

From the U.S. Army Acquisition Support Center (March/April 2021)

Implementation Complete for Army Acquisition Workforce Recruitment and Sustainment Center of Excellence

In September of 2019, the Director of Acquisition Career Management (DACM) Office and the Civilian Human Resources Agency (CHRA) announced a partnership for the creation of the Army Acquisition Workforce Recruitment and Sustainment Center of Excellence (AAW R&S COE). The center's mission is to address the hiring challenges facing the Army civilian acquisition community by supporting an integrated strategy to recruit, hire, sustain, and retain the best and brightest talent to meet current and future Army Acquisition Workforce requirements.

We are excited to announce that the year-long AAW R&S COE implementation plan is complete and the center is now diligently serving the acquisition workforce. We are also pleased to present new AAW R&S COE branding that represents the level of excellence that the organization provides throughout the personnel life cycle. Find the latest information at the center's website: <https://asc.army.mil/web/dacm-office/aawrs/>.

Open Now: Senior Enterprise Talent Management (SETM) & Enterprise Talent Management (ETM) Programs

Now through May 15, the SETM and ETM programs are open for applications. These Army talent management programs are designed to produce senior civilian leaders with an enterprise perspective and the potential to serve in positions of increasing levels of responsibility. A variety of exceptional professional development, senior-leader education, and experiential learning opportunities are available for eligible candidates at GS-12 through GS-15 (and equivalent pay bands). More details can be found at <https://asc.army.mil/web/career-development/programs/setm-etm/>.

Opening Soon - FY23 Centralized Selection List LTC/14 and COL/15

The Director of Acquisition Career Management (DACM) Office is pleased to announce the fiscal year 2023 centralized selection list (CSL) open announcement for GS-13 through GS-15 (or pay band equivalent) as follows:

- LTC/GS-14 Product Manager: Application window opens on April 28 and closes June 10.
- COL/GS-15 Project Manager: Application window opens on June 3 and closes on July 15.

The CSL is the chief of staff's process, and board members select acquisition officers and civilians to lead Acquisition Category (ACAT) I, II, and III weapon systems programs and run major contracts as well as test and evaluation efforts. Slating of CSL principals into CSL positions is an Army acquisition executive responsibility. ACAT II and III acquisition key billet positions are critical acquisition positions and typically have a tenure of three years. ACAT I key billet positions are key leadership positions and have a four-year tenure or that closest to a major program milestone decision (based on Title 10, Chapter 87 of the Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act [DAWIA]). Selected applicants may be invited to attend the U.S. Army's Command Assessment Program at Fort Knox, Kentucky, in September 2021. Additional details on the positions, eligibility, and application instructions will be posted on the CSL landing page at <https://asc.army.mil/web/centralized-selection-list/>.

Now Accepting Applications -Naval Postgraduate School

Systems Engineering Non-Resident Master's Degree Program with a System of Systems Focus (Cohort 311-221G) Education Opportunity

The DACM Office is pleased to announce the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) Systems Engineering Non-Resident Master's Degree Program (MSSE) with a System of Systems Focus (Cohort 311-221G) education opportunity. The DACM Office sponsors NPS-MSSE and will fund the cost of tuition and books. No travel is involved.

WHAT IS IT? The NPS-MSSE is a two-year program designed for civilians in DoD organizations faced with a wide range of systems engineering and integration challenges. NPS educates and trains engineers with tools and technologies relevant to their work. As a result, employees have greater knowledge and expertise to better meet the needs of their customers. Specific program educational objectives are provided in the [program announcement \(NPS MSSE Announcement\)](#). Classes for Cohort 311-221G will commence the week of Sept. 28 and end the last week of September 2023.

WHO MAY APPLY? Those eligible to apply are permanent GS-11 through GS-15 (or broadband/pay band equivalent) Army Acquisition Workforce (AAW) civilians; this includes AAW employees from DoD laboratories designated as science and technology reinvention laboratories who meet both the NPS admissions and the DACM Office requirements in the announcement.

WHEN: Applications for consideration of funding are being accepted from April 1 through May 31. NPS applications for

Career Development

conditional letters of acceptance are being accepted from April 1 through May 31.

HOW DO I APPLY? Instructions on how to apply and submit an application to the NPS-MSSE education opportunity are contained in the NPS-MSSE (Cohort 311-221G) Announcement. Please check the NPS MSSE Announcement (army.mil) to obtain instructions on submitting an application for consideration of funding.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES: The NPS-MSSE main information page can be found at <https://asc.army.mil/web/career-development/programs/naval-postgrad-ms-sys-eng/>.

The external NPS website can be found at https://nps.edu/web/dl/degprogs_se_nonres_2.

Now Accepting Applications – The NPS Master of Science in Systems and Program Management Degree Program

The DACM office is pleased to announce the NPS Master of Science in Systems and Program Management (NPS-MSSPM) Non-Resident Master's Degree Program (Cohort 722-221G) education opportunity. The DACM office sponsors NPS-MSSPM and will fund the cost of tuition and books. No travel is involved.

WHAT IS IT? The NPS-MSSPM is a two-year program designed for DoD and other federal agency civilians to obtain an acquisition defense-focused advanced degree in a distance learning format. The NPS-MSSPM is an interdisciplinary program combining systems engineering with program management knowledge and skills. The program is intended to broaden the technical capabilities of the acquisition workforce who may have nontechnical backgrounds so they are able to successfully manage and lead programs or projects in support of the defense acquisition system. Students in this program learn the systems engineering process from establishing system requirements through test and evaluation. Simultaneously, students learn how to manage, schedule, and budget programs as well as work with DoD suppliers through contracts to meet program obligations.

Classes for Cohort 722-221G will commence the week of Sept. 28 and end the last week of September 2023.

WHO MAY APPLY? Those eligible to apply are permanent GS-11 through GS-15 (or broadband/pay band equivalent) AAW civilians; this includes AAW employees from DoD laboratories designated as science and technology reinvention laboratories who meet both the NPS admissions and the DACM Office requirements in the announcement.

WHEN: Applications for consideration of funding are being accepted from April 1 through May 31. NPS applications for conditional letters of acceptance are being accepted from April 1 through May 31.

HOW DO I APPLY? Instructions on how to submit an application to the NPS-MSSPM (722-221G) education opportunity are contained in [the announcement](#). Please check the NPS-MSSPM (722-221G) Announcement to view instructions on how to submit an NPS-MSSPM application for consideration of funding.

INQUIRIES: Inquiries must be submitted through the Workforce Management Inquiry System via a CAMP help request.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES: The NPS-MSSPM main information page can be found at <https://asc.army.mil/web/career-development/programs/naval-postgraduate-school-master-of-science-in-program-management/>.

The external NPS website can be found at https://nps.edu/web/dl/degProgs_MSSPM_nonRes.

Open Now –Senior Enterprise Talent Management and Enterprise Talent Management Programs

Now through May 15, the Senior Enterprise Talent Management (SETM) and Enterprise Talent Management (ETM) programs are open for applications. These Army talent management programs are designed to produce senior civilian leaders with an enterprise perspective and the potential to serve in positions of increasing levels of responsibility. A variety of exceptional professional development, senior-leader educational and experiential learning opportunities are available for eligible candidates at GS-12 through GS-15 (and equivalent pay bands). More details can be found at <https://asc.army.mil/web/career-development/programs/setm-etm/>.

Army Looks to Expand Research Opportunities with HBCUs

ARMY NEWS SERVICE (FEB. 24, 2021)

WASHINGTON—As the Army progresses toward a force as diverse as the country it defends, senior leaders are also increasing its diversity of researchers tasked with developing scientific breakthroughs, said the Service's top civilian official Friday.

The Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology, or ASA (ALT), in coordination with Army Futures Command, held a virtual event



Acting Army Secretary John E. Whitley holds a press conference Jan. 25, 2021, at the Pentagon, Washington, D.C. The Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology, in coordination with Army Futures Command, held a virtual research opportunity forum Feb. 19.

U.S. Army photo

with the intent of fostering relationships with historically Black colleges and universities, or HBCUs, by sharing beneficial tools.

Friday's event, which had at least 48 of the 101 HBCUs register for it, allowed Army leaders, including acting Secretary of the Army John E. Whitley, to link up with HBCU educators and students to pitch various opportunities for them to partner with the Army, such as assistance with completing research grants and outreach programs.

ASA (ALT) officials also announced a new Army Faculty Immersion Program and an upcoming xTech|HBCU prize competition for HBCU researchers set for later this year, with specific details planning to roll out next month. Details on the prize competition will be made available at <https://www.xtechsearch.army.mil>.

Officials say efforts like the contest is only the beginning of a growing partnership with HBCUs.

Whitley said that he and other senior leaders are committed to seeing the long-term effort through. The real hope, he said, is to expand the relationship with the academic institutions

with more internships, partnerships, immersion programs, and recruiting.

"We're here to reduce the barriers for entry for these programs," said Phil Perconti, the Army's chief scientist, "by explaining some more challenging aspects of the work [to submit a research proposal], which can often seem like an insurmountable bureaucratic process. The Army simply cannot accomplish its mission without the skills, dedication, and contributions of all of our society.

"America's strength is derived in its ability to bring together a diverse group of people, their thoughts and their ideas," he added.

The Army is no exception to that statement, as the force continues to bring together people who have common values, like duty, honor, selfless service, loyalty and respect, he said.

Later, Whitley added that research is a vital part of the Army's future, despite people commonly associating the force with its infantry, armored, and artillery formations.

Scientific research is “the fourth part of the Army, because it will fight on the battlefield of tomorrow,” he said, adding that some key battles will be waged in the cyber realm.

To make the technology work, “it will require a tremendous amount of activity that extends across a tremendous number of fields of study, research, and job categories,” Whitley said. “[The Army is] focused on cyber, writing code, and have several initiatives,” but need to establish partnerships with colleges to build on its cyber capabilities, because “cyber is embedded in everything we do.”

That’s why the secretary is hopeful its academic partnerships will grow. “This is a deep commitment, and it’s very important,” he said. “We’re changing the way we do research.”

2021, with the intent of fostering relationships with historically Black colleges and universities, or HBCUs, by sharing beneficial tools. The event allowed Army leaders, including Whitley, to link up with HBCU educators and students to pitch various opportunities for them to partner with the Army. (Photo Credit: Lisa Ferdinando)

DAWN-ED Advanced Degree Program Now Accepting Applications for 2022 Academic Year

AIR EDUCATION & TRAINING COMMAND (MARCH 31, 2021)

JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO-RANDOLPH, Texas—Active duty Department of the Air Force (DAF) officers interested in Developing the Airmen We Need-Education advanced degree program have until June 25 to apply for the 2022 academic year.

DAWN-ED is a DAF-funded degree program that provides up to 15 eligible Airmen and Guardians an opportunity to pursue a master’s degree or doctorate from a university of choice.

Funded by the Air Force Education Requirements Board, DAWN-ED was established to help meet the Department’s future technological and emerging needs as outlined in the 2018 National Defense Strategy.

DAF officers in the following developmental categories are eligible to apply: Air Operations and Special Warfare - Space Operations; Nuclear and Missile Operations - Information Warfare; and Combat Support and Force Modernization. In addition, Air Force ROTC and U.S. Air Force Academy cadets may apply.

Additionally, eligible officers should have no more than 10 years of commissioned service; no less than two years’ time on station; the ability to meet application and testing

requirements for the school in which they apply; and will incur a service commitment following completion of the program.

Officers selected for this program must seek their advanced degree in one of the following areas: Computer Science (Advanced/Quantum Computing, Artificial Intelligence, or Machine Learning); Engineering (Autonomous Systems, Hypersonics, Optics, Robotics, Sensors, or Stealth); Physics (Advanced Materials or Directed Energy); and Other (Biotechnology, Ethics in Technology, Strategic Economics, or Strategic Foresight).

More detailed information about the criteria and application process is available on the myPers website. DAWN-ED program managers will host four telephone conference calls to talk with and answer questions from officers and cadets considering this opportunity. Additional information for these calls is contained in the program announcements at the websites listed below:

[DAWN-ED Master’s](#)

[DAWN-ED Ph.D Announcement](#)

For more information, contact the DAWN-ED program managers at AETC.DAWN.Workflow@us.af.mil.

MIT Partnership Helps Acquisition Officer Expand Toolkit

66TH AIR BASE GROUP PUBLIC AFFAIRS (MARCH 31, 2021)

Jessica Casserly

HANSCOM AIR FORCE BASE, Mass.—The Department of the Air Force-Massachusetts Institute of Technology Artificial Intelligence Accelerator (DAF-MIT-AIA) is helping acquisition professionals better understand AI and how to incorporate it into Air Force programs.

Col. Tucker Hamilton, DAF-MIT AIA director, said this unique partnership between the DAF and MIT’s main campus was established in 2019 to help tackle Air Force and Space Force challenges. Integrated teams of DAF and MIT personnel are currently working on 14 projects in partnership with the Air Force Research Laboratory, the Joint Artificial Intelligence Center (JAIC), the Defense Innovation Unit, the Air Force Life Cycle Management Center Detachment 12’s Kessel Run, the Air Force Nuclear Weapons Center, and others.

“We recognized very early on that the department needs individuals who understand artificial intelligence, and not just on the technical side, but how we acquire this type of technology, how we develop it appropriately, and how we contract for it,” he said.



1st Lt. Ben Paulk, right, a member of the Digital Phantom program and a program manager for AFNWC's Nuclear Command, Control and Communications Integration Directorate at Hanscom Air Force Base, Mass., speaks to Col. Tucker Hamilton, director of the Department of the Air Force-Massachusetts Institute of Technology Artificial Intelligence Accelerator, at its headquarters in Cambridge, Mass., March 26. The AIA is a unique partnership between Department of the Air Force and MIT's main campus that helps tackle Air Force and Space Force challenges.

U.S. Force photo by Todd Maki

Without a permanent program manager to assist with acquisition efforts, Hamilton and his team came up with a creative solution.

"We realized we may have an opportunity to bring people here for shorter periods of time to allow them to learn about artificial intelligence and how to best integrate this type of technology," he said. "Then they can take that knowledge and experience back to their parent organization."

1st Lt. Ben Paulk, a program manager for AFNWC's Nuclear Command, Control and Communications Integration Directorate at Hanscom, is the first acquisition officer to take part in the AIA's four-month Digital Phantom program.

"It's a great career broadening opportunity, because most acquisition officers don't do anything with AI," he said.

Paulk first learned about the AIA and the chance to temporarily work with the accelerator through a connection he made at a JAIC-hosted training session.

"It seemed like a good opportunity for Lt. Paulk to branch out a little bit, get more breadth of experience and maybe bring something unique back to us," said Capt. Brian Davidson, the AFNWC NC3 Test Integrated Product Team lead for the Global Aircrew Strategic Network Terminal program, and Paulk's supervisor. "Hopefully, experiences like this will help change the way we think about our programs."

Paulk agreed that his time at the AIA has helped him think outside the traditional acquisition model.

"It's definitely been an adventure," Paulk said. "The folks at MIT are unbelievable, unparalleled in their research. A lot of what I've been doing is trying to prototype a system for how we can get technology from the research lab into actual programs."

Hamilton said he intends to make the Digital Phantom program permanent.

"I envision individuals being competitively selected for this type of experience and then coming out to the MIT campus for a few weeks and working virtually the rest of the time," he said.

While the details of the program and selection process are still being worked, Hamilton said having Paulk at the AIA for the past few months has given him a clear vision for the type of acquisition professionals who will enhance his team.

“What we’re really looking for out of [applicants] is the right mentality and the desire to learn about emerging technology,” he said. “We’re looking for people who understand the acquisition career field and are passionate about trying to figure out how to integrate this type of technology into the traditional roadmap.”

Paulk encourages other acquisition professionals to take advantage of opportunities to work with organizations like the AIA and add new skills to their “toolkit.”

“Absolutely do it,” he said. “It’s career broadening and you’re going to learn things that you’re not going to learn literally anywhere else. It’s a unique acquisition experience.”

Hamilton said the AIA team’s work is valuable to mission sets across the Air Force.

“It’s extremely important for our national defense for individuals to be aware of this technology,” he said. “If we really want to accelerate change, we have to have a mindset of taking down barriers. We need to educate our members on the actual technical aspects of AI, as well as the acquisition side of AI.”

To learn more about the DAF-MIT-AIA or to contact Hamilton about the Digital Phantom program, visit <https://aia.mit.edu/>.