

ACC's MSG Echols Wins 2024 Ordway Award

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As the Federal Center of Excellence, Redstone Arsenal represents a diverse array of skills and experience. But one common thread in sustaining that level of excellence is the reliable support of the U.S. Army Non-Commissioned Officer corps.

Master Sgt. Antoine Echols, U.S. Army Contracting Command future operations officer, is the winner of the 2024 Sergeant John Ordway Award.

“Our NCOs are vital to the readiness of today’s warfighters,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Sgt. Rachel Harris, Senior Enlisted Leader for ACC. “They seek to excel every day. Master Sgt. Echols stands out in his work ethic and commitment to excellence. We couldn’t be prouder of him.”

The award started 17 years ago to commemorate the 200th Anniversary of the Lewis and Clark Expedition and is presented in recognition and appreciation of Soldiers who go above and beyond in taking care of their fellow soldiers and their families.

Ordway was the ranking NCO for the Corps of Discovery, the Lewis and Clark Expedition that crossed the United States. The Expedition started in 1804 and lasted 2 years. Ordway was a Sergeant in the United States Army who volunteered for the expedition.

During the expedition, Ordway was responsible for the day-to-day operations - essentially the same role and responsibilities of a unit First Sergeant. Ordway was well-educated and is remembered today for the journal that he kept which detailed the expedition’s explorations. Ordway demonstrated some of the earliest examples of duties of today’s non-commissioned officers.

Echols was recently named the 2023 United States of America Track and Field Masters M40 Male Athlete of the Year and competed in the 2024 World Masters Athletics Championships, earning gold medals in the 100-meter dash and the 4x100 relay. He represents ACC in athletic events, be they for the Armed Forces Week Team Redstone Softball Team or the ACC soccer team.

Echols is also the lead contracting instructor for ‘Master Gunner’ training, training Soldiers across the force on readiness topics that include the Military Decision-Making Process. Additionally, one of the Soldiers he mentors recently won the 2024 ACC Best Warrior competition and received awards for participating in the Army Material Command Best Warrior and Squad Competition.

ACC, its subordinate organizations and contracting centers enable Army readiness through contracting solutions in support of the Army and Unified Land Operations, anytime, anywhere. As the Army’s principal buying agent, ACC ensures Soldiers have what they need to be successful, from food and clothing to bullets and bombs.