Dr. Harold Shambley, LTC (Ret) Joyce Shambley, and COLs (Ret) Lisa Weatherington & Dorene Hurt at the 10th Annual Harlem Fine Arts Show's 2019 Salute to African Americans in Medicine Award Reception & Dinner. (Photo credit: Harlem Fine Arts Show Photographer)*

The Harlem Fine Arts Show (HFAS) 2019 Salute to African Americans in Medicine ~ "The Color of Healthcare," hosted their ceremonial dinner to salute African Americans in Medicine, June 15, 2019 at Howard

University's Louis Stokes Health Science Library.

In their continuing quest to promote health, wellness, and the opportunity for people to live their most productive lives, the HFAS forged a partnership with the medical community that highlights the synergy between art and healing. An active and stalwart ROCK, Major General (Ret) George Alexander was selected for his outstanding contribution to the medical field as well as his outreach in the African American community. According to the HFAS leadership, General Alexander represents one of those heroes in our community and deserves to be recognized. Over 250 guests enjoyed a special evening consisting of a VIP reception, dinner, awards, and an amazing exhibition and sale of African American art featuring over 30 artists and galleries.

Major General (Retired) George A. Alexander, M.D. is a senior executive with over 30 years of progressive leadership that have culminated at the highest levels of government in both the military and civilian sectors. He holds the distinction of being the highest ranking military medical officer from the U.S. Army, Navy, or Air Force who is a graduate of the Howard University College of Medicine (HUCM).

As the Deputy Surgeon General in the Office of the Army Surgeon General he championed health and medical readiness policies for Army National Guard (ARNG) soldiers. He served as principle advisor to the Army Surgeon General on all aspects of readiness and structure of ARNG assets. He advised on the medical readiness, deployability, and health status of over 350,000 soldiers. His military assignments included service as a medical officer with the 20th Special Forces Group (Airborne), the Green Berets, and as commander of medical units at the company, battalion, and brigade levels.

In his civilian experience General Alexander has held a series of prominent positions. As Director for Medical and Public Health Security in the White House, he was responsible for medical and public health policies to safeguard the entire U. S. against terrorism. As Chief,

Special Populations Studies Branch at the National Cancer Institute, he provided leadership and oversight of a \$50 million cancer intervention research program.



*Major General (Ret) George A. Alexander receives the Harlem Fine Arts Show's 2019 Salute to African Americans in Medicine Award (AAiM) from the Founder and President of the HFAS, Mr. Dion Clarke. Ms. Molette Green (far right) introduced MG (Ret) Alexander at the 10th Annual HFAS AAiM Dinner which was held on June 15, 2019 at the Louis Stokes Health Science Library, Howard University. (Photo credit: Dr. Michelle A. Jefferson)*

General Alexander completed premedical studies at Columbia University, his M.D. degree from the HUCM, postgraduate training as American Cancer Society clinical fellow in radiotherapy at the renowned MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, advanced biostatistics training at the Johns Hopkins University School of Public Health, and the Program for Senior Executives in National and International Security at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. Currently, as president of GA Alexander Solutions, LLC, he provides clients innovative health care solutions that promote success and growth.

As a recipient of the ROCKS Washington, D.C. Chapter's 2018 Lifetime of Leadership Award, MG (Ret) George A. Alexander never stopped mentoring cadets and officers. John C. Maxwell stated, "One of the greatest values of mentors is the ability to see ahead what others cannot see and to help them navigate a course to their destination." MG (Ret) Alexander is a visionary and passionate mentor who truly cares about growing and developing those in the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics fields, and regularly attends the Washington, D.C. Chapter of the ROCKS, Inc. chapter



meetings where he actively provides mentoring.

For more information on the HFAS AAiM check out their website: <https://hfass.org/art-tour/>.



*Washington, D.C. Chapter of the ROCKS, Inc. member, MG (Ret) George Alexander with one of his mentees, Dr. Michelle A. Jefferson, Washington, D.C. Chapter of the ROCKS, Inc.'s VP of Administration and Membership Chairman at the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Harlem Fine Arts Show's 2019 Salute to African Americans in Medicine Award Dinner. (Photo credit: Dr. Craig Myatt)*

## **Major General (Retired) Phillip M. Churn Sr., ROCKS DC Chapter Member, recipient of the 2019 Ellis Island Medal of Honor**

*Submitted by LTC Stephen Stanley*



On May 11, 2019, Major General (Retired) Phillip M. Churn Sr. was among a group of 93 distinguished American Citizens, who were honored as the 2019

recipients of the Ellis Island Medal of Honor.

The Ellis Island Medal of Honor is an American award founded by the Ellis Island Honors Society which are presented annually to American Citizens, both native-born and naturalized. The Medal recognizes individuals who have made it their mission to share with those less fortunate, their wealth of knowledge, indomitable courage, boundless compassion, unique talents and selfless generosity. They do so while acknowledging their debt to their ethnic heritage as they uphold the ideals and spirit of America. Past medalist include seven U.S. presidents, several world leaders, several Nobel Prize winner, and other leaders of industry, education, the arts, sports, and government, along with everyday Americans who have made freedom, liberty and compassion a part of their life's work.

Major General (Retired) Phillip M. Churn Sr. is a veteran with 37 years of service to our Nation, he is a native of Washington, D.C. His grandparents immigrated to the United States in 1912 from St. Kitts and Antigua.

Major General Churn commanded and held numerous leadership positions from platoon leader to Major General. He deployed four times in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm. His illustrious career culminated with his assignment as The Assistant to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff for Reserve Matters. He was responsible for advising the Chairman and the Joint Staff on issues concerning over 373,000 Reserve Component service members from the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, and Coast Guard, and their Families.

Major General Churn received numerous awards and decorations to include: Distinguished Service Medal (with Oak Leaf Cluster), Defense Superior Service Medal, Bronze Star Medal (with Oak Leaf Cluster), Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal (with 4 Oak Leaf Clusters), Joint Service Commendation Medal, and numerous other awards and decorations.

He is a Life Member of the ROCKS Inc and a member of the Board of Directors for the Family Health Centers of Baltimore.

## **Hampton University Honors a Life Member of the ROCKS**

*Submitted by RMOA Business Association, Inc.*



*COL James George, USA, Retired*

HAMPTON, VA. April 4, 2019 — Hampton University will recognize the generosity of Hampton University alumnus and Board of Trustee member, Mr. James T. George ('58) with the dedication and naming ceremony of the James T. George School of Business, April 4, at 4:00 p.m. inside the Ethel C. Buckman Hall Rotunda.

"Trustee James T. George truly believes in reinvesting back into his alma mater and I am just pleased that I could recommend to the Board of Trustees that we name the School of Business in his honor," said Hampton University President Dr. William R. Harvey. "Over the years, Trustee George has given Hampton University his time and skill while serving on our board. He has also given a significant financial gift back to his 'Home by the Sea.' This world-class institution is honored by his continued support."

George earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology from Hampton University, where he was also commissioned as Second Lieutenant in the United States Army. George went on to be one of the first African-Americans to receive an MBA from the University of Arizona. He also holds an Advanced Management Certificate from Pennsylvania State University. He is a

graduate of the Armed Forces Staff College in Norfolk, VA and the Army War College in Carlisle, PA.

“It’s wonderful to leave a legacy, but what is more important here is that the students get the highest quality education possible to enable them to lead in corporate America and someday lead their own businesses,” said George. “The Hampton School of Business instills business ethics in its graduates. That is one of the reasons that I am so pleased, no – thrilled, to have my name associated with this visionary and innovative school of business. But even in super competitive environments, there is still a need for business ethics. It begins with simply telling the truth. My hope is that more graduates of this great institution will think of themselves as employers and entrepreneurs, rather than employees only.”

George founded MSTI, a small business, in 1990 after serving for 27 years as an active duty Army officer. Retiring as a Colonel, he served in a variety of infantry and comptroller positions both overseas and in the United States, including two tours in Vietnam and tours in Korea and Europe. As Assistant Comptroller of the Army for Financial Planning at the Pentagon, he led the development of the initial concept for an information system to integrate the Army's programming and budgeting process. He concurrently served as a member of the board of directors of the Army and Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES) for three years while serving as comptroller of Fort Devens, MA and subsequently, while at the Pentagon. He currently serves on the Board of Trustees of Hampton University.

MSTI was established as a management consulting company. Its current focus is information technology solutions and management solutions. The company has grown from one person to its present strength of approximately 300 employees. Mr. George continues in the role as chairman, but has now relinquished day-to-day operations to the present CEO, Mr. Norris Middleton, who is also a Hampton alumnus.

George and his wife, Juliette, a retired Fairfax County secondary school teacher, have been married for over 50 years and have two children and two grandchildren. They currently reside in Fairfax Station, VA.

## Lawrence Gets Promoted to Brigadier General

*Submitted by: COL(R) Dorene Hurt*



On June 7th, COL Gavin A. Lawrence was promoted to the rank of Brigadier General in the United States Army. LTG Aundre F. Piggee, Deputy Chief of Staff, HQDA G-4 (Logistics) officiated the promotion ceremony held at the Fort Myer, VA Officer's Club (Patton Hall). During his comments, BG Lawrence specifically cited the profoundly positive affect the ROCKS Incorporated has had on his military career. He credited ROCKS for not only “bringing mentors into his path at critical junctures of his career but also teaching him the responsibility he has as a leader to mentor others and give back to the profession which has given him so much.”



*BG Lawrence post promotion picture with his family and LTG Piggee.*

BG Lawrence was born in Kingston, Jamaica and raised in the Philadelphia, Pennsylvania area. He earned his commission from the United States Military Academy (West Point) in 1995 and has commanded at the company, battalion, and brigade levels. He currently serves of the Director for Strategy, Readiness, and Operations within the HQDA G-4. BG Lawrence will assume command of Defense Logistics Agency Troop Support in Philadelphia in a ceremony on June 25th.



*BG Lawrence greets Lieutenant General (Retired) Arthur Gregg and distinguished guests at his reception.*

## DLA Troop Support Welcomes “Hometown” Leader during Change of Command

*By John Dwyer III DLA Troop Support Public Affairs*

The Defense Logistics Agency Troop Support bid farewell to one commander and welcomed another during a change of command ceremony June 25 in Philadelphia.

During the ceremony, Troop Support employees and distinguished guests witnessed the arrival of Army Brig. Gen. Gavin Lawrence and the departure of Army Brig. Gen. Mark Simerly.

It is an “honor and a privilege” to return to Philadelphia to lead a great organization, with such an important mission Lawrence said.

Lawrence, a native of Roslyn, Pennsylvania, and graduate of Bishop McDevitt High School, took the helm of Troop Support during the ceremony held only six miles from his childhood alma mater. As the commander, he leads the largest federal workforce in Philadelphia



with more than 2,000 employees and a \$17.6 billion warfighter support mission.



DLA Director Army Lt. Gen. Darrell Williams, left, passes the DLA Troop Support flag to Brig. Gen. Gavin Lawrence who assumed command of the organization at a ceremony June 25, 2019 in Philadelphia. The passing of the flag is a military tradition symbolizing the change of command. Lawrence, a native of Roslyn, Pennsylvania, returned to his childhood hometown to take command from Army Brig. Gen. Mark Simerly whose next assignment will be commanding the 19th Expeditionary Sustainment Command in the Republic of Korea. (Photo by Ed Maldonado)

DLA Director Army Lt. Gen. Darrell Williams presided over the ceremony, and opened by praising the organization's "venerable and storied" legacy in Philadelphia, as well as both leaders for their contributions to the agency and its partners.

He said that the military places a "premium on officers" chosen for command of Troop Support, and that Simerly and Lawrence were two such outstanding leaders.

"I would say, from personal knowledge about both of these officers and their families, that it does not get any better than this," Williams said.

Williams also noted that Lawrence's career successes and warfighter support – as well as the fact that he is a Philadelphia sports fan – made him "the absolute right person" to lead Troop Support and continue the Simerly's progress.

"[Simerly] has proven to be an exceptional leader who epitomizes strong support to the warfighter and indeed to

the entire whole of government," Williams said.

Simerly said that leaving Troop Support to take command of the 19th Expeditionary Sustainment Command in South Korea was "bittersweet," but that he would be taking a lesson with him from the Troop Support workforce. "To understand [Troop Support] I had to re-learn the meaning of the word grit," Simerly said. "It is the passion of persistence, the courage of resolve and strength of character. Grit is the essence of this great Troop Support team, and it has been my greatest privilege and honor to command DLA Troop Support for these past two years. Stay gritty!"

In his closing remarks, Lawrence praised the workforce's dedication to its mission throughout a history of change, and said he intends to continue to build on its legacy.

"There is and always remains one constant [for Troop Support]: an uncompromising commitment to innovation, service readiness and providing our nation's warfighters and Whole of Government partners the highest level of support," Lawrence said. "This is, and always will remain, our focus."

### Congratulations to one of the Army's newest Lieutenant Colonels

*Submitted by COL(R) Dorene Hurt*



LTC Ed Moten poses with his family (L-R): James, Jameta, Debra, and Jaden). Photo courtesy of KCG Photography, LLC.

On May 31, 2019, LTC Ed Moten of the Washington DC ROCKS Chapter celebrated with his family and friends at two promotion ceremonies. A long-term

ROCK, LTC Moten is a newly elected officer of the DC Chapter who'll be responsible for its Mentoring Program efforts. LTC Moten has the distinction of having two promotion ceremonies on the same day.



LTC Ed Moten receiving his promotion certificate from COL Neil P. Woods at his promotion ceremony held at Nationals Park, home of the Washington Nationals baseball team. Photo courtesy of KCG Photography, LLC.

He had the amazing opportunity to conduct an intimate ceremony at Nationals Park, the baseball stadium that's the home of the Washington Nationals in Washington DC. "Today is a day that I'll never forget," he said. "I couldn't believe it when I received the email from the Washington Nationals saying that I was able to host a promotion on their field." LTC Moten repeated the promotion ceremony and hosted a reception later that evening. He was overjoyed and ended his speech by thanking his "tribe," referring to the attendees and people with whom he has crossed paths throughout his career. "This promotion is a celebration of the abundance of love, caring, and mentorship that has been poured into me by you over the years and I thank you for believing and trusting in me."

## Jones Takes Command

*Submitted by Mrs. Sharene Alexis Cook*



*First Lieutenant Jones accepts company guidon from LTC Paul D. Lang*

On 5 April 2019, First Lieutenant Xavier Jones assumed command of the U.S. Army Trauma Training Center. Professional colleagues, family and friends looked on in the Ronald J. Spino classroom in the Gordon Center for Research in Medical Education of University of Miami's Miller School of Medicine of Jackson Memorial Hospital as Lieutenant Jones accepted the company guidon from LTC Lang, the Commander of the 187<sup>th</sup> Medical Training Battalion. Lieutenant Jones is no stranger to the Army growing up in a military family. He enlisted in the Army as an Air Defense Soldier serving with Terminal High Altitude Air Defense at Fort Bliss for six years before advancing to the rank of Sergeant and later being accepted to the Army's Green to Gold Program. He would serve as the Cadet Battalion Commander while attending the University of Texas at El Paso and was later commissioned as a Medical Service Officer. Lieutenant Jones served as Ambulance Platoon leader in Charlie Company of the 82<sup>nd</sup> Brigade Support Battalion, 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division and then with 759<sup>th</sup> Forward Surgical Team of the 44<sup>th</sup> Medical Brigade. While stationed at Fort Bragg, he served as the All American ROCKS Chapter's Vice President, Administration. He deployed to Afghanistan with his company supporting the Combined Joint Special

Operations Task Force earning a Combat Medical Badge and a Bronze Star. Less than three months after taking command, Jones was promoted to the rank of Captain by his mother, COL Karen M. Wrancher. COL Wrancher has served as Vice President of Communications and Publications for the ROCKS, Incorporated for the last two years.



*Newly promoted CPT Jones holds his certificate of promotion. Pictured with his wife, Mrs. Brenda Jones and mother, COL Karen M. Wrancher, Chief of the Assistance Division, U.S. Army Inspector General Agency.*

*Welcome*  
New Members

*Joined 03/27/2019-07/02/2019*

2LT Babatunde Adelaja USA  
CPT Jason Ancrum USA  
MAJ Michael Bennett USA  
CPT Mario Bowers USA  
COL Gregory Browder USA  
1LT Darren Brown USA  
LTC Cleo Brown USA  
MAJ Johnathan Butler USA  
CPT Kevin Claiborne USA  
WO2 LaToya Cooper USA  
MAJ Nina Copeland USA  
LTC Shane Cuellar USA  
CPT Wesley Dandridge ANG(Army)

MAJ Kimberly DeFour USA  
1LT Adrian Dilley USA  
MAJ Aquita Ellis ANG(Army)  
CPT Andre Foster ANG(Army)  
CPT DULCE FUENTES USA  
1LT Jordan Green USA  
CPT Cherrell Gross USA  
1LT Joseph Haas ANG(Army)  
1LT Camry Harrell USA  
CPT Stephanie Helmus USA  
2LT Gary Henderson USA  
LTC Brandon Hill USA  
MAJ Charles Houston USA  
MAJ Early Howard USA  
CPT Lynnette Johnson ANG(Army)  
CPT Kevin Jones USA  
MAJ Le Nard Kearney USA  
MAJ Beatrice Kearney USA  
CPT Megan Kuykendall USA  
2LT Jeremy Lahn USA  
CPT Sarah Levy USA  
WO1 Andrea Lewis USA  
CPT Deodato Louissaint ANG(Army)  
MAJ Thomas Marbury USA  
LTC David Marshall, Jr. USA  
CDT Brandi Mccoy  
CPT Christopher McDonald USA  
1LT Carlton McLaurin ANG(Army)  
1LT Jeynelle McReynolds USA  
MAJ mattii minor USA  
1LT Christian Nattiel USA  
CPT Sogbeye Okoro USA  
CPT John Okumu USA  
LTC Irvin Oliver USA  
1LT NeJuana Parish USA  
CPT Patrick Peacock USA  
CPT Rowan Pruitt USA  
Mr. Adam Shorter  
Mr. Magnus Thorpe  
CPT Chukwuma Ugenyi USA  
2LT Emilio Walls USA  
2LT Tanika Watson USAR  
MAJ Laurence Webb USA  
CPT Kalpatrick Wells USA  
LTC Creyonta West USA  
2LT Adam Wetzel USA  
MAJ Montae White USA  
LTC Traci Willie USA  
CPT Alexandra Young USA







## It Takes A Village

By Colonel Karen M. Wrancher  
VP, Communications & Publications

The elders in my community told me, and I would continue to hear the phrase as a young adult and later in my life as a service member in the military, “It takes a village”. Four simple words, yet very powerful to simply state the elders of the community have the responsibility to teach, advice and even admonish children so they were encouraged to behave, learn to work as team, pursue their dreams and become citizens actively serving in their community. I was taught important lessons not only by parents, but also the reverend in our local church, my Girl Scout Troop Leader and even my choir director and my circle of community teachers, leaders and mentors only increased as I became older and traveled around the globe.

When individuals come together to coach, teach and mentor the youth of their community, it has immeasurable impact on the next generation by helping them to excel and succeed in their future endeavors as well as avoid potential pitfalls in life. This concept when executed in its best form is exponentially powerful particularly in the military community. When senior leaders advise and provide insight on the history and best practices are interwoven in the ROCKS, Incorporated’s future strategic planning it helps give our organization direction and purpose to achieve our vision and organizational goals. The ROCKS also need younger leaders to bring great ideas, innovation and creativity to the forefront in order to help the ROCKS, Incorporated achieve its mission of mentoring leaders for another 45 years.



*Caption for picture America is one of the few countries where multigenerational households are not common but more families for various reasons are choosing to have more than one generation at home. As parents raise their children, grandparents provide can sometimes assist as caregivers and provide children with their first life lessons.*

Within the last year under the leadership of our Chairman, Brigadier General (Retired) Lawrence Gillespie; and our Vice Chair, Colonel (Retired) Ray Bingham; the ROCKS Inc. has strengthened its partnership with U.S. Army Cadet Command in an effort to increase the number of scholarships awarded to future cadets, created strategic communication messages, created a framework for Chapter Advisors to conduct Chapter Assistance Visits, and established an identification number for the ROCKS members to give donations through the Combined Federal Campaign. All those actions are excellent milestones; however, for these tools to positively impact chapters and their operations, all of us: members of the National Board, Chapter Advisors and chapter leaders need to look for ways to incorporate these tools into our operations. These products are to assist chapters especially as some struggle as members change duty stations and they experience increased and decreased membership as well as personnel turnover over the course of time as opposed to sustained growth.

The question, I have received most often as a new president is getting ready to have an office call with the senior mission or installation commander is,

“What Do I Say?” “Is there a slide deck already created?”

For individuals that are new to holding leadership roles, we have placed products for your use under the Resources tab of the ROCKS, Incorporated website ([www.rocksync.org](http://www.rocksync.org)).

What Do You Say? – A suggestion... The ROCKS, Incorporated started as an African American mentorship organization in 1974 and today the ROCKS have a diverse membership with chapters all around the globe. The National Navy Officer and the Pan-Pacific Asian Leaders and Mentors were started following the ROCKS’ Model. For over four decades, the organization has focused on serving those who desire to excel in their aspiration to be better leaders in service to our Army and our Nation. The ROCKS offers mentorship opportunities for those who desire to pursue excellence and ascend the rank structure within our Army.

The ROCKS conducts mentorship activities and forums around the globe. We have enjoyed partnering with Cadet Command in a number of activities such as the Army Senior Leadership Mentorship Forum and throughout the year the ROCKS’ assists high school

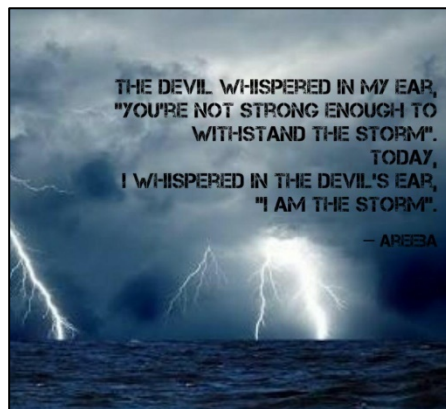
students and Cadets with scholarship applications as well as finding the right college or university to capitalize on their knowledge, skills and abilities. Even after they earn their commission the ROCKS, Incorporated continues to support its member in their professional journey to be the best cadets, officers and also Department of the Army Civilians (GS13 and above) they can be. Our organization provides those mentorship opportunities through:

- ☑ leadership professional development sessions
- ☑ professional development forums and discussion panels
- ☑ dissemination of information through the AUSA Expo and other expos, workshops and college fairs
- ☑ LPDs and instructional videos on topics such as mission command (given by General Gustave Perna), leadership (by Major General Charles Hamilton), and supporting your alma mater as well as giving back to you community (by Brigadier General Milford Beagle) and others via our Facebook page.

Is there a slide deck already created? - Yes, there a few templates to choose from to start creating a slide deck for a presentation to a senior leader at your location.

Do we have products for your use and for reference purposes? Yes, we do. Please visit the Resource tab of the ROCKS website. There are templates of products: story boards, slide decks for presentations to senior leaders, slides for providing chapter updates at our biennial leadership conference and other products to use as a starting point for almost any product you would like to create.

Is there a product you need and don't see on our website? If there is, please help us make the website better by sending an email to [VPComms4ROCKS@gmail.com](mailto:VPComms4ROCKS@gmail.com) and let us get it for you. If you have questions in other areas: Mentorship, Membership, Finance for any members of the National Board you can obtain these email address by going to the Board tab and clicking on respective member's title located to the right of their name.



Picture of Resources tab on [www.rocksync.org](http://www.rocksync.org) using an iPad.



### An Interest Group's Move to Chaptership

By COL Angie Hemingway USA (Ret)  
VP, Membership Development

In the last edition of the ROCKET, we discussed what it takes to become an Interest Group. Discussion areas focused on these points in moving from an Interest Group to Chaptership:

1. Individual contacts VP, Membership Development expressing interest in establishing an interest group
2. A letter requesting official recognition as an Interest Group sent to VP, Membership Development (VP, MD)
3. Requirements to be met as an Interest Group outlined in the response letter from VP, MD
4. Interest Group works on processes to ensure compliance with federal, state and local laws, files appropriate nonprofit Corporation application, collect local and National fees, and designation of a proposed chapter name.

Establishing and building a strong ROCKS Chapter requires dedication and strong leaders. A legacy this organization thrives on is leaders grooming and growing young officers and civilians through mentoring, coaching and teaching for success. Growing a strong ROCKS Interest Group or Chapter is not for the faint of heart given the challenges leaders face at all levels of their military, personal and professional life.

The Greater Bay Area ROCKS Interest Group is an example of new



interest group that is in the initial stages of standing up. Best practices currently being used to generate members and funding to establish Chaptership includes: Indicating interest to establish an interest group; obtaining support from strong senior ROCKS members to guide the decision-making process; rotating meetings places between the 3 ROTC Programs to meet unique needs of the geography/location; partnering with CASA (Civilian Aide to the Secretary of the Army; Recruiting Operating Officers (ROO); JROTC leaders; Recruiting Commanders, MEAPS and AMEDD Commanders. This interest group knows the importance of follow-on meetings to establish the leadership team, recruit new members, partners and to develop young officers and civilians.

The establishment of this interest group is unique as there are no installations close by. There are other structures such as recruiting companies and stations, young officers, civilians, retirees, cadets and partners that can help shape the ROCKS' story of success.

The end of the membership year is nearing. All memberships in local chapters expire on 8/31/2019. We value your membership in The National Board of the ROCKS, Inc. We ask that you encourage each of your members to renew membership before September 1, 2019 so their membership does not expire. You will not be notified beyond three notifications; however, I am interested in why you would choose not to renew your membership. Please take a moment to let us know the reason you would choose not to renew your membership by sending an email to [rocksnationalboard@gmail.com](mailto:rocksnationalboard@gmail.com) or [angiehemingway@hotmail.com](mailto:angiehemingway@hotmail.com). Your feedback is greatly appreciated.

As always let us know how we can serve you and your members. Thanks for the honor to serve you. I am reachable through the national website or at [angiehemingway@hotmail.com](mailto:angiehemingway@hotmail.com).

## Keeping our Fiscal Eyes on the Prize: Funding (Y)our Core Competencies!

*Submitted by COL (R) Eric P. Flowers  
USA*



The ethos of a non-profit organization (NPO) is, in many instances, expressed by the way the business handles its money. How, when and where a NPO spends its dollars helps define those things that are meaningful to the organization. In a way, those expenditures represent another way of defining the NPO's values, beliefs and core competencies. Subsequently, our annual Form 990 submissions should easily convey what is important to us as ROCKS. As a refresher, our various organizing documents effectively articulate those things that are important to us.

Notwithstanding those clarifying parameters, each chapter is fortunate to possess the

autonomy to govern itself as it sees fit. However, even with this essential latitude, we collectively conduct our respective business within the scope of a non-negotiable obligation to manage the fiscal affairs of the chapter so that no casual observer could ever doubt that we are about: "mentorship; leader development & diversity; coaching; scholarship; networking, and; professional development." As stewards of other people's money, it is imperative that we consistently exert discipline and logical train of thought to ensure our fundraising efforts and subsequent spending actions are geared towards some

type of measurable and relevant end. In other words, our spending should plainly and specifically (and not creatively and tangentially) relate back to our core competencies.

All we fiscally do (in our programmatic efforts) should conform to a "straight-line spending

theory" for non-profit fiscal management. If we ever find ourselves in a situation where we are unable to clearly show how future programmatic spending will definitively lead to tangible and enduring returns on investment- for the organization and/or for the profession of arms- then we need to refrain from obligating any funds towards such endeavors. Although some may argue that our inactions will cause us to miss out on the 'flavor of the month,' our long-term interests and organizational brand are best served if we commit to investing our resources into the niche areas where we possess a monopoly- mentoring!

When we unflinchingly commit to this type of challenge, our financial ledgers (across all levels of the organization) will unmistakably reflect that: mentoring/coaching is what we have been about, are about and will be about, until there is no longer a need for such "bench-building" in our profession of arms. Staying focused on this prize facilitates our restraint to do those "cool" things that so many other non-profits are effectively doing these days. In areas where we feel an urge to creep into the forte of others, at the expense of our monopolized commodity, we need to reaffirm our value of being unique and not succumb to the attractiveness of being duplicative.

So, as we head into budget development season, do what you can to ensure (y)our budgets reinforce all that The ROCKS stand for. When we do this, we will better posture ourselves to...

Set the standard!!!  
Eric Flowers,  
VP, Finance



## CADET CORNER

### West Point's Class of 2019 includes Historic Number of African-American Women

by Joel Shannon, USA Today  
(Published May 16, 2019)



West Point's 2019 class will include a record number of African American females. (Photo: US Army photo by Cadet Hallie H. Pound)

The U.S. Military Academy at West Point's class of 2019 is set to include 34 African-American women, the highest number in the prestigious academy's history.

That's not the only historic figure West Point is projecting this year: The class will also include the largest number of hispanic female graduates ever, West Point spokesperson Frank DeMaro told USA TODAY on Thursday. Nineteen hispanic female cadets are projected to graduate in a May 25 ceremony.

DeMaro said West Point is also set to graduate its 5,000th female cadet since 1980, when the first class of women graduated from the academy. At the time, the congressional decision to allow women to attend service academies was controversial and met with public

opposition from some senior academy leaders, according to a U.S. Army profile.

This year's record number of African-American women graduates isn't expected to last long: DeMaro projects that next year's class will be even bigger.

A traditional Old Corps photoshoot was held to memorialize the historic number of black female graduates, the website

Because of Them We Can reported.

"My hope when young Black girls see these photos is that they understand that regardless of what life presents you, you have the ability and fortitude to be a force to be reckoned with," cadet Tiffany Welch-Baker told the website.

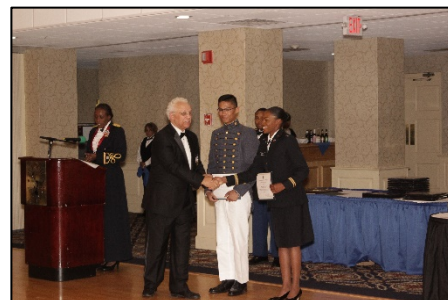
Vice President Mike Pence is scheduled to address West Point's class of 2019 as commencement speaker.

### South Carolina State University Cadet Receives Scholarship

Submitted by Cadet Brandi McCoy

Cadet Brandi McCoy was honored at the 2019 National ROCKs Spring Gala in the DC area. She was joined by several South Carolina State University Bulldogs

Trevon Andrews, Jarquis Brown, Javonte Thompson, and Jessica Owens, LTC (R) Tony Watson and LTC Rodlin Doyle. Bulldogs former Professor of Military Science, Heyward Stackhouse and several alumni to include Alex Conyers and others hosted the team during their stay. BG(R) George Price and many other Bulldog legends and supporters provided words of wisdom to the team: officership, what to expect after commissioning and networking.



Cadet Brandi McCoy is congratulated by ROCKS Chairman, BG(R) Lawrence Gillespie.



LTG Leslie Smith takes time to inspire cadets at the Spring Gala.

The Army's Inspector General, LTG Leslie Smith, came to talk with the team and remarked favorably about how the Bulldog Battalion Cadets embody the mission of The ROCKS, Inc., which is to strengthen the Officer and Senior Civilian Corps by serving as a world class organization that provides and promotes mentorship, coaching, scholarship, networking, leader diversity and professional development to leverage outreach opportunities and maximize talent across the U.S. Armed Forces. The Bulldog legacy and love is alive and well!!!





## ROCKS' CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

### **This Black History Month The Aloha Chapter of ROCKS, Inc. Saluted Chaplain (Col.) Khallid Shabazz and his Story of Triumph.**

*Submitted by Maj. Tamara Da Silva*

Leadership. Shabazz also holds a Ph.D. in Higher Education Administration, and he studied Arabic at the University of Jordan in Amman, Jordan. He currently serves as the 94th Army Air Missile Defense Command Chaplain, Hickam Airbase, Hawaii.

During the Aloha Chapter of ROCKS, Inc. Leader Professional Development Shabazz shared his inspiring and moving story of personal transformation. Years before joining the United States Army, he had to overcome many of his own issues. In high school, he failed the 9th

had just turned Muslim but still wrestled with his identity.

"I was at my lowest level and the chaplain came by and gave me what I needed at that point," Shabazz said. "I wanted to dedicate my life, and I have, to helping people who are in that position. Not by converting them, but by being a person who can put their arm around them and try to help them get to the other side."

Shabazz asked us to seek the same deep awareness from others that we also require from ourselves.



*The Aloha Chapter of ROCKS Inc Leader Professional Development attendees pose for a photo after the event with Col. Khallid Shabazz.*

On 21 February 2019, The Aloha Chapter of ROCKS, Inc. held a Black History Month Leader Professional Development facilitated by Chaplain (Colonel) Khallid Shabazz, the Army's highest-ranking Muslim chaplain. Colonel Shabazz holds two doctorate degrees, four master's degrees and teaches online courses at five colleges. This summer, he will pursue yet another master's degree at the U.S. Army War College Fellowship at the University of Texas at Austin.

Shabazz, raised in Alexandria, Louisiana, has authored three books: *A Call to Reason: Losing Our Manhood, Islam and Christianity a Roadmap to Peace*, and *The Confrontation Between Tradition and Faith: A Converts Concern*. The master's degrees he holds are in Interaction Faith, Comparative Religion, Philosophy and Ethics, and Higher Educational

and 12th grades. Shabazz was not able to graduate with his class and had to go to summer school. His destructive behavior continued throughout his first stint of college, he said.

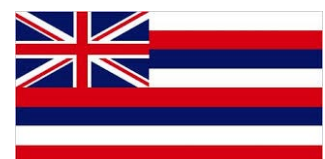
After graduating college, Shabazz was able to get a job as a teacher, making just under \$19,000 per year. So, in order to take care of his wife and children, he decided to join the Army as a 23-year-old private. He also sought discipline and stability, which the Army could provide said Shabazz. Initially he thought it was a good idea to sign up, but he admitted it was a difficult change.

"I found myself getting into a lot of trouble," he said.

Then his unit chaplain decided to stop and take the time to chat with Shabazz, who



*(L-R) Capt. Devin Vickers Col. Khallid Shabazz and Capt. Justin Thomas pose for a photo after the Leader Professional Development.*



*Hawaii State Flag*

## MG Charles C. Rogers Chapter Gives Back to the Community

*Submitted by LTC(P) Eric McCoy*



*Members of the Chapter lay wreaths at Arlington Cemetery in support of "Wreaths Across America" on December 15, 2018*

*[Photo by LTC(P) Howard Matthews]*

Whereas other ROCKS chapters transition a third of their membership in conjunction with summer permanent change of station (PCS) moves, the MG Charles C. Rogers chapter is unique in that over 90% of its active membership are resident students of the US Army War College who are only stationed at Carlisle for one year. While this makes operations challenging, the members of the Class of 2019 rose to the occasion and served the members of the Carlisle and larger Army community in innovative ways.

### Time to Give Back

Following the initial re-organization of the chapter and election of its officers, Carlisle ROCKS quickly began to provide meaningful service to the local community. In November and December, the chapter put together and donated holiday baskets to faith-based organizations to help families in need during the holiday season. Additionally, the chapter organized clothing, toy, and cookie drives for Carlisle CARES and Project SHARE in the month of December to help create a sense of home away from home for both students and members of the community. Finally, on

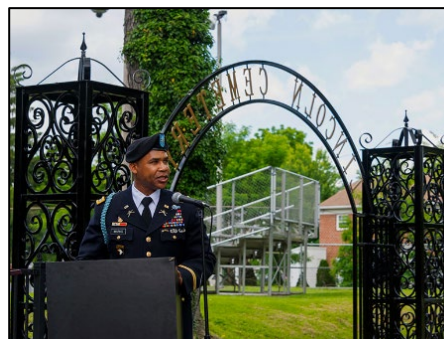


*Participants from Carlisle and DC ROCKS Chapters, along with GEN(R) Ward and the Cadets of Morgan State / Coppin State University ROTC Program at the "Man Up for What" LPD on March 30, 2019 (Photo by Morgan State ROTC Program)*

December 15<sup>th</sup>, chapter members traveled to Arlington National Cemetery to participate in Wreaths across America, in recognition of our fallen veterans interred there.

### Mentorship and Engagement

One of the most powerful resources of the ROCKS is a vast mentorship network. As senior leaders in the military and civilian service, members of the Carlisle ROCKS felt that it would be important to invest in the future human capital of our military. On January 12<sup>th</sup>, LTC(P) Clydea Pritchard-Brown spoke to Hampton University cadets at a ROCKS OPD on "Being a Steward of the Army Profession" at the Hampton Student Union Building. LTC(P) Pritchard-Brown returned on May 23<sup>rd</sup>, to serve as the guest speaker for the Hampton Roads Chapter of ROCKS Scholarship Awards Ceremony.



*LTC Fran Marks formally presents the Borough of Carlisle with the new cemetery arch, installed at the cemetery entryway, to honor for those buried at Lincoln Cemetery on Memorial Day 2019. (Photo by U.S. Army War College Public Affairs Office)*

On March 30<sup>th</sup>, LTC(P)s Antwan Dunmyer, Torin Hamilton, and Eric

McCoy participated in the Morgan State ROTC "Man Up for What" LPD in Baltimore. This was a moderated group discussion with senior officers in combat arms and non-combat arms branches focused on the historical successes and advantages of branching each. Along with GEN(R) William "Kip" War, representatives from both Carlisle and DC ROCKS facilitated a broad dialogue that educated the Cadets on the advantages and disadvantages of each of the various branches based on wisdom, knowledge, and historical analyses.

### Class Gift to the Carlisle Community

In a salute to the U.S. Colored Troops of the Civil War and World War I eras, the U.S. Army War College Resident Class of 2019 formally presented its class gift to the Borough of Carlisle on Memorial Day weekend. The Class Gift project was spearheaded by the 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President of the Carlisle ROCKS, LTC(P) LaFran Marks. The Memorial Day weekend event brought attention to the service and sacrifice of military veterans buried there: more than 40 U.S. Colored Troops who fought in the Civil War and a handful of African American World War I Soldiers. The Class of 2019 gift, a new cemetery arch, was installed at the cemetery entryway near the basketball courts and honors the sacrifice of those who paved the way for today's Soldiers.

As chapter members prepare to share knowledge obtained over the course of their Carlisle experience in new assignments, they are mindful of the opportunities provided through membership in the ROCKS chapter here.



Despite an annual turnover of its members, the MG Charles C. Rogers Chapter will continue to be innovative and resourceful in its representation of the national organization and service to the community.

## Senior Army Leaders Provide Mentorship to the United States Army War College ROCKS Chapter

*Submitted by COL Clydea M.  
Prichard-Brown*

*(Photo credits COL Prichard-Brown)*

Carlisle, PA. – On 7 Jun 19, the United States Army War College (USAWC) Class of 2019 graduated after completing their military academic requirements. Throughout their school year, members of the USAWC's MG Charles C. Rogers Chapter of ROCKS participated in several key leader engagements with the Army's most senior leaders. Chapter officers COL Clydea Prichard-Brown (President), LTC LaFran Marks (VP Operations), LTC Eric McCoy (VP Administration), LTC Howard Matthews (Treasurer), and LTC Antwan Dunmyer (Secretary), coordinated opportunities for members of the chapter to interact with the Army's key decision makers and discuss their continued growth after completing the USAWC.



*GEN Vincent Brooks met the MG Charles C. Rogers Chapter of ROCKS, Inc., on 22 Oct 18, at Carlisle Barracks, to discuss the importance of Networking, the Promotion Board Process (Flag Officers), Being a minority in the today's Army, and Self Reflection (Military and Civilian). (Photo by U.S. Army War College Public Affairs Office)*

The USAWC chapter met with Army senior leaders such as GEN James C. McConville, Army Vice Chief of Staff and future Army Chief of Staff; GEN (Retired) Vincent K. Brooks, Former Commander of the United Nations Command, Combined Forces Command, and United States Forces Korea; LTG. Darrell K. Williams, Director of the Defense Logistics Agency; MG Charles R. Hamilton, Commanding General of the 8th Theater Sustainment Command; and BG (Retired) Lawrence Gillespie, Chairman of the National Board of ROCKS, Incorporated.

During each engagements, these general officer provided candid advice and insight into the Army's expectations of its War College graduates after they integrate into the joint and strategic levels of the operational Army.

**GEN Vincent Brooks** met with the chapter on 22 Oct 18, at Carlisle Barracks, to discuss four important topics regarding minority officers at the O-5 and O-6 levels of the military. The four areas of concern GEN Brooks focused on were the importance of networking, understanding the promotion board process at the Flag Officer level, the challenges of being a senior minority officer or senior civilian in today's Army, and finally, self-reflection on when to consider retirement when nearing the end of a successful military career.



*GEN James C. McConville met with the MG Charles C. Rogers Chapter of ROCKS, Inc. on 7 May 19, at the Pentagon, during their National Security Staff Ride to Washington, D.C. Other ROCKS members in attendance were the Chairman and Members from the ROCKS National Board and the Washington DC Chapter of ROCKS. (Photo by Pentagon Public Affairs Office)*

**GEN James McConville** met with the chapter on 7 May 19, at the Pentagon, while the chapter was on their National Security Staff Ride to Washington, D.C. During the meeting, the VCSA focused

on talent management and explained how it contributes to strategic leader development. He stressed the value and trust leaders must place in training their people and understanding that they are the Army's most important resource and weapon system. "I think professional military education is absolutely key to producing the world class Army we have today," says GEN McConville.



*Class pictured with LTG Darrell Williams, Director of DLA on 23 May 19.*

**LTG Darrell Williams** met with the chapter on 23 May 19, and shared his thoughts on providing the right form of leadership that will make a difference in the lives of soldiers and civilians. He discussed the importance of balancing life priorities against a leader's daily challenges. LTG Williams also provided outstanding advice on officers remaining authentic, having a vision, and continuing to lead with passion. He closed by encouraging each officer to take personal accountability of their actions, as well as maintaining close ties with family and friends.

**MG Charles Hamilton and BG (Ret.) Lawrence Gillespie** met with the chapter during the final leader engagement and end-of-school-year social, on 29 May 19. Both leaders offered in-depth discussions

on the impact ROCKS members have on helping to achieve the Army's vision on Diversity. MG Hamilton's emphasis on having that "likeable" quality as stewards of the Army profession resonated with each ROCKS member.

BG (R) Gillespie's final advice on increasing ROCKS membership by providing and promoting more mentorship, increasing leader diversity, and professional development was the culmination of an outstanding academic year at the U.S. Army War College. After these engagements, each member pledged to continue supporting the ROCKS Mission of strengthening the Officer and Senior Civilian Corps.

COL Prichard-Brown served as the President of the MG Rogers Chapter of the ROCKS, Incorporated.

## The DC Chapter Strengthens Its Depth

*Submitted by LTC Stephen Stanley, USA*

During its May General Membership Meeting, The ROCKS' Washington DC Chapter 'spread the wealth', so to speak, by electing a slate of officers comprised of seasoned leaders and new, innovative go-getters. The officers-elect, scheduled for swearing-in at the June meeting, possess the chemistry, vision and energy to continue the phenomenal work started by the previous administration. Under the returning leadership of COL (R) Shelia Howell-Flowers, this team is destined to reach new heights with the additional talents of Mr. Andre Foster as Vice-President for Administration, Ms. Tilisha Lockley as Secretary, Ms. Ylonda Cuffie as Assistant Secretary, Dr. Leona Monroe as Treasurer and Dr. Craig Myatt as Assistant Treasurer. Mr. Stephen Stanley has also distinguished himself by winning re-election as Vice President for Operations. This collaborative leadership team will be complemented and rounded out by a group of dynamic committee chairpersons.

COL (R) Angie Hemingway returns as our personable Hospitality Chair; COL (R) Andre Barnes reassumes his indispensable role as the head of the

Scholarship Committee; COL (R) Rivers Johnson accepts reappointment as chairperson for the crucial Publicity Committee, and; COL (R) Barbara Wooten rejoins the team as our gracious Awards Committee chairperson. Adding to this wealth of experience and creativity are newly appointed Executive Committee members Ms. Tracy Bellamy and Mr. Eduardo Moten, who commendably volunteered to respectively lead the Membership and Mentoring committees.

There is excitement in the air regarding this new team and their optimistic commitment to build upon the previous team's legacy of fiscal responsibility and comprehensive program development. We salute them for their selfless willingness to take on a leadership role, even in the midst of a whirlwind of things they may confront in both their personal and work lives. This term promises to be a highly productive one, where we will reach heights never-before achieved. This great work will be done by those highlighted above, and we say to them, 'thank you,' in advance, for the marvelous things you are about to do for the Washington, DC Chapter of the ROCKS!

## Hampton Roads Mentoring Organizations 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Joint Cookout

*Submitted by LTC (Ret) Charles "Chuck" Holden*

The Hampton Roads area Mentoring Organizations hosted their 13th Annual Joint Cookout at Bethel Park in Hampton, Virginia on 27 April 2019 from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. The HRC Rocks chaired the planning and coordination for this year's Joint Cookout.

Participating organization representatives on the planning committee included Tuskegee Airmen, Inc., Tidewater Chapter - Ms. Betty Sharp; Hampton Roads Chapter of the Rocks, Inc.- LTC (Ret) Chuck Holden; National Naval Officers Association (NNOA) - LtCol (Ret) Jason B. Davis; Virginia Department of Veterans Affairs (VDVS) - Ms. LaShanda Standifer; Montford Point Marines Association - Master

Sergeant (Ret) Curt Clark; Hampton Roads Community Action Program (HRCAP), Inc -Ms. Hermlinda Miller and Dr. Lelia Shirley. These organizations share the same or similar missions of developing young leaders through mentorship, training, and networking.

The Joint Cookout event was started by HRC Rocks Inc. 13 years ago primarily as a family event and to promote networking between members of the Army, Air Force, and Navy. The intent of the networking opportunity was to foster a better understanding of the Services and to determine how best to leverage mentoring opportunities in the greater Hampton Roads Community. The Joint Cookout continues to be a family event for mentoring organizations but has a grown into a broader professional forum where the rich heritage of these organizations as well as military and community mentoring contributions are shared. Over the years the Joint Cookout continues to attract new youth development organizations who share common or similar mentoring and networking goals. The new organization this year was Hampton Roads Community Action Program, Incorporated.



*Ms. LaShanda Standifer explains the various services provided by the Virginia Department of Veterans Affairs (VDVS)*

LTC (Ret.) Chuck Holden provided the welcome, purpose of the event and sequence of activities for the afternoon followed by the invocation by a member of NNOA. Presidents or their designated representatives provided a brief summary of the organization's mission, objectives, programs and activities.

Following organization speeches, the food line quickly formed. This year's Hampton Road's Joint Cookout was also a potluck event. The meal consisted of



fried and baked chicken, BBQ ribs and BBQ chicken, baked salmon, hamburgers, several varieties of pasta and green salads, bean dip, casseroles, an assortment of deserts, fresh fruits and drinks. Volunteers from several of the organizations did an excellent job taking on impromptu task to set up the serving line and serving attendees.



*Some attendees enjoying their meal and socializing.*

After dinner, everyone socialized, shared professional stories, community action information, talked about social security, veteran's benefits, Medicare, investment strategies and a host of other subjects of common interest. The feedback provided by attendees is that the Joint Cookout provides the ideal setting to interact with individuals with similar interest to get to know each other and exchange valuable information.



*Attendees with the cute little Yorkie pups that were are the cookout.*

This year's event, as past events, was very successful. The approximately 50 people who attended the event had a great time networking, socializing and playing games. The children had a great time playing corn hole, football and volleyball. NNOA brought two cute little Yorkie pups that captured everyone's heart. All in attendance agreed that this event should be held again next year.

## Hampton Roads Chapter Presents Outstanding Student Awards

*Submitted by MG (Ret) Frank E. Batts*

The Hampton Roads Chapter (HRC) continued its tradition of awarding Outstanding Student Awards this spring to Junior ROTC Cadets at thirteen Hampton Roads Virginia area high schools. The HRC's Outstanding Student Award is open to area high school JROTC students who demonstrate exceptional achievement in the areas of leadership, academics, community service and extracurricular activities. The program was established in January 2002, shortly after the Chapter was chartered, in support of the National Board of the Rocks Leadership Outreach Program that provides for professional career development and guidance to ROTC students.



*MG (Ret) Frank Batts (center) poses with JROTC Cadets from Salem High School in Virginia Beach after presenting them HRC Outstanding Student Awards. Pictured left to right are Cadet Ensign Celina Rose, Cadet Seaman Robert Martinez, Cadet Petty Officer Angelica Guingon, and Cadet Petty Officer Tyra Spaulding.*

Not only does the Outstanding Student Award recognize and promote leadership and good citizenship, it also allows visibility of the HRC at the high school level. This year a total of fifty cadets were awarded certificates of achievement recognizing them as HRC JROTC Outstanding Students. This is believed to the largest number ever awarded by the Chapter. Senior Military Instructors who nominate cadets for the awards are pleased that one HRC award can be awarded to a cadet at each grade level, freshman through senior. The awardees this year were Cadet Seaman Derick B. Gyimah, Cadet Petty Officer (PO) Aurelio E. Santiago, Cadet PO Nesta B.

Cura, and Cadet LCDR Jacob C. Sekerak of Landstown High School, Virginia Beach Va.; Cadet Seaman Johnathan Marescortez-Bautista, Cadet PO First Class Elijah Cano, Cadet Esign Martha Guerrero, and Cadet PO First Class Bryce Schaffer of Warwick High School, Newport News Va.; Cadet Sergeant Major (SM) Chyanne Jackson, Cadet Sergeant First Class (SFC) Ethan Sinclair, Cadet Staff Sergeant Tonette Palmer, Cadet Corporal Alanna Roberson of Woodrow Wilson High School, Portsmouth, Va.; Cadet PO Tyra Spaulding, Cadet PO Angelica Guingon, Cadet Seaman Robert Martinez, and Cadet Ensign Celina Rose of Salem High School, Virginia Beach, Va.; Cadet Private First Class (PFC) Flannery R. Piercy, Cadet PFC Erick Munoz, Cadet Staff Sergeant Matthew J. Thullen, and Cadet First Lieutenant (1LT) Mamata Tamanjah of Denbigh High School, Newport News, Va.; Cadet Brandon Henderson, Cadet Justin Riddick, Cadet Demetrius Reid, and Cadet Michael Johnson of Princess Anne High School, Virginia Beach, Va.; Cadet PO Second Class Nigel J. Lampley, Cadet Ensign Tricia Khau, Cadet PO Second Class Zachary W. Updike, and Cadet Seaman Caidyn Nolan of Kecoughtan High School, Hampton, Va.; Cadet Captain Aniya I. Johnson, Cadet 1LT Gavin S. Caldwell, Cadet SFC Claudia L. Kilgore, and Cadet SSG Andrew Kiser of Smithfield High School, Smithfield, Va.; Cadet Ensign Joshua S. Dizon, Cadet LCDR Caleb M. Foreman, Cadet CPO Makyla C. White, and Cadet Seaman Grace E. Cox of York High School, York County, Va.; Cadet Airman First Class Kara I. Garnett, Cadet SSG Charlyze D. Campbell, Cadet MSG Jacob Capps, and Cadet 1LT Cameron P. Futch of Indian River High School, Chesapeake, Va.; Cadet SSG Sumyla Savage, Cadet Technical Sgt Terry W. McMickle, Cadet Technical Sgt Aunesti M. Headen, Cadet Captain Emily J. Huffman of Oscar Smith High School, Chesapeake, Va.; Cadet CPO Third Class Arwyn E. Elixson, Cadet PO First Class Jayden B. Hughes, Cadet Lieutenant Cayley T. Jobes, and Cadet Seaman Tucker M. Grochowski of Grandy High School, Norfolk, Va.; Cadet Kaylee Phillips and Cadet Zachariah Horton, of First Colonial High School, Virginia Beach, Va.



Chaplain (LTC) Juan Crockett, from the left, poses with Cadet PO First Class Elijah Cano; Cadet PO First Class Bryce Schaffer; Cadet Ensign Martha Guerrero; and Cadet Seaman Johnathan Marescortez-Bautista of Warwick High School, Newport News, Virginia

Chapter members who served as presenter for this year's awards were Chaplain (LTC) Juan Crockett, and MG (Ret) Frank E. Batts.

## Hampton Roads Chapter Scholarship Award Ceremony

*Submitted by LTC (Ret) Toney C. Mooney; Photos by Mr. Andrew Brown*



BG (Ret) Gillespie, Rocks Chairman of the Board, front row, 3<sup>rd</sup> from left, join the Scholarship Awardees and Rocks members

The Hampton Roads Chapter (HRC) held its Seventeenth Annual Scholarship Award Ceremony on May 25, 2019. Five outstanding Junior ROTC Cadets from the Hampton Roads Virginia area, who are pursuing college degrees and participate in Senior ROTC. The theme for the event was, "The Value of Becoming an Officer".

The evening started with an "ice breaker" social enabling the HRC members, scholarship awardees and their family, and guest to socialize before the formal portion of the ceremony. The ceremony began with the presentation of the colors

by the Denbigh High School, Newport News, Virginia, JROTC Color Guard, under the leadership of LTC Charles Birdsong, and 1SGT Terry Smith. Following the presentation of the colors was a rendition of our National Anthem performed by MAJ (Ret) Earvin Rosier. The Invocation was provided by Chaplain (MAJ) Sharon Browne, 7<sup>th</sup> Transportation Brigade – Expeditionary, Ft. Eustis, Virginia.

COL (Ret) Glover, Master of Ceremony, welcomed everyone to the event. This year's awardees are: Cadet Jaclyn Anderson, Woodrow Wilson High School (H.S.), Portsmouth, Va.; Cadet Heather Crum, Menchville H.S., Newport News, Va.; Cadet Michael Golden, Woodrow Wilson H.S., Portsmouth, Va.; Cadet Maria Saba, Denbigh H.S., Newport News, Va.; and Cadet Daniel Ward, Landstown H.S., Virginia Beach, Va.



MAJ (Ret) Earvin Rosier, from left, sings the National Anthem, while the Denbigh High School JROTC Color Guard Present the Colors

LTC Harris, Chapter President, recognized the Denbigh HS Color Guard by presenting them with a Certificate of Appreciation, and each Color Guard member was given a HRC Coin in appreciation. MAJ (Ret) Hubert Becton, Chapter Advisor, introduced the guest speaker, COL Cydea Prichard-Brown, a student at the US Army War College, Carlisle, Pennsylvania. COL Prichard-Brown provided an encouraging message to the awardees.

COL Prichard-Brown started by giving a profile of herself. She has overcome many obstacles, personal and professional. She talked about the Army values, and what they mean to her: Loyalty; Duty; Respect; Selfless Service; Honor; Integrity; and Personnel Courage.

LTC Harris thanked COL Prichard-Brown for her outstanding presentation, and presented her with an engraved Rocks Pen-set as a token of appreciation. He then invited the Rocks Chairman of the Board, BG (Ret) Lawrence Gillespie to give remarks.

The schools of higher learning the Cadets will attend this fall are as follows: Cadet Anderson, Longwood University, Farmville, Virginia.; Cadet Crum, and Cadet Golden, Virginia Military Institute, Lexington, Virginia.; Cadet Saba, Norwich University, Northfield, Vermont; and Cadet Ward, George Mason University, Fairfax, Virginia.

The Hampton Roads Chapter has awarded Scholarships to 70 Junior ROTC Cadets over the past 17 years.

Members of the this year's HRC Scholarship Committee are: COL (Ret) David Glover, Chairman; MG (Ret) Frank Batts; MAJ (Ret) Hubert Becton; COL (Ret) Julius Coats; LTC Joe Harris; LTC (Ret) Toney Mooney; and CPT (Ret) Timothy Rodgers.



COL Cydea Prichard-Brown, from left, Cadet Jaclyn Anderson, Cadet Heather Crum, Cadet Daniel Ward, Cadet Maria Saba, Cadet Michael Golden, and LTC Joseph Harris.



The National  
Board of the  
ROCKS, Inc.  
CFC #60959



# The Washington, DC Chapter of the ROCKS, Inc.

## UPCOMING CHAPTER EVENTS:

DC ROCKS monthly meetings are held every third Thursday, 1800  
@ Ft Myer Memorial Chapel



### SEPTEMBER 2019

DC ROCKS, 28th Annual 5 Mile Run/2 Mile Walk

Date/ Time: Saturday, September 21, 2019 at 8:00 am

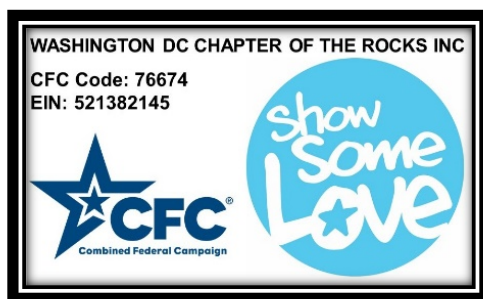
Location: Lake Accotink Park, 7500 Accotink Park Rd, Springfield, VA

### OCTOBER 2019

The ROCKS, Inc. Fifth Annual National Golf Outing

Date/ Time: Friday, October 11, 2019 at 7:00 am

Location: Fort Belvoir Golf Course , 8450 Beulah St, # 2920, Fort Belvoir, VA



### NOVEMBER 2019

DC ROCKS, 44th Annual West Hamilton Dinner

Date/ Time: Saturday, 2 November 2018, 6:00 pm

Location: TBD

### DECEMBER 2019

Joint Holiday Social (Co-Hosted w/ DCNNOA Chapter)

Date/ Time: Thursday, 12 December 2018, 6:00pm

Location: Fort Myer, Officers' Club, 214 Jackson Avenue. Fort Myer, VA,

KEEP IN TOUCH WITH US!

[www.rocksync.org](http://www.rocksync.org) or [www.facebook.com/DCROCKSInc](https://www.facebook.com/DCROCKSInc)

# THE ROCKS, INC. ACTIVE CHAPTERS

As of 3 July 2019

## All American Chapter

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## Aloha Chapter of the ROCKS

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## Central Virginia Chapter

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## Screaming Eagles

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## Washington, DC ROCKS

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