

DIRECTORATE OF EDUCATION

ESO's Corner

FORT RILEY UNIVERSITY ESO's Corner

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*Real leadership is being the person others
will gladly and confidently follow.*

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Directorate of Education

Lieutenant General James R. Helmly, Chief of the Army Reserve, recently gave an update on the status of the reserve forces in an article entitled "Standing Up for His Troops" published in Military Officer, April, 2004. In this article General Helmly talks about the challenges of force structure and how to restructure the Army Reserve to establish a more stable rotation plan.

One of the questions General Helmly addresses is the loss of a number of soldiers who probably had no idea their duty might involve 18-month mobilizations. "Yes," the General stated, "some are saying 'This is not for me', but that's all right" he goes on to say. Regardless of whether they leave, each soldier is being honored with a "been-there" medal. Every soldier departing will do so with a proper ceremony which honors his/her service.

The General further states that:

We're going to make this a positive experience. We have a bureaucracy that, in some cases, is almost immune to the necessity to reach out and embrace a soldier and family, to say we love, respect, and admire you, and as long as you served honorably during your service, that's what counts. If we do that, I am firmly convinced our retention will turn around.

Many more National Guard Soldiers and Army Reservists will be mobilized soon, and as they do, we must reflect on General Helmly's wise words.

What is the thinking at Fort Riley in support of all soldiers, to include the Reserve Component?

In the Directorate of Education at Fort Riley we are researching and finding ways to contribute and sustain that force. What's difficult for a lot of people is accepting this as a war. We have to change the way we prepare ourselves to do this. It's unfair to ask this nation to support the Army Reserve and for us not to be a contributor.

How is FRU assisting the warfighter?

At Fort Riley we have initiated a mentoring campaign to assist soldiers. This dynamic coaching initiative is developing a win-win situation for all student-soldiers, in conjunction with their formal academic program. One of the most important principles embraced at Fort Riley is investing the time needed to develop student-soldiers, to include our NG and Reservists.

As previously stated in our last eArmyU newsletter it was emphasized that:

By becoming a mentor, you become someone who empowers others. You enable others to reach the highest levels in their personal and professional development. It's seeing someone's potential, sharing your resources with them, and showing them that you believe in them completely...Everyone wants to feel that he counts for something and is important to someone.

Leadership is a sharing process involving leaders and the individual they lead. Building community is recognizing the value of each individual voice. Building leadership capacity calls for open, caring relations with all soldiers and this leads to retention.