

DLAMP Key to DCMA's Succession Planning Strategy



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Three Defense Contract Management Agency (DCMA) employees recently completed the Defense Leadership and Management Program (DLAMP) in Arlington, Va.

DLAMP is a leadership development program for senior Department of Defense (DoD) civilians that is a key element of DoD's succession planning strategy. DLAMP combines education and development in

order to mature a select group of highly skilled and capable senior civilian leaders that, in the future, will be able to manage DoD's workforce and programs through a joint perspective using the skills needed to envision and plan for the challenges that may arise.

Mr. Gordon R. England, deputy secretary of defense, attended the graduation ceremony. His personal leadership philosophy, summarized into 15 leadership principles, include the

importance of one's time, ethics, life-long learning, teamwork, dignity and respect. Mr. England stressed these principles to the group as essential for their future leadership roles.

Dr. Moonja Kim, Knowledge Management Center, DCMA; Ms. Lisa Marie Clark,

operations director, DCMA Aeronautical Systems Division; and Mr. John Cappiello, contract operations manager, Joint Strike Fighter team, DCMA Lockheed Martin, were among 77 participants recognized by Undersecretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness David S. C. Chu.

"When DLAMP started in 1997," explained Dr. Kim, "they had an ambitious plan to provide essential training to enable people to become DoD leaders at the senior executive service level. The program had strenuous requirements, such as 10 graduate courses that had prerequisites, a one-year rotational assignment, professional military education [PME] and a capstone seminar." She continued, "So when I started, I was really excited to be in the program."

Ms. Clark agreed: "I really appreciated the opportunities that this program gave me. I highly recommend the program; it is more than day-to-day lessons, and it gave me a great sense of the big picture and the organization as a whole. [It] included national security, business acquisition and leadership classes to name a few. It provided an ideal environment for networking along with chances to apply the things learned on a daily basis while seeing it come together as a whole."

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“The overall program was outstanding and very rewarding both personally and professionally,” said Mr. Cappiello. “From the time I entered the program until I graduated, there was a restructuring of the program; initially there was a requirement to complete an established 10 senior-level graduate courses from the DLAMP established curriculum of 29 courses. The courses were two-week courses (80 hours of classroom time) designed to incorporate both government and commercial ways of doing business and were taught at two main locations.”

“During the leadership seminars, we learned about what’s happening with the president’s management agenda from top-level government officials,” said Dr. Kim. “We had to

develop new ideas to be presented to the Office of Management and Budget [OMB]; various teams worked very hard, even though it was not going to be presented to OMB.”

Participants of the program must have an advanced degree from an accredited institution or an advanced degree through PME or an accredited institution while in the program. Participants must also attend senior-level PME at one of the senior service schools or the National Defense University as well as two courses in executive leadership.

“I completed six of the required 10 courses before the program changed due to budget constraints requiring only a graduate degree from an accredited university,” Mr. Cappiello



(Above) Mr. Keith D. Ernst, DCMA acting director, (far left) and Mr. Robert Schmitt, director, DCMA Aeronautical Systems Division (far right), congratulate the DCMA Defense Leadership and Management Program graduates Mr. John Cappiello, Ms. Lisa Marie Clark and Dr. Moonja Kim.

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said. “The DLAMP integrated courses were the best reality-related graduate courses I have ever taken. It feels great to have completed such a high-level DoD leadership program.”

“This program also instills a great camaraderie and kinship among its participants,” commented Ms. Clark. “I have created relationships and friendships with people that I know will last. It is a great sense of accomplishment to go through such an enriching experience together; it is an opportunity for an education that is hard to find anywhere else.”

“I had an excellent rotational assignment at the Department of the Navy for the chief information officer,” said Dr. Kim. “I worked as a special assistant to the deputy chief information officer for enterprise integration.”

Mr. Cappiello echoed their enthusiasm: “This program has given me a breadth and depth of understanding about senior-level DoD workings that I would have never been able to see without this program. I feel that I am a better-rounded individual and a better leader as a result of this program.”

DoD organizations nominate people to participate in DLAMP through an annual competitive selection process. Selectees must be permanent DoD civilian employees in grades GS-13 through GS-15 or their equivalent. The goal of

the program is to give potential future leaders a DoD perspective, knowledge of national security, understanding and trust of the military mission and opportunity to acquire strong leadership and management skills.

“I would encourage people to participate in DLAMP and take advantage of the opportunities for a developmental assignment and educational opportunity,” said Dr. Kim. “I think that incorporating varied assignments and educational opportunities into an overall development plan would strengthen readiness for senior leadership positions.”

“Having Mr. Keith Ernst and Mr. Bob Schmitt in attendance for our graduation ceremony also meant a lot knowing it was not easy for them to break away from their busy schedules,” said Ms. Clark. “I really can’t say enough about the program and am grateful to have been a part of [it].”

When asked about recommendations for future participants, Mr. Cappiello said, “My recommendation to the participants is when it is time to attend the PME portion of the program to attend one of the service schools in residence for 10 months rather than complete the requirements in two years by correspondence. It is very difficult to focus on and complete the PME while performing your current job duties.”

Mr. Cappiello concluded by saying, “Overall, the DLAMP program is an outstanding leadership program, and I highly recommend the program.”

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