



DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
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OCT 25 2024

MEMORANDUM FOR SENIOR PENTAGON LEADERSHIP  
DEFENSE AGENCY AND DOD FIELD ACTIVITY DIRECTORS

SUBJECT: Military Libraries Week 2024

Please join me in celebrating Military Libraries Week, November 10-16, 2024. This year's theme, "Leaders Are Readers," is based on the famous quote by President Harry S. Truman, "Not all readers are leaders, but all leaders are readers."

Libraries serve as trusted institutions essential to the military's academic, scientific, and social infrastructure. Military libraries deliver innovative services, connect people with information and knowledge, advance training and education, facilitate research, enrich military communities, and support informed decision-making.

The history of military libraries serving the U.S. Armed Forces can be traced back to the early years of the United States. In 1780, the military garrison at West Point established a library that was the predecessor to the U.S. Military Academy Library. Henry Knox, the first Secretary of War, established the War Department Library (predecessor to the Pentagon Library) in 1795. It was the second official Federal library established, preceded only by the Department of State Library in 1789.

Today, Department of Defense (DoD) Components operate more than 300 general, academic, technical, and special libraries in the United States and abroad, serving over 2.1 million military personnel, their families, and others. The DoD Morale, Welfare, and Recreation Virtual Library provides 24/7 access to online resources and support for Service members and other eligible patrons anywhere in the world.

Our military libraries have been recognized by the Library of Congress and numerous professional organizations for fostering innovation in meeting patron needs as military libraries, librarians, and library technicians have been well represented for decades among recipients of annual awards from the Library of Congress and the American Library Association. As demonstrated by the attached list, DoD honors military librarians, library technicians, and other library staff who make this support possible.

DoD is committed to supporting its libraries and to expanding access to information to accomplish the DoD mission and promote the well-being and intellectual development of personnel of all DoD Components.

Attachment:  
As stated



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