

From the Army Acquisition Executive

Acquisition Career Development



In the *Best Places to Work in the Federal Government* rankings for 2009, the U.S. Army Acquisition Support Center (USAASC), home of the Acquisition, Logistics, and Technology (AL&T) Workforce, ranked 32 out of 216 organizations for overall employee satisfaction. This finding is a great source of pride for our senior leaders and the entire U.S. Army because employee satisfaction drives agency performance—and we are a high-performing organization. With less than 41,000 members, our workforce successfully manages roughly one-quarter of the Army's budget, including a diverse portfolio of more than 650 programs.

With a heavy workload that continues to increase in both magnitude and complexity, it is imperative that our workforce has a great place to work. My special thanks to the U.S. Office of Personnel Management for conducting this biennial survey, as well as the Partnership for Public Service and the American University's Institute for the Study of Public Policy Implementation, for compiling and publishing the results. Further, I wish to extend my congratulations to LTG N. Ross Thompson III, our Director, Acquisition Career Management (DACM), and Mr. Craig A. Spisak, the USAASC Director and Deputy DACM, for their effective leadership and guidance of the Army's acquisition workforce.

Our people are our most important asset, and their mission is clear—to equip and sustain the world's most capable, powerful, and respected Army. Our dedicated workforce puts in long hours to make sure that our Soldiers have what they need, when they need it. We must do all we can to improve attracting and retaining people for this critical work.

That is why one of our strategic goals is to grow and enhance the capability of the acquisition workforce. It is well understood that in order for our acquisition system to function effectively, it must be supported by an appropriately sized cadre of acquisition professionals with the right skills and training to successfully perform their jobs. Our plans include increasing acquisition positions by more than 5,000 people in the next few years. In addition, we are working closely with members of Congress and DOD on initiatives to enrich the stature and career development of military and civilian acquisition professionals.

To better prepare our people to deal with acquisition in the 21st century, we are improving professional development, certification, education, and acquisition experience opportunities at all workforce levels. This issue of *Army AL&T Magazine* showcases the many ways our AL&T

Workforce can work to obtain career-broadening opportunities through education, training, and experience.

Our primary developmental resource is the Defense Acquisition University (DAU). The Army supports DAU in the development of course curriculums to explore and develop training programs to ensure that our AL&T Workforce has the best information and tools available anywhere. DAU offers several hundred resident and online courses and continuous learning modules, providing our acquisition professionals with readily accessible and accurate training on topics that have an immediate impact on their daily operations. In addition, DAU's Rapid Deployment Training initiative quickly pushes important acquisition information and related policy changes out to the workforce—around the world and around the clock—so that well-informed business and program decisions are made.

One of the greatest parts of my job is the ability to recognize and reward acquisition excellence throughout the community. Each year, at an awards dinner held in conjunction with the Association of the United States Army's Annual Meeting and Exposition, we honor Army acquisition workforce individuals and teams whose performance and contributions set them apart from their peers with awards that showcase the workforce members' outstanding achievements in support of the Soldier and the Army's Business Transformation efforts. Award categories include: the Secretary of the Army Project and Product Manager and Acquisition Director of the Year Awards, the Assistant Secretary of the Army for AL&T Contracting Noncommissioned Officer Award for Contracting Excellence, the Army Life Cycle Logistician of the Year Award, and the Secretary of the Army Excellence in Contracting Awards. The Army also supports the DOD David Packard Excellence in Acquisition Award, which recognizes groups and teams who have made significant contributions or demonstrated exemplary innovations and best practices in the defense acquisition process. The November *Army AL&T Online* (visit <http://asc.army.mil> and click on the *Army AL&T Online* tab located on the bottom of the flash banner in the center of the page) will showcase the winners of these prestigious awards.

It is my sincere hope that, as you read this issue, you will gain additional insight and appreciation for the outstanding work done by the Army AL&T Workforce. As a community, it is second to none in its tenacity, commitment, and superb support for our Soldiers.

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