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ARMY ORAL HISTORIES

INTERVIEW WITH COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR SHERYL D. LYON

Fort Belvoir, Maryland

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COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR SHERYL D. LYON

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## I N T E R V I E W

SGM WATERHOUSE: Good morning. My name is Sergeant Major Brett Waterhouse of the United States Army Heritage and Education Center, and today I'm interviewing Command Sergeant Major Sheryl D. Lyon for the Senior Non-Commissioned Officer Oral History Program.

Today's date is April 24th, 2018, and this interview is being conducted at Fort Belvoir, Maryland.

Sergeant Major, can you please tell me your date of birth and where you were born?

CSM LYON: I was born September 22nd, 1964, in Tompkinsville, Kentucky.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And would you please talk a little bit about your childhood, to include your family life, places you lived, your hobbies, interests growing up, through your high school time.

CSM LYON: So I'm the youngest of seven, raised in the country in a small dairy farm owned by my mom and dad. So a lot of family time, lot of farm time, lot of outdoors time. Hobbies including reading, running, a little bit of horseback riding, different

things. So we were a pretty tight-knit family growing up.

And as time has progressed though, my dad is one of 11, while mom is one of six. So when you think of the extended family, we were huge on the one side. Very close back in our younger days but like many, as time has progressed and people have moved away from the home front, the family has downsized just a little bit. Many have passed on. But I still have property in Kentucky, so.

It was a great childhood, I loved growing up in the rural environment. But it also contributed to who I am today, I think. So.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Sergeant Major, when you were growing up, you know, some people say "I'm going to be fireman," or I'm going to be, or like me I thought I was going to be a Blue Angels pilot until they told me my vision was messed up. When you were growing up, what did you think you were going to be or what you would do for a career?

CSM LYON: So when I was growing up what I thought was a doctor. And so one of the things that I

didn't mention about my dad was is that my dad was a Baptist minister. So in that respect he served the community. So what I figured out later on was that had a great impact on me and being able to serve and to serve others. And so now that I look back, I think that influenced my decisions about what I was going to do when I grew up.

So as a young, pre-teen, early teen years, I wanted to be a doctor. But then later on that changed as I worked and put myself through college, the importance of different things varied, things that I wanted to emphasize and things like that.

So like I said, I worked my own way through college, paid for my college tuition. So I was a young parent as well. I had the support of my family, but they helped me out when it came to babysitters and things like that. So my daughter and I were a pretty inseparable tag team back then.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Sergeant Major, you joined the Army in 1991. You were 26 at the time, and you had recently earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Castilian Spanish from the University of Western Kentucky. Did

you get a degree in Spanish in anticipation of, at that point, you know a lot of us change our majors but I guess the first question is what led to that major, and then what were you looking to do once you graduated with that particular degree?

CSM LYON: So I took Spanish in high school. I had an affinity for it, I truly enjoyed it. When I decided that was going to be my major in college, the intent was that I would be able to work independently as well as possibly teach high school Spanish. So I wanted to be, I was going to be a teacher, that was the plan, but also do, you know, translation work, medical or any type of, you know, any type of work that needed to be done for translation. So that would be a supplemental income, or possibly working for a company.

The timing just worked out that when I was done, when I actually had my degree, I still had my professional semester of secondary education, which is basically student teaching, to do, when the recruiter came knocking on the door.

So I realized, many in my family are teachers. Being from rural Kentucky, you know, you're either a

farmer or a teacher or in the medical field. So I decided I did not want to be a teacher, not just yet anyway. I didn't know if I had the patience for it.

So when they came knocking on my door and gave me a look at some of the opportunities that could be afforded to me, I was like "That's what I want to do."

SGM WATERHOUSE: So this was just a cold call, they just happened to show up?

CSM LYON: It was a cold call. Well they had a tendency to go to the University to recruit.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So you'd see them there.

CSM LYON: I had seen them there, and so many of those that I came in for, one of the male soldiers that I came in with at the same time, he was going to, because he had majored in biology and physics, chemistry, he was going to go work at NASA.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Oh, cool.

CSM LYON: So I thought that's the coolest thing I've ever heard of. So my minor is in biology, so had I probably had a major or something in biology maybe I could have done it that way too. But mine was in Spanish. At the time, it was 1991, which would have

right after Desert Shield/ Desert Storm, so they were looking for linguists. And because of my background that's what they were looking for me for.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: Was to try to recruit me into the language field.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And you felt that was something, with my degrees then I could use this now.

CSM LYON: Yeah. So I have an affinity for languages, I love languages, linguistics. So I was like "Yeah, I can do that." And so then it became more of a "Yeah, I'd really like to serve my country as well."

So when I came in I have a degree in Spanish, and they gave me the opportunity, the choice. They're like "Do you want to continue to pursue Spanish, or would you like to learn a different language?"

SGM WATERHOUSE: Oh, so they give you an option?

CSM LYON: They did give me the option. So I had scored high enough on my ASVAB that they're like okay. So my TT score was high enough and the DLAB was high enough.



SGM WATERHOUSE: DLAB was just, that's the test, for people that don't know that are reading this later, just kind of sensed your ability or your propensity to learn --

CSM LYON: Your propensity to learn languages.

SGM WATERHOUSE: -- a language or languages.

CSM LYON: Right. So I scored high enough on that that they gave me the option. They're like "What about Arabic?" Of course right after that they were putting as many people through Arabic as they could.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Right after Desert Storm, yeah.

CSM LYON: But Russian was also an option. They didn't give me Chinese. I don't think I was good enough or smart enough for Chinese, so they left that one off to the side. Those Asian languages we didn't go with. They're like "Oh, yeah, you would be a good candidate for Arabic." So that's how I wound up in Arabic language training at DLI, the Defense Language Institute.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Sergeant Major, did you, when the Army talked to you about this, did you query or talk

to the other Armed Services at all?

CSM LYON: I didn't. And I don't have a good answer as to why not. I think it has to do with the fact that, you know, you watch TV, you see movies. And honestly, when I was a kid watching the movies, the war movies, it was usually the Army that you saw. Maybe the Marines, but usually the Army.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM LYON: So Rocky, the 3ID mascot, was already a hero of mine. And it took me a little while to put two and two together that --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Rocky the Bulldog.

CSM LYON: -- Rocky the Bulldog was actually the 3ID mascot. So I already had an affinity for him. But, yeah. So it just appealed to me to be able to serve my country through the Army. And I think to me, at the time, they presented options that were best suited for me.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Now when you joined, how long did you sign up for initially, and expectations, you know, we all join the Army with certain expectations, whether it was "Hey, they can help pay back college

loans," or "I can get money for school," or "Hey, I just want to go to Europe," or. What were your expectations of the Army when you joined?

CSM LYON: So when I joined, I enlisted for four years, was promised loan repayment, which I had to work a while to get that one. And so that was one of them because I already had a degree, I went with loan repayment.

But also when I came in I had three goals, you know. As being looked at for a linguist, you know, promise of travel and things like that. So I had three goals when I came in. One was to learn another language, two was to travel around the world, and three was to work in covert operations. So I was able to accomplish all of those. So that's when my daughter looked at me and says "Well, it's time to make new goals." But those are three of the things that I looked at, that I was interested in, and the Army was able to provide me with those opportunities. So I was like "Okay."

SGM WATERHOUSE: So when you signed up they basically guaranteed you, well you come in as a

Specialist E-4 because you had a Bachelor's degree.

CSM LYON: Uh-huh.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And then in your contract I assume you were guaranteed the MOS training, or Military Occupational Specialty, of 98 Charlie, Signal Intelligence Analyst, or was that decided later?

CSM LYON: That was decided later. Actually I came in as a 98 X-ray, which meant that I could go in any of those fields.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: And they did that in the event that you weren't proficient at the language, they didn't have to lock you in to being a 98 Golf, what was a 98 Golf at the time.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Kind of like what they do used to do with Infantry too. You're an 11 X-ray and then you might become mechanized, you might become a mortar man or whatever.

CSM LYON: Right, exactly.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay. So, Sergeant Major, in March of '91 you attended basic combat training, or BCT, at Fort Jackson, South Carolina. What was your

experience like there? That's an open end question for an eight or nine week event, but.

CSM LYON: I think I would call it humbling. To me, basic training provided you the opportunity to take a real look at yourself and your capabilities and what you as an individual bring to the fight. And at the time you might not realize that it's the fight. So it caused you to come out of your comfort zone, caused you to challenge yourself. Or, if you didn't want to challenge yourself, it puts you back, relegated you to the back of the pack. So I was fortunate when I came in, or maybe unfortunate, I didn't really think about it at the time. There were what, 68 in my company. Of those, four, were going to DLI, to the Defense Language --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Sixty-eight total people?

CSM LYON: Yes. So four of those were going to the Defense Language Institute; and everybody else in that Basic Training Company was going to the Medical Corps. So we were --

SGM WATERHOUSE: The Medical Corps.

CSM LYON: We were an interesting group.

Every one --

SGM WATERHOUSE: How did that come about?

CSM LYON: They had a major push I guess.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So they changed their -- basically they signed up for one thing and they were told they're going to be doing a different MOS?

CSM LYON: No, they knew they were going to be medical.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Oh, they did? Okay.

CSM LYON: It just happened it turned out that there were four of us going in one direction and all the rest of them were going to the medical command.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So was this an all female unit you were in?

CSM LYON: It was.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Or was it coed?

CSM LYON: It was all female.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: It was all female but the cadre were mixed. So I had --

CSM LYON: But it wasn't just 98 X-rays, it was whatever the MOS number was back then?

CSM LYON: No. The others --

SGM WATERHOUSE: 68 Whiskey now.

CSM LYON: 68 Whiskeys were the rest of them.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: Or different fields, they were all different medical fields.

SGM WATERHOUSE: That's interesting.

CSM LYON: Uh-huh. I was a little surprised by it at the time but, yeah, that's what it turned out to be. So that was a whole different mindset of expectations.

So if you think about those, so the one basic training classmate of mine was going into Chinese, one was going into Russian, and one, I think, was going into Spanish, and then I was going into Arabic. And we so we had to take the tests, of course, while we were at basic training that was going to place us in our different languages. And that's the DLAB that I mentioned earlier. So it was the one that gave us our rating as for our propensity to learn the languages, and from that they determined this is the language that you are going to learn, or you can learn.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Right.

CSM LYON: So sometimes they gave you the options. But, yeah, it's a humbling experience. It really puts you in touch with what you are capable of and puts you out of your comfort zone. And you either strive to do well or you just go along with the flow of the pack. So I found it highly beneficial because it did make me go out of my comfort zone. And it did show me what my capabilities were so I found it very beneficial to me.

SGM WATERHOUSE: I was reading your career history, correct me, I think you served as the Platoon Guide, or did you. I'm sorry, that was a question. Did you, as a Specialty 4, I'm sure you are probably one of the only few Specialists, right, going through your basic training company. Was there any kind of leadership position just like they have in Advanced Individual Training that kind of gave you as a senior ranking person or were you just kind of lumped in with everybody else in basic training? I mean were you given any additional responsibilities because you had a higher rank?



CSM LYON: No. And I think that was part of -  
- there were a number of Specialists in that basic  
training.

SGM WATERHOUSE: There were? Okay.

CSM LYON: There really were. So, no,  
actually they didn't. I didn't have that opportunity in  
basic training to be in a leadership position, which I  
thought was kind of good. And, you know, they rotated  
it among all of us at different levels. And I think  
that challenged me because I wanted those positions. So  
it was good for me. But, no.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Because it was probably your  
other three linguist folks, probably all Specialists  
too, right?

CSM LYON: They were. And there were many in  
the medical field who were also Specialists because they  
were coming in with --

SGM WATERHOUSE: That's unique as well, I mean  
that's not --

CSM LYON: We were actually a very unique  
basic training course because there were a number of us  
that were Specialists. So that didn't mean anything to

us, you know, being a Specialist, we were all treated the same, we weren't given any leadership positions. As I said, they spread them out among everybody so that, and they challenged different ones.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, after graduating from basic combat training you attended the Defense Language Institute, or DLI, like you talked about earlier. And that was in Monterey, California. And you attended and graduated from the basic Arabic language course there.

When did you find out you were actually awarded that, was that in basic training that you, yes, you were definitely going to study Arabic?

CSM LYON: Yes. So after we did the DLAB, then we found out which one we were going go to. They did ask me when I got there because there were so many people, soldiers, who were being slotted to go into the Arabic, there was a wait. So you could either chose to go to another language, which some of my counterparts did, they chose to go to Russian. They had a class starting as soon as we walked into DLI. But I told them no, or Spanish. I said no, I wanted to learn a

different language; I didn't want to go back into Spanish.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Something you already knew.

CSM LYON: And so that's how they gave me the option of whether I wanted to learn a different language or whether I wanted to do Arabic or Russian. And I told them that I wanted to learn Arabic. So I had to wait three to four weeks before the actual class started because that was just the rotation at the time. So that gave me some time to learn a little bit more about how the Army worked and how it runs.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Did you work for like a Company First Sergeant or what were your duties, I guess?

CSM LYON: Most of our duties back then was, you know, keeping the grounds up.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Cutting grass?

CSM LYON: Cutting grass.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Mopping floors?

CSM LYON: Mopping floors.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Something they just trained you well to do in basic training?

CSM LYON: Absolutely. Probably too well. We

did a lot of, I'll call it team building. We did a lot of physical activities. At that time Fort Ord was still open so we would go over to Fort Ord and do training, different types of training, be it an obstacle course, you know.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So you had a separate set of cadres, it was like a holding company or whatever they call it, while you were waiting?

CSM LYON: In essence it kind of was. So they had the Alpha, Bravo, Charlie, Delta Companies, and those were each different language sets. So mine happened to be the Arabic one. And so there were those who were in the course who were getting close to being finished, and then there were the rest of us who were waiting for the others to come on board so that we could start the next course.

So there was a little bit of interaction going on between us just so that we could learn some more about what the expectations were, you know, what the requirements were, what it was going to be like learning a new language. So we did quite a bit of that. But, yeah, we did a lot of grass cutting and grounds keeping

and barracks maintenance and things like that so.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Now my next question is kind of, you know, by talking to people who have actually been through there, you know, you just left a place where you had Drill Sergeants with you 24/7, somebody's always there. Now you're in like a college level environment, which you'd already been through. So can you explain kind of like your experience there, and then we'll get to AIT after this. But, you know, is that what you expected when you got there, was this college like atmosphere where how much Army was in it, so to speak, you know, compared to, you know, you just left basic training and now you're, you know, talking to other people who have been doing this, now I'm in college again, kind of thing.

CSM LYON: Yeah. So fortunately for me, and I can't speak for others, there were those who were younger it was a little bit harder on because, you know, for some it was their first time away from home. My roommate at the time, it was her first time away from her family and everything. And she was like 19 years old, so she wasn't very old. So it was rough on her.

For me, I was older, is one of my advantages I think is because I was more mature, had life experiences, was a mom, it provided me with a level of maturity that I was okay with that environment. But it was also eye opening.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Did it meet your expectations or what you thought it was going to be?

CSM LYON: It wasn't as strict as basic training. It wasn't necessarily college life because they did try to keep us busy, you know, because of other soldiers. If you don't keep us busy we're going to find things to keep us busy. So it was trying to keep us out of trouble. But, yeah, it was still a military environment, just a little bit more liberal.

Of course then you had all the instructors on the facility. While they didn't live there, they were there virtually all the time and you interacted with them on a regular basis.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Did you live in like a dorm room?

CSM LYON: I did initially. And then my family came to join me so I moved out into the economy.

Again, a lot of responsibility placed upon you. There were a lot of married couples. My upstairs neighbors were in my course, or actually in the course ahead of me. And so a lot of different perspectives and opportunities. My next door neighbors were from Russia. My upstairs neighbors were military, so it was kind of interesting, the environment that I lived in. But it was good. It wasn't so stringent that I couldn't adjust and adapt. You know, you would have the occasional somebody had to stand out in front of the First Sergeant's window in the a.m. because they couldn't make it to formation on time. So we still had rules and regulations.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So you had like normal formations, accountability formations and all that?

CSM LYON: Accountability formations, PT, you know, ranges on a regular basis, that was a lot of what we did while we were waiting for the course to start. It was military training.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, looking back, I think you were there 18 months or so total. What do you think was the most difficult part of your

experience there, and how did you get through it?

CSM LYON: So I am what I call a hands-on learner. And what I mean by that is I learn much better in an environment. So learning Arabic for me was a challenge. It was a whole new alphabet, you know, whole new language. The cultural propensities of the Middle Eastern peoples and having to learn that, I found that to all be -- I found that at the time to be some of my greatest challenges. Actually learning the language, because it was not easy. And so when I say that I'm a hands-on learner, if you dump me into the environment, be it a Spanish language emersion or an Arabic language emersion, I do much, much better. Having to go through the books over and over and over again, eight hours a day, or more, you know. And I was like ah. So having the focus to do that in the classroom environment for those, back then it was 53 weeks, was my greatest challenge I think.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And were you able to get -- I don't know if you'd have time to do additional like if you knew somebody that spoke Arabic fluently that you could team up with them to do extra training, or was



there any time allowed for that?

CSM LYON: So we did cultural events. We had those who were in classes ahead of us who would do study halls. But we also had the military language instructors who were there to help us, one, to learn the military verbiage as well as give us more immersion into the language itself. So those military language instructors were supposed to help us learn the language as we would be using it in a military environment. So they helped also. So you learned the normal language but then you also had to go in and learn the military.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Into the job you're going to be doing, yeah.

CSM LYON: Which was one of the things that we found to be the hardest, that we sometimes always didn't do the best job at. Because they would teach us Arabic but then we would go in and we would try to use it in the environment and we would have none of that vocabulary originally because we weren't studying military stuff, we were studying just the language itself.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Even within our own military

different jobs they have their own languages, their own

--

CSM LYON: So that's why we had to have the military language instructors. They were one of the best things I think that they added. At least while I was out there. Of course that's been a long time ago.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, after graduating from the Defense Language Institute, or DLI, you attended Advanced Individual Training, or AIT, at Goodfellow Air Force Base in San Angelo, Texas where you were awarded the Military Occupational Specialty, or MOS of 98 Charlie or 98C, Signal Intelligence Analyst. An MOS later coded today as a 35 November, or 35N.

So you went to basic training, I think you said 53 weeks or so at the Defense Language Institute, and now you're back with Drill Sergeants, right? So can you talk a little bit about your experience at AIT?

CSM LYON: Yeah. So you hit that one on the head, the nail on the head with that one. So you go through basic training and you have Drill Instructors with you virtually 24 and 7. And my Drill Instructors, by the way, were fantastic. And I still remember them

to this day. And then you go to Defense Language Institute which is still military but much more relaxed environment. And then you go back to AIT with Drill Instructors.

SGM WATERHOUSE: After a year.

CSM LYON: 24/7, and you're back on phase, you know, you can't do this, you can't do that.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Phases you said. Like phases of basic training?

CSM LYON: Phases of basic training. So you had to get to Charlie phase before you have your weekends free and you can go do whatever you want to. So you're back in that environment and that mindset. So it was a little bit different and I think it was a bigger adjustment the second time around than it was the first time around. And the reason why I say that is because for 98 Charlies, now 35 Novembers, you're not required to have a language. So you had many of them who were coming in straight from basic training. And there were not many who came with me from DLI to go through the 35 November [training]. Many of my battle buddies were going through the 35 Papa, or at the time

98 Golfs, the actual linguists.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: So they were on the other side of the campus with us at AIT there in San Angelo, Texas. So it was a re-emersion back into the basic military structure of Drill Sergeants. But they were good people, they had our best intentions and they took really good care of us and trained us really, really well. And pushed us too. I was fortunate to have some very good Drill Instructors at AIT.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Now were you or any of your classmates in AIT given any kind of leadership positions to try to -- normally, like I mean I was in Armor School and they made the Platoon Guide because I was an "old guy." I mean did they do that to some of you, some of you guys and gals?

CSM LYON: They did.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Was this co-ed or all female?

CSM LYON: No, it was co-ed.

SGM WATERHOUSE: It was co-ed.

CSM LYON: It was coed and we were mixed within the hall, which was the norm from DLI, but not

basic training.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Right.

CSM LYON: So basic training was all females.

SGM WATERHOUSE: You allow you to live in the same hallway or --

CSM LYON: We lived in the same hallways.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Just like a college.

CSM LYON: Just like a college. And it was the same at the AIT also. We were coed within the barracks themselves. So it was a good learning environment. But, yes, they did, they gave us leadership positions, they pushed us. Because of my age, level of maturity, I think I did get some positions there, or they even had higher expectations of me because I was older, to help set the example and things like that.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Right. That's just natural for a Drill Sergeant to do that. So, Sergeant Major, looking back at AIT, any, I don't want to use the word "lessons learned," it's a catchall phrase, lessons learned or any key take-aways from that experience, before we go into your first unit, that may have stuck

with you to this day, I guess, that you --

CSM LYON: So I did an AIT, I did my AIT at San Angelo, Texas but then I went on to an additional AIT in Fort Huachuca, Arizona, which was the Electronic Warfare Signals Intelligence Course. Which added two, but between the two of those what I took away from both of those was that if you push yourself and you strive to be the best that you can, the Army will come back and compensate you for that, in essence.

The reason why I say that is while I was at the Advanced AIT, the additional AIT in Fort Huachuca; I was very good at PT. I enjoyed PT, loved it. So my Drill Sergeant there, or Platoon Leader there, came to me and says "Hey, why don't you go to Airborne School?" I was like "Okay." They're like "It'll be great for you, it will be great for your career, and it'll be." And so that's not something that they always let everybody do. But they came to me and said "Hey, you should really do this." I said "Okay. I'm good with that, let's do that." But it was because of my performance --

SGM WATERHOUSE: At Huachuca during the

training.

CSM LYON: -- at Huachuca and at San Angelo both, Commandant's List for both, or Distinguished Honor Grad for both. So I truly enjoyed what I was doing. And that's when it started clicking in my head that the Army will give to you what you give to it two-fold if you put in the effort and the time.

So when they said "Hey, go to Airborne School" it was an opportunity because of my performance. Otherwise not everybody was getting that opportunity. Those slots were not given out for free to just anybody. And so their justification for it was because of my performance in those other courses. And they said "Hey, this would be a great opportunity, she'll do a great job." I was physically fit, they knew I would pass the course and I wouldn't fail out of it.

So when I graduated from my AIT at Fort Huachuca, the additional one, they had put me on assignment instructions for Fort Hood.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Texas. Okay.

CSM LYON: Fort Hood, Texas. A lot of Arabic language students went there after they finished AIT.

But they got me into Airborne School. And when that slot for Airborne School came through, they dropped my orders to Fort Hood and I was on orders to Fort Bragg immediately. I hadn't even finished the course yet. Much faster than I had been on orders for anything that I had seen.

So it kind of put a young, new soldier into kind of a dilemma because as it turned so fast, I didn't have a sponsor at Fort Bragg. So my Platoon Sergeant from DLI was an E-7 at the time, one of the few Military Intelligence actual Green Berets.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Sergeant First Class?

CSM LYON: He was a friend of mine and I called him and said "I am Airborne School and I am coming your way, can you help me out?" So he helped me out because otherwise I wouldn't have turned around a sponsor fast enough to figure out --

SGM WATERHOUSE: And your stuff, your house and having your daughter, those plans were all going to Fort Hood, right, you had set up all that?

CSM LYON: Yeah, they diverted them, they got to them fast enough. It slowed them down and delayed



them, but I mean my daughter, because of the AIT and the travel, remember I went back to Drill Sergeants, right?

SGM WATERHOUSE: Right.

CSM LYON: So my daughter went to live with her dad.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: So that's how we handled that because they highly advised because of the hours and the time.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And being in Airborne School there's no way, right?

CSM LYON: Yeah, exactly. So she went and lived back at home in Kentucky with my family and her dad's family while I did that stint. So.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So for Airborne School, you know, like you said, it's not everybody gets to go there. And then your combat arms soldiers typically get more slots and, you know, when you get to your first unit. You didn't get to go as part of an enlistment contract or something, it's tough to get there, little less go through it.

But going through the school, you know, I

think it's a three-week course even back then?

CSM LYON: Right.

SGM WATERHOUSE: What are some of your take-aways or lessons learned from that course, besides you get to run a lot?

CSM LYON: Resiliency. So I am afraid of heights, or was. So I laugh nowadays, I'm like, you know, my first 10 jumps were all night jumps.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Really?

CSM LYON: I close my eyes, you know, what you're not supposed to do.

SGM WATERHOUSE: There's only one, right.

CSM LYON: Yeah, right. No, not for me. So the physical aspect of Airborne School for me at the time wasn't, it was a challenge but it wasn't the challenge that was going to defeat me. You know, a lot of it was attention to detail, paying attention to what you were doing, making sure that you were doing right by your battle buddy to your right and to your left. One of the things that I took away from it though was some soldiers drive within themselves to prove whatever. And what I mean by that is one of my battle buddies, you

know, you get a lot of injuries when you're going through Airborne School. It's just the nature of the beast.

I had one of my battle buddies who had actually either sprained or fractured a bone in his ankle. So they had given him plenty of Motrin. But that last run that you do to make sure that everybody's good before you start jumping out of the planes. He made it through the run, and as he was getting to the end and they said "Okay, done, time," he fell to the one side. And they told him he had fallen out of the run and they dropped him from the course.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Even though he crossed the finish line?

CSM LYON: They dropped him from the course technically because his ankle was fractured. But, and they said he should never have been in it. And so hopefully, I think at the end of the day they were willing to let him come back just for jump week.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Just for that final week.

CSM LYON: Yeah. But in the meantime they were giving him all sorts of hell that, you know, he

wasn't going to be able to do it, you know, he didn't make the run. But the fact of the matter is he did. And you know that he had to have been in pain --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Oh, yeah.

CSM LYON: -- that whole five-mile run that we did there on the last one before jump week. And to me that was just the tenacity that your battle buddies to your right and your left have to prove to themselves and to the rest of the Army what they're capable of. And so to me that's a love of Army, that's serving your country. So I was always glad to be around people like that because they motivate you to do the absolute best that you can.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, after earning your Airborne Wings there at Fort Benning you were assigned to Fort Bragg, North Carolina, like you said, where you served with the 319th Military Intelligence, or MI Battalion, 525th MI Brigade for about three and a half years. So in unclassified terms, what was the primary mission of the 319th MI?

CSM LYON: So the 319th MI served as the ACE for the 18th Airborne Corps.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Can you explain what ACE is?

CSM LYON: The Analysis and Control Element for Intel. So they drove the Intel machine for 18th Airborne Corps. Now 18th Airborne Corps owns the ACE outright and it is actually part of them, where back in my time, going through the 319th, we were an element that worked those and provided that support to the 18th Airborne Corps, but now they belong to 18th Airborne Corps.

SGM WATERHOUSE: It was like a Corps level asset, as we would say.

CSM LYON: Exactly what we were. And I worked in the TK, which is the Tactical Control and Analysis element as part of the ACE, providing the Signals Intelligence side of the Intel.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So during your three plus years there you served as Electronic Warfare Signal Analyst -- or Intelligence Analyst, and as a Senior Signal Intelligence Analyst.

So for those that are not that background are reading this later, so you did the Linguist School, you did the Electronic Warfare portion. So how does that

tie into this now your first unit? I mean is the language part of this or is this strictly Electronic Warfare type of work you're doing?

CSM LYON: So I was a 98 Charlie, now a 35 November, we are not tied to a language. Again, I was given that opportunity and I was blessed with that to be able to do that and have that opportunity. But it's not required of my MOS, my job skill. So as an EW Signal Analyst at Fort Bragg, I was doing more of the Electronic Warfare side of the house. My language was not a requirement.

So while we did have linguists there, they were more focused on South Com Spanish language type environment. So in that respect I was able to contribute as well, although I didn't have to because --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Because you knew the language.

CSM LYON: -- it depended upon the mission, basically.

SGM WATERHOUSE: I mean did you get any opportunities to use Arabic while you were there, or you just had to kind of keep your skills up on your own?

CSM LYON: So back when I came in, the importance of maintaining a language skill was not always recognized as it is today. The amount of time, effort, and money that we invest in linguists, it's critical to allow them or enable them to be able to continue to practice or train on their language skills. So, and remember, I said I was one of those who I'm much better with hands on --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Right.

CSM LYON: -- training environment.

SGM WATERHOUSE: You get there, it's like "Why am I here? Why am I here when I should be going somewhere where I can use this language skill?"

CSM LYON: Well Fort Hood would have allowed me that opportunity to use my language.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Did you ask your NCOs when you got there, "Hey, can I get to Fort Hood?" Or once you realized that "Hey, I'm not using Arabic here."

CSM LYON: Well remember that my language, my MOS is not tied to my language.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Right. But still you went through DLI.

CSM LYON: Right. So what came from my first three years, three and a half years there is that we had to provide the opportunity for soldiers who had the language capability to at least train. And it was so many hours a week. And so that transformed while I was at Fort Bragg.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: So that was a good thing. Which means that all these major installations had to have the capacity or the capability to provide language training for the linguists who came in.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Now was that computer based back then or what did that entail?

CSM LYON: I don't know. We had some, but most of it was we had a language lab, as we call them. So we had to have instructors there.

SGM WATERHOUSE: That spoke the language.

CSM LYON: That spoke the language. Which is an expensive endeavor.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM LYON: That's why at first it was kind of

--



SGM WATERHOUSE: Got to be more expensive than the computer based.

CSM LYON: It is.

SGM WATERHOUSE: But it gave you an opportunity to talk to a live person and interact.

CSM LYON: It did. And work on the skills and maintain them.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Which is different than doing some online course.

CSM LYON: Exactly. Yeah.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, in that first job there with the 319th, you know, you've been through school and you've been through AIT, but it's still your first unit so you're a new soldier in the Army still. And now in your first job as Signal Intelligence Analyst. Who did you look to for guidance, assistance, you know, trying to learn this Army way of doing things and/or your job, who did you look to?

CSM LYON: I had a Sergeant First Class House. I'll always remember him. And a Staff Sergeant Centerfield, who later became Warrant Officer Centerfield, who were great leaders. Everything was an

opportunity to learn, to train. We had the opportunity -- so in that environment back then Desert Shield/Desert Storm was done, we were still doing the over flights.

SGM WATERHOUSE: That was the no fly zone?

CSM LYON: In the no fly zones. So I had a lot of opportunities there. We spent three to four weeks at a time out in the field, at least two weeks beforehand, two weeks after, you know, preparing and then recovering. And so that was a constant rotation. We were constantly training in the environment that we were going to be or thought we would be working in. So in that respect it was a great learning environment. Plus I had great NCOs who took the time to coach, teach, and mentor. And they did an absolutely great, fantastic job at it. So they understood and they were very, very good at their jobs and they were able to share that information with us. So it was -- I was very, very fortunate that I wound up in an organization like that where they could teach and prepare us, whatever the case might be.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Sergeant Major, you said the 319th MI Battalion it worked with the 18th Airborne

Corps. Were you tied in with the 82nd Airborne at all, or was it just --

CSM LYON: Only through the 18th Airborne Corps. So the mission was that we were supporting 18th Airborne, or 82nd Airborne Division in something that they were doing.

SGM WATERHOUSE: You still answered right to the Corps?

CSM LYON: We still answered to the Corps. Because remember, the 82nd has their own MI assets. So if they needed to be augmented or supplemented we could do that. Or we could provide the bigger picture that you would at the Corps level, the strategic level of that.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And so your first unit your organization's a strategic level unit, which is, for most military occupations, that is not something a young Specialist gets involved in, but in your field that is the case, was it not?

CSM LYON: Yeah. It was kind of unique because many of my battle buddies they went to someplace like NSA, National Security Agency, and worked for their

first assignment. Which is truly a strategic level --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM LYON: -- organization.

SGM WATERHOUSE: You probably did some operational level stuff too, obviously, but --

CSM LYON: Oh, absolutely. Absolutely.

SGM WATERHOUSE: But not the tactical company, you know, platoon level stuff that most young soldiers in other MOSes like --

CSM LYON: Oh, yeah, we did.

SGM WATERHOUSE: But I'm saying that's not all you did.

CSM LYON: No. Yeah, we had some, because we were supporting a Corps, we had kind of the best of both worlds. Don't confuse me with a national level organization, we weren't. But if we needed to reach out to say "Hey, this is what we need, request for information."

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM LYON: So we could easily do those. And, you know, I was reaching right out to my battle buddies to say "Hey, I need to know this, can you help me out

with this?"

SGM WATERHOUSE: But as a young soldier you were exposed to the bigger Army.

CSM LYON: I was. And that's unusual.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So as a soldier like me, as a tanker, I didn't even think about any of that until I really had to think about this point.

CSM LYON: Yeah.

SGM WATERHOUSE: I mean certain jobs you didn't even have to worry about the strategic or how that -- I mean you might do some actions that could affect strategic stuff. You know, strategic mistake or whatever, you say the wrong thing on camera or whatever. But you were working in that realm right off the bat. I mean that must have been exciting.

CSM LYON: It was.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Any particular challenges involved in that?

CSM LYON: Learning how to do it?

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM LYON: So, you know, I think what we have found over time and one of the things that we have

worked very, very hard to ensure is that when you come out of basic training and your Advanced Individual Training, is that you're able to do your job. Whether that be, for me, in my career field, whether it be as a linguist or as an Intel Analyst. Being able to put what you're taught in the schoolhouse to practice. And that's why I said it was very good for me because I had some very good NCOs who could put that out in layman's terms and teach me, or add on to the knowledge that I already had from my AIT, and say this is how it actually works in the real world. So they were able to do that for us. And I think they -- I'm not sure that everybody always had that opportunity to put two and two together and be provided an environment where they could add on to what they had already learned in their AIT. So.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, in July of '94, about a year into your tenure there as an EW, or Electronic Warfare Signal Intelligence Analyst, you were promoted to Sergeant E-5. Did your basic duties and responsibilities change once you pinned on the Sergeant stripes after that first year?

CSM LYON: They did. So one of the

interesting things about that timeframe that influenced my career, although at the time I might not have truly recognized it, was they offered the Selective Retirement Incentive. Because they needed to downsize after Desert Shield/Desert Storm, they needed to downsize just a little bit. And so when they offered that up, they expected to have some 2,000 or so Intelligence professionals --

SGM WATERHOUSE: This is to retire early, or to retire at a lower --

CSM LYON: To retire early.

SGM WATERHOUSE: To retire early. Okay.

CSM LYON: So they expected to have some 2,000 raise their right hand and say "I want to do that."

SGM WATERHOUSE: That was what, get out at 15 years, or was it earlier than that?

CSM LYON: Fifteen years. It was either 15 or 18, I'm pretty sure it was 15. And so they --

SGM WATERHOUSE: You were still fulfilling your first enlistment, right?

CSM LYON: They had twice the amount. So in a way it was a good thing. So remember, I had great

mentors and coaches who taught me how to be a good leader. So as an E-5 I became automatically a Team Leader, and I had three soldiers that I was responsible for. So, yes, my responsibilities changed.

And then within very quickly I was boarded and promoted, yeah, to Staff Sergeant. And part of that was due to a couple things. One was my level of maturity. I was older, I was worldly wise, so to speak, I had already proven myself as a Team Sergeant, so that was good. And then, oh, by the way, we needed some because the Army lost a lot of Intel professionals to early retirement. So my Squad Leader, he looked at me and he says "You got two options. You can either go to BNCOC or you can go to Air Assault Training." Those were my two choices because they were both at the same time, because at the time Fort Bragg was offering the course there at Fort Bragg.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: And he looked at me, and he also said "I would go to BNCOC if I were you."

SGM WATERHOUSE: Which is Basic Non-Commissioned Officer course, which was required of Staff



Sergeants, right, or people trained you how to be a Staff Sergeant in the field.

CSM LYON: Yes. So naturally I want to BNCOC. And then I got promoted shortly after that because my points, I was already at points and so --

SGM WATERHOUSE: So this first unit you went from Specialist to Staff Sergeant?

CSM LYON: I did. I did.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So as a new Sergeant, were you then in charge of some of the same soldiers you were just peers with?

CSM LYON: We had had a significant turnover.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: So, no, they switched me over. While we were kind of still in the same environment, many of those soldiers PCS'd and so I had the new ones that were coming in.

SGM WATERHOUSE: That's hard.

CSM LYON: It is.

SGM WATERHOUSE: That's the hardest transition for soldiers typically is going from a Specialist to a Corporal or Specialist to a Sergeant, and now you're

still in the same unit and now these people who were your friends, you can't be their friends, you're their leader.

CSM LYON: Right.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So you didn't have to do that too much.

CSM LYON: I didn't because we worked it so that I didn't have any of those soldiers that were my team members that I was previously friends with. So while there were some who were still within the TK, the building that I worked in, I was not directly responsible for them. So it worked out well.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, once you were promoted to Sergeant and then Staff Sergeant, were the same NCOs you looked to for guidance and everything, or did you have new mentors once you changed positions to the Senior Intelligence Analyst?

CSM LYON: I did.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Or Senior Signal Intelligence.

CSM LYON: I expanded those just a little bit. So the Technical Control and Analysis Element was

separate from the Analysis and Control Element, the main body of our organization. So we were in two separate buildings. So I had the ability to go to them, the NCOs within that organization, to ask questions, to seek guidance.

And one of the things that I have to say about me is I'm not afraid to ask questions. So if I don't know something, I'm going to ask.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Right.

CSM LYON: Which I think has always been one of my -- if I have a strong point, that's it. I'm not afraid to ask questions. The other thing that I had within the TK itself, my organization, my sub-unit, was that I had some great Warrant Officers also at that point that I started turning to because they're our technical experts and they were able to give me even better, even more, sometimes better guidance as far as leadership, especially where it pertains to being in a tactical environment and leading soldiers. And getting the most out of our assets, you know, our soldiers, which are our greatest assets, and making them viable within the organization.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, in that final year you served as a Senior Signal Intelligence Analyst, and I assume that's as a Staff Sergeant. In layman's terms, unclassified terms, how were your duties different there than they were in the ACE, or what was your daily duties, I guess?

CSM LYON: So the mission of the Tactical Control and Analysis Element didn't change, they just, for me personally, they evolved to that leadership position.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: So, you know, during that time Haiti was an issue and we responded to that. And there were some other capabilities there at Fort Bragg that I was a part of, that I worked with while my other battle buddies were on some of the ships that were off the coast of Haiti, working.

So again, I had some great Warrant Officers because we split the force at that time, who took us over and taught us even more, different elements of our job. Morse Code Operator, for instance, I got to learn that. You know, that's like --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Are we still using it?

That's probably what I would have thought.

CSM LYON: Yes, they were, as a matter of fact.

SGM WATERHOUSE: It's a little old.

CSM LYON: Well, you know, push comes to shove and it's amazing the things that become new again, that come full circle. Analog, for instance, nowadays, tankers. So we'll go into this later, but it was one of the most fascinating things that I have seen recently is watching our tankers use flags again for signaling because we expect that our communications are going to be the first thing that goes.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Did you ever read a map and use a compass, all that's basic.

CSM LYON: Exactly. Exactly. So it's amazing I had to learn all of that all over again.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, you mentioned you went to the Basic Non-Commissioner Officer Course while you there. Did you go to the Primary Leadership Development Course as well?

CSM LYON: I did.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay. Can you talk about those two courses and kind of your take-aways from those two courses?

CSM LYON: So the Primary Leadership Development Course, or the Basic Leader Course, as we call it now, I found to be a lot of fun and very enlightening. And the reason why I say that is because it was all MOSes.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And this was at Bragg?

CSM LYON: It was at Bragg. So Bragg is a tough environment for the Primary Leadership Development Course, or PLDC. So it was -- you could make or break your own. Because, you know, back then there were no cell phones.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Was this a 30-day course when you went?

CSM LYON: It was a 30-day course when I went. There were no breaks except for that weekend before, the one weekend before and then the very weekend before your graduation ceremony, and you had to be back at a certain time. So I think that I learned quite a bit from that about working with the other Forces and using that to

create an advantage because we were all working together.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So working with men and women from different jobs in the Army that you have never the opportunity before.

CSM LYON: Different jobs, different elements, exactly. Exactly.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And what about the BNCOC?

CSM LYON: BNCOC back then for us was six months long.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And where was this?

CSM LYON: It was at Fort Huachuca.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Fort Huachuca.

CSM LYON: So the MI domain moved out to Fort Huachuca.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Arizona.

CSM LYON: Arizona. About the time that I did the additional AIT for Electronic Warfare.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: So in that year, '93, they had just started moving the transitions the year before, so they were still in transition when I did that. So BNCOC was,

it was like being back in college, so to speak.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Really?

CSM LYON: The rigors of the course were predominately academic. PT, you know, Fort Huachuca is at altitude.

SGM WATERHOUSE: A high altitude.

CSM LYON: Yeah. If you're not prepared, we're just 500 feet under the cap for acclimatization time. So if you're not physically fit when you go out there it becomes a challenge because you are at altitude. So being academically stimulated in that environment, I enjoy it, I mean I excel at it, or I did. Same thing with the PLDC.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So you actually learned some new stuff at BNCOC?

CSM LYON: I think so. And the greatest challenge back then for BNCOC and then eventually ANCOC, was how to apply those things when you came back to your organization. Personally, I think we do a much better job of it now in making it relevant to what you're doing in your career field.

So you probably remember that when I was at



Fort Bragg is when they did away with the SQTs.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Skill Qualification Tests for your different MOSs, yeah.

CSM LYON: And so some of our sister services, well at least two, we all of our sister services still use their version of the SQTs.

SGM WATERHOUSE: They read written exams to prove that you still know what you're doing.

CSM LYON: Exactly.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah, we got rid of them in the 90s.

CSM LYON: We did. I can remember that, I can remember when it was announced. Because I was preparing for mine and there it came up on the net and they're like no more SQTs. So I think using ANCOC and BNGOC or vice versa, to help determine what soldiers needed to be trained on in the different, was really important because that's what you were using at the time to help prepare them for the next level.

So, you know, when I went through PLDC we learned how to counsel soldiers, how to write DA6s and things like that. Still a little bit of drill and

ceremony, how to inspect uniforms. And I found all of that beneficial. I also take good notes so.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Now did you get to go to PLDC before you pinned on the Sergeant, or where you took charge of troops, or was it after?

CSM LYON: So back then you had to complete PLDC before you could pin. And so, yes, I pinned before I could take soldiers. But I pinned the day of graduation.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: Which happened to be on the first of July.

SGM WATERHOUSE: When you graduated then you got "Here's your soldiers," so that kind of worked out.

CSM LYON: Exactly.

SGM WATERHOUSE: It doesn't always work out that way for some guys and gals being in the position, at least before now in the STEP program. You're in a Sergeant position before you actually have stripes. It's a little harder for those guys and gals sometimes.

CSM LYON: Yeah. Well, you know, like I said, all things become new again so STEP, back then when we

went through, unless you had a very good reason for an exception to policy --

SGM WATERHOUSE: You had to go to school first.

CSM LYON: -- you had to go to school first.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And STEP means Select, Train, Educate, Promote. So today's Army you have to be selected to become a Sergeant, you have to be educated at the school, then you have to train, and then they pin you.

CSM LYON: Yes.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, before we go to your second unit. So looking back at that like three and a half years at the 319th Military Intelligence Battalion, what are some of your key take-aways or lessons learned, stuff that you can still remember today that affected the way you lead or affected the way you look at things?

CSM LYON: So one of the things that I take away that affected me the most was the caring and the time that my NCOs put into soldier development. And I took that with me. Also resiliency. So as a young

soldier on Fort Bragg, being an Airborne Trooper, we spent a lot of time on the tarmacs, waiting for a jump. But, you know, there's nothing like -- and I didn't realize it at the time until I left and then I was able to figure it out, was that regardless of how you think about it, when you're throwing yourself out of an airplane there's always the potential that it could turn out badly. And while you try not to think about that while you're on jump status, it's one of the things that draws you together as an organization, is sharing that danger every time you get on a plane with your peers and your battle buddies.

And I think one of the reasons, one of the first times, two instances that really brought it home to me was the crash of '95, where the planes collided on Green Ramp at Fort Bragg. And there were a number of casualties and a number that was hospitalized.

I was supposed to be on that jump but I was in a field environment and they wouldn't release me. So I had plenty of friends who were in the hospital at the time. So it makes you think about what could happen. It was a freak accident, nobody could have ever have

guessed that that would have been the cause, but it was.

And then another time was I was sitting on the tarmac, waiting. And, you know, you chat because you're there for hours, talking to the -- it was a Master Sergeant who was in behind me. He was behind me in the chock. So we'd been talking, talking, talking, you know. After a while you get tired of talking, so then start talking again. And I asked him a question and he didn't respond. And I turned around to look at him, to talk to him, to say "Hey, you all right?" And he was deathly pale, just white. And so what we had talked about previously was the fact that it was his 100th jump. It was his last jump.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And now he was feeling it.

CSM LYON: And he was about to retire and go on about his life with his family. And he finally looked at me, and he says "I don't think I can do this." He says "I don't think I can do this." And I was like "Wow." And so I called over the Jump Masters and I said "Hey, you all need to talk to him." Because that's all we needed was somebody -- jump refusal, okay, but anything could happen in that situation.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM LYON: So they came over and they talked to him and they were checking him out, you know, he was pale, he was, you know, shaking. And they pulled him off the jump.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Did they?

CSM LYON: So it was just --

SGM WATERHOUSE: He would be the one checking your chute, too.

CSM LYON: Exactly. Or behind me running across my chute. Or getting tangled up in my static lines because, you know, he's just not --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Not thinking clearly.

CSM LYON: Whatever happened? But, yeah, those are situations that make you think about what you're doing and bring the reality of it home to you about sometimes the responsibility, as a soldier, or as a paratrooper, and what that means to you and the rest of your organization.

SGM WATERHOUSE: You could have ignored that and that could have turned out to be bad.

CSM LYON: Yeah. I could have ignored it and,

yeah on all sorts of different levels. But, yeah, they pulled him. But it was one of those things to me, you know, watch out for your battle buddy. You take care of each other because in the end you have each other. So for me that was one of those, you know, it wasn't in combat, but it was one of those environments where you shared danger of the mission that you were doing. And it just makes you appreciate your battle buddies to your right and your left. And to me that's what it's all about. So.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Sergeant Major, in March of 1997 you were assigned to Bad Aibling, Germany where you served with the 718th Military Intelligence Group for a little over two years. So what led to this assignment, how did you get there?

CSM LYON: So oddly enough, you know, Branch Managers do what Branch Managers do. And I had been in Fort Bragg for three and a half years and it was time for me to leave. And so the Branch Manager gave me a call and says "Would you be interested in Germany?" He's like "You've been there long enough, you deserve a good assignment, a fun assignment, not quite so

tactical." And I said "Sure." So that is how I wound up in Bad Aibling, Germany.

SGM WATERHOUSE: That's pretty good, well you were a Staff Sergeant by then. Okay.

CSM LYON: I was a Staff Sergeant by then. And I had a really good tour at Fort Bragg, and so worked really, really hard, and the Branch Manager did, he says "Are you interested in going to Germany?"

SGM WATERHOUSE: You had a good Branch Manager.

CSM LYON: I did.

SGM WATERHOUSE: A lot of people would just get put in orders and then you call and like "Hey, what's going on?"

CSM LYON: I did. And so he took care of me at the time. So I went to 718th MI Group in Bad Aibling, a little known place down on the very southern border of Germany with Austria.

SGM WATERHOUSE: In Bavaria?

CSM LYON: It was in Bavaria, great place to be. Close to Chiemsee, close to Garching and Everdell. Close to Munich.



SGM WATERHOUSE: Down by the Alps.

CSM LYON: Down by the Alps. Like I could sit on my balcony on my government housing and look out over the Austrian Alps, and enjoy my cup of coffee in the morning, and it was just fantastic. So it was a great assignment.

The mission was good, very, very good. It morphed a lot while I was there. And of course it was a national level assets for INSCOM. It was an INSCOM Unit. So it has since been closed down and gone back to the German government.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And by this time the Soviet Union had gone away and --

CSM LYON: While I was down.

SGM WATERHOUSE: -- we were in a drawdown. I mean did that effect your unit at all, the drawdown?

CSM LYON: Not at the time. So --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Matter of fact '97 was one of the worst years.

CSM LYON: Yeah.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Skimpy years when there was no fuel and --

CSM LYON: It was.

SGM WATERHOUSE: -- there was a lot of you can't crank your vehicles.

CSM LYON: Lot of things were coming out of pocket. And so also what was going on at that time was the Bosnia/ Herzegovina era.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Started in '95, yeah.

CSM LYON: So that was going on hard and heavy. And there were a lot of soldiers that were moving to that front from Bad Aibling. So they would come into Bad Aibling. So in that respect, no, we weren't downsizing. We were actually going pretty strong.

But the installation itself had already been determined that it would close.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So you knew that when you got there.

CSM LYON: I knew that when I got there, and it was supposed to close in 2000. And it took it until 2010 to actually shut the place down.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Well after you left.

CSM LYON: Well after I left. And so it was

one of those viable missions that was really, really important to strategic intelligence and it took a lot longer to close it down than was expected.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, I understand that you served in two different duty positions while you were there, Senior Signals Intelligence Analyst and Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge or NCOIC of the Tactical Support Activity Analysis Center. That's a mouthful. Can you talk about those two positions, or is it one with two different jobs?

CSM LYON: No, it was actually two. So the one as the Senior Intel Analyst was under the, what we call the Watch Desk. So that is a 24/7 operation that we continue to this day. You provide oversight and over watch to the community. And that was the mission that we had. So it was a normal mission, Intel driven.

There were some very good experiences with that. One of the things that Bad Aibling had that was astounding was the research and development that they could do and was capable of at the time. So that was really rewarding to watch that and watch it morph and

develop, even with the transition of troops. So there were some assets that left Germany while I was there, but others continued to provide the oversight.

But then the Tactical Support element was in response to the need of those individuals who were working in that arena of Europe and all things covered by them, which was Bosnia/Herzegovina, anyplace where there were NEOs. So in that respect our biggest customer was 10th Special Forces Group. So I did a lot of work with them, bringing them in, demonstrating to them what our capabilities were and what we could provide to them, especially as they were doing whatever operation it was that they needed to commence.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Can we go back real quickly to NEO. Can you explain what that was? The Non-Combatant Evacuation, or are you talking about something else?

CSM LYON: Yeah, it is. I was sitting there I was drawing a blank on a NEO. You know, we don't talk about that very much anymore.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So contingencies if something happened we had to evacuate our family members.

CSM LYON: Any type of contingency operation that could be going on, to include the NEOs.

SGM WATERHOUSE: I think that's what it was, Non-Combative Evacuation something.

CSM LYON: Non-Essential is what it was.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Non-Essential Evacuation Operation, or something like that.

CSM LYON: And so, yeah. So things like that. And whatever part of the world it was in. So it wasn't necessarily Germany in particular because I don't think that we felt that we had any threat of that really, especially not during my time there. But there were other countries in other parts of the world.

SGM WATERHOUSE: You guys helped with them.

CSM LYON: And we would help them provide that information that they needed to be able to conduct a NEO and get the non-combatants out of country. And there were a couple of those that went on. But that's one of those that you never know when it's going to happen. And so you don't want to find out what you don't know at the time that you need to be doing or conducting a NEO. And then of course we supplied Intel to them for other

operations that they were conducting in different parts, so.

I developed some very good relationships from that. In fact some of them would follow me into my next assignments, just at random, and not even knowing that that was going to be the case or that it would happen. And so that was the first time I realized how important those networking capabilities and skills were to success. And it's also one of those opportunities where I was given the opportunity to brief the General Clarks of the world and to explain to him what that tactical support activity element was able to do and provide to the Forces general. So it was one that we stood up. So any time you stand up in an organization like that or an enclave, you have to be able to promote the capabilities to have buy in, or otherwise you might as well not be in existence.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Right. Now as that NCOIC position, was that a Master Sergeant position that you were in? You were a Staff Sergeant at the time, I want to say according to your records it was a Master Sergeant Major position. Maybe you didn't know that

back then.

CSM LYON: Yeah, to be honest with you I probably didn't know it.

SGM WATERHOUSE: You're a two pegger to retirement.

CSM LYON: I probably didn't know back then.

SGM WATERHOUSE: I mean that's what it says on your records. But if you didn't know it, maybe it's a good thing.

CSM LYON: Yeah. As the NCOSEs, are most of those organizations they typically are.

SGM WATERHOUSE: I would think so, if you're briefing like Wesley Clark.

CSM LYON: Yeah. I always remember that because I think he was the first General that I ever did a one-on-one briefing with. And, you know, in the MI world that's not unusual to brief Generals. So.

SGM WATERHOUSE: You'd been six years?

CSM LYON: I'd already been in, well, five years, six years, coming up on six years.

SGM WATERHOUSE: That's pretty good.

CSM LYON: Yeah. So we have like young

Specialists who do it on a regular basis. I brag that as a Military Intelligence Soldier we had some of the best briefers in the world because we start them at a very early age. But, yes. So I was working in the E-8 billet for that. And because at the time we were standing it up, you know, you have to develop those and you have to work the TDA or the Intel for it. So we were having to do proof of concept, basically.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And so if you're building a unit and you realize, "Yeah, this needs to be a Master Sergeant. I'm doing it right now but my follow on, you know, successor, probably needs to be getting paid a little more." Or who we work with needs a few more stripes or whatever to -- not necessarily, you know, but to create these units and then we realizes that after we create them it's like "Yeah, we need a little more power, maybe a little higher officer in this place, a little higher NCO."

CSM LYON: Yeah. So myself and -- yeah, we saw the need and we had the support from the 718th at the time, we had their support in developing this entity there. And so the person who I worked with in



developing this was a CW too. So we were under the auspices of a CW3 and we didn't have, I guess, the First Sergeant of the organization was helping to guide that at the time. But for the most part, you know, we had seen the need, as we normally do in the Army. Saw a way to fill it and fulfill it, and so we drove from there to create the position and the activity.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So the ones that you can mention, maybe not technical, what kind of challenges, you know, setting up a new unit obviously there's major challenges. Any ones that you'd like to highlight that you guys kind of overcame. In setting up any unit there's challenges, but this one's overseas and I'm sure there's -- anything you'd like to highlight on kind of what you and your team did?

CSM LYON: Well I think one of the biggest things that you can highlight with that is the fact that I was working with, networking directly with E-8s who were well established, very experienced in their field. And, you know, you got this young E-6 who's trying to tell them, you know, "This is what I can bring to your table."

SGM WATERHOUSE: Right.

CSM LYON: Fortunately, for me it was the SOT-  
As so they understood and they were responsive and they  
knew that we could fill --

SGM WATERHOUSE: The Special Forces, yeah.

CSM LYON: Right. The 10th Group. That we  
could fill the requirement that they had as far as the  
information and things like that goes. So I think that  
was one of the greatest things that we overcame was  
being so young and doing a standup of it. You know,  
you're talking to CW2 and an E-6. Buy in from all the  
critical players was important in knowing how to  
leverage that. You have this need, I can fill it by  
doing this. And having them listen and be responsive to  
what you're telling them. That was one of the biggest  
challenges and I think we overcame it very well. So.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And you were there a little  
over two years with that unit. One, I'd like to get  
kind of your take-aways from your time there, you know,  
leadership wise, or lessons learned. And then was it  
always going to be a two year? Because typically they  
are two or three year tours.

CSM LYON: No, it was supposed to be a three year. So one of the things I take away from it, the organization there was a joint environment. So we were 718th in my group but the whole environment that supported the Bad Aibling Station was joint. So I learned how to work with my joint partners and battle buddies, peers.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Different cultures.

CSM LYON: Learned how to write an Air Force report on an Airman.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So you had Airmen under you?

CSM LYON: I did, I did. So that's when I first learned the joint environment, writing reports, reporting to, you know, the battle buddies by, you know, I would swap off with an Air Force Tech Sergeant or Chief. And I always found that particularly interesting because I worked. This is before cyber was popular, or even thought about. I worked with one of these 500 pound Tech Sergeant's frame, Tech Sergeant's from the Air Force, who saw some discrepancies and anomalies in a report and was able to figure out from it that somebody was trying to hack our systems.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Wow. That's an E-6 in the Air Force.

CSM LYON: And that's just him just manually going through and looking and saying "This doesn't look right."

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM LYON: And so back in those days you could get cash awards for doing something like that. So that young man got \$10,000 out of that.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Wow.

CSM LYON: Yeah. They don't do that nowadays like they did. And that's why I said it was also --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Time for a new BMW or something.

CSM LYON: Right.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Mercedes.

CSM LYON: Yeah. So they did a lot of research and development in the incentives back then. If you developed something really, really great or really, really good or great, was that you could get a cash bonus for that as well. So he had written a script that found that, those anomalies, so he got the \$10,000

cash bonus.

But it was not unusual for anybody within that organization to not develop a new program or system or we would call it an app today, but before apps were popular.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM LYON: That worked or created or answered a need, and they would get \$10,000 at a pop. Man. Well, to have, one, the brain power to do that, but two, to have the capability nowadays. We just don't do it as often as we used to. It used to be very, very common.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, in February of 1999 you were promoted to Sergeant First Class E-7, and in May of 1999 you were assigned to Washington, DC where you served with the United States Army Office of Military Support, or US, I don't know how you pronounce the acronym, USAMOS, for the next seven plus years in several different duty positions, obviously, over that time.

For a tanker like me, a combat arms guys, I have no idea what the Army of Office of Military Support is. It's very non-descript title. Could you explain

that to people who read this, because, you know, some people might not be in the military, but most people in the military probably don't know what that is either.

CSM LYON: So in the Military Intelligence world, and other worlds, it's not just Military Intelligence, there are individuals who come to recruit for certain organizations. United States Office of Military Support is one of those organizations. They are a national level asset that works directly for the Department of Defense. So they are a joint environment. According to them they recruit some of the best of the best. And so you have to be assessed into the organization.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So it's a competitive assignment?

CSM LYON: Well you're invited to compete.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: So they don't let --

SGM WATERHOUSE: You can't submit your own application or you had to be chosen?

CSM LYON: Well you can, and they'll take a look at you, but if you don't meet the initial

requirements, they're going to say no. So they'll do recruiting, they can do recruiting trips and say "We would like to bring you into our organizations." They're going to have you fill out some paperwork and they're going to take a look at it and they're going to see certain things that they're looking for on that paperwork and they're going to say "Okay, you meet all these requirements. Now I need you to do this paperwork." And then it starts into the real process of being assessed into the organization.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: Not everybody gets invited to play. But I will tell you that there's a lot of training once you're accepted into the organization or assessed into the organization, there's a lot of training that is conducted, bring you up to speed to be able to conduct the missions that they need you to conduct.

So there are different attributes that they look for and that they would require that you possess. And so being a Senior --

SGM WATERHOUSE: And it's not a unit, it's training in the real world, it's not a unit that trains

you to go deport somewhere else, they have their own mission.

CSM LYON: They give you some initial training, but it is their training that they provide for you and then they put you in different places in the world to work, like I said, national level missions for them, and direct.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, the first seven months or so there you served as an Electronic Warfare Signals Intelligence Analyst, which is your military occupation specialty, obviously. Then you served as a Traffic Analyst for two years. What led you to switch duty positions in a relatively short time?

CSM LYON: The requirements of the job, basically. It is driven by the needs of the clients, per se, what is it that they're looking for, where do we need manpower. All of us received the same training regardless if we're male or female, and all of us can be interchanged with each other. Some have different specialties. One could be language skills capabilities, others different backgrounds that they've come from. And so when you're assessed in they're looking for those



different contributions that you can make to the organization as a whole.

So I found it to be one of the most satisfying missions that I've ever conducted because, you know, at Fort Bragg, as a young soldier, I did a lot of training, a lot of training. I spent a lot of time in the motor pool. Even in Bad Aibling, I could see effects of missions that we were conducting, especially with the Tactical Support Elements.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Effects on the Tactical Support Units.

CSM LYON: Right. And then when I went to this one it was actually direct effects of the things that we brought to the table. So be it Intel or any other number of things, it was something that contributed to the mission and you could see a direct effect and result achieved. So that's always --

SGM WATERHOUSE: So you knew what you were doing --

CSM LYON: Yeah.

SGM WATERHOUSE: -- it was value added.

CSM LYON: Yes.

SGM WATERHOUSE: It mattered.

CSM LYON: There were unique positions, opportunities that I got to participate in that I would never have gotten to have done in the regular Army.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So speaking of positions, a Traffic Analyst, I know we're not talking about cars and so Intel traffic, I mean --

CSM LYON: Signals Intelligence.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay. Similar to what -- and according to your records again, this was another E-8 position. Now you're Sergeant First Class but you're in another Master Sergeant position. Is it just because they needed you in that position, you filled it, or was that a "Hey, you've been doing some great things so we're going to put you in this higher level position?"

CSM LYON: This organization has a tendency, or at the time, has the tendency to go after very mature, responsible, proficient, efficient leaders, just because of the way they operate. And many times you'll find that they operate as very, very small teams. Sometimes its onesies and twosies, sometimes upwards of 10, 15, maybe 20. But for this --

SGM WATERHOUSE: You may not have the actual rank that you're looking for but you can have the person --

CSM LYON: So one thing that they strive for is that you are self-sufficient regardless because you never know when you're going to find yourself in that situation where you're the only one someplace trying to conduct the mission. And you don't have a team to depend on. So you're -

SGM WATERHOUSE: Or battle buddies with you.

CSM LYON: No battle buddies, so it's up to your own thoughts and capabilities in what you can do. So they have a tendency to recruit very senior individuals, or did at the time. And so the positions were required, a Master Sergeant, but they also knew if you were capable, that they could put you in those positions to.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, those first couple of years there, who did you look to for advice. I know you said a lot of times you're by yourself, but was there somebody that you, in that organization, a new organization, and now you ended up

probably being other folks' mentors or stuff. But when you first arrived who did you look to for assistance?

CSM LYON: Well so that's one of the good things about the organization is that sometimes when they assess people in they'll stay for a long time, they have lots of experience, they're very good at what they do, they're some of the best in the business. And you can't ask for anybody better than that to learn from. And so that was part of being on the team is that they would take you in and they would teach you, you know, once you did your initial training you got OJT from the rest of the team so that you either fit in and got to be, hopefully, as good as they were. And so that's one of the things that you can take away from that team is that they were definitely all about the teamwork, the possibilities that they provided to folks to excel. They had to have self-starters and go-getters because there was nobody taking you along to get you to accomplish the mission. They would train you, but when it came time to execute, everybody had to contribute their fair share.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So I would think the

challenge was you got to be on top of your game because you're going to be the only Army of one.

CSM LYON: Could be.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Bad pun there, but sometimes you were the Army of one, right? I mean I'm going to rely on your own --

CSM LYON: Yeah. And you also worked in an environment where you had, again, you had to promote your environment, your capabilities and you had to have buy-in. Sometimes it was difficult to convey to what you could bring to the actual table and with all the entities that you could be interacting with. And I know that's getting very, very vague, but I'm going to get to a point where I --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM LYON: So you never wanted anyone that you were going to have to work with or for to question your capabilities.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So you had to earn trust.

CSM LYON: You had to earn trust. And if you lost that trust you were probably never ever going to get it back. And so if you lost trust you lost it not

only for yourself but also as an organization because --

SGM WATERHOUSE: To the customer.

CSM LYON: To the customer you were done. So it would be hard to get buy-in back from another organization that had brought you on to provide a service and you weren't able to deliver.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, in the year 2000, during your tenure there as a Traffic Analyst, you attended the Advanced Non-Commissioned Officer Course, or ANCOC. Was this at Huachuca again?

CSM LYON: It was.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And how was your experience there? Was this another long one, long course?

CSM LYON: I think this was only four months long, if I remember correctly. Some of my battle buddies went with me.

SGM WATERHOUSE: From your unit?

CSM LYON: From my unit, which was good. Because sometimes it's hard to explain where you worked at, at this point.

SGM WATERHOUSE: I can't tell you where I worked.

CSM LYON: I can't tell you where worked at or I'd have to kill you. And that joke gets old after a while. People start looking at you strangely.

In that respect, it was very, very good. So in the MI world, in the Military Intelligence world, what they provide you with, you know, so everybody talks about networking, especially at this level.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Personal relationships.

CSM LYON: Personal relationships, being able to pick up the phone and call somebody and ask them "Hey, I'm doing this, I need this, can you help me out?"

SGM WATERHOUSE: Especially when you are by yourself in your organization.

CSM LYON: Yeah. And so that was one of the things that I took away from it is that I didn't interact with my Military Intelligence counterparts on a regular basis because of where I worked at. So this provided me an opportunity to meet with some of them, know who they were. Because you never know when you're going to need somebody's support or provide them support.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM LYON: And so being able to communicate, pick up the phone and call somebody and talk to them was always good. So that was the big thing for ANCOG for me on that one.

SGM WATERHOUSE: A lot of people have, you know, even my experiences, you know, you go to ANCOG and it may not have been the case with you, but a lot of times you get like I already know all this stuff, they're just kind of validating what we know and kind of getting all of us from all of our different stages, not stages of career but where we're serving, kind of come back and say "Here's what we're supposed to be doing as a branch." Was that kind of similar experience? Because I know in the Military Intelligence World some people are, you know, may go right, like you said, the strategic level or others the tactical level --

CSM LYON: Tactical level.

SGM WATERHOUSE: -- and then you don't really have shared experiences necessarily but you learn those are, if you get the opportunity to share those experiences.

CSM LYON: I think that was a good opportunity



to do that, especially in that environment because you are at the center of the Military Intelligence universe, being at Fort Huachuca. Otherwise you don't always have that experience with them.

So in that respect it was good. These are the things that we're working on, proponent was always coming out and, you know, they would talk to us.

SGM WATERHOUSE: You just have to learn what the Branch itself was looking at?

CSM LYON: Uh-huh.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: Places that they were going, things that they were focusing on. You know, I found it interesting that -- go back for a few minutes. When I was at Fort Bragg we had this system that we fielded for the Military Intelligence Corps, which was called ASAS, and it was supposed to be the next best analysis and database tool for the Military Intelligence world. So me being an Airborne Trooper the way I was, they were big, they were bulky, they were ugly, they were green, they had Styrofoam at the corners to be able to mount them on a table and put them in trucks, and supposedly

to help with the sort of shock absorber. I looked at it one day and I was like "So can I drop these in any place?" And they're like "No." I was like "I'm in an Airborne Unit, what do you want me to do with these?" you know. They're like "Well you're going to get them in somehow and you're going to set them up and you're going to work analysis." And I was like --

SGM WATERHOUSE: If they can't go with us, how are --

CSM LYON: Because they're not going on my back.

SGM WATERHOUSE: That's right.

CSM LYON: They were going to be dropped in or trucked in one. So I guess we settled for trucked in because I don't think they ever got to the point where they could be dropped, air dropped.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Styrofoam is probably not going to help.

CSM LYON: Yeah. And then they containerized them and all sorts of things, but. But again, that was one of those that was a new endeavor for the Army and it had taken years to get it to that point. In fact it had

taken so long to get it to that point that the software was already outdated. Wow. So they quickly evolved it, but still, you know.

So ANCOC allowed one of those opportunities to see what the rest of the big Army was coming up with, especially for Military Intelligence.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Go back to your units and kind of share of here's what the Branch is doing.

CSM LYON: Yeah. This is what the Branch is doing, or what they want us to do.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, you were serving as a Traffic Analyst I believe when terrorists attacked the United States on September 11, 2001. Do you remember what -- I'm sure you do, but where you were, kind of for what you can say, but everybody kind of remembers where they were and what they were doing.

CSM LYON: Oh, I remember exactly where I was. I was supposed to have been flying out of Reagan. A battle buddy and I were going to travel and I was supposed to be flying out of Reagan. And this was a time in my career where I just tell family I'm going on a trip.

SGM WATERHOUSE: That's all you could say.

CSM LYON: That's all I could say. So I was supposed to be flying out of Reagan. I got the note that "No, we changed it, we're actually flying out of BWI.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Baltimore.

CSM LYON: So I was traveling from Reagan to BWI, on the road. So I had not heard what was going on. So I walked into BWI and I noticed it was kind of quiet, kind of a lot of commotion, quiet chaos I guess I would call it. And I got to the counter and I asked the young lady, I said "So I think I'm supposed to be flying out of here today." And she kind of looked at me, she said "Ma'am, you're not flying out of anywhere today, not out of this area of the world." I was like "What are you talking about? She's like "You haven't heard yet?" And I was like "No, I haven't heard yet." So then news was on behind me, they had put it up on the screens because they normally don't have the news up on the screens. And you could see the news feed at that point. Because I was actually on the road when the planes hit.

So from there, I couldn't get anybody on the

phones, so I headed back to Fort Mead at the time, because it was the closest, and that's where we based out of. And couldn't get on the installation. Traffic was horrendous, gates were locked down. Everybody was being searched as they tried to go on and off. So at that time I did not have a cell phone, I was not a techie. I had a pager, but pagers don't give you any information.

SGM WATERHOUSE: No. Other than a phone number.

CSM LYON: So four hours later, still had not been able to get into the post. I finally went to my house and called the office. I said "Hey, I can't get in. If you need me to come in, you guys are going to have to shut down traffic so I could make it in," in case we had to go and respond. And they're like "Nope, we just need accountability of you," because at that time none of them knew where I was.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Nobody's leaving and nobody's coming in.

CSM LYON: Nobody was leaving, nobody was coming in. The cell towers were all tied up, nobody

could make phone calls of those people who did have cell phones. Landline was about the only way to get through to anybody if the lines weren't busy. So that was the day that I determined that I had to get a cell phone because my daughter finally got in touch with me six hours later, after the event. And she's like, she knew I was flying out, she knew where I was flying out from, or was supposed to.

SGM WATERHOUSE: How old was she then?

CSM LYON: She was 17.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: And she had been standing -- well, she was 18 actually. She had been standing on her head because she couldn't talk to me.

SGM WATERHOUSE: I bet.

CSM LYON: She was afraid that I was on one of the planes and that something had happened to me. So that was the day I determined that I needed a cell phone.

SGM WATERHOUSE: They weren't that prevalent at that point.

CSM LYON: They were getting to be.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM LYON: But, yeah. After that one I had one. So I remember exactly where I was at the time.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, looking back at the seven months or so you served as the Signal Intelligence Analyst and then two years where you served as a Traffic Analyst there at the Office of Military Support. What were some of your lessons learned from those two positions, before we move on to the next one?

CSM LYON: How to work with other agencies. That was one of the biggest lessons. Other agencies, the State Department, among others. We didn't have the Department of Homeland Defense then, or Homeland Security then. But you had State National Guard, any of the other entities. So depending upon who the client or customer was at the time, you had to be able to work with them to provide the best Intel that you could. So sometimes you had to use other assets as well. And so the other agencies within the Services and other agencies period, you had to develop those relationships and work with them.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And everybody remembers from

the news, this is when why are all our agencies stovepiped and nobody shares information.

CSM LYON: Nobody shares, and I heard that.

SGM WATERHOUSE: I'm sure you heard about all that so.

CSM LYON: No, I lived it. I absolute lived it.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So you were, you know, at the front lines of, you know, developing probably this Homeland Security concept, right? You and your unit, you know, I'm sure you were involved, something you don't have to talk about, but I'm sure, you know, all the agencies had to learn how to work together, including the police forces and stuff.

CSM LYON: Exactly. And so local law enforcement, you know, that's how the Department of Homeland Security came to be about was that because there was nobody guiding the exchange of Intel among, you know, it's hard to think about Intel for your own country. But the fact of the matter is, and we've seen it, is that we have those individuals who live right here on our soil who wants to do us harm.



SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM LYON: And so we had nobody to consolidate that information. There was nobody who was making this or forcing us to share Intel or information that we could have or we did have from, you know, wherever it might be. So finding a way to do that, because it was very territorial back then. You still find it to a certain extent today, but not like it was back then. This is my information, I can't share it with you.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So we had to change the whole culture of intelligence.

CSM LYON: We did. And you're right, I absolutely lived through it, and it was one of the most painful experiences. And you still see it today when there are, I'm going to say missteps from the Military Intelligence community, you know, whatever they might be. Many times it comes down to somebody wasn't willing to share the information with somebody else that could have brought it all together and made the picture that provided the best picture for everybody to look at and have an understanding of what was going on.

So that was the biggest challenge was learning

to work with all the other agencies. Because they were going through the same thing.

SGM WATERHOUSE: It probably continued, I'm assuming, in your next assignment, because it was February, 2002 you moved to a Team Sergeant position that you served there for three years. Now when I think Team Sergeant I'm thinking Special Forces Team Sergeant. So one, what led to this move, and in unclassified terms can you explain what your responsibilities were as a Team Sergeant?

CSM LYON: So in layman's terms, much like what we do today, coach, teach, mentor, train, prepare, conduct, plan, conduct operations wherever they were, I needed to go. So I traveled to a number of countries. And by that time I was one of the more experienced members of the team and so that's where the position came from. So we were able to -- well we had total input into the planning and the conduct of air operations.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So it was really you were training other Military Intelligence folks?

CSM LYON: We were training them in the sense

that they were part of the team.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: So we would travel together still.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, I understand that you deployed to Yemen three times between June, 2002 and October, 2003. Did you know where Yemen was? You don't see that on many people's records. And I was reviewing yours, I said "What is this country, three times?"

CSM LYON: Yeah.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So I mean from what you can say, I mean what was that about?

CSM LYON: Well let me put it this way.

SGM WATERHOUSE: If you can talk about it.

CSM LYON: So at that time, especially for Military Intelligence Forces, our number one mission across the spectrum and across the Forces was to find and defeat the Taliban. So wherever that took us was where we went.

So I've been to a lot of those places where most people didn't want to go because that's where we needed to be to see what we could find.

SGM WATERHOUSE: You just go there for whatever time it took and then go back home?

CSM LYON: Yeah.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: So those are the ones that you could see.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM LYON: It was unique environments, and that's where the team environment comes in. Unique situations, working with different organizations across the strategic and national levels. But again, the whole purpose was for us to find the Taliban and find ways to defeat them. So that's what our mission was.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Now from that assignment, because you did that for three years. Any particular lessons learned that were different from your previous two position there, in this? Sounds like you're on the road a lot, obviously, or air, however you want to look at it.

CSM LYON: Yeah. I think one of the biggest lessons learned, kind of mentioned it before, and was working with the other agencies. But there is a certain

level of trust that you have to have when you work at that level. And one of the things that you really want to take away from it is that if you are, if you were providing Intel to a client, to a customer, is that your Intel is trusted. So you have to be some of the best of the best at what the information that you provide. It can't be any of this second guessing or "Oh, I think," or, because the Intel that you provide could have actions taken upon an objective. So there's trust among your teammates and trust among your clients as to your integrity. Once you lose your integrity with that organization, you're done, you know. It would be very, very hard to get it back. But it was a fast paced, high intensity, very rewarding mission.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Three years can go fast.

CSM LYON: They do go fast. And across the years it morphed even into different things as well. We were able to contribute a lot to research and development of tools that we used and things like that. And so then it --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Technologies we used.

CSM LYON: Exactly.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, in July of 2003 you were promoted to Master Sergeant Leader. Did you gain any other responsibilities, or you pretty much did the same thing now you're just getting paid for what you did?

CSM LYON: Pretty much I did the same thing, it's just getting paid for it at that point. Most of the positions, well especially as a team lead, the responsibilities didn't change. And I don't think the expectations of teammates changed, because within that organization, like I said, everybody was expected to be at the top of their game. So that's what made it so rewarding and so unique to be with that organization. Their missions were real world and you could see immediate effects.

SGM WATERHOUSE: You know, a lot of units in the Army, they train, train, train, and their real world is going to a National Training Center, Joint Readiness Training as Air Force Polk, and that's where they play war. But in your Branch a lot of times, you know, it's always real. So it's kind of unique.

So in 2003, that same year that you were

promoted, you also attended Jump Master School. So what led to that?

CSM LYON: That was not a first time go. It was time. I didn't want to do it, I was an E-6 when I left Fort Bragg and unlike with the 82nd where they're like "Hey, if you want to get ahead in the world, you're going to be a Jump Master." So at that point it was just one of those things that I wanted to do. And I was on airborne status.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So you just volunteered, say I want to go?

CSM LYON: Yeah, I did.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: It was great. You know it's a different aspect to be a Jump Master as opposed to just to be a jumper. You know, you're sharing danger when you're an Airborne Trooper jumping out of the plane with somebody just because you never know what the end result's going to be, but now you're responsible for everybody else's lives as well. And I took that responsibility very seriously. So it was nerve-racking sometimes, but it was always rewarding to --

SGM WATERHOUSE: What was the hardest part of the course or the school for you?

CSM LYON: Timing. Really. You know, if you could take your time and do it as slow as you wanted to, then everybody would pass.

SGM WATERHOUSE: It's under the pressure.

CSM LYON: But under the pressure of time, you usually slip on something. It wasn't nomenclature, it wasn't catching the gigs, it was learning to pace myself so that I did it fast enough that I, you know, catch all the errors and then be able to, you know, spot them and tell them what they were. And so it was timing. Yeah, but I got it the second time.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, in February of 2005 you took over as a First Sergeant or the First Sergeant, I wasn't sure. First Sergeant of the Office of Military Support, or a First Sergeant in that organization. I didn't know if there was more than one.

CSM LYON: There are more than one and so I was on what we call the SI side of the house, the Signals Intelligence side of the house.



SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: So I was the First Sergeant for the Signals Intelligence side of the house.

SGM WATERHOUSE: You do that for 19 months or so. So you were already in the big organization, the Office of Military Support. So how did that come about where you were promoted to Master Sergeant? And how did that come about, "Hey, we want you or need you to be the First Sergeant over here?"

CSM LYON: I'll be quite honest with you, I wanted to do First Sergeant Time, and I needed to do First Sergeant Time. Because I saw it as a necessary part of career progression for me.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Because I was going to ask you because not every Military Intelligence Branch requires, I mean there are very few First Sergeant jobs.

CSM LYON: No, there's not. So as far as a Military Intelligence professional, it wasn't what I saw as being necessary for them because, you're right, you could do the G2, the two side of the house. But for me, having been Tactical most of my career, especially with that organization, that organization was very tactical,

whether you consider it that way or not, it's very tactical. I felt that it was what I needed to do to continue on my side of the house.

I'll be honest with you, I didn't see it as one of those necessary things to keep me on the Tactical side of the house, but it turned out that way. And so as we go through this you will see that it contributed to my being on the Tactical side of the house, which gave me opportunities that I would not have had had I stayed on what we call the strategic side of the Military Intelligence house.

So it was just one of those things that I felt I needed to do. I took it very seriously, and I wanted to, so I volunteered.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So my next question would be, I'm just thinking back to, you know, you had been there, I think, already about five years. So did you want to be a First Sergeant there or be a First Sergeant elsewhere? And did you have a choice in that matter?

CSM LYON: At the time I thought I needed for it to be there. Like I said, some people --

SGM WATERHOUSE: It is a special unit.

CSM LYON: Some people go to that organization and they'll spend the rest of their careers there.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay. I didn't know if that's normal.

CSM LYON: Yeah.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: At the time when I did it I didn't know whether that was normal for me or not. Could I have stayed there, I possibly could have stayed there and continued to work on teams. There are other --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Your whole career past that and you could just stay --

CSM LYON: -- other venues. You know, like I said, they do their own research and development for new technology and things like that.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So in a way it's almost like the Special Operations side. Once you're in you can kind of stay there if you want.

CSM LYON: It is. Yes, it is.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay. Very interesting. So as a First Sergeant, when you -- now I'm going to talk about, you know, as a First Sergeant, now you're really

in charge of that unit with your Commanders. Now you're the highest ranking NCO, you're responsible for all the NCOs below you, what they do and, you know, their education, their training, their development, their discipline, end discipline. So you're also, you know, you're trying, now you're responsible to try to make that unit better because you're a Unit Leader.

So when you got there was there somebody you took over for, were they, he or she, still in place, the old First Sergeant? And then when you did take over and you were, you know, in that Unit for a little bit and you had time to kind of assess what you just inherited, you and your boss.

CSM LYON: Uh-huh.

SGM WATERHOUSE: What are some of the things you set out to improve, you know, in your Unit?

CSM LYON: So considering the timing and when it was, that organization was pretty well established, set up successfully, so you had to look for different ways to make a mark, so to speak. One of the things that we had to work on was communication across the Force, and also programs.

And what I mean by programs are, unlike other organizations that are on a regular post, we didn't have ready access to many of the programs that were available to soldiers. It was unusual to go to AER or --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Army Emergency Relief.

CSM LYON: Army Emergency Relief.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Army Community Service.

CSM LYON: Army Community Service, any of those programs that were offered by either of those. We had our own chaplains internal to us, as well as flight surgeons and things like that.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Programs that supported soldiers and their families.

CSM LYON: So you had to work through that to get to those, to provide those. We didn't have a whole lot of end discipline. We did have some, and as the war continued it, much like other organizations, it continued to get a little bit worse. Not devastatingly so, but, you know, there were problems associated with it. And so finding those programs that could support all the soldiers was important, so we worked to that end.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So a lot of people say First Sergeant, first time in, there are certain duties and responsibilities for all First Sergeants do. But in this particular job, ones you can talk about, what were some of the unique things, you know, you as a person had to do, you know, that maybe wouldn't happen in an infantry company, you know? Because there are certain things First Sergeants always do, you know, there's certain things we have to do, but is there anything there that kind of stands out as unique that, you know, you had to, you know, as a First Sergeant of that particular unit? Or specific challenges of being a First Sergeant in that particular unit?

CSM LYON: I think the specific challenges of being a First Sergeant of that particular unit is that the unit was very senior. So that in itself is a unique position to find yourself in. You mentioned being the Senior NCO, well, no, you were one of the Senior NCOs.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM LYON: And so you had to be able to work with the others and have them respect what you were saying.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So you had a lot of Master Sergeants or other E-8s in your unit?

CSM LYON: E-7s, E-8s, some E-6s, couple of E-4s, not many.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So you were not the only E-8 in your unit?

CSM LYON: No, I was not. So it was a unique challenge in that respect was that previously everybody was your peer and you were trying to provide these support programs.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Same with HHC companies in line units or --

CSM LYON: Yes, where you've got all your Majors and couple young Captains and a bunch of Lieutenant Colonels and Colonels.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And you and a Captain are responsible.

CSM LYON: Exactly. Exactly.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Gotta get to the range, we got to do this PT test, all this.

CSM LYON: Oh, we fought to go to the range. So in that respect it was easy. Training, Tactical

Training, we were all about, we loved it, so that was easy. It was harder to fill outside requirements for training or to fill teams to go on a mission.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: Remember at that time, by that time, the Op tempo was pretty high.

SGM WATERHOUSE: They were wrapping up pretty soon for the surge, you know.

CSM LYON: Yeah. So it was --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Iraq, surge in Iraq.

CSM LYON: Yeah. So it was busy. But, you know, it was a pretty much responsible group of adults that were all about accomplishing the mission. So in that respect it made it easy. The challenges were that to my right and left were my peers as well.

SGM WATERHOUSE: You were just wearing the dime at the time.

CSM LYON: I was wearing the dime at the time.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, you also attended, I'm not sure where, but I know, I think, as a First Sergeant, you attended the First Sergeant Course?

CSM LYON: I did.



SGM WATERHOUSE: And where did you go to attend that?

CSM LYON: I went to -- okay, I'm going to forget the name of the Camp, but it was a National Guard Camp on the back side of Fort Jackson.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay. So not Fort Bliss, it was a different, because there's different courses but there is one in Fort --

CSM LYON: There is.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So you went to a different one. Okay.

CSM LYON: We did that a lot, you know, and right now that's one of the big trends is to promote all the combos.

SGM WATERHOUSE: One Army School System, yeah.

CSM LYON: Exactly. And so I personally have been doing that for a long time. And the reason being is because it was much easier for us to find seats at schools like that than at the regular schools, you know, because we weren't part of the normal trend of units on an installation. We were kind of the exception so getting seats was sometimes difficult. So we worked

with the National Guard and they're like "Oh, yeah, come on, we need the numbers and you need the seats."

SGM WATERHOUSE: They have open seats, you take them.

CSM LYON: We did for the Warrior Leader Course, PLDC, ANCOC, BNCOC, we did it for all of them.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And that was really before we as an Army started pushing that, I mean late 2010, '11 I remember we really started getting hot and heavy in that, and we do it a lot today. But back then you guys were actually in the game.

CSM LYON: We were breaking ground. Yeah. So at the time you don't realize it, that you are.

SGM WATERHOUSE: It's like they have seats, yeah.

CSM LYON: Yeah. So people talk about it now and so that's one of my disadvantages. So for something like that I personally had experience with it so I take it for granted. Which is not a good thing because I have to remember that others have not had the same experiences that I have, and so talking about going to a National Guard School, I'm like "Oh, yeah, sure, no

problem.”

SGM WATERHOUSE: They think its different standards.

CSM LYON: They do. And I’m like “Nope, they teach exactly the same POI that we do and they are fantastic.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And lots of times they have better facilities.

CSM LYON: And it’s shorter. It’s normally shorter because they can’t afford to have their people gone for that long.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Right.

CSM LYON: So, yeah. I think overall that’s one of my biggest challenges is to remember that my experiences are different than others, and having to share that knowledge as well.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So at that First Sergeant Course, do you remember how long it was?

CSM LYON: I want to say --

SGM WATERHOUSE: A couple weeks?

CSM LYON: Fourteen days.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Any particular thing that you

remember from that course that you learned that maybe we weren't doing on the active side, like people who went to an active duty location?

CSM LYON: So back then for the First Sergeant Course they still did, you know, it was a continuation of the other PME's, so I can remember doing drill and ceremony out on the floor, making sure that we still know how to do that and things like that.

But you know one of the biggest things I took away from that, and probably because it was a National Guard Unit, we had a classmate who had a Big Red One Patch, Combat Patch. And so I think we were all floored when he came in the door. I mean we were just in awe because this was an actual Vietnam Veteran coming in. He was a Vietnam Veteran, he was not --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Not Desert Storm.

CSM LYON: Not Desert Storm. He was a Vietnam Veteran and he wanted to go to the First Sergeant Course. He didn't have to, I mean all that was grandfathered for him, but he wanted to. And this is one of the first times that I learned about literacy deficits and the effect that they can have on folks.

This young man, he wasn't a young man at the time anymore. This young man who had served his country in Vietnam --

SGM WATERHOUSE: He probably getting close to 30 years in then maybe?

CSM LYON: Pretty close. His reading level was not high enough for him to be able to pass the test. And back then -- you know nowadays if you can't pass a test because you can't read the test, they'll have somebody read it to you. So they didn't allow that back then. So I think he would have passed the test because he could have answered all the questions, but he wasn't able to, so they -- it broke my heart bigger than day. And they had to ask him to leave the course. He didn't have to be there.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Right.

CSM LYON: So I was truly proud of him for trying to be there.

SGM WATERHOUSE: What was his rank, do you remember?

CSM LYON: He was a First Sergeant.

SGM WATERHOUSE: He was a First Sergeant?

CSM LYON: Yeah. It was a learning the literacy rates and what it can do to you if you don't or can't complete a test. So we knew he had the knowledge, he'd already proven that. He was proven in combat.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM LYON: So it was a big learning curve for me.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, in November of 2006 you were promoted to Sergeant Major, E-9, and were assigned to Camp Zama, Japan, where you served with the 441st Military Intelligence Battalion, part of the 500th Military Intelligence Brigade where you served as a Sergeant Major for about 17 months. How did this assignment come about, and when did you find out you were going to Japan?

CSM LYON: So I was still with USALMS when I was selected to become a Sergeant Major. So career progression as far as things like that had never been in the forethought of my planning processes. So I was selected and thought about it, was like "Oh, my goodness, I'm going to have to get a job." So I determined at that point that I probably knew to get a

job as a Sergeant Major in another organization, not the one that I was with currently. So I honestly came to this building, the Knowling Building here that was Inscom's, and still is, Inscom's headquarters. And I spoke with a Sergeant Major, and Sergeant Major Pablo Burgos brought me. And he happens to be a civilian working here now. And because of the way we worked, anybody on the Military Intelligence side of the house wouldn't know who I was.

So he came here with me and we said "Hey, we're looking for her a Sergeant Major position, do you have any available?" And she says "Well, no, not really, not right now." And this is back at the time before CSL.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Since your last Selection List, the process wasn't in place?

CSM LYON: It was not in place yet. And so she's like "No, not really." And then as, you know, we continued to talk and we discussed, you know, career progression, development, things like that. She's like, as I was getting ready to leave she's like "Well, I do have one position." And she's like "I don't know if

you'll be interested in it or not." She's like "It's in Japan, it's a Provisional Battalion." I said "Sounds perfect."

SGM WATERHOUSE: And this was a Command Sergeant Major position?

CSM LYON: Well technically no. Because it's a Provisional it was Sergeant Major position.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So it was Provisional Battalion. I served in one of those.

CSM LYON: Yeah.

SGM WATERHOUSE: It was a Provisional Battalion so it wasn't rated as a Command Sergeant Major.

CSM LYON: It wasn't rated as a Command Sergeant Major, although you were given that title.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: So she's like "You can have overnight to think about it." I said "I don't need overnight to think about it." I said "I'll take it." And so I did. We considered it my re-greening period. So it was kind of -- the whole story behind it was kind of humorous because I had been with that organization,



as you mentioned, for seven and a half years.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM LYON: Long time. And so that is not the mainstream green Army, it's a little bit different.

SGM WATERHOUSE: It's like people going to Special Forces, outside the Military Forces community.

CSM LYON: Yeah. So the Brigade Sergeant Major, when he found out that I was coming to his organization to take one of the Battalions, Provisional or not, he's like "I need to meet you." I was like "Okay, Sergeant Major."

SGM WATERHOUSE: He had your PCS and everything.

CSM LYON: Yeah. He's like "I need to know that you're going to be doing the right things." He said "I don't need a Sergeant Major that's going to have their head gear, you know, flipped back on their head with their sunglasses on top of them."

SGM WATERHOUSE: So free trip to Japan.

CSM LYON: No, actually it was a free trip to Hawaii.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Better.

CSM LYON: Yeah.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Maybe, I don't know. I've never been to either place.

CSM LYON: So the Brigade was in Hawaii, the job was in Japan. So he flew me to Hawaii to do the introductory arrangements and so he could check me out, make sure that I was not some Special Forces dweeb that was going to act like I knew it all and do poorly by setting the example for the soldiers.

It was quite interesting. And he was big into something that was going on at the installation at the time and I think he spent a day and then half a day the next day with me, or me in his vicinity just so he could see. He's like "Okay." So I must have passed muster, he sent me to Japan, let me take the organization. And I tell you what, I had a whole lot to learn about the regular Army again at that point. Some of it was painful.

So I had always been one of those entities that wanted to serve my country through the Army, and I was always about what else could I do for the Army, what else can I do, what else can I contribute, could I be

better. And so I went to take the Battalion in Japan, and my little retention NCO comes running up to me and he's all excited because it's his time to reenlist as well. He's like, "Oh, what do you think the Army should give me?" And I was like "I don't know, what are you going to give the Army?" He's like "Oh, no, seriously." "What are you going to give the Army?" And it went on for a couple of minutes and then I realized, man, I'm going to have to really change my mindset because I'm not used to this.

But that was my first experience with the mindset of our younger generation of soldiers at the time. They're great and I love them, but in that respect it's a little bit different than what it was when I came in the Army, I think.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, the 441st MI Battalion. My first question would be why was it Provisional, if you knew that at the time, you know, or as Provisional it seems kind of it's kind of on a Probationary thing and we might make it an official battalion one day, we might not. But I've known Provisional Battalions to be provisional for eight, nine

years.

CSM LYON: Technically, by the regulation, they're only supposed to be Provisional up to two years and then you're supposed to make the decision whether they're going to be a real unit or not. So the last time I checked, 441st was still a Provisional. I'm just saying.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So I guess from what you could say, what was the mission? I guess they were a fairly new unit if they were Provisional, right? So it's a new --

CSM LYON: So the 500th has been around for a while. The 441st was stood up to provide, to meet the need of HUMINT, which is Human Intelligence and Counter Intelligence. That was their primary mission for the 441st. And that was in the Pacific AO.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Sergeant Major said "Hey, we need another Battalion to do this."

CSM LYON: They need to do that, and they need to focus on exactly that.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: Those things. And so that whole

organization was comprised of counter intelligence and HUMINT soldiers.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay. So I was going to ask you, so, you know, as a Battalion Sergeant Major, what kind of units did you have in your Battalion? That was the next question.

CSM LYON: Yeah, that was the two.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: It was a small Battalion, it had three companies, CI, HUMINT, and then the 81st Company.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: So great mission. People often ask me what is my favorite assignment that I've ever had. I said I don't have a favorite. I said all of them have been good in some shape, form, or fashion. Some have been great, some have been good, some of them had better points than others, but all of them have been good in some respect. So I didn't say, I've never had a favorite. But then I'm like oh, my God, you're in Japan, you know, you had young troops. I traveled all over the Pacific because they were all over the Pacific.

Again, the Army gave me the opportunity to

travel to places that I would never, ever have been able to travel otherwise, or even thought about it. I've been go Guam, I've been to Okinawa, Japan, I've been to the Philippines, I've been to Kwajalein Atoll, that most people don't know even exists. And so I like history, although I don't claim to be a history buff. They go into those places were really, really important because when you see them and you think about what it cost us during World War II and others, it's kind of amazing. You know, there's a couple little islands, Kwajalein Atoll is like four square miles, and that's it. But the strategic impact of that island was crucial to the US back then, and it's like they fought for that island for four days.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Wow.

CSM LYON: And you can still see because Palm trees don't grow back very quickly.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Was this the Marines or the Army back then?

CSM LYON: I want to say for Kwajalein Atoll it was the Army. But, you know, I also got to hit Iwo Jima as I was flying to some of those other places. And

it doesn't look like much of an island when you fly into it. And that monster rock out there is just, it doesn't look like it would kick your backside, but they did a couple of staff rides to there and it took out a couple people just try to climb it, walk it up much less fighting up it.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Those Japanese soldiers were of course all dug in underground so it wasn't just rush the hill and they were --

CSM LYON: Nope.

SGM WATERHOUSE: -- right there for targeting, they're not.

CSM LYON: They still found some of those individuals hidden in the tunnels years later. I think one was 40 years later they found somebody hidden down there and they thought the war was still going on.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Wow.

CSM LYON: That island, it's not very big.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, in that unit, how new, I guess, or how long had the Battalion been in existence when you got there, or were you one of the first Battalion Sergeant Majors of that unit?

CSM LYON: I was not the first, and I'll be honest with you, I don't remember off the top of my head how long it had been in existence. I do know that my predecessor was gone already so there was a Master Sergeant in the seat holding it down until I got there, who is now a Sergeant Major in the Military Intelligence Corps.

SGM WATERHOUSE: I guess what was the shape, when you got there, what was the unit doing, what was something you and the Commander tried to improve upon or thought needed to be --

CSM LYON: So they were conducting a lot of missions. Like I said, they were spread out through and across the Pacific. So in that respect they were doing very, very well. And so they were providing support to all the different installations throughout the Pacific. Because they were separated from the headquarters, and because they were Provisional there and under Camp Zama, one of the things that we had to work for was to be recognized by everybody else and to work with them. So being a Provisional Battalion, we were still continuously setting up just the whole environment



there. You know, the TDA was new, the Intel was new, the mission was relatively new. We had soldiers spread across the Pacific, the HUMINT soldiers were there with us, and they spent a lot of time training.

So that was one of the biggest challenges was educating the rest of the Forces that were assigned there what we did and how we did it and where we did it, and making sure that we were able to take care of the troops that were assigned there.

Before I left, one of my last -- they graduated a class of HUMINT soldiers and there were 32 of them that came to the 441st. So what that did to us was it left us, because others were rotating out, PCSing and ETSing, that left us with just a few leaders to help inculcate those brand new soldiers, brand new HUMINTs in and teach them the ropes and train them. We were limited on resources and assets. To go to the range we had to travel like an hour and a half, and it was a range that was owned by the Marines, so again, in that respect, for training, it was a joint environment. Or we had to go to the Japanese, and ask them if we could use some of their facilities.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Was Camp Zama only Americans on that base, or was it --

CSM LYON: We were.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay. Was it a fairly big area, or small?

CSM LYON: It was pretty small. But they did have a separate living area that was separate from the Camp Zama proper. But it was mostly a living environment so, much like the concerns that you would find in Germany. You would have some that were just basically living quarters for soldiers and things like that.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Right. About the size of a forward operating base, some of them.

CSM LYON: Yeah, some of them, yeah. So in that respect we were pretty good. We worked oftentimes -- not oftentimes, sometimes we would work at the behest of the embassies and things like that and so -- and that was more for building relationships and the things that we could provide as far as, especially with HUMINT and Counter Intelligence.

SGM WATERHOUSE: What was your relationship or

working or mentor or communication I guess I'd say with Brigade? How did that work, because they were in Hawaii? So how did that work?

CSM LYON: Because of the time difference and because of the travel time, the Brigade Sergeant Major or Commander, or both, would try to come over at least once a quarter.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: Because it was not a close hop, skip, and a jump. But I spoke with the Brigade Sergeant Major regularly. He particularly liked to call me on Saturday mornings at 5:30 in the morning because he was still on Hawaii time, and tell me all the things that I had done wrong.

SGM WATERHOUSE: How big a time difference was it?

CSM LYON: It would have been like 10:00 his time. So he was working late, for starters, and it was early my Saturday morning, like 5:30 in the morning. So it was pretty painful there for my first few months until he figured out that I was willing to learn, it was my first Battalion so I did have things to learn. I

didn't know it all.

SGM WATERHOUSE: That's what I was going to ask you, you know, first Battalion. Did you rely on him for advice, or other folks?

CSM LYON: I relied on him for mentoring, and he gave it freely. And once he figured out that I was not stupid, the phone calls every Saturday morning kind of ended, his Friday nights. As far as who did I go to for mentoring. So I call this the Island of Red Headed Step Children. The MPs were that way, their main headquarters was in Hawaii also, their Brigade. So we were battle buddies.

SGM WATERHOUSE: They were like a Battalion too?

CSM LYON: They were a Battalion also. I want to say they were a Signal Battalion, same thing. So we were all kind of Battalions without our parent units with us, all trying to do the mission for USFJ, Japan. But there were a lot of Sergeant Majors there. And we were a great team. So the G-1, close personal friend of mine, had lots and lots of experience. In fact she was retiring from that position, and that happened to be the

same time that they extended them to 32, so she stayed on another year. But they were just a great team and willing to share knowledge and, you know, this is how this works. I had peers there that were top notch, that weren't afraid to say "Hey, you know, you maybe might want to try this." So it was really, really good in that respect. So lot of mentors.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So switching subjects for a minute, when did you go to the Non-Resident Course for Sergeant Major then, was that during this assignment?

CSM LYON: Yes, while I was a Battalion Sergeant Major.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: So thank God for the time difference because I would work all day and then go into the night and, you know, try and study. So I was turning in homework assignments at 2:00, 3:00 in the morning over there. It's amazing what you can do when you're younger. And that was just the norm. Because back then for the Non-Res, as you probably well know, you could do the fast pace or you could do the normal two year.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Two year time limit.

CSM LYON: And you could finish it in a year, so I was bound and determined I was going to finish it in a year, and I did. So I finished it in that first year. But, yeah, I would do my day job and then I would, by night, would do my classwork.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So did you sleep?

CSM LYON: A couple hours a night.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Well you were younger, right?

CSM LYON: I was younger, so it made a difference.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So other than timing, anything particularly challenging about the Sergeant Major course that you remember, or anything you remember getting out of it, learning from it? I know it's totally changed now, but it's changed since I've done it too.

CSM LYON: Yeah. And so at the time I didn't think I did. And I'll be honest with you, I was pushing it through pretty fast, very quickly. So the impact of what I was learning I think was different. And what you miss when you're doing the Non-Res Course is how do you

apply it. So I'll be honest with you, when I took -- and you're going to have to do the acronym for me -- the Joint Senior Enlisted Professional Military Education, SEJPME. When I did that course later, at StratCom, it reminded me of all those classes that I had taken for the Non-Res Course, and it put it all into perspective. This is what I should have gotten from that. So doing that later on helped me actually realize those things that I had learned earlier and was actually able to relate them to different circumstances. So I got quite a bit out of it. I would have gotten more I think in a different environment, or if I had had the opportunity to emphasize it the way I did when I did SEJPME.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, looking back at the 17 months or so you served with the 441st Military Intelligence Battalion there in Japan, what were some of your key take-aways?

CSM LYON: One of my key take-aways from that assignment was that soldiers make or break you. And the respect that they have for you is earned, and when you earn it those soldiers will give back 100 percent to you, or 110 percent. I was young when I took that

Battalion, I was inexperienced. Fortunately I had battle buddies to my right and to my left. And one of the things that I think has helped define me is the fact that I honestly love soldiers. I really, really do. And those soldiers were, you know, whatever you asked of them they were willing to find a way to do it. And they were very young and inexperienced also. I would say my greatest challenge with them is when I got those 32 new soldiers straight in out of -- 32. 32. That was over, that was like a third of the organization.

SGM WATERHOUSE: That's a big -- a couple of tank platoons in my world.

CSM LYON: Yeah, so it was.

SGM WATERHOUSE: All brand new soldiers.

CSM LYON: All brand new soldiers, straight out of AIT. Some with spouses, some without. Try to get those spouses there.

SGM WATERHOUSE: In Japan.

CSM LYON: In Japan. Foreign country, you drive on the other side of the road.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Oh, do they? Like England.

CSM LYON: Yeah. It was interesting. But we



had some good leaders too. So that was one of my biggest take-aways is that soldiers, if you earn their respect, they'll give it back to you two-fold. And they can make or break you and make you a success or otherwise.

SGM WATERHOUSE: One more question, this is something I forgot to ask. So your Commander was a Lieutenant Colonel?

CSM LYON: He was.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay. So he got the correct -- well, he wore the correct rank. You had to wear Sergeant Major [SGM insignia]. It's different, we don't do that anymore, I mean at least Provisional Battalions I've seen that I've worked in, or worked under, the guy or gal wore CSM stripes.

CSM LYON: Yes. You do find that now, especially because it is a leadership position.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah. I mean you're still the Battalion Sergeant Major.

CSM LYON: Yes.

SGM WATERHOUSE: We've improved.

CSM LYON: Lessons learned. I mean that

happened to me, that's part of it.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And that brings credibility as your income here in command position, you know, you work for a Commander.

CSM LYON: And I think it was because they were just so new. As I said, they hadn't been around all that long, and I would be lying if I said there had been one or two predecessors before me. I know there had been one, there could very well have been two. But, you know, they're still a Provisional Battalion to this day, and I'm not sure why.

SGM WATERHOUSE: I don't either, I don't know why it is.

Sergeant Major, in April 2008, you were assigned to Fort Stewart, Georgia, where you served as a Command Sergeant Major of the Brigade Special Troops Battalion for 1st Heavy Brigade Combat Team, or HBCT, 3rd Infantry Division, or 1-3 BSTB for short, and you served as the Command Sergeant Major of the BSTB for more than three years. How did this particular assignment go about?

CSM LYON: So this was one of those gifts due

to my tactical experience (laughter). I say that tongue in cheek but it's actually kind of true. They wanted somebody -- the 1-3 BSTB Sergeant Major position was one of the few that was slotted as an MI, Sergeant Major.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Uh-huh, okay.

CSM LYON: So I was one of the few MI Sergeants Major who was considered to be tactical.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And BSTBs were fairly new, I think, at that time.

CSM LYON: They were.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yes.

CSM LYON: They were. Of course, they were designed to answer the call for modularity.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yes.

CSM LYON: Especially the heavy brigades, so they consisted of the HHC -- the HH Battalion -- the HHC, the Signal Company and the MICO, the Military Intelligence Company.

SGM WATERHOUSE: The Military Intelligence Company, yes.

CSM LYON: So we provided all the -- I call them the enablers, maintainers, providers -- we provided

all that for the Brigade as a whole. So my getting that position was based upon the fact that they needed somebody in there who could tactically do the job.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Mm hmm.

CSM LYON: And so I was one of the few that met the requirements to be a tactical Sergeant Major.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And in that field, you know, working at those higher levels, did this feel like a step down to you, or is this something you welcomed?

CSM LYON: No, I truly enjoyed it. One of the things that I have been fortunate with in my career as a military intelligence soldier, is that I have done both strategic and tactical. My first mission tour was tactical, I loved it. I learned to be a soldier, a soldier's soldier. My second one was strategic.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Mm hmm.

CSM LYON: So I learned to work at that level and I kept going back and forth throughout my career, except for that seven and a half year stint where I was a little bit of both in all. Going to Zama, Camp Zama, as my first battalion, was considered strategic.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Mm hmm.

CSM LYON: Because it wasn't INSCOM assignment and then going to take the 1-3, the 1-3 BSTB, honestly, it was right up my alley, because it was tactical. So it kind of brought it back home to me, the importance of it, working with troops, preparing them for deployment because as the 441st -- we had onesies and twosies --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Individual deployers.

CSM LYON: Who would deploy, but not as an element or anything more than that. There was no company, or even a platoon deploying out of the 441st. So as the 1-3 BSTB Sergeant Major they had pretty much -- just about come home from their last deployment to Iraq.

SGM WATERHOUSE: When you arrived.

CSM LYON: And, of course, 3 ID usually went as the whole division pretty much, so wound up deploying, if not then they were at least just offset just a little bit of each other.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM LYON: So they had just come back, I took the Battalion, it was tactical, and I was glad to have it. So, the irony of being a female MI Sergeant Major

taking a 1-3 BSTB tactical, deployable --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Heavy Unit with Bradleys --

CSM LYON: Heavy Unit with Bradleys -- it was all my battle buddies. Honestly? They didn't know what to do with me.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Uh-huh.

CSM LYON: So it was very, very interesting meeting them for the first time because -- I will never forget -- I'm going to have to wash this because somebody is going to say defamation of character, they honestly -- many of them didn't know how to talk to me.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Uh-huh.

CSM LYON: You know, when you have been raised combat arms your whole career; you've not had much exposure to females within among your midst. So now here I am among the middle of them, and I'm a female Sergeant Major --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Unless you've done some kind of, not dominant, but broadening experience --

CSM LYON: Yeah. (Laughter) I know the infantry battalion -- for the first couple of months -- he honestly didn't know how to talk to me.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Uh-huh.

CSM LYON: But I will tell you we had two major missions as not just the BTSB, as the Brigade. So the Brigade was the first organization to take the CCMRF mission which was the counter-catastrophe, actually, the rapid response to any natural disaster that was going on.

SGM WATERHOUSE: In the United States.

CSM LYON: In the United States.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yes.

CSM LYON: Or it's territories. It's the first time that had happened in a long time. Typically, that's National Guard, but because of the way they were deploying with us, they were tapped out, so they wanted us to take it for a while, and so we were the ones who were put on site port. So we spent our time -- the first year back from deployment -- training to do the CCMRF mission.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And you could have gotten the call at any time.

CSM LYON: I could have gotten the call at any time. So we spent that whole year training, training,

training; preparing for, responding to, and then toward the end of it -- well, I'm sorry, the whole time we were on the CCMRF, we were training to deploy.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So you kind of did both.

CSM LYON: When we got done with the CCMRF mission, we were actually deploying back to Iraq.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So you already knew you were going back.

CSM LYON: We knew we were going back. So our NTC rotation was our final month of the CCMRF mission -- so had something happened --

SGM WATERHOUSE: (Laughter).

CSM LYON: We were just going to have to load everything up --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Wow.

CSM LYON: And go.

SGM WATERHOUSE: That would have been ugly.

CSM LYON: Uh huh. So you talk about being flexible, adaptable, and responsive. We learned a lot. So most active duty units do not know how to respond to a crisis contingency mission within their homeland. In that respect, it was a great -- we had to learn how to



do it.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM LYON: We had some great battle buddies at Peers that were helping us along the way, National Guard (inaudible) in house.

SGM WATERHOUSE: I was going to say you probably worked with the Guard.

CSM LYON: We did, we used their training areas because they had already used them for the same thing. Of course, they got the mission back now, again. At the same time, we were training to deploy to Iraq, so we trained, trained, trained, trained, trained, and trained.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Now, were you able to send folks to school during this time because you were on a rapid recall or, you know, a certain amount of hours. I'm sure you had to be back?

CSM LYON: We did because, one, we had to, so it wasn't a question of holding people back because of the CCMRF [Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and High Yield Explosive (CBRNE) Consequence Management Reaction Force] mission; because, regardless, it

wouldn't take 100% of the whole brigade to respond to the CCMRF.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So you could send NCOs to schools one at a time --

CSM LYON: Onesies and twosies, yeah we sent them.

SGM WATERHOUSE: ANCOC, BNCOC, all that stuff.

CSM LYON: We did, and then of course, as we got closer to deployment back to Iraq, we had priority, especially coming home. Naturally we had priority so we managed to keep the soldiers trained up. And back then you could still do exceptions and promote them ahead of school.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yep.

CSM LYON: So it's not like now with Step, where they need to have the school first and the training before you actually promote them. So that was -- it was very enlightening, how to conduct simultaneous operations; the training for, the manning and equipping --

SGM WATERHOUSE: So not to train for one mission, but --

CSM LYON: Yeah. There were things, equipment we were required to have that we literally had to go out and purchase because we didn't have it. That, or borrow it from the National Guard if they could afford it, you know.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM LYON: The National Guard, that's pretty much state owned.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Mm hmm.

CSM LYON: And they are letting them use it because they want them to be able to respond.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Unless they are deploying, then they get extra money, but if they are not on a deployment --

CSM LYON: Yeah, it was a lot of lessons learned with that one.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So you said some of your peers out there, it took them a while to get to know you and stuff, but who did you look to, I guess. I mean, did you end up looking to those guys and gals to like, kind of -- it's your second Battalion, so maybe you were helping them out, but you know, who helped you in the --

because BSTB is a fairly new unit too. I'm sure you had plenty of questions, or probably you needed help from the Guard, or help from this guy; time management, I'm sure, was a nightmare.

CSM LYON: Mm hmm.

SGM WATERHOUSE: You know, but --

CSM LYON: It was interesting.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Who did you kind of lean on when you needed to?

CSM LYON: So I did have some good battle buddies; some with as much or more experience than me. The BSB, the 3rd BSB, lived in the same building with us. Their headquarters was there with us so we could walk across the hallway and talk to each other, across the building.

The resources were good in that respect. I had a great XO and even better S3, and they -- we all worked very well together because we were all about the mission, so in that respect I was blessed.

The other Battalions -- so we lived through the CCMRF and we came to depend on each other as Battalion Sergeants Major, and as we should.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Mm hmm.

CSM LYON: And then we deployed, and so the first inklings of it -- you know, 57 was using my MICO and grabbing some of my LLVI guys to go out with the scouts. 27 was using some of the MI Assets as well, or even some of the --

SGM WATERHOUSE: This is once you got into Iraq?

CSM LYON: This is in train-up.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Oh, in train-up.

CSM LYON: So we went to NTC for our validation exercise.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So you had worked out all of these contingencies.

CSM LYON: We worked out some and we basically made it better. You know, we had the assets, we were going to let them use it, we knew it. The Brigade took the rest of my MI assets.

SGM WATERHOUSE: (Laughter).

CSM LYON: And even most of my signal assets because they were the help desk and making sure the IT was running and things like that.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Well, you are the Brigade Special Training (laughter).

CSM LYON: We are. That's why I said, we were there to support the Brigade and make it work. And so as we deployed and went into Iraq -- of course, we were all on different FOBS --

SGM WATERHOUSE: And this was December '09, 2009ish?

CSM LYON: Yes, yes. We went like a week before Christmas.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Uh-huh.

CSM LYON: Because we spent Christmas in Kuwait.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Nice (laughter).

CSM LYON: Before we rolled into Iraq, yeah.

SGM WATERHOUSE: At least you weren't getting shot at there.

CSM LYON: True; and we were doing a little bit more training before we went on it. But yeah, it was great working with them. We would call each other. We had some porcine (phonetic) functions that caused us, made us, work together.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Mm hmm.

CSM LYON: So in that respect, it was really, really good. By the end of it, the same Infantry Sergeant Major, we were calling each other every night from our different FOBs saying, hey, how are you doing today, what are you seeing, what's going on, is --

SGM WATERHOUSE: So you guys deployed as a BSTB, like the whole --

CSM LYON: We deployed as a Brigade.

SGM WATERHOUSE: The whole Brigade went.

CSM LYON: The whole Brigade went.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Did you get any extra folks attached to you, or any of your battalion split off to work for other brigades or anything, or you pretty much had all your guys and gals with you, just in different FOBS?

CSM LYON: We were all split up; separate from each other on different FOBS, so our 27 was --

SGM WATERHOUSE: But you still were -- they were still working for you and your boss.

CSM LYON: Who, the Battalion?

SGM WATERHOUSE: Your Company.

CSM LYON: You're talking the Companies.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM LYON: Yeah, for the most part because the brigade was co-located with us, so our MI assets went to them, same with their signal. We provided our own PSD for our convoys for the most part. If somebody else needed some, we would -- our Air Bradley guys would go out with them so, in that respect, yes.

BSB was on there with us too and they were, of course, running convoys, running logistics all over Iraq, and supplying force. 5-7 was on the installation with us as well. We were on cab --

SGM WATERHOUSE: The cab?

CSM LYON: Mm hmm.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: We were on FOB Falcon, 2-7 was down at Mahmudiyah. 1-63 was --

SGM WATERHOUSE: That's a pretty good spread.

CSM LYON: They were --

SGM WATERHOUSE: From Mahmudiyah to Falcon, that's a long road.

CSM LYON: Hmm, I didn't consider it that



long, it wasn't bad --

SGM WATERHOUSE: An hour or so.

CSM LYON: Hmm, yeah, other places were worse.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Not five minutes, yeah.

CSM LYON: Yeah. So 1-63 was way up north. I don't even remember the name of the FOB they were on, and then the Field Artillery, 1-41, they were across the river, virtually. They really sucked.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Now, as far as your Companies, how spread out were you when you had --

CSM LYON: The Companies, we were on the FOB together --

SGM WATERHOUSE: You were on the same -- okay.

CSM LYON: Yeah, we were on the same FOB.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, as far as battle circulation, everybody is right there (laughter).

CSM LYON: Mm hmm. The big thing that we did, and all of us did at that point, was we were working the relationships with Iraqis to do the coaching and mentoring. So that one had to be interesting in itself because you could -- I can speak Arabic.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Mm hmm.

CSM LYON: I can't speak Iraqi dialect for anything.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Uh-huh.

CSM LYON: I'm very, very bad at it. But most of their military spoke MSA, which is Modern Standard Arabic.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So they could understand you.

CSM LYON: They could understand me when I spoke. If I went out into the streets and talked to folks --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Different --

CSM LYON: They would just look at me like -- well, for one, I'm a woman, why are you talking to me?

SGM WATERHOUSE: You could talk to the women, probably, but the guys were probably --

CSM LYON: They were just as bad.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Oh, were they?

CSM LYON: Yeah, because the men could see them and they'd be like, no.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Uh-huh.

CSM LYON: You've got to remember, my role was not to be a human or conducting questioning.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Right, right.

CSM LYON: So that was one of the lessons learned from that, and we did. We depended upon each other quite a bit because forces were drawing down at that time.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah, I was going to ask you, I mean during your deployment, Operation Iraqi Freedom, that operation officially ended and then New Dawn began in September of 2010, or in 2010 while you were over there. I'm sure it wasn't cut-and-dry as far as what you were doing. I'm sure some of your missions may have overlapped and you had to kind of, like you said, turn stuff over to the Iraqis and working, I'm sure that had -- you probably have hundreds of stories about that, but that had to be a key mission you guys did, obviously.

CSM LYON: We turned over a number of FOBS, to include Falcon where we were, Mahmudiyah, where 27 was, the one up north we hung on to for a little while. I think it was Camp Warrior, I'll think of it later. But one of the things that we had to watch -- of course, there were a number of things we had to watch for.

They had to clear out from down the road at

Mahmudiyah with 27, and so we had some lessons learned from them because they turned over first. When they took ours we had that huge DFac that was KBR run on air installation.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Dining facility, yeah.

CSM LYON: So guess what they had a lot of in that dining installation, because all that food was not moved someplace else.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Uh-huh.

CSM LYON: They just didn't have the capacity to take it, so pork products --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Uh-huh, it's like, what are you going to do with it<

CSM LYON: Yeah, what are you going to do with it? So we had to get creative on ways to get rid of all the pork products.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Oh.

CSM LYON: We were eating a lot of pork there those last couple of months (laughter).

SGM WATERHOUSE: Right, because the locals weren't allowed to eat it.

CSM LYON: No.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Not if they were Muslim.

CSM LYON: Mm hmm. Well, you also had to consider the message that it conveyed if you let the pork products -- you were deemed disrespectful.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah, you can't be disrespecting.

CSM LYON: It can be disrespecting.

SGM WATERHOUSE: 90% of our population.

CSM LYON: Yes, exactly.

SGM WATERHOUSE: There are some Christians there but mostly Muslim so that would not be a good signal.

CSM LYON: Yes, so we had to learn that lesson and you had to make sure soldiers understood that lesson. And that's one thing that we got better about, I think, as an Army, was making sure that people understood the cultural differences because we weren't using them to our advantage. We were letting them defeat us in that respect because we were, in essence, being disrespectful.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Uh-huh.

CSM LYON: Sometimes, not intentionally, but

just because of a lack of knowledge.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Sergeant Major, in December of 2010 you guys redeployed back to Fort Stewart where you continued to serve as the 1-3 BSTB Command Sergeant Major for another 9 months or so. When you got back, what did the focus of the Battalion become; what did you focus on your last months there?

CSM LYON: We came back in December and actually I came home a week before the unit because that is when my father passed. So we came back from walk leave, after the holidays, when most of it was in recovery and PME, the normal that you would do on the (inaudible) end cycle --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Send guys and gals to school, yeah.

CSM LYON: Making sure that everybody was good. The biggest change that we came back to was the fact that the BSTB was going away.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Uh-huh.

CSM LYON: It was becoming the BEB, which was the Engineering Battalion, so it morphed after I left to become that.

SGM WATERHOUSE: The Brigade one, was the  
Brigade --

CSM LYON: Engineer --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Engineer.

CSM LYON: Battalion.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Brigade Engineer Battalion.

CSM LYON: Yep. So they kept the MICOs. I'm  
not sure exactly what they did with the signal guys  
because it is still a discussion to this day about their  
use of the MICOs and how they are using them, and how  
they should be used and things like that. It's a major  
discussion between the two. Of course, the military  
intelligence community is not happy about it. They say  
it should not be allowed and --

SGM WATERHOUSE: I know in some Brigades, like  
the one that I was in, they were attached to a CAV  
spotter.

CSM LYON: Uh-huh.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Somebody -- each infantry,  
armor, even our maintenance battalion, they took one of  
those signal MI engineer, they took that as another  
company to the Battalion level --

CSM LYON: Because they made a -- they were supposed to have made an Engineer Battalion across the -  
-

SGM WATERHOUSE: An Engineer Battalion took over after we left.

CSM LYON: Okay.

SGM WATERHOUSE: But as we were drawing down -  
- when we did our deployment, this was the second ID, I had the MICO under me, and another unit has the signal company (laughter).

CSM LYON: Yeah, we didn't do that.

SGM WATERHOUSE: They were Brigade level assets but they were assigned to Battalion for all your daily admin stuff.

CSM LYON: And you didn't have a BSTB to -- or equivalent to run them?

SGM WATERHOUSE: We did not.

CSM LYON: Interesting, okay. There was the whole concept behind the modularity thing, to make those assets work that way.

SGM WATERHOUSE: If we did, I mean, each battalion, each line battalion, had a specialty company.



CSM LYON: Mm hmm. Hmm.

SGM WATERHOUSE: I would have to look back and see if we had a BSTB, I don't remember that, but we could have --

CSM LYON: Well they were in the heavies.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay, no, we were light.

CSM LYON: Yeah, I was going to say.

SGM WATERHOUSE: We were a striker.

CSM LYON: Yeah, you guys were a little different in your setup, and that's why.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: Mm hmm, yeah.

SGM WATERHOUSE: But it's interesting that the BSTBs came around and then they went away so quickly.

CSM LYON: Apparently, I've done that my whole career (laughter). So many things that used to be are no longer.

SGM WATERHOUSE: (Laughter) you help set them up, get them working and then, yeah, we're going to change it.

CSM LYON: Oh, yeah, we do -- so we did some great things. For instance, we had a MICO, right? So

my first Sergeant at the BSTB of the HHC was a Tanker, a very good Tanker. In fact, he said when he came to interview with me that it was the scariest day of his life. You know, I don't know if I could say this on the -- and I asked him why, because later on we became, close.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Mm hmm.

CSM LYON: And we worked well together, he said, I knew that you were either an absolute bitch or very, very good at what you did.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Ah.

CSM LYON: And I said, well, I'm a little bit of both.

SGM WATERHOUSE: (Laughter).

CSM LYON: And he said, yes, I've learned that now.

SGM WATERHOUSE: This is one of your First Sergeants?

CSM LYON: Yes.

SGM WATERHOUSE: (Laughter).

CSM LYON: After the fact, he did. He was nervous as all get out when he came to interview with

me.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Hmm.

CSM LYON: And they made him go through the process because he was a Tanker.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM LYON: I was authorized a Tanker as my First Sergeant, which is great because they had the operational experience, and the planning experience, and so he brought so much to the table.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Hmm.

CSM LYON: But, yeah, that's what he told me, he was like, yeah, I was afraid to come and interview with you. But you know we worked through it, but it was a lot of lessons learned. And what he brought to the table for training and the effects and things like that; we were doing gunnery tables with his assistance for our MICO.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Mm hmm.

CSM LYON: And for our signal because we knew that when we went into Iraq that we weren't going to be pigeon-holed. That they were all going to be out on the road.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM LYON: And for the most part, we were right. We had some that were up with the Brigade headquarters and that was fine, but they all knew how to conduct a proper convoy, fire from a moving convoy, under duress, and so we ran gunnery tables for them. So, one of the greatest disappointments I've had in the last couple of years is that they are, no, we're not going to do that, we have no business doing that within MI company, and I'm like --

SGM WATERHOUSE: So you guys trained for -- because you had to do convoys, you had to go from point A to point B, not necessarily a patrol to go snatch somebody or combat patrol, but more convoy operations.

CSM LYON: Mm hmm. Yeah, more -- combat operations, convoy operations --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Convoy, I mean, I'm sorry.

CSM LYON: Yeah, so for that purpose, we learned it and then we did a lot of, like I said, our battles would call us, 57 was on the FOB with us, the BSB was on the FOB with us; we could provide oversight to them for security, same with 57. 27 would do the

same because, you now, there were down at Mahmudiyah, so when they were going by heading up to Camp Victory, you know, we would jump in the convoy with them. So it was one of those things that we needed to have that experience and that ability, otherwise, you become the liability.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Right.

CSM LYON: And you're not a -- you become a burden instead of an enabler. So we trained our soldiers that way and now we have gone back away from that saying that it's not important, that you shouldn't do it, and I just don't agree with that.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Uh-huh.

CSM LYON: I think every soldier needs to be able to, one, be proficient with their weapon.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM LYON: In whatever environment, moving a convoy, providing security, providing over-watch, and you can't do that sitting at a desk running your computer; it just doesn't transfer out to the field the same way.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yes, we're leaving, or

getting away from that, you have to be able to train for any contingency to live off of what you have, because it may not be FOBs out there, but even on a FOB, guess what, if the FOB gets overrun --

CSM LYON: Exactly.

SGM WATERHOUSE: You've got to be able to do your job as an infantryman.

CSM LYON: (Laughter).

SGM WATERHOUSE: Or infantrywoman; I mean, you have to be able to defend yourself and defend your soldiers and --

CSM LYON: Exactly.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And that is kind of how I approach it. I'm sure that's what you were thinking too.

CSM LYON: It is absolutely what I was thinking.

SGM WATERHOUSE: I mean, it's basic soldier stuff.

CSM LYON: It is.

SGM WATERHOUSE: I mean you have to be able to do it.

CSM LYON: So, the Marines make everybody do

it, everybody is an infantryman first in the Marines.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yes.

CSM LYON: And so that -- I guess I was fortunate that in my first -- at defense language institute, at DLI -- we were joint, so I had as many Marines beside me as I did Army or Navy or Air Force.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Well I think that's we had what we call warrior tasks and drills.

CSM LYON: I always thought that. That's why I always tried to be proficient at it.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Because you had to be a warrior first, and then you're a tanker, and then you're a military intelligence. You have to be able to do the basics.

CSM LYON: And I thought we proved through the GWOT and through OIF and through OEF that you never know where you're going to find yourself at --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Mm hmm.

CSM LYON: In what circumstances or situation you'll find yourself in, and you have to be able to fight your way out of it if you need to be.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So that training paid off for

you guys?

CSM LYON: It did.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM LYON: It absolutely did.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So Sergeant Major, in June of 2011, you were assigned to Fort Bragg again. This time you served as a Command Sergeant Major of the 525th Military Intelligence Brigade which later became the 525th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade, the first of its kind.

So first off, how did you end up there? Was this CSL oriented, did you get picked from the Centralized Selection List, or was this not in effect yet?

CSM LYON: Yes.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: CSL had just gone into effect and it was the timing -- so I had been selected for it without knowledge of it before I ever came back from Iraq.

SGM WATERHOUSE: (Laughter) Well, you knew you had been chosen to be a Brigade Sergeant Major, you



should have found that out, right, when the list came out, it should have had that.

CSM LYON: Not before I came back from Iraq.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Not before you came back.

CSM LYON: It came back just --

SGM WATERHOUSE: No, it came out after --

CSM LYON: So, I was one of the early ones to get activated.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: I would have moved earlier. It was known by them -- I'll be honest with you, I had put my retirement paperwork in.

SGM WATERHOUSE: How many years had you had by that point?

CSM LYON: It was by 20.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: And I didn't know what the future held for me, so I had put my paperwork in and they denied it.

SGM WATERHOUSE: (Laughter).

CSM LYON: Because they knew --

SGM WATERHOUSE: They? Was that HRC?

CSM LYON: Yes, because they knew that I had been selected for the Brigade. So, it was going to be one of those that you'll either --

SGM WATERHOUSE: You don't know why you are denied but you'll figure it out.

CSM LYON: Well, that or you will retire "in lieu of". You could still retire "in lieu of" back then.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Uh-huh.

CSM LYON: And I was like, okay. Remember, I wasn't basing anything in my career projection, I was just -- I went from place to place and tried to do the best that I could at everything that I was doing. So up to that point, I was hoping that my career had spoken for itself, and it had. And it gets a little different as you move up into the NOM world. It's a little different, I think. But I had been selected to take the 525, and so I actually moved in March and had to spend a couple of months at the Corps G2.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So you prepositioned.

CSM LYON: I did preposition because the 525 was actually deployed at that point.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: And so I had to wait for them to get home. The rear detachment was there and so not to create that conflict of who's at large and in charge --

SGM WATERHOUSE: (Laughter).

CSM LYON: I stayed up at the G2.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: So that there was no confusion as to --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Who the rear D was.

CSM LYON: Who the rear D was, and who was still the Brigade Sergeant Major at that point.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Uh-huh, okay.

CSM LYON: Because he was deployed with the rest of the Brigade so I stayed up there when he came home, when we did the change of responsibility. So that's how I got to be at the 525, which was the Battlefield Surveillance Brigade, and it had been the Battlefield Surveillance Brigade for at least two -- at least one rotation, if not two, before me.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: So it was kind of reversed. Again,

when I came home from that deployment, it went back to being an MEB (laughter).

SGM WATERHOUSE: So I have it backward. It was a BFSB --

CSM LYON: It was a BFSB --

SGM WATERHOUSE: BFSB when you arrived --

CSM LYON: When I took it --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: And it was developed to provide extra power and modularity for the force. So, the BFSBs, there were three of them, each Corps had one, and they had a CAV Squadron assigned to them.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Mm hmm.

CSM LYON: So, that's where it became -- so, I guess -- I love being tactical. But those elements were able to use the MI Battalions and the CAV Squadron to work together to develop best practices and about how to use that force. So, they knew that the MI Battalions could be force enablers for them, and our MI soldiers had to be as physically fit --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM LYON: As the CAV Squadron was because we

were putting them way out in front like we used to do with the LLVIs.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And was the CAV Squadron light in Humvees and stuff like that?

CSM LYON: Yes.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay. So it wasn't a mechanized CAV unit.

CSM LYON: No, and they had the long range surveillance company with them as well.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: And so they were a part of them, but our MI Battalion assets worked more with the CAV soldiers. The LRS as we call them --

SGM WATERHOUSE: The low range surveillance?

CSM LYON: Yes. They remained pretty much independent and orchestrated under their old charter; the way they functioned and had for 30 years --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Mm hmm.

CSM LYON: Thereabouts, so I found it to work very, very well, when they worked together like that, and when they worked like that we're a force multiplier.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Do you remember -- was the

Army's plan to make a lot more of those and we only got to three, and then decisions made a change?

CSM LYON: Well there's more in the National Guard, of course, and --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Because that, I mean, I remember just like people reading this that have been as long as I have, I remember they came about and then they went away pretty quick.

CSM LYON: Yeah, again, they were that call for modularity and answer to it and once the major combat operations ceased -- not to say that we are not still in combat operations --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Well, in 2011 is when we changed the admission in Iraq.

CSM LYON: Mm hmm, when those went away, they reformatted yet again. They had a couple more missions after that into the continuing resolve in -- the 525 itself -- the battalions went to Afghanistan, and the 1-3 CAV and the headquarters went to Kosovo.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Uh-huh.

CSM LYON: So, we were split as a force and it was very, very difficult. There wasn't a whole lot of

battlefield circulation from us so we had to depend upon, I think, 18th -- their home Corps was there. I want to say they were the headquarters at the time. So that was good. They provided the oversight and took care of them while they were in Afghanistan.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So from I understand, later the Battlefield Surveillance Brigade became an Expeditionary Military Intelligence Brigade.

CSM LYON: Exactly.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Because you have a level 9 (inaudible) so why did we, as an Army, decide to go with that? I mean, there is a name change there, but I don't know what else did that encompass?

CSM LYON: There were a couple of things. They felt -- part of this is me speaking -- they felt that with the CAV Squadrons there -- we couldn't maximize the effect of those CAV Squadrons because they didn't have enough fire power. So, to be landowners in a combat environment was pushing the threshold of the capabilities.

Did they do it? They did it once successfully, and they were okay. They were good, but

they just couldn't get enough fire power for them to expand in their borders when they were in a combat environment. And so the Military Intelligence Battalions didn't travel with them as such.

Whenever they did that, they were spliced off to somebody to begin with, be it Corps headquarters or somebody else. So they never truly -- they deployed that way but they weren't employed that way, so it was a little bit different. And that's another reason why I said it was always great when I had the MICO as a BSTB Sergeant Major that we learned how to conduct convoys, to do combat operations, and to train that way.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM LYON: It made us a force multiplier instead of a detractor when you are out in combat. So they split from that and for the -- my understanding -- for the Military Intelligence side of the house was, it gave them back the control of those MI Battalions to use them in the way that they were initially designed to be used. So the MI Brigade reverted back to its original formation, they just changed the name.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.



CSM LYON: And the CAV Squadron left them, so they lost combat fire power capability.

SGM WATERHOUSE: (Laughter).

CSM LYON: Me, being tactical like I am, to me, that was a problem.

SGM WATERHOUSE: (Laughter) when you were the 525th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade, Sergeant Major, what kind of guidance -- who was your higher headquarters, and what kind of feedback or guidance did you get from him or her?

CSM LYON: 18th Airborne Corps.

SGM WATERHOUSE: 18th Airborne Corps.

CSM LYON: So we were considered an MSE.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: Mission Support Element. 18th Airborne Corps, when I took the 525, was still in Afghanistan. They had rear detachments and naturally they had left individuals from their organizations to be the rear detachment Sergeant Major and Commander.

We were direct report to them, and they had tasking authority for us as the BSFB. So that's Sergeant Major as a BSFB, that Sergeant Major that was

at 18th Airborne Corps, was who I reported to on a regular basis.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: They were also who tasked us.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay (laughter).

CSM LYON: We were not --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Who they would call and complain to (laughter).

CSM LYON: We were not an INSCOM unit so, therefore -- and that's where the distinction usually comes in, who they'd report to INSCOM, until they deploy and then they are at CON/OPCON to whoever they're deploying with, usually. And it's typically a Corps or higher that they are usually attached to.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Sergeant Major, speaking of deployment, yet another one: in May of 2013, you deployed to Kosovo for nine months where you served as the Multinational Battle-group East Command Sergeant Major for Kosovo Force, or K4 17; did your entire Brigade go with you on that?

CSM LYON: No, no, the entire Brigade did not. The CAV Squadron went as the maneuver element, the

maneuver force for K4 17, and our two MI Battalions went back to Afghanistan.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: So we left -- as far as Brigade went -- we left a relatively healthy rear detachment population because they didn't need the whole Battalion to go -- either of the battalions to go forward. So, they did a fantastic job over there and did provide a great support to the 18th Airborne Corps, but we were in Kosovo as the headquarters and the 1-38 CAV Squadron.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So Sergeant Major, what did you see, in layman's terms, as your role, what your role was as the CSM of that Multinational Battle-group East?

CSM LYON: So, K4 --

SGM WATERHOUSE: What was your day job, in other words, for those that are trying to picture that?

CSM LYON: Man, train, and equip the Multinational Force in Kosovo. K4 was the higher, or Kosovo forces was the higher --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Which is a NATO unit, right?

CSM LYON: NATO unit.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM LYON: NATO unit, NATO directed. We also answered to 18th Airborne Corp. We also answered to FORSCOM, and we also answered to USAREUR.

SGM WATERHOUSE: That's from Europe.

CSM LYON: Mm hmm. The United States Army Europe; it was pretty interesting. We had a lot of bosses and everyone that we had to keep happy, or to feed and report to the information. So on a daily basis -- the situation in Kosovo is still tenuous, and I think it will remain such for a number of years to come. We can't control the mindsets of those entities within Kosovo and the Balkan States.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Mm hmm.

CSM LYON: There is a lot of history that plays into that and so those are at levels higher than me.

SGM WATERHOUSE: (Laughter).

CSM LYON: My job was to make sure that we were conducting security operations and providing assurance and deterrence to the Balkan States to keep them, hopefully, in a state of quiet. So you would find that there were as many Serbians who were happy to have

the Americans in their footprint as the Albanians in the rest of Kosovo were. And the reason being is because it provided a source of calm and quiet, regardless of which side of the -- where your interests lay.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Mm hmm.

CSM LYON: Because the Kosovorians didn't want us to have to get involved other than to provide security any more than the Serbians wanted us. So in the Serbians minds we kept it at a peaceful level so that they weren't aggressed in any form or fashion.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So a layman would say this is like a peace-keeping mission?

CSM LYON: Yes.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: Even though we were under arms it was a peace-keeping mission. Kosovo was used to us being there so we were under GO No. 1.

SGM WATERHOUSE: This is about '95, '96?

CSM LYON: Well --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Oh, no, that was Bosnia, that was in Bosnia.

CSM LYON: Yes, as a steady state, '99.

SGM WATERHOUSE: '99.

CSM LYON: For Kosovo.

SGM WATERHOUSE: For all country (laughter).

CSM LYON: Yeah. Close.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Close (laughter). So, when you were over there, and you said you had troops back, how long was --

CSM LYON: Rear detachment.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Rear detachment, so did you try to bounce between, back and forth, or how did you spend your time?

CSM LYON: No, we had a really good, strong rear detachment taking care of things. I did come home on a couple of occasions just to check on the troops. But like I said, the rear detachment was pretty strong and they had a lot of supervision from 18th Airborne Corps who were helping to make sure that they were taking care of the troops.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So they had their own training plan and all that kind of stuff.

CSM LYON: They did. They did. They kept them gainfully employed, but you know, on a large

installation you're also providing borrowed military manpower.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Pulling aid guard, and --

CSM LYON: Absolutely.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Details and all the other stuff.

CSM LYON: Absolutely, yes we did.

SGM WATERHOUSE: (Laughter).

CSM LYON: So they were kept busy, and those who weren't kept busy, it was because they were either ETSers or PCSers, or MEBs or such.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Plus they -- probably some of them went to school they had to go to and stuff.

CSM LYON: Yes, absolutely. We didn't preclude people from going to school in that one; if they really had to come home to go to school --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Oh, from Kosovo.

CSM LYON: Yes. We would do it.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, after you guys redeployed to Fort Bragg in February of 2014, you continued to serve as the Battlefield Surveillance Brigade Command Sergeant Major about a month in

preparation for your next assignment. Looking back at those 32 months, almost three years you served as the 525 BFSB at Fort Bragg, Sergeant Major, and in Kosovo, what were some of your key takeaways or lessons learned from those three years?

CSM LYON: One of my key -- two, I think, I would consider really, really key was the message that we tried to convey, of the way that the MI Battalions and the Combat Arms, when they train together and work together, can actually make a formidable force.

So our CAV Squadron and our MI Battalions, they worked very, very well together, and they had it down to a fine -- they trained that way. They were very adept at using that to their advantage, and they knew the capabilities that an MI Battalion brought to them.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Mm hmm.

CSM LYON: So they used them to their advantage. As a BFSB, I think we were one of the three that worked very, very well at getting that capability developed. So naturally, I was very disappointed when it went away.

SGM WATERHOUSE: When it changed.



CSM LYON: Because I thought -- I would have preferred to have seen more fire power go into that CAV Squadron than to dissolve it the way that they did because I thought they benefited each other very, very well. They were complimentary.

The other thing that I'd take away from it was the Kosovo mission was unique. A lot of people, a lot of soldiers do it. I have met any number of them now who have been to Kosovo, whether at the beginning of the conflict or as peace-keeping forces later on. But that is a unique environment to work with your allies and partners that way. For K4 proper, there are 31 countries that were represented at the time.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Mm hmm.

CSM LYON: So what I learned while I was there -- there were a number of countries that were starting to pull out. You're talking at that point there had been almost -- 1999, that was 2013, so you're looking at 14, 15 years that they had been in Kosovo proper. And some countries were like, we have other things that we have to go and do. And so they had pulled out and taken their attentions other places, and put their focus on

those.

I was there recently last year and I see the number continue to pull out and I think we will continue to see that, but I don't see the U.S. pulling out any time soon, honestly. I see them staying there as a stabilizing force. That was a big lesson learned; working with allies and partners. They bring unique capabilities and knowledge to the table so it's always interesting and fun to work with them, and train with them, and learn from them, and vice versa; they do the same with us.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Sergeant Major, in March of 2014 you were assigned to Offutt Air Force Base in Nebraska where you served as the Senior Enlisted Leader for the Joint Functional Component Command for Global Strike, United States Strategic Command, or STRATCOM, for about 14 months. Can you explain what that is in layman's terms (laughter)?

CSM LYON: Well --

SGM WATERHOUSE: It sounds like a mission, but "Senior Enlisted Leader for the Joint Functional Component Command for Global Strike"?

CSM LYON: So that is (laughter), our term, our colloquial term for ourselves was the provider of global swackage.

SGM WATERHOUSE: (Laughter), another word for striking something.

CSM LYON: Exactly.

SGM WATERHOUSE: (Laughter).

CSM LYON: Their mission overall was basically nuclear deterrents.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: So in layman's terms, their (inaudible) are pretty simple. We provided support and enabled that endeavor.

SGM WATERHOUSE: When did you find out you were going there?

CSM LYON: That is a nominative position, which means that I had to interview for it.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And working for a General Officer --

CSM LYON: And working for a General Officer. So I interviewed while I was in Kosovo, as a matter of fact, and did a phone interview because that was the

only capability we had at the time. Spoke with them -- you find many times that in a position like that they are looking for someone who can, very oftentimes, work with their civilian population as well as their enlisted population.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Mm hmm.

CSM LYON: To take care of them and provide for them, whether it be training, manning, equipping, in an environment at that strategic level; there's not a whole lot of equipping that goes on, though. So it was truly a strategic assignment; very, very strategic.

STRATCOM is global. It's very, very diverse. Space and Missile Command falls under it; CYBERCOM falls under it, so you are talking about a very divergent, global capability. That is STRATCOM in a nutshell.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And your guys' Command was one of those Commands under STRATCOM.

CSM LYON: Yes, we were a subordinate Command under STRATCOM. The General at the time is usually dual-headed.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Is this a one-star or two-star General?

CSM LYON: Two-star.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Two-star General. So did they --

CSM LYON: And an Air Force.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And an Air Force General in your case.

CSM LYON: Mm hmm.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Because it's joint, it probably changes.

CSM LYON: No it doesn't change, actually.

SGM WATERHOUSE: It's always an Air Force General?

CSM LYON: It's always an Air Force [General] and the reason being is because they also have 8th Air Force which is at Barksdale.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: So that person is dual-headed that way, actually, they were triple-headed but I can't remember the other two --

SGM WATERHOUSE: (Laughter).

CSM LYON: That they had as well. So he was dual-headed and he would go back and forth between the

two locations.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So for you, it sounds like a huge responsibility, so how did you -- I guess, how did you learn the job, the organization, and how did you determine where, you know -- how did you assess such an organization as your Commander and you, you want to get out to know your troops and your units, how did you go about that process?

CSM LYON: There are a couple of different ways. One, I had to learn what everybody else did too, and all those other organizations that I talked about. Figuring out everybody's niche and what they bring to the table and what they contribute, that was really, really important. And then how can I best enable them, while providing for our troops and our civilians to provide -- again, that was intelligence; the biggest thing that we provided was intelligence at that level. So you're talking the strategic level, intelligence network. We had some great troops who were doing that and it was a joint environment. STRATCOM is predominantly Air Force, second to maybe Navy and then Army and then Marines.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So your soldiers, per se, were actually airmen and sailors --

CSM LYON: That's when I learned to call them all troops.

SGM WATERHOUSE: (Laughter).

CSM LYON: I did. I had to learn to call them all troops because they all weren't airmen, they all weren't sailors --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM LYON: And they all weren't soldiers, so I just called them troops and that encompassed everybody.

SGM WATERHOUSE: (Laughter).

CSM LYON: But you know, they were very good, they were very capable, and they were very smart. There were a lot of civilians there to contribute. One of the biggest things that we did was the training environment also -- so there was real world which went on every day.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Mm hmm.

CSM LYON: So in that environment, what you want to make sure is that you are deterring --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Deterring?

CSM LYON: That you do not want to go passed

Bay Zero in that environment because it could just get ugly after that. That was the environment that we lived in, but training and exercising in the event of was really important because at that level, at that strategic level, you had to bring everybody together. And they had to be able -- so, who reported to who.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Uh-huh.

CSM LYON: And what was the reporting chain; what was the reaction chain; who had the authority to do what. So, we practiced that on a regular basis in the event of, and it was very, very empowering. But again, you don't want to get passed Bay Zero in that business. We had -- actually they were all Navy. There was no jointness to it for two of the subordinate units; one was at Norfolk and one was at Hawaii.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So a pretty big spread  
(laughter).

CSM LYON: I would go to visit them, make sure that they were doing well, learn how they did their business --

SGM WATERHOUSE: How long did that take you to actually see all your units?



CSM LYON: In that respect, technically you could do it in a couple of weeks because you had to fly to Hawaii, but for the most part, most of them were there at Offutt Air Force Base.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: Except for those who were deploying forward -- because they did deploy some of them forward. You'd get taskers just like any place else. They needed this support or that support. It was a very unique experience. Some of the organizations associated with STRATCOM were the service provider for SES level transport.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Uh-huh.

CSM LYON: And so it was very, very unique; very enlightening. Talk about professionals; they took their job very, very seriously and they were very good at it too.

SGM WATERHOUSE: As the Command Senior Enlisted Leader, I think was your title, right?

CSM LYON: Mm hmm.

SGM WATERHOUSE: CSEL, and you had NCOs and troops from all branches of service so when you would go

around and talk to your sailors, your Marines, what would you kind of stress to those guys and gals when you'd visit them, or did you try to -- did you have time to get into any kind of NCO with development?

CSM LYON: Mm hmm. What you will find across the services is that we are not really different. We call them different things, but for the most part -- now the Air Force, to me, is a little bit different because they have their universities.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Mm hmm.

CSM LYON: Which is equivalent to our PMEs, like that -- everybody calls it something different. One of the things that I saw that I did like best was the Navy, as far as ratings and evaluations; I think they are doing it right, and here is why I say that: every time we move some place, we do an NCOER, so we have a change rater (phonetic), right.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Every time you have to change locations.

CSM LYON: Mm hmm, or somebody moves, I did one on the folks that I -- when I left I had to --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Somebody in your rating chain

leaves.

CSM LYON: Yes. So the Navy doesn't do that. They do the letter of continuities and they are very adamant about them. What they do is they fill out the report form and they put their comments on it and you as the new rater, or evaluator, brings that on, if they haven't had time to rate it.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And they just get an annual report?

CSM LYON: They get an annual report and they all get their reports at the same time. So when you have the percentage of the rating profile?

SGM WATERHOUSE: Mm hmm.

CSM LYON: For those individuals, they stick to that.

SGM WATERHOUSE: They are all getting rated against their peers.

CSM LYON: They all get rated against each other.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So nothing happens to be in the window at that time.

CSM LYON: So you have 600 on a ship and they

do a murder board, and they let me participate in the one at STRATCOM; it was much smaller, it's not like being on a ship where you --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Now, this is for your senior ranks too, or is this just, like, your E5, E6?

CSM LYON: I know it's for E5, E6s and E7s.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: I can't speak on the E8, E9 -- I don't know about how they do it for the E9s.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And this is for part of their evaluation?

CSM LYON: Yeah.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Ah.

CSM LYON: So that they part among the best, promote now --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM LYON: Promote when available --

SGM WATERHOUSE: They have to go through a board, a contest, or knowledge --

CSM LYON: And they are all pitted against each other.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Uh-huh.

CSM LYON: And so when they stratify, they are stratifying everybody. So, if you got 600 on a ship, those 600 are stratified against each other; staff sergeants for instance, heaven help you if you are on the ship when the annual reports come to you because you're going to go up against all your peers, and they go in and they argue for all of them; this one should be first and this is why, and they will do 1 to 600. So, they let me sit on one of their boards because I happen to have the Chief, and he was really, really, good. In fact, my personal experience in watching him and the others, he was like number one.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Uh-huh.

CSM LYON: So they let me sit in on their board when they were doing that, and I got to watch it all as it played out. And I thought that was really, really good. But they do -- and if you can't advocate for your sailor, then you'd better have the justification written down on paper someplace, because if somebody else is better than you are at advocating --

SGM WATERHOUSE: (Laughter).

CSM LYON: You just got number two instead of

number one. But they can only do a certain percentage. Those senior rather, that come in behind them, they only have a certain percentage that they can get above the margin at --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Right.

CSM LYON: Theirs is more strictly enforced because they do it all at one time.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM LYON: The numbers pop up and they can see them.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM LYON: Right then and there, so it's not something that catches up with them six months later and then they're like, oh, oops, we gave too many one-walks away.

So I enjoyed learning that from them. But they were -- the joint environment at that level, that's where SEJPME came into play, and I retook -- I took that while I was there. You're talking about opening your eyes about the way it really works.

SGM WATERHOUSE: (Laughter).

CSM LYON: That's when everything started

clicking and it really started making sense. I was like, oh, oh, okay (laughter). I understand now.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Sergeant Major, looking back at that, so you went from a Brigade level Command Sergeant Major position where you are working with a Colonel or O6 to a (inaudible) Sergeant Major position working for a two-star General or Major General. How did you feel going into that?

CSM LYON: Scared to death.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And was reality as scary as it -- what were some of your concerns, I guess, and how did that pan out, or how did you do?

CSM LYON: Some of my concerns were knowing how to conduct myself at that level, at the strategic level, in that environment and being able to produce results. And honestly, knowing what results to produce.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Uh-huh.

CSM LYON: You know, how is the mission different, you know, what are the expectations for me, and of me, to help make the organization better, and leave it better than I found it. So that was my biggest concern going in the door, and I will tell you that what

I learned was, is that while they are General Officers and very, very professional, they are human beings just like everybody else, meaning that their expectations are normal, human being expectations. They expect you to either know what the policy is, and if you don't, figure out what it is and find out so that you can share it with the rest of the force.

They don't expect you to be bigger than life. They don't expect you to know it all. But they do expect you to be able to find it and act upon it.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Sergeant Major during your time in that position, what kind of things did you try to do in the organization, as far as like NCO corps related stuff, or anything specific for the big force -- you had this joint force of --

CSM LYON: One of the things that you had to do for them was to make sure that they were doing their PME, that they were being allowed to go to school, that they were getting their reports and their evaluations much like you would anywhere else. I think a bigger challenge, or something that was of more concern there was making sure that your civilian force was not



forgotten.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Uh-huh.

CSM LYON: Because you are responsible for that civilian force as well.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Right.

CSM LYON: Not just the enlisted or the military side of the house, and making sure that those were all working together. So depending on how you look at it, the civilian force is typically your continuity.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Mm hmm.

CSM LYON: Because they don't go anywhere, they stay right there. So making sure that the troops were doing what they needed to be doing so that they weren't taken for granted or being non-contributors. Because you don't want that to happen, because once that does happen, the civilian has no use for you --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Right.

CSM LYON: So you become a non-player in the field and that is not a good place to be. That means you sit around and twiddle your thumbs if the civilian force can do everything without you.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Uh-huh.

CSM LYON: They provide the Intel, the manpower, the force to -- really the general workforce, the general workforces.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And did you realize this going in or is this something you learned after.

CSM LYON: I think I had to relearn it. I had seen it before and I had forgotten the impact that it can have. So that is why it's a balancing act. You don't want the civilian force to think that they don't need you.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Uh-huh.

CSM LYON: Because you want them to work with you, educate you, or be educated by you and to use you. Otherwise, you have a lot of troops -- soldiers, sailors or airmen -- who are verbally getting in trouble because they have nothing to do and they are bored.

SGM WATERHOUSE: When you are there a while -- and I know you said initially coming in, you know, to determine -- I don't want to say the word, value -- but how you could be effective as a Sergeant Major and make a difference. What are some of the things that you tried to do in your tenure there to try to do that, to

better the organization for the next guy or gal coming in?

CSM LYON: Involvement with the rest of the force. I think working together was very, very important there. Like I said, everybody has their contributions that they make but being team players in that environment -- for instance, the Marines, there are a very small, strong force. In fact, they had two detachments.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Uh-huh.

CSM LYON: So that means they might have 60 to 80 individuals, Marines, there. So they have a small force, but I can tell you what, they are a force to be reckoned with.

SGM WATERHOUSE: (Laughter).

CSM LYON: Because they come together and they let their presence be known. So leadership-wise, reminding -- I think, one of the -- I call it a challenge -- and I find it in many places like this, reminding troops, soldiers, that they are military.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Uh-huh.

CSM LYON: Sometimes their expectations get a

little bit -- they get a little bit civilian-oriented, and we are not the same. If we were, we would be civilians --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Right.

CSM LYON: And therefore not need to be military. So I think that in itself sometimes is a challenge. They are working side by side with an individual; while they don't have the same level of responsibility, at the end of the day it looks like their job is the same.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Uh-huh.

CSM LYON: Their production is the same, so why do I want to be making this amount of money when this person here who is my supervisor and has responsibility, which they don't always see, is making more money than me. I can do that.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Right.

CSM LYON: So now you are in that environment where they can see where somebody else makes more money --

SGM WATERHOUSE: (Laughter).

CSM LYON: Than they do and you have to

convince them that they really like being in the military because it's a really cool job, and a really great job, and you're serving your country. That is one of the biggest challenges I find in that type of environment.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Sergeant Major, in May of 2015, you were assigned to Wiesbaden, Germany, where you served as the Command Sergeant Major of the United States Army Europe, or USAREUR, for 30 months or so, when did you get word that you were going to Germany?

CSM LYON: December of '14.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So you got six months' notice or so before you had to --

CSM LYON: Well, I took a little time off before I went over so, if it wasn't December, it was January of '15.

SGM WATERHOUSE: But you had some leave time where you had to go right into --

CSM LYON: Yeah, I had some leave time. Again, it was a nominative position. So I interviewed with General Hodges, and I'll be honest, Dave Davenport, Sergeant Major Dave Davenport, was the one who called me

to tell me that I got the position, and I thought he was messing with me.

SGM WATERHOUSE: (Laughter).

CSM LYON: Because Dave Davenport, Sergeant Major Davenport, was the USAREUR Sergeant Major when I was in Kosovo as the K4 17 --

SGM WATERHOUSE: So you were going to be taking his place?

CSM LYON: I was going to be taking his place and I had technically worked for him when I was in Kosovo.

SGM WATERHOUSE: (Laughter).

CSM LYON: So he would come down, he would do battlefield circulation with us. A couple of times while he was there he'd come down and visit us so that is how I got interested in the USAREUR realm.

SGM WATERHOUSE: (Laughter).

CSM LYON: Never thinking that I would ever get it, so it was kind of a novel experience. So yes, I interviewed with General Hodges and he made his selection and I got to go be the Sergeant Major at United States Army Europe.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And Sergeant Major, this was working for a three-star General now, Lieutenant General, so one higher than you had just left. How prepared did you feel now for a three-star level, after working at the two-star level?

CSM LYON: At STRATCOM, regardless that it was a two-star; STRATCOM is headed by a four-star.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Mm hmm.

CSM LYON: So it is about as strategic as you can get. Going into the ASCC is a little different because it was more operational. You know, you have a fighting force there. So it was a little bit different in the purview. So while I was prepared to work at the strategic level, and to also work with our allies and our multinational partners, I think operationally-wise of the ASCC, I think that was going to be my biggest challenge because there are a lot of assets over there. You know, two direct report brigades, a theater sustainment command, the 7th Army Training Command all report to USAREUR, so --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Lots of diverse --

CSM LYON: A lot of diverse organizations that

direct report to the United States Army Europe, and in essence, to EUCOM.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Which is European Command.

CSM LYON: Mm hmm.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Did you actually get to spend any time with Sergeant Major Davenport before he left or --

CSM LYON: No, Sergeant Major Davenport was selected for Trade-Occ (phonetic) already and so he had left probably, I want to say, two months before I got over there.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay. When you got over there the General was already in place.

CSM LYON: General Hodges was in place.

SGM WATERHOUSE: When you got there what was -- how did you kind of -- what did you focus on in those first couple of months when you got over there?

CSM LYON: Battlefield circulation.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: I arrived on a Wednesday and on a Saturday I was on a plane with General Hodges traveling. So General Hodges was very, very good about strategic



messaging and working with our allies and partners and building a strong Europe. And building a strong Europe ensures that all of our allies and partners were working together. We had one, and I don't remember who it was, who made the comment -- it was a very good comment because I think it wrapped it up very well -- is that the U.S. Army in Europe is the synergy that brings all the forces of Europe together to work together.

SGM WATERHOUSE: It's not just the Germans we are talking about; it's all the other allies --

CSM LYON: It is not just the Germans; it is every ally and partner. So you're talking 51 countries and territories that we worked directly with. It was a huge environment, a huge endeavor, and 20 to 30 years ago -- I'll use this as an example -- my first mission for the United States Army Europe was before I ever took the seat. And it was a conference of European armies for non-commissioned officers. So they have one for the officer side and we had one for the non-commissioned officers --

SGM WATERHOUSE: So this is already set up before you arrived?

CSM LYON: Right.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: And it's something that they have done -- well, I think we are on our 12th year -- so it's been going on for quite a while. But all of those entities come together, their most senior enlisted member from that Army comes to this conference and my first visit was in Slovenia --

SGM WATERHOUSE: So is this NATO and UN, or is it --

CSM LYON: No --

SGM WATERHOUSE: It's neither of those.

CSM LYON: It's conference of European armies.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: So, it was directed by us through EUCOM --

SGM WATERHOUSE: So just select countries --

CSM LYON: We conducted it.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: Well, they were all invited --

SGM WATERHOUSE: (Laughter).

CSM LYON: It was up to them whether they came

or not.

SGM WATERHOUSE: (Laughter), okay.

CSM LYON: And that's my point.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM LYON: Kosovo was there, a couple of other countries, Greece, Georgia; I want to say a couple of the Eastern Bloc countries but --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Latvia, Estonia --

CSM LYON: Albania, you know, Estonia is a big player with us now; huge. And so we were walking to a dinner that we were conducting, it was the last dinner and everybody was there and one of the Sergeants Major looked at me, and I knew him from before, and he's like, Sheryl, look around here, he's like, 20 years ago, 30 years ago, you would never have seen this, because we were all walking together to this dinner.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Uh-huh.

CSM LYON: Now, yes, there were clicks; you know, this little group, that little group, but we were all walking together and nobody was avoiding anybody else. So that is one of the biggest things that you can take away from, that is, how much progress they, as

armies, have made, and developing their force, and securing their borders and their boundaries while at the same time providing assurance to their allies and partners.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Uh-huh.

CSM LYON: So that is huge, and I honestly think, for many of them, that they would come to each other's aid now -- of course, which they wouldn't have done 20 or 30 years ago.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And this conference helped facilitate the expansion of those relationships or --

CSM LYON: Absolutely.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Maintaining those relationships.

CSM LYON: Maintain, build, you know, it made me think of USASMA as a bedrock for networking, developing --

SGM WATERHOUSE: The United States Army Sergeant Major Academy, yeah --

CSM LYON: Relationships with each other --

SGM WATERHOUSE: If you go there, the two of us didn't get the chance (laughter).

CSM LYON: Well, that's why I say, I was never afraid to pick up a phone and call somebody and ask for something.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM LYON: Because I didn't have that.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM LYON: I didn't have those relationships from USASMA.

SGM WATERHOUSE: That is one of the least favorite things about the non-res course is you don't get to experience that.

CSM LYON: Yeah, so I'm glad that I'm not afraid to pick up a phone and call. I'll be like, hey, I don't know what I'm talking about, can you help me; what would you do?

SGM WATERHOUSE: (Laughter).

CSM LYON: So I don't have so much pride that I can't do that. But that was one of the good things over there because of the way -- you're talking about some third world countries. They don't have a lot of emphasis -- they didn't have a lot of support in their armies. NATO came up on the net and said, hey, you will

put 2% of your GDP into your Army to develop your forces.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Like professional development or just --

CSM LYON: Grow them, man them, whatever, so that they were a viable force.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Oh, to make them viable.

CSM LYON: And not a force that had to be supported by somebody else.

SGM WATERHOUSE: I gotcha.

CSM LYON: In other words, they had to contribute to their own success. If you want us to help you out being in the alliance --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Mm hmm.

CSM LYON: Then you have to be able to bring something to the table as well. You can't expect us to just rescue you.

SGM WATERHOUSE: (Inaudible, over-talking) person Army (laughter).

CSM LYON: Yeah, so there are some very small countries over there.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM LYON: But now many of them, (laughter) I'll tell you what -- when Trump took seat, any country that was trailing behind on their 2% that was supposed to be offered up, quickly got over it and started anteing up the funds. Some of those third world countries, they are not -- they still suffer from extortion and things like that. It's difficult for them. They want to do the right thing, they just -- financially, they can't.

But many of them, and I'm proud to say, many of them I've seen in the three years that I was there, grow by leaps and bounds. And it's not something that started just because I was there. It's something that was propagated with Sergeant Major Davenport and other Sergeants Major before him, you know. There has always been that presence and that advocacy for Sergeants Major. You know, many of the armies over there don't have Sergeants Major

SGM WATERHOUSE: Right.

CSM LYON: They had Warrant Officers.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Like the British.

CSM LYON: Exactly like the British. Most of

them use that practice. But you know, the British do now have a Sergeant Major in their Army, so, they do have --

SGM WATERHOUSE: I met, I met -- well, this is a long time ago when I was at West Point, when they came down for the Sandhurst competition --

CSM LYON: Mm hmm.

SGM WATERHOUSE: I met the Sergeant Major of the Army at the time and he explained to me the whole system of once you do this time then you go to one (inaudible, over-talking) officers.

CSM LYON: (Laughter) Yeah.

SGM WATERHOUSE: But yeah a lot of people don't know that. So when you did these conferences, where those Warrant Officers from the British there, or --

CSM LYON: Mm hmm.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: Yep. Actually their SMA came most of the time, but I went to one for them at Sandhurst and so, usually up to the Brigade level they do have Sergeants Major and then they transition into being a



Warrant Officer.

SGM WATERHOUSE: When they start working for Generals, yeah.

CSM LYON: And then before they retire, they have the possibility of becoming a Major or even a Lieutenant Colonel for retirement purposes, so that's a pretty, good, sweet deal.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So from what you can talk about --I'm sure people who are reading this would be interested, when you got together once a year, and you have all these allied armies getting together, I'm sure you are meeting all of these senior operative officers in these other armies, what kind of stuff would you talk about (laughter), what were some of the things you would discuss?

CSM LYON: Intel Development.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: For the purposes mentioned, and some armies don't even have higher level NCOs. Many of them go to squad level, or platoon level, and then they stop.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: Or their responsibility, as they get even higher, becomes even less.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Uh-huh.

CSM LYON: They are more like an aide to their General. So they are not a coach/teach mentor type of mentality for their forces; even though they know how to do it because --

SGM WATERHOUSE: So they are small unit leaders as far as NCOs, typically?

CSM LYON: Yes.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Squad leader and below.

CSM LYON: Squad leader and below, platoon sergeant, they have all those and then as they become a Sergeant Major they become an aide too.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Uh-huh.

CSM LYON: There is only a couple that do that, but I did encounter that. And so you always have to know which country you are working with and what their culture is, and how they actually man their force. And then you have to have a great leader who says NCOs are the bomb and are very important to your business, and you need to advocate for them. We made a lot of

progress. It was really, really good.

SGM WATERHOUSE: I'm sure it was fun too.

CSM LYON: Absolutely fun.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Learning those different cultures and you loving languages, I'm sure that was a good thing.

CSM LYON: Oh the Germans were mad at me because they asked me if I was learning German and I was like, no, I'm sorry. And I actually said --

SGM WATERHOUSE: (Spoke German) (laughter).

CSM LYON: Yeah, I actually said it in German but that wasn't good enough.

SGM WATERHOUSE: (Laughter).

CSM LYON: Because they started like, is there something else after that, and I was like, uh, that's it. That's all I got.

SGM WATERHOUSE: (Laughter).

CSM LYON: And they were like, you are living in Germany, and I was like, I know, but I'm never here.

SGM WATERHOUSE: But you traveled to other places too, right.

CSM LYON: I did.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Italy and Greece, I'm sure, or wherever else you had to go to.

CSM LYON: I traveled everywhere over there.

SGM WATERHOUSE: How long do you think it took you to -- did you get to visit all over your units in the time you were over there?

CSM LYON: Mm hmm.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: I did. So the RAF is employed over there. We have an MCE that is employed over there.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Can you say what those mean.

CSM LYON: So the RAF is the Rotational Allocation of Forces.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So for us a Brigade level unit right now in the U.S. Army.

CSM LYON: Yes, and then because USAREUR 5th Corp is gone --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM LYON: The divisions are gone so there was nothing in between USAREUR or the ASCC headquarters and some of those direct reports; they were RAF when they were coming in, so they directly reported to an ASCC.

That means the ASCC was doing all the planning, operations, training, everything.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM LYON: We did have the theater support command, and the Army training command so Army training command was doing all the training down there in Grafenwoehr and Hollenfels, 7th ATC. 21st Theater Support Command was running all the logistics basically.

SGM WATERHOUSE: All the housing, equipping and all of that.

CSM LYON: Yeah, so in that respect, both are direct reports to USAREUR but there was nobody taking care of those direct report brigades that were your combat fire power.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Mm hmm.

CSM LYON: They reported directly on up, so, in infinite wisdom, with the amount of extra sizes and operations that we had going on, they brought in, or we had brought in, what we called the Mission Control element, which was 4th ID provided that for nigh on two and a half years. It is just switched out and I want to say either 2 ID or 1 ID took it, and I don't remember --

SGM WATERHOUSE: So it like a division headquarters over there to facilitate that rotational brigade.

CSM LYON: It is. Actually, at the end it was to facilitate all the brigades, even the direct reports.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: For exercises and operations --

SGM WATERHOUSE: So that headquarters is not all the way up to --

CSM LYON: Yeah, they have a 90 to 100 man MC that works over there doing the mission commanded control, basically.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM LYON: Across all of Europe. So there is the enhanced forward presence came out of the last Warsaw Summit, which was also when they said that the prior summit was the one where they stated, you will supply 2% of your GDP to your Army and develop them.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Mm hmm.

CSM LYON: But they were going to put an enhanced forward presence in because of the Russian threat -- the possible Russian threat -- on the eastern

front.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Mm hmm.

CSM LYON: So Estonia has UK, Latvia has Canada, Lithuania has Germany, and we have Poland, meaning the United States has Poland. So we have a battalion sized element in each of those with attachments from all of the other countries within Europe.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Uh-huh.

CSM LYON: Whatever force were missing, somebody else is providing. It works out uniquely well to create that assurance and deterrence that is one of the main missions of the United States Army Europe. So they work that very, very well. I think they have seen great successes with it. Now they have to look at the south and how they are going to develop that because I don't think they consider it quite the same threat as having the Russians right on your border.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So Sergeant Major, in that position as the United States Army Europe Command Sergeant Major, you said you did battlefield circulation to kind of learn where everything is and get to know

your folks. What would you say, in looking back, were your primary roles or responsibilities and how you support your commander, and did you do split-ups or were you always together?

CSM LYON: No we did split-ups; we did a little bit of both. It was dependent on what the circumstances were and what the missions were. So one of my main roles was to help our allies and partners develop their NCO Corp while at the same time providing for our soldiers; quality of life, training capability, training facilities; so 7th ATC played a huge role within our allies and partners.

One of the things that we advocated for was that our soldiers, wherever they might happen to be in Europe, they had to be able to train and to maintain and sustain their certifications and their qualifications.

To that end we had to make sure that any of the other countries where we were training at was able to provide us with a place to train. That meant we had to look at their training environments as well, so, for instance, you might go in some country and their idea of right and left limits on a firing range might not be the



same. And you know, ignore that little village in the middle there, we won't hit it.

SGM WATERHOUSE: (Laughter) just shoot around them.

CSM LYON: And they are only there part of the time.

SGM WATERHOUSE: (Laughter) safety standards are a little bit different.

CSM LYON: A little bit different. We had to emphasize that --

SGM WATERHOUSE: So if you had medics that needed to do some hands-on medical training at the CFA provided facilities or wherever it was.

CSM LYON: Yes, across the board we were involved in all that. What are the medical capabilities wherever our soldiers might be? And to that end, also, there was a lot of opportunities where joint training environments. That is one of the things that you can transport anywhere in the world, is our soldiers medical capabilities, because a lot of places don't have that.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Right, because they have certifications and things they have to keep up on or

they lose the ability to do their jobs.

CSM LYON: Mm hmm. Exactly, providing those -  
- Ukraine was a point of interest, of course, because of  
the aggression against them, back in 2013/14. That is  
always a point of interest. A lot of training going on  
there, and Canada is involved, Latvia and Lithuania were  
involved; so it was always fun to watch them. The  
Scandinavian countries, the Balkan countries, the Baltic  
States, because they all have a common thread to their  
languages which enables them to talk to each other  
regardless of if they speak the exact same language or  
not.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Right.

CSM LYON: So it empowers them to work  
together, and in that respect, it's kind of beneficial.  
They were fun to watch.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Sergeant Major, for the  
senior enlisted or the Sergeants Major level folks in  
USAREUR, there are certain people, I guess, that you  
talked to all the time that were under you, who were  
those Sergeants Major, I guess on the Army side, that  
you were kind of responsible for, mentoring and giving

advice, or looking over.

CSM LYON: All the brigade levels.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: The two commands, the RAF, the MCE, we would bring them up and envelope them with us because they are over there and they are part of our force while they are there. I try not to interfere with their headquarters --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Mm hmm.

CSM LYON: Their home base, but I also wanted to make sure that they were informed, so any of them had the opportunity for me to work with, coach, mentor as best that I could. And if I wasn't able to, then I would ask somebody else to do it. You know, there is a lot of -- the signal environment in itself is usually widely dispersed and they have a lot of teams out and about; as does the logisticians. So being able to provide coaching and mentoring to them, you know, you had to empower your junior leaders and some of your seniors to make sure that they were helping to take care of those guys.

There was also the point where you could have

a team, a signal team, out with the rotational forces, or at the Joint Military Training University in the Ukraine, and they're like a three-man team.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Mm hmm.

CSM LYON: So that means they might not have leadership with them or they have a junior NCO with them. So, you had to make sure that everybody knew, hey, you've got these people in your formation, make sure that you are taking care of them because they are going to serve you and make sure that you're taken care of.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Right.

CSM LYON: So you can't ignore them. They are part of your formation. So that was one of the things that we really had to work on because of those small teams that were all over the place making things happen.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Right, but you personally worked with those brigade level sergeants major out there, BTC phone call, in person to make sure things were getting done right.

CSM LYON: Yes, mm hmm.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So that was, what they call

it, COMPLAN or whatever, that's a big area in Europe  
(laughter).

CSM LYON: It is.

SGM WATERHOUSE: It would be nice to go  
somewhere every day and see somebody --

CSM LYON: Makes the place different every  
week.

SGM WATERHOUSE: But I'm sure it takes a while  
to see a unit a second time, you know.

CSM LYON: Mm hmm, that is true, absolutely  
true.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Speaking of that, we senior  
NCOs tend to go where the fires are or sometimes our  
boss will say, hey, I want you to go spend time with X,  
and in your case I guess, brigade, because they need  
some extra love or whatever. I mean, was that the case  
with you, or were you able to kind of do your own  
scheduling or go wherever you felt you were necessary?  
How did you determine your battlefield circulation after  
you had visited all your units or at least seen them one  
time; how did you determine where you would go?

CSM LYON: The Commander of EUCOM and the

Commander of USAREUR had their list of priorities, and they weren't one and the same.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Mm hmm.

CSM LYON: And the reason why I say that is because the USAREUR Commander was very good about getting out and about. He was way out ahead of the EUCOM Commander. So the EUCOM Commander, of course, had to divvy out among the others, so he had his list of priorities of where did we need to focus and who did we need to work with the most.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yes.

CSM LYON: And to that end, because there were lots of relationships built with our forces, who were teaching and mentoring and coaching other forces, we could see where the places of need would be.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Uh-huh.

CSM LYON: So we had soldiers that would rotate in to different locations. You know, we are building presence in Poland. We had them building barracks for us where we can go and stay for extended amounts of time and train. So, finding those spots --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Because the rotation you are

in (inaudible, over-talking) I'm sure in a field that you guys visited --

CSM LYON: Training meetings were phenomenal because that is where you find out where everybody was at.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Uh huh (laughter).

CSM LYON: So, my G3 was my best friend.

SGM WATERHOUSE: I bet.

CSM LYON: And if I couldn't make, I would ask him to make it. If we couldn't make it, then I had another one that I would ask to make it. If I saw something was coming up and I wasn't going to make it, I'd call the Sergeant Major and say, listen, I need you to take a look at.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Mm hmm.

CSM LYON: So you had those things that are indicators. Blotter reports, for me, were golden because it would show me where there were pockets of possible problems or things that need to be addressed and I think that's normal. I've used that before, it's not just here or at USAREUR, but it was one of those triggers for trends.

If you go to a drug ring some place, it's very easy to see when you've got five people arrested in one weekend for drug possession or intent to sell, so I think we worked -- I'd like to think that I empowered those sergeants major, but I also at the same time empowered them to pick up the phone and call me and we will talk about whatever it is. Even the MCE was the same way. I don't think they had issues with it.

I think I did a poorer job with our National Guard partners because they would come in on rotations; Kosovo went back to the National Guard.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Uh-huh.

CSM LYON: The JMGTU was a joint multinational training group in the Ukraine; they went back to the National Guard and they were manning all of those up and the rotational forces that were coming in to coach and teach the Ukrainians were National Guard units.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So you felt obligated to go see those guys and gals also.

CSM LYON: You want to and you need to, but sometimes the rotations were so quick that you didn't make it.



SGM WATERHOUSE: The enforcers command, would they come over or would they leave that to the combatant command to visit those folks.

CSM LYON: They would usually leave it to the combatant commander.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: I think I see that changing later on as they realize the importance of those National Guard units; there are just so many of them.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM LYON: Rotating in all over the world. I'm sure that Sergeant Major Grinston has his hands full --

SGM WATERHOUSE: (Laughter).

CSM LYON: Trying to visit every force that he has someplace.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Oh yeah, yeah. Sergeant Major looking back at the 30 months, or almost three years that you served their as the Command Sergeant Major of the U.S. Army Europe, what are some of the key take-aways that you took with you here to this assignment or maybe passed on to your successor over

there?

CSM LYON: My successor and I were gapped.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Oh.

CSM LYON: It was the same way with me when I went into USAREUR.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So you didn't actually get any face time with him.

CSM LYON: We didn't get any face time. We did talk to each other on the phone, or in emails, and things like that. So it was the same way with me when I took mine. If ever there is a question -- for that, I think one of the biggest things that you have to take away from it is the impact that your soldiers can have as ambassadors for the United States Army in the Department of Defense. And the second that plays into that also is knowing the cultures that you are working with; part of their history, how did they evolve, how did they get to where they are currently.

SGM WATERHOUSE: It's definitely complicated in some of those countries.

CSM LYON: Balkan States, for example, many of them fought -- those, my peers, our peers in many of the

Balkan countries, they fought for their independence. You know, the ones that we work with right now, fought for the independence of their countries. And so that is something to take away from it, they have a different perspective of what independence means.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Mm hmm.

CSM LYON: Sometimes I worry that we take it for granted. And in these, it's very, very real to them what it cost to have their independence. But they are also always very appreciative when we have been a contributor to helping them with their independence. They are very, very cognizant of that fact and they recognize it; thank you for what you have done and say I never, ever want to go back under someone's dominance again, ever.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Sergeant Major before I go on to your current assignment here is there anything about your time over there that maybe we haven't talked about you'd like to discuss?

CSM LYON: I think that that is one of the -- if I've ever had a favorite assignment, there were opportunities there to work with our allies and partners

to help develop them while they helped develop us, lessons learned on both sides, and that ability to work with one another, and to have mutual respect for one another, you see that there in that environment more than I have ever in my whole career; except for the 1-3 BSTB.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Mm hmm.

CSM LYON: Where all of my battle buddies were all males.

SGM WATERHOUSE: (Laughter).

CSM LYON: At the end of the tour they were welcoming me in, but the knowledge of what they bring to our fight, and the knowledge that they appreciate what we bring to their fight, I think is very, very powerful, and very, very enabling for both sides.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Sergeant Major, in March of this year, you were assigned here at Fort Belvoir, Virginia where you took over as a Command Sergeant Major of the United States Army Cyber Command, CYBERCOM, how much notice did you get (laughter), that you were coming here. I assume you were in Germany still?

CSM LYON: So I think this was the one that I

actually got the notice, or I did the interview in December.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: So I knew, and I was trying to get here as fast as I can, but that is a courtesy that you also -- because I had an incoming commander on the other side of the pond.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: In USAREUR, so we were in a period of transition there as well. I was respectful of that fact so I asked to wait until he came on board.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: So that I could ask him personally, Sir, I need to get to U.S. Army Cyber, are you good with that? And he was. In fact, I think he and General Nakasone had run into each other at one of the conferences that we were at and had discussed it. So they had come to a mutual consensus. I think that, personally, it's a great thing, and that's across the Army, is that a commander doesn't want to be without their sergeant major for very long.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Right.

CSM LYON: They really don't, so they like having them there. So I think for us, that speaks volumes, as a Sergeant Major.

SGM WATERHOUSE: We might have talked off the recording, but was there a sergeant major here when you got here or was it vacant when you got here?

CSM LYON: It was vacant when I got here. There was an interim sergeant major who was sitting in the seat who happens to be very, very familiar with Army Cyber, so in that respect it was very good.

SGM WATERHOUSE: You've been here a little over a month, I think.

CSM LYON: Yes.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So far, and this is another three-star level command, right? And your boss is, I guess, going to be here soon, a new boss that is taking over. What are you looking to -- well, you're still learning this organization, but what kind of impact, or how are you thinking. So far you've been here trying to assess the organization, but how are you looking to impact this command as far as the Senior NCO Command Sergeant Major side, what are you looking to hopefully

accomplish during your time here?

CSM LYON: Technically Army Cyber is a second ASCC for me. Army Cyber in itself is the youngest branch in the Army, of course.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yes.

CSM LYON: And they are working lots of things to make it a viable MOS. So they have worked wonders writing policies, procedures, POIs, standards, certifications, accreditations, while at the same time they are developing programs and they are developing tools and all sorts of things across the spectrum for the MOS itself. So, I mean, you're creating a brand new MOS so you have to grow your senior NCOs, you have to grow your warrant officers; so in that respect it's difficult.

What I hope to contribute to it is from my experience with a previous ASCC is to help them actually develop the ASCC which is only been in existence now for about three years. The initial things that you focus on are making an ASCC that runs while you are trying to develop policies and procedures which you might not have fully developed like you should or need to. And, oh, by

the way, by now is when they really need to take a look at their TDAs --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Is it manned correctly --

CSM LYON: Is it manned correctly, have we put bodies in the right place, have we put emphasis in the right place, what do we need to work on or to develop to make it a viable ASCC.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Still kind of building the ship, even though it's sailing, it's moving but --

CSM LYON: It is definitely sailing, they are doing lots of things. And they are, some within the organization, who are juggling on a daily basis, trying to work operations while they are trying to work policies and procedures, while they are trying to establish programs. So, I don't think there is anybody, maybe some of the operators on the force, who are able to absolutely focus on that one job that they are doing and the rest are doing about 5 or 6 jobs trying to make it a functional, efficient organization. They have, like I said, they have worked wonders and they have made great, great progress, and so now I think is a time for them to take just a little bit of a step back, not away,



but a step back and reassess what they've done.

SGM WATERHOUSE: See where they are now and where you need to go.

CSM LYON: Yes.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Sergeant Major, after this assignment, do you plan on staying in, or do you plan on continuing on or, what are you looking at right now -- I mean you just started here.

CSM LYON: (Laughter).

SGM WATERHOUSE: Have you thought about that yet, or --

CSM LYON: One of the stories I didn't tell you when we were talking earlier, I was promoted to Sergeant First Class just before I left Europe, and so I was given an advantage in my career probably because I was older when I came in, so I was more mature. I progressed quickly. I always strove to be the best that I could be in everything that I did.

So, somebody asked me when I got promoted to E7, well what are you going to do next? Without even hesitating a moment, I said, I want to be the first female Sergeant Major of the Army.

SGM WATERHOUSE: (Laughter).

CSM LYON: Yeah, that's what they did too.

SGM WATERHOUSE: They said, really? Where were you at the time?

CSM LYON: I was in Germany. They kind of laughed.

SGM WATERHOUSE: They thought you were joking.

CSM LYON: They didn't say, really? What they said was, well, that will never happen.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Oh really?

CSM LYON: Well, I'm a woman. I'm not combat arms.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Wow.

CSM LYON: So, one of the benefits of USAREUR

--

SGM WATERHOUSE: They actually said that to you?

CSM LYON: Oh yes.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Hmm.

CSM LYON: Yeah, I'm sure I've heard quite a few comments like that. But you know at the time, that was the reality. And nobody, nobody -- I'm sure there

were some that thought, oh yeah, they will open all of the MOSSs, all of the branches to everyone, and it will be non-script, and it will be based upon merit.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Mm hmm.

CSM LYON: But that was said to me and it just crushed me.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Wow.

CSM LYON: To be told you would never even be considered to be able to compete with --

SGM WATERHOUSE: And these were senior Sergeants Major telling you this?

CSM LYON: Actually, it was an officer and a Sergeant Major that told me that, (laughter). And so, that was a little bit debilitating. So, again, I've always strived to do what I wanted, the best that I could be in everything that I did. But, that was an eye-opener for me, so, what am I going to do next? For one, I'm going to wait and see. At this level, sometimes it's all about timing.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Mm hmm.

CSM LYON: I'll be honest with you, I want Sergeant Major Troxell's job (laughter).

SGM WATERHOUSE: Oh yeah (laughter).

CSM LYON: I like the joint environment.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Senior Enlisted Advisor to  
the Chairman of the Joints Chiefs of Staff.

CSM LYON: Chairman of the Joints.

SGM WATERHOUSE: I have met him when he was at  
JBLM.

CSM LYON: That, or I want the one at  
STRATCOM, because I like that --

SGM WATERHOUSE: But you'd be willing to take  
the Sergeant Major Army job as well.

CSM LYON: I don't know, he's pretty good;  
Sergeant Major Dailey is pretty good, he would be a  
tough act to follow.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Might be (inaudible, over-  
talking) (laughter).

CSM LYON: I know, but he would be a tough act  
to follow.

SGM WATERHOUSE: (Laughter).

CSM LYON: And I don't think he's leaving soon

--

SGM WATERHOUSE: Well, yeah, that's up to his

boss, but --

CSM LYON: Right.

SGM WATERHOUSE: (Laughter).

CSM LYON: That's exactly true.

SGM WATERHOUSE: But you said, you know, that was a goal.

CSM LYON: It was.

SGM WATERHOUSE: It still could be a goal.

CSM LYON: Uh-huh, what I'd like to be afforded the opportunity, absolutely, I really would, I'd like to see females go that route, and I know that in 10 to 15 years from now those that are becoming instructors and drill sergeants in the combat arms fields, females, they will be the ones who will move up naturally through the ranks.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Right.

CSM LYON: And legitimately be considered for those positions, so, I guess, at the end of the day I'm hoping that being the USAREUR Command Sergeant Major opened a few doors and windows for different individuals, whoever they might be, whether they be combat arms, non-combat arms. Somebody asked me once,

and I thought it was a great question, they were like, when you leave the Army, what do you hope you have contributed?

SGM WATERHOUSE: I have a similar question for you, something like that, we can talk about that now, how do you want to be remembered. You know, when somebody, they will get a copy, a version of this, they'll get to hear it...I mean, they get to see it, but that is something -- typically we don't like as senior NCOs, or people in the military, don't typically go, well how do you want to be remembered? We don't usually think like that.

CSM LYON: Mm hmm.

SGM WATERHOUSE: But we do, some of us, you know, we all like to be loved, so to speak.

CSM LYON: Yeah.

SGM WATERHOUSE: You know, I still have people calling me First Sergeant, even though I haven't been a First Sergeant in a while, but I was there First Sergeant, you know, you were somebody's First Sergeant, you were somebody's squad leader, or sergeant major. So, when somebody thinks about you in the future, 10

years from now; I mean, you serve and have served a lot of soldiers and sailors and Marines, and how would you hope they remember you?

CSM LYON: Actually, General Nakasone was the one who asked me that similar question. He interviewed me for this job and I didn't -- it doesn't take me anything to think about it. What I want, or hope, that at least I am thought about as someone who helped make it that we are based upon our abilities and capabilities that we bring to the table, and not our gender, or our MOS, or even our race, but strictly capabilities based.

As a young soldier, my platoon sergeant was a Green Beret, you know, I told you one of the few MI soldiers who managed as a Green Beret before they stopped letting them just go and do it. I was in a quandary as a specialist in the Army I weighed a buck 05; he weighed a couple of bucks 05 --

SGM WATERHOUSE: (Laughter).

CSM LYON: And we were doing partner carries and I looked at him and I said --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Like Fireman's carry?

CSM LYON: Yes. We were doing a PT session,

we were training and I looked at him and I said, do you know it bothers me a whole lot that if we were on a battlefield right now and I had to be the one to take you off this field, I would be greatly challenged by that. And he stopped and he says, you know, he's like, hey Specialist Lyon, the fact of the matter is, there are as many guys around here who had the same challenge.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Who won't be able to do it?

CSM LYON: Who won't be able to do it, he says, you can't think about it that way. You have to think about what you bring to the fight. And so that has stayed with me my whole career. And to that end, be it as a female, be it as a military intelligence specialist, be it as a sergeant major or leader, what I would like to see 10 years from now, 15 years from now, is that I helped make it easier for it to be based upon someone's capabilities that they bring, the whole package. It's based upon your capabilities; you have to be able to pass this test. It doesn't matter whether you're --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Occupational physical assessment --



CSM LYON: Assessment, mm hmm.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Test.

CSM LYON: So, regardless of --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah, if you want to join this particular MOS or job, you have to be able --

CSM LYON: You have to be able to do these --

SGM WATERHOUSE: To do this many, dead lift this weight, and jump this far.

CSM LYON: Mm hmm, and I think that's important. Those are abilities and capabilities based.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Right.

CSM LYON: Nothing else has to do with it, so that is the legacy that I would like to leave, is that I helped get to that end a little bit.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Sergeant Major, I've got a few more questions for you.

CSM LYON: Okay.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And I'm going to switch from the career, we've got up to where you are now. Now I just want to get your opinion for the force for future NCOs, for current NCOs that read this; kind of get your opinion on some things; leadership and stuff like that.

So, in your opinion, what are some of the key things a Senior Non-Commissioned Officer, Sergeant First Class or above, or someone serving in those positions must do to be an effective leader of his or her subordinate NCOs and soldiers. So, it could be a Section Sergeant in an S2 shop, or a Platoon Sergeant, or whatever; what must they be able to do to be an effective leader.

CSM LYON: I think as we continue to progress as a society, I think one of the things that they have to be able to do, and sometimes it becomes harder and harder, especially for us old folks, is to be empathetic, and to be able to put on at least a little bit, or walk a few steps in the shoes of our soldiers for understanding the mindset state. It's is very easy, and we mentioned it earlier; Vietnam, we kind of brow-beat them and said, you're going to do it.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yep.

CSM LYON: And this is the way it is and now we are a little bit -- I hate to say it -- but a kinder, gentler, more accepting force. So I think we have to be able to be an adaptive leader with empathy to sympathize with our soldiers, a little bit, to help guide them, to

give them the right responses so that we can get the right responses from them.

One of the best conversations I had was with a First Sergeant and I said, so, what do you do when you've got a diverse group of soldiers and you are trying to accomplish the mission? He said, well Sergeant Major, I have to invest -- and this is a First Sergeant, about a year ago -- he said, Sergeant Major I have to invest the time to figure out what makes my soldiers tick.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Mm hmm.

CSM LYON: Be it the one over here who wants to be the Strat-Stat poster boy for the United States Army, or the one over here who just wants to be able to survive on the battlefield and be able to accomplish the mission.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Mm hmm.

CSM LYON: Or, you know, the one who just wound up at the wrong place at the wrong time (laughter) and continues to drive forward because somebody is there pushing him. He said, each of them takes a different type of mechanism to push their buttons to get them to

do what we want them to do. He said, I have to figure that out, that is my responsibility as their First Sergeant and as their leader; and I was refreshed by that response because I was afraid that we had lost some of that capability. So, I think we have to be able to empathize a little bit with each of them.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Sergeant Major, as you know, we as NCOs, part of our duty is to advise our officer counterparts, whether as Platoon Sergeant and really help train and mentor that young Platoon leader, or you're an Operation Sergeant Major working with your S3, in your opinion what are some of the key things that a Senior Non-Commissioned must do to be effective advisors for their officer?

CSM LYON: Knowing the soldiers. If you have to know 500 soldiers through two or three of your Sergeants Major, sometimes that is what you have to do. But, for the most part, knowing your soldiers -- and it gets into readiness, your training of them. If you spend enough time with them, in those environments, you learn how they function; what is normal for them. It doesn't have to be a huge, in depth conversation, to

know every family member or whatever they possess. It could be mannerisms, are they outgoing, do they talk a lot, do you see them on a regular basis. Because if you've got that one that talks a lot then all of a sudden they are not talking --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Something's wrong.

CSM LYON: Something's wrong, so knowing your soldiers. Are they a 300 on a PT test, do they fire expert every time or marksman, those to me are the things that you need to know, and they all pertain to readiness, that you convey with your leader to help build the force because that gives you direction of where you are going or where you need to take them -- where do you need to focus your training, is it over here, is it on marksmanship, is it on APFT, is it on pushing a button on a computer screen so that they can take over the world.

SGM WATERHOUSE: (Laughter).

CSM LYON: I think that is part of the guidance that you need to be able to provide to your leader so that they have a true picture of what their force looks like.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Sergeant Major, you came in with a Bachelor's Degree. A lot of soldiers today come in with none, some come in with some, and our Non-Commissioned Officer professional development system now is going to kind of take care of this, a little bit, if we get our way; it's going to take care of it where if a soldier stays in and that NCO ends up going to the Sergeant Major academy here, she will end up with a Bachelor's Degree.

CSM LYON: Mm hmm.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Based on their experience and going to school and all that but, a lot of people today are in the Army, in and out of the Army, kind of disagree with this, that civilian education is important for Non-Commissioned officers. So, I guess, this is a two part question: what do you feel about civilian education and since you came in with a civilian education, how has that helped you as an NCO? Or how has that benefited you as an NCO.

CSM LYON: I have to admit that coming in with a civilian education; I came in as a specialist. I will tell you that I also came in older, a little wiser, so

that played to my advantage as well. It means I was more mature and I was ready to assume responsibility quicker, faster. That played into my promotion rate, I think, as well.

It gave me a great foundation, but I will tell you that I don't think that there is any of the ranks for the position that I was given that I didn't deserve or didn't try my best at and to excel at, so, I don't think it was a hindrance or should be considered a hindrance.

When I look at our young soldiers today, what I see are some extremely intelligent and capable and thought provoking members of society. They actually think about things. They know how to think about things and they look for answers on a regular basis. I think you have to take that into consideration. When I look at our soldiers and I compare them to when I came in and my battle buddies around me, I think that their intelligence level is twice-fold, I think it's double. I find them extremely intelligent, most of them well versed.

Now, do I have to admit that there are some

out there that I wouldn't give the time of day because they don't know how to hold a conversation because they are too busy reading or texting on their phone, yes, absolutely. But I don't see them coming into the Army; I've seen a couple that couldn't carry on a conversation with me if they tried.

For the most part, they are very articulate. Most are well versed. Are they technically proficient, absolutely. They have that advantage over us but I find them very intelligent and so I think that is an aspect of our generations that are coming into the Army right now that we have to advocate for them because they are extremely intelligent. How are you going to progress them? This is not like Vietnam where they were draftees --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Mm hmm.

CSM LYON: And were told, you will go fight for our country and these are the things that you will accomplish. I think it is a totally different environment from back then or even when I came in 20 plus years ago. So, I personally think that providing them with a degree, I don't think that is a



disadvantage. I think that is something for them to strive and work for. I think that they will remain in the NCO Corps and I think it just makes them the more intelligent, more adaptive leaders that we are currently looking for.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Sergeant Major, what advice would you give to Sergeants Major selected to serve in their first Battalion-level Command Sergeant Major position. Now that you, when you look back on your time?

CSM LYON: Use everything to your advantage. Don't be afraid to ask questions. Find your mentors, your battle buddies, whoever you can use as a source of information. Sergeant Major Davenport, whether he realizes it or not, because of my time in Kosovo with him being the USAREUR Sergeant Major, became a mentor of mine. So if there was something really perplexing me, or bothering me or I don't have a good solution for, I will call him and say, I just need to bounce something off you. And with his busy schedule he picks up the phone and he gives me a call back and says, okay what'd you got? So he has been very, very good in that. But

finding someone that you can use as a mentor, who has experience, who has knowledge, and using them as a source, not the know-all, be-all.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Mm hmm.

CSM LYON: But as a source, or even a sounding wall, you have to, I think you have to have that and you have to cultivate that because if you don't you will run into a brick wall and put yourself in a corner and be trying to figure out how to get yourself out of it.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Sergeant Major on the same line, but now on a higher level, we have something called the Nominative Leader Course now, which we send Sergeants Major getting ready to go onto their first general officer position, the one-star, two-star level Command Sergeant Major position, but if you were to get five minutes with each person, what would you tell those guys and gals getting ready to work on their first general officer position, some basic advice?

CSM LYON: Sit down and have that discussion. Get their direction from them. What are their expectations of you, what are their expectations of you, not what is the textbook expectation?

SGM WATERHOUSE: Mm hmm.

CSM LYON: What is their expectation of you and what they expect you to be able to accomplish for the organization, and have that open dialogue. And then 30 days, 60 days, you know 6 months, go back and have that refocusing session and make sure you are on AZIMUTH, do an AZIMUTH check with them.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Uh-huh.

CSM LYON: What is it that you expect from me, am I accomplishing that? Many of them want you by their side, which is a great thing, but don't be afraid to go out on your own also, so long as you're speaking the message of that Commander, because at the end of the day, that is who you work for.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Mm hmm.

CSM LYON: So you need to be on the same sheet of music and you need to be able to share their message, make it part of yours, and vice versa, contribute to it if you can so that you are well versed in presenting to the forces, because they are looking; they see everything that you do. You and your Commander and they know when there is dissent among the ranks. They can

feel it, they can sense it, smell it, and whatever it is.

SGM WATERHOUSE: (Laughter).

CSM LYON: They know.

SGM WATERHOUSE: If there is a divided locker room in (inaudible).

CSM LYON: They do.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Sergeant Major, this is usually something I ask folks that are already retired but --

CSM LYON: (Laughter).

SGM WATERHOUSE: It doesn't hurt to get your opinion on this. But you're still living the dream, just like I am, but what do you think the Army's major challenges, I'll just give you a multitude of different things, but it doesn't necessarily have to be Cyber or anything, but what do you think the Army's major challenges, and this can include the Reserve too, will be in the next 15, 20 years and do you think some of those challenges you are thinking of, do you think we are headed in the right direction to meet those? I mean, the Army has changed a lot, obviously, since you

joined, but there are always things that we can improve.

CSM LYON: I think that one of the greatest challenges that we will have as we go into the future, because we see it already a little bit, and that is keeping our soldiers vested in the future of the Army, so that they don't seek other opportunities, be that with accessions or retention, what are the things that we bring to the table that makes them want to stay and continue to serve our country. With the cessation of combat in Iraq, we have stabilizing forces still there; we have forces still providing the assist brigades. I think it is going to be a challenge making sure that we get the right people coming in who want to serve our country, and who want to make it a better place than they found it, and competing with the rest of civilization as to what are our incentives --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Uh-huh.

CSM LYON: What makes them want to serve and in some of that are great examples; those who love the force and serving our country and making it a career. I don't think I have ever been asked to go out and be a recruiter, you know, a small town, home town recruiter.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Mm hmm.

CSM LYON: And I just wonder, I think those still have a great impact. I know it gets kind of expensive but finding a way to -- when soldiers go home to visit family, to go out and do a little bit of a recruiting trip --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Go visit their old high school, go visit the VFW -- well, not the VFW, that's the wrong place, but somewhere where some of their friends might be and --

CSM LYON: Yeah.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Even that person in college, maybe my daughter should follow your steps, or my son should follow your steps.

CSM LYON: Well, you know, on that note, the Army has lots of programs that they have that a lot of people don't know about. My daughter is a vet in the United States Army. She is a vet because they helped pay for part of her vet school, and she wants to do a great job for the Army --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Oh, she's a veterinarian.

CSM LYON: She is a veterinarian.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM LYON: Yes, I'm sorry. So they paid for half of her veterinarian school and she wants to do a great job while she is in the Army, but you know, lawyers, physicians assistants, public affairs even, I mean, there are lot that they do; the internships with the civilian side of the house. You know, I have a friend of mine who worked for Google for a year.

SGM WATERHOUSE: (Laughter).

CSM LYON: How cool is that.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Working with industry.

CSM LYON: Yeah.

SGM WATERHOUSE: They do it for a year.

CSM LYON: Those opportunities are out there and having the younger generation know about those and the opportunities that they provide; internships, we have them all and so using those to bring in our future generations, I think is going to be a challenge, and a needed challenge, being able to do that. I think we have to. We are not going to get the soldiers that we want if we don't.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Sergeant Major, the last

question, is there anything topically we haven't talked about or something over your career, or even before you joined the Army, something we haven't talked about that you'd like to discuss?

CSM LYON: I don't know if it's about to discuss, but when I came into the Army I didn't know what to expect, honestly. Right place, right time a recruiter found me and I said, you know that sounds great --

SGM WATERHOUSE: To be that guy.

CSM LYON: That guy.

SGM WATERHOUSE: (Laughter) He had a good day.

CSM LYON: Yeah, and so when I joined I didn't think that -- I thought that I would do my four year stint and then as time went by I was like, oh, you know, I like this.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Uh-huh.

CSM LYON: And as I went even further, I was like, I really like this, I enjoy it, and I excel at it. So for me it was a great selection, but at the time that I did it I didn't know that I would still be in 20 plus years later. You know, initially, it was for four



years, and then it was for another four years.

SGM WATERHOUSE: (Laughter).

CSM LYON: Then you get into in depth --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Well then you made steps pretty quick.

CSM LYON: And then it becomes a way of life, you know. So, what the Army has done for me that I really didn't expect when I joined was that it provided me with the opportunities to try different things, to challenge myself, to excel, to push my limits. You know, those are things that I think our future generations look for and so in that respect, young ladies, young men, as far as that goes, somebody who is not combat arms, they will come up to me and say, you give me hope in what I do that there is a future in where I am going.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Uh-huh.

CSM LYON: And that it's not just going to be this particular thing, or that particular thing. So, being afforded the opportunity to talk to those individuals and say, hey, the Army is what you make of it. It really is.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And the Army is much more than shooting, you know, it's more than you see on TV --

CSM LYON: It is, and I tell them, I want you to be able to shoot, I want you to be able to move, communicate, and I want you to be able to do them all. I want you to be good at your MOS because that makes you a force multiplier.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Like with that home town recruiter in the general public, even in towns where there are military, they don't really know what the military does unless we tell them or we show them.

CSM LYON: Mm hmm, yeah, and so coming in and taking advantage of those opportunities I think that is one of the greatest gifts that I have had. I have been given opportunities, I have sought out opportunities. I have been asked and I have never said no.

SGM WATERHOUSE: (Laughter).

CSM LYON: So, in that respect, I love what I do. So it has been well worth it for the last two decades plus.

SGM WATERHOUSE: (Laughter).

CSM LYON: Well, Sergeant Major, thank you

very much for taking the time out of your busy schedule. I know you just came on board here and you have a lot of things you probably need to be doing, but I thank you for doing this and I think this will definitely benefit the current and future NCO Corps and I think that this will inspire some of those male and female soldiers to both either continue on or join our great Army.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Well, thanks Sergeant Major, it has been a great opportunity and I really appreciate you taking the time to come here and do this because I think it's important and it means a lot to me. So, I hope it was what you needed and you got out of it what you needed and that we can use it to that end.

CSM LYON: Thank you.

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## CERTIFICATE OF NOTARY PUBLIC

I, Carleton J. Anderson, III do hereby certify that the forgoing electronic file when originally transmitted was reduced to text at my direction; that said transcript is a true record of the proceedings therein referenced; that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to the action in which these proceedings were taken; and, furthermore, that I am neither a relative or employee of any attorney or counsel employed by the parties hereto, nor financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of this action.

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