



CP-56
LEGAL CAREER PROGRAM

AUGUST 2020



**LETTER FROM THE FUNCTIONAL CHIEF'S
REPRESENTATIVE FOR CP-56**



Greetings CP-56 Attorneys and Paraprofessionals,

Change is on the horizon, as the Army is seeks to modernize its approach to talent management. The details of this effort are still emerging; but, the newly-created Army Civilian Career Management Activity (ACCMA) will be at the forefront of implementing the Army People Strategy Civilian Implementation Plan. That plan focuses on an enterprise-wide approach to talent management to acquire, develop, employ, and retain Army Civilians. The high level changes include a realignment of all career programs under CHRA; grouping existing career programs into a smaller number of career fields intended to enable Civilians to gain experience across broader functional areas; establishing Operations & Plans Offices to provide enterprise-wide talent management; and, centralizing transactional tasks under a Support Office so that career fields may instead focus on core tasks.

I look forward to witnessing how these changes will create additional opportunities for professional growth and advancement for members of the Army Legal Career Field. If you have any questions about these changes, do not hesitate to contact me or any member of my team.

Sincerely,

William J. Koon

Director,
Civilian Personnel, Labor & Employment Law
Office of The Judge Advocate General



CP-56
LEGAL CAREER PROGRAM



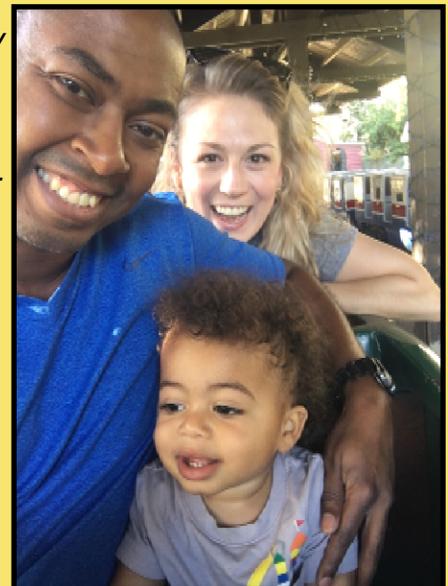
A NOTE FROM YOUR NEW CP-56 CAREER PROGRAM MANAGER

It was not until my second position in the JAG Corps that I knew our legal career program existed. And, it took my move to OTJAG to understand the wealth of information and potential that our career program holds. I love that our careerists are inherently a motivated, engaged, and high-achieving population. It is exciting to work with our team and stakeholders to move the career program forward through initiatives long-championed and recognized by our leadership as vital to recruiting and retaining a workforce that is diverse in experience, expertise, and background. The initiatives will be seen in ways large and small, and our dedicated and committed team is already forging ahead. Ms. Heather Ingrum Gipson joins us from OTJAG's Fair Labor Standards Act team, and she has hit the ground running. You will notice her efforts in this newsletter, which is a robust and meaningful message to and from our careerists, so many of whom are working directly to answer the legal challenges of the global pandemic. As the manager of the JAG Corps Military Spouse Attorney Program, which is now its sixth year, Heather is also working with software developers to update the Program's database. Our own Sarilyn Leary has not allowed the social distancing realities of the pandemic to hamper our training efforts. Capitalizing on remote learning opportunities, Ms. Leary has trained more careerists than any other year and identified a perfect platform for careerists juggling demand positions and additional personal responsibilities. CW2 Nicole Redmond, our first legal administrator, joins our team this month, and she has jumped in immediately by expanding our social media footprint to a new Facebook page...so stay tuned!!

Sarah Ford

Sarah P. Ford
*CP-56 Career Program Manager
Chief, Civilian Personnel Management
Labor and Employment Law Division,
Office of The Judge Advocate General*

Chosen to manage the CP-56 Career Program in April 2020, Ms. Ford previously served the Army legal community in a broad range of capacities—most recently as the CP-56 Assistant Chief and Program Manager for the JAG Corps Military Spouse Attorney Hiring Program. Ms. Ford served as a labor counselor at U.S. Army Futures Command Headquarters and with the XVIII Airborne Corps at Ft. Bragg. She was also the Client Services Division Deputy at Fort Lee, Virginia and a legal volunteer with the Client Services Division at Fort Campbell, Kentucky. Prior to joining the federal service, Ms. Ford was selected for an Equal Justice Works fellowship where she provided legal services to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault through the Montgomery County Women's Center in southeastern Texas. Ms. Ford She is a graduate of The University of Houston Law Center. Her husband, Dave, is an active-duty Judge Advocate. Sarah and Dave have a two-year-old son, Luke. Email: sarah.p.ford3.civ@mail.mil





TRAINING UPDATE

CP-56 Breaks Training Record

CP-56 is charged with identifying and funding formal education and training opportunities that promote continued professional development for Army Civilian legal professionals. Despite significant budget cuts and the disruptions caused by COVID-19, CP-56 trained a record-setting 317 legal careerists in nineteen courses in FY20. The tables below provide an overview of the wide-ranging training opportunities that CP-56 careerists joined in FY20.

FY20 Paraprofessional Courses	
Course Title & Presenting Organization	Individuals Trained
Admin Law for Military Organizations (TJAGLCS)	4
Paralegal Certificate Course (CLS, online)	10
Legal Investigation Course (CLS, online)	5
Advanced Legal Research & Writing (CLS, online)	6
Personal Injury (CLS, online)	4
Lorman Annual All Access Pass (online)	56
Total No. Paraprofessionals Trained in FY20	85

Breakdown of CP-56 Careerists Trained in FY20 (by Qualifying Authority)			
# from TJAG	# from AMC	# from USACE	# from OGC
170	68	74	5

FY20 Attorney Courses	
Course Title & Presenting Organization	Individuals Trained
Ethics Counselor Course (TJAGLCS)	7
CYBER Law Course (AFJAG)	4
MSPB & EEOC Hearing Practices Week (FELTG)	4
Eminent Domain and Land Valuation (ALI, CLE)	4
Environmental Law (ALI, CLE)	14
Contract & Fiscal Law New Developments Course (TJAGLCS)	5
Persuasive Brief Writing (NITA, online)	12
Deposition Skills (NITA, online)	16
Motion Skills (NITA, online)	12
Building Trial Skills (NITA, online)	12
EEOC Law Week (FELTG, online)	6
UnCivil Servant: Holding Employees Accountable (FELTG, online)	26
Lorman Annual All Access Pass (online)	110
Total No. of Attorneys Trained in FY20	232

Suggestions for FY21 Training Opportunities?

We are currently looking toward FY21 for training opportunities. If there are specific courses that you would like our office to consider for its Competitive Professional Development (CPD) Program in FY21, please contact **Ms. Sarilyn Leary** at sarilyn.h.leary.civ@mail.mil to discuss.



CP-56
LEGAL CAREER PROGRAM



CIVILIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM

The Army's Civilian Education System (CES) is a progressive leader development program for Civilian employees, that is centrally funded for most permanent Army Civilians and Local Nationals (this means the Army pays for your tuition, travel and per diem centrally, there is no cost to your office or command). In "normal" years, the resident portions of the CES courses are held at Fort Leavenworth, but this year, due to COVID-19, all courses through March 2021 will be completed virtually.

CES COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Foundation Course – provides Army Civilians with an orientation to leader development concepts, and introduces the role of an Army Civilian, the Army's core values, problem solving, written communication, customer service, and risk management. The course is available online. **The Foundation Course is required for all Army Civilians hired after 30 September 2006.** The Foundation Course is a prerequisite prior to progressing to the other CES courses.

Basic Course – is designed for the Army Civilian leader at the GS 05-09 level (or equivalent), and is offered in either a 100% online setting or a two-week resident phase at Fort Leavenworth. The primary option is the online course, which is offered continuously and space is available for all prospective students in grades GS 01-09. The resident phase is offered 15 times annually and the seats are quota-managed by commands. **The Basic Course is required for all supervisors in grades GS 05-09**, but non-supervisors can also complete the course.

Intermediate Course – prepares current and aspiring Army Civilian leaders at the GS 10-12 level (or equivalent) to become more innovative, self-aware, and prepared to lead and care for personnel. The course is conducted through two phases – Phase 1 is online, and Phase 2 is a three-week resident experience taken after completion of Phase 1 ("resident" phase will be virtual through March 2021, and there are several options for completion). **The Intermediate Course is required for all supervisors in grades GS 10-12**, but non-supervisors can also complete the course.

Advanced Course – prepares Army Civilian leaders in grades GS 13-15 (or equivalent) to assume increasing levels of responsibility and leadership within organizations. Graduates learn to lead complex organizations, manage organization resources, lead change, inspire vision and creativity, and integrate Army systems. The Advanced Course is conducted through two phases – Phase 1 is completed online prior to Phase 2, which is a four-week resident phase ("resident" phase will be virtual through March 2021, and will take 6 weeks to complete). **The Advanced Course is required for all supervisors in grades GS 13-15**, but non-supervisors can also complete the course.

The FY21 CES course schedule and additional information on the virtual course options can be found on the Army Management Staff College (AMSC) webpage at <https://usacac.army.mil/organizations/cace.amsc> or on the CP-56 webpage at jagcnet.army.mil/sites/CP56.nsf. Register for CES courses at <https://www.atrrs.army.mil/channels/chrtas/student/login.aspx>.

If you are in a supervisory position and you have not completed the required CES, now may be a great time to complete this requirement using the virtual course option.

For questions, please contact Ms. Sarilyn Leary at sarilyn.h.leary.civ@mail.mil.



CP-56 CAREERISTS RESPOND TO COVID-19

The Coronavirus pandemic brought about unprecedented changes in our Nation and the Army Legal community was no exception. CP-56 careerists adapted to the ever-changing working conditions brought on by the pandemic and continued delivering principled legal counsel their clients in new and innovative ways. CP-56 careerists from the four Qualifying Authorities reflected on their experiences working in the era of COVID-19.



ARMY MATERIAL COMMAND

Ms. Melissa Lloyd

*Senior Attorney, Business Law Branch
AMC Legal Center
RSA Business Operations Division
Redstone Arsenal, Alabama*

Ms. Melissa Lloyd has been part of the Army legal community for nine years and has served as Acting Chief of the Business Law Branch (BLB) since October 2019.

Ms. Lloyd lauded the BLB's quick, competent, and efficient response to the change in workflow due to COVID-19. Ms. Lloyd described the BLB's actions in recent months as "diverse, rapidly dispersed, with the expectation that some be resolved with less than [three] hour turnaround." The BLB accomplished this by triaging incoming COVID-related actions and assigned them to attorneys already familiar with the underlying issues. Novel legal problems were tackled by multiple attorneys who "joint-ventured" the actions. Microsoft Teams was the digital platform used on a daily basis for issue spotting; discussing legal analyses; real-time collaboration on work product; and, promoting esprit de corps.

Among all of the actions the BLB worked in recent months, Ms. Lloyd reported that the most significant was the integration of MG Paul Pardew's designation as the MEDCOM Head of Contracting Agency (HCA). This will impact the BLB's future support of actions related to COVID-19 and *Operation Warp Speed*

that will come to MG Pardew as the AMC HCA.

Ms. Lloyd's predictions for the lasting professional impact of COVID-19 hinged in large part on how long the pandemic persists. Should it last longer, then the BLB would need to hire additional seasoned attorneys to support the ongoing legal needs of AMC; ACC and its 6 contracting centers/ Contracting Support Brigades/subordinate commands; and, MEDCOM.

Ms. Lloyd reflected that teleworking full time in a quiet, isolated environment facilitated concentrating, analyzing, and solving these unique "knowledge based" legal issues. She estimated that teleworking cut out commuting time, walking to/from meetings, and waiting for meetings which ultimately amounted to increased productivity of each attorney of 2 hours a day.

JUDGE ADVOCATE LEGAL SERVICES

Ms. Mary Rae Dudley

*Chief of Legal Assistance
U.S. Army Cyber Center of Excellence
Fort Gordon, Georgia*



Ms. Mary Rae Dudley has worked with the Army for ten years including four years as a Judge Advocate. For the past four years Ms. Dudley has been the Chief of Legal Assistance.

Legal Assistance Offices traditionally operate in what Ms. Dudley describes as "a high-



CP-56 Careerists Respond to COVID-19 (Continued)

*Ms. Mary Rae Dudley
Continued from Previous Page*

volume, in-person only” model. In response to COVID-19, the waiting room for the legal assistance office was closed and in-person appointments were limited only to those clients with emergency estate planning needs. A single paralegal fielded telephone calls in the Division’s main office; verified client eligibility; made appointments; and, worked with another paralegal working remotely to update the Client Information System (CIS). The Special Victims’ Counsel alternated between remote work and in-person appointments with clients and CID interviews. Attorneys consulted with clients via telephone. Overall, the Legal Assistance Division experienced enhanced customer satisfaction by offering telephonic appointments. Out-of-town clients found it easier to access legal services in this operating environment.

When demand for legal services decreased, attorneys attended CLEs and focused their attention on the Division’s preventative law program. The attorneys created and updated multiple preventative law information papers on COVID-19-related legal issues and non-COVID-19 legal issues which were posted to the Division’s public website.

In Georgia, the standard notary attestations for powers of attorney were recently amended according to the State Bar of Georgia Fiduciary Law Section’s guidelines for remote notaries and attestation of estate planning documents. As a result of this change, Ms. Dudley was able to assist two clients who needed emergency powers of attorney executed and notarized. Ms. Dudley contacted the clients using FaceTime; verified their identities and eligibility for services; then witnessed the clients sign the required documents. The clients emailed the signed powers of attorney which Ms. Dudley printed, notarized as a State of Georgia notary, and then emailed back to the clients. The clients appreciated

Ms. Dudley’s willingness to continue delivering legal services in this difficult situation.

When asked about the long-term impact of the pandemic on the practice of law in the Army, Ms. Dudley speculated that teleworking and remote work could particularly benefit the Legal Assistance community. According to Ms. Dudley “telephonic appointments conducted by the right attorneys, on the right cases, under the right management” can ultimately benefit the Legal Assistance community.

JUDGE ADVOCATE LEGAL SERVICES

Ms. Traci Voelke

*Legal Assistance Attorney
Office of the Staff Judge Advocate
Fort Belvoir, Virginia*



Ms. Traci Voelke has served six of her seven years as an Army attorney as a legal assistance attorney at Ft. Belvoir, Virginia.

Working in the National Capitol Region in the midst of this pandemic required that Ms. Voelke keep track of ever-changing procedural requirements in courthouses across multiple jurisdictions. When courts limited access for certain types of cases, such as landlord/tenant disputes, Ms. Voelke relied on collaborative dispute resolution methods to assist her clients. Guardianship cases were still being heard by courts in certain jurisdictions; however, the docket was limited to 1/3 of the usual caseload. When appearing in court, masks, gloves, and social distancing were required.

Given that legal assistance offices are doing unprecedented work in unprecedented times, Ms. Voelke observed they had to move beyond the mindset that “this is just the way we do things.” This experience forced creative thinking, innovation, and required flexibility.



CP-56 Careerists Respond to COVID-19 (Continued)

*Ms. Traci Voelke
Continued from Previous Page*

Something as simple as having a client pre-fill forms with background information prior to an appointment can increase efficiency and limit in-person contact. Ms. Voelke is also focused on more complex, long-range projects. One such initiative is intended to serve the needs of mobile military families with children aged 18+ for whom legal guardianship is needed. The cost of PCSing from one state to another can mean paying a private attorney upwards of \$4,000 to institute the guardianship proceedings at each new duty station.

When asked how she thought Legal Assistance services might be impacted in the long-term, Ms. Voelke commented that the pandemic caused a lot of reflection about improving efficiency—to include additional opportunities for telework and adopting policies permitting virtual notary services in preparation for similar events in the future. Ms. Voelke noted that teleworking is not without its drawbacks. Not having in-person meetings with clients can make it challenging to forge personal connections and to pick up on a client's non-verbal cues. In addition, Ms. Voelke misses the comradery of the office—particularly in the midst of the summer PCS season when it was not possible to send off colleagues in person.

OFFICE OF GENERAL COUNSEL

Ms. Cassandra Johnson

*Associate Deputy General
Counsel for Human Resources
Army General Counsel's Office*



Ms. Johnson possesses a wealth of legal experience with the Army. In 1980, Ms. John-

son started her career as a civilian attorney practicing civilian personnel law at the Army Research Lab, Harry Diamond Laboratories in Adelphi, Maryland. Ms. Johnson later spent 18 years with AMC Office of Command Counsel prior to joining the Army General Counsel's Office in March 2001.

Ms. Johnson was one of approximately 35 lawyers, across multiple fields of practice, who collaborated to create Headquarters level policy in response to COVID-19. According to Ms. Johnson, everyone hit the ground running and spent long days working through these novel issues. Access to the most up to date information was crucial to this effort as guidance came out from the White House, the CDC, OPM, OMB, and EEOC. Ms. Johnson described the end product as a "monumental effort."

Ms. Johnson reflected that responding to COVID-19 was no less intense than working in the Pentagon in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. This current national emergency, however, highlighted the benefits of automation in facilitating quick collaboration between colleagues. Ms. Johnson emphasized the importance of immediate access to information to keep pace in this environment.

Now that the task of responding to the initial crisis has concluded, what remains to be done is to refine; but, not reinvent what has already been done. Ms. Johnson looks forward to a slower work flow; but, noted that there will still be challenges ahead as we grapple with the continuing effects of COVID-19. As people return to the workplace, social distancing requirements and the needs of colleagues with underlying health conditions must be considered.



CP-56 Careerists Respond to COVID-19 (Continued)

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

Ms. Deena Braunstein

*Assistant District Counsel
Louisville District, Kentucky*



Ms. Deena Braunstein joined the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers through the Honors Program in 2005. Ms. Braunstein's portfolio, which has included government contract law since her first day on the job, has expanded to include Interagency International Services and Veterans Affairs; advising on Procurement Fraud for the District; and, labor wage rates pursuant to the Davis-Bacon Act.

In response to COVID-19, Ms. Braunstein's professional focus shifted to supporting the USACE mission of building Alternate Care Sites throughout the Midwest. Working on these FEMA projects often meant late nights collaborating with colleagues by phone, Skype, and email. Obtaining certified cost and pricing data from contractors in a timely manner in the midst of a national health crisis made it particularly challenging to keep these important projects running on schedule. Those construction projects that are part of Ms. Braunstein's regular portfolio have also been affected by COVID-19; in that, travel restrictions and social distancing requirements have impacted contractor productivity.

Shifting to telework was a significant change as Ms. Braunstein missed the face-to-face interaction with her colleagues. However, the quick pace required to keep up with the FEMA projects quickly helped her to adapt to the change in working locations.

Ms. Braunstein reminds CP-56 careerists facing the current working environment to "stay focused." Even in these fast-paced stressful situations, one must prioritize work tasks and be decisive in the midst of the chaos.

Furthermore, it cannot be forgotten that "the mission is to help people, which is a great thing to be able to do."



Across the Army Legal community, attorneys and paraprofessionals have met, and continue to meet, the incredible challenge of providing uninterrupted representation to clients on novel issues of law arising from the pandemic. If the attorneys interviewed for this newsletter are any indication, this was done by focusing on the mission; making room for innovation; good old-fashioned teamwork; embracing new technology; and, longer-than-normal workdays.

It cannot be forgotten that this professional endeavor occurred at the same time that the members of the Army legal community experienced the varied impacts of the pandemic on their personal lives. In a recent interview with "War on the Rocks", Under Secretary of the Army, James E. McPhearson described an Army-wide initiative of creating "protective bubbles" around soldiers to ensure force readiness. For many civilians in the Army legal community, that "protective bubble" was a home shared with children whose schools or daycares were closed; teleworking spouses or partners; elderly or medically-vulnerable family members; or, vocal four-legged family members. Although no one seems to be lamenting the loss of their morning and afternoon commutes, engaging in this "monumental effort" inside the "protective bubble" of our homes was not easy.

Every member of the Army legal community will have stories to tell about their experiences of living and working during the COVID-19 pandemic. I look forward to that day in the future when we can gather again for in-



CP-56

LEGAL CAREER PROGRAM



CP-56 Careerists Respond to COVID-19 (Continued)

person trainings, ceremonies, and “hails and farewells” to hear those stories and discuss how this experience continues to shape the practice of law in the Army.

*Heather Ingram Gipson
CP-56 Assistant Chief*

NEWS OF NOTE

Three Civilian Attorneys to Attend the 69th Judge Advocate General Graduate Course at TJAGLCS

Three CP-56 Attorneys have been selected by their Qualifying Authorities to attend the Graduate Course in 2020-21. AMC will be represented by Mr. Eric Hammerschmidt, US Army Communications-Electronics Command, Tobyhanna Army Depot and Ms. Kelly Sledgister-Stehle, US Army Aviation and Missile Command, Redstone Arsenal. JALS will be represented by Ms. Jennifer Talley, OTJAG Labor and Employment Law Division, Labor Counselor and Litigation Branch. All the best to these attorneys as they begin this next phase of their Army careers.

RESOURCES

The best way to stay up-to-date on all CP-56 happenings is to follow the CP-56 [mil-Book](#) page in your e-mail stream, where you will receive an e-mail directly to your inbox any time new training opportunities are posted. Also follow us on [GoArmyEd](#) and [Army Career Tracker](#) (ACT). To attend trainings, you and your supervisor must have GoArmyEd accounts.

QUESTIONS?

**CONTACT ONE OF YOUR CP-56
TEAM MEMBERS!**

MEET THE CP-56 TEAM

Sarilyn Leary, Assistant Chief

Sarilyn Leary has served as the Assistant Chief of CP-56, overseeing the training program and budget, since May 2014. Prior to joining the Career Program, Sarilyn served as a Legal Assistance Attorney and Administrative Law Attorney at Fort Riley, Kansas. Before beginning her civilian service with the Army, she was an attorney for Harnett County, NC, and was also in private practice in Fayetteville, NC. Sarilyn is a graduate of Campbell University (B.A., J.D). Her husband, Ryan, is an active-duty Judge Advocate. Sarilyn and Ryan have a 12 year-old daughter, Kennedy.

Email: sarilyn.h.leary.civ@mail.mil

Heather Ingram Gipson, Assistant Chief

Heather Ingram Gipson recently joined the CP-56 Team as the Assistant Chief and also manages the JAG Corps Military Spouse Attorney Hiring Program. Heather previously served as a member of the OTJAG Fair Labor Standards Act Team. Before beginning her civilian service with the Army, she was a private practitioner, a public defender, and a law clerk. Heather is a graduate of University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Law. Her husband, Jeff, is an active-duty Air Force meteorologist. Heather and Jeff have three children Svere (10), Oscar (7), and Mary Alice (5).

Email: heather.s.gipson.civ@mail.mil

CW2 Nicole Redmond, Assistant Program Manager

Chief Redmond has the dual distinction of being the newest to join our Team and is also the only member who is Airborne and Jump Master Certified. She currently serves as Assistant Program Manager for CP-56 and for the Army's Labor Counselor Program. Prior to joining CP-56, Chief Redmond was a legal administrator at Ft. Huachuca and JBLM. She was a paralegal with at Ft. Bragg (Special Forces Command), Ft. Drum, and Ft. Bragg. Chief Redmond deployed as a paralegal with the 10th Mountain Division. Her husband, Shea Redmond, is an active-duty Military Intelligence Officer with the Army. Nikki and Shea have three children Landon (11), Logan (7), and Maverick (6 months).

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