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WORTH REPEATING

“

I am confident that our strong ASA(ALT) leadership team will continue our progress and build upon the successes that we have achieved. Thank you for your dedication, extraordinary work ethics and commitment to the Soldier.”

~ Honorable Heidi Shyu

Hon. Heidi Shyu, Former ASA(ALT) Leader, Bids Farewell to Workforce

By Rick Gregory, PEO STRI Strategic Communications Support Staff

After serving for nearly five years as the Army's Acquisition Executive and the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology (ASA(ALT)), Hon. Heidi Shyu retired from the position Jan. 31, 2016.

In a personal email to all of the ASA(ALT) employees announcing her decision, she praised the workforce for their continued professionalism in supporting the mission.

“It has been a great privilege to lead the outstanding men and women of the Army's acquisition workforce,” she wrote. “I learned quickly that the more than 37,000 professionals who comprise our team are the most talented, dedicated, disciplined and successful in the entire Department of Defense.”

Shyu was appointed to her position by President Barack Obama on Feb. 3, 2012 and confirmed that September. Prior to that she had served as the acting ASA(ALT) since June 4, 2011 and previously as the principal deputy since Nov. 8, 2010.

In her message to the field, ASA(ALT)'s leader said she was proud of what the workforce as “one team and one family” accomplished during her leadership.

“We have worked to streamline the acquisition process, although there is more to be done to ensure that our systems and programs can keep pace with technological progress,” Shyu wrote. “We have made great strides in increasing the lines of communications between our partners internally across the Army, to Office of the Secretary of Defense, as well as Congress, industry and academia.

“In addition, we have brought greater focus on program execution and affordability. The end goal of these efforts and our greatest achievements, have been enabling our Soldiers to accomplish their mission and the safe return to their families.”

Maj. Gen. Jon Maddux, Program Executive



Hon. Heidi Shyu

Officer for Simulation, Training and Instrumentation, said he will personally miss her leadership.

“I had the distinct pleasure of working for Ms. Shyu at the ASA(ALT) offices in the Pentagon as well as during my two PEO assignments at PEO Ammo and here at PEO STRI,” he said. “She consistently set the leadership example for the entire workforce through her calm demeanor, personable interactions interjected with a great sense of humor and a fine-tuned knowledge about all of the programs under her charge.”

The President of the United States has directed the Hon. Katrina McFarland to serve as the acting ASA(ALT). (Please see page 10)

PROGRAM EXECUTIVE OFFICER



**“ALL OF YOU
CAN CERTAINLY
BE PROUD OF
THE WORK YOU
DO DAY IN AND
DAY OUT FOR
OUR SOLDIERS.**

— MG Jon Maddux

To The PEO STRI Workforce,

As we go through our daily mission here at PEO STRI, we don't always get the opportunity to see the tremendously positive impact we are having on our Soldiers who use the training devices and systems we field.

With that in mind, I encourage you to take time to read the articles on pages 4, 5, 6 and 7 in this issue of Inside STRI. Each of them give firsthand testimonials on how the products we field not only help train our Soldiers to win on the battlefield, but, more importantly, to save the lives of those brave men and women taking the fight to the enemy.

There are no better individuals to share with us the end results of our efforts than those who have had hands-on training on those products and then applied what they learned while deployed in combat situations. Their stories certainly validate the important work you are doing here at PEO STRI.

As an example, Master Sgt. Michael Chavaree, a brigade senior medic with the Airborne and Ranger Training Brigade at Fort Benning, Ga., relates on page 5 that he “performed several procedures on the battlefield that were perfected with training events in controlled environments to include simulations.”

Additionally, Capt. Darryl Sandberg, a brigade physician assistant and dive medical officer in the same unit, said that he has “performed many techniques in an aid station and on a helicopter with no additional support that were tested in a training environment.”

The other articles include testimonials from others about the positive aspect of using simulations in training prior to having to execute those same skills on the battlefield.

All of you can certainly be proud of the work you do day in and day out for our Soldiers. I know I speak for the entire leadership team at PEO STRI when I say we are certainly proud of you.

Regards from your program executive officer,



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PEO STRI Committed To Providing Equal Opportunities For Individuals With Targeted Disabilities

By Kenneth Richmond, PEO STRI Equal Employment Opportunity Manager

PEO STRI is committed to ensuring equal opportunity in employment, upward mobility and retention of individuals with targeted disabilities. To demonstrate this commitment, PEO STRI has adopted the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's goal of a two percent workforce of individuals with targeted disabilities and is committed to ensuring that qualified individuals with disabilities receive appropriate reasonable accommodations.

PEO STRI's ultimate goal is to be an employer of choice for all employees and applicants, including people with targeted disabilities. This command is fully committed to employing individuals with targeted disabilities, creating an environment that is disability friendly and resolving barriers to employment as it relates to people with disabilities.

People with disabilities remain one of our Nation's greatest untapped resources and PEO STRI will continue to seek, recruit, select and develop talented and qualified Individuals with targeted disabilities to be part of our team.

One of the most common complaints about the federal hiring process is that it takes too long. As noted by the Merit Systems Protection Board in its report entitled Reforming Federal Hiring -- Beyond Faster and Cheaper (September 2006), it takes an average of 102 days to complete all of the steps in the competitive hiring process, from making the request, to making the appointment.

Certainly federal hiring managers or officials do not look forward to the prospect of spending three months or more trying to fill a position. Moreover, it is well known that excellent potential employees are lost because they too do not want to wait (or cannot afford to wait) months for a hiring decision. So what can hiring managers do? Use Schedule A!

WHAT IS SCHEDULE A?

Schedule A is an excellent alternative to the frustrating and bloated traditional hiring

process. Moreover, hiring individuals with disabilities furthers several goals.

Every federal agency strives to be diverse, inclusive and provide equal opportunity to all. Agencies appreciate that a diverse workforce is its greatest asset.

Further, Congress has mandated that the federal government be the model employer. Reaching that status means federal agencies need to make significant improvement in the area of hiring people with disabilities. Meeting that goal while also getting positions



filled quickly makes using Schedule A, a win-win proposition!

Using the Schedule A appointing authority, found at 5 CFR § 213.3102(u), qualified candidates who meet the Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) guidelines can be hired non-competitively –

- ▶ Without the typical recruitment headaches
- ▶ Without posting and publicizing the position, and
- ▶ Without going through the certificate process

HOW? BY FOLLOWING THESE EASY STEPS USING SCHEDULE A:

- (1) Hiring managers should first approach the Individuals with Targeted Disabilities (IWT) Program Manager, Mr. Ken Richmond, and alert him of the job opening. The manager should also explain what competencies the ideal candidate should possess as well as essential functions of the position.
- (2) The IWT manager will search the internal IWT Database for potential Schedule A applicants who have already been determined to meet the qualifications for the position. The number of candidates the manager is presented with will vary greatly, depending on the level of specialty required by the job.
- (3) The hiring official can now review the resumes and references of the applicants, conduct interviews, etc., and then make a selection. Resume and reference reviews should be thorough to accurately assess job readiness. If the hiring manager is not satisfied with any of the Schedule A applicants presented, they retain the option of using the traditional competitive process to fill the vacancy.
- (4) The selection decision, once made, should be relayed to the appropriate persons within the Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC) who extend offers of employment on behalf of PEO STRI.
- (5) Once the offer has been accepted, a start date may be established to bring the candidate on board. This requires coordination with the CPAC and Reasonable Accommodation Coordinator (if needed) to ensure that any accommodation required is in place on the new employee's first day.

continued on page 10

Simulation Center Carries Medal of Honor Soldier's Legacy Forward

By Monica K. Guthrie, Fort Sill, Okla. Tribune Newspaper

Medal of Honor recipient, Sgt. 1st Class Jared Monti, was a field artillery forward observer whose name is now displayed on the Fires Center of Excellence Mission Simulation Center.



simulation center, often called Monti Hall, helping to take the legacy of Monti out of the past and into the future.

"Basic trainees, second lieutenants, captains, lieutenant colonels, they all come through the building," said Shannon Judnic, chief of the center. "Fort Sill's Monti Hall is the only place within the Army with the ability to provide immersive training."

Judnic said immersive training gives Soldiers the sights and sounds of what it would be like training in the field or in a deployed environment without having to load up Soldiers and equipment and physically relocate. Instead, Soldiers and their instructors can conduct training at one of the 100-plus simulators in the building. Simulated environments include being in a Middle Eastern urban location, another puts trainees in an outdoor rocky terrain. One simulation can even change the temperature of the room to extremes, giving Soldiers the feeling of being in the actual environment in all ways except one -- smell.

Each environment features a screen (sometimes multiple screens) on which the terrain is projected. Meanwhile, civilian operators can change the environment the Soldiers see to include rain and snow, buildings, aircraft and even enemy forces approaching from behind.

Sgt. 1st Class Michael Nestell, senior instructor at the hall, knew Monti from when they attended advanced leadership course together. Nestell said the hall is a tribute to Monti as a Soldier and also as a leader. By bringing at times, untrained Soldiers into the building and molding them into leaders in their field, Monti's legacy continues through the Soldiers

trained in his hall.

"We have this saying about captains and lieutenants," said Nestell. "We put them in our pocket and carry them around feeding them until they're able to go out on their own. I think that's a good analogy. This building takes in Soldiers and carries them and when they finish the class they'll be able to go out on their own and do something when they leave this building's door."

Ross Cox, a former Soldier who served with Monti from 2003-2004, said it is his hope that Soldiers attending training at the hall will take a moment to remember the person behind the name.

"I don't want the new guys to be walking into some hall," said Cox. "I don't want this to just be some training facility they have to come to. I want them to know that Jared Monti was a man that was an American hero."

Cox said knowing the building is helping to train current Soldiers to do tasks in the future is how the legacy of Monti is able to continue. Monti's friends and families are not limited to remember the past, but continue to be reminded of the impact Monti is making despite his absence.

"I have a lot of friends that were in (Monti's) platoon that would



Photo by Monica K. Guthrie, Fort Sill

From right, second lieutenants Arthur Kim, Churxa Yang and Amber Warren prepare for battalion-directed operations training at Sgt. 1st Class Jared Monti Hall, Jan. 19, 2016.

appreciate knowing what's going on with the Fires Center and how Monti Hall is creating a way for Monti's legacy to be about continually leading Soldiers," said Cox. "He's continuing to teach and train Soldiers like a good NCO."



Army Medical Professionals Share Their Thoughts on Using Simulations for Medical Training

By Rick Gregory, PEO STRI Strategic Communications Support Staff

Voltaire, the French philosopher, once asked “Is there anyone so wise as to learn by the experience of others?”

The answer is “yes.” It’s the U.S. Army that is always using the experience of its battle-tested Soldiers to constantly improve the training regimen for future Warfighters. One way is having Soldiers participate in the Warfighters’ Corner during the annual Interservice/Industry Training, Simulation and Education Conference (I/ITSEC) where invited Soldiers share their experience using simulations to prepare them for battle.

This past year’s conference, held November 28 to December 2 in Orlando, was no exception.

Two of those warfighters, Capt. Darryl Sandberg and Master Sgt. Michael Chavaree, provided their insight, based on numerous combat deployments, on how the Army can improve on the medical simulation training offered to its Soldiers.

Sandberg, who has extensive medical experience as an Army physician assistant in both combat and peacetime roles, said medical simulation training provides him the opportunity to teach his medics new skills and techniques while reinforcing proven methods.

“It allows me to validate the medics before they may encounter a situation requiring their skills in combat or without my direct supervision,” he explained.

Currently assigned to the Airborne and Ranger Training Brigade at Fort Benning, Ga. as the brigade physician assistant and dive medical officer, Sandberg praised the training provided by the Tactical Combat Medical Care (TCMC) course at Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

“The facility offered healthcare providers a chance to use lifesaving techniques before a combat deployment,” Sandberg said. “The effectiveness of this one-week course was outstanding. Many of the techniques taught during TCMC were utilized over two deployments to Iraq and one deployment to Afghanistan.

“I have performed many techniques in an aid station and on a helicopter with no additional support that were tested in a training environment,” he continued. “If it wasn’t for these trainings, I would not have been as confident as I was during those situations. Medical simulations that are real and relevant keeps your edge when you don’t have time to work in a trauma hospital or busy emergency department.”

Through his experience, he offered what he thinks would improve on the already solid medical simulation training.

“I would like to see improvements on the capabilities of simulations such that the model is cost effective, rugged but realistic, and relevant to the injuries commonly seen on the battlefield, but also have the ability to be tailored to a particular mission set,” he said.

Asked if there are medical training devices he would like to see added to the already existing ones, he was quick to respond.

“Yes, female and canine models. As missions become more joint in nature, regular forces need to be comfortable treating injured females and canines.”

Chavaree, who serves as the brigade senior medic in the same unit as Sandberg, also speaks highly of the effectiveness of using simulations to prepare Soldiers for the battlefield.

“Field simulation allows me to practice innovation in a controlled environment,” he said. “The constant evolution of medical capability and equipment is essential in the advancement of battlefield care and field simulations allow us to validate these before applying them in combat.”

Using the Medical Simulation Training Centers (MSTC) as an example, he said he saw the benefits when the MSTC was used at Fort Bragg, N.C. to prepare special operations support Soldiers for deployment.

“The facility offered us the ability to save on resources and time. The training event was a ‘plug and play.’ From start to finish all



U.S. Army Photo

Capt. Darryl Sandberg speaks to the audience during the Warfighters’ Corner presentations at the Interservice/Industry Training, Simulation and Education Conference on December 1.



U.S. Army Photo

Master Sgt. Michael Chavaree shares his experience using medical simulations prior to deploying to combat zones during the Interservice/Industry Training, Simulation and Education Conference on December 2.

training was conducted at the MSTC. The MSTC was the best training facility available and extremely underused considering their potential,” Chavaree said. *continued on page 10*

Study Looks to Improve Tactical Combat Casualty Care to Save Soldiers' Lives

By Mike Casey, Combined Arms Center-Training Public Affairs

The Army is looking to save Soldiers' lives by making Tactical Combat Casualty Care, also known as TC3, training more realistic and accessible. Those efforts stem from an ongoing Army study, Squad Overmatch-TC3, which is exploring ways to improve warrior skills, achieve squad overmatch and save lives through cutting-edge learning techniques and state-of-the-art simulation technologies.

One of the study's findings was that Soldiers lack access to realistic TC3 simulation that could improve the individual and collective skills Soldiers and squads need to manage the complex environment of simultaneous combat and casualty management.

Squad Overmatch-TC3 training draws on the Army's experiences from Iraq and Afghanistan, said Maj. Gen. Mark J. O'Neil, deputy commanding general of the Combined Arms Center-Training, or CAC-T.

"Now the Army is taking those lessons learned and making them part of training. We need to have tough, realistic training to improve readiness and most important of all -- save Soldiers' lives," said O'Neil. CAC-T fields training systems, delivers leader training and sustains training capabilities.

During the wars, the Army's care for wounded Soldiers improved. At the start, 90 percent of casualties survived their wounds. Eventually, medical advances, command emphasis, improved evacuation and better training pushed survival rates up to 97 percent.

Yet other statistics from the recent wars point to areas for improvement:

- 87 percent of casualty deaths occurred before the casualty reached a medical treatment facility in the prehospital setting.
- Of the 1,096 casualty deaths from October 2001 to June 2011, 24 percent of the

casualties who died in the prehospital setting potentially could have survived with the right assets and training.

- For Army Rangers, the rates for died of wounds and killed in action were 1.7 percent and 10.7 percent respectively. For conventional forces, the rates for died of wounds and for killed in action were 5.8 percent and 16.4 percent respectively.

“SOLDIERS NEED ACTIVE TRAINING AND THEY'LL GET THAT BY ANALYZING AND DISCUSSING SIMULATED SITUATIONS BASED ON REAL EXPERIENCES AND PRACTICING INDIVIDUAL SKILLS ON A COMBAT TRAUMA MANNEQUIN.”

— Col. (Dr.) Daniel Irizarry

The statistics underscore the importance of command emphasis and realistic combat casualty care training for all Soldiers, said Col. (Dr.) Daniel Irizarry, who has served as an 82nd Airborne Division brigade surgeon and a special operations battalion surgeon. He is a senior advisor to the Squad Overmatch TC3 study.

"While the Rangers have some unique combat enablers, the truth is that in the prehospital setting, survival in the first 10 minutes does not require advanced technology," Irizarry said. "It requires command emphasis, individual and collective training, and available individual first aid equipment."

Every Ranger receives individual training above the Army standard in stopping bleeding, opening airways and other life-saving skills, Irizarry said.

These skills are practiced in collective

training events to reinforce the teamwork required to manage casualties effectively while continuing the fight. Ranger leaders also are trained in and held accountable for the commander's casualty response system.

"Now we need to spread similar concepts throughout the force," he said.

Irizarry is also the clinical adviser to the Army Program Executive Office for Simulation, Training and Instrumentation, or PEO-STRI. The Orlando, Florida, organization develops, acquires and sustains simulation, training, testing and modeling solutions. PEO-STRI and CAC-T collaborate to develop and field training devices to support the Army.

MORE REALISM

The Squad Overmatch-TC3 training methodology and technologies aim to make three days of progressive training more realistic through:

- Lectures and classroom demonstrations at the crawl stage.
- Video game-based virtual simulations at the walk stage.
- Live training at the run stage.

"The first day starts with time in the classroom where Soldiers learn the basics of advanced situational awareness, team dimensional dynamics, resilience training and TC3. But this training cannot be death by PowerPoint," Irizarry said.

"Soldiers need active training and they'll get that by analyzing and discussing simulated situations based on real experiences and practicing individual skills on a combat trauma mannequin." Irizarry noted one example of how Soldier TC3 training is ripe for improvement.

"The current Army standard for Warrior Skills training requires Soldiers to practice applying a tourniquet on

continued on page 7



their battle buddy. This is flawed because first, your buddy is not bleeding, and second you can't tighten a tourniquet tight enough because it is too painful," he said.

"In fact, this is actually negative training because in combat, you tighten tourniquets until the bleeding stops, which may require more than one tourniquet," Irizarry said.

To address this need, today's fielded combat casualty mannequins breathe, bleed and are visually modeled to be extremely realistic to show severe trauma. Their realism helps Soldiers get past the visual shock of war trauma to assess and identify life-threatening bleeding. They learn to apply tourniquets until the device's simulated bleeding stops.

"And that's exactly what a Soldier has to do on the battlefield, move past the horror, search for the bleeding and treat it," he said.

Besides teaching the correct way to apply a tourniquet, the training device helps Soldiers learn how to properly treat other preventable causes of battlefield death by placing a chest decompression needle and opening an airway with a nasal tube.

Today's combat medic (68W) training uses similar devices in training and validation at the Army Medical Simulation Training Centers, but there are not enough training devices to reach every Soldier.

A day of classroom training is followed by a day with video game scenarios in which Soldiers are immersed as avatars in the Army's flagship gaming program, Virtual Battlespace 3, or VBS3, to conduct missions.

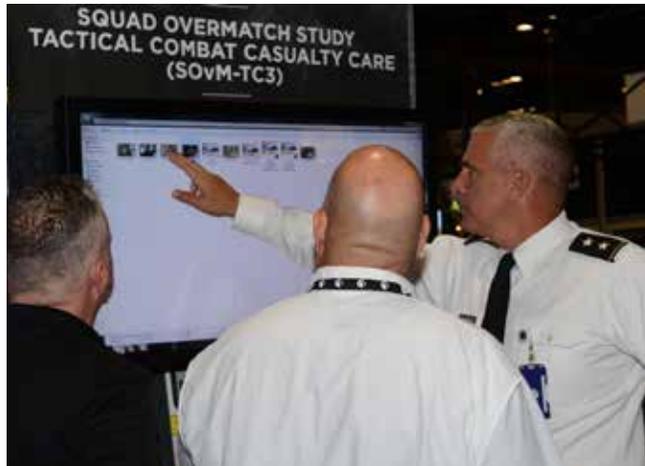
Enhanced with a future TC3 plugin, VBS3 soon will allow for realistic casualty treatment by first responders, which creates the drive for squad coordination and reinforces individual skills for effective casualty management.

The Army is also developing a new TC3 stand-alone game for first responders that will build the knowledge skills required to decide how to treat casualties properly in the context of effective fire and in secure locations.

These game-based programs will provide higher-fidelity distributed training for medics and Soldiers. Both programs will be available later this year.

LIVE TRAINING

On the third day, Soldiers train in field exercises at local training sites augmented by Squad Overmatch technologies, combining combat operations with casualty care management using the Army's Multiple Integrated Laser Engagement System, or MILES.



U.S. Army Photo

Maj. Gen. Jon Maddux, PEO STRI's program executive officer, receives a briefing on the Squad Overmatch Study during the annual Interservice/Industry Training, Simulation and Education Conference last December.



U.S. Army Photo

Gen. Dennis L. Via (left) commanding general, U.S. Army Materiel Command, receives a briefing on the latest medical simulations by Col. Dan Irizarry, clinical advisor, Joint Programs Office during the general's visit to PEO STRI last August.

To add realism, the Army is looking at replacing the 30-year-old paper MILES Casualty Card. The cards only reflect the moment of injury, but the new dynamic MILES Casualty Display Device, or MCDD, changes over time with treatment.

HERE IS HOW MCDD AUGMENTS THE LIVE TRAINING ENVIRONMENT:

During the operation, when a Soldier is wounded, the MILES alarm will activate. Then the MCDD will automatically display the Soldier's wounds, pulse, pain, respiration as well as the abilities to shoot, move and communicate.

This starts an internal clock for treatment. The Soldier or the first responder must assess the card, decide the right treatment and apply it. The MCDD communicates with modified tourniquets, nasal airways tubes and chest decompression needles found in the Soldier's first aid kit that automatically changes the card to reflect the treatment's application.

"If Soldiers wait too long to apply the tourniquet, then the wounded Soldier bleeds out and the MCDD changes to dead," Irizarry said. "Apply it correctly, within time and the Soldier lives. That's realistic."

The MILES system sends data from the field to a commander for an After Action Review. Augmented with treatment data, the system begins to give leaders feedback on the commander's casualty response system -- a key feedback loop in Ranger training.

Incorporating casualty care into live training also helps leaders develop decision-making skills in a complex environment. "The squad sergeant or platoon lieutenant has to decide: How do I keep up the fight and treat the wounded at the same time?" Irizarry said.

The new video game and live training TC3 technologies represent the Army's effort to make home station training more realistic and challenging.

Coordinating with the Army Medical Department, proponent for first aid Warrior Skills training, CAC-T and PEO-STR I are working quickly to field an exportable TC3 training package. The training package could touch up to 294,000 Soldiers per year with better, more realistic training at home stations, Combat Training Centers and training institutions such as Basic Combat Training.

"By integrating these innovations, the Army can enhance training, improve unit performance and develop agile, adaptive leaders," O'Neil said. "And this type of training will save Soldiers' lives."

BLACK HISTORY MONTH



HALLOWED GROUNDS: Sites of African American Memories



Frequently Asked Questions on Voting, Use of Social Media, Email

By the U.S. Office of Special Counsel

The U.S. Office of Special Counsel (OSC) routinely receives questions from federal employees and others about when the use of social media and email could violate the Hatch Act.

Social media and email—and the ease of accessing those accounts at work, either on computers or smartphones—have made it easier for federal employees to violate the Hatch Act. Yet there are many activities employees can do on social media and email that do not violate the law. OSC has created this Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) page to help employees understand what the Hatch Act does and does not allow when using social media and email.

In general, all federal employees may use social media and email and comply with the Hatch Act if they remember the following guidelines:

(6) Do not engage in political activity while on duty or in the workplace.

- ▶ Federal employees are “on duty” when they are in a pay status, other than paid leave, or are representing the government in an official capacity.
- ▶ Federal employees are considered “on duty” during telecommuting hours.

(7) Do not engage in political activity in an official capacity at any time.

(8) Do not solicit or receive political contributions at any time.

“Political activity” refers to any activity directed at the success or failure of a political party or partisan political group (collectively referred to as “partisan groups”), or candidate in a partisan race.

These rules have some very limited exceptions. When in doubt, federal employees should consult OSC or their agency ethics officers.

The following list of questions is not comprehensive, but answers many of the most commonly asked questions regarding the Hatch Act and the use of social media and email. Please note that although the FAQs refer to Facebook and Twitter, the advice provided is applicable to any social media platform. If federal employees have further questions, they should email OSC at hatchact@osc.gov.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Q: May a federal employee engage in political activity on Facebook or Twitter?

A: Yes, federal employees may express their opinions about a partisan group or candidate in a partisan race (e.g., post, “like,” “share,” “tweet,” “retweet”), but there are a few limitations. Specifically, the Hatch Act prohibits employees from:

- ▶ engaging in any political activity via Facebook or Twitter while on duty or in the workplace;
- ▶ referring to their official titles or positions while engaged in political activity at any time (note that inclusion of an employee’s official title or position on one’s social media profile, without more, is not an improper use of official authority); and
- ▶ suggesting or asking anyone to make political contributions at any time. Thus, they should neither provide links to the political contribution page of any partisan group or candidate in a partisan race nor “like,” “share,” or “retweet” a solicitation from one of those entities, including an invitation to a political fundraising event. An employee, however, may accept an invitation to a political fundraising event from such entities via Facebook or Twitter.

Q: May a federal employee engage in political activity on Facebook or Twitter if she is “friends” with or has “followers” who are subordinate employees?

A: Yes, but subject to the limitations described in other questions and the following guidelines. If a supervisor’s statements about a partisan group or candidate in a partisan race are directed at all of his Facebook friends or Twitter followers, e.g., posted on his Facebook page, then there is no Hatch Act violation. Such statements would be improper if the supervisor specifically directed them toward her subordinate employees, or to a subset of friends that includes subordinate employees. For example, a supervisor should not send to a subordinate employee a Facebook message or “tweet” that shows her support for a partisan group or candidate.

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Katrina McFarland Selected As Acting Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology

By Rick Gregory, PEO STRI Strategic Communications Support Staff

On Feb. 1, 2016, the President of the United States selected the Hon. Katrina McFarland to serve as the acting Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology (ASA(ALT)), replacing the Hon. Heidi Shyu who retired from the position in late January (please see page 1).

The new ASA(ALT) leader assumes her new role after serving since early 2012 as the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Acquisition) where she was the principal adviser to the Secretary of Defense and the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics.

Prior to that, McFarland served as the president of the Defense Acquisition University (DAU), the Department of Defense's primary academic resource for



Hon. Katrina McFarland

acquisition professionals. During her time there, she was responsible for overseeing the development and expansion of the acquisition curriculum and supporting learning opportunities for more than 150,000 members of the Defense Acquisition Workforce.

She began her civil service career in 1986 as a general engineer at Headquarters U.S. Marine Corps. Her follow-on assignments included a stint with the Department of National Defense in Ottawa, Ontario as procurement head of electronics; the Marine Corps System Command where she was responsible for various, high-level acquisition initiatives; and then as the director for acquisition at the Missile Defense Agency.

ARMY MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS SHARE THEIR THOUGHTS ON USING SIMULATIONS FOR MEDICAL TRAINING *continued from page 5*

He said that training paid off when he found himself on the battlefield.

"I have performed several procedures on the battlefield that were perfected with training events in controlled environments to include simulations. Training on simulations increased my confidence in my equipment and capabilities by giving me realistic feedback," the senior medic explained. "Although simulations training was not the sole source of my training, my training would not have been conclusive without the use of simulations."

Chavaree added that he would like to see more simulations during full mission rehearsal training events to increase the effectiveness of the training.

"I would like to someday use a simulated casualty for all phases of Tactical Combat Casualty Care (TCCC). It should be a simulated casualty that can be used for point of injury care that emphasizes on the three leading causes of preventable death - hemorrhage from an extremity, airway management and treatment of tension Pneumothorax.

"Tactical Field Care with more advanced injury capacity would be a great asset for effective training. The model would have to incorporate scenarios that are real and relevant and the injuries need to be both realistic and responsive to treatment."

He is also in agreement with Sandberg in what he feels is the future needs for combat medical care training using simulations.

"There needs to be more simulations that replicate female operators," he said. "Females are soon going to have more active roles in the maneuver force and training needs to include realistic simulations and scenarios that will prepare us for that."

As Voltaire has said, "Perfection is attained by slow degrees; it requires the hand of time."

(Note: Please see pages 6 and 7 for a detailed report on how steps the Army is taking to improve Tactical Combat Casualty Care training)

Thanks to Soldiers like Sandberg and Chavaree who are willing to share their experiences and recommendations, the Army is able to come as close to perfection as possible in preparing future warfighters for domination on the battlefield.

PEO STRI COMMITTED TO PROVIDING EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH TARGETED DISABILITIES *continued from page 3*

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS:

Q. Why should agencies consider using the Schedule A hiring authority?

A. Agencies should use this hiring authority for a number of good reasons:

- Individuals with disabilities are an untapped source of excellent applicants;
- No public notice is required. In fact, many of the usual HR-related stumbling blocks are avoided, which could result in significantly reducing the time necessary to hire a well-qualified candidate;

Q. What about accommodations? Aren't they expensive and a hassle?

A. No! More often than not, providing accommodations is simple and usually free! Moreover, you are not alone in trying to work through accommodation requests. The

Reasonable Accommodation Coordinator can help you.

Q. What about a probationary period?

A. Depending on the type of appointment, probationary periods typically last up to two years. Schedule A candidates should be held to the same performance standards as all other employees. Once the employee's accommodation needs, if any, have been met, then you should expect no more or less from a Schedule A employee than you would from any other employee. Once the probationary period has been successfully completed, employees should be converted to permanent competitive status.

For more information, contact Kenneth Richmond at 407 207 5045 or via email: Kenneth.I.Richmond.civ@mail.mil.

Q: May a federal employee become a “friend,” “like,” or “follow” the social media page of a partisan group or candidate in a partisan race?

A: Yes, but not while on duty or in the workplace.

Q: May a federal employee use an alias to “friend,” “like,” or “follow” the social media page of a partisan group or candidate in a partisan race?

A: Yes, but be advised that federal employees remain subject to the Hatch Act even when they act under an alias. Therefore, the advice provided in response to other questions applies regardless of whether or not the employee is acting under an alias.

Q: May a federal employee continue to “friend,” “like,” or “follow” an official social media page of a government official after he has become a candidate for reelection?

A: Yes. For example, a federal employee may continue to “friend,” “like,” or “follow” the official Facebook, Twitter, or other social media page of the President or Member of Congress, even after the President or Member begins his reelection campaign.

Q: What should a federal employee do if an individual posts or “tweets” a message soliciting political contributions to a partisan group or candidate in a partisan race, or a link to the political contribution page for such entities, on the employee’s social media page?

A: Although the Hatch Act prohibits employees from soliciting or receiving political contributions at any time, employees are not responsible for the statements of third parties, even when they appear on their social media page. Thus, if an individual posts a link to the political contribution page of a partisan group or candidate in a partisan race, or otherwise solicits political contributions, the employee need not take any action. The same advice applies to any “tweets” directed at the employee. However, the employee should not “like,” “share,” or “retweet” the solicitation, or respond in any way that would tend to encourage other readers to contribute.

Q: If a federal employee has listed his official title or position on Facebook, may he also complete the “political views” field?

A: Yes. Simply identifying one’s political party affiliation on a social media profile, which also contains one’s official title or position, without more, is not an improper use of official authority.

Q: May a federal employee display a political party or campaign logo or candidate photograph as her cover or header photo on Facebook or Twitter?

A: Yes, federal employees may display a political party or campaign logo or candidate photograph as their cover or header photo on their personal Facebook or Twitter accounts. This display, usually featured at the top of one’s social media profile, without more, is not improper political activity.

Q: May a federal employee display a political party or campaign logo or a candidate photograph as his profile picture on Facebook or Twitter?

A: Yes, but subject to the following limitations. Because a profile picture accompanies most actions on social media, a federal employee would not be permitted, while on duty or in the workplace, to post,

“share,” “tweet,” or “retweet” any items, because each such action would show their support for a partisan group or candidate in a partisan race, even if the content is not about those entities.

EMAIL

Q: What is a partisan political email?

A: A partisan political email is an email that is directed at the success or failure of a partisan group or candidate in a partisan race.

Q: May a federal employee—while on duty or in the workplace—receive a partisan political email?

A: Yes. Simply receiving a partisan political email while at work, whether to a personal or government email account, without more, does not violate the Hatch Act. However, federal employees must not send or forward partisan political emails to others while on duty or in the workplace.

Q: May a federal employee—while on duty or in the workplace—forward a partisan political email from her government email account to her personal email account?

A: Yes. If a federal employee receives a partisan political email in his government email account, she may send that email to her personal email account while at work.

Q: May a federal employee—while on duty or in the workplace—send or forward a partisan political email from his government email account or his personal email account to others?

A: No. A federal employee cannot send or forward a partisan political email from either his government email account or his personal email account (even using a personal device) while at work.

Q: May a federal employee—while on duty or in the workplace—send or forward an email about current events or matters of public interest to others?

A: The Hatch Act does not prohibit federal employees from engaging in non-partisan political activities. Accordingly, employees may express their opinions about current events and matters of public interest at work so long as their actions are not considered political activity. For example, employees are free to express their views and take action as individual citizens on such questions as referendum matters, changes in municipal ordinances, constitutional amendments, pending legislation or other matters of public interest, like issues involving highways, schools, housing, and taxes. Of course, employees should be mindful of their agencies’ computer use policies prior to sending or forwarding any non-work related emails.

Q: May a federal employee send or forward a partisan political email to subordinate employees?

A: No. It is an improper use of official authority for a supervisor to send or forward a partisan political email to subordinates, at any time.

Q: May a federal employee send or forward an email invitation to a political fundraising event to others?

A: No. The Hatch Act prohibits federal employees from soliciting or receiving political contributions, which includes inviting individuals to political fundraising events, at any time.

STRI IN FOCUS



U.S. Army Photo

Maj. Gen. Jon Maddux, PEO STRI's program executive officer, presents the certificate of promotion to newly promoted Maj. Erica Chin during a ceremony on Feb. 5, 2016.



U.S. Army Photo

Lt. Col. Douglas Twitty, program manager, Ground Combat Tactical Trainers, presents the certificate of retirement to Mr. Joseph Labalbo during his retirement ceremony on Oct. 30, 2015.



U.S. Army Photo

Col. Rich Haggerty, project manager, Instrumentation, Targets and Threat Simulators, presents the Superior Civilian Service Award to Ms. Slylina (Sam) Walsh during her retirement ceremony on Feb. 2, 2016.



U.S. Army Photo

Mr. Fran Fierko, deputy project manager, Integrated Training Environment, presents the certificate of retirement to Ms. Debbie Kravchuk during her retirement ceremony on Dec. 15, 2015.



U.S. Army Photo

Members of the Defense Acquisition University's Senior Service College Fellowship Program pose for a photo during their visit to PEO STRI on Jan. 27, 2016.



U.S. Army Photo

Col. Tim Wallace, PEO STRI's chief of staff, gives a presentation to the attendees at the Combined Professional Associations Group during their annual breakfast on Jan. 7, 2016.