

# NCO UPDATE

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## Soldier's Idea Saves Army Big Money

### In this issue...

**Soldier's Idea Saves Army Big Money**

**Partnerships Answer Dilemma in Army Cyber**

**Make Your Barracks Your Home**

**Veteran Finds Brotherhood in Cycling Group**

**South Carolina National Guard Aids in Hurricane Matthew Response**

**Hanging Up the Green Suit**

**Army Begins Testing on New Light Tactical Vehicles**

**TERA Now an Option for Army National Guard Soldiers**

**Details on the New Combat Tourniquet**

**Korean and English Speech Contest Reinforces Alliance**

While working on a light towed howitzer, Illinois Army National Guard Sergeant Wesley Todd of La Porte, Indiana, invented a device that improves Soldier safety and equipment longevity. Todd's idea is being adopted by the entire Army later this year.

"I am shocked that the Army is going to adopt something I designed myself. . . . It's an honor to know I improved the Army in a small way," said Todd, an NCO with the 333d Military Police Company in Freeport, Illinois, and a military technician with the Combined Support Maintenance Shop (CSMS) at North Riverside Armory in North Riverside, Illinois.

Army Major General Richard J. Hayes, the Adjutant General of the Illinois National Guard, said Todd's invention will affect the Army in more than just a small way: "This Soldier's invention will increase safety and save the entire Army hundreds of thousands of dollars in equipment parts and repair time. . . . Resources will now be able to be devoted to other U.S. Army priorities. Sergeant Todd and his leadership have set a great example."

He added that Sergeant Todd has shown how a single Illinois Army National Guard Soldier can improve a process for the entire Army, noting that Todd's leadership has provided a great

example of how to listen to Soldiers' ideas and help them implement positive changes.

When he saw Soldiers struggling to remove a seized-up muzzle brake on a light towed howitzer at the North Riverside CSMS, Todd took it upon himself to design and fabricate a device that makes the process much easier, bypassing the type of force that could damage the howitzer tube or its rifling. Just the tube of the light towed howitzer can cost over \$265,000. Soldiers normally had to take a sledgehammer to the muzzle brake to remove it. Not surprisingly, resultant damage was frequent, both to the equipment and to Soldiers.

Todd has worked as a machinist at the CSMS for three years, normally repairing damaged parts and making new parts for military vehicles and equipment, but "this was the first part that I designed myself, and then fabricated. . . . Normally, I fabricate parts from manuals in the shop."

The Army has approved Todd's device for adoption, officials said, and it is scheduled to be implemented on 31 December 2016.

Information for this article adapted from "Face of Defense: Soldier's Idea Saves Army Big Money" by Staff Sergeant Robert R. Adams with DoD News, Defense Media Activity.



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## Partnerships Answer Dilemma in Army Cyber

The once-innovative auto industry has trouble keeping pace with new developments of autonomous vehicles, sensors and information technology gadgets going into their cars.

Likewise, the Army has trouble keeping up with new cyber technologies used by adversaries against the United States, said Brigadier General Patricia Frost, director of Cyber, Office of the

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Deputy Chief of Staff, G-3/5/7, speaking on 5 October at the Association of the United States Army's Annual Meeting and Exposition. The Army and the other services within the Department of Defense (DoD) are hobbled by a slow acquisition system and bureaucracy that hamper the adoption of innovative ideas and new technologies. Adversaries are not as constrained, she warned, and "they are leaping ahead at a speed never seen in modern history."

Raj Shah, director, Defense Innovation Unit Experimental, who spent a decade as an Air Force cyber operator, agreed with Frost's assessment. He recently visited cyber Soldiers in the field and observed their intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance feeds running poorly. He asked the Soldiers about the problem and found they were running Windows XP, an old operating system. The Soldiers weren't allowed to install the latest version because of the slow way in which security concerns were being addressed.

Shawn Wells, chief security strategist at Red Hat, also agreed with Frost and cited his own example of the dilemma. As an operator deployed to a combat zone with Marines, he saw source code verification being held up in the accreditation process. In plain language, the enemy might have been using an iPhone for command and control. Soldiers could monitor that.

However, if the enemy switched to Android devices, the Soldiers had no way to monitor the traffic because they didn't have the accreditation to do so. Wells' company is now working to eliminate that type of problem through a public-private partnership.

Lieutenant General Edward C. Cardon, then-commander, Army Cyber Command and Second Army, argued that public-private partnerships are critical because the Army and DoD can "never keep pace with the innovations going on right now in the tech industry, not in the [science and technology] world and not in the [research, development, testing and engineering] world."

"That's a little bit overstated," he added, "but not too much."

The Army, with a total science and technology budget of \$4 billion a year—a figure that covers much more than cyber—would never be able to go it alone when it comes to introducing new cyber technologies. The science and technology budgets of Microsoft, Google, AT&T and Verizon are all much larger than that of the Army.

"Cyber is no longer an intelligence problem or an electronic warfare problem. It's a commander's problem," Cardon concluded.

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Information for this article adapted from "Clockspeed dilemma' hobbling Army cyber, but partnerships may be answer" by David Vergun with Army News Service.



## Make Your Barracks Your Home

The A barracks at Bismarck Kaserne, Germany, was recognized in October as the "Best Barracks of the Quarter" within U.S. Army Garrison (USAG) Ansbach by Command Sergeant Major Derek R. Cuvellier, USAG Ansbach command sergeant major, and a jury of first sergeants. More than 60 Soldiers from the garrison took the personal initiative to earn the title for their building and living quarters. A total of more than 310 rooms and three buildings were judged for the fourth quarter of Fiscal Year 2016 competition.

The Best Barracks of the Quarter is a U.S. Army Europe inspection and recognition program that judges whether established procedures are being followed. Each Soldier makes it his or her personal responsibility to care for individual rooms and surroundings, making sure that rooms are clean, buildings are secure and the overall appearance is kept to high standards.

"This is our community," said Cuvellier during his closing remarks. "This is where you live. Make it your home. Take pride in it and do what you can to make it better for yourself and others."

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Information for this article adapted from "CSM Cuvellier to 'Best Barracks' Soldiers: 'Make it your home'" by Cornelia Summers with Army News Service.





# South Carolina National Guard Aids in Hurricane Matthew Response

The South Carolina National Guard responded to missions along the state's coastal region in the aftermath of Hurricane Matthew, clearing roads of tree debris so people could return to their homes. About 2,800 South Carolina National Guard Soldiers and Airmen were activated to support state and county emergency management agencies and local first responders after Governor Nikki Haley declared a state of emergency.

National Guard assets were prepositioned throughout the region in preparation for the devastation expected as the storm passed through the state. Soldiers had been staged in the Hilton Head area earlier in the week as Hurricane Matthew was monitored. They were able to get their equipment ready for missions and were prepared to start clearing roads as soon as the storm passed.

Army Colonel Jeffrey Jones, 218th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade commander, said these assets were in place because floods in October 2015 demonstrated their importance. "We were thinking ahead this year. . . . We anticipated the needs, and we're responding to the needs of the citizens in a timely manner."

Information for this article adapted from "South Carolina National Guard Continues in Hurricane Matthew Response" by Captain Jessica Donnelly with DoD News, Defense Media Activity.



# Veteran Finds Brotherhood in Cycling Group

David Camacho, a retired Army master sergeant who had served for 22 years—from 1985 to 2007—says he joined the Army "because it was in my blood."

His first deployment was to the Gulf in 1990. But it was when he was deployed to Mosul, Iraq, from 2004 to 2005 with the 1st Stryker Brigade from Fort Lewis, Washington, that he was badly wounded.

"[The perpetrator] was a guy who dressed himself up like a national guardsman from Iraq. We used to be at the same base together when we used to train them. At least 26 people got killed in that dining facility. . . . I got injured. My stomach, my head, my leg; I got shrapnel everywhere. They removed my spleen. They had to fix everything inside of me. They removed stuff in my stomach."

Camacho lost consciousness on the scene; he woke up after five surgeries at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio, Texas.

As he recovered, he fought through nightmares, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and depression. The hardest part for him was leaving his guys behind. Before they had all deployed, many of his Soldiers had been over to his house for barbecues; some of their parents had even asked him specifically to take care of their kids.

"Friends and people from the chain-of-command would come visit me, but I felt

like I wasn't good enough because my Soldiers were out there. I was very protective of my guys. I enjoyed being out there with them. They were like part of my family out there, and I felt like I left them. . . . Maybe because of my culture, that's the way I am or because I'm an NCO—you're responsible for your Soldiers. You are there for them and they are there for you. We've got to look out for each other."

This mentality carried over as he left the service and found friends in a nonprofit cycling group; with Warriors4Life and cycling, he's been able to cope with his PTSD and find the brotherhood he had in the service. "It's like being back in the armed forces, but at a different level. We enjoy each other. I love it. We speak the same language. It doesn't matter where we're from. Sometimes you find somebody you have served with. Once you're a Soldier, you will always be a Soldier. It's the camaraderie we get as a Soldier. We always keep it among us, and support each other. . . . Find an activity that works for you. And surround yourself with positive people, so you cannot stay in the past with what happened. And it's hard; it's very hard sometimes, but there's life out there. . . . You've just got to look and have that will to get better and live better."

Information for this article adapted from "Veteran Finds Brotherhood in Cycling Group" by Shannon Collins with DoD News, Defense Media Activity.



## Hanging Up the Green Suit

**F**uture North Carolina National Guard (NCNG) retirees gathered to attend the inaugural final-formation retirement seminar hosted at the 139th Regional Training Institute in September 2016.

The seminar educates Soldiers who have 18 months or less before retiring about critical resources available to them. This is also an opportunity for Guard members to show their appreciation and thanks for retirees' years of service.

A few key points of the seminar included creating awareness about eligibility for state pensions, the application process into retirement before reaching 60, eligibility for Veteran's Affairs benefits and updating Soldiers' Retirement Points Accounting Management.

"For them [retirees] to find this out after they get out is not a good thing," said Sergeant Major Elsa Gaver, an NCNG quota source manager. "We wanted to be able to put something in place to educate the Soldiers, so they can have a better understanding of what their retirement entails, what they need to do on their side and what we have to help them."

The targeted audience attending the seminar falls into three categories: Soldiers who possess retirement orders, Soldiers with a projected retirement date of 18 months or less and Soldiers who are starting to think about retirement.

Retirees rotate through numerous stations, receiving information and asking questions, creating a one-on-one interaction with representatives from organizations such as Veterans' Affairs, TRICARE, family programs and many more. Armed with this information, retirees will be better able to take care of themselves and their families, helping defray some of the costs that pose difficulties in making ends meet.

The aim for the future is to hold a seminar quarterly or annually for both North Carolina Army and Air National Guard retirees to better inform and prepare them for the next chapter in their careers.

Information for this article adapted from "NCNG: Hanging Up the Green Suit" by Sergeant Leticia Samuels with Defense Video & Imagery Distribution System and information provided by Staff Sergeant Robert J. Latsch, USA Retired.



## Army Begins Testing on New Light Tactical Vehicles

**T**he first seven joint light tactical vehicles (JLTVs) were turned over to the Army and Marine Corps in late September by Oshkosh Defense for testing at different sites around the force. A total of about 100 of the JLTVs will be provided to the Army and Marine Corps for testing over the next year, at a rate of about 10 per month. The JLTV is a tactical wheeled vehicle with a chassis that offers protection from underbelly blasts and a suspension system that can be raised and lowered for off-road conditions. It also offers greater fuel efficiency than current tactical vehicles.

In addition to maneuverability and automotive testing at Yuma Proving Ground, Arizona, the vehicles will undergo testing for cyber integration of command, control, communications and intelligence at the Electronics Proving Ground on Fort Huachuca, Arizona. The vehicles will also be tested for automotive performance at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland, and the Cold Regions Test Center on Fort Greely, Alaska.

Once full production begins on the JLTV program in 2019, Army acquisition officials expect to shave five years off the original fielding schedule. The schedule reduction is expected to save \$6 billion from previous estimates.

Originally, plans for the program called for fielding all 54,599 vehicles for the Army and Marine Corps by the early 2040s. However, as a result of the unit cost savings, the Army should be able to buy more trucks faster. The Army may acquire the full complement by as early as the mid-2030s.

Information for this article adapted from "Army begins testing on new light tactical vehicles" by Gary Sheftick with Army News Service.

# TERA Now an Option for Army National Guard Soldiers

Soldiers in the Tennessee National Guard with less than 20 years of active service but more than 15 may now qualify for partial retirement benefits, according to an Army Directive released in June 2016 to aid in the Army's force reduction plans.

The Army expanded its Temporary Early Retirement Authority (TERA) to Soldiers serving in an Active Guard and Reserve (AGR) status; TERA had previously been authorized only for Soldiers serving in the active duty Army.

TERA is a discretionary authority, not an entitlement. The Army elected to use this limited program as part of a comprehensive force management strategy through the end of 2018. It was initially implemented as part of the 2012 National Defense Authorization Act and did not initially apply to members of the National Guard or Reserve. Those who receive TERA will receive retirement benefits at a reduced rate.

Both enlisted Soldiers and officers who qualify and elect to receive TERA immediately draw benefits, just as if they had received a 20-year retirement.

Final implementation guidance came down from the National Guard Bureau at the end of August 2016. These guidelines show that TERA will not be a retroactive option for Soldiers; it will be an option only for those who are not selected for retention by an Active Service Management Board (ASMB) or for officers who are not selected for promotion twice in a row.

At this time, TERA is scheduled to be rescinded for National Guard and Reserve Soldiers on 31 December 2018. Depending on utilization and necessity, it could be extended.

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Information for this article adapted from "TERA is now an option for Army National Guard AGR status Soldiers" by First Sergeant Robin Brown with Defense Video & Imagery Distribution System.



## Details on the New Combat Tourniquet

Makers of the Combat Application Tourniquet™ (CAT) have updated the design of the widely-used tourniquet. The update has resulted in two different versions of the tourniquet currently in use in the field. Deployed Soldiers may soon receive the updated version and wonder how to use it.

"When you need to actually use a tourniquet is the wrong time to figure out which version you have and how to use it," advised Jason Harrington, Army Medical Materiel Agency's nurse consultant with the Medical Devices Program Management Office.

"Soldiers need to look at their tourniquets and become familiar with the version they have been issued by carefully reading the printed instructions that come with each CAT."

Exsanguination (i.e., bleeding to death) is the most common cause of potentially survivable death for wounded warfighters. Every Soldier carries a CAT on the battlefield to provide life-saving care to themselves or a fellow Soldier.

The older version of the tourniquet,

Generation 6, which was developed through research at the Army Medical Research and Materiel Command, is a small, lightweight tourniquet designed to completely stop arterial blood flow from an injured limb. The updated version of the CAT, Generation 7, features a single-routing buckle through which Soldiers feed the tourniquet belt before tightening it with the windlass (a textured black rod). The Generation 6 CAT model has two slots on the buckle and could be used to either double-route (buddy-care) or single-route (self-care) the belt. While the updated CAT single-slot buckle is designed for faster and easier application, the Army emphasizes that both models are effective.

"Soldiers who have an older version should not feel they have to replace their device by getting the newer version or fear that the older version is any less effective," Harrington said.

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Information for this article adapted from "Details on the new combat tourniquet" by Ellen Crown with Army News Service.

# Korean and English Speech Contest Reinforces Alliance

Hosted by Republic of Korea Army Support Group, the 16th Korean and English speech contest was held for U.S. Soldiers and Korean students on Yongsan Garrison in recognition of the 570th anniversary of Hanguk Proclamation Day.

“I hope this contest serves as an opportunity to reinforce our ROK–U.S. alliance and fosters our mutual understanding,” said Republic of Korea Army Support Group commander Colonel Lee Chul Won.

Each contestant was tasked to give a five-minute speech in Korean and then work as a member of a two-man team in a verbal charades event, which consisted of one participant describing words in Korean until the other participant could guess the word and answer in Korean.

Event contestant Private First Class Phuong Tran, assigned to 188th Military Police Company, emphasized the importance of learning Korean: “To keep this alliance, we must be able to



communicate with our KATUSA [Korean Augmentation to the United States Army] counterparts. Even though they know English well, sometimes they feel more comfortable speaking Korean.”

Many of the participants’ speech topics covered their personal experiences in Korea and their love for KATUSA and Korean citizens. After the contestants’ speeches, members of the panel of judges spoke briefly about how impressed they were with the participants’ language proficiency and in-depth topics.

“It was a great opportunity to get to know the KATUSA Soldiers better, as well as the Korean culture and mindset on a personal level, the more I learned about their language,” said Tran. “In this sense, I really think that this contest promotes the ROK–U.S. interaction on an individual level, which is what really strengthens the alliance.”

Information for this article adapted from “Korean and English Speech Contest reinforces the alliance between ROK and U.S.” by Corporal Lee Kyeong-min with Army News Service.



## Letters to the Editor

NCO Update would like to hear from you. We want to know your opinions and possibly publish them in future issues. Please send your letters to Editor, NCO Update, AUSA, 2425 Wilson Blvd., Arlington, VA 22201. Letters are also accepted via e-mail at [etoner@ausa.org](mailto:etoner@ausa.org) with the subject line “Letters to the Editor.”

Ellen Toner, Editor

SMA (Ret.) Kenneth O. Preston, Director, NCO and Soldier Programs

Association of the United States Army  
2425 Wilson Boulevard  
Arlington, VA 22201-3385

Phone: 800-336-4570 x2602 or  
703-907-2602

E-mail: [etoner@ausa.org](mailto:etoner@ausa.org)