

I want to take a moment to honor a fine officer who will shortly be leaving active duty. COL Stephen M. Christian will be retiring from the United States Army on October 12, 2009, after more than 30 years of active military service, culminating as Garrison Commander for the United States Army Garrison, Fort Monmouth, New Jersey.

Colonel Christian enlisted in the Army in 1978 and in 1984 attended Officer Candidate School and was commissioned as an Air Defense Artillery Officer. Throughout his career Colonel Christian has held numerous high level command and staff positions, including tours with the 7th Infantry Division (Light) at Fort Ord, California; the 25th Infantry Division (Light) at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii; and the 10th Mountain Division at Fort Drum, New York. He commanded at the battalion level on two occasions and served two tours of duty in Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, during which he was awarded two Bronze Star Medals. Colonel Christian's civilian education includes a master of science in administration and a master of security strategy from the National War College, National Defense University. Colonel Christian is married to Laura Christian and they have two adult children, Captain Nicholas Christian and Leslie Roop.

Our active duty families make many sacrifices for the rest of us, and this is especially true of those who make the military their career. I thank Colonel Christian for his long and honorable service to our Nation, and I wish him and his wife Laura the very best as they prepare to enter a new phase in their life journey together.