

Writing Award Program Will Help Highlight NCO Education, Stories

By Command Sgt. Maj. Mike Clowser - Army University Provost Command Sergeant Major

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The Army University and all the words associated with it have less to do with college credit and degrees and more to do with realigning Training and Doctrine Command organizations to make a better Soldier of the future.

Although our institutions are the best in the world, we as leaders must never give up on the idea that we can be better. We can be better about talent management, ensuring the right Soldiers teach our Soldiers of the future. We can be better about developing these talents in our faculty base and we can be better about researching and publishing our thoughts and experiences.

I would guess that developing and retaining world-class faculty is the goal of most universities in the United States for a few reasons — the most important being the appeal or prestige. World-class faculty and the promise of an education given by renowned leaders in their fields can entice students who desire to become experts. This drives requests for attendance, causing a lower rate of acceptance compared with the amount of students applying, as well as improving employment opportunities post-graduation.

Second, world-class faculty members maintain their skills by researching and ensuring they give their experiences and knowledge back to the academic body.

In our goal to develop a world-class faculty, the Army Press has developed the noncommissioned officer writing award program. Initially, the idea was to pull papers from institutions as writing assignments from the students. Ultimately, we're looking for papers that express concerns, ideas, recommendations and professional experiences. In the end, we desire that noncommissioned officers research topics and start writing about their ideas to support the "world-class faculty" initiative outlined in the Army University strategic plan.

A walk to any library will find two prevalent facts about NCOs. One: We rarely write. The few books I was able to find that mentioned the progression of NCO education were primarily focused on professional military education and were mostly about officers. Two: We have a vast number of experienced NCOs whose stories are not being told. NCO perspectives are essential to preserve our history and to guarantee accuracy in future research. The perception of NCO education in the military is not very robust. We need more written examples of how the NCO Corps began, how it evolved and what makes its leaders different so the researchers of the future gain a better understanding.

A review board will assess all quarterly submissions and select the winners. Once approved, selected articles will be sent to the NCO Journal or other publications associated with the Army Press. The articles should be 1,500-3,000 words and not have been published in other military or

commercial publications prior to submission. Winners will receive a medallion and presentation box, as well as a letter of congratulations from the Army University provost.

For more information on this program, please go to <http://www.armyupress.army.mil/> (<http://www.armyupress.army.mil/>) and submit your writings to usarmy.leavenworth.tradoc.mbx.nco-journal@mail.mil (<mailto:usarmy.leavenworth.tradoc.mbx.army-press@mail.mil>).