

# INSIDE <sup>PEO</sup> STRI

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## WORTH REPEATING

“ From the first battles at Lexington and Concord to the streets of Mosul and Kandahar, Soldiers have always defended freedom and epitomized what is best about America. We will remain the nation’s decisive force, the clearest symbol of America’s commitment to freedom and the country’s pre-eminent leadership experience. We will remain America’s Army, the strength of the nation.”

— Army’s 37th Chief of Staff Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, who was recently named to head the Joint Chiefs of Staff



U.S. Army Photos/Gil Ramos

A group of Wounded Warriors leads the way at the start of the May 14 Walk, Run, Roll road race sponsored by Operation Giveback, an organization founded by PEO STRI employee Jose Garcia-Aponte to assist service men and women wounded in action. PEO STRI was well represented among the hundreds of participants in the event that garnered more than \$50,000 to benefit wounded warriors. Also in support of military members injured in combat, PEO STRI awarded a contract April 2011 to hire wounded warriors.

## WOUNDED WARRIORS BRING AN ELITE PERSPECTIVE TO STRI

By Rick Gregory, APEO Business Operations Support Staff

While wounded warriors are being taken out of the fight, employers across the country are quickly learning you can’t take the fight out of the warriors.

Last month, PEO STRI joined the growing ranks of organizations who are taking advantage of the special skill sets, operational experiences and work ethics that the nation’s wounded warriors bring to the workplace. With the launch of the Wounded Warrior Program last month, two veteran warriors joined PEO STRI to apply their expertise as military environment experts in PM TRADE and PM CATT.

“We are delighted to have

the opportunity to launch the Wounded Warrior Program and welcome these brave warriors to the PEO STRI team,” Dr. Jim Blake, program executive officer for PEO STRI, said. “It creates a productive environment all around. While we are dedicated to providing them a solid foundation for their career transition from military to civilian life, they bring to the table a unique perspective that will have a positive, lasting impact on our mission to provide operationally relevant simulation, training and testing capabilities for our nation’s security.”

Jose Santana, who joined PM TRADE, brings a distinct per-

spective to the job from having served in the U.S. Navy.

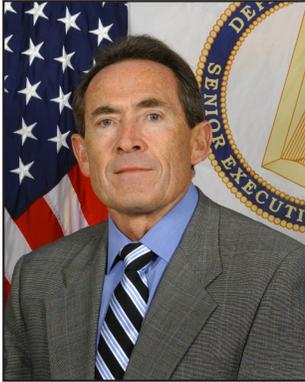
“Applying my knowledge gained in the Navy with what I learn at PEO STRI will allow me to give input for process improvement and streamlining of the testing and fielding of new training devices to meet the requirements and challenges that will face our future ground forces,” he explained.

Santana said he learned about



Jose Santana

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**Dr. Jim Blake**  
Program Executive Officer

## A Message from the PEO

To the PEO STRI workforce:

On Memorial Day—one of our nation’s oldest and most revered holidays—let’s pause to reflect on the true cost of freedom and honor those who made the ultimate sacrifice to protect it.

In a recent message from The Honorable Malcolm Ross O’Neill, the assistant secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology, he reminds us that “every generation realizes the cost of a free and undivided republic. They know the sacrifice of the Minutemen marching across the misty fields of Yorktown, the infantrymen running up the beach of Normandy amid a blizzard of enemy bullets, the platoon patrolling the murky jungles north of Saigon, and the Soldiers today prevailing in Afghanistan and Iraq and nearly 80 countries worldwide.”

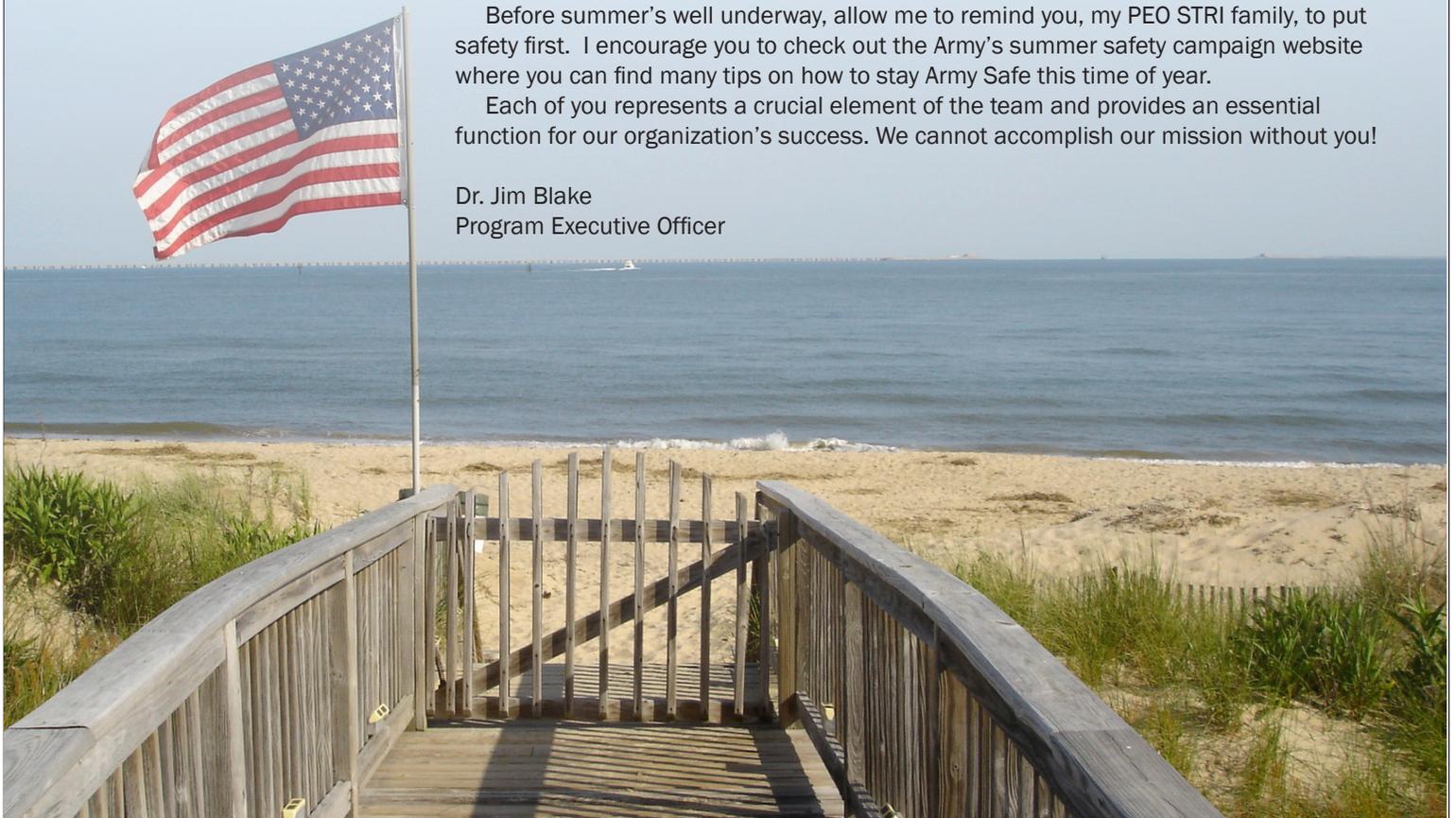
As we remember the brave men and women who’ve died while in service to our country, I ask that you also remember all those who are serving so selflessly now. As our nation’s attentions focus on foreclosures, the financial meltdown and badly behaving celebrities, I ask that you’re reminded—and that you remind those around you—that war is still very real and increasingly dangerous.

Although Memorial Day is, most importantly, a time for us to honor our armed forces, it also ushers in the start of the summer season.

Before summer’s well underway, allow me to remind you, my PEO STRI family, to put safety first. I encourage you to check out the Army’s summer safety campaign website where you can find many tips on how to stay Army Safe this time of year.

Each of you represents a crucial element of the team and provides an essential function for our organization’s success. We cannot accomplish our mission without you!

Dr. Jim Blake  
Program Executive Officer



# Lean Six Sigma Initiatives Set to Make PEO STRI Even More Efficient

By Megan Jeffers, PEO STRI External Affairs Specialist

Doing more with the same resources is a common theme lately. The Army's chief of staff, Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, and nearly every leader from there on down is urging the workforce to maintain its present high operational tempo despite the lack of additional resources. Though a challenging feat, demands are being met across the Army by employing several efficiency measures, and for PEO STRI, one of these measures is the initiatives set forth by Lean Six Sigma.

A combination of tactics aimed to increase quality and efficiency in the workplace, Lean Six Sigma (LSS) became a popular concept in the early 1990s when organizational makeovers of Motorola and Toyota gained momentum. Motorola was set on improving quality by focusing on predictable manufac-

turing and business processes. Toyota, on the other hand, concentrated on eliminating excess inventory and increasing manufacturing speed. The processes, respectively called Six Sigma and Lean, merged and placed increased focus on improving efficiency while decreasing waste and defects in the workflow.

"Lean Six Sigma is a methodology used to streamline and reduce variation in a production design process," Steve Nguyen, a PEO STRI LSS specialist, said.

Practiced by organizations worldwide, LSS significantly cuts down on costs associated with production and espouses the customer as its primary focus. The main success of this approach, however, is due in large part to LSS aficionados.

Much like the belt ranks in

karate training, LSS also categorizes its experts by bestowing rank. Though no actual belts are presented, system classifications include Green Belt rankings for initial projects, followed by Black Belt and Master Black Belt rankings for more in-depth projects.

"Each ranking helps to create the specific infrastructure necessary to lead and implement the LSS approach," Nguyen, who is a Master Black Belt, said.

"Both Lean and Six Sigma concentrate on customer satisfaction and improving business performance," Chris Rozycki, also a PEO STRI Master Black

Belt, continued. "Basically, Lean Six Sigma is the result of two different approaches that complement each other."

"Lean places focus on the

**Lean Six Sigma can be used anywhere. Almost every process is a candidate for [becoming] more efficient, and everything that we do is a process."**

customer and looks for feedback on how to satisfy the needs of the customer," he said. "Six Sigma, on the other hand, concentrates on the statistical side of improving a process and places the focus on measurable, quantifiable financial returns. The key to this is that the results are always data-driven."

Though employing the LSS approach to improve a process takes planning, John Kirch, PEO STRI's LSS deployment director, was quick to point out that even a good process can be made better and easier by LSS tactics.

"Here at PEO STRI everybody's efficient and we do a very good job, but this may add some ways to where the workforce can do their jobs better," he said.

For instance, Jimmy Dunn, PEO STRI's newest Black Belt, recently completed a project that will save the organization more than \$25 million over the next three years. Dunn was able to leverage and streamline the hardware platforms of two

*Continued on page 7*



U.S. Army PEO STRI Photo/Megan Jeffers

Lean Six Sigma experts, Chris Rozycki (left) and Steve Nguyen, provide the PEO STRI workforce insight on how to reduce defects and increase efficiency in workflow. Initiatives set forth by the process have already helped save the organization millions of dollars.

# PEO STRI BROACHES THE NEXT GENERATION OF DISTRIBUTED TRAINING

By Kristen A. McCullough, PEO STRI Public Affairs Officer

Imagine a live training event in which an observer/controller uses a souped-up e-green book—or mobile device to publish and maintain real-time exercise data—not only to ensure trainees are following Army doctrine, but also to host a myriad of mobile apps right at his fingertips.

One app, for instance, would take all that exercise data and create a standardized after-action review report. Another app would allow the observer/controller to monitor a platoon that's not even in his line of sight. A different app would help the observer/controller record how long it takes a medic to treat a casualty, and if the medic treated that patient correctly.

The “what ifs” are endless, and before long, the live training community might be saying, “we have an app for that.”

Being able to experience this seemingly far-fetched training scenario might not be too far into the future. In fact, PM TRADE hosted a two-day seminar, called the Live, Virtual or Constructive Training: SOA, Cloud Computing & Virtualization Architecture Workshop, May 3-4 in Central Florida's Research Park to start making this dream a reality.

“At PEO STRI, we want to enhance a Soldier's training effectiveness,” Jeremy Lanman, the Live Training Transformation program's lead systems architect, said. “We want to evolve with technology to meet the needs of today's combat Soldier who's used to high-tech gadgets for operational use in theater and personal use at home.”

Today's Soldier en route to capturing a high-value target encounters many obstacles—ene-

mies, threats and roadside bombs. He's likely to pull a smartphone from his uniform and enter the information into an app, instantaneously transmitting warning graphics to his fellow Soldiers and higher headquarters. Although these gee-whiz tech moments are popping up all over the operational grid, they have mildly crossed over into the simulation and training sphere.

“It's madness for us, the Department of Defense, to think only of these large-scale simulators when Soldiers are used to having a world of information right on their smartphone,” Patrick Place, a senior technical advisor with the Software Engineering Institute (SEI), said after he spoke at the workshop. SEI is a federally funded research center that assists government, industry and academic institutions continually improve their software systems.

“In one sense, applying mobile apps to the training and simulation realm is merely keeping up with reality,” Place continued.

A giant leap in technology transformation would not be a first for PEO STRI, however. Beginning with the Live Training Transformation Product Line in 2001, PEO STRI's live training domain was freed from its stovepipe structure into a software product-line architecture. Essentially from this migration, each program based on the Common Training Instrumentation Architecture uses common components—the same architecture, components and interface—which reduces development costs.

The next step to ensure PEO STRI's training and simulation programs remain current with next-generation technology is to make them compatible with the

Common Operating Environment so that all computer systems and networks can be accessed anywhere at anytime, much like the iTunes App Store or Netflix.

In doing so, PEO STRI would move toward a cloud computing environment by which all the training data is logically centralized in one place, reducing technical complexity, enabling on-demand access to training and creating a peer-to-peer relationship with command and control systems. “For live, virtual and constructive training to be cloud-centric, we must adopt a service-oriented architecture paradigm,” Lanman expressed about the possible way ahead in PEO STRI's software design and development approach.

“PEO STRI's in a good place because it has a lot of discipline in the software product-line architecture approach, and as a result, there's an enormous amount of possibility to achieve a service-oriented architecture and cloud concepts,” Place noted, whose organization stood up the Service Migration and Reuse Techniques, or SMART initiative, to help organizations migrate to a service-oriented architecture.

In order to migrate to a service-oriented architecture, the common components created under the product-line architecture would be broken up into “services,” which would standardize common components to an even greater degree so that they can be interchangeably used for a multitude of training systems.

“SOA and cloud computing will enhance training by providing an on-demand training capability to the Warfighter,” Lanman advised. “It would also reduce the

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JPEO JTRS/Ashley Blumenfeld

Paratroopers from the 3rd Brigade Combat Team of the 82nd Airborne Division use smartphones to communicate during a recent field exercise at Fort Bragg, N.C.



# Team Orlando Gets in SHAPE with Self Defense

By Megan Jeffers, PEO STRI External Affairs Specialist

Every day media across the country deliver news of yet another assaulted victim. Whether simply running into the store, walking the dog or going for a leisurely stroll, women—and men—are robbed, attacked and in several cases, killed. It's a grim reality, but PEO STRI's senior enlisted advisor, Sgt. Maj. Patrick Ogden, vows to help reduce this statistic in any way possible.

On May 2-4, through Team Orlando's SHAPE program, Ogden conducted what is the first in a series of classes to teach basic self-defense tactics to the Team Orlando workforce.

Held during lunchtime, the three-day course concentrated on multiple scenarios of what to do if an attacker grabs a victim, how to get out of the hold and how to swiftly and safely escape.

"An attacker is not a rational human being," Ogden told the class, reminding them not to think of the attacker as a coherent individual. "At that point, he or she is an animal."

The victim's first reaction when attacked is usually to unconsciously hold his or her breath, he said. "Do NOT do this," he stressed. "Quick reaction is the key to surviving."

"Get mad. Get angry. Yell. Scream obscenities. Do whatever you need to do to attract attention and show this animal that you are not going down without a fight," he continued.

As he asked male and female participants of various statures to step forward for demonstrations, Ogden urged class participants to use their size, whether big or small, to their advantage.

One of the techniques of using elbows to jab an attacker in the rib cage and the sternum resonated with PEO STRI employee Gale Watzel.

At the age of 18 while walking up to her apartment one evening,

two men came running toward her from opposite directions. The man in front threw a knife while the other stepped behind and blocked her escape.

Watzel, having recently completed a judo class, knew to use her arms as weapons to block the attackers, but said panic was undeniably her first reaction.

"I had maybe five dollars on me at the time," she recounted. "I just thought, 'Is this worth my life?' But then I got mad. I went into survival mode and did whatever I could to escape."

Though escaping was not an easy feat when the attackers had removed light bulbs from every other floor and had taken the knob off the door from which Watzel could have escaped, she said she never again would allow herself to be that vulnerable.

"That's part of the reason I wanted to take the SHAPE class," she shared. "I don't ever want to feel that unprotected again. This course sounded like something that I could be using today, and it turned out to be an excellent refresher."

"The great thing about the class was that it wasn't just geared toward women," Watzel continued. "It taught techniques such as aiming for an attacker's throat or grabbing and pulling down hard on their pinky finger for them to release their grip, which could also be used by men, children and people of all ages. It made me realize that when you're in survival mode no level of force is too much. It put me in the mindset of 'How dare you!' versus 'Why me?'"

Another participant who shared Watzel's sentiments about the class was SHAPE chairperson Gary Ashland.

"At some point, you or someone you know may be assaulted. The more prepared you are for [an attack], the better off you are," Ashland said as he recounted his

story of being threatened by a man with a 2x4 piece of wood while vacationing in Key West, Fla., in the early 90s.

"I was walking back to the hotel after watching the sunset and a man came toward me with this plank, inferring that I give him whatever I had on me," Ashland said. "You never forget the fear when you go through a process like that."

Echoing the feelings of several class participants, Ashland reiterated the sergeant major's message that when attacked, you only have seconds to make your reaction count.

"As a man, I think many times there is the misconception that when in a vulnerable situation you shouldn't scream," he said. "But you have to remember the longer you take to react, that's just more of an advantage you're giving the attacker."

Several of the defense tactics practiced by the class included what to do when in situations exactly like Watzel's and Ashland's. The main tip to always be alert, aware and critical of one's surroundings was the first lesson taught to the class. Despite following one's intuition, Ogden emphasized physical preparedness if an attacker should manage to make contact.

From carrying car keys with the sharp ends weaved through fingers to carrying pepper spray or using whatever items you have on your person, Og-

den also taught the class to "be a doctor."

"Go for the eyes, ears, nose and throat," he advised as he told participants to forcefully poke an attacker's eyes, box their ears, push up and inward on an attacker's nose with the palm of the hand and to show no mercy when using the palm to go for an attacker's throat.

If an attacker grabs you around the neck from behind, first and foremost tilt your head down so they don't cut off your air supply, he continued. "Bash the back of your skull into their face. Stomp on their feet. And ladies, those heels you wear, use them to your advantage and make your counter-attack count."

Throughout the three-day class

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U.S. Army PEO STRI Photo/Doug Schaub

Sgt. Maj. Patrick Ogden coaches PEO STRI employee Lindsey Jones on how to escape an attacker's grip during the May 2-4 SHAPE self-defense class held outside of the deFlorez building. By quickly and forcefully pulling down on an attacker's hand, Ogden and Jones demonstrated to class participants the proper escape tactic for a surprise assault.



PEO STRI'S ANNUAL



TAKE OUR SONS  
& DAUGHTERS  
TO WORK DAY

APRIL 28, 2011



# New Human Resources Manager Brings Expertise, Enthusiasm to STRI

By Kristen A. McCullough, PEO STRI Public Affairs Officer

Joining PEO STRI in the midst of the major transition from one pay system to another, Lisa Taylor, the new personnel resources manager, had no other choice but to hit the ground running when she came on board April 25. Less than a month after her arrival, she took over the complex task of converting 800-plus government



**Lisa Taylor**  
*Personnel Resources Manager*

**LEAN SIX SIGMA:** *continued from page 3*

PEO STRI training programs—Games for Training and Joint Land Component Constructive Training Capability—into a single, upgraded platform with multiple configurations supporting both training requirements.

Dunn's concept was then utilized by PM CATT and yielded additional, unexpected savings for our organization, Kirch said.

To help kick off and enforce the LSS initiatives, a Green Belt class will be held June 6-10 in the Partnership I building's acquisition classroom for government employees to learn the basics of LSS.

"This is a good way for people to come in, see what they like and if they want to prog-

ress to the different belts," Kirch said.

"The class itself is one week, but participants will be assigned a project during the course and will complete that project over the next couple of months, part time," he continued. "One of the advantages of this is that it will be able to be counted as part of the employee's performance plan in October."

Primarily geared toward federal employees and PEO STRI's third-year interns, work on the projects may be done during working hours as part of an employee's normal tasks as long as the employee's supervisor signs off on it.

"Currently, I'm going to each of the PMs identifying

employees from the National Security Personnel System to either Acquisition Demo, commonly referred to as AcqDemo, or the General Schedule (GS).

"I will continue the legacy of PEO STRI's HR team and keep our personnel resources efforts focused on providing the best possible support to the entire workforce," Taylor acknowledged.

With a focused, but extensive understanding of personnel management, Taylor—whose background spans from a military officer to a corporate vice president to a government supervisor all in the area of human resources—makes her just the person for the job.

"With a broad background, you experience every situation necessary to be successful in the human resources area," she noted.

Taylor said that, in addition to the personnel system transition,

right now her top priority is understanding the needs of the organization, its leaders, managers, supervisors and employees, and how to best support those needs in accordance with the PEO STRI mission.

She said she will do so by "being proactive, getting ahead of any new changes, retaining quality employees, helping managers attract and hire the best qualified employees, as well as taking care of employees already on the team."

The Alabama native whose most recent past position brings her to PEO STRI from Fort McPherson, Ga., said, "my experience thus far [at PEO STRI] has been great. It appears I didn't just join an organization; I became part of a great team.

"I'm never lost at PEO STRI because somebody always tells me

which way to go," Taylor joked referencing the maze-like structure PEO STRI employees have come to know as their workspace.

In all seriousness, Taylor's can-do kind of attitude fits right in at PEO STRI, a can-do kind of organization where even seemingly impossible tasks are accomplished. "The train keeps on moving and I know I'll need to learn PEO STRI's new systems quickly as well as continue the day-to-day activities of meeting deadlines and other important actions that are pertinent to our organizational sustainment and growth."

Outside of the office, Taylor can most often be found reading, running or spending quality time with her family. In fact, just recently she placed second in her age group at the Operation Giveback race. "I work hard, play hard and pray hard," she added.

"It will help make PEO STRI more efficient with the scarce resources we have and actually deliver more to the Warfighter," he continued. "And to me, that's the bottom line of it; we get more out there [to support training] with the limited dollars we have."

"Lean Six Sigma can be used anywhere," Rozycki added. "Almost every process is a candidate for making it more efficient, and everything that we do is a process.

"Remember what we said about the customer [being the focus of LSS]?" Rozycki asked. "For PEO STRI that customer is the Warfighter – getting training to them faster and better, that's really what it's all about."

The combination of actual dollar savings for projects that PEO STRI could use elsewhere is one of the main benefits of LSS, Kirch said.

projects important to them," Kirch said.

As each of the PMs come up with project lists, the Green Belt class will aim to find good candidates to complete the respective projects for their organization, he continued.

The complexity of the project and how much time an employee has allocated to work on it will determine the time frame of a project, Nguyen added, but the average time frame to complete a Green Belt project is three months and for a Black Belt assignment it's generally six to eight months.

LEAN SIX SIGMA: continued from page 3

PEO STRI training programs—Games for Training and Joint Land Component Constructive Training Capability—into a single, upgraded platform with multiple configurations supporting both training requirements.

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To help kick off and enforce the LSS initiatives, a Green Belt class will be held June 6-10 in the Partnership I building's acquisition classroom for government employees to learn the basics of LSS.

"This is a good way for people to come in, see what they like and if they want to prog-



# PEO STRI HELPS SAVE A PART OF U.S. HISTORY

By Rick Gregory, APEO Business Operations Support Staff

Weighing in at just more than 2,000 pounds and just under 10 feet high and 12 feet long, it would not have appeared as much more than an annoying little bug to enemy submariners stalking allied forces' ships. However, like a mosquito that can make life miserable with a single bite, the small drone helicopter could make life terminal for enemy submariners with a lethal strike from one of its two torpedoes.

Built by the Gyrodyne Company of America for the U.S. Navy's anti-submarine warfare efforts in the early 1960s, the remote-controlled QH-50 DASH, short for Drone Anti-Submarine Helicopter, was capable of locating, locking in on and destroying an enemy submarine up to 50 miles away from the U.S. Navy destroyer from which it was launched.

Taking advantage of the stealth of the small drone and due to the limited submarine warfare during the Vietnam War, the Navy expanded the role of the QH-50D by adding to its weapons payload capability. Refitted with a grenade launcher, a high-resolution video camera and two bomblet dispensers, the QH-50D became an anti-personnel weapon capable of locating the enemy and dropping more than 4,000 bomblets on the acquired target. The camera also provided surveillance capability to allow the destroyer commander to accurately zero in on his targets.

While the little "bug" was doing all of the biting, it was swatted from active offensive duty in the early 1970s due to reduced defense expenditures resulting from the drawdown of the Vietnam War. The QH-50D quickly went from being the hunter to being the hunted.

Enter PEO STRI.

With the DASH program officially cancelled in November 1970, the remaining 388 QH-50C and QH-50D model drones were

shipped to the Naval Air Warfare Center, China Lake, Calif.

There, according to Gyrodyne's website ([www.gyrodynehelicopters.com](http://www.gyrodynehelicopters.com)), "the unmanned air vehicle that was developed to extend a pilot's reach without increasing his risk was used as a target for real-kill missile and anti-helicopter development; more than 350 aircraft were simply blown out of the sky before the military began to rethink this policy."

With the steadily decreasing inventory of the aircraft and the cost of building additional drones going from \$154,000 to more than \$2 million per helicopter, the QH-50s began towing targets to prevent them from being shot down. In 1997, the Navy transferred their entire remaining inventory of QH-50s to PM ITTS' Target Management Office at White Sands Missile Range, N.M., where they were used to meet Army Air Defense training and weapon system testing requirements.

By 2008, PEO STRI canceled all QH-50 operations and the remaining aircraft were placed at Oro Grande Base Camp, N.M. Gyrodyne board members Robert H. Beyer and Peter P. Papadakos, the son of the late founder, then decided that action needed to be taken to preserve the rich history of the company as well as the Navy's DASH weapon system.

To honor their desire to secure two QH-50Ds for museum displays, PEO STRI, through the General Services Administration, transferred two of the aircraft to the Gyrodyne Foundation in 2009. The remaining 12 were sent to the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, Calif., where they were

subsequently destroyed during training exercises.

After a six month, labor-intensive effort to restore it to its 1967 condition, one of the QH-50D helicopters will be on display at the Aerospace Museum of California in McClellan, Calif. Later this year, the second aircraft will become part of the displays at the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum in Washington, D.C.

Needless to say, Papadakos is extremely grateful to PEO STRI for helping him realize his dream of keeping the memory of the QH-50s alive for both his late father and the military members who became part of their history.

"Essentially, if not for PEO STRI, the acquisition, restoration and then placement of the aircraft as a part of U.S. military

history would not have happened," Papadakos said. "From my conversations with Dr. Jim Blake and all of the PEO STRI professionals, I have only experienced generosity and kindness so that the helicopter that my father built for the Navy could be saved."



U.S. Army Photo/Doug Schaub

The QH-50D, a Navy helicopter used to destroy enemy submarines during the Vietnam War, sits in a warehouse prior to its restoration.



U.S. Army Photo/Doug Schaub

Peter Papadakos, who oversaw the restoration of the QH-50D, poses with the finished product before it is shipped off to the Aerospace Museum of California in McClellan, Calif. Later this year, a second restored aircraft will become part of the displays at the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum in Washington, D.C.



# TWISTER TAKES EVERYTHING, BUT HOPE AND HELP

By Kristen A. McCullough, PEO STRI Public Affairs Officer

The mile-wide twister that spawned 200 mph wind gusts and spanned three states in the southeast U.S. April 27 perhaps devastated the little town of Hackleburg, Ala., the greatest. The town of Hackleburg, nestled in the northwest quadrant of the state, is the hometown of one of PEO STRI's very own.

"The people of Hackleburg lost everything—family members, homes and pets—all in a few minutes. The storm destroyed the town in less than 20 minutes," Brittney Hester, a PM ITTS' Threat Systems Management Office employee in Huntsville, Ala., said.

Hester, having been raised the first 20 years of her life in Hackleburg before moving an hour and half northeast to Huntsville, had a lot at stake in the town that most of her family and friends still call home.

As soon as the tornado warning siren sounded in Huntsville, Hester said she immediately started to call her family. She got through to her mother who was hiding out in her closet for protection. After that phone call, the power went out and all the lines of communication went down. The EF5 tornado, the strongest of its kind, came through Mississippi, Alabama and Tennessee that horrid Wednesday afternoon.

"Then, I heard an initial report that 150 people were injured, all the hospitals were filled and they were calling in all emergency personnel to set up ad hoc triage centers," Hester vividly recalled, still fearing the worst having no contact with her family.

Finally around midnight the next morning, Hester got through to her mother, who was finally able to check on Hester's grandparents, and verified that their entire family was physically alright.

"I went down there in the fol-

lowing days, and I was shocked pulling into town. I didn't have any frame of reference. Everything was so severely devastated that I even got lost," Hester said about the very town in which she grew up.

Having to report her status through the PEO STRI chain of command, Hester notified her supervisor, "I'm okay, but my hometown is not," citing 18 deaths in the 1,500 population

town. In total, 340 lives were lost, 336 of which were in Ala.

From that single message, Mark Tutten, TSMO's then director, notified practically everyone he knew. "Immediately people wanted to know what they could do to help," she said.

Hester acknowledged how crucial Tutten's message was to the relief efforts. "Hackleburg is such a small town that the devastation had not made the news yet," Hester remembered. Because of Tutten's message, all the local TV and radio stations called out for aid and assistance in Hackleburg.

The people of PEO STRI, and specifically PM ITTS' TSMO, also quickly came to the rescue of their fellow employee's hometown. "Literally all of TSMO donated something. I was able to distribute these supplies before federal help could come in for relief," Hester appreciatively said.

"I've been blown away by the generosity and caring nature of the people of PEO STRI," she continued, but also citing the need for continued support.

Among being part of a search and rescue team and helping out with debris and road clean-up activities, Hester also created a do-



Photo Courtesy of Brittney Hester, PM ITTS TSMO

**The tornado that ripped through Mississippi, Alabama and Tennessee April 27 devastated the town of Hackleburg, Ala., the hometown of PEO STRI employee, Brittney Hester.**

nation account, the Hackleburg and Hodges, AL Tornado Relief Fund, so supporters can contribute money to benefit the relief efforts.

Hester, in turn, uses those donations to fulfill shortfalls. Most recently, the Hackleburg residents had enough bottled water and personal items, but needed food so Hester used the donations to buy canned goods. "One hundred percent of the donations go directly to the affected area," Hester said.

Those interested in making a donation can do so by mailing a check to the Hackleburg and Hodges, AL Tornado Relief Fund at Redstone Federal Credit Union

located at 220 Wynn Dr., Huntsville, Ala., 35893. The fund's account number, 51003596719, should be written in the "for" line. Questions can be addressed by the Redstone Federal Credit Union at (800) 234-1234.

Donations can also be made through PayPal via another organization, Hackleburg Helping Hands, at <http://www.hackleburghelpinghands.com/>.

"I can't begin to tell you how thankful I am for the outpouring generosity and care from my co-workers," Hester said. "It's times like this that restore your faith in people."

## ITTS LEADER REMINISCES

"I was in Huntsville when the tornado hit, but I didn't realize how devastating the damage was until the next day. Because my flight was cancelled, I ended up driving to Atlanta to catch a flight with three strangers I met at the Delta counter in the airport. We ended up driving past places the tornado had actually touched down. The pictures you see on TV do not do justice to what this damage looks like up close.

That said, I am truly impressed by the resiliency of the leadership and the workforce in Huntsville and how everyone rallied to each other's support to ensure everyone was taken care of. I believe that there is truth to seeing the true character of people in how they get up after being knocked down. PM ITTS' folks really impressed me."

- Col. Mike Zarbo, project manager for PM ITTS



# CITIZEN STRI

*“Summer’s right around the corner! What’s your best piece of summer safety advice?”*



“Hydrate, hydrate, hydrate!”

- Richard Boast, Acq. Center



“With the wonderful opportunities to hit the water this summer, I would recommend anyone participating in a water sport to know how to swim. Relying solely on a life jacket to protect you or a loved one may not be good enough.”

- Jeffrey Claar, Acq. Center



“Always have an adult supervising young swimmers. In home swimming pools, prudence is necessary since you are the lifeguard. If you’re at a beach, be vigilant; lifeguards cannot keep a watch at all times.”

- Fernando DaSilva, PM ConSim



“Motorcycle safety is important. A helmet, gloves, long sleeves, pants, eye protection and boots should be worn.”

- Sgt. 1st Class Keyon McDonald



“If the heat this weekend is any indication of how hot this summer is going to be, we are in for a long and extremely hot summer. It is important to note that drinking water is the only sure way to hydrate. Coffee, iced tea, soda and beer are not good substitutions and will only make a dehydrated condition worse. A 20 ounce bottle of water per hour should be consumed to avoid heat injuries when enjoying outdoor activities.”

- Scott Turner, PM TRADE

Want your opinion heard? Answer June’s Question! The question is open to the entire workforce.

“What did you enjoy most about the Army Birthday Ball?” Send your response to [Kristen.McCullough@us.army.mil](mailto:Kristen.McCullough@us.army.mil) and put Citizen STRI in the subject line.

## CLLOUD COMPUTING: *continued from pg 4*

total life-cycle acquisition costs. And finally, it would help PEO STRI meet the Army’s vision as it works toward the Common Operating Environment, Net-Centric Enterprise Service strategy and the Live, Virtual and Constructive Integrated Training Environment.”

Thomas Erl, a best-selling author who’s looked at by many as the father of service-oriented architecture, had this advice to offer PEO STRI after his presentation at the workshop, “service-oriented architecture is the end state you want to keep your eye on because it fosters reuse and it makes organizations more responsive.”

Col. John Surdu, the military deputy to the Communications and Electronics Research Development and Engineering Center under the U.S. Army Research, Development and Engineering Command, said that the Army is making meaningful progress toward a Common Operating Environment by way of a service-oriented architecture. “Our battle command folks are already doing work in SOA, and have fielded some operational cloud computing concepts,” he acknowledged.

“As you decompose product-line architecture and break each common component down into a service, someone who’s kind of savvy can create a training application we [on the institutional side of the Army] didn’t even think of yet,” Surdu said.

The opportunities are almost limitless, and the fun has just begun. Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the next generation of distributed training.

## SELF DEFENSE: *continued from pg 5*

Ogden routinely reiterated the previous day’s lessons and monitored the techniques participants employed when they were surprise attacked by their class partner. Ensuring each participant correctly utilized their chosen method of defense, Ogden continuously built upon basic techniques to those for more advanced situations, such as if an attacker came forth with a knife.

“Practice is crucial,” he said. “The more you practice, the more of a habit defense techniques become.”

“If someone grabs you and you don’t want to be grabbed, you should automatically be mad, take action and end the situation in any way, shape or form possible,” he added. “It’s your life on the line. React, don’t be scared. It’s not always how strong you are, it’s how fast you are.”

With the turnout and participation for the level one class a success, Ogden, again through the SHAPE program, will offer a second level one class July 18-20 for those interested in learning the basics of self defense. For participants who complete level one, a level two course followed by a level three course will also be offered at a later date.

“The whole key to self defense is preparedness,” Ogden said. “Be prepared for the worst case scenario, and remind yourself that if someone is going to try to alter your life, you’re definitely going to alter theirs.”

the opportunity available at PEO STRI through Able Forces, Inc., a veteran-owned organization who is contracted by PEO STRI to execute the program. He said he feels very fortunate to have been selected by Able Forces and PEO STRI among multiple candidates.

“I am so thankful for the opportunity to be part of a program where the main objective is to enhance our Soldiers’ training and ability to survive during live combat action,” Santana said. “My first impression of PEO STRI is that of belonging. From the first day of my arrival to the present, the staff has welcomed me into a well established, supportive and friendly environment. I am humbled, honored and very thankful to both Able Forces and PEO STRI for their efforts in bringing this program together.”

Able Forces, Inc. was started by two veterans—Skip Rogers, an Army vet, and Joe Cunningham, a Navy vet—who are passionate about helping the nation’s wounded warriors. They sold their partnership in a for-profit small business to establish the nonprofit Able Forces company under the Ability One Program which is a federal

initiative to help people who have significant disabilities find employment by working for nonprofit agencies that sell products or services to the U.S. government.

Rogers emphasizes that the warriors hired under the program are specially selected for each position. Though their combat wounds initially qualify them for consideration, it’s their job qualifications that are paramount in placing them.

“What must be kept in mind is that our warriors must be able to perform. They must have the qualifications and experience to do the job. They must perform just like any other employee in any job situation,” Rogers explained. “Able Forces focuses on the warrior not the wounds and we are proud to be a part of their healing and their reintegration back into the workforce.”

“The contract with PEO STRI is exclusively written to support wounded warriors in a highly cognitive, specialized environment,” he added. “We applaud PEO STRI for their commitment and courage to step up and execute such a contract.”

Tim Gust, a former Army infantry officer who joined PM CATT under the new contract,

applauds both Able Forces and PEO STRI for supporting wounded warriors.

“It’s a difficult transition to go from a theater of operation to a civilian work environment. Both Able Forces and PEO STRI are able to understand the challenges of the wounded warrior,” he said. “This is an opportunity to make the transition easier by working side by side with active duty Soldiers, prior services’ vets and civilians who care deeply about all service members.”

Gust added that he believes he can be a valuable asset to PM CATT with his first-hand knowledge of combat, military training and as a former user of PEO STRI training devices.

“While I was in the Army for 22 years, I used many of the training systems that were developed and deployed by PEO STRI under PM CATT. I actually never knew that it was PEO STRI that developed these systems,” he explained. “I am a strong believer in the role of PEO STRI to develop systems that will help our brothers and sisters in uniform survive and complete their mission.”

He, like Santana, is very appreciative for the opportunity



**Tim Gust**

to be a part of PEO STRI’s Wounded Warrior Program.

“My impression of PEO STRI is that this is home for me. From the first day that I arrived, I felt welcomed and in a supportive environment as if I was back in the Army and in a unit again,” Gust said. “I am honored for the opportunity to contribute to developing systems that save lives on the battlefield.”

Author William Arthur Ward wrote, “feeling gratitude and not expressing it is like wrapping a present and not giving it.” As for the Wounded Warrior Program at PEO STRI, gratitude and giving are a two-way street.



By Marge Hadbavny, Protocol Officer

**ARMY BALL DINING 101**

For a formal place setting, the salad and bread dishes are on the left side of the dinner plate. The butter dish and drink glasses (water and wine goblets) are on the right side of the dinner plate. Remember to pass the salt and pepper shakers together.



CMWRA Picnic ..... June 9

Army’s 236th Birthday ..... June 14

TSIS ..... June 15-16

Army Birthday Ball..... June 18

Father’s Day ..... June 19

**INSIDE PEO STRI**

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# TEAM ORLANDO IN PHOTOS



U.S. Army Photo/Virginia Smallwood

Brig. Gen. Peter D. Utley (right) receives a demonstration of PM TRADE's Instrumentable Multiple Integrated Laser Engagement System (IMILES) products during his April 27 visit to PEO STRI. Providing real-time casualty effects for tactical engagement training, IMILES is used in several training scenarios such as direct fire and force-on-force situations.



U.S. Army Photo/Doug Schaub

Rob Reyenga, PEO STRI's deputy program executive officer, provides an overview of PEO STRI to Heidi Shyu, the principal deputy assistant secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology, during her May 12 visit to PEO STRI.



U.S. Army Photo/Doug Schaub

The Army/Air Force soccer team poses with the first place trophy after defeating the Navy/Marine Corps team 2-0 at the SHAPE Soccer Challenge April 28 at Blanchard Park. Team members include (top row) John Womack, Ricardo Guerrero, Randall Spain, Hugo Carneiro, Bob Wolfinger, Rick Copeland, Chris Camp, Phil Davis, Jason Malak, David McGovern, Adam Baldwin, Bill Jensen, (front row) Capt. James Cooper, Marco Mayer, Megan Allums, Glynn Vincent, Erik Hurley and Brian Serra.



U.S. Army Photo/Doug Schaub

The newest Webster University graduates celebrate receiving their Master of Business Administration degrees during the May 25 commencement ceremony held in Partnership III. The class consisted of military, civilian and contracted employees from the Army, Navy and Marine Corps in which eight of the 13 graduates are members of PEO STRI.



U.S. Army Photo/Virginia Smallwood

Maj. Gen. Richard Longo (left), the deputy commanding general for the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, presents the new Col. Gordon Graham, PM TRADE's project manager for Live Training Systems, a certificate during his May 6 promotion ceremony in Warfighter Park.



U.S. Army Photo/Doug Schaub

Employees representing each PM shop prepare for the Match Game during the Army's quarterly Town Hall meeting May 17. Points earned during the game are figured into the annual Org Day scores and count toward winning the first place trophy.

