


This we'll defend


Mobile 'digital campus' created to train NCOs

System will help meet training requirements in theater and other worldwide locations

Access to military education is playing an increasingly important role in the Army's transformation efforts and in the lives of noncommissioned officers and soldiers.

At the core of every NCO's ability to lead, train and inspire soldiers are the NCO's own educational requirements.

Training – such as the Basic NCO Course (BNCOC) and the Battle Staff NCO Course (BSNCO) – is critical to NCO and soldier development.

Now, the Army's Deployed Digital Training Campus (DDTC) is creating a flexible, mobile system to meet training requirements in theater and at other locations across the globe.

Training areas – mandated by the Non-commissioned Officer Education System (NCOES) – are necessary to achieve the benefits of the modular forces prescribed by the Army Campaign Plan and the Army Force Generation model.

Early DDTC prototypes were deployed to Macedonia, Bosnia, Germany, Kosovo and the Sinai Peninsula.

When the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) deployed to Iraq with the fourth generation of the prototype in August 2005, it helped lay the groundwork for the way the Army delivers training in an in-theater, war-time environment.

DDTC adds a key component to the Army's state-of-the-art, distributed-learning technologies managed by the Army Distributed Learning System (DLS) program that falls under the Program Executive Office Enterprise Information Systems.

DLS combines hardware, software and telecommunications resources with training facilities and course content to deliver a Web-based distributed learning solution to 1.2 million personnel.

During January, a BNCOC team concluded training at Fort Campbell, Ky., for 53 students who completed two BNCOC courses.

All 53 workstations were simultaneously transmitting and receiving data remotely from Fort Lee, Va., via a single satellite link.

In March, the Army announced that Lockheed Martin was awarded a five-year, \$15 million contract to create two DDTC tests, followed by 48 additional units. The company is partnering with Omega Sys-



Soldiers use a Deployed Digital Training Campus prototype during a Basic NCO Course in Iraq. The DDTC can display incoming images on a main screen in the room or on individual work stations concurrently.



A Deployed Digital Training Campus, here packed and ready for transport, can be assembled and disassembled in less than 60 minutes by two soldiers. It provides access to the most advanced computer based training system available in the Army for up to 20 soldiers at a time.

tems Inc. and SRA International.

Charles Bos, deployed training manager for the Army's Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), said, "The DDTC represents the best possible solution for cutting down the NCOES training backlog caused by the Middle East conflict."

Using a DDTC at a deploying unit's home station and then transporting the mobile training system to the deployed location, provides concrete benefits.

"With a compressed cycle," Bos said, "the ability to deliver training at a deploying unit's home station via the DDTC prior to deployment, rather than remove the soldiers from their units and families, not only saves money for the Army, it increases individual soldier morale."

Adding, "It gives them more time with their families and greatly decreases unit turbulence for commanders."

The DDTC is being designed for rapid set-up and use in theater environments.

Bos said, "Once the unit deploys, allowing the unit to take the DDTC classroom with them for use during deployment affords NCOs and soldiers a way to continue their education without interruption."

As the DDTC program matures, the goal is to issue one DDTC to each brigade in the force.

Studies conducted by the Army Research Institute, TRADOC and industry and academic institutions confirm the effectiveness of distributed learning technology in meeting critical training needs.

The studies show that distributed learning reduces the time of instruction by 20 percent to 40 percent, while reducing the cost of instruction by 30 percent to 60 percent.

Distributed learning is also effective in a wide variety of learning situations, including group instruction, individual instruction and hands-on training.

By delivering a transportable training solution that offers secure, high-bandwidth communications and satellite connectivity, DDTC is taking the Army's distributed learning capabilities to new levels that will make a strategic contribution to the Army's transformation.

Gen. William S. Wallace, TRADOC commander, stated that the transformation efforts of the Army Campaign Plan (ACP), which are designed to deliver a modular, unit-based, brigade-centric Army, call for a brigade-centric training strategy.

The DDTC is being developed to meet that need.

ACP-related changes to training and leadership development foreseen by Wallace include emphasizing more distrib-

uted learning classes and increasing the number of training cycles per year.

With the ability for a brigade to deploy with its own DDTC, NCOs and other personnel will have access to training anytime and anywhere.

DDTC prototypes have evolved over the years since TRADOC originally envisioned the system more than 10 years ago.

The initial commercial off-the-shelf systems, built and deployed during 1995 and 1996, were refined in response to comments and recommendations from field commanders.

As a result of those early efforts, system requirements were drawn up for the DDTC program, which is the fourth increment in the DLS acquisition program.

By the time the most recent DDTC prototype was deployed with the 101st Airborne Division in Iraq, the system had been refined into a lightweight, easily portable, satellite communications-based digital classroom solution.

The DDTC can be transported in a humvee and erected or disassembled in less than 60 minutes by two soldiers. It provides up to 20 soldiers with access to the most advanced computer-based training system available in the Army.

In addition to the BNCOC and BSNCO courses, the currently deployed DDTC prototypes are delivering the Unit Movement Officer Course as well as foreign-language courses sponsored by the Defense Language Institute.

The 101st has made a valuable contribution to the DDTC initiative by providing important feedback and to be addressed in subsequent generations of the system.

DDTC provides benefits that extend beyond delivering online courses and live, instructor-led classes delivered from remote locations.

When soldiers in the field need information on a specialized topic, they can use the DDTC to contact and collaborate with a subject-matter expert.

Real-time, video-based discussions enable participants to confer about complex operations or new procedures.

Because DDTCs are seamlessly integrated with other DLS resources, the DDTCs deliver all the Web-based learning capabilities and advantages offered by other DLS components, including:

- Connection to approximately 275 Digital Training Facilities at 115 locations worldwide.

- 2,600 training courses in the areas of information technology, foreign languages, business, leadership and professional development through Army e-Learning.

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This we'll defend


NCO and Soldier Programs

Army, AUSA honor top recruiters

**Command Sgt. Maj.
Jimmie W. Spencer, USA, Ret.
Director,
Noncommissioned Officer
and Soldier Programs**

We have a world-class Army and I don't think anyone, friend or foe, would disagree.

The reason we have a world-class Army is because we have great young men and women who are willing to serve the nation in this time of war.

That's not to say that we don't have great "stuff," because we surely do. We have state-of-the-art weapons, tanks, helicopters – AKA: "Stuff."

The very best stuff that America can produce is in the hands of our soldiers, and this gives us a much-needed edge over our adversaries.

But it's not about the stuff, it's about people.

Our quality Army begins with U.S. Army recruiters from Washington State to Washington, D.C., – and everywhere in between.

Some of the Army's best and brightest noncommissioned officers man America's Army recruiting stations, ensuring we continue to fill our ranks with quality men and women.

Our quality Army starts with quality recruiters.

The Association of the United States Army is pleased to host again this year as our special guests at the AUSA Annual Meeting and Exposition, the top recruiters of the year – active, guard and reserve – three Army noncommissioned officers who have excelled this past year as recruiters.

They are "The Best of the Best."

The noncommissioned officer selected as this year's top U.S. Army Recruiter is Sgt. Derek J. Vasquez.

Vasquez, a native of Buffalo, N.Y., began his military career as an infantryman with the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) at Fort Campbell, Ky.

"I joined the Army strictly to serve my country," he said. "I was a senior in high school when Sept. 11 happened. I wanted to be part of the fight on terrorism."

Adding, "The infantry was the job I wanted, and it was the job provided."

From February 2003 to February 2004, he deployed to Iraq in support of Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraq Freedom. Upon his return from Iraq, he was



selected for the Corporal Recruiting Program and completed the Army Recruiter Course in February 2005 as the distinguished honor graduate.

Vasquez holds a bachelors degree in criminal justice from Colorado Technical University, and has earned the Combat Infantryman and Air Assault Badges. He is assigned to the Cheektowaga, New York, Recruiting Station, Syracuse Recruiting Battalion.

The U.S. Army Reserve Recruiter of the Year is Staff Sgt. Terry L. Spangler.

Spangler's first duty assignment was a Bradley crew member with the 4th Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment, in Baumholder, Germany.

After a tour in Bosnia-Herzegovina, he left active duty to work as a field training officer, SWAT team member and self defense instructor with the Phenix City Police Department, Phenix City, Ala.

In 2005, Spangler applied for and was accepted as an Army Reserve recruiter.

Following completion of the Army Recruiter Course at Fort Jackson, S.C., he was assigned to the Talladega, Alabama, Recruiting Station.

Spangler holds a bachelors degree in criminal justice from Columbus State University, and is a member of the National Justice Honor Society. He holds both the Gold Recruiter Badge and Recruiter Ring.

The Army National Guard Recruiting and Retention NCO of the Year is Sgt. 1st Class Ricky J. Weber.

Weber began his military career with the Indiana National Guard as a medical specialist in February 1990.

He attended infantry training in 1997, and was subsequently assigned as an infantryman with the 1st Battalion, 293d Infantry, in Fort Wayne, Ind.

After a deployment to Iraq with the 76th Brigade, he became a National Guard recruiting and retention NCO in Fort Wayne and Allen County.

Weber is working toward a degree in mechanical engineering from Indiana University.

He has been awarded the Combat Infantryman Badge and the National Guard Master Recruiting and Retention Badge.

Three outstanding noncommissioned officers who, given a tough mission, have not only succeeded, but have excelled.

By doing so, they have done their part to sustain America's world-class Army.

You are invited to meet these great NCOs – along with the Drill Sergeants



Sgt. Derek J. Vasquez (top), Staff Sgt. Terry L. Spangler (middle) and Sgt. 1st Class Ricky J. Weber (bottom).

of the Year and many other outstanding soldiers and NCOs from around the Army – at this year's Annual Meeting – A Professional Development Forum – in Washington, Oct. 8 – 10.

We will announce the winners of the Army's Soldier and NCO of the Year competition at the Sergeant Major of the Army's Awards Luncheon on Monday, Oct. 8.

Thank you for your selfless service to the nation and for all you do for America's Army.

Thank you for your support of AUSA. Stay safe, stay Army Strong.

We will see you in October.

Still Serving!

Digital

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■ A Web-based information system for managing, developing and delivering self-paced and live, interactive training, which is available through the Army Learning Management System.

■ DLS system administration support for integrated computer servers, telecommunications equipment and software assets, provided by the Enterprise Management Center.

DDTC also provides fast, on-demand access to foreign language instruction.

Limited foreign language learning opportunities and time constraints have created barriers that have worked against the goals of fielding forces capable of basic communications with local populations in deployed areas.

In addition, courses in Arabic, Farsi and Pashto can make differences not only in basic communication skills, but also in intelligence gathering.

DDTC enables the Army's technology professionals to access more than 40 preparation certification programs, including programs from Microsoft, Oracle, Cisco and IBM, which prepare students for certification exams, application development projects and maintenance programs.

(Editors' note: This article is based on information from Meggan Kring, Army Distributed Learning System, and Tim Dzyacky, CorpComm, Inc.)

Preston to address enlisted troops at Annual Meeting

Association of the United State Army officials have announced that there will be special events and programs at the 2007 AUSA Annual Meeting and Exposition, Oct. 8 – Oct. 10, at the Washington Convention Center that will focus on this event as a professional development forum.

Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth Preston will convene the annual Sergeant Major of the Army Conference for sergeants first class and above on the morning of Oct. 9.

The session with outstanding soldiers and NCOs, staff sergeants and below, will convene on Tuesday afternoon.

The NCO Professional Development Forum will be held at 10 a.m., Tuesday, following the Sergeant Major of the Army Conference.

The Professional Development Forum is designed to impart information of importance on contemporary military issues to NCOs.