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# NEWSBLAST

U.S. Army Contracting Command

*"Providing global contracting support to war fighters."*

## ECC to welcome new commanding general

Brig. Gen. Theodore Harrison is slated to take charge of the U.S. Army Expeditionary Contracting Command at a 10 a.m. change of command ceremony at Redstone Arsenal, Ala., April 20.

He assumes command of the ECC from Brig. Gen. Joseph Bass who commanded the ECC since Nov. 2009. His new assignment will be as director for contracting in the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army - Procurement.



**Harrison**



**Bass**

Harrison joins the command from an assignment as deputy director, National Contracting Organization, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

ECC is a subordinate command of the Army Contracting Command and provides essential contracting support to the Army and other Defense organizations at installations outside the continental United States. ECC also provides expeditionary contracting services during military and humanitarian operations to the Army's service component commands and the joint war fighter.



*(Photo by Col. Debra Daniels)*

Command Sgt. Maj. Bentura Fernandez, 409th Contracting Support Brigade, pushes Staff Sgt. Booker Jordan, contracting specialist, 903rd Contingency Contracting Battalion, to finish the 12-mile forced road march. Jordan won the 409th NCO of the Year competition and now moves on to the Army Contracting Command - level competition at Camp Bullis in San Antonio, Texas.

## Soldiers compete, rally for NCO of the Year honors

By Rachel Clark  
409th Contracting Support Brigade

**GRAFENWOEHR, Germany** - Staff Sgt. Booker Jordan battled it out with other noncommissioned officers and was selected the 409th Contracting Support Brigade's NCO of the Year during an intense three-day competition here March 28-30.

Jordan, a contracting specialist with the 903rd Contingency Contracting Battalion's 606th Senior Contingency Contracting Team, will go forward and compete at the Army Contracting Command NCO of the Year competition May 21-23 at Camp Bullis, Texas.

"The 409th CSB's Noncommissioned Officer of the Year competition was an

outstanding event. It allowed me to get out of the office and literally, shoot, move and communicate like we're trained to do," Jordan said. "It felt great to compete against outstanding and knowledgeable Soldiers."

Soldiers competed in events that included urban orienteering, a formal board and essay, rifle marksmanship, land navigation and the Army Physical Fitness Test. The final event was a 12-mile road march with the NCOs carrying a 40-pound rucksack.

"All the hard work really paid off... the competitors did a bang up job," said Master Sgt. Gary Weir, NCOIC of mission operations, 409th CSB.

See NCOs, page 2.

# Spotlight on...

## Ruby L. Mixon

### Working on her bucket list of things to do

Joining with friends to execute her bucket list of things to see and do, Ruby L. Mixon is not one to sit idle.

The Joppa, Md., resident splits her time as chief of the Policy Support Branch, Edgewood Contracting Division, Army Contracting Command-Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md., and actively organizing and participating in several youth outreach ministries for her church community.

Mixon began her career in contract acquisition in 1993 as a Department of the Army intern and has since earned a Level III certification and Level I in program management. She has also earned a bachelor's degree from Tuskegee University and a master's degree from Florida Institute of Technology.

At ACC-APG, Mixon is responsible for the analysis and evaluation of contracting matters and initiatives; the

development and implementation of contracting policies, procedures and guidance; and compliancy review of documents supporting contracting solicitations and awards. In addition, she provides technical advice and assistance to the division's workforce and customers.

The mission of the ECD is to support the war fighter from a chemical and biological defense prospective.

"As the policy chief, I manage initiatives that enhance acquisition processes to improve requirement definition and evaluation processes resulting in reduced cycle time for contract award... thus minimizing delays," she said. "Clearly defined needs enhance the government's access to innovative cutting edge technologies within the marketplace. The war fighter's needs are met on time and at a fair market price."

During her spare time, Mixon enjoys traveling and attending Broadway plays.

**Individuals and supervisors wishing to submit to the Spotlight must complete the linked form and provide a high resolution photo (300 dpi) suitable for publication.**

 Click on the icon to submit someone for the Spotlight.



**Ruby L. Mixon**  
Chief of Policy Support Branch  
ACC-Aberdeen Proving Ground, Edgewood  
Contracting Division, Md.

## NCOs

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The competitors were evaluated on their knowledge of several subject areas as well as proper wear of the uniform, and drill and ceremony.

"The most difficult part of the whole competition was the formal board. You have your senior NCOs scrutinizing you and asking you anything and everything from the NCO study guide," Jordan said.

"After the board, the panel met with me immediately and gave me verbal feedback," he said. "The members were supportive enough to mentor me on my shortcomings

and I've been working on them every night since."

This is the second year the 409th has conducted its NCO of the year competition.

"The 409th CSB is the only brigade within the Expeditionary Contracting Command that puts on an NCO competition of this magnitude," said Command Sgt. Major Bentura Fernandez, 409th CSB. "I want our Soldiers to represent the best that we have to offer."

## Safety Message

Visit the Army Contracting Command Safety office SharePoint page at: <https://acc.aep.army.mil/Safety/default.aspx> for a safety message on severe weather.



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The *NewsBlast* is a weekly newsletter authorized and produced by the U.S. Army Contracting Command's Office of Public and Congressional Affairs editorial staff in accordance with AR 360-1 (The Army Public Affairs Program) to inform, educate and entertain the ACC community on people, policies, operations, technical developments, trends and ideas of and about the Department of Defense, the Department of the Army and this command.

The views and opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. government, the U.S. Army or this command.

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## Nominations sought for 2012 Army Acquisition Corps awards

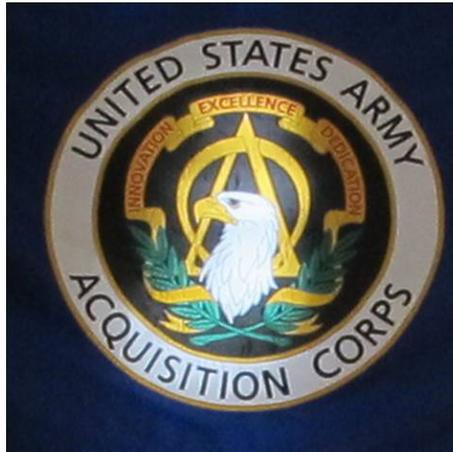
By Stanley Eisenhower  
USAASC Marketing Analyst

ALEXANDRIA, Va. – The U.S. Army Acquisition Support Center announces the 2012 Call for Nominations for the awards listed below. Award winners will be announced at the 2012 U.S. Army Acquisition Corps Annual Awards Ceremony on Oct. 21, 2012 (excluding the Packard and Workforce Achievement Awards).

The Army Acquisition Excellence Awards recognize an Army acquisition workforce individual or team whose performance and contributions set them apart from their peers. The nominees may work at all levels from senior management to newly hired interns. The awards directly reflect their achievements in support of the Soldier and in transforming the institutional Army. Nominations for these awards is from February 29 to April 25.

The 2012 Secretary of the Army Awards for Project and Product Manager and Acquisition Director of the Year applauds the product manager and acquisitions director whose outstanding contributions and achievements merit special recognition and provide a forum to showcase exceptional leadership within the corps. Nominations for these awards is from March 14 to May 9.

The David Packard Excellence in Acquisition Award recognizes Department of Defense civilian and/or military organizations, groups, or teams, who



Click on the image for award submission guidelines.

have made significant contributions that demonstrated exemplary innovation and best acquisition practices, reflecting achievements that exemplify goals and objectives established for furthering life-cycle cost reduction and/or acquisition excellence in DOD. Nominations for this award is March 28 to May 23.

The Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics Workforce Achievement Award was established to encourage and recognize excellent performance by members of the defense acquisition workforce in the acquisition of products and services for DOD. This program recognizes individuals (military or civilian) who represent the best in the various acquisition workforce disciplines. Nominations for this award is March 28 to May 23.

The Assistant Secretary of the Army

for Acquisition, Logistics, and Technology Contracting Noncommissioned Officer Award for Contracting Excellence applauds the ASA(ALT) Contracting NCO whose outstanding contributions and achievements merit special recognition and provides a forum to showcase exceptional leadership within the Army Acquisition Corps. Nominations for this award is from April 11 to June 6.

The Director, Acquisition Career Management Award is reserved for the Army Acquisition, Logistics, and Technology workforce member who has shown outstanding performance and made conspicuous, significant, and long-lasting contributions to the Army Acquisition Corps over the course of his/her career. The nominee's career should span a minimum of 20 years of federal government and/or military service. Nominations for this award is from April 25 to June 20.

For more information about the awards, please contact Stanley Eisenhower at (703) 805-1096 or stanley.o.eisenhower.civ@mail.mil.

USAASC supports the Army's acquisition mission through superior personnel development systems and management support capabilities, enabling the most effective and efficient equipping of the nation's forces while maintaining an internal culture of constant organizational improvement.

For additional information, visit the USAASC website at <http://asc.army.mil>.

## Anonymous Email Program

<https://acc.aep.army.mil/Pages/Anonymous.aspx>

The Commander's Anonymous Email Program was established so employees can voice their concerns or ideas freely and confidentially.

**Concern/Suggestion: Resurrect Sealed Bidding**

**Response:** Thank you for your inquiry regarding Sealed Bidding.

Sealed Bidding is still an available contracting method in accordance with Federal Acquisition Regulation Part 14. The choice of the contracting method is a business decision made by the contracting officer as part of a multi-disciplinary team that includes the customer, budget or finance experts, technical experts, legal counsel and other direct or indirect

stakeholders (such as price analysts.) Prior to selecting a contracting method, the team considers historical information, various constraints, cost targets, requirements description, evaluation criteria and contract administration. For more information, please contact the staff at the Contracting Operations Directorate at (256) 955-5721.

# Thrift Savings Plan to offer new Roth option

By Karen Parrish  
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON – Service members and Defense Department civilian employees who are eligible for the Thrift Savings Plan will soon have a new Roth option for retirement savings under the program, defense finance officials announced April 13.

According to the Defense Finance and Accounting Service statement, the change will allow participants to contribute after-tax dollars to the federal government-sponsored retirement savings and investment plan.

As with traditional and Roth individual retirement accounts, the TSP's two options will now allow plan participants to invest either before- or after-tax dollars, although limits on annual contributions, catch-up contributions and agency matching funds will remain the same, officials said.

The plan, which is similar to a 401(k), is open to federal civilian employees and military members. For 2012, the maximum contribution is set at \$17,000. Catch-up

contributions, available to participants 50 or older, are capped at \$5,500 over the standard limit.

Only federal civilians are eligible for agency matching contributions. All eligible civilian employees receive one percent in agency matching funds. Eligible plan participants receive a dollar-for-dollar agency matching contribution for the first three percent of pay they contribute, and 50 cents on the dollar for contributions of between three and five percent. Contributions above 5 percent of pay are not matched.

The current plan treats all contributions as pre-tax dollars – participants do not pay taxes on pay they put into the plan, but will pay deferred taxes when they receive those funds in retirement.

The new Roth option will allow contributions that are taxed in the year they are made, but will be tax-free in retirement, TSP officials said.

Greg T. Long, TSP executive director, urged participants to carefully consider whether Roth TSP would be to their advantage.

“As with all tax matters, you should seek the advice of a qualified tax or financial advisor for information pertaining to your specific tax situation,” Long wrote.

He added the plan's website will soon offer a Roth calculator, and other website content including forms and publications will be updated in May to include information about the Roth feature.

Defense finance officials said the Roth option will be available on a phased basis by military service from June to October. Officials said the schedule will allow service finance employees to complete and thoroughly test the complex changes needed to the various payroll systems.

Defense finance officials said more specific deployment dates on Roth TSP elections will soon be available on [www.dfas.mil](http://www.dfas.mil).

Officials said service members and their families may contact Military OneSource at 800-342-9647 to schedule an appointment with a financial consultant.

## ACC/ECC to host ‘Bring Your Child to Work’ Day

The Army Contracting Command and the Expeditionary Contracting Command will co-host a “Bring Your Child to Work” Day April 26 for children ages 5-19 at the Redstone Arsenal, Ala., campus. Many events are planned, including physical fitness demonstrations; camouflage painting; and, Army, emergency vehicle and communication systems displays. Breakfast and lunch will be served. Individuals wishing to participate must turn in the RSVP form to Mike Holcomb as soon as possible. The form can be found at <https://acc.aep.army.mil/SiteAssets/Lists/Announcements/NewForm/BYCTWD%20RSVP%20Form.pdf>.

ACC/ECC employees whose children are participating will receive an excused absence form for their child's school. More details will follow as they become available.



## ACC in the News

*This article includes mention of the Army Contracting Command.*

### Packard becomes DISA's new deputy for procurement

**Federal News Radio News Stream**  
(Published April 11, 2012)

The Defense Information Systems Agency is getting a new deputy for procurement. Douglas Packard comes to the job from the Army's Mission and Installation Contracting Command in Fort Eustis, Va. His official title at DISA is vice director for procurement and vice chief for the Defense Information Technology Organization. Packard will work for DISA's chief of procurement, Kathleen Miller.

<http://www.federalnewsradio.com/741/2823010/Packard-becomes-DISAs-new-deputy>

