

“Warrant Officer Career College’s New Shoulder sleeve insignia, Distinctive Unit Insignia, and Unit colors”

By CW5 Thomas B. Elder, USAWOCC

The Warrant Officer Career College’s (WOCC) new shoulder sleeve insignia, distinctive unit insignia (DUI), and unit colors, approved by the Army’s Institute of Heraldry in September 2008, clearly indicate the level of excellence the College is striving to reach as it continues the greatest transformation in its history. In fact, it would have been extremely difficult to have developed something to better communicate the end stage the College is striving to reach during this transformation.

The new motto, “Strength in Knowledge,” derived from the old saying that “knowledge is power,” clearly communicates the philosophy of the College. By modifying the saying to, “The sharing and use of knowledge is power,” we can more accurately capture the essence of the motto. Warrant officers not only find strength in knowledge, but, more importantly, they are able to more effectively serve this Army and Nation when they are afforded enhanced educational opportunities, helping us become Army Strong. Maintaining the status quo is no longer good enough; providing support in any operating environment, as warrant officers must do today, requires a higher level of professional military education. The motto has already caught on at the WOCC, spreading like wild fire around the College. No doubt, as warrant officers participate in the enhanced educational opportunities the WOCC now offers and become more effective at providing support, that motto will become meaningful throughout the Army.

The symbol of cannons with the blue mine case is symbolic of warrant officers’ history, lineage, and pride. The symbol dates to 9 July 1918, the date that Congress established the Army Mine Planter Service as part of the Coast Artillery Corps. The historical significance of this is obvious in the fact that the Coast Artillery Corps was responsible for mine defenses in major U. S. ports during World War I. As a result of the Congressional action, the crews of Coast Artillery Corps vessels were made up entirely of Army personnel who operated vessels ranging in size from small motorboats to 1,000-ton ocean-going ships to lay and maintain minefields.

The other components of the shoulder sleeve insignia, DUI, and unit colors are also significant and meaningful. The background color, brown, is the traditional and official Warrant Officer Corps color. Warrant officers in the Mine Planter Service wore simple bands of brown cloth on their uniform sleeves as their insignia of rank. The inflamed torch symbolizes enlightenment and dynamic learning. And, finally, the three stars signify the three components of the Army that will be beneficiaries of the training and professional development the Warrant Officer Career College provides the Army’s warrant officers: Regular Army, Army National Guard, and Army Reserve.

The Warrant Officer Career College is justifiably proud of its new shoulder sleeve insignia, DUI, and unit colors—proud because of the history and symbolism and proud because of the philosophy they convey for warrant officer education. That philosophy truly is, as stated in a current warrant officer candidate greeting, “STRENGTH IN KNOWLEDGE, SIR!”



USAWOCC Shoulder Patch



USAWOCC Unit Crest



USAWOCC Unit Colors

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