

The Future Army

Capt. Tim Bauler, *AR, 5-15 CAV*—It was great to read Gen. Robert Cone’s article “The Future Army: Preparation and Readiness” (*Military Review*, July-August 2013).

I am glad that he refused to parse his words and simply stated that we have developed a reluctance to place top-tier officers in the institutional Army. He’s absolutely correct. This is not to trivialize the service rendered over the last decade. Desperate times indeed, but now the day has come to recognize and rectify the desperate measures we had to take. Nearly all company grade combat arms officers are familiar with the phrase “then I got stuck in TRADOC for a while.” They are similarly familiar with the reaction it usually elicits—a shudder and a look of pity. That a position instructing the planet’s premier land force is generally accepted as pitiable is, in and of itself, quite pitiable.

To be clear, the way a select few branches treat their officers in the institution is a shame. They’re treated as pariahs, and are encouraged to leave as soon as possible, made to believe that TRADOC kills careers. This has obvious detrimental effects on the officer, his subordinates, and his unit. The officer doesn’t stay long enough to really learn anything. His subordinates know his time is short.

Continuity in junior officer billets at brigade and below is nonexistent. We must return to the days that saw some of the absolute best and brightest officers and leaders teaching the future of the Army. Even Gen. George S. Patton worked many long days in the institution. Our Marine Corps colleagues have continued this tradition even in the face of two grueling conflicts.

Simply stated, an officer who trains students in the institution will have a greater impact on the future force. Often this is measurable by orders of magnitude.

In his one year, a company commander in this environment will train anywhere from 500 to nearly 1,000 soldiers, depending on the MOS. An operations officer in the initial entry training environment for 12 months will impact over 3,000 soldiers. He will see firsthand how the institution integrates the Army Learning Concept 2015 and how it adapts to accommodate changes in doctrine and force requirements. His effect on the future force is expansive, yet strangely it’s a captain’s billet.

We’re on our way, the resurrection of Project Warrior is a step in the right direction, but it only accounts for a very few positions in the institution.

Shouldn’t we be making every effort to get our best guys here?



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TO EARN AND MAINTAIN **TRUST**

TO SERVE **HONORABLY**

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