

Acquisition Writing Award Opportunity

Principal Military Deputy to the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology Lt. Gen. Michael E. Williamson has announced the third annual Maj. Gen. Harold J. "Harry" Greene Awards for Acquisition Writing competition to encourage critical writing focused on U.S. Army acquisition issues.

Authors may write articles, opinion pieces, or essays from 500 words to 1,800 words on U.S. Army acquisition in one of four categories including acquisition reform/Better Buying Power; future operations; innovation; or lessons learned.

The deadline for submissions is Sept. 19, 2016. Additional information is on the ASA(ALT) website at <https://www.army.mil/asaalt>.

Army DACM Office Announces Training, Leadership, and Educational Opportunities for FY16

U.S. ARMY ACQUISITION SUPPORT CENTER (JULY 15, 2015)

Susan L. Follett

FORT BELVOIR, Va.—Open up your calendars: The Office of the Army, Director of Acquisition Career Management has scheduled a host of Army Acquisition Workforce (AAW) education, training, and leadership development opportunities for FY16.

A handful of AAW leadership development opportunities are on the schedule, including four sections of the Acquisition Leader Challenge Program, a series of seminars that focus on developing leadership skills for civilians, identifying challenges for new leaders, and incorporating individual talents into a cohesive workforce. Applications will be accepted in August for the Competitive Development Group, a three-year developmental program for board-selected applicants that offers expanded training, leadership, experiential, and other career development opportunities. Civilian workforce members can also take advantage of the opportunities offered through the Defense Civilian Emerging Leaders Program and the Senior Service College Fellowship, both of which will open for applications next year.

Ready for your next career challenge? Announcements open in mid-September for the Centrally Selected List/Centralized Selection Board, which fills billets for project and product managers as well as product directors. Maybe a hands-on experience is what you need for this stage of your career. Military members of the Army Acquisition Workforce might consider the Training With Industry program, which places

competitively selected officers in corporate assignments, giving them extensive exposure to managerial techniques and industrial procedures. The program announcement opened July 23. Programs for 51C NCOs and FA-51 officers include Advanced Civil Schooling, which offers a number of sessions through FY16, and the Degree Completion Program, which opens for applications a year from now.

Looking for tuition assistance programs? The Student Loan Repayment Program opens in the fall, and applicants will be selected early next year. Further down the road, the Naval Postgraduate School Master's Degree Program, which allows participants to earn an advanced degree in program management or systems engineering, will open for applications in early 2016.

A complete list of the FY16 programs, including opening and closing dates, is below, and additional information can be found on the [online calendar](#).

FY16 U.S. Army Acquisition Support Center/Army DACM Office Announcement Timelines

ADVANCED CIVIL SCHOOLING (ACS) [FA-51] OFFICERS AND MOS 51C NCO'S

ACS 17-02 [FA-51 Officers]

- Announcement opening: o/a Aug. 7, 2016
- Announcement closing: o/a Nov. 5, 2016
- Applicant selection notification date: o/a December 31, 2016

ACS [MOS 51C NCOs]

- Announcement opening (FY 17): Aug. 8, 2016
- Announcement closing: Nov. 30, 2016
- Applicant selection notification date: January 20, 2017

DEGREE COMPLETION PROGRAM (DCP)

More information will be posted at <http://asc.army.mil/web/dacm-office/>.

- Announcement opening (spring): Aug. 1, 2016
- Announcement closing: Oct. 14, 2016
- Applicant selection notification date: Nov. 18, 2016

DoD Ramps Up Training on Blended Retirement System

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE NEWS, DEFENSE MEDIA ACTIVITY
(JUNE 1, 2016)

Karen Parrish

WASHINGTON—The Defense Department's new retirement system will affect some 2.2 million people who all need to get smart on what it will mean.

Two subject-matter experts from the department's personnel and readiness branch described the issues involved to *DoD News*: Army Sgt. Maj. Luther Thomas Jr., senior enlisted advisor to the Defense Department's Manpower and Reserve Affairs Division, and Wayne Boswell, DoD's director of financial readiness.

Thomas described the four-phase overall training program planned for the Blended Retirement System, or BRS, as "a very comprehensive financial education strategy."

The leader training module will be available starting today, June 1, on the Joint Knowledge Online portal and the MilitaryOneSource website, and on DVD at deployed, shipboard and other remote locations. Thomas, who has reviewed the module, said he's impressed with the tools available in the training.

"I'm going to have service members whose situations are all different. ... I can go up online to JKO, click 'launch the class,' and then look in the glossary and get the specific information I need to be able to talk to my service member one on one," he said.

Thomas said that while leaders are required to take the first round of training, it's also available to those who aren't yet in leadership roles. Boswell noted that the online availability also will help family members learn about the new retirement system.

"We know a lot of these decisions will be made around the dinner table, with families' input in terms of the impact of lifelong financial decisions," he said.

The training is designed to inform leaders about BRS "to be able to translate this for their members," Boswell said.

Modules and Milestones

The learning strategy for BRS includes four separate modules:

- Leader training starts June 1;
- Training for installation and command financial counselors rolls out in the fall;
- Opt-in training for current service members begins in January 2017; and
- Service members who join after January 2018 will receive training during their first months of service.

Everyone serving as of December 31, 2017, will be grandfathered under the current retirement system. Service members who have served fewer than 12 years on active duty or accrued fewer than 4,320 retirement points in the reserve component will have the option of remaining covered under their current retirement system or enrolling in BRS. Those with greater than 12 years on active duty or more than 4,320 retirement points in the reserve component will stay under their current system.

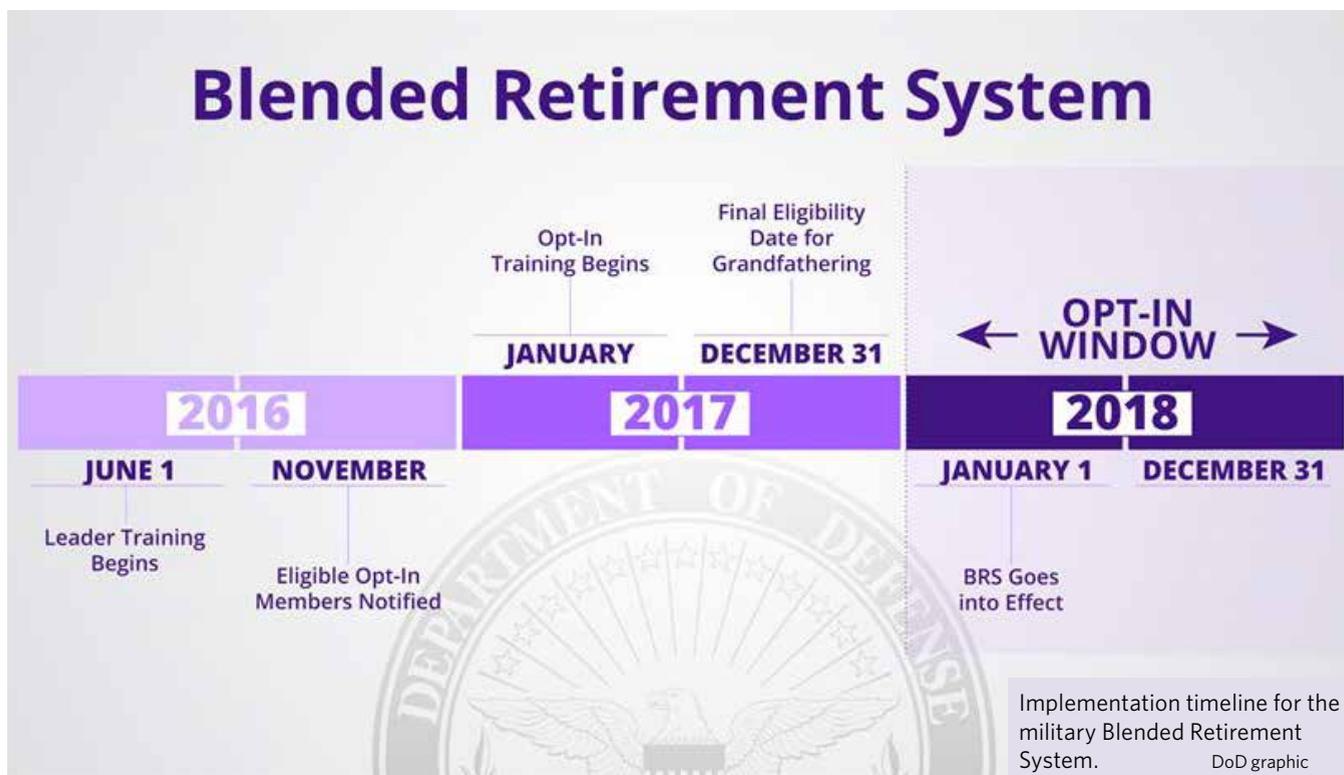
Both men emphasized that while training will happen at all levels, the decision on whether to opt in belongs to the individual. Leaders will be informers of—not advocates for—the new system, they said.

Service members who join on or after Jan. 1, 2018, will automatically be enrolled in BRS. Members eligible to opt into BRS will have until Dec. 31, 2018, to decide if they want to switch to the new plan.

More Benefit for More Troops

"Under the current system only about 19 percent of service members actually leave with some type of retirement benefit, and 81 percent of service members don't," Thomas said. "We believe under this new system, about 85 percent of those who serve, if they serve two years or longer, will be able to leave with some type of portable retirement benefit that they can take with them to a future employer."

The "blending" in BRS comes from the combination of the Thrift Savings Plan and an annuity provision for those who retire after 20 or more years. BRS will use the annuity formula currently in place: the average of the service member's highest 36 months of basic pay times 2.5 percent of his or



her years of service—but the 2.5 percent is adjusted downward by half of a percentage point, from 2.5 to 2 percent.

The Thrift Savings Plan is currently offered to service members without government contributions, but under BRS several changes take place. After their first 60 days in the service, all members will be enrolled in TSP and receive an automatic government contribution of 1 percent of basic pay into their account each month. Additionally, the service member will be automatically enrolled with a 3 percent contribution from their own pay. After two years of service, the government will match the member’s contributions up to an additional 4 percent. In total, members can get up to a 5 percent government contribution on top of what they contribute each month.

BRS also includes a mid-career continuation pay at about 12 years of service, as a further incentive to continue serving toward the traditional 20 years to qualify for monthly military retired pay.

Congress enacted BRS following upon the recommendations of the congressionally mandated Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission, Boswell said, adding that the commission heard from “a vast swath” of stakeholders and subject-matter experts who “are very

interested in the military and are connected to the military” when making this recommendation.

Taking Part of My Pay?

So while those in BRS may see part of their pay deducted for TSP contribution, Thomas said, “what’s happening is they’re going to have to help contribute to their retirement, just like in the civilian world. ... It’s still the service member’s money.” The new system offers the potential for a greater retirement income than the current system for “disciplined savers,” Thomas noted, adding that with DoD’s 1 percent contribution plus matching contributions, members who contribute from their own pay, even in amounts as small as the cost of a pizza or movie each week, could end their careers with potentially sizable savings for retirement. And those who don’t retire won’t walk away with empty pockets.

“When they go into a new job in the private sector or public sector at [age] 24, 25, 26, they don’t start with zero,” Thomas said. “They start with the retirement savings they accumulated [starting] 60 days after they joined the military.”

Boswell said the new system will add to the benefits of military service.

"I think lifelong success comes from self-investment and self-preparation," he said. "I think service members who leave after four years leave with a lot: they leave with skills, experience, [and] education. They've had their mettle tested to some degree."

With BRS, those leaving service will have skills, education, and financial resources, he said.

Product and Project Director Centralized Selection Board Update

OFFICE OF THE ARMY DIRECTOR FOR ACQUISITION CAREER MANAGEMENT (JULY 2016)

The Army Director, Acquisition Career Management, approved a centralized product and project director (PD) selection process in FY15 to identify high-performing acquisition civilians with leadership potential. The annual centralized selection board mirrors and immediately follows the centralized PM board.

The initial product director board (GS-14 level) was in December 2014 and again in January 2016; the initial project director board (GS-15 level) was conducted in February 2016. Over the past two years, 26 acquisition civilians have been selected to fill positions throughout Army Program Executive Offices. The next PD boards will convene in December 2016 and will select product and project directors for the summer of FY17. For more information, go to <http://asc.army.mil/web/career-development/prod-dir/>.

Carter Unveils Next Wave of Force of the Future Initiatives

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE NEWS, DEFENSE MEDIA ACTIVITY (JUNE 9, 2016)

Karen Parrish

WASHINGTON—Defense Secretary Ash Carter today announced the next steps in his Force of the Future initiative to modernize the rules and regulations that govern how the Defense Department recruits, develops, and retains service members and civilian employees.

These are the third and fourth steps he's announced since a snowy week in February 2015, his first week in office, when he spoke urgently during an all-hands meeting here about one of his top priorities: building the force of the future.

"Generations change, technologies change, labor markets change. That's why one of my responsibilities now—and a job for all of us in the years ahead—is to make sure that amid all this change DoD continues to recruit, develop, and retain the most talented men and women America has to offer," Carter said during remarks today in the Pentagon courtyard.

"It's critical we do so to meet and overcome the five challenges we face today—from Russia, China, North Korea, Iran, and terrorism—especially [the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant]," he added, "and to be flexible and agile in preparing for ... unknown dangers we can't anticipate today."

Today's proposed changes—which the secretary called "the capstone of how the department is building the Force of the Future"—for the uniformed military services, focusing on giving them room to make common-sense improvements to the officer promotion system, and for DoD civilians, focusing on continuing to attract and retain the best talent, Carter said.

Landmark Changes

The department is proposing four landmark changes to the 36-year-old Defense Officer Personnel Management Act, or DOPMA—all of which Congress must approve.

Today, DOPMA governs the 100-year-old military "up or out" promotion system involving promotion boards, minimum time-in-grade requirements, and maximum age limits that still mean officers have to be good enough to advance or they have to retire, the defense secretary said.

"Together, these stand to be the most consequential changes to our officer promotion system in over 30 years, if not more," Carter said, "and they'll improve that hundred-year-old system and help bring it into the 21st century."

The proposed DOPMA changes include:

- **Adjusting Lineal Numbers:** DOPMA limits how many personnel are allowed in each grade, so officers chosen for promotion must wait for an opening in the grade above them. When there is an opening, the order in which they advance is determined by line numbers based on seniority. This might mean an assignment goes to the senior person on the list, even if someone lower down would be better in the job, or that high-performing officers chosen for promotion ahead of their peers have to wait in line behind everyone who is more senior.

"That's why we're seeking to change DOPMA to let the Services adjust lineal numbers based on superior performance," Carter said. "It's a key part of good talent management, and it'll help us recognize and incentivize the very best performers."

- **Deferring Promotion Boards:** DOPMA has specific timelines for officers coming up for promotion. Everyone in a year group is considered when the system says they've stayed long enough at their current grade, and they're

considered in competition with their chronological peers. To advance, officers must meet experience and knowledge requirements within a specific amount of time, and the system can penalize deviations from the typical career path.

“The second change we’re seeking—to ensure our force doesn’t lose or penalize talented officers who wish to broaden their careers—is the authority for the Services to be able to temporarily defer when those officers are considered for promotion,” Carter said.

- **Expanding Lateral Entry:** Civilian doctors can become commissioned military officers at grades commensurate with their skill and experience, Carter said, but in most other specialized fields, there’s no way for the Services to recruit a properly skilled and experienced civilian who wants to serve in uniform without having to start at the lowest ranks.

In situations where, for example, a network defense or encryption expert from a tech company feels a call to serve and is willing to contribute to the DoD mission as a reservist or on active duty, the department needs a way to harness their expertise and put it to use, the secretary said.

“Allowing the military services to commission a wider segment of specialized outside talent ... who can meet our standards, who provide unique skills we need and who are willing to serve in uniform will help fill critical gaps in our force and will make us more effective,” he added.

- **Enduring Flexibility:** Under certain conditions the Services must be able to waive select DOPMA constraints to quickly build up expertise in a critical career field, the secretary said. This will enable them to respond to an uncertain future in ways that can be tailored to their specific capability requirements and personnel needs without casting off a system that still largely meets department needs for most officers across the force.

“Here we’re seeking enduring flexibility for future defense secretaries to let the Services make needed tweaks to DOPMA-related policies down the line, for purposes of improving the force,” Carter said. “While the other three changes are about providing specific solutions to specific problems, this change will help us be prepared for what we can’t anticipate.”

Other Military Efforts

The department also is proposing other measures to improve military recruiting efforts, Carter said.

These include moving to an all-digital system for recruiting and processing new personnel into the military, and expanding work being done by DoD’s Joint Advertising, Market Research and Studies program to leverage advances in data science and microtargeting, to build a precision recruiting database and making sure the department has access to the nation’s entire population.

“Rather than identifying geographic and demographic groups that already have a higher propensity to serve and sending recruiters to find people like them—which is what we do now—we’re going to build and use this precision recruiting database to identify those who’d be a great service member, but might not know it,” the secretary added.

Changes for DoD Civilians

For DoD civilians, the department is proposing three changes to current policies. These include:

- **On-Campus Direct Hire Authority:** Today, if a DoD recruiter meets an undergraduate student, a graduate student or a recent graduate who is a perfect candidate for a particular job, the candidate must go to the USAJOBS website and start a 90-day or longer process of applying for the job, not counting the time it takes to get a security clearance.

In this change, Carter said, “we’re seeking authority from Congress to directly hire civilian employees from college campuses. ... This has potential to be a real game-changer for us. Our civilian recruiters will be able to go to a campus job fair, do some interviews, and if they find someone who’s the right fit, they can make a tentative offer on the spot, pending security clearance.”

- **Two-Way Talent Exchange with the Private Sector:** In this change, the department proposes to create a new two-way talent exchange program for DoD civilians with the private sector.

“Right now we only have one such program, and it’s limited to information technology-related fields,” Carter said. “If we want to send a civilian from the Defense Logistics Agency or the U.S. Transportation Command to spend six months at a place like Amazon or Federal Express to see what we might be able to learn, there’s no formal mechanism for that.”

- **Paid Parental Leave:** For this change, the department is calling on Congress to authorize paid maternity and paternity leave for DoD civilians.



Defense Secretary Ash Carter announces new “Force of the Future” initiatives at the Pentagon, June 9, 2016.

DoD photo by Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Tim D. Godbee

“Parental leave is fully paid for military personnel, and the same should be true for their civilian colleagues. ... We can’t afford to risk losing civilian talent just because private-sector companies will pay them during their maternity and paternity leave and we won’t,” Carter said.

Other Civilian Efforts

The department has other proposals that will help build its civilian force of the future, the secretary said, including to better leverage existing authorities to directly hire more highly qualified experts across the department.

A highly qualified expert is an individual, usually from outside of the federal government, who possesses cutting-edge skills or world-class knowledge in a particular technical discipline or interdisciplinary field beyond the usual range of expertise. The expertise and skills of such personnel are generally not available within the department and are needed to satisfy emerging and nonpermanent requirements.

“Today,” Carter said, “we only have about 90 such experts ... across DoD, including some really talented and innovative people like the director of the Defense Digital Service, the head of DoD’s Strategic Capabilities Office, and the Air

Force’s chief scientist, ... so we’re going to use this authority more often and increase our number of highly qualified experts by 10 percent a year over the next five years.”

The department also will increase participation by 10 percent a year over five years in the dozens of career-broadening programs now offered to civilians, and expand by 10 percent over five years DoD’s decade-old scholarship-for-service program, which brings in graduates in mission-critical science, technology, engineering, and math fields to build the next generation of DoD science and technology leaders, Carter said.

Defense Assistive Technology Program Reaches Milestone

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE NEWS, DEFENSE MEDIA ACTIVITY
(JUNE 9, 2016)

Karen Parrish

WASHINGTON—The Defense Department’s Computer/Electronics Accommodations Program recently celebrated the 20th anniversary of its Technology & Evaluation Center, known as CAPTEC.

Located in the Pentagon, CAPTEC allows people seeking solutions to accessibility challenges to view available assistive technologies and compare different solutions.

Stephen M. King, the Computer/Electronics Accommodations Program's director, described how CAPTEC is an essential part of CAP's mission.

Promoting Inclusion, Increasing Productivity

"The accommodation solutions provided by the Department of Defense through CAP remove barriers for employees with disabilities and service members, promote inclusion, and increase productivity," King said.

CAP, the largest centrally funded reasonable accommodation program in the federal government and the largest assistive technology program in the world, continues to have a unique impact on the federal government's ability to be inclusive, officials said, adding that CAPTEC plays an essential role in that impact.

Mike Young, manager of CAPTEC, describes the center as a "place where our customers realize possibilities."

"Matching tools to an individual's job requirements and limitations, and giving that individual the opportunity to try the tools on the spot, allows them to maximize their capabilities," he said.

Since non-DoD agencies began using CAP services in 2000, the Defense Department has provided more than \$21 million in assistive technologies to support, equip, and empower federal employees at 69 partner agencies.

"Through CAP and our Technology and Evaluation Center, the Department of Defense demonstrates its unwavering commitment to, and investment in, its people and to individuals with disabilities across the government," King said. "It is an investment that has paid huge dividends for taxpayers and serves as a shining example of the federal government at its best."

Competitive Development Group/Army Acquisition Fellowship Program Announcement Opens Today

U.S. ARMY ACQUISITION SUPPORT CENTER (JUNE 28, 2016)

Ashley Tolbert

FORT BELVOIR, Va.—Applications for the Competitive Development Group/Army Acquisition Fellowship (CDG/AAF) program, a three-year developmental program offering expanded training through a series of education, leader development and broadening assignments for members of

the Army Acquisition Workforce (AAW), are now being accepted through September 28.

AAW professionals at GS-12/13 (or bandwidth equivalent) who apply must compete for a slot in the program and be selected by a board of senior acquisition professionals. The results of the board are scheduled to be announced late December.

And while this program does not guarantee a promotion, it does strengthen desired skills, providing a competitive edge for those who compete for senior acquisition leader positions. Since the first class in 1997, 225 AAW professionals have participated in the program, of which three have been selected for the Senior Executive Service, 98 have been promoted to GS-15, and 51 have been promoted to GS-14—roughly a 68 percent promotion rate.

In addition, 14 fellows have been selected as program managers, with two currently serving in those positions. These positions are centrally selected, or selected by a board of acquisition professionals to ensure that the best qualified officers and civilians are chosen to serve in key acquisition roles, including directors and product or project managers. This very competitive process results in a selection rate just under 10 percent.

CDG/AAF Fellow Lauren Johnsky started her rotations in 2014, and has held several positions, including acquisition management specialist, contracting specialist, and technical planner. "The ability to rotate through positions with the CDG/AAF program has given me the chance to fill in gaps in my resumé while preparing for positions of increasing leadership through amazing training opportunities," she said. Those selected for CDG/AAF have their choice of two distinct tracks: program management or acquisition leader.

Participants who pursued the acquisition leader track came from the fields of systems engineering, contracting, and logistics. The acquisition leader track offers largely broadening assignments within their acquisition career fields (ACF) and opportunities to gain experience in other ACFs. The program management track offers an opportunity for developmental assignments as well as posts as an assistant product manager, Department of the Army systems coordinator, and other developmental program management positions.

"I now have a strategic perspective of not only the Army, but the Department of Defense as a whole, that I did not even have a hint of prior to the program," said Stephen Roberts, a 2015 CDG/AAF graduate. Roberts recently took over as

the new product director for Field Artillery Launchers in Redstone, Alabama.

The program incorporates developmental acquisition assignments in program executive offices, the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology, the U.S. Army Materiel Command Headquarters, and other functional organizations.

Additional program information can be found on the CDG/AAF website at <http://asc.army.mil/web/career-development/programs/competitive-development-group-army-acquisition-fellowship/>.

Blended Retirement System Training Now Available

*SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMAND
INFORMATION (JUNE 16, 2016)*

Air Force Tech. Sgt. Bryan Franks

WASHINGTON—Online training designed to educate airmen about the new Blended Retirement System, the Defense Department system with changes on the current military retirement system, is now available via Joint Knowledge Online course number P-US1330. The course is also available to those without a Common Access Card—to include family members—via an alternate website at http://jko.jten.mil/courses/brs/leader_training/Launch_Course.html.

The BRS was enacted into law in the Fiscal Year 2016 National Defense Authorization Act, and will go into effect Jan. 1, 2018. All currently serving members are grandfathered into the current military retirement system. However, those with fewer than 12 years of service as of Dec. 31, 2017, or Air Force Reserve component members with fewer than 4,320 retirement points may choose to “opt in” to the BRS during the designated opt-in period from Jan. 1, 2018, through Dec. 31, 2018.

“The BRS is a major change for our airmen,” said Brig. Gen. Brian Kelly, the Military Force Management Policy director. “Although the majority of airmen serving today will not fall under BRS, it is important for all airmen, either as leaders today, or as leaders tomorrow, to understand the changes that will impact airmen in the future.”

The BRS Leader Training is a 30-minute course designed to provide basic familiarity with the key components of the upcoming retirement system and the timeline for implementation. It is designed primarily for Air Force leaders at all levels, but is also open to all airmen and others who wish to learn more about BRS.

“Education is key in providing airmen the information they need in order to make informed decisions about the BRS,” Kelly said. The Defense Department is on track to provide three additional courses with more detailed information within the next 18 months.

An “opt-in” course is targeted at those eligible to opt into the new system. This course will provide eligible active and reserve component members an understanding of both the current and new systems. The course will be available in January 2017.

A “train the trainer” course for personal financial managers, counselors, and retirement services officers is targeted at those experts who serve in an advisory role to commanders, airmen, and their families. This course should be ready by fall of 2016.

A new accessions course targets individuals who enter military service on or after Jan. 1, 2018. It is intended to provide those members who enter service under the BRS an understanding of their blended retirement benefits and personal options.

The Air Force is taking a comprehensive approach to BRS education. “Online courses are designed to provide basic knowledge and understanding,” Kelly emphasized. “In addition to the aforementioned courses, airmen will receive in-person education at various points in their career, starting in basic training, and professional counseling will also be available.”

To learn more about the Blended Retirement System, visit <http://militarypay.defense.gov>.

Department of Defense Publishes Phased Retirement Program Guidance

*DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE NEWS, PRESS OPERATIONS
(JUNE 22, 2016)*

The Department of Defense has released a department-wide policy on the Phased Retirement Program. As more employees become eligible for retirement, this program will assist DoD components and agencies with the transfer of knowledge and provide continuity of operations on a short-term basis.

The DoD Phased Retirement Program is an exciting new human resources tool that allows retirement-eligible, full-time employees to request to work on a part-time basis while receiving a portion of their retirement annuity. It offers eligible employees the opportunity to transition into retirement

while providing mentorship and development for the next generation of emerging subject matter experts.

Participation in the DoD Phased Retirement Program is voluntary and requires the approval of an authorized DoD component official based on written criteria that comply with the Office of Personnel Management regulations. DoD components may opt to develop implementation guidance specific to their organizational structures and establish timeframes for accepting phased retirement applications.

For more information, please view the Department-wide policy at <http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/dir3.html>.

Training for New Civilian Performance Management Program Now Available

SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMAND INFORMATION (JUNE 27, 2016)

Air Force Tech. Sgt. Bubba Franks

WASHINGTON—Educational training is available to civilians and their supervisors in advance of the Air Force's April 2017 transition to the new Department of Defense-wide Performance Management and Appraisal Program.

A phased implementation of DPMAP, part of the DoD's collaborative labor-management effort, New Beginnings, began in April 2016 with a limited number of Army, Navy, and defense agency civilians.

Department of the Air Force civilians are part of phase II with the first annual appraisal period beginning April 1, 2017, and closing March 31, 2018.

"Our airmen, including our civilian airmen, are critical to accomplishing the Air Force's mission," said Air Force Secretary Deborah Lee James. "New Beginnings focuses on institutionalizing a culture of high performance through greater employee-supervisor communication and accountability, increased employee engagement, transparent processes, and improved capabilities in recruiting, developing, and rewarding our workforce."

Training options include either the six-hour web-based training via Joint Knowledge Online, a 14-hour in-resident class, or a combination of the two. Training must be complete for transition into DPMAP. The online JKO training is available under course numbers PM101A for part one, and PM101B for part two. While the online training is available now, employees will receive further information when DPMAP training is scheduled for their base.

"The new program will bring some administrative changes, but the key tenet of our current civilian evaluation system will be retained—individual performance will be linked to organizational mission and goals," James said.

Additional Air Force training related to DPMAP and New Beginnings, expected in the fall, includes a performance management coaching program that will provide short, facilitated, interactive learning opportunities. Performance management coaching will be implemented in group or individual sessions on topics such as active listening, holding critical conversations, and developing performance standards.

For more information on the Air Force implementation of the DPMAP, visit the myPers website at <http://www.af.mil>; click on Career Center.

AF Moving Forward with Restructure of Missileer Career Field

AIR FORCE GLOBAL STRIKE COMMAND PUBLIC AFFAIRS (JUNE 28, 2016)

Carla Pampe

BARKSDALE AIR FORCE BASE, La.—The commander of Air Force Global Strike Command directed a review of the nuclear and missile operations career field earlier this year, with the goal of creating a self-sustaining career field.

The review was recently completed, and over the past week Maj. Gen. Anthony Cotton, 20th Air Force commander, briefed members of the 13N career field at Malmstrom Air Force Base, Montana; F.E. Warren AFB, Wyoming; and Minot AFB, North Dakota, on some of the upcoming changes they will see starting in fiscal year 2017 as the Air Force begins to implement the 13N restructure.

"As we move forward with this restructure, we're going to be making changes that will grow nuclear experience and expertise at the wing level, developing our missile operators into the nuclear 'go-to' experts needed across the Air Force and the nuclear enterprise when it comes to policies and procedures," Cotton said.

The first step in the restructure will reduce the number of accessions into the 13N career field, balancing accessions with retention to eliminate virtually all crossflows. In the past, more 13Ns were accessed than needed, with the knowledge that 30 to 40 percent of the officers would crossflow into other career fields after their initial four-year commitment.

"In recent years, efforts to reinvigorate the nuclear enterprise have led to more missileers wanting to stay in the career

field," Cotton said. "The Air Force has also made an overt effort to do more recruiting at the [U.S.] Air Force Academy and other universities informing cadets about the missile career field, and those efforts have been very successful."

As the 13N restructure progresses, adjustments will be made to grade structures across the entire career field to ensure a more senior crew force at the wing level. This redistribution, combined with additional leadership opportunities following completion of the 3+3 primary operations tours, such as being a flight commander, provides increased nuclear expertise at the unit level. Simultaneously, nuclear-related billets across the Air Force will be reviewed to determine if they are well suited for inclusion in the 13N career field, to ensure nuclear experts are where they are most needed.

"You are also going to see assignment opportunities at other nuclear-related [major commands] and bases," Cotton said. "Missile officers will provide these units with corporate knowledge or subject matter expertise about the nuclear enterprise they may not have had in the past."

Gen. Robin Rand, the AFGSC commander, said the changes will help normalize the 13N career field with the rest of the Air Force.

"However, the biggest and most important benefit will be the level of expertise we'll grow across the nuclear enterprise," he said.

Navy Leaders Prepare Protégés for Civilian Careers at 'Flash Mentoring' Event

*NAVAL SURFACE WARFARE CENTER DAHLGREN DIVISION
CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS (JUNE 29, 2016)*

John Joyce

DAHLGREN, Va.—"How can I positively affect black employment at Dahlgren?"

"It's one of two questions I constantly ask myself," said Michael Hobson, Naval Surface Warfare Center Dahlgren Division (NSWCDD) Special Emphasis Program manager, as he spoke to seasoned mentors and their protégés gathered at NSWCDD's sixth 'Flash Mentoring' event, June 7.

The engineer's second question: "What issues prevent my demographic from obtaining employment or advancing in their employment?"

Hobson and the Black Employment Special Emphasis Program sponsored the colloquium held at the University of Mary Washington Dahlgren campus to foster collaboration,

and mentoring opportunities for Dahlgren's future leaders.

Two years ago, NSWCDD engineer Gaurang Dave had similar questions. He was looking for a way to boost the careers of Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) Navy civilian professionals and increase their representation in "high-grade" government positions.

Dave, the command's AAPI Special Emphasis Program manager at the time, didn't have to look far. He heard about "flash mentoring" success stories and quickly made the connection.

This year, Hobson made the identical connection to enhance an environment that assists, promotes, and invigorates the careers of the command's African American personnel.

Consequently, the event's discussion topics supported the objectives of NSWCDD's Black Employment Special Emphasis Program and the NSWCDD Mentoring Program.

"Mentoring is a necessary process for employee development and growth," said Hobson. "Many of our newer employees are eager to define their career paths and to advance beyond the current stages of their respective careers."

NSWCDD officials believe the dialogues will significantly impact mentees throughout their careers as they advance and engage in the process of mentoring to achieve mutually defined goals.

"The flash mentoring event introduced employees to quality mentors and gave them the opportunity to interact with all levels of leadership," said Hobson, regarding the discussions between employees and command leaders, which focused on employee development.

"I'm proud to work in a place that has so many leaders interested in mentoring its workforce," said Lorna Tebrich, NSWCDD Mentoring Program coordinator. "The flash mentoring events are incredible opportunities for employees to meet others outside of their organization and have quality face-time with senior leaders across the command. Attendees are encouraged to bring questions and challenges specific to their career goals and receive advice directly from a mentor who may have experienced those same challenges."

In small groups, employees discussed their challenges with mentors. In turn the mentors, including NSWCDD department heads, division heads, and program managers, shared



DAHLGREN, Va.—Naval Surface Warfare Center Dahlgren Division (NSWCDD) mentors and mentees discuss various aspects of employee development during the command's flash mentoring event held at the University of Mary Washington Dahlgren campus in June. Mentors guided conversations on three topics: increasing success in your current position, development opportunities, and advancing in your career.

Courtesy photo

their perspectives and experiences, providing guidance to mentees on how to overcome challenges and advance in their careers.

"This was an excellent opportunity to introduce employees to another level of leadership," said Tebrich. "We focused on providing a roster of mentors that is more representative of the career paths here at Dahlgren, line, and technical. Mentoring event discussions often skew toward line management, but there is a whole host of people at Dahlgren who want to be senior technical leads or program managers. It's important to us that they're introduced to mentors who can provide guidance and advice on those goals."

In all, 66 employees, mentors, and mentees, engaged in roles which included task lead, group lead, branch head, project manager, and program manager. Mentors guided conversations on three topics—increasing success in your current position, development opportunities, and advancing in your career.

Moreover, the mentees networked with other employees in similar roles to learn about best practices and success stories. They engaged each other in conversations about challenges and development opportunities within and outside of their positions.

"Our mentoring strategy is to provide a number of events and activities to introduce people to potential mentors and educate them about the benefits of establishing thoughtful

mentoring partnerships," said Tebrich after the sessions. "Mentoring is such a critical piece of career development. Mentors can be guides, career counselors, and sounding boards. They can be ears and eyes for new opportunities. They can be wingmen by introducing you to the right people. There's no need to go it alone when there are so many leaders on base willing to support an employee's career journey."

NSWCDD, a Naval Sea Systems Command warfare center division, is a premier research and development center that serves as a specialty site for weapon system integration. The command's unique ability to rapidly introduce new technology into complex warfighting systems is based on its long-standing competencies in science and technology, research and development, and test and evaluation.

For more information, visit <http://www.navy.mil>, www.facebook.com/usnavy, or www.twitter.com/usnavy. For more news from NSWC Dahlgren, visit <http://www.navy.mil/local/NSWCDD/>.

AFMC Successfully Transitions to Acquisition Workforce Personnel Demonstration Project

*AIR FORCE MATERIEL COMMAND PUBLIC AFFAIRS (JUNE 29, 2016)
Stacey Geiger*

WRIGHT-PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Ohio—Some 12,500 Air Force Materiel Command civilian employees have transitioned to the Acquisition Workforce Demonstration Project, or AcqDemo, pay system effective June 12.

Under AcqDemo, employees no longer carry their general schedule, or GS, designation and numbered grade. Instead, they have been placed in one of three broadbands comparable to their previous grade and salary.

"AcqDemo is enabling us to do what is most important for us to accomplish our mission, and that is hiring, developing, and caring for our civilian workforce," said Gen. Ellen M. Pawlikowski, AFMC commander. "I am personally committed because it is critically important to the success of this command."

AcqDemo allows greater managerial control over personnel processes and functions, and expands opportunities for employees through a more responsive and flexible personnel system. The new pay system retains, recognizes, and rewards employees for their contribution rather than performance, and also supports their personal and professional growth.

To sync up with the AcqDemo appraisal cycle of Oct. 1 to Sept. 30, the current appraisal cycle for transitioned employees has been modified to three months and will end on Sept. 30. During the beginning of each appraisal cycle, employees and their supervisors will complete an employee contribution plan to project an employee's impact on the organization's mission. At the end of each appraisal cycle, employees will complete their self-assessments to measure their contributions and also create new contribution plans for the following cycle. Pay pools will be conducted from October through December and, where applicable, employee raises and award pay-out in January.

AcqDemo covers mainly non-bargaining, supervisory, and professional series employees. The command will continue to explore expanding AcqDemo to all AFMC civilians.

Face of Defense: Chinook Pilot Turned Acquisition Officer Shares Insights

U.S. ARMY ACQUISITION SUPPORT CENTER (JULY 5, 2016)

Tara Clements

FORT BELVOIR, Va.—Veteran Chinook helicopter pilot Army Lt. Col. Al Niles Jr. changed course and became an Army acquisition officer, and instead of take-offs and landings, he's working on acquisition and contracting.

Also a maintenance test pilot, Niles has 19 years of flying experience with multiple combat deployments. For the last year he has been a fellow in the Army Acquisition Corps' Training with Industry program, working with Lockheed Martin in Orlando, Florida, and gaining experience on every-

thing from program management and business development to capture management, finance, and contracting.

"I've had the opportunity to participate in the integrated process for several commercial aviation and international programs, for which I was able to provide helpful viewpoints," Niles said about his experience with TWI. His technical expertise in aviation, he said, provided him the opportunity to work with several teams charged with resolving complex aviation challenges.

TWI is designed to give selected Army commissioned and noncommissioned officers the opportunity to work with industry to see how the private sector works, and to then use that perspective to help improve Army acquisition, Niles said.

"My experience [with TWI] has been very positive," Niles said. "In this profession, I'm continuously developing my business expertise by being involved in major acquisition programs. I've been able to gain an in-depth understanding of the Lockheed Martin organization and how it relates to the Army from a business perspective, and I was also able to participate in domestic and international business operations."

For Niles, the biggest surprise was "the vast amount of knowledge and support we [the military] get from our national laboratories and collegiate partners. When you're in the Army Acquisition Corps, you get to see that we collaborate with many organizations to develop equipment for soldiers. There are a tremendous amount of people and other experts outside of the military who put resources into developing a boot, a helmet, a weapon system, et cetera. It's not just one or two people."

For those considering the program, Niles had this advice to offer: "Know exactly what you'd like to learn while you're in TWI. Know what you expect to get out of the year of experience—there won't be a program laid out for you when you get there."

Employing Talents

With a background in special operations forces acquisition, Niles is set to take command in July as the Product Manager for Special Operations Forces Training Systems within the Program Executive Office for Simulation, Training, and Instrumentation, and he plans on taking some of the lessons he's learned from TWI and his other assignments to his next post.

He highlighted one of those lessons: don't focus on the equipment—focus on the people who make it happen.

"I had the opportunity to observe talent management techniques from a different perspective during my TWI experience," Niles said, "which solidified [for me] that finding and keeping skilled talent takes coaching, tracking and investing in the right training and education opportunities for the workforce. People first!"

Niles has served as a company commander for an aviation unit in Iraq, a Chinook aviation operations officer in Afghanistan, the assistant product manager for Product Manager Air Warrior in Iraq and Afghanistan [within PEO Soldier], and as the chief of aviation accident investigations for Afghanistan.

"Through the years and several deployments, I think the acquisition community has gotten better at providing the warfighter with the equipment and services they need anywhere in the world," he said. "As the mission has transitioned, so has the ability of the Army Acquisition Corps to be more agile, effective, and efficient."

Giving Back

In what spare time he can muster, Niles said he makes sure he finds time to be involved with the Orlando community, whether it's with veterans' organizations, schools, or youth programs. He has racked up more 250 hours of community service during his time in the TWI program, he said.

"I think that it is very important that we give back to the community and inspire our future leaders, the children, whenever it's possible," Niles said. "Many of us have experienced challenges or moments that have shaped us into who we are



Dedicated to giving back to the community and inspiring a younger generation, Army Lt. Col. Al Niles Jr., an acquisition officer, speaks to a kindergarten class at Saint Cloud Preparatory Academy in Saint Cloud, Fla. He logged more than 250 hours of community service during his time with the Army's Training With Industry program, supporting veterans' organizations, schools, and youth programs.

Courtesy photo by Tamara Carpenter

today. I feel as though the time that I dedicate to give back to could result in another individual to achieve greatness."

His intent to serve the community didn't start with TWI. For the past several years, he has taken an annual trip to his alma mater, Tuskegee University in Alabama, to speak to students and ROTC cadets and to connect with junior soon-to-be officers, pointing them to the resources and information he didn't have as a lieutenant.

What motivates Niles to make community service a priority? "A sense of duty and responsibility to something bigger than myself," he said.

SECNAV Announces Implementation of Full and Inclusive Review (FAIR) Program

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY PUBLIC AFFAIRS (JULY 21, 2016)

WASHINGTON—As part of ongoing efforts to enhance the professional growth of leaders in the Navy, Marine Corps,

and Department of the Navy (DON) civilian workforce, Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus recently directed the development of policies and procedures for the implementation of a Full and Inclusive Review (FAIR) program.

Core to the FAIR program is the use of a multi-rater assessment, more commonly referred to as a 360-degree review, for all military and civilian supervisory personnel. Government agencies and the private sector routinely use these types of assessments as a developmental tool to provide personnel with relevant feedback designed to help them evaluate and use their strengths while also dedicating attention and resources to skills they may need to improve.

“Effective implementation of FAIR, and the feedback provided by these reviews, will hone the skills of our future leaders and foster continued growth and excellence in the execution of our mission,” said Mabus. “This program is a further example of our existing efforts to modernize our personnel processes and strengthen our Navy, Marine Corps, and civilian leaders.”

FAIR implementation plans and policies for DON civilian supervisory personnel are overseen by the office of the Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Manpower and Reserve Affairs) (ASN[M&RA]), while the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) and Commandant of the Marine Corps (CMC) will oversee the implementation of FAIR in their respective Services.

The program is designed for use across the DON by personnel in positions of increasing scope of leadership and responsibility such as civilian supervisors, senior enlisted leaders, or officers assigned as department heads or higher.

The feedback provided via FAIR will address core leadership and innovation competencies, and be discussed during a developmental discussion with a supervisor during which the reviewed leader’s plan for continued growth will be addressed.

The DON has already launched a dedicated portal site to provide information to and register civilian senior executives for 360 assessments.

Further development of policy and training for those who will be using the program is underway and continues through the end of 2016.

Advanced Degree, Experience Programs Open to Eligible AF Officers

AIR FORCE PERSONNEL CENTER PUBLIC AFFAIRS (JULY 26, 2016)

Kat Bailey

JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO-RANDOLPH, Texas—Eligible active-duty officers interested in 2017 advanced academic degree and experience broadening opportunities can now apply for various developmental programs, Air Force Personnel Center officials announced.

As part of the force development construct, Advanced Academic Degree/Special Experience Exchange Duty (AAD/SPEED) programs provide targeted developmental education and broadening developmental assignments for officers in eligible career fields.

These career broadening opportunities are available through AAD programs such as the Air Force Institute of Technology, AFIT faculty pipeline, U.S. Air Force Academy Faculty Pipeline, and National Reconnaissance Office.

SPEED programs include Acquisition and Intelligence Experience Exchange Tour, Acquisition and Logistics Experience Exchange Tour, Comptroller Operation Logistics Tour, Education with Industry, U.S. Marine Corps Expeditionary Warfare School, and more.

A full list of all AAD/SPEED programs, along with their application procedures and deadlines, is available on the myPers website at <http://www.af.mil/>; click on the Career Center link.

For more information about Air Force personnel programs, go to the myPers website at <http://www.af.mil/>; click on the Career Center link. Individuals who do not have a myPers account can request one by following the instructions on the Air Force Retirees Services website at <http://www.retirees.af.mil/mypers/index.asp>.

Army Senior Leader Invests in Interns

U.S. ARMY MATERIEL COMMAND (JULY 29, 2016)

Kara Wall

Running the gamut from high school to Ph.D. students, 42 Army Materiel Command Summer Hire Interns gathered here to hear from the command’s top leader July 28.

Gen. Dennis L. Via, AMC commanding general, spent two hours answering the interns’ questions, taking photos and giving them his personal keys to success. “There are tremendous employment opportunities in the federal government,” Via said to the students. “This summer, we hope we exposed



More than 40 Army Materiel Command Summer Hire Interns meet with Gen. Dennis L. Via, AMC commanding general, to discuss opportunities in the federal government and hear advice for future success, July 28, at Redstone Arsenal.

Photo by Army Sgt. 1st Class Michael Zuk

you to a possibility you may not have given any consideration otherwise."

Focused on igniting a passion for federal service in potential new employees, Via started the "AMC 1,000" initiative, which offers 1,000 intern opportunities each year for five years across AMC's global enterprise. "We need a large and diverse bench to pull from as we proactively refresh the workforce," Via said.

Interns don't have to join the Army to serve, Via explained. AMC employs around 64,000 Department of the Army Civilians, offering a full spectrum of careers including science, engineering, accounting, public affairs, business, and even medical.

"This internship provides an excellent foundation for you," said Via. "You've been exposed to successful people and an organization with a real world mission that impacts people's lives. It takes everyone, the entire team, to be able to meet those missions and to take care of soldiers."

Via shared his personal leadership lessons, starting off with good education as the foundation for success. "Embrace a mentality of lifelong learning," Via said. "Be the best at every job you're given."

Via also encouraged the group to find their passion, be a good person and a good friend, set high goals, and work hard every day. "Some people say success is luck," he said. "I've found that the harder I work, the luckier I get."

Via said that he would love for all of the interns to find careers at AMC. "We want you to spread the word and go back as ambassadors to your schools and talk about the opportunities here," said Via. "We would love to have you as part of our team."

Participating interns were employed by AMC Headquarters, AMC's Logistics Support Activity and AMC major subordinate command U.S. Army Security Assistance Command.

Force of the Future Requires Commitment By All, Carter Says

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE NEWS, DEFENSE MEDIA ACTIVITY
(JULY 29, 2016)

Terri Moon Cronk

WASHINGTON—The Force of the Future takes commitment by all service members to modernize the U.S. military and keep it strong, Defense Secretary Ash Carter told sailors yesterday at Naval Station Great Lakes in Illinois.

The secretary said in his troop talk that continually improving how DoD manages, develops, and recruits its people “does not mean we’re not doing a good job. It only means we could do it better.”

Carter said he develops ideas for the Force of the Future by visiting with and speaking to service members, adding that he appreciates their insights.

Force of The Future Efforts

The secretary talked about some of the initiatives he’s instilled to strengthen the Force of the Future, such as ensuring the military has the best in technology, accessing particular talents the military needs in its force recruitment, the ability to train outside DoD for personal development, improving the parental leave policy and opening up all military specialties, including combat, to women.

“It doesn’t mean that everybody meets standards, and everybody gets selected, but the principle of the all-volunteer force is we get to pick and choose. That’s why we have such good people,” he said.

DoD’s Greatest Asset

And people comprise DoD’s greatest asset, Carter said. The U.S. military stands for good things, the secretary said. “People like us for that ... they like us because of how our people conduct themselves, and what they stand for,” he said.

When he travels around the world, the secretary said he hears how other nations enjoy working with the U.S. military. “It’s a strength of America, but the biggest strength we have is our people. That’s where you all come in,” Carter told the service members.

Serving: A Noble Duty

The secretary said he swore in seven Navy recruits that morning at a local Military Entrance Processing Station, and told them serving in the military is the noblest thing they can do.

“There’s nothing better than being part of feeling or protecting our people, leaving a better world for our children,” he said. “You can see in those young eyes the beginning of them getting that and that they feel like they’re part of something bigger than themselves. And it’s an inspiration that, for me ... never stops,” the secretary said.

The day before represented the “other end of things” at Fort Bragg in North Carolina, Carter said, when he met with members of the XVIII Airborne Corps as they prepare to deploy to join the battle to counter the Islamic State of Iraq and The Levant.

“Off they go to Iraq and Syria, which is where ISIL was born, so we need to destroy it there,” Carter said. “We’re going to destroy it there—and then, everywhere around the world.”