

# Time at Lockheed Martin Encourages NCO to Update Civilian Education Plan

By Jonathan (Jay) Koester - NCO Journal

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As the Training With Industry program rapidly begins adding NCO participation at workplaces that have only accepted officers in the past, there are many firsts. Sgt. 1st Class Arthur Ireland had the privilege to be the first NCO to work a yearlong stint at Lockheed Martin.

Ireland, serving his Army utilization assignment as a training developer for 94M (radar repairer) at U.S. Army Combined Arms Support Command at Fort Lee, Virginia, said he had to put away some of his NCO tendencies while at Lockheed Martin.

“Being the first NCO in the program, I was paving the way,” Ireland said. “I was confused when I got there at first. As NCOs, we’re used to putting hands on equipment and doing stuff like that. As I talked to proponent while I was there, they advised me that it was more about observing business practices and how they work their day-to-day operations. So I took that and ran with it and tried to see how their leadership advised their employees. We also got to see how the acquisition corps worked with Lockheed Martin, so we saw how the defense industry works together with the Army.”

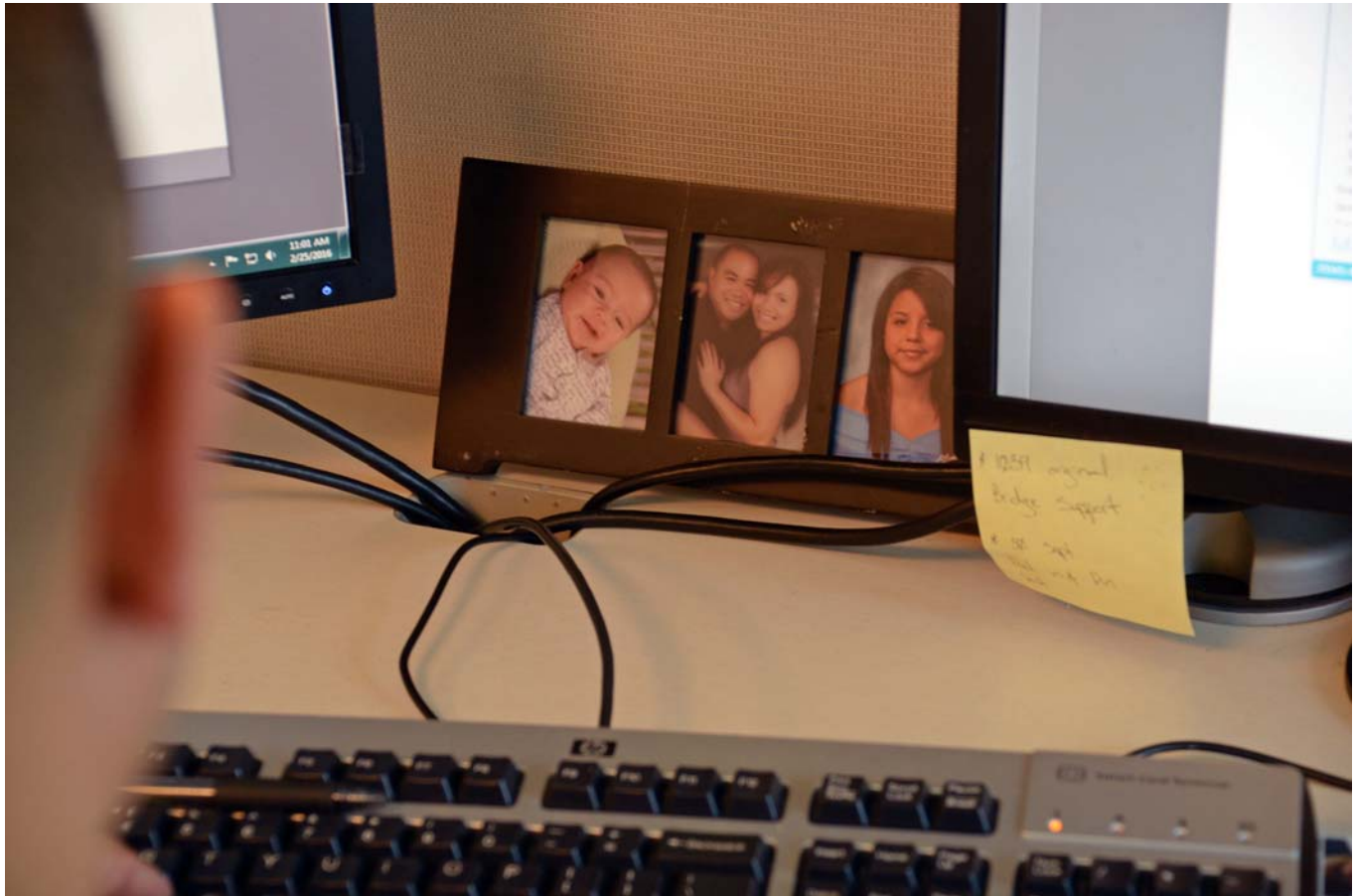
Getting a good, long look at private industry meant a lot to Ireland's future. Seeing how things work at Lockheed Martin caused him to take a second look at the education he needs before he retires from the Army and enters the civilian workforce.

"Seeing what I saw at Lockheed Martin actually made me decide to change my degree path," Ireland said. "I changed my degree path to project management. It seemed like everybody who was there in a high position was a program or project manager. So I took it upon myself to re-evaluate where my civilian education was taking me."

After years of "adapt and overcome" in the Army, Ireland was fascinated by the civilian-world process of dealing with problems that crop up during a mission.

"In the civilian world, they stop and look at things when something goes wrong," he said.

"Whereas, in the military we don't stop. We find a workaround right there and we complete the mission."



While serving his Army utilization assignment as a training developer for 94M (radar repairer) at U.S. Army Combined Arms Support Command at Fort Lee, Virginia, Sgt. 1st Class Arthur Ireland keeps his family visible at his desk. (Photos by Jonathan (Jay) Koester / NCO Journal)

The Training With Industry program is considered a broadening assignment, and Ireland

definitely felt like he learned ways of solving problems that will make him a better NCO.

“I was able to see the different sides of the military that I was not privy to before, like working with the acquisition corps and seeing how they interact with Lockheed Martin to get the product to the end user,” he said. “I think that helped build me as an NCO to have a broader understanding of how things work throughout the Army.”

Geraldine Hargrow, team lead for 94-series course development at the Combined Arms Support Command, said the broadening assignment at TWI has helped Ireland in his Army job.

“I believe TWI helped him in being able to deal with all the external agencies we deal with in this job,” Hargrow said. “He has to work with high-ranking people, some military, and a lot of civilians, and it helped him be prepared for that. He’s an outstanding NCO. He’s very meticulous in everything that he does. Whenever he’s assigned a task, he goes above and beyond. He’s a really good researcher, something you don’t find too often today. I thought that was very impressive.”

Hargrow, who made the transition to civilian work after serving in the Army, echoed the advice of many who have made the jump.

“You have to remember that you can’t just tell somebody they have to do something,” she said. “You have to negotiate. You have to get them to do the task, but also understand why they are doing the task so there are no questions. In the military, you are told to do a task and you don’t really question it, if you are a good NCO. You don’t question it; you go and get it done. You have to learn how to talk to people. By Sgt. Ireland being in the TWI program, it has helped him adjust to working around a lot of civilians.”

Chief Warrant Officer 3 Brian Masters, a training developer for 948D (electronic missile systems maintenance warrant officer), worked along with Ireland at Lockheed Martin as part of the TWI program. Masters said it was a great experience to have an NCO join him in the program.

“I think it was great that they incorporated NCOs into the program,” Masters said. “It provided him the ability to see how supervisors work in industry. Sgt. Ireland was everywhere — from working with the production managers down to the floor supervisors. He got to see everything and got a better understanding of how the Army and industry work together.

“He was already a phenomenal NCO going into that year at TWI,” Masters said. “But from that year we spent together, we both grew in our professional development. It absolutely should set him up for success. Sgt. Ireland was a great ambassador of the NCO Corps.”