

Agency Training Conference

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Employees throughout the agency met in Atlanta, Ga., for the 2009 DCMA Worldwide Training Conference, Oct. 26–30.

This year’s conference focused on employees making connections in four specific areas — with the warfighter, across the acquisition enterprise, within the agency and to each other.

Attendees had as little as two days’ experience with DCMA to as many as 42 years of experience. Therefore, there were varying opportunities for attendees to make these connections.

Connecting with the Warfighter

Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition, Technology and Logistics) Dr. Ashton Carter focused his remarks on his appreciation for the difficult work performed by DCMA employees. Carter stated his appreciation for DCMA’s willingness to tackle the tough issues while working to better the acquisition process throughout the department.

A working lunch featured guest speaker Army Spec. Nathan Short. Short was medically retired following an incident in Iraq while serving convoy duty. The vehicle ahead of his in the convoy detonated an improvised explosive device and stopped

moving. In the subsequent fire and smoke, Short’s vehicle struck the rear of the crippled truck, crushing Short’s legs in the collision. Short expressed his appreciation for DCMA employees working on the mine resistant ambush protected — MRAP — vehicle program, which Short credits with saving his life. He further encouraged attendees to remember the importance of employing wounded and handicapped persons through the AbilityOne program.

A contingency contracting administration services panel, led by DCMA International Commander Navy Capt. David Graff, addressed the difficulties of contract management within a war zone. Graff reminded attendees of the great opportunity for connection with the warfighters by serving in a CCAS assignment with the International Division and encouraged attendees to take advantage of this opportunity.

Connecting Across the Acquisition Enterprise

Much like Carter, keynote speaker Richard Ginman, the Department of Defense’s program acquisition and contingency contracting deputy director, filling in for Shay Assad, DoD’s procurement and acquisition policy director, praised DCMA’s role in Iraq and Afghanistan and



Defense Contract Management Agency Director Charlie Williams, Jr. speaks to attendees at the agency’s Worldwide Training Conference in Atlanta, Ga., Oct. 27, about the importance of working, and living by the agency’s core values of integrity, service and excellence. (Photos by Mark Woodbury, DCMA Public Affairs)

Focuses on 'Connections'



Honored attendees of the conference's Wounded Warrior Dinner pose for a picture after the event Oct. 29. Each wounded warrior expressed their appreciation to Charlie Williams, Jr., Defense Contract Management Agency director, for the service DCMA employees offer to the warfighter.

the work its people are doing for the department.

Other speakers discussed the newly created cost and pricing center and the latest workings and issues surrounding both earned value and supply chain management. Breakout sessions covered subjects ranging from contract receipt and review to international trade and arms regulations.

Connecting with the Agency

An employee panel focused on helping conference attendees

connect with the agency through their "view from the trenches." The panel included employees with months of experience to decades of experience, all sharing their ideas and thoughts with attendees and the senior leadership team. A term that was born during this discussion was "legacy employees" — used to describe long-term DCMA employees. Following this panel, most of the agency leadership, including the director, jokingly used the term during their conference presentations.

A working lunch on the second

day of the conference featured Defense Acquisition University President Frank Anderson, Jr. Anderson reminded employees and supervisors of the importance of getting and pushing for the training they require to do their jobs effectively. Midway through his speech, Anderson asked all of the supervisors in attendance to identify themselves and declared aloud, "I will let my people go" to accomplish training.

Breakout sessions focused on issues ranging from the headquarter's base realignment

and closure move to Fort Lee, Va., to processing and effectively using corrective action requests and implementing corrective action plans to achieve the desired results.

On the final evening of the conference, a dinner with wounded warfighters as special guests reminded attendees of the importance of their roles in supporting the warfighter. The dinner's guest speaker was retired Army Reserve Command Sgt. Maj. Michelle Jones, who discussed the "bones" principle with attendees. Jones explained that are four kinds of bones in each organization:

- A backbone to perform a job until its completion
- A wishbone to maintain a positive outlook on what is needed to perform a job to its fullest extent
- A funny bone to encourage laughter during the difficult times, reevaluate and then attack again
- A tailbone for people to "get off of" and get the mission accomplished.

Connecting with Each Other DCMA Human Resources

Executive Director Randy Sawlsville indicated that the agency's first initiative toward making connections was the recent hiring of employees for the newly created agency cost and pricing center headed by Ron Youngs. To fill these jobs, the agency advertised for the first time on **Monster.com**, obtaining more than 20,000 hits and generating more than 7,000 applicants. So far, DCMA has hired 130 of the 7,000 applicants.

Sawlsville also spoke of the 546 Keystones currently in training and development. He stated this is the most Keystones the agency has ever taken aboard at one time and commended his people for being able to make this happen.

DCMA's nearly completed recruiting Web site — **dcmacareers.com** — was previewed for conference attendees. The site explains the agency's mission, main career fields and possible working situations while being wrapped in a high-energy, high-impact packaging. Each page on the site offered the user a new avenue for information while also providing

an avenue for applying for jobs within the agency.

Charlie Williams, Jr., DCMA's director, wrapped up the conference by stating that he had never seen the stars so aligned for change and progress in the acquisition community. He stated that from the president of the United States to the lowest levels of government, people are talking about what the agency does and the value it provides the nation. Williams exhorted attendees to take advantage of this opportunity for progress and change.

Referencing Jones, Williams stated the agency has "a lot of work to do" and "we need everyone off their tailbones working toward agency progress and betterment."

Presentations from the conference may be accessed at: <https://home.dcma.mil/registration/CmdConf/fall09/agenda.cfm>.

Photos from the conference are available at: https://portal.dcma.mil/portal/server.pt/gateway/PTARGS_32_0_219_0_-1_47/http://pele5.dcma.mil;11930/collab/do/document/overview?projID=328948&folderID=1904831. 



Members of an employee panel take questions from attendees Oct. 29 during the agency's Worldwide Training Conference in Atlanta, Ga.