



The
ROCKET
Spring 2022 Edition

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ROCKS TO REMEMBER

The Passing of an Originating Member



Clifford Edward Young (Age 93)
LTC, US Army (Ret.)

Clifford recently departed this life on Monday, February 21, 2022 after a long struggle with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. He was born in Chicago, IL but lived in Washington, DC for the past 22 years. Clifford is survived by his devoted wife, Katye Young, his brother Cornelius (Ethel) Young, his sister Sandra Topp, a devoted nephew, Dr. Ahmed Stowers, and many relatives and friends. A memorial service will be held later this spring. In lieu of flowers donations should be sent to his Alma Mater, Southern University, 801 Harding Blvd, Baton Rouge, LA 70807.

Published by The Washington Post on Mar. 20, 2022.



In Memory of Antoine E'Li-Jah Flagg *by COL (Ret Dorene Hurt)*



On behalf of the ROCKS National Board and all ROCKS members, sincere condolences are extended to Mrs. Sharene Alexis Cook and her family on the passing of her nephew Antoine E'Li-Jah Flagg on 17 February 2022.

Born in October 1990, Antoine was raised in Alexandria, Va., graduating from Wakefield Senior High School in 2009. Antoine joined the United States Marine Corps soon after graduating, serving until 2012. Many ROCKS came to know him from his work with his Aunt's (Mrs. Sharene Cook) company, WSC. When supporting ROCKS events, Antoine was always poised, professional and did everything possible to support a positive experience for our guests.

Antoine also worked for fellow ROCK Al Thomas's company (Thomas Solutions, Inc. or TSI), which became one of the fastest growing Fortune 5000 companies in America. As a ROCK and member of the Retired Military Officers Association (RMOA) Al exposed Antoine to high performing professionals who enjoyed helping an uniquely talented Antoine grow professionally.

In addition to helping meet the goals of TSI Antoine grew significantly professionally and benefitted from the sage guidance, mentoring and friendship with Mr. Thomas. Having learned so much professionally and eager to branch out on his own,

Antoine established his own company, OneMega, LLC in 2020. Albeit it a shorter life than his family had hoped for him, Antoine lived a rich life with lots of hobbies and passions enjoyed with dedicated friends, colleagues and family.



MOAA-Indeed Virtual Career Fair

Interested in remote or teleworking career opportunities? Don't know where to start or how to make it happen? Join us **Tuesday, May 17, from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.** Eastern for a virtual networking, career, and hiring event!

You'll be able to engage in 1-on-1 chats with military-friendly and veteran-ready companies looking for people like you! Be sure you're camera-ready, as the platform supports audio and video functionality. Employers may want to interview you on the spot!

Participating employers include: CACI International Inc., Leidos Opportunities, McKesson, Synchrony, Raytheon Missiles & Defense.

And do your homework! Before the hiring event, attend the [MOAA-Indeed webinar](#) on Thursday, May 12, at 2 p.m. Eastern to prepare you for this and other virtual career fairs. You'll get best practices, tips, and techniques to ensure you are ready to make a great first impression and have a productive, fruitful conversation with your potential future employer. Register for both events today!

Want more? Visit [MOAA's Transition and Career Center](#), and the [Indeed for Military homepage](#).

Message from the Chairman



BG Lawrence Gillespie, USA, Retired

This is a very demanding and yet beneficial period for our members. Demanding, due to the conflict that is raging in Ukraine that has impacted our soldiers who are deployed away from their home base and their families. I understand that their mission is a requirement of being a soldier and I am confident that the ROCKS who have deployed to the various NATO countries will aid and support their NATO host. This scenario that our members find themselves is a result of a dictatorship that feels that an emerging democracy is a threat. To those ROCKS who have been deployed I thank you for your service and know that we are thinking of you.

The beneficial period previously mentioned is the pride that I have for the ROCK Chapters that are interfacing with the US Army using the Leadership Professional Development (LPD) tool. These LPD's are invaluable in having face-to-face engagements with the Army leadership. The feedback that we receive at the National Office is that the Army is overjoyed to participate, and the Army feels, as we do, that this type of interface with the ROCKS is beneficial to the Army and to the

ROCKS. I agree, the LPD's that I have had the privilege of observing, have been invaluable in detailing the various successful career routes taken by General Officers. In addition, these LPD's delve into the latest personnel, promotional requirements, and command requirement criteria. I urge the Chapters to keep up the LPD tempo and expand the subject areas to address those issues that have the capability of enhancing their members' careers and their assignment preferences.

Lastly, I am requesting that the Chapters place additional emphasis on the ROTC Scholarship program. Thank you for all you do for the ROCKS.

BG(Ret) Lawrence E. Gillespie
Chairman

BG(Ret) Lawrence Gillespie
Chairman, ROCKS, Inc.



ROCKSWide Meeting

*National Board &
ROCKS Chapters*

**Saturday, May 21, 2022
3:00pm-4:30pm EDT
(1500-1630)**

You Can Support The ROCKS, Inc.

- 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



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Advisor: LTC(R) Kimberlee Short



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W · E · L · C · O · M · E

06/28/21 – 04/29/2022

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 MAJ Michael Bennett USA, Screaming Eagles ROCKS
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 2LT Ruby Bolden USA, Member At Large
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 1LT Nigel Coles USA, Member At Large

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TOP STORIES

Secretary Approves Implementation of Revised Army Combat Fitness Test

By Sgt. 1st Class Will Reinier

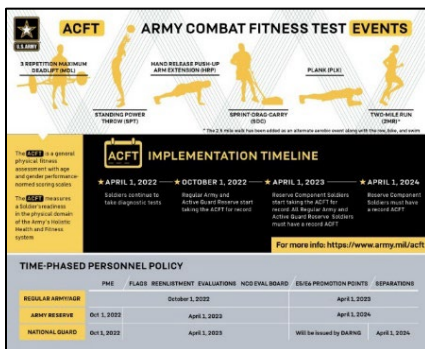
https://www.army.mil/article/254875/secretary_approves_implementation_of_revised_army_combat_fitness_test



WASHINGTON – Secretary of the Army Christine E. Wormuth issued an Army Directive today outlining a time-phased implementation of a revised ACFT as the Army's general physical fitness test.

Changes made to the ACFT incorporate feedback from Soldiers and independent analysis of test performance.

Among the key changes announced by the Army are new age-and-gender-performance normed scoring scales; the replacement of the leg tuck with the plank for the core-strength assessment; and the addition of the 2.5-mile walk as an alternate aerobic event.



“The ACFT is an essential part of maintaining the readiness of the

Army as we transform into the Army of 2030,” Wormuth said.

“The revisions to the ACFT are based on data and analysis, including an independent assessment required by Congress. We will continue to assess our implementation of the test to ensure it is fair and achieves our goal of strengthening the Army's fitness culture.”

A common concern identified by the Army's independent analysis and the RAND study was that a gender-neutral test might not accurately measure all Soldiers' general physical fitness levels. One example was using the leg tuck as the assessment of core strength.

RAND concluded that Soldiers might have the core strength that is not accurately measured if they lack the upper body strength required to perform a leg tuck. Now, the plank will be the sole exercise to assess core strength, using recognized standards from sister services as a baseline, and modifying the scales based on Army requirements.

The revised ACFT will utilize scoring scales that are age and gender normed, similar to the APFT. The Army designed the new scoring scales from nearly 630,000 ACFT performance scores, historical performance rates from the APFT, and scoring scales used by other military services.

The Army will continue to assess performance data and has established an ACFT governance body to provide oversight of the full implementation of the new test. This structure will assess ACFT scores, pass rates, injuries and environmental considerations, and report those findings along with any recommended changes to Army Senior Leaders. The first comprehensive assessment will be in April 2023.

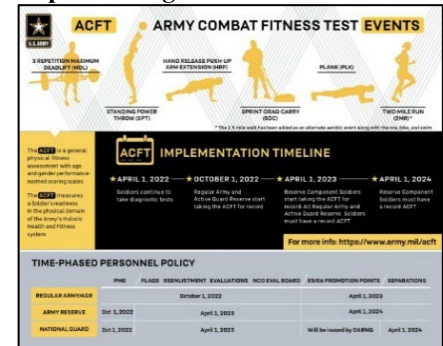
Unlike the APFT, which went largely unchanged for 40 years, Army leaders believe the ACFT must be adaptable.

“Since 2018 we've said this test would evolve, and it has,” said Sgt. Maj. of the Army Michael Grinston.

Grinston noted the governance structure will continue to advance the ACFT to maximize the physical fitness of the force.

The six-event ACFT now provides commanders and Soldiers an accurate assessment of a Soldier's physical fitness level and sustains the Army's efforts to maintain a physically fit force capable of a wide range of missions.

Implementing the ACFT



Beginning April 1, units will start diagnostic testing under the new structure. Record testing begins for Regular Army and Active Guard Reserve Soldiers on October 1, 2022, to allow Soldiers six-months to train. Also on October 1, a passing ACFT score will be used for retention, graduation of initial military training, professional military education, and evaluation reports for Regular Army and Active Guard Reserve Soldiers. Implementation of separation actions may begin in April 2023 for Regular Army and Active Guard Reserve Soldiers.

The Army also approved similar, but longer, timelines for Army Reserve and Army National Guard Soldiers, with April 2023 marking the start point for most personnel policies, and the implementation of separation actions beginning in April 2024.

“During this transition, we want to make sure all Soldiers have the proper time to succeed,” Grinston explained. “Put the test on the calendar and make sure your Soldiers have a solid training plan.”

Grinston said while Regular Army Soldiers can be flagged beginning October 1, 2022 for failing the ACFT, no Regular Army Soldier will be separated solely for ACFT failure until April 2023.



The policy also directed a change to extend retesting periods from 90 days under the APFT to 180 days for Regular Army and Active Guard Reserve Soldiers, and 240 days for Reserve Soldiers for the ACFT. Grinston noted that the extended reconditioning timelines will guarantee that Soldiers who are willing to put in the time and training are provided an opportunity to pass the test.

Chain Teach throughout the Force

To help inform the force of all the policies and procedures of the test, the Sergeant Major of the Army is initiating a chain teach throughout the force – and personally gave Army Command, Army Service Component Command, and direct reporting unit command sergeants major a class on changes to the ACFT.



“They will turn around and give that class to the NCOs who report to them as well as the [command sergeants major] for their subordinate units,” Grinston said.

The chain teach will continue throughout the Army to ensure all noncommissioned officers and Soldiers are directly informed of the policy.

“This is an opportunity for leaders to get engaged and understand their Soldiers’ questions and concerns about the test,” Grinston said. “Know where they are struggling and develop a plan to help them succeed. Leaders need to address more than just physical training and focus on the Soldier’s overall fitness.”

To ensure Soldiers throughout the Total Army have comparable training opportunities, the Army procured and distributed more than 40,000 sets of equipment, 60% of which were designated for Soldiers in the Army Reserve and National Guard.

Grinston encouraged Leaders to use their equipment for physical readiness training, including on drill weekends for the Reserve Component, to help Soldiers familiarize themselves with the events before testing.

There are also a number of resources available on the ACFT website to help Soldiers train, including workout program examples and videos of exercises – many of which require no equipment.

Holistic Approach

Army leaders expect units to incorporate principles of all the Holistic Health and Fitness (H2F) System domains into their training. In addition to the physical domain, Leaders should include proper nutrition, sleep, and spiritual and mental fitness to improve overall Soldier readiness. Unit master fitness trainers are the subject-matter experts and are trained to advise in all domains of fitness.

“H2F is an incredible system that looks at training in ways the Army has never done before,” said Brig. Gen. John Kline, commanding general of the Center for Initial Military Training – the Army’s lead proponent for the H2F system.

“Incorporating things like mindfulness training, proper nutrition counseling, and better sleep techniques are proven methods to improve mental and physical readiness,” Kline said.

“If you really want to improve your ACFT score,” Grinston agreed, “start with those other four domains of fitness.”



Black History Month 2022, Let’s Put the Focus on Black Health and Wellness

Written by COL (Ret) Charles Allen

The national theme for Black History Month 2022 is Black Health and Wellness. In that spirit, I share a reflection from 2013 as my family sought to care for our mother during her transition from independence. What we did not know then are the facts about Alzheimer’s disease and dementia.

From a Alzheimer’s Association 2021 report *Race, Ethnicity, and Alzheimer’s In America*, “More than 1 in 9 people (11.3%) age 65 and older has Alzheimer’s dementia” and “two-thirds of Americans over age 65 with Alzheimer’s dementia (3.8 million) are women.”

An important finding for people of color during this Black History Month is that “Hispanic, Black and Native Americans are twice as likely as Whites to say they would not see a doctor if experiencing thinking or memory problems.”

These statistics and findings aligned with my family’s experience.

We long suspected something was amiss before receiving the doctor's diagnosis. With each visit over the past few years, my sisters would tell me, "Mom is a little different than the last time you were here." Sure, she moved a little slower and did not stand as tall—but hey, she was in her late seventies.

My brother, who was her caretaker, also told me that Mom did not want to venture outside of the home nor did she want to take part in the senior citizen activities of the local community center that she so pushed for as a volunteer. I chalked it up to a couple of things.

For one, she always operated on her own schedule and would be hard pressed to be ready when the senior citizens van came to pick her up at home. We often kidded that Mom was born late and would be so to her own funeral. The second item was her struggle with incontinence. I assumed that personal pride kept her from partaking in situations in which she might be embarrassed.

Mom seemed comfortable and very content to sit in her favorite bedroom chair and spend the day watching television. That is usually where she was when I called on the telephone and where I found her during my visits to the house. This was in contrast to her the always-on-the go and something to do behavior of the past.

The indicators became stronger when she would ask, in relatively short spans of time, the same questions about my wife and son. She would chuckle when I would point this out to her and say, "I guess I'm losing some memory."

But when I asked her about events of over a half-century ago, she was lucid with details of people, names, locations, events, and, more importantly, feelings.

It really hit me one summer when my sister and I took Mom to visit her cousin—both were good friends

throughout their lives and were approaching their eightieth birthdays.

In the space of the hour-long visit, they had the same conversation over a half-dozen times and neither was aware of it. It brought about an uneasy humor between my sister and me. We felt something more was in play than simply aging and scheduled a series of doctor appointments for the following weeks.

One of my visits back to our hometown was to celebrate Mom's eightieth birthday. We surprised her with an outing that brought together family, friends, and members of her church community. She was deeply touched, but her comments throughout the event reinforced what most of us already knew.

That week the doctor confirmed the diagnosis of Alzheimer's dementia. The two dominant symptoms are a decline in memory as well as a decline in the ability to focus and pay attention. The doctor said there were no other medical issues of concern — she was happy and not depressed. Mom would often say, "I'm in pretty good shape for the shape I'm in."

Several friends and colleagues had been down this path with their loved ones. I reached out to them for their wisdom on how to take this journey with my mother. I can now more fully appreciate the challenges of others in similar circumstances.

While studies linking Alzheimer's dementia to racial and ethnic group are not definitive, African-Americans have a higher percentage as a group of the gene indicating increased risk than do European-Americans.

For all Americans, it is important to know there is "decreased risk of developing dementia if they had more years of early life education, had mentally challenging work in midlife, participated in leisure activities in late life, and/or had strong social networks in late life."

The theme of Black Health and Wellness should motivate us to seek out the facts to increase our awareness and knowledge. More important, it also provides the opportunity to follow the science and act to care for those whom we love.

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[This Black History Month, let's put the focus on Black health and wellness | Charles D. Allen - Pennsylvania Capital-Star \(penncapital-star.com\) 17 February 2022.](#)



**Former ROCKS Inc. Chair
and Living Legend
Interviewed by
Channel 4 TV Station
By COL (Ret) Dorene Hurt**



*BG (Ret) Clara Adams-Ender with
Molette Green, Channel 4's In the
Community Reporter following
10 Mar 2022 Interview*

Our local Channel 4 TV Station was in for a treat on a bright day in Northwest Washington DC on 10 March 2022. In honor of Women's History Month,

Channel 4 “In the Community” Reporter Molette Green, sat down to interview BG (Ret) Clara Adams-Ender. A former two term Chairman of the ROCKS and well known history maker, General Adams-Ender was delighted to share her thoughts on a host of topics.

Ms. Green asked the general to share her insights about the 6888th. Much like many omitted accounts of the contributions of African American service members during WWII, the history of the 6888th Postal Directory Battalion – the “Six Triple Eight” was only known by a few until recent years.

The pioneering unit was the only all-African American Women’s Army Corps battalion to serve overseas in World War II. More than 850 women cleared up a backlog of millions of pieces of mail that had led to a decline in troop morale. Less than a half dozen of these women are living.



Members of the 6888th Central Postal Directory Bn served overseas during World War II.

In 2021, the U.S. Senate unanimously passed U.S. Senator Jerry Moran’s (R-Kan.) legislation to award the Congressional Gold Medal to the members of the Women’s Army Corps who were assigned to the 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion – the “Six Triple Eight” – during World War II. Senator Moran is working tirelessly to advance it in the U.S. House of Representatives

The bill was led through Congress by Reps. Gwen Moore (D-Wis.) and Jake LaTurner (R-Kan.), along with Sen. Jerry Moran (R-Kan.) “The Six Triple Eight was a trailblazing group of ‘sheroes,’” Moore said. “Facing both racism and sexism in a war zone, these women sorted millions of pieces of

mail, closing massive mail backlogs and ensuring service members received letters from their loved ones. A Congressional Gold Medal is only fitting for these veterans who received little recognition for their service after returning home.” They were responsible for clearing out an overwhelming backlog of mail that was not reaching soldiers and negatively affecting morale.

The unit served at home and in Europe where they sorted and routed mail for millions of American servicemembers and civilians.



Channel 4’s In the Community Reporter, Molette Green Interviews BG (Ret) Clara Adams-Ender on 10 March 2022

In addition to sharing her thoughts on the 6888th, Ms. Green asked BG Adams-Ender to share highlights from her storied Army career. A women of many “firsts” BG Adams-Ender is a retired [United States Army](#) officer who served as Chief of the [United States Army Nurse Corps](#) from September 1987 to August 1991. She was the first woman to receive her [master's degree in military arts and sciences](#) from the [United States Army Command and General Staff College](#). She is also the first [African-American](#) nurse corps officer to graduate from the [United States Army War College](#). She is also the first female officer to earn the coveted Expert Field Medical Badge, arguably the toughest badge to earn during peacetime. When she retired, in 1993, she was serving as commanding officer of [Fort Belvoir](#), Virginia and Deputy Commander of the Military District of Washington, another first for woman. Along the way she’s mentored tons of women and men alike. She’s also personally sponsored

young people to ensure that they got a college education. A ROCKS legend, she’s been active for many decades and led the organization for two terms. After retirement, in 2001 she published a memoir: *My Rise to the Stars: How a Sharecropper's Daughter Became an Army General*. Incredibly, after over 60 years as a nurse, she still lends her nursing skills where she is needed including most recently in her county during the COVID pandemic.



ROCKS MEMBER RETURNS AS SPEAKER

By BG Clara L. Adams-Ender, Retired

On February 10, 2022, Brigadier General Clara L. Adams-Ender returned to the Center for Army Analysis and Operations Research by popular demand. She was their speaker for Black History Month in 2021 and never expected to be invited back so soon.

The theme for Black History Month this year was “Black Health and Wellness.” General Adams-Ender chose to discuss some African American heroes who contributed not only to black health and wellness, but to the health and wellness of all Americans. Dr. Daniel Hale Williams, performed the first open heart surgery. The patient lived and died later of other causes. Dr. Charles Drew was educated in Canada at McGill University because he could get a seat in a medical school in the United States. Later on, he was awarded a 2-year Rockefeller Fellowship and earned a Doctor of Science Degree in Surgery. His doctoral thesis, “Banked Blood” was the basis of blood preservation techniques. It was most popular because of the need for it by the military for the World War II wounded. Dr. Drew was appointed the Director of the American Red Cross Blood Bank. Yet, he could not put his own blood in the bank because of his race. It was unconscionable that Dr. Drew did all the research on blood

banking, discovered and perfected the techniques, yet he was not allowed to put his own blood in the bank! He was awarded the Spingarn Medal of the National Association of the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Dr Drew died tragically in an automobile accident when he was 45 years old. Imagine what he might have accomplished had he lived another 45 years!

Colonel (COL) Margaret “Maggie” Bailey was born in Selma, AL on Christmas Day in 1915. As a little girl, she decided to be a nurse. She was accepted into a hospital school of nursing in Montgomery, AL and, after graduation, worked as a civilian nurse for 6 years. She joined the Army in 1944 to help wounded soldiers. COL Maggie often faced discrimination and continued to do her job. She took evening classes and earned a Bachelor of Science in nursing degree. She went on to become the first African American Nurse Corps Officer to be promoted to Lieutenant Colonel (LTC) and COL. She was also the first Army nurse of color to be chief nurse in a non-segregated hospital. COL Maggie worked actively to increase the number of African American nurses in the Army. Maggie retired from the Army after 27 years, she never married and was always a dignified and gracious lady. In retirement, she wrote her autobiography titled The Challenge, which described her many contributions to nursing practice despite many obstacles. She was a Rocks member and recruited many nurses to the organization. She was named ROCK OF THE YEAR in 1991. She died in 2014 at 98 years and was laid to rest at Arlington National Cemetery.

One category of health care personnel is nursing assistants. These are the paraprofessional personnel who assist professionals in their work. In my first position as Assistant Chief Nurse, I met such an individual at Kimbrough Army Hospital, Fort Meade, MD. Ms. Hubbard worked in the newborn nursery. She worked permanent shifts in the evening. When she was on duty,

she could be seen entering the hospital with baskets of food which fed all personnel working in the labor and delivery, newborn nursery and postpartum nursing units. Ms. Hubbard, whom we affectionately called “Mother Hubbard,” had raised 6 children of her own and they were all professionals. Her husband was a blue collar worker on the base. Mother Hubbard had not earned all the scientific degrees as the professionals, but her many years of experience with newborns had sharpened her intuition and observation skills to an extent that she could accurately state the newborn’s condition. I consulted her many times as well as other staff members. It is very important to seek the assistance of all health care personnel who can assist with patient care.



Verify Then Trust

<https://www.militarymentors.org/post/verify-then-trust>

Author Colonel Jabari Miller currently leads the 3rd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division. He has served as an Operations Officer for Joint Test and Evaluation Command, Aide-de-Camp to the FORSCOM Deputy Commanding General, and as a Military Assistant to the Secretary of the Army. In this post he reminds us of how important it is to build mutual trust at the lowest echelon, or level, of command. Though he takes an Army perspective, the lessons about leading at the O-3 level can ring true across the joint force. Read on to see what he's talking about.



Mutual Trust is a tenet of the Army’s [Mission Command doctrine](#). To enable Success, Trust within a formation must be earned by subordinate, peer, and supervisor alike. The Supervisor gains trust in the subordinate through inspection and observation. Peers and Supervisors gain trust from peers and subordinates through their actions, prowess, and their ‘[video matching their audio](#).’ This note focuses on what Company Commanders (Captain/O-3) can do to enable themselves to trust their formations with confidence early into and throughout their commands. From my personal experience and recent observation of Company/Troop/Battery (C/T/B) Commanders, this is the echelon at which failing to confirm expectations early occurs the most.

Younger Commanders often fail to *inspect* what they *expect* early in their command and discover only at “the point of contact” that their personnel are untrained, their equipment is non-mission capable, or that the unit is operating outside of Army regulations. Below are some personal suggestions to prevent this from happening.

Before Taking the Guidon:

1. Read and understand AR 600-20 (and other Army regulations most applicable to your formation’s assigned mission), relevant TTPs, and Command Policies to ensure you know what you are supposed to and are allowed to do before you assume command. Your professional bearing, physical fitness, and demonstration of tactical, technical and professional knowledge on the first day of your Command are key to you beginning to earn the trust of your subordinates, peers, and supervisors.
2. Begin to determine which peers you will trust through professional and social interaction (if possible). Command is a wonderful, yet arduous, endeavor. Having a battle buddy upon whom you can trust for candid advice and support is of great importance. *Find an ally early.* Some things you may

consider: Who is succeeding? With whom do you have an existing relationship? With whom do you have the same coaches and mentors in common? Who commands a formation like yours? Your peers can make or break you just as easily as your supervisors or subordinates. Find a trusted few, early.

Upon Taking the Guidon:

1. Pay the “start-up costs” by immediately inspecting what you’re expecting. I suggest the following sequence and deficiencies found in any of these areas should be fixed immediately:
2. Things that will get you personally in trouble - arms rooms, supply rooms (and associative procedures), and physical security. Have you read 750-1 and installation policies and do the additional duty officers you’ve appointed know what they’re doing? Do you?
3. Your Battalion (O-5) and Brigade (O-6) Commanders’ priority areas.
4. Drivers Training - Safety of your Soldiers is a paramount concern.
5. Determine how you will assess and certify your Platoon Leaders, Platoon Sergeants and Squad Leaders:
6. At what level of proficiency is each of these leaders?
7. What knowledge, skills and attributes does each possess that you can apply to future problems?
8. How are you assisting the Battalion Commander in certifying and training Platoon Leaders, and how are you certifying, training, and retraining your Squad Leaders and NCOs overall? Don’t assume professional military education or their last unit have made them any more than proficient in their assigned tasks. To trust in what they know, challenge them yourself.
9. Based on your assessments of your formation and the directives

you’ve been given by your higher headquarters, determine what you must and what you can train in the time allotted. Once this is done, communicate to your boss what you assess as possible and more importantly what you think you cannot accomplish in the time given. Your candor and diligence should earn you some trust in the eyes of your higher command.

10. To earn the trust of your subordinates and supervisors alike, do what you say you’re going to do to standard and on time. If you know you won’t be able to do this, **REPORT EARLY!**

“Trust but verify,” [a phrase often attributed to our 40th President Ronald Reagan](#), might not be an appropriate term for new C/T/B Commanders. “Verify then trust” saves time, money, and lives. In a time when the Army is relearning how and what to train, with ever-more complicated Systems of Record for our C/T/B Commanders to use, to trust without first explicitly verifying can be disastrous. **Take the time to inspect and then trust.**



Contributions of Black Service Members Recognized by North Carolina, Army General at FSU

<https://www.fayobserver.com/story/news/2022/03/25/fayetteville-army-general-joins-nc-discussion-black-service-members/7075085001/>



Recognizing Black service members

When Gen. Michael Garrett, U.S. Army Forces Command's commander, received his fourth star three years ago, a friend wrote him a three-word note.

“Congrats No. 9.”

Garrett wondered what the note meant. He talked about it during a presentation to Fayetteville State University ROTC cadets during the second annual North Carolina ROTC Roundtable held Friday in FSU’s Seabrook Auditorium. “Think about this — in the history of our Army, I am only the ninth Black four-star general in our Army, in our history,” Garrett said. “I hope we have out there today, No. 10, 11, 12 and 13.”

Garrett’s remarks were part of a keynote speech before the roundtable discussion that was hosted by the North Carolina Department of Military and Veterans Affairs in collaboration with the Braxton Bragg Chapter of the Association of the United States Army

Representatives of the state DMVA kicked off Friday’s discussions by telling cadets about a statewide initiative to honor African American service members before the cadets heard from a panel of five Black military leaders that included Garrett.

The African American Military and Veterans Initiative Project addresses the lack of information about the roles that North Carolina African Americans had during World War II, the Korean War, Vietnam, the Gulf War and the War on Terror, said Ariel Aponte, assistant secretary of military affairs for the state DMVA.

“In earlier conflicts, despite getting inferior equipment, less training, as well as navigating a segregated and biased military, Black Americans served with valor and courage,” Aponte said. “Most of their accomplishments do not exist in many American history books, therefore the African American Military and Veterans Initiative Project works to properly document and preserve the unknown and overlooked history of

North Carolina African Americans' participation in America's wars."

In a video, retired Marine Lt. Gen. Walter Gaskin, secretary of the state DMVA, said the project is in collaboration with the North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, the State Archives and the North Carolina Museum of History.

The stories of the state's Black service members that are displayed in the museum come from oral histories, interviews, collections and papers from the state archives and interviews conducted by the state archives staff and representatives of Elizabeth State University, Charlie Knight, military curator for the state history museum, said in the video.

A booklet is being handed out statewide to promote the exhibit, military archivist Matthew Peek said in the video.

Called "[Trials and Tribulations: North Carolina African American Soldiers and the Racial Divide](#)," the booklet features three North Carolina Black soldiers — [Elmer Gibson](#), from Greensboro; [Bennis Blue](#), who was raised in Harnett County; and Alfred Fowler, who was born in Bladen County and later moved to Sanford.

Blue was the first minority female officer for the 82nd Airborne Division and the first female officer who arrived at the division when women integrated in 1978. Gibson was an Army chaplain who helped integrate the Army. Fowler faced racism during and after his service in Vietnam.

In the video, Peek said that officials are working to collect more African American veteran papers, which has been hard based on distrust of earlier decades that did not focus on contributions of Black service members.

Aponte said there are also efforts to build trust in Hispanic and Native American communities to encourage veterans who served from those

cultures and ethnicities to share their stories, too.

"It's important to see all of America represented in military service, especially in our military collection," he said.

North Carolina African American veterans who want to share their experiences can visit [NCAFAMLineage.com](#), said Reid Wilson, director of the North Carolina Department of Natural Resources.



Talking to the ROTC cadets, Lt. Gen. Gaskin said that as late as 1916, people of color were prohibited from joining the ROTC program or fully participating in military service, despite their patriotism and a willingness to fight.

"Unfortunately, the armed forces have had a troubled history regarding race, mirroring the history of our nation," Gaskin said.

Despite that, Gaskin said, African Americans have made contributions to the armed forces, from the Revolutionary War to the War on Terror.

African Americans' military service has not always been well-received, which has equated to lack of promotions, awards or knowing the names of those who made contributions, he said.

"The discussions we will have today serves to inform and to educate the significant roles of people of color, present here today who have made history in their own right and they have met the challenge, and as we like to

say they adapted and overcame," he said.

The panelists who spoke to the cadets included [Garrett](#), whose command includes 745,000 soldiers and 96,000 civilians.

He previously served with the 75th Ranger Regiment and 82nd Airborne Division and was chief of staff for the 18th Airborne Corps and U.S. Central Command.

[Gaskin](#) was also a panelist.

He served as the deputy chairman for NATO's Military Committee in Brussels, Belgium from 2010 to 2013, was commander of the 2nd Marine Division at Camp Lejeune from June 2006 to June 2008, and also served as commander of the II Marine Expeditionary Force during a year-long deployment to Iraq.



Other panelists included [retired Command Sgt. Maj. Andrew McFowler](#), [retired Brig. Gen. Arnold Gordon-Bray](#) and [retired Maj. Gen. Rodney Anderson](#).



Black leaders advise ROTC cadets

McFowler was drafted into the Army in 1966 during the Vietnam War and served with infantry, airborne and

Ranger units during his 35 years of service.

He deployed with 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division during the Gulf War.

McFowler was command sergeant major for the 18th Airborne Corps since 1995 and FORSCOM.

Gordon-Bray has served with the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, and is the prior division chief for the Joint Special Operations Command.

He's had numerous deployments to Iraq and was a principal advisor to the Iraqi ground forces commander during the 2007 surge there. He also assisted with operations for the U.S. Africa Command.

Anderson served in the Army for 33 years as a field artilleryman and general officer, which included four tours with the 82nd Airborne Division.

His operational and combat deployments included Operation Urgent Fury in Grenada, Operation Desert Shield/Storm in Saudi Arabia and Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan.

Anderson was deputy commander and acting commander of the 18th Airborne Corps during the 2011 base realignment and closure transition period at Fort Bragg.

All panelists focused on encouraging ROTC students to be leaders during Friday's discussion.

During his keynote speech, Garrett said the Army exists to fight and win the nation's wars and that its priorities today are people, readiness and modernization, with people being the first priority.

"You get one chance to make a first impression," he told the cadets. "Do not leave that to chance."

Gordon-Bray advised the cadets to research their units before arriving and to know the first three people they'll meet.

McFowler also encouraged them to know their soldiers.

"They know phony when they see phony," he said. "They know whether you care about them or whether you're going through the motions."

Anderson told the cadets that resiliency starts with themselves.

Cadet Narissa Harris was among the group of about 100 cadets who attended Friday's presentation.

She has served in air defense artillery from 2018 to 2021 as a Patriot launching station operator and maintainer and joined the [Army's Green to Gold Program](#) to join ROTC while she earns her Master of Business Administration at FSU before commissioning as an Army officer.

"I took away just the need for balance, humility among soldiers, and understanding despite rank, always remember your Army values," Harris said of Friday's discussion.



BRITO: Army Works To Refine, Improve Talent Management

<https://www.ansa.org/news/brito-army-works-refine-improve-talent-management>



Photo by: U.S. Army/Ashley Hayes
Thu, 02/10/2022 - 08:00

The Army continues to refine and build its talent management system so it can recruit and retain the best, the service's top personnel officer said.

Testifying before the House Armed Services personnel subcommittee, Lt. Gen. Gary Brito, Army deputy chief of staff for personnel, stressed that the Army will continue to prioritize its people.

"The Army's No. 1 priority remains our people," he said Feb. 8. "All of our Army's personnel programs and initiatives are focused on taking care of our people with dignity and respect and building a culture of trust and cohesion."

Leaders also continue to focus on how to "acquire, develop, employ and retain the very best talent," he said. This includes persevering through the challenges of recruiting during the COVID-19 pandemic, Brito said.

"We have a very challenging recruiting environment right now, largely due to COVID and some other environmental factors, but [we're] very aggressively working through all of that," Brito said. "I'm very proud of where our talent management efforts are going."

In fiscal 2020, the Army "increased end strength, decreased accessions and increased retention" over fiscal 2019, according to a Rand Corp. study on recruiting and retention.

Looking ahead, the Army will use new technology and programs to ensure that its talent management system can meet recruitment and retention needs, Brito said.

"Personnel readiness is critical to Army readiness," he said. "New technology, programs, policy, innovation and management models are transforming the Army's personnel systems and will provide our soldiers and civilians with more opportunities to excel and improve our ability to compete for and retain talent."

One key change is rolling out the Integrated Personnel and Pay System-Army, Brito said. Also known as IPPS-A, it is an electronic, data-driven system that brings personnel, pay and talent management information into one place.

The Army National Guard is already using the system, and the Army plans to roll it out to the Regular Army and Army Reserve in September.

“IPPS-A is the No. 1 human resource modernization effort for the Total Army,” Brito said. “IPPS-A is the Army’s new web-based HR system, which when fully deployed will deliver a single comprehensive, data-rich HR and talent management system to the total force.”

In addition, programs such as the Army Talent Alignment Process, a decentralized, market-style hiring system that aligns officers with jobs based on their preferences, will help the force fill critical talent gaps, Brito said. These programs also will give commanders in the field the talent they need for specific jobs, he said.

“This talent marketplace gives leaders more flexibility to build a team of individuals with the needed skills, talent and experience,” he said. “It also gives individuals more control over their assignments and their career path.”

CHAPTER ARTICLES

All American ROCKS Join Forces for a Good Cause



Pictured: Cherise Monroe, AA ROCKS Community Service Chair with Blood Drive participant and a Member of Fort Bragg Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta

All American Chapter Hosts Blood Drive -The All American Chapter of the ROCKS in conjunction with the Fort Bragg Alumnae Chapter of the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority hosted a Blood Drive on 18 JAN 22, at the Fort Bragg Blood Drive Center. The event allowed the two organizations to increase the awareness of the blood drive center, encourage people within the community to donate blood, and assist at the blood drive center.

described how she overcame obstacles throughout her military career in the 1950-70s.



Ms. Joyce B. Malone spent her formative years in Fayetteville, North Carolina where she was inspired by her family’s military service in World War I (Mr. William Lesly Hadley), World War II (William Lesly Hadley Jr Mr. Herman Hadley), and Vietnam (Mr. Cecil Malone).

Ms. Malone enlisted in the U.S. Marines in 1958 where she served as an Administrative Clerk in Quantico, VA and Headquarter Marine Corp in DC. After completing her initial contract with the Marines, Ms. Malone returned to Fayetteville, NC and married SFC (R) Cecil Malone in 1962.

While raising their daughters (Connie & Patricia (retired U.S. Marine)), Ms. Malone worked on Fort Bragg and she remained active as a Civic Leader in the Fayetteville Community.

In 1971, SSG (R) Malone joined the Army Reserve as a personnel clerk and she was assigned to the 824th Air Delivery Unit, which provided rigger supported to the 82nd Airborne Division. In 1974, Malone became the first African American woman and the oldest woman at 38 years old to earn Airborne Wings in the United States Army Reserve. SSG (R) Malone completed 15 parachute jumps during her time in the Army Reserve and she retired from the military in 1982. After



All American Chapter Hosts Black History Month LPD -1st African American Woman Paratrooper SSG (R) Joyce B. Malone –

On 17 February 2022, the All American Chapter of the ROCKS, Inc., hosted SSG (R) Malone in a Black History LPD.

During the virtual LPD session, Ms. Malone highlighted her family’s history of military service and she

WISDOM IS KNOWING
THE RIGHT PATH
TO TAKE.
INTEGRITY
IS TAKING IT

military service, Ms. Malone earned a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science in 1985 and Master's Degree in Administration in 1988 from Fayetteville State University.

There were many naysayers along SSG (R) Malone's journey, but there were also a strong supporting cast of encouragers who helped her pursue her goals in the U.S. Marines and U.S. Army. Ms. Malone encouraged us all to pursue our goals vigorously and prove them wrong through our day to day actions.

The All American Chapter of the Rocks was honored to be in the presence of a living legend in the U.S. Army Airborne Community.



National Act of Memorial: The San Antonio ROCKS Inc., Supports Wreaths Across America

*Written By CPT LaDonna Tolbert,
Alamo Chapter Community
Service Chair*



San Antonio ROCKS Inc. members with LTC John R. Evans, Jr, US Army North Commanding General at the Wreaths Across America Ceremony. Photo Credit: PAO

The San Antonio (Alamo) Chapter of The ROCKS, Inc. members supported the Annual Wreaths Across America event hosted by The Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery on 18 December 2021 in concert with over 3,000 other locations nationwide. The annual event commenced with a heartfelt ceremony in honor of those who have served and are no longer with us. The Bexar County Buffalo Soldiers rode high and

proud on their horses into the center of the amphitheater to erect the National Flag and signal the singing of our national anthem. Past and present members of every service were presented to the audience, including a World War II veteran. The Commanding General of US Army North, LTG John R. Evans, Jr. and Alamo ROCKS member, gave a powerful speech that touched the heart of all who were in attendance.



San Antonio ROCKS, Inc., Chapter volunteers at the 2021 Fort Sam Houston Cemetery Annual Wreath Across America. (Left to Right) Community Service Co-Chair, CPT Kyle Hashimoto, Chapter President, LTC Michelle A. Jefferson, Chapter Senior Mentor, BG Shan Bagby, Historian and Community Service Chair, CPT LaDonna Tolbert, ROTC Leadership Outreach Chair, Chana Mason, Alamo ROCKS member, COL Shane Cuellar, Chapter Secretary 1LT Monica Santoyo and Alamo ROCKS member 1LT Kimberly Alfaro. Photo Credit: CPT LaDonna Tolbert

There are several notable service members that rest at the Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery. David Lee "Tex" Hill was an American fighter pilot in the US Army Air Corps during WWII. He is credited with 12 ½ victories as a squadron leader. He was inducted into the Texas Aviation Hall of Fame and National Aviation Hall of Fame. He retired as a Brigadier General. LTC Karen Wagner was a Medical Service Corps officer who was tragically killed when a hijacked plane struck the Pentagon on 11 Sept 2001. A native of San Antonio, LTC Wagner commissioned in 1984 as an ROTC graduate from the University of Nevada. She is remembered as trying to help others during the dawn of the attack. If you attended any training at Fort Sam Houston, the Rocco Dining facility may ring a bell. Chief Warrant Officer 2 Louis Rocco was an US

Army Soldier who received the Medal of Honor. During the Vietnam War, while wounded, CW2 Rocco saved three other soldiers from a burning helicopter. He served two tours to Vietnam during the war. After retirement, he went back to his home state of New Mexico and established the Vietnam Veterans of New Mexico organization, establishing counseling and housing for veterans. He also was instrumental in New Mexico's legislators to waiving tuition for all veterans at state colleges.

The volunteers of the Wreaths Across America event at Fort Sam Houston Cemetery were able to lay 60, 947 wreaths. Approximately 2.4 million wreaths were laid by volunteers around the country. This 30-year tradition started by Maine wreathmaker Morrill Worcester will continue on 17 December 2022.



Chapter Senior Mentor, BG Shan Bagby lays wreaths to honor and remember during the Annual Wreaths Across America. Photo Credit: CPT LaDonna Tolbert



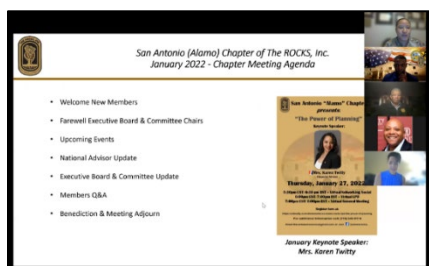
My favorite mentor unleashed my passions, channeled my energy, guided my growth and encouraged my success. – Anna Letitia Cook, Director, WomenUP Ltd.

The San Antonio “Alamo” ROCKS Hosts LPD “The Power of Planning”

Written by MAJ Amy M. Hashimoto

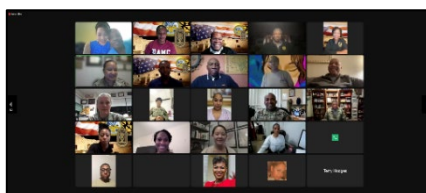
San Antonio – With fewer companies offering retirement pensions and more families relying on dual incomes to support their households, it is increasingly crucial for young adults to start financial planning earlier. The financial planning environment is flooded with information and data that can be overwhelming to understand. Where do young families and adults start?

The San Antonio (Alamo) Chapter of The ROCKS, Inc. hosted a virtual leadership professional development (LPD) meeting on January 27, 2022, with Mrs. Karen Twitty, First Command Financial Advisor, to discuss the “Power of Planning.” As a former military spouse to Lieutenant General (LTG) Steph Twitty, Mrs. Karen Twitty understands the unique financial pressures on military families. Her LPD focused on the confidence and peace of mind that financial security brings to individuals who successfully plan. Over 50 participants consisting of ROCKS members and military service members from across the United States, participated in the virtual LPD.



San Antonio (Alamo) Chapter of the ROCKS Inc. members pictured with Mrs. Karen Twitty for “The Power of Planning” LPD hosted on 27 January 2022. (Top to Bottom: Chapter President and LPD Co-Moderator, Dr. Michelle A. Jefferson, LPD Co-Moderator and Scholarship Chair, Mr. William Wallace, Lifetime National Member and Alamo ROCKS member, GEN (Retired) Vincent Brooks, Chapter Senior Mentor, BG Shan Bagby, and LPD Keynote Speaker, Mrs. Karen Twitty.) Photo Credit: MAJ Amy Hashimoto

Mrs. Twitty effectively began the LPD with shocking statistics of how many Americans live paycheck to paycheck, lack adequate savings, and accumulate credit card debt. It was an excellent ice breaker to convey the importance of starting financial planning regardless of an individual’s current situation. She emphasized that there is never a perfect moment to plan for the future. Mrs. Twitty continued the LPD with the negative impacts of waiting on planning. Waiting affects the amount of an individual’s input of funds, rate of return, and time available to benefit from a financial plan.



Over 50 participants consisting of ROCKS members and military service members from across the United States, participated in the virtual “The Power of Planning” LPD hosted by The San Antonio (Alamo) Chapter of the ROCKS Inc. Photo Credit: CPT Tabatha S. Trice

The second half of the LPD focused on starting a plan. Planning begins with an individual’s priorities. Mrs. Twitty explained the importance of setting specific goals, building a written financial plan, and taking action. She went into great detail on First Command’s three cornerstones of financial planning; cash management, risk management, and wealth accumulation and management. She also did an excellent job of explaining the financial advisor’s role as a coach throughout the financial planning and execution process.

After Mrs. Twitty’s presentation, audience members were able to ask specific questions. The questions included discussing the new cryptocurrency market and individual disability income insurance. The LPD hosted by The San Antonio (Alamo) Chapter of The ROCKS, Inc. with Mrs. Twitty was a successful event. It focused on personal development for financial security, and attendees left the engagement with helpful

information to pay forward to their respective formations.

For more information on the San Antonio (Alamo) Chapter of The ROCKS, Inc. activities, check out the Chapter Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/alamorocks>



What Mentorship Means to Me

*Written by MAJ Amy M. Hashimoto
and edited by LTC Michelle A.
Jefferson DVM, DACVP*

San Antonio – “You are the product of the many generations that came before you. Conduct your life in a way that would make their sacrifices meaningful.” My parents raised me with those words, and they carried me through the best and worst of times.

On 03 October 2021, I had the distinct honor and privilege to be promoted to the rank of Major and indoctrinated into the institution of field grade officer. The ceremony was small with the presence of both my husband’s family and mine, my co-workers and mentors. Before the ceremony, I reflected on the experiences that led to this moment, reaffirming the importance that mentorship has to me.

As a young officer, I sought mentorship informally from my peers and immediate supervisors. I was very fortunate to be surrounded by driven and passionate professionals that took a genuine interest in my well-being. My first experience with formal mentorship began with the Fort Hood Women’s Mentorship Network. It was a life-changing and positive experience. The support from that organization was so helpful when the Army started placing women on the staff of combat arms units. It opened my eyes to the power of mentorship and networking across boundaries of rank and organizations.

When I conducted a permanent change of station (PCS) to Fort Carson,

Colorado, I searched for yet another formal mentorship program based on my positive experience at Fort Hood, TX. I was part of a group of motivated individuals that established the Pan Pacific American Leaders and Mentors (PPALM) chapter in Colorado Springs, CO. That chapter provided immeasurable opportunities to seek mentorship from other service members and civilians within the community. I most recently PCS'd to Joint Base San Antonio (JBSA), Fort Sam Houston, TX. The Chairman of PPALM, Major General (Retired) Tony Taguba, introduced me to Lieutenant Colonel Michelle A. Jefferson a member of PPALM stationed in JBSA. Dr. Michelle A. Jefferson is the President of The San Antonio (Alamo) Chapter of The ROCKS, Inc. and encouraged both my husband, Kyle Hashimoto, and I to join and serve on the executive board. This warm hand-off between organizations was eye-opening to the importance of interpersonal connections.



(From Left to Right): Parents of MAJ Amy Hashimoto, MAJ (Retired) Austin Mikasa and Joanne Mikasa, Alamo ROCKS Fundraising Chair, MAJ Amy Hashimoto, 18-month-old daughter, Sadie Hashimoto, Husband and Alamo ROCKS Community Service Co-Chair, CPT Kyle Hashimoto, In-laws, Cynthia Hashimoto and COL (Retired) Ted Hashimoto Photo Credit: Hashimoto Family

This past year of working with the ROCKS, Inc. has been an incredible experience. The Alamo Chapter is engaged with the community and continuously demonstrates a passion for mentorship and community service. I'm amazed at the active and consistent engagements with high school students, chapter members, and professional development sessions they established during the COVID-19

pandemic. Mentorship is thriving, and I'm so glad to be a part of it.

The ROCKS Inc. and, previously, the Fort Hood WMN and PPALM have been like a second family to me. They are comprised of multiple generations committed to military service and mentorship. These programs enable each generation to stand on the shoulders of the previous, allowing for continuous improvement in personal and professional growth. As a newly promoted Major, I am committed to carrying on the responsibility of being an organizational leader who stewards the profession and will pay forward the mentorship and lessons I have learned for the next generation.

For more information on the San Antonio (Alamo) Chapter of The ROCKS, Inc. activities, check out the Chapter Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/alamorocks>

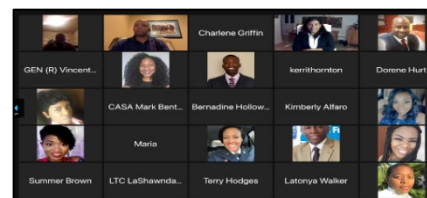


San Antonio "Alamo" ROCKS Hosts LPD "Building Your Tomorrow, Today"

Written by CPT Tabatha S. Trice

San Antonio - No matter our seniority in service, one thing is inevitable for all: transition from service. Even if you are no longer serving, life will continue to take you through transition periods that involve financial, technological, and educational adjustments. The Leadership Professional Development (LPD) seminar entitled, "Building Your Tomorrow, Today" focused on those periods of transition and how the audience can make preparations for their tomorrow through intentional efforts.

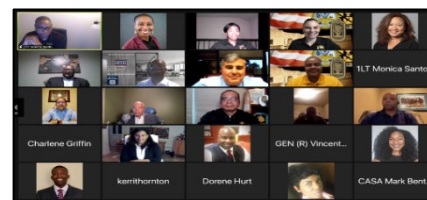
The San Antonio (Alamo) Chapter of The ROCKS, Inc. hosted the virtual LPD on October 28, 2021, with two keynote speakers and three panelists. Over 45 participants consisting of ROCKS members, military service members, and civilians from across the globe participated in the virtual LPD.



Over 45 participants from across the globe participated in the virtual LPD.

Photo credit: CPT Tabatha S. Trice

The first speaker was Mr. Brann Calvetti, a Financial Advisor from First Command. Mr. Calvetti offered a presentation titled "Decision Points: Financial preparedness for military separation and retirement." He covered Post 9/11 G.I. Bill, TRICARE, Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (SGLI), Thrift Saving Plan (TSP), and Survivor's Benefit Plan (SBP). He was able to use his own experience as a former Soldier to inform the group on the relevance of several of these topics. On the topic of TSP, he informed the group that upon separation, servicemembers have options with what to do with their TSP. One option is to leave your money there with the benefits of being able to make unlimited withdrawals, scheduling fixed-amount payments, and establishing a life annuity. The other option with removing your money from TSP comes with being able to transfer the money to a new employer's tax-qualified retirement plan, taking direct possession of the funds, or transferring the money to an Individual Retirement Account (IRA). He offered these two options with the addition that a servicemember must also consider the tax consequences before making a decision.



Guest panelist and Alamo ROCKS member, LTC Brian Smith, a transitioning Officer, shares pearls of wisdoms with attendees during the LPD. Photo credit: CPT Tabatha S. Trice

Next, we welcomed Ms. Heidi Richards, the Managing Director for Ernst and Young, LLP. Her

presentation, “Using LinkedIn to catapult your career journey” was an interactive step-by-step guide to preparing your LinkedIn account for transition. She highlighted that “LinkedIn is the leading online directory of professionals and companies.” She guided the audience on how to utilize the search features to look for recruiters and other key connections once in the job market. She offered her help to anyone who had further questions on how to set up their account.

The LPD ended with a panel consisting of a retired Soldier, a currently transitioning Soldier, and the Site Manager of the USO San Antonio (SA) Pathfinder Program. Each was able to offer the group a key takeaway. MAJ (R) Monique Jones encouraged the group to take time to understand the nuances of medical ratings upon separation. Along with transitioning and job preparedness, she highlighted that those medical appointments often get put low on the priority list until it is too late. Next LTC Brian Smith, currently transitioning, suggested that the time to take action is now regarding your separation from service. He gave the group two web sites to visit: <https://www.cool.osd.mil> and <https://usarmy.skillport.com> which offer credentialing assistance and e-learning opportunities, respectively. Last Mr. R.T. McClain of the USO provided the site www.uso.org/transitions and echoed the “time is now!”

The LPD hosted by The San Antonio (Alamo) Chapter of The ROCKS, Inc. was thought-provoking and encouraging. We encourage readers to browse the web sites above and start asking questions regarding your transition from service.

For more information on The San Antonio (Alamo) Chapter of The ROCKS, Inc. activities, check out the Chapter Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/alamorocks>

Never Late is Best, but in this case...Better Late than Never

Written by MAJ Marie St. Louis Okoro



MAJ Marie St. Louis Okoro with the Ozark Armed Color Guard Team at the 10th Annual Pioneer Drill Meet, February 26, 2022.

I guess you can call me a rebel. When I left college to enlist in the Air Force, I did not tell a soul. I was the first in my family to join the military. I called my mother from basic training during phase zero to tell her that I had enlisted and was currently at Lackland Air Force Base. My mom dropped the phone and screamed, “my baby is going to war.” The rest is history.



Marie St. Louis Okoro pinned as a Second Lieutenant at the Leadership Development & Assessment Course in 2009.

As I write this, I am reflecting on all the triumphs, tears, and sacrifice; the internal and external struggles that I endured on my own. No one to turn to for support or guidance. Feeling marginalized, ostracized, and isolated. There was no mentor or advisor to talk

to about my experiences. What I would give to have a moment of mentorship as a young cadet. The ROCKS provides a safe and nurturing space.

Fourteen years later, things are different. Like many of my peers, I felt like an extra with no script or direction. Nevertheless, I am sure that it is not the case today. Listening to these young Cadets, I am reassured that this is not their state of mind. They are eager to serve their country with passion, dedication but most of all, they are confident. As members of The ROCKS, Inc. these young ROTC Cadets have the advantage of early access to senior mentorship. Reflectively, I wish I had known about the ROCKS when I was their age. Here is the better late than never part. I am so grateful to Lieutenant General Raymond Scott Dingle, Army Surgeon General, and U.S. Army Medical Commander, who advised me to join The ROCKS, and thank God I listened. Maybe due to lack of exposure, information, or simply opportunity, I was not aware of this professional organization until I became a Major in the United States Army.



MAJ Marie St. Louis Okoro with the Missouri Military Academy Armed Color Guard Team at the 10th Annual Pioneer Drill Meet, February 26, 2022.

My ROTC experience is where I felt I did not belong. While in college, I enlisted in the Air Force. After completing basic training and technical school, I was certain that I wanted to become an officer. With no on-campus ROTC program, I searched for a cross-registration ROTC program. The commute was too extensive for the Air Force ROTC, so I separated from the Air Force and joined Army ROTC. I was one of three persons of color that

year and the only female. I commuted three times a week to make it to physical training and ROTC classes. As a Biochem major with a demanding class load and a 90-minute commute, fellow cadets would say, “just quit.” As a first-generation Haitian-American, quitting was not an option.

Fast forward, I attended ROTC Advanced Camp (AC), the most important training event for an Army ROTC Cadet. Leadership Development and Assessment Course (LDAC) at Fort Lewis, Washington. LDAC is your first introduction to the Army tactics that quickly identifies your weaknesses and improves your strengths through a series of physically and mentally challenging events. I graduated as an end of camp commissioned as a 2LT. I am humbled to be a part of an organization that proudly teaches its members to lead with integrity, builds confidence, and grooms competency. Mentorship should be diverse and inclusive, providing officers an opportunity to receive the best the Army offers. ROCKS is the chess to everyone else's checkers by providing unhindered two-way communication between leaders at all levels. These future leaders will soon find out that ROCKS, rocks!



Buffalo Soldier ROCKS Expresses Congratulations

The Buffalo Soldier Chapter congratulates ROCKS, Inc. Member 1LT Jacob Adams assigned to the 15th MP Brigade, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, who was selected to serve as the Aide de Camp for the Deputy Provost Marshal General, COL Sarah K. Albrycht in Arlington, VA.

Also, congratulations are in order for Buffalo Chapter Member MAJ Derail Young, selected as a 2022 CGSC Information Advantage Scholars; a graduate-level seminar producing military practitioners who possess a deeper understanding of the technologies, principles, and

challenges within the information advantage framework. All Information Advantage Scholars complete a Master of Military Art and Science thesis.



MAJ Derail Young, 2022 CGSC Information Advantage Scholar



Climb to Glory Chapter Celebrates Black History Month with 10th Mountain Division Leaders

Written by CPT Gregory Hacker

Every February, our nation observes and reflects on the tremendous contributions of African Americans to our country and our history. African American Soldiers, who have defended our nation since the Revolutionary War, have built a legacy of courage and professionalism by serving the U.S. Army with great honor and distinction, inspiring generations to come. The U.S. Army story cannot be told without reflecting on the historical achievements made by African Americans and preserving those memories. African Americans have served and sacrificed in every conflict in our nation's history with more than 245 years of honorable service.

On Tuesday, February 22, 2022, the Climb to Glory Chapter of the ROCKS hosted a virtual Leader Professional Development (LPD) event in honor of Black History Month. The LPD, conducted in a panel-style, allowed participants to interact with three current 10th Mountain Division

leaders. The leaders joined together to celebrate Black History Month and acknowledge the significant contributions various Soldiers in their formations have made throughout the years.

The panel members included Colonel Damon K. Harris, Commander, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division; Colonel Travis L. McIntosh, Commander, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, 10th Mountain Division; and Lieutenant Colonel Ryan J. Scott, Commander, 2-10 Assault Helicopter Battalion, 10th Mountain Division.

During the event, panel members were asked to reflect on African-American leaders who have influenced them, the value of diversity within their formations, and how the Army can continue to create value for all Soldiers. The panel members were asked what they were doing at their level to support the Army's efforts when it comes to race relations. Colonel Harris highlighted that his role involves mentoring young officers. He highlighted that he tells young officers that to be great leaders, they must be both “empathetic” and “sympathetic.” Lieutenant Colonel Scott highlighted that he focuses on “modeling genuine connection” with others throughout his formation.

Another discussion surrounded how the Army can grow more leaders of color to fill senior leadership and command positions. When asked about his thoughts, Colonel McIntosh emphasized the need to begin growing leaders early in their career and told leaders not to “be afraid” of taking chances. Colonel Harris acknowledged the Army is working hard at tackling diversity among the ranks, but offered that leaders should learn the “positive history of African-Americans” and use it to motivate African-American leaders.

When asked about how leaders educate themselves on topics such as race and diversity, the panel members keyed in on the importance of self-development. Colonel Harris indicated self-

development is the most important domain when it comes to leader development. He told the participants that they should “read and study history,” but they must “choose the right thing to read.” Colonel McIntosh expressed that he focuses on channeling positive energy and shields himself from negativity. Lieutenant Colonel Scott underscored that leaders should “stay hungry” when it comes to self-development and “be good at the job you are in now.”



Climb to Glory Chapter poster with panel members from Black History Month Program

During the discussion the panel made various book recommendations:

- The Last Lecture by Randy Pausch
- How Successful People Think: Change Your Thinking, Change Your Life by John C. Maxwell

The Climb to Glory Chapter of The ROCKS, Inc., is appreciative and thankful to panel members for their steadfast dedication to developing the Army's future leaders.

“The Responsibility to Write History is Ours Right Now” – LTG Scott Dingle, Surgeon General of the Army

*Written by Maj(R) Hubert L. Becton
Hampton Roads Chapter of the
ROCKS Advisor*



The Hampton Roads Chapter of the ROCKS General Membership Meeting on 1 February 2022 was honored to have the Surgeon General of the Army, LTG Scott Dingle present a powerful message titled “Innovative and Honorable Black Officers Past and Present.” General Dingle referenced the hallways of the Pentagon where Black soldiers that have been part of history are recognized, such as Henry O. Flipper, First Black Graduate of West Point; BG Charles Young, 3rd Black Graduate of West Point; the 18 Woman commissioned into the Army Nurse Corp; and General Chappie James, 1st Black 4 Star General, Congressional Medal of Honor recipients, the Tuskegee Airmen as well as many other great Black heroes. He emphatically declared that we stand on their soldiers, while clarifying we have to write the unwritten. The responsibility to write history is ours right now and we must tell the story! General Dingle shared “5 Ps” to live by and guide us on our journey.

1. Passion – be passionate toward what you are going after. This

cannot be taught. You have to have passion for your profession!

2. Precise – be precise at what you are going to do. Avoid landmines like cheating, plagiarism, adultery. Some people want to see you fail. The ROCKs can help young officers navigate these obstacles and provide overwatch.
3. Persistence – someone will tell you no, tell you that you are not good enough. Don't accept it - we are standing on past and present leaders' shoulders; you have to press on!
4. Perseverance – things sometimes get tough. You must get to the goal; life is going to happen. Do not let things stop you. Don't quit!
5. Practice Perfection – put in the time to perfect your craft of leadership and to be a professional. Allen Iverson had it wrong. Practice is the key to perfection. Army often teaches by repetition; do it over and over again.

He further explained that as we write the unwritten, we must be mentors, coaches and teachers. General Dingle ended his talk with a Martin Luther King, Jr. memory in October 1967. MLK was speaking to a junior high school in Philadelphia. He told them; this is the most important period of your lives and you must have 3 things:

1. A deep belief in yourself (dignity)
2. Determination to succeed. Be the best at what you do. Strive for excellence.
3. Commitment – keep moving, never quit.

We must keep writing the unwritten. We are history. The story is yet to be told!





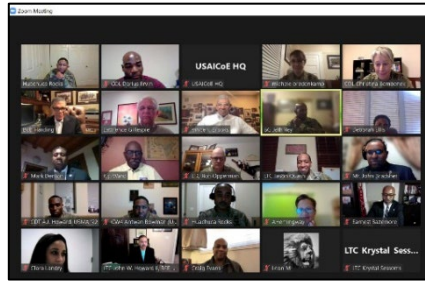
Huachuca ROCKS on the Edge of the Frontier

Written by CW4 John Coakley, Jr.

In February 2021, MG Anthony R. Hale, Commanding General (CG), US Army Intelligence Center of Excellence (USAICoE) and Fort Huachuca (FH), participated in a three-part Leaders Professional Development (LPD) forum focused on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. This three-part series was hosted by The MG Charles C. Rogers ROCKS Chapter, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

During his LPD, MG Hale mentioned his desire to establish a Huachuca chapter of The ROCKS, Inc. Shortly thereafter, a handful of officers and warrant officers began the work of standing up the chapter. Through the diligent recruiting efforts of numerous members of the Military Intelligence (MI) branch, the "Interest Group: Fort Huachuca, AZ" submitted their Letter of Intent to The ROCKS, Inc. National HQ, and was recognized as Huachuca ROCKS on December 14, 2021.

Huachuca ROCKS, led by CW4 John Coakley (President) and CW4 Gary Jackson (Vice President), has worked arduously to chart a course toward making an impact on FH, and specifically within the MI branch. Huachuca ROCKS is positioned to conduct a variety of activities to the benefit of the local community, as well as the personnel diligently serving on FH. For the 2021 Holiday Season, Huachuca ROCKS conducted a food drive to donate enough food for five families to have a little extra at their tables. Huachuca ROCKS has conducted two LPDs over the past two months, with senior officers of the MI branch as their guests.



Huachuca ROCKS' first LPD via Zoom moderated by COL Christina A. Bembenek with MG Michele H. Bredenkamp as the guest.

The first LPD was with MG Michele H. Bredenkamp, CG, Intelligence and Security Command. She communicated her vision, mission, and intention toward addressing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) challenges across the command's footprint. The second LPD was with COL Christina A. Bembenek, Commandant, MI Schools, USAICoE and FH, and COL Mark A. Denton, Commander, 207th MI Brigade. It was a conversation between a future and current, respectively, Brigade Commander regarding their plans to implement MG Bredenkamp's DEI initiative into their respective INSCOM brigades. The next LPD will be with MG Hale, who will provide insights into how leaders can remain positively engaged with their Soldiers and formations.



Huachuca ROCKS' second LPD via Zoom with COL Mark A. Denton discussing the value of caring for people through a deliberate mentoring relationship.

Huachuca ROCKS' desire is to serve as a "hub" for MI Officers, Warrant Officers, Civilians, and Cadets due to the chapter being located at the home of MI. As the MI branch is comparatively small in relation to other branches in the Army, Huachuca ROCKS aspires to be a means to facilitate connections with MI professionals across the service

regardless of assignment and location. In the future, Huachuca ROCKS will present routine chapter introduction briefings at the FH Post-level Welcome Brief, as well as officer training courses across the post. The chapter also has plans to get involved in post-level events, and partner with other professional organizations in the area to further serve the community and soldiers of FH.

As with sister chapters of The ROCKS, Inc., Huachuca ROCKS is excited to continue to provide mentorship, professional development and professional networking opportunities for Officers, Warrant Officers, Civilians, and Cadets of the Armed Forces. Although chapter members predominately reside within the MI branch, the chapter is diligent to ensure all eligible and interested personnel, regardless of branch, know and understand they are welcome to become members of Huachuca ROCKS. The Huachuca ROCKS chapter is striving to make good people better. Overall, Huachuca ROCKS is excited to partner with like-minded individuals who are collectively focused on the hard but rewarding work of investing in people.



Carlisle Barracks ROCKS Activities



MG David Hill, U.S. Army War College Commandant, and members of the MG Charles C. Rogers (Carlisle Barracks) ROCKS Chapter meet with ROCKS National Chairman, BG (Ret) Larry Gillespie (center right).

Greetings from the MG Charles C. Rogers (Carlisle Barracks) ROCKS

Chapter and the entire AWC class of 2022. Despite COVID restrictions, the chapter has found creative ways to make an incredible impact over the past few months. In November, we hosted ROCKS chairman, BG Gillespie. He had the opportunity to sit in and observe a seminar discussion, discuss ROCK priorities with CG, conduct an LPD session, and dinner with AWC students. Great learning and fellowship!

We're happy to share our holiday efforts! We raised over \$2,500 as a chapter for our Project Share fundraiser (fall food drive to support local food bank) making us the #1 community donator. The holiday giving didn't stop there. The chapter also partnered with Cumberland Country Children and Youth Services for a toy drive - providing gifts to over 400 children and teens in Cumberland County in 2021. It's all about giving back, and we were excited to make the holidays brighter for many children and their families here in Central Pennsylvania.



The MG Charles C. Rogers (Carlisle Barracks) ROCKS chapter partnered with Cumberland Country Children and Youth Services for a holiday toy drive, providing gifts to over 400 children and teens in Cumberland County in 2021.

Speaking of giving back, through our fundraising efforts (masks) we were able to make financial contributions to the National ROCKs organization and the local annual Dr. Martin Luther King commemoration and scholarship program! We presented a check to Rocks for \$540 towards the 2022 General Roscoe C. Cartwright ROTC Scholarship fund. These awards are presented to outstanding Army or Air Force Cadets or Navy Midshipmen

enrolled in the Reserve Officer Training Course (ROTC) at Historically Black Colleges or Universities.

Here at Carlisle Barracks, ROCKS continued its historical ties with the Army War College/Carlisle Barracks Black history month recognition ceremony. This year's theme was Health & Wellness and chapter member, COL Tom Noble, AWC 22) provided his expertise as one of the community panel members.



Chapter members enjoyed a great opportunity during a fellowship and mentoring session by MG Reg Neal, DCG-Natl Guard, US

Finally, getting after our core purpose, the chapter hosted two professional development sessions by senior Army leaders. We had a great opportunity for fellowship and mentoring session by MG Reg Neal, DCG-Natl Guard, US Army Pacific, and 2012 USAWC graduate and chapter VP. An outstanding leader – he shared valuable insight on relationship building and the importance of mastering your craft. We were also fortunate to host LTG Gary Brito, Army G1, for an LPD on Senior leader expectations of post-AWC COLs, the Future of the Army (TMTF, MDO, etc.), and best practices/lessons learned for strategic leaders.



The chapter was honored to host LTG Gary Brito, Army G1, for an LPD on March 10, 2022.

This is why we exist! It's all about making OUR community better. The MG Charles C. Rogers (Carlisle Barracks) ROCKS chapter is delighted to do our part!



2022 National Board of the ROCKS, Inc. Awards

Honorary ROCK of the Year Award
EDWARD M. DALY
GENERAL, USA

ROCK of the Year Award
R. SCOTT DINGLE
LIEUTENANT GENERAL, USA

ROCK of the Year Award
JULIUS E. COATS
COLONEL, USA, RETIRED

ROCK of the Year Award
TAMISHA R. NORRIS
LIEUTENANT COLONEL, USA

COL Robert B. Burke Award
MICHELLE A. JEFFERSON
LIEUTENANT COLONEL, DVM



The courage we desire and prize is not the courage to die decently...but to live manfully. – Thomas Carlyle

Chairman Award for Exceptional Service

Alamo ROCKS Chapter
MAJ Amy Hashimoto, USA
1LT Monica Santoyo, USA
CPT Tabatha Trice, USA

Fort Huchucha ROCKS Chapter
CW4 Gary Jackson, USA
WO4 John Coakley, USA

National Board of the ROCKS
LTC(R) Jerry Cheatom, USA
LTC Jeremiah Owoh, USA
CPT Ladonna S. Tolbert, USA
CW5 Yolondria Dixon-Carter, USA



BG(R) Roscoe Cartwright Scholarship Winners

Cadet Julian Cherry
Temple University

Cadet Logan D. Williams
Prairie View A&M University

Cadet Logan Adams
Texas State University

Congratulations to all the cadets who received \$3,000 to be used towards tuition, room and board, books, or other educational fees.



ROCKS' MEMBER ARTICLES

From Little Rock to West Point – BACH General Surgeon Shares Journey, Why She Serves

*Written by Sirena Clark,
Fort Campbell Courier*

Dr. (Maj.) Chonna Kendrick is a United States Military Academy West Point graduate, has served as the general surgeon at Blanchfield Army Community Hospital since 2016, and this week she takes on another challenge at The Sabalauski Air Assault School to get her wings.

Kendrick said she's humbled by all the opportunities she has received throughout her Army career, not just because it has made her Family proud, but because at one point people set out to tell her she would never succeed.

Her calling

Kendrick knew she wanted to become a doctor early in her high school career because of her grandmother's struggle with diabetes.

It was not just the chronic health condition that proved challenging, she also struggled to find doctors she could trust. The lack of competent medical care led to years of dialysis and a foot amputation, and her grandmother eventually succumbed to the disease. The experience was devastating, she said.

"When she passed away, I remember thinking 'If only she'd had a doctor that she trusted, maybe she'd have lived,'" Kendrick said. "I really want to be able to reach people and let them know they can trust me to do what's right and what's in their best interest, and that I will listen."

She set her sights on medical school but had no idea the road to becoming a

doctor would be challenging because people questioned her ability to pursue the profession.

When she spoke with guidance counselors about her dream, they suggested she attend a junior college instead of a university, Kendrick said. And when she voiced her wish to attend West Point the reaction was even worse.

"I went to get a recommendation letter from a male mentor and the first thing he said to me was that I'd never make it," she said.

Kendrick didn't allow the naysayers to keep her from chasing her dream, and in 2002 she was appointed to the U.S. Military Academy West Point and was selected to apply to medical school. Since then, her journey has taken her places she never imagined her skills would be needed, such as deploying to warzones to set up makeshift operation rooms.



COL Kendrick poses for a picture with her family.

Despite her success and military standing, Kendrick said she is still occasionally confronted by bias.

"I've definitely gotten comments like 'You don't look like a doctor,' or 'You don't look like you should be my doctor' because of my gender or the color of my skin," she said. "I've been mistaken for the nurse and even the cleaning lady. Sometimes you're doing something that people aren't used to seeing someone like you do, and you have to overcome that."

The bias, while unwarranted, serves as a reminder of why it's important she continue to do her job, Kendrick said. Serving overseas during her first deployment helped solidify that truth for her.

'A defining moment'

Immediately after completing her surgical residency, Kendrick deployed to Iraq. She was tasked with setting up casualty collection points, which were makeshift operating rooms.

"When we got to the place it was not at an installation, it was in a house in the middle of a neighborhood, and the place had been partially destroyed by an explosion and then refurbished," she said. "We had a room full of blankets and that was it, and we had to get supplies and try to coordinate the logistics to make this a surgical asset."

The experience was stressful because the work was constant. There also was the occasional language barrier because victims sometimes only spoke Arabic.

"Every day we'd hear an [improvised explosive device] go off and 10-15 Soldiers would come to the casualty collection point. We had to do damage control surgery just to keep them alive to get to the nearest hospital," Kendrick said. "That mission was a defining moment for me because I had to use every surgical skill I had been taught for the past six years. I had to really dig into that passion to help people even though they didn't understand and connect with them."

That experience has confirmed her calling to be a medical professional, she said, and deepened her desire to serve.

Family values

Kendrick, who hails from Little Rock, Arkansas, said although her family came from humble beginnings her home was rich in love and support.

The success she has enjoys today, she said, is the result of strong family

values that were instilled in her early on by strong parents, Willie and Bettie.

"My parents instilled the values of honesty, integrity, dedication, the importance of serving others above yourself, and personal accountability for my own actions in myself and my three brothers," Kendrick said. "They both ingrained in us the desire to serve others to make society better for everyone, not just for yourself. At the end of the day, there were two things that my mama said I needed to have: a degree and a job. In my parents' eyes, a bachelor's degree was where the journey started when it came to education."

She watched her parents work to give her and her brothers, Kevin, Derrick, and Willie Jr. a good life, Kendrick said.

"I realized when I got older that their work was instrumental in helping others have a better life and creating opportunities for their advancement," she said.

Her parents, she said, are proud of what she had done with her life's calling.

Getting her wings

Kendrick will soon add another accomplishment to an already long list as she goes through TSAAS to get her Air Assault badge.

The task is important to her even as a medical professional, she said, because it will strengthen her abilities in all facets of her job.

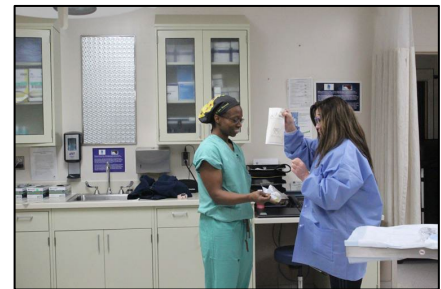
"The knowledge and experience gained during the course will help me to be a better all-around Army leader and medical provider who is informed about Army air assault operations and will ensure that I can endure the physically demanding environment that our Soldiers face," Kendrick said.

She also chose to attend Air Assault School because she felt it would contribute to her ability to be a better adviser to Army leaders.

"As an Army doctor, I need to be able to physically do and understand the Army training so that I can then advise my future commander on how we can optimize the health of the Soldiers to maintain a medically ready force," Kendrick said.

Looking ahead

Although her story is one of resilience in the face of doubt, it is not unique to her, Kendrick said. Many women experience challenges to their competence and are faced with questions of whether they can perform their duties to the same degree as men. However, this should not deter them from chasing their dreams, and if nothing else should serve as even more reason for women to change the narrative about what they're capable of.



General surgeon Dr. (Maj.) Chonna Kendrick, left, and LPN Cherie Myers, general surgery clinical nurse, prepare a room to receive a patient March 18 at Blanchfield Army Community Hospital. Soldiers like Kendrick make up the more than 70,000 women who serve in the U.S. Army, according to the 2021 Portrait of Active-Duty Women report released by the Department of Defense Office for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. March is National Women's History Month. During this observance, the Army pays tribute to the contributions of women in the building of this nation. (Sirena Clark | Fort Campbell Courier)

"Throughout it all and even now, my personal conviction is to always stay professional, be honest, have integrity, treat others with dignity and respect, and make sure that I do not give what others do and say power over me," she said. "For me, I know who I am, and that God has a purpose for me. I am in my position for a purpose, and I belong here. When you know that, you don't give power to those who want to make you feel less than. You persevere,

prosper, change mindsets, and change atmospheres.”



Creating a Culture of Honest Feedback: A Strategy to Keeping the Organization Healthy.

Submitted by LTC Rich Farnell

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/leading-high-performing-team/202003/creating-culture-honest-feedback>

Honest feedback is the breakfast of champions: it allows those who seek and incorporate it to identify their blind spots, increase self-awareness, and become a better version of themselves. Unfortunately, some leaders skip this important “meal” to stay comfortable and avoid criticism that may compromise their psychological well-being.



Failing to receive honest feedback can stunt the growth of leaders and organizations. Honest feedback enables transparency, in contrast to feedback that is only open to compliments or praises. Consider a person who never gets physical checkups or ignores symptoms of ailments. This type of behavior could potentially create long-term irreversible effects. Similarly, leaders who ignore honest feedback from their employees can hinder performance levels and put organizations at risk, leaving employees unable to trust them.

There is a myriad of reasons some leaders struggle to receive feedback, but a few are especially worth mentioning. First, seeking and enabling feedback requires a willingness to be vulnerable that some leaders lack.

Leaders look for trusted employees when eliciting feedback. This process works well if the leaders have a variety of minds to draw from and the feedback loop stays transparent. However, this is often not the case, so it is important for leaders to seek feedback from multiple sources—particularly those they feel can give them unexpected, perhaps even unwanted perspectives. Second, leaders often fail to respond effectively to feedback. When feedback is ignored, misinterpreted, received defensively, or outright rejected, relationships and atmospheres within the workplace are negatively impacted.

Third, some leaders like to control the narrative about themselves, and this tendency can get in the way of the leader receiving productive criticism. One person’s image should not supersede the welfare of the organization. Good leaders welcome feedback and understand what got them there will not always be the same thing that will give them continued success.

Regardless of the quality of the leader, poor feedback channels can be risky, and honest feedback channels can be developed without risking or jeopardizing relationships. Here are some strategies to set the conditions for honest feedback.

1. Do not underestimate the expertise, knowledge, and intelligence of employees. One of the biggest pitfalls of some leaders is that their ascension to the top gives them “airplane ear,” which impairs their ability to hear what is going on across their organization. Instead, leaders should take a humble approach, proactively and openly seeking insight from all levels, as various insights are imperative for growth.
2. Spend time with your team and encourage transparency. Employees will not provide honest feedback until they trust you. They will need to hear you repeatedly and openly elicit feedback. Your

team will also be more apt to provide feedback after observing your receptiveness to criticism. If the leader shows appreciation and a desire to understand without defensiveness or retaliation, employees will recognize this and be more comfortable in openly providing feedback.

3. If a leader is to receive feedback, he or she should acknowledge it, and make the applicable adjustments. Employees will observe whether or not the leader makes the suggested changes. If nothing changes, employees will be less likely to expend the time and effort required to provide feedback in the future. Therefore, when a leader receives feedback, it should be shared with the appropriate team. Following, a plan of action should be publicized; outlining the steps the leader intends to take to make necessary changes. Additionally, it is important the leader follows up and report outcomes, allowing employees the opportunity to see that their feedback was taken seriously.
4. Be approachable. Employees observe whom their leaders spend the most time with and how comfortable they are around different personalities, genders, and ethnicities. A leader must be mindful of how he or she treats that very vocal employee: does the leader keep their distance from that individual, while gravitating towards employees who are considered safe or those who only tell their superiors what he or she may want to hear? A leader should not be afraid to spend more time with employees whom they are not naturally inclined to correspond.
5. Model the behavior you want your team to follow. Leaders must seek opportunities to provide feedback to team members in a constructive manner and establish a model for the team to follow. Additionally, a leader should encourage team members to provide feedback to

each other. The more the team provides feedback to each other, the more likely this type of communication will become commonplace. Once that happens, the stress around providing feedback diminishes, and it will be a more natural occurrence.

6. Practice footprint-circulation. It is common for busy leaders to get overwhelmed by their schedules, but systematically circulating and maintaining the pulse of the organization will pay huge dividends. Leaders often get feedback that has been massaged or diluted by their advisors. If leaders periodically circulate, they are more likely to build trust and diversify their inputs, as well as get direct feedback from a variety of perspectives. This process then minimizes the potential of distorted feedback. The leader is also able to observe whether the advisor inputs coincide with the interactions that have taken place during circulation. Employees are more trusting when they know their boss cares about the group or organization in its entirety.

Creating a culture of honest feedback can be challenging, but if leaders set conditions to open up channels that will help them determine the pulse of the organization, they will be best positioned to guide the team. Moreover, they will better gauge how their decisions and actions are affecting those around them. Without transparency, leaders are haphazardly guiding without truly understanding the health of the organization. Much like the individual who ignores lingering symptoms, poor health does not get better over time without awareness and a plan of action. Hence, leaders should take their feedback systems seriously.



ROCKS, Inc. Group Provides Mentorship, Professional Development and Social Interaction for Officer Corps

Submitted by LTC DaMond Davis

FORT SILL, Oklahoma (Feb. 28, 2022) – Have you ever thought ‘I wish I knew then what I know now’?

A newly formed, local group of ROCKS, Inc. is working to put an end to that thought. The organization was formed to provide mentorship, professional development and social interaction to strengthen the officer corps.



Fort Sill, OK ROCKS Members

“Someone knows now what you do not know,” said Capt. Kiasha Hamilton, assistant S4, 75th Field Artillery Brigade and president of the local chapter of ROCKS, Inc. “Let’s find those people who have the information we require and pass that information to the next person who needs it. Some people want to lead, while others need to be led. Providing that environment here at Fort Sill where both objectives can be met was important to me.”

Hamilton said an environment for two-way mentorship is not a new concept but allowing it to flourish with the ROCKS, Inc. chapter will allow for more well-rounded officers and senior civilians at Fort Sill.

“I just got into the mindset of let’s do it; I can do it, the team rallied around and things began to flourish,” she said. “I wanted to provide something to others that I was missing and create a field artillery community of

excellence. As leaders, we define how we face situations every day. I identified an area where I personally could have benefitted from early on -- mentorship.”

ROCKS, Inc. is a non-profit organization comprised of active, reserve and retired commissioned officers and warrant officers of the U.S. Armed Forces. ROTC and Military Academy cadets and DoD GS-12 and above civilian counterparts are included in this composition. ROCKS also provides scholarships to cadets, and “Leadership Outreach,” which provides the opportunity for teams of ROCKS members to visit historically black colleges and universities for professional career development guidance to ROTC students.

ROCKS, Inc. was officially founded in 1974, but was initially started in the mid-1960s as informal meetings of black Army officers assigned to the Command and General Staff College. Currently, 18 Army installations have local chapters and five installations – including Fort Sill – have their own interest group nationwide.



Fort Sill, OK ROCKS Members

Hamilton said mentorship never ends. “As a Black Female field artillery officer, I am a leader; and I represent the next generation of field artillery leaders. I am also always willing to mentor, to be mentored, or enable networking between mentors and mentees. The wonderful part about ROCKS is the organization is committed to strengthening the Army officer corps and I am happy to be a part of it. There are officers, seniors, peers and subordinates who come to

me for mentorship and those I reach out to for continued mentorship both through the group and individually,” said Hamilton.

According to Hamilton, black officers have historically had less access to mentorship than their contemporaries. “We are changing it at Fort Sill; we are essentially an extension of the command team and we are building a community of excellence. We provide mentorship and camaraderie for permanent and transient personnel,” she said. “If someone has trouble with gunnery or fire support, we have experts on the team. If someone wants to know what to do at Fort Sill, we have those answers too. We will utilize timing, strategic aligning and dedication to ensure we are here for anyone who needs mentorship.”

The group meets two times a month, formally and informally. They occasionally meet three to four times a month if there are extracurricular activities or initiatives occurring in that month.

“Formal meetings are held on post in the duty uniform. This allows us to be able to identify rank, name and unit just by seeing one another in uniform,” she said. “Formal meetings are very structured and typically held to one hour. We have set topics and guest speakers at these meetings. Formal meetings allow for a learning environment in garrison and strengthen the bonds of the individuals in uniform. This also allows for field grade officers to be easily identified for additional conversation and mentorship after the meeting.”

Hamilton said informal meetings are held off post in appropriate civilian attire, typically at different locations around town.

“Although informal meetings are less structured, we do have a set topic. This is more dialogue driven, and allows for officers to feel more relaxed, share their experiences and receive or give input,” she said. “These meetings are expected to run typically an hour and a

half but have always gone to as many as three or four hours due to so much engagement and mentorship occurring.”

The group also has extracurricular activities or initiatives where they come together to build a ‘community of excellence’ by engaging with the community outside of Fort Sill.

“We also build a ‘community of excellence’ within our group by participating in events such as the Buffalo Soldier Black History Month 3-Mile Walk/Run; and based on individuals’ interests, we plan group hikes, family days and other outings,” she said.

Upcoming initiatives include blood drives, food drives, tutoring and volunteering at outside organizations.

Author’s note: Even though today is the last day of Black History Month, ROCKS, Inc. celebrates the spirit of Black History year-round with a mentorship program started by black officers to help other black officers through the benefit of their experience. The program is now all-inclusive and offers the best of ‘helping yourself by helping others.’



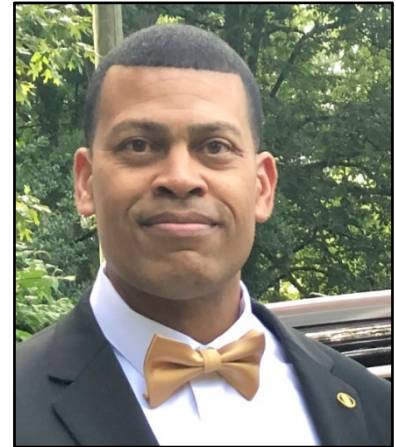
ROCKSWIDE MEETING

**Saturday, May 21, 2022
3:00pm-4:30pm EDT
(1500-1630)**

Inviting all Chapters to participate in a meeting with the National Board to share their successes, challenges, and obtain guidance from Board Members.

BOARD MEMBER ARTICLES

Message from Our National Board Chaplain



“The Power Of Hope!”

By Dr. B. Gregory Edison

If a global census on hopelessness was administered, it would reveal that the world we live in struggles against hopelessness. There are people who feel that the world would be better off without them. Daily conversations often oscillate around discouragement and the loss of hope.

Listen to any of the radio talk shows or podcast, watch any TV talk show or the news and you are going to hear people who are cynical about life. On a world scale, it seems that we go from crisis to crisis. People’s belief in hope and each other is being challenged daily and sadly, too often people lose hope.

The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was jailed, 29 times, for being the conscience of his generation against the bondage of separation and injustices. He never lost hope of his dream of what America could be. He states, “Even in the inevitable moments when all seems hopeless, men know that without hope they cannot really live, and in agonizing desperation they cry for the bread of hope.”

"And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out His love into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, whom He has given us" (Romans 5:5). The noted psychologist, Carl Menninger said, "Hope is a major weapon against the suicide impulse. It has been said that humans can live 40 days without food, 3 days without water, and 8 minutes without air. But only 1 second without hope. Hope is necessary to the human spirit as oxygen is to the physical body." People are energized by hope!

During WW II, Winston Churchill, the Prime Minister of England, was asked by a reporter what his country's greatest weapon had been against Hitler's Regime? Without hesitation, Churchill, responded: "England's greatest weapon has always been hope."

Many historians consider U.S. Senator Robert Kennedy's Day of Affirmation address, which he delivered at the University of Cape Town in South Africa on June 6, 1966, to be his greatest speech, which has been known as the 'Ripple of Hope.' In this speech, he drew powerful parallels between the systems of racial inequality in South Africa, which was ruled by apartheid and the United States' wall of segregation. He wanted to express to those being discriminated against that they are human beings, and that they do matter and are valued by God. He declared, "Few will have the greatness to bend history itself, but each of us can work to change a small portion of events, and in the total of all those acts will be written the history of this generation. Thousands of Peace Corps volunteers are making a difference in isolated villages and city slums in dozens of countries. Thousands of unknown men and women in Europe resisted the occupation of the Nazis and many died, but all added to the ultimate strength and freedom of their countries. It is from numberless diverse acts of courage and belief that human history is shaped. Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny

ripple of hope, and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring those ripples build a current which can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance."

Hope is contagious, it is global, and crosses all boundaries.

"Hope is the thing with feathers. That perches in the soul, And sings the tune without the words, And never stops at all" (Emily Dickinson).



Some Proactive Financial Food for Thought During A Time of War

By Eric P. Flowers, VP Finance



As members of the Profession of Arms, it's prudent for us to always stay abreast of geo-strategic events to discern potential impacts on our professional and personal lives. The conflict in Ukraine is an obvious example and offers practical food for thought regarding your personal financial matters.

Given the widespread uncertainty surrounding Vladimir Putin's subsequent actions in Eastern Europe, coupled with his past, America is an enticing target for debilitating cyber-attacks against our financial systems/networks. The amount of time it will take our country to recover from such attacks may be lengthy and their subsequent impacts could be frustrating and- to a certain extent-

incapacitating if the attacks inhibit the American economy's ability to conduct cashless transactions for a lengthy period.

Since this is a plausible scenario, one's interests are best served by always having a healthy amount of cash on hand in your home. Please consider a "healthy amount" to be no less than \$1500. Fifteen hundred dollars could adequately facilitate one's ability to purchase gas and food if the sale of those commodities could only be conducted via cash. This amount should be regarded as a bare minimum and something that could reasonably accommodate 2-3 weeks of a "cash only" scenario for a family up to four. Another thing to consider is the utility of always having cash- up to \$50- in your personal vehicle(s) as a way of mitigating the possible effects of a feasible double whammy of a gas tank nearing empty and operating gas stations only able to conduct cash transactions.

Of course, we pray such scenarios never evolve, but if they do, it's best not to be caught totally off guard. A little prior planning and preparatory acts can help make the inconvenient bearable until things get better. Although this article offers specific dollar amounts for consideration, the main takeaway of this piece is not the figures, but the process of doing something in advance of the possible, without regard to its likelihood.

Take heed of this advice and please share it with family members and those in your mentoring networks so it can serve as another concrete example of how The ROCKS and you... Set the standard!!!



Know Your Documents

By COL Angie Hemingway USA (Ret)



Permanent Change of Station and personnel changes for local ROCKS chapters can present challenges for inexperienced Chapter leaders. Solution: know your documents, seek help from experienced ROCKS members and keep the records updated. The ROCKS Inc. is a stalwart 501c3 organization that grew out of an urgency to distinguish itself, and be recognized, as a premier mentoring organization. The ROCKS strives to provide guidance and support to those who invariably seek effective tactics, techniques, and procedures to “survive” various challenges that confronted them as members of the profession of arms. Over time the focus has been more precise that guidance and support are needed not only for members of the profession of arms but the civilians that support the military organization and the cadets who are the future of the profession of arms. As a member of the ROCKS who has participated in the organization over the years, you probably can attest to an often turbulent and stressful environment, yet you meet the challenges with dependable and selfish service to pave the way for others who follow. If you are a member who has spent continuous time in the ROCKS, you have benefitted from the encouragement, mentoring, coaching, and teaching of those who went before you. The founding leaders of the

ROCKS recognized early on the need for a structured organization and incorporated it. This structured process continues today. Individuals often recognize the need to establish a Chapter if there is not one. An inactive Chapter may need revitalizing. Anytime a chapter has less than ten members, they are inactive. Inactivity happens for various reasons. However, these inactive chapters can be re-established with good leadership. Leadership changes present challenges for inexperienced Chapter leaders. The solution to doing a good job is knowing your documents, seeking help from experienced ROCKS leaders, and keeping the documents up to date.

When chapters are established where one does not exist, it requires good assessment, networking, and business skills. As the VP Membership, this is a very manageable task that can go very smoothly when leaders have a positive attitude, are teachable, and are willing to work with other committed members to establish the chapter. Accessing the population for officers, civilians, and cadets who want to grow through, encouragement, mentoring, coaching, and teaching is easy. Good networking skills give one insight about personnel on the installation. Talk with other ROCKS members about who else would be of excellent character to invite into the ROCKS. Start organizing and start identifying the ten members who will make up the Interest Group. Once a group comes together and commits to establishing a chapter or revitalizing a chapter, the work begins. Each Interest group that is recognized as a ROCKS Interest Group, commits to “file appropriate nonprofit corporation applications with the state and local authorities where they live.” The Interest Group that moves to Chapter status must also commit to this requirement. The interest group has to file for the Articles of Incorporation, the Employer Identification Number (EIN), and the 501c-3 tax-exempt status. The Articles of Incorporation (AOI) tells the chapter’s purpose and establishes its relevance as an organization. The AOI must be filed

with the Secretary of the State before the nonprofit status is established. Once the AOI is established, the EIN request is filed. The EIN is assigned by the IRS and keeps track of your business tax reporting.

As a 501 (c) (3) organization, Chapters become tax-exempt after filing Form 1023 and receiving a letter of exemption. Once these documents are established, filing Form 990 is required annually. A copy of all these documents should be shared with National ROCKS, safeguarded, and passed on to incoming leadership when there is a change. When these documents are not safeguarded, and if National does not have copies, Chapters incur unplanned expenses to renew these documents. Other ramifications include donors cannot claim tax exemptions for donations made to the chapter. Additionally, a Chapter cannot register with entities such as AmazonSmile to receive donations from Amazon. AmazonSmile donates 0.5% of your eligible purchases on Amazon to your designated charity. That charity could be you. Chapters that have established best practices using the program include Washington, DC ROCKS, Alamo Chapter ROCKS, and Fort Leavenworth ROCKS.

www.AmazonSmile.com

Let us know if you need help. I am reachable through the national website at angiehemingway@hotmail.com.



Humbled and Honored

Written by Ms. Karen M. Wrancher



What's Next to Continue Sustained Service

When I left the 1st Armored Division as the first battalion commander of the division headquarters after its return to United States after 40 years in Germany, I headed to the Quartermaster Center and school to be the first female Chief for the Quartermaster General. I found myself reflecting on how I could try to make a meaningful impact in our military community and help develop the next generation of officers. By the time I relinquished my battalion colors, I had hosted nine LPDs with three of the nine, focusing specifically on women addressing such topics as Marriage & Motherhood in the Military, Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Financial Literacy and Investing and concluding with a presentation entitled "So She Thinks She's All That". "So She Thinks She's All That" focused on the lack of and the critical need for a spirit of sisterhood, female empowerment and the need for women to support each other and leverage our skills and talents to collaborate and not to compete in an organization dominated by mostly men. I asserted there is a overwhelming need to move away from the lowest denominators of the human experience: envy, jealousy,

back biting and messy gossip that impedes women from being a tour de force in our Army, any business unit and industrial nation. I was somewhat at a loss on how could I continue to try and make a difference in assisting others in being successful as the moved forward in their own Army careers.

Leaving & Returning to the Fold

I was a Rocks member before as a Captain in Germany. After successfully completing company command, I was an assignment officer with 1st Personnel Command (PERSCOM) in Kitzingen, Germany near Heidelberg. At that time then Colonel Belinda Pinckney was our chapter advisor and MAJ Steven Lambert was the chapter president leading our chapter and facilitating mentorship sessions. I returned to the states selected as a Training with Industry Fellow working for the Logistics Management Institute and later a Joint Chiefs of Staff Intern. I was excited about coming to the National Capital region and attending my first Rocks gala. It was at that time I attended with my friends Captains Deirdre Windsor and the late Major Trudy Caldwell. As young Captain to me it was the equivalent to attending the event was on level of attending a military-type BET awards. It was that year that Debra Lee, the former Chairman and CEO was the guest speaker at the gala. It was at that gala as a Captain I observed lieutenant colonels and colonels talking amongst themselves about either their next job or their transitioning/retirement plans ignoring the junior officers that I became disillusioned and walked away from the Rocks, not return until after battalion command. But my passion for mentorship and helping others to be successful never left me. I was determined to help others navigate the labyrinth that we know as the Army, negotiating through the politics which becomes even more complex with each rank and never forgot to give back. When I headed to Korea as a Major, I supported rocks events and hosted LPDs as a series of brown bag lunches instructing the officers in my battalion on everything from supply discipline to

call for fire. That passion continued through battalion and beyond.

It was in 2013 my dear and lifelong friend, a former member of the Senior Executive Service and now and entrepreneur, CEO of the Windsor Group, Deirdre Windsor who brought me back into the fold of the ROCKS. She stated the ROCKET needed writers, contributors to provide content and stories on the changes and the latest developments across our Army. I joined the Rocket writing staff working with the Vice President of Communications, Colonel (Retired) Dorene Hurt. I began submitting articles quarterly and assisting with review of content. My passion for mentorship continued, as I was one of the founders of the Virginia chapter of the Women's Mentorship Network organizing sessions and events at different venues. When I deployed again to the Middle East, a Colonel and the inaugural Command Inspector General for the Combined Joint Task Force- Operation Inherent Resolve, I stay connected to the Rocks organizing a series of LPDs. The LPDs covered a myriad of topics to include officership, OERs and profiles, and how boards are conducted. The most successful one and last one before I redeployed was given by Army Central Commanding General, then Lieutenant General Michael X. Garrett in Camp Arifjan theater which was packed with soldiers, civilians and contractors with some individuals even standing against the walls.

Taking the Mantle

Upon returning to the United States, I found myself serving in the Pentagon leading the largest division within the United States Army Inspector General Agency. It was during this time, I was afforded the honor of taking the mantle and the responsibilities of the Vice President of Communications from Dorene Hurt and to build on the foundation she had laid. Immediately, I took on the task of redesigning the website and embedding certain functions which allowed individuals to become ROCKS members, pay dues, make contributions to the scholarship

or operational fund of their choice directly on the website. It was the former Rocks Chairman, Brigadier General (Retired) Earl Simms that provided me with the opportunity and honor to have a ROCKS kiosk for the first time at the Association of the United States Army Exposition at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center. It was a good marketing opportunity to interview the Army's senior leaders and hear their perspectives on servant leadership, the latest issues, about mentorship as well share their advice on such topics like work and life balance. It also provided us the opportunity to post these interviews as videos on our Facebook page each year introducing the Rocks to a new and wider audience. During the onset of the pandemic, we sought ways to continue with our mentorship discussions and introduced the inspirational interviews with senior sharing their story of their Army career and journey with the Buffalo Soldiers Series. More than anything serving as the Vice President of Communications provided me with the opportunity to interact with cadets, be the recipient and beneficiary of sagely advice from some of the Army's senior leaders and talented giants. It also allowed me to witness and take pictures capturing the excitement of ROTC Cadets as they interact with senior leaders at such events as the Army's Leadership and Mentorship Forum and mentorship panel discussion in Howard University's Cramton Auditorium. But more than anything, it provided me with the opportunity to develop lifelong friendships and relationships all across the globe and to refine my oratory skills which would ultimately help me to transition out of the Army. I found myself interviewing well and being selected to participate in the Hiring of Heroes Fellowship impressing all prospective employers during the interview process. At the end of the fellowship, I found myself with job offers from Amazon, Verizon, and Wells Fargo to name a few. Ultimately, I chose a role with Wells Fargo, and it was during that year as I transition out of the Army, I found

myself honored to be the recipient of the 2020 Rock of the Year award.



Womens Mentorship Network LPD - Visit and informational briefings at the Army G4 (2013)

Honoring Your Calling & Passion

My passion for mentorship was not motivated by the reception of any reward but more by the memories of being a second lieutenant in the 82nd Airborne Division witnessing some of my battalion leaders investing time in other officers who they thought would go the distance and overlooking me. They were not having those formative developmental conversations with me as an aspiring junior officer. My passion to help others was driven by the memory of being the most successful company commander in my battalion with most honor streamers and going to my battalion commander for mentorship and guidance and being told, "Well just keep doing what you're doing." Those words catapulted me into the past like I was in some sort of time machine remembering the Senior Paralegal Master Sergeant when I was a soldier in the 82nd saying the same thing using the exact words as he tried to discourage me from submitting my Officer Candidate School packet. It wasn't until after I had successfully navigating company command serving in the 1st Infantry Division completing a peace enforcement mission in Kosovo and becoming an Assignment Officer would I interact with my first mentors. My mentors would encourage me and provide me with guidance throughout the remaining years of my career; then Captain and now the Future Army G4, Major General (Promotable) Charles R. Hamilton and Colonel (Retired) Robert "Rick" Harney who now serves as the Dean, Logistics Leader Development College

of the Army Logistics University located at Fort Lee, Virginia. I can say as I reflect over the three decades that I served our United States Army starting at the rank of Private First Class ultimately ascending to the rank of Colonel that there were hills and valleys, but I was fortunate to meet leaders who cared enough to invest in me as I ascended the rank structure of the Army. They are also the individuals that continue to provide me with counsel and feedback on how to serve in the best capacity as both an officer and the Vice President of Communications for the Rocks Inc. such wise and kind mentors as Lieutenant General (Retired) Arthur Gregg and Major General (Retired) Proctor 'Peet' Hawthorne.

I am humbled and honored to have been given such an opportunity. The interviews, the interactions, the relationships I have developed and wonderful moments I have experienced as the former Vice President of Communications go beyond anything words can express and any tangible measurement. I can only say I am grateful for such an opportunity, and I thank Brigadier General (Retired) Sims, Brigadier General (Retired) Gillespie and Colonel (Retired) Ray Bingham for allowing me to serve at their pleasure and Colonel (Retired) Dorene Hurt for her endorsement and the confidence she placed in me. It is with that same passion and fervor that sustained me for over three decades, I will support our next VP of Comms, LTC Damond Davis. I am excited to witness what he has in store for all of us as he takes the ROCKET and the website to the next level.

Colonel (Retired) Karen M. Wrancher culminated her service to the Army serving as the Chief of the Assistance Division, the largest division of the US Army Inspector General Agency. She transitioned from the service accepting a role as an Audit Manager in Internal Audit with Wells Fargo. She now works in the Strategy and Operations Group of the nation's fourth largest bank.

ROCKS ON THE RISE

Dedicated ROCK Named Maryland's Military Coalition Legislator of the Year

Submitted by COL (Ret) Dorene Hurt



COL(R) Michael J. Rogers

Special Congratulations are extended to COL (Ret) Michael J. Rogers, Maryland State Delegate on his selection as the 2021 Legislator of the Year by the Maryland Military Coalition (MMC). This prestigious recognition was bestowed upon Delegate Rogers in March 2022 for spearheading the passing of legislation in support of Veterans and their families. Although he was being honored, he made a point of thanking the MMC for its incredible advocacy for Veterans and their families at both the state and federal levels.

A ROCKS Life member and Charter member of the ROCKS Chapter at Fort Lewis, COL Rogers was actively involved with the ROCKS wherever he was assigned for over two decades. He served on the Executive Board of several Chapters including the Washington DC Chapter and was President of the Ft. Lewis Chapter.

Delegate Rogers served in the U.S. Army [Medical Service Corps](#) from 1986 to 2015, retiring at the rank of [Colonel](#). Rogers was a member of the board of directors of the [Military](#)

[Officers Association of America](#) from 2012 to 2018.

He has been a [Democratic](#) member of the [Maryland House of Delegates](#), representing Maryland's District 32 in [Anne Arundel County](#) since January 2019. He mounted a phenomenal grassroots campaign with 100s of loyal volunteers who engaged Marylanders at all levels, committing to addressing their most pressing needs.



Delegate Rogers being presented with his award by fellow Maryland Delegates

He currently serves on the Economic Matters committee, Banking, Consumer Protection & Commercial Law subcommittee, and Unemployment Insurance subcommittee. He is also a member of the Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland, Maryland Veterans Caucus, and is an associate member of the Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus, and Women Legislators of Maryland.



SIGNED INTO LAW!: Sen. Moran's Legislation to Award 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion the Congressional Gold Medal Becomes Law - News Releases - U.S. Senator for Kansas, Jerry Moran

Leadership is solving problems. The day soldiers stop bringing you their problems is the day you have stopped leading them. They have either lost confidence that you can help or concluded you do not care. Either case is a failure of leadership – Colin Powell

From Soldier's Soldier to Statesman. Biden Makes Historic Pick for Secretary of Defense: ROCK Lloyd J. Austin

Submitted by COL (Ret) Dorene Hurt

FELLOW ROCKS:

Secretary and Mrs. Austin have enormous challenges in their new roles. Let's keep them in our thoughts & prayers!!



Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin is sworn in as his wife Charlene Austin holds the Bible at the White House on January 25, 2021.



U.S. Navy Adm. Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, right, speaks with U.S. Army Gen. Lloyd Austin, commander of U.S. Forces-Iraq, aboard a C-17 Globemaster en route to Baghdad, Aug. 1, 2011



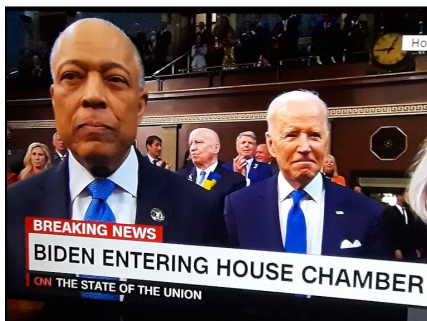
Vice President Joe Biden and Gen Lloyd Austin - pictured here in Iraq in 2011 - worked closely together during the Obama administration

History Making ROCK Serving as United States House of Representatives Sergeant at Arms

By COL (Ret) Dorene Hurt



The Sergeant at Arms of the United States House of Representatives is an officer of the House with law enforcement, protocol, and administrative responsibilities. The Sergeant at Arms is elected at the beginning of each Congress by the membership of the House. The current Sergeant at Arms of the US House of Representatives is Fellow ROCK Retired SES and Major General William J. Walker seen above introducing President Biden to the Joint Session of Congress on March 1, 2022. He is the chief law enforcement officer of the House.



Sergeant at Arms of the US House of Representatives, Fellow ROCK, Retired SES, Major General William J. Walker escorts President into the Joint Session of Congress on March 1, 2022

"Nothing in the world can take the place of Persistence. Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts. The slogan 'Press On' has solved and always will solve the problems of the human race." —Calvin Coolidge

LEARN ABOUT OUR ROCK HEROS: Veteran of three Wars, Eldest ROCK Turns 98

Submitted by COL (Ret) Dorene Hurt

Source:

<https://www.elpasotimes.com/story/news/2018/1/10/retired-brig-gen-edward-greer-el-paso-fought-three-wars/1925983002/>

Originally written by: Bill Knight

On March 8, 1924, our most senior ROCK turned 98! His was a life of service and his journey was little short of wondrous.

His journey began in 1943 when he hopped aboard a train for Massachusetts, a train that would take them to a ship that would take them to England and ultimately get them to France and smack into the middle of World War II.

What was that moment like? Was he nervous? Excited? Fearful?

Breaking into a big laugh, the big man with the big voice said: "Oh, hell, I was 19 years old. You can do anything. I was gung-ho. We all thought we could win the war all by ourselves. That was the general mood. Go get 'em."

Edward Greer was still just a teenager, little more than a wide-eyed kid and just a private in the U.S. Army then. When he retired in 1976, after fighting in three wars, he had risen to the heights, becoming a major general in that same Army. He and his wife Jewell were married over 70 years before she passed away a few years ago.

Ed Greer grew up during the Great Depression near the coal mines in West Virginia. Life was not easy for anyone then. It was even more difficult for a black man. But he knew at an early age life in the coal mines was not for him.

His parents pushed their children to get an education.

"I was in my first year at West Virginia State College," he said. "ROTC there was mandatory. They let us all finish our first year of college, and then in May 1943, we all enlisted in the Army."



Then Private Greer (on the left) with two fellow soldiers somewhere in Europe during WWII. He began his military service in a segregated Army. Rudy Gutierrez/El Paso Times.

On the wall of a small trophy room that overlooks the patio with a spectacular view, a framed flag adorns one space on the career-cluttered wall — 777, representing the 777th Field Battalion, Company C, an all black artillery unit. It was his first unit.

"We spent until 1945, until the end of the war, out there," he said. "We were an artillery group that roamed all over Europe, so we got to see a lot of places and a lot of things. We had a 155 millimeter howitzer, which was a very dependable weapon."

"Of course, we were behind the lines," he said. "The stuff we were sending was five or six miles out. We just shot at coordinates. We had no idea what the hell we were hitting."

Of course, they were firing at us, too, and we had to dig in and be prepared." When the war in Europe ended, they were all put on a ship, headed for the Pacific.

"A few days out, we found out the Japanese had signed the deal and we headed back to the U.S.," he said calmly, as if talking of a change in plans of a summer vacation. Greer got home in December and by January he was back in West Virginia State College. Three years later he and Jewell graduated. A day later, they were married.

Was planning to be a dentist

Smiling, Greer said: "I really didn't plan on a military career. I was studying to be a dentist. But there weren't a lot of colleges who accepted black students. Howard University was one and I got accepted there, but I had already raised my right hand by that time."

Having raised his right hand to enlist previously, now he was a second lieutenant, and Korea was looming. "I was a forward observer in Korea," he said. "I was out with the infantry and you tried to gather a lot of information, get them shooting at you, so we could shoot at them." Greer earned the Silver Star and the Bronze Star in Korea.



Major General Greer stands in his "military room" at his Northeast El Paso home. Then 94 years old, Greer, who began his military career during WWII, moved to El Paso with his wife Jewell in 1976 from Wash. DC. Rudy Gutierrez/El Paso Times.

"I basically brought fire on to our own position," he said matter-of-factly. What goes racing through your mind in a moment like that, when the enemy is all around, when bullets are humming? Laughing again, Greer said: "All you are thinking about is survival. How the hell are we going to get them before they get us." And Greer is still here.

Greer was promoted to captain while in Korea. He came home and served a tour in Germany and a tour at the Pentagon and he also found time to get a master's degree from George Washington University. After advanced schooling in 1955, he was promoted to major and assigned to the Department of Army general staff in Washington, D.C. He was promoted to lieutenant colonel in 1963.

He moved around the world, as soldiers do, and in 1965 he returned to Washington and worked as an operations officer for the Joint Chiefs of Staff. During this time, he was promoted to colonel. And then, in 1970, came Vietnam. He served as deputy commander of the artillery, and it was there he earned the Legion of Merit and the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry with Gold Star.

"I was in charge of five artillery battalions and I spent a lot of time in a helicopter," he said. "We would go around to the fire bases. There was only room for four, but most of the time it was just me and the pilot." Greer said calmly: "There were no casualties. We took on fire. Lot of bullet holes, but nothing more. Greer took a moment to reflect on the difference in the three wars, how each one had its own personality, each one had its own degree of difficulty. "World War II was fought from fortified positions," he said. "That was peanuts compared to Vietnam. Korea,

In Korea, the Chinese were damn good. Vietnam was tough, tough, tough. The weather, raining all the time. Booby traps. The enemy was around you 360 degrees." Of course, none of the three were picnics."

Greer came home again and continued his life of service. He said making general was not even on his radar. "Not even remotely did I expect that," he said. "It was a long haul from private to there. I moved up pretty quick, but I was a lieutenant colonel for a long time and I was a colonel for a long time.

"When I made brigadier general, only four or five blacks before me had done

it," he said. "To their credit, the Army made five of us brigadier generals at one time. (He showed a picture of the five proud black men standing together). Fortunately, now that number has increased manifold."

"I was not surprised when he was named a general," retired Lt. Col. Preston Davis of Washington, D.C., told the West Virginia magazine Goldenseal. "Of the many officers I've known, Ed Greer had all of the attributes for promotion to general—the character, the military experience, the warmth of personality that well-fitted him for the tasks the Army set before him. He was always a person to be greatly admired."



A portrait of Brigadier General Edward Greer. He would go on to earn a second star. Rudy Gutierrez/El Paso Times.

When he retired in 1976, Greer had earned the Silver Star, the Bronze Star, the Legion of Merit, the Joint Services Commendation medal, the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry with Gold Star and a wall full of commendations and medals.

The Takeaway for ROCKS today?

-Learn your ROCKS history. Every ROCK has a story. Those who paved the way for us overcame incredible barriers. Their courage and outstanding performance slowly chipped away at the effect of prejudicial barriers.

Solid ROCK MAJ (Ret) E. Sean Lanier Makes the Difference that Counts for the ROCKS and as the Founder & Executive Director of Resolve Solutions Inc.

Submitted by COL (Ret) Dorene Hurt

MAJ (Ret) E. Sean Lanier knew what he wanted to do very early in his life. According to his mother, she took him to his first air show when he was around the age of four, and she had a hard time pulling him away from the fence as he stared at the various aircraft with amazement and wonder. She knew that he had inherited the thrill of flying from his father, a MEDEVAC pilot in Vietnam. Sean would follow in his father's footsteps and become an Army Aviator after earning his commission via ROTC graduating from the Virginia Military Institute.



During his first-class (senior) year at VMI, he would be first introduced to the ROCKS Inc, via then LTG Johnnie E. Wilson. Sean mentored GEN Wilson's son, who was a VMI freshman. GEN Wilson hosted Cadet Sean Lanier and Cadet Kendall Clarke on tour and visited the Pentagon in Wash., DC, attending a leadership conference at Howard University.

2LT Lanier would cross paths again with GEN Wilson a couple of years later in South Korea, as the AMC Commander toured the theater, and 2LT Lanier had the privilege of co-piloting him on his tour. Despite the

hectic schedule GEN Wilson made time to ask how his tour was, going and how his relationship within the ROCKS was developing.

As a Company Commander in Germany, CPT Lanier attended the National ROCKS conference in 2003. He befriended LTG Edward Honor (Ret) and offered mentorship similar to his early experiences with GEN Wilson. While deployed to Afghanistan, MAJ Lanier attended the ROCKS National Conference in 2010. At this event, another seed was planted via the Honorary ROCK of the Year, ADM Michael Mullen. During one of the sessions, a member of the audience asked the CJCS about improving the diversity of the officer corps within the DoD, and ADM Mullen responded by challenging the Captains and Majors in the room to be the ones who would make the change.

Three years later, reassigned to Washington, DC, that message stayed with MAJ Lanier. When the opportunity to help improve the recruitment, retention, graduation, and commissioning rates of African-Americans at his alma mater, VMI, he reflected on the challenge of ADM Mullen and stepped up. As MAJ Lanier engaged, with support from other ROCKS like BG Richard Dix and COL Charles Hamilton, he realized that his contributions focusing solely on his alma mater were not large enough in scope to effect change in the U.S. Army. He had to think bigger.



MAJ (Ret) Lanier with VMI Cadre and Cadets at the ROCK Inc. 45th Spring Gala

Eight years later, with the support and advocacy of the ROCKS Inc., Sean has become the Founder & Executive Director of Resolve Solutions Inc,

which is an Alexandria, VA-based, 501(c)3, service-disabled veteran-owned and operated non-profit. RSI's mission is straightforward in that they work with student scholars in high school who want to pursue careers in military and/or civilian service.

To date, RSI has assisted over 550 scholars from 23 states to earn over \$51 million toward their undergraduate degrees. Nearly 50 scholars chose to attend one of the five federal service academies. Over 100 scholars decided to participate in one of the six Senior Military Colleges. And over 150 have chosen to attend an HBCU. In 2021, RSI had 38 scholars who graduated and commissioned representing all five service branches.

RSI is a small group of four incredible part-time staff members who work alongside a network of volunteers, coaches, veterans, counselors, and mentors. They empower young Americans to fundamentally change their future by providing transformative opportunities to become future global leaders through military and civil service.

RSI's partnership with the ROCKS Inc. is critical to fulfilling ADM Mullen's challenge of changing the officer corps to be more reflective of our society. With a five-year goal to scale up to 500 scholars annually (with 50% targeted for HBCUs) the task may appear daunting, but it will be transformational.



This would give colleges an estimated 2,100+ scholars within our program worth \$140-160 million toward undergraduate degrees. Additional impact:

Improve the number of MFE officers who are on the glide path to have a successful company command at the 6th & 7th years of service.

The estimated total Lifetime Earned Income of these graduates is \$735 million to \$1 billion USD Est \$2 trillion in home value through uses of VA certificates.

Est \$120-160 million in GI Bill educational benefits to using towards advanced degrees (can be transferred to spouse or children).

Est \$14-30 million in donations back to respective alma maters.

In addition to all of that, Sean is actively engaged in the process of assisting young people and their families in obtaining ROTC scholarships and Service Academy appointments. Despite the pandemic, he has leveraged technology and his personal engagement with scores of young people and their families in the quest to assist them achieve their goals.

In terms of selfless service, Sean Lanier has been a stalwart ROCK who sets the example for others to emulate. He is an awardee of the coveted COL (ret) Bobby Burke award. He's received multiple ROCKS Chairman's awards and served on the ROCKET publication team. But his lasting legacy will be what he's doing to help hundreds of students get a college education and hopefully, pursue a military career.

ROCKET DEADLINE Summer Edition 2022 Friday, June 24, 2022

Email all articles and photos with captions to nationalrocket@gmail.com prior to the deadline.

Please read the Submission Guidelines for guidance.

ROCKET SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

- Submit articles in **Microsoft Word Document Format Only!!!**
- 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 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 along with the article in MS Word format.

Standards and Procedures for the Dissemination of Information to ROCKS, Inc. Membership

Purpose: To provide a formal process and guidance on the dissemination of information and announcements to our ROCKS Membership via National Board communication platforms.

Issue: The National Board lacks a comprehensive method for communicating approved messages to the membership. As a mentorship and professional development The ROCKS needs an approved method outlining the requirements for communicating current programs, events and announcements to the membership. The pandemic across the nation resulted in a significant increase in communications via our web, email and social media platforms. Over the last six months numerous communications were disseminated by various board members in a manner that undercut the effectiveness and significance of the other—information fratricide. Our communications require an approval and dissemination process that showcases the synchronization and deconfliction of our signature programs and events, in a unified manner that promotes collaboration and efficiency across the National Board and ROCKS organization.

Objective: To present a policy outlining a codified process to ensure all outgoing communications/messages to the membership are reviewed by the Vice President of Communications and approved by the Chairman or Vice Chairman. More importantly, the objective of this policy is to ensure all National Board communications support our organization's mission and prior to dissemination, are properly coordinated, approved and synchronized to provide our membership with the most accurate and timely information at all times.

Policy Proposal: As a professional mentorship organization, all members

are expected to submit requests for the dissemination of a message in a *copy ready state* no less than seven (7) business days in advance of the desired dissemination date. The Vice President of Communications will review, vet and submit concur/nonconcurrence of the communication to the Chairman and Vice Chairman. The Chairman and/or Vice Chairman will review, vet and provide approval/disapproval to disseminate. Only the Chairman, Vice Chairman, the Vice President of Communication or the Secretary will be able to make changes to the National Board's website.

Scope: The terms of this policy is applicable to all members of the National Board, the Membership and any individual or organization who wants to disseminate a message or announcement to the members and/or chapters of The ROCKS, Inc. organization. Information for dissemination in addition to ROCKS program/event messages and announcements include but are not limited to promotion ceremony announcements, change of command announcements, website posts, political appointments/elections, retirements and death/funeral announcements.

Communication Criteria & Standards:

- **Lead Time Required for Submissions.** Requests to disseminate a message must be in print ready product format with basic 5Ws and include a photo ready flyer (in word, pdf or jpg format). Message and flyer must be sent to the Vice President of Communications for review no less than seven (7) business days prior to the desired date of dissemination via email, VPComms4ROCKS@gmail.com.
- **Standards for Promotions, Change of Command, Building Openings, & Retirements.** Announcements for Promotion, Change of Command Ceremonies,

Building Openings and Retirements must be received fourteen (14) days in advance of event for dissemination to our membership worldwide and posting on both the ROCKS, Inc. webpage and the African American Officer Facebook Page.



- **Save the Date Announcements.** Save the date announcements will at minimum have the name of the honoree or organization, the name of the event, the purpose of event/occasion, date of event and point of contact for addition information. We will not publish "coming soon" events without the Chairman or Vice Chairman's awareness and approval.
- **Website Content & Management:** Changes, additions and modifications to the website is the sole responsibility of the Vice President of Communications. Any ROCKS member or National Board member who wishes to have governance documents, Power Point presentations or any other products added to the National website, Facebook page or Resource Tab will send the product to the VPComms4ROCKS@gmail.com.
- **Flyers or Postings on the Website:** Flyers for events, announcements, or the sales of event tickets or products will be submitted to the Vice President of Communications seven (7) business days prior to posting for review and approval by the Chairman and Vice Chairman.

- **Reports to the Board.** For quarterly National Board VP reports created to present information to the board, provide an update, present a proposal, or to present a proposal/issue for a vote will be submitted on time to the National Secretary or office manager IAW with the deadline as set forth by the Vice Chairman. Late reports received after the deadline (12:01AM) will be added to the reports received as a point of record; however, it will be at the discretion of the Vice Chairman as to whether or not the owner of the report will be allowed to present their report. The Vice Chairman may elect to have the report accepted and entered into record without discussion.



- **Funeral Announcements.** Funeral announcements will be disseminated only with all pertinent information: time, location of service and we will also include if provided a photo, link to a Tributes or In Memoriam page, information that family provides which addresses contributions to a charity or cause in lieu of flowers.

Desired Policy Implementation Date

– This policy will go into effect immediately after presentation to the National Board and the motion passes. Thereafter, all teammates become agents of change by supporting the aforementioned measures that will formalize the dissemination and

synchronization of messages and ultimately provides our members with the best situational awareness and support.

Consider This

Things to Consider When Sending a Message, Submitting an Article or Hosting an Event

What is the article or event about? Does it support ROCKS' commitment to mentorship or another leadership development topic? Does this event, announcement or article align the organization strategic plan, mission or any of the lines of effort? Will someone in another state or country benefit by learning something new or garner new information for your article as if they physically attended your event.

Date of Communication – When will it happen? This section is especially useful for gradual transitions that require a ramp-up period. Use this to map out key events that will call for communication.

Who is in Charge of Creating the Article or Communique – Who is responsible for the article, communication and even virtual LPDs? Choose your communication lead based on their skill set and relationship to those receiving the communication...the readers/audience.

Audience – Who is the target audience? Design your communication to answer questions, like What's in it for me? (WIIFM) and What does it mean to me? (WDIMTM), for your intended audience.

Events or Actions That Require Communication – What needs to be communicated? Initial announcements, meetings, deadlines? Be ready to add action plans as needed to make your event success and then send us, the ROCKS, Inc an article on your great event. Planning is helpful but adjusting your strategy along the way is imperative.

Reason for Communication – Why is it necessary? Why is it relevant? Why would people be interested in your article of message? You should know what the desired outcome for each article or engagement is before you initiate it. For example, a LPD event is designed to teach the audience something, while a meeting to discuss a sensitive topic is so members can ask questions, express concern or even for leaders to listen to get feedback chapter members.

Method of Communication – How will your message be communicated? Use multiple channels for communications, such as video demonstrations, social media platforms small team meetings, and internal chats. People like to receive information in different ways, so it's beneficial to use a variety of communication methods.

It takes a level of self love, of dedication and determination to live your greatest life. So, look within. Look at every area of your life and ask yourself these questions: Am I on course? Am I growing mentally, emotionally and spiritually? Anything that is blocking that, anything that is preventing you from living your greatest life, make the tough decision to let it go.



**YOU SHOULD KNOW THEIR STORY.... BECAUSE IT IS OUR STORY,
THE ROCKS INCORPORATED.... *THIS IS THE JOURNEY***



BG(R) Roscoe "ROCK" Cartwright

These men comprised the "Blue Geese".
They are "The Journey".
More details to come later in 2022



Burke



Brooks



Cade



Chambers



Collins



Francois



Hazelwood



Mann



Miller



Wyatt

Shown above:

*COL Robert B. Burke
MG Harry W. Brooks Jr.
BG Alfred J. Cade
LTG Andrew P. Chambers
COL Harold Collins*

*COL Frank Francois III
COL John E. Hazelwood
LTC John E. Mann Sr.
COL Clarence A. Miller
COL James E. Wyatt*