

# The MICC Communicator



January 2014

Mission and Installation Contracting Command

Vol. 4, Issue 1



**Taking  
Command**  
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# The MICC Communicator

## Contracting for Soldiers

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### Changing command

Brig. Gen. Jeffrey Gabbert, left, accepts the colors of the Mission and Installation Contracting Command from Brig. Gen. Theodore Harrison during a change of command ceremony Dec. 2 at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston, Texas. For more on the change of command ceremony, see Page 4.



Photo by Michael O'Rear

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Submissions to The MICC Communicator may be sent to the MICC Office of Public and Congressional Affairs at 2219 Infantry Post Road, JBSA-Fort Sam Houston, TX 78234 or you may reach the staff at (210) 466-2335 or [usarmy.jbsa.acc-micc.list.pao@mail.mil](mailto:usarmy.jbsa.acc-micc.list.pao@mail.mil).



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#### MISSION

Provide Army Commands, installations and activities with responsive contracting solutions and oversight.



Photo by David San Miguel

Brig. Gen. Theodore Harrison discusses the future of the command with Army Contracting Command and Expeditionary Contracting Command headquarters' staff members during a Nov. 12 town hall meeting.

## ACC outlines priorities, challenges

by Edward G. Worley  
ACC Public Affairs

The Army Contracting Command commanding general recently outlined his priorities and gave the ACC and Expeditionary Contracting Command headquarters staffs their first glimpse of transformation initiatives.

During a town hall meeting at Redstone Arsenal, Ala., Nov. 12, Brig. Gen. Theodore Harrison laid out initial information about how the Army-directed 25 percent cuts at two-star and above headquarters may affect ACC.

Harrison said his top priorities included ensuring "a climate of trust, dignity and respect." He said that was especially true when it comes to combating sexual harassment and sexual assault.

"We need to create a climate where people feel comfortable to come forward and report it," he added, saying the Army as a whole "has work to do."

Turning to the headquarters reduction, Harrison spoke on the Nov. 18 - Dec. 5 window that was open for Headquarters ACC non-contract specialist employees in career program 1102 to apply for early retirement and separation under the Voluntary Early Retirement Authority and Voluntary Separation Incentive Payments.

He also focused on preparing the command to operate in a climate of declining budgets. He expects sequestration and declining budgets to be around for the foreseeable future.

Harrison said the big challenge facing the command is "how

does ACC look to support the Army of 2020." He established a transformation team to look at the headquarters structure and to "think outside the box. I want some bold ideas."

One change coming in fiscal 2014 is further integration of the ACC and ECC headquarters staffs. With the exception of the commanders' personal staffs, the two headquarters will share staff functions. The ECC will retain its focus on expeditionary contracting.

Harrison said the next four to five years will be challenging and pledged to keep the staff informed. He plans to conduct quarterly town hall meetings, but said they could be held more often as the environment changes.



Photo by Michael O'Rear

Brig. Gen. Jeffrey Gabbert addresses approximately 200 local civic leaders, Soldiers and members of the command attending the change-of-command ceremony.

## MICC welcomes new commander

by Daniel P. Elkins  
MICC Public Affairs Office

Command of the Mission and Installation Contracting Command changed hands during a ceremony attended by Fort Sam Houston leaders, local civic dignitaries and members of the command Dec. 2 at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

Brig. Gen. Jeffrey Gabbert assumed command from Brig. Gen. Kirk Vollmecke in a ceremony officiated by Brig. Gen. Theodore Harrison, commanding general for the Army Contracting Command.

Gabbert comes to the MICC after serving as the special assistant to the ACC commanding general at Redstone Arsenal, Ala. Vollmecke departed for an assignment as the

deputy for acquisition and systems management at the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology in Washington, D.C.

Harrison said Gabbert will lead the command as the Army continues its transformation in an uncertain budget environment.

“General Gabbert has served at just about every level of procurement and acquisition. His rich military background and more than 25 years of experience and leadership have prepared him for the challenges ahead,” the ACC commanding general said. “Matching the right senior leadership to the right command at the right time is one of the toughest tasks in the Army. When the combination is the right fit, the command has a great opportunity to

reach new heights.”

In order to meet that challenge, Gabbert said the command must stay focused on learning, training and development.

“As an Army, we share in the sacrifice of all Americans during this period of fiscal uncertainty and must shape the Army of the future with an understanding of both our national security obligations and the importance of transforming to remain the strength of the nation today, tomorrow and always,” Gabbert said.

Gabbert has served in numerous command, staff and operational assignments during his 27-year Army career. He entered the Army Acquisition Corps in 1995 and has held a variety of leadership positions to include command of the Defense Contract Management



Photo by Ben Gonzales



Photo by Michael O'Rear

(Top) Joan Gaither, president of the Society for the Preservation of Historic Fort Sam Houston, welcomes Brig. Gen. Jeffrey and Doreen Gabbert to the command during a reception. (Above) Brig. Gen. Theodore Harrison officiated the ceremony. (Right) Contracting noncommissioned officers assigned to Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston made up the color guard during the change-of-command ceremony.

Agency-Iraq/Afghanistan, DCMA Huntsville, Ala., and DCMA Central Region.

Gabbert was commissioned as a quartermaster officer in 1986 from the ROTC program at New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, N.M., where he received a Bachelor of Arts in Business Management. In addition to accomplishing all necessary levels of professional military education, his advanced education includes a Doctor of Business Administration from Argosy University, Sarasota, Fla., and the Advanced Management Program at Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.



Photo by Daniel P. Elkins

# MICC is one team, one family

by Brig. Gen. Jeffrey Gabbert  
MICC commanding general

Happy New Year. What an honor to serve our Army as your commanding general. It's a distinct privilege to join the MICC family, known across the Army for the outstanding contracting solutions and oversight provided for our customers in the continental United States and Puerto Rico.

I pledge to give members of the MICC the right resources coupled with the appropriate training and experience needed to accomplish our vital mission. We're a command that must be focused on learning, training and developing the next generation of contracting professionals to give Soldiers and their families what they need to maintain the most decisive land force in the world.

During the town hall meeting in December with every MICC office, I outlined my command philosophy. Realize that being a valuable

part of a team is vital to success, and being accountable is important at all levels. It starts from the commanding general to our contracting support brigades then to the unit and every individual – each military and civilian member of our command. Accountability is the fabric and essence of what we do. By holding ourselves accountable for everything we do, we bring value to our unit as well as improve our work areas.

Accountability is critical not

only in our day-to-day contracting support but extends to our personal actions as well. Every MICC member must understand that sexual harassment and assault will not be tolerated throughout our command. This is the Army's No. 1 priority, and it's my top priority. I'm going to do what I can to make this the best place to work, and sexual harassment and assault have no business in our work environment.

After serving at Army Contracting Command and in the office of the assistant secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology, it's clear that the MICC is on the right azimuth when it comes to transforming. Our command structure is sound, and throughout the command we have new contracting Soldiers learning vital skills from experienced Army

civilians. We're doing so many things right, and it's time we turn the corner and take the MICC to even higher levels of exceptional performance. To advance

to the next level, every MICC Soldier and Army civilian must realize that the Army is transforming: garrison operations are downsizing; directorate of logistics are consolidating under Army Sustainment Command; and Installation Management Command is looking to the MICC to standardize our actions so performance is consistent throughout the Army. My near-term priorities are to position the MICC to support these changes consistent

with the Army values.

First, we need to move forward with our three CSBs to make them fully operational. It's time to have our brigades fully trained and prepared to deploy. It is our role to help win the war, and it is time to show that MICC Soldiers are ready to go. In fact, plans are already under way to deploy one brigade in the near future. The purpose of the brigade structure is to prepare our team to deploy because our Army and nation needs contracting professionals in contingency environments to help warfighters accomplish their crucial missions.

As our military members deploy, the remaining staff will stay behind

to sustain day-to-day operations. Every one of us plays a critical role in the success of the Army mission, and through your dedicated efforts you demonstrate the power of contracting to the Army. Now, more than ever, military leaders understand the importance of contracting. As the Army draws down to pre-9/11 numbers, the MICC must remain relevant by showing the value and importance of what we do, and what we bring to the fight. My vision is that the MICC is recognized by our customers and supported commands as a strategic partner and enabler of their missions.

The second factor I want

everyone to understand is that the only thing constant is change. Organizations are dynamic; a living organism. To survive we must adapt to new environments. I'm aware of the many changes the MICC has had to endure in its four-year history, and I'm cognizant of our team being weary after four years of transformation. If our command is to be relevant, we must adapt to the transforming Army. We must now be prepared to work smarter. For example, it's only logical that if we write a contract for services at one base that is the same requirement at other locations, then there's no need to recreate the wheel if we can learn to standardize our contracts.

As we move into 2014, let's all have a new spirit and fresh attitude toward our jobs. Sometimes it's necessary to knock down barriers of resistance to advance to the next level. Now is the time for us to move forward together, as one team, to provide sound contracting solutions for our customers and Soldiers. Good morale comes from doing a hard job well, and I am confident that we can join in unison to form one cohesive team while enjoying our teammates and vital mission.

In closing, I'd like to thank all of you for a smooth transition and for welcoming Doreen and me into the MICC family.

“Every one of us plays a critical role in the success of the Army mission, and through your dedicated efforts you demonstrate the power of contracting to the Army.”

General Gabbert



Brig. Gen. Jeffrey Gabbert speaks with members of the command on the importance of accountability during training Dec. 19 at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston.

Photo by Daniel P. Elkins

# Bowens becomes MICC command sergeant major

by Daniel P. Elkins  
MICC Public Affairs Office

Members of the Mission and Installation Contracting Command welcomed their new command sergeant major in January.

Command Sgt. Maj. Stephen E. Bowens comes to the MICC from 1st Recruiting Brigade at Fort Meade, Md., where he served as the command sergeant major.

Bowens assumed responsibilities as the MICC command sergeant major in an assumption-of-responsibility ceremony at Fort Bliss, Texas. Former Command Sgt. Maj. Rodney Rhoades was reassigned in December to the 21st Theater Sustainment Command in Germany.

“Our Army has entrusted us with this tremendous responsibility — to provide Army commands, installations and activities with responsive contracting solutions and oversight — and in turn we have an obligation to our Army and the nation to do so in a responsible manner and be accountable for all our actions — individually and collectively,” Bowens said. “We have a sacred obligation to those who have gone before us. We fulfill this obligation by setting and enforcing high standards — standards only the best of the best can meet — so

that we, too, can maintain the trust of the American people and the continued viability of the all-volunteer Army.”

Bowens, a native of Saint Stephens, S.C., enlisted in the Army in June 1989 as an armor crewman. He served in armor battalions and an armor cavalry regiment before entering the recruiting military occupational specialty in 1997.

Following recruiting duty, his assignments included senior instructor and division chief at the Recruiting and Retention School, first sergeant at the battalion level, and sergeant major for the Soldier Support Institute at Fort Jackson, S.C. He served as the command sergeant major at the battalion level prior to the recruiting brigade.

Bowens is a graduate of all of the Army NCO Education System courses, including the Sergeants Major Academy. He also holds a Master of Business Administration in Project Management from Columbia

Southern University and MBA in Human Resource Management from Trident University.

His awards and decorations include the Meritorious Service Medal with five oak leaf clusters, Army Commendation Medal with seven oak leaf clusters, Army Achievement Medal with 11 oak leaf clusters, and Glen E. Morrell Ring and Medallion. He is authorized to wear the Air Assault Badge.

“I want to thank the MICC family for the warm welcome Shelly and I have received since we joined the

team,” he said. “I am proud to be serving alongside each of you as your command sergeant major and look forward to working with all the professional Soldiers, civilians and families of this premier command — from the headquarters at Fort Sam Houston to the field offices throughout the continental United States and Puerto Rico.”



Photo by Shirley Herwig

Command Sgt. Maj. Stephen Bowens accepts the noncommissioned officer's sword from Brig. Gen. Jeffrey Gabbert as sword bearer Sgt. 1st Class Kevin Carter looks on during the MICC assumption-of-responsibility ceremony Jan. 16 at Fort Bliss, Texas.

# Soldiers earn top acquisition awards

by ACC Public Affairs

Two Mission and Installation Contracting Command Soldiers were competitively selected as recipients of the 2013 Army Acquisition Awards and honored by the Army's top acquisition officials.

During a Nov. 13 ceremony at the Pentagon, Heidi Shyu, assistant secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology and the Army acquisition executive, recognized Master Sgt. Andrea Dailey and Lt. Col. Maria Schneider.

“These awards recognize our very best and acknowledge our superior, dynamic and dedicated professionals. Our central mission is to equip Soldiers so they can execute their mission quickly and successfully and return home safe.

That's our priority,” said Shyu of the acquisition awards.

“It is a privilege to witness the outstanding work of our acquisition and contracting professionals and the work they do to support our warfighters,” she added.

Dailey, who is deployed from MICC-Fort Hood, Texas, tied for first place in the Noncommissioned Officer Award for Contracting Excellence. Her actions led directly to the success of the Joint Contracting Readiness Exercise-13 by establishing a contracting ready team and she single-handedly prepared more than 90 contracting packets for the exercise.



Dailey



U.S. Army photo

Lt. Col. Maria Schneider receives her Acquisition Director of the Year at the Lieutenant Colonel Level award from Heidi Shyu.

Schneider, from MICC-Fort Belvoir, Va., was selected as the Acquisition Director of the Year at the Lieutenant Colonel Level. She leads the MICC-Fort Belvoir contracting office and served as the overall acquisition integration officer for the Arlington National Cemetery, where she identified and negotiated savings of more than \$16.5 million. Additionally, she was recognized for her leadership and team-building in a large and geographically dispersed workforce including Fort Belvoir, Fort A.P. Hill, Va., and Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall, Va., where the contracting missions are both high visibility and of the highest priority.

## 419th CSB welcomes command sergeant major



Members of the 419th Contracting Support Brigade welcomed their new command sergeant major during a ceremony Jan. 3 at Fort Bragg, N.C.

Command Sgt. Maj. Eliecer Quintero assumed responsibilities from Sgt. Maj. Leatrice Person.

Quintero comes to the 419th CSB after serving as the senior enlisted adviser for the 905th Contingency

Contracting Battalion at Fort Bragg.

He serves as the primary adviser to the 419th CSB commander on all matters pertaining to contracting and enlisted personnel assigned as well as responding to concerns of assigned civilians.

A native of Panama, Republic of Panama, Quintero entered the service in November 1993, completing Basic Training at Fort Jackson, S.C.

# Soldiers, civilians support OCSJX-14

by Daniel P. Elkins  
MICC Public Affairs Office

Approximately 100 Soldiers and civilian members from throughout the Mission and Installation Contracting Command are among the more than 500 taking part in the Operational Contract Support Joint Exercise 2014 Jan. 7-31 at Fort Bliss, Texas.

The purpose of OCSJX-14 is to train and assess operational contract support capabilities for the Office of the Secretary of Defense, Joint Staff, U.S. Northern Command, Army North and service components against a variety of exercise scenarios that have been developed during workshops over the past several months. MICC members supporting the exercise also will train and assess operational contract support, or OCS, capabilities.

“OCSJX-14 core themes are to train OCS and warrior tasks for Department of Defense contracting officers and to improve OCS capabilities to include contract support integration, contracting support management and contractor management,” said Col. Tim Strange, commander of the 412th Contracting Support Brigade at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston, Texas, and the executive director of OCSJX-14. “This exercise also focuses on growing the next generation of contracting leaders from all services and to develop the next generation of military leaders who are well versed in all aspects of OCS.”

OCSJX-14 is the premier OCS exercise designed to prepare uniformed and civilian operational contract support professionals to deploy and support any contingency, humanitarian or operational mission. Officials anticipate approximately 530 OCS professionals will

participate in OCSJX-14. The exercise also provides DOD contracting and support professionals training on joint skills and warrior tasks that include control of contracting operations and contract planning, execution and administration.

The Expeditionary Contracting Command is Army Contracting Command’s lead organization for operational contract support and designing and guiding the exercise. The 412th CSB is ACC’s lead to execute the concepts for the OCSJX-14.

Additional MICC organizations providing personnel in support of the exercise include the 418th CSB at Fort Hood, Texas; 419th CSB at Fort Bragg, N.C.; MICC Field Directorate Office-Fort Eustis, Va.; and MICC-Fort Belvoir, Va.

Training has evolved from a multi-service annual exercise to now include participants representing various services and agencies throughout DOD, other federal agencies and foreign coalition partners. They include the Defense Contract Management Agency, Joint Chiefs of Staff Logistics and Directorate for Joint Force Development, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army for Procurement, Army Sustainment Command, Army Contracting Command, Mission and Installation Contracting Command, Expeditionary Contracting Command, and the Contingency Acquisition Support Model Program Office. Air Force participants include representatives responsible for contingency and functional area management, contracting instruction and business systems.

More than 380 trainees and cadre participated in the 2013 exercise. Among them were MICC Soldiers as well as civilian personnel who supported the joint event as teachers, mentors or coaches.



# 418th CSB activates battalion

by Sgt. William Smith  
4th Infantry Division Public Affairs

Unit colors for the 918th Contingency Contracting Battalion were uncased for the first time during an activation ceremony Dec. 13 at Fort Carson, Colo.

Lt. Col. Christopher Ostby assumed command of the battalion during the activation ceremony. He comes to Fort Carson after serving as an assignment officer for the U.S. Army Human Resources Command’s Acquisition Management Branch.

Col. Tim Starostanko, commander of the 418th Contracting Support Brigade at Fort Hood, Texas, welcomed Ostby and his family, adding he believes the Army and, more importantly, the Army Acquisition Corps got it right by selecting Ostby to command the battalion.

“Chris, you are the right leader at the right time for the 918th CCBn,” Starostanko said.

Ostby thanked those who made the transition easy for him and his family.

“It’s a great day to be a Soldier,” he said. “I am truly honored and humbled to be selected for this unique, once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. To be the first commander of an activating battalion truly is an honor and great privilege.”

In 2008, the Army Contracting Command began activating contingency contracting battalions in support of warfighters on Army installations around the world. In 2013, as part of the ongoing reshaping effort, ACC began



Photo Sgt. William Smith

Col. Tim Starostanko, left, passes the 918th Contingency Contracting Battalion colors to Lt. Col. Christopher Ostby during an activation ceremony Dec. 13 at Fort Carson, Colo. Starostanko is the 418th Contracting Support Brigade commander and Ostby is the first commander of the 918th CCBn.

integrating contingency contracting battalions from the Expeditionary Contracting Command with the Mission and Installation Contracting Command at various warfighting installations.

The 918th CCBn is the newest deployable contracting battalion fully integrated with the MICC. The battalion consists of three contingency contracting teams: the 602nd Senior Contingency Contracting Team, 616th Contingency Contracting Team and 724th CCT.

The battalion, along with MICC-Fort Carson, will train and

deploy in support of contingency operations and plans, and execute world-class contracting operations in support of Fort Carson, Pueblo Chemical Depot and Piñon Canyon Maneuver Site.

Ostby said he cannot wait to take charge of his new team.

“I do anticipate there will be many first experiences between us, and, with that, I look forward to working with each one of you and sharing future successes together,” he said. “We may be small in numbers, but we are great in deeds.”

# CTOC: Belvoir database offers improved contracting support

by Daniel P. Elkins  
MICC Public Affairs Office

The development of a database application by contracting experts and their stakeholders at Fort Belvoir, Va., is yielding greater customer support and buy-in while also addressing key capability gaps in managing contracting operations.

The Contracting Tactical Operations Center application was designed to provide online, real-time procurement insight to address the challenges of a geographically dispersed command, acquisition training, managerial capabilities and resourcing levels at Mission and Installation Contracting Command-Fort Belvoir.

Lt. Col. Maria Schneider, the commander of MICC-Fort Belvoir, said managing those processes was previously limited by antiquated workload tracking methods, redundant data entry, significant resourcing gaps and training shortfalls. She added that the legacy approach was extremely labor intensive and time-consuming with minimal return on investment, resulting in inefficient operations, unnecessary stressors on the already strained workforce, and diminished customer service to supported activities.

“We sought a no-cost solution to mitigate shortfalls and morph data into actionable information that could be accessed readily from multiple locations without network issues, while providing greater visibility, promoting individual accountability and truly managing performance,” Schneider said.

CTOC provides visual aids, inclusive of varied organizational perspectives, in order to provide increased situational awareness of procurement actions throughout their respective life cycle. It also aides in defining workload priorities, properly allocating resources, while emphasizing organizational and individual accountability and risk assessment.

Schneider gained buy-in with an integrated project

team approach that included representatives from the contracting workforce, resource managers and supported activities to identify information important to each. The Phase I development effort focused on managing acquisition planning, pre-award execution and obligation rates.

“The value is not in the data collection but in the data output. We’ve managed to bridge the gap

between collecting data and providing online, real-time actionable information,” said Jerry Harvey, who helped lead the effort. “We have more than 12,000 discrete searchable comments attached to fiscal 2013 procurement actions. These comments have been invaluable in telling the story. The general business rule of ‘capture what you did today with your procurement’ has freed up valuable work time for contracting

specialists and enabled managers to review daily actions on their time.”

The team leveraged an existing Army Materiel Command software used for task management and assigned a project lead to work through the tracking of data feeds, creation of data elements, establishment of business rules, concurrent beta-testing and follow-on maintenance and revision.

Schneider said CTOC helps mitigate a variety of capability gaps at MICC-Fort Belvoir. Those include identifying and analyzing trends in the submission of complete acquisition packets to enable tailored training for supported activities; ensuring connectivity between various systems associated with the generation of a purchase request; and improving management workload visibility throughout the entire procurement life cycle to allow greater flexibility to respond to unforeseen conditions. CTOC can also help increase accountability for all parties to enable prioritization and root cause analysis; centrally track non-database items; expand the record of communications associated with the procurement action; and automate the use of toolkits and other oversight checklists into daily operations capable of conducting queries to develop a tailored training program for the workforce.

“CTOC helps underscore the relevance of the command to our supported activities by leveraging already existing Standard Procurement System data to do our jobs better,” said Brig. Gen. Jeffrey Gabbert, the MICC commanding general, who recently reviewed the capabilities of the database. “Best practices such as this should be shared with other directors and leaders throughout the organization.”

Developers of CTOC are now engaged in a Phase II effort focused on incorporating various elements of post-award contract administration with a desired end state of offering local installation leaders a visually enhanced dashboard of information on open procurement actions, spending trends, proactive post-award administration and a snapshot of legacy and current close-out actions at their fingertips.

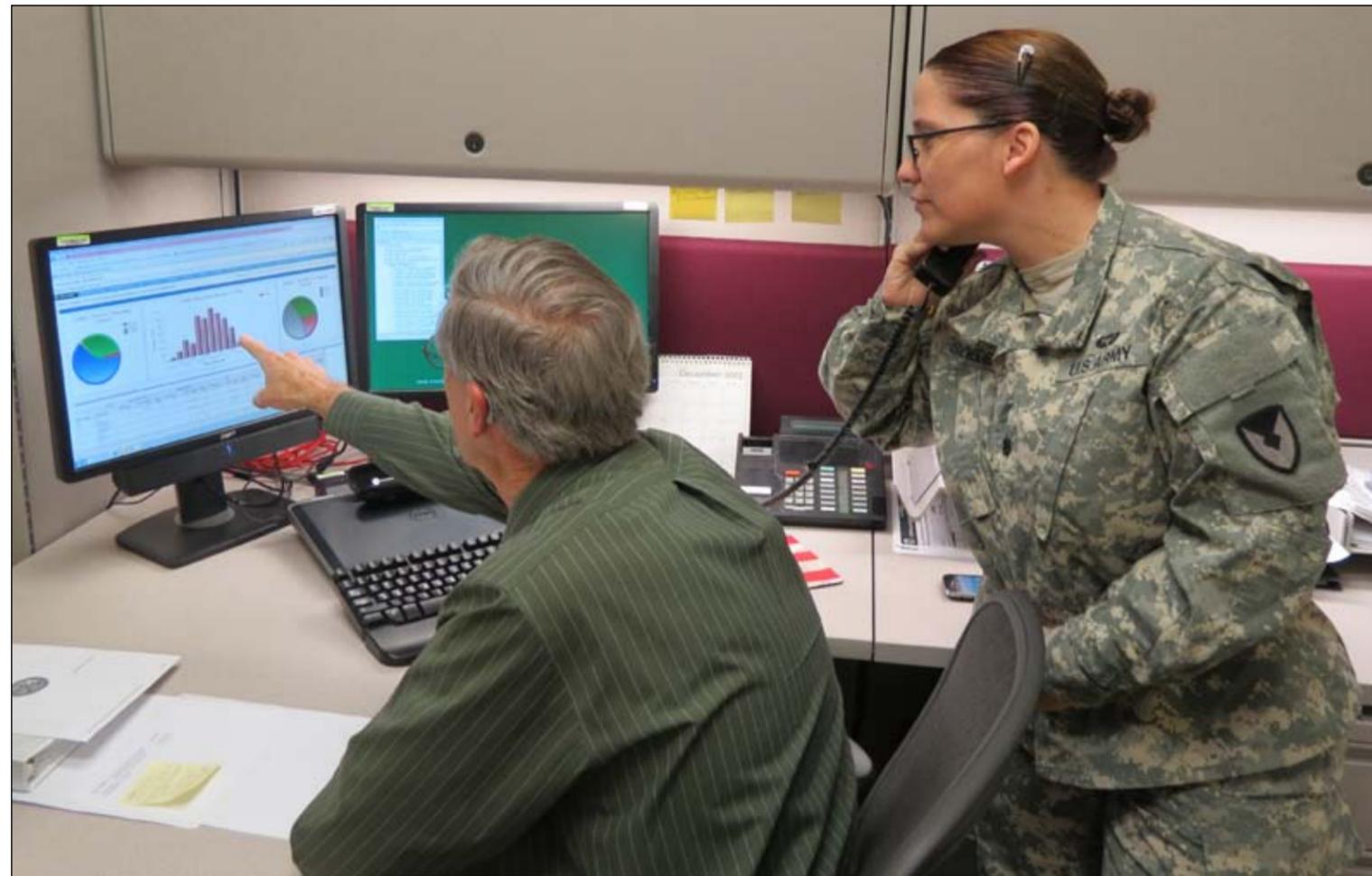


Photo by Andrew Marion

Lt. Col. Maria Schneider and Jerry Harvey review contract actions in the Contracting Tactical Operations Center database application Dec. 12 at Fort Belvoir, Va.

# Members lead MICC reverse auction

by Daniel P. Elkins  
MICC Public Affairs Office

Two Mission and Installation Contracting Command members are among the many who helped champion more than \$21.8 million in savings for the Army in fiscal 2013 through reverse auctioning.

Reverse auctioning allows Army requirements to be solicited online through a fully automated process offering greater efficiencies for both MICC customers and contracting personnel in a fiscally challenging environment.

Laura Cannady, a contracting officer with the 900th Contingency Contracting Battalion at Fort Bragg, N.C., led the MICC and Army Contracting Command by saving her Army Reserve Command customers more than \$2.3 million through reverse auctions last fiscal year.

Topping the list of MICC members with the most actions awarded through reverse auction in fiscal 2013 with 68 was Marvene Falgout, a contract specialist responsible primarily for purchasing at Fort Stewart, Ga.

A rewrite of the Federal Acquisition Regulation in 1997 removed the prohibition of auctions and paved the way for the Department of Defense to establish reverse auctioning as an option in the sourcing process over the next few years. Employed sparingly throughout the Army, it was not until August 2012 that a command policy memorandum made its use mandatory by members of the MICC, according to Kimberly Drake, the chief of the MICC Policy and Acquisition Training Division.

The policy directed the use of

reverse auctions for all acquisitions above micro-purchase thresholds defined in the Federal Acquisition Regulation when competitively purchasing commercial supplies and services in a specific number of product and service codes. Those include information technology, furniture, clothing and individual equipment, office supplies, construction and building materials, training aids, and utilities and housekeeping services. A complete list of relevant product and service codes can be found in the MICC Desk Book, available on the MICC SharePoint site.

Recognizing the benefit of savings that allowed Army organizations to reallocate their monies toward other mission priorities, ACC followed suit and issued similar policy in February 2013.

Cannady, a member of the contracts management division, said she was able to leverage the use of reverse auction with an Army Reserve requirement for the procurement of laptops and peripherals. She said organizations whose requirements fall under North American Industry Classification System Code 334111, Electronic Computer Manufacturing, stand to realize greater savings through reverse auction regardless of being restricted to the Army's Computer Hardware, Enterprise Software and Solutions program as a contracting vehicle.

"Contractors actively compete against each other's prices in order to obtain the contract, which resulted in ... very competitive prices that may not have been realized through another procurement method," she said.

Falgout said familiarity and buy-in of the process by MICC

customers is critical. A majority of her awards did not fall in to any particular product code, but she said the education element involved with convincing her customers that reverse auctioning is the best sourcing avenue for supply items made believers of them.

"At first they were hesitant about vendors who could not perform or deliver the products they needed, but 98 percent of the time they get just what they asked for," said Falgout, "and they actually wind up spending less."

Reverse auction requirements are similar to conventional contract vehicles but instead are conducted online and rely on interactive bids during a defined period. Similar to private, personal auction sites, a number of bids may be made over the course of the auction window, each disclosed to other bidders. This

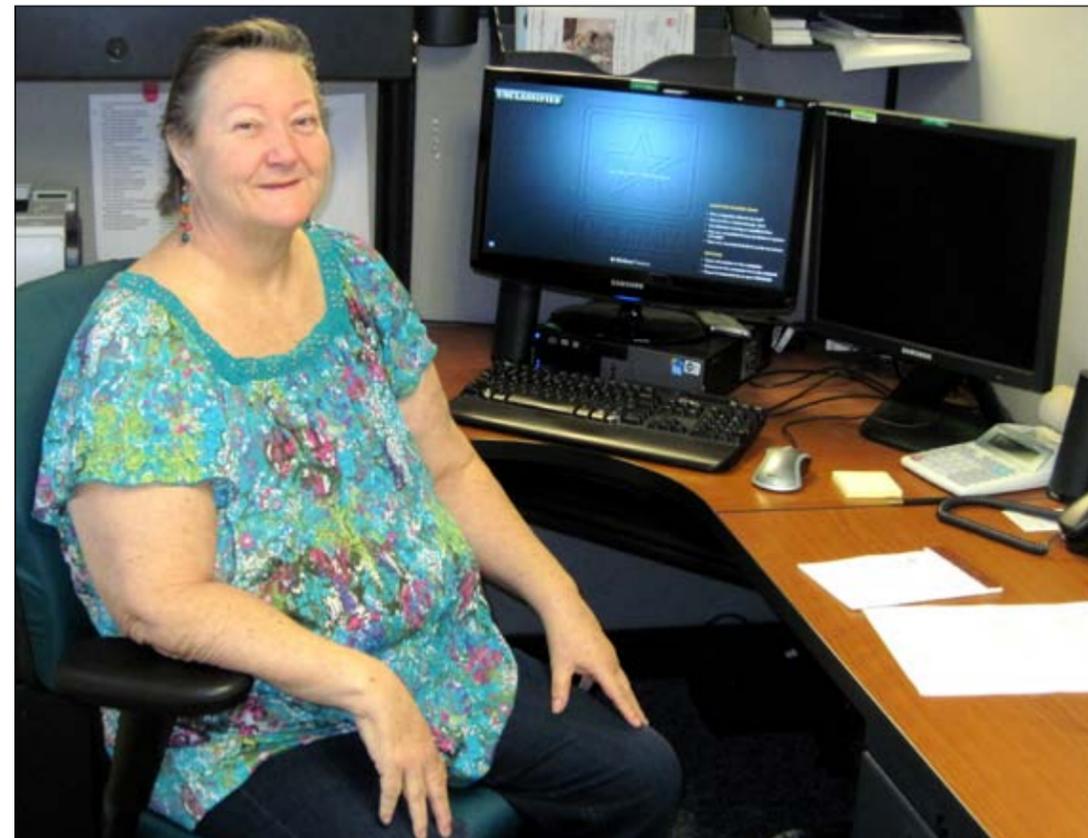


Photo by John Dunivan

nature typically achieves greater savings as the bidding process generates increased competition and allows the requirement to be awarded to the lowest bidder so long as they meet a pre-award survey and review.

After careful review of customer requirements, Cannady recommends the use of reverse auctioning to take advantage of its efficiencies in the speed of the solicitation by minimizing the need to contact individual vendors for quotes, and reduction in the acquisition timeline to five days or fewer.

"My peers have expressed satisfaction with the benefits of the reverse auction process, and we have all benefited from the clone feature that saves time by allowing you to clone a similar purchase then tailor to the specific needs of the requirement," Cannady said.

Reverse auctioning has an added benefit of documentation for audit

integrity, which Cannady found helpful in avoiding a potential protest regarding a discrepancy in the closing time.

"After receiving complaints from some of the offerors, we were able to obtain a detailed report regarding rejected offers submitted and were able to successfully avoid any formal complaints," she said.

Falgout agrees the process maintains the integrity of contracting process as her market research extends beyond the

bidding process and includes examining vendors, online product availability and any documents attached to the bid.

The \$21 million saved through reverse auctions was part of more than \$852 million in overall savings by the MICC in fiscal 2013. Contracting professionals throughout the command achieved the savings through contract negotiations, reverse auctioning and Government Purchase Card Program rebates.

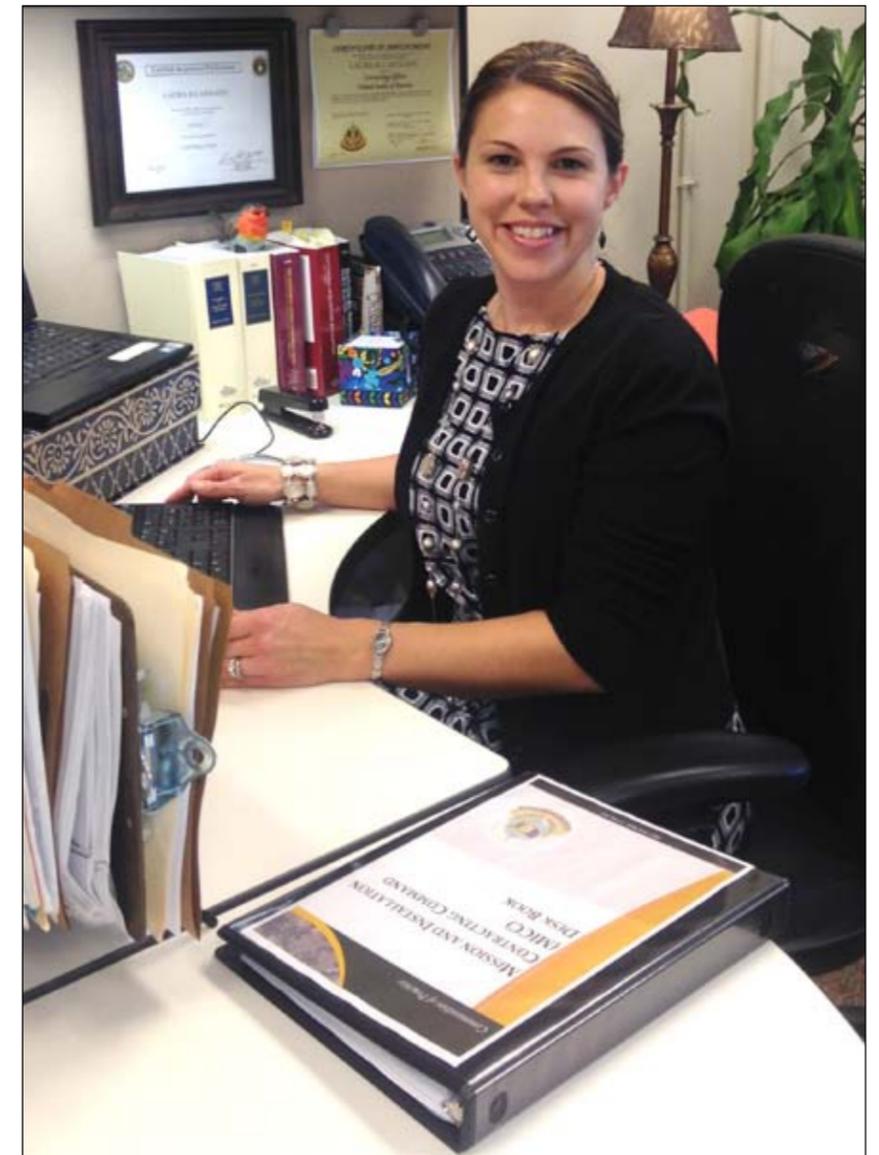


Photo by Carrie Nelson

Laura Cannady, above, and Marvene Falgout led the Mission and Installation Contracting Command in savings and awards, respectively, through reverse auctions in fiscal 2013.

## *Deployment reveals contract specialist's*

# DIRECT IMPACT

**by Daniel P. Elkins**  
MICC Public Affairs Office

A contract specialist from the Mission and Installation Contracting Command deployed to Camp Phoenix, Afghanistan, is witnessing firsthand his direct impact on contingency operations.

Arriving in country for his year-plus deployment during the summer, Dane Bolanos serves as a flight chief for the non-tactical vehicle super-cell at the Regional Contracting Center-Capital. His contracting cell is responsible for providing accountability and oversight for non-tactical vehicle leases supporting more than two-thirds of Afghanistan.

Bolanos, who holds a Master

of Business Administration from Webster University, entered contracting as an intern six years ago. He is assigned to the MICC Installation and Support Programs Contracting Division at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston, Texas, where his job entails processing a variety of service projects to support tenant units and other assigned installations throughout the Army.

In Afghanistan, he said that experience has expanded to include a wide array of contract actions ranging from negotiation, cost and price analysis, and contract administration to include the more specialized and unique requests for equitable adjustments and termination of contracts.



Photo by Capt. Jesse San Nicolas

Dane Bolanos serves as a flight chief with the non-tactical vehicle super-cell for the Regional Contracting Center-Capital at Camp Phoenix, Afghanistan.

“The performance of my team’s contracting duties in a contingency environment directly impacts the security and economic well-being of U.S., NATO coalition, and Afghan forces within Afghanistan,”

he said. “Our contracting actions have a direct impact on the warfighter and the current retrograde process. It is extremely rewarding to know the services my team provides via our contracting

actions have positively affected our military service members.”

Retrograde involves the disposition of equipment during the drawdown of forces in Afghanistan. He said the sheer volume of contract actions can make for a demanding day.

“The work can be challenging but at the same time rewarding. The days are long but the weeks seem short,” said the San Antonio native, who spends what little free time he finds talking with his wife and 8-year-old daughter, playing cards or listening to Salsa music.

“The constant changes in priorities to meet the current mission posture require a great deal of flexibility. There is also the steady turnover (and) redeployment of contracting personnel, which can lead to some loss of institutional knowledge.”

Bolanos said the training received at the CONUS Replacement Center helped mentally prepare him for the deployment but found that while many of the contracting processes are becoming standardized across the Army, there can be a steep learning curve when working under a joint contracting command.