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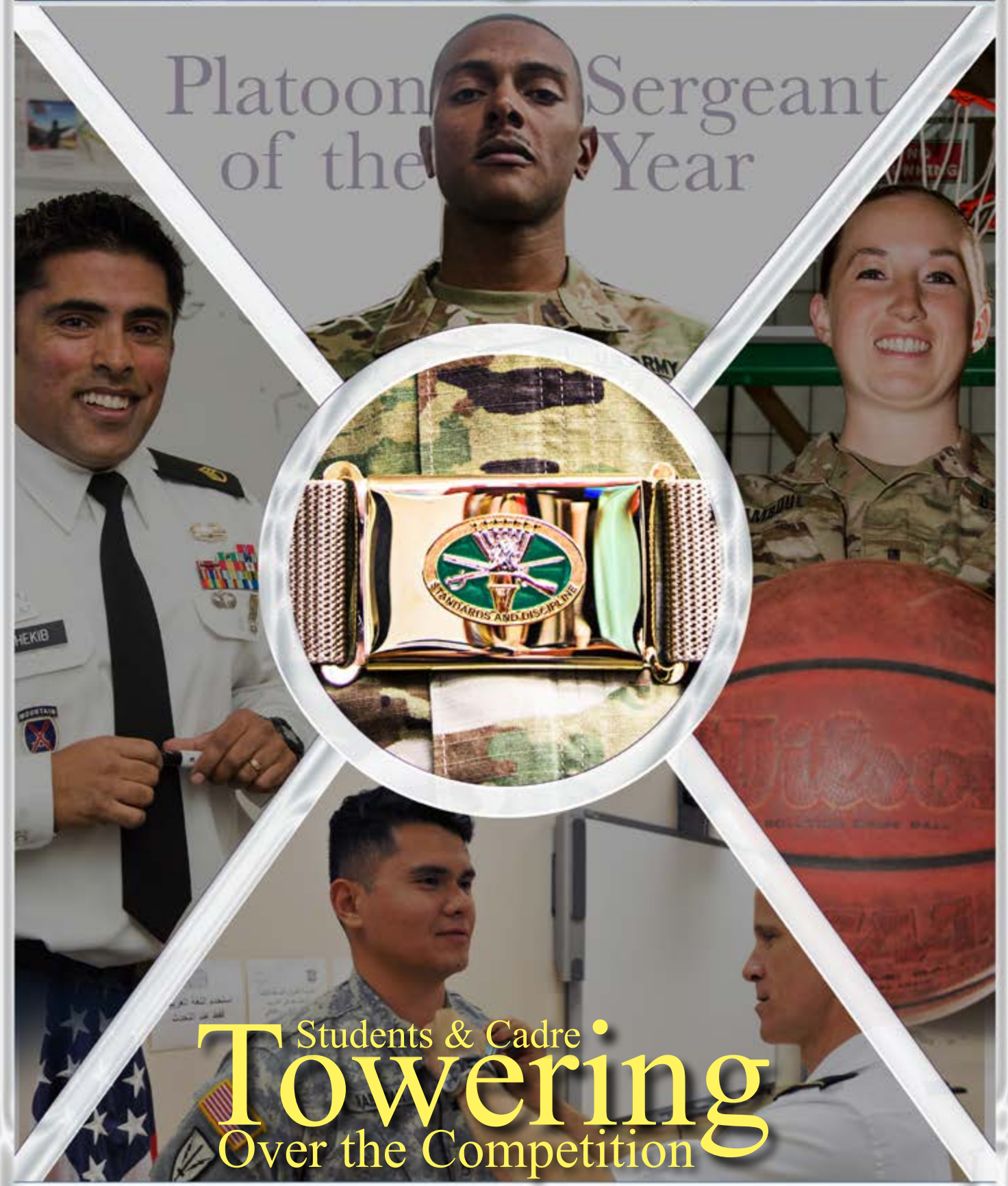

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SERVING THE MILITARY & CIVILIAN COMMUNITIES OF DLIFLC & PRESIDIO OF MONTEREY

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On Jan. 25, 2018, DLIFLC leadership conducted an official ribbon cutting ceremony for the Center for Leadership Development, a new organization with the mission to prepare faculty for the challenges and rigors of leadership positions throughout DLIFLC, enhancing the effectiveness of the foreign language education and training mission. (Photo by Natela Cutter)

FRONT COVER

(From top, clockwise) Staff Sgt. Bryan Ivery, Platoon Sgt. of the Year; 1st Lt. Michelle Ambuul, All-Army Weoman's Basketball; Staff Sgt. Alex Rababah, MIL of the Year; Staff Sgt. Mashal Shekib, Afghan native fulfills American dream. (Center) Platoon Sgt. of the Year awarded belt buckle.(Digital art by Amber Whittington)

BACK COVER

Join us to celebrate Language Day 2018 on May 11 on Soldier Field from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Tag us on all your social media photos. #DLIFLC

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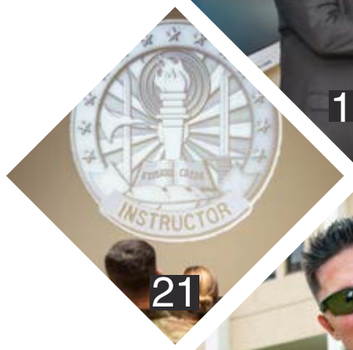
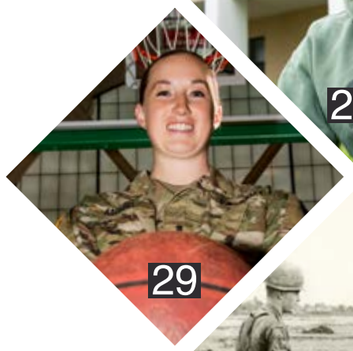




INSIDE THIS ISSUE

FROM THE COMMAND
From the Top 4
Command Sgt. Maj. Corner 5
LEADERSHIP
"Leadership principles of a loyal heretic" 6
NATIONAL HOLIDAY
Veterans Day 8
PROVOST
Farewell 8
Interim Provost 9
STAFF & FACULTY
Academic Senate takes lead on shared governance 10
ACCREDITATION
DLIFLC creates Tiger Teams for 2022 12
Preparing for reaffirmation of accreditation 13
2+/2+/2
Getting to 2+/2+/2: by 2022 14
FOREIGN AREA OFFICER
The slow road toward democracy: FAO program guest speaker discusses democracy issues in Africa 16
Looking for lessons learned: Cameroonian delegation 17
Dr. Huntley discusses North Korea: FAO program guest speaker on North Korea's nuclear ambitions 18
CLPM
CLP Support team picking up speed 20
Record attendance for CLPM workshop 21
MILITARY LANGUAGE INSTRUCTOR
Going the extra mile: DLIFLC MLI of the Year 22
Master Educator Course prepares service members to teach 24
First Army Instructor Badge Recognition 25
Soldier-linguist and Afghan native fulfills his American Dream 26
PLATOON SERGEANT OF THE YEAR
Ivery towers over competition 30
SPORTS
Officer says farewell to All-Army Women's Basketball 32
FACULTY
Coming full circle from student to teacher 34
ALUMNI
The Forgotten South Vietnamese Airborne 36
STAFF
Only in America: One family - nearly 60 years of service 39
ALUMNI
Seeing the light 40
RELIGION
Saint Jerome: The Patron Saint of military linguists 42
SUICIDE PREVENTION
Alum shaken by suicide shares son's story 44
STUDENTS
Korean students celebrate Hangul Day with alphabet contest 45
Visions 46
EDUCATION
Airman enjoys being student,mastering Chinese culture, language 48
Instructors use new tool to develop content 50
VISITOR
DOD Senior Language Authority visits Russian class 51
BACK COVER
Language Day 2018 ..... Back

FROM THE TOP

Col. Phillip J. Deppert

Welcome to the first edition of our Globe Magazine for 2018. We trust that the New Year has begun well in your units, headquarters, and organizations. We are confident that this will be a great year for the entire military linguist community. If I were to predict what is to come for DLIFLC in 2018, I would say that it will be a year of transition.

We have been working diligently to transition our classroom instruction for our students, our faculty recruitment and development, and all of our basic course curriculum to ensure we meet our 2+/2+/2 goals for our undergraduate programs by 2022. While we have annual targets for each program, many of them have already met, and some are exceeding those targets on the way to a sustained 2+/2+/2 for all our students. Our faculty continue to go above all expectations and are also updating all our curriculum to ensure you receive the most proficient linguists out in the field. Just to highlight the level of expertise our faculty bring to this effort: across our more than 1,600 faculty members, they bring an aggregate of over 13,000 years of dedicated service to DLIFLC, almost two thirds hold a Masters or Ph.D.!

> *"Our faculty continue to go above all expectations and are also updating all our curriculum to ensure you receive the most proficient linguists out in the field."*

Among the most significant changes at the beginning of the year for DLIFLC was the retirement of our Chief Academic Officer Dr. Betty Lou Leaver. Her service to this Institute and her impact will be long lasting. I asked Dr. Rob Savukinas to serve as our interim provost while we move through the process of selecting a new provost. Dr. Savukinas has served our students and DLIFLC for many years and we are confident he is the right person as we take time to make such an important selection.

This year will also mark the transition of many of the military leaders across all our Service units, to include my own. Serving the DLIFLC team since 2015 has been a humble honor; it is already bittersweet to know that I will be departing soon, but change is always good. The leadership of DLIFLC both military and civilian, have been the best I've had the opportunity to work with. They have trained me well and have always had our students' success as their number one priority.

Transitions can be a time of anxiety and concern about what is to come. This is a normal reaction, especially with an organization as complex and as large as ours. However, I am excited by the opportunity before us to set DLIFLC on a path of continued excellence. Much more to follow in the next edition of the Globe.

Phillip J Deppert
Col. Phillip J. Deppert
Commandant

COMMAND SGT. MAJ. CORNER

Command Sgt. Maj. Ryan J. Ramsey

Last year was an impressive year of achievements for the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center. We welcomed a number of distinguished visitors ranging from senior Department of Defense leaders to foreign delegations and academic universities. All our visitors were impressed with DLIFLC staff and students. Comments voiced by our guests about DLIFLC included: "Extremely innovative…Best practice for other DoD organizations to follow… Tremendous team dedicated to the mission."

The Secretary of Army, the Army Chief of Staff, and the Sergeant Major of Army recognized Staff Sgt. Bryan Ivery in Washington, D.C., for winning the Department of the Army Advanced Individual Training Platoon Sergeant of the Year competition. This recognition is indicative of the immense talent here at DLIFLC.

> *"…I would like to challenge those who are stationed around the world to tell us your stories for inclusion in the Globe."*

Additionally, we commenced language training for the Army's new Security Force Assistance Brigade Soldiers. This initiative facilitates the important mission of enabling combatant commanders to accomplish theater security objectives by training, advising, assisting, accompanying and enabling allied and partnered security forces. DLIFLC plays a vital role for the SFAB's language training and force protection. The importance of the SFAB Soldiers having foreign language and cultural competencies was recognized immediately by the Army leadership, starting with the Army Chief of Staff, Gen. Mark Milley, a DLIFLC graduate.

For the first time in DLIFLC's 76 year history, two Military Language Instructors received the Army Instructor Badge, which puts them on par with their peers across the Army and better positions them to compete in their career field and steward the profession. This program helps our NCOs to better teach, coach, and mentor our students in the classrooms. More than half of our MLIs are in the process of obtaining their Instructor Badge this year. The Globe magazine wishes to expand its reach and touch all our linguists around the globe in 2018. I would like to challenge those who are stationed around the world to tell us your stories for inclusion in the Globe, providing context and inspiration to those who are in the DLIFLC classroom today and working hard to attain your level of linguistic expertise. This publication can be the hallmark that will keep all our linguists around the globe informed and inspired. Whether you are an Air Force Technical Sergeant stationed in Japan, a Navy Master Chief on a ship to Bahrain, an Army Staff Sergeant in Korea, or a Marine Corps Lance Corporal in Hawaii, the Globe is a voice which speaks for all of us and documents our history.

Ryan J. Ramsey
Command Sgt. Maj.
Ryan J. Ramsey

"Leadership principles of a loyal heretic"

Story and photos by Patrick Bray

Col. Wiley Barnes, the assistant commandant of the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center and commander of the U.S. Air Force 517th Training Group, spoke at an institute leadership forum to staff and faculty Jan. 25.

Barnes titled his talk "Leadership principles of a loyal heretic" and made several book recommendations to support the subject of leadership.

"A loyal heretic is a person loyal to the Nation, his service and mission while challenging the status quo in a constructive way," said Barnes, who uses the Webster Dictionary definition of heretic as "one who differs in opinion from an accepted belief or doctrine."

Barnes did not coin the phrase himself, but attributes it to Lt. Gen. Paul K. Carlton, Jr., the 17th Surgeon General of the Air Force. Carlton had spoken to a class of officer candidates at the Officer Training School at Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama, while Barnes was serving as an instructor there from 2002-2003.

A loyal heretic is a way of thinking, according to Barnes, who then challenged the staff and faculty to "not just do what you're told, but be informed of the situation or mission and make positive change." He said they must adhere to five leadership characteristics or principle and five disciplines to do so.

The leadership characteristics or principles are experience, education, natural talent or intellect, vision, and courage.

The disciplines are mutual respect for others, doing the right thing for the right reason, leading by example, continuously improving and adapting systems thinking.

Barnes offered a book recommendation with respect to the principle of vision.

In the "Opposable Mind" by Roger Martin, he proposes that an opposable mind can take two separate and distinct ideas or approaches, find the best characteristics of those two for the situation or the mission and integrate them to create a third approach," said Barnes.

Barnes then spoke about cultivating that vision at DLIFLC. It will require courage, which he more plainly described as accepting risk.

"Accepting risk is part of what we do. If we didn't, we would never leave our house. There would be no risk in personal relationships or driving down the highway," said Barnes.

"Life is fraught with peril," continued Barnes, but he said "we have to embrace it and understand how to manage risk."

For continuously improving, Barnes introduced the OODA loop, which refers to the decision cycle of observe, orient, decide and act, and then repeat the cycle.

> *"A loyal heretic is a person loyal to the Nation, his service and mission while challenging the status quo in a constructive way,"*

"And that's where the heresy comes in. People will get stuck, whether they realize it or not, in the way things have always been. That does not constitute a positive, innovative, adaptive or productive way of doing things," said Barnes. Loyal heretics will keep the constant cycle going.

The OODA loop was developed by Col. John Boyd, who is considered the greatest U.S. fighter pilot in history, and Barnes recommended another book: "Boyd: The Fighter Pilot Who Changed the Art of War" by Robert Coram. Not only could Boyd fly fighter jets but he knew the inner workings of aircraft and was constantly improving them. As a pilot, his theories of lightweight aircraft led to the F-16 fighter jet still used today.

"As we look at getting to the goals we set for ourselves, such as getting to 2+/2+/2, it will also require systems thinking," said Barnes, speaking of the fifth of the five disciplines he previously mentioned. "Everything we do is a system of systems, a process interlinked with processes."

Barnes then recommended reading the "Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization" by Peter Senge, which focuses on using systems thinking to develop learning organizations.

The final book recommendation focuses on examining the decision making process. "Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis" by Graham T. Allison provides a case study of the rationale behind government decision making during one of the most dangerous events in U.S. history and how this decision-making process can be applied in the future.

"The last characteristic is personal courage reinforced by your conviction and adhering to those values of your oath of office," said Barnes, who added that "you can have courage because you've developed yourself through education and experience."

"It is not easy sometimes being a loyal heretic," Barnes said in summary. The journey to leadership has to begin on day one when staff and faculty as federal servants take their oath of office and standards and expectations are established, according to Barnes.

Therefore, as a learning organization, DLIFLC has established the Center for Leadership Development to grow its leadership capacity. It develops current and future leaders on their journey to leadership who are committed to promoting a highly engaged and positive workforce.

Barnes has a Master of Arts in Organizational Management from George Washington University in Washington, D.C. He also graduated numerous Air Force training schools, the Joint Forces Staff College in Norfolk, Virginia, and, from July 2014 to June 2015, he served as a National Defense Fellow at the Atlantic Council in Washington, D.C., a think tank that encourages cooperation between North America and Europe.

The Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center held a Veterans Day ceremony Nov. 9th on the upper Presidio of Monterey with military personnel, veterans, faculty, staff and students in attendance. Army retired lieutenant colonel, Mayor of Del Rey Oaks Jerry Edelen, was guest speaker, with mayors and officials from seven different local municipalities.

Veterans Day

attended by Monterey Peninsula leadership

Story by Natela Cutter
Photos by Amber K. Whittington

The Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center held a Veterans Day ceremony Nov. 9th on the middle Presidio of Monterey with military personnel, veterans, faculty, staff and students in attendance.

"We are gathered here today to honor our Veterans, and to remember their courage and sacrifices they have made to defend this great nation of ours," said guest speaker, Jerry Edelen, mayor of Del Rey Oaks.

Attending the event were mayors and city officials of the seven surrounding municipalities. Earlier in the day, veterans and guests were invited to a social hour with light refreshments in order to mingle with your service members who study at DLIFLC.

"This location that you have chosen to honor this special day is a fitting one," said Edelen, pointing to the three slabs of the Berlin Wall that have been mounted in the courtyard of the Presidio of Monterey and serve as a reminder of the Cold War.

"During the Cold War, I served behind this wall in the Berlin Brigade during the years 1985-1988," said Edelen, himself a retired lieutenant colonel, Ranger qualified and graduate of the West Point Academy.

"You future veterans … study hard to master strategic languages so that you provide critical, timely information to your chain of command so that the right decisions can be made, battles can be won, and lives may be saved," he said.

DLIFLC provides resident instruction in 17 languages at the Presidio of Monterey, California, with the capacity to instruct another 65 languages in Washington, D.C. The Institute has graduated more than 220,000 linguists since 1941. In addition, multiple language training detachments exists at sites in the U.S., Europe, Hawaii and Korea, spanning all the U.S. geographic combatant commands in support of the total force.

Farewell

DLIFLC Provost Dr. Betty Lou Leaver

For a while, I have been on a journey toward retirement. As most know, I was planning to retire last July, but with a new 2+ goal and my experience in achieving 3 and higher elsewhere, it seemed important to stay until DLIFLC was well down the path toward achieving the new requirement.

We have indeed made progress, thanks to the Advanced Language Academy and other faculty development and curriculum support efforts. Those efforts will continue and get better with a revised basic course Instructor Certification Program; many thanks to the Academic Senate, Faculty Advisory Councils, and Deans' Council for their input into the revision.

I know the seeds have been sown for even greater progress in 2018. I pray for a year where all work together to support each other, leader and teacher alike. Thank you for sharing my journey these last five years as your provost. I have listened to what you have told me (with and without cookies!) I have learned from you. I have tried to support you in your journeys. And, I have loved having you with me on my journey.

I hope I have been a good Johnny Appleseed. Johnny never saw the trees he planted grow to maturity. Neither will I, but I trust all of you to nurture diagnostic teaching, open architecture, and transformative approaches and to work together to transform DLIFLC's curriculum in order to take DLIFLC's language students where few have gone before! Working with you on that goal has been a sincere pleasure and knowing you has been a blessing.

Although technically retiring, I am moving into my next career phase, one that is more flexible and stretches beyond Level 2, but language will always be at my core.

Wishing you all the best. I look forward to hearing about your future successes.

Interim Provost

DLIFLC Interim Provost Dr. Robert Savukinas

It is my honor to serve as your Interim Provost. I am sincerely humbled by this responsibility, and I will ensure continuity in leadership and diligently work toward DLIFLC's goal of achieving higher levels of foreign language proficiency.

Our priorities remain focused on student success, and I will continue to support the faculty and staff in their efforts of achieving positive progress toward reaching both 2+/2+/2 Undergraduate Education goals and 3/3 and beyond through our Continuing Education Directorate.

Thus far a lot of positive work has been accomplished. Our faculty and staff's dedication to the mission in producing the best culturally based professional military linguists is certainly awe inspiring. To meet demand in growing languages, the Institute will continue to press forward with hiring and retaining high quality faculty. Having participated in the reinvigoration of the Academic Senate, Faculty Advisory Councils, and shared governance concept, I will continue to support this vital process that is an important tool of communication and collaboration between faculty and leadership.

In March, DLIFLC will be hosting an official accreditation team that is expected to reaffirm DLIFLC's degree granting authority. Many of our faculty and staff have put long hours into preparing the self-study, and I would like to thank all those who devoted their time and effort to this important task. It is incredibly important that we maintain our accreditation and continue to be able to award college credit for successful completion of DLIFLC's resident programs and grant AA degrees in foreign language to military students whose job is to protect the security of our nation. Each change in leadership creates a sense of uncertainty which is normal. I will strive to support you in any way I can in the coming months. I will need everyone's help to succeed and look forward to meeting and talking to as many of you as possible and getting your ideas of how to keep our great organization on the path to success.

Academic Senate takes lead on shared governance

Story and photos by Natela Cutter

Everyone at the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center knows that the Commandant's preferred venue of interaction with faculty, staff and students is face-to-face, normally conducted through Town Halls, or on his well-known weekly walks to the school houses.

On most occasions during the Town Halls, Col. Phil Deppert, DLIFLC Commandant, will ask the assembled group "what are we for?," normally eliciting a loud answer by the audience - "for the students!," in reference to more than 2,500 military service members who learn one of the 17 foreign languages taught at DLIFLC.

Today, however, Deppert turns to the first row in the auditorium, spots a dark-eyed young man and says, "Aziz, come up here and tell the faculty and staff what you are for!"

"I am for the faculty sir," says Aziz Popal, a confident-looking young man in his early 30s, well dressed and sporting a brilliant white smile. Popal is the new Academic Senate president who turned the organization around over the past year into a model of shared governance between faculty, staff, and the Institute leadership.

In 2016, Deppert directed a review of shared governance, to analyze the extent to which DLIFLC groups were fulfilling their stated purpose and mission, with the intent of creating a clear pathway for faculty and staff members to have their voices heard in the Institute's decision-making processes.

"Shared governance has been reenergized," said Popal, in an interview, explaining that these efforts had fallen by the way side in recent years and that the Academic Senate and Faculty Advisory Councils had lost their luster for participants throughout DLIFLC's schools and directorates, with faculty numbering around 1,650.

"The Faculty Advisory Council and Academic Senate are the primary organizations through which the faculty engages in shared governance and they represent the collective voice of the faculty," explained Popal.

"Our board first realized that the bylaws needed to be redone, and we asked each and every Faculty Advisory Council member for input. We strongly communicated that all (faculty members) are welcome (to participate)….. (and that it is) open to everybody."

With a new set of bylaws and a reenergized base, Popal says that some of the first accomplishments include sitting at the table with leadership at important decision-making meetings. Members participated in the 2022 Tiger Teams that were created by the Commandant to assess if DLIFLC would be ready for the challenges coming its way in the future.

Popal himself participates in every Town Hall, where the Commandant calls upon him to speak to faculty and staff, to explain his work and the roles of the two organizations.

"We currently have Col. Deppert visiting the FACs, a completely new initiative, and he is taking the same message of shared governance with him to every school. This sends a message about how much DLI is paying attention to the issue of shared governance," said Popal.

Popal says that the next move of the Academic Senate will be to ensure representation in the two bodies provided at DLIFLC Language Training Detachments, at 23 locations beyond Monterey, where faculty and staff members can number from two to three, up to 25 and more. Another initiative includes visiting local universities to share best practices and ideas for improvement.

"If someone is heard in the process, I think shared governance is being achieved. The fact that we are being heard is what gives us the power to help the decision makers make an informed decision, "said Popal, referring to his organization's role to inform DLIFLC leadership about faculty and staff opinions regarding issues that can pertain to curriculum, organization of schools or a variety of other academic issues.

Col. Phil Deppert, commandant of the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center, poses with the faculty advisory council members and academic senate leadership.

DCSOPS director Dr. Clare Bugary

DLIFLC creates Tiger Team for 2022

Story and photos by Natela Cutter

Asking seemingly simple questions often leads to very complicated answers, but can also give rise to productive solutions. Such was the case last May when Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center Commandant Col. Phil Deppert asked leadership if DLIFLC was properly organized for success by 2022, the year set for the reaching of the 2+/2+/2 higher graduation standard.

We caught up with DLIFLC's Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations Director, Dr. Clare Bugary, to ask what transpired with the Tiger Team and the five key subcommittees that had been created to analyze the issues identified by leadership. DCSOPS is DLIFLC's central coordination office, in charge of everything from scheduling classes, working with the Services' requirements, to spearheading the Institute's strategic planning processes.

Q and A:

Q. Why is increasing DLIFLC graduation standards important?

A: To understand why higher proficiency is important, you need to understand DLIFLC's mission and where we fit in the big picture. The Institute is run by the Army, which is the executive agent. However, we are the primary language training provider for the Department of Defense and we therefore train service members from all four branches. Our students will go on to serve sensitive intelligence missions critical for national security. The world is ever changing and our graduates will be on the forefront of protecting our national interest in light of these changes. In fact, our stakeholders are leaning on us to increase our graduation proficiency standards so our graduates are better able to support these critical missions right out of school.

Q: What is DLIFLC currently doing to reach higher proficiency standards?

A: This new graduation standard is no small task. We have been asked to raise proficiency by half a level in each modality of listening, reading, and speaking for all of our language programs. We anticipate it will take at least another five years, 2022, before we can be postured to meet that new goal. That means retooling our curriculum, training faculty, and ensuring we have a ready, motivated, and prepared student population. To drill down into the areas needing improvement, we created a Tiger Team consisting of all levels of representatives, from directors and deans to team leads, and all those with significant experience at DLIFLC.

Q: What areas did the Tiger Team address?

A: To answer the "big" question - Are we properly organized to meet future challenges - we identified areas of concern or potential issues – these included span of control within the school houses, curriculum, technology, evaluation and assessment, semester scheduling, and Military Language Instructor utilization. We formed subcommittees of Subject Matter Experts and interested parties to take a hard look at these areas and see if there were any structural changes that needed to be made. Later, a subcommittee focused on faculty development was also formed.

Q: What were the results of the subcommittees?

A: The subcommittees identified numerous areas for improvement, and as a result, initiatives such as establishing a Curriculum Review Board, opening an instructional/educational technology office, and revitalizing the Technology Executive Steering Committee were put in place. Further work is being done to reduce the span of control within the basic course language departments (reducing the number of employees supervised by a department chair, for example), fine tuning product development and evaluation project prioritization, as well as improving communication between the Services and the schools.

Sometimes it is important to just step back and take a hard look at what you are for and how you are getting after it. The work of the Tiger Team and subcommittees continues, the conversations are sometimes difficult, but in the spirit of share governance, the Institute will be better postured to meet the challenges of the future.

**DLIFLC's scoring system is based on the Interagency Language Roundtable scale. For more information go to www.govtilr.org/*

Preparing for reaffirmation of accreditation

Story and photos by Natela Cutter

Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center leadership welcomed Dr. Jill Stearns, chair of Institute's accreditation visiting team, on Jan. 18 for an introduction and tour of DLIFLC in advance of an official accreditation visit this March that will reaffirm DLIFLC's degree granting authority.

Stearns, who is president of Modesto Junior College, will lead a team of 11 peer reviewers that will be examining DLIFLC's mission, academic programs, processes, and services.

"I am very pleased to be here today," stated Stearns, as she explained that DLIFLC's accreditation process in March will be her 11th time participating on a review team. Stearns was accompanied by Dr. Jennifer Hamilton, Modesto Junior College Vice President of Instruction.

"The intent of this visit is to introduce Dr. Stearns and Dr. Hamilton to all the similarities and differences between a military educational institution such as DLI and a typical community college," said Dr. Erin O'Reilly, DLIFLC's accreditation liaison officer, in charge of drafting a 300 page document that has been turned over to the accreditation team for review.

Dr. Jill Stearns (center), president of Modesto College and chair of the DLIFLC accreditation team, listens to DLIFLC Commandant Col. Phil Deppert in an introductory brief about the Institute and its mission. Her deputy, Dr. Jennifer Hamilton, accompanied Stearns on a one-day visit before the March official accreditation visit.

Accreditation serves as a quality assurance process for educational institutions. The rigorous self-evaluation and follow-on external peer review ensures that colleges and universities are held accountable to standards of academic excellence.

DLIFLC must go through a re-accreditation process every seven years in order to maintain its degree granting authority to issue Associate of Art degrees in foreign language to qualified students.

The institute has granted more than 14,000 AA degrees since 2002 and is currently accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges.

In addition to the AA degree, institutional accreditation is valuable for DLIFLC graduates in that other colleges and universities are more likely to accept DLIFLC courses for transfer credit as service members go on to pursue their higher education goals. Accreditation is a public recognition that the work of DLIFLC's students, faculty, and staff is of the highest academis quality.

Getting to 2+/2+/2: by 2022

Story by Natela Cutter

After 9/11, one thing became abundantly clear to the intelligence community – there is a dire need for more and better qualified linguists.

Seven months later, in April 2002, then National Security Agency director, Lt. Gen. Michael Hayden, issued a memo establishing the Interagency Roundtable Level standard for Cryptologic Language Analysts to perform assignments to a 3/3 Level. He acknowledged this meant "adjustments in training, assignments and numbers of billets. These adjustments will not be easy, but they are absolutely essential," he stated.

"As staff directly involved in the training of CLAs, we took this memo very seriously and started planning accordingly, said Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center Chief of Staff, Steven Collins.

To reach these new standards, DLIFLC decreased the teacher-student ratio, introduced innovative technology in the classroom, improved curriculum, trained instructors to teach at higher levels, and increased its presence worldwide through Language Training Detachments, Mobile Training Teams, and online learning products.

"Essentially, we have been working toward this goal for years, but now we have direct support at the highest decision-maker levels," explained Collins

In May 2016, to meet the NSA standard, the Department of Defense Senior Language Authority directed DLIFLC to change its basic course graduation standard to 2+ in both listening and reading by September 30, 2022.

"It is important to understand that the new DOD Instruction 5160.70 states that the CLA requirement is 3/3," emphasized Collins.

On Oct. 1, 2016, DLIFLC Commandant, Col. Phil Deppert, directed all faculty, staff, students and military cadre in the Undergraduate Education Schools to work closely together to reach the 2+/2+/2 proficiency goals.

"My goal was to have the Military Language Instructors, who help our faculty leadership run the schools, aid in guiding with simple planning techniques to reach a desired end-state," said Deppert.

With new facilities stood up and a sophisticated technology infrastructure established, the current push to reach the higher proficiency goals essentially concentrates on three pillars of focus: prepared students, trained and ready faculty, and an improved and flexible curriculum.

"The difference now is that we have moved from talking about the plan to actual implementation of that plan. We now expect students reach the 2+ level and we continue to remind them of this reality every time we get a chance," said Deppert.

Accordingly, the phase-in process of the 2+ higher graduation standard was widely discussed at DLIFLC's Annual Program Review held Nov. 16, attended by 10 senior language authorities representing the Services and the DOD.

"It is not going to be an easy process, nor did we expect it to be, but reality dictates that we need to do what is good for the Services and for the defense of our nation," stated Deppert.

2+Listening	Sufficient comprehension to understand most routine social demands and most conversations on work requirements as well as some discussions on concrete topics related to particular interests and special fields of competence. Often shows remarkable ability and ease of understanding, but under tension or pressure may break down.
2+Reading	Sufficient comprehension to understand most factual material in non-technical prose as well as some discussions on concrete topics related to special professional interests. Is markedly more proficient at reading materials on a familiar topic. Is able to separate the main ideas and details from lesser ones and uses that distinction to advance understanding.
2 Speaking	Able to satisfy routine social demands and limited work requirements. Can handle routine work-related interactions that are limited in scope. In more complex and sophisticated work-related tasks, language usage generally disturbs the native speaker. Can handle with confidence, but not with facility, most normal, high-frequency social conversational situations including extensive, but casual conversations about current events, as well as work, family, and autobiographical information.

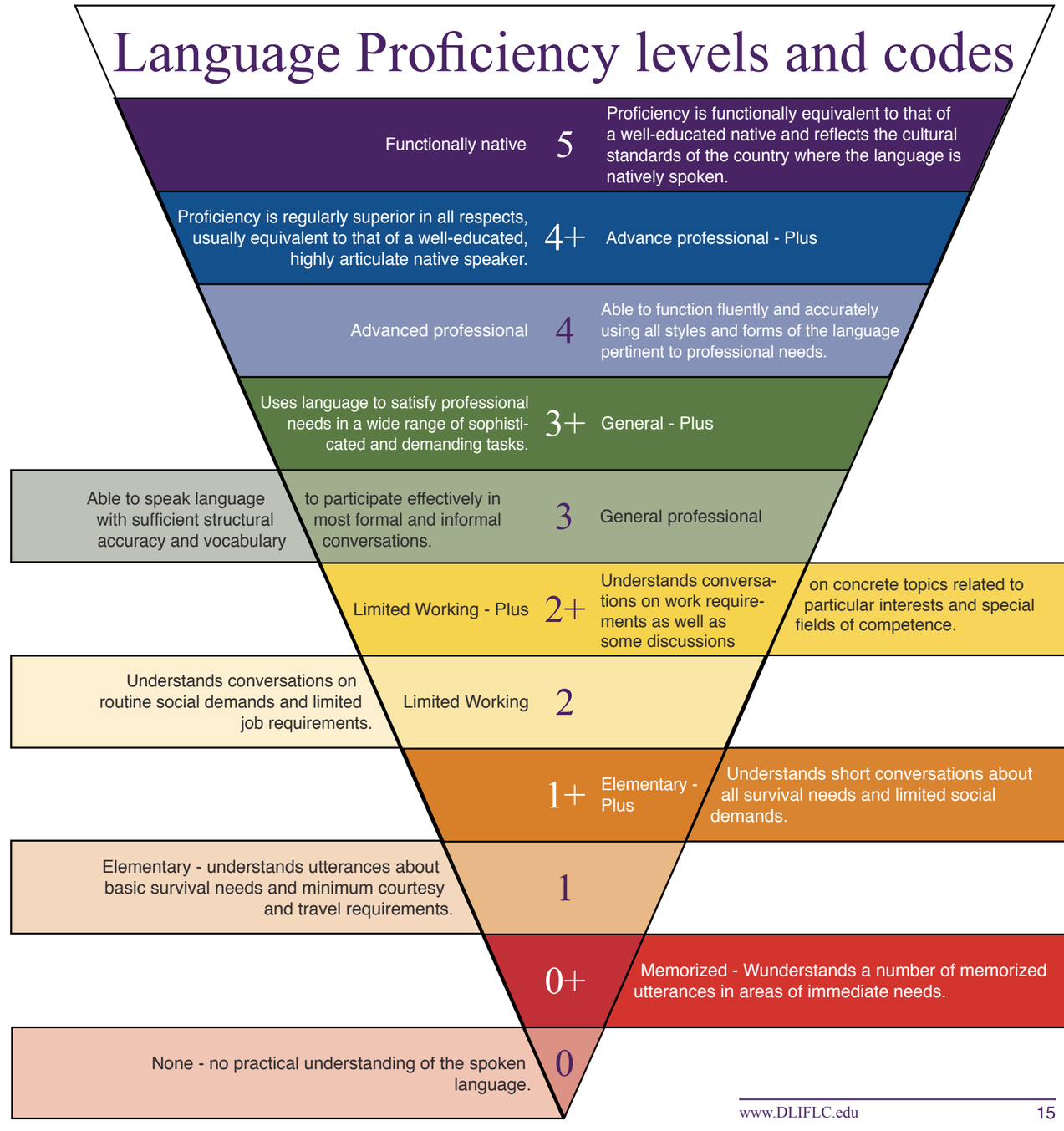
Defense Language Proficiency Test System

The Defense Language Proficiency Test System serves to evaluate the ability of Service Members to understand written and/or spoken material presented in a foreign language, and measures the required ability to speak a foreign language.

The designation 0+, 1+, 2+, etc. will be assigned when proficiency substantially exceeds one skill level and does not fully meet the criteria for the next level.

For more detailed information go to www.govtilr.org

Language Proficiency levels and codes



Nicholas Tomb, program manager of the Center for Civil-Military Relations Africa Program at the Naval Postgraduate School, in Monterey, speaks to U.S. Army Foreign Area Officers in language training at the DLIFLC, Sept. 20, about Africa.

The slow road toward democracy

FAO program guest speaker discusses democracy issues in Africa

Story and photos by Patrick Bray

You may be eligible to win a $5 million dollar award on the African continent if you are willing to step down from the presidency after your term expires. This is democracy Africa style.

Peaking student interest, this is how Prof. Nicholas Tomb, program manager of the Center for Civil-Military Relations Africa Program at the neighboring Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, began his lecture Sept. 20 "Beyond Democracy in Africa" to Foreign Area Officers studying either at NPS or the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center.

"Mo Ibrahim, a Sudanese businessman and telecom magnate, offers the Mo Ibrahim Award to any African president who steps down from power at the end of his term," explained Tomb.

Since 2006, only four African leaders have been honored with the $5 million award, proving the Ibrahim Prize for Achievement in African Leadership to be one of the world's most exclusive awards, explained Tomb.

"The fact that so few African leaders have accepted the award and stood down demonstrates how much money is to be made by staying in power," Tomb continued. "There's this perception that Africa is a very poor place, and there are certainly a lot of poor people, but in reality, it is an extremely wealthy continent."

Many African nations face a lot of problems on the road to democracy such as economic, security and demographic challenges, along with corruption, natural resource concerns, climate change, desertification, and food scarcity.

"The governors who are elected have to meet the needs of the people or the people will vote them out and bring in somebody who will do a better job representing their interest," said Tomb, explaining why civilian regimes perform better as opposed to "rule through the barrel of a gun."

Though Africa is poor, there are still "massive economic opportunities," said Tomb. From 1970 to 2008, Africa has experienced enormous economic growth becoming the third largest growing economic region in the world.

"People often ask me 'why does Africa matter?'" said Tomb. "I turn around and ask 'why does China think Africa matters?'"

Resources are incredibly abundant in Africa, which the Chinese seek, along with access to fast growing markets. China is building infrastructure on the continent that African countries otherwise could not afford, especially improvements to ports, highways and railroads.

Demographically, 50 percent of the population is under 20 years of age, more than a billion people, and the population continues to grow rapidly, according to Tomb. But, large parts of the population face a humanitarian crises such as major epidemics like Ebola or AIDS.

Additionally, millions of people have been displaced by terrorist activity such as Boko Haram, which has emerged as an extension of Al Qaeda in northeastern Nigeria and parts of Niger, Chad and Cameroon.

All of this contributes to security challenges, triggering U.N., the African National Union and the European Union peacekeeping operations take place across the continent. This tension has reinforced terrorist activities such as Boko Haram and Al-Shabaab, an active militant group in East Africa. Both have adopted the black flag of ISIS, which has plagued parts of Iraq, Syria and Libya.

"If African countries can get governance right then there are incredible opportunities," said Tomb. "Democratically elected, civilian controlled armed forces lead to security and better governed countries, which leads to more economic development and ultimately a better place to be."

Tomb's teaching focus is on executive education, conflict management, conflict resolution, post-conflict recovery, civil-military relations and civil society organizations. He spoke as part of the FAO program's monthly U.S. Army officer professional development program, which is a critical part of FAO training at DLIFLC.

Looking for lessons learned

Cameroonian delegation

Story Natela Cutter, photos by Patrick Bray

(Above) Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center Assistant Commandant, Col. Wiley Barnes, welcomes members of the Cameroonian delegation (left to right) Dr. Jean Eudes Biem, Col. Thomas Engoloella, and Prof. Wullson Mvomoela. (Below) Prof. Wullson Mvomoela talks to students in a French class.

By NordNordWest [Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons

The International School for Security Forces, a Cameroon-based Institution for training and research on peace operations and security, visited the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center Sept. 18-19, to explore opportunities of sharing lessons learned in foreign language instruction with faculty and staff.

"The hosting of the Cameroonian delegation was a distinct pleasure," said DLIFLC Chief of Staff, Steve Collins, referring to the delegation that included individuals from Cameroon's Ministry of Defense and the United Nations Development Program. "The delegation is interested in expanding their foreign language program at their training center, possibly adding Arabic, in addition to teaching French and English," Collins explained.

In 2007, Cameroon opened an international training center for African police to prepare them for U.N. peacekeeping operations on the continent with significant aid from France. Last year, the U.S. trained more than 27,000 peacekeepers for the UN and African Union missions.

"We want to learn from a world class institution the latest standards, techniques, approaches and tools for effective language training," said one Cameroonian official.

The delegation had the opportunity to meet with DLIFLC faculty and curriculum development experts, as well as participate in a round table discussion about DLIFLC's use of immersion programs in foreign countries for Monterey-based students in the basic course programs.

The delegation also visited a French and Persian Farsi basic course class, where they were able to ask students questions about their studies as well as share details about their home country of 23 million people.

French is one of the fastest growing foreign language departments at DLIFLC, where 17 languages and dialects are taught to all four branches of the Services.

Dr. Huntley discusses North Korea

FAO program guest speaker on North Korea's nuclear ambitions

Story & photos by Patrick Bray

Dr. Wade Huntley, academic director of the Regional Security Education Program at the Naval Postgraduate School, in Monterey, spoke to U.S. Army Foreign Area Officers in language training at the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center along with students from the Institute's Korean School, Aug. 16, about North Korea and its nuclear weapons program.

Huntley's talk came merely two weeks after North Korea's threat to strike the U.S. Territory of Guam prompting U.S. Secretary of Defense, James Mattis, to say that, "The United States and our allies have the demonstrated capabilities and unquestionable commitment to defend ourselves from an attack," and also stated that, "The DPRK (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) should cease any consideration of actions that would lead to the end of its regime and the destruction of its people."

Huntley subtitled his talk "Dr. Strange Kim (Jong Un)… or, how I learned to stop worrying and love the crazy dictator with the bomb." Kim Jong Un took power in North Korea in 2011 after the death of his father, Kim Jong Il.

"Why does North Korea do anything it does?" asked Huntley, who explained that the motives of the world's most secretive and isolated regime are sometimes baffling. "Most analysts come to a consensus that the primary focus of North Korea is regime survival."

Huntley continued with a detailed lecture on North Korea's quest to obtain the bomb.

Beyond the Cold War

South Korea and the U.S. have maintained a bilateral alliance for more than 60 years. Born out of the Korean War, the alliance grew stronger, both during and after the Cold War. Today, both nations "go together," as their slogan suggests, to meet the security challenges of Northeast Asia.

A major focus for the alliance is still North Korea as the alliance has faced thousands of North Korea armistice violations in six decades.

In the 1980s, Mikhail Gorbachev, the last leader of the Soviet Union, pushed North Korea to sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. Huntley discussed the 1970 treaty, which commits states with nuclear weapons to pursue disarmament, while states without nuclear weapons agree to forgo developing or acquiring weapons of their own.

Then, the world began to change dramatically. The Berlin Wall fell and the Tiananmen Square protests for democracy in Beijing both took place in 1989, followed by the downfall and 1991 collapse of the Soviet Union, North Korea's main benefactor.

"The Soviet Union left North Korea out in the cold (after the collapse)," said Huntley.

At that time in history, many believed that North Korea would be next.

"In the early to mid-1990s North Korea was imploding. We didn't realize it then because the problem was chronic rather than acute," said Huntley.

North Korea's nuclear ambitions may have begun as a way to ensure regime survival, Huntley also added, leading to the first nuclear crisis.

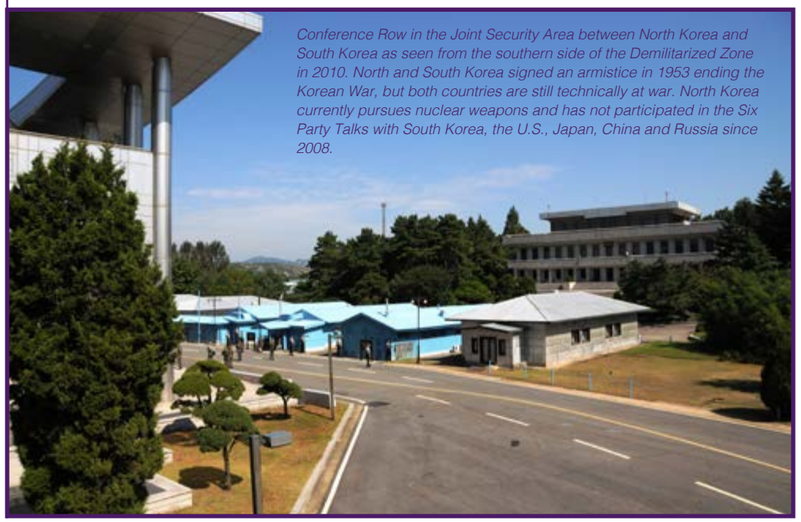
In 1994, North Korea expelled investigators from the International Atomic Energy Agency instigating the first nuclear crisis. This prompted the Clinton Administration to deal with the situation. Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter traveled to North Korea and was able to work out an agreement with President Kim Il Sung. Known as the Agreed Framework, it allowed North Korea to replace nuclear reactors with light-water reactors, which is allowable under the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty.

Kim Il Sung died later in 1994 and was followed by his son, Kim Jong Il.

Because of the belief that North Korea would be the next communist state to collapse, "most Koreans supported the Agreed Framework thinking that reunification would occur before the light-water reactors were ever completed," said Huntley.

In 2002, the Agreed Framework collapsed as a result of a dispute between the Bush Administration and the government of Kim Jong Il. North Korea pulled out of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and restarted its nuclear program, leading to the second nuclear crisis.

The Bush Administration began a series of talks that included North and South Korea, the U.S., Japan, China and Russia – the Six Party Talks – because the U.S. favored a broad, regional discussion rather than bilateral negotiations. The talks had some success throughout the remainder of the Bush Administration but have not occurred since 2008 when North Korea walked away.



Conference Row in the Joint Security Area between North Korea and South Korea as seen from the southern side of the Demilitarized Zone in 2010. North and South Korea signed an armistice in 1953 ending the Korean War, but both countries are still technically at war. North Korea currently pursues nuclear weapons and has not participated in the Six Party Talks with South Korea, the U.S., Japan, China and Russia since 2008.

> *"Why does North Korea do anything it does?"*

Most proliferate states have had years of experience running a research reactor as opposed to North Korea, which decided to go full on nuclear before having a research reactor. It takes longer for countries without a full industrial base, such as North Korea, to construct nuclear weapons. North Korea's 2006 test was unsuccessful.

In 2009, North Korea's first minimally successful nuclear test took place instigating the third nuclear crisis. North Korea may have achieved at least some part of its nuclear ambitions without full weaponization, but it has still not fully developed its delivery systems. It may have succeeded in building medium-range ballistic missiles capable of hitting targets in South Korea and Japan, but has not developed intercontinental ballistic missiles, or ICBMs – heavy space rockets – capable of hitting long range targets. The North could hit Seoul, but according to Huntley, that is North Korea's "prize" and may not be willing to drop nuclear weapons anywhere south.

The biggest dilemma in all of this, Huntley argued, is that if the U.S. were to accept North Korea as a nuclear state, it could null the 1970 Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty causing other states to pursue nuclear weapons, but it is already obvious that North Korea has nuclear capabilities, according to Huntley.

The role of China in North Korea

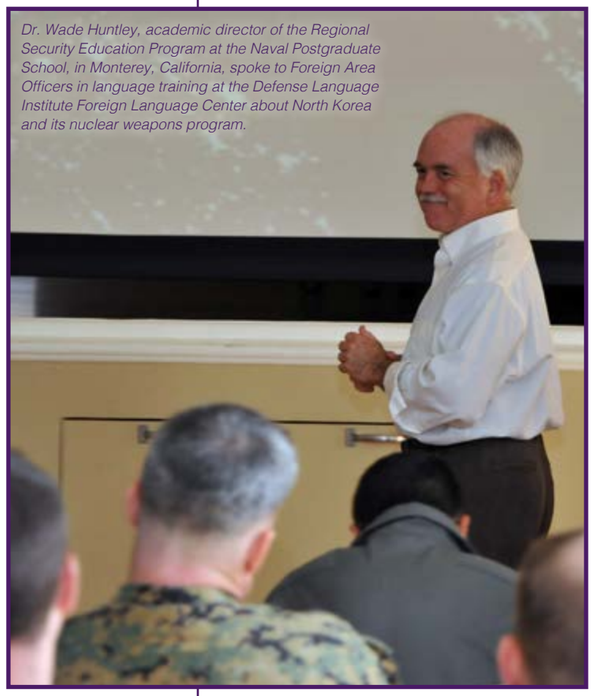
The North's ally throughout the Cold War had been primarily Russia, Huntley emphasized. Today when considering North Korea one must also consider the role of China, which supports maintaining the status quo in Northeast Asia. The region is an economic powerhouse with a black hole, North Korea.

For years China has been expanding its economic zones outside of its own borders as an alternative to the U.S. dominated international order. This is an effort to marginalize the U.S. by looking west and uniting Eurasia and Africa under the Chinese model of globalization.

So, China is more interested in stability and therefore more concerned about a North Korea collapse than its nuclear program, or at least that is what they tell us, according to Huntley.

Q & A time

Huntley concluded by answering questions from the students concerning a possible reunified Korea, where North Korea gets its technology, how North Korea survives in the internet age, and U.S. strategy in dealing with North Korea. Huntley stated that in light of these recent events, most experts on Northeast Asia are still trying to determine how Kim Jong Un will shape the direction of the country.



Dr. Wade Huntley, academic director of the Regional Security Education Program at the Naval Postgraduate School, in Monterey, California, spoke to Foreign Area Officers in language training at the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center about North Korea and its nuclear weapons program.

For the U.S., North Korea is merely one of many international problems, but for North Korea the U.S. is its sole international problem, according to Huntley, which is why there is not a more long-term U.S. strategy in dealing with the regime.

The Obama Administration's way ahead for the U.S. was a policy of "strategic patience," which was unlike the more confrontational Bush Administration approach of the early 2000s. The policy suggested that the U.S. can afford to wait for North Korea to make its own decision to denuclearize.

"The U.S. has left a chair at the table for North Korea in the Six Party Talks and has waited for eight years," said Huntley. "North Korea never came around."

As the Trump Administration's policy is still developing Secretary Mattis emphasized that, "Kim Jong Un should take heed of the United Nations Security Council's unified voice, and statements from governments the world over, who agree the DPRK poses a threat to global security and stability."

Huntley's teaching interests include nuclear, biological and chemical weapons proliferation and non-proliferation, and Northeast Asian security. He spoke as part of the FAO program's monthly U.S. Army officer professional development program, which is a critical part of FAO training at DLIFLC. The monthly program is as an essential addition to the biannual Joint Foreign Area Officer Course Phase I, usually held in January and June.

FAOs, who come from the four branches of the U.S. military, are regionally focused and are considered experts on political-military issues. Once their FAO training is completed, they are expected to serve as defense attachés, security cooperation officers and political-military planners worldwide.

CLPM

CLP Support team picking up speed

Story & photos by Natela Cutter

With new blood in in the Command Language Program Support office at the Presidio of Monterey, Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center, the program is expanding and offering even more support to managers of language professionals world-wide.

"We are working to put a new database in place to track linguists for all branches of Service, which is probably not a new concept, but it is now taking place at the DOD level, and DLI's Command Language Program support office, as the DOD proponent for CLPM training, is taking the lead," said Frank Everson, director of the CLP Support office.

The Joint CLPM Database, as it is called today, was designed by the Air Force as a one-stop shop for training and tracking linguists throughout their careers. The JCD not only tracks demographic and assignment data, but also individual linguist training plans, Defense Language Proficiency Test scores, proficiency pay orders, and language training history. The database is currently managed by the Air Force who offers access to the other services. Currently, all four services use the database to request language training through the National Cryptoplogic School.

"In time, all the Services will have fully populated their databases and we will provide any support the Department of Defense needs in this regard," said Everson, explaining that DLIFLC is working with the Air Force to transition the system to be managed by the DOD.

Progress has also been made on two fronts regarding the training provided to CLPMs. Those attending the DOD CLPM mandatory course within the first six months of their job can receive American Council on Education credit for the 40 hours of training completed.

"Students will now get four ACE credits for attending the CLPM course, which translates into promotion points for junior NCOs" said Everson, referring to ACE credit given to those who complete their courses.

Also on the horizon is the expansion of teaching CLPM courses to managers via Mobile Training Team missions. In addition to the four resident courses taught in Monterey annually and the five Army National Guard and Army Reserve MTTs, 14 more courses were programmed as part of the FY19-22 programmed budget, which can be found listed in the Army Training Requirements and Resource System.

"Now the Services won't have to pay for the MTTs because DLI will be programmed to cover those costs, at least as far as the Army goes. I would love to have the other Services do the same," said Everson.

Currently, with a four-person team, Everson and his colleagues are teaching 25 to 30 individual courses outside of their Monterey-based instruction.

DLIFLC's Command Language Program Support team discuss their next Command Language Program Course in their office on the lower Presidio of Monterey. From left to right, Mr. Stanley Bell, Staff Sgt. Juan Garcia, Mr. Frank Everson, and Chief Warrant Officer 3 Scott Thompson.

Record attendance for CLPM workshop

Story & photos by Natela Cutter

The winner of the DOD's Command Language Program of the Year for 2016 was the Navy Information Operations Command, Maryland. The award was received by the incoming CLPM Chief Petty Officer Vernon "Duke" Smith, who accepted the cup on behalf of the work of CLPM Chief Petty Officer Kate Greifzu and her commander, Capt. J.S. Scheidt. Marine Corp, Army and Air Force program managers also received recognition.

More than 200 members of all four branches of the services and Department of Defense civilians attended a three-day Advanced Command Language Program Manager Workshop held at the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center Aug. 29-31.

The workshop was opened by DLIFLC Assistant Commandant Col. Wiley Barnes, who welcomed the CLPMs, whose job is to help linguists maintain and improve their foreign language skills and advise them in their career paths.

"Take advantage of this workshop… build relationships across services and agencies, exchange ideas, learn from each other. Don't accept the status quo, things are always changing. Technology changes, the environment changes, and the enemy gets a vote…we have to adapt," said Barnes.

The large gathering of military and civilian foreign language community managers and leaders served as a perfect venue to give awards for the DOD Command Language Professional of the Year and the Command Language Program of the Year.

The winner of the DOD's best Command Language Program of the Year for 2016 was the Navy Information Operations Command, Maryland. The award was received by the incoming CLPM Chief Petty Officer Vernon "Duke" Smith, who accepted the cup on behalf of the work of CLPM Chief Petty Officer Kate Greifzu and her commander, Capt. J.S. Scheidt.

DOD winner of the best Command Language Professional of the year went to Air Force Staff Sgt. Monica Helling, who works for the Defense Threat Reduction Agency at Travis Air Force Base as a Russian Linguist.

Completely caught off guard by the recognition in this forum, in an interview Helling admitted that she was surprised by the announcement.

"I was shocked," Helling said with a broad smile. When asked how she decided to become a linguist, Helling said "This predisposition for languages came to me from my parents who are Polish immigrants, my brain in structured differently."

"When I joined the Air Force I knew I wanted to be a linguist, but when I arrived, I was given Arabic instead of Russian. Fortunately, someone heard me, and I was moved to a Russian class. The rest is history," she said.

Today Helling is one of the top interpreters of Russian where she must deal with topics related to strategic arms reduction in the nuclear division.

By her side, beaming with pride, was Helling's father, Jaroslav Jerzy Fabis, a veterinarian by profession. "I knew that coming to America would be a good choice for my children. I am very proud of my daughter." Fabis immigrated to the United States in 1983 during a politically tumultuous time for Poland.

The 2016 U.S. Army Language Professional of the Year was Sgt. Auday Alamery of the 513th Military Intelligence Brigade, Fort Gordon, Georgia, the U.S. Marine Corps Language Professional of the Year was Sgt. Kyle Morgan, of the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, Europe, and the U.S. Navy Language Professional of the Year was Cryptologic Technician – Interpretative 1 Brian Blacher.

Finalists for the DOD Command Language Program of the Year were the 500th Military Intelligence Brigade, Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, the 2nd Radio Battalion, Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, and the 34th Intelligence Squadron, Fort Meade, Maryland.

Going the extra mile

DLIFLC MLI of the Year

Story by Natela Cutter

Staff Sgt. Alex Rababah is part of the DLIFLC Joint Service Honor Guard (Photo by Steven Shepard)

Most people who join the military don't go into a recruiting station with the demand to pick a Military Occupational Specialty that offers the longest training pipeline.

Ten years ago, this is exactly what Staff Sgt. Alex Rababah did. "I heard it was the longest training in the military, and said 'I will take it.' I was interested in the linguist career field and really wanted to learn Arabic," he said, explaining that he had his language choice stipulated in his contract.

Today, Rababah is the top Military Language Instructor at the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center, having won Military Language Instructor of the Year for 2017 and is the Institute's first MLI to represent DLIFLC in the Training and Doctrine Command Instructor of the Year Competition.

"I won't find out the results of the TRADOC competition until March, but it was an honor to enter this competition just the same, having competed here against more than 100 of my fellow instructors, all of whom are extremely competent. Now I will be competing against mostly AIT instructors, civilians, and other military services," Rababah said, speaking about Advanced Individual Training instructors.

Though Rababah is modest about his accomplishments, it is quite obvious that getting to this point has required a lot of time, effort and dedication to teaching, working with students, and collaborating with civilian faculty and staff inside his school, called Middle East II.

"The students always brag about how 'awesome' he is and how he always goes the extra mile to help them. They learn so much from him. He is always willing to help and invests time and energy into our departments' success," said Pascale Koayess, an academic specialist in MEII.

Over the past several years Rababah has won MLI of the quarter twice and three Team Teaching Excellence Awards, which means that, along with his civilian colleagues, 40 percent of his students received 2+/2+ or higher on the Defense Language Proficiency Test. During the 64-week-long course, Rababah taught 10 to 15 hours per week, along with recording grates, counseling, after class tutoring, and liaising with unit commanders, to whom the students report.

Left - Staff Sgt. Alex Rababah, an Arabic Military Language Instructor at DLIFLC who recently claimed the title of MLI of the Year, took students twice to Morocco on a month-long immersion, making sure their classes were conducted to the highest standards and that they remained safe during their stay. (Photo by Natela Cutter)

Right - Staff Sgt. Alex Rababah, is awarded MLI of the Quarter in 2016 by DLIFLC Commandant, Col. Phil Deppert. (Photo by Patrick Bray)

Alongside these duties, Rababah still had time to volunteer 600 hours at the local Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and lead the DLIFLC Color Guard for the last three years, which involved practice twice a week with joint service members and participating in weekend events from San Francisco to Los Angeles.

But Rababah's real passion lies in the love of teaching and helping other people. He is able to motivate his students and urge them to press on with their studies that are tedious and seemingly never-ending. The key is using examples from his own life experience and deployments to Iraq and the United Kingdom.

"Almost every mission we did was reportable to the President," said Rababah, talking about his experience. "This responsibility led me to think that I can't just be good at my job but that I also needed to be good at teaching and mentoring service members and civilians. Soon after I became an adjunct faculty member at the Royal Air Force Menwith Hill," in the UK.

For their efforts, Rababah's unit won the Intelligence Unit Citation award in 2013.

"At this point I realized that I really liked teaching because I could see that it affected mission directly, at a time when I was not thinking of reenlisting," said Rababah, adding that the work of his unit helped ensure the safety of military personnel, civilians and allies at the beginning of the Arab Spring.

Rababah is now slated to enroll into the Russian Basic Course, which will technically be his fourth language, right after Arabic, Tagalog, and Cebuano, in all of which he has tested at Level 3.

"I chose Russian because of the current geopolitical climate. I believe that knowing Russian and Arabic is very advantageous for my career, and I essentially see myself as someone who can help in future missions," he said.

Master Educator Course prepares service members to teach

Story by 1st Sgt. Sean Cherland, photos by Natela Cutter

Sgt. Baojun Marie Cui, who teaches Chinese at DLIFLC, is using her experience in the classroom to work on a higher education degrees through the University of Louisville, Kentucky.

Military service members in Monterey, California are taking advantage of their military training as foreign language instructors and are applying their experience toward achieving higher education degrees through the University of Louisville, Kentucky.

Staff from the University of Louisville visited the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center Oct. 27 to observe foreign language classes being conducted by the half a dozen Military Language Instructors who are enrolled in their program.

"I feel very fortunate to be able to pursue my Master Degree in Higher Education through the University of Louisville by using my experience from DLI. There was a two-month in-residence part of the course which I found useful to bring back to my students," said Sgt. Baojun Marie Ciu, who teaches Chinese.

The program, previously called the Cadre and Faculty Development Course, now known as the Master Educators Course was designed by the University of Louisville Department of Educational Leadership, Evaluation and Organizational Development, with the intent to support ROTC instructors at Colleges and Universities through the United States and Army University, a nascent Army organization that focuses on providing college credit and credentialing to Soldiers for their military education and experience.

"The emphasis here is on excellence in teaching and learning," said Dr. Megan Pifer, assistant director for CFDC, who observed Ciu's instruction in Chinese to military service students aiming to become professional linguists. "It gives me a chance to see if she is applying what we had been doing in the classroom, explained Pifer. "She has great mannerisms, sets the tone, and students are relaxed. Laughter helps with retention and is also a learning strategy."

As part of the site visit, Dr. Jeffrey Sun, who designed the program, gave an informational briefing to all interested DLIFLC leadership on the CFDC Program, as well as about the University of Louisville online Bachelor and Master Degree Programs in Educational Administration and Leadership.

"We started out with designing a similar program for West Point," said Sung, who mentioned that his university has a very strong online program that is nationally recognized. "Our goal is to tailor affordable accredited higher education programs for DLIFLC participants."

The University of Louisville is a Carnegie-classified Research 1 University and is nationally ranked and accredited by Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

Sgt. Baojun Marie Cui's instructs military service students aiming to become professional linguists in Chinese

First Army Instructor Badge Recognition

Story by Natela Cutter, photos by Amber K. Whittington

For the first time in the history of the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center, two Military Language Instructors received the Army Instructor Badge, which puts them on par with their peers and enables them to better compete for promotion.

"I believe the Army recognized it for what it is, and as a result I was selected for promotion to sergeant first class," said Staff Sgt. Garrick Bartlett, who is a Military Language Instructor in the Multi-Language School and has been recognized three times as the MLI of the quarter, while simultaneously pursuing his Master degree in higher education.

MLIs are a vital part of the education construct at DLIFLC, where eight separate foreign language schools are managed by a mix of military and civilian instructors and leadership. MLIs not only teach the foreign language in the schools, but also manage student linguist careers and maintain open channels of communication between civilian management and military units.

"Our goal was to validate the role of the MLIs as instructors Army-wide and align them directly with their leader peers," said Sgt. 1st Class Sean Cherland, adding that it is vital that Army "leadership outside of DLI is aware of their qualifications as instructors."

"Historically, the role of MLIs is not well understood outside of DLI and was seldom acknowledged by TRADOC. They only received a local badge….and didn't have anything that recognized them Army-wide," Cherland said.

In the making for more than two years, the key to success for the program was the enabling of the MLI's to complete the Army Training and Doctrine Command course called the Foundation Instructor Facilitator Course, which is designed to train new instructors on how to facilitate basic courses and learn instructional techniques. Utilizing the concept of One Army School System, DLIFLC leadership collaborated with the 223rd Regional Training Institute, located in San Luis Obispo, to co-conduct the FIFC courses and certify DLIFLC instructors as well as DLIFLC FIFC trainers.

"It takes a network of people to build a program," said DLIFLC Commandant Col. Phil Deppert, who gave closing remarks and congratulated the team of senior noncommissioned officer leadership who worked diligently to develop the program.

Thus far, 20 Army NCOs have completed the FIFC course which certifies them as instructors under TRADOC and allows them to participate in the Instructor Development and Recognition Program. More than 100 MLIs currently work in the school houses, of which 54 are Army NCOs.

Awarding the Army Instructor Badge to DLIFLC NCOs goes hand in hand with the Army University construct that aims to maximize educational opportunities for Soldiers by providing valid academic credit for the education and experience they receive while on active duty.

Staff Sgt. Mashal Shekib, gives a treat to the Institute's mascot, Pfc. Lingo, Oct. 31, 2017. When he's not teaching Pashto, Shekib likes to train dogs and operates his own canine training academy. (Photo by Patrick Bray)

Soldier-linguist and Afghan native fulfills his American Dream

Story by Patrick Bray

Every Tuesday at the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center, Col. Phil Deppert, commandant of the Institute, and Command Sgt. Maj. Ryan Ramsey, the senior enlisted leader, meet-and-greet all the new personnel during the newcomers briefing.

Most are fresh recruits, straight out of basic training, who are about to begin their language classes. Others can be returning for their second or third language, while some return to serve as Military Language Instructors, or MLIs, within the language schools.

During the briefing, Deppert has the new MLIs stand up, say their name and where they come from. One Soldier stood and said, “I’m Staff Sgt. Shekib. I’m coming from Fort Gordon.”

Before moving on, Deppert said, almost without hesitation, “Wait. Stand up again. You’re a native speaker!”

Deppert had guessed correctly. Staff Sgt. Mashal Shekib is from Kabul, Afghanistan, and a native speaker of Pashto and Dari. He just recently completed the MLI certification course in September 2017 and now shares his language and culture with his students, who look to him for inspiration as a subject matter expert.

MLIs are qualified noncommissioned officers who teach their language to students and serve as an example to them. They bridge the gap between the military units and the civilian staff in all eight schools and languages taught at DLIFLC.

Watching students study (and struggle) with Pashto reminds Shekib of his own experience, only the other way around, when he studied English in his home country. Yet he concedes that it is more difficult to be an English speaker and learn Pashto rather than vice versa.

“It’s a struggle to learn another language and seeing my students’ struggle kind of echoes that experience for me,” said Shekib. “But I can empathize more when my students need help.”

Shekib’s long road to DLIFLC began in his homeland, a non-stop warzone for as long as he can remember. In Kabul in the 1990s, Shekib attended public school and learned to speak English at schools setup by non-governmental and charitable organizations designed to help the people of the war-torn, impoverished country.

“Staff Sgt. Shekib’s family success is an American dream story, from Kabul to California with many twists and turns. He embodies courage, hard work and sacrifice with all his combat operations in Afghanistan,” said Ramsey, who meets with every new NCO, including Shekib, before they begin their tour of duty.

War began in 1978 followed by the Soviet invasion, the Afghan Civil War, years of infighting, the establishment of the Taliban Islamic Emirate, the NATO invasion, and finally insurgencies that have lasted to this day.

Staff Sgt. Mashal Shekib, teaches Pashto to students at the Institute on Thursday, January 25, 2018. (Photo by Amber Whittington)

But the worst of the worst times, according to Shekib, was during the 1996-2001 Taliban rule. Shekib grew up in a “very non-religious, very educated family,” he said, but both of his parents were without work during Taliban rule. His father was unemployed solely because he worked for the government prior to the Taliban. His mother could not continue her teaching job because she was a female – work was forbidden for women under the Taliban – and his sister could not go to school for that same reason.

Still, for Shekib and those who lived there, life went on as they tried to find normalcy. It was while in his senior year of high school that the world would change forever – Sept. 11, 2001.

“I remember watching the news showing the collapse of the World Trade Center, but I could tell the goal behind the newscast wasn’t to tell people how bad this was,” said Shekib. “Basically it blamed the Western world instead of sympathizing with the situation.”

Taliban state-sponsored news depicted the Twin Towers falling, followed by footage of scorched earth tactics and massacres by the Russian military during the Soviet-Afghan War. The scenes were designed to rally the Afghans against the potential war to come, but Shekib did not buy into this propaganda.

“My take was that they (Al-Qaeda) just killed innocent people,” said Shekib. “I knew, in the bottom of my heart, that wasn’t right.”

The U.S. overthrew the Taliban government in October 2001, launching Operation Enduring Freedom, though the Taliban insurgency continued to fight on.

“I hate the word invasion. I never saw the U.S. as invaders. I saw them as liberators because they liberated me and my family,” said Shekib.

After high school, Shekib began working as an English teacher to Afghans and attending Kabul Polytechnic University. Soon, he was visited by military police at the school where he taught. Classrooms were divided by curtains in a building that was basically a large hallway.

“Three or four military police walked down that hallway, watching all of us,” said Shekib. “They waved at me and I waved back.”

Staff Sgt. Mashal Shekib, known as “Marshall Sanchez” at the time, right, served as a linguist with the 10th Mountain Division in Afghanistan in 2010. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Blair Neelands/Released)

The U.S. Soldiers approached Shekib. “Salaam alaikum,” they said in an attempt to talk to him and then asked, “If we were to tell you that we’re going to hire you right now as our interpreter would you leave this job and work for us?” For Shekib this was a dream come true. “I said yes and they said okay, let’s go now.”

“I’d never leave my class like that today,” Shekib adds to reassure his DLIFLC students. “But the next day I did go back and formally resign.”

For Shekib, working for the U.S. Army couldn’t be more fulfilling. His first two years were with the MPs who hired him, which involved patrolling Camp Phoenix and training Afghan National Army Military Police.

“The senior NCOs in the company mentored the Afghan MP Company commander,” said Shekib. As the U.S. Soldiers taught and trained, Shekib translated.

His responsibilities grew and after two years Shekib transferred to the G2 section – military intelligence – where he translated for the intelligence officer and his counterparts in the Afghan National Army.

Shekib worked for the Army for five years all together until June 2008, when he received a visa under the Afghan Special Immigrant Visa Program, designed for those who were employed by the U.S. Government. More than 150 interpreters on Camp Phoenix at that time had applied, with others doing so as well across Afghanistan. The process took about three years for him due to vetting and the number of applicants.

A distant cousin of Shekib’s already lived in the U.S. and he helped Shekib to settle in Dumfries, Virginia. One of his first memories of arriving in the U.S. was at the airport where he noticed an abundance of electricity unlike anything he had seen before in Afghanistan.

“The lights, the brightness and the loudness of everything – the first question I asked my cousin was, ‘Do you all have this every day? Like 24 hours? What time do they shut it off?’” Shekib said, followed with a laugh. In Afghanistan, electricity was sporadic, only supplied for a few hours a day and definitely none at night.

After settling in the U.S. and a brief job teaching Pashto and Dari to Air Force defense attaches, Shekib enlisted in the U.S. Army. At that time, in 2009, Pashto and Dari linguists were in very high demand. His service also opened a pathway to him becoming a U.S. citizen.

Today, Shekib says that teaching puts a smile on his face, especially when he hears students start to pronounce letters and sounds that don’t even exist in English, and then master it.

“The Army has done a lot for me and my family and I felt that I owe it back to them… that I should do something to pay it all back,” said Shekib, explaining why he serves.

PLATOON SGT. OF THE YEAR

IVERY TOWERS OVER COMPETITION

Story by Brian Lepley, photos by Amber K. Whittington

The eight other candidates for the Army's 2017 AIT Platoon Sergeant of the Year can blame Leesa Brotherton.

Staff Sgt. Bryan Ivery, the PSOY winner named at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, Sept. 15, 2017,credits his hyper-competitiveness to his aunt Lisa.

"We grew up together and she was 10 years older than me. We played all kinds of games and she showed me no mercy," remembers Ivery. "I learned. Since I was young I have to bring my best to any competition I'm in."

"Iron sharpens iron" is Ivery's motto, an ethos born from those losses to Brotherton as a child.

His duty at Company B, 229th Military Intelligence Battalion, was to prepare new arrivals for the academic rigor of the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center.

"Motivation is definitely a driving factor in my day-to-day activities with these new

Soldiers," said Ivery, one of five platoon sergeants who lead the battalion's Phase Four training.

Co. B 1st Sgt. Clint Rowe and Ivery are products of DLIFLC, a joint service school where students can spend more than 18 months learning languages, dialects and cultures like Farsi, Arabic, Korean, Urdu and many others.

"Staff Sgt. Ivery gets Soldiers right out of basic and brings them up to the level DLI and the Army needs them to be in order to succeed," Rowe said. "His dedication and grit are paramount."

The Army AIT PSOY event, run by Training and Doctrine Command, was modeled on a hectic combat mission and tested that motivation, Ivery said. It was five days of strenuous tasks on a punishing schedule.

"Starting Monday (Sept. 11), we didn't know what was coming next until they told us. PT, taking tests, range, the board… it was non-stop," he said. "We didn't get much sleep. There was zero down time. That was by design."

Ivery's coach at the Army Drill Sergeant and AIT Platoon Sergeant of the Year competition was Rowe. By the end of day two, the first sergeant knew his NCO was finishing high.

"In every event Ivery was first or second and if he was second, it was always a different NCO in first," Rowe said. "He and another contestant were the best I saw there in military bearing and PT."

Ivery's feats weren't only recognized by his first sergeant. "By Thursday morning, the other competitors were calling him champ," remembers Rowe.

Seven drill sergeants were after their award alongside the nine platoon sergeants. Ivery regarded everybody as competition.

"It was me against 15, that's how I saw it. There was an award that everybody competed for, the Tobias C. Meister physical fitness award," said the South Carolina native. "After the PT test a drill sergeant and I were tied with a 299 score."

Event administrators decided the tiebreaker would be the score from the Army Combat Readiness Test. The Meister award went to Ivery.

"Sheer persistence and determination was the difference for me in platoon sergeant of the year," he said. "At that level, when you have that type of competition, the best that the Army has to offer, I thought 'I would love to be on top.'"

Ivery's achievement has earned him a new set of duties, an assignment to the Center for Initial Military Training at Fort Eustis, Virginia, and reported in December 2017.

"I will be on a team that will visit basic combat training and advanced individual training sites to see that things are being done according to reg and to learn about new methods and ideas that are being used," he said.

On losing his NCO, Rowe says "It's bittersweet and I'm not happy about it," but he believes that Ivery will be sitting at Rowe's desk one day.

But first, Ivery's next iron to sharpen is improving the Army's initial training process, the latest step of the journey aunt Leesa began.

Officer says farewell to All-Army Women's Basketball

Story by By Tim Hipps, photos by Amber K. Whittington

Presidio of Monterey's 1st Lt. Michelle Ambuul tough-nosed hoops skills helped the All-Army women secure silver at the 2017 Armed Forces Basketball Championships. Literally.

As if getting her nose broken during training camp Oct. 10 at Fort Indiantown Gap, Pennsylvania, was not enough to overcome, Ambuul got whacked again the following week during an intra-squad scrimmage at Fort Hood, Texas.

A nose broken twice in as many weeks would make many athletes retreat from competition, but Ambuul donned a protective mask and played All-Army's last four games of the seven-day tournament at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland.

All-Navy (6-1) defeated All-Army (4-3), 79-63, in the women's gold-medal game Nov. 7 at Chaparral Fitness Center.

The tournament was perhaps the last hurrah as a competitive basketball player for Ambuul, 30, who serves as associate dean of the Persian Farsi School at the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center.

"I think this is the last time I'll play competitive basketball at a high level," she said. "I have other priorities that I want to focus on. And the older you get, the harder it is on your body. I'm definitely learning that the hard way. I just want to go out strong."

Despite a delivery delay of her mask, Ambull managed to play in the Army's last four games. She collected 10 rebounds during the Army's 95-37 win over the Marines Nov. 4.

Broken noses were growing old for Ambuul, who was an All-Armed Forces basketball selection in 2012.

"Once in Germany, when I was 22 or 23," she recalled of her previous facial injuries. "All the rest were in college between 2005 and 2009."

Both of the most recent fractures happened after Ambuul secured a rebound, only to catch an elbow to the face in the process. This time, Ambuul predicted she had "at least a deviated septum" because she couldn't breathe very well.

In college, Ambuul was one of the leading three-point shooters in the Rocky Mountain Conference for the NCAA Division II Colorado State University-Pueblo Thunder Wolves. In high school, she averaged 20.6 points and 5.1 rebounds as a senior and was named Colorado Springs' Player of the Year by The Gazette.

"Everyone who plays a sport always has that passion and that drive to do it," Ambuul said. "I said I was going to stop playing a while ago, and look where I'm at today."

Ambuul appreciated the encouragement of her chain of command at the 229th Military Intelligence Battalion: her company commander Capt. Brandon Peer and Lt. Col. Toni Sabo, battalion commander.

"They told me to go out there and do well and make them proud," Ambuul said. "I really love the job that I'm in right now and I'm thankful to be a part of the community."

The Presidio and DLIFLC are a small community with a training mission of teaching foreign languages to service members in a compressed time period. Looking out for each other's interests is automatic, Peer said.

"She was very concerned about leaving the school and her dogs for such an extended period of time," he said of Ambuul's worries. "This was a once in a lifetime opportunity for her and if we have Soldiers pass up these amazing moments because of a sense of duty and selflessly, not wanting others to need to fill in, we really do a disservice to those special talents that are out there."

(Left) 1st Lt. Michelle Ambuul of the Defense Language Institute at Presidio of Monterey, Calif., grabs a rebound during All-Army's 95-37 victory over All-Marine Corps on Nov 4 in the 2017 Armed Forces Women's Basketball Championship tournament at Chaparral Fitness Center on Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland. After sustaining a twice broken nose during training camp, Ambuul donned a protective faceguard, courtesy of medical personnel at crosstown Fort Sam Houston, to play in Army's final four games of the seven-day tournament. (U.S. Army photo by Robert Dozier, IMCOM Public Affairs)

(Right) The All-Army Women's Basketball team pose for a photo opportunity in Philadelphia before departing for the Armed Forces Basketball Championship at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, Texas, Oct. 31 – 8 Nov. (Photo courtesy of All-Army Women's Basketball)

Coming full circle from student to teacher

Story and photos by Patrick Bray

Standing at a height of only four feet, 11 inches, one could be forgiven in thinking that Josephine "Josie" Petkovski may feel intimidated by the military uniforms that surround her every day. Though short in stature, she is not. She has worn two of them as a veteran of the U.S. Army and U.S. Navy.

Petkovski is a new teacher at the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center Asian School II, better known as the Korean School. She is also an alumna of the Institute where she now teaches, having graduated from the Chinese Mandarin course in 2004.

So, Petkovski knows a thing or two about both learning languages and being in the military.

Originally from Busan, South Korea, she presently resides in San Juan Bautista, California, with her family, husband and a six-year-old daughter. She first visited the U.S. in the 1980s to attend a wedding in Minnesota and visit her relatives in Florida. She then traveled for two months from Colorado to Florida to Chicago by Greyhound bus. Later, she permanently moved to the U.S. in 1990 and in 1991 joined the U.S. Army Reserves, seeking education benefits.

Military life in the fleet and field

"One day I was sitting on the couch in the living room and I saw this commercial – Be all that you can be," said Petkovski of the Army's recruiting slogan from 1980 to 2001.

The Army opportunities looked better to her than part-time retail or food service jobs, but when she entered the recruiter's office he told her that she is "not quite there yet."

"What does that mean?" she asked.

"Josie, you're too short," he replied, and after measuring her height three times, the recruiter had to ask for a waiver from the Army for her to join.

Petkovski's height was her first challenge in joining the military. Her second was getting through Army basic training at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri.

"I strived to pass basic training because I wanted it so bad," she said.

After graduation from basic and advanced individual training, also at Fort Leonard Wood, Petkovski became qualified as an 81B technical drafting specialist.

"That job doesn't exist anymore," Petkovski said, speaking of the tedious work of drawing technical designs by hand before computer-aided design. "But I loved being in the Army and getting to go to school."

However, in December 1993 Petkovski left for Germany; spent three years there; and then returned to the U.S. She continued her postsecondary education in the midst of undergoing a few personal ordeals.

"I thought about returning to Busan but my mother said, 'Josie, you've come too far to start over again in Korea,'" she said.

Instead, Petkovski channeled any negative feelings she had into her studies and graduated Magna Cum Laude with a Bachelor of Science in Mathematics from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. From there she decided to join the active duty Navy.

Petkovski made her decision based on a brief visit to Naval Station Rota, Spain, but also out of her love for the white uniforms, famously featured in the movie "An Officer and a Gentleman" in the 1980s.

"I fell in love with the Navy. I told the navy officer recruiter that I want to travel the world by ship," said Petkovski.

His reply, "Josie, you're too short."

At DLIFLC

Despite her height, Petkovski was able to join the U.S. Navy and attended Officer Candidate School in Pensacola, Florida, commissioning in 2000.

Petkovski's first deployment was as an aviation maintenance duty officer for six months aboard the USS Harry S. Truman. Afterward she was re-designated as a cryptologist, also known as an Information Warfare Officer, and got hand selected for DLIFLC to study Chinese Mandarin. She reported in January 2003.

"I totally underestimated learning Chinese Mandarin," said Petkovski, having previously studied it in Korea. "I struggled for a good six months."

Sino Korean is a non-tonal language. Chinese taught in Korea does not utilize tone, which can differentiate the meanings of every single character.

"Not to be really dramatic, but you could mean to say you want to help somebody but really say you're going to hurt them," said Petkovski on the importance of getting the right tone.

As an officer she did not want to embarrass herself in front of her classmates who were a U.S. Marine Corps Captain and a U.S. Air Force Special Agent with the rest of the class being enlisted.

"I was very proud of my enlisted classmates, though. Although they had no background in Asian languages, they were amazingly perfecting the language," Petkovski said. "I admired their endeavor in learning the language."

Petkovski never thought about quitting though she was studying every night without her grades improving. "As an officer and a section leader the thought never crossed my mind," she said.

Then one teacher helped Petkovski achieve a breakthrough. She told her that her pronunciation and tone were not correct, but she said so in a constructive way. "So Zhao Laoshi, who is no longer a teacher at DLI, helped me to figure it out."

From then on, "I could hear Chinese Mandarin and process it in my brain in Korean and then produce an output in English," Petkovski said as her learning improved.

Overall, she says of her experience as a student was not easy training. "Chinese is not an easy language to learn," commented Petkovski.

After DLIFLC, Petkovski went on to water survival training and then Survival, Evasion, Resistance, and Escape (SERE) School, but due to the required non-disclosure agreement signed by all students she cannot talk about SERE.

"I have my profound deference to every single POW in my country like Sen. John McCain and Louis Zamperini, a WWII POW who was featured in the movie "Unbroken," and have a speck of understanding what our POWs might have gone through," said Petkovski of the SERE experience.

Petkovski went on to Misawa, Japan, to work with Chinese Mandarin linguists. Today, as a Korean teacher she is familiar with the linguist career beyond being a student at DLIFLC.

Petkovski's maiden name is Cho. She met her husband through a Korean missionary pastor while stationed in Bahrain and took his surname – Petkovski – who is of Macedonian and Danish descendent.

Coming full circle

Petkovski, who has been teaching for a little less than a year at DLIFLC, just finished her second semester as a Korean teacher. She finds it to be a learning experience for her just as much for the students.

"I'm learning a lot from my students," said Petkovski, who is excited to see them graduate in about a year.

"I know my student's physical and mental struggles. I tell them to work with their teachers if they find themselves struggling, and find balance and manage their time outside of class."

"I always encourage my motto, PMA - positive mental attitude. I tell them if I can do it, so can anyone."

Since returning to DLIFLC, Petkovski has reunited with some of her Chinese teachers who welcomed her back and also surprised that she became a teacher. "I am very grateful that I have this opportunity to teach Korean at DLI, albeit not in uniform. I only hope to be an invaluable asset not only to the Korean School but also DLI as a whole."

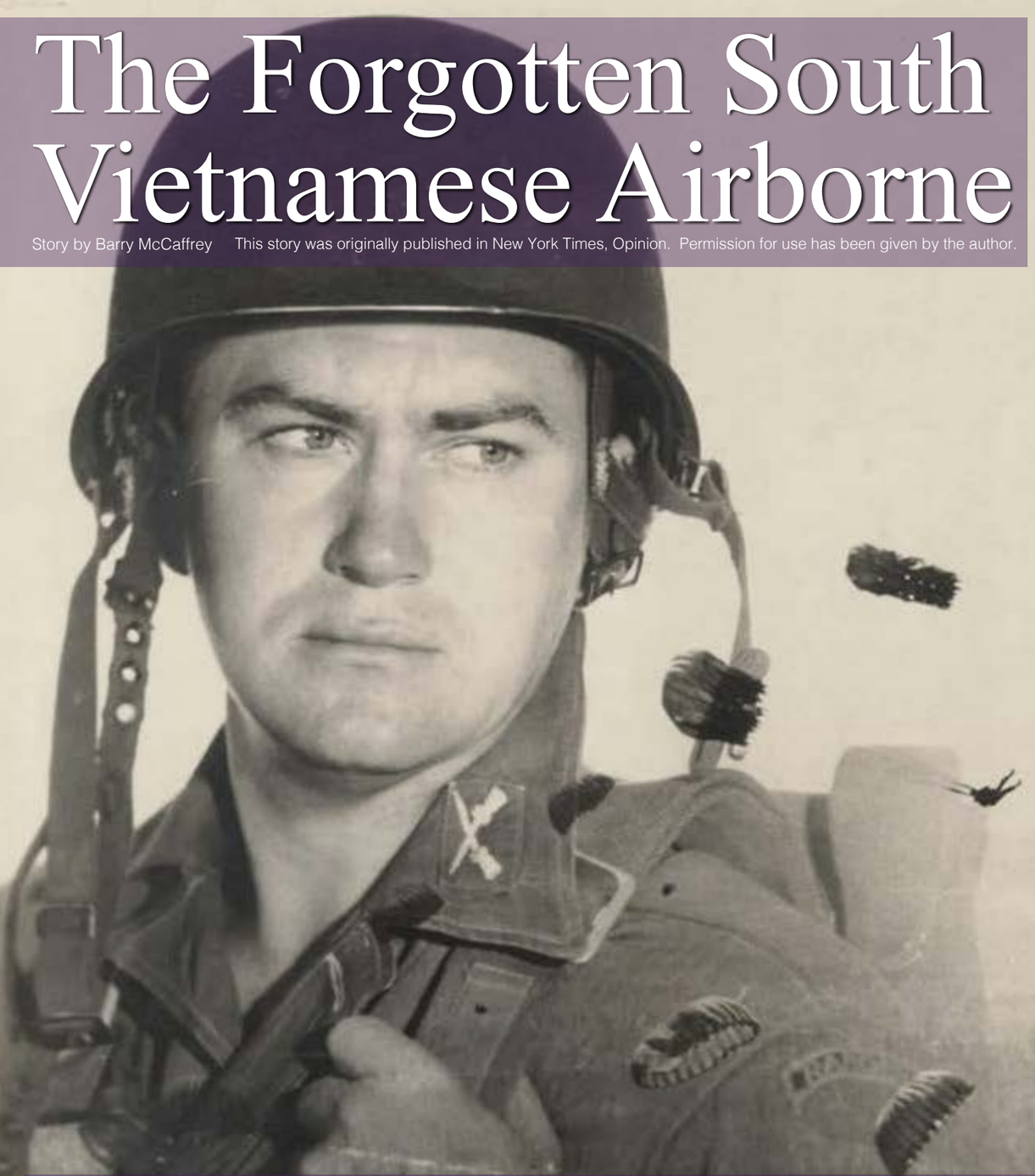
Josephine Petkovski is a U.S. Army and U.S. Navy Veteran, a Chinese linguist and native speaker of Korean. Now she has returned to teach at DLIFLC where she studied years ago.

Josephine Petkovski teaches a Korean class Aug. 7 at the DLIFLC's Asian School II, better known as the Korean School. She is also an alumna of the Institute where she now teaches, having graduated from the Chinese Mandarin course in 2004.

U.S. Navy Lt. Josephine Petkovski proudly shows off her diploma after graduating in Pensacola, Florida. (Photo courtesy of Josephine Petkovski)

The Forgotten South Vietnamese Airborne

Story by Barry McCaffrey This story was originally published in New York Times, Opinion. Permission for use has been given by the author.



I arrived in Vietnam in July 1966, and for the next year I served as an adviser with the South Vietnamese Airborne Division. It was the last year we thought we were winning. It was the last year we could define what we thought winning would be. It was a year of optimism, of surging American troop strength that largely took over the war from the Vietnamese — and of wildly expanding American casualty lists.

By the end of 1967, there were 486,000 American troops in the battle. The number of Americans killed in action that year roughly doubled from 1966. Amid all of that, the sacrifice and valor and commitment of the South Vietnamese Army largely disappeared from the American political and media consciousness.

Jim Farrington during an airborne operation over 50 years ago.
(Photo by Staff Sgt. Jeremiah Runser, Indiana National Guard Headquarters)

The South Vietnamese Airborne Division, which I joined as an assistant battalion adviser, was an elite combat unit. By 1967 these paratroopers, with their camouflaged jump uniforms and distinctive red berets, had grown to 13,000 men, all volunteers. Those of us privileged to serve with them were awe-struck by their courage and tactical aggressiveness. The senior officers and noncommissioned officers were extremely competent and battle hardened; it's easy to forget that while the Americans were new to Vietnam, many of these men had been at war since 1951.

As advisers, we essentially acted as staff and liaison officers at the battalion and brigade levels. We had spent a year preparing in California, including 16-hour days of cultural and language immersion at the Defense Language Institute. I ended up with a sub-fluent command of spoken Vietnamese. Counterinsurgency tactics and training in the World War II-era weapons systems that the Vietnamese still used took place at Fort Bragg, N.C.

We played a wide range of roles: coordinating artillery and airstrikes, arranging helicopter lifts and medevac and providing intelligence and logistical support. We didn't give orders, and we didn't need to. Our Vietnamese counterparts were men we admired, and they were glad to have us — and American firepower — with them. We ate their food. We spoke their language. We trusted the Vietnamese completely. I usually had a paratrooper as a bodyguard and as a radio operator.

Normally, a battalion-level advisory team like mine consisted of three men: an American Army captain, a first lieutenant and a senior noncommissioned officer, usually a sergeant.

The sergeants were the core: While officers rotated in and out, many of the sergeants stayed with their assigned South Vietnamese units until the end of the war — or until they were killed or knocked out of the fight.

My introduction to Vietnam was a bloody experience. We deployed by American Navy assault boats and Army helicopters into the swampy river delta south of Saigon. This was combat without glory, fighting and drowning in the saltwater muck. There was none of the adventure that we felt in Ranger school. My captain, an incredibly professional and competent senior adviser, was killed. Back at base, I helped carry his body off the helicopter. It was only the beginning.

Four months into my tour with the airborne we were involved in a giant, bloody battle supporting American Marine units north of Dong Ha, near the coast in the northern part of South Vietnam. Two of our battalions were inserted by helicopter into the Demilitarized Zone to check a significant force of North Vietnamese moving south. It turned into three days of intense and bloody combat. My senior adviser was killed. Our incredibly courageous noncommissioned officer, Master Sgt. Rudy Ortiz, was riddled from head to foot. He asked me to load his M-16 and put it on his chest so that he could "die fighting" with the rest of us (luckily, he survived).

We took hundreds of casualties and came very close to being overrun. But the South Vietnamese paratroopers fought tenaciously. At the critical moment, with supporting air and naval fire, we counterattacked. The executive officer of my Vietnamese battalion walked upright through heavy automatic weapon fire to my foxhole. "Lieutenant," he told me, "it is time to die now." It gives me chills to remember his words.

In combat, the South Vietnamese refused to leave their own dead or wounded troopers on the field or abandon a weapon. In another battle one of my West Point classmates, Tommy Kerns, a huge Army football player, was

badly wounded and stuck in a narrow trench as his airborne battalion tried to break contact with a large North Vietnamese force. The Vietnamese paratroopers with him, all much smaller than Tommy, couldn't haul him out of the trench. Rather than withdraw and leave him, they held their ground and won a violent engagement over his giant wounded body. He survived because of their courage.

The American advisers and most of the Airborne Division were stationed in and around Saigon. We loved the energy and fun of the city. We loved the culture and the language and the Vietnamese. We were terribly proud of our status with the Red Berets. We were sure the entire world envied our assignment — we were working with the country's elite. With combat and airborne pay, we had what seemed like a ton of money. We lived in air-conditioned quarters. We were young and harebrained and aggressive. The American colonels and lieutenant colonels who ran the advisers were older, stable and battle-hardened men who had seen much worse combat in World War II and Korea as paratroopers.

Life as an adviser in the Vietnamese Airborne Division was unpredictable. The division's job was to serve as a strategic reserve, to be inserted into combat whenever commanders needed an edge. A Vietnamese airborne battalion or a full brigade would be alerted for emergency deployment in the middle of the night. We would cram into American and Vietnamese Air Force transport planes, which sat, engines roaring, in long lines at Ton Son Nhut Air Base, near Saigon. Live ammo would be issued. Sometimes parachutes were issued. A hurried battle plan.

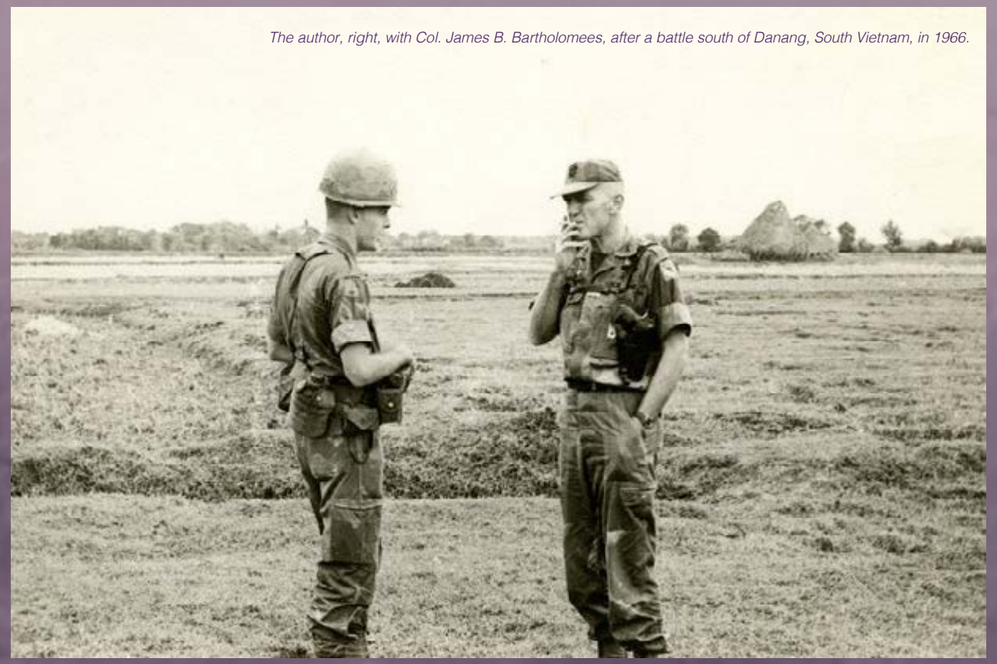
And then — mayhem. The battalions deployed to wherever they were needed. We could head anywhere in the country and find ourselves in the middle of a firefight. Many of the America advisers and hundreds of the Vietnamese paratroopers I served with did not come back from these operations. I can see their young faces still. Capt. Gary Brux. Capt. Bill Deuel. Lt. Chuck Hemmingway. Lt. Carl Arvin. My very young radio operator, Pvt. Michael Randall. All dead. Brave. Proud.

Vietnam wasn't my first combat tour. After graduating from West Point, I joined the 82nd Airborne Division in the Dominican Republic intervention in 1965. We had deployed to the island and quashed the Cuban-inspired Communist uprising, and then stayed as an Organization of American States peacekeeping force. We thought that was what combat meant, and when we returned to Fort Bragg, we were eager to get to Vietnam — several lieutenants from my infantry battalion jumped into a car and drove all the way to Army headquarters in Washington to volunteer for the battle. We thought we were going to miss the war.

Now we know the end of the story. Two million Vietnamese probably died. The United States lost 58,000 and 303,000 were wounded. America descended into a bitter and convulsive political civil war. We knew nothing of it then. I was so very proud to have been selected to serve with the Vietnamese airborne. My new and beautiful wife, whom I loved dearly, knew I had to go. My dad, an Army general, would honor me if I was killed.

All this was over 50 years ago. The Vietnamese Airborne Division soldiers who survived the collapse of South Vietnam either escaped through Cambodia or went through a decade of brutal "re-education" camps. Most of them eventually made it to the United States. We have an association of the American advisers and our Vietnamese comrades, and there is a memorial to our efforts at Arlington National Cemetery. We gather there every year and remember how we fought together. We wear our red berets. We laugh at our old stories, but there is a deep sadness that we lost so many, and that it came to nothing.

People often ask me about the lessons of the war in Vietnam. Those of us who fought with the Vietnamese Airborne Division are not the ones to ask. All we remember and know is the enduring courage and determination of the Vietnamese Airborne privates pushing forward into battle. They have no monuments except in our memories.



The author, right, with Col. James B. Bartholomees, after a battle south of Danang, South Vietnam, in 1966.

Only in America

Staff

One family - nearly 60 years of service

Story by Natela Cutter
Photos courtesy of Dr. Natalie Marchenko-Fryberger

In the early years of DLIFLC, when it was called the Army Language School, Russian teachers were recruited from various communities around the country. One teacher who accepted the job offer to teach Russian, was Mr. Nikolai Marchenko, who traveled with his family to Monterey from New York by Greyhound bus. His wife, Mrs. Natalia Marchenko, with limited English skills, took on various jobs in the community, including packing fish on Cannery Row, and working as a dishwasher in the chow hall.

At her retirement party on December 5th, 2017, their daughter, Dr. Natalie Marchenko-Fryberger, recollected a family story her mother loved to tell:

"One morning, a full-bird colonel returned his breakfast because he did not like the way the eggs were cooked. The manager of the chow hall, instead of bringing him his new order, asked my mother to go "give it to the damn bird." My mother, with her 0+ English skills, walked around reading name tags.

When she couldn't locate the name, she stood in front of the room, and in her thick accent loudly asked "Who is Mister Damn Bird?" As expected, the entire room burst into laughter when a red-faced colonel stood up and identified himself. My mother was scared to death.

She grew up in the Ukraine under Communism, then lived under Nazi occupation, and in a Labor Camp in Germany. She knew what it meant to insult an officer. However, this colonel stood next to her in front of everyone, took the plate, smiled, and asked her about her family and how she got to the U.S.

From that day forward, each time he ate at the chow hall, he would stop by the kitchen, and ask my mother how she was doing. This moment, to my mother, defined America. This was a unique place, where a full-bird colonel treats an immigrant dishwasher with respect and as a fellow human being. She never wavered in her love for this country, and passed her patriotism on to her children through this story."

Fryberger retired for a second time from DLIFLC Dec. 5. 2017, after 34 years of service. She started working at the Institute as a Russian instructor in 1979, just three years after her father retired from his teaching position following his 25 year old career. Together, they served almost 60 years.

Dr. Fryberger remembers her first visits to DLI when she was five years old, going to class with her father and talking in Russian to the service members who were awed by a little girl, born in the U.S. but who spoke fluent Russian.

"These are the best memories of my childhood, and I am proud to have grown up at DLI and been able to give back, twice now," she said. Fryberger came out of retirement back to DLIFLC two years ago to use her knowledge and expertise to stand up the Center for Leadership Development, an organization that will train faculty and staff on leadership skills and prepare future leaders of the Institute.

Nikolai and Natalia Marchenko in Germany before immigrating to the United States in the 1940s.

Col. James Collins, commandant from 1959 to 1962, presents an award to Nikolai Marchenko.

Seeing the light

on the way to stardom Beijing style

Story by Natela Cutter

When Nate Boyd attended the Chinese Basic Course as an Airman at the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center in 2003, he didn't really expect his knowledge of a foreign language to be his ticket into the movie industry as an actor.

Fast forward 15 years and Boyd has become a well-recognized actor in China, winning best new actor at the Chinese American Film Festival, held in Hollywood, California, Nov. 1, 2017, for his role as the Catholic Missionary Rudolph Bosshardt in the movie "A Preachers' Long March."

"The Chinese American Film Awards is not the most important award show in China, but it does attract many big stars. This year, for example, the list of attendees included Chadwick Boseman (Black Panther) and Michael Rooker (Walking Dead, Guardians of the Galaxy) as well as Chinese stars Wu Xiubo, Lin Yongjian, Wu Gang, and famous Chinese director Zhang Jizhong," explained Boyd.

Boyd's road to stardom began with his move to China, immediately after graduating from college in 2007 with a double major in International Relations and Asian Studies. His first job involved teaching English part time, after which he managed to get a job at a software company.

"It only lasted four months and I wasn't enjoying it. I began looking for acting jobs on the internet in Chinese sit coms," said Boyd. Soon, the jobs started rolling in.

When asked if he had an accent, eight years after residing in Beijing, Boyd modestly says he doesn't think so. "I just blurt stuff out. People say I don't have an accent, which shocks the delivery guy when he shows up at the door. They always think I am Chinese," he said with a chuckle.

Thus far Boyd said that he has done about 30 TV shows, 10-12 movies and a lot of commercials. He also does screen writing and hopes to produce some of his own work soon, but says there is "No guarantee that it will be shown on the premium online streaming channel."

As for acting, Boyd said in a telephone interview from Tennessee over the holidays, that he really enjoyed playing the role of a preacher based on actual historical fact.

"The story is about an English preacher in Guizhou Province in china, Rudolph Bossart, a Swiss born English preacher, who was kidnapped by the Red Army, which wanted him to translate a map. The preacher said he wanted to be neutral in the conflict and they take him on a long march…" explained Boyd. In the end, Bossart, faced with fighting for survival along with the soldiers, translates the map. "It is a patriotic movie, but a lot more artsy."

As for his experience at DLIFLC, Boyd says that he never would have been able to move to China and pick up working, integrating himself skillfully into society.

"Without DLI I would have never moved to China because it gave me a foundation in the language and culture," said Boyd.

"A lot of times learning a language seems like an impenetrable wall, but every day you learn a little bit more, it's like dusting off a piece of glass. Every time you dust, the more hope you have for getting through, seeing a bit more of the light…."

SAINT JEROME

The Patron Saint of Military Linguists

During a humble ceremony at the Presidio of Monterey Chapel Sept. 11, St. Jerome became inducted as the patron saint of the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center and of military linguists.

Story and photos by Patrick Bray

Chaplain Maj. Chan-young Ham, the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center command chaplain, gives St. Jerome pendants to service members and civilians following an induction ceremony for St. Jerome at the Presidio Chapel Sept. 11. St. Jerome became inducted as the patron saint of DLIFLC and of military linguists. Linguists now join with other military career fields who have followed in this tradition.

St. Jerome loved languages. He was a proficient linguist, and an open minded scholar and translator.

St. Jerome, who lived from 347 to 420, has been associated with writing, cataloging and translating works of history, biographies, and biblical translations and is traditionally regarded as the most learned of the Latin Fathers.

"St. Jerome was dedicated to his work as a translator and linguist. He was disciplined and he believed in what he was doing, pushing himself to be an expert in languages and the understanding of them," said Ham.

"He was internationally influenced," Ham continued. "He traveled the world and respected other cultures, while dialoging with many to discuss scholarship and the truth."

The tradition of patron saints as guardians over areas of life, to include occupations, dates back to as early as the fourth century. Linguists now join with other military career fields who have followed in this tradition. St. Michael, paratroopers, and St. Barbara, field artillery, are examples of military occupations that have previously inducted a patron saint.

Father George Khoury, associate professor of Levantine at the Institute, inducted St. Jerome at the Presidio Chapel and blessed the pendants with holy water, which were then given to all in attendance. He and Col. Phil Deppert, commandant of DLIFLC, unveiled the St. Jerome icon that will be displayed in the Aiso Library on the Presidio.

The idea of a patron saint for linguists was brought up to Deppert when Ham arrived at the Institute in December 2016. Patron saints within each branch have long been a military tradition.

"Since I got here I thought we should have a pendant with a patron to set our commitment and professionalism," said Ham. "Since we did not have one we embarked on making a pendant and ended up inducting a patron saint."

In the process Ham offered Deppert a choice between St. Nicholas, the patron saint of the Military Intelligence branch, and St. Jerome. In the end, the Commandant decided to go with St. Jerome.

The next step was to ensure that the Institute did not appear to be promoting a religious affiliation. Although it has a Christian historical background, there are no hidden motives of endorsing the Christian faith.

"Instead, we are creating a tradition like other branches where we hold our standards to the highest values and commitment as linguists," said Ham. "St. Jerome loved languages. He was a proficient linguist, and an open minded scholar and translator."

Deppert told those in attendance that they can look to St. Jerome as a point of inspiration, especially students, as DLIFLC is considered one of the toughest training pipelines in the Department of Defense.

The language school places enormous pressure on students from across the services to succeed in only a limited amount of time. It is easy to see how students might feel stressed and overwhelmed.

The Army offers a variety of wellness programs through physical fitness, emotional, and spiritual fitness to improve readiness and increase resilience through public health initiatives and leadership engagement. According to the Army Public Health Center, spirituality is often defined as a sense of connection that gives meaning and purpose to a person's life. Spirituality is unique to each individual, and refers to the deepest part of "you."

Part of St. Jerome's legacy is that he once said, "Good, better, best. Never let it rest 'til your good is better and your better is best."

Father George Khoury, associate professor of Levantine at the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center, Presidio of Monterey, California, blessed St. Jerome pendants with holy water Sept. 11. During a humble ceremony, St. Jerome became inducted as the patron saint of DLI and of military linguists. Linguists now join with other military career fields who have followed in this tradition.

Alum shaken by suicide shares son's story

Story by Brian Lepley, Presidio of Monterey PAO

Rob Miltersen shares the story of his son Thor's suicide with Presidio of Monterey military and civilians at the Physical Fitness Center Sept. 14. He and his son both graduated from the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center.

The saddest task for a parent, it is said, is burying one of their children.

But sadder still, Rob Miltersen found out, is burying your 21-year old Airman First Class son after his suicide.

Christian Miltersen took his own life in 2014 while assigned to the National Security Agency at Fort Meade, Maryland. He was a 2012 Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center graduate in Chinese Mandarin.

Rob was also an Air Force DLIFLC grad, in 1990, at the start of his 20-year career.

Staggering grief alters lives. Rob's tragedy focused him to a mission of shouting from the rooftops about suicide prevention.

"The loss of one individual to suicide impacts many, up to more than a hundred family, friends and colleagues of that person," he said. "They mourn the loss and are impacted with sadness and grief that is hard to understand, in turn, those individuals then find themselves in a higher risk category."

On Sept. 14, Miltersen brought his suicide prevention presentation to DLIFLC, addressing a few hundred students and faculty.

"I think this generation of students are more in touch with their vulnerabilities than previous generations," he said, "however, there is a general idea that we are all impervious to this kind of tragedy.

"Unfortunately the statistics tell a horribly different story. Suicide impacts all of us in some way; to some of us it is incredibly personal."

DLIFLC Chaplain (Maj.) Chan Ham was impressed by how personal and relatable Miltersen's story was for the audience.

"I think it was a fitting message for DLI students, anyone, who can be exposed to those ideations," Ham said.

Among the groups Miltersen has addressed on the issue are the Air Force War College faculty and students, the Georgia State Legislature and three times this year at the Presidio of Monterey to service members and employees.

"I wanted to bring this message here because I believe it was a story they could understand, that this (Christian) wasn't just another sad person that we lost, but a DLI student, just like themselves," Miltersen said.

Korean students celebrate Hangul Day with alphabet contest

Story and photos by Patrick Bray

Korean language students support their classmates during the 26th Annual Korean Language Writing Contest for Foreign Nationals and the 15th Annual Korean Alphabet Day Video Contest.

The Korean School at the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center at the Presidio of Monterey held the 15th Annual Korean Alphabet Day Video Contest Oct. 12 and presented awards to students who participated in the 26th Annual Korean Language Writing Contest for Foreign Nationals.

The annual contests are in celebration of Hangul Day, translated as Alphabet Day, which also takes place in October. The writing contest was hosted and judged by Yonsei University in Seoul.

The overall winner of the writing contest was U.S. Army Pvt. Brennan Couch, a first-semester student. Couch's award was presented by the DLIFLC commandant, Col. Phil Deppert.

"Winning a difficult contest like this is motivating for me," said Couch, who is still early in the Korean program with no prior experience in foreign language acquisition. "I can measure my learning and have a tangible product for my efforts."

The writing contest theme centered on the seasonal change from summer to fall allowing students to showcase their Korean writing ability and cultural awareness in a fun way.

Couch wrote a poem and read it aloud in Korean. "Autumn is a pale horse wandering around the globe, a beautiful warning of the coming winter and her icy touch."

The video contest winner came from Department D, Team 3, for their rendition of the Beatles' song "Let it be" parodying life as a student at DLIFLC

The ninth of October every year in Korea is Hangul Day, and is a holiday commemorating the gift of a simplified alphabet from King Sejong the Great to his people in 1446, replacing complicated Chinese characters.

"Being of foreign origin, Chinese characters are incapable of capturing uniquely Korean meanings. Therefore, many common people have no way to express their thoughts and feelings," said the king, according to the alphabet's historical account.

More than 570 years later, the Korean alphabet withstood the test of time and is being taught all around the world, to include DLIFLC.

Deputy Consul General Jimin Kim, from the Korean Consulate in San Francisco, was a special guest at the ceremony and spoke about the spread of the Korean alphabet around the world and commended the students for studying the Korean alphabet. To see the alphabet so widely used by so many people pays homage to the efforts of King Sejong, said Kim.

U.S. Army Pvt. Brennan Couch, a first-semester student, was the overall winner of the 26th Annual Korean Language Writing Contest for Foreign Nationals.

Visions

Story & photos by Patrick Bray

With the golden minarets shining in the bright desert sun, mountains in the distance and camels crossing in front of the ancient city walls, this is what Marco Polo, the journeyer from Venice, might have seen on his way along the Silk Road to the court of the Great Kublai Khan in Peking.

Instead, it is a ceiling tile painted by Spc. Alexandra Bell at the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center inside the Middle East School II on the Presidio of Monterey in 2017.

"I painted this just because I liked the way it looked, to be completely honest. The colors and the shape of the buildings are so unique to that area," said Bell.

Much of the Iraqi-Arabic dialect course materials at DLIFLC focus on major cities such as Baghdad.

"I love to paint. It's what I do on weekends to decompress."

Considered one of the toughest challenges in the Department of Defense, the language school places enormous pressure on students from across the services to succeed in only a limited amount of time. Bell uses painting as her way to decompress.

"It is always amazing to see how incredibly talented our students are. There must be some connection between being able to learn a foreign language and having that artistic ability," said Middle East II Dean, Dr. Deanna Tovar, who encourages students in her school to use their creative talents to draw, write articles for the student newspaper or paint on ceiling tiles that are now mounted in her school.

Spc. Alexandra Bell, an Iraqi-dialect Arabic student, poses with her ceiling tile painting of the old city of Baghdad at the DLIFLC Oct. 26, 2017.

Airman enjoys being student, mastering Chinese culture, language

Story by By Staff Sgt. Anthony Hyatt, 70th Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Wing
Photos by Staff Sgt. Alexandre Montes

Learning a new language can provide direct access to new literatures, new perspectives and new cultures. It can foster an understanding of the interrelation of language and human nature. It can also improve the knowledge of one's own language; increasing native vocabulary skills.

The benefits of learning a new language really are endless, as U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Abraham, an Airborne Cryptologic Language Analyst with the 70th Operations Support Squadron, has discovered. He joined the Air Force seven years ago with the goal of testing his abilities, and he has passed that test with flying colors.

Abraham picked his career field because he wanted to be challenged, he said, and being a linguist also had that "cool factor" he was looking for. The Chinese linguist said he liked … "the prospect of knowing a foreign language that was incomprehensible to everyone else I knew."

Abraham, like most Air Force linguists, spent his first year in the military training at the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center in Monterey, California. The duration of any language training depends on the specific language being studied and, in Abraham's case, his Chinese Mandarin course lasted 63 weeks.

The young Airman had to attend three additional training courses before he was considered ready for duty.

"We had aircrew fundamentals school, which was a four-week course in San Antonio, after Basic Military Training; the DLIFLC, a three-month course at Goodfellow Air Force Base, Texas, for more intelligence specific skills and, depending on your Air Force Specialty Code, there's a month long survival training in Spokane, Washington," Abraham said.

Even after completing all the required training, Abraham still has to test his skills regularly.

"The Defense Language Proficiency Test is the final test you take before you graduate from DLI, and you then take it every year to ensure you maintain the Air Force 2/2 standards for Reading and Listening," said Abraham. "You only have to test once every two years if you score a 3/3 or higher."

DLPT scores play a big role in a linguist's career because the results are used to select personnel for programs or assignments that may require minimum language proficiency levels, and they also are used to determine eligibility for the Foreign Language Proficiency Bonus.

"设定目标，
天天向上，
自强不息"

"Set goals, go upward every day and never stop strengthening yourself."

On Abraham's August 2017 DLPT in Chinese, he earned scores of: Listening, 4; Reading, 4; and Speaking, 3.

"To give you an idea of what this accomplishment means, the Air Force proficiency standard for language is a Listening, 2; Reading, 2," said Master Sgt. Sarah Ault, flight Instructor at the Air Force Senior Noncommissioned Officer Academy, and Abraham's former 70th Operation Support Squadron flight chief. "He may be the only person, or one of only a handful of people, with the Chinese proficiency he has and, to top it off, he is a non-native Chinese speaker. The Interagency Language Roundtable scale only goes to level five. Even most native language speakers do not get a five on this test. He is at near-native proficiency, which is a huge accomplishment.

"He has done all of this on his own, through self-study," said Ault. "He is a wonderful testament to hard work really paying off."

"I worked really hard for my score," Abraham said. "It's worth it to me because it allows you to do a lot more, mission-wise."

Abraham recalled a situation at his first base, where his proficiency in Chinese presented him with a new opportunity. His group commander had a trip planned to an undisclosed location, and one linguist was requested to go on the journey. As one of the most proficient Chinese speakers in the unit, Abraham was contacted.

"I'm always like, "dress for the job you want, not the job you have," Abraham said. "I want to use my language at a high level."

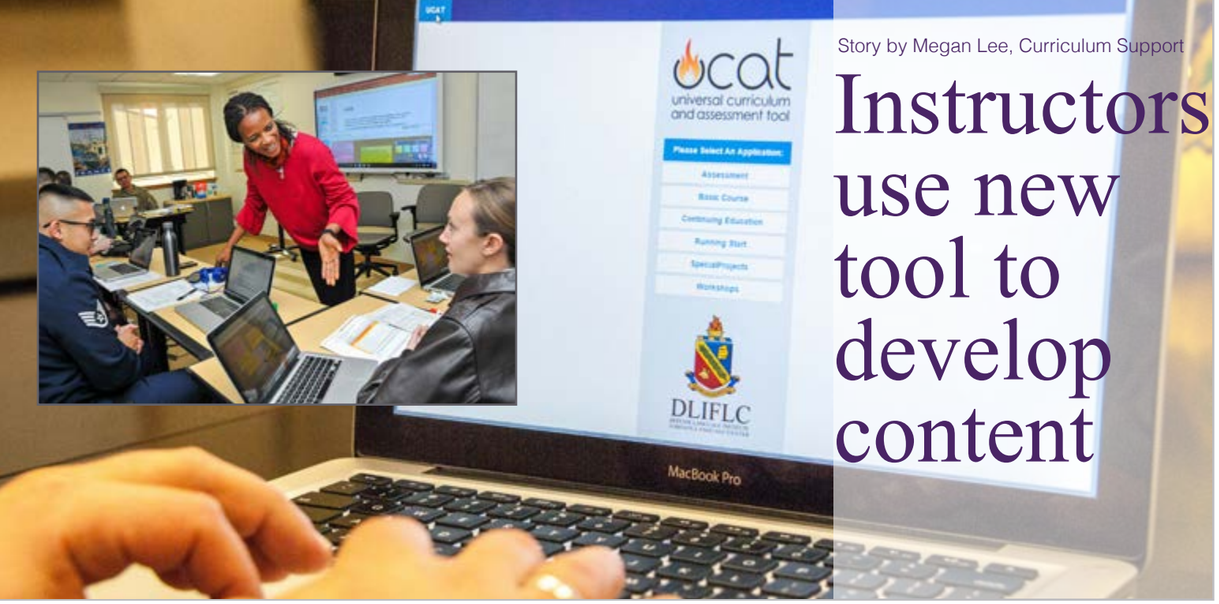
Currently, the majority of Abraham's time is spent translating Chinese information and conducting research in the hopes of delivering intelligence products to policy makers.

"What we do as language analyst has high stakes," said the Illinois-native. "An aircrew linguist shared a speech with us after he won an award, and he talked about his deployment. The linguist wondered to himself, 'What if I had studied more or studied harder, maybe we could have found a high-priority target?' or 'What if I had studied more Pashto, maybe I could have prepped my team better.' We have to keep this in mind. I think people sometimes forget that."

Abraham believes a linguist's goal should always be to become an expert in their target language culture, history, literature, poetry, television, politics and economics, and should always strive to do better.

"As with anything in my life, it's mostly about setting a goal and doing it. You have to keep finding motivation. I think just about anyone who works as hard as I have can get to the same level," he said, concluding with his advice in Chinese: 设定目标，天天向上，自强不息, which translates to, "Set goals, go upward every day and never stop strengthening yourself."

Tech. Sgt. Abraham, an Airborne Cryptologic Language Analyst with the 70th Operations Support Squadron, recently earned a Listening 4, Reading 4 and Speaking 3 on the Chinese Defense Language Proficiency Test in August 2017. The DLPT system evaluates Airmen's ability to understand written and/or spoken material presented in a foreign language and their ability to speak a foreign language. (U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Alexandre Montes)



Story by Megan Lee, Curriculum Support

Instructors use new tool to develop content

Ask any instructor at the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center what their greatest challenge is and they will most likely tell you that finding and designing enough current authentic materials that is interesting enough to keep the their millennial students engaged and motivated is something that keeps them in constant "hunting mode."

"The joy of teaching largely consists of a continuous hunt to find better and more interesting materials for your students, to see them light up and get excited about something they just learned," says Suzie Suriam, a French instructor at the European and Latin American School.

DLIFLC's Universal Curriculum and Assessment Tool is a relatively new content development platform with multiple capabilities that has been developed in-house by Curriculum Support staff and contractors for DLIFLC instructors and curriculum developers

"The good thing about this tool is that it can handle just about any type of content you can throw at it, be it course curricula, tests or workshops. It allows instructors to develop, deliver and share supplemental instructional materials. They system even allows support staff to deliver and share workshops across all their mobile devices," said Curriculum Support Specialist Tara Schendel, explaining that the initial design of the program began in 2014.

"Today we have more than 1,000 UCAT faculty accounts on the system and it is growing, as instructors become familiar with it and realize that it is as simple to use as building blocks," she said.

Universal Curriculum and Assessment Tool home screenshot

Tech. Sgt. Jesse High discusses elements of the Universal Curriculum and Assessment Tool for Urdu with Sunita Narain, a Urdu instructor who works with the development team as a subject matter expert.

Universal Curriculum and Assessment Tool home screenshot

The goal of the UCAT team is to expand usage of its program to incorporate all DLIFLC languages and to encourage instructors to build materials at the 2+ and beyond level for use in the classroom.

"The system can handle all target language writing systems, audio and video materials, and enables the developer to change things on the fly. One of the best things is that an instructor can never lose their materials, even if they unintentionally delete their work," said Schendel, describing an incident of language material recovery.

The next step for the UCAT team is to develop a testing platform that will allow instructors to assign in-course assessment tests to students and follow their progress, seamlessly, as the student is taking the exam. There is also ample space for feedback and commentary by both student and teacher.

"One of the features is to have the exams automatically scored," explained Schendel.

Currently, both basic course and continuing education advanced and intermediate course instructors are working with the UCAT tool to include Chinese, Korean, Russian, Levantine, Iraqi, French, Modern Standard Arabic, Pashto, Urdu, Persian-Farsi, and Spanish.

DOD Senior Language Authority visits Russian class

Story & photos by Natela Cutter

Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, Force Education and Training, and the Department of Defense's Senior Language Authority, Mr. Fred Drummond, shakes hands with Lt. Col. Kevin Bosch Nov. 15, 2017 in front of the European and Latin American School as Assistant Dean Ivanisa Ferrer looks on.

Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, Force Education and Training, and the Department of Defense's Senior Language Authority, Mr. Fred Drummond, received a tour of the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center and Presidio of Monterey Nov. 15 and 16, during a two-day visit.

Drummond observed a Russian language class and had an opportunity to talk with students, reply to their questions and learn about their intensive studies, that last 48 weeks, five days a week, six to seven hours per day.

"I really appreciate the opportunity of being able to see what you do in the classroom and take back your story to Washington D.C. and the policy people. My job is to ensure you folks have everything you need to effectively learn foreign languages in support of the Services," said Drummond, to a class of students studying Russian.

Drummond also had the opportunity to see a demonstration of DLIFLC online foreign language products which are used as predeployment or sustainment materials for service members.

On Nov. 16, Drummond chaired the language and culture Annual Program Review, held each year to review DLIFLC's past progress and future plans for the upcoming fiscal year. Aside from the 20 or more outside visitors, some 50 members of the DLIFLC academic and military leadership participated in the event.

Senior DOD Language Authority Mr. Fred Drummond shares a laugh with Russian language students whom he visited during his two-day visit to the Institute. Enjoying the exchange is DLIFLC Commandant Col. Phil Deppert (far left.)

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