

THE BACKBONE

Fort Benning NCO Academy Newsletter 01-18 Edition



"Standards and Discipline"

INSIDETHIS ISSUE

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From The Academy Leadership



Message from the Commandant and Deputy Commandant:

One of the most important attributes of a professional leader and noncommissioned officer in today's Army is the ability to adapt. While the need to adapt cannot be overstated on the battlefield, it can be just as important during uncertain times that effect the climate and the daily operations of the United States Army back here at home.

One of our goals at the Henry Caro Non-Commissioned Officers Academy here at Fort Benning, GA is to help develop, at all levels of NCOPD, the ability for our Maneuver leaders to overcome and adapt to an ever-changing environment that includes new stresses and requirements being put on them daily.

In times like these, where we have some uncertainty that is beyond our control, it is our opportunity as NCO's, as leaders of Soldiers, and as the Backbone of the Army, to display vigilance and integrity in our daily choices to ensure there is never a day with a loss of continuity of leadership among the ranks.

Look among you and you will find one of the most combat experienced groups of Non-Commissioned Officers the United States Army has ever experienced; which is why the Army continues to require more from every leader at every level. As you continue to develop, we will be there with you every S.T.E.P. of the way! We Look forward to having you here at the Henry Caro Non-Commission Officer Academy soon



"Standards and Discipline" CSM Mike Ames SGM Patrick Maurin



Maneuver Senior Leader Course

Trends:

The first week of exams continues to be the biggest challenge to students while attending M-SLC. Typically 1-2 students per small group will have to re-test one of the four exams at the conclusion of the first week of the course: AFTB, Unit Sponsorship, CRM, and ABCP/NCOPD.

The culminating course exam continues to effectively gauge the retention of information throughout the duration of the course by combining all testable material into a final exam. Students have a high success rate with no course failures since its inception which solidifies information retention throughout the classroom instruction.



1SG Constantine J. Vassilakos Maneuver SLC 1SG

There has been a significant decrease in land navigation failures with only three students removed from the course in class 01-18. Still, this is too many and we encourage all students to take the time to refresh on their land navigation skills prior to reporting to class.

Recent Changes:

1SG Constantine Vassilakos recently took over responsibilities as the Branch Chief for M-SLC. Class 02-18 will be his first full course serving in his new position. He most recently served in 1-16 CAV as the D Company 1SG and as the S3 NCOIC. Additionally, we welcome SFC Timothy Harshbarger our newest platform instructor.

Continuing with the partnered training line of effort, IBOLC and ABOLC students executed developmental counseling with M-SLC students to prepare them for future assignments and integration into their role as a Platoon Leader. Additionally, we continue to find ways to pursue training opportunities with our partnered units. MCCC, IBOLC, and ABOLC provide CPTs and LTs to be an integral part in the TLPs for OPORD development and the execution of the Company Mission during CCTT and VBS3 training.

Future Plans:

M-SLC instructors have been finding creative ways to integrate MCCC, IBOLC, and ABOLC students into the POI driven course material to enhance the educational environment. From OPORD development to participating in CCME training with I/ABOLC students our instructors keep finding ways to facilitate partnered training. We are currently looking at more opportunities to incorporate partnered training into the course.

We are revising the M-SLC Challenge PT event that we execute each class. This is a great event that brings the class together in a team building and physically challenging scenario. We are looking at making it more combat focused and adding some of the decision making that would be expected from a senior NCO. All instructors are responsible for developing a CONOP and together the cadre will vote on the best event. The intent is to incorporate the new M-SLC challenge into class 03-18.

Infantry Advanced Leader Course

FY18 Infantry ALC Symposium:

We hosted our first Infantry ALC Symposium. Respective Regional Training Institution (RTI)s from the National Guard that participated in Symposium included Pennsylvania, Hawaii, Indiana, Mississippi, Arkansas, New Jersey, Oregon, and Minnesota. The purpose of the Infantry Symposium was to have Active and Reserve Cadre come together in order to discuss the way ahead for students of AC/RC units to ensure students are exposed to the same course material and training at Infantry ALC. At the conclusion of the Symposium everyone had the opportunity to highlight their course,



and the group as a whole discussed recommendations for aligning all courses. We at Fort Benning wanted to see how our POI affected the RTIs POIs. We found that the RTI's had no issues executing training to the same standard as us. We did however discover that time is a factor for some of the RTIs, resourcing and their capabilities was not. In fact, it was discovered that the majority of the RTIs has great training facilities and resources available to them. During the second day of the Symposium Mr. Taylor briefed the Leader Core Competences (LCC) and it's impacts on Active and Reserve ALC's. It was interesting to find out the RTI's did not only teach Infantry ALC but they also taught Armor ALC, Maneuver Senior Leaders Course, Officer Candidate School and the Warrant Officer Course (just to name a few). At the conclusion of the Symposium a few events were streamlined and all agreed that Land Navigation needed to continue being a drop event in the course. Lines of communication were established as well which have already been utilized. Expectations for the next Symposium were also discussed. For the next Symposium we will ensure everyone has a clear understanding of the Symposium's events and purpose before arriving. We will also schedule the next Symposium around major training events from the POI as well as the installation. It was also recommended that we bring in more briefers that could have a positive impact on the courses. These could include personnel from Fort Carson to talk about Space Command and AWG's Joe Ulibarri to talk about how to implement adaptive training in the courses.

Recent Changes:

Over the past 90 days we have focused our efforts on adaptability. At the conclusion of the course we want students to be able to perform well in an ambiguous environment, think outside the box when approached with a problem, and also be able to know how to train their soldiers at the home station to be agile thinkers and creative innovators. Before we implemented or changed anything we wanted to know exactly how to go about training NCO's to be adaptive. With some help from Joe Ulibarri we were able to focus on two big areas within the POI. Those were daily class room instruction and the STX. Joe Ulibarri put on a four day adaptability work shop for the Infantry ALC Branch. At the conclusion of the work shop the cadre and leadership concluded that focusing on daily class room instruction and the STX would be most effective when training to an adaptability outcome. During the class room instruction students were more engaged in the material. Changing a simple thing like asking open ended questions and pulling the students thoughts and ideas on a particular subject has proven to be most effective. Cadre still use slides, but they are only there to reinforce what was already discussed. Most of the learning stems from student interactions. During the four day workshop Joe really focused on being more of a facilitator instead of an instructor who just teaches off the slides. During class 001-18 we had the lowest number of academic drops because of this change. The second area we focused on was the STX. For the past Situational Training Exercises each lane had nothing to do with the next. The simple changes we made has intel driving all the lanes and based off the students thought process as a leader their decision can take you anywhere, thus giving the students freedom of movement and free thinking, instead of a linear start and stop lane. Students are also faced with 4 international roll players in which they have to gain rapport in order to accomplish follow on missions.

Infantry Advanced Leader Course

Future Plans:

- Continue to focus on adaptability
- Incorporate 11C into 11B STX
- Adjust LANDNAV to incorporate use of NETT Warrior system

Top 5 Units that Graduated in the top 20%

FY18 (1 Class)

82nd Airborne
 75th RGR
 4th ID
 2nd ID
 25th ID

Top Reasons For Dismissal FY18 (1 Class)

- Land Navigation
 APFT
- 3. Academic
- 4. Compassionate
- 5. N/A

(4thQuarter News Letter 10th Mountain) (4thQuarter News Letter 101st ABN) (4thQuarter News Letter 7th ID) (4thQuarter News Letter 82nd ABN) (4thQuarter News Letter 75th RGR)

(4thQuarter NL No Change)
(4thQuarter NL Marksmanship Qualification)
(4thQuarter NL Academic)
(4thQuarter NL APFT / HT / WT)
(4thQuarter NL Disciplinary)

Armor Advanced Leader Course

The Armor Advanced Leader Course (AR ALC) continues to evolve in order to train and educate Armor Noncommissioned Officers to meet the challenges of the operating environment. AR ALC focuses on training Sergeants to become Scout Squad Leaders and Tank Commanders. It is critical that students attending AR ALC have achieved mastery at Skill Level II prior to reporting in order to achieve the desired course outcomes. Students not at this proficiency level upon reporting to the course not only struggle throughout, but also affect other students from achieving a



1SG Brian D. Ditzler Armor ALC 1SG



higher learning. We recommend that NCOs scheduled to attend the course seek out assistance to better understand the course requirements. This edition of our newsletter includes the 19D and 19K ALC Course

Snapshots to assist units in helping prepare their NCOs for the course. Additionally, my number is listed for anyone to contact me for assistance in preparing for the course.

Trends:

There is a consistent and significant trend of students coming to the course with a lack of knowledge and ability to apply the fundamentals of land navigation. Reading comprehension and attention to details when applied to Combat Reports and Route Overlay is still an issue for some students.

Recent Changes:

Some of the course methods of examinations have been revised in order to ensure students receive the most accurate assessment for their performance in relation to the task. Although written examinations are a great way to assess student's knowledge; we significantly increased emphasis on their ability to demonstrate the practical application of their knowledge during the culminating terrain board, CCTT and FTX performance examinations. Those performances are playing a significant role in the overall student assessment for the course.



Future Plans:



In an effort to provide a more relevant and realistic training environment to our student, the AR ALC will combine the 19D and 19K FTXs. Scouts will conduct a tactical movement and establish a screen line in the hours of darkness while the Tankers conduct assembly area operations in preparation to conduct an occupation of a platoon battle position and development of an engagement thereafter. Platoons will rotate throughout training interaction allowing for other tactical tasks such as relief in place and passage of lines to take place.

Armor Advanced Leader Course

Armor Advanced Leader (19D) Course Snapshot



Armor Advanced Leader (19K) Course Snapshot

	Week 1	Week 2	2	Week 3	Week 4
Students should report to Armor ALC having already achieved mastery on all 19K Skill Level 2 Tasks	 Initial APFT Land Nav Resilience Trng Soldier 2020 Property Accountability Maintenance Management Fratricide Avoidance 	OTS Combat Rep TLPs Intelligence Preparation of Battlefield Army Aviatio Branch Histor	orts Infantry • Conduct Inferior F • Passage • Conduct n Place	of lines Linkup and relief in hicle Tactical	 Breaching Ops Direct Occupation of a Vehicle Fighting Position Adjust Indirect Fire Quartering Party Activities
• Pat • Dire • Ter • Mili Cap • DID	Week 5 don and Search rolling ect Convoy Escort rain Board tary Vehicle oabilities Brief DEA K (GST & AGTS)	Week 6 • FTX and CCTT Operations	Week 7 • FTX Recovery • Briefings • Transgender • Graduation	have a do 19K Skill I upon and further o	es of Armor ALC will ctrinal foundation on Level 3 Tasks to build achieve mastery with experience as Tank Commanders

Basic Leader Course

Trends:

There continues to be a number of students with appointments and personal issues that have not been resolved prior to arriving at BLC (Dental CAT III, needing PHA, etc.). Please make sure the parent unit screens each candidate for all appointments and personal issues. This mitigation will prevent the student from missing mandatory training and POI hours, which can result in being dismissed from the course.



1SG Richard A. Rolls

Students are arriving to the course not familiar with the welcome letter, NCO Creed and the student guide. These items are located on the website at: https://www.benning.army.mil/mcoe/NCOA/BLC.html

There has been a slight decrease in Land Navigation failures for the past class. However, students are reporting to BLC not knowing how to plot a point correctly on a map, how to determine distance to a point using a protractor, or how to use terrain association to navigate, just to name a few of the causes for failures on the Land Nav Course.

Recent Changes:

The NCOA/BLC has launched an Army Career Tracker Community Page. This informative page will give you up to date access on recent changes and upcoming events for the Basic Leader Course. It will also be an additional resource page to download all required documents to attend the Basic Leader Course.

There have been moderate renovations to the common areas and barracks facilities. We are gradually improving accommodations for the welfare of the students while attending BLC. We have upgraded all the furniture in the living areas of the barracks with new and improved furniture to make the students more comfortable during their stay.

Future Plans:

The new Basic Leader Course Management Plan and POI will be sent out to the Academies from USASMA next Fiscal Year after completion of it's validation. The Fort Benning BLC validation started during class 03-18 on 7 January 2018. The validation courses are being held at multiple locations across all three components to ensure compliance with the One Army School System. During the validation process, changes will be made to both CMP and POI as needed to resolve issues. The goal is for the redesign to launch in August 2018 with Class 08-18. As soon as the new CMP and POI are approved through all channels, they will be released to the Academies.



NCOA Instructor Spotlight

I am truly humbled and honored for being given the chance to compete for and subsequently selected as the Maneuver Center of Excellence Instructor of the Year. I couldn't have accomplished this without the help, guidance, and mentorship from my fellow instructors and leadership of the Henry Caro Noncommissioned Officer Academy. It is important to note that our Soldiers are the best at what they do because of the training they receive from world class instructors serving at the NCO Academies. This award codifies and recognizes hard work. This recognition is not just for me, but for my team and all the hard work and dedication they put into the development of NCOs who come through the NCO Academy. I only represent the thousands of dedicated professionals in our Army who teach, coach and mentor tomorrow's future leaders.



SSG Louis J. Ziacik Armor ALC SGL

Being an instructor at the Henry Caro NCO Academy has given me the opportunity to take a creative and adaptive approach to teaching. I like to relate course material with experiences

students have already had during their time in the Army or prior to. By using the Experiential Learning Model, generating a concrete experience creates the foundation for my method of facilitation. My goal is to provide the students with a relevant, realistic, and memorable learning experience.

Taking a creative approach to facilitating helps the students internalize learning in a way they will never forget. Having that concrete experience fosters an environment to promote peer to peer learning. No two experiences are ever the same so breaking them down and relating them to the course material gives students a shared understanding in their own unique way. By discussing their experiences it reinforces the learning objective, understanding, and above all a relevant, realistic, memorable learning experience.

SSG Louis James Ziacik is from Colorado Springs, Colorado. He enlisted in the United States Army as a Cavalry Scout in May of 2006. He attended One Station Unit Training at Fort Knox, Kentucky.

SSG Ziacik's previous duty assignments include HMMWV Gunner, CFV Gunner, and Sniper with Lightning Troop/Killer Troop, 3rd Squadron, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, Fort Hood, TX; Squad Designated Marksman, Team Leader, Squad Leader, Operations Sergeant, and Section Sergeant with Comanche Troop, 7th Squadron, 10th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Armored Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, Fort Carson, CO; Section Sergeant with Comanche Troop, 2nd Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, Fort Carson, CO; Currently serves as a Cavalry Scout, Small Group Leader, Armor Advanced Leader Course, Henry Caro Noncommissioned Officers Academy, Fort Benning, GA. His combat deployments include Operation Iraqi Freedom 2007-2009, Operation Enduring Freedom 2010-2011, and Operation Spartan Shield 2013.

SSG Ziacik's military education includes Warrior Leaders Course, Advance Leader Course, Long Range Marksman Course, Squad Designated Marksman Course, US Army Sniper School, Combat Life Savers Course, Tactical Site Exploitation Course, Advanced Situational Awareness Basic Course, Dismounted Counter IED Tactics Master Trainer Course, Tactics Certification Course, Battle Staff NCO Course, Digital Management System Training Course, Mobile Retention Training Course, Master Resilience Training Course, Stryker Recon Vehicle Crew Course, Mobile Gun System Commanders Course, Army Basic Instructor Course, Small Group Instructor Training Course, Training Developers Course, Instructor Faculty Developers Course, and the Evaluator Instructors Course.

SSG Ziacik's awards include Army Commendation Medal with Valor Device, Army Commendation Medal (4rd award), Army Achievement Medal (10th award), Army Good Conduct Medal (3rd award), National Defense Service Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal with two Campaign Stars, Iraq Campaign medal with two Campaign Stars, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, NCOES Professional Development Ribbon (2nd award), Army Service Ribbon, Overseas Ribbon (2nd award), NATO Medal, Combat Action Badge, and Senior Army Instructor Badge. His unit awards include the Valorous Unit Award (2nd award). He was inducted into the Order of Saint George, Black Medallion, in 2011 and received the Amor and Cavalry Leadership Award in 2016.

NCO Academy Recognitions

M-SLC Class 001-1

Instructor of the Cycle – SFC Brandon T. Wheat, NCOA Support of the Cycle – Mr. Reuben Enriquez, NCOA Distinguished Honor Graduate – None Selected Honor Graduate – SSG Deric S. Quinlin, HHC, 1st Ranger Bn, 75th Ranger Regimen Iron man – SSG John K. Breda, RSTC, RSTB, 75th Ranger Rgt Leadership Awardees – SSG Sean B. Scott, HHC, HHB, Garriison Volunteer – None Selected

IN ALC Class 001-18

Instructor of the Cycle – SSG Brian C. Schmidt, NCOA Support of the Cycle – Mr. Richard C. Taylor Honor Graduate – SGT Michael B. Hommel (11C), B Co, 2/503rd, 173rd ABCT Honor Graduate – SGT Michael J. Bonoma (11B), D Co, 1st Bn, 75th Ranger Rgt Iron man – SGT Andrew D. Keer, 3rd Bn, 75th Ranger Rgt Leadership Awardees – SGT Kevin D. Lyons (11B), C Troop, 1st Squadron, 91st Cavalry Rgt Volunteer – None Selected

Armor 19D ALC Class 001-18

Instructor of the Cycle – SSG Brandon Falso, NCOA Support of the Cycle – Mr. Frankie George, NCOA Distinguished Honor Graduate – SGT Dylan S. Swanty, A Co 3-61 CAV, 2IBCT, 4ID Honor Graduate – None Selected Iron man – None Selected Leadership Awardee - None Selected

BLC Class 001-18

Instructor of the Cycle – SFC Andrea Pitts, NCOA Support of the Cycle – Mr. Matthew Toulouse, NCOA Distinguished Honor Graduate – CPL Shaun P. Shea, B Co, 3rd RTB, 75th Ranger Regiment Honor Graduate – SPC Trevar D. Humbertson, D Trp, 2/16th

Cav Rgt **Iron man** – SPC Diana N. Ontiveros-Albizu, A Co, 1-11th Avn Regt

Leadership Awardee – CPL SPC Mercy W. Kahihu, E Battery, 1st BN, 28th Inf Rgt

CMDT's INSP Awardee - SPC Patrick M. Sunderman, HHD, U. S. Army Marksmanship Unit

Armor 19K ALC Class 001-18

Instructor of the Cycle – SSG Anthony Cruz, NCOA Support of the Cycle – Mr. Frankie George Distinguished Honor Graduate – SGT Jesse L. Kinder, A Co, 2-12 CAV, 1ABCT, 1CD Honor Graduate – None Selected Iron man – None Selected Leadership Awardee – SGT Edwin A. Mulero, A Co 1-8 CAV , 2ABCT, 1CD

BLC Class 002-18

Instructor of the Cycle – SSG Andres Serna, NCOA Support of the Cycle – Mrs. Ella Plodzik, NCOA Distinguished Honor Graduate – SPC Joshua L. Fisher, HHC 6th Bn, USAIS RTB Honor Graduate – SPC Monica Conley, A Co, 1/11th AVN, Regiment Iron man – SPC Kaitlynne E. Lutrell, USA Aeromed Research Lab Leadership Awardee – SPC Durrell L. Mitchell, A Co, MEDD CMD CMDT's INSP Awardee - CPL Benjamin C. Wickerham, HHC Co, 3rd BN, 75th Ranger Rgt

NCO Academy Instructor Application

Give Back to the NCO Corps!

The Henry Caro NCO Academy is always accepting applications for those NCOs interested in becoming the best Instructors the Army has to offer. You will be challenged every day training and educating NCOs from across the Army and will be helping to shape the future of our NCO Corps.

Basic Instructor Badge: Future instructors will attend the Army Basic Instructor Course and earn the special qualifying identifier "8" and can earn the Basic Instructor Badge as early as 6 months once you are certified.

<u>**Civilian Education:**</u> Our Instructors have ample time to complete civilian education whether online or in the classroom. The Fort Benning Education Center and the participating colleges do an outstanding job at providing classes that our flexible with our schedules.

Functional Courses: The leadership here at the NCO Academy understand and encourage the continued development of our Instructors and provide multiple opportunities for functional course attendance. Our Instructors have graduated from *Airborne, Pathfinder, Ranger, Army Reconnaissance Course* and many other courses while assigned here as an Instructor.

<u>Promotion Potential</u>: Instructors assigned to the NCO Academy have a high potential for promotion. Over the past 2 Promotion Boards, 15 SSGs have been selected for SFC and 6 SFCs have been selected for MSG.

Select the link below to apply

http://www.benning.army.mil/MCoE/ncoa/InstructorApplication.html

NCO Academy Contacts and Links

	Phone	Email	Website				
The Henry Caro NCO Academy	(706) 545-9412	michael.j.ames2.mil@mail.mil	http://www.hopping.org/mil/MCoE/acco/indov.html				
The Commandant	(706) 545-2233	Iniciael.j.anesz.inii@mail.inii					
The Deputy Commandant	(706) 545-2235	patrick.m.maurin.mil@mail.mil	http://www.benning.army.mil/MCoE/ncoa/index.html				
Operations NCOIC	(706) 545-5528	matthew.s.reel.mil@mail.com					
Maneuver Senior Leader Course							
First Sergeant	(706) 545-2586	richard.a.rolls3.mil@mail.mil					
19 Series Senior SGL	(700) 545 5520		http://www.benning.army.mil/MCoE/ncoa/M-SLC.html				
11 Series Senior SGL	(706) 545-5528	eric.j.cross.mil@mail.mil					
Infantry Advanced Leader Course							
First Sergeant	(706) 545-0986	kente.l.bryant.mil@mail.mil					
11B Senior SGL	(706) 545-6531	Benjamin.g.brooks.mil@mail.mil	http://www.benning.army.mil/MCoE/ncoa/INALC.html				
11C Senior SGL	(706) 626-3218	Christopher.j.walker74.mil@mail.mil					
Armor Advanced Leader Course							
First Sergeant	(706) 626-7417	Brian.d.Ditzler.mil@mail.mil	http://www.benning.army.mil/MCoE/ncoa/ARALC.html				
19D Senior SGL	(706) 626-1636	vincent.m.foster.mil@mail.mil					
19K Senior SGL	(706) 626-1637	William.h.fellows.mil@mail.mil					
Basic Leader Course							
First Sergeant	(706) 545-5050	nicholas.k.spinks.mil@mail.mil	http://www.benning.army.mil/MCoE/ncoa/BLC.html				
Senior	(706) 545-5784	andrea.g.pitts.mil@mail.mil					