

Howdy Everybody,

Time for another update. I'm drafting this while flying from the west coast to the east coast---seems the travel never stops. I did spend a week in Europe earlier this month and had a great visit with our Civilians over in Germany. Many thanx to all the folks who had a part in making it happen. And thanx to both our Corps members and their military co-workers who attended our discussions. I really enjoyed meeting and spending time with you. In the near future I'll be visiting Redstone Arsenal and Fort Leonard Wood (week of 6 Feb) and am looking forward to that as well.

OK, here we go with the current updates, in no particular order.

-- Strategic Learning Project (SLP): We had a really good first SLP (the one where folks apply, come to Fort Sam TDY, do a project, learn about the Civilian Corps, and outbrief flag level folks---and we pay the bill). Thanx again to Tawanna Campbell from Fort Stewart for doing such a nice job. We plan to do one per quarter. You can get all the information and download the submission form from our website at <https://ameddciviliancorps.amedd.army.mil> (use the "What's New" link on the left hand side), but here are the basics.

WHEN: 27 February - 9 March 2012. You must be available for the entire period.

WHERE: Civilian Corps Office, AMEDD Center & School, Fort Sam Houston, TX

TOPIC: Civilian Awards

DEADLINE TO APPLY: 3 Feb 12

INTERESTED? Send us a short essay (250 words or less) with your supervisor's endorsement. Explain why you want to work on this project and why you should be selected.

Again, the application information and more details on the project are available on the AMEDD Civilian Corps web site at <https://ameddciviliancorps.amedd.army.mil> under the "What's New" link. Again, the suspense for submission is 3 Feb 12 so pull your info together and send it on to us. We look forward to hearing from you.

--Leadership Training: We had good success with the first in our series of our leadership videoteletraining (VTT) classes, "The Psychology of the Workplace," conducted in early January. There were 14 different sites and more than 40 attendees tied into the class. Don't forget to register for Part 2. Information is below. It will cover the Basics of Personality and Social Psychology. Participants will learn "What is personality?" and the basic tenants of personality theories. We will also review social theory, social influence and social relations as they relate to the work environment. This is a great opportunity and is pretty easy to access.

DATE: Thursday, 9 Feb 12

TIME: 1300-1500 CST

Self Nominate on the CL3 website at <https://ke2.army.mil/cl3/> <<https://ke2.army.mil/cl3/>> Registration closes @ 1300 CST on Monday, 6 Feb 12. Please contact the POC, Ms Donna Sabsook at cl3@amedd.army.mil for any questions.

In addition, for those who couldn't attend the first session, we did video the presentation. We'll soon have it available for you to review on the Civilian Lifelong Learning (CL3) site and will post the information on the Corps web site. We're planning to video the 2nd and 3rd classes as well.

--Good News on the Master of Social Work Degree! A number of you have asked if there would be more opportunity to pursue a Master of Social Work (MSW) degree in the Army's program at the AMEDD Center and School at Fort Sam Houston. Well, we received the application information for this year's opportunities today! We will place it on the AMEDD Civilian Corps web site (<https://ameddciviliancorps.amedd.army.mil>) in the next day or so under the "What's New" link on the left side of the page and will find it a more permanent spot under the "Training and Development"– "Other Training Information" link shortly after that. There is a whole list of training information on the page and the Master of Social Work Program information will be toward the bottom of the page. The application deadline is early in April so, if you're interested, start pulling your information together!!

--The Army Medicine Wolf Pack Award: The first Army Medicine Wolf Pack Award winning team will be announced later this month. A panel is in the process of reviewing the 1st Quarter FY2012 nominations now. As mentioned in previous messages, the Wolf Pack Award is designed to recognize exceptional teamwork by an integrated group of military and civilian team members focused on excellence in support of Army Medicine. Winning teams will be selected and announced quarterly. Quarterly winners will automatically compete for the Army Medicine "Wolf Pack of the Year" Award, presented annually at the MEDCOM Training Symposium or other appropriate forum.

Eligible teams must consist of a mix of civilian and military team members, and may include contractors. The Wolf Pack Award will recognize teamwork that drives excellence in outcomes supporting the Army Medicine mission. The winning teams must demonstrate excellence and effective teamwork resulting in significant products or services with the potential for broad impact in support of Army Medicine. Anyone can nominate a team for this award, with Command endorsement. All the information is available on the Civilian Corps website and you can download the Wolf Pack Nomination Form. We will accept completed forms via email to Civilian.Corps.Chief@amedd.army.mil anytime throughout the quarter.

Deadline for 2nd Quarter FY2012 nominations is 5 April.

--Army Civilian Record Brief: The Department of the Army has developed a Civilian Record Brief (CRB) for all employees. After a successful pilot of the CRB at select organizations in 2010, the CRB is now available for all Army employees. The CRB is a readily available one-page snapshot of an employee's official data pulled from multiple sources like MyBiz, Defense Civilian Personnel Data System (DCPDS), NPA/SF-50s and Training Application Systems. It's a concise reflection of the employee's work experience, education, training, awards, professional licenses and certifications, performance ratings, foreign language proficiency, security investigation status, personal and emergency contact information, current and previous position description information, and other data regarding the employee's federal civilian service. It will give you an uncomplicated way to review your data from the source systems and, if necessary, update or correct it. You can access your CRB through the Employee Portal Login of CPOL via <http://acpol.army.mil/>. Once you're on the Employee Portal, you can get the CRB from the Employee Tab/Employee Data box.

Remember this is a new capability so there may be an "opportunity" to work out some functional and policy bugs but it will benefit all of us in the long run. We'll have more on this topic as the system evolves.

--A Message from One of Our Own: I've mentioned in the past that we often get responses to the Corps Chief messages when we send them out. One came in a couple of messages back

that I want to share with you. It came from Dr. Brian G. Scott, MD, MPH, the Surety Medicine Program Manager, US Army Public Health Command, Fort Sam Houston. Brian is one of our "hybrid" Civilians who served on active duty and is now an Army Civilian. We've made a couple of small edits but it is essentially intact and carries an important message for all of us. Here's the quote:

"When I became an Army Civilian employee in Dec 2010, I reported as instructed to the designated place, and filled out a number of forms. Then I was asked to stand, raise my right hand, and take an oath.

'I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office upon which I am about to enter. So help me God.'

(Source: <http://cpol.army.mil/library/permis/74b.html>; Reference 5 USC 33, Section 3331)

This is meaningful because it is word-for-word the same oath I took over 30 years ago to become a commissioned officer. I spent 27 years in uniform and did not know that Army Civilians took an oath upon appointment to Civil Service positions. I knew that there was a material difference between those in the Civil Service and other citizens, because Army Civilians could perform inherently governmental actions, but I never knew that Army Civilians took an oath. Perhaps it was in the Officers' Guide, or it may have been mentioned in Officer Basic, but if it was, I missed it or forgot it.

Since then, I have had occasion to mention this to several senior officers more or less my contemporaries, and none of them knew this, either. And telling them made a difference in their understanding of certain issues. I wonder if this shortfall in knowledge might be widespread? Perhaps this might be an appropriate target for one of our strategic communications: be sure the uniformed force understands that Army Civilians are also sworn to uphold and defend the Constitution."

The enlisted oath is very similar, a major difference being a reference to the Uniformed Code of Military Justice. Isn't it interesting that we are all members of the same Army Medicine Team; we take nearly the same oath; and, if you take a look at the Civilian Corps Creed on the Corps web site, you'll see that we all commit ourselves to the same mission and values. Teammates working together with that kind of commitment are unstoppable in achieving their mission. Thanx, Brian, for this important reminder.

--Logistics and Technology Master of Science Degree Program: Watch for an upcoming call for applications (with a relatively short deadline in late April/early May) for the Class of 2014 Logistics and Technology (LOGTECH) Master of Science Degree Program in Supply Chain Management through Syracuse University. The program is centrally funded and sponsored by the US Army Materiel Command. This program is intended for employees who work in a Logistics or Supply Chain Management Career Program (CP) such as, but not limited to, CP13 Supply Management, CP17 Materiel Maintenance Management, and CP24 Transportation and Distribution Management. You can get more information about the program, eligibility criteria and application instructions from our MEDCOM Career Program Managers at HQ MEDCOM - Ms. Dana Baker for CP13 and CP17, and Mr. John Almager for CP24.

--Professional Associations: As part of your personal and professional development plan, do you belong to any professional organizations? Many occupational areas and career groups have national level organizations that sponsor research, provide professional development programs, and help members stay current on issues and programs affecting federal employees in the occupational area. In addition to helping cultivate a network of professional colleagues, some organizations also offer certification, which can provide a recognizable level of personal commitment to your profession.

A few examples include the American Society of Military Comptrollers (ASMC), the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), the American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE), the American Academy of Medical Administrators, the American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA), the Association of Military Surgeons of the United States (AMSUS) and the American Association of Healthcare Administrative Management (AAHAM). There are many others; these barely scratch the surface. Talk to your supervisor, co-workers, mentor, or Career Program manager to get some ideas. There might be local, regional and state chapters of a national association in which you could get involved with your peers in the local area.

A common question is whether there is government funding for such memberships. Unfortunately, there isn't. Membership is a personal choice and is funded by the member. I am not endorsing any organization and membership in such organizations is not mandatory. My purpose in mentioning it is only to help raise awareness of professional organizations as a possible avenue for you to explore in your career development journey.

--Physicians and Dentists Pay Plan Transition: We've had a number of questions recently about the Physicians and Dentists Pay Plan (PDPP). Here is some information we've been able to gather in response.

Army has completed the transition of all eligible Physicians and Dentists into the newly developed Plan. A small number of ineligible employees remain in the GS system, but for the most part, the focus of our human resources managers will change from understanding the transition process to learning our role in PDPP hiring and internal placements.

Our research tells us that PDPP is based on a hybrid of Title 5 and Title 38 provisions with the most unique aspects being related to pay. Classification, qualifications, and base pay rates come from Title 5. Each PDPP employee is assigned to a Table and Tier for compensation, based on the type and the level of the performed duties. These Table and Tier assignments determine the range of Market Pay available to be paid to the employee. Market Pay is unique to PDPP and is a single amount which includes what used to be paid separately as locality pay, special salary rates, and premium pay.

The primary role of your local CPAC Specialist in PDPP actions is to ensure that management provides the properly documented PDPP salary worksheet and that the total adjusted salary is in the range for the assigned Table and Tier. Talk with your local organizational or regional Civilian HR Office if you have questions about PDPP. If they cannot answer all of your questions, the MEDCOM POC for PDPP is Mr. Paul Cardona in the Civilian Human Resources Division, HQ MEDCOM. You can find his contact information in the AMEDD Global.

--Civilian Corps Web Site: My Corps Chief message just wouldn't be complete without a reminder dedicated to our Civilian Corps website. It's mentioned above and you can STILL find it at <https://ameddciviliancorps.amedd.army.mil>. Lots of good info for your use!! We also want your photos, articles, stories, and ideas to help make the website even better but, more importantly, to tell the world about the great things you do daily to support Army Medicine. Send us photos (with signed release forms) of award ceremonies,

stories about your successes, or even historical pictures to help add some photos to our Army Medicine Civilian Corps history. Help us tell your great story.

Well, the flight has landed and I'm finishing this up in my hotel room—headed to an all day TRADOC meeting tomorrow. So, last but not least let's hit a couple of key points. Remember that SAFETY is key to our success. Please keep it in the forefront of both your thoughts and practice at and away from your work. I can't say enough about how we are all important parts of the Army Medicine Team and can only be that when we take care of ourselves and one another. Doing so builds trust among our team members and that trust is a key element of our capability to execute the Army Medicine mission. Thank for your daily contributions to that mission.

Until next time... Take care.

Sincerely,

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Gregg Stevens, SES
Chief, AMEDD Civilian Corps