

Happy Thanksgiving Corps!!

It has been a while since we've had a regular message with thoughts and information about what's going on in Army Medicine and in the Army. This week seemed the appropriate opportunity. There is much to tell you (yes, that means another long version!) so I'd better get started.

First of all, I want to take a moment to recognize some of the great blessings for which we can be thankful as we celebrate our national Thanksgiving holiday. I am, of course, thankful first for my faith and family. They ground me and enable all that I do. But I also feel it an extraordinary blessing to be a citizen of the United States. No, our country isn't perfect; none is. But, after serving it for nearly 48 years and seeing many other countries in the process, I am convinced that we live in, by far, the greatest nation on earth. Our rights and our freedoms are like none other. It is a true honor to serve this nation.

And that leads me to you, the AMEDD Civilian Corps. Being your Corps Chief has been one of the great joys of my career. I loved being a Soldier for nearly 30 years but, without doubt or reservation, I can say that my time as an AMEDD Civilian makes me equally proud. We are blessed with the most honorable mission any citizen could have, entrusted with the health, the wellness, the very lives of the sons and daughters who defend this great land. You are the skeleton on which the flesh of Army Medicine is hung and in which its heart beats every day. Your contributions to the good of the Nation are immeasurable on a daily basis and it makes me incredibly proud to be among you. You are my blessing.

Just as in the model of the Army Profession, you give stability and continuity to the AMEDD and the Army every day through knowledge you bring to bear and the honorable service with which you apply that knowledge. You are professional members of an incredible Army Medicine Team and, by and large, the people you serve respect your professionalism. The heart and caring, the dedication to our mission, I see among our members everywhere I go across the Army tells me the esprit of our Corps is more active than most think and is one of the true strengths of Army Medicine. Never give up that professionalism that makes you what and who you are. We as a Corps must have a "jealous regard," for the Army as a profession and our part of its mission in particular. As we serve the Army day to day, moment to moment, our positive choices as we execute our mission with both excellence and grace will both guard our profession and reinforce our esprit to build increasing levels of trust among ourselves and with those we serve. You impact a Soldier's life every single day. Our Corps motto "Army Medicine; Our Profession" tells the story. Thank you for all you do every day to fulfill the promise of that motto. You are such a blessing, .to so many. You will truly be on my mind this Thanksgiving Day.

As I said earlier, there is much to tell you so here we go. Saddle up!

GOOD NEWS: There is, as always, good stuff to share.

- . Congratulations to the MRI Team from Darnall Army Medical Center at Fort Hood for being the FY 15 winner of the Annual Wolf Pack Award. TSG presented the award on 30 September. The MRI Project produced \$847K in savings over the course of eight months and made significant improvement to quality of care at the facility. It established a model that can be used to standardize care across the command and make very real contributions to the MEDCOM's movement toward both an Operating Company Model (OCM) and a High Reliability Organization (HRO). Well done, Team!!

- . Congrats too to the Group Practice Manager Course development Team from the AMEDD Center and School/Health Readiness Center of Excellence for being the first quarter FY 16 Wolf Pack Award winner. The Team built their course six months ahead of schedule, set the standard for not just the Army but the Military Health System (MHS), and saved money in the process. Hooah!

- . A very special congratulations to Ms. Elham Williams who received the Outstanding Civilian of the Year 2015 DoD Disability Award!! She is a licensed Clinical Social Worker at US Army Health Clinic, Schofield Barracks, HI. The award celebrated her superior technical expertise, valuable contributions to the organization's mission, and exemplary community involvement. What a great thing to happen to one of our Corps members!

- . Congratulations also to our Corps members selected to be new members of the Corps Board of Advisors. Well done, all!

- o Barry Eyestone, Guthrie Ambulatory Clinic, Fort Drum, NY-Category 7, Nursing

- o Douglas Davis, Walter Reed Army Institute of Research, Silver Spring, MD-Category 9, Admin

- o John Liston, Madigan AMC, JBLM, Category 10, IM/IT

OPPORTUNITIES!!

- . AMEDD Civilian Corps Mentorship Program:

Just a reminder about Corps Chief Message # 63 which announced a pilot for a mentorship program that focuses effort on our GS 1-10 population. The program offers an opportunity for some of our junior Corps members to be mentored by some of our senior members in an effort to guide careers, prepare individuals to compete for future opportunities, and build a culture of Corps members supporting one another. If you are interested in being a mentee (GS 1-10) or a mentor (GS 10-15) you can find and complete the application by going to our AMEDD Civilian Corps website (<https://ameddciviliancorps.amedd.army.mil>), retrieving message #63 from the archive where all our previous messages are stored, and using the links in the message. Two points:

- o When Message #63 first came out we were having some technical difficulties with the web page. Those are now fixed and the links work well. The form is fillable on the site.

o There has been some question about whether completion of the grade-appropriate Civilian Education System (CES) course is required for participation in the program. It is an advantage but is not required. Those who don't have it will attack it as part of the program. So give some thought to whether this program might be of benefit to you and your career. If the answer is "yes" (and for many it should be!), then apply! We will take somewhere between 10-15 mentees in the pilot and an equal number of mentors. GS 10-15's, remember that as a mentor you always get back more than you give so it's a great growth opportunity for you as well. Enuf said!

AMEDD Civilian Corps 20th Anniversary:

This is a different type of opportunity, a chance to contribute to our celebration of 20 years of recognition as a Corps in the Army Medical Department. We'll celebrate the anniversary on 30 March 2016 with a ceremony at the AMEDD Museum here at Fort Sam Houston (even though the 26th is the actual anniversary date-making space for folks to be off around Easter). Our intent is to have a display in the museum dedicated to the AMEDD Civilian Corps. To do so, we need to collect information, artifacts, etc., that deal with the Corps. If you have anything that you think might even remotely fit that bill, please contact us in the Corps office and let us know. For instance, if you've deployed-maybe a uniform, if you've had a special award-maybe a photo with a short statement on the event, and so on. Be creative! If you want to donate an artifact to the AMEDD Museum, that's great; if you'd like to get your artifact back, we can see to that as well. This is a great opportunity to show how our Corps has impacted Army Medicine and the Army, so please think it over and see if you might have something to contribute. Thanx in advance for your support!!

A Couple Upcoming:

Just wanted to give you a heads up about a couple of opportunities that will be announced in upcoming messages so you can be prepared when they come up:

o AMEDD Executive Skills Course: This is a course civilians have attended for the past several years but the course has changed. It is now a two week course focused on leadership and the business of healthcare. It is centrally funded so we pay the bill. Look for it in the late winter/early spring timeframe.

o Strategic Learning Project: This one has been dormant for a couple of years but we plan to revive it. It is an opportunity for an individual to come to Fort Sam (yes, we pay for this one as well!) and work on a specific project for the Corps Office. It will include refining the problem, doing the research, and conducting the necessary analysis. The conclusion of the project is a flag-level out brief. It's a good chance for a Corps member to learn about the Corps and Army Medicine, as well as help solve an issue the Corps is currently facing. Expect to see the first opportunity in the late winter timeframe.

A REMINDER ABOUT THE CIVILIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM (CES): As I look at the future of Army Medicine and of our Corps as a major contributor to the AMEDD mission, I am certain that our enterprise will challenge us more and more to take on leadership roles, roles that will be essential to a successful future. In fact, it's already happening. To prepare for this challenge, leadership training will be essential. Our grade-appropriate CES course (GS 1-9 = Basic; GS 10-12 = Intermediate; GS 13-15 = Advance) gives us a head start. Remember, each consists of an on-line front end and an in-residence back end which is DA centrally funded. These courses are focused on leadership and are the primary leader training opportunities for civilians. In addition, as you complete this training they earn your unit \$500/person/year added to your budget from MEDCOM. So, if you haven't already, please consider this training and get started. Information on the courses is available through our AMEDD Civilian Corps website (<https://ameddciviliancorps.amedd.army.mil>).

As an aside, I'd like to make a points about two things I often hear from our Corps members:

. "I'm not a leader or in a leadership position so why do I need leadership training?" Seems to me that all of us in Army Medicine are leaders in one way or another. Every time you greet/meet/treat a patient, you instantly become a leader to that individual. Leadership comes in many forms. You are the expert at what you do and therefore you are an "expert leader" because your customer trusts you to do the best thing for them. This is a pretty universal application.

. "My supervisors won't support me going to this training." This one we hear all too often. The Corps is working with command teams across the Army and taking other training opportunities to get the word out to supervisors about how critical this training is to the future of the enterprise. It will take a while to get the word out and make required changes but we've got it on our radar screen and are working the issue.

SOME INFO FOR SUPERVISORS (and others who are interested!): Here are a couple of good pieces of information we've stolen from the October MEDCOM Civilian Human Resource Division Newsletter:

. Hiring Manager's Toolkit: --In an effort to remove the complexities and inefficiencies of existing hiring processes, DCPAS has created the Hiring Manager's Toolkit (<https://dodhrinfo.cpmso.osd.mil/directorates/hrops/staffing-and-civilian-transition-programs/hiringmanager/Pages/Home1.aspx>) which is composed of 23 guides, tip sheets, checklists, and templates designed to equip hiring managers and human resource professionals with end-to-end guidance, automated tools, and a variety of hiring information to enhance the hiring process. Topics range from strategic recruitment, conducting job analysis, building a job opportunity announcement, interviewing and selection, to onboarding. In addition, other information such as "Helpful Websites for Managers" and "Component Resources" is also available.

. Mandatory Supervisory Training for Civilian and Military Supervisors: The Supervisor Development Course (SDC) is the Army's single source for mandatory supervisor training for first time and refresher/sustainment training. The SDC is a web-based course with lessons that focus on supervising Army civilian employees and is required for all civilian and military personnel who supervise Army Civilians. The SDC must be completed within the first year of placement into a supervisory position in accordance with the one-year supervisory probationary period. Supervisors also are required to complete this course as refresher training every 3 years. Registration is through Civilian Human Resources Training Application System (CHRTAS). Additional information can be obtained by contacting Ray Mendoza, G37, RT&E Division, usarmy.jbsa.medcom.mbx.civilianworkforce@mail.mil. (NOTE: There is an ongoing effort at DA to find a better way to conduct refresher training. That has not come to fruition yet, so the SDC as we know it is the standard for now. gs)

SOME INFO FOR EVERYONE: (Also stolen from the October CHRD Newsletter!)

. Update on Phased Retirement for Civilians: On August 8, 2014 the Office of Personnel Management published implementing instructions in the Federal Register for a new tool for managers effective November 9, 2014. The new program cannot be implemented until development and issuance of DoD and HQDA guidance, which is expected to take at least one year. The phased retirement provisions grant Commanders the discretion to approve a request from a retirement eligible employee to work less one-half of their administrative work week (20 hours or less) while continuing on MEDCOM's rolls, but with payment of up to 50% of their earned annuity. In essence, the individual would be treated as a part-time employee for salary and leave purposes, but with a partial annuity. The tool is intended to provide for the transfer of knowledge and mentoring for the replacement hire. The Office of Personnel Management has posted "Five Things to Know about Phased Retirement" on their website:

<http://www.opm.gov/blogs/Director/phased-retirement/index.aspx>. (NOTE: One thing to emphasize for sure is that this program is not available yet and won't be until DOD and Army guidance comes out. Stay tuned! gs)

. Army/Defense Civilian Personnel Development System (DCPDS) Self-Service Hierarchy (Read this as "organizational relationships between supervisors and employees. gs) Module Deployed: DCPDS deployed the new Self-Service Hierarchy function on September 25, 2015. Two user guides are available to help both supervisors (My Team) and employees use the new hierarchy function to accurately update the hierarchy. As of September 24, 2015, MEDCOM had 97% of its positions coded, but still need the remaining 3% to be coded. 100% of those coded positions must be validated to ensure supervisors and employees in the hierarchy are currently correct. Why? Many future (as early as 2016) Office of Personnel Management (OPM), Defense Civilian Personnel Advisory Service (DCPAS), and Army system initiatives will use the DCPDS Self-Service Hierarchy; therefore, it is essential to

keep the hierarchy accurate and maintained as your organizations/supervisors/employees change.

DATES TO REMEMBER:

. 13 JANUARY 2016-The next series of CORPS CHIEF VTC TOWN HALLS. So block your calendars and save the date. Remember that you can contribute to the topics covered by simply using the "Contact Us" link on the top right of the Corps web page and sending us questions or concerns you'd like us to discuss. Remember, you can ask anything and it's a lot like basketball-if you never throw it over the hoop it has zero chance of going through! We schedule several VTCs in order to accommodate our worldwide Team, so pick the best for you. Here are the times:

o #1: WEDNESDAY, 13 Jan 2016, 0800 CENTRAL TIME (Local times: 2300 Japan/Korea / 0900 Eastern / 0400 Hawaii / 0500 Alaska /0600 Western /0700 Mountain / 1500 Europe)

o #2: WEDNESDAY, 13 Jan 2016, 1300 CENTRAL TIME (Local times: 0400 next day Japan/Korea / 1400 Eastern /0900 Hawaii / 1000 Alaska / 1100 Western / 1200 Mountain / 2000 Europe)

o #3: WEDNESDAY, 13 Jan 2016, 1800 CENTRAL TIME (Local times: 0900 next day Japan/Korea / 1900 Eastern / 1400 Hawaii / 1500 Alaska / 1600 Western / 1700 Mountain / 0100 next day Europe)

. 8 JANUARY 2016-Due date for submission of the 2nd Quarter FY 16 Wolf Pack Award applications. I know there is tremendous teamwork going on out there between our military and civilian Team members. Take a shot at having it recognized!!

SAFETY: Yes, you'll get the regular "this-time-of-year" stuff but there's another serious twist as well.

. As we move into winter, we play different sports and have different activities. Be sure you are prepared! Remember, we routinely know what we should do to be safe in a winter environment-regardless of where you are in our AMEDD. It's the careless or "Oh, it won't happen to (famous last words..) approach we're sometimes tempted to take, because it's more trouble to do the full "safety thing," that often gets us in trouble. So take the time to remind yourselves, your families and Teammates about and then do the right thing when it comes to:

o Cold injuries

o Winter sports-yep, training, conditioning, and working up to a full blown event are key

o Putting away motorcycles (advice from friends who are enthusiasts and great riders)

o Winter driving

o You get the picture!!

. There's another kind of safety and taking care of yourselves and one another that is key right now. We all need to be aware of indicators for trouble and how to act/react in the event of some sort of dangerous incident

such as active shooter or terrorism. First, be knowledgeable, then be alert to indicators.

- o If it doesn't look right, REPORT IT
- o If it doesn't smell right, REPORT IT
- o If it doesn't sound right REPORT IT

As the saying goes, "SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING!!"

FINALLY!!

Well, that's it for now, with one final exception. I've asked before and will continue to ask you to please share this message with your military Teammates, especially if they are supervisors of civilians-and they don't have to be your own! As our Civilian Corps becomes more and more integrated into what's going on in the Army and Army Medicine, it's important that your uniformed Teammates know what's going on with the other members of their Team! Thanx!!

So, a very Happy and Blessed Thanksgiving to you and yours. We all have much to be thankful for, including each other. All the best!

Sincerely,

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Gregg Stevens, SES

Deputy to the Commanding General

AMEDD Center & School/Health Readiness CoE Chief, AMEDD Civilian Corps

"Army Medicine; Our Profession"