

UNITED STATES MILITARY ENTRANCE PROCESSING COMMAND

Messenger

SHARING INFORMATION TO REACH A VISION

VOL. 38, NO. 2



40th Anniversary

Messenger

Sharing information to reach a vision

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Change of Command

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U.S. Military Entrance Processing Command

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On July 1, 2016, USMEPCOM celebrated 40 years of supporting the nation's All-Volunteer Force.

Established in 1976 at Fort Sheridan, Illinois, by Department of the Army General Order No. 7, United States Military *Enlistment* Processing command was created from existing elements and personnel assigned to the U.S. Army Recruiting Command. It was redesignated United States Military Entrance Processing Command in 1983.

Throughout its existence, the command has maintained a proud heritage of ensuring millions of applicants for enlistment in the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force and Coast Guard meet established Department of Defense and service aptitude, medical and conduct standards.

Even as the command observes this milestone, it looks to the future. It will be fully engaged in the Secretary of Defense's Force of the Future initiatives to help our military recruit the best talent America has to offer.

USMEPCOM anticipates being on the forefront of the secretary's intent to take recruiting and processing into the all-digital realm within the next five years. Additionally, USMEPCOM will participate in the Electronic Health Record (known as MHS Genesis) pilot program beginning in the spring of 2017, while continuing to modernize and replace existing data systems.

The command came into being in interesting times. July 1 was a Thursday in 1976, and the na-

Commander's Commentary

tion was preparing to celebrate the Bicentennial on Sunday. Gerald R. Ford was the president. Americans first saw "Rocky" at the theaters, watched "Happy Days," "Good Times" and "M*A*S*H" on the small screen, and listened to Wings, the Captain and Tennille and the Miracles on their radios.

It was also a turbulent time for the armed forces. The Cold War was at its height. The All-Volunteer Force, created just three years before, was still in its infancy. A substantial post-Vietnam drawdown of U.S. troop strength was in progress.

After a phased gestation and adjustment period between 1976 and 1979, when the command still fell under the umbrella of USAREC, USMEPCOM became an independent Department of Defense organization in 1979. In 1982, the headquarters moved from Fort Sheridan to Naval Station Great Lakes, Illinois.

The fledgling command performed its mission from the day of its creation at 66 Armed Forces Entrance and Examination Stations, or AFEES, plus substations in Guam and Anchorage, Alaska. Along their institutional green walls and down their linoleum covered floors, hallway-long red, blue, yellow and green stripes were painted as guides for the potential recruits to follow from point to point along their pre-enlistment journey. The furniture was government-issue gray steel. The chatter of IBM Selectric typewriters and the not infrequent sergeant's bark provided the sound track.

During the 1980s the assembly-line approach to processing applicants was discarded in favor of what the command refers to as Red Carpet Treatment. All the services were now relying on motivated volunteers to fill their ranks, volunteers who had other options in terms of education and employment in their post-high school lives. Procedures were implemented to make efficiency, courtesy and personalized service the watchword. Carpet was laid on station floors, government-issue furniture was out, walls were more appealingly deco-

rated. The sergeant stopped barking.

The command currently operates 65 stations which were renamed Military Entrance Processing Stations in 1981. Only four still exist in their original locations: Fargo, North Dakota, established in 1961; New York City, established in 1965; Montgomery, Alabama, established in 1968; and Louisville, Kentucky, established in 1969.

Anticipation of and response to change has been the command's focus from its inception. Stations have closed, opened or relocated, workload levels fluctuated, as have staff composition, staffing levels, and perhaps most significantly, technology.

Technology to gather, store and transmit applicant data within the organization and to the recruiting services has advanced exponentially from the days of typewriters and punch cards, and now impacts nearly every aspect of USMEPCOM operations. The once state-of-the-art Wang word processors have long been replaced by personal computers. The 1970s introduced the punch tape machines that recorded applicant data. It yielded to IBM magnetic card typewriters, which in turn were replaced by the command's main-frame computer, the IBM 370/165. In 1982 UNIVAC System 80 microcomputers linked all stations and the headquarters. In 1985 the precursor to today's USMEPCOM Integrated Resource System, USMIRS, was introduced. USMEPCOM continues to exploit modern technological solutions to maximize efficiency and hold down costs.

Throughout its four decades of existence, USMEPCOM has provided the military services with new recruits who meet Department of Defense standards, thereby ensuring the continued military manpower needed to face the nation's challenges today and tomorrow.

David S. Kemp
Captain, USN
Commanding



The Origins of Modern U.S. Military Entrance Standards

by Gaylan Johnson
USMEPCOM Public Affairs Officer

The doctor's icy hand and order to "turn your head and cough" has been a rite of passage shared by millions of American men facing military service for nearly a century.

Volunteer or conscript, male or female, all were required to meet the standards for enlistment, appointment or induction of their day. The standards military entrance processing stations apply today evolved from 100 years' worth of intelligence test development, and advances in medicine, science and technology.

The current standards reflect vast progress made in American public health policy, nutrition and education.

Today's Department of Defense and service qualification standards originated with the United States' entry into World War I. The declaration of war signed by President Wilson on April 6, 1917, set into motion what would become, by the end of World War II, the largest coordinated system of human resource selection, classification, training and assignment ever implemented in this country.



But armed forces personnel selection standards are hardly a 20th century innovation. Throughout the ages, nations have employed some form of selection criteria to meet their military manpower requirements. *"On the careful choice of soldiers depends the welfare of the Republic, and the very essence of the Roman Empire and its power is so inseparably*

connected with this charge, that it is of the highest importance not to be entrusted indiscriminately, but only to persons whose fidelity can be relied on."

So cautioned Flavius Vegetius Renatus, in his *De Re Militari*, circa 380 A.D. In his day, not unlike our own, the individuals in the Roman levies were selected for their potential to adapt to military life and learn

military skills to accomplish the mission. Vegetius' description of physical standards would not be entirely out of place today:

"The young soldier, therefore, ought to have a lively eye, should carry his head erect, his chest should be broad, his shoulders muscular and brawny, his fingers long, his arms strong, his waist small, his shape easy, his legs and feet rather nervous than fleshy."

More than 1,500 years later, Lawrence Kubie, writing in the Winter 1944 issue of *Military Affairs*, described the early American military accession process this way:

"Not many years ago, every citizen had a gun and knew how to use it. He had to in order to survive. In those days, there was no induction process. There was no training. There was no classification of men for specialized tasks."

Kubie's statement was dramatic, but not precisely true.

The Civil War

During the Civil War, Union Army regulations called for a physician to inspect each recruit. The physician's judgment of the recruit's suitability was largely subjective. No specific cause for rejection was required. The Army did, however, provide guidance in the form of acceptable height and chest circumference measurements based on contemporary British and French standards.

Just as in the present day, the intent of height and chest circumference tables were to screen out individuals who were not likely to bear up during military service. The inspecting physician used below average height (minimum of 5 feet in 1864, down from the previous standard of 5 feet 6 inches in effect since 1802) as an indicator of possible disease, parasitic infestation, tuberculosis or malnutrition.

Overweight prospective military members wouldn't become an issue for another 100 years. Exceptions to every rule existed, however. In 1875, Colonel Jedidiah H. Baxter noted that a rejected Civil War draftee stood only 4 feet 3 inches tall, but weighed 313 pounds.

Although vague by today's standards, the screening procedures met the Union Army's needs, even as its ranks swelled from 27,958 personnel in 1860 to 1,062,848 in 1865. They also served the U.S. Army 30 years later during mobilization for the Spanish American War, when the Army grew to five and one half times its pre-war size.



1864: Recruiting in the New York City Hall Park. Illustration from a sketch by George Law, published in *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, March 19, 1864.

World War I

Modern military medical and aptitude screening processes, however, trace their origins only as far back in time as the U.S. mobilization for World War I.

During the 18 months the nation participated in that global conflict, the first Selective Service Act enabled the nation to expand its active duty military force to 2,897,167 by 1918, 16 times the 1916 peacetime total of 179,376. Behind these numbers were 200,000 local, state and federal civilian medical and administrative personnel who registered 24 million American males for potential service and inducted about 2.8 million of them.

In order to evaluate, process and classify these massive numbers, uniform classification standards were devised to screen out the medically unsuitable and to assess the aptitude capabilities of volunteers and inductees.

Medically, screening for tuberculosis was a priority. Much as heart disease is today, tuberculosis was a leading cause of death in turn of the century America. The disease killed nearly 6,500 Union Army soldiers during the Civil War, while a far larger number were discharged, returned home and eventually succumbed to the disease.

Even with screening, military hospital admissions for tuberculosis during the war amounted to 11.8 per 1,000 and accounted for 15 percent of all military discharges. Three thousand U.S. soldiers died of tuberculosis during World War I. It also accounted for 12.7 percent of all disability discharges. In 1922,



1917: Physical examination of the men summoned in the first call for the National Army, at District No. 154, #60 West 13th Street, New York City.

44,591 veterans were under the care of the Veterans Bureau for the disease. The total cost for caring for tubercular World War I veterans was \$1 billion.

Height and weight standards were also first applied with uniformity during the World War I era. The standards were first published in Selective Service Regulations, Part VIII, Physical Examination Standards, No. 3, November 1917. They were incorporated into Army Regulation 40-105, Standards of Physical Examination for Entrance into the Regular Army, National Guard and Organized Reserves, on May 29, 1923, and included the horse-friendly policy of barring those exceeding 180 pounds from joining the cavalry. The regulation included a table titled: U.S. Army Standards for Weight and Chest Girth, 1917, that specified standard and minimum variation measurements for height, weight and chest circumference. The standards incorporated information gathered from the U.S. Sanitary Commission's survey of demographic data and height/weight measurements of 23,785 Civil War soldiers, the Army's first height and weight chart of 1887, and the insurance industry's 1912 Medico-Actuarial Mortality Investigation.



February 1918: Men undergoing physical examination at the Plattsburg, New York, training camp. Only three out of the 1,374 enrolled in the camp were rejected as physically unfit.

The application of these standards resulted in far more rejections of prospective service members for underweight than overweight. In 1918, nearly 75,000 were rejected for underweight, while only slightly more than 4,200 were rejected for being overweight.

World War I also witnessed the advent of aptitude testing. The Army Alpha test consisted of eight subtests and served as a prototype for later test development. The Army Beta test was one of the first paper and pencil tests to evaluate the aptitude of recruits with little or no schooling and those who were non-English speakers. Both were replaced by the Army General Classification Test, AGCT, in World War II.

(For a comprehensive overview of the development of armed forces aptitude/intelligence testing, which evolved into today's Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery, see, "The 100-year journey to the ASVAB," pages 18–19.)

World War II

More than 20 years later, World War II presented the nation with an even more monumental mobilization.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the Selective Service and Training Act of 1940, the nation's first peacetime draft, to facilitate the anticipated personnel expansion the impending war would require. By the time the wartime selective service laws expired in 1947, more than 10 million men had been inducted into the military services. The war years witnessed active duty personnel

strength balloon from a peacetime total of 334,473 in 1939 to a total of 12,055,884 in 1945.

Tuberculosis screening remained a major concern. A vaccine for the disease would not be widely available until after the war. Effective tuberculosis screening, however, was one of the success stories of the era thanks to the widespread use of chest X-rays.

In October 1940, at the direction of the War Department, chest X-rays were required for all Selective Service registrants suspected of having pulmonary disease. By March 1942,

the rules had changed so that all inductees received a chest X-ray. The results were impressive. In World War I, tuberculosis accounted for 15 percent of all disability discharges. By 1943, it accounted for only 1.6 percent. In all, of eight million examinees, 120,000 or 1.5 percent were rejected for service because of the disease. Hospital admission rates for tuberculosis were 11.8 per thousand service members in World War I. In World War II, the admission rate was reduced to less than one per 1,000.

The physical standards for induction were first published by the War Department in Medical Regulation, MR, 1-9, Standards of Physical Examination During Mobilization, dated Aug. 31, 1940. The standards were used by both local draft board examining physicians and those at Joint Army and Navy Induction Stations. MR 1-9 was subjected to several major revisions as the war progressed. Specific subjects were amended by the War Department as the need arose.

The most extensive changes to MR 1-9 involved dental and visual acuity standards.

The August 1940 edition of MR 1-9 required military members to possess "a total of six masticating teeth and six incisor teeth properly opposed." The first statistics available after the standard was implemented revealed that it was responsible for about 9 percent of all rejections, and if continued, would result in the rejection of one million otherwise acceptable men by 1943.

The standard was revised downward at the same time the Army and Navy Dental Corps instituted extensive dental repair programs. By October 1942, the revised MR 1-9 allowed an inductee with no teeth to serve if dentures would correct the condition.

MR 1-9's visual acuity standards were the second highest cause for rejection. In 1940, the standard specified 20/100 in each eye, if corrected with glasses to 20/40 in both eyes. By April 1944, the standard had been lowered to 20/200 in each eye or 20/100 in one and 20/400 in the other if both were correctable to 20/40, and the services provided the corrective lenses. During World War II, the Army alone issued 2 million pairs of glasses.

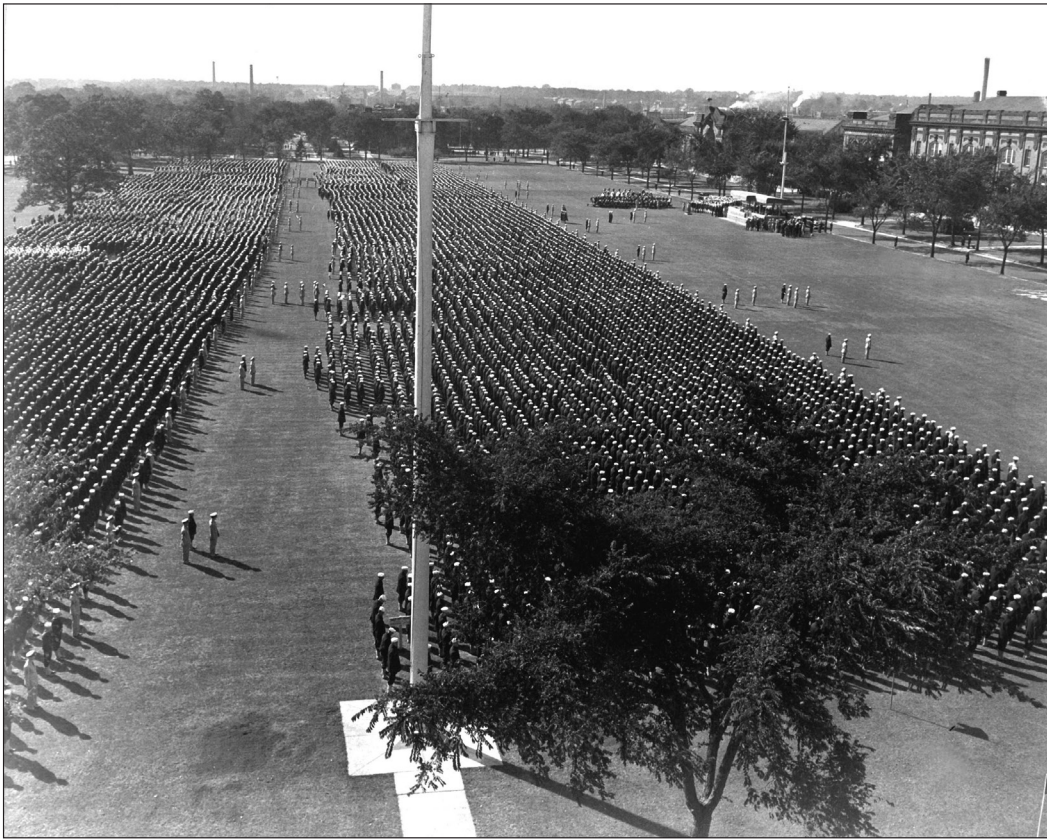
World War II also introduced the PULHES physical classification system, still in use today.

Throughout most of the war only two physical classifications were available, general service and limited service. Job-specific placement was determined by testing and interviews, but the process lacked a simple means to indicate the individual possessed the physical requirements to perform the assignment.

Enter our neighbors to the north. The Canadians had a system already in use called PULHEMS, which



Dec. 8, 1941: President Franklin D. Roosevelt signs the declaration of war against Japan. A year earlier, he signed the Selective Service and Training Act, in anticipation of a necessary personnel expansion for an impending war.



1942: A ceremony at Naval Training Station Great Lakes, Illinois. The photo was shot from the roof of the main administration building. Today, USMEPCOM Headquarters and Eastern and Western Sectors are located in a tenant building of Naval Station Great Lakes, the base that includes the Navy's Recruit Training Command.

indicated the individual's suitability for a particular assignment at a glance. After experimenting with the Canadian system, the Americans adopted it as PULHES in May 1944. The U.S. definitions are: P-general physical stamina and strength; U-upper extremities; L-lower extremities; H-hearing; E-eyes; and S-psychiatric evaluation. Each of the letter categories had four numerical grades that could be assigned. The M in the Canadian system stood for mentality (intelligence) and was eliminated from the U.S. system in favor of AGCT results, recorded separately in the individual's record.

At the conclusion of World War II, the nation faced a demobilization challenge almost as daunting as the earlier mobilization. Millions of former GIs had to assimilate back into civilian society. The size of the active force dropped dramatically from 12,055,884 in 1945 to 3,024,893 in 1946. That total was halved in 1947, resulting in an active duty force of 1,581,110. The force has remained within a range of about 1,430,000 to 3,600,000 from 1947 to the present day.

Post World War II

After the war, the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, the newly-created Air Force and the Coast Guard resumed recruiting volunteers. Recruiting had been

suspended in 1942 to allow the conscription system to fill service manpower quotas. The wartime Selective Service Act was allowed to lapse in 1947, but was replaced the next year with a new law that would drive conscription until the draft ended June 30, 1973.

In 1948, an inter-service working group was created to develop a single aptitude test for use by all services. This effort resulted in the introduction in 1950 of the Armed Forces Qualification Test.

The AFQT served as a screening device, determining the inductee or applicant's overall capacity to absorb military training, and provided a uniform yardstick with which to predict the individual's potential for success while in service. It did not aid in job classification, however. For this, the services employed their separate Army Classification Battery, Navy Basic Test Battery, and Airman Qualification Examination, in addition to other specialized tests.

In 1974, the Department of Defense selected the ASVAB as the single instrument of choice to both screen applicants for enlistment and for occupational classification testing. This streamlined the testing process and enhanced the individual service's ability to match applicants with jobs and to provide job guarantees to those applicants who qualify. In 1976, the same

year the United States Military Enlistment Command was established, a revised version of the ASVAB became the enlistment eligibility test Department of Defense-wide. Refined and improved versions of the ASVAB continue to serve in the 21st Century.

In 1959, the surgeons general of the Army, Navy and Air Force created the Consolidated Medical Fitness Standards Project to consolidate, simplify and clarify the standards for military medical fitness. At the time, four Army regulations and about 200 directives addressed medical fitness standards for the armed forces. The revisions were submitted for review by the Department of Defense as well, since induction physical standards were included in the new document. The approved document was published in 1961 as Army Regulation, AR, 40-501, Standards of Medical Fitness.

The Department of Defense first published department-wide medical fitness standards for all services in the first edition of Department of

Defense Instruction 6130.4, Criteria and Procedure Requirements for Physical Standards for Appointment, Enlistment, or Induction in the Armed Forces published in 1986. It replaced AR 40-501 as the DoD standard.

Medical fitness standards continue to be refined to keep pace with current trends in public health, advances in medical science and military requirements. In 1961, audiometric standards were added and hearing tests became routine. Screening for HIV was mandated in the 1980s for all persons entering the services. USMEPCOM incorporated International Classification of Disease, ICD-10 codes with the rest of DoD in 2015. The codes, developed by the World Health Organization, are used to identify and record applicant medical conditions during MEPS processing. Results are used in statistical analysis of the data.

And the “turn your head and cough”?

Well, not everything changes in 100 years.



After World War II, military entrance processing begins to focus on

Quality

by Christine Parker

USMEPCOM Public Affairs Specialist

Although military processing has continued to evolve in the last 60 years, its mission remains the same: ensuring the quality of tomorrow's armed forces.

The last article, "The Origins of Modern U.S. Military Entrance Standards," outlined how mankind has filled its military ranks from the Roman Empire through World War II and beyond. It was after that war that military processing took new turns: from "drab, musty green-walled military buildings," through the adoption of Red Carpet Treatment for applicants to the command's current transformation to the best possible processing systems.

At this point of further growth and transformation, reflecting on the past can provide insight to plan for the future.

Before 1950

When tracing the roots of today's U.S. Military Entrance Processing Command, one must look to the Army, because the military processing mission once belonged to that service.

USMEPCOM has been an independent command only since the late 1970s. Before that, it belonged to the U.S. Army Recruiting Command, which traces its history back to the inception of the General Recruiting Service in 1822.

In general, the first U.S.

military was done at military sites, such as training camps. Later, processing was accomplished at induction centers or stations.

The 1950s

Although the Army has relied on volunteers throughout history, the service has always recruited. The only time conscription completely replaced volunteerism was during the latter part of World War II. Following this, the Army Adjutant General's Office re-established recruiting in August 1945.

After the Korean War began in 1950, military leaders noticed there were sharp contrasts in the quality of people serving in the military services. On April 2, 1951, the secretary of defense sent a memorandum to the secretaries of the Army, Navy and Air Force, stating that certain policies would change to ensure a fair distribution of military manpower.

This memorandum had four directives. One, voluntary enlistments would continue. Two, identical mental and physical standards for acceptability would be provided for both enlistments and inductions. Three, qualitative distribution would be maintained by quota control. And, four, Armed Forces Examining Stations — AFES — would be established to carry out the qualitative distribution program.

On Sept. 1, 1951, the Secretary of the Army established AFES.

Its mission was to facilitate the standardization of military processing and to ensure each military service received a fair distribution of quality enlistees.

Part of the general order read, "Armed forces examining stations are established as element of recruiting main stations ... Unless otherwise indicated, armed forces examining stations are located at U.S. Army and U.S. Air Force recruiting main stations."

At the time, 1st Army Area had 10 AFES, the second had 12, the third had six, the fourth had 12, the fifth had six, and the sixth had eight, for a total of 54. By Nov. 1, 1951, another general order added one to each of the six Army areas, for a total of 60 AFES (today, there are 65 MEPS).

The AFES reported to their executive agent, the Army. Initial AFES military personnel staffing was 50 percent Army, 15 percent Navy, 5 percent Marine Corps and 30 percent Air Force. Effective July 16, 1954, the percentages were changed to provide for staffing by the four services based on workload.

In the early days of AFES, potential military recruits were herded from room to room and processed through the various medical screening steps — eyes, ears, walk like a duck, turn your head and cough, etc. The process was often compared to herding cattle.

Processing in the 1950s

"How did I feel about being drafted?" Retired Chief Warrant Officer 2 Charles A Frith said. "Words cannot do justice to the resentment. I was working in a factory making nearly \$700 a month, had my own car, lived where I wished and did what I pleased, when I pleased and with whom I pleased. Uncle Sam offered me \$68 a month without amenities"

Frith said he didn't want to be drafted into the Army, so he drove to the Navy recruiting office to enlist. "I told the old chief I wanted in the Navy instead of the Army," he said. "He gave me a test called an AFQT, on which I made a 98 percent score. He told me to have someone drop me off at the post office at 6 a.m. the next morning and he'd be waiting there with a train ticket. He told me to take nothing with me but the clothes on my back, to volunteer for every school offered and to otherwise never volunteer for anything."

According to Frith, there were none of the civilities that are extended to today's applicants. "We were treated as though we were a bunch of dumb steers to be herded with verbal cattle prods through a series of events that we would understand later. It may be that such treatment was necessary as men from every background were being inducted by the hundreds every day. There was a war going on, and we were getting the short end of a stick. In and out as fast as possible was the only way to meet the manpower demand."

He added that he was given a pre-induction physical several months before getting his draft notice, but was subjected to a much more thorough one after reporting to boot camp. "The first one didn't consist of much more than reading an eye chart and a few other things," Frith said. "On the first day of boot camp, we were taken to a building that appeared to be a gym where we were subjected to a physical. We were lined up around the perimeter of a basketball court in alpha order and told 'drop your pants,' 'turn your head and cough,' 'bend over, spread your cheeks,' and the rest is history. No one failed."

Testing

In 1948, Congress passed the Selective Service Act that mandated DoD to develop a uniform screening test to be used by all of the services. In response, DoD developed the Armed Forces Qualification Test. DoD began administering the AFQT in 1950, and continued doing so until the mid-1970s.

During the 1950s, the high mental rejection rate of registrants throughout the nation made it necessary for the Army to take action. On Jan. 1, 1952, each AFES received a personnel psychologist for the purpose of maintaining standardized and uniform mental testing procedures. They developed procedures where certain categories of registrants could be administratively accepted despite failing to achieve a passing score on the AFQT.

By June 14, 1957, procedures for categorization of administrative acceptees were further revised to restrict administrative acceptance to registrants who failed to achieve a passing score on the AFQT.

The 1960s

In 1962, the Army transferred the recruiting, examining, induction and processing responsibilities in the continental United States to the commanding general, Continental Army Command.

Under the U.S. Army Recruiting Service, recruiting was divided among the six continental armies, with each one responsible for recruiting within its geographic boundaries.

In December 1963, the Army deputy chief of staff for personnel appointed a committee to study recruiting. The committee recommended the Army remove the recruiting responsibility from the continental armies and centralize it under CONARC.

The Army activated U.S. Army Recruiting Command Oct. 1, 1964, as a subordinate element of CONARC. The new command was located at Fort Monroe, Virginia, and the headquarters had 23 officers, one warrant officer, 18 enlisted personnel and 50 civilian employees.

The new recruiting command had six recruiting districts,

similar to today's recruiting brigades. They were located in New York, Fort Meade, Maryland, Fort McPherson, Georgia, Fort Sam Houston, Texas, Chicago and at the Presidio of San Francisco.

The command reorganized July 1, 1965. The reorganization included moving AFES from the recruiting main stations and placing them directly under the control of the recruiting districts. Also, two districts were consolidated. USAREC then had five recruiting districts, 38 recruiting main stations, 70 AFES and 1,024 recruiting stations (in the continental United States).

Effective July 1, 1966, the Army transferred USAREC from CONARC and placed it under the Army deputy chief of staff for personnel.

About this time, the command moved to facilities at an old Nike site at Fox Hill, Virginia. In 1968, USAREC moved to Hampton, Virginia.

The draft was in full swing in the 1960s and AFES were busy.

The Army established and named AFES in 1951. Documents from the mid-1970s use the term

Processing in the 1960s

Conditions during the 1960s were very different from today, with a much more hectic pace. "Processing conditions during the draft were horrendous," said previous Phoenix MEPS processing supervisor Joe Bivins. "It wasn't uncommon to process 400 to 500 inductees a day." He also served three years in the military at the Chicago Armed Forces Examining and Entrance Station as a testing NCOIC and noted, "there were occasions when the floor count actually reached 700 at the Chicago AFES."

"Obviously, Red Carpet Treatment could not be used during the draft era, especially when half of the people on the floor didn't want to be there and would do anything to avoid induction. Seldom was there an oath group that didn't include one who refused to take the traditional step forward to acknowledge induction. This was especially true for those who were told they would be going into the Marine Corps."

AFEES — Armed Forces Examining and Entrance Stations. The best estimate for the name change from AFES to AFEES is 1965.

Testing

As it had in the 1950s, the Army was still grappling with aptitude testing methods and how they related to enlistment standards. So much so that, in 1960, the Army recruiting district headquarters were authorized a personnel psychologist, an enlistment assistant personnel psychologist, and a statistical clerk to supervise the armed forces examining and induction activities at the recruiting main stations.

Clarification arrived soon after these authorizations. On April 1, 1961, the Army published Regulation 40-501, Standards of Medical Fitness for Appointment, Enlistment and Induction. This regulation seemed to clarify many aspects of military enlistment standards.

During the 1960s, DoD was working to improve testing in schools as well. Beginning in 1958, the first test used in schools was the Airman Qualifying Exam. Shortly thereafter, the Army and Navy introduced their own versions of classification tests into high schools.

The service-specific tests were redundant and lacked a common

standard. In 1966, DoD began developing a single battery for all the services.

In 1968, DoD first offered the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery — at no cost — to high schools and postsecondary schools.

The 1970s

The draft officially ended in July 1973 and the services began recruiting an All-Volunteer Force.

On July 15, 1973, USAREC headquarters moved from

Hampton, Virginia, to Fort

Sheridan, Illinois, to gain more space for its expanded mission.

By 1976, AFEES had been accomplishing the processing mission for 25 years — under USAREC's leadership. However, things were about to change and military enlistment processing was about to become independent.

On July 1, 1976, the Department of the Army established the U.S. Military *Enlistment* Processing Command as the agency that would medically, mentally and administratively process and enlist applicants for the armed forces.

Still, the command was a staff element of USAREC. The Army designated the commander of USAREC as the concurrent commander of USMEPCOM. Both USMEPCOM and USAREC were located at Fort Sheridan, Illinois.

Three years later, USMEPCOM would completely break away from USAREC. In August 1979, the USAREC/USMEPCOM commander, then Maj. Gen. William Mundie,



Early days: In 1980, the USMEPCOM staff gathers on the porch of its headquarters building at Fort Sheridan, Illinois. Although a few of these employees remained at USMEPCOM for 20 or more years, only a few remain. Today, one of them, Tina Siordia stands directly to the right of the second pillar from the right (wearing a navy blue top). She is the USMEPCOM commander's secretary. The officer in an all-white uniform, in front, on the right, is USMEPCOM's second commander, Rear. Adm. Thomas F. Brown, III.

recommended to the Army deputy chief of staff for personnel that USMEPCOM should stand alone. The Army approved his recommendation and, on Oct. 1, 1979, the secretary of the Army directed that USMEPCOM would separate from USAREC and the USMEPCOM commander would report directly to the Army deputy chief of staff for personnel.

DoD assigned the Army as executive agent for USMEPCOM. For operational and policy supervision, USMEPCOM reported directly to the then deputy assistant secretary of defense, military manpower and personnel policy.

With this in mind, in a sense, USMEPCOM has two birthdays. On July 1, 1976, the Army created USMEPCOM. However, USAREC kept the command under its wing until Oct. 1, 1979. On that day, USMEPCOM stood alone and distinct as a DoD joint activity.

Whichever date you cite, USMEPCOM broke away from the Army and became a joint service command, an independent broker for military processing. And, because USMEPCOM provided support to all five services, the command was staffed with personnel from all five. The command was proportionately staffed, based on enlistment totals, until 2005.

Also in 1979, USMEPCOM began Entrance National Agency Checks. And records indicate that in that same year, the command created its Public Affairs Office, Civilian Personnel Office and Equal Employment Opportunity Office.

Initially, the ASVAB wasn't used for military recruiting. However, in 1976, DoD introduced ASVAB



Today's USMEPCOM seal. The command created and approved its original seal in 1978. The seal was recreated in 1983 after the command's name change from U.S. Military Enlistment Processing Command to U.S. Military Entrance Processing Command. The five corners of the pentagon allude to the five services comprising USMEPCOM. The three basic functions performed in the selective process are represented by the checkered background indicative of administrative processing, and the colors blue and red are symbolic of the mental and medical aspects of examination. The gold sword represents the high ideals inherent in the new service member.

as the official aptitude test for all the services. This version had 12 subtests. By 1979, the command began automated ASVAB scoring.

Technology

USMEPCOM began its first use of data processing in the early 1970s. MEPS were using Dura machines to process data gathered from applicants. These machines were similar to typewriters, with the addition of a strip of yellow paper running through them. As the person typed the data, the machine would punch holes in the tape. Next, the MEPS transmitted the data tapes through a device (that looked like a tape recorder) to headquarters. Sometimes the device would malfunction during the night, and

there would be piles of yellow tape all over the floor the next morning.

Because of this problem, military personnel were required to stay after duty hours to feed the tape into the device. When the yellow tape broke, the operator had to re-establish communication with headquarters. What made it even more challenging was the operators needed to remember which dots represented which letters of the alphabet.

After the Dura machines, the command began using IBM magnetic card typewriters. They were very noisy and required sound-proofed rooms. The rooms were carpeted and had acoustic tile on the walls. Two to five typists sat in this room and operated the typewriters. At the end of the day, the lead typist would proofread all the codes and transmit the data on the cards via a telephone hook-up to Fort Sheridan, where the data was stored.

Editor's Note: The U.S. Military Entrance Processing Command does not have a historian. In 1996 and 2008, the Messenger magazine did feature stories. They are the most requested issues of the magazine.

Our goal in producing another history issue was to paint a more thorough picture of the history of military processing.

We are open to continuing to refine the command's written history. If you have information that will add to what's printed here, please contact the USMEPCOM Public Affairs Office at (847) 688-4874.

USMEPCOM



1990s

1990

Closed Guam, New Haven and Manchester MEPS



1992

One day processing at MEPS

Testing Directorate inactivated

Developed PA&E Directorate

Total quality field training

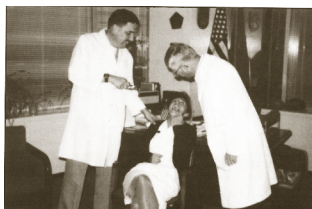
Western Sector moved to Denver from Presidio of San Francisco

Los Angeles riot, MEPS burned (April 29)

Desert Storm workload peak

1993

Central Sector disestablished, Eastern Sector moved from Fort Meade to headquarters



Closed Wilkes-Barre, Cincinnati and Newark MEPS

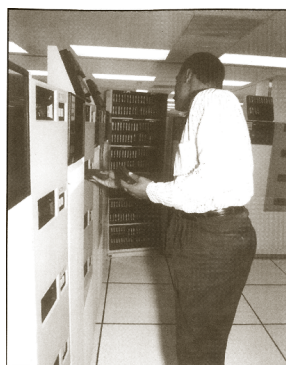
Air Force Col. Wanda Wood became first O-6 commander

1994

MIRS fielding

Began processing National Civilian Community Corps applicants

New mainframe operating system installed IBM MU/ESA



Acquired access to Defense Data Network

1995

Email implemented

Physical examinations upgraded

Western Sector moved from Denver to Aurora, Colorado

1996

CAT-ASVAB implemented



1997

Executive agent responsibilities transferred from the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel to Headquarters, Army Training and Doctrine Command

"Freedom's Front Door" selected as USMEPCOM motto

First USMEPCOM public website

1998

Roof caved in at the Beckley MEPS



History of



2000s

2001

Began using ICD-9 codes



2002

Executive agency responsibilities transferred from TRADOC to Army Accessions Command

Expect Report implemented



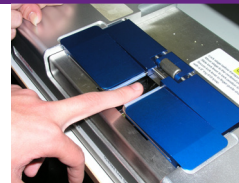
2003

Wellness and Readiness Division established

Centralized Relational Database implemented

Moved to Oracle database mainframe

Upgraded from batch processing between field and Headquarters to nearly real-time replications/CRDB



2004

External organization check implemented

2005

Program Budget Decision 712 changed USMEPCOM's civilian/military ratio from 50/50 to 80/20 (the command converted more than 850 military positions to civilian)

Began using joint staff designations

Western Sector moved from Aurora, Colorado, to Building 3400, Naval Station Great Lakes (joining Headquarters and Eastern Sector)

MEPCOM Operations Center created

2006

Data Exchange/Top-of-System Interface Process (DE/TOSIP), now known as e-SOA, implemented

2008

First biometric enlistment signature

iCAT implemented



Command received second Joint Meritorious Unit Award

2009

e-Security fully implemented

Battalions established (December)



USMEPCOM



2010
CRDB/USMIRS
transferred from
mainframe to servers

2011
Max Daily Capacity
Allocation

Face-to-face behavioral
assessment focus areas
(known as the Omaha 5)
implemented



2012
Defense Information
Systems Agency
enterprise email
implemented

2013
SPEAR implemented

Upgraded to Electronic
Fingerprint Capture
Station application

2-day/48-hour
projection process
implemented

Las Vegas remote
processing station
established

2014
Background
Investigation Report
implemented

Non-MEPS shipping
process implemented

Upgraded to e-orders
applications

Provider Quality
Management Program
established

2015
Began using ICD-10
codes

Upgraded to Expect
and Onward
Transportation Reports

DD Form 2807-2
revised

2016
USMEPCOM
public website host
transferred to Defense
Media Agency

USMEPCOM Commanders

Brig. Gen. William P. Acker*	Air Force
Rear Adm. Charles E. Gurney III**	Navy
Rear Adm. Thomas F. Brown III	Navy
Rear Adm. Benjamin T. Hacker	Navy
Brig. Gen. Wilma L. Vaught	Air Force
Brig. Gen. Caleb J. Archer	Army
Rear Adm. Eugene D. Conner	Navy
Brig. Gen. Michael P. Mulqueen	Marine Corps
Rear Adm. Edison L. Watkins III	Navy
Col. Wanda C. Wood	Air Force
Col. Michael B. Weimer	Army
Capt. Martha R. Bills	Navy
Col. David L. Slotwinski	Army
Col. Lon M. Yearly	Marine Corps
Col. Mariano C. Campos Jr.	Air Force
Capt. Eric W. Johnson	Navy
Col. Kathy J. Maloney	Marine Corps
Capt. Stuart C. Satterwhite	Navy
Capt. David S. Kemp	Navy

* Brig. Gen. William P. Acker was the USMEPCOM deputy commander because, at that time, the USAREC commander was dual-hatted as the USMEPCOM commander.

** Rear Adm. Charles E. Gurney III was the USMEPCOM deputy commander until Oct. 1, 1979, at which point he became USMEPCOM commander for two days before his change of command on Oct. 3, 1979.

Did you know...

*Four MEPS still exist in their original locations:
Fargo (established in 1961), New York City
(established 1965), Montgomery (established
1968) and Louisville (established 1969)*

The 100-year journey to the ASVAB

Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery

by Christine Parker

USMEPCOM Public Affairs Specialist

Today the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery — the ASVAB — is the most widely used multiple-aptitude test battery in the world. You read that correctly — in the world.

When we reflect on intelligence and aptitude testing in the past 100 years, two things are evident: great strides have been made and the U.S. military has played a significant role in that progress.

Before the journey

The first recognized attempts at assessing intelligence took place in England in the late 1800s. Francis Galton, half-cousin of Charles Darwin, is known for his studies and writing in a broad range of fields. Part of his life's work includes some of the first studies on variations in human abilities.

Just after the turn of the century, French psychologist Alfred Binet began developing techniques to assess the intelligence of grade school children. In 1905, he produced the first intelligence test — the Binet-Simon scale — with Theodore Simon. This test included a series of 30 items related to everyday tasks, e.g., counting coins, naming parts of the body, naming objects in a picture, word definition and digit span (the number of digits a person can recall from a list). The Binet-Simon laid the groundwork for today's intelligence testing.

The next progress was made in the United States. Lewis Terman of Stanford University adapted Binet's test and released



A soldier (right) administers an Army intelligence test to another soldier at Fort Lee, Virginia, in November 1917.

a revision, called the Stanford-Binet, in 1916. This is the first time the concept of IQ appeared.

The next need for improvements came from the U.S. military. In the midst of World War I, the Army needed to assess the intelligence of large numbers of recruits. However, administering the Stanford-Binet was time consuming, costly and required highly trained administrators. In 1917, the president of the American Psychological Association, Robert Yerkes urged the APA to contribute to the war effort by helping find a way to assess military recruits.

The APA formed numerous committees, one of which was charged with developing a group intelligence test that could identify men with low intelligence and those well-prepared for special assignments or higher-level training. Their efforts resulted in the Army Alpha and Beta tests, introduced in 1917. The Army Alpha was a written test for literate recruits. The Alpha had various parts, including analogy recognition, missing number fill-ins, and sentence unscrambling. These types of questions are still common in modern IQ tests. The Beta version was used for men who did not speak English or who were



The Army Alpha and Beta tests could be administered to large groups and could be completed in less than an hour.

illiterate. It had several parts as well, including a maze, number work and picture completions. The Alpha and Beta tests could be administered to large groups and took less than an hour to complete.

By the end of World War I, more than one million people had taken the Army Alpha and Beta tests. The Army was using the tests for two primary reasons — to better assign new recruits and to allow military leaders to better understand their soldiers' individual abilities. The first tests were just the beginning of the journey for U.S. military intelligence and aptitude testing.

During the next 10 to 20 years, the intelligence testing community began identifying limitations of mass intelligence testing. For example, the test takers's level of cultural knowledge affected their scores. Many recent immigrants were not familiar with some of the material on the Alpha and Beta tests; however, their inability to correctly answer American culture-specific questions did not necessarily correlate with their intelligence.

Also, for a variety of reasons, many men who should have been taking the Beta tests were directed to take the Alpha tests, which they failed. Often both tests were administered in unsatisfactory settings. The Beta test also required the use of a pencil and writing numbers, and many testers had never seen or used a pencil before the test. These and other factors affected test results.

During World War II, each service used its own assessment procedures before an individual's induction. The Department of Defense also began using the Army General Classification Test and Navy General Classification Test to classify enlisted personnel. These tests included questions on vocabulary, arithmetic and block counting. More than nine million people took these tests during the war.

In 1948, Congress passed the Selective Service Act that mandated DoD to develop a uniform screening test to be used by all of the services. In response, DoD developed the

Armed Forces Qualification Test. DoD began administering the AFQT in 1950 and continued doing so until the mid-1970s.

The AFQT consisted of 100 multiple choice questions in vocabulary, arithmetic, spatial relations and mechanical ability. DoD used the AFQT to measure the "general trainability" of draftees and volunteers for all the armed services.

Beginning in 1958, the first test used within schools was the Airman Qualifying Exam. Shortly thereafter, the Army and Navy introduced their own versions of classification tests into high schools. The service-specific tests were redundant and lacked a common standard. In 1966, DoD began developing a single battery for all the services.

In 1968, DoD first offered the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery — at no cost — to high schools and postsecondary schools. It all began with ASVAB Form 1.

The ASVAB wasn't used for military recruiting until a few years later. The draft ended in 1973, followed by the beginning of the All-Volunteer Force. By 1976, DoD introduced ASVAB as the official aptitude test for all the services.

Since ASVAB's beginning, DoD has improved it, and the ASVAB Career Exploration Program continues to be updated and improved as well. USMEPCOM published the most up-to-date ASVAB Career Exploration Guide in July 2012, with another update set to release in fall 2016.

Today the ASVAB CEP is one of the largest career exploration programs in the world. School counselors can use the program to encourage students to increase their level of self-knowledge and understand how that information is linked to military and civilian occupational characteristics.

The U.S. military has played a significant role in intelligence and aptitude assessment — two areas that were only vague concepts 100 years ago.

USMEPCOM welcomes new commander

By Skip Wiseman
Messenger Editor

Photos by Darrin McDufford
USMEPCOM Public Affairs Specialist

USMEPCOM welcomed a new commander at an April 15 change of command ceremony.

Navy Capt. David S. Kemp assumed command, succeeding Navy Capt. Stuart C. Satterwhite who is returning full time to his duties as USMEPCOM's Western Sector commander.

Satterwhite assumed command in November and was dual-hatted as commander of USMEPCOM and Western Sector. Before that, he was assigned as director of the Total Force Manpower Division, Naval Education and Training Command, Pensacola, Florida.

Kemp joins USMEPCOM after serving as director of Manpower and Personnel, United States Naval Forces Europe, United States Naval Forces Africa and United States 6th Fleet, Naples, Italy.

Stephanie P. Miller, director of accession policy in the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Military Personnel Policy, officiated. In her remarks, Miller emphasized the mission, importance of processing applicants into the armed forces, and thanked Satterwhite for his efforts.

"I saw first-hand how your professionalism inspired confidence and esprit de corps throughout the command," Miller said. "At a critical moment, you brought out the best in our team and spearheaded efforts toward successful remediation.

"Stakeholders across the Army, Office of the Secretary of Defense and key Department of Defense agencies have all credited your leadership in that regard," she said. "For these efforts and many others, I want to say 'thank you.'"

After thanking Satterwhite, Miller explained that she, Kemp and Satterwhite have served together in the past and welcomed Kemp to the command.

"Dave, Stu and I first crossed paths at the Navy Annex in Arlington, Virginia, under the command

of the chief of naval personnel," Miller said. "We navigated Quarterly Demand Planning, Legislative Budgeting Cycles and CNP stoplight charts. Through it all, both Dave and Stu were well recognized within the command as leaders of the highest caliber and standards of excellence."

She spoke of how quickly Satterwhite grasped the importance of USMEPCOM's mission and her confidence that Kemp will do the same.

"It's a responsibility Captain Satterwhite has taken quite seriously," Miller said, "furthering USMEPCOM's mission objectives in almost every area over the last several months – and one I know Captain Kemp will bring his own experiences and enthusiasm in the years to come.

"In Dave's very capable and experienced hands, I know USMEPCOM will continue to excel – tackling tough challenges where they arise, implementing innovative processes and strategies where needed and

– most importantly – fostering the same standards of excellence he's well known for throughout the Navy."

"There is no doubt that the strength of the Department of Defense is in the dedicated people who make up teams like this one and the outstanding leaders we celebrate today," Miller said.

"Stu, again my sincere thanks and appreciation," she said.

"Western Sector is lucky to have you. Dave, my most enthusiastic welcome and good wishes for continued success. I expect nothing but excellence in the coming years from everyone here today."

In his remarks, Satterwhite thanked the headquarters staff for its hard work and reflected on his tenure as commander.

"I arrived here in September and began turning over to take command of Western Sector," he said. "In October, I found out I was going to be dual-hatted as both the US-



Navy Capt. David S. Kemp accepts the USMEPCOM guidon from Stephanie P. Miller, director of accession police, Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Military Personnel Policy.



Navy Capt. David S. Kemp, USMEPCOM commander, and Army Command Sgt. Maj. Earla L. Reddock, senior enlisted advisor, cut the cake for the reception after the change of command.

MEPCOM and Western Sector commander. And so our journey began.”

Satterwhite spoke of working on the command’s strategic plan and why it is important if the command is to perform its mission.

“This was a challenge for us,” Satterwhite said. “Was our last plan way off the mark or were we close and just needed to make some adjustments? We were close, but the real issue was it wasn’t really our plan. It was just a document hung for all to see if they wanted to find it.

“If we are to move forward as a team, we must all see where we fit in the plan and how the work we are doing is aligned with the long-term goal,” he said. “The good news is, the first part of our strategic plan is done, and we are ready to begin establishing measurable milestones to reach our goals. Without these goals, the plan remains aloof and unattainable.”

Satterwhite thanked staff members for their help and support during his tenure.

“I have sought the wise counsel of many of you since I arrived and we made some changes based on

your guidance,” he said. “Thank you for taking the time to explain to me why we do some of the things we do. Your input has made a difference to me and the course corrections we have made.”

Kemp reflected on the command’s motto, history and future.

“I always have a sense of history and heritage on days like today,” he said. “Though this actual command is only 40 years old, the mission itself is not a new or modern-day mission.”

Kemp pointed

out that the idea of carefully selecting military members can be traced back to the Roman Empire, that the screening process evolved through the centuries and will continue to evolve today in today’s fast-paced technology-driven society.

“Today’s Department of Defense and service qualification standards originated with our country’s entry into World War I, which set in motion what would become, by the end of World War II, the largest coordinated system of human resource selection, classification, training and assignment ever implemented.

“Our processes, standards and procedures have steadily evolved since,” Kemp said, “and today, we have the most well-educated, highest quality military force ever.

“We are ‘Freedom’s Front Door,’” he said, “every day ensuring the quality of tomorrow’s armed forces.”

Kemp next focused on upcoming changes to the command’s processes and organizational culture, and the impact of new technology.

“Technology is both a cause of our challenge and a tool for our success,” he said, “but it will be culture

change in the organization that will allow us to use technology properly.

“This does not mean we have a ‘bad’ culture now,” Kemp said. “The fact that we are accomplishing the mission every single day is testimony to the culture of mission accomplishment this team has. But as our systems and processes change, we will have to figure out together what else we need to change inside the organization to accommodate that.

“We will need to be more efficient, but that will not be enough,” Kemp said. “We have to be adaptable. We have to become a network ourselves. Our MEPS are small teams and they are successful because they are able to build trust and purpose in a small group. This is a challenge in a large organization, but is the only way for us to become a team of teams.

“This is our goal,” he said. “It will not be easy, especially since we can’t stop what we’re doing to focus on this. But from what I have seen so far, I have no doubt we have the talent, experience, dedication and passion to position USMEPCOM for the challenges of the 21st century.

“What I have observed you accomplish on an everyday basis is eye-watering,” Kemp said. “Every day, thousands of young men and women – our nation’s finest – walk into our facilities with a desire to serve.

“Process change and new technology will be important, but so will our internal architecture and organizational culture,” he said.



Navy Capt. David S. Kemp applauds ceremony organizers during his change of command remarks.

Problems? Questions?

USMEPCOM operations center best place for solutions, answers

Story and photos by Skip Wiseman
Messenger Editor

It's a busy day at the MEPS. You're a human resources assistant. An applicant's processing has been stopped cold because of confusion over how to interpret USMEPCOM regulations or a new info message. The commander tells you to research the issue so the processing can get back on track.

All the HRAs, including you, are busy with applicants, either at the front desk, preparing for an enlistment ceremony, taking finger prints or one of the other important tasks that have to be done before young men and women can enlist.

You have some options. You could drop everything and research the issue yourself. You could try to

figure out who you can call at headquarters or sector to get an answer. You could submit a MOC request, call or email the USMEPCOM operations center, known as the MOC.

The MOC is your best solution for a number of reasons – both for you and the command as a whole.

"We can do that work for them at the headquarters, and the MEPS staff can fully engage with the applicants on the floor," Rich Preston, the MOC's chief, said.

"I know it's human nature to want to keep it in house, resolve it

at the lowest level possible," he said. "I'm not saying don't do that. I'm saying the service is available to you. We are extra staff members for you to look up anything and everything operational and give you the official answer."

As a matter of fact, USMEPCOM Regulation 10-1 designates the MOC as the single point of contact in the command for operational questions. Battalions don't play a role in operational issues per USMEPCOM Regulation 10-1. The center has two lead controllers and six controllers along with Preston.

"We're basically a direct reflection of the regulation," Preston said. "Imagine the regulation sitting on somebody's desk. He or she should be able to open that up and look at the real deal any time. There should be no guilt or fear of looking at the regulation.



Darrell Brown

Management Analyst

Brown has been at USMEPCOM since October 2011. He is a retired Army staff sergeant who served 18 months in the Marine Corps before transitioning to the Army.

"All you're doing when you call us is talking to the walking, talking regulation. That's all we are," he said. "If you have an interpretation you think is questionable, talking to us is the same as looking it up yourself."

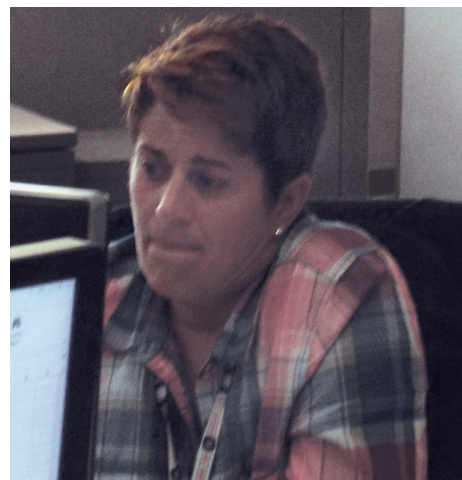
The center is manned 5 a.m.–6 p.m. central time. MOC requests



Rich Preston

MOC Chief

Preston began his civilian career in the MOC in 2012. He is a retired Navy lieutenant commander who served USMEPCOM assignments as the Eastern Sector operations officer, Eastern Sector deputy commander and Chicago MEPS executive officer.



Julie Savage

Management Analyst

Savage joined the MOC staff in March after retiring from the Army as a master sergeant.

may submitted by email at osd.north-chicago.usmepcom.list, hq-jd-meop-co-moc@mail.mil; by phone at (847) 688-3680, Ext. 7830; via the MOC tab in Outlook; or the MOC icon on SPEAR.

The MOC operates under a priority system and strives to answer questions the same day.

"Priority one is when your hair is on fire. You're running around screaming. It's a real-deal emergency," Preston said. "We rarely get one of those. Obviously, we get an answer for you as quickly as possible.

"In priority two, there is an applicant on the floor whose processing has stopped because there is an issue and the MEPS needs help," he said. "We update those every 30 minutes. If we don't answer a priority two pretty quickly, the service may lose a contract. We really work hard to make sure the applicants keep moving.



Joe Bogan

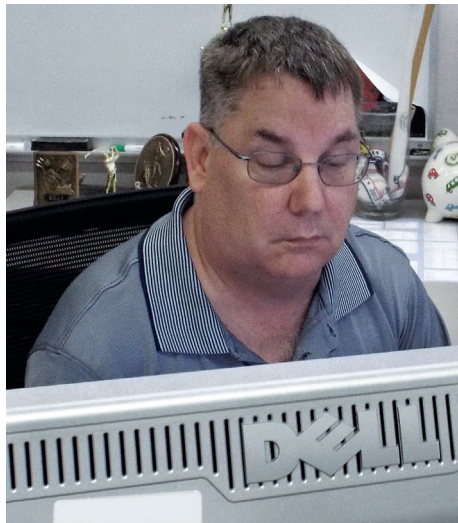
Lead Management Analyst

Bogan joined USMEPCOM in August 2009. He is a retired Marine Corps master sergeant with 25 years of service.

"Priority three is a generic question," Preston said. "Am I doing this right? 'Am I interpreting the regulation right?' 'What's your take on this?' 'The info message is new. This is how I see it. Do you see it the same way?'"

The MOC is designed as a "force multiplier," Preston said.

"People take shortcuts for information all the time," Preston said. "They might go to their favorite person at headquarters or sector. They might go straight to the proponent and bypass the MOC.



Mitch Benson

Lead Management Analyst

Benson joined the command in 2003 as the personnel sergeant. He returned to USMEPCOM in 2005 as a civilian after retiring as an Army staff sergeant.

"If they do that, we lose the tracking and trending, and an issue out in the field could lose visibility and attention, and cost time, money and effort," he said. "If everybody came through the MOC, we could see something that might have been masked that is a legitimate problem. Once it is documented in MOC tickets, we can put more resources on the issue.

"It kind of goes back to what you learned in junior high," Preston said. "There's no such thing as a stupid question. If you're asking a question, somebody else is probably asking it, too.

"If somebody goes to another organization in the headquarters, then all of a sudden that same question that was asked four times elsewhere is invisible to the MOC, because we were bypassed," he said.

"If everybody used the MOC and we went and got the answer, by the second or third time, we would realize there was a trend," Preston said. "By the fourth time, we would be putting out an info message or an update to the regulation or changing things to fix it. All that can get lost if people bypass the MOC.

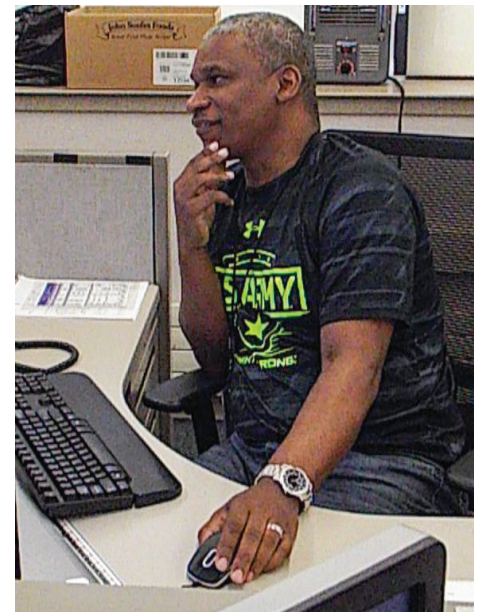
"There are usually three entities – us, the MEPS and the proponent who know, theoretically,

how something is supposed to work in an ideal situation," he said. "We know, and the MEPS knows, it's not working that way. It takes the proponent to interpret what we're seeing and go in and fix it. Sometimes they're baffled by the issue, but together we figure it out."

The enlistment process has a lot of moving parts. The MOC's primary goal is to fix problems before they spiral out of control.

"From initial contact, to medical, to fingerprinting and getting those results back, to putting in a contract, there is a chance something can go wrong," Preston said. Anytime there is a subtle chance something can go wrong, we're hoping the MEPS will call us to see if it was a one-off issue or a trend that can be fixed nationwide. That's why we are the centralized element for this mission. That's what we do."

Bottom line: Contact the MOC whenever applicant processing stops due to problems such as system issues or policy questions, and ask the MOC for help to continue to process the otherwise-qualified applicant.



Michael Hutson

Management Analyst

Hutson joined the command in February after serving 27 years in the Army, retiring as a master sergeant.

Student Testing Program exceeds goals for nearly a decade

By Danielle Lieber

Messenger Associate Editor

The hard working men and women of USMEPCOM's student testing program have exceeded their student testing goals every year since 2007. For the 2015–2016 school year, program administrators tested nearly 706,000 students nationwide, 71,162 more than their target.

The Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery Career Exploration Program, or ASVAB CEP, provides students with a snapshot of their current skill sets. Combined with the Find Your Interests quiz on the program's website, students are provided with tools to help them plan their futures, whether they want to join the military or pursue other career options.

According to Ted Hagert, ASVAB CEP national program manager, majority of those who participate in the CEP ASVAB use the results to help them prepare for postsecondary education. The second largest group of students who participate are undecided about their futures, followed by students interested in joining the military and students who plan on entering the workforce immediately upon graduation. Last year, 15 percent of applicants for enlistment obtained their ASVAB scores through the CEP.

Of the MEPS that have exceeded the MEPS' student testing goals, Atlanta has tested the most students annually since 2012. They consistently test more than 22,000 students.

"This is a total team effort every year," Harriet Blakely, education services specialist at the Atlanta MEPS, said. "It requires the support, commitment and dedication of every team member to accomplish our mission, and to keep our program relevant and successful. My advice to other ESSs is to continue to do what works well for you in your programs or areas of responsibility. Also, look for new and innovative approaches each school year. Collaborate with fellow ESSs who are successful, and most importantly treat everyone with dignity and respect."

Getting schools on board with the student ASVAB is sometimes difficult. Education services specialists have to address educators' concerns over privacy issues, time constraints and preconceived notions. Time is a precious commodity in schools. They have to prove the results are worth taking 2 hours and 40 minutes out of students' school day to take the test.

They have to overcome the perception that the ASVAB is a military test alone. Student testing

score privacy is a major concern for educators and parents. Some locations do not allow USMEPCOM to release scores to military recruiters. While other locations permit it, educators and parents can be secure in the knowledge that schools can opt into or out of sharing scores, and individual students can opt into or out of sharing scores as well.

The 2016–2017 school year will see exciting changes for the program, including giving staff more tools, making the program more robust.

The ASVAB Career Exploration Guide is being reorganized and rebranded. The CEP website is being overhauled to be more user-friendly, including adding more content, so users don't have to go to third-party sites for all career information.

The student testing program is also currently piloting a computerized student ASVAB, called the CEP iCAT, or Internet Computer Adaptive Test, which will be fully implemented before the end of the 2016–2017 school year. Whether schools are eligible for the CEP iCAT depends on their computer specifications. The target is that 10 percent of student tests will be computerized. The CEP iCAT takes approximately 90 minutes, and schools will likely be pleased with the time savings.

"I am very excited about going forward with this option," Dr. Faith Durden, education services specialist at the Buffalo MEPS, said. "Previously-uninterested schools are showing interest and scheduling tests. School counselors are giving me positive feedback. The CEP iCAT takes approximately 50 percent less time to administer, and test administrators do not have to carry around all those test books. Computer adaptive tests

maximize the precision of exams by selecting questions based on what is known about the examinee from previous questions. Adaptive tests can provide uniformly precise scores for most test-takers. In contrast, standard fixed tests, such as the current paper version of the student ASVAB, almost always provide the best precision for test-takers of medium ability and

increasingly poorer precision for test-takers with more extreme test scores. An adaptive test can typically be shortened by 50 percent and still maintain a higher level of precision than a fixed version."

If past performance is any indicator, the student testing program staff will continue to exceed expectations and enlighten future youths about their career options, using all tools at their disposal to help them find their dream jobs.

“Collaborate with fellow ESSs who are successful, and most importantly treat everyone with dignity and respect.”

—Harriet Blakely, ESS, Atlanta MEPS

PiCAT saves time

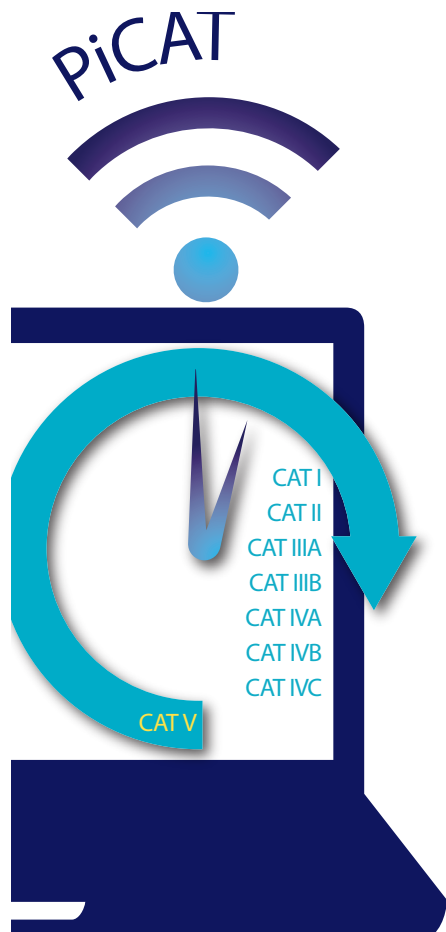
By Danielle Lieber
Messenger Associate Editor

The Prescreen Internet Computer Adaptive Test, or PiCAT, saves the MEPS time and resources while helping recruiters work more efficiently. The PiCAT is a version of the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery, or ASVAB, that applicants can take anytime, anywhere before arriving at a MEPS.

The PiCAT can be taken from any PC; it cannot be taken on a Mac or a cellphone. Once the recruiter nominates an applicant, he or she can log into the controlled-access PiCAT test on a computer at home, at the library or at the recruiter's office. Applicants have 72 hours to use login information and 24 hours to complete the test once it is started. The PiCAT takes one and a half to two hours to complete, and recruiters can view results immediately upon completion.

That means recruiters know what jobs an applicant is eligible for earlier in the process. Also, recruiters save time by not having to take unqualified applicants to a MEPS.

When it is time to visit the MEPS, applicants who took the PiCAT will take a 22-minute verification test. The verification test has been available to recruiters nationwide since November. As of April, the verification test sustains PiCAT results in 68 percent of test scores.



"I like PiCAT. It gives us more flexibility. Applicants don't have to take an entire day to take the test. We get their scores right away, and we can see every job they qualify for. All of that in three hours in the office."

Staff Sgt. Dustin McFarland, U.S. Army recruiter at the Rockford Recruiting Center, Rockford, Illinois.

"PiCAT is an amazing tool that enables recruiters to save time. Our MEPS is an hour and a half away, and having applicants take the PiCAT in the office reduces travel time. I can type scores into the goarmy website and see what jobs they qualify for right away,"

Staff Sgt. Robert Nowak, U.S. Army recruiter at the Rockford Recruiting Center, Rockford, Illinois.

"It's a good time saver in the field. The only problem is if the applicant doesn't finish in three days. The best time to give them access is on the weekend,"

Petty Officer 2nd Class Harold Banks, Leading petty officer of Navy Recruiting Station Pulaski, Chicago.

Currently, 6 percent of initial ASVAB testers at the MEPS take the verification test, meaning they have already taken the PiCAT.

Applicants whose PiCAT test scores are not sustained are automatically flowed to the iCAT. Currently, 20 percent of verification test takers are flowed to the iCAT, either because their PiCAT scores were not sustained or they are randomly selected to take the full iCAT; this percentage will decrease as Defense Manpower Data Center collects enough data.

According to Don Hill, USMEPCOM Operations Directorate Testing Division chief, recruiter use of the PiCAT has tripled between December and March.

"PiCAT is an amazing tool that enables recruiters to save time," Staff Sgt. Robert Nowak, U.S. Army recruiter at the Rockford Recruiting Center, Rockford, Illinois, said. "Our MEPS is an hour and a half away, and having applicants take the PiCAT in the office reduces travel time. I can type scores into the goarmy website and see what jobs they qualify for right away."

To increase recruiter use of the PiCAT, the test is pitched annually to all recruiting commanders.

Command announces annual award winners

Company Grade Officer of the Year Capt. Keaurora Grigsby Sacramento MEPS

Capt. Keaurora Grigsby is the 2015 USMEPCOM Company Grade Officer of the Year. She was the operations officer at the Sacramento MEPS.

She supervised the operations, medical and testing elements.

Grigsby set alternate work schedules to tackle an 81 percent manning level, and enabled processing and shipping for 3,400 applicants to nine basic training centers. She revitalized the awards and recognition program, implementing new station submission requirements, and drafted 11 nomination packages, producing two battalion-level winners.

She audited control desk biometric enrollment/applicant check-in functions, and sustained 100 percent enroll and 97 percent accountability rates. She led a cross-functional self-inspection team and corrected program discrepancies. Her efforts directly affected each section's superior performance during the 2015 inspector general inspection.

Capt. Grigsby planned the first-ever MEPS open house event, educating mid-level recruiting leadership on local policies and procedures. She hosted a Master Resiliency Training session for MEPS staff and expanded MEPS' quarterly training by fusing mandatory events with development-based improvement opportunities.

She authored a SmartBook for recruiters, which highlights common processing errors and frequent issues and assisted with Emergency Management Plan revision. She also drafted a quick-reference manual for inbound/newly-assigned officers.

Capt. Grigsby is pursuing a master's in human resource management.

She organized the annual Organization Day, created quarterly MEPS Family Fun Night, and planned and executed Bring Your Kids to Work Day.

Senior NCO of the Year Sgt. 1st Class Latisha Robertson Denver MEPS

Sgt. 1st Class Latisha Robertson is the 2015 USMEPCOM Senior Enlisted Military Member of the Year. She is the medical noncommissioned officer in charge at the Denver MEPS.

She was responsible for processing nearly 15,000 applicant physicals and inspections.



She overhauled the medical element, resulting in a zero discrepancies or negative findings on the inspector general inspection.

Robertson developed and managed a new 48-hour process for medical consult appointments, which brought the no-show rate down to 6 percent from 24 percent.

She created the "silver bullet" process, which identifies applicants with additional screening requirements to streamline their processing in medical. She set up a "recruiter viewpoint" forum with the Interservice Recruitment Committee and MEPS employees, creating a shared mission understanding and building stronger relationships.

She supervised the HIV/DAT Program, ensuring 7,000 specimens were processed accurately.

Robertson supervised eight civilians and two military members. She reinvigorated the employee cash incentive program as a motivating tool and improved the morale of her staff.

Robertson is pursuing a Bachelor of Science in business administration.

She was the 2015 Western Sector Military Member for the 3rd Quarter and the 2015 3rd Battalion Military Member for the 3rd Quarter.

She also planned and executed two Equal Employment Opportunity diversity month luncheons.

Junior NCO of the Year Tech. Sgt. Christina Linz Boise MEPS

Tech. Sgt. Christina Linz is the 2015 USMEPCOM Junior Enlisted Military Member of the Year. She is the noncommissioned officer in charge of the testing element at the Boise MEPS.

She processed 1,897 special tests, 1,629 enlistment ASVAB tests and assisted with 5,743 student ASVAB tests.

She supervised 11 people and managed \$15,000 of entitlement payouts. She tracked and briefed 2,251 recruiter errors to recruiting station commanders, helped pinpoint problem areas, made on-the-spot corrections and trained liaisons and recruiters.

Linz took the lead on creating and implementing a step-by-step procedures guide for newly-assigned



MEPS testing employees. She conducted USMEPCOM Business Intelligence System training for the testing element staff and created a tutorial on common report requests for the MEPS testing element.

She created a modified work schedule during an employee's five-week medical leave. In addition to primary testing element duties, she juggled acting first sergeant responsibilities and assisted the medical element by chaperoning female applicant physicals.

Linz maintained accountability of more than \$6,000 worth of controlled test materials used at 170 schools without test loss or compromise, and performed 100 percent quality review on student testing accountable material.

She directly contributed to the MEPS' zero MEPS of Excellence discrepancies.

Linz was the 2015 Western Sector Military Member for the 3rd Quarter and the 2015 3rd Battalion Military Member for the 2nd Quarter.

She is pursuing a master's degree in human resource management.

Linz organized the Boise MEPS holiday party and acted as the mistress of ceremonies for the first sergeant's retirement and change of command ceremonies.

Civilian of the Year (GS 10 and above)

Dr. Gary Klein Charlotte MEPS

Dr. Gary Klein is the 2015 USMEPCOM Civilian of the Year, GS 10 and above. He is the chief medical officer at the Charlotte MEPS.

He elevated the average first-time qualification rate from 76 percent to more than 80 percent and maintained the same-day qualification rate at or above 94 percent. He improved the turnaround time for medical record reviews to 97 percent within one business day.

Klein discovered numerous pre-existing medical conditions, several of which required major medical and surgical intervention, preventing unnecessary investment by the services.

He saved USMEPCOM money by establishing a consulting committee, which requires

agreement from two or more physicians before sending applicants out for consults.

Klein served as the primary medical trainer for MEPS' medical technicians and physicians, and instructed service liaisons regarding policy changes/interpretation to facilitate efficient and appropriate applicant processing. He provided guidance to recruiters on how to approach medical issues with new and potential recruits, and maintained regular contact with medical waiver authorities.



Civilian of the Year (GS 7-9)

Paul Bennett

Nashville MEPS

Paul Bennett is the 2015 USMEPCOM Civilian of the Year, GS 7-9. He is the supervisory human resources assistant at the Nashville MEPS.

He filled the position of medical element supervisor for six months. His efforts resulted in a complete turnaround of medical element operations, flawless inspector general reports, visibly increased section morale and award recognition for outstanding

performance for three of his employees. His leadership resulted in the medical element processing nearly 4,000 applicants in those six months.

He mentored the chief medical officer and five fee-basis providers. He successfully paid 16 bills, managed nine reports, located discrepancies, and restored working relationships with medical equipment suppliers through timely financial management.

Bennett was a key player in developing a comprehensive station standard operating procedure, which increased MEPS efficiency by 13 percent.

He was selected as the 2015 Eastern Sector Civilian of the Year and earned the 2015 F.L.A.G. of the Year from the Nashville MEPS command team.

Bennett is pursuing a Master of Business Administration.



Civilian of the Year (GS 6 and below)

Kenneth Martin Jr.

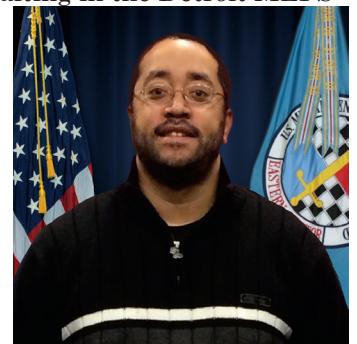
Detroit MEPS

Kenneth Martin Jr. is the 2015 USMEPCOM Civilian of the Year, GS 6 and below. He is the transportation assistant at the Detroit MEPS.

His execution of fingerprinting applicants resulted in no unclassifiable electronic fingerprint captures sent to the FBI during fiscal 2015. He ensured his element maintained 100 percent in fingerprinting and biometric enrollment of applicants, resulting in the Detroit MEPS earning the 3rd Quarter 2014 and 1st Quarter 2015 MEPS of Excellence Award.

Martin developed and provided training tools to MEPS staff on how to deal with problem applicants effectively.

Please see "Awards," page 30



Processing leads Memphis' efforts for Black History Month observance

By Reid Martin Basso
Testing Clerk, Memphis MEPS

Each February, Black History Month celebrates African American contributions to our nation's heritage.

At Memphis MEPS, the celebration is a highly anticipated opportunity for local staff members to shine in making the celebration memorable.

At the start of the year, Navy Command Master Chief Eric Stowe, the station's senior enlisted advisor, tasked each section to coordinate events for the various annual equal opportunity observances. Events commemorating Black History Month were assigned to the processing element.

"Today's youth seems out of touch at times with the cultural contributions that paved the way for them," Carolyn Lester, information technology specialist and one of Memphis' activity coordinators, said. "Celebrating African-American

heritage is as relevant today as it has ever been. Maybe even more so to this generation."

Doing its part to honor cultural contributions woven into our nation's fabric, Memphis MEPS hosted a series of black history events in February. Several notable highlights included items of dress and fashion specific to black heritage. African-American cultural displays adorned many locations throughout the station. Retired chief petty officer, Charles E. Rushing offered a heartfelt reading of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr's "I Have a Dream" speech.

Memphis MEPS concluded Black History Month with one of the station's popular potluck luncheons. The celebration's theme allowed for a robust serving of various homemade favorites, including slow baked chicken,



Memphis MEPS staff members make their way through the potluck line at the Black History Month celebration

pork chops with cabbage, fried chicken with corn bread, sweet potato pies, chocolate cakes, and teas and lemonades.

"Memphis really raised the bar this year, ensuring an informative, resounding success," Army Maj. Devette M. Olds, station commander, said. "This year's commemoration was the most involved since having moved here from our old downtown location four years ago."

Olds is the first African-American Memphis MEPS commander. "I could not be more proud of the distinction or the stellar support of our entire team," she said.

The city of Memphis' significance resonates in relation to not only the American experience, but is also a cultural cornerstone that reflects African-American influences. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, the Memphis metropolitan area's population is 63.3 percent African-American.



Memphis MEPS Black History Month display.

Shreveport staff reflects on significance of African-American heroes, history

By Capt. Darrell L. Lyles, U.S. Army Executive Officer, Shreveport MEPS

The Shreveport MEPS had its annual Black History Program and Observance Feb. 26.

The guest speaker was Dr. Theodis L. Goree, Caddo Parish Schools superintendent.

The Westwood Elementary's leadership and Student of the Year attended. Westwood is Shreveport MEPS' Partner in Education.

Goree spoke about the importance of recognizing black history in America and why it should be passed on from generation to generation as part of American history. He also spoke about African-American trailblazers in fields from education to business.

The program also featured performances from the Navy recruiting liaison shop and a poem. The MEPS concluded the program with an award presentation to Goree for being the guest speaker. The MEPS staff enjoyed a selection of food with their guests.

Three MEPS staff members shared what Black History Month means to them personally.

"Black history means the celebration of my heritage and existence," Wekena Glover, a member of the operations element, said. "It's a reflection and identifies the progression of my people and this nation."

"Black History Month is a month to honor African-Americans who

played a major role in society and fought for their lives and rights," Bruce Sheline, who also works in operations, said. "Black History Month gives us the opportunity to become educated in other cultures and appreciate other races, which is something we don't do enough."

"As I reflect on my earlier years in school, I was never taught what my forefathers contributed to our society other than slavery or the civil rights struggle," Beatrice Bailey of testing, said. "Black History Month provides information and insight to the great contributions of our people to this country. It also provides a forum for conversations, celebrations and memories through which we share the knowledge of our rich history with our young people."

Each of them also pointed out which African-Americans they respect and why.

"The influential person I admire is Ella Baker," Glover said. "Ms. Baker was an African-American

civil and human rights activist that was often not recognized for her behind-the-scenes contributions. Her focus was not to gain attention and notoriety, but to just do her part in the advancement of our people. She believed in grass-roots efforts and organizations with a collective



Navy Chief Petty Officer Willis performs the poem "Negro Mother" by Langston Hughes.

leadership style. She was once quoted as saying, 'My theory is strong people don't need strong leaders.' I am inspired by her commitment to support and impact the mission and movement without expecting recognition."

"Maya Angelou," Sheline said. "As a young girl, she experienced racial discrimination that was the legally enforced way of life in the American south, but she also absorbed the deep religious faith and old-fashioned courtesy of traditional African-American life. She was an American author, poet, and civil rights activist. She published seven autobiographies, three books of essays, several books of poetry, and was credited with a list of plays. In 2011, President Obama awarded her the nation's highest civilian honor, the Presidential Medal of Freedom. She died May 28, 2014, but her legacy will forever live."

"Carter G. Woodson is a pioneer to me because his vision encouraged our society to realize what African-Americans contributed to our country," Bailey said. "He also started the celebration of what was known as Negro History Week in February 1926, and now we celebrate the Black History Month as acknowledgement of facts and history of our culture and contributions to our society."



Dr. Theodis Goree, Caddo Parish Schools superintendent, delivers the keynote address at the Shreveport MEPS Black History Month observance.

El Paso partners with school



Members of the El Paso MEPS staff help students at Mission Ridge Elementary School make projects for Wreaths Across America. The program recognizes fallen service members by placing holiday wreaths in veterans cemeteries in December. The MEPS and the school are part of the Partners in Education program.

Cleveland joins drive to benefit crisis center

**By Capt. Cory R. Carter
U.S. Army, Cleveland MEPS**

The staff of Cleveland MEPS participated in a Christmas toy drive to benefit Laura's Home, Women's Crisis Center of Cleveland City Mission.

Laura's Home is for women and children and serves as a bridge from crisis to stability and self-sufficiency.

At Laura's Home, the three-phase program offers services geared to preparing women and children for positive, productive futures.

In Phase 1, women and children are introduced

to the Laura's Home program and live-in accommodations by the home.

Phase 2 is when the Laura's Home staff works closely with each woman to develop feasible steps and goals for accessing resources and future housing.

Phase 3 is the re-entry phase when women who complete the program are prepared to transition into employment and safe, independent housing. This final phase is dedicated to job search and securing housing options.

Annual award winners

'Awards,' from Page 27

He is often counted on to train new civilian and military personnel on proper processing procedures.

He volunteered to be the assistant information technology specialist and is able to troubleshoot all information technology-related issues when called upon or in the absence of the information technology specialist. He also volunteered to act as the forms management officer and orders forms and publications for the entire MEPS.

Martin performed duties of the lead human resources assistant when that person was absent.

He was selected as the 2015 Eastern Sector Civilian of the Year.

Martin completed the Agency Program Coordinator Course and is pursuing a bachelor's in business administration.



Columbus life-saver

Rodney A. Chatman, medical technician, saved a service member's life by performing the Heimlick Maneuver in the Columbus MEPS parking lot. Far left: Air Force Lt. Col. Mia L. Kreimeier, Columbus MEPS commander, and Chatman, medical technician, listen as Navy Master Chief Petty Officer Thomas H. Mace, Columbus senior enlisted advisor, reads Chatman's citation for the Achievement Medal for Civilian Service. Left: Kreimeier pins the medal on Chatman.



USO opens in El Paso MEPS

Army Lt. Col. Paul Stewart, Fort Bliss garrison executive officer, Yolanda Castillo, director of the El Paso USO, and Army Maj. Jeannette Molina, El Paso MEPS commander, cut the ribbon to officially open the new USO services center in the MEPS. The center features a newly-renovated USO dining area, game room and staff lounge. The USO provides services to all applicants, their families and the MEPS staff.



JULY