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NewsBLAST

U.S. Army Contracting Command

"Providing global contracting support to war fighters."



(Photo by Adoratia Purdy)

Gen. Dennis L. Via assumed command of the U.S. Army Materiel Command during a change of command ceremony held at Redstone Arsenal, Ala., Aug. 7. Prior to taking command, Via received his fourth star, becoming the Army's first signal officer to achieve that rank.

Via takes AMC helm, becomes first 4-star signal officer

By Adoratia Purdy
AMC Public Affairs

REDSTONE ARSENAL, Ala. – Gen. Dennis L. Via assumed command of the U.S. Army Materiel Command during a change of ceremony at AMC's headquarters at Redstone Arsenal, Ala., Aug. 7.

Chief of Staff of the Army Gen. Raymond T. Odierno hosted the time-honored change of command.

Earlier, Gen. Ann E. Dunwoody, AMC's outgoing commanding general, presided over Via's promotion ceremony. She described the event as a momentous occasion for the Army.

"For those of you who may not know, one of the reasons this is such a historic day for our Army, is that Lt. Gen. Via is the first-ever signal officer in the history of the Army to ever be promoted to a four-star (general)," Dunwoody said.

She went on to recount the challenging assignments Via has held throughout his career, from commander of an 82nd Airborne Division signal battalion to commander of the 3rd Signal Brigade at Fort Hood, Texas, where he was also dual-hatted as the III Corps G6.

"I have learned when you have a guy as talented as Dennis you just don't want to waste him on one job," joked Dunwoody.

Dunwoody shared her thoughts on what Via will bring to the AMC and the Army.

See VIA, page 2.

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Dunwoody leaves mark as Army trailblazer

By Adoratia Purdy
AMC Public Affairs

“It’s great to be here on a day of celebration, a celebration honoring the accomplishments of Army Materiel Command. A unit that has frankly changed the dynamics of logistics for the United States Army,” said Chief of Staff of the Army Gen. Raymond T. Odierno during the AMC change of command, held Aug. 7 at Redstone Arsenal, Ala.

AMC has a complex mission ranging from development of sophisticated weapon systems and cutting-edge research, to maintenance and distribution of spare parts. If a Soldier shoots it, drives it, flies it, wears it, communicates with it or eats it, AMC provides it.

Odierno credited Gen. Ann E. Dunwoody’s vision and determination during her tenure as the AMC commanding general as key factors in transforming the command into the Army’s lead materiel integrator and joint

logistics supplier, all while streamlining efficiencies and caring for the Soldiers, civilians and their families.

“Ann has been, and is today a Soldier first, always leading by example,” he said.

Considered throughout her career as a trailblazer for women in the Army, Dunwoody was the first female four-star general, assuming command of AMC in November 2008 and becoming its 17th commanding general.

She oversaw the transition of AMC through the 2011 Base Realignment and Closure from Fort Belvoir, Va., to Redstone Arsenal, Ala.; the Army-wide synchronization and integration of the Directorate of Logistics; and the drawdown of equipment in Iraq, all while providing uninterrupted support to the war fighter.

After thanking her husband for his many years of support, Dunwoody took a moment to acknowledge the AMC workforce.

“To the 69,000 Soldiers and civilians of

Army Materiel Command, you have made today and every single day of the last four years very special to me. I have watched you bear so much of our nation’s burden over the last four years,” she said.

During her 37-year military career, Dunwoody led at every level to include commanding the 10th Division Support Command at Fort Drum, N.Y.; the 1st Corps Support Command at Fort Bragg, N.C.; the Military Traffic Management Command/Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command in Alexandria, Va.; and the Combined Arms Support Command at Fort Lee, Va.

She reflected on her time at AMC and the command’s impact on the Army.

“I’ve had the privilege to go to Iraq and Afghanistan many times and I got to meet with leaders one on one. They all told me the same thing ... they never worried about logistics and I can’t imagine a better compliment,” the general said.

Dunwoody’s retirement ceremony is slated for Aug. 15 in Washington, D.C.

VIA

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“He has a caring personal leadership style that brings out the best in everyone. From the youngest private to the most senior officers, he has an absolute commitment to the highest standards of this Army’s profession, and has the wisdom and the vision to see how the future can be different and better,” the general said.

With his wife, Linda, and sons, Brian and Bradley, by his side, Via took to the podium to thank his predecessor.

“Thank you for presiding at our promotion ceremony and I say our promotion ceremony because I clearly realize today is a shared celebration of personal investments made by many people in Dennis Via throughout my life and career of service in the United States Army,” he said.

A Martinsville, Va., native, Via was commissioned May 18, 1980, in the Signal Corps after graduating as a distinguished military graduate from Virginia State University. He later earned a master’s

degree from Boston University, and is a graduate of the U. S. Army Command and General Staff College and the U.S. Army War College.

With heartfelt gratitude, Via took a moment to thank mentors, peers, family and friends, many of whom traveled extensively to be a part of the celebration.

A strong advocate of education, he closed the ceremony by thanking his high school teacher and Army veteran, Edward L. Fontaine, for his support over the years. Via credits Fontaine with starting him on his Army career and working with Virginia State University guidance counselors to get him enrolled as a freshman.

“Mr. Fontaine epitomizes that one person can make a difference in your life. I tell that story because it’s not about me today, it is about the impact all of us can make on someone in our lives,” Via said.

He will serve as the 18th commanding general of AMC.



U.S. Army Contracting Command

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Fort Knox contracting office saves Army nearly \$22 million

By Daniel P. Elkins
MICC Public Affairs Office

FORT SAM HOUSTON, Texas – A Mission and Installation Contracting Command contracting office at Fort Knox, Ky., saved almost \$22 million with the award of a contract for wireless devices and services supporting the Army's more than 8,500-member recruiting force around the world.

MICC-Fort Knox officials awarded the contract at the end of June to Sprint Communications for \$31,240,200.

It provides a full range of wireless devices and associated services to include both voice and data for the Army Human Resource Command and other elements it supports. The USAHRC provides information technology support to the Army Recruiting Command, which is primarily responsible for recruiting young men and women to serve in the Army's all-volunteer force.

"Cellphones and BlackBerrys have been provided to recruiters for several years to better enable them to attract and communicate with prospective recruits throughout the United States as well as overseas installations," said Dale Williams, chief of the MICC-Fort Knox Human Resource Center of Excellence Division.

"We started discussing the requirement with the customer in January when we learned the package would be coming our way," said Lucy Vessels, the MICC-Fort Knox procuring contracting officer.

The acquisition package arrived at MICC-Fort Knox in March and contracting officials quickly discovered that a potential for significant savings was possible. The requirement was identical in technical terms and its government estimate was based on present and historical pricing, Vessels said.

Vessels explained that much of the savings were realized as a result of a competitive contract process that led to substantially lower monthly fees.

"Additionally, the contract was previously managed through the General



(Photo by Melody Price)

Lucy Vessels and her fellow staff members helped save the Army almost \$22 million as part of the procurement of wireless communications services in support of recruiting. Vessels is a contracting officer with the Mission and Installation Contracting Command at Fort Knox, Ky.

Services Administration, which had charged a 1.5 percent fee for the cost of the contract it administered," said Vessels. "As a result of using the MICC-Fort Knox to process the contract action, non-DoD contract fees were avoided."

The firm-fixed-priced contract includes a 10-month base period and four one-year option periods. An estimated contract savings of \$21,957,210 is anticipated over the base and option periods.

"We knew we'd save money on the contract, but had no idea we'd save that kind of money," Williams said.

Devices included in the contract will include commercial off-the-shelf cellular phones and BlackBerrys and related accessories on the Army's approved products list. Services include voice, data,

international roaming and dialing, SMS instant message, multimedia messaging, secure voice and directory assistance.

The contracting staff took a proactive role in this acquisition as part of the Acquisition Milestone Agreement planning process implemented across the MICC in January 2012 as a strategic approach to improve communication, standardize the development of milestones and increase accountability between contracting offices and their customers. The teaming process between contracting staff, requiring activities and Army leaders affords a more active role earlier in the acquisition process to ensure efficient and effective acquisition strategies are executed to meet the mission.

Lending more than just a hand

By Jacqueline M. Greene
Army Contracting Command – Colorado Springs, Colo.

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. - The Army Contracting Command-Redstone Arsenal Colorado Springs Contracting Directorate's team-building exercise resulted in more than an increase in esprit-de-corps. It helped create a home.

Members of the directorate volunteered their services to help Habitat for Humanity. The team helped construct portions of a home in the Woodmen Vista development. Woodmen Vista is a local development that offers affordable housing to low-income families.

While shovels and power drills were busy outside under the sunny Colorado blue sky, another ACC-RSA team volunteered in the shade of the Habitat for Humanity's ReStore. The ReStore's mission is to convert charitable donations into cash for use by Pikes Peak Habitat for Humanity to construct affordable homes.

According to L.R. Thrasher,



(Photos courtesy of ACC-RSA Contracting Division)

ACC-RSA Colorado Springs members include (top row, left to right) Brian Gaines, Jennifer Baker, Theresa Coffenberry, Danny Cowell and Tim McAteer; (front row, left to right) Jessica Janicek, Jacqueline Greene, Laura Clinger, L.R. Thrasher, Andrea O'Neill and Bryan Sasaki. During the team-building project they helped Habitat For Humanity construct a home.

director, ACC-RSA CSCD, through selfless service and team work, the ACC-RSA Colorado Springs Contracting Directorate gained

not only a deeper awareness and appreciation of the actions that affect their community, but also developed a more cohesive and efficient team.



Habitat for Humanity construction supervisor Tim McAteer (left to right) observes Jessica Janicek, ACC-RSA Colorado Springs, using a power saw to cut a fence post as her co-workers, Jennifer Baker, Laura Clinger look on and Jacqueline Greene assists.



ACC in the News

These articles mention Army Contracting Command.

Ten Questions: Army Contracting Command's Maj. Gen. Camille Nichols

(Published Aug. 6, 2012)
By Kenneth Kesner
The Huntsville Times

HUNTSVILLE, Alabama -- On May 17, 2012, Maj. Gen. Camille M. Nichols became the first commanding general of the Army Contracting Command, a subordinate of the Army Materiel Command, both of which are headquartered on Redstone Arsenal.

ACC and its subordinate Expeditionary Contracting Command were formed in 2008 after a study found, among other things, that the Army wasn't sufficiently equipped to handle the kind of contracting support needed for missions like Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan.

http://blog.al.com/huntsville-times-business/2012/08/ten_questions_army_contracting.html

Olympic experience resonates with commanding general

(Posted Aug. 6, 2012 on U.S. Army Acquisition Support Center website)
By Larry D. McCaskill
ACC Office of Public & Congressional Affairs

Every four years, people around the globe focus their attention on the Olympic Games. For many, the attraction is watching their national athletes compete to bring home medals for their countries; for others, it's a dream of one day making the team. For MG Camille M. Nichols, Commanding General (CG), U.S. Army Contracting Command (ACC), the games evoke memories of past accomplishments and friendships.

<http://asc.army.mil/web/access-olympic-experience-resonates-with-commanding-general/>



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