



Vol. 4, No. 34
Sept. 26, 2013

NEWSBLAST

U.S. Army Contracting Command

"Providing global contracting support to war fighters."

ACC commander holds town hall meeting, tours Rock Island facilities

By Liz Adrian

ACC-Rock Island, Ill.

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ROCK ISLAND ARSENAL, Ill. – Maj. Gen. Camille M. Nichols, commanding general, Army Contracting Command, held a town hall with the workforce here, followed by a tour of the ACC-RI facilities.

In what is likely her last trip to ACC-RI as ACC commanding general, Nichols spoke Sept. 18 about the value of the contracting workforce. She also discussed the future of ACC as she sees it.

She thanked the workforce for being "incredible citizens and partners" that were diligent in completing the mission in spite of the blows – furlough and automatic budget cuts – that have been dealt over the past year.

See TOWN HALL, page 6.



(Photo by Liz Adrian)

Maj. Gen. Camille M. Nichols, commanding general, Army Contracting Command, discussed the state of the command and her thoughts on its future at a town hall meeting held at ACC-Rock Island, Ill., Sept. 18.

Memo preps employees for possible government shutdown

By Jim Garamone

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON – Although defense department officials believe a government shutdown can be avoided when the new fiscal year begins Oct. 1, they want DOD employees to be prepared for the possibility, Deputy Defense Secretary Ash Carter said in a memo issued to the workforce Sept. 23.

The fiscal year ends Sept. 30, and Congress has not passed a budget. If Congress does not approve a budget or pass a continuing resolution, the portions of the government funded via appropriated funds will be forced to close.

"The department remains hopeful that a government shutdown will be averted," Carter wrote in the memo. "The

administration strongly believes that a lapse in funding should not occur and is working with Congress to find a solution."

Congress still can prevent a lapse in appropriations, but "prudent management requires that we be prepared for all contingencies, including the possibility that a lapse could occur at the end of the month," the deputy secretary wrote.

The absence of funding would mean a number of government activities would cease. "While military personnel would continue in a normal duty status, a large number of our civilian employees would be temporarily furloughed," Carter said. "To prepare for this possibility, we are updating our contingency plans for executing an orderly shutdown of activities that would be affected by a lapse in appropriations."

President Barack Obama and Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel understand the hardships such a shutdown could cause civilian employees, the deputy secretary wrote.

"The administration strongly believes that a lapse in funding should not occur and is working with Congress to find a solution," Pentagon Press Secretary George Little told reporters. "The secretary has made it clear that budget uncertainty is not helpful for us in executing our budget efficiently, and a shutdown would be the worst type of uncertainty. A shutdown would put severe hardships on an already stressed workforce, and is totally unnecessary."

Carter vowed to provide more information as it becomes available.

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Spotlight on...

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NCO strives for success, works toward senior leadership role

By Rachel Clark

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A native of Columbus, Ohio, Staff Sgt. Booker Jordan is an acquisition, logistics and technology contracting noncommissioned officer with the 409th Contracting Support Brigade's 903rd Contingency Contracting Battalion in Kaiserslautern, Germany.

Jordan currently works in the Kaiserslautern Military Community Division at the Theater Contracting Center. Within the KMC division, he works mainly on small construction contracts for the Kaiserslautern and Baumholder military communities.

"Staff Sgt. Jordan is the future of the NCO Corps and the Army," said Sgt. Maj. Marlon Cooper, 903rd senior enlisted advisor. "He demonstrates what a leader should look like and he's an outstanding NCO."

Jordan enlisted into the Army in 1997, reclassified into the contracting career field and has served in it for the past two years. Prior to contracting, he was a water treatment and supply NCO.

"After three combat deployments I wanted to serve the Army in another way," he explained. "I was very interested in the contracting military occupational specialty and how it could help me improve my life after retirement."

More than a contract specialist, Jordan represented the 409th CSB and placed runner up in the Army Contracting

Command's annual NCO of the Year competition.

"Staff Sgt. Jordan is the epitome of the warrior ethos; committed to excellence; anything else is unacceptable. He consistently exemplifies superb leadership qualities," said Sgt. 1st Class Ontario Flower, Jordan's supervisor and sponsor during the competition.

Besides competing for the NCO top spot, Jordan has set a lot of goals he'd like to achieve.

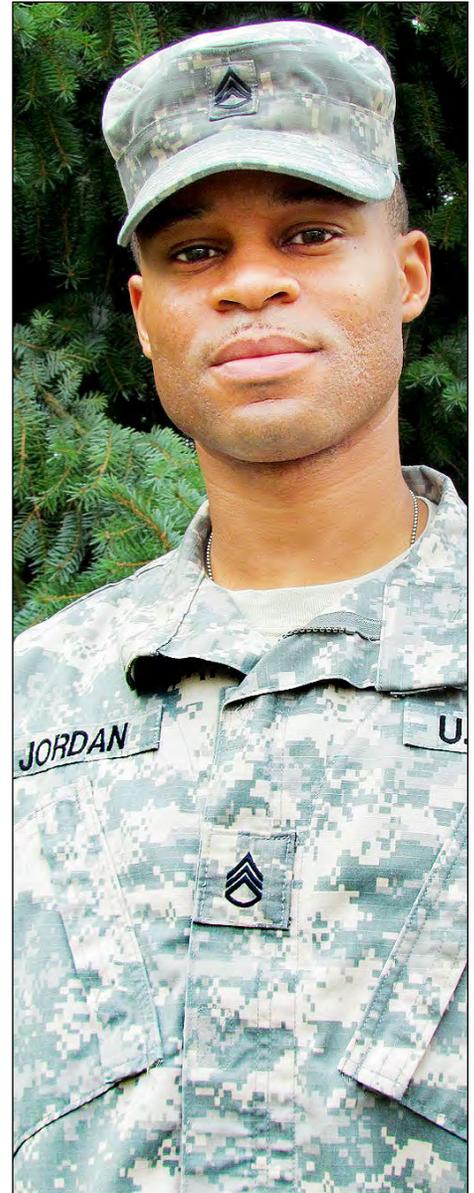
"I'm working toward an accounting degree and want to climb the Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act ladder of certifications; to learn and experience more within my job; to one day be the senior enlisted advisor, and last but not least, spend more time with my family," he said.

Jordan enjoys staying active and working out.

"I like putting miles on and tracking my runs in the German countryside," he said. "I also play paintball and invite friends to partake in my passion for the sport. When I'm with my family, their hobbies are my hobbies; however, when I'm alone I play Candy Crush Saga."

When asked why he enjoys serving in the Army, Jordan said he liked "being a part of a team that has the power to change the lives of people and liked protecting our great nation."

"The mission is forever changing," he said, "the people within my team come and go. Time away from family is part of the job and asking for more challenges is always on the "to-do" list."



Staff Sgt. Booker Jordan

U.S. Army Contracting Command

Commanding General
Maj. Gen. Camille M. Nichols

ACC Command Sergeant Major
Command Sgt. Maj. John L. Murray

The NewsBlast is a bi-weekly newsletter authorized and produced by the U.S. Army Contracting Command's Office of Public and Congressional Affairs editorial staff in accordance with AR 360-1 (The Army Public Affairs Program) to inform, educate and entertain the ACC community on people, policies, operations, technical developments, trends and ideas of and about the Department of Defense, the Department of the Army and this command.

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NEWSBLAST



MICC analyst bound for leadership program

By Ryan Mattox
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JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO-FORT SAM HOUSTON, Texas – A member of the Mission and Installation Contract Command here has been selected for the Department of Defense Executive Leadership Development Program.

Cicely Simmons, a procurement analyst, is one of approximately 60 DOD members selected for the program this year.

“It is a tremendous honor being one of eight Army participants being selected for the ELDP for this year,” Simmons said. “I am consistently seeking opportunities for self-improvement and am motivated to look for challenges. I want to be in a position to reach back and help others. I look forward to being given the opportunity to make a difference.”

This 10-month program takes participants to a variety of locations both in the United States and overseas and provides hands-on experience of the role and mission of the war fighter in DOD.

The program was developed in 1985 at the direction of the secretary of defense to provide a method of experiential leadership development for future leaders. Program officials said it is intended to develop leaders who have an understanding of DOD’s global missions; the complexities and challenges war fighters face in carrying out those missions; and to afford, through hands-on immersion training, opportunities for experiential learning that enhance the capabilities required to support and lead a military and civilian expeditionary workforce.

“It will prepare me for a broader range of leadership in a joint environment,” Simmons said. Selection to the program is very competitive.

Class size is limited to between 55 and 65 participants. The program is targeted for civilians in grades GS-12 through GS-14; and military personnel within the ranks of captain, major and sergeant first class and above.

“I expect many challenges both mentally and physically,” Simmons said. “From passing the physical test, crawling through mud at the Army Ranger course, many reading assignments and very long hours, but I believe it will be a once-in-a-lifetime experience. This program will provide opportunities that will expand my understanding of the mission of DOD, improve my leadership skills and provide experiential training that can’t be provided while sitting at a computer. Since this isn’t a contracting program, there is a multi-discipline aspect that will reap rewards in spades.”

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.





(Photo by Betsy Kozak-Howard)

ACC-APG Career Development Specialist Jeff Ralls served as a drill sergeant in the same building he now occupies as a civilian.

ACC-APG renovation project unites Division D employees

By Betsy Kozak-Howard
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A building renovation project literally brought together employees of Division D of the Army Contracting Command – Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md.

With the completion of the refurbishment of building 4310, Division D employees are now located under one roof. The division held an open house Sept. 18 to celebrate the opening of its newly renovated building.

“Prior to the completion of this renovation, the division was located in three different locations, including five temporary office trailers,” said Sue Greider, division chief. “We didn’t have a facility large enough to accommodate the entire division of 95 people. It’s truly wonderful to see the whole division together, mentoring and collaborating on work issues.”

The building is divided into three bays,

reminiscent of the building’s history as a facility with the Ordnance Center and School, which relocated to Fort Lee, Va., as part of Base Realignment and Closure. Prior to the renovation, a portion of Division D had office space in two of the bays. Its occupants moved to a temporary location for the duration of the work.

“The renovation included all three bays and took 17 months to complete,” said Tim Yingling, ACC-APG facilities manager. “A single heating, ventilation and air conditioning unit was installed which involved the removal of the entire ceiling and an unexpected asbestos abatement. Division D personnel will enjoy the upgraded restrooms, tiled floors and the new windows which bring more light. The eight new windows were installed in openings cut through the 12-inch thick exterior wall, which was a significant accomplishment. Despite the complexity of this renovation, it went extremely smooth and I’m pleased with the results.”

The open house gave other ACC-APG division staffs an opportunity to tour the new facility and to scope out employee work areas. One visitor was Jeff Ralls, career development specialist with the Enterprise Resources Division. He recalled working in bay 2 as a military member, which still displays the murals painted by the Bravo Company “Bulldogs” of the 16th Ordnance Battalion.

“From 1996 to 1998, I worked in this building as a senior drill sergeant with the Ordnance School,” Ralls said. “Each week, buses rolled up in the back parking lot with Army Soldiers rotating in from basic training ready to begin their advanced individual training. I spent numerous hours within this building taking care of Soldiers while they were at the school and preparing them for their follow-on assignments. The work that I did within these walls taught me so much about time management, supervising and interacting with varied personality types.”

See **RENOVATION**, page 5.

Liaison bridges gap, expands contracting partnership

By Betsy Kozak-Howard

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ABERDEEN PROVING GROUND, Md. – Collaboration, via the addition of a liaison position, was the key to the successful award of five year-end contracts for the Army Contracting Command – Aberdeen Proving Ground in support of the Program Executive Office for Missiles and Space, officials said.

According to Gregory L. Davies, chief of ACC-APG's Division C, this type of collaboration was envisioned in the 2007 Gansler report on Army contracting.

It included the recommendation that contracting personnel need an effective customer interface that performs the type of function an acquisition management staff officer performs.

"The report further defined the customer interface role as someone who could be a bridge between the program office and the contracting office in order to translate requirements into statements of work that quickly and seamlessly can be placed on contract," Davies said.

ACC-APG's Division C put this recommendation into practice and has seen impressive results, according to Davies. As a joint effort, PEO Missiles and Space and ACC-APG established the liaison position to strengthen the acquisition process leading to awarding contracts. The objective was to create a senior-level reach-back capability to serve as the link between both organizations.

The liaison is assigned to PEO Missiles and Space, but located with Division C.

Mark West, contracting branch chief, sees the advantages of this union.

"Having a liaison position imbedded within ACC-APG provided more exposure to the program office and



(Photo by Betsy Kozak-Howard)

Frank P. Taraborelli Jr. (left), contracting liaison from the Product Management Office for Radars, and Mark West, branch chief from Division C of ACC-APG, formed the liaison position to serve as a bridge between the two offices.

the customer's unique requirements," said West. "This exposure enhanced communication, improved understanding and led to an increased level of collaboration."

Frank P. Taraborelli Jr., Product Management Office for Radars liaison, reported to work with ACC-APG in April.

"I haven't been in the position long but this partnership has already yielded big dividends," Taraborelli said. "The good working relationship between PM Radars and ACC-APG has evolved even stronger."

As a result of this collaborative effort, the team obligated \$521 million in contract awards in the third quarter of fiscal year 2013, West said.

"We've made great strides and as this partnership continues, I'm confident we'll achieve even greater accomplishments. This teaming has produced results and is working great," Taraborelli said.

Having the liaison within ACC-APG has been a win-win situation, according to West.

"Frank has vast experience and he is able to address the issues," West explained. "He attends our division chief meetings and we attend the product manager meetings. With a knowledgeable expert on hand, we are able to solve issues within hours that used to take days to resolve. It also helps that Frank has prior contract specialist experience and understands our work."

RENOVATION

Also during the open house, 14 Division D employees were recognized for their contributions to the ACC-APG mission: Terry Blevins, quality assurance specialist; Sabrinna Cosom, contract specialist; Ralph Kaminski, contract specialist; Shirley Kelly, business specialist; Paula Kestler, contract specialist; Dennis

Libershal, contract specialist; Thomas Marousek, lead contract specialist; Terry McBee, procurement analyst; Rebecca Mitchem, contract specialist; Theresa Quick, lead contract specialist; Jeffrey Schoerner, supervisory contract specialist; Carol Tyree, lead contract specialist; Gregory Wagenknecht, supervisory

contract specialist; and Mitzi Wall, lead contract specialist.

Also awarded for their support to the building renovation were two members of the Special Security, Logistics and Technology Division: Aaron Vandiver, procurement information analyst, and Tim Yingling.

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Hispanic Heritage Month an opportunity to explore contributions

By Terri Moon Cronk

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON – Hispanic Heritage Month, which began Sept. 15, marks a time to showcase the many contributions Hispanic Americans have made to the Defense Department, the deputy director of DOD's Office of Diversity Management and Equal Opportunity said.

Continuing through Oct. 15, the month-long observance gives everyone an opportunity to explore the Hispanic culture, F. Michael Sena said in an American Forces Press Service interview.

"It's our history," he said.

The department's Hispanic-American population of service members and civilian employees is increasing, Sena said.

"Military and civilians throughout the world are in critical roles in DOD," he added. "Hispanic-Americans have a deep, profound impact on DOD, and it's through that impact that their commitment to family, faith, hard work and public service has influenced and enhanced our national culture through multicultural and multiethnic traditions. You can see that in everyday life through our food, language and art."

About 11.5 percent of DOD's total military force is Hispanic, and about 5.5

percent of that comprises officers, Sena said. The greatest strides are being made in Hispanic women, or Latinas, and Latina officers in particular, whose numbers have nearly doubled to 2,000 in the military in recent years, he said.

"(Latina officers) are fantastic role

"Hispanic-Americans have a deep, profound impact on DOD, and it's through that impact that their commitment to family, faith, hard work and public service has influenced and enhanced our national culture through multicultural and multiethnic traditions."

– F. Michael Sena

models to our folks throughout the country," he said, adding that of the estimated 800,000 civilians who work for DOD worldwide, Hispanics make up about 6.5 percent.

Still, he said, Pentagon officials hope to recruit more Hispanic service members. "DOD still needs to do a lot of work to increase our numbers to be reflective of the nation," he acknowledged.

DOD's major strategies to increase the Hispanic population in its ranks include having a robust outreach and recruitment program, working on educational and developmental programs for future employees, and developmental programs for existing employees to refresh their skills and make them more competitive in their occupations, Sena said.

While strides have been made, he

added, more progress also is needed within the realm of civilian DOD employment.

"DOD is committed to increasing its diversity and inclusion numbers," he said, adding that diversity represents more than demographics. "We're talking about individuals who have skills, knowledge and abilities that bring different perspectives – diversity is key to our readiness."

To spread the word among Hispanics that DOD is a model employer, the department engages

with affinity groups such as Latina Style, the National Organization of Mexican American Rights and the League of United Latin American Citizens to reach out to Hispanic Americans, Sena said. The department also is pursuing opportunities for Hispanics in the science, technology, engineering and math fields – also known as STEM – by working with students, parents and teachers.

STEM investments in individuals such as Hispanic-Americans leads to innovation, Sena noted.

"Innovation requires individuals who are creative (and) have diverse thoughts and ideas to make our lives better," he said. "It increases quality of life, which leads to a better economy, and a better economy is a pillar of our national security."

TOWN HALL

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"I also wanted to tell you that the command, especially you all, that when you have the secretary of the Army and the chief of staff of the Army going forward to ask the (secretary of defense) to exempt our workforce – ours was the only workforce besides emergency people – that they were championing for you because they get what you do," said Nichols.

Looking into the next fiscal year and beyond, Nichols said she does not have a "crystal ball." However, as far as ACC's future in the coming years, Nichols said she believes there will be a holistic approach to determining the most deliberate and appropriate ways in which to address budgetary challenges.

Nichols said leaders may look at shifting some workload and potentially

consolidating some locations to reduce redundancy.

"We have 103 sites in this command and we cannot sustain 103 sites," said Nichols. "Some are just 20 miles away from each other. Some places you have two ACC organizations with a footprint."

However, Nichols said that if an office is closed, that does not necessarily mean people will lose their jobs.

"Maybe that person will stay there and work virtually for someone in another place," said Nichols. "That's the power of (the virtual contracting enterprise). Using that to champion for the past couple years to get us into the future, operating like a 21st century type of organization allows us to be global, it allows us to be everywhere."

Nichols said she believes ACC will fare reasonably well in fiscal year 2014, noting that there needs to be an 8 percent reduction in the field. However, she said that because the leadership teams have been helping headquarters manage workload at vacancy rates of approximately 10 percent, ACC does not have to cut anyone in the field at this point.

Beyond fiscal 2014, Nichols said there is little known and that the command must place priority on being open, transparent and sharing a real dialogue.

Before moving onto questions from the workforce, Nichols assured the contracting professionals here that the everyday work that is accomplished is known and noticed by those with exemption powers.

Sunday: nation to honor Gold Star Mothers

By Army News Service

WASHINGTON – This Sunday, the Army and the nation will, for the 77th time, turn their attention to mothers who have lost sons or daughters while fighting America's wars.

The Congress first created "Gold Star Mother's Day" in 1936 to honor those women whose children were taken from them as a result of war.

"The Gold Star Mothers, as well as all family members who bear the enormous burden of loss, will always be cherished members of our great Army family. We maintain our commitment to support these families while honoring the legacy of our fallen Soldiers," stated Secretary of the Army John M. McHugh, Chief of Staff of the Army Gen. Ray Odierno and Sgt. Maj. of the Army Raymond F. Chandler III in a tri-signed letter to the Army.

Donna Engeman, program manager, U.S. Army Survivor Outreach Services, is a "Gold Star Wife." She lost her military husband. She said just the letter from Army senior leadership – proof that the Army recognizes the heartache of those who lost their loved ones – is meaningful.

According to Engeman, the nation as well as military communities worldwide will host events to honor and recognize Gold Star Mothers.

"Gold Star Mother's Day is important because it's a day set aside to recognize mothers who lost a son or daughter who made the ultimate sacrifice," she said.

The Army's Survivor Outreach Services provides access to support, information and services for those who have lost a Soldier. The services are provided at the closest installation to where the survivor resides, Engeman said.

Engeman said services to Gold Star mothers and other surviving family

members are provided by local resources such as support groups. The SOS works to put surviving family members in touch with those services, and can also coordinate counseling.

The SOS is available to surviving family members of Soldiers across the total Army – including the Army National Guard and the Army Reserve.

During World War I, families would hang flags in their windows that were white with red borders. Inside, a blue star would represent each family member who was serving in the military. When a service member was killed, the blue star was changed to a gold star.

In 1947, the Gold Star Lapel pin was designed and created to be presented to eligible surviving family members of service members who died while deployed in support of overseas contingency operations, or who died from wounds sustained in theater.



ACC in the News

These articles mention Army Contracting Command.

Meet Charlie Daniels

(Published on page 9 in the Redstone Rocket Sept. 25, 2013)

Brig. Gen. Ted Harrison, commanding general of the Expeditionary Contracting Command, meets legendary country music artist Charlie Daniels during the Charlie Daniels Scholarship for Heroes Dinner in Nashville on Sept. 11. The dinner is a charity event to help fund recovery for Soldiers with war wounds and aid families coping with trauma. Harrison and his wife, Wendy, represented Team Redstone at the event. Daniels is known for one of the most popular fiddle songs of all time, "The Devil Went Down to Georgia."

<http://theredstonerocket.p2ionline.com/Flip/Sitebase/index.aspx?adgroupid=136170&view=double&FH=535&TrackString=Redstone+Rocket>

Tri fitness

Photo by Larry McCaskill, ACC

(Published on page 38 in the Redstone Rocket Sept. 25, 2013)

Soldiers and civilians of the Army Contracting Command and the Expeditionary Contracting Command biked, hiked and walked during an ACC-sponsored physical fitness event Sept. 17. Starting at the Col. Carroll D. Hudson Recreation Area, participants biked 17.5 miles, ran 3.5 miles or walked 2.5 miles along designated paths.

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