

New corporate interns look forward to making

By Jessica Walter, APR, DDC Public Affairs

Sixteen Defense Distribution Center employees were sworn in earlier this year, beginning their careers in the Defense Logistics Agency's Career Intern Program.

The two-year program is designed to train entry-level employees for advancement in various DLA career fields including supply, information technology, contracting, property disposal, accounting, environmental, and quality assurance. Many members of DDC's current group of interns will enter the traffic management and supply fields.

As nearly half of the Defense Logistics Agency's workforce nears retirement over the next few years, the intern program provides an opportunity to have a trained and ready workforce in place during the transition.

The group finds the program to be beneficial for trying out prospective positions. "We're getting an overview of the entire organization and learning which department we would work better in or have an interest in," said Shala Pulgar.

"I'm looking forward to learning and absorbing as much information as I can in order to be the best," added Jennifer McCormack.



From left to right, Ahndrea Schmick, Elena Alvarez, Terrance Trottie, and Robert Garrettson.

Most of all, the group is looking forward to working in the distribution centers in order to gain a better understanding of how they can assist the sites in achieving their mission to serve the war fighter.

"Everything starts in the warehouse – it's the foundation," said Terrance Trottie. "If we're going to be effective at the headquarters level, we need to know how things work there and everywhere in between."

Service to the war fighter was what attracted most of the interns to the program. Pulgar, whose sister is a Navy lieutenant commander serving in Iraq, said, "I'm proud of her and all of our armed forces and what they do, and I'm honored and excited to do my part in serving our great country."

Some of the interns have been on the receiving end of DLA's services while serving in the military, so they know what it's like on the other end of the supply chain and they're happy to have a chance to make a difference.

"I'm glad to have the opportunity to support the mission from a support position," said Trottie who served as a supply clerk in the Army.

The backgrounds of each of the 16 new interns are quite unique. They hold bachelor's and master's degrees in varied disciplines ranging from business management, environmental science, and human resources to psychology, kinesiology, and criminal justice.

"Each person brings a key element to the table," said Scot Osborne. "We compliment each other."

Pulgar says she's glad the group is so diverse yet meshes well with each other



From left to right, Bryant Siegfried, Nate Morgan, and Rafael Gonzales.

difference, tackling challenges



From left to right, William Simpson, Jennifer McCormack, and Jennifer Ream.

and with the rest of the workforce. “I think it’s a good example of what’s going to happen in the future.”

DDC has provided a very welcoming environment, they say. “Everyone is so encouraging, and they’re excited about us being here,” said William Simpson.

“This is the first place I’ve worked where everyone has been so supportive and positive,” said Pulgar.

For Nate Morgan, the attitude of his co-workers has made a big difference. “If this place wasn’t so positive I don’t think I would have stuck with it.”



Emily Moore, left, and Scot Osborne.

Ahndrea Schmick was already working for DDC’s Transportation Division when she was accepted in to the intern program, but it was the people working with her

who influenced her to apply. “My mentors and co-workers inspired me through their dedication to support the war fighter to take a more active role in learning the operations of DDC.”

The interns say they have learned to rely on each other and are beginning to build a network that will last their entire careers.

“The team is stronger than the individual,” said Irvin Brown, formerly of DDC’s East Coast strategic distribution platform.

The next two years are full of challenges and possibilities for the interns. During the program, they will participate in rotational assignments, cross training, on-the-job assignments and formal training – learning something new every day.

They welcome the rapid pace of the training and embrace the change it brings. “You can’t get better without change,” said Moore.

“It’s a new adventure every day,” added Simpson.



Shala Pulgar, left, and Irvin Brown. (Not pictured: Alonso Aguay-Oliveras and Aaron Nguyen)