

## AROUND EUROPE

### German-American partnering meeting builds relationships, provides value

BAD DÜRKHEIM, Germany -- Representatives from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Europe District met with German federal and state ministries and local construction agencies to work through challenging regulatory and process issues during an annual partnering workshop here Feb. 22-23.

"Our goal with the partnership conference is to maintain the excellent relationships we have with the bauamt and ministries of construction," said Col. D. Peter Helmlinger, Europe District commander.

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### USACE reinforces law enforcement in the republic of Georgia

TBILISI, Georgia – Raising both arms over his head in a stretch a cadet at the Tbilisi Police Academy, located in what is now a centralized campus, is anxious for a break after an hour of sitting in a classroom learning fundamental police procedures.

In the center of desks arranged like a rectangle, Capt. Besik Galuashvili, an academy instructor, gives the final few minutes of classroom instruction on suspect apprehension, police codes, and policies in a newly-opened, newly-construction training building.

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### People make the projects - US, local nationals build Georgia together

TBILISI, Georgia – "I have a great team; a team that has completed millions of dollars in upgrades for the Georgian people." John Gerlach, a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Europe District resident engineer said. "Building in Georgia is a challenging and rewarding job."

According to Stanley Young, a Caucasus project engineer, every time he steps into the resident office he feels an immediate energy. He said they do not have typical office environment.

"Although, the team is busy working on their individual projects, talking to customers, or solving a challenge, there is also playful teasing, swapping stories and sharing snacks or lunches," he said. "We're like family."

Young led the five-person local national team during Gerlach's six-month deployment to Afghanistan.

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### Message from the Commander



Local Nationals: The Backbone of Europe District

It is said that Non-Commissioned Officers are the "Backbone of the Army". Similarly, our district Local Nationals are the "Backbone of EUD." While our Department of the Army Civilians and Soldiers come and go, our LNs provided the structure, strength, and continuity that is essential for the organization to succeed.

It has taken me nine months, but I've finally visited all of our Resident Offices in eight countries, including Germany, Israel, Turkey, Georgia, Bulgaria, Romania, Belgium, and Italy. I am in awe of our LNs employed in each of these countries. We literally could not succeed without them. They provide local expertise, cultural insight, and language skills that would take years for a DA civilian to acquire. They also provide diversity, which allows multiple perspectives to be focused on a solution far greater than a narrow group could produce. Our LNs faithfully serve the interest of both the United States and their home country in our common cause of project delivery.

Historically, the district workforce has been between 25 – 34 percent LNs, compared to DACs. We are currently at 27 percent LNs district wide and 24 percent in Germany. In the past five years, the district added almost 100 DACs, while our LNs in Germany slightly declined. At the same time, our DAC workforce has remained turbulent, with a 22 percent turnover last year. As I mentioned last month, we will have a slight realignment of our workforce based on shifting workloads. I am committed to keep the district within its historic ratio of LNs for its many benefits. Therefore, my intent is for any potential downsizing in the district to be absorbed by normal DAC rotation attrition, and not by reducing the number of LN positions.

Yair Shani, a LN project engineer from the Israel Northern Resident Office, shared with me that serving in Europe District is like serving in the Israeli Defense Force reserves, where he is also a NCO. In both organizations, his leadership comes and goes, bringing new focus and enthusiasm, while he soldiers-on with steadfast support.

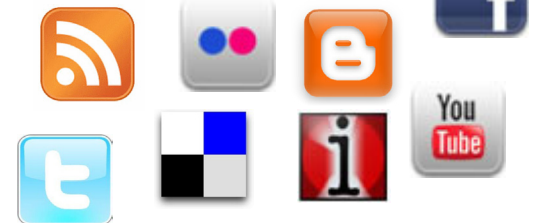
John Norman, a LN in Engineering Branch, recently retired after 36 years of service. When asked why he didn't switch jobs to find something new, he said he didn't need to, because the faces of the Americans around him constantly changed as they rotated to their home districts.

To our many LNs, thank you for your dedication and service. You are an invaluable member of the EUD family including LNs, DACs, and Soldiers. My vision is for Europe District to be one of the best in USACE at project delivery, as measured by customer satisfaction. We couldn't do this without you. You are the Backbone of EUD.

Building Strong! People, Partners, Projects  
COL Pete Helmlinger

Congratulations for a job well done by our recent Europe District Heroes of the Battle: Ravit Uzan, Catherine Bingham, Alex Tomosieski, and Heidi Meissner.

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USACE employees retire



Photo by Carol E. Davis

After 39 years of service, Jakobia "Jackie" Schempp, a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Europe District local national, receives the Commander's Award for Civilian Service and her Certificate of Retirement, shown here, from Col. D. Peter Helmlinger, district commander.

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Photo by Carol E. Davis

After 36 years of service, John Norman, a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Europe District local national, receives the Commander's Award for Civilian Service, shown here, and his Certificate of Retirement from Col. D. Peter Helmlinger, district commander.

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NAU in the News

Woodbury-MiddleburyPatch.com, Egg Hunts Taking Place in March & April - NAU photo

April is  
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