



# DEOMI

DEFENSE EQUAL OPPORTUNITY MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE



NEWS RELEASE

## DEOMI Collaborative Series 'hits the mark'

Col. Martin: We still have plenty of work to do to remain relevant for the DOD

By Christopher Calkins  
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*Dr. Richard Pimentel, a disabled Army Veteran and a nationally renowned expert on disability management, job recruitment, job retention, Americans with Disability Act (and more) opens the DEOMI Collaborative Series here at Patrick AFB, Fla., Dec.7, 2016. When his poignant, stirring and most relevant speech was concluded, a whirl-wind of approximately two dozen diversity-based training, panel, paper and breakout sessions were conducted throughout DEOMI continually for both days of the event.*

**PATRICK AFB, Fla.** – More than 100 visitors converged here at the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute for the first-ever “DEOMI Collaborative Series” (DCS) and the 45th Anniversary Celebration of “The Department of Defense’s Center of Excellence for Human Relations Education and Research” Dec. 7-8.

Following keynote speaker Dr. Richard Pimentel, a disabled Army veteran and a nationally renowned expert on disability management, job recruitment, job retention, Americans with

Disability Act, (and more), a whirl-wind of approximately two dozen diversity-based training, panel, paper and breakout sessions were conducted throughout DEOMI continually for both days of the event.

Those sessions, just to name a few, included ...

- *“When Leadership Goes Wrong; Facing the Challenges of Toxic Leadership”*
- *“Command Climate Assessment; Suicide Prevention”*
- *“Leadership Challenges for Cultivating a Capable and Diverse Force of the Future”*
- *“LGBT in Equal Opportunity”*
- *And the Series’ final panel, “The Future of Human Relations Specialists and Programs.”*

According to Army Col. Mary L. Martin, DEOMI Commandant, who assumed command here in June of this year, she was thankful for both the work that went into the Collaborative Series and – just as important -- the comments she received from the guests and speakers who attended it.

“In the immediate feedback I received it was all very positive,” she said.

“We definitely hit the mark we were shooting for, but there’s always room for improvement and I’m very proud to lead this fantastic group of professionals.”



Col. Martin then explained why, in her mind, DEOMI is every bit as relevant now as it was when the Department of Defense mandated race relations training in 1971.

Forty-five years ago, an inter-service task force examined the causes and possible cures of these racial disorders within the military. That task force, chaired by then Air Force Colonel Lucius Theus (who eventually retired as a Major General), resulted in the publication of Department of Defense Directive 1322.11.

This directive established the Race Relations Education Board and in 1971, created the Defense Race Relations Institute (DRRI), the original name for DEOMI.

Today, DEOMI is much more than a black-and-white organization.

“Marked changes in the demographic makeup of the United States will soon throw existing disparities into sharp contrast, creating a workforce recruiting pool that looks very different from



the pool of 30 to 40 years ago, from which today's leaders were drawn," Col. Martin said.

"Like the private sector, the U.S. military recognizes the need for a diverse civilian and military workforce that includes a greater range and diversity of individual competencies, including skills, education, and professional backgrounds," she added.

"The bottom line is this: Today, perhaps as much or more than any time in our history, we still have plenty of work to do, and our training, our curriculum and our policies need continuous reviews in order to stay relevant in an ever-changing environment," she said with emphasis.

Dr. Jarris Taylor, Jr., Deputy Assistant Secretary (Strategic Diversity Integration), Secretary of the Air Force, who not only participated in the Collaborative Series, but also served as the Keynote Speaker for the sold-out 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner held Dec. 7, echoed the DEOMI Commandant's comments.

"DEOMI is an iconic institution of education and has provided 45 years of continuous service to our beloved nation, Armed Forces, and allies that has taught us over the years to embrace diversity, equal opportunity, equal employment opportunity and inclusion for the betterment of society," Dr. Taylor said.

Following a Board of Advisors telecom with the DEOMI staff and leaders from the Office of Diversity Management and Equal Opportunity (ODMEO) Dec. 9, Dr. Taylor talked about the professionals in the DEOMI Conference Room for that meeting.



"The leadership of DEOMI is the epitome of professionalism at its finest," he said. "The faculty and staff are preparing military and civilian leaders to engage, mediate, and dismantle institutional barriers from a holistic and inclusive global perspective," he said.

"What they do, and what they'll continue to do is vital to the Department of Defense."

Dr. Carrie K. Baker, Air Mobility Command's Branch Chief, Human Relations & Workforce Diversity, at Scott Air Force Base, Ill., said she thought the Collaborative Series was a great experience and a terrific way to interact with other military and civilian workplace diversity professionals.

"Not only were all the break-out sessions interesting and informative, this event was a great opportunity to raise awareness, build understanding and encourage reflection on the future of our career field." Baker said.

"I'm proud to say I'm just one of many who work hard to ensure EEO programs continue to make important contributions for all DOD civilians and uniform members serving in an environment of dignity, equity and mutual respect to foster an inclusive environment," she added.

So what comes next?

Mr. Clarence Johnson, Principal Director, ODMEQ, answered that question.

"Thanks to all who took the time to attend, educate and participate in this first-class event, and what an absolutely fantastic job by the total DEOMI team to bring this all together," he said at the closing ceremonies.



Morality and ethics mean different things to different people – based, among other things, on their culture, values, religious beliefs and environment.

"This is where our EO, EEO and Command Climate Professionals help bridge the divide for leaders due to their intense training and commitment to their Service values. And the vast majority of that training is done right here at DEOMI," he said with emphasis.

"We might have some resource and scheduling challenges to work through, but I am going to make every effort to ensure we make this an annual event," he said. "It's really *this* important."

Hitting the mark, indeed.

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