

MentorLine

Professional Growth Through Partnership



VOLUME 2, ISSUE 1

Exiting Mentor Program Coordinator Fred Hofferbert Hits a Homerun as He Retires from the Agency



USAAA Mentor Program Coordinator Fred Hofferbert is retiring—again.

As most everyone knows, each of baseball's three bases must be touched before a player reaches home to score a run.

For 37 years, Fred Hofferbert has been rounding the bases, first serving for 35 years at the Agency—starting as an auditor trainee and working up to program director—retiring, then coming out of retirement to hit second base as a pinch-hitting editor, and then moving to third base as coordinator for the Agency's Mentor Program.

"They felt it would be a good thing for someone like me to get the program off the ground—I had 35 years of experience with the Agency and I'd been chief of productivity improvement earlier in my career," Fred says.

He was motivated to do it "because it was something the Agency believed in and many of our people wanted a mentor, so it was a matter of getting the program up and running."

"I just felt like it could benefit a lot of people," he says. "When you think about our organization," Fred continues, "a lot of new employees come to us fresh out of college; they don't know a lot about the Army, the Agency, or about auditing, and they're expected to learn a lot in a very short time."

Fred says he has had several informal mentors in his career—people who gave him opportunities to succeed. "People want to be mentors because they love the Agency and what we do, and they want to make a difference." He continues, "Our mentors have shown a true interest in their mentee's development and growth." Just as important, however, is that "mentees need to want to help themselves get better at what they do." According to Fred, it's critically important for mentees to keep in touch with their mentors to get maximum benefit from the partnership and the program.

Using a handbook the Employee Council had prepared, Fred started developing a curriculum for program workshops. The first workshop was held in August 2009 and launched 17 formal partnerships. Since then,

two more workshops have been held. To date, 35 of the 40 formal partnerships established in the first 2 workshops have completed their first year successfully. And, according to Fred, most mentors have said they'd be willing to do it again.

Now, as he rounds third base and heads for home, Fred is retiring—again.

"I've really been blessed by having this opportunity," he says. "So many mentors and mentees have thanked me for the program, telling me that the program has really helped them out."

Fred continues, "When I walk out the door, I walk out feeling really good about what we've accomplished with this program."

PROGRAM DETAILS

The Mentor Program fosters an employee's understanding of our Agency's mission and culture and it facilitates professional growth. The program partners a more experienced professional (mentor) with a less-experienced individual (mentee) to share knowledge, experience, and insight.

CONTACT

INFORMATION

Siobhan Moore

Mentor Program Manager
301-677-2203

siobhan.moore@us.army.mil

UPCOMING MENTOR WORKSHOP

We're planning the next program workshop for early FY 12.

If you're interested in being a mentor or mentee, please contact Siobhan Moore.

Exploring Generational Diversity in Partnerships

What do Frank Sinatra, Elvis Presley, Michael Jackson, and Beyonce have in common? They all play an important part in learning about generational diversity at our workshops.

When we initially set out to establish our agenda, we became aware of Dr. Arthur McMahan, who was then directing educational services and

strategic planning for the U.S. Army Management Staff College. Dr. McMahan had written an article, "Generational Diversity: A Leadership Tool," which is published in the college's *Perspectives on Leadership*.



Dr. Arthur McMahan shares his insights on generational diversity at mentor workshop

A generation is a group of people defined by age boundaries—those who were born during certain eras. And every generation is influenced by economic, political, and social

events of the period, such as the Great Depression, television, Vietnam, and computer technology.

Members of a generation share similar experiences growing up and their values and interests tend to be similar.

Today's workforce has four generations: Traditionalists (1920-1945), Baby Boomers (1946-1964), Generations Xers (1960-1980) and Millennials (1980-2000).

According to Dr. McMahan, who is now director for program-based training and evaluation at the

Department of Veterans Affairs Learning University, understanding generational diversity is beneficial not only to leaders of an organization, but also to those who want to improve their performance and overall potential. Having awareness of differences among the generations in the workforce can help us all work more productively with each other.

In a mentoring partnership, understanding generational similarities or differences helps build the relationship.

Dr. McMahan's presentation has been a fun learning experience for our attendees, especially with how he uses music to typify each generation. That's when attendees get to listen to Frank Sinatra (traditionalists), Elvis Presley (baby boomers), Michael Jackson (generation xers), and Beyonce (millennials) to learn—and hear—what generational diversity is all about.

Agency Holds Third Successful Mentor Program Workshop

The weather forecast threatened snow, sleet, and ice—and everything else imaginable—all week. Yet, 34 intrepid employees braved the elements and arrived safe and sound on 1 February 2011 for our third mentoring workshop. All were eager to begin forming partnerships with their partners.

Principal Deputy Auditor General Benny Piccolo arrived early on the first day to open the workshop. He welcomed participants and talked about the Agency's purpose



Principal Deputy Auditor General Benny Piccolo gave opening remarks and welcomed new Mentor Program participants at the program's third workshop, held in Annapolis this past February.

for the program and its support for it. He also discussed current issues affecting the Agency and fielded questions from attendees.

Participants worked hard during the 2-day workshop to create a strong relationship with their respective

partners and to accomplish all of the program's requirements. This third workshop was noteworthy as six assigned mentors had also been mentors before.

At the end of the workshop, 17 new partnerships had been established.