

"Profession of Arms".....and Warrant Officers

by CW4 Joel Lockhart

After serving my entire adult life in uniform, I believe the "Profession of Arms" is more cultural in nature than occupationally related, which the "profession" terminology seems to lean towards, at least from a seasoned, military perspective vice a literary one. For most veterans, this isn't a novel thought. Many before me discovered this at some point in their career, meaning that most Soldiers join the military by signing a contract – it's a job opportunity for most – not a career choice. But, as they mature as a Soldier, their opportunity emerges to join a "profession".

In my opinion, maturity is a critical factor when recognizing the desire to become a professional, which I consider a precursor to joining the ranks of any profession, including law, medicine or religion. For example, doctors and lawyers generally display a commitment, maturity and unremitting desire to learn and to grow in their professional field. This requires a learned, disciplined approach to individual and collective training developmental opportunities. It also demands a reciprocal relationship in which the profession demands one to provide direct and indirect sustenance – nourishment, if you will -- to the profession as one grows individually. This implies the need for emerging professionals; current professionals; and professional alumni to relentlessly contribute to the development of their profession. Arguably, all have a role in the sustainment of their "Profession of Arms".

Simply put, professionals must endure their efforts to ensure the unremitting existence - - and lasting success -- of their craft. This can take many forms, but, primarily in the form of contributions to the institution by way of active mentorship, recruitment and donation, both in time and resources, with the sole goal being the continued success of the profession, in our case, defining, sustaining and executing the fundamental role of the Warrant Officer in the US Army's "Profession of Arms".