Air Defense Artillery is in a period of transformation and growth that is needed to effectively support U.S. military operations. The 2018 Air Defense Artillery Training Strategy laid the foundation to transform training and education to prepare air defenders to combat air and missile defense (AMD) threats. Over the last year, the ADA school focused on increasing the rigor and technical expertise in the Officer Education System (OES), Warrant Officer Education System (WOES) and Noncommissioned Officer Education System (NCOES). Additionally, the school maximized credentialing opportunities for air defenders to receive civilian certifications related to their military occupational specialty.

The ADA Captains Career Course (CCC) and Basic Officer Leaders Course (BOLC) are going through revisions to develop inspirational leaders who are analytical and logical thinkers, being both technically and tactically competent. These revisions will reinforce student knowledge of ADA core competencies: (1) Understand ADA capabilities and doctrine, (2) Synchronize AMD operations (across warfighting functions and joint/coalition AMD), (3) Conduct AMD mission command, (4) Execute AMD force operations, (5) and Execute AMD engagement operations.

The CCC and BOLC courses also continue to train with allied partners to strengthen our alliances and build partnership capacity. Highlighted by the first allied Patriot Top Gun Course graduating eight international students last October. This graduate-level program is a mirror image of the U.S. course that focuses on Ballistic Missile Defense planning and developing student expertise in air defense posture against aerial threats.

To increase the depth of knowledge of our Warrant Officer Corps, we have split the AMD Systems Tactician/Technician (140E) Military Occupation Specialty (MOS) into two separate tracks: 140K MOS AMD Systems Tactician and MOS 140L AMD Systems Technician. The last class of 140Es graduated in June 2018, and in December we graduated the first classes of 140K and 140L MOSs. The separation of the 140E MOS was necessary to develop a Warrant Officer that can provide precise technical advice to commanders.

In the 140A MOS Warrant Officer Advanced Course, the school added Information Control Officer training on joint networks. Students develop and brief a plan to integrate and employ Army weapons, sensors, and C2 systems into a joint operational network scenario. The plan development provides our Warrants an in-depth understanding of capability and limitations of those networked systems. Most importantly, this process gives our students a better knowledge of interoperability and how to connect our Army systems with the joint community.

For NCOES, the ADA school has been busy completing and incorporating technical classes back into the Senior Leader Course (SLC) and the Advanced Leaders Course (ALC), reinforcing the technical competency of our NCO Corps. Instead of having only two centralized classes for SLC and ALC the school now has 12 classes with each ADA MOS having an individual school code to attend NCOES.

To prepare our air defenders to transition from military service the ADA school recently signed a memorandum of agreement with Upper Iowa University to offer a Bachelor of Science Information Technology (IT) degree for Command and Control System Technicians (140A) Warrant Officers and Air Defense Enhanced Early Warning System Operators (14H).
The Bachelor of Science IT degree plan would award a new 14H just graduating from Advanced Individual Training (AIT) 14 semester hours towards the bachelor degree. The 14 semester hours is roughly one college semester and valued at $15,000. Similarly, a new 140A Warrant Officer Basic Course (WOBC) graduate would receive 40 semester hours.

14H AIT Soldiers from 30th Air Defense Artillery Brigade became the first class to take a civilian certification course on CompTIA IT Fundamentals at Fort Sill, Okla. The IT Fundamentals course teaches Soldiers basic concepts of computer security best practices while providing students with an understanding of the infrastructure of common operating systems and networks. In the coming months, 14G AIT students will also begin taking the CompTIA IT Fundamentals course.

140A Warrant Officers have similarly embraced credentialing opportunities including CompTIA A+, Network+, and Security+. The 140L Warrant Officers take certification classes on Basic Electronic AC/DC at Red River Technology Center, Duncan, Okla. With funding from TRADOC, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration provides Patriot Launching Station Enhanced Operator/Maintainer (14T) AIT students the opportunity to certify on Class VII Rough Terrain Forklift Trucks (over 1,075 14T AIT Soldiers certified to date).

To keep pace with evolving technology, and new learning methods, the school has introduced new training devices to increase the level of realism as well as the number of repetitions. The addition of new Stinger trainers places air defenders in a virtual and interactive three-dimensional world where they face numerous combat situations and are able to demonstrate their technical competence in a much more realistic setting.

In December 2018, the ADA school conducted a grand opening ceremony for the new Counter-Rocket Artillery Mortar (C-RAM) Classrooms and Virtual Maintenance Trainers. These trainers provide the same functionality as the actual C-RAM system without the risk of physically damaging equipment. Instructors can also program faults into the virtual systems and allow students the ability to practice preventive maintenance and troubleshooting procedures. Previously the school was limited to train on two C-RAM weapon systems, but with the new classroom and virtual technology, 36 virtual C-RAM trainers allow students to acquire experience before they conduct hands-on training on the real guns.

As threats continue to evolve we are resolute on what matters; building an Air and Missile Defense force of competent Soldiers and leaders, equipping the force with the right equipment at the right time, and strengthening our allied and coalition partnerships. With this focus, we will provide Soldiers and leaders ready to meet the challenges of the next century.