

Happy New Year to All y'All!!

This is the last Corps Chief message for 2012--stunner, huh?!! From the Corps Chief's Office we hope that your holiday season has been both fun and safe and that 2013 will be a terrific year for all of us. In the coming year, Army Medicine will be aggressively pursuing execution of the Army Medicine 2020 Campaign and implementation of the Performance Triad (yep--Activity, Sleep, and Nutrition) that we've talked about before. As many of you know, I take the opportunity to make visits to your activities as often as I can. One of the things we'll be doing in future visits is some sort of health related activity during the day of the visit. So, when you hear that I'll be in your neck of the woods, plan to join me. There is only one restriction I can think of--the options do not include sleeping during my presentations!! OK, there is, as always, lots going on--some of it long but important--so here we go.

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

- 11 Jan 13--Submission date for applications to be a member of The Surgeon General's Commander's Initiatives Group (CIG). Details are in Corps Chief Message # 29. If you need to find the message go to the Corps website (<https://ameddciviliancorps.amedd.army.mil>) and look under the "About Us" link, then "Corps Chief" and "Corps Chief Messages". You can also find a checklist to assist with submission under the "What's New" link on the site. This is a great opportunity for one of our own to be in the strategic level of the AMEDD and make a real impact on the future of Army Medicine. The position will be in OTSG for 2 years and the selectee will have return rights to their current position.
- 14 Jan 13--Due date for applications for the 2nd Quarter FY 13 Wolf Pack Award. Recall that this award is given quarterly to a combined team of civilians and military (can include contractors but must have the other two) which makes a significant contribution to the Army Medicine mission. Details on the award and application are on the website under the "Celebrate Success" link.
- Late March--We will announce the dates and topic for our next Strategic Learning Project (SLP)---you know, the one where we pay the bills for you to come here, do a project, and learn something about Army Medicine and the Civilian Corps at the strategic level--in the next Corps Chief message. We expect that the event will occur in late March and the topic may have to do with increasing supervisor knowledge of civilian awards and the associated processes. Stay tuned!

NEAT STORY--IT'S NEVER TOO LATE!!

Here's a cool story about one of our own, Dr Richard Mull. It makes a good point. I'll leave it in his words with VERY minor edits. Enjoy!

I am currently a physician member of the AMEDD Civilian Corps. Specifically, I am a GS-15 civilian radiologist and have been working at Fort Campbell, KY (BACH) for about 2 years. I caught a bad case of "gung ho" from the local young soldiers and volunteered to join them on Active Duty with the US Army Medical Corps last year. I was finally accepted as a LT COL in the US Army Reserves, and am now going to Officers Basic at Fort Sam Houston in January 2013 (btw, how's the weather there in January?), followed by a 2 year overseas assignment in Korea. I will be going on Leave of Absence from the AMEDD Civilian Corps so as to maintain my Federal re-employment rights under USERRA after I rotate off Active Duty.

I requested assignment to Afghanistan immediately after Officers Basic, but COL Wirt (the Radiology Consultant) has been coy with parceling out that duty, and so far he has only agreed to put me on an Afghanistan "back-up" list in case one of the young guys he has already chosen can't make it. My father was stationed for 4 years with the US Army Medical Corps in nearby Pakistan (then, India) during WWII, so I still hope for the chance to pull a tour nearby to my father's old haunts.

So far, I imagine that this story is nothing unusual for you to hear. The more unusual part is that I am 61 years old now, and will turn 62 years old about the time my family and I all get to Korea - the month after I finish Officer's Basic - of course, that's presuming that I can even PASS Officer's Basic training at my age; wish me luck! The "Army Strong" online newsletter thought it was worth a series of online articles last year when a 60 year old civilian family practitioner volunteered for active duty. I read those articles, and since I am older than him then and now, I thought that you might also find a similar story involving an AMEDD Civilian Corpsman to be of some passing interest.

DEFENSE ENTERPRISE EMAIL (DEE) MIGRATION UPDATE

As many of you already know, the DOD is transitioning to an enterprise email system. We talked about it a bit in Message # 28. There have been some changes in dates but there are some things that remain constant. Each of you has a VERY important role in the success of the migration. I can't stress enough how important it is for you to follow the instructions that come down on how to execute the process. When you update your profile, please pay particular attention to Duty Organization, Duty Sub-organization, and Duty Installation/Location. The AMEDD is working hard to have current distribution lists added to DEE to keep communication channels to you open. That will include the list that directs these messages so please do the required updates.

My email is scheduled to migrate by 7 Jan 13 and I understand migration across the Command is currently projected to be complete sometime in March 2013, so it's important to pay attention to it now. Once we are all on the new system, we can only use the new distribution lists. By insuring the correct information is in your profile, you will insure you are on the lists. If not, you won't get my messages. NO, this is not an opportunity for you to delete yourself from the list! Not only will you miss these messages and the associated opportunities but you will likely miss other important information as well.

We will be using our legacy distribution list until all accounts migrate to the new system. New folks who come in under the new email system won't be picked up on the old lists, so please share my messages with new employees until we are all transitioned. Also, don't forget that these messages are all posted to our Civilian Corps Website at (<https://ameddciviliancorps.amedd.army.mil>) under the "About Us" and "Corps Chief" links. We will also work to make it even easier by adding an indicator to the main website page that gives the date of the latest message and will try to link to it.

One final comment on this topic. We will no longer be able to manually add or delete names from the distribution list. So please help us by checking with those around you to see if they get these messages. If not, please share or direct them to the website. Thanx!

CIVILIAN WORKFORCE TRANSFORMATION

This has been an important topic for us for the past couple of years. DA has put out a very nice summary of accomplishments through this program for 2012. You should be familiar with it so we have put a copy of it on our website under "What's New". Best part of the whole thing is that the program has excellent senior leader support and is continuing in 2013. We'll keep you updated as things progress.

ARMY CAREER TRACKER (ACT)

The Army Career Tracker (ACT) is a new leader development tool that you may have heard something about ...maybe have even tried it out. It provides Army personnel the ability to manage their professional development and to monitor progress toward training, education, and career goals. ACT:

- * Integrates training, education, and experiential learning into one personalized and easy-to-use interface
- * Presents users with an intelligent search capability of multiple Army education and training resources
- * Provides users with an efficient and effective way to monitor career development
- * Allows leaders to track and advise users on personalized leadership development
- * Provides users the opportunity to create their Individual Development Plan (IDP)

ACT is a great capability that helps keep track of your civilian career as well as the career of your military teammates. It can really help supervisors to gear training towards the needs of their civilian and military employees. Properly used, it can help employees reach their full potential. You can log into ACT now at: <https://actnow.army.mil> or reach the ACT information page on AKO at <https://www.us.army.mil/suite/page/601000>.

As of the 10 Dec 12 ACT Usage Report the login percentage for occupations in Career Program 53—Medical, is at 8.13% (one of the lowest in of the career programs so far). Again, it is a very useful page, very important for career planning, and, I suspect, its importance will grow as time goes by. I strongly encourage you to try it out.

CAREER PROGRAM FUNDING -TRAVEL ORDER PROBLEMS

Here's a heads up from the folks down in our Civilian Management Division of the AMEDD Personnel Proponency Directorate who manage funding for Career Program 53 (Medical) centrally funded training. I suspect though that the following applies to all folks in all CP's so here goes.

DA G-3 continues to receive requests from personnel attending career program centrally funded training for Lines of Accounting (LOAs) for DTS orders reflecting Centrally Billed Accounts (CBA). No orders, either in DTS or manual orders, will receive a LOA with CBA. Only orders that indicate Individual Billed Account (IBA) will receive LOAs. No LOA also means no travel and no training so it's important to get this right. Please pay close attention to this detail and help us minimize Defense Finance and Accounting System (DFAS) errors and alleviate potential reimbursement issues.

NEW ON-LINE DISTANCE LEARNING TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES FROM THE JOINT MEDICAL EXECUTIVE SKILLS INSTITUTE (JMESI)

We're always getting questions about training and education opportunities. Well, here are several. In order to stay current with the ever changing medical world, JMESI, by the way a major contributor to our Civilian Life Long Learning (CL3) Program, works hard to keep its modules both relevant and current.

They recently let us know they are now proud to offer five new distance learning courseware modules.

- Medical Doctrine Decision-based Module
- Military Mission Decision-based Module
- Change Management Decision-based Module
- Population Health Improvement Decision-based Module
- Group Dynamics Decision-based Module

This means they now have a total of 105 Distance Learning modules available that anyone with a CAC card can access through the CL3 program (always available via the AMEDD Civilian Corps website using the “Training and Development” link) or by directly accessing the JMESI site at: <https://jmesi.army.mil/login.aspx> <<https://jmesi.army.mil/login.aspx>> . They have also updated the following modules:

- External Accreditation One: Overview
- External Accreditation Two: Preparation and Findings
- Quality Management One: Quality Management
- National Disaster Medical System One: Overview
- National Disaster Medical System Two: Planning and Applications
- Strategic Planning One: Assessment
- Medical Readiness Training
- Organizational Design
- Contingency Planning One: Disaster Preparedness
- Communications: Patient Relations and Communication
- Lean, Six Sigma
- Balanced Scorecards

As you can see by the variety of topics in this list, JMESI and CL3 have something to offer almost everyone. It’s also worth noting that you can get CEU and CME units by taking many of the JMESI courses. So don’t miss the opportunity to build your personal resume. The JMESI and CL3 programs are great opportunities and they are largely FREE!!!

RETIREMENT INFORMATION

I’m certainly not encouraging anyone to retire but we do get a fair number of questions about the issue. Many of you already know that local CPACs don’t offer retirement counseling/courses the way they used to. Now we get our information through the Army Benefits Center-Civilian (ABC-C). While I understand it has had some issues, I also know it is the way of the future so when we have information regarding the site we’ll try to provide it.

Retirement is an important milestone in all our lives. Now the ABC-C offers its newest benefit tool, eRetirement (Retirement Application On-Line), a web application located in the Employee Benefits Information System (EBIS) that will allow you to fill out a retirement application right there!

Effective 29 October 2012, if you are an Army serviced employee within one year of retirement, you can fill out your retirement application on the secure website. First, you will need to logon to the site at <https://www.abc.army.mil> Common Access Card (CAC) and select the EBIS icon or web link. You will then enter your Social Security Number (SSN) and Personal Identification Number (PIN).

Once you have accessed the EBIS website, click on the eRetirement button. You will need to complete all the forms listed. Once you have finished, simply print off each form individually, review closely, and sign any applicable forms. Lastly, send it off to the ABC-C at 301 Marshall Avenue, Fort Riley, Kansas 66442. They will review your application closely and send you a letter acknowledging receipt.

If you have any questions on eRetirement, please contact a Benefits Counselor at 1-877-276-9287 from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 CT. Also, keep checking the AMEDD Civilian Corps website under "FAQs" where we'll be loading some additional information and links in the near future.

WELLNESS CORNER

Here are a few thoughts on wellness that may help in your support of The Surgeon General's Performance Triad. I know there are multiple sources out there. These are from one I received at an executive training course. They're from a book called "Train Smarter, Not Harder" by Traci Riley.

- People who sleep less than six hours per night increase their risk of viral infections, heart disease, and stroke by 50 percent.
- Regularly drinking just half a can of soda raises your risk of diabetes. Researchers tracked people who drank six ounces of soda daily and found they are 67 percent more likely to have Type-2 diabetes than non-soda drinkers
- If you listed the foods you ate over time, how would you answer these questions?
 - o How many vegetable servings are listed?
 - o Do I always eat the same vegetable or is there a variety?
 - o How many fruit servings are listed?
 - o Is there a rainbow of fruits or does the same fruit appear over and over again?
 - o What kind of snacks am I eating and what is their caloric content (should be between 100-125 calories)?
 - o Do I eat three small meals a day with two snacks? (Most people skip breakfast, gorge at lunch, and eat a large, late dinner.)

I find this interesting because I'm not sure my own answers are as good as they should be. In this time of New Year's resolutions I think I know what some of mine will be...

OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST

- DD214 On Line: I know we have a significant number of members with prior military service. For your information in case you haven't seen it, DD-214 discharge papers can now be requested online. The National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) has provided the following website for veterans to gain access to their DD-214s online: <http://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/>. I've tried it and it works. Good luck.

- We're always looking for good stories and information to celebrate successes in the Corps. Please let us know and SEND PICTURES! I know there are lots of success stories and recognition ceremonies out there to share. The only thing I ask you to do is include a release form so we can use the photos. You can find instructions and the release form on our website under the "Awards and Recognition" link at the bottom of the page.

- SHARE!! Please share these messages with both civilians who don't get them (yes, a duplicate reminder...) and with your military teammates (yes, a consistent reminder...). It'll be good for them and good for you. Don't forget those who have been on leave or gone for a while and whose email boxes may be full. We get any number of "undeliverable" replies when we send these messages, most due to full mailboxes. Thanx!

- Remember there is a "Contact Us" button on the webpage. That little dude sends a message direct to the Corps Chief Office so I get them. If you need/want to communicate with us that is a way that's always available to you.

- We've asked before and will continue to ask for your thoughts on what we should tell the world about the AMEDD Civilian Corps. We have the facts but we need the heart. I know what makes me proud to be an AMEDD Civilian. I need to know what makes you proud—so let me know so I can tell your story as I travel. Use the "Contact Us" button described above; it'll work great. Thanx in advance.

FINALLY THE END

Far be it from me to go without a safety comment as a closer to my message. I don't think we can say it enough that you are individually and collectively a great part of the Army Medicine Team. Without you those who depend on Army Medicine across the world would be worse off,...no question. So please pay attention to safety. Think through your actions looking for risks and 2nd and 3rd order consequences. Then do the right thing and come back to us whole, hale, hearty, and rested. We have much to do in 2013 and Army Medicine depends on your contribution to the mission. Remember, without safety there is no joy.

Thanx for all you do. I pray the holidays have been and the New Year will be good to you.

Sincerely,

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Gregg Stevens, SES
Chief, AMEDD Civilian Corps