



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
CENTER FOR THE ARMY PROFESSION AND ETHIC
BUILDING 621, WILSON ROAD
WEST POINT, NEW YORK 10996

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

ATZL-MCE

16 May 2016

MEMORANDUM THRU

Mission Command Center of Excellence (MCCoE), Ft. Leavenworth, KS 66027
Commanding General (CG), Combined Arms Center (CAC), Ft. Leavenworth, KS 66027

FOR Chief of Staff of the Army, Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQ DA), Pentagon,
Washington, D.C. 20301

SUBJECT: Summary of the Junior Leader Army Profession Symposium (JLAPS), Joint
Base Lewis-McChord, WA 98433, 13-14 April 2016

1. PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND. This memorandum provides a summary of the Junior Leader Army Profession Symposium held 13-14 April at Joint Base Lewis-McChord (JBLM), Washington. The symposium was hosted by the Commanding General, I Corps and JBLM, and conducted by the Center for the Army Profession and Ethic (CAPE). The primary objective was to gain the perspective of junior Army leaders (in the ranks of SGT-SSG, WO1-CW2, and 2LT-CPT, and the grades of GS 06-GS 09) from Active and Reserve Components, regarding character development of Army professionals. This was the third JLAPS event, the first two (Nov 2011 and Feb 2015) were conducted at the direction of former Chiefs of Staff of the Army. This event focused on development of character, and directly supports the CSA-approved Army Character Development Project (APLDF Initiative I-14-007) and execution of the Army Human Dimension Strategy HQDA EXORD 086-16 Army Profession Cross Cutting Concept. At all three events, junior leaders from throughout the Army recommended that an Army Profession symposium be held with junior leaders on an annual basis.

2. OUTCOMES. This symposium was one of CAPE's most successful Army Profession events. The support we received from HQ I Corps; the inspirational opening remarks from MG James, CG 7th Infantry Division; guest speakers; closing remarks by MG Fuller, DCG I Corps; and participating junior leaders were all outstanding. The attendees were impassioned about their roles as leaders and unanimous in their commitment to improve our profession. CAPE received candid and enthusiastic feedback from the participants, which will contribute to the understanding of the challenges they face in striving to be trusted leaders of character, competence and commitment, and to how they develop the character of their subordinates. The participants gained a greater understanding of the Army Profession and Ethic and their shared identity as *Trusted Army Professionals*. In nearly all cases they identified systemic issues that continue to challenge Army culture and small-unit leaders. The solutions they propose validate the doctrinal principles of Army leadership and the Army Profession. They agreed that character in the Army is developed through caring leadership, education, training, and experience in a positive and ethical command climate. However, as they stated: "It is not enough for junior leaders to recognize the symptoms of

ATZL-MCE

SUBJECT: Summary of the Junior Leader Army Profession Symposium (JLAPS), Joint Base Lewis-McChord, WA 98433, 13-14 April 2016

professional challenges.” It is the responsibility of the senior leaders, the strategic stewards of our profession, to establish and maintain the policies, doctrine, command climate, and discipline that foster an Army culture of trust that nurtures character development in the Total Force through transparent decisions and ethical example.

a. Findings: Participants out-briefed key findings from the symposium to MG Fuller, DCG I Corps (Enclosure 2). Detailed cohort and component group concerns and recommendations are reflected in the focus group reports (Enclosure 3). The most significant finding, reiterated across cohorts and components is that the junior leaders overwhelmingly believe there are too many demands and mandatory training requirements (i.e., AR350-1), and lack of prioritization of effort in units for them to live up to the expectations of their commanders and the profession. Active duty officers believe there is a serious issue with unrealistic “fudged” training, maintenance, property, and readiness reporting within the command. Variations in command climate, local and Army policies, lack of transparency in personnel decisions, lack of exemplary role-modeling, and peer and leader toleration of unethical conduct fall short of the professed ideals of our profession. As highlighted in previous Army Profession events of this nature as well as the CASAL and CASAP survey findings, junior leaders reported that they are not receiving the interpersonal professional development (i.e., face-to-face coaching, on-the-spot corrections, counseling, and mentoring) that they need in order to continually improve as Army leaders. Both warrant officers and Army Civilians identified specific unique cohort issues that affect their ability to personally and professionally develop themselves and their subordinates. Reserve Component members stated that the quality of leadership and degree of professionalism in their units vary greatly, and that the limited number of official training days inhibits their ability to develop character. Across the board, these practices erode trust and create cynicism.

b. Recommendations: The junior leaders made several recommendations for ways the Army can enhance the development of *character* while inspiring *commitment*, and simultaneously developing Soldiers and Army Civilians in *competence*. At their level the primary factors that affect mutual trust and cohesion are the environmental conditions set by the leaders above them: (1) Ethical command climate, (2) Caring leadership manifested in exemplary role modeling and interpersonal relationships, (3) Professional Military/Civilian Education, (4) Challenging training, (5) Experience and the ability to learn from honest mistakes. The most significant recommendation was that leaders at all echelons must establish and maintain a positive and ethical climate. Specific acts, such as setting clear priorities to eliminate unneeded activities, reducing unrealistic or unimportant requirements, and “locking” in training, would help significantly. But to encourage honest reporting, the junior leaders believe that senior leaders (i.e., general officers) must challenge the validity of the reports they receive (e.g., readiness, training, maintenance, and property management) and put systems in place to validate the veracity of such information.

3. SUMMARY OF THE PROCEEDINGS. The Agenda is attached as Enclosure 1. Enclosure 2 provides summaries of the plenary sessions’ presentations and dialogue and the out-briefing with MG Fuller. Enclosure 3 is the detailed summaries of the break-out

ATZL-MCE

SUBJECT: Summary of the Junior Leader Army Profession Symposium (JLAPS), Joint Base Lewis-McChord, WA 98433, 13-14 April 2016

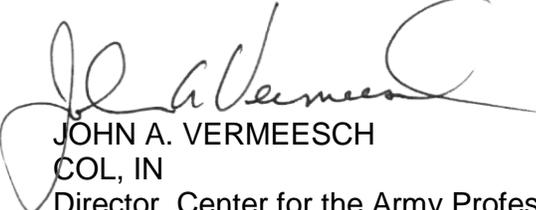
group focused discussions, and Enclosure 4 is the after-action assessment report based on feedback from attendees.

4. MEDIA COVERAGE. At the start of the event, an Army Stand-To! message was issued by HQDA (http://www.army.mil/standto/archive_2016-04-13/?s_cid=standto) and I Corps PAO coordinated press coverage at JBLM. (<http://www.northwestmilitary.com/news/news-front/2016/04/character-to-be-reexamined> and <https://www.dvidshub.net/news/195340/corps-hosts-2nd-annual-jlaps#.VxUqKDFrO5g>).

5. FORGING THE WAY AHEAD. All leaders in the operational and institutional Army should analyze specific feedback and use those recommendations to strengthen the profession and help develop their subordinates in character, competence, and commitment. The Army should continue to consider the recommendations of its junior leaders to examine Army policies, procedures, and programs for conformity with the Army Ethic to ensure both trust and efficiency are enhanced through the removal of impediments to the exercise of professional judgment.

CAPE will use the JLAPS feedback and recommendations to help shape the ongoing effort to articulate the Army's concept for character development. The Army White Paper *Developing the Character of Trusted Army Professionals: Forging the Way Ahead* was published on 19 April and distributed for comment throughout the Army. The Army Character Development Project workgroup is on schedule to publish that concept in June 2017. CAPE plans to conduct another JLAPS in FY17 to validate the character development concept and is soliciting a host command and installation for that important Army Profession event.

6. The point of contact for this memorandum is COL John Vermeesch, (845) 938-0475, or john.a.vermeesch.mil@mail.mil. Additional detailed enclosures (e.g., agenda, proceeding summaries, focus group summaries, and assessment report) are posted on Army Knowledge Online at: <https://www.us.army.mil/suite/files/46494169>.



JOHN A. VERMEESCH
COL, IN

Director, Center for the Army Profession
and Ethic

DISTRIBUTION:

Commanding General, I Corps and Joint Base Lewis-McChord, WA 98433
Commanding General, Forces Command, Fort Bragg, NC 28310
Commanding General, Combined Arms Center, Ft. Leavenworth, KS 66027
Commanding General, Training and Doctrine Command, Fort Eustis, VA 23604
Secretary of the Army, HQ DA, Pentagon, Washington, D.C. 20301