

# THE ROCKET

*Winter 2019*





## ROCKET SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

- ✓ Submit articles in **Microsoft Word Document Format Only!!!** (Do not include photos within body of text.)
- ✓ Article Header Font = **Times New Roman**; Font Size = 14; **Bold**.
- ✓ Author/contributor credit reflected in following format: *Written by [Insert Author's name]*; Font = *Times New Roman Italics*; Font Size = 10]
  - Page Margins = 1" Left, Right, Top and Bottom
  - The text should be **Times New Roman** Font; Font Size=10. No special formatting. Use left justification. Maximum number of words = 600 words
  - Maximum number of photos per article = 3 (Place at the end of the article)
  - Include photo captions under photo (Times New Roman Font; Font Size=8)
  - PDF documents will **NOT** be accepted.
  - Links to web articles will **NOT** be accepted.
  - Articles should be written from third-person point of view, or outsider looking in, and use pronouns like he, she, it, they or the \_\_\_\_ Chapter.
  - If would like an article from another publication to appear in the ROCKET, you must obtain written permission from the author and forward it to [nationalrocket@gmail.com](mailto:nationalrocket@gmail.com) along with the article in MS Word format.

**DEATH ANNOUNCEMENTS** will be sent for former/current ROCKS Members and their spouses. The dissemination of such information for children and extended family is to be done at the discretion of the local chapter president.

**SAVE THE DATE ANNOUNCEMENTS** need to have the name of the event, date and time; the address, building number or name, city or post.

Note: We do not accept podcasts or videos as stand alone submissions for this written publication. However, we do have other media platforms available to disseminate or distribute video or podcast material.



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## Message from the Chairman



*BG Lawrence Gillespie, USA, Retired*

As we move through this holiday season and look forward to the promises of 2020, we should reflect on the achievements the ROCKS has enjoyed and the challenges that we face with approaching New Year. In my opinion, the accomplishments of this organization in 2019 have been significant and will form the basis for our future successes.

Noteworthy, was the outstanding Gala we experienced in April. It was well organized, well attended, and from the comments I received, very much enjoyed. We also used the Gala to announce the achievements we made in the ROTC Scholarship arena. In conjunction with the US Army Cadet Command, the ROCKS was responsible for the awarding of ninety-one ROTC Scholarships worth over nine million dollars. Our scholarship awarding goal for 2020 is over two hundred. I want to take the opportunity while discussing ROTC Scholarships to highlight the outstanding ROTC program at Morgan State University. LTC Willie Rodney, PMS at Morgan has been very active and on the leading edge when it comes to pursuing the ROCKS and ROTC Scholarships for his cadets at Morgan and Coppin State. In addition, between the two institutions they received fifteen ROTC scholarships in 2019. It should also be noted that due to LTC Rodney's outstanding contributions to these two programs, he has been selected for Senior Service College. Congratulations and WELL DONE!

Accolades are in order for the efforts associated with the Golf Tournament, the Five Mile Run and the West Hamilton Dinner. Also are the dynamic events: fundraising for chapter scholarships, community service events and LPDs by the Alamo, Aloha, All-American, Central Virginia, Hampton Roads, and Morning Calm Chapters. We have chapters that are reorganizing, rejuvenating and on the rise...Fort Bliss, the Gator Chapter, All were outstanding successes and representative of the leadership needed to organize and run these events. We have interest groups and chapters that were dormant that are reorganizing, rejuvenating and on the rise...Fort Bliss, the Gator Chapter, Phantom Warrior, San Francisco Bay. We see you and laud your efforts.

The ROCKS are an organization that began some forty – five years ago and we have collectively accomplished a great deal. However, there are still some significant challenges that we should put forth our best efforts to rise above these challenges. Number one is to increase our membership. Reaching out to our uniform brethren who know about the ROCKS but are not members is everyone's responsibility. When you are discussing the new Army with your comrade in arms, please ask if they are a ROCK member. If not, tell them about the organization, and direct them to the information that provides the history and the achievements of the organization. Our second objective is receiving your support assistance in facilitating our scholarship efforts. With the significant impact that technology will have on our Army and the benefits these scholarships have on our community, in my mind it is imperative that each of us reach out to those seeking financial assistance and provide direction. Lastly, an organization that has been in existence for as long as the ROCKS has deserved to have a permanent office with a permanent staff.

I am confident we will meet these challenges and overcome them. As increase our membership, strengthen our partnerships with organizations such as AUSA and our efforts to support United States Cadet Command in finding deserving cadets to be scholarship

recipients and help support tomorrow's future leaders will meet these challenges.

Thank you for all that you do to support the ROCKS and Happy Holidays.

Lawrence Gillespie  
BG USA (Ret.)  
Chairman



**The ROCKS, Inc.  
Leadership & Training  
Conference  
April 2 & 3, 2020  
Fort Belvoir Community Center  
10300 Taylor Road  
Fort Belvoir, VA 22060**



**The ROCKS, Inc.  
46th Annual Spring Gala  
April 4, 2020  
Fort Belvoir Officers Club  
5500 Schulz Circle, #20  
Fort Belvoir, VA 22060**

**STAY TUNED FOR  
REGISTRATION DETAILS**

## MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAPLAIN



### A Time to Celebrate and Give Thanks

*By Chaplain (LTC) James D. Key, 11  
National ROCKS Board Chaplain,*

Several years ago, a generous couple put a smile on my face by reminding me that there are still a few people left in our society who haven't forgotten how to say "thank you."

I was sitting in a restaurant enjoying my lunch when the waitress returned to my table to inform me that a couple in another booth, who asked to remain anonymous, told her to put my bill on their credit card. She told me that they saw me in my uniform eating alone and wanted to show their appreciation by paying for my meal. She said, "It's no big deal. It's just their way of thanking you for serving our nation."

While this gesture of kindness might have been no big deal to the waitress, it was certainly a big deal to me. It restored my hope and assured me that no matter how people felt about the war – good, bad or indifferent – they appreciated the sacrifice and selfless service of our young men and women in uniform. And, based on the comments of other Soldiers I know, such generosity is quit a common occurrence.

As we prepare to enjoy the days of the holiday season, let us remember that Christmas is more than time off from work and taking advantage of department

store sales and cyber deals. Christmas is a time for families and friends to gather to celebrate the birth of Jesus and to give thanks. Unfortunately, sometimes we become overwhelmed by the daily events of life and forget to say "thank you" to those who have been a blessing to us.

More than 2,000 years ago, Jesus was on the border between Galilee and Samaria and was met by a group of 10 men who suffered from leprosy, a terrible disease that disfigures the skin and at the time made the victim a social outcast and unfit for normal association.



When these 10 men saw Jesus they stood at a distance and called out in a loud voice, 'Jesus, Master, have pity on us!' Imagined the kind of life these men must have lived? A life relegated to the fringe of society marginalized and always considered the "other." No hope. No joy. No future.

Jesus responded, "Go show yourselves to the priest." And as they went they were physically cleansed.

But this is not how the story ends. You see, one to them, when he saw that he was healed, came back praising God. He threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him. And he was a Samaritan. Jesus asked, "Were not all 10 cleansed? Where are the other nine?"

Did the other nine not appreciate what Jesus did for them? Or were they so overwhelmed by joy that they simply forgot to say "thank you?"

The Christmas season is a good time to stop and count blessings, large and small, that fill our lives. It's a good time to thank family and friends for being supportive during times of challenge and difficulty. And it's a good time to thank God for allowing us to celebrate the birth of Jesus one more time.

That couple who paid for my meal that day did more than simply pay for my meal. They reaffirmed to me that we still live in a society that has not forgotten how to say "thank you" – including to our troops, many of whom will be working this holiday season or celebrating it half a world away from their families so that the rest of us can have more reasons to be thankful.



*Jesus heals ten lepers but only one of the ten say thank you (Luke 17:11-19)*





## Army Chief: New Talent Management Will Start with Officers, Then Go To Enlisted

By Kyle Remper, *Army Times*



Gen. James McConville, chief of staff of the Army, speaks during the Dwight D. Eisenhower Luncheon at the AUSA conference on Oct. 15, 2019. (Eric Kayne/For Army Times)

The Army is starting to roll out new talent management initiatives, like an assessment for battalion commanders, but the focus on officers is not the final stop, Army Chief of Staff Gen. James McConville said Tuesday.

“Our efforts so far have been focused on leaders, specifically officers, but I want to be very clear that 21st century talent management and taking care of people extends to all of our people,” McConville said during his keynote speech at the Association of the U.S. Army’s annual gathering.

“After we prototype and test these programs with our officers and make sure we have them right, we will expand them to our enlisted soldiers, to our civilians,” he added.

McConville also announced that the Army is publishing its very first “Army People Strategy” to address how the service can better take care of its personnel. The initiative is part of what McConville called his “top priority” to

focus on the Army’s soldiers, family members, service civilians and retirees. The new strategy commits the Army to five quality-of-life priorities for that group of people: quality housing; world-class health care; quality childcare and youth services; meaningful employment for spouses; and fixing current permanent change of station moving problems.

Despite the changes in command this summer, Army leaders remain focused on progressing the readiness and modernization strategies laid out under their predecessors.

“We’ve done a great job of restoring tactical readiness over the last several years,” McConville said. “Now, we need division and brigade commanders to stay focused on it. We will resource it, but I need you to build and maintain it. You own it.”

Modernization includes rolling out a next-generation tactical unmanned aerial surveillance system in 2025 and fielding the optionally manned fighting vehicle to replace the Bradley Infantry Fighting Vehicle in 2026, McConville said. “And shortly after that, we’ll begin fielding our future vertical lift aircraft,” he added.

“But no matter how much technology we develop, soldiers will always remain the centerpiece of our Army,” he said. “We equip people, we don’t man equipment, and that philosophy will not change. To ensure we recruit and retain the right people for the Army, we are also implementing a 21st century talent management system.”

The Army has lauded the new talent management system in development as a game changer in how assignments are meted out. The current system manages officers and enlisted troops by two variables: “You’re a captain of infantry or a sergeant of engineers,” McConville said.

To compete for talented personnel with the civilian sector, “we have to do better,” he added.

The new talent management system will take into account 25 variables instead of

two, such as a soldier’s knowledge, skills, behaviors and preferences.

“I know, it’s almost blasphemous to think the Army would actually consider someone’s preferences, but if we know where they want to go and what they want to do, we believe we can get the right person in the right job at the right time,” McConville said.

The implementation of the Integrated Personnel and Pay System, or IPPS-A, has been a critical part of the new talent management system. IPPS-A brings the Army National Guard, Army Reserve and active-duty force onto one personnel and pay system.

“This will prevent us from losing our National Guard and Army Reserve’s soldiers’ records and messing up their pay when they come on active duty,” McConville said.

The talent management system will use data gathered from a comprehensive assessment program that measures knowledge, skills and attributes at key points in soldiers’ careers.

The information will measure cognitive and noncognitive abilities to help do everything from identify soldiers for command slots to graduate schools. This starts with the new Battalion Command Assessment Program this year, which will screen officers through a command board. Then the top qualifiers will compete in-person in a five-day assessment program at Fort Knox, Kentucky, in January.

“We spend more time and more money on selecting a private to be in Ranger regiment than we do selecting what I would argue is one of the most consequential leadership positions in the Army, our battalion commanders,” McConville said.

That assessment program will potentially expand to sergeants major and brigade-level commands in the future, based on what is learned in January, according to McConville.

## On Contracting: How to Convince the Army to Get What You Need

*By Dennis P. Longo, Army Contracting Command at Aberdeen Proving Ground*

Market research can be the basis for vigorous competition in Army acquisition.

This is the first in a new series, On Contracting. The author developed the Competition in Army Contracting course for the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army for Procurement to introduce Army acquisition personnel to the competition requirements prescribed in the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR), Defense FAR Supplement and the Army FAR Supplement. This article is based on the content of the market research lesson in that course.

Competition drives efficiency and stimulates innovation. For Army acquisition, market research can serve as a powerful driver. While the connection between market research and competition might not be immediately obvious, market research helps the Army identify industry talent and capability. Knowing who potential competitors might be—all of them—is what good market research shows.

For example, let's assume that helicopters don't exist today; they haven't been invented. Someone decides we need a "vertical lift capability" for missions down range and you've been assigned to research the market. Your market research consists of contacting aircraft manufacturers Cessna and Piper Cub for white papers on the feasibility of a vertical lift capability. Maybe you also contact a maker of blimps or dirigibles, because that's the current technology that does vertical lift. The manufacturers' responses conclude they have no such capability. Fixed wing won't do vertical and dirigibles don't have the maneuverability needed. So you conclude that vertical lift is a non-starter. Pushing aside thoughts that whoever came up with the idea is a lunatic, you decide to limit competition for the development effort to Cessna and Piper Cub.

To your amazement, protests to the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) soon follow from Hughes Aircraft, Sikorsky, Bell and several others stating they've invented what they call "helicopters." You quickly realize that you can't make conclusions based on what you don't know.



### FINDING OUT WHAT YOU DON'T KNOW

Thorough and objective market research will identify commercial capabilities, including the capabilities of small businesses, as well as provide for a good acquisition strategy.

In this regard, defense acquisition uses market research to identify and enhance opportunities for full and open competition. Market research, unlike the helicopter debacle discussed earlier, will expand insight into the commercial marketplace, determine how quickly technology is advancing, and obtain data on products, services, capabilities and business practices. Market research contributes toward selection of an appropriate contract type. Award of a fixed-price type contract, for example, may be more appropriate to a contractor that has designed and successfully tested a vertical lift capability, as opposed to a contractor that is just entering that market. A more focused or in-depth approach to market research may reveal that other defense agencies have awarded contracts for the same capability, affording you the opportunity to share current technology. Finally, market research techniques such as exchanges with industry and communicating with other defense agencies may result in refining requirements in terms of form, fit or function, performance and physical

characteristics to align with your agency's needs.

### CASE STUDIES: MARKET RESEARCH AND COMPETITION

Your twin daughters have both decided to attend the same college in North Dakota—a long way from home. One daughter concludes that a 2019 Corvette will get her to the college and home again for the next four years. You're thinking that, of all the vehicles available on the market, she decides on one of the most expensive and least fuel efficient, not to mention one that lacks sufficient space for all her clothing. A new vehicle may be expensive, but a 'Vette, in the snow? Your other daughter concludes that the 1981 Volkswagen Rabbit she saw on the internet will satisfy her transportation requirements. You wonder if she really understands what it's going to take to drive to North Dakota and how in the world she found a 1981 Volkswagen on the internet. Obviously, the twins' market research was subjective and limited.

Conducting effective market research for personal requirements is unlike that for Army requirements. The basics may be similar: determining capability, availability, reliability; but Army requirements must not include convenience, personal preferences or motives. The quantities of items being procured and their military application place Army market research at a more focused intensity.

The results of market research should determine if sources are "capable." This may appear logical on its face, but at least three factors should be considered to determine if sources are capable:

*1. To determine if sources are capable, you must know your requirement.*

Just as a 1981 Volkswagen may not endure the North Dakota winters, a single airplane manufacturer may not have the capability to understand a novel military vision of a vertical lift capability. The team conducting market research needs to understand the requirement in order to focus its efforts effectively.

For example, GAO sustained the protest by Triad Isotopes Inc. (B-411360) in July 2015 because the agency's market research could not have reasonably identified sources capable of responding to the requirement because it was too broad and didn't align with the requirement.

The agency's stated objective in its market research was to award a contract to a contractor that can provide radioisotopes. That research included online searches for the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) code 325412 (companies that perform pharmaceutical preparation manufacturing of "in-vivo diagnostic substances and pharmaceutical preparations"), which located 676 concerns. That number of apparently capable businesses led the agency to conclude that it was likely to receive viable quotations from at least two responsible small businesses.

Triad Isotopes protested the decision by the agency to issue a request for quotations for the acquisition of radiopharmaceuticals as a small business set aside. Triad argued that the agency's market research was flawed because the NAICS code includes a large array of pharmaceuticals, including cold medicines and lip balms. In short, Triad asserted that the agency had not demonstrated that there was "even one small business that both meet the requirement and meet the delivery requirements" in the request for quotations.

GAO agreed and the protest was sustained.

The market research unnecessarily restricted its scope of capable offerors because it didn't align properly to the requirement and effective competition was unachievable.

### *2. To determine if sources are capable, you must know your market.*

Just as it's important to know your requirement, an understanding of what's out there to satisfy your requirement is essential for obtaining the most efficient and cost-effective solution.

In a case involving Red River Waste Solutions LP (B-411760.2), GAO sustained a protest because the Army's market research focused on Army contract history rather than customary commercial practices. In short, the market research failed to support its conclusion that its pricing terms were consistent with customary commercial practice.

The Army's solicitation required the contractor to collect and dispose of solid waste in designated areas in and around Fort Polk, Louisiana, requiring price proposals to be submitted on a per-ton basis. Red River protested that the commercial practice for refuse collection contracts was to price such contracts on a monthly or per-container basis, not on a per-ton basis.

The Army explained that its market research supporting the pricing determination was customary commercial practice because other Army contracts were priced on a per-ton basis and responses solicited from industry and a local refuse company both indicated that this was customary commercial practice.

In January 2016, GAO rejected the Army's claim and sustained the protest. It found that the Army's conclusions about pricing drawn from its market research restricted competition because commercial sources were unwilling to engage in a practice that was not customary in that particular commercial market. Since the agency didn't understand the market, the solicitation's estimated quantities for the various contract line item numbers were overstated.

### *3. The results of market research should determine if sources are capable, not "technically acceptable."*

Market research should determine if there is a reasonable expectation of receiving acceptably priced offers that are capable of performing the contract.

In 2016, the U.S. Air Force evaluated responses to its request for information (RFI) and industry day discussions and concluded that two of the small businesses that responded were capable of performing the agency's requirements





as prime contractors. The Air Force limited competition to two small businesses under a justification and approval (J&A).

Analytical Graphics Inc. (AGI) (B-413385) protested, arguing that only one firm could meet nine of the 10 salient characteristics described in the Air Force's RFI, and a small business set-aside was improper.

GAO ruled in October 2016 that neither the FAR nor GAO decisions require an agency to request, or a prospective small business offeror to provide, a complete technically acceptable approach in response to market research. Agencies need only make an informed business judgment that there is a reasonable expectation of receiving acceptably priced offers from small businesses that are capable of performing the contract.

Making a de-facto source selection decision based solely on the results of market research limits the number of qualified sources and restricts competition by eliminating the government's opportunities to leverage commercial solutions.

#### Lessons learned:

Triad-Make sure the focus of market research aligns with the requirement.

Red River-It is not reasonable to rely on other government contracts to establish what a customary commercial practice is.

AGI-The contracting officer must make an informed business judgment to show sources are capable of performing the work.

Market research is an enabler that will expand insight into the commercial marketplace, determine how quickly technology is advancing, and obtain data on products, services, capabilities and business practices.

The impact of hasty or superficial market research may restrict competition to sources that cannot offer the best and brightest resources toward the requirement. Knowing your requirement, knowing the market, and understanding commercial capabilities will avert the

lunacy of awarding a sole source helicopter development contract to a single airplane manufacturer and avoid wasting years of inexperienced resources and millions of dollars.

### **THE MARKET RESEARCH TEAM APPROACH**

We need experts in the field to obtain the best results in market research-as a team. A contracting officer may not be qualified to conduct market research for biological dysesthesia dysfunction (the effects of radiofrequency electromagnetic fields-cell phones, for example-on biological systems) studies. Similarly, a team of 12 personnel to research the commercial market for ventilation filters may be excessive.

The requiring activity (the organization with the need) should craft the capability information (the description of what is needed) to be submitted by industry; identify form, fit and function descriptions; review industry capability statements; revise government performance work statements or statements of work based on industry responses; and determine applicability of commercial items and modifications to commercial items to meet the agency's need.

The contracting officer should issue pre-solicitation notices-requests for information and sources sought, and draft requests for proposals-to promote early exchanges of information; host pre-solicitation conferences to involve potential offerors early in the acquisition process; and conduct other means of stimulating industry involvement. All of the tools just mentioned are pre-solicitation notices, and there is no particular order in which they should be done-market research is conducted appropriate to the circumstances, so any number of the notice techniques may be used.

Experts, such as industrial specialists and intellectual property attorneys, should be part of the acquisition team as required.

In market research, we want to gather all of the pertinent information on whatever the capability is, whether it's simple trash

collection services or biological dysesthesia dysfunction studies or helicopters. The intent is to identify the availability and capability of commercial products or services that meet the Army's requirements and mission needs.

### **CONCLUSION**

The role of market research is to help the government identify companies that have the potential to meet government's requirements. That research is flawed when we neglect to fully investigate possible commercially available alternatives to meet Army requirements. The lack of knowledge of the requirement, the commercial market and industry's capability impact decisions related to full and open competition.

When we think we know what we want, or may have formed a predetermined conclusion on the product, service or vendor, we risk obtaining the full value of expertise and innovation that may be available in the commercial market-as well as the risk of being thought of as a lunatic.

### **CASE STUDIES: CHALLENGES TO MARKET RESEARCH**

The extent, or scope, of market research should be adequate to identify the capabilities that are available in the marketplace for meeting agency requirements. Two examples below consider both the scope and adequacy of market research and how they inform competition.

#### *1. Scope*

Court of Federal Claims *Palantir v. U.S.* (No. 16-784C)

Issue: Was the scope of the Army's market research adequate to determine whether there were commercial items that could meet its requirements?

In 2015, the Army issued a solicitation seeking a single contractor to be the system data architect, developer and integrator of the Army's Distributed Common Ground System - Army Increment 2, the Army's primary system for processing and disseminating

multisensor intelligence and weather information to the warfighter.

Three requests for information preceded the solicitation, and Palantir, responding to those requests, explained that it had a commercial alternative to the development effort and, therefore, development was unnecessary.

After responding, Palantir continued to try to express to the Army its views and frustration with the direction of the developmental procurement choice by the Army, and with the Army's apparent lack of interest in considering commercially available alternatives. Nonetheless, the Army issued the solicitation.

Palantir submitted a protest to the Court of Federal Claims, contending the Army acted arbitrarily and capriciously because Palantir claimed it had identified to the Army a commercially available technology that Palantir believed satisfied the Army's requirements.

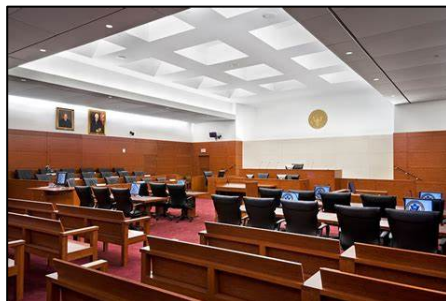
Palantir stated, "The most cost-effective and lowest-risk procurement approach is the acquisition of an open architecture data fusion platform through open competition for an existing software solution at a firm-fixed price (FFP). FFP vehicles shift performance risk to the contractor, reduce the risk of cost overruns to the government, and shorten delivery schedules."

The Court of Federal Claims agreed and concluded that the Army neglected to fully investigate possible commercially available alternatives to meet its requirements. Lesson learned: Here, the scope of the Army's market research was unreasonably limited and therefore inadequate because it focused on development efforts rather than commercial alternatives. Effectively, the results of the Army's market research made it impossible for another source to offer a commercial item to satisfy its requirements.

## 2. Adequacy

Information Ventures Inc. (B-294267)  
Issue: Was the agency's limited search of the potential small business market reasonable?

Despite interest by six small businesses resulting from a pre-solicitation notice, an RFP was not set aside for small businesses, but instead was issued unrestricted as the result of market research. From that, the contracting officer determined that there was no reasonable expectation that two or more small businesses could perform the work.



The record indicates that the contracting officer failed to take into account known information indicating the interest of capable small businesses in this procurement.

Lesson learned: In a ruling issued in October 2004, GAO held that the contracting officer did not reasonably consider a small business set-aside and failed to take into account information from the market research report that indicated interest from small businesses.

For more information on market research and its impact on competition in contracting, go to <https://spcs3.kc.army.mil/asaalt/procurement/SitePages/NewTraining.aspx>. A common access card is needed to access the site.

*DENNIS P. LONGO is advocate for competition, task and delivery order ombudsman, and senior procurement analyst at the Army Contracting Command at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland. A member of the Army Acquisition Corps, he holds a bachelor's degree from University of Baltimore, and is Level III certified in contracting and acquisition.*

*This article will be published in the Winter 2020 issue of Army AL&T Magazine.*

## NATIONAL BOARD OF THE ROCKS INC



**CFC #60959**

By becoming part of the Combined Federal Campaign, The National Board of the ROCKS Inc. expands opportunities worldwide for its mentoring and support to local chapters and military servicemembers.

CFC is the world's largest and most successful annual workplace charity campaign, with almost 200 CFC campaigns throughout the country and overseas raising millions of dollars each year for member organizations. Pledges made by Federal civilian, postal and military donors during the campaign season will support eligible non-profit organizations that provide health and human service benefits throughout the world.

National ROCKS INC is listed in the 2019 CFC charity list under the following three (3) categories: Education, Science and Technology, and Mutual & Membership Benefit. We will appear on the 2019 CFC Charity List to receive monetary and volunteer pledges during the solicitation period.

For the first time, federal employees and military members can pledge their donations to the National ROCKS, INC. Show some love today at the online giving portal:

<https://opm.gov/ShowSomeLoveCFC>

**Last Day to Give  
Jan. 12, 2020**

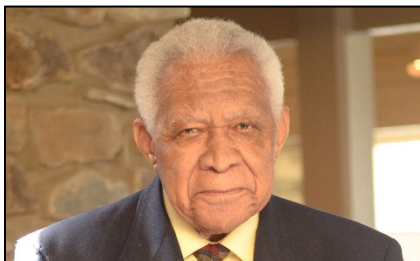


## FALLEN ROCKS

### COL (Ret) Harvey George Dickerson, Jr. Memorialized

*Submitted by COL (Ret) Dorene Hurt*

*(A portion of this was Published in The Washington Post from Oct. 18 to Oct. 20, 2019)*

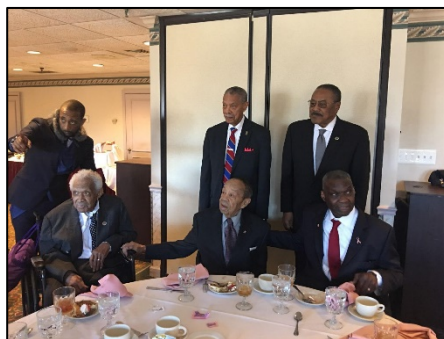


*COL (Ret) Harvey Dickerson, Jr.*

Former ROCKS Chairman, Life Member and ROCK of the Year Harvey G. Dickerson, Jr. COL., USA (Ret.) passed away on Friday, October 11, 2019. His Celebration of Life program was held on December 7, 2019 at Fort Myer, Va. COL Dickerson was a Founding member of the ROCKS. In fact, according to ROCKS Deputy Chairman COL (Ret) Ray Bingham, representing the ROCKS, Inc. during his remarks at the Celebration of Life program, COL Dickerson was one of the signers of the original ROCKS Charter in 1974. From its inception, COL Dickerson was an active ROCKS member, including serving as its Chairman for multiple terms. Despite the demands of his military profession, and the many demanding volunteer hours of his ROCKS position, he was an ardent supporter of the organization and believed strongly in its core tenets: Concern, Dedication, and Professionalism. He was one of the driving forces in strongly advocating for substantive policy modifications/changes that ultimately helped African American and other minority officers. His astute understanding of the Army personnel management system and the reality that soldiers deserved qualified leaders....no matter their race or ethnicity, undoubtedly helped to reduce barriers and increase opportunities for underrepresented leaders in the ranks. COL Dickerson was also extremely active including serving as an officer in

the Retired Military Officers Association (RMOA) for a number of years.

Prior to his passing, COL Harvey G. Dickerson, Jr., resided in Mitchellville, MD. He was the beloved husband of the late Gerthyl Rae Dickerson; loving father of Harvey G. Dickerson, III (Gail Milazzo) and of the late Glenda Joy Dickerson; dear brother of Mary Ethyl Yates; cherished grandfather of Nathan T. Dickerson, Nubia Rae Dickerson and Anitra Dickerson Duncan, adoring great-grandfather of Julia and Madison Duncan. Arlington National Cemetery services and interment will be held at a later date. Those interested may send contributions to Prairie View A&M University in memory of COL (Ret) Harvey G. Dickerson, Jr.



*From lower L to R: COL (Ret) Harvey Dickerson, Jr.; COL (Ret) Harry Townsend; LTG (Ret) Julius W. Becton, Jr.; 2nd row left to right: COL Dickerson's grandson; MG Bob (Ret) Gaskill; COL (Ret) Clarence Miller*



### A ROCKS Gem Mrs. Sharon Francois Passes

On Tuesday, November 12, 2019 at Washington Hospital Center, in Washington, DC Sharon Marie Wilkes Francois, age 74 of Clinton Maryland, passed away after a long and difficult illness. She was born on April 24, 1945, in Clinton Maryland of Juanita E. and Joseph Austin Wilkes. She attended school in Washington DC at St. Cyprian Elementary School, Immaculate Conception High School, Howard University and obtained her BS degree with a concentration in accounting at the University of the District of Columbia in Washington, DC. She worked as an accountant throughout her life.



She loved her family immensely and was very proud of her children's accomplishments. She was a devote Christian, a strong woman, well organized, family-oriented and loyal. Her faith in God enabled her to face life's changes with grace, courage, and dignity. She enjoyed traveling and one of her most memorable trips was visiting Rome in 1985 with her mother and the St Theresa of the Avila Catholic Church Gospel Choir where they were bestowed the honor for singing for Pope John Paul II.

She is survived by her husband of 14 years, Col Frank Francois III USA (Ret), daughter, Stephanie M. Covington, son, Dr. Damian L. Covington, (Carol Ann), her grandchildren; Nia Marie, Damian Jr, and Drew L. Covington; her brothers, Joseph (Sylvia), William (Audrey), Stephan (Jane) and Philip Wilkes. She is also survived by her stepchildren, Wanda J. Kirkpatrick (James), Karen L. Francois, Frank Francois IV (Ellen) and Greg Francois (Annmarie); eight grandchildren, eight great-grandchildren and a host of nieces, nephews, family, and friends. She is preceded in death by her parents, Juanita E and Joseph A. Wilkes and two sisters, Faye Wilkes Perry and Brenda E. Wilkes.



# ROCKS ON THE MOVE

## ROCKS FOUNDER COL (Ret) Clarence Miller Recognized as Army War College Distinguished Alumni

*Submitted By: COL (Ret) Dorene Hurt*

ROCKS FOUNDER COL (Ret) Clarence Miller was recognized as an U.S. Army War College Distinguished Alumni on Thursday, November 21, 2019, at Carlisle Barracks, Pa. A rare honor, COL Miller joined an ever growing collective of trailblazers and role models for the profession of arms members specifically, and citizens in general. COL Miller took the opportunity to connect with his fellow ROCKS after the ceremony. ROCKS, collectively extend our heartfelt congratulations on this singular achievement and are very proud of you!



*BG Adams-Enders speaks at the United States Merchant Marine Academy's Equality Day*

Diversity is the collective mixture of differences and similarities that include individual and organic characteristics, values, beliefs, experiences, backgrounds and behaviors. Inclusion is involvement and empowerment, where the inherent worth and dignity of all are recognized. Examples of a diverse workplace is one in which all races and ethnicities are included and considered for promotion and advanced opportunities; handicapped persons are placed in supervisory positions; and persons over 50 are considered for promotion.

Why are diversity and inclusion important? First, diverse workplaces understand employees needs better. They also demonstrate better financial performance than non-diverse ones. However, the most compelling case for diverse and inclusive workplaces is that it is just good business. In a comprehensive study of global companies by McKinsey & Company, it was found to be statistically significant that greater diversity results in greater profitability, improved financial performance and greater cooperation among teams.

*Brig Gen Adams-Enders was the Chief of the United States Army Nurse Corps from 1987 to 1991. She is the first African-American Nurse Corps officer to graduate from the U.S. Army War College, the first woman to receive a master's degree from the Army's Command and General Staff college and the first woman to earn the coveted Expert Field Medical Badge. She is also a role model, an entrepreneur and an author. After her presentation, she spent some time with the Academy community and enjoyed a meal with the Regimental leaders.*



*BG Adams-Enders joins the Regimental Staff for lunch in Delano Hall. Here she chats with Reginald Parker, PAO, MIDN First Class Angela Parker*



## Senator Warner Recognizes MG (Retired) Churn

*By COL Karen Wrancher*

On Tuesday, December 10, 2019 Senator Mark Warner (VA) presented Maj. Gen. Ret. Phillip M. Churn the Legion of Merit for his service as the, U.S. Army Reserve, commander (Troop Program Unit), 200th Military Police Command, Fort Meade, Maryland, to assistant to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff for Reserve Matters, Joint Staff, Washington, District of Columbia.

The presentation took place in the Russell Senate Office Building, Kennedy Caucus Room (SR-325) before an audience of over 200 Veterans who were on hand for the Commonwealth Coffee Honoring Virginia Veterans, sponsored by Senators Warner and Senator Tim Kaine. The

## BG Adams-Enders Speaks at United States Merchant Marine Academy's Equality Day

*By: COL (Ret) Dorene Hurt*

*Former ROCKS Chairman, Brig Gen (Ret) Clara Adams-Enders was welcomed to the United States Merchant Marine Academy (USMMA) in Kings Point, New York by Deputy Superintendent, Rear Admiral Susan Dunlap as the featured speaker for Equality Day (Dec 2<sup>nd</sup>) - where they recognized all the special observance days in 2019. The multi-cultural Academy event focused on cross-cultural awareness and the accomplishments of all Americans.*



coffee serves as an opportunity for veterans, active duty service members, their families, and Virginia's broader military community to speak with the Senators and members of their staff.



MG Churn accepts Senator Mark Warre



## 2019 ROCKS ANNUAL GOLF OUTING

By COL (R) Angie Hemingway & COL (R) Lucretia McClenney

The ROCKS, Inc., held its 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Golf Outing co-hosted by the DC Chapter, on October 11, 2019 at the Ft Belvoir Golf Club. What a beautiful day for fellowship, good fun and the opportunity to gain bragging rights. Due to competing events in the area, no ROTC Cadets played this year. There were seven Wounded Warriors and one of their teams won first place. Thanks to MG(R) Peet Proctor our Senior Advisor, Gen(R) Johnnie Wilson, MG(R) Arthur Dean, BG(R) Earl Simms for their play and annual support. Special thanks to our Gold, Silver and Bronze Sponsors.

**Gold:** Systems Application & Technologies (3rd Consecutive Year)

**Silver:** CAPE Legacy Fund (5th Consecutive Year)

**Bronze:** BG(R) Von Richardson

A continental breakfast was served in the Clubhouse prior to the start of play. A Silent Auction was set up and facilitated by COL(R) Dorene Hurt and MG(R) George Alexander for anyone looking for a bit of nostalgia. A Putting Contest was offered for a chance to win a 5K prize, and Prize Holes were also offered. First, Second and Third Place Winners received gift certificates to the Ft Belvoir Golf Pro Shop. A BBQ Buffet Lunch was provided in the Clubhouse for the golfers and volunteers at noon. BG(R) Gillespie hosted the awards ceremony:

**1st Place:** TA Henry, Alfred Boone, CPT Sam Martin, Cedric Franklin

**2nd Place:** Col(R) CD Smith, Joe Carter, Rudy Gonzalez, Seldon Von Der Hoff

**3rd Place:** COL(R) Joe Briggs, Charles Sias, Benzell Floyd, Ted Williams

**Closest to the Hole:** Sam Martin

**Longest Drive:** Kerry Steward



Players: COL (R) Kerry Brown and T.A. Henry predicting the win

The ROCKS, Inc., is a proud Commemorative Partner in support of the Vietnam War 50th Commemoration. Recognition of four Vietnam Veterans were presented Vietnam Veteran Lapel Pins and Presidential Proclamations (signed by President Obama) during the awards ceremony.

The ROCKS, Inc., is a 501(c)(3) and all donations are tax deductible and help support the administration of our scholarship program.

Special Thanks to the outstanding ROCKS Golf Outing Planning Team and volunteers who made the event successful.



Team Briggs: Charles Sias, Benzell Floyd, COL (R) Joe Briggs, Ted Williams

### Golf Outing Planning Team

MG(R) Peet Proctor - Senior Advisor

BG(R) Clara Adams Ender

COL(R) Lucretia McClenney - Chair

COL(R) Angie Hemingway

COL(R) Shelia Flowers

COL(R) Bob Warren

LTC(R) Walter Smiley

Mr. Dan Daddario

Ms. Jade Fulce

### Volunteers

MG(R) George Alexander

COL(R) Dorene Hurt

COL(R) Ray Bingham

COL(R) Debra Thedford

COL(R) Monique Bagby

COL(R) Kenneth Younger

LTC Verdar Ashford

LTC Stephan Stanley

LTC Craig Myatt

MAJ Jerome Towner

**This is my wish for you:**  
 comfort on difficult days.  
 smiles when sadness intrudes.  
 rainbows to follow the clouds.  
 sunsets to warm your heart.  
 laughter to kiss your lips.  
 friendships to brighten your being.  
 beauty for your eyes to see.  
 faith so that you can believe.  
 confidence for when you doubt.  
 patience to accept the truth.  
 courage to know yourself.  
 love to complete your life.



# Welcome

## New Members

Joined 07/03/2019-12/24/2019

2LT Aaron Adamson	LTC Timothy Gatlin	CPT Corey Riddick
1LT George Allen	Mr. Roy George	2LT Reuben Riley
COL Harold Anderson	LTC Latroy Glover	MAJ Michael Robinson
CPT Tyrone Atkinson	COL Samuel Glover Jr	LTC Leon Rogers
LTC Katresha Bailey	COL Paul Green	Mr. Elliott Rogers
CPT Michael Bell	CPT Charlene Griffin	CPT Kievell Ruffin
CPT Kayla Benton	MAJ Samuel Haynes	1LT Erika Service
CPT Allan Bishop	CPT Cherika Henry	CPT Marcus Sharps
MAJ Marcie Blasingame	CPT Chauncey Henry	LTC Alice Smith
1LT Zoe Bolden	CPT Charles Hodge	LTC Kemielle Smith
LTC Lane Bomar	CPT Markisha Homer	CPT Ricardo Spriggs
LTC Alfred Boone	LTG Charles Hooper	COL Richard Stage
Mr. Cornelius Boone	2LT Grantham Huguley	CPT Laterrious Starks
CPT Nicole Bracey	CDT Leon Hurst, III	LTC Ronald Stewart Jr.
MAJ Aprill Bright	2LT Lesley-Ann Jackson	MAJ Camilla Swain
MAJ Brandon Brim	1LT Rashad Jacobs	LTC Jason Tate
CPT Latecia Brown	LTC John James Jr.	Mr. Edward Tee
LTC Janice Brown	CPT Kevin Johnson	1LT Asta Teferri
MG Xavier Brunson	LTC Michael Johnson	1LT Priscilla Teixeira
MAJ Brian Burns	Ms. Siliana Joseph	BG William Thigpen
MAJ Karl Butler	2LT Rehema Kabiru	1LT Summer Thomas
Mr. Alexious Butler	CPT Tierra Kendrick	LTC Delvena Thomas
Ms. India Calhoun	CDT Austin Kim	MAJ Marcia Thompson
LTC Pressley Carr, Jr.	Mr. Michael King	MAJ Tiffany Thrower
MAJ Rosette Clarke-Morton	MAJ Brian Kitching	LTC Sabrina Thweatt
Ms. Deonna Clay	LTC Samuel Lashley	CPT LaDonna Tolbert
Mr. Ronnie Coney	CPT Crystal Lattimore	MAJ Jerome Towner
MAJ Kenneth Cook	CPT Shayla Leathers	2LT Katrina Townsend
CPT Eloisa Cox	Ms. Linsa Lesane	LTC Ricardo Turner
CPT Joy Crenshaw	CPT Octavia Lewis	MAJ Atai Usoroh
CPT Gabriel Croker	LTC Melinda Litman	Mr. Antonio Vargas
CPT Eric Curry	MAJ Lakeshia Logan	1LT Michael Vaughn
MAJ Tamara Da Silva	CPT Cherry Lust	LTC Michelle Vergara
MAJ LaShawnda Davis	COL Landis Maddox	LTC Patrick Watson
LTC Sharon Denson	COL Yolanda Maddox	CPT Krizia Webster-Gaither
LTC Mark Denton	1LT Terence Martin	MAJ Ronnie White
COL Daryl 'Gwen' Devera-Waden	1LT Ronnie Mckinzie	MAJ Thomas Whitfield II
COL Oscar Doward	Ms. Jermetryca McKnight	CPT Micha Whitted
2LT Jeron Draine	CPT Kara McNeil	MAJ Mickoyan Williams
CPT Kemisha Drew	LTC Odelle Means	Ms. Tanya Willis
CPT Terry Dunn, Jr.	CPT Quinten Mims	Mr. C. Brandon Wilson
CPT Jalin Eason	MAJ Sterling Montgomery	1LT Harrison Young
CPT Dedrick Edwards	BG James Moore	CPT Malarie Younger
MAJ Natasha English	CPT Johanna Mosby	
CPT Albert Farley	LTC Jarrett Moses	
CPT Avery Fulp	CPT Jermaine Moss	
COL Daniel Furtado	Mr. Craig Myatt	
LTC Ellis Gales	1LT Christian Nestor	
LTC Vincente Garcia	LTC Tajudeen Ottun	
MAJ Qiong Garner	2LT James Palmer III	
	MAJ Kye Pannell	
	MAJ Celina Pargo	
	CPT Alva Pearson	
	CPT Marquese Powell	
	COL Bryce Pringle	
	LTC Kimberly Pringle	
	COL Mark Quander	
	MAJ Jason Quash	
	CPT Christopher Reid	





## Where are the African American Army Combat Arms Battalion Commanders and Senior Leaders?

*By Colonel Oscar W. Doward, Jr., Ph.D*



*Colonel Oscar W. Doward, LTG (R) Julius W. Becton, Jr., and then USMA Cadet Javier Doward in December 2016.*

Colonel Oscar W. Doward, Jr., a ROCK and active duty Field Artillery officer in the U. S. Army for over 25 years, has successfully served in leadership positions from company fire support officer to brigade commander. Although COL Doward has had a successful career, throughout his tenure as a commissioned officer a single question remained imprinted in his psyche as he transitioned between multiple combat divisions, student detachments, and operational task forces deployed abroad. His perplexing question was "Where are the African American combat arms battalion commanders and senior leaders?" This isn't to say that he had never encountered an African American artillery battalion or brigade commander. In fact, the first two he met in those commands were the same senior leader. Lieutenant General (R) John Morgan was a field artillery battalion commander at his first unit, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division (ID), and several years later Morgan became Doward's Division Artillery Commander in the 1<sup>st</sup> ID. The problem was that throughout the history of the African American army officer from America's entry into the

Great War through the start of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the John Morgans of the U.S. Army's combat arms branches have been disproportionately underrepresented.

The Department of Defense mandated several studies on why African American officers have consistently sustained a low presence in the Army's combat arms branches over the last several decades. Articles, monographs, and dissertations have been written to explain why this phenomena persists over 70 years after President Truman enacted equal opportunity policies to eradicate a military culture of racial discrimination that mirrored the nation's systemic white supremacist ideology of separate but equal. As COL Doward grew professionally, his passion for understanding this question led him to opportunities to add to the body of academic work on this topic. He finished Master of Military Arts and Science degrees at both the Command General Staff College and the School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS) and produced monographs on the historical agency of African American military service in a white supremacist environment (segregated army) and combat arms officer diversity. Several years later Doward was accepted into the Army's Advanced Strategic Plans Policy Program (ASP3), a SAMS supported PhD Fellowship at the University of South Carolina. This same question inspired him to pen, and successfully defend, a dissertation that tied the historical legacy of white supremacist based Army personnel policies in the early to mid 20<sup>th</sup> century to the modern problem of combat arms officer senior leadership diversity.

Initially, Doward's research detailed the evolution of racially biased Army officer branch policies from 1917 through 1954; however, his dissertation chair recommended that he include combat arms diversity through the end of the Vietnam War. Doctoral research requires in-depth source investigation, and ASP3 enabled him to explore sources at presidential libraries and multiple archival venues such as the Library of Congress and the National Archives; however, Doward's strongest supportive evidence was acquired via contacts he made through the assistance of the

ROCKS Inc. Doward was first introduced to the ROCKS as a Cadet at Alabama A&M University by an energetic young Captain named Robert S. Ferrell (retired LTG). He sustained intermittent contact with the ROCKS over the years as it provided professional development opportunities and exposure to successful officers who were inclined to lift as they climbed the ladder of success. The ROCKS afforded Doward unfiltered access to living legends such as the Army's first African American Corps Commander, LTG (R) Julius W. Becton, Jr., LTG (R) Arthur J. Gregg, the first African American Army three star general, Generals Johnny Wilson, Larry Ellis, Kip Ward, and several other notable African American senior Army leaders. Each officer was generous with their time. Their recollections were invaluable in strengthening his thesis. LTG (R) Becton was a pivotal voice to Doward's research as he was the only officer who completed expeditionary tours as a combat arms officer from World War II through the Vietnam War eras. General Becton's ability to contrast his experiences as a young leader in the segregated Army (end of World War II and partially through the Korean War) with his deployment to Vietnam as a combat arms battalion commander presented the Army's transition to integration in a perspective that few have written about. Doward's research findings traced the debilitating effects the Army's segregation policies had on the opportunities and reputations of African American combat officers by projecting stereotypical character deficiencies that tended to be inferred across the Army. His research determined that the Army's segregation traditions imprinted on military culture the same way that the institution of slavery and Jim Crow practices caused negative secondary and tertiary effects on African Americans in modern American civil society. The memories conveyed by most of the interviewed officers confirmed that these negative beliefs about African American combat arms officers in the Vietnam War era Army continued to linger, but each of them to a man expressed that the keys to their success were strong work ethics and clear lines of communication with their superiors. The Army acknowledged decades ago that it has a diversity

problem in achieving African American proportional representation in the combat arms. Despite multiple iterations of diversity goal setting, incentives, and other initiatives, the results remain relatively unchanged.

COL Doward's quest to understand why there are so few African American combat arms battalion commanders and senior leaders was answered by the historical evidence he amassed in order to organize, write, and successfully defend his dissertation during the fall of 2019. His doctoral journey to piece together why this question persists was enhanced by his access to a historical treasure trove of ROCKS African American Army officer experiences. COL Doward remains intrigued by this enduring question and realistically viable strategies needed to address this issue. He will continue to refine his research findings and utilize his skills as a historian to help solve it.



### **The Future Direction of the ROCKS is Determined by You**

*By Karen M. Wrancher*

The ROCKS Incorporated marked its Sapphire Anniversary in October of this year. I gained a greater understanding and deeper appreciation for the background behind the genesis of the organization after attending the DC ROCKS Chapter's Founders Day Program. It was wonderful hearing the story of how the ROCKS began from three men who and among our very few remaining original founders: MG(Ret) Alexander Cade, COL(Ret)

Frank Francois and COL(Ret) Clarence Miller. Imagine a time 45 years ago when as COL Francois put it, when African Americans Officers were "washing out" of their Basic Branch Officer courses and their Intermediate Level Education Courses. The ROCKS started with a band of brothers who shared information to ensure academic and operational success. As these relationships deepened and the officers supported each other at Fort Leavenworth, in subsequent assignments and around the beltway, that support system broadened to include the officers' spouses and families. As the relationships strengthened, they also began doing activities like fishing together. The ROCKS which had its roots as a social organization for academic and operational survival morphed and expanded into a support system for officers and their families. The purpose of organization was crystal clear but it seems as if individuals do not appreciate its history or purpose today.

### **ROCKS on the Rise**

As the organization continued into the late 1980s, the discussion began on what the way forward for the organization would be, its purpose and how it would support the next generation of officers and leaders. The decision was made by the leaders within the ROCKS, that the organization would focus on mentorship helping junior officers ascend the ranks. The ROCKS' DC Chapter had a dynamic outreach program going to universities like Howard University, Virginia State, Morgan State and other historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) giving not only classes on officership but other topics like financial management and investing. BG Adam-Ender was the DC ROCKS Chapter President and these outreach teams were lead by LTG Arthur Gregg and had officers like then COL Kip Ward, then CPT Patrick Sargent and then CPT Charles Hamilton among others.

### **Rising Stars**

While today people debate the importance and the relevance of the ROCKS, its influence in previous years was apparent when you looked at the impact it has had on the careers of different officers as a result of networking opportunities. BG Adams-Ender who not only served as a ROCKS

chapter president served as a mentor to many in the Nurses Corps to include our Army's former Surgeon General, LTG Patricia Horoho and others. Many of us know of General Dennis Via but many do not know Brigadier Velma Richardson who was a mentor to officers in the Signal Corps. The most amazing fact about the ROCKS is every African-American four-star general has been a member of the ROCKS and realized the importance of giving back and building the bench. A few Lieutenant Generals and General Michael X. Garrett that now carry that mantle and continue to support other junior general officers on the rise. This growth and type of support is lacking within and among our female ranks and population.

### **The Shallow and Selfish vs Servant Leader**

In addition to the lack of support among sisters-in-arms, there is a insidious divisiveness that exists as a number of us in this day and age think the standards and opportunities in our Army are meted out equitably. This pervasive attitude exists despite the lower enrollment in HBCUs, the higher drop rate among minorities to include those who leave because of financial woes, and the diminishing percentage of minority officers particularly in Combat Arms. This mentality has risen at a time when the Army is on verge of change in different areas: talent management, personnel assignments in a marketplace, GRE testing in Officer Advance Courses, and a new physical fitness assessment test...the Army Combat Fitness Test. Unfortunately, when new standards have been introduced in the past, they have initially had an adverse impact on the success and advancement of minority officers as they struggle to familiarize themselves and "master" new standards...not all minority officers...but a considerable number. There are those of us at the Lieutenant Colonel rank and higher who tell ourselves we do not have time for the ROCKS or do not think we need to support such an organization. You certainly can be successful without the ROCKS but if you have chosen not support the ROCKS, as a successful officer you could certainly give one hour. A successful officer or leader can take one hour time to give a class or a



leadership development session at their installation to help junior officers and leaders who are in search of information or direction. Also there are those who join the ROCKS in hopes of being on that next promotion or command list and when they don't make to that next desired level, you never see them again. The advancement of senior officers is not where the strength of the ROCKS lies; the truth strength of the ROCKS and the organization's future is helping junior officers and their civilian contemporaries get to the next level. It's investing in today's junior officers who are the Army's future. Somewhere among those junior ranks is our next FORSCOM Commanding General or the next Commanding General of Army Materiel Command but they will not get their without the support of our community. It truly takes a village; or in this case a military community. What has made me a successful is not the rank I bear on my chest or my collar, what has made me successful, rich beyond words and fulfilled has been witnessing my protégés ascend the ranks. I have only replicated what I received from more senior and experienced leaders as I try to give back and invest in others as my mentors invested in me.

### The Next Chapter

One of our future general officers is among today's cadets. He or she may be an individual who has to get through financing school or funding their tuition, thriving as they advance through their university/academy curriculum, earning their commission and then going through all the gateways that follow. No one should start with becoming a general officer as their solitary goal. For the majority of us — officers the rank of Captain, Major, Lieutenant Colonel and beyond, wouldn't it be magnificent to know there is an organization we can connect to to get help and support, provide direction, guidance and mentorship. In addition, the organization could provide you with networking opportunities to meet senior leaders who may by some twist of fate become an advocate for you, a sponsor or be a mentor advising you on how to prepare for a promotion board or some other opportunity. The best way to help the ROCKS find its future direction and write

its next chapter of greatness is for you to join your local chapter. You can help develop its mission, vision, objectives and goals to support the officers on your installation and the surrounding universities and community. The next chapter for the ROCKS will be written by you. You will decide and drive the future direction of the ROCKS.



- \* Volunteer to serve on the Leadership Outreach and Cadet Enhancement Team
- \* Attend chapter meetings
- \* Be accessible and become a mentor
- \* Volunteer to address chapters (General and Senior Officers are especially needed)
- \* Serve as a resource for referrals on branch peculiar and other professional development issues
- \* Encourage mentoring/coaching for all officers and set the example
- \* Volunteer to lead and/or participate in Committees
- \* Donate to our scholarship funds and sponsor a cadet to attend various events
- \* Volunteer to provide your expertise and guidance in assisting officer transitioning from military service
- \* Volunteer to provide your expertise and guidance in assisting current and transitioning civilian members
- \* Become a Corporate sponsor



### Gratitude for the ROCKS, Inc.; Past, Present and Future Membership Development Team

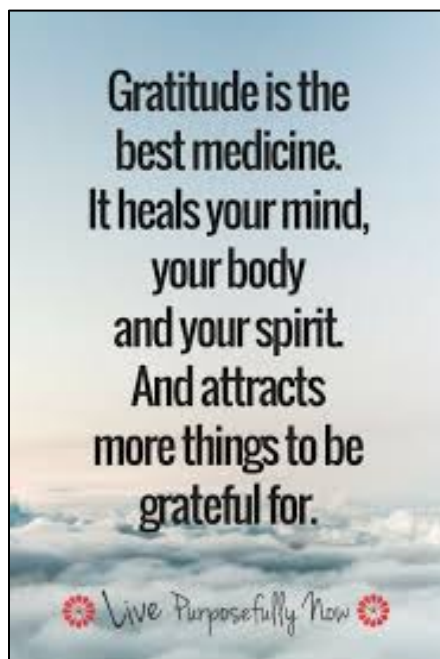
*By COL Angie Hemingway USA (Ret)*

ROCKS Teammates, as we come to the end of another year, it seems as if it was just yesterday, when we welcomed in 2019. Many of you have accomplished tremendous work at the chapter level, in addition to your full-time work responsibilities and personal responsibilities. For this I give my thanks and gratitude. As I mull over what I am grateful for during this holiday season for the ROCKS, I am thankful there was a ROCKS Inc., in my past, there is a ROCKS Inc., in my presence, and there is a ROCKS Inc., in my future.

The thankfulness and the gratitude I have for the ROCKS of the past, involves memories of senior leaders allowing me to stand on their shoulders, to gain leadership skills and certain competencies. These senior leaders were not afraid to be involved in the ROCKS, and they counted it a privilege to coach, teach and mentor me and other members.

I remember a senior leader sponsoring me during my first overseas assignment and what a difference it made in connecting with people. These connections with various people made it easier to navigate the organizational structures of the military. It was easier to negotiate policy, programs and various military taskings. How great, to have someone to bounce ideas while in an overseas assignment.

While the assignment was good, I was trusting that the next assignment would be just as good or better. I have learned goodness come, when we can let go of what we have, to catch the greatness of the next thing. I have also learned how not to grab hold of an irrational sense of self-sufficiency. Yes, I was growing in knowledge and other areas, but I knew I needed more if I was to move to the next grade. The overseas assignment and the people, prepared me, they however, they did not complete me. Moving into the next assignment I made sure that I was plugged into the ROCKS. I realized, we will never fulfill our purpose in life, which can be far grander and more significant than we could ever imagine, unless we are plugged into the right people, the right things, the right mindset. So again, I am eternally thankful for those solid ROCKS who allowed me to stand on their shoulders, who saw potential in me, and who helped guide me to greatness. With the coaching, teaching and mentoring from these leaders, I flourished because bold leaders spoke into my life to enable me to give back to the ROCKS and the greater call in our Army and our Nation.



The thankfulness and the gratitude that I have for the presence is for up and coming leaders like MAJ Michael Bennett, President Ft. Campbell ROCKS. A native of Havana, Florida, who enlisted in

the Army, completed Basic Combat Training and Advanced Individual Training. This training awarded him a Military Occupational Specialty 92A, Automated Logistical Specialist. MAJ Bennett went on to attend Officer Candidate school and was commissioned as a 2LT in the Ordnance Corps. He has had an outstanding military career. Additionally, he received great mentorship and leadership at the Ft. Lee, Central Virginia ROCKS Chapter. He now takes on the challenge of being President of the Fort Campbell, Screaming Eagles ROCKS Chapter. He has great support from LTC Larry Dean and BG (R) Adams-Ender to help him ensure the Screaming Eagles are flying stronger and more resilient. I am encouraged this field grade officer is taking on this office. He reminds me of a young MAJ Bob Ferrell who helped established the European Chapter of the ROCKS under the leadership of President COL Lucretia McClenney, with support from the late, MG (R) Bob Nabors.

I am also thankful and encouraged and have much gratitude for the ROCKS of the future. You know gratitude helps people feel more positive emotions, relish good experiences, improve their health, deal with adversity, and build strong relationships. My gratitude for the ROCKS of the future in the coming year is with great hope and optimistic that we will continue to have leaders rising up to the challenge of carrying greatness forward in their support of our young iron leaders (officers and civilians). My prayer for our future ROCKS, is that we as an organization will continue to provide productive, enduring and effective relationships that sustain our members through a career of service to our Nation.

Thanks for the honor to serve you. Let us know if you need help. I am reachable through the national website at [angiehemingway@hotmail.com](mailto:angiehemingway@hotmail.com).



*Happy Holidays*

## Veterans Owed Refunds For Overpayments Attributable To Disability Severance Payments Should File Amended Returns To Claim Tax Refunds

*IR-2018-148, July 11, 2018*

WASHINGTON — The Internal Revenue Service today is advising certain veterans who received disability severance payments after January 17, 1991, and included that payment as income that they should file [Form 1040-X, Amended U.S. Individual Income Tax Return \(PDF\)](#), to claim a credit or refund of the overpayment attributable to the disability severance payment.

This is a result of the Combat-Injured Veterans Tax Fairness Act passed in 2016.

Most veterans who received a one-time lump-sum disability severance payment when they separated from their military service will receive [should have received] a letter from the Department of Defense (DoD) with information explaining how to claim tax refunds they are entitled to; the letters include an explanation of a simplified method for making the claim. The IRS has worked closely with the DoD to produce these letters, explaining how veterans should claim the related tax refunds.

### Statute of Limitations

***The amount of time for claiming these tax refunds is limited.*** However, the law grants veterans an alternative timeframe — one year from the date of the letter from DoD. Veterans making these claims have the normal limitations period for claiming a refund or one year from the date of their letter from the DoD, whichever expires later. As taxpayers can usually only claim tax refunds within ***3 years from the due date of the return***, this alternative time frame is especially important since some of the claims may be for refunds of taxes paid as far back as 1991.

### Amount to Claim

Veterans can submit a claim based on the actual amount of their disability severance payment by completing Form 1040X, carefully following the

[instructions \(PDF\)](#). However, there is a simplified method. Veterans can choose instead to claim a standard refund amount based on the calendar year (an individual's tax year) in which they received the severance payment. Write "Disability Severance Payment" on line 15 of Form 1040X and enter on lines 15 and 22 the standard refund amount listed below that applies:

\$1,750 for tax years 1991 – 2005  
 \$2,400 for tax years 2006 – 2010  
 \$3,200 for tax years 2011 – 2016

Claiming the standard refund amount is the easiest way for veterans to claim a refund, because they do not need to access the original tax return from the year of their lump-sum disability severance payment.

#### Special Instructions

All veterans claiming refunds for overpayments attributable to their lump-sum disability severance payments should write either "Veteran Disability Severance" or "St. Clair Claim" across the top of the front page of the Form 1040X that they file. Because all amended returns are filed on paper, veterans should mail their completed Form 1040X, with a copy of the DoD letter, to:

Internal Revenue Service  
 333 W. Pershing Street, Stop 6503, P5  
 Kansas City, MO 64108

Veterans eligible for a refund who did not receive a letter from DoD may still file Form 1040X to claim a refund but must include both of the following to verify the disability severance payment:

A copy of documentation showing the exact amount of and reason for the disability severance payment, such as a letter from the Defense Finance and Accounting Services (DFAS) explaining the severance payment at the time of the payment or a Form DD-214, and  
 A copy of either the VA determination letter confirming the veteran's disability or a determination that the veteran's injury or sickness was either incurred as a direct result of armed conflict, while in extra-hazardous service, or in simulated

war exercises, or was caused by an instrumentality of war.

Veterans who did not receive the DoD letter and who do not have the required documentation showing the exact amount of and reason for their disability severance payment will need to obtain the necessary proof by contacting the [Defense Finance and Accounting Services \(DFAS\)](#).

More information on this issue is available on [IRS.gov](#).



### IRS PUB 525 P. 18

## YOUR DISABILITY PENSION PAYMENTS AND YOUR TAX RETURN



**Disability Pensions.** If you retired on disability, you must include in income any disability pension you receive under a plan that is paid for by your employer. You must report your taxable disability payments as wages on line 1 of Form 1040 until you reach minimum retirement age. Minimum retirement age generally is the age at which you can first receive a pension or annuity if you aren't disabled.

*You may be entitled to a tax credit if you were permanently and totally disabled when you retired. For information on this credit, see Pub. 524.*

*Beginning on the day after you reach minimum retirement age, payments you receive are taxable as a pension or annuity. Report the payments on lines 4a and 4b of Form 1040. For more*

*information on pensions and annuities, see Pub. 575.*

**Terrorist attacks.** Don't include in your income disability payments you receive for injuries incurred as a direct result of terrorist attacks directed against the United States (or its allies), whether outside or within the United States. However, you must include in your income any amounts that you received that you would have received in retirement had you not become disabled as a result of a terrorist attack.

*Contact the company or agency making these payments if it incorrectly reports your payments as taxable income to the IRS on Form W-2, or on Form 1099-R, to request that it reissue the form to report some or all of these payments as nontaxable income in box 12 (under code J) on Form W-2 or in box 1 but not in box 2a on Form 1099-R. If income taxes are being incorrectly withheld from these payments, you may also submit Form W-4 to the company or agency to stop the withholding of income taxes from payments reported on Form W-2 or you may submit Form W-4P to stop the withholding of income taxes from payments reported on Form 1099-R.*

Disability payments you receive for injuries not incurred as a direct result of a terrorist attack or for illnesses or diseases not resulting from an injury incurred as a direct result of a terrorist attack can't be excluded from your income under this provision but may be excludable for other reasons. See Pub. 907.

**Retirement and profit-sharing plans.** If you receive payments from a retirement or profit-sharing plan that doesn't provide for disability retirement, don't treat the payments as a disability pension. The payments must be reported as a pension or annuity.

**Accrued leave payment.** If you retire on disability, any lump-sum payment you receive for accrued annual leave is a salary payment. The payment isn't a disability payment. Include it in your income in the tax year you receive it.

#### Military and Government Disability Pensions



Certain military and government disability pensions aren't taxable.

**Service-connected disability.** You may be able to exclude from income amounts you receive as a pension, annuity, or similar allowance for personal injury or sickness resulting from active service in one of the following government services.

The armed forces of any country.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

The Public Health Service.

The Foreign Service.

**Conditions for exclusion.** Don't include the disability payments in your income if any of the following conditions apply.

You were entitled to receive a disability payment before September 25, 1975.

You were a member of a listed government service or its reserve component, or were under a binding written commitment to become a member, on September 24, 1975.

You receive the disability payments for a combat-related injury. This is a personal injury or sickness that:

- Results directly from armed conflict;
- Takes place while you're engaged in extra-hazardous service;
- Takes place under conditions simulating war, including training exercises such as maneuvers; or
- Is caused by an instrumentality of war.

You would be entitled to receive disability compensation from the VA if you filed an application for it. Your exclusion under this condition is equal to the amount you would be entitled to receive from the VA.

**Pension based on years of service.** If you receive a disability pension based on years of service, in most cases you must include it in your income. However, if the pension qualifies for the exclusion for a service-connected disability (discussed earlier), don't include in income the part

of your pension that you would have received if the pension had been based on a percentage of disability. You must include the rest of your pension in your income.

**Retroactive VA Determination.** If you retire from the U.S. Armed Forces based on years of service and are later given a retroactive service-connected disability rating by the VA, your retirement pay for the retroactive period is excluded from income up to the amount of VA disability benefits you would have been entitled to receive. You can claim a refund of any tax paid on the excludable amount (subject to the statute of limitations) by filing an amended return on Form 1040X for each previous year during the retroactive period. You must include with each Form 1040X a copy of the official VA determination letter granting the retroactive benefit. The letter must show the amount withheld and the effective date of the benefit.

If you receive a lump-sum disability severance payment and are later awarded VA disability benefits, exclude 100% of the severance benefit from your income. However, you must include in your income any lump-sum readjustment or other non-disability severance payment you received on release from active duty, even if you're later given a retroactive disability rating by the VA.



**Special Statute of Limitations.** In most cases, under the statute of limitations a claim for credit or refund must be filed within 3 years from the time a return was filed. However, if you receive a retroactive service-connected disability rating determination, the statute of limitations is extended by a 1-year period beginning on the date of the determination. This 1-year extended period applies to claims for credit or refund filed after June 17, 2008, and doesn't apply to any tax year that began

more than 5 years before the date of the determination.

**Example 19.** You retired in 2012 and receive a pension based on your years of service. On August 3, 2018, you receive a determination of service-connected disability retroactive to 2012. Generally, you could claim a refund for the taxes paid on your pension for 2015, 2016, and 2017. However, under the special limitation period, you can also file a claim for 2014 as long as you file the claim by August 3, 2019. You can't file a claim for 2012 and 2013 because those tax years began more than 5 years before the determination.

**Terrorist Attack or Military Action.** Don't include in your income disability payments you receive for injuries resulting directly from a terrorist or military action. However, you must include in your income any amounts that you received that you would have received in retirement had you not become disabled as a result of a terrorist or military action. Disability payments you receive for injuries not incurred as a direct result of a terrorist or military action or for illnesses or diseases not resulting from an injury incurred as a direct result of a terrorist or military action may be excludable from income for other reasons. See Pub. 907.

A terrorist action is one that is directed against the United States or any of its allies (including a multinational force in which the United States is participating). A military action is one that involves the Armed Forces of the United States and is a result of actual or threatened violence or aggression against the United States or any of its allies but doesn't include training exercises.

#### **Long-Term Care Insurance Contracts**

In most cases, long-term care insurance contracts are treated as accident and health insurance contracts. Amounts you receive from them (other than policyholder dividends or premium refunds) are excludable in most cases from income as amounts received for personal injury or sickness. To claim an exclusion for payments made on a per diem or other periodic basis under a long-

term care insurance contract, you must file Form 8853 with your return.

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## Page 18 Publication 525 (2018)

### AMENDING TAX RETURNS FOR REFUND OF STATE AND LOCAL TAXES PAID

**Bottom line:** Disabled Veterans pensions should be exempted as income up to the amount of the disability compensation rating so if your DFAS 1099-R line 2a states you received \$48000 in taxable retirement income and you are 80% disabled, you get to subtract 80% of the total.

Your formula for change is: \$48000 minus 80% = \$9600 effectively reducing your total taxable retirement income by a whopping \$38,400, not only reducing your tax liability but also placing you in a lower tax bracket. An amount previously owed can now change to a refund.

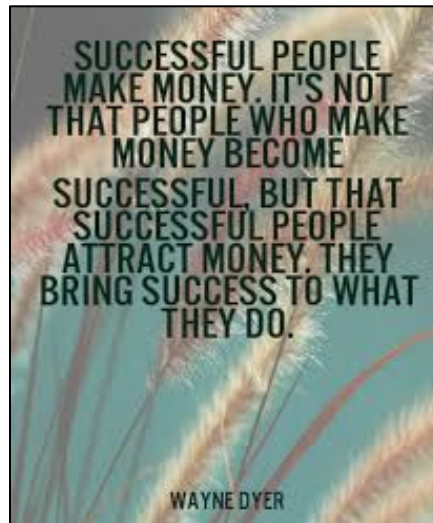
#### What to do:

- See your tax preparer with a copy of your tax return from that year (2014-2018)
- Tell your preparer you need to do amended tax returns
- Take a copy of your VA letter of disability determination, your military retired ID (both sides) and your DD214
- Prepare and File a 1040X (Amended U.S. Individual Tax Return - adjust your income based on this formula (retirement income minus your total disability percentage so if you are 100% disabled, none of your retirement pay should be included as income).
- Net change (column B) will show the new amount with corresponding calculations on each line and the amended amounts shown in column C.
- You must include the following statement on Part III of the 1040X as explanation of the changes:

THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND THE IRS PUBLICATION 525 PAGES 18 STATES THE RETIREMENT INCOME IS EXCLUDED FROM INCOME UP TO THE AMOUNT OF THE VA DISABILITY. MY RETIREMENT INCOME WAS NOT

### REDUCED BY DFAS REGARDING MY DISABILITY.

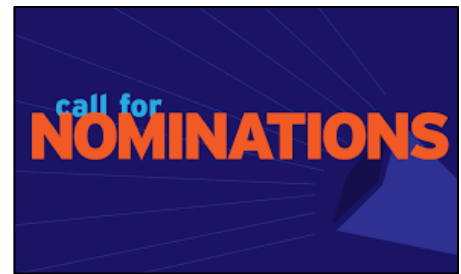
That is the process; the same should exist for state income tax if your retirement is taxed. You must act fast on 2014 as there is a limitation that may have already run out but file it anyway. DFAS should be notifying retirees about this because it is really their glitch.



## SPRING ROCKET DEADLINE



Articles for the ROCKET Spring Edition are due no later than **Friday, March 13, 2020.** Be sure to refer to the Submission Guidelines for guidance.



### 2020 National ROCKS Chairman's Award for Exceptional Service

TO: Chapter Presidents

The National Board of the ROCKS, Inc. is now accepting up to three (3) recommendations from each Chapter for the "Chairman's Award for Exceptional Service." This award is presented to individual ROCKS' members who have gone **above and beyond** to support the goals and objectives of The ROCKS, Inc.

#### CRITERIA

The Chairman's Award for Exceptional Service is presented to those individual ROCKS members who have worked in their chapters or with the National Board to establish and coordinate programs for professional development, mentoring, scholarship or have assisted on a continuing basis in support of activities of The ROCKS, Inc.

Submit completed certificate nominations via email to:

[rocksnationalboard@gmail.com](mailto:rocksnationalboard@gmail.com) **no later than Friday, February 7, 2020.**

Awards will be presented at the 46<sup>th</sup> Annual Spring Gala & Awards Banquet on Saturday, April 4, 2020.





## CADET CORNER

### Cadets Interact with the Army's Senior Leaders

*By COL Karen Wrancher*

WASHINGTON, D.C. - On 7 November 2019, over 400 cadets from more than 20 universities converged on the Howard University Campus for the 6th Annual Army Senior Leader Development Conference. The conference which started as the vision and brain trust of LTG(Ret) Robert Ferrell with support of the ROCKS, Inc. has grown into an Army forum which is supported by the Army Senior Leaders to include the Commanding General of US Army Cadet Command, MG John Evans.

The conference began in the Burr Gymnasium where Cadets had the rare opportunity to interact directly with General Officers and a few members of the Senior Executive Service. In addition, to directly engaging flag officers, there were branches like the Armor Branch with the Armor School Commandant, BG. Kevin D. Army Admiral and Ordnance Branch that had information tables and displays to disseminate information about their branches. They addressed any questions on why a future officer may want to select their branch. There was an abundance of ROCKS Members in attendance talking, laughing and even taking pictures as well as selfies with cadets: SES Marshall M. Williams, the Principal Deputy, Assistant Secretary of the Army (Manpower and Reserve Affairs); LTG Les Smith, the 66th The Inspector General; LTG Scott Dingle, the 45th Surgeon General; MG William J. Walker, the Commanding General of the D.C. National Guard and our own Chairman, BG Lawrence Gillespie.

During the next part of the conference in Cramton Auditorium, Mr. Marshall Williams did a masterful job serving as the moderator for a leadership panel. He stated we, the Army are changing to be prepared for the challenges in the future. We must be better organized, better



manned, and better trained than our enemies. Sharing with the audience his service to our nation as a former Command Sergeant Major, he stated, "The foundation of our success has been and will always be — our people." referring to the Cadets as our Army's future leaders.

He then introduced the Provost and Chief Academic Officer, Dr. Anthony K. Wutoh who delivered his welcome remarks. Dr. Wutoh recounted the founding and history of Howard University as well the creation of its Officer Training Program and its evolution into today's ROTC Program. Howard University was founded in 1866 by missionaries as a training facility for black preachers. Howard University, which of bears the name of university's founder, General Oliver Otis Howard, a Civil War hero served as the commissioner of the Freedman's Bureau while serving as President of the University. Howard has evolved into one of the leading historically black colleges and universities with a 60% graduation

rate and offering over 120 areas/programs leading to degrees.

Mr. Williams then introduced the keynote speaker, LTG Leslie Smith, a former ROTC Cadet from Georgia Southern University. He opened by saying, "Regardless of what branch or job you do, you need to know why you fight." LTG Smith then paused for the audience to view the Army's "Why We Fight" video ([https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=n1wwJv\\_ndGM](https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=n1wwJv_ndGM)) narrated by our 39th Chief of Staff of the Army and now Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Mark A. Miley. The key points LTG Smith made during his interactive presentation was:

- \* Taking care of people increases your potential for promotion and your ability to address the problems you've been predestined to address when you become a leader.
- \* Don't be afraid to be a leader. Every opportunity, even failures is a training opportunity to develop your team for the future. Make the tough calls when people don't want to follow standards.

\* Learn to maintain yourself. You have to get the appropriate sleep, you have to eat right, and you have to exercise. Maintain your appearance and bearing.

\* Focus on developing your communication skills. Your soldier's lives depend on your ability to effectively communicate decisions, goals and objectives.

\* Integrity. If you tell your boss you're going to do something, then do it.

\* Got to be humble. General Smith stated that we should remain humble because no one ever advances or achieves success without the help of someone else, helping you get there.

\* Those who serve have treat people with dignity and respect. If you get the PEOPLE right, everything else will take care of itself. People matter. The Army's Winning Matters video (<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=oIw5JTX2c5o>) was then shown.

\* Winning Matters. In order to win you have to serve, support and develop the people in your formation.

After LTG Smith's presentation, Mr. Williams facilitated the exchange of responses to the questions from approximately two dozen cadet. The cadets posed a question which was followed by an answer from two members on the panel. The Cadets asked insightful questions like:

\* Looking back at your career and given the Army's focus on people, if you could give just one piece of advice to your younger maybe no so smart second lieutenant self what would it be?

General Paul Funk replied, he believed it would about trust and tenacity. Trust establishes a highly functioning unit cohesive and tenacity solidifies one's resolve to get a fixed result. General Smith stated he would recommend that you listen to your non-commissioned officers and you treat everyone with dignity and respect. LTG Smith stated, "You'll be humbled to learn from the NCOs who are the bedrock of our profession."

Lieutenant General Dingle responded to one of the cadet's question reflecting on what was one of his greatest failures. He stated it was when he lost his bearing and his temper in the battalion headquarters. He recalled he was a collegiate athlete who was highly competitive. He stated he failed in his duty and responsibility to set an example for his Soldiers as a company commander but he had a forgiving battalion commander who assisted him in his development as an officer.

\* As a diverse people within the Army what advice would you offer cadets getting ready to serve as minorities in the Armed Forces?

Before answering the question, Major General Williams thanked audience for wearing the cloth and being among the 1% of our population that wear the uniform. Addressing relationships and learning, he stated, "You need three people in your life: a coach, mentor and sponsor. The coach speaks at you, the mentor speaks to you and the sponsor speaks for you." He stated he was a lifetime member of the ROCKS which was a sponsor of the event. He went on to add rarely can a person be all three but General Gillespie [the Chairman of the ROCKS] has been all three during the course of his career. "There are times when people spoke rather harsh to me. That was my coach and it was a one-way conversation, a two-way conversation that was a mentor," he added.

General Funk stated it was his third time participating in conference and each year more cadets, more schools and generals attend. He stated it is about service to the nation, for the the greater good; serving something greater than yourself. You are joining a team has existed for 245 years; wearing the jersey of the greatest team on this earth. You are absolutely part of profession. Thank you for my family and thank you for joining our family.

\* How does social media effect operational security? How can Army operations evolve offensive and defensively address information security and deal with those security threats? BG Admiral replied in this day and age everyone has smart phones. We have to educate Soldiers on what is and is not

appropriate for posting. When we head to training events, we have to remind Soldiers not to post certain information. In addition, you have to explain to Soldiers so they understand why. Our adversary is watching and can put pieces of information together and before you know it you have compromised a fire mission taking out a squad or even battalions. As leaders we should use our social media platforms to get messages out to get and through the layers are in between us and our Soldiers and if as leaders we do not, someone else will.

After the leadership all attendees took a group photo. The event was a resounding success for the college and the ROTC Cadre of the Bison Battalion led by LTC Creyonta West.

### The National Board of the ROCKS, Inc. Scholarship Programs

#### *Calling All ROTC Cadets!!!*

Cadets enrolled in ROTC Programs are encouraged to compete for one of our two awards/scholarships, LTG Edward Honor Leadership Award and the BG Roscoe Cartwright Award. The details for the submission of the application can be found on the Scholarship webpage at [www.rocksync.org](http://www.rocksync.org).



**Application are due no later than Friday,  
December 31, 2019.**

If you have any questions, please call 301-423-5500 or send an email to [rocksnationalboard@gmail.com](mailto:rocksnationalboard@gmail.com).





Photo Collage: 2019 Army Senior Leader Development Conference





## ROCKS' CHAPTER ACTIVITIES



### All American Chapter Leading the Way

During the Fall and Winter of 2019, The All-American Chapter of the ROCKS, Inc. distributed holiday care packages to members of the community, hosted an invigorating Leadership Professional Development session with Commanding General, 8th Theater Sustainment Command, Major Gen. Charles Hamilton and held its annual Christmas party where the chapter donated toys to local Fayetteville families. The All-American Chapter is in the Army's Center of The Universe, and it intends to Lead The Way, All The Way!

On September 19th, 2019 The All-American Chapter of The ROCKS, Inc., hosted Maj. Gen. Charles Hamilton

during a Leadership Professional Development session. Fort Bragg leaders eagerly listened to Maj. Gen. Hamilton speak candidly on training for the Army Combat Fitness Test, being an engaging leader, resiliency, mental health, the importance of organizations like The ROCKS, and even the role of artificial intelligence in logistics. Maj. Gen. Hamilton shared how he personally prepared for the ACFT, stating that he began CrossFit to train his body to endure the high intensity events in the test. He advised leaders to assimilate into their organizations as well as take a day off to recharge their batteries through mental rest.

Maj. General Hamilton answered questions from the crowd ranging from topics such as the importance of Lean Six Sigma and Program Management certifications to the role of artificial intelligence in the logistics industry. At the conclusion of his speech he was presented a Certificate of Appreciation from The All-American ROCKS Inc., Chapter President Major LaDarrell Willis.

In addition to the engaging LPD with Maj. General Hamilton, The All-American Chapter of the ROCKS, Inc. hosted Ms. Susan Goodman for a Master Resiliency Training (MRT) session on October 1, 2019. Ms. Goodman engaged with leaders on what MRT consists of and how they can use those skills to help their Soldiers and peers in a time of need. The

Chapter also hosted a financial literacy seminar on November 5th, 2019 to educate Fort Bragg officers and Fayetteville State University cadets on the importance of budgeting and investing. Cain Hill, a former servicemember and financial planner, shared his experiences with money and encouraged open discussion on monthly spending, Blended Retirement System, Thrift Savings Plan, and the importance of paying down debt.



The All-American ROCKS continued to Rock Steady through the holiday season and beyond. On December 13th, it held its annual Christmas party at the Linden Oaks Lodge. The Chapter held a toy drive where members and guests donated wrapped gifts in support of children in Cumberland County. The Chapter plans to give away \$1,000 in scholarships to eligible FSU, Campbell, and North Carolina State University cadets in January 2020.



*Fort Bragg leaders and ROCKS members pose with Maj. Gen. Charles Hamilton, the Commanding General of 8th Theater Sustainment Command during the September 19, 2019 LPD*



## ROCKS Celebrates 1<sup>st</sup> Founders Day

By: COL (Ret) Dorene Hurt



*ROCKS National Board Chairman, BG (Ret) Lawrence Gillespie, addresses ROCKS Founders and guests*

Thursday, October 17, 2019, became an historic day in the life of the ROCKS Inc. The 1st Founders Day was celebrated to honor three of the five ROCKS who were to be recognized for their vision and contributions to the ROCKS as Founders of the “official” organization in 1974. Maj. Gen. (Ret) Arthur Holmes, Jr.; Brig Gen (Ret) Alfred Cade; COL (Ret) Clarence Miller, COL (Ret) Frank Francois, and COL (Ret) James Wyatt were slated to be recognized. Although Maj. Gen. (Ret) Arthur Holmes, Jr. and COL (Ret) James Wyatt were unable to attend, fellow ROCKS and other attendees were thrilled and honored to recognize the three Founders present. It’s important to note that COL Miller and COL Francois were “Blue Geese,” a special designation of ROCKS Founders who constituted the informal group that was formed at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas while they attended the Command and General Staff College during the 1960s. Notably, Brig Gen (Ret) Alfred Cade came from Richmond, Va with an impressive group of family and friends. Senior attendees present included: Dr. Marshall Williams, Principal Deputy to the ASA (M&RA), who also provided remarks; LT Gen (Ret) Ferrell; Maj Gens (Ret) Alexander, Churn, and Gaskill; Maj Gen Sargent; Brig Gens (Ret) Richardson, Gillespie and Simms; and Brig Gen Dean.

COL (R) Dorene Hurt of the ROCKS National Board spearheaded the effort to establish a ROCKS, Inc. Founders Day. The proposal garnered unanimous approval by the National Board in July

2019. ROCKS Founders include: the original Blue Geese from Fort Leavenworth; Charter members who were present when the ROCKS Charter was signed and the first members of the ROCKS, Inc. The purpose of this new annual celebration is to recognize and honor the original members of our organization; highlight our ROCKS history; and energize our membership as we move forward.



*ROCKS National Board Chairman, BG (Ret) Lawrence Gillespie, assists ROCKS Founders during the cake cutting.*

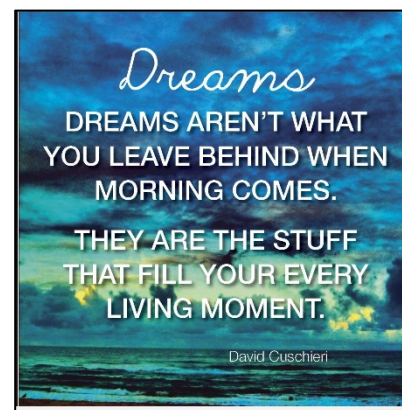
The Washington DC Chapter and ROCKS National Board teamed to conduct the 1<sup>st</sup> ROCKS Inc. Founders Day on Oct 17th at the Fort Myer, Va. Memorial Chapel Fellowship Hall.

Prior to the cake cutting and certificate presentations, ROCKS DC Chapter President COL (Ret) Shelia Flowers, ROCKS Chairman Brig Gen (Ret) Gillespie and former ROCKS Chairman Brig Gen (Ret) Simms gave remarks. All three Founders had an opportunity to share reflections from the ROCKS Inc. early years including why they believed it was important to formalize what had been a very special more socially focused group of African American officers who

generally supported one another. They also shared their belief that although a lot of progress has been made, there remains much work to be done before everyone truly has an equal opportunity to reach ones full potential.

In addition to cutting the celebratory cake, each Founding ROCK received a framed certificate which read in part...“We extend our heartfelt appreciation and sincere congratulations for your steadfast commitment to assisting and supporting one another from the beginning, even prior to officially establishing the ROCKS, Inc. It is evident that your personal courage, determination and steadfast commitment to our core ideals of “Concern, Dedication and Professionalism” continue to resonate throughout an organization that has dedicated itself to strengthening the U.S. Army through mentoring, representative leadership and increased professional opportunities for over 45 years.”

Sincere appreciation is extended to everyone who played a part in bringing well deserved honor to our Founders to fruition.



*COL (Ret) Shelia Flowers, ROCKS DC Chapter President, welcomes 1st ROCKS Founders Day attendees*

## The Alamo Chapter of the ROCKS, Inc. co-hosts Breakfast & Learn with JROTC

By Dr. Michelle A. Jefferson



Over 100 parents and JROTC students attended the two Breakfast and Learn Outreach events in the San Antonio Independent School District (ISD) and Edgewood ISD where they learned how to get ROTC scholarships, listened to The Alamo Chapter of the ROCKS, Inc. share their personal military experiences, and how Resolve Solutions, Inc. assists cadets with maintaining their ROTC scholarships. (Photo credit: Mr. Jerry Cheatham)

SAN ANTONIO, TX -- The Alamo Chapter of the ROCKS, Inc. co-hosted two Junior Reserve Officer Training Corp (JROTC) Outreach events with Resolve Solutions, Inc. (RSI) the first on 14 September 2019 with the San Antonio Independent School District (ISD) at the Thomas Edison High School and the second on 16 November 2019 with the Edgewood ISD at the John F. Kennedy High School. Over 100 students attended the events where active duty and retired servicemembers of the Alamo Chapter served as panel members and assigned mentors for cadets who joined the Chapter.

RSI Founder & Executive Director Major (Retired) E. Sean Lanier opened both events by presenting several success stories of current and former scholarship recipients at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU), Service Academies, and Senior Military Colleges. MAJ (Ret) Lanier also explained how RSI assists students and parents with the ROTC scholarship applications and the academy and college admissions process. The presentation was followed by The Alamo Chapter of the ROCKS, Inc. panel members Q&A, where they shared their personal experiences in the military,

provided tips on being a successful student and applicant, and explained how to obtain science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) internships through the Army Educational Outreach Programs (AEOP) i.e. Gains in the Education of Mathematics and Science (GEMS) at the United States Army Institute of Surgical Research located at the Brooke Army Medical Center on Fort Sam Houston, TX, where middle and high school students participate in scientific experiments, exposing them in laboratory, teamwork and leadership skills while getting a small stipend. Both events culminated with empowering students and parents with the possibility of securing a college education debt-free while serving our country as an officer in the United States Armed Forces.

RSI is an Alexandria, VA based nonprofit that identifies undiscovered talent of future global leaders to address the manpower shortage critical to the National Security of the United States of America. To date 430+ students, from 23 states have earned \$36 million in offers for their undergraduate degrees. RSI specifically focuses on improving the recruiting, retention and graduation rates of ROTC scholarship recipients by offering opportunities for SAT/ACT score improvement, Summer Bridge programs, language immersion and

introduction to professional organizations like BEYA, NSBE, SWE, SHPE, BDPA, etc.

After collaborating with RSI in 2019, The Alamo Chapter of the ROCKS, Inc. successfully have two Texas JROTC students, Ms. Stephanie Guardiola and Ms. Crystal Isunza, awarded nearly \$100,000 in three-year ROTC scholarships at the University of San Antonio Texas (USTA) and Sam Houston State University.

The Alamo Chapter of the ROCKS, Inc. is committed to assisting underserved youth in the greater San Antonio, TX area with obtaining ROTC scholarships and mentoring them to succeed as future global leaders as part of The National ROCKS, Inc. Strategic Plan 2017-2022: Partnering Worldwide to build a Stronger, Culturally, Diverse Force. For more information on the AEOP programs throughout the United States visit the website

<https://www.usacop.com/program/>

"Leaders become great,  
not because of their power,  
but because of their ability  
to empower others."

— John Maxwell



The Alamo Chapter of the ROCKS, Inc. co-hosts its first Lunch and Learn with Resolve Solutions, Inc., on 14 September 2019 at the Thomas Edison High School JROTC Building.  
(Photo credit: Mr. Jerry Cheatham)



## The Washington, DC ROCKS, Inc., Joins Volunteers Across America

By COL (R) Angie Hemingway

Members of the Washington, DC Chapter of the ROCKS, Inc., successfully accomplished the motto of "REMEMBER the fallen... HONOR those who serve... TEACH our children the value of freedom," on Saturday, December 14, 2019. This motto is on the Arlington National Cemetery Wreath's Across America website. Although the day was rainy, wet and dull, this did not deter chapter members and family.



Ready, set to work, Members of the Washington, DC Chapter of the ROCKS joining forces with volunteers across America to Remember and Honor our nation's veterans. COL (R) Barbara Wooten, Mr. Glenn Stahl, COL (R) Angie Hemingway, LTC Stephen Stanley, COL (R) Shelia Howell-Flowers –President, DC Chapter of ROCKS, Isaiah Foster, Aisha Foster, and CPT Andre Foster.

The DC Chapter volunteered in conjunction with other volunteers across America, to lay 253,000 veterans' wreaths on the graves at Arlington National Cemetery. This act is a symbol of commitment to Remember and Honor our nation's veterans. During the hours of volunteering, CPT Andre Foster and

his wife Aisha used this time to teach their son Isaiah, about the significance of the numbering on the back of the tomb stones.



Members of the Washington, DC Chapter of the ROCKS, Inc laying wreaths, COL (R) Angie Hemingway, COL (R) Shelia Howell -Flowers, LTC Stephen Stanley, Isaiah Foster.

On January 19, 2020 when the DC Chapter pick up wreaths, we challenged other ROCKS Chapter to join us.



## The Morning Calm Chapter

By MAJ Nina Copeland &  
LTC Ellis Gales

The Morning Calm Chapter is moving expeditiously in the Republic of Korea. The chapter is focused on growing our membership, raising money to award a scholarship to a high school senior and providing an environment where officers, warrants and civilians can experience professional growth.

BG (P) David Wilson, United States Forces Korea's J4 Director hosted a peninsula-wide leader professional

development session on the Talent Alignment Process on September 28th. He expressed the importance of reading supplemental material to remain abreast of the forthcoming changes on the assignments process. He also recommended that everyone remain flexible and adapt to upcoming changes in the manner in which the Army conducts business.

His key point to the audience was, "STAY and YOU DON'T HAVE TO GET READY!" He encouraged everyone to do their part as an individual and complete their AIM Resume. The LPD concluded with LTC Natasha Clarke and LTC Ellis Gales, Area I and Area III coordinators respectively, giving an overview of the ROCKS, Inc. and explaining the evolution of the organization and the benefits of membership.

When October was approaching the Area III leadership decided the next LPD should focus on the nearly seventy-five percent of officers who move on to other assignments each year. CPT Kristina Bolden, strength manager for Eighth Army, discussed the Assignment Interactive Module (AIM) 2.0. The program couples talented officers with available Army jobs.

She described how battalion commanders are doing their research for company commanders and staff officers. She said incomplete resume sends a negative message and infers that officers are not interested in being selected for preferred jobs. The new way is truly your way of



Soldiers within the Republic of Korea Leader Professional Development session on Assignment Interactive Module (AIM) 2.0

having your preferences matter; but you also have to sell yourself and why you are the right officer.

CPT Madelyne Corcino, HHD Commander, 532<sup>nd</sup> Military Intelligence Battalion coordinated an outreach program with the Camp Humphreys High School JROTC Department. Four officers with a background in humanities, systems engineering, geospatial, and business management spoke with over 45 cadets. They discussed different commissioning routes and provided important tips on selecting a major. The session concluded with a question and answer session and cadets were able to ask questions about how to select a university, major, and questions about the military, and general life questions.

On November 15th during the 2nd Infantry Division's warfighter exercise the Commanding General, 8th Theater Sustainment Command, MG Charles Hamilton conducted an LPD at Area IV's Camp Walker, on the importance of being an Army leader. MG Hamilton discussed Chief of Staff Priorities - People, Readiness, Modernization and Reform. It is important for everyone to take care of our people: Soldiers, Civilians, and Family Members. He concluded the LPD by reiterating readiness is the Army's number one priority. In an increasingly volatile and uncertain world, the Army as a whole must be postured to shape the global security environment while remaining ready to fight and win.

December's LPD focused on various career decisions that Soldiers and civilians make throughout their career and included a panel of three lieutenant colonels and a warrant officer from 2nd Infantry Division and a civilian employee from Eighth Army's Directorate of Human Resources Management. The session received positive feedback as the panel members, from various military careers, answered a wide array of questions from the audience.

Although the temperature is cooling down on the Korean peninsula, things are starting to heat up for the Morning Calm Chapter. Looking ahead, the chapter will participate in a fundraiser and also plans to conduct LPDs on financial management, board prep and the Army's

new Battalion Commander Assessment Program.



## **The DC ROCKS' 2019 West A. Hamilton Dinner**

*By LTC Eduardo T. Moten*

On November 2, 2019, the Washington DC Chapter of The ROCKS, Inc. hosted its annual BG West A. Hamilton Soul Food Dinner and Silent Auction at the Fort Belvoir Golf Club. This annual signature event occurs each fall during the month of November. During that evening the DC ROCKS and their guests pay tribute to the past as ROCKS members gather for a meal and fellowship much like the founding members.

The dinner's namesake, BG (Ret) West A. Hamilton, enlisted in the Washington DC National Guard in 1905. He was rapidly promoted through the enlisted ranks. In 1913, he was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant. He then served forty-four years in the Reserves/National Guard and achieved the rank of Colonel in 1922. In July 1983, during the dedication of the West A. Hamilton Museum at the D. C. National Armory, he was posthumously promoted to the honorary rank of Brigadier General. BG Hamilton as a faithful member of The ROCKS, Inc. and was a pioneer for the advancement of African Americans in the Army and a champion of higher education.



*Keynote speaker Lieutenant General Bruce Crawford, the National ROCKS, Inc. Chairman, BG (Ret) Lawrence E. Gillespie, Major General William J. Walker - Commanding General, District of Columbia National Guard, Washington, DC*

Lieutenant General Bruce Crawford, Army Chief Information Officer/G6 served as this year's keynote speaker. He

spoke passionately about the life and contributions of BG Hamilton in the Army and the community at large. He ended his remarks by noting for the recipient of the BG West A. Hamilton award, that BG Hamilton left the "gift of a good example."

Besides a key fundraising event, the West Hamilton Dinner is an opportunity to celebrate members who have made significant contributions to the Washington DC Chapter. During this event, the following awards were presented:

**SOLID ROCK OF THE YEAR**  
LTC Stephen Stanley

**Jr. SOLID ROCK OF THE YEAR**  
CPT Andre Foster

**BG WEST A. HAMILTON AWARD**  
LTC Ed Moten

**LIFETIME OF LEADERSHIP AWARD**  
COL (Ret) Angela Hemingway

**2019 VOLUNTEERISM AWARDS:**

Ms. Tracy Bellamy  
CW5 Yolondria Dixon-Carter  
CPT Lenora Monroe  
Mrs. Joy Stanley  
Mr. Jerome Towner  
COL (Ret) Barbara Wooten

Attendees enjoyed a wonderful soul food dinner prepared by the Fort Belvoir Golf Club and ended the evening dancing. "I had such a wonderful time tonight. I look forward to this event each year," said MG (Ret) George Alexander. He was just one of many who praised the event.



*SOLID ROCK OF THE YEAR, LTC Stephen Stanley & spouse Joy Stanley*



# **THE ROCKS, INC. ACTIVE CHAPTERS**

**As of 24 December 2019**

## **Alamo Chapter**

*San Antonio, TX*

LTC Tamisha Norris, USA  
tamishanorris@gmail.com

## **All American Chapter**

*Fort Bragg, NC*

MAJ LaDarrell Willis, USA  
darrelltwillis@gmail.com

## **Aloha Chapter of the ROCKS**

*Oahu, HI*

CPT Justin Thomas, USA  
aloharockschapter@gmail.com

## **Buffalo Soldier Chapter**

*Fort Leavenworth, KS*

LTC Irvin Jackson, USA  
bscrocksteamftlvn@gmail.com

## **Central Virginia Chapter**

*Fort Lee, VA*

LTC Daphne Dixon-Reed, USA  
cvcrocksinc@gmail.com

## **Gator ROCKS**

*Fort Polk, LA*

1LT Taurean Morrow, USA  
[taurean.d.morrow.mil@mail.mil](mailto:taurean.d.morrow.mil@mail.mil)

## **Gold Vault ROCKS**

*Fort Knox, KY*

LTC Bernard House, USA  
Bernard\_house@yahoo.com

## **Hampton Roads, VA**

LTC Joseph Harris, USA

Jahj1911@gmail.com;  
tcmooney@cox.net

## **Morning Calm, Korea**

MAJ Nina Copeland, USA  
morningcalmrocks@gmail.com

## **MG Charles C. Rogers Chapter- AWC**

*Carlisle Barracks, PA*

COL Tammy Heath, USA  
tammy.a.health.mil@mail.mil

## **Patriot ROCKS**

**GA National Guard**

*Forsyth, GA*

LTC Alicia Smith, USA  
Smith\_hd@comcast.net

## **Phantom Warrior ROCKS**

*Fort Hood, TX*

MAJ Wayne E. Griffin, USA  
w.e.griffin.jr@gmail.com

## **Screaming Eagles**

*Fort Campbell, KY*

MAJ Michael Bennett, USA  
bennettmichael6@gmail.com

## **The Henry O. Flipper Chapter**

*West Point, NY*

LTC Winston Williams, USA  
winston.williams@usma.edu

## **Washington, DC ROCKS**

COL(R) Sheila Howell-Flowers,  
USA

washdcrocks@gmail.com

