



## CORPS TO STUDY OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN IN GROUND COMBAT JOBS



The Commandant of the Marine Corps recently announced that the Corps will conduct a comprehensive study of policies that restrict women from permanent assignment to ground combat units or ground combat military occupational skills. "I have directed that measured and responsible research be conducted to provide me with the information and data necessary to make an informed and educated recommendation on potential policy changes," stated Gen. James F. Amos in an All Marine (ALMAR) Message signed April 23. The research study includes an exception to policy that will allow the assignment of female junior officers and staff noncommissioned officers into select ground combat element units, such as artillery and tanks, at the battalion level, in several occupational specialties already open to female Marines. The study will also include quantitative

research into ground combat element physical performance standards and training, as well as a total force survey.

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## NEWS

### BACK FROM AFGHANISTAN, TOOLAN DISCUSSES PROGRESS IN HELMAND

After a one-year tour commanding coalition forces in Afghanistan's Helmand province, Maj. Gen. John Toolan spent a week sharing his experiences and perspective with policy research groups, news media and members of Congress in Washington, D.C. and New York. The former commander of NATO's Regional Command Southwest said the Afghan national security forces have made tremendous progress, but still require U.S. aid, instruction and capabilities. "From a military perspective, we have taken it pretty far. But we need to start handing it off to the law enforcement professionals," said Toolan.



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Read more on Maj Gen. Toolan's visit to DC:

[The Post-2014 View from Helmand](#)

[Watch: Maj. Gen. Toolan: Southwest Afghanistan "Most Kinetic"](#)

[Watch Video on the Progress in Helmand Province](#)

### MARINES PROTECT AFGHAN GIRL, OFFER HOPE

Bruised, ill and with nowhere else to turn, one Afghan girl went to Camp Leatherneck in January 2011 seeking protection. Her name was Malika, and her brothers had beaten her after accusing her of having a romantic relationship with a young man



who was already betrothed to another woman. In southern Afghanistan, that amounts to a death sentence. In despair over the situation, she had apparently ingested rat poison or insecticide before she arrived at the Marine forward operating base. But the Marines would not let Malika's brothers kill her, or let her kill herself. "We saw someone in real need of help. We couldn't turn her away," said Maj. Jennifer Larsen. "This was one life we could affect in a positive way, and we did."

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## EXPERIMENTAL FORWARD OPERATING BASE TO HOST INDUSTRY DEMONSTRATION AT LEJEUNE



The Marine Corps' Experimental Forward Operating Base (ExFOB) process is designed to identify and evaluate commercial technologies that can increase the self-sufficiency of expeditionary forces. ExFOB will host invited vendors to demonstrate their technologies at Camp Lejeune, N.C., April 30-May 4. The demonstration will evaluate wearable electric power conversion and distribution systems, and man-portable water purification systems for individuals and

small units in expeditionary environments. "We know that resource efficiency aids in combat effectiveness, and that our investments in reset and modernization will provide a force that operates lighter, faster and at reduced risk," said Gen. James F. Amos, Commandant of the Marine Corps. "Likewise, our force will be more energy efficient to support the type of operations expected of us in the future. To do this, we are changing the way we think about and use energy."

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[Also Visit: Marine Corps Expeditionary Energy Office](#)

## 24TH MEU HONORS FALLEN MARINES WHILE AT SEA





Marine Cpl. Derek Kerns and Cpl. Robby Reyes were honored by Marines and Sailors from the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) and Iwo Jima Amphibious Ready Group during a memorial ceremony aboard the USS Iwo Jima April 18. Kerns and Reyes died April 11 when the MV-22 Osprey they were traveling in crashed during Exercise African Lion 2012 in Morocco. Their fellow crew chiefs shared stories about the Marines during the ceremony. Toward the end of the event, Sgt.

Maj. Ricky Jackson, the senior enlisted Marine for Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 261 (Reinforced), conducted a ceremonial roll call, during which silence fell when Kerns' and Reyes' names were called. The playing of taps and a three-shot-volley rifle salute concluded the memorial service. "Today we honor them through words; tomorrow we honor them through actions," said Col. Frank Donovan, commanding officer of the 24th MEU.

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## 1ST RADIO BATTALION CHAPLAIN UP FOR MILITARY FATHERHOOD AWARD

Navy Lt. Dennis Kelly, the chaplain of 1st Radio Battalion and 1st Intelligence Battalion, is one of three finalists for the Military Fatherhood Award. The award, sponsored by the National Fatherhood Initiative (NFI), recognizes a military dad who displays an ongoing commitment and dedication to his children, makes extraordinary efforts to father from a distance or while deployed, successfully balances military and family life and mentors military families. Kelly is the father of five, including twins. In addition to his day job, his duties include being a youth sports coach, a Sunday school teacher, a Tiger Cub den leader and chauffeur to his children. "It's a special privilege that we have to be fathers. I consider that God has entrusted this task to me and has uniquely qualified me to do it," Kelly said. The winner of the Military Fatherhood Award



will be decided by popular vote on NFI's Facebook page. Voters must 'Like' the NFI page to vote and can vote every day until May 20.

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[Vote for Lt. Dennis Kelly](#)

## COMBAT ASSAULT BATTALION SUPPORTS BOY SCOUT CAMPING TRIP IN OKINAWA

More than 150 Boy Scouts and staff members with the Boy Scouts of America's Far East Council attended a weeklong camping trip in Okinawa, Japan, April 8-14 thanks to Combat Assault Battalion (CAB). The CAB Marines provided clean water for drinking and showering, as well as tents, air conditioning and refrigeration units.

"Back in the states, the Boy Scouts of America are able to use resident camps that are already set up with everything we need," said Renny S. McDermott, camp program director for the Far East Council. "Here in Okinawa, we just do not have that luxury." This is the first time the CAB Marines have supported civilians, putting into practice their training for humanitarian missions and disaster relief. "Being able to have an exercise where we are providing water to civilians has really helped us see and experience what it might be like when we respond to a crisis," said Lance Cpl. Dustin P. Turner, a water support technician.



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## TRANSITION

### VETS HEALTH CARE EXEMPT FROM BUDGET CUTS



The Office of Management and Budget announced April 23 that veterans' health care programs under the Department of Veterans Affairs will not be subject to budget cuts as a result of sequestration. The



Budget Control Act of 2011, which included sequestration as a mechanism for cutting federal programs if a deficit spending agreement wasn't reached, specifically exempted veterans' benefits but had no clear statement about what would happen to veterans' medical care expenses. Sequestration is looming because Congress and the White House failed to reach an agreement on a 10-year, \$1.2 trillion deficit reduction plan.

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## HEROES

### CORPS RECOGNIZES EOD WARRANT OFFICER FOR VALOR IN COMBAT

Warrant Officer Kelly Minkler was awarded the Bronze Star Medal with Combat Distinguishing Device 'V' for valor for averting injury to his Marines Sept. 3, 2010, while on patrol in Helmand province, Afghanistan. Minkler, an explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) section leader at the time, rendered safe a command-pull improvised explosive device (IED) that consisted of an anti-disturbance switch and a 35-pound directional fragmentation charge -- a tactic that had never before been seen. "I used the components after the device was safe to train other EOD technicians and infantrymen on this new, lethal threat to help preserve the lives of my fellow Marines," said Minkler, who is deployed again to Afghanistan with 1st EOD Company, 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward), as the company operations officer.

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