

U.S. Army Europe and 7th Army

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Program helps officers become Army lawyers

Story by Sgt. Daniel J. Nichols, U.S. Army Europe Public Affairs



Sgt. Daniel J. Nichols
Capt. Alison Pliske, chief of client services, U.S. Army Europe Staff Judge Advocate's office, takes notes while working at the Patton Law Center in Heidelberg. Pliske, a graduate of the Funded Legal Education Program, said she feels the Army JAG Corps is the best law firm to work for.

The Army's Funded Legal Education Program offers commissioned officers the chance to attend law school free of charge while on active duty and become a part of the Army Judge Advocate General Corps.

"I made the best decision that I could have made," said Capt. Alison Pliske, chief of client services, for the U.S. Army Europe Staff Judge Advocate, who recently graduated from law school through the FLEP program.

"I love my job, and the people I work with, the other captains, the other attorneys, are incredible. This is nothing you would ever find in another law firm," Pliske said.

In a private law firm, colleagues compete against one another for promotions. Army attorneys earn their promotions according to military policies and schedules, she said.

"So the result is that we all help each other with everything we're working on. The teamwork is great," Pliske said.

"Every time I get a FLEP person in my office, they (already) know about the Army," said Lt. Col. Kevin Boyle, USAREUR, deputy staff judge advocate. "So when an issue comes in they know the Army perspective and the legal perspective."

According to the Department of the Army Office of the Judge Advocate General, officers who have two to six years of active duty service are eligible to apply for the FLEP program. The Army pays law school tuition and active-duty salaries for those selected.

“During the time you’re in law school, you still stay on active duty,” said Boyle. “Most law students take out student loans for a \$100,000, but you’re getting paid.”

Officers seeking to enroll in the FLEP program have to submit an application packet, pass the Law School Admissions Test and undergo an interview by an SJA officer, he explained.

This year’s application packets are due Nov. 1, Boyle said, and selection takes place in December.

“Twenty-five officers per year are selected, so it’s competitive, we always get more applications than slots,” he said.

“It’s not difficult,” said Pliske about her application process. “It’s a lot of little details but it’s not so difficult that it should deter anyone from the program.”

Commissioned officers interested in applying for the FLEP program should contact Lt. Col. Kevin Boyle, USAREUR deputy judge advocate, DSN 370-8059, Civilian 0221-57-8059 or by e-mail at kevin.boyle@eur.army.mil.



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