USASMA Bulletin

The United States Army Sergeants Major Academy

Educating Today's Leaders For Tomorrow

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USASMA's Mission

To provide professional military education that develops enlisted leaders to meet the challenges of an increasingly complex world.

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International students recount year in America

Photo by David Crozier, Command Communications

The international students of Sergeants Major Course Class 66 spent some time in the Nation's capital during a Field Studies Program trip in late April. Besides being immersed in studies alongside their American counterparts, the international students are shown the American way of life through visits to local, state and federal government institutions, as well as being introduced to our culture and history.

By David Crozier
Command Communications

For most students attending the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy's Sergeants Major Course, a trip to El Paso, Texas is just another pack and ship effort courtesy of the U.S. Army. For international students however, the trip to the Sun City, or America for that matter, is an experience of a lifetime.

"Coming to the United States I thought that maybe the criminals are all over like you see in the movies, but then I arrive in El Paso and find a completely different story," Warrant Officer One Pulenyana Monauna of South Africa said. "People are so friendly, especially when they know where you come from; they embrace you; make you feel at home. That is what I really experienced."

For Sgt. Maj. Yerik Kassymov from Kazakhstan, it was more than he expected.

"This is my first time in America and I am enjoying it here. It is different from what I was

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thinking about America and when I see America. I thought it was a big country, nice country. But when I come here and I see for myself – it is very beautiful," he said.

Sgt. Maj. Arkadiusz Niedziela of Poland said he didn't have any real expectations of what the United States would be like. He just wanted to experience it first-hand. Of his fondest memories of more than a year in the U.S. – El Paso.

"I didn't have a lot of time to travel around and see different places. I only got to go out on the field studies program trips with the International Military Student Office. But I will remember El Paso," he said. "You have red grass instead of green. El Paso is something new for me and I didn't expect this climate, this environment, the friendly people; very sociable."

Photo by David Crozier

During one of their Field Studies trips, the students ventured out to Prude Ranch located in Fort Davis, Texas. Here the students learned about the Cavalry Soldier and even spent time on horseback to get the feel of what it was like to ride patrol. The students also visited historic Fort Davis and learned about how the Soldiers protected westward travelers from the Indians in the late 1800s.

The Field Studies Program, headed by the IMSO, provides the international students a better understanding of the United States, its people, political system, military, institutions, and way of life through field trips. While at the Academy the students visit city government, state government and the federal government institutions as well as visit historical sites like the Alamo, Fort Davis, Baltimore's Fell's Point, Fort McHenry, the Washington Mall and the Smithsonian Museums, to name a few.

"When I came to the United States I see it is something different, something new. We are learning a lot of new traditions and customs, everything," Sgt. Maj. Madi Tukbassov of Kazakhstan said. "I am learning U.S. history through these trips and being in Washington DC is very helpful because to be able to create new ideas you need to base it on history. History is very important; everybody must know history because history is related to the customs and traditions."

Seeing how the federal and state government operates helped Warrant Officer 1 Pulenyanna Monauna of South Africa form a better opinion of a democratic society.

"Fortunately in our Africa, we are also teaching the civic education which is how the civilians govern the military. Yes we are a conditional democracy, but this is a federal system. So I had a little bit of knowledge of your system, but now I understand what a federal system is, how the states become independent from the federal government. Especially when appointing a president with each and every member casting a vote," he said. "I see that history is one of the components that Americans identify with. There are some things I use to compare where I am from. The way I am and to be a patriotic citizen you have to understand the dynamics of your country. So the Americans, I realize from the Vietnam and Iraq, is a history that is embraced and it is given to a younger generation. Americans, they love their country.

Attending the Academy during a presidential race has also left some impressions upon the students.

"The political process is better than ours," said Sgt. Maj. Clayton Dos Santos of

Photo by David Crozier

Part of the students exposure to America is experiencing local government. Above, the students are greeted by El Paso Mayor Oscar Leeser. The students also observed a City Council meeting.

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Photo by David Crozier

A trip to Baltimore, Maryland, brought the students to the Flag House and Star Bangled Banner Museum, a place where Mary Pickersgill sowed the flag which flew over Fort McHenry in the summer of 1814 during the Battle of Baltimore in the War of 1812 and inspired Francis Scott Key to pen the poem that would later be turned into the National Anthem.

Brazil. "You have two big parties and the democracy is very strong here so my impression is a good one because in my country it is a little different. We have a lot of parties and the democracy is not so consolidated like here. So I have a good impression about it."

It is not all road trips exploring America's culture, history and form of government, the students do spend 10 months in class beside their American counterparts learning about being a senior noncommissioned officer. The takeaways are many.

Photo by David Crozier

While visiting Washington, D.C., the students participated in a full honors wreath-laying ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Arlington National Ceremony.

"There are a lot of things I have seen so far," Monauna said. "I realize the education system especially through the warrant officers and NCOs, or sergeants major, is marvelous. I used to compare where I come from and the way I am now and how do we close that gap. How can I bring this back to my country. It's amazing. The discipline of the Soldiers from all the different demographics it is like they are from one ethnic group in the way they are so disciplined."

"I got a lot of good stuff, a lot of new ideas to take back to my country from the sergeants major academy such as leadership, department of force management, department of Army, joint, how to explain and improve battle training; how to develop subordinates," Tukbassov said. "It is a good system – Be, Know, Do; leadership model requirements; I learned everything."

"I learned a lot of things here such as the steps for problem solving (military decision-making process) is a good idea for us. I also learned about the different departments (joint, operations, leadership, force management, training)," Kassymov said. "When I go home I am going to tell them that it is different when you see it. I am going to tell them about everything I have seen."

"The most important thing I will bring back, because we don't have this rank yet in the Brazilian Army, is the level of leadership and the responsibilities the NCOs have here is totally different," Dos Santos said. "The relationship with the sergeants major was a great opportunity not only to understand, but to learn how the leadership works, how the structure in the Army works. I think I will bring back with me a lot of knowledge about leadership and the American culture."

Quick Links

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USASMA Restructures NCO PME (Common Core), part of new NCOPDS

Soldiers and NCOs have been telling the Army for years that NCOES courses and Structured Self-Development (SSD) are not as effective as they can be. There are many problems with the content and delivery, not to mention redundancy in some cases. Well, TRADOC and USASMA heard them!

Check out this YouTube Video - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Ihq2KQJUxc

As of February 2016, USASMA's Curriculum Development and Education (CD&E) Division has worked hard on doing an extreme make over for every NCO common core course to include all levels of SSD. It all started with analysis and getting feedback from the field on exactly what the problems are and what Soldiers and NCOs want from their common core education system. The CD&E is currently in the design and development phases of the process. The newly constructed courses will include more problem based learning and less PowerPoint slides. Lessons and courses will be progressive and sequential so that each level of PME flows logically to the next and build upon each other.

CD&E will also write the new lesson plans in the Experiential Learning Model (ELM) format and not the old Training Support Package (TSP) lesson plans most courses use today. These changes support the new Army Learning Model 2020 and the NCO 2020 Strategy's first line of effort….LOE#1: Development. Some of the goals were to add rigor and relevance, incorporate the General Learning Outcomes (GLOs), be more interactive, and have a similar flavor to the Sergeants Major Course and the new Master Leader Course. Some of the major topics will include NCO History, Leadership and Management, Joint Operations, Soldier Readiness, Training Management, and Army Operations. The tactical tasked based lessons are being removed from the Basic Leader Course with the exception of Map Reading and the Land Navigation Course.

Mr. William Ogletree, the Chief of CD&E and Sgt. Maj. William Gentry, the CD&E Sergeant Major want Soldiers and NCOs to be excited about and proud of their education system, all while learning how to be an agile, adaptive, critical thinking warfighters and leaders. The final products will be ready for trials and validations in early to mid-2017.

Hatch Act Penalty

The Office of Special Counsel (OSC) has exclusive jurisdiction over investigation and enforcement of the Hatch Act rules.

BEWARE! DoD civilians must scrupulously comply with the Hatch Act restrictions.

PENALTY:

- Political Appointees. OSC will make a recommendation for discipline to the White House.
- All Others. *Removal.* For most employees, the Hatch Act imposes a presumptive penalty of removal from Federal service for a knowing violation. The minimum penalty for a Hatch Act violation is a 30-day suspension without pay.

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In Briefs

A quick look at what's happening at USASMA

From the SMC Director

Congratulations to all the students who have been selected to attend this year's Sergeants Major Resident Course (SMRC) Class 67. We have a few tips to help you get off on the right track.

First we suggest that you complete Senior Enlisted Joint Professional Military Education II (SEJPME II) prior to arriving at the course. It can be accomplished while you are attending the course. However, it is one less requirement you will need if you complete it prior to attending.

You must be aware of the altitude here at Fort Bliss, it will affect your run times. On average most Soldiers gain one minute on their normal run time. Arriving early, even if you don't in-process right away, could benefit you by acclimatizing for your APFT in August.

If you are unfamiliar with Perdue Owl APA style of writing, we suggest that you do some research, or take a class, on this subject. The Perdue Owl APA style of writing is what will be used for all papers written at the course. The format will be assessed as well as your content within you papers.

As of 1 August 2016, all students reporting to Fort Bliss for the course will conduct their in-processing through the SMRC orderly room. We will implement some new initiatives during this class: We will no longer be conducting multiple choice assessments. All assessments will be short answer/essay-based. You will have to articulate your understanding of the material rather than choosing an A, B, or C answer. We are also moving to an academic system for grading. We will institute a cumulative GPA for our students. The assessments will be in line with higher learning institutions. At the end of the course, the GPA earned from each department will be calculated into a final GPA. Therefore, a student's GPA can fluctuate throughout the course. However, in order to graduate with an achieved course standard, the student must have a 3.0 GPA (80%). The GPA will be comprised of grades from the written assignments (papers), assessments (exams), and oral presentations (briefings). A passing grade for each of these areas will be a 3.0 (80%). Why a 3.0? In most colleges, a 3.0 (80%) is considered a B letter grade. We are aligning ourselves with this academic standard.

Again, congratulations on you selection to attend the SMRC. We look forward to providing you the best educational experience you have ever had in your military career.

Ultima!
CSM Harold Reynolds, Director

U.S. Army NCOs lead training of Djibouti's first logistics unit

As Staff Sgt. Richard Keaton and other U.S. Army Soldiers look on, members of the Djiboutian army go through an exercise on dealing with roadblocks.

By JONATHAN (JAY) KOESTER
NCO Journal

As the soldiers of Djibouti joined the African Union Mission to Somalia to help fight the terrorist group Al-Shabaab, they had a major weakness: The Djiboutian army had no logistics unit.

That made resupplying their soldiers in Somalia difficult and sometimes impossible. Djiboutian army officers requested U.S. Army help, and a Regionally Aligned Forces group of U.S. Army Soldiers recently spent five months in Djibouti training the country's first army logistics unit.

Because there had not been any logistics soldiers in the Djiboutian army, training began almost from scratch, said Staff Sgt. Richard Keaton, senior foreign weapons instructor for the United States Army Africa RAF training team.

"We've been doing supply operations, convoy operations, basic rifle marksmanship, advanced rifle marksmanship, various tasks that you'd have your everyday soldier do," Keaton said. "Because it's a new company, they haven't had any basic training or basic military drills, so that's what we've been enforcing.

"The main goal is to support the African Union Mission to Somalia," he said. "By helping train up the Djiboutians, it supports the mission in Somalia. It gives them the tools necessary to survive out there. The entire time they've been going down to Somalia, their logistics packages have come through air drops and air resupplies. What they are trying to do now is ground resupplies. So, that's the importance of standing up this logistics company. We're giving them the ability to move supplies from Djibouti to Somalia by ground and get them there securely and safely."

The RAF brought together Soldiers from three different divisions: the 10th Mountain Division of Fort Drum, New York; the 1st Armored Division of Fort Bliss, Texas; and the 3rd Infantry Division of Fort Stewart, Georgia.

Sgt. 1st Class Charles Frith, the noncommissioned officer in charge of the RAF, said the group came together after the 10th Mountain Division Sustainment Brigade was tasked with the mission.

"They wanted extra stuff that we just didn't have on hand," Frith said. "For instance, they wanted some foreign weapons training, and in sustainment we don't train with foreign weapons. So they went out to other divisions and tasked some of those folks to come in and provide those things for us."

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