

## Contracting Community Highlights



### U.S. Army Sustainment Command (ASC) Stands Up Southwest Asia (SWA) Support Branch

*Jake M. Adrian*



**A**s many of you may know, I have accepted a wonderful opportunity to serve as the Executive Director of the AbilityOne Program. This column will be my last opportunity to address you as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army for Policy and Procurement. It is difficult to believe that nearly 6 years have passed since I came onboard. Each year brought new challenges, new successes and much professional satisfaction. You are the finest contracting professionals I have ever known.

The upcoming months will see unprecedented change for the Army's contracting community. Contracting will be reinstated as an acquisition core competency. General Officer (GO) billets for contracting positions are being considered. This will increase the community's visibility and stature. The new GO billets will provide increased promotion potential for Army officers and enhance training and assignments for officers as well as noncommissioned officers. We also anticipate increases in the workforce and opportunities to bring interns onboard. Organizational changes at the headquarters and commands will impact all levels of the community and workforce. Change, especially rapid and far-reaching change, can seem overwhelming. All of us know these changes signal the recognition and value being placed in Army contracting. This is clearly a positive change.

The Army contracting community's future is full of potential. I encourage you to seize every opportunity to improve yourself, the community and the world-class support you provide the Soldiers. I ask that you be ever vigilant while upholding the highest ethical standards. Continue to be "one community serving our Soldiers, serving our Nation." Thank you for the opportunity to work with you, know you and be a part of the outstanding things you have done in this community. I wish each of you continued success and rich blessings in your journey.

**Ms. Tina Ballard**

Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army  
(Policy and Procurement)

Calling on experience and expertise, the Army has tapped ASC to bring its contingency contracting strength to bear for warfighters in SWA. On Sept. 14, 2007, the ASC Acquisition Center CONUS-based Contracting Reachback Cell (CRBC) was established to support the 408th Contracting Support Brigade (CSB). Its intent is to use CONUS contracting office strengths to execute contracts on behalf of OCONUS warfighters. This CRBC has since been renamed the SWA Support Branch under the ASC Acquisition Center's Field Support Division. The CRBC conforms with a Sept. 7, 2007, Secretary of the Army Operational Order that transferred authority of contracts exceeding \$1 million from Army Contracting Agency-Kuwait to the U.S. Army Materiel Command, which assigned the mission to ASC because of four important factors:

- ASC has extensive experience executing high-dollar service contracts with performance in SWA.
- ASC uses the Logistic Civil Augmentation Program's Management Structure in theater, a high-dollar service contract administered by ASC.
- ASC has a 230-person Acquisition Center at Rock Island Arsenal (RIA), IL, which provides contracting experts, including cost/price analysts, policy analysts, property administrators and legal counsel.
- ASC has worldwide reach that is tied directly to the warfighter through Army field support brigades and contingency contracting brigades that are aligned in every area of operations.

#### Reachback Implementation

Since Sept. 11, 2001, there has been a massive increase in the 408th CSB's annual workload from approximately \$150 million to nearly \$1 billion. Requirements and contract complexity have increased and there has been a lack of a defined requirements process. In addition, the organization faced personnel challenges that include limited staffing, inexperienced personnel dealing with more complex contracts and difficulty recruiting for SWA deployments. Facing a huge increase in volume and velocity, management control and oversight suffered, which allowed fraud to raise its ugly head.

On Oct. 1, 2007, ASC assumed control of most requirements with remaining contracts following at logical transition points.



ASC SWA Reachback Cell members (left to right): Joe Loftus, Cindy Ball, Barb Voss, Cynthia Pleasant, Amber Thompson, Tina Grove, Bob Pulscher, Jake Adrian, Dean Brabant, Jeremy Miller, Sue Phares and Mike Hutchinson. (ASC photo by Sharon Crawford.)

The SWA Support Branch was established with eight dedicated contracting personnel with more support to follow.

### SWA Support Branch Accomplishments

At RIA, the group is split into two teams. One team is dedicated entirely to the Combat Support Services Contract-Kuwait (CSSC-K), a base-plus-9-option-year, cost-plus-award-fee contract valued at \$1.9 billion. CSSC-K initially had seven Undefined Contractual Actions (UCAs) issued against it. With the help of ASC's Financial Services Division and its assigned cost/price analysts, four UCAs are in negotiations with one comprised of five additional UCAs. The initial proposed price for the four UCAs is approximately \$500 million. The team has also negotiated seven new actions against the contract, saving an additional \$18.4 million through intensive negotiations via teleconferences and trips to SWA. For the first time in 6 years, a Contracting Purchasing System Review was conducted on the CSSC-K contractor in November 2007.

The other team has the remainder of the transferred contracts, including SmartZone, a communication systems contract shared with the Kuwait Ministry of Defense; dining facilities; Standard Army Management Information Systems; and Bulk Fuel and Heavy Lift Six, a commercial line haul program. Kuwait Non-Tactical Vehicles (NTVs), a \$145 million base-plus-2-option-year contract, is the team's first major acquisition that resulted in four contract awards. The current value of all non-CSSC-K contracts is \$2.1 billion. ASC has assumed responsibility for approximately \$4 billion of SWA contracts.

With the Kuwait NTV contracts, ASC has shown that it can effectively and efficiently solicit and award an OCONUS program with a value of up to \$145 million in less than 90 days from a CONUS contracting office. The award of the

Kuwait NTV contracts is estimated to save the U.S. government \$36.6 million over the life of the program.

### Goals

Handing off some of its workload to ASC should help the Kuwait Contracting Office to provide better service to warfighters and improve administration and oversight. Taking the concept a step further, ASC intends to show that reachback contracting also has value for Principal Assistants Responsible for Contracting in Europe, Korea and South America. Ultimately, the reachback concept's goal is to ensure the best contract structure is used to deliver goods and services to troops while reducing costs and getting a better deal for American taxpayers.

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### AbilityOne Program and PRIDE Industries Start New Fort Bliss Base Facilities Support Operations

*George Brian Foulkes*

Can people with severe disabilities provide the level of service required to maintain facilities on an Army installation transitioning from a U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command activity with 9,000 Soldiers to a U.S. Army Forces Command Power Projection Platform with 30,000 or more Soldiers? The answer was "Absolutely!" when the Fort Bliss, TX, leaders committed to an AbilityOne (formerly *Javits-Wagner-O'Day Act*) solution for the Fort Bliss Directorate of Public Works (DPW) facility maintenance contract.

The question was first asked last year during a meeting with a National Industries for the Severely Handicapped (NISH) representative who came to Fort Bliss to discuss contract opportunities for AbilityOne, a national program that creates employment for people with severe disabilities or blindness, by securing federal contracts for its 600 nationwide community-based nonprofit agencies (NPAs). NISH, a national NPA, facilitates AbilityOne, which has created employment opportunities for nearly 48,000 Americans who are blind or have severe disabilities.

After much research, numerous meetings with the installation leadership and a NISH search for quality, capable

NPA, a partnership between AbilityOne and PRIDE Industries Inc. was formed, creating nearly 150 jobs at Fort Bliss. PRIDE takes over the facilities support operations at Fort Bliss with experience in successfully managing Navy, Air Force and NASA facilities. The NPAs have maintained service contracts with DOD for 20 years.

After following AbilityOne protocols, *Federal Register* announcements and reviews from the Purchases from People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled Committee, the work was added to the Procurement List and announced in August 2007. The Directorate of Contracting (DOC) Team, along with the DPW and PRIDE leads, awarded a fixed-price contract that began Oct. 1, 2007, with a value estimated at \$51.2 million over 5 years.

In preparation for the transition, PRIDE wrote, published and distributed an introductory welcome brochure for the Fort Bliss community that features phone numbers and contact information for key services and management leads, "how to" instructions for work orders, and frequently asked questions and answers. After a flawless transition, the PRIDE, DPW and NISH teams are now successfully engaged in managing the installation's facility support operations.

"I think it [AbilityOne] will be a model for the future," said COL Robert Burns, Fort Bliss Garrison Commander, at a NISH award presentation last September. "There are a lot of people with eyes on this and we have no other option but to succeed. I honestly believe we're going to hit a home run."

*George Brian Foulkes is the DOC Director at the Fort Bliss Army Contracting Agency.*



## North Atlantic Regional Contracting Office (NARCO) Helps Launch Military Advanced Training Center (MATC)

*LTC John C. Pastino and Craig Coleman*

NARCO at Walter Reed Army Medical Center (WRAMC), Washington, DC, has made several major purchases for the new \$10 million MATC that opened Sept. 13, 2007, on the center's campus. With sophisticated computer and video monitoring systems and the latest prosthetics, MATC's mission is to enhance amputee and functional limb loss care for wounded warriors in transition, returning them to the highest possible levels of activity using state-of-the-art technology. Designed for easy use, MATC offers rehabilitating Soldiers cutting-edge equipment in a single location.

NARCO supported the MATC launch by purchasing equipment costing more than \$1.8 million, including a ramp system, video system, a massive truss to support the video system and the Computer Assisted Rehab Environment (CAREN) system.

LTC John C. Pastino, NARCO Director, saw the numerous injuries suffered by Soldiers coming back from war when he was serving as Chief of Logistics at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center (LRMC), Germany. At LRMC, Pastino was able to provide assistance and now can see the complete medical treatment from end-to-end as the Director of Contracting. "It's a sad day when any Soldier gets hurt or injured, but when we can provide the state-of-the-art equipment and medical supplies to Soldiers in a fast and responsive mode, it makes the day a little better for all of us."



Left to right: LTC John C. Pastino, NARCO Director; David Johnson, Contracting Officer; Felipe Romo, Contract Specialist; Linda Giles, Contract Specialist; Herb Suber, Contracting Officer; and Robert Shepherd, Contract Specialist. (WRAMC photo by Winston Wilson.)

The 31,000 square-foot MATC houses more than 15 specialists, including physicians, nurse case managers, therapists, psychologists, social workers, benefits counselors and Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) representatives.

Retired COL Charles Scoville, Chief of Amputee Service, said the building is designed to bring together the multi-disciplinary team that cares for warriors in transition. "Our team will provide care from initial surgery through reintegration of warriors to their units or a seamless transition to VA care."

The MATC contains a myriad of clinical features and enhancements. The Center for Performance and Clinical Research — known as the gait lab — measures strides, but according to Scoville, MATC researchers are measuring far more than a runner's gait. Scoville said data collected by engineers play a significant role in assuring proper prosthetic fit and alignment and appropriate foot or knee selection. The gait lab contains six calibrated force plates, four for walking and two longer plates for running. It also includes a dual force-plate treadmill for running analysis and research protocols for prolonged activity. The system has 23 infrared

cameras mounted around the room to gather data. The current system uses only eight cameras. "This makes collaborative research opportunities within this facility virtually limitless," Scoville continued.

The CAREN system, designed to build a virtual environment around a patient performing tasks on a treadmill bolted to a helicopter simulator, uses a video capture system similar to the traditional gait lab, but with an interactive platform that responds to the patient's every move. "There are only three CAREN systems like this one in the world," Scoville remarked. "Its platform is



MATC offers "one-stop-shopping" for warrior care that includes therapy and exercise areas and computer simulation training for military-specific tasks. Here, a wounded warrior lifts weights at the MATC media day in September 2007. (WRAMC photo by SFC Roger Mommaerts Jr.)

so sensitive you can stand a pencil on its end and the platform will keep it vertical."

CAREN also assists warriors recovering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder by reintroducing patients to both simple and complex environments and measuring their performance while ensuring absolute safety. "We can continually add stressors," Scoville explained. "We can start with patients walking on an empty street and gradually add parked cars, traffic, pedestrians and noise. We'll take patients to the edge of discomfort, but not beyond what they can handle."

Warriors in transition will be able to communicate via video teleconference with units in Iraq or Afghanistan or with family back home by reserving the Telemedicine Conference Room.

Scoville noted that doctors, nurses and medics in the combat zone and LRMC can also follow their patients' progress. "Soldiers can communicate with the people who took care of them at each step of their treatment," he continued. "It gives the medical people in theater a chance to see how they [former patients] are doing, which they normally wouldn't have."

Additionally, MATC features a rope climb and rock wall; uneven terrain and incline parallel bars; vehicular simulators; a fire arms training simulator; physical therapy, athletic and exercise areas; an occupational therapy clinic; prosthetic training and skills training areas; prosthetic adjustment and fitting rooms; and separate exam rooms for all amputee-related care. The 225-foot indoor track surrounding the second floor interior boasts the world's first oval support harness. "It allows the Soldiers to walk or run without a therapist tethered to them," added Scoville. "Patients can recover more quickly because the therapist is free to provide immediate feedback to patients while observing their gait. We got a lot for the money."



The 31,000-square-foot MATC offers unprecedented medical care and services for amputees and functional limb-loss patients. Here, a wounded warrior makes a "solo" step at the MATC media day in September 2007. (WRAMC photo by SFC Roger Mommaerts Jr.)

The \$10 million center augments the capabilities of existing WRAMC facilities and supports the goal of returning to duty multiskilled leaders who personify the Warrior Ethos in all aspects. According to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the MATC was constructed 3 months ahead of schedule in cooperation with the U.S. Army Health Facilities Planning Agency and Turner Construction Co.

MAJ David Rozelle, MATC Project Officer, credited the early completion date to teamwork. "This has been a balancing act, which is why we could install equipment at the same time we put in flooring and completed other elements of the building."

NARCO's mission is to provide sound business advice and quality contracting support that is responsive to today's health care requirements while preparing for changes in contracting demands to support the health care environment of the future.

*LTC John C. Pastino is the NARCO Director. He is Level III certified in contracting and purchasing and is an Army Acquisition Corps member.*

*Craig Coleman is the Assistant Editor for the Stripe newspaper at WRAMC.*

## U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Creates National Contracting Organization

*Theresa M. Garnes*

USACE continues to respond to the Nation's call in peace and war, consistently adapting to meet the country's changing needs. As the world's premier public engineering organization, USACE supports Iraq and Afghanistan's reconstruction efforts and responds to numerous recovery missions. To keep up with the challenging pace of its contracting missions and to begin the process of acting as one contracting corps, USACE created the National Contracting Organization (NCO). The one contracting corps concept stems from DOD and Army guidance, which highlights the importance of contracting officials retaining their functional independence to allow unbiased contract advice on sound business principles.

USACE's NCO is an integrated network of contracting offices that spans the globe with 57 sites in CONUS, Hawaii,



USACE's new NCO was established on April 24, 2007. Here, COL Norbert S. Doyle, Director of Contracting HQ, USACE, answers questions at the organization's first leadership conference held June 11-13, 2007. (USACE photo by John Hoffman.)

Alaska, Korea, Japan, Germany, Kuwait, Afghanistan and Iraq. These offices employ more than 1,100 contract specialists, contracting officers and support personnel who award contracts and serve as advisors to decision makers. The USACE Headquarters (HQ) office includes three divisions: Contract Policy, Program Evaluation and Workforce Development. These divisions provide strategic focus and are responsible for developing policy, handling workforce development issues and responding to program evaluation issues. Three field Principal Assistants Responsible for Contracting (PARCs) have been strategically located in Dallas, TX; Winchester, VA; and Atlanta, GA; to handle mission execution and provide technical oversight. In addition, nine Regional Contracting Chiefs (RCCs) oversee contracting services and leverage regional contracting support. The PARCs, RCCs and the Center Contracting Chiefs now report directly to the Directorate of Contracting. Previously, these assets reported to the District and Center Commanders.

"I have been especially impressed by the commitment and performance of the contracting workforce as we help USACE provide its world-class performance with the disaster response and the global war on terrorism [GWOT], while skillfully performing the normal work of USACE," explained Sandra R. Riley, former USACE Director of Contracting. "These are very visible and challenging times for not only USACE, but for the Nation as well. But, while we had been successful in this Herculean task, it had come at great individual and organizational cost."

"USACE has not had clearly defined roles and responsibilities and has operated under resource constraints, which have been exacerbated by demands for assistance with [Hurricane] Katrina and GWOT, while simultaneously assuring the daily demands remain operational," continued Riley.

“This shortage is further challenged with skill imbalances in some places, along with the inability to realign work to meet the changing demands in other places. Add to these challenges the absence of electronic tools, current policy, standardized processes and training to expedite our work.”

To address the challenges, Riley stresses the importance of making contracting a core competency, partnering internally and externally, and building a world-class professional contracting branch.

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## Army Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Program

*Susan Nichols and Jennifer M. Thompson*

The SBIR is a congressionally mandated Army program designed to provide small, high-tech businesses the opportunity to propose innovative research and development (R&D) solutions in response to critical Army needs, and to provide “seed” money to a select group of U.S. small businesses to conduct R&D in support of Army technology requirements. The Army SBIR program is carried out by the U.S. Army Research, Development and Engineering Command (RDECOM).

### What’s New?

The program has been in existence since 1984, but substantial new program enhancements have taken place over the past 2 years, creating objectives to increase technology transition and commercialization success. These initiatives, the Commercialization Pilot Program (CPP) and Technical Assistance (TA), accelerate the fielding of capabilities to Soldiers and benefit the Nation through stimulated technological innovation, improved manufacturing capability, increased competition and productivity, and economic growth.

### CPP

CPP, established in response to the *2006 National Defense Authorization Act*, is a 2-phase process as follows:

- Assess, identify and recommend SBIR Phase II firms that strongly align with CPP goals.



CPP and TA accelerate the fielding of capabilities to Soldiers and benefit the Nation through stimulated technological innovation, improved manufacturing capability, increased competition and productivity, and economic growth. Here, PFC Kenneth Armbrister, Co. A, 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division (ID), scans for enemy activity during *Operation Browning* in southern Arab Jabour, Iraq, Jan. 28, 2008. (U.S. Army photo by SGT Luis Delgadillo.)

- Assist the recommended firms to achieve accelerated commercialization and transition success.

Phase I firms that have exceptional results and have identified strategies or paths for transition from research to an operational capability are invited to participate in the SBIR as a Phase II project. Phase II represents a major R&D effort culminating in a well-defined deliverable prototype.

The CPP looks for Phase II SBIR firms that address high-priority Army needs, exhibit potential for accelerated transition and offer high-commercialization potential as measured through the CPP-defined return on investment metric.

The Army selected MILCOM Venture Partners (MVP) to manage CPP. MVP supports CPP objectives, including identifying and recommending CPP firms, assisting with market research and business planning, matching CPP firms with customers and facilitating collaboration, supporting technology transition plans and recommending funding levels from an FY08 \$15 million allocation to CPP firms’ commercialization plans.

SBIR recently approved 25 small businesses to participate in the current CPP FY. This year’s CPP firm spans a broad spectrum of the Army’s technology portfolio and end-user applications including next generation night vision sensors, advanced unmanned vehicle control devices, medical diagnostics to improve Soldier survivability, low-profile scanning arrays for satellite communications, improved personal

armor, health and monitoring systems to increase aircraft effectiveness while reducing operational costs and high-performance, low-signature tactical generators.

## TA

Following the *SBIR Reauthorization Act of 2000, Public Law 106-554, Section 9 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S. Code 638)*, the Army is providing TA services to small businesses with SBIR projects. Real success for an SBIR project goes beyond solving a research problem. Ultimately, the Army would like SBIR technologies developed into a useable prototype and transitioned into a military or commercial product. The Army understands that for many small businesses and their potential customers, the path to successful transition can be extremely difficult and is therefore providing TA.

TA advocates (TAAs) assigned to five Army regions provide assistance to small businesses that have projects with the participating organizations. The TAAs are talented and experienced industry professionals with varied backgrounds. They work closely with small businesses to ensure their technologies/products fit the company's goals and Army requirements. They assist small businesses in making better technical decisions and solving technical problems, thereby minimizing the risks associated with the SBIR projects. Using their experience, TAAs play an important role in commercializing new products and processes by identifying potential military and/or commercialization partners.

Coordinating with the government research manager, SBIR awardees and any stakeholder TAAs will provide Phase III transition plans for Phase II projects. The Phase III plan will transition and document the strategy, requirements and resources to change the SBIR project into an acquisition program, larger science and technology (S&T) effort or a stand-alone product or service.

Another important TAA role is to work with the government on technology transition planning and developing integration road maps. By participating in acquisition requirements development, technology assessment and technology transition planning and management activities, TAAs will identify SBIR technology insertion points into an acquisition program executive office (PEO)/program manager (PM) program or a larger S&T program. TA and more PEO/PM involvement in managing the yearly \$270 million in SBIR research will result in more relevant products/services to meet near-term needs, resulting in increased transition opportunities.



This year's CPP firm spans a broad spectrum of the Army's technology portfolio and end-user applications. Here, combat medics SPCs Aimee Collver and Vanessa Bolognese, 25th ID, pull security during a mission in Amerli, Iraq. (U.S. Army photo by SPC Mike Alberts.)

Although both the CPP and TA are in their infancy, feedback from the small business community and government researchers has been overwhelmingly positive. Through these two initiatives, SBIR can tap into the innovativeness and creativity of the small business community and meet some of the Army's most critical R&D requirements. Ultimately, this will provide our deployed Soldiers with world-class and state-of-the-art technologies while also helping small businesses to commercialize their products.

For more information on the Army SBIR program and these two new initiatives, visit their Web site at [www.armysbir.com](http://www.armysbir.com).

*Susan Nichols is the Army SBIR PM. She has a B.S. in management/computer information systems from Park University.*

*Jennifer M. Thompson, Administrative Specialist for Phacil Inc., works on the RDECOM Army SBIR.*

## Natick Contracting Division (NCD) Interns Quickly Adapt to New Contracting Reports

*Nathan Jordan*

Beginning in FY07, reporting of contracts to Congress changed from the *Individual Contracting Action Report (DD Form 350)* to the Federal Procurement Data System-Next Generation Contract Action Reports (CAR) system. As this was a new procedure, there was a learning curve that delayed CAR reporting. This applied to the U.S. Army Research,



NCD Intern Coordinator Maria Dunton (second from left), with interns Mark Marchioli, Valerie DeAngelis and Judy Collier. Mark Marchioli is one of the NCD interns creating a CAR system training briefing. (Photo by Matthew Foster, Avatar Computing Inc.)

Development and Engineering Command Acquisition Center (RDECOM-AC) NCD at the U.S. Army Soldier Systems Center, Natick, MA, where more than \$70 million in obligations had yet to be reported.

With the end of the FY quickly approaching, NCD interns volunteered for a tasker from the acting NCD Division Chief to resolve all outstanding actions by Oct. 15, 2007. The team began the tasker in late August, addressing minor CAR issues. Despite the team's efforts, by mid-September, outstanding actions increased from approximately 200 to more than 350, totaling more than \$70 million unreported.

From mid-September to the October deadline, the team increased its efforts and successfully decreased outstanding actions to seven with a value of more than \$580,000, with \$500,000 unreportable because of a base contract issue. Estimates indicate that the team completed more than 500 CARs during this short period.

Help in resolving these issues came from an NCD information technology contractor. Additionally, Standard Procurement System help desk support was crucial to successfully completing this task.

The NCD interns are creating a training briefing for the NCD contracting workforce on CAR. Once they brief the division, the number of unreported actions should decrease and future issues should be minimized.

*Nathan Jordan is an RDECOM-AC-NCD Contracting Division Army Civilian Training, Education and Development System Intern.*

## TACOM LCMC Acquisition Center Selects Trainer of the Year

*Carrie English*

The U.S. Army TACOM Life Cycle Management Command (LCMC) Acquisition Center, Warren, MI, selected Karen Forsgren as its 2007 Trainer of the Year at the second annual award presentation on Oct. 9, 2007. Forsgren, Contract Specialist in the Tactical Vehicles Division for 7 years, has trained 11 buyers in 7 years and is currently training 2 interns. She offers the following training tips:

- Find out how interns like to learn or what works best for them.
- Teach interns to use the Acquisition Center's Electronic Resource Center and the *Federal Acquisition Regulation*.
- Have some fun once work is completed and the customer is happy.

Forsgren received a name-engraved Acquisition Center coin and a Certificate of Appreciation signed by Harry P. Hallock, Director, TACOM LCMC Acquisition Center.



Karen Forsgren proudly displays her Trainer of the Year award. She is flanked by Associate Director for Contracting Marty Green (left) and Associate Director for Operations Art Siirila. (TACOM LCMC photo by Elizabeth Carnegie.)

The Trainer of the Year award, created by the New Employee Focus Group in 2005, recognizes excellence in knowledge/experience, training ability, organizational skill, character and leadership. The Trainer of the Year award committee formed a group of Acquisition Center interns to select the 2007 winner. The committee asked Acquisition Center employees, with a maximum of 3 years employment, to submit an essay describing a trainer they thought was exceptional at his or her job.

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## U.S. Army Materiel Command (AMC) Announces 2006 Frank S. Besson Jr. Award Winners

The AMC Frank S. Besson Jr. Award, established in honor of AMC's first commander for his lifelong acquisition achievements, recognizes outstanding accomplishments in the AMC contracting community. The Besson Award is one of the few



The WWSS C-E LCMC Contracting Team 2006 Besson Award winners (from left): Athena Loesch, John Onieal, Justin Filler, John Traversone and William Newell. (C-E LCMC photo by Charles Ross.)

that exclusively honors the AMC contracting workforce for accomplishments supporting the diversity of AMC's contracting missions. AMC presents Besson Awards annually for exceptional achievements by an outstanding military officer (functional area 51), a civilian careerist, a civilian intern and a contracting team.



MG William M. Lenaers, TACOM LCMC Commanding General, presents Mary Pasqual the Besson Award, Civilian Intern category, at an awards ceremony Oct. 4, 2007, in Warren, MI. (TACOM LCMC photo by Elizabeth Carnegie.)

**Civilian Intern** — Mary Pasqual, U.S. Army TACOM Life Cycle Management Command (LCMC)

**Contracting Team** — The World Wide Satellite Systems (WWSS), U.S. Army Communications-Electronics (C-E) LCMC

Jeffrey Parsons, AMC's Director of Contracting, selected the following individuals for 2006 Besson Awards:

**Civilian Careerist** — John Kaddatz, U.S. Army Sustainment Command (ASC)  
**Military Officer** — LTC Jay Carr, ASC

The AMC major subordinate commands presented the awards to the recipients for their success as contracting professionals.

AMC is now seeking nominations for the 2007 Besson Awards. For additional information, contact April Miller at (703) 806-8233/DSN 656-8233 or [april.miller1@us.army.mil](mailto:april.miller1@us.army.mil).

## Italian Contracting Specialist Begins 36th Year of Customer-Focused Procurement

*MAJ John Coombs*

Giancarlo Zancan, a Local National (LN) Contract Specialist and Contracting Officer (KO) at the Regional Contracting Office-Italy (RCO-I), U.S. Army Contracting Command Europe (USACCE), has served more than 35 years of government service. What's his secret to superior contracting support? "First, call the customer and establish a relationship," said Zancan. "Don't send a problem requirement back without working with the customer to make it right."

RCO-I provides acquisition support to the U.S. Army Garrison in Vicenza, Italy, including Southern European Task Force (SETAF), 173rd Airborne Infantry Brigade, and several military communities and units in northern Italy. The RCO-I has been recognized 5 of the last 6 years as the best contracting office in USACCE. "Giancarlo has been a key contributor to the continued success of this office," said Frank Petty, RCO-I's Chief. "Our customer satisfaction levels continually exceed 99 percent and a lot of the positive feedback from our customers includes personal thanks to Giancarlo."

Zancan has an exceptional memory for contractors, their prices and their performance. "He is an expert on the local market and is the workhorse of our commercial items contracting effort," added Petty. "The bulk of our FY-end commercial item purchasing surge is handled by Giancarlo."

Zancan began his career with the Army in 1973 as a supply clerk for the Directorate of Engineering and Housing. In 1978, he was recruited by the contracting office because of his expertise in supply support of equipment and mechanical items. He has faithfully supported the Army through many tough times, including the kidnapping in 1981 of BG James Dozier, then SETAF's Chief of Staff, by the terrorist group Red Brigade. "Many Soldiers point to Sept. 11, 2001, and the attacks on the



LN Giancarlo Zancan, RCO-I, USACCE Contracting Specialist and KO, has more than 35 years of government service. (Photo courtesy of USACCE RCO-I.)

Pentagon as a turning point,” said Zancan. “But for me in Italy, Sept. 11 was a return to an Army threatened worldwide, as I recalled the Red Brigade.” Zancan procured support for increased security

measures then, and has continued to support the Army for the last 3 decades, purchasing supplies and services to support multiple deployments to Africa, the Balkans and the Persian Gulf.

Zancan takes pride in providing superior contracting support and notes it’s in his nature to work with others and support their needs. “I like the people, the customers. I like helping everyone.”

*MAJ John Coombs, formerly of the USACCE RCO-I, is an Army Research Fellow at RAND Corp.*

## Farewell to Army AL&T Magazine’s Editor-in-Chief

*Army AL&T Magazine’s* editorial staff would like to extend a heartfelt “thank you” and “good luck” to departing Editor-in-Chief Michael I. Roddin as he takes on new opportunities as the Strategic Communications Director for the U.S. Army Tank Automotive Research, Development and Engineering Center in Warren, MI.

Roddin served as *Army AL&T Magazine’s* Editor-in-Chief for almost 5 years, providing consistent expertise and guidance on every aspect of the magazine production process. He authored numerous articles, conducted interviews and helped transform the magazine into one of the Army’s most respected publications. After assuming his duties as Editor-in-Chief, Roddin instituted a fresh look to the magazine — a change that was met with extensive positive feedback from readers and leadership, as evidenced by his selection as the 2005 Secretary of the Army Editor of the Year. Roddin also adapted and updated the magazine accordingly when it was changed from bi-monthly to quarterly publication and from an individual-based to an organization-based subscription in 2006.

Roddin also initiated the launch of our sister publication, *Army AL&T Online Monthly*, in April 2006. This electronic magazine, which is sent to more than 50,000 subscribers, has become a valuable, timely source of information for the Acquisition, Logistics and Technology (AL&T) Workforce. Roddin instituted the updated layout and format of *Army AL&T Online Monthly* that began with the January 2008 issue. This updated look and feel has also received optimistic and affirmative responses from the AL&T community. The successes of both *Army AL&T Magazine* and *Army AL&T Online Monthly* are due in great part to Roddin’s creativity, expertise and leadership.

Jointly serving as the Strategic Communications Director for the U.S. Army Acquisition Support Center (USAASC), Roddin was also responsible for the oversight, management and execution of all USAASC strategic communication programs and provided direction to communicating USAASC’s mission and vision to the acquisition community and the Army at large. He initiated the new USAASC Web site design and launch in 2007, which resulted in a more user-friendly site and better communication means to the field. Roddin oversaw and managed USAASC’s participation in the Association of the United States Army Annual Exposition and Meeting, and provided planning and support to several Assistant Secretary of the Army for AL&T-sponsored events, including the Competitive Development Group/Army Acquisition Fellowship Orientation and Graduation; U.S. Army Acquisition Corps Annual Awards Ceremony; Senior Leaders Conference; and Procuring Contracting Officer and Intern Training Symposium, among others.

Roddin’s strong work ethic and expertise are supported by his extensive education. He holds B.S. degrees in English and journalism from the University of Maine and an M.A. in marketing from the University of Southern California. He is also a U.S. Army Command and General Staff College and Defense Information School graduate, as well as an Army Training With Industry program alumnus. Roddin is a 3-time Army Keith L. Ware Journalism Award recipient.

The *Army AL&T Magazine* staff and the entire USAASC organization will greatly miss his outstanding expertise, leadership and guidance and wish him great success in his future professional endeavors.



Here, Michael I. Roddin (left) receives a Commander’s Award for Civilian Service from USAASC Director Craig A. Spisak. (U.S. Army photo by Richard A. Mattox.)