



DEOMI

DEFENSE EQUAL OPPORTUNITY MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE



NEWS RELEASE

Leadership Seminar ‘Levels the playing field’



The LTAS seminar is geared toward the strategic decision makers in the Departments of Defense and Homeland Security. This seminar is designed to present senior leaders with an orientation on the intrapersonal, interpersonal and organizational aspects of human relations, EO and EEO in order to gain an understanding of their impacts on unit cohesion and mission effectiveness. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Joshua Brandenburg, DEOMI Public Affairs)

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By Christopher C. Calkins
DEOMI Public affairs

PATRICK AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. – U.S. Marine Col. Sekou S. Karega has shaped a very successful Marine Corps career being anything but anonymous.

However, for the current Commanding Officer, Marine Corps Logistics Base, Barstow, Calif., he was given some specific advice recently from the Leadership Training Awareness Seminar instructors here at the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute.

“Conducting this class without revealing military rank – leveling the playing field if you will -- was a highly effective method to encourage participation and open dialogue,” said Karega.

“There was great discussion on many issues throughout the LTAS class, and I truly believe keeping everyone equal, as students only, created the environment for the candid exchange of ideas,” he said emphatically.

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Participants are encouraged to bring real-world issues and problems to the table, give and receive feedback, and explore the impact of their personal behaviors on others, the group, and on larger organizational systems.

For Air Force Col. Kevin D. Heckle, Vice Commander, Air Reserve Personnel Center Buckley AFB, Colo., his biggest take-away from the 40-hour class was ... well Just about everything.

“The staff at DEOMI is energetic and positive! This class focuses on making our DOD a better place to work for all employees wherever they came from and whatever their walk of life is,” Col. Heckle said.

(Left to right) Dr. Jose Bolton, Sr., DEOMI Dean, Marine Col. Sekou S. Karega, Commanding Officer, Marine Corps Logistics Base, Air Force Col. Kevin D. Heckle, Vice Commander, Air Reserve Personnel Center and Chief Master Sgt. Boston Alexander, DEOMI Senior Enlisted Advisor, meet in the DEOMI Library after speaking to all LTAS graduates.



“Leadership starts at the top and this class provides our leaders with more tools to help them succeed in leading a very diverse, yet exciting work force. Talent management is huge right now and we’re competing with the private sector,” Col. Heckle said.

“In order to attract the very best talent, we have to ensure we are attracting the very best talent AND ensure they feel accepted. This class really focuses on how leaders set the tone in our units,” he added.

The California-based Marine was in virtual lock-step with his Colorado-based Air Force classmate.

“The level of instruction at DEOMI was nothing short of exceptional. Each instructor was knowledgeable, and very passionate about the topic that they taught,” Col. Karega said.

“I learned something new from each period of instruction. I wish I had taken the LTAS class sooner, and I have already recommended it to other senior leaders and EO and EEO professionals.”

For Mr. Gary Richardson, Program Manager, Senior Leader Training Directorate, it’s all about the mission itself.

“I’m appreciative and honored to receive the compliments and accolades from our senior leaders. They are reflective of the hard work each LTAS team member puts in to prepare for each class,” said Richardson.

“Our job is to challenge perceptions and give participants a new perspective on human relations issues that affect the mission of the Department of Defense.”

And after a short pause, Richardson had this to say.

“And I agree with Col. Karega,” he said, “more senior leaders and EO and EEO professionals should attend this course.

Editor’s note: DEOMI offers two versions of this SLD: LTAS for mid-level personnel and an executive version for command level personnel. In the future, attendees of this executive level seminar must meet the following criteria (commanders and key staff/department heads O-5 to O-6), senior enlisted members (E-8 to E-9), and civilians (GS-14 to GS-15), legal officers, chaplains and inspector general personnel who hold leadership positions within their respective organizations. Requestors outside of these ranks will not be permitted to attend.

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