

## ARNG Program Manager Finds Fulfillment in Serving Soldiers

Those who work with Laura Greenfield inside and outside of the Army National Guard (ARNG) agree on one thing above all others: She is dedicated to serving ARNG Soldiers. In fact, many co-workers have heard her say of a particular idea, "I'm only concerned that it helps Guard Soldiers." Her co-workers know that Ms. Greenfield's devotion is genuine and extends beyond Soldiers to family members as well. The connection between education and service to Soldiers is also exemplified in Ms. Greenfield's own academic achievements. Having received her Bachelors in Liberal Studies degree, with a minor in Sociology, from Regents College in 1996, and her Master's in Education from Old Dominion University in Virginia in 2002, Ms. Greenfield has required high performance from herself while also seeking better service for ARNG Soldiers.

Laura Greenfield was hired as a contractor in 2004 and later as a Department of the Army (DA) civilian to work with the ARNG, arriving with a history of accomplishments in both the military and higher education communities. Currently, she is ARNG Program Manager for Testing, Licensing and Certification, in which position she advises "ARNG state education staff and leadership on issues, needs, and requirements affecting testing for Soldiers, family members and civilians." Her duties include providing briefings, managing special projects pertaining to training, conducting courtesy visits, and providing training and assistance to state education office staff members.

Prior to joining ARNG, Ms. Greenfield began her military career in 1979, when she enlisted in the Army as a Telecommunications Specialist, later retraining to become a 00R -- Career Counselor. It was through her work as a Career Counselor that she would gain significant insight into the

activities she now conducts for ARNG. During her last two positions in the Active Army, Ms. Greenfield served as Garrison Career Counselor at Fort Drum, NY, and as the 193<sup>rd</sup> Signal Brigade Career Counselor in Panama.

According to Ms. Greenfield, "while working as a career counselor, it was my responsibility to know quite a few regulations, in-depth, that were related to the well-being of Soldiers and their family members." She says, "Out of 39 regulations that were necessary to make career counselors a success, 27 were noted as key tools to be used every day." Among the 27 regulations she was required to know were the following: Military Pay and Allowances, Army Training and Education, Military Personnel Information Management/Records, Regular Army and Reserve Enlistment Programs, Army Personnel Selection and Classification Testing and Management of Army Individual Training Requirements and Resources.

As part of her ongoing commitment to ARNG Soldiers, Laura Greenfield does not wait for things to happen with regard to testing and certification -- she helps to make them happen. She says, "I aspire to continue improving the testing and certification programs for the ARNG. One project we are currently working is the distribution of 128 Information Technology vouchers to the state education offices, starting in January of 2009." The vouchers will be applicable for a variety of information technology tests, including Microsoft examinations. Prometric will act as the testing vendor for the project, with locations throughout the U.S. and its territories. According to Ms. Greenfield, state Education Services Officers (ESOs) and Test Control Officers (TCOs) will be able to assist Soldiers with their inquiries about the vouchers.

As innovation renders paper-based testing obsolete, Ms. Greenfield is coordinating with the distance learning program manager to make 300-plus Internet accessible classrooms available to test ARNG Soldiers. DLPT IV foreign language testing is already available at many of the distance learning classrooms. In addition, the Professional Education Center (PEC) Information Technology Training Center has become a Microsoft Information IT Academy and seeks to partner with NGB Education to provide both testing and training. Some ideas being discussed include possibly making testing available at night and on weekends for all ARNG Soldiers attending school at the PEC.

Maintaining her primary goal of serving Guard Soldiers, Laura Greenfield tirelessly pursues means for delivering on her promise to do what is in their and their families' best interests.

Laura Greenfield, ARNG Program Manager for Testing, Licensing and Certification.



## Iowa Army National Guard Soldier Exemplifies Life-Long Learning

Ask PFC Lisa Langel-Cordes of the Iowa Army National Guard (IAARNG) what led her, at 38 years old, the mother of three children, a former Executive Team Leader at Target, to enlist and endure Basic Combat Training (BCT) and Advanced Individual Training (AIT), and she might first joke that it was “mid-life crisis.” Initially, that’s what she told *ARNG Education News*, admitting with a chuckle that she joined the Guard a bit “later in life” than most.

The truth is, however, that she was pursuing something she had wanted to do since her teen and pre-teen years. She recalled times growing up in Sioux City, watching parades with military participants, feeling pride and a sense of patriotism. Then, as now, it was the Guard that attracted her interest, since it was the Guard to which she was exposed at that time.

As the oldest of six children, with hard-working parents who were able to succeed without college degrees, PFC Langel-Cordes never felt pressured to attend, or complete, a college education. Still, she was a good student and wanted to go to college. She also experienced that urge to join the military again as high school graduation approached. At age 18, she went as far as to schedule an appointment with a military recruiter at her family’s home, without telling her parents. At the time, she felt certain they would think she was crazy.

While exceeding the speed limit on her way to meet the recruiter, she ran into an intense thunderstorm and was pulled over by the police. These delays, or the recruiters’ own failure to show, caused her to miss the meeting and to rethink the option of enlisting. She says now it was either “never meant to be,” or it was a “missed opportunity.” In fact, she wonders sometimes what would have happened if she had enlisted at the time. Since that was 22 years ago, she would perhaps be close to retirement by now. She admits that in those days, she was pretty unsure of what exactly she wanted to do.

As it turned out, her life took a series of different turns, none of which she would regret, and all seeming to lead to that eventual enlistment anyway. She attended Briar Cliff University for a year, as a music major, using her singing talent and hoping to teach music. Then she got married, at 20, and had her first child at 21. Today, her three children, Courtney, AJ, and Drew, are 17, 15 and 13 years old, respectively. While having children took her out of school, they remain her life’s greatest joy. (She recommended to anyone that they not avoid having a family for the sake of a career or degree

program and said she will never regret this decision.)

Once her children were able to go to school themselves, PFC Langel-Cordes resumed her own rigorous pursuit of both education and a career in 2002. As a full-time Executive Team Leader with Target Stores, she also attended Upper Iowa University (UIU) as a full-time student, pursuing a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration. Everything seemed to mesh in terms of career and education, but the “work-life balance” just didn’t work. She left Target in 2006 to put some priority back into her approach to the family.

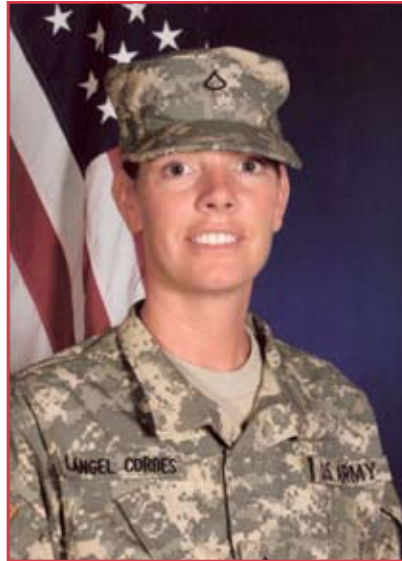
As she looked for another job, just a year and a half short of her BS degree, PFC Langel-Cordes thought her college coursework and managerial experience would make finding a more accommodating position easy. However, she found that interviewers viewed her as either over-qualified due to her work experience, or under-qualified because she did not yet have a degree. Eventually, she found a job with the Cedar Falls Hearst Center for the Arts as a receptionist, and while the position did not challenge her skills, experience and ambitions, it allowed her to bring home

a paycheck. She also enjoyed the people she met, and the 32 hours per week allowed her to put time back into being a mother and a student. Still, the job’s slow pace and lack of growth potential forced her to look hard at her options.

One day, as she and her husband, Dan, stood outside their home, the Aviation Battalion out of Waterloo practiced maneuvers in a field across the street. Watching a Blackhawk helicopter hover and land, PFC Langel-Cordes said to her husband, “You know, that’s something I always wanted to do.” He surprised her by saying, “Then why don’t you?”

That’s what led 38 year-old Lisa Langel-Cordes to enlist in the ARNG, as a 68W Health Care Specialist, taking BCT at Fort Jackson, SC, and AIT at Fort Sam Houston, in San Antonio, TX. She and her husband agreed that it was something that she wanted to, and could, accomplish, with the children in a position to be without their mom for awhile, and a husband willing to provide the support necessary for Mom to realize her long-time dream.

Like getting married and having her children, it is a decision she says that she will never regret. Seeing their mother realize a dream at this time in her life allows her children to consider how they might one day achieve, and never give up on, their dreams. PFC Langel-Cordes is not just a mother but a role model. Moreover, the Guard has ended up fitting her other commitments to family and career as never before. After her initial separation during training, she has returned home re-energized. During training, her drill instructors (only one of whom she was younger than) held



PFC Lisa Langel-Cordes,  
Federal TA Manager, Iowa ARNG

her up as an example to others as someone who does not give up and who strives. She found the continual learning processes during training to be particularly invigorating, adjusting to a totally new culture and learning to be a leader and team member at the same time.

For PFC Langel-Cordes, joining the Guard was not just “something to try.” It was the achievement of a life goal, exposing her to diversity, building peer relationships with people close to the age of her children, which she says has helped her communicate as a mother as well. She now is unafraid of asking a younger Soldier about his or her life experiences to gain greater insight into her own children’s lives, and she listens closely to their feedback.

This experience of interdependence in the Guard has also informed her return to school as a student. PFC Langel-Cordes has every intention of using her Federal Tuition Assistance benefits to complete her business administration degree, and to go beyond it. As a student after joining the Guard, PFC Langel-Cordes says that she is more determined than ever to get the information she needs to succeed. She’s not afraid to ask questions, of her instructors and fellow-students, and she sees herself at some advantage over traditional students. What appears to be a “big deal” to some students seems much less so to someone who has trained and served as PFC Langel-Cordes already has.

Even as she re-enrolled in UIU in May of 2008, immediately after AIT, major flooding in Iowa forced her to take incompletes in her first two classes. As IAARNG assisted the state in recovery from the floods, PFC Langel-Cordes volunteered to remain active in salvage operations at the destroyed Iowa City Armory. She credits UIU with being extremely cooperative in her need to withdraw from classes and intends to retake the courses at a later date. However, her eventual completion of those classes might be delayed even further. This fall, she engaged in extended training to prepare for a January 2009 deployment to Iraq, which has now been postponed until June. This means she will repeat the eight-week pre-mobilization training in early 2009.

There is no doubt, however, that this determined Soldier will complete those courses, her degree, and much, much more. Even as she assisted with flood relief operations, PFC Langel-Cordes heard about a job opening in the IAARNG Education Services Office, as a Federal TA Manager. Inquiring about the job, she found her superior, MAJ McVey (the OIC), to be encouraging and supportive, even arranging for her transportation to the interview. Within a day of interviewing, she got the job, and now walks Soldiers through a process that she has walked through herself very recently. She says that she feels gratified with the job, since she has the same needs, and desires, as those she serves: the desire for life-long learning, for ongoing growth and a sense of fulfillment, which she can share with fellow-Soldiers, fellow-students, and perhaps especially, her husband and children. For PFC Langel-Cordes, all of them are, in a sense, part of her family.

## West Virginia Soldier’s “Success Story” Leads to National Award Recognition

In the June 2008 issue of *ARNG Education News*, readers learned the educational success story of SGT Patricia Deaver, of the West Virginia Army National Guard (WVARNG). SGT Deaver’s accomplishments included completing bachelor’s and master’s degrees through the use of Federal Tuition Assistance (FTA), and through consultation with WVARNG’s Education Services Officer (ESO), CPT Jason Webb, and his staff. Soon after appearing, SGT Deaver’s story caught the attention of Ms. Ela Karczewska, Acting Chief, Education Oversight Branch, at the National Guard Bureau (NGB).

Believing that SGT Deaver’s success could inspire wider interest nationally, Ms. Karczewska submitted this Soldier’s story to the Commission on Military Education and Training (CMET) as an entry for CMET’s Leon McGaughey: Adult Military Learner of the Year Award. As it turned out, SGT Deaver’s experience moved the CMET Award panel to the extent that she won the award for 2008, against some strong competition. Moreover, SGT Deaver is, according to Ms. Karczewska, the first-ever ARNG recipient of the McGaughey Award. CMET President Mike Engen shared the good news with SOCGuard, Ms. Karczewska, and SGT Deaver, who traveled to the American Association of Adult and Continuing Education’s Annual Conference in Denver,



SGT Patricia Deaver speaks at American Association of Adult and Continuing Education Annual Conference.

CO, on November 11, 2008, to receive her award.

Upon hearing of her selection, SGT Deaver said that she was "honored and amazed" at having won. She thanked *ARNG Education News* and Ms. Karczewska for taking an interest in, and submitting, her story to CMET. After returning home from Denver, SGT Deaver expressed her delight over attending the event. She was thrilled by the kindness of conference participants and described the Colorado scenery as "gorgeous." Now looking ahead to future accomplishments, SGT Deaver says that she is considering a doctorate, but "not for at least two more years," as she seeks to gain a "little more 'real world' experience before I further my education."

SGT Deaver's vision for her future is actually quite clear. She says, "I don't want to lose the whole reason I started this career path. I want to help people, and right now I'm in the position to do that." Recently taking a new job as a Substance Abuse Therapist at Seneca Health Services, SGT Deaver provides individual and group counseling to individuals with substance abuse disorders. Her individual counseling focuses on people with dual diagnoses of depression/anxiety and substance abuse disorders. Eventually, she intends to return to the Veterans Administration to "continue my work with our nation's veterans," a position she recently left to take her current position. It is a sure bet that she'll follow through on achieving this goal, just as she has seen her earliest dreams become reality through service in ARNG and use of her education benefits.

So sure is she of how well this formula has worked that she recently reenlisted in the Guard for another six years. Moreover, she says that she looks forward to "encouraging all of my fellow Soldiers to get a better education," even as she finalizes her own plans to attend a military school this spring. In addition to the possible promotion this activity

might bring her, it will once again reveal SGT Patricia Deaver as a living example of how a Guard Soldier can succeed through pursuing her education and serving the ARNG, her community, and her country.

*ARNG Education News* looks forward to including future Soldier "Success Stories," submitted by ESOs from all the states and territories, which might lead to more ARNG recipients of the prestigious Leon McGaughey Award. Send success stories via e-mail to [RIGGLED@AASCU.ORG](mailto:RIGGLED@AASCU.ORG), or phone in referrals to Daniel Riggle, SOCGuard Program Manager, 202-478-4705.

## Scholarships Offer Support to Guard Members and Families

Western Governors University (WGU) has announced a scholarships program for new National Guard and Reserve students. The WGU Reservists and National Guard Scholarship is valued up to \$1,500, which is credited toward the tuition cost at the rate of \$300 per six-month term, renewable each year for up to a maximum of five terms. These scholarships are designed to help members of the Reserves and the National Guard attend college online and earn a degree in business, information technology, teacher education, or healthcare. Scholarships are available for undergraduate and graduate degree students who establish eligibility under the program guidelines (see Website referenced below).

The scholarship is available through 31 March 2009, and the application deadline is January 31, 2009. For additional information, see [http://wgu.edu/tuition\\_financial\\_aid/reservists\\_overview.asp](http://wgu.edu/tuition_financial_aid/reservists_overview.asp) or contact John R. Gantz, Director of Military Relations, Western Governors University, 2365 Caddy Shack Lane, Pensacola, FL 32526. Phone: 850-944-1929. E-mail: [jgantz@wgu.edu](mailto:jgantz@wgu.edu)

For military Servicemembers, their spouses or family members in the state of New York, the New York State Higher Education Services Corporation has announced the Military Enhanced Recognition, Incentive and Tribute (MERIT) Scholarship Program. MERIT scholarships are available to military personnel, their spouses, children and financial dependents who are residents of New York State. Eligibility extends to military personnel who have become permanently and severely disabled during active duty, as well as to their families and the families of servicemembers who have either died or been declared missing during active duty.

Eligibility applies to personnel injured or disabled on federal or state active duty; however, death or disability of a servicemember must have occurred in a combat theater or combat zone of operations or while training in preparation for duty in a combat theater.

For additional information, contact the NYS Higher Education Services Corporation at 518-474-3552 or go to <http://www.hesc.org/>.



SGT Deaver with CMET President Mike Engen, receiving McGaughey Award.

## SOCGuard Education Expertise Helps Ensure ESO Success

As NGB-EDU provides vanguard administrative direction for ARNG's educational mission and goals, SOCGuard continues to support the successful achievement of those goals. In FY 09, SOCGuard staff has engaged in multiple activities, directly assisting ESOs in their states and informing the education community as to how best to serve ARNG Soldiers.

At a Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges (SOC) Consortium Workshop in Philadelphia, PA, in October, a SOCGuard Program Manager arranged a meeting between Delaware ARNG's new ESO, CPT Jeff Stowell, and Delaware State University administrators at the CPT Stowell's request. Such college briefs allow ESOs to resolve administrative issues or to get better acquainted with college representatives with whom they have frequent contact via phone or e-mail. These briefs can take place in conjunction with another SOC/SOCGuard activity, such as a higher education conference or workshop, or they can be pursued alone. In the latter case, SOCGuard and an ESO will identify several schools with which it would be useful to meet over a one-, two-, or even three-day period, and SOCGuard works with those schools to arrange times and places for the meetings. Future college briefs are planned at colleges in Virginia and Massachusetts.

SOCGuard/ARNG Education Benefits Workshops are invariably cited by ESOs who participate in them as the most cost-effective, time-efficient means for reaching out to multiple institutions in their states at a single time and place. Developing such a workshop is easy for an ESO. Simply notify SOCGuard of the prospective host location(s) and date(s) for the proposed workshop(s), preferably a month to two months in advance. SOCGuard handles much of the rest of the administration, from reserving a room on the host campus, sending out invitations, coordinating RSVPs, and providing workshop evaluations and sign-up sheets (as well as handouts). At the workshops, SOCGuard and the ESO and his/her staff provide information briefings to the group, and they can conduct one-on-one sessions with individual schools. These one-on-one sessions are essentially college briefs, which can take place at the workshop site or at the attending school's campus after the workshop.

SOCGuard staff also attends higher education conferences throughout the year, and these are ideal events at which ESOs and SOCGuard can team-up to occupy a booth, act as co-presenters at a session, or conduct briefs with attending colleges. In some cases, ESOs can share the booth or present as a "guest," thereby waiving conference fees. Since conferences often bring together hundreds of educators from across a state or region, they provide excellent opportunities to do outreach, resolve business issues with colleges, and solidify working relationships between Education Offices and college administrators. Most recently, the SOCGuard Project

Director and the ORARNG ESO conducted the "Battlefield to the Classroom" presentation at the Pacific Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (PACRAO), and the SOCGuard Program Manager provided a similar presentation at the Middle States ACRAO. SOCGuard welcomes opportunities to have ESOs discuss education benefits at such sessions or to share a booth. In the first half of 2009, SOCGuard will be attending conferences in Louisiana, Virginia, Washington, DC, and Arizona.

At the ESO Education and Incentives Course at the Professional Education Center (PEC) in Camp Robinson, AR, the SOCGuard Project Director provided the Accreditation 101 presentation, which highlights a number of issues confronted by ESOs in their work with the higher education community. Accreditation issues represent one of many areas in which SOCGuard furnishes troubleshooting assistance to ESOs and their staffs in the field. SOCGuard receives questions regularly from ARNG Education Offices and recruiters pertaining to accreditation, administrative problem-solving with institutions, improved communication with institutions, and other education-related topics. SOCGuard staff also receives numerous queries from schools on how they can improve their working relationship with the ARNG in their states.

SOCGuard's Web site and the publications it helps to develop on behalf of the ARNG continue to develop to better serve ESOs and ARNG Soldier-students. Over the past year, *ARNG Education News* was tasked with developing "Success Stories" of Soldiers who have used their education benefits to advance their careers and lives inside and outside of the ARNG. One such story resulted in a West Virginia ARNG Soldier's receiving the Commission on Military Education and Training's (CMET's) Leon McGaughey: Adult Military Learner of the Year Award (see previous article). This was the first time an ARNG Soldier has received the McGaughey Award. Moreover, SOCGuard's editorial contributions to the *ARNG Education Benefits Handbook* and its companion brochure help to make those publications some of the most popular and user-friendly documents available to Soldiers and educators.

SOCGuard looks forward to continuing to serve ARNG in achieving its "recruitment and retention through education" mission. SOCGuard also looks forward to continuing to serve individual ARNG Soldiers in achieving their life and career goals through educational excellence. For more information, go to SOCGuard's Web site (<http://www.soc.aascu.org/socguard/Default.html>) or call (toll free) 800-368-5622.

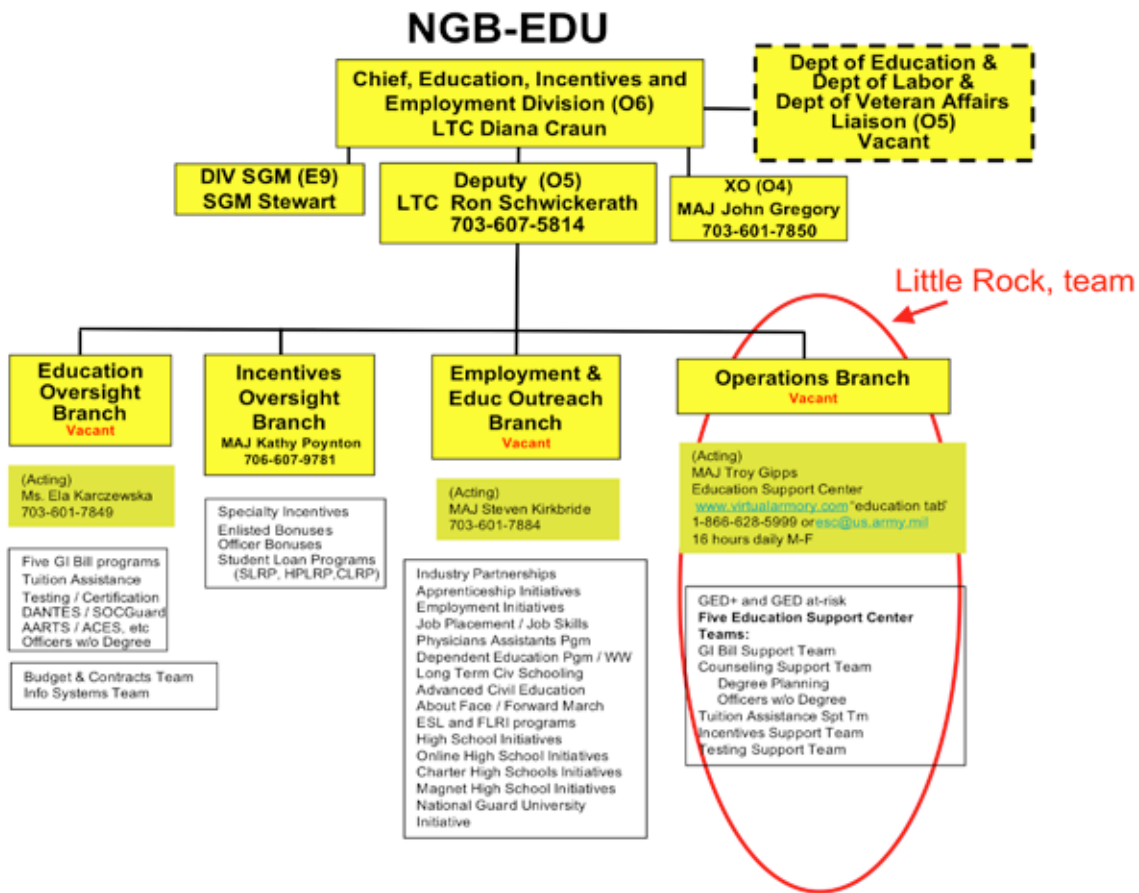
To learn more about ARNG education  
go to:

<http://www.virtualarmy.com/>  
and follow the "Education" link.

## NGB's Education, Incentives, and Employment Division Continues to Take Shape

As part of an ongoing series of articles, *ARNG Education News* will continue to track developments within the National Guard Bureau's (NGB's) Education, Incentives, and Employment (EDU) Division. For now, as exciting changes take place into the New Year, we are posting the following

organizational chart for readers to visualize administrative changes across EDU. In later issues, we will continue to post biographies of those dedicated individuals who are taking charge and serving the Guard at EDU.



## New SOCGuard Program Manager Knows Education is the Key

On January 5, 2009, SOCGuard welcomed Danielle Strand as its new Program Manager, bringing the program to full strength with her exceptional accomplishments in higher education. Among those experiences is work that directly benefited military servicemembers at Bowie State University. Born and raised on Virginia's eastern shore, Danielle moved to northern Maryland to attend Bowie State, where she received her Bachelor of Science in Business Administration degree in 2002. Throughout her undergraduate years, Danielle remained employed at the university, as an administrative assistant, and then a staff assistant. As a staff assistant, she coordinated the Partial Assistantship Program, which involved direct contact with and support for military servicemembers, including ARNG Soldiers, attending Bowie State.

During graduate school at University of Maryland - University College (UMUC), Danielle remained employed at Bowie State, as Academic Support Coordinator for Science, Engineering and Mathematics



Danielle Strand  
SOCGuard's new Program Manager

(SEM) at the university. In this position, she evaluated and performed oversight over student advancement activities. She was also involved in evaluating academic development programs and educational activities that might be worthy of grant funding. While finishing her Master of Business Administration degree at UMUC in 2006, Danielle had advanced to Assistant Director of SEM at Bowie State, where she conducted research, evaluation and reports on several of the university's National Science Foundation and National Aeronautics and Space Administration grant projects. She would also serve as coordinator for UMUC's ADVANCE Program, which focuses on academic and career advancement for women in science, technology, engineering, mathematics (STEM) in research and education.

Over her years serving the higher education community, focusing specifically on STEM career advancement for underrepresented individuals, Danielle has authored or co-authored 18 articles on topics related to the field. She also received four awards for outstanding service to the programs and communities with which she worked between 2002 and 2005. SOCGuard is pleased and proud to have her on the team.

Published by Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges  
Written and edited by Daniel Riggle, SOCGuard Program Manager  
E-mail: [RiggleD@aascu.org](mailto:RiggleD@aascu.org)  
Phone: 202-478-4705

For the National Guard Bureau  
Education, Incentives and Employment Division  
111 S. George Mason Drive  
Arlington, VA 22204  
Phone: 703-601-7690