

# INSIDE <sup>PEO</sup> STRI

NOVEMBER / DECEMBER 2012

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## WORTH REPEATING

“When the game is over, the players from both teams will walk off that field and join a better and bigger team, that of the defense of the greatest country the world has ever seen.”

— Secretary of the Army John M. McHugh speaks in advance of the Army's 113th face-off against Navy on the football field at Philadelphia's Lincoln Financial Field, Dec. 8.



U.S. Army PEO STRI/Doug Schaub

PEO STRI exhibits their products and services at the Interservice/Industry Training, Simulation and Education Conference Dec. 3-6 at the Orange County Convention Center.

## WORLD'S LARGEST SIMULATION TRADE SHOW ATTRACTS A LARGE INTERNATIONAL AUDIENCE

By Kristen McCullough, PEO STRI Public Affairs Officer

Although Department of the Army approval to participate in this year's I/ITSEC nearly stood in the way of service-wide attendance, the PEO STRI team quickly jumped into action when the conference was formally approved by Army officials a mere week and a half prior to show time.

"I believe the Secretary of the Army recognized the value of the opportunities that I/ITSEC provides the modeling and simulation community and the importance of our

employees taking advantage of technical papers and technology demonstrations," Traci Jones, the Army principal for I/ITSEC, said.

"PEO STRI was very pleased to support I/ITSEC this year, especially due to the challenges that were faced in obtaining the Department of the Army's approval to participate in the conference," Jones, who serves as the organization's assistant program executive officer for project support, continued.

I/ITSEC, the popular term for

the Interservice/Industry Training, Simulation and Education Conference, is hosted annually at the Orange County Convention Center. The four-day exposition hosts modeling, simulation and education entities from across the U.S. and international militaries, industry base and academic institutions. Though attendance this year was more moderate than in years past and the exhibit area appeared to be less crowded, I/ITSEC 2012 hosted the largest

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# A Holiday

## MESSAGE FROM THE PEO

To my PEO STRI family,

As 2012 comes to a close, Sharon and I would like to wish every member of the PEO STRI team a safe and joyous holiday season. Once again this year, you have proven that our workforce is second to none, contributing to rewarding successes and overcoming seemingly significant challenges. Time and time again, you demonstrate the importance of PEO STRI to our Soldiers and to our nation.

I've noticed many of you across the organization have been out and about sharing holiday cheer. Members of PM CATT bought Christmas gifts for 17 children. The PM TRADE team delivered homemade Christmas cookies to patients at the Orlando Veterans Medical Facility. A team of "CHAMPS" from the Acquisition Center, who've supported the community through a number of events throughout the year, recently served breakfast to more than 175 residents at the Coalition for the Homeless of Central Florida. And, many children of fallen heroes will have the Christmas of their dreams all because of Operation Giveback, a foundation supported largely by people across PEO STRI.

As I do every year, I ask that while you're home warm, safe and happy enjoying the holidays, you remember our service members who are not able to share in this wondrous time of year with their loved ones. Please pause and toast those who serve for all they do to make our country proud.

We must think about those men and women—and their families—who made the ultimate sacrifice while defending our nation. We know their service is essential to our nation's well-being. Let's honor these fallen heroes and their families, especially those close to our heart, including the Nelson family, over the holiday season.

The mission we perform here at PEO STRI is essential to our nation's security, and we are critical to the success of our Soldiers and coalition partners on battlefields across the globe. I personally want to recognize the PEO STRI team for what you do on a daily basis to support our nation. Because of your efforts, our Army is the best trained force in the world.

Please enjoy your time away from the office, and always keep safety in mind. We want to see each and every one of you back here in the New Year, refreshed and ready for the challenges ahead.

Again, my family and I wish you and yours the very best holiday season, and health and happiness in the New Year.

Dr. Jim Blake  
Program Executive Officer



*U.S. Army PEO STRI Photo/Doug Schaub*  
Dr. Jim Blake and Sharon Blake at the 2012 Interservice/Industry Training, Simulation and Education Conference.

# Personnel News: Pay Lanes Slated to Incentivize Employees

By Kristen A. McCullough, PEO STRI Public Affairs Officer

As the dust settles from the 2012 evaluation cycle, one major personnel change is underway for the 2013 employee evaluations. PEO STRI, in an effort to provide the workforce a clearer perspective of the opportunities for career development and progression within the organization, will institute the use of pay lanes for the employees who fall under the Acquisition Workforce Personnel Demonstration Project, commonly referred to as AcqDemo.

Pay lanes are intended to encourage employees to seek and compete for positions of greater responsibility. A management tool to encourage employee development and contribution, pay lanes will align the salaries of positions similar in complexity, responsibility and authority. They are also intended to

particular type of work. Pay lanes, subsequently, determine the salary range for a position within the broad band.

“Under NSPS [PEO STRI’s previous evaluation and compensation system], we had control points, which worked very well,” Lisa Taylor, the PEO STRI personnel resources manager, said. “Now, we’re using the same process to institute pay lanes, a tool organizations use to classify job positions.” Other organizations that fall under AcqDemo, to include some of PEO STRI’s sister program executive offices, have also employed the use of pay lanes.

Each AcqDemo employee in PEO STRI falls within a broad band: NK-II, NK-III, NH-I, NH-II, NH-III or NH-IV. A broad band consolidates several GS pay grades into a group, but more importantly, forges a link between a position’s salary and its contribution to the mission of the organization.

AcqDemo broad bands will be segmented into pay lanes to further categorize job positions in relation to their contribution to the mission, subsequently grouping them by a compensation range. Positions are associated with a specific pay lane based on three factors: mission requirements, benchmark against duties and position complexity.

“The same meticulous process that was used in transferring our employees from NSPS to AcqDemo has been and will continue to be used in establishing pay lanes,” Taylor acknowledged.

PEO STRI’s Pay Lane Panel is responsible for establishing and adjusting the pay lanes. The senior-level panel representing various offices across PEO STRI is chartered to ensure job positions and compensation are properly aligned across the organization.

PEO STRI’s top personnel resources official advised that the establishment of pay lanes will be seamless with no impact to an employee’s pay or work. “It’s important to understand that positions will stay in the same broad band, and no employee, through the establishment of pay

lanes, will lose pay,” she said.

The establishment of pay lanes, Taylor noted, assists employees in looking for more advanced opportunities, citing that broad bands and pay lane information will be included with each new job announcement. “It’s our intention to incentivize people to move from Point A to Point B. An organization benefits when people contribute at a high level to the success of the mission.

“When you incentivize people correctly, you motivate them and boost morale, especially when people are paid in accordance with their contribution. If you’re a consistent hard worker and high contributor, then AcqDemo – and pay lanes – are a benefit to you,” she acknowledged.

In early spring, PEO STRI employees under AcqDemo will be notified which pay lane their position falls in. The notification from the PEO STRI Personnel Resources Office will come in the form of a hand-delivered letter by each employee’s supervisor.

Employees are able to advance to higher pay lanes and broad bands through a competitive process. “PEO STRI’s intent is to compete jobs, whenever practical, and to select the most qualified individuals for positions,” Taylor said.

Under extenuating, mission-related circumstances, management-directed reassignments may be used for moving an employee within the same broad band to a higher or lower pay lane.

“It’s my goal, and the goal of the leadership, to ensure our workforce is fully informed throughout the implementation and use of pay lanes,” Taylor said.

The business rules for pay lanes can be viewed on the AcqDemo SharePoint site once the policy is final and approved: <https://portal.peostri.army.mil/sites/ACQDEMO/default.aspx>. The site will also host a document detailing what positions fall within each pay lane, providing a clear depiction of how an employee can chart a path for obtaining positions of increasing responsibility and salary potential.

“Right now, we’re refining how we manage the establishment of pay lanes, but employees can expect to be informed,” Taylor noted.



motivate individuals to gain education, training and experience and move to positions of greater responsibility.

“Our goal is to compensate employees fairly for the level of work performed,” said Deputy Program Executive Officer Rob Reyenga, the PEO STRI proponent for AcqDemo-related policies. “We want to ensure compensation is commensurate with responsibility in order to retain needed skills.”

Each position will be assigned a pay lane based on the expected contribution of a



*U.S. Army Acquisition Support Center Photo*

Dr. Jim Blake, Tom Coffman and Col. Mike Flanagan accept the U.S. Army's Acquisition Excellence Award on behalf of PEO STRI at the Nov. 7 ceremony in Arlington, Va.

# Esteemed Army Awards Granted to Deserving STRI Professionals

By Kristen A. McCullough, PEO STRI Public Affairs Officer

PEO STRI employees recently received two separate accolades for their contract and program management expertise from Army leadership.

The Acquisition Center's Jeffrey Claar received the 2012 Secretary of the Army Excellence in Contracting Award, being named the outstanding contract specialist/procurement analyst of the year.

"Jeff's selection for the contract specialist of the year represents a milestone for the PEO STRI contracting workforce," Joe Giunta, PEO STRI's principal assistant responsible for contracting and the director of the Acquisition Center, said. "Jeff is the first PEO STRI Acquisition Center nominee to receive this prestigious award since PEO STRI was delegated contracting authority."

PEO STRI was also recognized by the Army acquisition community when PM

TRADE's Live Training Transformation (LT2) team received the U.S. Army's Acquisition Excellence Award-Information Enabled Army.

"This award recognized the LT2 Software Product Line (SPL) program's nearly \$400 million cost avoidance received by the Army, Marine Corps and Air Force, across 14 separate programs, in the development and sustainment of 150-plus live training systems. The LT2 SPL successfully employs technical and acquisition strategies that significantly reduce fielding time, minimize acquisition costs and enable total ownership cost reductions across the Live, Virtual, Constructive-Integrated Training Environment," Col. Mike Flanagan, project manager for PM TRADE, said.

These awards reaffirm the importance of PEO STRI's expertise to the Army.



*U.S. Army PEO STRI Photo/Doug Schaub*

**PEO STRI Acquisition Center employee Jeff Claar is named the 2012 contract specialist/procurement analyst of the year.**





Photo Courtesy of the CHAMPS Committee/Marnita Harris

Acquisition Center employees and their family members who volunteer as part of the Caring Hands Aiding Many Public Services Committee, called "CHAMPS" for short, serve breakfast to homeless Central Florida residents Nov. 3.

# CHAMPS in Action

By KeYanna Boone, PEO STRI Contracting Officer

In the early hours of Nov. 3, close to 30 individuals from the Acquisition Center and some of their family members prepared and served breakfast to more than 175 residents at the Coalition for the Homeless of Central Florida.

The group exceeded the minimum number of volunteers, enabling residents to be served at their seats instead of through a serving line. Officials from the Coalition for the Homeless said it was a treat for their clients.

The volunteers, however, did not stop there. After the meals were served, they rolled up their sleeves to assist the Coalition staff in cleaning up the kitchen and dining room facility.

The Coalition is the largest provider of homeless services in Central Florida. Their mission is to address the needs of the homeless in the Central Florida community and serve as a catalyst for community collaboration to end

homelessness. Last year, the Coalition served more than 300,000 meals to individuals.

This was the third project completed by the CHAMPS committee since February 2012.

"It was the most rewarding event yet. The opportunity to serve others was very inspiring," Marnita Harris, a committee member and PEO STRI contract specialist, said.

The CHAMPS committee was established by volunteers within the Acquisition Center to support local Combined Federal Campaign-affiliated organizations. Their goal is to identify, organize and lead volunteer projects once a quarter. CHAMPS volunteers acknowledge that the program continues to make a big difference in the local community, one project at a time.

## CHAMPS Team Members

Keyanna Boone  
Jill Edwards  
Joseph Giunta  
Marnita Harris

Debbie Liedtke  
Lisa Parker  
Ann Pham  
Molly Stoute

# TIS THE SEASON FOR GIVING LIFE

By Gina Guerzon, PEO STRI Business Operations Support Staff

At the Town Hall Meeting Nov. 15, PEO STRI received an award from Florida's Blood Centers for successful blood drives over the years. According to the Center, PEO STRI drives have saved more 2,200 lives right here in Orlando since 2010.

"When I first started donating, over 25 years ago, I just felt good about being able to give back to my community. Now that my dad has been battling leukemia for three-and-a-half years, he regularly receives blood and platelets. This is my way of helping him," Jill Edwards, a PEO STRI contract specialist, said.

Many people are unaware of the importance of blood drives and what it does for the community. More than 60 percent of the local blood supply is collected from donations at the workplace, and the blood is used in neighborhood hospitals for accident victims, cancer patients, open heart surgery patients, burn victims, bone marrow transplants, sickle-cell anemia, premature babies, liver transplants and orthopedic surgery.

"Every donation can save up to three lives, one of which could be your loved one, friend, family member, neighbor or co-worker," Philip Trees, Florida's Blood Centers' donor development coordinator, said.

The fact of the matter is only 38 percent of the U.S. population is eligible to give blood, but less than 10 percent of people donate. Yet, 60 percent of people will need blood in their lifetime. There is no substitute for blood and it cannot be manufactured. Red blood cells have a shelf life of 42 days and platelets have only five days, so the blood supply needs to be constantly replenished. If everyone committed to donating at least three times per year, there would be no shortages.

Donating blood not only helps save lives, it can save the donor's own life too. According to well-known research, donating blood at least three times a year can dramatically



U.S. Army PEO STRI Photo/Doug Schaub

**Dr. Jim Blake (left), program executive officer, and Gina Guerzon (center), PEO STRI's blood drive coordinator, accept an award of achievement and gratitude from Florida's Blood Centers' representative Philip Trees Nov. 15 at the Town Hall Meeting.**

reduce the chance of a heart attack and certain types of cancer in men. Medical evidence shows that too much iron in the body may lead to colon cancer and clogging of the arteries, which is a contributing factor for heart attacks. Blood loss is a simple way to rid the body of excess iron. Women who lose blood through menstruation have about half the amount of iron in their bodies than men. Not only do men store iron at a much higher level, it is important for them to continually reduce that level. Regularly donating as often as every eight weeks is one of the best and easiest ways for men to lower their iron levels, and thus reducing associated risks.

For both men and women who donate, they can receive a free mini-physical that checks their blood pressure, cholesterol, iron level and more. This quick health assessment can provide advance notice of potentially dangerous health problems.

For a critically ill patient, the most

compatible blood for a transfusion is most likely to come from someone with the same ethnic, racial and genetic background as the patient. Sickle cell disease is a blood disorder found primarily in African Americans. The survival of many African-American patients depends entirely on the availability of blood from other African-American donors. Some have rare blood types such as U-negative and Duff-negative that are unique to the African-American community.

Equally important is the fact that many Hispanics carry a rare antigen in their blood that could save lives needing that exact blood. Hispanic patients with rare blood types are more likely to find the blood they need among donors of their same ethnic race. In addition, statistical data shows that nearly 60 percent of Latinos in the U.S. have type O blood, compared to about 45 percent for the rest of the population. This type of blood is especially valuable because O positive is the most common blood type, which means it's

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# RUNNING FOR A CAUSE

By Trina Cothrin, PEO STRI Support Staff

On the evening of September 20, 2012, teams converged in the small town of Cumberland, Md., in preparation for the annual Ragnar Relay from there to Washington, D.C. These teams consisting of six to 12 team members were all focused on a common goal; completing the 198-mile overnight relay race and reuniting at the National Harbor in Washington, D.C.

One of the groups, Team #47 – Operation Giveback (OGB), embarked on a mission that was about much more than completing 198 miles. The team was led by PEO STRI employee Jose Garcia Aponte, a retired Army command sergeant major, and his wife Maribel, both co-founders of Operation Giveback, a non-profit organization with a mission to raise awareness and resources for wounded warriors, their families and the children of the fallen heroes.

Team #47, consisting of wounded warriors, the wife of a fallen Soldier, active duty and

retired military members, set out that day to give back to the families of those who made the ultimate sacrifice in defense of the nation.

After 198 miles and 36-hours with little sleep and nourishment, the OGB team crossed the finish line. Upon completing the race, the team visited Arlington National Cemetery to pay their respects to the service members laid to rest in Section 60, the part of the cemetery reserved for veterans of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, and raise awareness for the children of the fallen.



Courtesy Photo/Operation Giveback

A team of Operation Giveback members ran 198 miles from Cumberland, Md., to Washington, D.C., as part of the Ragnar Relay to raise awareness for wounded warriors, their families and the families of fallen heroes.

## Redstone Arsenal-based STRI Employee Volunteers to Help Children

By Rene Gilliland, PM ITTS' Targets Management Office Employee

As a program and management analyst for PM ITTS' Targets Management Office out of Huntsville, Ala., Larry Bowlin has shown he has a head for figures. His heart, however, belongs to children.

In his 10 years as a member of the American Society of Military Comptrollers, an organization made up of budget and program analysts, comptrollers, auditors and accountants, Bowlin has volunteered in many of the group's projects. He has served food and helped preschoolers with crafts at the National Children's Advocacy Center, supervised the "adoption" of angels for the Salvation Army, and coaxed smiles from children who recently lost loved ones at a local hospice.

While Bowlin enjoyed all these activities, he said his favorite is the Special Olympics, an athletic and recreational program for the mentally disabled children 8-years-

old and up. Its primary purpose is to improve the self-confidence of the children and adults participating.

In October, Bowlin escorted 16-year-old Austin Vu for the fourth year in a row and cheered him on as he won two bronze medals. Bowlin said getting to know Austin and his family—whose father, like Bowlin, works on Redstone Arsenal—has been a joy. "Austin enriches the lives of everyone around him," Bowlin said, "including mine."

Bowlin said he encourages other PEO STRI employees to consider volunteering. He sees



Courtesy Photo

PM ITTS' Targets Management Office employee Larry Bowlin assists children participating in the Special Olympics.

it as "giving back, for all those times that others have given to me," citing a biblical quote from Luke 12:48, "From everyone who has been given much, much will be required."



# Visiting Senior NCOs Share Their Thoughts on Using Simulators for Training Soldiers

By Rick Gregory, APEO Business Operations Support Staff

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Martin Dempsey, said earlier this year that one “non-negotiable imperative” in his Joint Force 2020 plan is “keeping U.S. armed services the best-trained, best-equipped, best-led force on the planet.” He also believes the noncommissioned officers corps has a huge responsibility in making that happen.

“We have continually said to them, rightly, that they are what make us great; that they are the backbone of the profession,” he said.

Command Sgt. Maj. Timothy Guden and Sgt. Maj. Scott Broxton are part of that revered “backbone.” They visited PEO STRI recently to learn about some of the latest training simulators being used to help them meet the “best trained” aspect of the general’s imperative.

“Soldiers want to be trained! They love training and they love being challenged,” said Guden, who has served five combat tours and is currently the command sergeant major for the U.S. Army Infantry School at Fort Benning, Ga. He said simulations play an important part in that training, but it’s up to the NCOs to ensure it is realistic.

“If you go into the Engagement Skills Trainer (EST), for instance, and just tell the Soldiers to get down into the prone position or take a knee and start shooting at targets, it takes the realism out of the exercise,” Guden explained. “You have to let them know they aren’t going in there to play a game, that it’s a real mission rehearsal. You have to tell them, ‘Here’s your operations order; here’s your fragmentary order. We’re going from point A to point B to do this task.’ You have to keep the military operational idea involved in all aspects of training.”

Broxton, who has served three combat tours and is now the sergeant major of the Training and Doctrine Command’s Capability Manager – Soldier, also at Fort Benning, said he couldn’t agree more.

“We have to train Soldiers that it’s a training tool, not a gaming piece,” he said. “As soon as a Soldier looks at it as a gaming piece you lose the training value. The leaders have to instill realism into the training so they don’t suddenly feel like they are sitting at the mall driving something with their gunner up there shooting at stuff.”

Guden also emphasized that if you have training capabilities such as the EST, it’s imperative that leaders take advantage of them.

“Before yesterday, the last EST I was in was



U.S. Army PEO STRI Photo/Doug Schaub

**Sgt. Maj. Scott Broxton (left) and Command Sgt. Maj. Timothy Guden (right) stand with with Sgt. Maj. Patrick Odgen, PEO STRI's senior enlisted advisor, after being briefed on the Medical Simulation Training Center.**

in Baghdad,” he said. “We implemented a plan where when our platoons pulled back from the forward operating base, we’d send them to the EST for refresher marksmanship training. Unfortunately, the guys running it said it wasn’t being used that often by other units. You have to know what’s available, where it’s at, how to use it and then take advantage of having it there to train your troops.”

Broxton added that the benefit of using simulations such as the EST is Soldiers aren’t constricted to range standards such as keeping the weapons oriented a certain way or restricted to where the targets are placed.

“With the simulations, you aren’t necessarily moving, but they can change the scenarios with targets being located where you want them. It keeps us thinking. It makes it more real as opposed to a range,” Broxton explained.

One aspect of simulations that they both agree provides a very realistic training aspect for soldiers is the Medical Simulation Training Centers (MSTC).

“The medical simulation training is phenomenal compared to what we had years ago,” Broxton

said. “I sent my report to my boss last night that we are just leaps and bounds over what we had. MSTC is a battle drill for the medics. When they come across a casualty and they’ve never seen a Soldier with a leg blown off, do they gasp at it, do they react to it by getting sick, or do they take action? The MSTC better prepares them for the latter.”

Broxton and Guden are both big proponents of having every Soldier go through the MSTC training.

“I believe the training is good for Soldiers and their leaders. The simulation exposes them to the actual bleeding, the sounds of the trauma that is going on and the physical reaction of looking at the Soldier and saying ‘Holy cow, this guy’s leg is gone. He has bone sticking out and blood squirting,’” Guden said. “Remember, people were shocked at some of the scenes in the movie Saving Private Ryan. Well, that’s what war is about. The MSTC provides that shock and exposure prior to Soldiers experiencing the real thing.”

Broxton said medical training for every Soldier needs to go beyond the basics and the MSTC training is just what they need.

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number of international attendees.

“The global nature of I/ITSEC continued its expansion this year. The event, now more than ever, provides an excellent opportunity for PEO STRI to help build a partner-nation capacity in support of the National Security Strategy. Extremely valuable discussions were

held with partner nations regarding ongoing and potential foreign military sales and armaments cooperation programs,” said John Daniele, the PEO STRI proponent for foreign military sales and international programs who also oversees the organization’s conference and event management team.

All things considered, I/ITSEC 2012 was applauded by many of the conference presenters, exhibitors and attendees. “The conference was a great success. Thanks to all of the [PEO STRI] staff members who assisted in the conference; we could not have supported I/ITSEC without you,” Jones noted.

DONATE BLOOD *continued from page 6*

always in demand and O negative is the only one that can be transfused into any patient regardless of the patient’s blood type.

PEO STRI employee Melissa Ruping, a program analyst who supports PM TRADE, also has a rare blood type, which prompted her to start donating blood. “I have the rarest blood type – AB negative; only one percent of the population has AB-negative blood. When my son was born, we found out that his

blood type is the same as mine. From that day forward, I started giving blood just in case he ever needed it. This is my stewardship as a Christian. I thank God every day that he has not needed it, and I’m happy that I have helped save severe burn and hemorrhage patients.”

As the season of gift giving is among us, why not give the best gift of all – life? PEO STRI will host the next blood drive

on January 16, 2013. The entire procedure, from completing a short medical history questionnaire to drawing the blood and resting afterward with refreshments takes less than an hour. Rest assured that time there will be well spent.

Employees interested in donating blood, but unsure of whether or not they are eligible, can visit <http://floridasbloodcenters.org/learn/eligibility.shtml> for a quick online assessment.

NCO *continued from page 8*

“Every Soldier in the Army needs to be trained to the level of an emergency medical technician,” he said. “What happens in combat if the medic gets shot? Who is the next primary care guy? Is it the guy who did cardiopulmonary resuscitation on the Resusci Anne dummy and has seven sticks, but doesn’t know how to apply a tourniquet or doesn’t know how to stop the bleeding? The MSTC simulation is great and every Soldier needs

to go through it.”

While they have high praise for the simulators they have used and those they experienced on their visit to PEO STRI, they share a common belief on how they can be improved... add some pain to the experience.

“If you put some kind of pain of realism in the simulators, it takes the gaming aspect out of the training,” Broxton said. “As an ROTC instructor, I would take the students

to a paintball course. When they stood behind that tree, poked their arm out and got hit by that paintball, it shed a different light. It was no longer a game. It let him know he wasn’t doing something right and got shot. In the real world he would have been a casualty.”

With these two senior noncommissioned officers, what won’t be a casualty is the quality of training they will be ensuring Soldiers receive during their home station rotations.



**New Year's Day  
JANUARY 1**

**Colors Ceremony  
JANUARY 4**

**Leadership Development Seminar  
JANUARY 18**

**Birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr.  
JANUARY 21**



Inside STRI is an authorized publication for military and civilian members of the U.S. Army Program Executive Office for Simulation, Training and Instrumentation, Orlando, Fla. 32826. Inside STRI is published under the authority of AR 360-1 and applies the Associated Press Stylebook industry standard.

Contents of Inside STRI are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, Department of Defense, Department of the Army, or PEO STRI.

Editorial material for publication should be submitted to PEO STRI Public Affairs Office, 12350 Research Parkway, Orlando, Fla. 32826. The PAO reserves the right to edit all material submitted for publication.

For more information about PEO STRI or to view Inside STRI online, visit our website at [www.peostri.army.mil](http://www.peostri.army.mil)

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# 10TH BIRTHDAY WISHES FROM PAST STRI COMMANDERS

PEO STRI celebrated its tenth birthday Oct. 1, 2012. In recognition of a decade of excellence, two of the organization's previous commanding generals passed along their well wishes.

1996-1998

Dear PEO STRI family,



I would like to take this opportunity to wish the entire PEO STRI team happy birthday and congratulations on the 10th anniversary of being organized as a program executive office. Your significant contributions to our Soldiers and Warfighters around the globe are widely recognized throughout the DoD community. As the Army transitions from today's operational environment, PEO STRI will play a vital role in helping to maintain the Army's readiness posture. Great job and keep up the good work!

John Geis  
Brigadier General, U.S. Army Retired  
STRICOM Commander from 1996-1998

1998-2000

Dear PEO STRI,



It is with a deep sense of joy and appreciation that I send you birthday greetings. You've grown tremendously within the Army; every Soldier and most Marines train on PEO STRI's systems. I've watched you expand your budget and your programs. The advances in the technology continue to amaze and astonish, but most important has been in the growth of the people of PEO STRI.

Like a proud parent, it's been a privilege to watch young officers grow from being project directors and product managers to program managers. The civilian workforce grew from being PDs to deputy product managers and deputy program managers, and yes, even PMs. I've witnessed young junior engineers and logisticians advance to chief engineer or logistics manager.

I salute you for making the PEO one of the best, if not the best, in all of DoD. Congratulations on 10 years of heroic service to this nation and its service men and women. Best wishes on the new adventures to come. I know you are more than ready for whatever's around the next corner.

Sincerely,

William L. Bond  
Major General, U.S. Army Retired  
STRICOM Commander from 1998-2000



# CITIZEN STRI

## Employees Share their Thoughts about PEO STRI's Decade of Excellence



"Clearly, for me, the most enjoyment about working at PEO STRI is being a part of a great workforce that has a tremendous responsibility to deliver training capabilities to our military that makes them the best trained in the world."

- **Tom Coffman, PM TRADE**



"Through the last 10 years, I have seen not only a significant increase in our workforce, but they are, indeed, a much younger crowd! Being in my forties 10 years ago, I was one of the young ones here; today, the young ones are in their twenties and thirties...absolutely a positive transformation!"

- **Carol Murphy, Acquisition Center**



"The biggest change over the last 10 years is the amount of change that has occurred. We have navigated several personnel management systems, reacted to significant changes in our external stakeholders and their processes, and all during a time of war. And not a beat has been missed. Remarkable!"

- **John Daniele, CSG**



"I enjoy that the PEO STRI workforce and leadership are among the best in the Army. I am honored that the work we do increases readiness that allows folks in harm's way to increase their probability of a safe return. It makes it all worthwhile."

- **Jude Tomasello, PM Field OPS**



"The biggest change in the past 10 years has been the growth of STRI. We were a smaller organization at the time and relied heavily on the Navy for our contracting and human resources support. When STRI received our own contracting authority, the development of our own Acquisition Center has been phenomenal. I was also glad to see the footprint of our Human Resources office grow to meet the needs of STRI and managed locally."

- **Rhonda Meyers, PM Field OPS**



"The biggest change I have seen over the years is the continuing outreach that Foreign Military Sales continues to exercise within the PEO."

- **Mark Pye, CSG**



"The biggest change in the past 10 years has been the organizational adjustments of STRICOM into a PEO structure. These changes seem to reflect the nature of the changing project needs around the Army and the shift from an organization oriented on direct mission to one where we saw the rise of support mission. What has remained the same whether we were STRICOM or PEO STRI is that we have the vital role in fulfilling the need to provide the simulators and other training tools or test capabilities to ensure our Army is ready."

- **Mike Landers, PM ITTS**



"The one thing I enjoy most about working at PEO STRI is being able to actually see how my individual efforts impact Soldiers going into or returning from theater. When you have knowledge that what you are doing day-to-day matters, you put more of yourself into it because you're making a difference in the lives of Soldiers."

- **Milt Washington, Acquisition Center**

Want your opinion heard? Answer January's Question! The question is open to the entire workforce.  
*PEO STRI was recently recognized by Florida's Blood Centers for their substantial blood donations over the past few years. Why do you think it's important to donate blood?*  
Send your response to [Kristen.McCullough@us.army.mil](mailto:Kristen.McCullough@us.army.mil) and put Citizen STRI in the subject line.

# TEAM ORLANDO IN PHOTOS



*U.S. Army PEO STRI Photo/Doug Schaub*

Long-time PEO STRI Business Operations Office employee, Doug Smith, retires from federal service Nov. 1 in a ceremony hosted by Ken Wheeler, the assistant program executive officer for business operations.



*U.S. Army PEO STRI Photo/Doug Schaub*

Army Brig. Gen. Michael Lundy, the deputy commanding general of the Combined Arms Center - Training visits PEO STRI Nov. 15 and meets with Dr. James Blake, program executive officer for PEO STRI.



*Photo Courtesy of Frank Jamison Photography*

PM TRADE military officers participate in the Camaraderie Foundation's first Ruck Sack March at the University of Central Florida Nov. 17. The charity organization offers supplemental counseling, and emotional and spiritual support for deployed service personnel and their families.



*U.S. Army PEO STRI Photo/Doug Schaub*

Army officer Gregory "Gator" Gatrell, the team lead for contract management oversight in PEO STRI's Acquisition Center, is promoted to the rank of lieutenant colonel in a Dec. 14 ceremony presided over by Joe Giunta, the principal assistant responsible for contracting and director of the Acquisition Center.



*U.S. Army PEO STRI Photo/Doug Schaub*

The PM CATT Business Office participates in a holiday toy drive to benefit a local non-profit organization, New Hope for Kids. The PM CATT team brought the magic of the holiday season to 17 Central Florida children suffering from grief, loss or life-threatening illnesses.



*U.S. Army PEO STRI Photo/Doug Schaub*

The principal executives from the local military agencies sign the new Team Orlando interservice agreement Nov. 13. Pictured left to right: U.S. Marine Col. Michael Coolican, program manager for Training Systems at the Marine Corps Systems Command, Dr. James Blake, program executive officer for the U.S. Army Program Executive Office for Simulation, Training and Instrumentation, U.S. Navy Capt. Steve Nakagawa, commanding officer of the Naval Air Warfare Center Training Systems Division, and U.S. Air Force Col. Marcus Boyd, commander of the Air Force Agency for Modeling and Simulation.



*U.S. Army PEO STRI Photo/Doug Schaub*

PM TRADE's Assistant Product Manager for Live Training Systems Pon Tran is promoted to the rank of lieutenant colonel Nov. 16 in a ceremony hosted by Col. Mike Flanagan, the project manager for PM TRADE.



*U.S. Army PEO STRI Photo/Doug Schaub*

PEO STRI wins the annual SHAPE Turkey Bowl defeating the NAVAIR team 33-6. The local Army-Navy flag football game was played Nov. 29 at the UCF Intramural Fields.