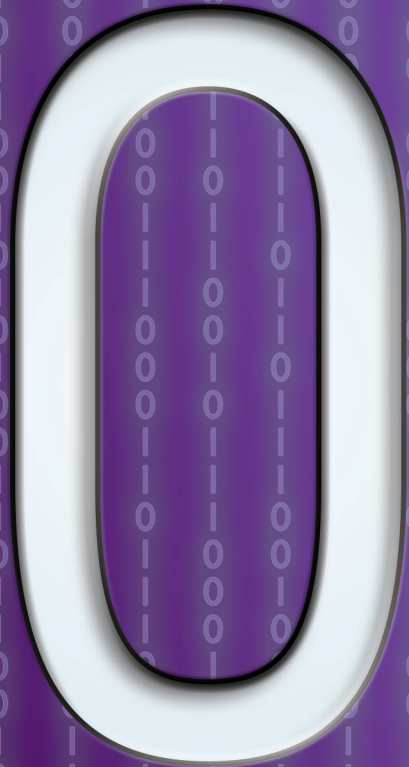


UNITED STATES MILITARY ENTRANCE PROCESSING COMMAND

Messenger

SHARING INFORMATION TO REACH A VISION

VOL. 39, NO. 1



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STAGE I

2016

2018

STAGE II

2019

2021

STAGE III

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Messenger

Sharing information to reach a vision



Helping our neighbors

Army Capt. Aaron Kao, Dallas MEPS assistant operations officer, and Air Force Senior Master Sgt. Matthew Thrune, Dallas senior enlisted advisor, unpack cartons of eggs while volunteering at the North Texas Food Bank. Page 18.



Secretary of Defense visits Chicago

Then-Secretary of Defense Ash Carter speaks with an applicant during her processing at the Chicago MEPS. Page 8.

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U.S. Military Entrance Processing Command

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Messenger
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Since I assumed command last April, I have visited more than 20 MEPS including all 12 battalion headquarters and have thoroughly enjoyed meeting and learning from every teammate I've met.

Additionally, I've had the opportunity to engage face-to-face with all MEPS commanders and senior enlisted advisors at our recent National Training Symposium. During this time, I have primarily assumed a listening and learning stance in order to understand your thoughts on USMEPCOM's strengths, vulnerabilities and opportunities so as to gain insights on opportunities for improving our mission and to better support operations.

What follows are my initial observations, as well as my thoughts on where I see us headed. Much of the way ahead flows directly from our Strategic Plan, Operations Plan, and MHS Genesis implementation – which you will read about in more detail in this issue.

Our strengths and successes

This command consists of a superb group of professionals doing amazing work on an inspirational mission.

Despite significant challenges, you are getting the job done and accomplishing the mission every single day. More than once, your dedication and commitment to getting young men and women into our 65 dignified ceremony rooms around the country to raise their right hand and swear an oath to serve has moved me to tears. **This is a great team!**

Routine things happen routinely

Commander's Commentary

here. The "Command Triad," sector/MEPS leadership teams and headquarters leaders are strong and united.

Speaking of success, just take a look at some of the significant wins we have accomplished in the past several months:

- Implemented a successful New Commander/SEA Course.
- Executed an outstanding National Training Symposium/Commanders' Conference.
- Laid the financial groundwork and OSD leader support for executing the IT Path Forward. Began to establish a reputation for successful financial and IT execution.

- Obtained funding for FPS security officers at our 33 GSA-leased facilities.

- Cleared much of our CCRI Failure TASKORD of IT vulnerabilities.

- Convinced Navy to include us in their Meritorious Advancement Program and obtained a quota to meritoriously advance one of our sailors.

- Completed the contracting process to renovate facilities housing Atlanta and San Antonio MEPS .

- Implemented an effective Communications Battle Rhythm to reduce distance between headquarters and field.

- Commenced Phase 3 of the IT Path Forward.

- Renewed relationships with external partners including participating in the Council on Recruit Basic Training.

- Re-established public recognition of our service members and civilians of the year at NTS.

Our challenges

Despite recent and ongoing successes and efforts, many challenges remain, and I'd like to highlight some of the more significant ones I've observed as I've listened to you and witnessed our operations first hand.

First, we don't communicate with each other as well as we could – within the headquarters, with our stakeholders, or with our MEPS in

the field. This tends to lead to misunderstanding and stovepiped actions and decisions.

Second, while we remain well-resourced, we regularly under-execute, leading to sub-optimal decision making – both in what we choose to spend our money on as well as in who makes these spending decisions.

Third, I've observed that threads of a negative narrative are evident at the headquarters and also among some of our stakeholders. It has become clear to me that some employees do not feel valued, causing me to look for ways to strengthen a sense of inclusion, respect and job satisfaction among the entire team.

I'm also looking for ways to further develop and empower our leaders at all levels. This includes giving them the tools needed to deal with the extraordinarily complex challenges we face at the headquarters and at the MEPS. We will meet these challenges as we proceed together on our path forward.

Where do we go from here?

To continue to build on the aforementioned successes as well as to address these challenges, I believe we must start with our people and our leadership.

In the OPLAN, I have directed commanders at all levels, as well as staff directors and special staff officers, to build and/or strengthen high functioning civilian and military teams based on a foundation of trust.

In order to accomplish this, leaders will necessarily have to address all aspects of human capital development – from recruitment and hiring to development, retention and promotion – as well as to take steps to build and maintain trust within their organizations.

Additionally, we need to continue to invest in the development of leaders at all levels in order to provide the foundation for effective mission execution in the distributed, complex environment in which we operate.

Furthermore, the OPLAN is my instrument for driving the com-

Please see 'Commentary,' Page 7

Operation Plan lays out command's path to the future

By Skip Wiseman
Messenger Editor

USMEPCOM's newly-published Operation Plan lays out how the command will achieve its Strategic Plan goals established in January 2016.

The Strategic Plan charts the command's way forward over the next 10 years. The OPLAN details the step-by-step actions the command will take to achieve the goals set forth in the Strategic Plan. The three-stage OPLAN will shape how USMEPCOM operations will change at the headquarters, sectors, battalions and MEPS.

The impetus for many of the changes is Secretary of Defense Ash Carter's mandate that military accessions processing will be all digital by 2021.

"In Stage I, we must focus on the efforts to reach the all-digital state within the next five years and integrate MHS Genesis into medical processing," Amy Ramirez, a program lead for the OPLAN said. (See following MHS Genesis story.)

She pointed out that USMEPCOM has made strides toward modernizing its operations but this time the impetus for change is flowing down from DoD's highest

levels. She also credits command leadership's support for the plan moving forward, particularly from Navy Capt. David S. Kemp, USMEPCOM commander.

At the outset, the OPLAN anticipates that demographic, social and technological changes will affect the way the command operates in the future. It also recognizes the need for upgrading information systems to support USMEPCOM's mission.

Despite the many changes to how the command does business, the command's organizational structure will not change in the near future, Ramirez said.

"Captain Kemp made it crystal clear that we will not be closing any MEPS and that we will not be restructuring any time soon," she said. "His plan is to keep the structure we have and close any of the gaps we need to close.

"We've already looked at command and control between levels and how communications are supposed to flow," Ramirez said.

Stage 1 will take place over the next two fiscal years. Stage 2 will follow in fiscal 19-21 and the final stage in fiscal 22-26. This article focuses on Stage I.

For starters, the command has

created a 27-member operation plan team. It includes people from each directorate and staff office, one battalion commander, six MEPS commanders and one MEPS senior enlisted advisor.

"We have involved a core group of MEPS commanders and SEAs from the very beginning," Ramirez said. "They helped create the OPLAN. Since then, we've had briefs with the commander where they've been video conferenced in. It was important to the success of the OPLAN to actively involve them in everything we've been doing."

At all three stages, MEPS commanders, battalion commanders and sectors will execute the communication strategy; execute policy, guidance and orders; evaluate policies and processes to find ways to increase efficiency; and foster and promote care for the command's civilian and military personnel to maintain fair treatment for everyone.

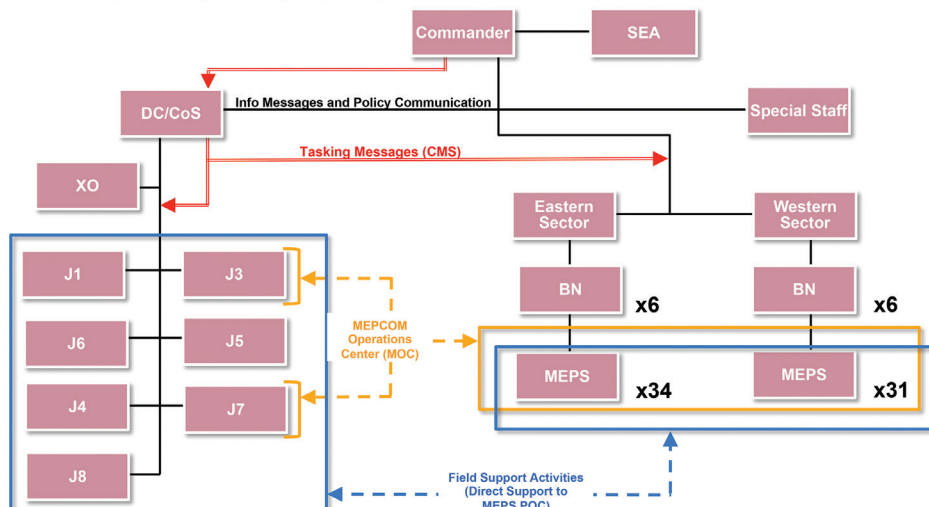
MEPS commanders will also pilot programs to support the Strategic and Operation Plans, and implement and enhance supervisor development programs to ensure all supervisors are promoting professionalism and effective work environments. The plans emphasize that first-line supervisors are the "centers of gravity" and are key to successful organizations. Sectors and battalion commanders are also charged to implement and enhance supervisor development programs.

The Human Resources Directorate will review force management by assessing the current structure, function, and command and control roles of the headquarters and battalions, carefully study manpower requirements and methods for testing, medical and processing elements and headquarters to provide the right resources.

It will also build a plan to gain and keep qualified employees, including the civilian hiring process, total force recruiting, succession plan, pathways and scholarship, retention, career workforce plan,

COMMAND AND CONTROL (C2)

• All staff elements concur



military and civilian attrition, and military and civilian market data mining.

The directorate will build a human capital strategy and a learning and development program framework, including a career workforce development plan that includes individual development plans, civilian education system program, civilian career program, review and modify mandatory training, and civilian competitive development, supervisor development, mentor and coaching programs.

Equal Employment Opportunity will support current operations as set forth by policies and regulations. Equal Opportunity is charged with executing actions described in the March 2016 Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute Organizational Climate Survey corrective action plans.

Kemp wants the command to assess the climate, analyze gaps and find ways to improve its climate and make USMEPCOM an even better place to work.

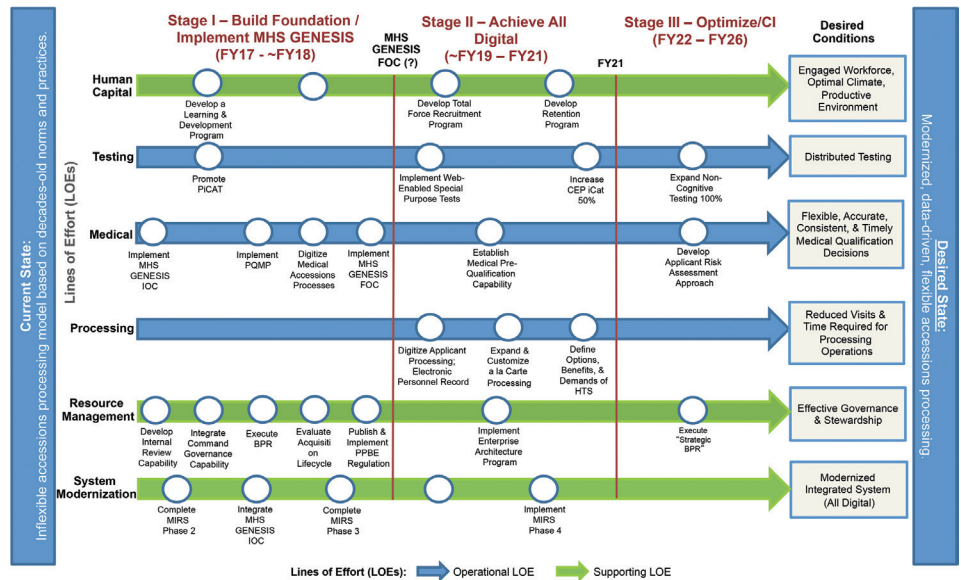
“He says he wants EO and EEO to be like the Maytag repairman,” Ramirez said. “We will always have complaints. We want to be proactive, train and get ahead of the issues before they become complaints. In turn, this will help us strengthen our command climate.”

The Operations Directorate will take on several projects to move processing into the all digital world. It has already begun moving forward on some tasks.

The directorate’s testing division is promoting the Prescreen Internet Computer Adaptive Test, called PiCAT, to the recruiting services and the Career Exploration Program Internet Computer Adaptive Test to school administrators and students. Administering the Career Exploration Program via computer will largely depend on the individual school’s computer resources and the number of people testing in a session.

Much of the directorate’s effort will be devoted to making the accessions process all digital.

To that end, it will develop ways to digitize applicant records and support establishing electronic



How USMEPCOM intends to pursue the goals spelled out in its Operation Plan.

personnel records. That will involve coordination between USMEPCOM headquarters, sectors, MEPS and external organizations.

The command will work with appropriate stakeholders to determine how the project should be run; collaborate with outside organizations including the services to define the project scope and identify how the services are proceeding individually.

A la carte processing – tailored to the needs of recruiters and applicants – will be explored and implemented where practical. The recruiting services will determine how much information is needed to qualify an applicant for a particular career field. USMEPCOM will break down applicant processing to its most basic steps to learn how a la carte processing will impact how much time it will take and its effect on costs.

The Facilities and Acquisition Directorate will set standards for and integrate command-wide acquisition and contract planning as outlined in a recent audit by the Army Audit Agency. It will also evaluate the acquisition lifecycle, and review processes to determine how well the command complies with regulations in that area.

The directorate will also develop plans for where to locate facilities and determine the best layouts to achieve the most efficiency.

The Resource Management Directorate will write and implement a command regulation to standardize how USMEPCOM conducts financial planning, programming and budgeting.

The Information Technology Directorate will shoulder many responsibilities as it moves the command toward all-digital processing.

The directorate will establish a performance measurement tracking and reporting process to review costs, contracts and recording milestone achievements while developing sustainable initiatives to upgrade the USMEPCOM Integrated Resource System, commonly called USMIRS.

It will be the technical proponent for deploying the command business intelligence system and making sure financial and technical resources are provided as needed. It will also find ways to use existing hardware and software when practical.

Making sure the system can transmit digitized records in an integrate multi-service environment is another important part of the directorate’s work. Transmitting testing data to the Defense Manpower Data System is another important area.

Along with all these tasks, the directorate will complete the second and third phases of MIRS during Stage 1 of the OPLAN.

Electronic health record looms large in Operations Plan

Story and photos by Danielle Lieber
Messenger Associate Editor

In the near future, USMEPCOM will medically process applicants as envisioned by the USMEPCOM Operation Plan.

The MEPS' medical element will create electronic health records in the future via the Military Health System Genesis, also known as MHS Genesis.

As the first encounter applicants have with medical personnel, it will be up to USMEPCOM's medical professionals to create the electronic health records that will follow military personnel throughout their careers and into Veterans Affairs.

MHS Genesis is a major component of the OPLAN, and medical processing will change as USMEPCOM moves toward paperless processing.

The system will go live as a pilot in the Pacific Northwest. All other MEPS will follow once the system and USMEPCOM are ready. After training, further support will be provided by headquarters medical management analysts and the information technology help desk.

"This is the future," Suzanne Kirchhoff, Medical Plans and Policy Directorate medical program business manager, said.

"It's going to be a big change," Kirchhoff said. "We have such committed personnel at our facilities. The MEPS personnel do whatever it takes to meet the mission. We know this change is going to be disruptive initially, but we are going to try and make it as seamless to the end-users as we possibly can."

MHS Genesis is an off-the-shelf system that will be accessible by all military treatment facilities to access military members' electronic health records, which will originate with the MEPS. This will allow medical personnel to provide the best treatment to new military members, regardless of their locations. MHS Genesis is expected to pay big benefits. Electronic health records are the best choice for military members, taxpayers and the military services.

Not only will military members

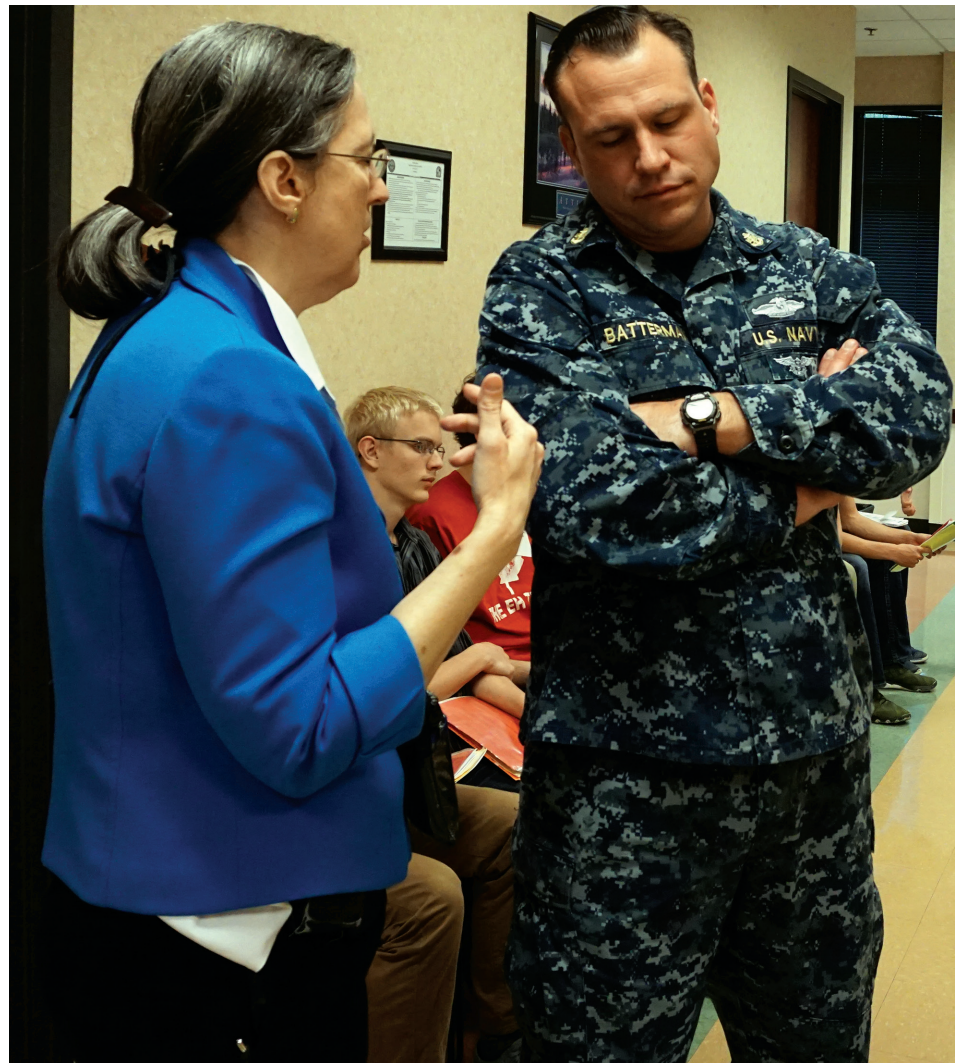
have a central place for their medical records, but it will also be more secure. All of the MEPS personnel accessing their information will be trained in the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, or HIPAA.

"Medical information security and privacy is of paramount importance to everyone who uses or handles the information. MHS Genesis will improve these aspects of medical processing," Kirchhoff said.

While it will be different, it will

not be more difficult, and the results will benefit everyone.

Recruiters will spend less time collecting the medical paperwork required to medically process applicants at the MEPS. Before an applicant's visit to the MEPS, he or she will be given access to a portal where electronic health records and necessary forms can be uploaded. While medical personnel will have to learn a new information technology system, ample training will be provided by the creators of MHS Genesis.



Dr. Kathleen Dallen of the Medical Plans and Policy Directorate's Clinical Quality Division discusses MHS Genesis with Navy Chief Petty Officer Christopher Batterman, noncommissioned officer in charge of the Milwaukee MEPS medical element.



Dr. Kathleen Dallen of the Medical Plans and Policy Directorate’s Clinical Quality Division, talks with Navy Lt. Cmdr. Emily Klossner, Milwaukee MEPS commander.

‘Commentary,’ from Page 3

mand forward to achieve the end-state envisioned in the Strategic Plan and the Secretary of Defense’s Force of the Future vision.

Fielding and implementing MHS Genesis is the main effort for Stage 1 of the OPLAN, envisioned to be complete by early 2019.

During Stage 1 we will also implement a more robust governance process at the headquarters which will assist me in maintaining better visibility on our financial and IT execution as well as in making well-informed decisions in these and other areas.

We will accomplish all of this with a spirit of transparency, collaboration and flexibility as we work to continue to improve communications across the entire command, all while adhering to our core values of Integrity, Teamwork, Professionalism and respect.

Finally, we will maintain a special focus on the three things that keep me up at night – force protection,

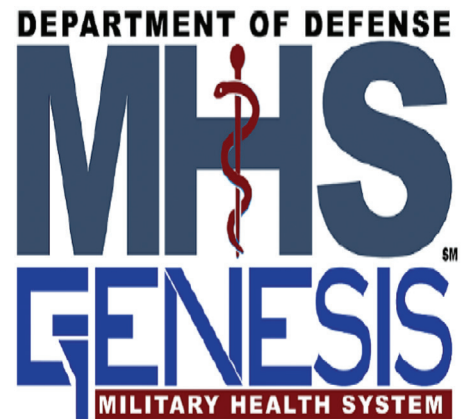
applicant safety and protection of Personally Identifiable Information – implementing measures wherever feasible to reduce risk in these areas.

Our target

We’ll know we’ve succeeded in implementing the above if the following conditions are met by early 2019:

- 1) every member of the USMEPCOM team is excited to come to work every day;
- 2) we have achieved a track record of IT and financial execution, to include full Authorities to Operate for the Defense Accessions Network and USMIRS as well as robust POM and governance processes;
- 3) we have completed Stage 1 of the OPLAN, including implementation of MHS Genesis across the command; and
- 4) effective integration of – and communications among – the HQ, Sectors, Battalions, and MEPS in “Team-of-Teams” fashion has been achieved.

Thank you again for the trust you have placed in me. I can’t think of a



better place to be and am having a blast. I look forward to working with you to accomplish our mission today, and posture us for the future!

David S. Kemp
Captain, USN
Commanding

Secretary of Defense visits Chicago MEPS

Right: Navy Capt. David S. Kemp, US-MEPCOM commander, briefs Stephanie Miller, director of accession policy in the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Military Personnel Policy, and then-Secretary of Defense Ash Carter on operations at the Chicago MEPS. Army Lt. Col. Evangeline G. Rosel, commander of the USMEPCOM's 8th Battalion and the Chicago MEPS, is at the right. Carter visited the MEPS during his visit to Chicago July 28.

Below right: Carter speaks with an applicant during her processing at the Chicago MEPS.



Command begins journey toward paperless processing

By Skip Wiseman
Messenger Editor

USMEPCOM, in partnership with the recruiting services and training units, has reduced the number of printed pages used in processing potential enlistees by 22 percent.

The reduction, 17.7 million pages of printed material over the last year, represents the first steps by the partners in the accession process to reach the Department of Defense's goal of paperless accessions by 2021. All-digital recruiting and processing for new military members is part of Defense Secretary Ash Carter's Force of the Future initiative.

Carter said the department will move to an all-digital system over the next five years.

Navy Capt. David S. Kemp, USMEPCOM commander, said the next steps in the program "are all about USMEPCOM."

"Much of the way forward will fall to us," Kemp said. "We will upgrade our information technology systems in partnership with the recruiting services and training bases. The desired end-state is to introduce applicants to the world's most advanced and capable military at first contact, not later in the accession process."

The paper reduction was achieved by refining USMEPCOM's policies and procedures and in collaboration with the services, according to Dale Ostrowski, USMEPCOM director of operations.

"It's been an evolving process," Ostrowski said. "As we've moved forward with the recruiting services, we've found varying areas where we could revise our business processes. Some of the services, specifically the Army, developed different technology. We determined certain forms were not needed. Collectively, that's where we came up with the 17.7 million."

Some forms are now digitally scanned. Reduced printing volume was achieved by eliminating multiple copies. The majority of the printing reduction, 10.4 million pages, was achieved by eliminating nearly 100 service-unique forms that applicants carried to their training bases.

"For example," Ostrowski said, "the Army now has Electronic Records Management. They scan all the enlistment documents except for medical into their system. Only one printed copy – the original – has to be generated."

Documents applicants must provide to the service they are joining, such as birth or marriage certificates or adoption paperwork, are now sent electronically. The change improves security and reduces workload, Ostrowski said.

"We are limiting the exposure of personally identifiable information, lost material or anything of that nature," he said. "Once the documents are scanned, they are returned to the applicant."

Previously, Ostrowski said, service liaisons in the MEPS had to reprint the documents if an applicant lost his or her packet.

Not printing the Standard Form 86, Questionnaire for National Security Position, also saves several million pieces of paper as it is about 130 pages long.

USMEPCOM has also drastically reduced the number of times a USMEPCOM Form 680-3ADP, Applicant Automated Data Processing Record, must be printed. The form includes an applicant's enlistment qualification, medical information and other accession data.

"We essentially required the MEPS to print it after every transaction, so we would have

a paper copy of the individual's current status," Ostrowski said. "Over time, we've looked at when we really needed to print.

"We evaluated and determined the MEPS only need to print it five times as opposed to 30 in the course of an accession," he said. "At some point in time, we will stop using paper. It will all be transactional. It will be in the system and we won't need the paper."

Transferring documents electronically also improves how things are done as a new enlistee arrives at his or her training base.

"For the trainers, certainly for the Army, they don't have to wait for the shippers to arrive to build their training packets," Ostrowski said. "They don't have to wait until trainees get there at nine o'clock at night to start their work. They can do it throughout the course of a normal day."

Almost all of the paperwork reduction that can be realized by streamlining policy and procedures has been accomplished, Ostrowski said.

"Some of the services are probably farther along than we are," he said. "They could further reduce paper use today, but we can't. We need the information technology path forward that gets us to that end state so we can exchange all the information electronically between us and whoever needs it.

"Now we need the investments in technology to provide the capability to exchange information," Ostrowski said. "The information is still required. The question is how you can exchange it and how you can receive it. The real impetus to move forward and get us to that other 62.3 million pages is to have the alignment of the information technology systems between us and the services."

Command hosts National Training Symposium

MEPS commanders and senior enlisted advisors from around the nation gathered in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin Oct. 17-21 for the USMEPCOM National Training Symposium.

The theme for this year's symposium was Strengthening our Team of Teams.

During the event, they heard from Department of Defense leaders, service recruiting commanders, and USMEPCOM and sector leaders and key staff members.

Retired Navy Vice Adm. Michael Lefever, now a senior mentor for joint force development for the Joint Chiefs of Staff, spoke on leadership and teamwork.

USMEPCOM's military and civilian of the year honorees were recognized during an awards ceremony.

Attendees also took part in smaller breakout sessions designed to help them operate their stations more efficiently.



Counterclockwise from left, Dale Ostrowski, operations director, Navy Capt. David S. Kemp, USMEPCOM commander, Kent Morgan, information technology director, Army Command Sgt. Maj. Earla L. Reddock, USMEPCOM senior enlisted advisor, and David O'Brien, USMEPCOM chief of staff, chat during a break.



David Hamby, USMEPCOM inspector general, talks about the processes and uses of the Inspector General Office.



Navy Capt. David S. Kemp, USMEPCOM commander, introduces Army Maj. Gen Jeffrey J. Snow, commanding general of Army Recruiting Command, at the National Training Symposium.



MEPS commanders and senior enlisted advisors take part in a breakout session during the National Training Symposium.



National Training Symposium attendees at the closing dinner.



Navy Capt. David S. Kemp, USMEPCOM commander, presents the Achievement Medal for Civilian Service to Tamera Dawson, Columbus MEPS supervisory human resources assistant.



Mark DeWildt of the Human Resources Manpower Branch speaks to commanders and senior enlisted advisors about the Management Review Board at the National Training Symposium.



Retired Navy Vice Adm. Michael LeFever, senior mentor for J7/Joint Force Development, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff, in support of Combatant Command and Joint Task Force Operations and Exercises and a Navy career surface warfare officer speaks about weapon systems during the closing dinner at the National Training Symposium.

Course for new commanders, SEAs makes return

By Skip Wiseman
Messenger Editor

After a three-year hiatus, the orientation course for new MEPS commanders and senior enlisted advisors is back.

The New Commanders' and Senior Enlisted Advisors' Course was held Sept. 12-16. It was hosted by the Human Resources Directorate's Training Development Division.

Twenty-five new commanders and 23 new SEAs were joined by eight experienced commanders and SEAs nominated by the sectors, who served as mentors during the week-long course.

"The mentors are there to provide best practices and share what they have seen," My Hunyh, course coordinator, said. "They have proven they can do this very well. Many of them have earned MEPS of Excellence awards. They are proven performers."

Part of the course's intent is to allow new commanders and SEAs to meet and interact with directors and special staff officers from the headquarters.

"We want them to be able to put a face to a name," Hunyh said. "They

may have seen message traffic from the directors at headquarters, but they really don't know who they are."

Attendees met the USMEPCOM commander, sector commanders and all the headquarters directors and

special staff officers the first day of the course.

On Tuesday, attendees split into two groups and went to the Chicago or Milwaukee MEPS.

"We purposely took them out on



Ivan Martinez of the Human Resources Directorate Training Development Division, checks in attendees for the New Commander and Senior Enlisted Advisor Course.



Army Command Sgt. Maj. Earla L. Reddock, USMEPCOM senior enlisted advisor, and Navy Capt. Stuart C. Satterwhite, Western Sector, commander address the group.

Tuesday, because it's usually the busiest day a MEP has," Hunyh said. "We wanted them to see the up tempo a MEPS can have. We wanted them to see the high floor count, the families who come for the enlistment ceremony. We split them into two groups because we had so many people in this class."

Those who went to Milwaukee got to see the MEPS recovering and catching up a day after USMIRS was down.

"We did have a debate about whether we should take them there, but we decided that was real life," Hunyh said. "It was their chance to see how somebody would resolve that. Milwaukee MEPS was able to recover with J-6 (Information Technology Directorate) help. It showed them what to do if this happens at their MEPS."

On Wednesday, the groups reunited at headquarters to discuss MEPS core functions with

proponents from the headquarters.

The course also included presentations from Naval Recruiting District and Recruit Training Command leaders.

“They are our partners,” Hunyh said. “It gives attendees a chance to learn about the recruiting and training pieces that go on before and after we see the applicants.”

Thursday was reserved to discuss civilian personnel issues.

“We brought in Mary Grant (head of the Civilian Personnel Division) to talk about problems they might encounter with the civilian personnel system,” Hunyh said.

“On Friday, we discussed ethics and legal issues and held their graduation ceremony.”

Since the course hadn’t been held for three years, this class included people who have or will arrive in 2016.

“We tried to make this course online only,” Hunyh said, “but if our intent is to put a face to a name, that obviously doesn’t do that. The course kind of fell by the wayside and never got refreshed. This course will stay current.”



Navy Lt. Cmdr. Emily Klossner, Milwaukee MEPS commander, talks about MEPS operations with people course attendees.

Doing the course in person also allows new commanders and SEAs to build relationships with each other, Hunyh said.

“They learn they aren’t alone,”

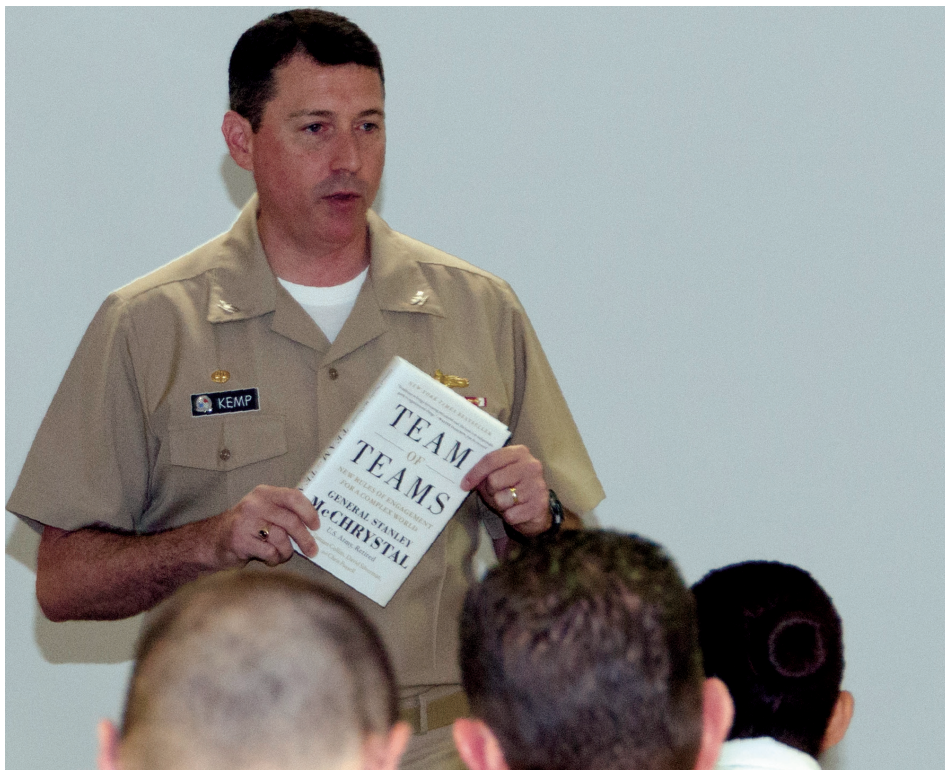
Hunyh said. “These people are coming on board at about the same time, so they build relationships early on. In the future, if they have issues or challenges, they know who to reach out to.

Critiques and the after action report show that attendees found the information useful.

“We need to do some tweaks,” Hunyh said, “but they said they wished they had seen some of this before they even got on board.”

That is what the Training Development Division intends to do in the future. The course will be held three times a year and include about 25 people in each class. People will attend the class before they begin their assignments with USMEPCOM.

“We learned they wished they had this information before they set foot in the MEPS,” Hunyh said. “They wanted to know what they needed to do the first 30 days, 60 days, 90 days. Ideally the proponents can tell them what to do before they even get to the MEPS.”



Navy Capt. David S. Kemp, USMEPCOM commander, discusses the book “Team of Teams” with attendees.

Syracuse sailor earns meritorious promotion

For the first time, a sailor assigned to USMEPCOM has been promoted under the Navy's Meritorious Advancement Program.

The command's Human Resources Directorate spearheaded the effort for USMEPCOM to receive a quota for the program.

After evaluating candidates from the headquarters and both sectors, the command nominated Petty Officer 2nd Class Andrew J. Kropf, a human resources assistant from Syracuse MEPS.

After Navy Personnel Command approved the promotion, Army Col. Christopher J. Beveridge, Eastern Sector commander, and Army Maj. Charles C. Manning, Syracuse MEPS commander, invited Navy Capt. David S. Kemp, USMEPCOM commander, and Army Command Sgt. Maj. Earla L. Reddock, USMEPCOM senior enlisted advisor, to surprise Kropf with the promotion.

He was described by his previous supervisors as a proven leader, me-

ticulous and the standard for others to follow," Kemp said of Kropf. "The joy on the faces of the Syracuse team

when we advanced him was a testament to how much they value Petty Officer Kropf."



Army Command Sgt. Maj. Earla L. Reddock, USMEPCOM senior enlisted advisor, Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Andrew J. Kropf, Syracuse MEP human resources assistant, and Navy Capt. David S. Kemp, USMEPCOM commander, pose for a photo after Kemp and Reddock surprised him with a promotion through the Navy's Meritorious Advancement Program.

Atlanta MEPS participates in active shooter exercise

The Atlanta MEPS joined Department of Defense security police and the Forest Park Fire Department in an active shooter exercise on Fort Gillem Enclave.

Coast Guard Petty Officer 2nd Class Davin Ramos opened the

MEPS on a Thursday morning and noticed a suspicious vehicle parked in front of the station.

He immediately notified security personnel and the MEPS operations officer on duty.

Hours later, there were reports of

possible shots fired at another part of Fort Gillem Enclave. The station staff secured all doors and closed all blinds.

Role players in the roles of injured victims stumbled toward the building while a "gunman" tried to get into the MEPS.

MEPS staff, service liaisons, applicants and guests took shelter in secured rooms in the station.

The "active shooter" gained access to the MEPS and began trying to open interior doors.

The "shooter" was unsuccessful and everyone in the MEPS survived the exercise. This part of the exercise was evaluated by MEPS staff members Valerie D. Bell and Coast Guard Lt. Jasper S. Esmalla.

Meanwhile, outside the MEPS, first responders arrived to put out a car fire.

The exercises were conducted in conjunction with one another.

A local television station also responded to the scene.



A burned out shell is all that remains of a van used during an active shooter exercise at the Atlanta MEPS.

Review leads to updates for Career Exploration Program

Parents, educators and students will find new and improved tools for their career toolbox in the Department of Defense's newest version of its Career Education Program.

Every young person asks, "What do I want to be when I grow up?" and DoD offers a free resource to help answer that question. High school sophomores, juniors, seniors and post-secondary students can use the redesigned Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery Career Education Program to find their dream jobs.

ASVAB CEP has been around for decades, but an internal review revealed several areas for improvement so DoD went to work to build a better CEP. The all new ASVAB CEP makes it easier than ever for young people to find their dream job. The all-inclusive design empowers students to explore a variety of options in the context of their skills and interests, and then creates a post-secondary plan that works.

The program has three components:

- The ASVAB test – A multiple aptitude test that allows students to identify their skill strengths
- FYI – An interest inventory highlights work-related interest areas where students are most likely to succeed
- OCCU Find – An occupational database housing pertinent information for careers

Traditionally only available in paper-and-pencil, ASVAB CEP now allows schools that meet certain technical requirements to offer computer-adaptive testing to reduce test time and increase efficiency.

The redesigned ASVAB CEP website, not only has a modernized look-and-feel, it also allows audiences to easily navigate to relevant information, resources and activities. Behind the scenes, software upgrades allow real-time content updates via web service while a responsive design accommodates a larger user base.

The ASVAB CEP has always given participants the tools to identify their abilities and find their inter-

ests with an interest inventory. But until now, participants were required to visit several different sites to find occupational information.

Not anymore. In addition to an overall enhanced user experience, the ASVAB CEP flagship occupational database, OCCU-Find, has seen a complete overhaul. The expanded OCCU-Find combines various data sources to present a holistic look at the world of work all in one place.

Users are no longer encouraged to leave the site to find what they're looking for. Occupational listings for more than 1,000 careers, derived from O*NET Online, <http://www.onetonline.org/> contain relevant labor market information from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, <http://www.bls.gov/> pathway opportunities organized by Career Cluster <https://www.careertech.org/career-clusters> showcase education and training options from CareerOneStop, <http://www.careeronestop.org/> and military service options.

Each listing includes data points about what an individual in an occupation does and how to enter it:

- Job description and daily tasks
- Interests
- Relative Skill Importance
- Related careers
- Education requirements and institutions offering that degree
- Services offering occupations, including Hot Jobs from each branch
- Credential and licensing opportunities
- Employment outlook (average earnings by state and expected growth)

To round out the program improvements, CEP offers a retooled My Portfolio which lets users chart their achievements and preferences, and produce a customizable resume-like document that includes:

- Future Plans
- Work experience
- Education
- Test Scores – including ACT and SAT
- Achievements
- Skills
- Volunteer activities
- Interests
- Work Values

- "Favorite" occupations and career clusters

The ASVAB CEP benefits students, schools and military services. Students who participate in the ASVAB CEP program are given guided and self-paced career exploration tools that let them explore career options in the context of their interests and aptitude. Most students who participate, 56 percent, intend to continue their educations at a college, university, or vocational-technical school. For students who are interested in the military, participation provides a usable score for enlistment, and allows students to explore multiple military services to find the best opportunities. Using ASVAB CEP, allows schools to provide a comprehensive career exploration program tied to Career Clusters and American School Counselor Association National Standards. Testing personnel, assessments, reports, website access, and other materials are provided to schools free of charge. If a student decides to enlist in the military, it saves the services time and money since the student has already tested and thought about their career options. Typically, 10-15 percent of students enlisting each year use their ASVAB CEP scores.

National Program Manager, Dr. Shannon Salyer said, "These program improvements allow us to deliver a comprehensive, engaging career exploration program to American youth regardless of their chosen career paths."

A comprehensive program review will take place once all improvements are implemented to evaluate their impact on the ASVAB CEP. To learn more about the ASVAB CEP visit www.asvabprogram.com or contact: Salyer at Shannon.d.salyer.civ@mail.mil.

The USMEPCOM administers the ASVAB CEP. For more information, contact one of 65 education services specialists located across the nation. For a map of their locations and contact information, visit <http://www.mepcom.army.mil/MEPS.aspx>. For information about the ASVAB CEP, call (800) 323-0513.



A Michigan state trooper conducts active shooter training in the Lansing MEPS.

Michigan State Police provide active shooter training in Lansing

By Lt. Cmdr. David E. Pavlik
Lansing MEPS Commander

Training day at the Lansing MEPS June 3 helped the MEPS staff prepare for the worst with active shooter training by four members of the Michigan State Police.

The four troopers conducted classroom instruction and five live-fire training exercises.

The classroom sessions presented ways to counter an active shooter, including barricading, evacuation and counterattack. They also presented case studies of victim and law enforcement responses to real incidents, which provided valuable lessons and perspective.

“The training was much more realistic than I expected. It was a great opportunity,” Bruce Powell,

Lansing MEPS test coordinator, said.

Blank rounds fired from an AR-15 and airsoft pistols gave the scenarios realistic sights and smells. Some MEPS staff members were placed in waiting areas as applicants, visitors, and family members creating additional, but realistic, response and mitigation challenges.

“We got to experience the sights and sounds of different simulated attacks, and we saw the confusion that results when people are confronted with this kind of thing for the first time,” Jacqueline Evans, lead human resources assistant, said. “The training allowed us to try out different ways to respond, so we could observe first-hand what responses would help keep us safe and alive and what wouldn’t.”



Members of the Lansing MEPS staff participate in active shooter training conducted by the Michigan State Police.

Honolulu shows Taiwanese visitors how it operates

By Capt. Russ Newman
Honolulu MEPS Executive Officer

The Honolulu MEPS hosted two members of the Taiwanese army April 6.

Maj. Wen-Wei Chen, recruiter officer, and Master Sgt. Zeng-Li Yang, personnel NCO, both assigned to Personnel Readiness Section, Taiwanese Army Headquarters, were part of a larger group that went to Hawaii to observe the United States' recruiting and enlistment processes. The overall tour was hosted by U.S. Army Pacific retention.

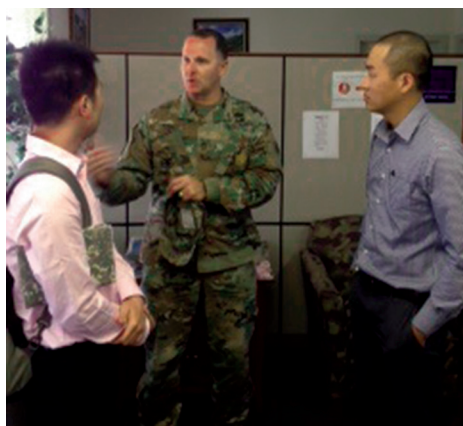
Taiwan is moving toward a volunteer military and is looking for positive examples to follow.

The visitors received a briefing on the MEPS' operations before touring the facility.

MEPS employee Lindsey Flake gave a briefing on testing element functions and explained the timeline if an applicant fails the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery. They were curious about the ASVAB's content and structure. Taiwan's military administers an intelligence test, which takes about 15 minutes to complete. Chen hoped to obtain a copy of the ASVAB, so he could compare it to their test. The MEPS staff explained they could give him a copy, but directed him to



Army Master Sgt. John Stiles, U.S. Army Pacific, answers a question for Taiwan army Master Sgt. Zeng-Li Yang, personnel NCO for the Taiwanese Army Headquarters Personnel Readiness Section.



Army Master Sgt. John Stiles, U.S. Army Pacific discusses for Taiwan army Master Sgt. Zeng-Li Yang, personnel NCO for the Taiwanese Army Headquarters Personnel Readiness Section and Taiwan army Maj. Wen-Wei Chen, recruiting officer, Personnel Readiness Section, Taiwan Army Headquarters.

a commercial Web site that has an older version of the test.

Next, they toured the medical element and received a briefing from Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Nasura N. Matovu, noncommissioned officer in charge of medical. Chen took hearing and vision tests. The guests asked questions about the consulting process and Matovu explained that when MEPS' doctors needed a second opinion or the issue was outside their specialties, they referred the applicant to Tripler Army Medical Center.

Army Sgt. 1st Class Lakesha Coleman, processing NCOIC, gave a briefing and conducted a tour of the section. She explained the

fingerprinting process and the importance of the travel assistant, Araceli Embry, who ensures the applicants get to their respective training centers and that the travel bills get paid.

The tour continued in the liaison offices, where the visitors saw the difference between their recruiting setup and the way it is done in the United States. In Taiwan, all the recruiters are in one room. The arrival of an applicant sets off a contest to see who can attract the applicant to his or her service. The visitors also watched the "A Day at the MEPS" video.

Dallas staff, family members volunteer at local food pantry



Elliott Goode, Dallas MEPS information technology specialist, breaks down a bag of carrots into smaller portions.

The Dallas MEPS staff and family members recently volunteered at the North Texas Food Bank's "Our Community Pantry" in Dallas.

Partners from the Dallas area gathered to support the pantry near the heart of downtown Dallas.

The volunteers helped families and veterans with shopping, checkout, meal preparation and stocking.

The food bank is a non-profit, hunger-relief organization. It distributes donated, purchased and prepared food through more than 200 agencies in 13 counties.

The food bank provides access to nearly 170,000 nutritious meals a day.

As a member of Feeding America, the food bank supports nutritional needs of children, families and senior citizens through advocacy, education and partnerships.



Army Sgt. Jeremy Anderson, Dallas MEPS transportation specialist, helps a customer select groceries.



Air Force Senior Master Sgt. Matthew Thruene, Dallas MEPS senior enlisted advisor, carries a bag of onions.



Tamara Shelton, Dallas MEPS human resources assistant, loads a cart. Shelton is a retired Army sergeant first class and Dallas operations NCOIC.



Army Capt. Aaron Kao, Dallas MEPS assistant operations officer, and Senior Master Sgt. Matthew Thruene, put eggs in the cooler.



Army Sgt. Jeremy Anderson assists a customer.

Cleveland testing earns first Pacesetter Award since 2009

The Cleveland MEPS Student Testing Program team achieved its goal May 5 of earning the Pacesetter Award for the 2015-16 school year. The team tested 196 high schools and 8,509 students this year, compared to 183 high schools and 8,319 students last school year.

This is the first time the Cleveland MEPS has earned the award since the 2008-09 school year.

Julie Kelly, education services specialist, Brian Butcher, test coordinator and Coast Guard Petty Officer 2nd Class Jillian Spaulding earned the award even though this is Kelly's first year as ESS and Spaulding's position was established this year.



Coast Guard Petty Officer 2nd Class Jillian Spaulding, Student Testing support specialist, Julie Kelly, education services specialist, and Brian Butcher, test coordinator, were key players in the Cleveland MEPS' efforts to earn a Pacesetter Award.

Senate staff member visits Chicago

Joshua Lake, veterans outreach and special assistant to Republican Sen. Mark Kirk of Illinois, presents a U.S. Constitution booklet to Navy shipper Pilon, during Lake's visit to the Chicago MEPS. Lake toured the MEPS June 23, observed an oath of enlistment ceremony and passed out constitution books signed by the senator to applicants after the ceremony.



New York Times follows applicant as he processes for enlistment

The Syracuse MEPS hosted a visit by a New York Times journalist and photographer who were following the enlistment process of Isaac Eisch.

Catrin Einhorn, the journalist and Leslye Davis, the photographer and videographer, visited the MEPS in July to report on Eisch shipping to basic training at Fort Benning, Georgia. Eisch's specialty will be parachute rigger. After basic training

he will attend Army airborne school.

The Times became interested in his story as a follow-up on his father's deployment and return in 2010-11.

Eisch's father became a single parent at about the time he deployed, was wounded, became an amputee and was sent home.

Last year, Isaac's younger brother was killed while riding his bike. Einhorn has followed the family since the deployment.



Isaac Eisch shakes hands with Army Maj. Charles C. Manning, Syracuse MEPS commander, after taking the oath of enlistment.



Einhorn attaches a microphone to Manning's uniform, before the ceremony.



Leslye Davis, New York Times photographer and videographer (top) and Catrin Einhorn, New York Times journalist, set up equipment before Isaac Eisch's enlistment ceremony.



Davis records Eisch's enlistment ceremony.

Knoxville enlists applicants at minor league baseball game



Navy Lt. Cmdr. Brandi McGehee, Knoxville MEPS commander, prepares to administer the oath of enlistment to applicants before a Tennessee Smokies baseball game.

“New Recruits” was the theme for the Tennessee Smokies Military Appreciation Day May 21.

The Knoxville MEPS held a pregame enlistment ceremony for 28 applicants from the Knoxville, Tennessee, area.

Navy Lt. Cmdr. Brandi McGehee, Knoxville MEPS commander, was the presiding officer for the ceremony.

Army Sgt. 1st Class David Murray, noncommissioned officer in charge of the MEPS’ medical element, led the new enlistees onto the field.

The new enlistees, joined by veterans, active duty service members and recent Tennessee National Guard enlistees, held a giant American flag on the field during the national anthem.

Marine Sgt. Austin McGregor, Knoxville MEPS human resources assistant, threw out the ceremonial first pitch.

Thirty military members from the surrounding area were recognized for their service as part of a military baseball card set.

The Smokies beat the Biloxi Shuckers 10-9. The Smokies are the AA affiliate of the Chicago Cubs.



Applicants take the oath of enlistment as part of the Tennessee Smokies Military Appreciation Day.



Air Force Lt. Col. Christopher Thomas, Thunderbirds commander and lead pilot, administers to oath of enlistment to applicants on the Barksdale Air Force Base flightline.



Applicants march into position before their enlistment ceremony at Barksdale Air Force Base.



Shreveport MEPS enlists 64 with assist from local base, Thunderbirds commander

Shreveport MEPS teamed up with the 2nd Bomb Wing at Barksdale Air Force Base and the U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds to conduct an enlistment ceremony for 64 applicants at the base's 2016 Defenders of Liberty Air Show.

Air Force Lt. Col. Christopher Hammond, Thunderbird commander and lead pilot, administered the oath of enlistment to the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force and Army National Guard applicants.

The air show is an annual event that allows the general public from the Shreveport-Bossier City, Louisiana, area to see displays of modern and historical military and civilian aircraft along with aerial demonstrations by various performers.

It is organized and hosted by the 2nd Bomb Wing Barksdale Air Force Base with support from the local military affairs council.

Recognizing testing help

Brian Butcher, Cleveland MEPS test coordinator, Coast Guard Petty Officer 2nd Class Jillian Spaulding, Cleveland MEPS Student Testing Program support specialist, Army Staff Sgt. Daniel Kruska, a recruiter, and Julie Kelly, Cleveland MEPS education services specialist, pose after Kelly presented a certificate of appreciation to Kruska. He was recognized for his dedication as a test proctor and assistant to intermittent test administrators for the Career Exploration Program. The certificate, signed by Air Force Lt. Col. Jason Johnson, Cleveland MEPS commander, recognizes the partnership between USMEPCOM and the recruiting commands.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

FEBRUARY 2017

“SUCCESS ALWAYS LEAVES FOOTPRINTS.”

BOOKER T. WASHINGTON



Mary McLeod Bethune

Linda Brown

Ruby Bridges

Lieutenant Henry O. Flipper

Booker T. Washington

Little Rock Nine

James Meredith



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