

Long-Time Employee Puts ‘Quality’ in Quality Assurance

Mark Woodbury | DCMA Public Affairs



David Frank, DCMA Hampton (Richmond) lead quality assurance representative, center left, demonstrates a punch to the martial arts students he teaches at the Quinton, Va., community center Oct. 14. (Photos by Mark Woodbury, DCMA Public Affairs)

When a warfighter uses a piece of equipment, he or she expects it to work right every time. Malfunctioning

equipment in a warzone is more than an inconvenience; it can mean the difference between mission success and failure. Ensuring warfighters have the proper equipment built to the quality standard required within the contract is the responsibility of the Defense Contract Management Agency's quality assurance workforce.

Depending on a quality assurance representative's area of expertise, he or she could be monitoring the quality and performance of anything from airplanes to ships, weapons systems to food items, foul-weather gear to software — just to name a few. Within this diverse career field, according to his colleagues, customers and leaders, there is none finer than David Frank. Frank is assigned to DCMA Hampton (Richmond) as a lead QAR.

Frank started his career with DCMA 38 years ago after realizing his strong

desire to know how things work and how things “should be” were worthy traits for someone in the quality assurance field.

Frank said he also realized he was a “good QA fit” when he realized that no two work days were the same.

“There is always something new and different going on with this job,” said Frank. “This brings a lot of excitement and novelty to the job, something I have appreciated for 38 years.”

The importance of what he does for the warfighter each and every day is not lost on Frank.

“Our warfighters are using the equipment I am saying is ready to go,” he said. “These men and women are ducking bullets over there. They need to know that someone like me is doing my job to ensure they are getting quality equipment needed to do their job. There is no halfway in this job.”

Just like a heart surgeon who has to do his or her job perfectly day-in and day-out for people to survive, Frank places his job

on equal grounds. His personal motto, “Do the best you can in everything you do,” was instilled in him at a young age and has allowed him to perform at his best day-in and day-out.

At this late stage in his career, Frank says he feels a great responsibility to mentor and train new QARs coming into the agency.

“Dave's mentorship to me has been priceless,” said Katie Morgan, DCMA Hampton (Richmond) QAR Keystone Program intern. “He always has an answer that comes with a prior experience perspective that helps ensure the best action is taken.”

Morgan said a trait she admires in Frank is his ability to work with the contractors to correct situations in a way that keeps a positive relationship between the agency and contractor.

“Dave has a way of being able to tell the contractor where they are deficient and their need to make things right without causing strife,” said Morgan. “This is a trait I am working on developing on a daily basis.”

Morgan attributes Frank's ability to communicate this way with the contractor to the relationships he establishes with the contractors he oversees.

“The contractors know they are able to reach out to him at anytime, day or night, to get clarity on a situation even before something could become a problem,” said Morgan. “The contractors appreciate this level of service and react with respect when deficiencies are identified.”

Adrian Robbe, Frank's supervisor, says the value he brings to the office is immeasurable.

“Over the past four years, I have observed him invest his life in helping others to succeed in the QA profession,” said Robbe. “Through his informal communication, face-to-face meetings and on-the-job efforts, Dave has done a wonderful job in conveying his knowledge, wisdom and experience to his protégés.”

“She’s always with me... I can’t imagine a day with her not being right by my side.”

— David Frank, Defense Contract Management Agency lead quality assurance representative

Frank’s desire to mentor and pass along life’s lessons does not stop at the workplace. This extends into his community life as well.

After taking a martial arts class with his daughter while she was in college 17 years ago, Frank embraced the newfound passion and looked for the first opportunity to pass along his passion to others.

“Once I got my black belt, I immediately started looking for places where I could teach,” said Frank. “I realized quickly the increased focus and concentration that comes with participating in martial arts. I realized how these traits can help so many people in all aspects of their life, and I wanted to help others gain this in their own lives.”

In an effort to offer more activities for entire families within his small

community, Frank started up a family martial arts class and has taught for several years at his local community center.

While contemplating who has had the most influence in shaping him into the person he is today, Frank’s eyes begin to water. He pauses, then stammers and chokes out the words, “That would have to be my wife.”

Frank says his connection to his wife has been a 41-year partnership and marriage. Counting the 12 years prior to their marriage, where he and his wife were dating, Frank has had a “partnership” with his wife for 53 years.

Even with the early stages of Alzheimer’s disease affecting his wife, Frank says, “She’s always with me. You will always find her with me at each of my classes looking on. I can’t imagine a day with her not being right by my side.”

Although Frank’s partnership with DCMA will come to a close in the coming years, Robbe points out, “Frank’s training and sharing of his knowledge and experiences with our QA specialists is creating a legacy of successes that will be evident in DCMA for many years to come.”



David Frank, DCMA Hampton (Richmond) lead quality assurance representative, right, discusses proper documentation with his fellow QAR colleagues Archie Lomax, middle, and Michael Coyle, left, in the DCMA Hampton (Richmond) office recently.

Did you know?

The Defense Contract Management Agency has a total of 3,065 quality assurance specialists throughout the agency or approximately 28 percent of the agency’s current workforce. The following are where quality assurance specialists are located throughout the agency:

- Eastern Division — 1,010
- Central Division — 680
- Headquarters, Centers and Operations — 655
- Western Division — 585
- International — 78
- Special Programs — 57

The quality assurance career field helps support the agency’s mission to be the “Department of Defense’s leading experts in quality assurance.”

The headquarters quality assurance staff is aligned as:

- Process and Policy Management Support Team
- Information Management Support Team
- Resource Management Support Team
- Quality Engineering Support Team
- DCMA NASA Audit Team

For information on DCMA quality assurance, or on how to become a quality assurance specialist, e-mail the Quality Assurance team at DCMAQA@dcma.mil.