



DACM NEWS

DIRECTOR, ACQUISITION CAREER MANAGEMENT OFFICE

The Army DACM Office is responsible for talent management, career/leader development, Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act certification, policy, and advocating for the professionals who are members of the Army Acquisition Workforce.

FROM THE DACM:

After 35 years as an Army civilian and 16 years as director of the U.S. Army Acquisition Support Center (USAASC) and Director of Acquisition Career Management, Craig A. Spisak retires.

Craig A. Spisak, Director, Acquisition Career Management (DACM)



As the saying goes: "All good things must come to an end." And so it is with my career as an Army civilian. This will be my final column as the director of the United States Army Acquisition Support Center and the DACM. I'm retiring. After more than 35 years of public service essentially all working for the Army, it's time to move on to the next chapter of my life.

That next chapter will include many things that I can think of and many that will come along. I will try to spend time supporting several friends who have small businesses that occasionally need help here and there. I'm going to golf and garden a lot more. I definitely plan to be more active and physically fit. I'll do some reading for pleasure again. My wife and I will do a lot more traveling. And when we get back from those trips, I have lots of projects around the house to keep me busy.

Read the entire Army AL&T magazine article "[Looking Back, Moving On.](#)" To read more about Mr. Spisak's epic career with the Army, read "[Leaving a Mark.](#)"



AAE AWARDS

Calling all nominations! The 2021 Army Acquisition Executive (AAE) Excellence in Leadership Awards nomination period is now open and will close on Aug. 9. The AAE awards recognize Army Acquisition Workforce (AAW) and acquisition community professionals whose performance and contributions directly reflect outstanding achievements in support of the warfighter and in transforming the Army. Organizations are encouraged to consider the amazing work that our acquisition personnel

accomplish on a daily basis, and to submit nominations for contributions made between Aug. 1, 2020 and July 31, 2021. To learn more about the eligibility requirements and submission instructions for the AAE Excellence in Leadership Awards, visit the [U.S. Army Acquisition Support Center website](#).

WHAT'S INSIDE:

YEAR GROUP 2018 CDG-AAF GRADUATES



CAREER NAVIGATOR



(From the original article “[Charting Your Course](#)”)

When it comes to managing one’s career, Army acquisition professionals can turn to the Individual Development Plan (IDP). An IDP is a career and personal development tool for employees that will help them reach short- and long-term career goals and improve current job performance, according to the Office of Personnel Management. Several agencies within DOD and elsewhere in the government have implemented IDPs to assist employees in their development, and the Director of Acquisition Career Management (DACM) Office is no exception—all Army

Acquisition Workforce (AAW) members are required to maintain a five-year IDP.

The IDP is a tool that enables employees to plan, discuss and manage their **continuing education, training or special experience needed** to meet the certification requirements of their position. For those civilian employees whose positions fall under the Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act, the IDP is a requirement, as is its regular maintenance, because training never stops. The IDP outlines what employees want to do with their careers in the future and how they would like to achieve those goals. Employees should keep in mind that the IDP is not

the same as a performance evaluation. A performance evaluation is for the past, while the IDP is for the future—career planning. The IDP supports the performance evaluation because you’re saying: “Here’s what I did,” or “Here’s what I am planning to do within the rating period.” The IDP complements the performance evaluation.

For more information on how to use the IDP, contact your designated acquisition career manager through **CAPPMIS** (CAC required). For more information on how to manage an acquisition career, read the DACM’s quick **reference guide**.

CERTIFICATION EXTENSION

The Director of Acquisition Career Management recently signed an **Interim 12-Month Certification Grace Period Extension Waiver** of the Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA) Certification Grace Period memorandum. The waiver extends the DAWIA certification grace period by an additional 12 months, retroactive to April 1, 2021. This memo applies to current Army

Acquisition Workforce (AAW) members within their grace period and to newly hired AAW members who onboard between April 1, 2021, and March 31, 2022. It does not apply to key leadership positions and AAW members who were previously outside of their grace period as of April 1, 2020.



SPOTLIGHT ON SUCCESS



(From the Faces of the Force profile, “Aiming for Space”)

Meet Satonya Hobson-Williams, chief engineer for the Program Executive Office for Missiles and Space (PEO MS) at Redstone Arsenal, Alabama. She completed the Civilian Education System (CES) Advanced course administered by the Army Management Staff College in March 2018. CES is a progressive and sequential leader development program that provides enhanced educational opportunities for Army civilians throughout their careers.

What program/course did you participate in? When did you start and when did you complete it?

I took the CES Advanced course in early 2018. The course was a month long, I started in February and completed it in March.

What were your expectations of the program or course before you started, and how did they change as the course proceeded?

My initial expectations of the course were that it was going to be like most of the leadership training that I have taken. We talk about what our leadership style is and how it works for some situations and not others. As I went through the class, I understood that it was much bigger than just your leadership style. It talked about my leadership philosophy, good managers, bad managers, conflict management, team dynamics, emotional intelligence and talent management. All of these are things you think about as you advance in your career, but no one

really talks about in great detail because they are the touchy feely part of the job that no one wants to acknowledge.

What were your top three takeaways from the course?

My top three takeaways from this course were as follows:

1. Developing an understanding of self, others and the impact that emotional intelligence (EQ) has on a team.
2. Strategic leadership.
3. Building high-performing organizations.

What skills, knowledge or experiences from the program/course do you apply most, in your job or outside of work?

As the Javelin Engineering Division chief, I have to utilize strategic leadership every day. I have to manage the change that the organization is going through right now. The speed of the information that is being provided requires me to represent the organization in a way that was never thought of while maintaining the culture as well as all the relationships in this COVID environment. I have to remind my team of our vision and shape what our relationships look like now with the current restrictions.

How has this program/course affected your career?

I think that taking this course has made me more observant of my co-workers and how they deal with and address concerns.

Who would you recommend this course to, and why?

I would recommend this course to all Army personnel. We all need a refresher and leadership skills are something that requires continuous learning.

Briefly describe what you do in your position and why it's important to the Army or the warfighter. In addition to having the opportunity to support Soldiers, what's the greatest satisfaction you have in being a part of the Army Acquisition Workforce?

I currently work as the Javelin Engineering Division chief within the Tactical Aviation and Ground Munitions (TAGM) project office. The Javelin is a shoulder-launched,

man-portable “fire and forget” medium-close combat missile. I provide technical insight informing the decisions of both the product and project managers. As the technical lead, I am responsible for the modernization and sustainment of the Javelin Missile for our Army warfighter. I direct engineering teams to lead development and transition-to-production activities for the modernization of the Javelin missile and Command Launch Unit. This includes multiple component level design reviews, integrated systems test planning, performance verification tests, and baseline discussions with TAGM management. I get satisfaction from my position because we provide the Soldier with the hardware needed when they need it.

I joined the acquisition workforce after spending several years in outside industry. What appealed to me about the production engineer position was it was an opportunity for me to see how the Army manufactured products, compared to outside industry.

How did you become part of the Army Acquisition Workforce, and why? What was your first acquisition position, and what appealed to you about the work?

I began my acquisition career working in propulsion on the 2.75 Hydra Rocket as a production engineer. I joined the acquisition workforce after spending several years in outside industry. What appealed to me about the production engineer position was it was an opportunity for me to see how the Army manufactured products, compared to outside industry. During my tenure working the 2.75 Hydra Rocket program, I got the opportunity to work on a Lean Six Sigma project. This was a great opportunity for me since I was already a green belt in Lean Six Sigma from outside industry.



(From the Faces of the Force profile, “**Get Comfortable Being Uncomfortable**”)

Meet Mike Cowperthwait, a deputy project manager for the Program Executive Office (PEO) for Aviation, Cargo Helicopters project management office. He shared his unique insights on career experiences, advice, and playing an active role in one's own career development.

Briefly describe what you do in your position and why it's important to the Army or the warfighter. In addition to having the opportunity to support Soldiers, what's the greatest satisfaction you have in being a part of the Army acquisition workforce?

I serve as the deputy product manager (DPM) of the CH-47F Block I Product Office, a 55-person cross-functional organization responsible for the production, delivery, new equipment training and foreign military sales (FMS) activity for the CH-47F Block I Chinook Cargo Helicopter and CH-47F Block I Training Aids, Devices, Simulators and Simulations. In addition to the inherent satisfaction that comes from supporting Soldiers and foreign customers, I get a great deal of satisfaction from continuing what I started in the Army almost a quarter century ago when I served as a U.S. Army aviation officer and CH-47D pilot. I've spent my entire adult life in and around Army Aviation and it's a tremendous honor to work with the finest workforce in the world on the premier heavy lift cargo helicopter in existence.

If you describe your work to others, what's one thing they typically find interesting or surprising?

How much is actually involved in what we do as acquisition professionals. Acquisition is so much more complicated than simply procuring a material solution. I certainly didn't have an appreciation for the complexity of our business it when I was in uniform and was a customer of the Acquisition process. People are always amazed at how complex our jobs are and how much goes into designing, developing, delivering, and then sustaining an aircraft.

How did you become part of the Army acquisition workforce, and why? What was your first acquisition position, and what appealed to you about the work?

It actually happened on accident and as a result of an incredible chain of happenstances. When I was preparing to separate from the Army in late 2003, I attended a job conference in Atlanta where I was offered an opportunity to work as a support contractor on a high-tech aviation program in Huntsville, Alabama. At the time, I really didn't know what I was getting into other than the promise that it allowed me to remain in the Army Aviation community. In 2008, after four years working as a support contractor, my first mentor, the Cargo Helicopters tech chief,

encouraged me to apply for a DA civilian position as the Cargo Helicopters Configuration Management/Data Management (CM/DM) lead. I was selected, quickly assessed into the Acquisition Corps, and that led to an incredible string of Army Acquisition Workforce assignments the past 12 years culminating in where I am now.

“When you're comfortable, you're not growing”

What do you see as the most important points in your career with the Army acquisition workforce, and why? Is there a program or opportunity you wish you had pursued but didn't?

Getting recognized by our PM tech chief—who's now an SES and director of the DEVCOM [U.S. Army Combat Capabilities Development Command] Ground Vehicle Systems Center—early on and having him take a personal interest in my development was absolutely a kick-start to my career. Since then, I've been extremely blessed to have worked for supervisors and mentors who have all made a practice of plucking me out of my comfort zone to expose me to progressively challenging opportunities. One of the more drastic turns in my career path and an unbelievable broadening experience was when I was given an opportunity to take on a high-visibility, COCOM [combatant command]-priority FMS effort in 2012. That was my first exposure to a lesser-known but vital element of our Acquisition business—foreign military sales—and opened the door to some truly remarkable FMS assignments in another Aviation program office a few years later. The time I spent on PEO Aviation headquarters staff from 2016 to 2017 was another assignment which I didn't fully appreciate at the time but can look back on and recognize was definitely career-broadening.

What was the latest career development program you took? When did you take it, and what did you get out of it? Would you recommend it to someone else?

I started the International Acquisition certification program in my last assignment and was one course away from achieving Level III certification before COVID-19 played its hand and all the remaining fiscal year 2020 courses were cancelled. “Standard” acquisition is hard enough, and the International Acquisition program introduces the additional complexities of the Security Assistance operation. I would absolutely recommend the program to anyone in the workforce, not just those directly working FMS programs. Through the course of their careers, everyone is eventually going to touch or work in support of an FMS program and I think it would help build the awareness and context of what those programs are and how they fit into the “big picture.”

Have you given advice to junior acquisition personnel? If so, what was it? If not, what would it be?

I routinely give two pieces of advice to junior professionals:

1. Be patient. My take on career progression or vertical movement is that it occurs at the perfect intersection of opportunity and preparedness. You can only directly impact one of those, so make yourself as ready as possible for when an opportunity presents itself.

Continued on page 5



2. Never say no. The majority of the opportunities that my supervisors and mentors have steered me towards were ones that I wasn't necessarily looking for and honestly, a few were ones that didn't really appeal to me at first. I was content in my comfort zone and not looking to move but in hindsight that's exactly what I needed to do. I was blessed to have folks looking out for me and I never said no when someone presented me with a

new opportunity, even when it meant taking on more responsibility at the same pay grade.

For those who know you outside of work, what do they know you for? (E.g., inventor, pizza chef, scout master, builder of ultralight aircraft, etc.)
What does this have in common with your work?
I love shooting and I'm passionate about learning more about it and getting better at it. I'm not a hunter or competitive shooter; it's just part of

the profession of arms that I picked up when I joined the Army that I never let go of. It's the one activity where I'm able to completely block out everything else from my mind. I shoot regularly (although it's growing increasingly expensive lately) and take a day or two off every year to go to a training course or get private instruction. Much like aviation, shooting places safety, quality training, and currency at a premium.

FACES
of the
FORCE

SPOTLIGHT ON SUCCESS

The Spotlight feature is your chance to highlight the interesting work you or your AAW teammates are doing in support of the warfighter. Don't be shy—tell us what you're working on. Fill out a nomination form and we'll help get the word out. Details are at: <https://asc.army.mil/web/publications/army-alt-submissions/>.

ACQUISITION EDUCATION, TRAINING AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

CLOSING SOON – INSPIRING AND DEVELOPING EXCELLENCE IN ACQUISITION LEADERS (IDEAL)



The IDEAL program application window closes on July 29. This program is targeted to new and future supervisors who are seeking to refine their leadership skills or

develop them in preparation for a supervisory or leadership position. Applicants must be permanently-tenured civilian members of the Army Acquisition Workforce, GS-12 or GS-13 (or broadband equivalent), and meet Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act certification requirements. More details and application instructions can be found on our [IDEAL program web page](#).

DAU NEWS

FISCAL YEAR 2022 DAU SCHEDULE



The first and second quarters of the fiscal year 2022 Defense Acquisition University (DAU) training schedule will now be released in late August (date to be determined) rather than July 29. This decision was made based on discussions with the Directors of Acquisition Career Management (DACMs) from all services. Delaying the schedule release allows more time to develop **Back to Basics** implementation policies and processes. The DAU team within the Army DACM Office will continue to update the workforce as information is received.



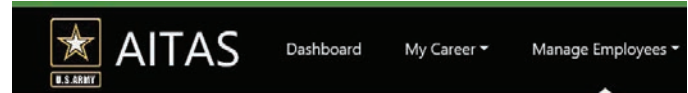
THE ARMY INTERNET TRAINING APPLICATION SYSTEM 2.0 IS NOW ONLINE

On May 10, the modernized Army Internet Training Application System (AITAS) 2.0 was deployed. AITAS 2.0 has a completely new look and user-friendly interface. Please take a few minutes to log in with your CAC, get acquainted with the new interface and update your AITAS browser bookmark with the new URL, <https://www.atrrs.army.mil/aitas>. Users who click on the previous URL will be redirected to the new website. Applications in the former AITAS database were transferred to AITAS 2.0 so students do not need to resubmit those applications.

Do you have questions about AITAS 2.0? **The Quick Start Guide** is a helpful resource to get you acquainted. Keep in mind, AITAS 2.0 works best when using Google Chrome or Microsoft Edge.

Students must have a supervisor assigned to their student profile. When a supervisor is not assigned, and the student cannot find their supervisor in the search, this means that the supervisor must first create a user profile. Once the supervisor user profile is created, the student will be able to search and select their supervisor.

While using AITAS 2.0, be sure to check out helpful insider tips on the **AITAS FAQ page**. Students experiencing problems with AITAS 2.0 should submit a help request via **CAPPMIS**. For more details, the AITAS 2.0 policy is now available in our **Policies Library**.



TRAINING WITH INDUSTRY

The application window for the fiscal year 2022 **Training with Industry (TWI)** program is open until August 6. TWI is a unique and highly selective program designed to provide selected acquisition officers the opportunity to gain career-broadening experience while working in an industry environment. The Army Acquisition Corps takes great care in selecting companies that are not only highly respected leaders within industry, but who will also offer officers the greatest exposure to cutting-edge technologies, innovative managerial and production techniques, technology development processes, organizational structures, corporate culture and best business practices.

The Acquisition Corps is looking to increase the focus of the program by aligning the fiscal year 2022 TWI opportunities with the projected fiscal year 2023 lieutenant colonel centralized selection list (CSL) positions and other specific follow-on assignments. As a result, the TWI program will align officers' skills and experiences with the most relevant post-utilization tours. The Acquisition Corps only accepts TWI applications during an officer's movement cycle window. The fiscal year 2022 TWI program will start in the summer of 2022 and end in the summer of 2023. For more information, visit our **TWI web page**.



LAST BUT NOT LEAST - YEAR GROUP 2018 CDG-AAF GRADUATES



On July 22, the Year Group 2018 Competitive Development Group – Army Acquisition Fellows (CDG-AAF) participants celebrated their graduation. The Army DACM Office is pleased to announce the following graduates:

- **Sharon Halbert**, program manager, PEO Combat Support and Combat Service Support
- **Samuel Newland**, Soldier portfolio director, Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology (ASA(ALT))
- **Nautilus Nobles**, operations officer, PEO Aviation
- **Doreen Simmons**, logistics management specialist, U.S. Army Security Assistance Command
- **Carlton White**, systems coordinator, ASA(ALT)



Excellence and Acquisition Development (LEAD) program.

The Leadership Excellence and Acquisition Development (LEAD) program is the premier

This is the final cohort class for the CDG-AAF. Based on feedback, as well as input from the field, the CDG-AAF program, established in 1997, has transitioned to the **Leadership**

24- to 30-month leadership development program offering expanded training through a series of education, leader development and broadening assignments to build skills required for positions of greater responsibility. Managed by the USAASC Army DACM Office, the program is designed to enhance the leadership acumen of the Army's civilian acquisition workforce. LEAD participants are provided centrally funded leadership training and developmental assignments within the acquisition community.



AMPLIFY YOUR IDEAS

8TH ANNUAL

2021 Major General Harold J. "Harry" Greene Awards for Acquisition Writing

THE 2021 MAJOR GENERAL HAROLD J. "HARRY" GREENE AWARDS

for acquisition writing provide a platform to discuss how the Army can best deliver capabilities to Soldiers—both now and in the future. Share your ideas, expertise and solutions by submitting your essay in one of the following categories:

- Acquisition reform
- Future operations
- Innovation
- Lessons learned



“ In every job I had we got things done that I think made our Army better, and it was done by other people ... all I did was try to pull people in the right direction and they went and did great things.”

~ Maj. Gen. Greene



The competition is open to everyone, and wide participation is encouraged among the DOD acquisition workforce. Submission requirements are available at:
<https://www.army.mil/asaalt>



Army DACM Office Highlights

- ▶ July DACM Hot Topics
- ▶ Career Navigator: Who Needs an Office Anyway?
- ▶ Engaging Four Generations of Workers
- ▶ Senior Service College Fellowship 2021-2022 Cohort Announced
- ▶ June DACM Hot Topics



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Please **email** us any questions
or suggestions.

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