

# Army to Accelerate Leader Development

Oct 11, 2007 BY John Harlow

WASHINGTON (Army News Service, Oct. 11, 2007) - The U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command recently announced a plan to accelerate leader development at all levels and Wednesday a panel at the Association of the U.S. Army's annual meeting outlined more of the specifics.

"This is not just another 'study' of how to improve leaders in our Army," said Lt. Gen. William Caldwell, the commanding general of the Combined Arms Center and Fort Leavenworth. "It's a focused look of 'how to' accelerate leader development across all cohorts, components and domains in order to meet the increased leadership demands for the Long War."

The initiative will increase joint, interagency, intergovernmental, multi-national opportunities across the Army, officials said. It will give Soldiers opportunities to fill slots in other government agencies, such as the State Department, to expand their knowledge base. It will also allow civilians to fill seats at courses that have normally been reserved for the military.

Lt. Gen. Caldwell was joined on the panel by Maj. Gen. Montague Winfield, commanding general of the U.S. Army Cadet Command; Brig. Gen. Mark O'Neil, deputy commandant of the U.S. Army Combined and General Staff College; Col. Mark Jones, commandant, U.S. Army Warrant Officer Career Center; Col. Donald Gentry, commandant, U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy; and Mr. Jim Warner, director, Civilian Development Office in the office of the Deputy Undersecretary of the Army.

"We will evolve and implement officer, noncommissioned officer and civilian education systems that acknowledge those increased demands and conduct leader development training in ways that support our expeditionary Army, develop an offensive mindset focused on winning our Nation's wars," said Lt. Gen. Caldwell.

It is a tough mission to change the culture of learning at all levels of the leadership chain, panel members said. During a time when more than 230,000 Soldiers are deployed or forward stationed around the world makes the undertaking even more challenging.

"Our mission is to examine and analyze accelerating leader development programs to grow leaders for the future strategic environment," said Caldwell. "This will revise leader development programs for the 21st Century, synchronize programs with Army Force Generation Model, (known as ARFORGEN) and ensure policies and procedures are in place to support the recommendations of accelerating the development of leaders."

There are already changes being implemented at all levels of leader development. At the junior officer level, there is a new course of Basic Officer Leadership Course, known as BOLC. BOLC I is the pre-commissioning phase Soldiers take either through the United States Military Academy, Officer Candidate School, or Reserve Officer Training Corps.

In BOLC I, Soldiers learn Warrior Tasks, adaptive leadership development techniques, team building, and many other tasks. A new addition to the program includes cultural awareness training.

At BOLC II, lieutenants face a field leadership lab at Fort Benning, Ga., or Fort Sill, Okla. By the time officers complete BOLC I and II they have been trained in 71 leadership tasks.

At BOLC III, Soldiers attend the Leader Development and Assessment Course. This is a rigorous 33-day course in which they complete land navigation, weapons training, confidence training, and squad drills.

Each level of BOLC has a cultural understanding block of instruction. There are five levels of cadet cultural development; leadership, personal development, officership, tactics and techniques, values and ethics.

At the mid-level officer development, there are seven major recommendations.

"At the end of the day the mission is to implement officer, noncommissioned officer and civilian education systems that have evolved to acknowledge those increased leader demands," said Lt. Gen. Caldwell. "By accelerating Army leader development programs in ways that support our expeditionary Army, we are integrating the complexities of full spectrum operations in an era of persistent conflict."

Gen. William S. Wallace, TRADOC commanding general, originally announced the leadership development initiative, saying the goal is to accelerate and redesign leader development programs at all levels that fully support persistent conflict, an expeditionary Army with an offensive mindset, and focus on winning the nation's wars.

**(John Harlow writes for the TRADOC News Service)**