

# ALABAMA GUARDSMAN

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### On The Cover

*PELHAM RANGE, Alabama--Staff Sgt. Anthony Blackman, a team leader with the 666th EOD Company controls a Talon Robot during EOD training here August 8, 2015 (U.S. Army Photo by Sgt. William Frye, State Public Affairs Office).*

## Adjutant General

# Optimism key in facing current challenges



**Maj. Gen.  
Perry Smith**

“Do what you can, with what you have, where you are.” - Theodore Roosevelt. We mark the end of fiscal year 2015 with uncertainties regarding state budget cuts, armory closures, recruiting shortages, and the list

goes on. I am not starting my article out with doom and gloom, but I wanted to make you aware of the current challenges of the Alabama

National Guard. The point is that they are only challenges, and ones that we have faced many times before and come through on the other side and survived. Please read again the opening quote from Theodore Roosevelt and keep the word optimism in your pocket.

“Optimism is a force multiplier,” Colin Powell once said. He also said that optimism was the secret behind President Ronald Reagan’s charisma. Never before in the history of civilization have we had access to such a wealth of ideas, resources, equipment and opportunities. Spread the word and tell your friends, neighbors, civic groups, and high school students what a great opportunity it would be for them to become a member of the Alabama National

Guard. In spite of the current challenges, the Alabama National Guard brings many opportunities for increased income, discipline, new job skills, the chance to travel overseas and train with our Romanian partners, and help your neighbor in times of disaster.

So even if you hear the news that your unit will have to relocate or the budget is tighter than last year, have optimism and faith that the Alabama National Guard has weathered many of these storms in the past. Stick together as a big family and actively recruit new members to share with them the great opportunities that you are already benefiting from. Lead from the front!

## State Command Sergeant Major

# Professional military education: making lifelong learners and leaders



**Command  
Sgt. Maj.  
Eddie Pike**

During the recent years of military combat and global conflict, the Army National Guard has been geared towards the immediacy of war and strongly focused on defeating enemies of the United

States and our allies around the world. With the withdrawal of ground troops in many regions, coupled with the drawdown of military forces, the United States military is adjusting its focus on the ever-changing global conflicts, and the way the United States is positioned to defend itself, allies and coalition forces in the

future.

A significant part of the changing dynamic is professional military education, which has adopted new and improved ways of implementing training and capabilities within the ranks of our Army. There are many Soldiers and Airmen that possess advanced civilian degrees and have achieved distinction as civilian scholars. A formal education has always been an important source of added value to the development of leadership qualities, critical in the growth of any military professional.

The military as a whole considers both civilian and military academic achievement as an essential foundation required for service members to prepare for the many challenges and realities that await them in performing their daily duties, and to prepare

for the future demands of their duty positions. Soldiers and Airmen are expected to meet and exceed expectations of their leadership and to grow and develop into leaders as well. The American military force is the most experienced, effective and essential fighting force in the world and to maintain the high levels of readiness, we must also be the most educated.

Advanced education affords us opportunities to prevent mistakes of the past, align our civilian strengths with military requirements, and gives us the ability to overcome obstacles by making quantitative and measurable smart choices when dealing with military conflict. Our job as service members are to protect the constitution, the ideals embodied therein, and to serve in the security of our home-  
**(Please see EDUCATION, page 12)**

# Alabama Guard unit thanks Anniston Contracting Office

by Jennifer Bacchus (AMC)  
Contributed

ANNISTON ARMY DEPOT, Ala. -- Col. Dennis Butters, commander of the 279th Army Field Support Brigade, presented the Anniston Contracting Office with his organization's flag in gratitude for training assistance.

The 279th is the only organization of its kind - a National Guard unit devoted to contingency contracting.

In that role, members of the 279th regularly deploy overseas. So, having a fully trained and ready staff is vital.

"Sending a Soldier here for a year of training gives us a certified contracting professional and it gives the contracting office extra labor," said Butters.

Soldiers who serve with contingency contracting operations must achieve and maintain certain certifications.

The year of on-the-job training here is in support of each Soldier's Level I certification.

Since the 279th is headquartered in Huntsville, Alabama, having a training location at Anniston Army Depot is convenient.

Each Soldier assigned to the Anniston Contracting Office for training is given a training plan and assigned a contracting officer and a mentor, who is a contracting specialist.

"We try to give the Soldiers



Contributed/photo

*Director of Contracting David Bunt, right, accepts a framed flag from Col. Dennis Butters of the 279th Army Field Support Brigade for the Anniston Contracting Office's training assistance.*

a good overview of contracting," said Yvonne Land, chief of the Contracts Division for the Anniston Contracting Office.

The training plan focuses first on the most important things the Soldiers need to know about purchasing and contracting. Other fields, such as contract management, analysis and support functions and direct sales contracts are covered as time permits.

"We try to expose them to as much as possible to be able to deploy or go to another garrison," said David Bunt, director of the Anniston Contracting Office, adding that some of the Guard and reserve Soldiers

have even gotten civilian jobs in contracting, thanks to their training here and other Army courses.

The Guard and reserve Soldiers contribute to the office as well, assisting an organization which is short-staffed.

"Some of the Soldiers are coming to us with Level I contracting experience," said Bunt. "So, we have an extra, knowledgeable person."

Butters said an additional benefit of the training is the relationships built with the employees here.

"I was amazed at how much is done here and everything the depot does for all branches of service," he said.

# Snap Shots

A look at some of the recent highlights from the Alabama National Guard



Contributed/photo

**ANNISTON, Alabama**--On Friday, September 18, 2015 the Little Tree Preschool held Appreciation Day and invited Soldiers from the Fort McClellan Army National Guard Training Center. Several Soldiers from the installation visited during the day and were each greeted by a teacher and a student whom presented them with a cool beverage, snack and gift bag. Students, teachers and Soldiers were thrilled at the opportunity to share each other's company during the visits. The Little Tree Preschool is located at the United Cerebral Palsy Center located adjacent to Fort McClellan. Established in 1983, The Learning Tree is a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing educational, residential and support services for children and adolescents with developmental disabilities, including autism.



Contributed/photo

**TUSCALOOSA, Alabama**--Maj. Gen. Perry Smith, the adjutant general of Alabama, presents Maj. Gen. Charles Gailes with a Col. William Oates certificate, upon his retirement, for his support of the Alabama National Guard at a retirement ceremony here August 8, 2015.



Contributed/photo

**WASHINGTON D.C.**—(From left to right) Capt. Jason Britt, Lt. Col. Brian Howell and Master Sgt. Robert Elmore stand together after completing the Army Ten Miler here October 11, 2015. 35,000 runners registered for the 31st installment of the annual run which passes several national monuments such as Arlington Cemetery, the Lincoln Memorial and the Washington Monument. Six Alabama Guardsmen participated in the event: Capt. Jason Britt (62nd Troop Command), Master Sgt. Robert Elmore (62nd Troop Command), Sgt. 1st Class Lisa Garrett (AL JFHQ), Lt. Col. Brian Howell (Headquarters 31st Chemical Brigade), Capt. Trey Lawless (FSC, 1-117 Field Artillery) and Sgt. Jackie Parker (A Battery, 1-117 Field Artillery).



Contributed/photo

**BIRMINGHAM, Alabama**--Bethany Lovell, left, is presented the Command Sgt. Maj. Virgil R. Williams Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States (EANGUS) Scholarship Award by Nancy J. Waller, Enlisted National Guard Association of Alabama (ENGAA) secretary treasurer, right, September 20, 2015, at Birmingham Air National Guard Base here. The national scholarship awards \$2,000 toward education costs and is available to all dependents of sponsors who are members of EANGUS. She was chosen by a committee of educators and competed against 26 other applicants. Bethany is the daughter of Master Sgt. Darryl Lovell, 117th Mission Support Group, customer service supervisor.



Erick Yates/image

**Alabama Army National Guard explosive ordnance disposal Soldiers** from the 666th Explosive Ordnance Disposal Company, out of Jacksonville, Ala., conduct joint training with Kosovo Security Force soldiers on electronic explosive device procedures Sept. 9, 2015, at an EOD training site in Prizren, Kosovo. The Soldiers attended the training to ensure their teams are familiar with each other's best practices while conducting peace support missions in the region.



Contributed/photo

**Lt. Gen. Nicolae-Lonel Ciuca, Chief of the Romanian General Staff** was inducted into the U.S. Army War College (USAWC) International Fellows Hall of Fame September 23, 2015. Ciuca and Romania have been active in the Partnership for Peace Program in which Romania and the Alabama National Guard have worked together for more than 20 years. The U.S. Army War College International Fellows Hall of Fame was established to provide a prestigious and visible means of honoring USAWC International Fellow graduates who have attained the highest positions in their respective nations' armed forces or who have held an equivalent position by rank or responsibility in a multinational organization. The first induction was held in March 1988. There have been 1,459 International Fellow Graduates and Ciuca is the 57th International Hall of Fame Member.



William Frye/photo

**MONTGOMERY, Alabama**—Sgt. Maj. Adarain Salaam is pinned by her children at her promotion ceremony at Joint Force Headquarters here, Sept. 8, 2015. Also in attendance are Maj. Gen. Perry G. Smith, the adjutant general of the Alabama National Guard, left, and Command Sgt. Maj. Eddie Pike, the state command sergeant major of the Alabama National Guard, right.



William Frye/photo

**ALEXANDER CITY, Alabama**—Pfc. Keonte Lucy poses for a photograph with parents Theo and Avos Rice, at a deployment ceremony for the 214th Military Police Company at Benjamin Russell High School here, Oct. 10, 2015. The 214th MP Company is deploying to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Pfc. Keonte Lucy is deploying with the 214th Military Police Company.



William Frye/photo

**MONTGOMERY, Alabama**—Col. Steven G. Shepherd is pinned by wife Leigh and mother Jean Shepherd at his promotion ceremony at Joint Force Headquarters here, Sept. 1, 2015.



Shannon Hancock/photo

*MONTGOMERY, Alabama—Maj. Gen. Perry Smith, the adjutant general of Alabama, holds the Alabama National Guard flag with Representative Duwayne Bridges (left) and Representative Richard Laird (right) at the House of Representatives press room here on September 8, 2015. Smith presented Bridges and Laird with Col. William Oates certificates, upon their retirements, for their support of the Alabama National Guard during their time as representatives for the state of Alabama.*



Shannon Hancock/photo

*MONTGOMERY, Alabama—Maj. Gen. Perry Smith, the adjutant general of Alabama, presents Representative Duwayne Bridges with a Col. William Oates certificate, upon his retirement, for his support of the Alabama National Guard during his time as representative for the state of Alabama, at the House of Representatives press room here on September 8, 2015.*



Shannon Hancock/photo

*MONTGOMERY, Alabama—Maj. Gen. Perry Smith, the adjutant general of Alabama, presents Representative Richard Laird with a Col. William Oates certificate, upon his retirement, for his support of the Alabama National Guard during his time as representative for the state of Alabama, at the House of Representatives press room here on September 8, 2015.*

# US Army contracting team trains local institutions in Kosovo

by Ardian Nrecaj  
Multinational Battle Group-East

*Editor's note: This story was originally featured on the official homepage of the United States Army on Aug. 21, 2015 and is being reprinted with permission.*

PRISTINA, Kosovo - U.S. Army Soldiers with the 1960th Contingency Contracting Team out of Huntsville Alabama, and currently assigned to Area Support Team-Balkans in Kosovo, marked the completion of a five-day training series on market management and technical specifications, for approximately 20 members and officials from Ministry of Kosovo Security Force and their Land Forces Command, during a ceremony Aug. 14 in Pristina, Kosovo.

U.S. Army Master Sgt. Lesly Richardson, one of the instructors of the training, said the training's value exceeded her expectations.

"They had a lot of questions, and that made the training much more energetic," Richardson said. "There was a good exchange of information."

AST-Balkans serves in support of U.S. Army Europe, the overarching organization which oversees the readiness of Army forces forward-stationed in Europe, and works side-by-side with U.S. allies in the region. AST-Balkans, headquartered out of Camp Bondsteel in Kosovo, supports USAREUR priorities in the region, and



Ardian Nrecaj/photo

*Kosovo Security Force Maj. Skender Hajdari, a planning and maintenance officer for the logistics department with Kosovo Security Forces Land Forces Command, presents with a gift to U.S. Army Maj. Justin Todd Floyd and Master Sgt. Lesly Richardson, respectively, the chief of contracting and NCO in charge for the 1960th Contingency Contracting Team, out of Huntsville, Ala., and currently assigned to Area Support Team-Balkans, during a graduation ceremony, Aug. 14, 2015, in Pristina, Kosovo. Soldiers with the 1960th Contingency Contracting Team held a course on market management and technical specifications for a group of approximately 20 members and officials from Ministry of Kosovo Security Force and their Land Forces Command.*

also provides logistical support to U.S. Army forces serving in support of the Kosovo Force, or KFOR, mission.

AST-Balkans provided subject-matter experts to conduct this training in order to further build partnership and capability between the U.S. Army and Kosovo's institutions.

"There was a recognition of their own policies and laws and how in the future they may look to modify some of them," added Richardson. "The organizations spoke with one another and there was a good dialogue and exchange of information so we think it created a great baseline for them."

Kosovo Security Force Maj. Skender Hajdari, a planning and

maintenance officer for logistics department with KSF's Land Forces Command said that he was happy with the instructors and the training.

"This training was necessary for us, we saw that we have a need to train and develop our forces in technical specifications and market research, also managing contracts as a process in whole," Hajdari said.

According to Hajdari, the training was fruitful because they exchanged experiences with the U.S. Army contracting team.

"Every day we did our after action review and all participants from the training came out with recommendations and (Please see TEAM, page 11)



Sgt. Mikhail George (left), an electrician with the 1151st Engineer Company, levels out the concrete for the base for the posts to support the roof to an ammunition supply point Aug. 25 (U.S. Army Photo by Staff Sgt. Frederick Varney, 131st Mobile Public Affairs Detachment)



Romanian Soldiers (from left to right, Cpl. Florin Jordai, Cpl. Gheorghe Costicaru and Cpl. Tibor Gal) and Pfc. Brinson McCants, a carpenter with the 166th Engineer Company, work together to fix a circular saw at a building construction site Aug. 26 on Cincu Training Center. (U.S. Army Photo by Staff Sgt. Christopher Davis, Alabama National Guard Public Affairs)



Pfc. Micheal Blackwelder, a carpenter with the 1151st Engineer Company, assists Romanian Soldiers with cutting support beams for an ammunition storage building Aug. 25 at Cincu Training Center. (U.S. Army Photo by Staff Sgt. Frederick Varney, 131st Mobile Public Affairs Detachment)

Operation Resolute Castle 15 was a joint effort between Romania's 136th Geniu Engineer Battalion and Alabama's 877th Engineer Battalion to improve the structures and infrastructure at Cincu Training Center, Romania, during the Summer of 2015.

## Build It Strong Men of Earth

Operation Resolute Castle 15 highlights the partnership between the Alabama National Guard and the Romanian Armed Forces for years to come.

**877TH**

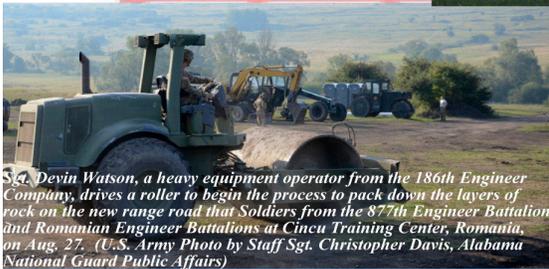
**136TH GENIU**

**ENGINEER**

**ENGINEER**

**BATTALION**

**BATTALION**



Sgt. Devin Watson, a heavy equipment operator from the 186th Engineer Company, drives a roller to begin the process to pack down the layers of rock on the new range road that Soldiers from the 877th Engineer Battalion and Romanian Engineer Battalions at Cincu Training Center, Romania, on Aug. 27. (U.S. Army Photo by Staff Sgt. Christopher Davis, Alabama National Guard Public Affairs)



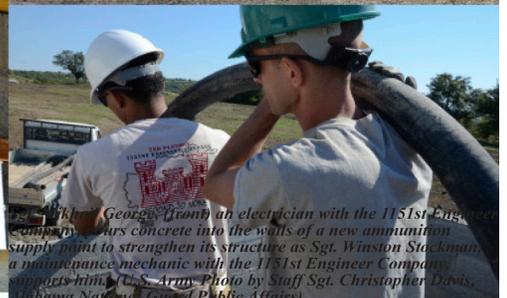
Sgt. Mikhail George, an electrician with the 1151st Engineer Company, assists Romanian Cpl. Claudiu Dingheana to cure a ceiling panel to a new ammunition supply point Aug. 25 at Cincu Training Center. (U.S. Army Photo by Staff Sgt. Christopher Davis, Alabama National Guard Public Affairs)



Spe. Garrett German, an equipment operator with the 186th Engineer Company, operates a grader during a road construction project Aug. 24 at Cincu Training Center, Romania. (U.S. Army Photo by Staff Sgt. Frederick Varney, 131st Mobile Public Affairs Detachment)



Col. James B. Bishop, Brigade Commander with the Tennessee National Guard's 194th Engineer Brigade, speaks with Capt. Florin Jordai, Commander for the 166th Engineer Company Aug. 26 during a visit to the Cincu Training Center in Romania. (U.S. Army Photo by Staff Sgt. Frederick Varney, 131st Mobile Public Affairs Detachment)



Sgt. Mikhail George (front), an electrician with the 1151st Engineer Company, pours concrete into the walls of a new ammunition supply point to strengthen its structure as Sgt. Winston Stockman, a maintenance mechanic with the 1151st Engineer Company, supports him. (U.S. Army Photo by Staff Sgt. Christopher Davis, Alabama National Guard Public Affairs)

## Congratulations to the following retiring Alabama Guardsmen:

E7	Arnold, Malcolm	HHC 115th ESB
E4	Boykin, Guy A.	HHT 1st Squadron 131 CAV (-DET 1)
E7	Caudill, Richard G. II	HHC 226 ME Brigade
E5	Crews, Harold B.	TROOP A 1ST Squadron 131st CAV
E6	Davis, Everrette L.	900 MAINT Co. (-DET 1) (CRC)
O3	Eubanks, Carole C.	127TH Medical Co.
E4	Lebeaux, William B.	DET 1 CO B 711 BSB
E7	Robinson, West C.	117 Forward Support Co.
E7	Rogers, Phillip D.	SPT Co. 1 BN 20 SFG (-DET 1)
E6	Smith, Joe E.	HHC 877 EN BN
E5	Snow, Wendy M	440 Chemical Co.
E9	Stasiak, Edward P.	HHC 142nd BFSB
E8	Tucker, Max Z.	HHB 1st BN 117th FA
E6	Wilson, Stephen P.	HHB 1st BN 117th FA

*Editors note: The names of retired Alabama Guardsmen are provided by MACOMs*

*(TEAM continued from page 9)*

conclusions that in the future we can incorporate them into our procurement laws in Kosovo, and use them for market research and managing contracts," added Hajdari.

Students received their certificates from German Air Force Brig. Gen. Werner J. Haumann, the outgoing director of NATO's Liaison and Advisory Team and Kosovo Security Force Brig. Gen. Zymer Halimi, director of operations for MKSF.

Haumann called the training an important step for KSF. "Contract management it is

one of most important things you have to look after, and you have to be well-trained," Haumann said. "So I see this course as a very important step forward for MKSF and Land Forces Command of KSF."

Kosovo Security Force Brig. Gen. Zymer Halimi, director of operations for MKSF said that this training was organized at the right time and it was more than welcome for them.

"The market research and technical specifications are a very important topic for us," Halimi said. "We know it is a

basic training, but we know also that training will continue, and we will prepare in time for the coming activities."

U.S. Army Maj. Justin Todd Floyd, chief of contracting with the 1960th Contingency Contracting Team, was happy with the outcome of the training and said looks forward to see how they will incorporate it into the changes they want.

"They've got some really smart guys here that are knowledgeable about contracting procedures," Floyd said.

# 12 Alabama Guardsman

*(EDUCATION continued from page 3)*

land. Education has increasingly become a larger part of the daily activity of our men and women in uniform and America is much stronger when its service members are educated, adding consistent and current-day knowledge in efforts to defeat those who desire to do us harm.

All of us are charged with creeds, ethos and oaths of service, and we should be proud of those promises

to serve. We should also be lifelong learners, eager to obtain as much knowledge as possible, and willing to take the necessary steps to maximize growth opportunities. As new educational opportunities arise, be mindful of the impact the additional knowledge will have on you, as a service member.

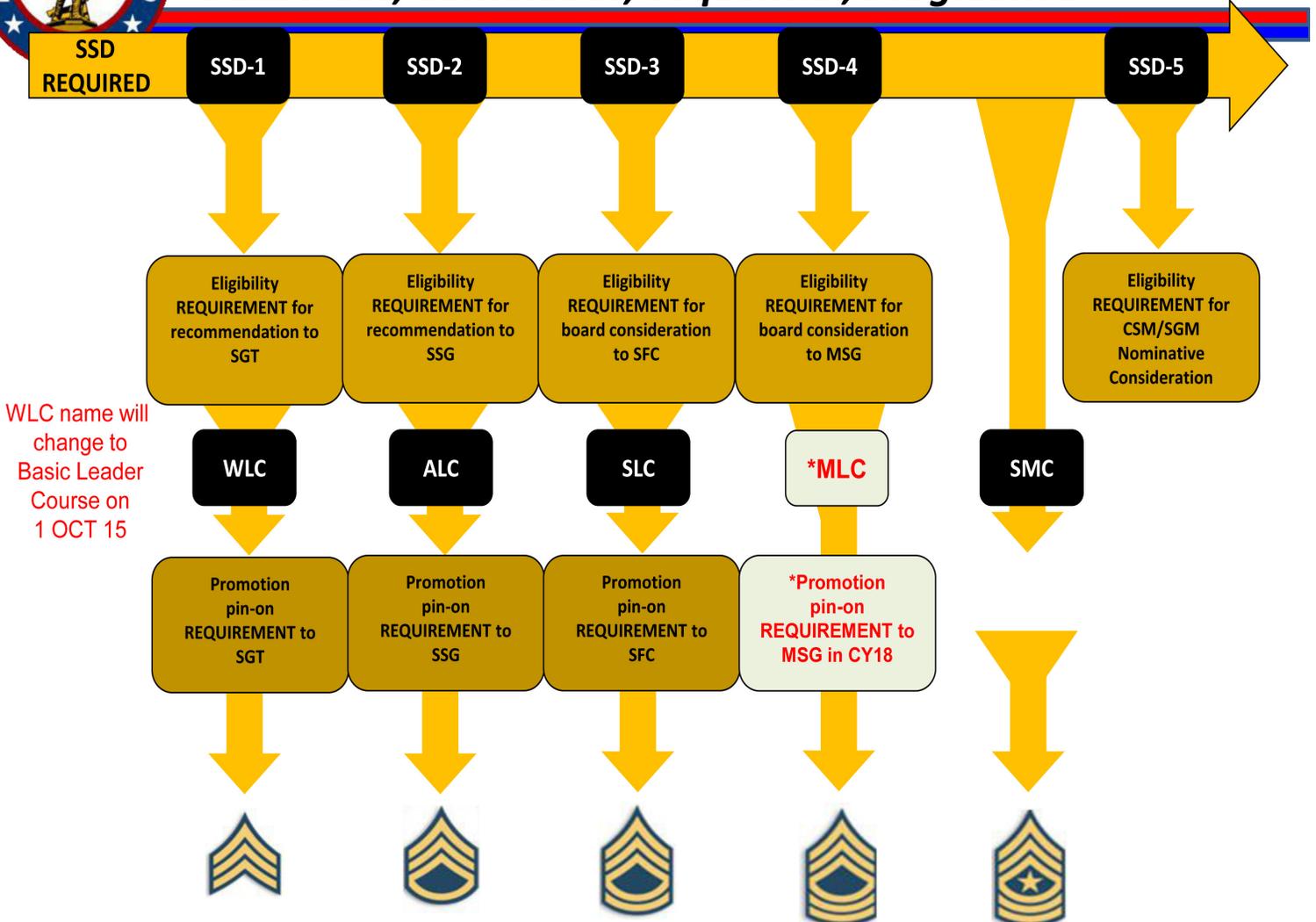
On January 1, 2016, there will be significant changes to the enlisted promotion system and education has

a significant role in future promotions for Soldiers. Take a moment to familiarize yourself with these changes and feel free to ask questions of your leadership. We are here to help mentor and guide you in your endeavors to advance within your careers, and we take pride in knowing that some of the smartest Soldiers and Airmen within the ranks of the military are members of the Alabama National Guard.



## UNCLASSIFIED STEP Requirements

*Deliberate, Continuous, Sequential, Progressive*



WLC name will change to Basic Leader Course on 1 OCT 15