



NEWSBLAST

U.S. Army Contracting Command

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"Providing global contracting support to war fighters."

ACC employees earn AMC's 2012 Dellamonica Awards

By Betsy Kozak-Howard

ACC-Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md.

Clay Socha and Gloria Golden, Army Contracting Command – Aberdeen Proving Ground, have been selected by the Army Materiel Command for the 2012 Louis Dellamonica Award for Outstanding Personnel of the Year.

According to the news release announcing the recipients, the award recognizes personnel whose outstanding work accomplishments significantly contribute to AMC's mission. The nominees were judged on how their initiatives measurably improved their

work environment, how they motivated and inspired fellow employees to improve or increase the quality of their own work. The award was named in honor of Louis Dellamonica, a general engineer at the Hawthorne Army Depot, Nev. Dellamonica's 65-year career exemplified integrity, innovation, leadership and outstanding dedication to AMC's mission. Each year AMC selects military and civilian members who meet the established criteria and stand out as model employees.

Socha's award nomination cited his performance while serving as a contracting officer with the civilian expeditionary workforce in support of Operation

Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan. In February 2012, he volunteered for the CEW program which led to his one-year assignment in Afghanistan. Socha has been a member of ACC for four years and started his career as a contract specialist intern with ACC-APG's Adelphi Division in Adelphi, Md.

As an acquisition certified contracting employee, Socha's initial responsibility was to manage the contracting workload for 12 installations within the Kabul base cluster. He was responsible for approximately 130 new and recurring requirements valued at \$300 million.

See **DELLAMONICA**, page 4.

ACC-NCR drawdown going 'better than expected'

By Ed Worley

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"Better than expected" is the way the point man characterized the closing of the Army Contracting Command-National Capital Region contracting center.

"There are 1,001 details, but we are managing every aspect of the drawdown and are on track to successfully meet the Army's July 20 closure date," said Jack Cunnane, deputy director, ACC-NCR, Alexandria, Va., and point man for its closure.

The Army estimates the move will save about \$13 million annually, once the transition is complete. The savings will be achieved through increased efficiencies, reduced facilities and information technology costs, reduced turnover and reduced locality pay as the positions are moved outside the region.

Center leadership and ACC staff developed transition processes for employees, supported activities, workload, facilities and property, explained Cunnane.

See **ACC-NCR**, page 5.



(Photo by Master Sgt. Robert Yanez)

Caldwell assumes command

Lt. Col. Jeffrey L. Caldwell (right), incoming commander of the 916th Contingency Contracting Battalion, returns the unit guidon to Col. William A. Sanders, commander, 410th Contracting Support Brigade, during the 916th change of command ceremony held May 16 at Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

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Undra Robinson II

ACC-National Capital Region, Alexandria, Va.

By **Larry D. McCaskill**

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For Undra Robinson II, the Army Contracting Command's Deployable Cadre Program has been a window of opportunity both professionally and personally.

Prior to his deployment in October, Robinson, a contract specialist at the ACC-National Capital Region in Alexandria, Va., decided he wanted to serve closer to Soldiers. So when he was able to deploy with them, he jumped at the chance.

"I have always wanted to support the war fighter in a contingency location and this job gives me the ability to do that," said the George Washington University graduate. "I am currently a contract specialist with a limited warrant with ACC-Qatar procuring services for Camp As Sayliyah, other bases in Qatar and contracting missions throughout the Middle East."

Applying for the program in February 2012, Robinson got his wish in October and soon found himself in a whole new world.

"The type of contracting I do here is different than back at ACC-NCR," said the 28-year-old who calls the northern Virginia area home. "At ACC-NCR, I work mostly on information technology

services contracts. In theater, I've been working on construction projects."

Robinson is working side-by-side with the Soldiers he has supported from afar and is gaining a better appreciation on how contracting supports their needs.

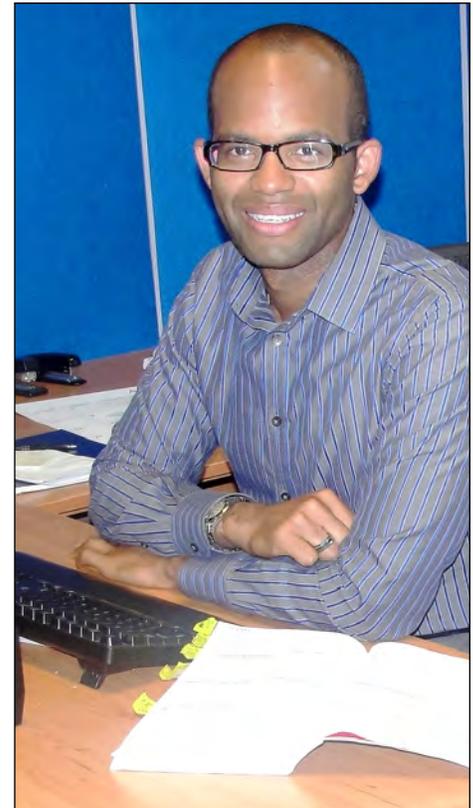
"I work with a lot more Soldiers than civilians back at home. My work here in theater directly supports the war fighter just as it does back home. The thing is, there I can't see that. Here, I have the opportunity to see it for myself," said Robinson, who enjoys travelling as well as singing in the church choir back in Virginia.

Robinson said the experience has allowed him to learn about contracting as a whole.

"I am learning a lot about base operations contracting. I'm also learning how to work with Soldiers as customers, not as contracting officer's representatives, which is totally different," he said.

Robinson said the DCP is something every junior contracting specialist should consider.

"You gain experience in contracting that will be satisfying career-wise and personally. Being a member of the DCP you learn and do things not every civilian military contracting specialist can say they have done. You meet great people that could potentially help your career in the future," said Robinson, who met his personal goal of supporting Soldiers



Undra Robinson II

overseas after three years of working for the government.

"On a personal note," he said, "being in the DCP makes me feel like I'm actively doing something to assist in the defense of my country."

Readers are encouraged to submit comments or suggestions to the editorial staff via the mailbox icon to the right. Responses will assist the NewBlast staff in producing a publication to better meet readers' expectations and information needs.



U.S. Army Contracting Command

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NEWSBLAST

414th CSB contracting Soldiers support African mission

(Additional information was compiled from Special Operations Command Africa Public Affairs and the 414th Contracting Support Brigade reports.)

By Sarah F. Taylor
Chief, Regional Contracting Office-Italy

The 414th Contracting Support Brigade, Vicenza, Italy, recently supported the Flintlock 2013 exercise in Mauritania, Africa, with two contingency contracting officers.

Flintlock is a Joint Chiefs of Staff-directed, U.S. Africa Command-sponsored exercise conducted by the Joint Special Operations Task Force-Trans Sahara focusing on improving the capabilities of regional militaries as well as to conduct civil military operations aimed at improving the health and welfare of local civilian populations. The exercise brings together participating multinational Special Operations Forces in a joint environment to develop and refine relevant tactics, techniques and procedures for today's operational environment.

Hosted by Mauritania, the annual capacity-building exercise drew more than 1,000 participants from 14 African and Western partner nations between Feb. 20 and March 9, 2013.

Bordered by the Western Sahara Desert, Algeria, Senegal and Mali, reports of conflict and unrest are constant in the region. With events unfolding in nearby Mali, each military force was aware that they could be called upon to support their neighbor in the fight against violent extremists.

It was into this region that Maj. Melody Varner and Sgt. 1st Class Wanda Knight, contingency contracting officers assigned to the Italy-based 414th, were called to provide support for the exercise. Their mission was to overcome language barriers and ensure that all contract requirements were met to support 1,200 participants from 17 countries at three remote training locations for 58 days.

Although there was only one contract for this exercise, it was a very complex requirement. The German contractor bought the U.S. Army Veterinary Command-approved food from a Dutch supplier, loaded it in refrigerated



(Courtesy photos)

During breaks, Soldiers supporting the African-based exercise designed various physical conditioning devices to maintain fitness.



Sgt. 1st Class Wanda Knight (left) and Maj. Melody Varner supported the Flintlock exercise in Africa.

containers, and transported it via ship to the port of Nouakchott, Mauritania.

While in Nouakchott, the CCOs facilitated the contractor's entry into the country and onward movement of their equipment to the remote locations. Moving a dozen containers and the contracted workforce on questionable roads through hundreds of checkpoints was no small feat. The refrigerated containers required a generator to keep them cold during transport from the port to the field locations.

Once the contractor and equipment arrived at each site, working with the host

nation was critical. Initially a problem, the language barrier was quickly overcome with the support of a 10th Special Forces interpreter who assisted until the contracted interpreters arrived.

Through it all, the two Soldiers had to survive the austere conditions.

Field conditions in Nema, Ayoun and Kiffa were a shock to the Soldiers and contractors alike.

The only operational toilets were squatters. Cold showers were the norm and temperatures often reached 130 degrees during the day and sandstorms occurred several times a week. The barracks and work areas were not climate-controlled. Laundry services were not available for more than a month, so washing clothes in a bucket became a necessity.

Since there was not a gym at the field site, the engineers built a pull-up stand and dip bar. The Soldiers used many other innovative methods to keep fit in the field, such as a homemade "sled" using a pallet and a box of water.

As is human nature, the Soldiers adapted to the situation.

Flintlock is the longest exercise supported by the 414th CSB. The CCOs were away from Italy for 75 days and spent 56 days in field conditions. Although this is not the "normal" contracting experience, both CCOs learned valuable lessons that they can carry with them throughout the rest of their careers.

NCO Journal goes online, expands reach and accessibility

By The NCO Journal staff

FORT BLISS, Texas – The Army’s official magazine for noncommissioned officer professional development, the NCO Journal, has moved online.

In an effort to expand its reach, accessibility and to cut costs the NCO Journal will no longer have a print edition and can be found exclusively at <http://ncojournal.dodlive.mil>.

The NCO Journal will still produce the same quality and number of articles as the print editions, said Command Sgt. Maj.

Rory Malloy, commandant of the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy where the NCO Journal is produced.

“By moving the NCO Journal to an online-only presence, we can still give our NCOs across the force access to relevant, quality articles that NCOs can use in their daily duties,” Malloy said.

Although the NCO Journal has provided the enlisted corps with informative print articles since 1991, the professional journal is setting a standard as one of the first Army journals to leverage digital technology, thereby reaching a

wider audience than a print product.

The NCO Journal’s official website is accessible from government and home computers as well as most mobile devices.

Past issues, as well as the “Long Hard Road” book series, will be available for download on the site. “Long Hard Road” is a three-volume series, published by the NCO Journal that shares first-person accounts of NCO experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The NCO Journal provides updates through Facebook at www.facebook.com/ncojournal.

DELLAMONICA

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“Clay’s (Socha) performance was exceptional throughout and he was highly respected by all members of the staff and leaders in the Combined Joint Operations Area-Afghanistan, despite having a thankless job,” said U.S. Army Maj. Gen. Kenneth R. Dahl, U.S. Forces-Afghanistan deputy commanding general for support. “During the last few months of his tour, he served as the deputy officer-in-charge of the Joint Acquisition Review Board. I worked with him personally and he quickly earned my confidence and trust in his judgment and leadership.”

Socha said he oversaw all procurements and was at first overwhelmed.

“I provided my recommendation to the board whether to concur or non-concur with each procurement,” Socha said. “I presented each case and offered rationale to support my decision. I had to make tough decisions that were often met with resistance as drawdown efforts forced a culture shift toward a lean expeditionary standard.”

Golden received the Louis Dellamonica Award for her leadership and customer relations initiatives.

“I didn’t know that I was nominated and winning the award came as a total surprise,” said Golden. “I was happy that I was selected but I couldn’t have done it without a team of talented individuals.”

Golden, chief, Information Systems Engineering Command Branch of ACC-APG’s Huachuca Division, Fort Huachuca, Ariz., supervises 18 contracting professionals. She has been providing contracting support to the installation community for 26 years and fully credits



Clay Socha

her team for her success.

“My leadership style is simple,” Golden said. “I ensure that nothing inhibits an employee’s creativity, allowing them to be all that they can be. I provide the direction they need, celebrate their victories and help them overcome defeat. I give them the tools that they need to be successful.”

In addition to her degree in contracting, Golden has a background in psychology which helps in understanding the human aspect of being a supervisor, she said. “It also helps that I truly love what I do.”

Golden is also celebrating another recent award. She was identified as the Employee of the Year for 2012 for the Army Team Command, Control, Communication, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance



Gloria Golden

group, comprised of five organizations. Commonly referred to as C4ISR, the partner organizations collaborate and are collectively responsible for the Army’s C4ISR systems.

As she edges closer to retirement, Golden plans to embark on a new career.

“I want to raise guide dogs for the blind,” explained Golden, who is legally blind. “I will be a puppy raiser and my responsibility will be to teach the puppy to be a nice dog within a loving home environment. Once the puppy reaches 1 year of age, the dog will be transferred to a guide dog school for specialized training.”

As Louis Dellamonica award winners, Golden and Socha will receive certificates of achievement, engraved plaques and four-star notes signed by AMC’s commanding general.

He praised the staffs of the ACC deputy chief of staff, Human Capital G-1 and DCS, Installations and Logistics G-4 for “leading from the front and executing the personnel, facilities and property efforts,” allowing the NCR to put the majority of its effort toward transitioning customers and workload.

He also praised the NCR team.

“The credit is widely spread,” he explained. “ACC-NCR’s Customer Support Element has been instrumental in coordinating recurring stakeholder meetings and keeping our customers informed and moving in the right direction. ACC-NCR’s eBusiness Team has done a phenomenal job managing the transfer process and keeping the transition schedule on track.”

John Landry, ACC G-4 Logistics Support and Service Division team chief, said the logistics team has provided assistance from the beginning for the NCR Hoffman facilities and equipment disposition.

“Even though the NCR is scheduled to close on July 20, G-4 will remain to ensure the facilities are turned in and all equipment is relocated or properly disposed of,” he said.

When the closure was announced in November, each ACC-NCR employee was given a management-directed reassignment, with almost two months to decide whether to accept it, Cunnane explained. About half of the unit’s employees initially accepted their reassignments; that number is down to about 40. Some have already made the move to their new locations. Others have found employment on their own; have entered the Department of Defense Priority Placement Program or the ACC Command Assistance for Placing Employees program.

“Despite the hiring challenges, dozens of employees have been placed locally through the CAPE program and external hires,” he added. “Other ACC subordinate organizations with a presence in the National Capital Region have placed

about 30 ACC-NCR employees.”

Transferring the workload from ACC-NCR to the gaining organizations is an equally high priority for the staff, said Cunnane.

“A major priority for me is knowing exactly what our workload requirements are and being able to track and measure progress,” he explained. “As such, we established several metrics that allow us to track where we are, where we need to go and how we’re doing.”

He said all of the center’s requiring activities with active workload have linked up with their gaining contracting organizations, with 70 percent of those customers considered officially transferred. He expects to have 100 percent transferred by June 15.

So far, feedback from the requiring activities has been positive, Cunnane said.

“I think the impact has been minimal on our customer base,” he explained. “I am not aware of any instances where a customer requirement fell through the crack due to the transition and distribution of workload. At first, I don’t think any of our customers were happy about having to transition their contracting support. With that said, after they established working relationships with their new ACC contracting organization and realized the commitment the command has placed on making this transition work, most, if not all, are satisfied.”

He said the most difficult part of the transition is dealing with “a ton of challenges managing the deactivation and the multiple transition efforts.”

According to Cunnane, what surprised him the most is the endless number of details that must be considered. One of the most difficult areas is simply maintaining the momentum and staying on track to get the work done.

“For most of our employees, the management-directed reassignment is a life-changing event. It’s human nature to want and need to focus on your personal priorities and immediate future. Striking the right balance of allowing/providing folks the time to focus on their personal situations while still getting the job done is more of an art than a science.”

Military Kids website helps parents, educators

From a National Center for Telehealth and Technology News Release

JOINT BASE LEWIS-MCCHORD, Wash. – The Defense Department website for military children has added new features to help parents and educators explain difficult topics of the military lifestyle to children.

Since its launch in January 2012, www.MilitaryKidsConnect.org has served more than 125,000 visitors and won five industry excellence awards. To mark the one-year anniversary, the website added new content designed for children, parents and educators, officials said.

The new features include: military culture videos and lesson plans for teachers, school counselors and educators to better understand the differences between military and civilian youth; graphic novels and mini-documentaries by military kids sharing their experiences; and new modules for children and parents on

handling grief, loss and physical injury.

The website, created by the Defense Department’s National Center for Telehealth and Technology, known as T2, uses innovative ways to help military youth cope with the unique strains of military life to include coping with readjustment issues when a parent returns from deployment. These issues may include post-traumatic stress and physical disabilities.

“After watching the interaction with kids on MilitaryKidsConnect this past year, we saw many conversations about trying to understand the issues they live with,” said Dr. Kelly Blasko, T2 psychologist. “We developed the added features to help parents and teachers answer the questions the kids were sharing with each other.”

The National Center for Telehealth and Technology serves as the primary Defense Department office for cutting-edge approaches in applying technology to psychological health.



ACC in the News

These articles mention Army Contracting Command.

Senior executive accepts new challenge

By Kari Hawkins

Assistant editor, *The Redstone Rocket*

(Published in *The Redstone Rocket*, May 22, 2013)

Dickens joins AMCOM as deputy commander

For 32 years, Cathy Dickens has worked for an organization known for its ability to change, evolve and adapt to the nation's worldwide military actions and policies.

http://www.theredstonerocket.com/news/article_b914cc58-c2e8-11e2-aeb5-001a4bcf887a.html

Long-distance hookup decides contracting NCO of year

By David San Miguel

Army Contracting Command Public Affairs

(Published in *The Redstone Rocket*, May 22, 2013)

Competition conducted via video teleconference

In what may be the first time the Army has conducted any kind of Soldier's competition by video teleconference, the Army Contracting Command has set a new precedence.

http://www.theredstonerocket.com/military_scene/article_772581e6-c2ea-11e2-bf23-001a4bcf887a.html

African American Soldiers Honored At Glenwood Cemetery

By Matt Kroschel

WHNT19 News (Aired May 27, 2013)

HUNTSVILLE, Ala. (WHNT) – There was a fitting tribute in honor of our service men and women who have made great sacrifices Monday at Glenwood Cemetery in Huntsville.

<http://whnt.com/2013/05/27/african-american-soldiers-honored-at-glenwood-cemetery/>

Man's best friend helping veterans

By Clay LePard

WHBF-TV (Aired May 27, 2013)

For our injured military veterans, the road to recovery can be hard.

The memories from the battlefield still linger for Mitch Chapman, but he says at least he's doing it with someone who will always be loyal to him.

<http://www.whbf.com/Global/category.asp?C=190186&clipId=8914710&topVideoCatNo=149119&autoStart=true>



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