



(Photo by Andrea Wales, U.S. Army Human Resources Command PAO)

Graduates of the Strategic Studies Fellows Program of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill-Institute for Defense and Business gather for a photograph 30 July 2013. The broadening program enhances critical and strategic thinking skills.

Developing Army Enterprise Leaders

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Our organizations will be judged by the performance of leaders serving in areas where critical thinking skills are essential. We must ensure our leaders possess the ability to understand the security environment and the contributions of all elements of national power; lead effectively when faced with surprise and uncertainty; anticipate and recognize change and lead transitions; and operate on intent through trust, empowerment, and understanding.

—Army Leader Development Strategy 2013

The U.S. Army finds itself once again in the familiar circumstances of uncertainty and ambiguity that seem to occur every decade or so. The recurring pattern begins with engagements in

extended military operations, then restructuring of the force based on lessons learned, and then projections regarding future threats and the capabilities needed to deal with them. However, the projections have often

proven to be wrong. Several senior military leaders have acknowledged the U.S. military's poor record of predicting future conflicts, as our Army has repeatedly found itself engaged in military operations in ways that it had not envisioned.¹

Comparatively recent examples of such challenging periods include the transition out of the Vietnam War in the 1970s, the resurgent Cold War rivalry with the Soviet Union in the 1980s, combat and peace operations in Iraq and the Balkans in the 1990s, and the Global War on Terror in the first decade of the twenty-first century. In each of these decades, the U.S. military was called upon by our nation to commit American service members across a range of military operations to secure U.S. interests.

During these periods, successive service chiefs of staff across the Department of Defense have lamented the lack of senior leaders who understand how to sustain the force of the day while preparing to meet the demands of the future. Experience has shown that senior military officers must be as adept at advising their political masters on national policy, developing long-range military strategy to support policy, and managing the defense enterprise as they are at leading service members in actual military operations.

Such senior leader competencies, apart from military skills, are even more important now in the face of inevitable fiscal reductions and ambiguous mission requirements. As a professional force, this means the military needs to assess whether it is properly developing its officers to be successful at its most senior levels.

Accordingly, as the military service most commonly assigned to lead joint and combined operations, the U.S. Army must more effectively develop officers to successfully lead and manage the Army of the future—both operating and generating forces. The Army has made advances in how it fights, from using technology to developing innovative operational concepts and fighting formations, but the critical enabler remains effective leader development.

The Army has achieved hard-won successes over the past decade by providing Army officers with tremendous tactical and operational experience in joint and coalition operations. However, as executive coach Marshall Goldsmith's book title asserts, *What Got You Here Won't Get You There*, meaning that Army leaders cannot rely on old habits for future success, especially as they gain higher-level responsibilities.²

Moving forward to Army 2025—the future of land power within the joint force—it is essential that we select, develop, and retain leaders within the officer corps with a great potential for high levels of responsibility. A well-known statement attributed to champion hockey player Wayne Gretzky serves as a metaphor for future-oriented leader development. According to Roy MacGregor, Gretzky “liked to say he didn’t skate to where the puck was, but to where it was going to be.”³ Like a hockey player who anticipates the movement of a puck and adapts quickly, the Army leader development effort must anticipate the need for vital senior leadership in the Army of 2025. While the present regimen of senior officer education may put future leaders in the “good” leader category, to make them great, the Army profession as a whole must embrace many new competencies.

A former chief of staff of the Army, retired Gen. Gordon R. Sullivan, wrote a leadership book together with Michael V. Harper in which they describe “three kinds of skills ... necessary for success [in strategic leadership]: good management, working effectively with people, and creating the future.”⁴ While Sullivan and Harper’s text addresses business leaders, their principles come from their military experience and remain relevant to Army leaders who are creating the future of the force. Army leaders, understandably, want to retain the warfighting edge in the face of budget reductions and downsizing, but the Army must not forget the importance of leading the generating force to accomplish the Army’s Title 10 functions to man, organize, train, and equip the force.⁵

Many officers are familiar with the adage “amateurs talk tactics; professionals talk logistics.” A more appropriate statement would be, “warriors talk operations; soldiers talk enterprise.” Over its history, it has become clear that the Army must be effective in both Title 10 and warfighting functions. Former Army Lt. Gen. Richard G. Trefry describes how officers tend to think of themselves as *warriors*: “Generally speaking, a warrior is ‘one engaged or experienced in battle,’ while a soldier is ‘a man of military skill or experience.’”⁶ He emphasizes that “soldiers not only fight, but they understand the multitude of internal missions of the Army, ... the business of provisioning, sustaining, maintaining, training, organizing, and resourcing the Army.”⁷ The business of the Army



(Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Mike Brantley, 10th Sustainment Brigade PAO)

Maj. Scott Meyer signals a train forward 10 February 2006 as it enters the Taji Rail Yard at Camp Taji, Iraq. Meyer served as a program manager with Strategic Mobility-Iraq Railroad.

requires leaders of the entire enterprise. The Army's culture must reflect this.

The Army's organizational culture is a legitimate source of pride; nevertheless, it is important to understand what organizational culture is and to attend to its implications. Renowned scholar Edgar Schein defines organizational culture as "a pattern of shared basic assumptions learned by a group as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, ... taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think about, and react to organizational problems."⁸ Schein's notion of culture development provides a systematic and validated approach to changing a culture. He identifies five embedding and five reinforcing mechanisms. Embedding mechanisms change the root assumptions held by people, which they use, often unquestioningly, to inform action. Following the call to action that acknowledges the need for change, embedding mechanisms challenge previously unquestioned assumptions and replace them with new assumptions—creating a new norm that undergirds the new way of doing business—thus, a new culture. Reinforcing mechanisms support the embedding mechanisms by realigning the physical, more tangible aspects with the new culture—often referred to as artifacts. Reinforcing mechanisms are

easier to implement, and they are often thought to be sufficient. However, in and of themselves, they do not create enduring cultural change.

The Realities of Army Cultures

Elevating the notion of soldier over that of warrior is likely to meet resistance. This is a new and necessary cultural change. The current Army culture emerged from embedding and reinforcing mechanisms that have served current members well. For the Army, however, the cultural legacy of *muddy boots*, *anti-intellectualism*, and *egalitarianism* hinder the effective development of senior leaders.

The muddy boots legacy rewards troop time, rarely permits off-track assignments, and results in a narrow experience base.

The anti-intellectual legacy focuses almost exclusively on warfighting competence and disdains intellectual pursuits, both for self-development and for advanced professional military and civilian education. The egalitarian legacy, while essential to providing opportunity for all members, sometimes hinders the Army's support for the further development of high performers who show potential for senior leadership. Perhaps similar cultural impediments exist in the other armed services, especially following more than a decade of deployments.

Muddy boots. Shaped by the past twenty years and reinforced with two long wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, this aspect of Army culture re-emerged with the downsizing of the Army after Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm. Sullivan appropriately sought to protect the Army's core competency of warfighting in a turbulent era. Accordingly, he emphasized training for combat in major wars or major regional contingencies. "No more Task Force Smiths!" became the clarion call for the Army to maintain clear tactical and operational focus.⁹ The current cohort of Army general officers were company grade officers raised on this idea; they would not serve in a "hollow Army." Throughout their careers, they have been combat arms leaders—high performers with high potential—developed through the crucible of command in operating forces. Their career timelines rarely permitted off-track broadening assignments.

The words written by retired Army Col. Lloyd J. Matthews in 2002 still ring true: “For today, ... time with troops has become the ultimate measure of worthiness for promotion to the highest ranks. Many of today’s generals are thus very good with troops, but, lacking a broader repertoire, they often find it difficult to adapt at higher staff and ancillary positions.”¹⁰

Anti-intellectualism. In 1992, Trefry noted, “warriors have a tendency to dismiss or deride formal schooling The soldier understands that formal schooling is continuing education and ... a hallmark of a profession.”¹¹ A decade later, Matthews offered the following anecdote:

A distinguished Army four-star general, now retired, once boasted to me that he never read anything but the contents of his in-box. The Army culture that produced this sort of swaggering, know-nothing complacency simply has to give way to a tough insistence that our senior leaders be whole men and women.¹²

More recently, the Army culture has embraced deferring school assignments during over a decade of conflict. Professional military education became unnecessary for promotion and selection to key assignments for majors, lieutenant colonels, and colonels.¹³

Egalitarianism. The Army views itself as a meritocracy, but an egalitarian aspect of its culture evolved after the Cold War drawdown and as a consequence of Officer Personnel Management System (OPMS) III, which was designed to provide functional branch officers a path to career advancement. In the 1990s, then Chief of Staff Gen. Sullivan decided not to target specific individuals for separation or retention. With the expansion of the force in the twenty-first century under the “Grow the Army” initiative, there was an increased requirement for personnel at specific grades. Therefore, retention of gross numbers was more important to meet downstream requirements of the officer pipeline. This coincided with near-term staffing of operational and joint headquarters as well as tactical units (brigade combat teams). To meet operational demands, higher-than-traditional promotion rates to field-grade ranks became the norm. With OPMS III, the warriors became first among equals with officers in the functional areas and non-operations career field designations.

The consequences of this Army culture aligning with operational requirements must be examined. The current cohort of field grade officers has very limited experience with management of training, with command supply

discipline, with administration, and with budgeting. Consequently, this generation of officers does not have the base of knowledge—through experience or education—to develop enterprise-level management skills. The report of the 2006 Review of Education, Training, and Assignment of Leaders (RETAL) Task Force reflects the officer development trend that continued to develop during the Global War on Terror, with a focus on warriors.¹⁴

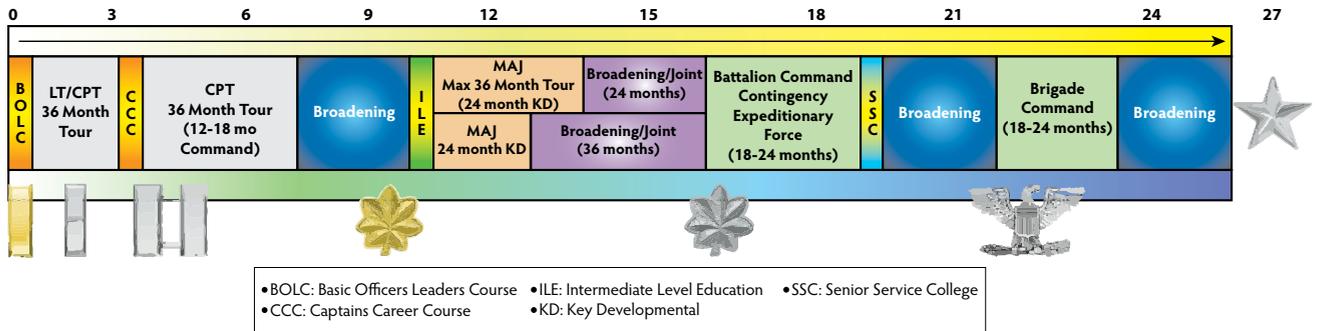
Supporting warriors across the range of military operations demands soldiers capable of leading large and complex organizations, processes, and systems to produce the capabilities that achieve mission success in future operations. The Army must develop soldier-officers who can forecast, design, build, field, and sustain the force—the enterprise.

Enterprise Management

According to Department of Defense Directive (DODD) 8000.01, the term *Department of Defense enterprise-level* means “relating to policy, guidance, or other overarching leadership provided by OSD [Office of the Secretary of Defense] officials and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in exercising authority, direction, and control of their respective elements of the Department of Defense on behalf of the Secretary of Defense.”¹⁵ Since 2007, the civilian deputy chief management officer has managed enterprise-level business integration for the Department of Defense.¹⁶

The Army aligns its enterprise-level business functions, such as human resource management, weapon system lifecycle management, and financial management, with the Department of Defense business enterprise. Uniformed officers assist in developing policy and strategies as they execute the specific functions within the joint force. The Army prepares an annual report on business transformation that explains how it is “improving ... processes and ... systems that support business operations.”¹⁷ According to the 2014 *Annual Report on Army Business Transformation*, the Army

1. scopes to the size of a Fortune 5 Company;
2. [is the] fourth largest enterprise in the world by aggregate manpower;
3. [possesses a] vehicle fleet exceeding the world’s largest delivery companies; and
4. [operates] more than seven hundred enterprise-level business systems, which exceed \$2 billion annually.¹⁸



Officer Career Timeline

These data illustrate that Army enterprise-level business management, guided by the Army business management strategy, is the right idea. The Army business management strategy includes a goal to “provide better alignment between business operations and operational forces.”¹⁹ However, while Army operational doctrine clearly addresses tactical- and operational-level leader development, the word *enterprise* is noticeably scarce in its text. This suggests that the Army still needs to improve its enterprise alignment.

Serving as a warrior is a noble calling; the warrior’s identity supports the Army’s core mission to fight and win the nation’s wars. However, the muddy boots culture is not supportive of developing the professional soldier for responsibilities at senior levels, a cultural dissonance further compounded by dysfunctional anti-intellectualism and supposedly egalitarian practices. Change is needed.

Acknowledging that Army culture is misaligned with needs of the profession, Chief of Staff of the Army Gen. Raymond T. Odierno has taken appropriate action. Two senior leader development courses have been established to fill the education gap at the senior officer level. These courses are designed to prepare leaders to manage the Army enterprise. Each course targets officers serving in critical assignments within the institutional Army, known as the generating force. The first course, Senior Leader Seminar Phase I, began in September 2011 and has graduated approximately eight hundred post-Military Education Level 1 officers and senior civilians.²⁰ In March 2014, the U.S. Army War College’s Center for Strategic Leadership and Development piloted the second course, Senior Leader Seminar Phase II, comprised of brigadier generals and promotable colonels.²¹ It has twenty-eight graduates from the three sessions conducted thus far.

In November 2013, based on the success of the two Senior Leader Seminars, the Sergeant Major of the Army directed the development of a similar program for newly selected nominative-level command sergeants major. The Executive Leader Course is for those who will serve as senior enlisted advisors at one- and two-star level command. At the time of this article’s publication, the course had met twice and produced thirty-eight graduates.

All of these courses help shape the Army culture by creating cohorts of senior Army professionals who can guide and sustain enterprise-wide change. Leadership expert John P. Kotter warns us, however, that “new practices ... not compatible with the relevant cultures ... will always be subject to regression.”²² In the Army’s case, the relevant cultures are muddy boots, anti-intellectualism, and egalitarianism.

Application of Schein’s embedding and reinforcing mechanisms is useful for shaping improvements to the Army culture. Recent efforts, such as the improved 2014 Officer Evaluation Report (OER) and the *Army Leader Development Strategy 2013 (ALDS)* represent steps in the right direction—first, to change systems and processes and, second, to present formal statements of organizational philosophy and creeds.²³

However, as reinforcing mechanisms, the revised OER and the *ALDS 2013* are insufficient to sustain change. They usefully describe the desired change, but to influence the change effort, the Army needs accompanying actions through embedding mechanisms. The guiding coalition of leaders who deliberately role model, teach, and coach the cohorts of senior company grade and junior field grade officers must endorse and support the change. These cohorts must be developed to serve as enterprise-level leaders for the Army of 2025. Their development must

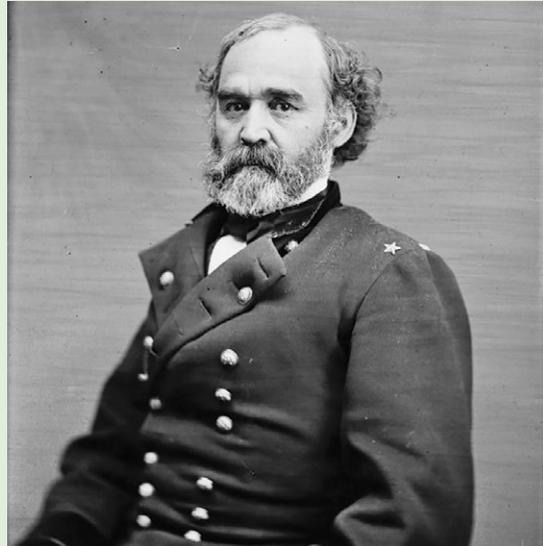
be incentivized by established, unambiguous criteria for selection and promotion.

The change initiative must be supported by a commensurate allocation of resources that clearly demonstrates the importance of enterprise management to the entire Army. A new norm must emerge: leading and managing the enterprise must become part of the professional officer's ethic, much as the Warrior Ethos of the Soldier's Creed has been.²⁴

Conventional wisdom holds that changing a culture takes time. The Army must leverage the impact of OER changes by creating the systems that support change. Synchronizing officer developmental assignments will require patience and perseverance to align with the new norm. To influence and shape the Army of 2025, the Army should focus on the officer cohorts commissioned between 2002 and 2007. These current company and field grade officers will direct and manage the Army enterprise of 2025. The Army's leader development effort must support their growth through well-considered training, experience, and educational opportunities. These cohorts will be the colonels graduating from senior-level colleges and ultimately serving as advisors to the most senior defense leaders. They will run the institutional schools, manage Army facilities, and lead Pentagon directorates. In these capacities and others, these officers will shepherd the planning, programming, budgeting, and execution processes to enable the operating forces.

These officer cohorts will have extensive tactical and operational experience. They should also understand and embrace their professional responsibility to learn how the Army enterprise works. It is their duty to lead and manage it, just as they have led in the operating force. Concomitantly, the Army must provide them with developmental assignments so they can acquire new skills and perspectives through broadening experiences as outlined in the *ALDS 2013* (see the figure showing the Officer Career Timeline on page 46).²⁵ For the force of 2025, the Army must identify specific enterprise-focused broadening assignments in which selected officers from the various career field designations are immersed—such as operations, operations support, and institutional support.

The *ALDS 2013* provides a comprehensive approach; it appropriately addresses ends, ways, and means, as well as near- to mid-term guidance for programming and budgeting. Nevertheless, it does not go far enough; it misses an important mark by not defining enterprise



(Photo courtesy of the U.S. Library of Congress)
Montgomery C. Meigs, circa 1865

Montgomery Cunningham Meigs was a career U.S. Army engineer officer who was selected to serve as the Quartermaster General of the U.S. Army during the American Civil War. He was among the first senior Union commanders to recognize the vital necessity of building a logistics system on a vast and unprecedented scale to support operational military planning for the contemplated war effort. Under his leadership, a logistics system was built that kept supplies moving forward with increasing efficiency to support attacking troops even as the length of supply lines stretched into the thousands of miles. Some later historians have concluded that without Meigs' strategic foresight and genius for energetic execution in building the necessary logistics system to support the Union forces, the campaigns of such luminaries as Generals Grant and Sherman would simply not have been possible. Speaking of Meigs' wartime contributions, Secretary of State William H. Seward said, "that without the services of this eminent soldier the national cause must have been lost or deeply imperiled in the late Civil War."

Sources: David W. Miller, *Second Only to Grant* (Shippensburg, PA: White Mane Publishing Company, 2001); See also text of Seward letter in *Henry Benjamin Meigs, Record of the Descendants of Vincent Meigs: Who Came from Dorsetshire, England, to America about 1635* (Baltimore, Maryland: J.S. Bridges & Company, 1901), 258.

responsibilities future senior officers must be prepared to assume. The stated goal in the strategy is to create strategic-level officers who “lead and inspire change, [and who] are high-level thinkers, accomplished war fighters, and geopolitical military experts.”²⁶ The document makes limited mention of the enterprise, which implies, unfortunately, that enterprise-wide responsibilities belong mainly to civilian leaders.²⁷

Broadening assignments that emphasize enterprise-focused activities should be on par with the programs already designed to provide broadening perspectives in the joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational arenas. Established programs such as the Army Acquisition Corps’ Training with Industry Program could be renamed *Training with the Enterprise*. Some selectees should have broadening enterprise-related assignments; others could earn academic degrees, work with business, or participate in joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational experiences (e.g., with the State Department, U.S. Agency for International Development, or Central Intelligence Agency).

The impact of these assignments on the officer culture will become clear when those completing enterprise-related activities are promoted and selected on par with peers within their operational branches. The officer corps will then perceive the program as a viable path for career success—and a new culture will emerge. The tension between warrior and soldier identities will then be no more than a part of Army history.

Between World Wars I and II, when resources had dwindled and the Army largely sat idle, officer education and development took precedence—some through institutional programs and others by way of

inspired self-development. Some of the Nation’s greatest warriors, such as Dwight D. Eisenhower, George S. Patton, and Omar Bradley, served in World War II under the enterprise leadership of then Chief of Staff of the Army Gen. George Marshall. One unsung Army hero played a critical role by leading a ninety-day planning effort in 1941: Albert C. Wedemeyer. Then a mid-level officer with considerable knowledge of the Army enterprise, he led a small staff’s planning effort in the Army War Plans Division. Their Victory Plan developed accurate estimates of the nation’s economic capability and power. The Victory Plan then led to additional detailed planning that supported the rapid mobilization of manpower and industry, which subsequently generated war material and equipment needed to defeat the Axis powers.²⁸ Acknowledging his distinguished accomplishments as a soldier and patriot, President Ronald Reagan presented then retired Lt. Gen. Wedemeyer with the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1985.²⁹

In the three decades since that award ceremony, the Army has answered myriad calls across the range of military operations. The Army’s culture has produced warriors to protect the Nation’s interests and, by happenstance, the soldiers who have led the enterprise to enable their success. It is essential that the Army culture now realign to develop professional warriors and soldiers competent to manage the enterprise into the future. ■

*This article expands on author Charles D. Allen’s essay “Beyond Leading Boots on the Ground” in *The Washington Post’s* On Leadership roundtable, 9 November 2011.*

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Notes

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3. Roy MacGregor, *Wayne Gretzky's Ghost: And Other Tales From a Lifetime in Hockey* (Toronto, Canada: Vintage Canada, 2011).
4. Gordon R. Sullivan and Michael V. Harper, *Hope is Not a Method: What Business Leaders Can Learn from America's Army* (New York; Crown Business, 1997) 44–45.
5. Title 10, United States Code, *Armed Forces* (July 2011), §§3001–5000 et seq.
6. Richard G. Trefry, "Soldiers and Warriors; Warriors and Soldiers," in *The American Warrior*, eds. Chris Morris and Janet Morris (New York: Paradise Publishing, 1992), 221.
7. *Ibid.*, 225.
8. Edgar Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bas, 1992), 18.
9. Task Force Smith refers to the 1st Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment, under the command of U.S. Army Lt. Col. Charles Smith. This was the first U.S. unit to engage in ground combat at the onset of the Korean War. After the U.S. drawdown following the end of World War II, the unit was woefully unprepared to repel the better-equipped and surprisingly resolute North Korean forces; Smith's unit was routed.
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15. Department of Defense, DOD Directive (DODD) 8000.01, *Management of the Department of Defense*

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16. The Department of Defense began business transformation in 2005. Enterprise business integration continues under the Deputy Chief Management Officer, but the original Business Transformation Agency has been disestablished.
17. U.S. Army, *2014 Annual Report on Army Business Transformation: Providing Readiness at Best Value* (Washington DC: Department of the Army, 13 January 2014), 2, <http://usarmy.vo.llnwd.net/e2/c/downloads/327858.pdf>, accessed 16 April 2015.
18. *Ibid.*
19. *Ibid.*
20. The Senior Leader Seminar Phase I is a one-week leader development course for select senior Army colonels (about 23–26 years of service), GS-15 Army civilians, and nominative positions for sergeants major and command sergeants major who are assigned or projected for assignment to key positions as advisors and staff officers for general officers and senior civilian leaders. The experience is broadening and educational, focused on preparation for national-level service. The program offers two courses a year for 112 participants per course.
21. The Senior Leader Seminar II (SLS II) is a chief-of-staff-of-the-Army directed intensive course designed for select promotable colonels and brigadier generals. The intent is to improve strategic-level skills. The bulk of the course is conducted at the U.S. Army War College with several off-site engagements at think tanks, government agencies, media outlets, and universities. The course is expected to occur twice annually and include twenty participants per session.
22. John P. Kotter, *Leading Change* (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 1996), 148.
23. U.S. Army, *ALDS 2013*.
24. Soldier's Creed, army.mil website, <http://www.army.mil/values/soldiers.html>, accessed 16 April 2015. Four lines from the Soldier's Creed are known as the Warrior Ethos: I will always place the mission first; I will never accept defeat; I will never quit; and I will never leave a fallen comrade.
25. U.S. Army, *ALDS 2013*, 13.
26. *Ibid.*
27. *Ibid.*, 18. While the *ALDS 2013* refers to Army 2020, it also supports Army 2025.
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