

Mr. Geurts' efforts in developing managers and executives throughout his career are an inherent effect of his leadership style. He has initiated and supported professional development and training of others in every position he has held in public service. Mr. Geurts' efforts in fostering an environment of learning, opportunity, and excellence to develop himself and others have manifested in his current initiatives with the United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) Special Operations Research, Development, and Acquisition Center (SORDAC) workforce. He single-handedly spearheaded quality of life, education, and training programs to shape the culture of the organization to create, define, and craft a cadre of "Special Operations Forces (SOF) Acquirer" professionals.

Mr. Geurts' creative and innovative approaches to incentivize and build proficiency have revitalized and motivated the USSOCOM acquisition workforce. He strategically identified that developing a unique ideology that distinguishes the SOF acquisition workforce from the Services acquisition workforce would shape the environment in order to turn opportunity into advantage. As a newly appointed Deputy in 2009, he swiftly set out to revamp the Headquarters (HQ) USSOCOM and SORDAC newcomers training to make it more focused and mission oriented and to ensure it instilled the SOF ethos for anyone serving in the HQ USSOCOM. Mr. Geurts provided the USSOCOM Chief of Staff and Vice President of Joint Special Operations University a vision for the course and outlined key facets to make it value added for both the HQ and the students. The first classes with the new curriculum will begin in May 2011 and will have a specific segment dedicated to SOF acquisition, a premier for the University.

Mr. Geurts also recognized the need and opportunity to create the "SORDAC University" as a means to stretch individual and team capabilities by fostering SORDAC as a self-sufficient, internal, learning organization and to support the development of "SOF Acquirers." He developed collaborative work tools to plan, schedule, and archive training materials, presentations, and other important documentation. Mr. Geurts personally conducted five classes, and he has been successful in motivating senior acquisition personnel to share their knowledge, expertise, and experiences to the SORDAC workforce. As a complement to the SORDAC University, Mr. Geurts has also implemented a Deputy Directors forum, with presentations, discussions, and exchanges with Warfighters from operational units, Program Executive Officers, and other USSOCOM leaders to help "SOF Acquirers" better learn the acquisition and operational environment in which they work. These programs have been recognized by USD AT&L, leading to USSOCOM receiving Defense Acquisition University Career Management Certification authority—a much needed flexibility to grow and manage its workforce.

Mr. Geurts' appreciation and commitment to developing managers and personnel under his purview does not end with the efforts he has accomplished in creating a learning environment. His efforts have also been extended to developing a premier awards program exclusively formulated to recognize the efforts of the SOF acquisition workforce, the "SOF Acquirers" Award Program. This program was distinctly designed to recognize and reward the workforce for the qualities, competencies, and successes that are novel to supporting the SOF community, creating esprit-de-corps and identification with the customer: the Special Operations Forces. Categories of awards such as "Acquisition Maverick," "Acquisition Enabler," and "Acquisition Adapter" were coined and tied to specific SOF core values—bringing purpose, shared vision, and pride in the dynamic and challenging work environment.

Mr. Geurts is not only concerned with the professional development of others, but is a strong advocate and leader on physical fitness. Mr. Geurts developed the "SORDAC PT Challenge," a program that advocates physical fitness and allows the SORDAC workforce to track their accomplishments, creating a healthy competition in individual and team sporting events.

Mr. Geurts' contribution to developing future military acquisition officers is unparalleled in the development of training/mentoring programs in which Air Force acquisition officers deploy to USSOCOM to gain experience and training in rapid acquisition and SOF acquisition processes. To date, 45 officers have graduated from this activity, growing their experience and leadership capabilities to better serve the Department of Defense (DoD). Mr. Geurts continues to maintain personal contact with all these officers in a community of practice that enables continued learning, sharing of ideas, and innovation even after they return to their home station. Many officers have directly credited this program for their inspiration to remain in the Air Force and for the wealth of ideas and experiences from which they continue to use well after their deployment has been completed.

Mr. Geurts served for more than three years as the senior Air Force military acquisition officer for USSOCOM, mentoring approximately 20 military acquisition officers in acquisition training and policy matters. Currently he is serving as a mentor for more than 30 military officers in addition to civilian acquisition personnel, providing career advice and training advice, as needed, and overseeing intermediate and senior developmental education progress.

Mr. Geurts' commitment to effective continuity of government through his successful development of managers and executives is also showcased in his role as a recognized expert and speaker at DoD and Industrial Association Conferences. He has spoken regularly at the Air Force Senior Leader Conferences for the past five years at the personal invitation of the Air Force Service Acquisition Executive, sharing successes, lessons learned, and his unique and engaging philosophy on how to drive the acquisition process to deliver solutions faster to the field. Mr. Geurts has also been a featured lecturer on acquisition leadership at the DoD's premiere senior executive program manager's course at the Defense Acquisition University, and he has been an invited speaker at the Senior Acquisition Course at the National Defense University several times. In addition, Mr. Geurts is a much sought-after speaker at defense industry companies, National Defense Industry Association Conferences and events, Precision Strike Association Conferences, Air Research Lab Conferences, and the Royal United Service Institute (United Kingdom) Conference.

Mr. Geurts' professional development of managers and executives does not stop there. He has authored and published two articles regarding leadership of large organizations and leading change in large, complex organizations ("The Special Challenges of Leading Geographically Dispersed Teams," *Defense AT&L*, Jun 2005, and co-author of "Joint STARS Undergoes People-Based Overhaul," *National Defense*, July/August 1995, respectively) sharing his knowledge, expertise and lessons learned.

While serving his country in the U.S. Air Force, Mr. Geurts developed and instituted the Program Executive Office for Fixed Wing (PEO-FW) University, a unique training and mentoring program that enabled the PEO-FW to become a self-learning organization. During this period, Mr. Geurts promoted three Air Force officers to Colonel, who all went on from USSOCOM to lead major acquisition programs for the Air Force (and one who has since been promoted to Senior Executive Service). Mr. Geurts also trained and mentored three civilians under his leadership who were promoted to GS-15, all who have now assumed major leadership roles in the HQ Air Force and in USSOCOM. Mr. Geurts promoted at least 10 acquisition officers to Lt Col/GS-14, three of which have been selected for or are serving in Squadron Commander level positions.

As the Commander of the 308th Armament Systems Group, Mr. Geurts provided comprehensive training and mentoring for the entire civilian and military workforce. During that tenure, he also served as Associate Dean of Acquisition for the Air Armament Academy, an award-winning program where he trained and mentored the Eglin Air Force Base acquisition workforce. This was an effort at the Air

Armament Center to foster self-teaching and support the commander's initiative to transform the Center into a self-learning organization. As Associate Dean, Mr. Geurts developed curriculum, oversaw course development, and monitored courses (about three per month), as well as taught classes on acquisition leadership. As one of the four deans in the Air Armament Academy, he served on the Air Armament Academy leadership team to help set the course for the Academy. The Academy has won several DoD and Air Force level awards.

Mr. Geurts has dedicated his career, both as active duty military and as a civilian, to serving his country and carrying out its ever-important mission. Over the years, he has made it his personal mission to develop and grow the careers of others around him, as evident in the numerous training and mentoring programs he has established. His unique style, high energy, and creative ideas build alliances and collaborative relationships within and across USSOCOM. Mr. Geurts is undoubtedly a trailblazer that is committed to fostering an atmosphere of open communication, personal and professional growth, and opportunity for others.