

## COMMUNITY CORNER

# ACAP assists Soldiers with transitioning, career planning

By Col. William Clark  
GARRISON COMMANDER

A transition can be stressful – but the transition from Soldier to civilian can be especially trying. Taking off the uniform, hanging up the patrol cap and putting away the combat boots for sneakers, slacks or even a suit can be daunting. When Soldiers leave the Army, they may feel like they are entering an unknown world – one where an OER or NCOER means little, but a resume might mean everything and where an MOS does not necessarily determine the direction of your career. Luckily, the Army has a

program to help these transitioning Soldiers – the Army Career and Alumni Program.

ACAP provides transition and job assistance services to our Soldiers to aid them in their future career planning. These services include pre-separation briefings, benefits briefings, resume workshops, education resources and job fairs.

The Fort Riley ACAP office assists and process almost 200 transitioning Soldiers per



Col. Clark

month.

As you may have read in the column on page 1 by Lt. Gen. Rick Lynch, Installation Management Command commanding general, the Army will be rolling out an enhanced 12-month transition program model. At the center of this model is the Individual Transition Plan – a plan each transition Soldier will create that is choice-based and results-oriented.

This new program also will allow each Soldier 60 to 70 hours accessing ACAP resources such as the Transition Assistance Program.

While I believe we have a very strong ACAP program

locally, I'm excited the Army has made the commitment to continue to improve ACAP.

Often, Soldiers do not encounter ACAP until mandatory briefings within the final 90 days of their service. I hope Soldiers at Fort Riley take advantage of the resources available to them.

You and your spouse may use ACAP services up to two years prior to retirement or one year prior to separation. I encourage everyone not to wait until the last minute to utilize these excellent services – the more you use these services, the more successful I think you will be in your transition to civilian life.

As Lynch said, we want to "take care of them until the very last day."

Our Soldiers have sacrificed a lot during their service. These individuals have gained valuable skills and experience in the Army, but they may need help translating that into marketable skills for the civilian world. We want to give them the best opportunity to be successful outside of the military – and we want to ensure they know about all of the benefits they are entitled to after separation.

The Fort Riley ACAP office is located in Room 006 of Building 210 in the basement of the In- and Out-processing Center. It is open from 7:30

a.m. to 4:30 p.m. – even during the lunch hour – Monday through Friday, except every other Friday for Garrison Resilience Days Off and for federal holidays.

For more information about ACAP, call 785-239-2278 or email [acap.riley@serco-na.com](mailto:acap.riley@serco-na.com).

Information – including a schedule of briefings – can be accessed at [www.riley.army.mil](http://www.riley.army.mil) by clicking on "Services," then "Soldier Services" and "Army Career and Alumni Program."

*If you would like to comment on this article or suggest a topic for Community Corner, e-mail [riley.post.newspaper@coms.army.mil](mailto:riley.post.newspaper@coms.army.mil).*

## Volunteers receive honors at quarterly ceremony

By Melony Gabbert  
1ST INF. DIV. POST

Soldiers, Family members, retirees and civilians were honored July 26 for volunteering to help out others in a multitude of ways, from driving 246 miles to Joplin, Mo., or 90 miles to Reading, Kan., to help with recovery efforts after a tornado, to organizing Soldier welcome home kits, providing child care, coaching youth sports and helping with USO Fort Riley No Dough Dinners.

Volunteers also provided care packages, manned the reception desk at USO Fort Riley, prepared meals for the homeless and developed the Walk to Iraq program, as well as volunteered with countless other projects.

"We could not do all of this without you," said Brig. Gen. Paul Funk, 1st Inf. Div. deputy commanding general for maneuver at Fort Riley's Quarterly Volunteer Recognition Ceremony at Riley's Conference Center. "If you factor out how much volunteers save us by donating their time, that would be thou-

sands and thousands."

Funk quoted author Edward Everett Hale as he recited the words: "I am only one, but I am one. I can't do everything, but I can do something. The something I ought to do, I can do."

"Volunteers devote time and energy and expect nothing in return," Funk said.

Two award recipients, who both volunteered more than 100 hours each, seemed humbled about receiving the awards.

Sgt. Jon Ahrens, 601st Aviation Support Battalion, Combat Aviation Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, said he was just helping out.

"One of the (Family readiness group) ladies nominated me, and then I was getting an award. I don't know what to say."

Ahrens received a Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal with an attachment for committing more than 100 hours of volunteer service.

The hours were from a combination of things, Ahrens said, including spending three months as a Guardian Angel, a program where drivers are on

call 24/7 for intoxicated individuals. He also volunteered at Sundown Salute and the Junction City Mud Bog with security and parking details. Additionally, Ahrens volunteered to drive Family members of Soldiers to and from the Kansas City International Airport on an on-call basis, sometimes using his own vehicle.

"Sometimes there is a pregnant spouse of a deployed Soldier or Family members of an injured Soldier," Ahrens said. "I've always helped out. I always try to help out my Soldiers. I have the time... I'm always willing to help if somebody needs it."

First Lt. Nathan Elkins, who recently transferred into the 977th Military Police Company, 97th Military Police Battalion, also was honored with a Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal with two attachments for committing more than 200 hours of volunteer service.

When asked how he felt about receiving the award, Elkins turned the attention to the 97th MP Bn., which Becky Willis, Fort Riley Army volunteer

coordinator, said "blew everyone away."

Elkins said he was really impressed with the talk of volunteerism, which came from the command.

Elkins spent hours volunteering with youth soccer and as a Scout master for the Boy Scouts of America. He worked with two soccer teams from the Junction City YMCA – third-, fourth- and fifth-grade teams from Lincoln Elementary School, Junction City; and a sixth-grade team from Junction City Middle School.

"I've always coached my kids, except when I have been deployed, just to be more involved with my children and to teach youth," he said. "Soccer is such a fun sport. It's a lot of fun teaching them – feeling the high of winning and the chill of defeat."

"I try to make practices hard, make them sweat, make them feel like they achieved something."

Funk ended the ceremony with a quote from Winston Churchill.



Melony Gabbert | POST  
First Lt. Nathan Elkins, 97th MP Bn., center, receives the Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal with two attachments from Brig. Gen. Paul Funk, 1st Inf. Div. deputy commanding general for maneuver, right, as Garrison Command Sgt. Maj. Colvin Bennett Sr., left, looks on July 26 at Riley's Conference Center.

"Winston Churchill said it best," Funk said. "We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give."

For a complete listing of all of the volunteers who were recognized, visit [www.1divpost.com](http://www.1divpost.com).

## Community leaders gather for annual CPC review

By Shandi Dix  
1ST INF. DIV. POST

During a time of change, former Garrison Commander Col. Kevin Brown presided over his final Community Partnership Conference annual review July 6 at Riley's Conference Center, prior to his July 15 retirement.

"This is a time of change as you can tell as you look around the table and you look at the length of my hair. I will soon be retired and my replacement is with us today, Col. (William) Clark," he said.

Brown began the annual CPC with a "boots-on-the-ground" update.

"We're entering a new phase of our lives. It's not just going to be about how many Soldiers are at Fort Riley, but it's also going to be about the current executive-level decisions to reduce the Department of Defense budget and the impacts that that will bring on our uniformed service ability to bring the right services to our Soldiers and Families and how critical these partnerships will be in a time of reduced budgets," Brown said.

Brown said it's not just about how many boots are going to be

on the ground, but what kind of fiscal reductions Fort Riley will face and how the surrounding communities will have to work together to continue taking care of business.

With the planned return of the 1st and 2nd heavy brigade combat teams by the end of the 2011 calendar year, it is anticipated there will be more Soldiers with boots on the ground at Fort Riley than since 1994, Brown said. The average troop strength with boots on the ground will peak between 12,000 and 15,000 from 2011 to 2013.

With the peak of troops, there is an anticipation of deployment lengths shortening to nine months and dwell times lengthening to 27 months, which will increase the number of Families at Fort Riley as they begin to accompany Soldiers.

Following the briefing given by Brown, updates were provided on housing, health care, education, recreation and employment.

### HOUSING

During the conference Mick McCallister, housing manager, Directorate of Public Works, talked to community officials

about seminars the Housing Services Office offers to Soldiers and their Families, including the Home-Buying and Rental Property Management seminars.

"(HSO) recently has added property management seminars due to the overwhelming request from Soldiers that are leaving the area and asking how they can rent their properties," McCallister said. "In these seminars, the Soldiers are briefed by professional lenders, real estate professionals and property management professionals. The key takeaway is affordable housing is a key component for Families to follow their Soldier to Fort Riley."

McCallister went on to talk about the housing office's key topics of Family housing and unaccompanied housing with the anticipation of a population increase.

"(With) longer dwell times, we could see an increase of 1,100 to 1,200 Families. In our single unaccompanied hous-

ing, there are about 1,100 to 1,200 single Soldiers that we researched, and they are competing for our housing off the installation. So looking at a one-third, two-third split on post, off-post housing, we believe there is a market for a barracks such as Fort Bragg's Randolph Point complex that is for single unaccompanied Soldiers."

### HEALTH CARE

Irwin Army Community Hospital commander Col. Michael Heimall informed the community of the top four priorities for IACH and the Medical Activity.

Those priorities include making sure Fort Riley has high-quality health care services available for Soldiers, their Families and the retirees who live in the community.

Heimall said IACH also trains and deploys medical professionals to the battlefield, with 13 staff members currently deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan.

"As with any small com-

munity hospital, the local community is incredibly important to us, and we are really reliant on health care facilities and health care providers spread out between Topeka, Salina, and sometimes as far north as Lincoln, Neb., and as far south as Wichita Falls, Texas, for a lot of our health care services," Heimall said.

Another priority for IACH is the construction of the new hospital facility set to open in 2014, along with the completion in 2010 of the Farley Health Clinic on Custer Hill and the Army's first Warrior Transition Battalion complex.

"As Col. Brown will tell you, we've already outgrown that complex. Our warrior transition population when we opened was about 220 Soldiers. Today, we have 372 Soldiers assigned to that battalion, with about 350 of them living in this community," Heimall said.

Other construction projects included the renovation of the Consolidated Troop Medical

Clinic and the opening of a new mild Traumatic Brain Injury Clinic on Custer Hill.

Heimall also went over the comparisons of the new hospital and old hospital to silence any rumors being spread about the new hospital being smaller than the current facility, he said.

### EDUCATION

Nikki Crisman, assistant director for Family programs, Child, Youth and School Services, Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation, gave an update of the planned construction for a new elementary school at Fort Riley.

Crisman said that Phase 1 of the school facility, which will provide space for 675 students by the 2012-2013 school year, is underway.

School officials were given the opportunity to provide updates on construction in each of their districts including Geary County Unified School Dis-

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