

# USAHEC supports force, preserves history through experiential learning

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April 18, 2012 -- The United States Army Heritage and Education Center maintains many invaluable resources for the United States Army—thousands of manuscript, photograph and audio visual collections, library holdings, oral histories and artifacts. Not only does USAHEC make its historical holdings available to the Army, but it also offers the vast subject matter expertise of its staff. The staff shares its knowledge of the history of the United States Army; the management of archival, photograph and audio visual collections; the creation, management and preservation of digital content; artifact and materiel culture identification; and conservation and preservation practices.

To support the force, USAHEC has engaged entities within the Army, Reserves and National Guard to share this expertise and provide training through experiential, group-based learning. This method of active, cooperative, hands-on learning has proven extremely effective and beneficial. In this environment, USAHEC staff assesses needs and builds training accordingly. Initial training sessions present foundational information through instruction that allows the trainees to put the subject matter into context. After the overview, the trainees are broken into small groups to discuss the principles outlined. They also apply the concepts by working with materials in the USAHEC collection.

USAHEC has provided training to TRADOC Command Historians, National Guard Archives and Museum Specialists, Active and Reserve Military History Detachment Personnel, and Soldiers attending the Special Forces Warrant Officers Tactical and Technical Course. As an example, the TRADOC Command Historians conducted annual training at USAHEC. USAHEC staff set up a multiday training and archives practicum. The historians learned about archival processing, photograph identification, digitizing collections, preservation and conservation of archival and photographic material, and proper collection housing. During the practicum, the historians were divided into groups to work on small manuscript collections with a USAHEC archives staff member. During this process, the staff was able address any questions. After returning to their installations, several historians put into practice the archival policies and procedures they learned by organizing their archives more efficiently and thus

making collections more accessible.

As USAHEC's role as a training center to support the Army evolves and grows, the organization looks forward to addressing the needs of the Army and providing assistance and solutions. By offering its resources and expertise, USAHEC stands ready to assist the Army with any challenges it may face.

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