



## **THE COLORADO ARMY NATIONAL GUARD**

is a diverse, community-based force of nearly 4,000 Soldiers from all walks of life. Helping to lead the way in cyber defense, the Colorado Guard commands cutting-edge high-tech units such as space support and cybersecurity units as well as hardcore, hard-charging Infantry units that harken to its origins in 1860. The diversity of its locations and missions allows the Colorado Army National Guard to deliver on its commitment to protect and defend its community, State and Nation on all fronts.

Special Forces Soldiers from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 5th Battalion, 19th Special Forces Group (Airborne), Colorado Army National Guard, demonstrate special forces gear and equipment at an undisclosed location.

Colorado Army National Guard Photo by  
SSG David Stroud



# Colorado Army National Guard Mentors Future Cyber Warriors

BY CPT Ron Bailey,  
COLORADO NATIONAL GUARD

**C**olorado Army National Guard information technology Soldiers mentored a student Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps cyber team for the U.S. Air Force Association (AFA) 2017 Cyber Patriot National Youth Cyber Defense competition.

Through a mutually beneficial partnership, Colorado Army National Guard Soldiers coached students at Denver North High School on how to defend against cyber-attacks.

The Cyber Patriot competition, first held in 2009, has exploded in scope from a local event held at the AFA's annual symposium with only eight school teams from the Orlando, Fla., area, to more than 4,400 teams across the country last year. Denver North's JROTC team is one of 152 teams from Colorado alone.

The competition is one of three key elements of the Cyber Patriot, National Youth Cyber Education Program. Its mission is to inspire students to pursue careers in cybersecurity or other science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) disciplines critical to the future of the Nation. Competitions are held at the State, regional and national levels.

The genesis of the Colorado Army National Guard's involvement with Denver North High School came from CW2 Robert Heflin, telecommunication manager, and the Colorado National Guard Assistant Adjutant General – Cyber, Space and Missile Defense. BG Michael Willis. BG Willis asked Colorado Army National Guard Deputy Director of Information Management LTC Isaac Martinez to explore cyber-related community engagement projects based upon the Colorado National Guard's Connect Colorado initiative. CW2 Heflin began searching more than two years

**TOP:** Team mentors work with the Denver North Army JROTC Cyber Patriot Team: Puri Depak, Teshawn Williams, Dustin Bell, Aaron Singer, Dakota Bliven and Aaron Perez.

Photo courtesy of Denver North High School

**BOTTOM:** CW2 Robert Heflin (left) Colorado Army National Guard telecommunications manager and students and managers from Denver North High School display their certificates of appreciation from the U.S. Air Force Association 2017 Cyber Patriot, National Youth Cyber Defense competition.

Photo courtesy of MAJ Scott Lynch (Ret.)



ago for competitions that the Colorado Guard could enter. When LTC Martinez mentioned BG Willis' idea to CW2 Heflin, he said that he remembered the Youth Cyber Defense Competition from those previous searches and thought that affiliating with a local school would be a great idea.

"Once we spoke with the school they immediately jumped on the opportunity. They were so motivated, they agreed to compete within a day or two of contacting them," CW2 Heflin said.

Not only was the timeline for entry into the competition tight, the first events were only weeks away. CW2 Heflin and three other Soldiers involved in the program had less than a month to determine if the relationship would work and submit an application for the team.

"After they signed up, we conducted about two hours of training before the first practice round. We used that practice as a training and familiarization event," CW2 Heflin said.

Working with the students twice a week from October through January, Colorado Guard Soldiers provided cyber defense training in Windows and Ubuntu operating systems, hardening those systems, detecting vulnerabilities, and mitigating vulnerabilities.

During the practice and qualifying rounds of the competition, the team received a download package with instructions, questions, and a simulated cyber machine environment. The team had six hours to identify and solve a series of 15-20 problems/

vulnerabilities with their virtual system and answer a series of multiple-choice cyber-related questions.

In their very first year in the competition, the Denver North JROTC team scored second place in the Colorado All-Service Division (JROTC, Civil Air Patrol, and Naval Sea Cadets), just missing the cut-off by a small margin to attend the national competition.

"It's a great opportunity for us to support our youth to create the excitement for cyber and develop future cyber warriors" LTC Martinez said. "I am very proud of Chief Heflin for his efforts to build a new program at our local high school. He is a dedicated Soldier who wants to continue to give back to the community."

The relationship is about more than just the competition. While the Colorado Army National Guard's connection with the community deepens, it fosters youth interest in cyber – potentially motivating students to consider careers in cyber that meet community, State and national needs for cyber talent.

"Building relationships that encourage our young men and women to pursue careers in cyber and other STEM fields is a critical step towards ensuring we have both the military and civilian workforce necessary to protect our Nation and ensure our economic viability in the future." BG Willis said. "In order to have the diverse workforce we're going to need then, we have to invest in diverse young people now." ●



CW2 Johnston, of the Colorado Army National Guard's Defense Cyber Operations Element, provides a briefing to the joint Task Force -Centennial, at the Regis University Training Center at Greenwood Village Colo.

## Cyber Games Strengthen Ties and Technical Skills

BY Air Force TSgt Jecca Geffre,  
COLORADO NATIONAL GUARD

Colorado National Guard photos by  
Maj Darin Overstreet

A cyber-attack is invisible, is often undeterred by boundaries and is extremely dangerous. The possibilities for damage are endless. Attacks can range from small annoyances, to catastrophic damages to loss of life and property. Colorado National Guard leadership has been concerned with proactively defending against potential cyber vulnerabilities, since the late 1990s when prepping for Y2K.

LTC Brad Rhodes is the commander of Cyber Protection Team (CPT) 174 and the Defensive Cyber Operations Element (DCOE) of the Colorado Army National Guard. He is

recruiting personnel to fill positions in both units.

One of 10 teams across the U.S., CPT 174 is a 39-person National Guard element, shared with Utah, North Dakota, and South Dakota. Colorado is home to the command headquarters and the inspection team. "Our stated mission is to be the first military responder for major cyber incidents in FEMA [Federal Emergency Management Agency] Region 8," LTC Rhodes said. "Teams from each area can act as attackers, defenders, inspectors or hunters who seek out the threat."

The DCOE team defends against local attacks on DoD networks supporting the Colorado National Guard. The Colorado governor can also call upon the 10-person DCOE team to assist with State-level defensive cyber operations, when civilian assets are unavailable or exhausted.

LTC Rhodes emphasized how partnerships are important to cyber programs.

"Some organizations only think of cyber protection when they experience a significant problem or breach," he said, "We want [to maintain] a secure community that is leading the way."

For example, the Colorado Army National Guard participated in the vital connection cyber security exercise with Regis University Feb. 11-12, 2017, at the Regis campus in Greenwood Village, Colorado.

The exercise, which increased interagency coordination efforts, involved a critical infrastructure protection scenario, where one of the State's 1,738 dams experienced a malicious cyber-attack.

The players divided into two teams: one team acted as the hackers, or the opposing force (OPFOR), and the other defended against attacks, acting as BLUFOR. To experience both perspectives, the teams switched roles in the second half of the exercise. The teams included Colorado National Guard information technology specialists, instructors and students from Regis University and civilian industry experts who provided guidance along the way.

LTC Isaac Martinez, the director of Joint IT and Communications for the Colorado Army National Guard, emphasized how important trust is for





## ***"If you come to cyber, you will get significant professional certifications and experience, making you extremely marketable."***

- LTC Brad Rhodes

those within the industry.

"This was a great opportunity for us to build relationships, because IT is all about trust; you have to trust someone before you allow them to do anything on your network," LTC Martinez said. "This exercise allows [our] partner organizations to build that trust."

Mr. Clark, an IT manager at Northern Water in Berthoud, Colorado, said he participated in the exercise so that he can contribute to the betterment of his organization's cyber security plan. "The scenarios were very educational," he said.

LTC Rhodes said, "It's an extremely rewarding experience to work in cyber for

the military. If you come to cyber, you will get significant professional certifications and experience, making you extremely marketable, and you get to work in the cutting edge of the industry."

"We've had people come to us from unexpected fields - Special Forces, aviators, etc.," said CW2 Laura Cobert. A DCOE member, CW2 Cobert was a key planner for the exercise. "[People] want to be involved with IT. They want to go to a whole new realm of training and experience and be a vital aspect of our security."

"Every day people connect more things to the internet. Every day we're creating more vectors, more surfaces, more opportunities for

bad guys to do bad things," LTC Rhodes said.

"The Guard has always been a force multiplier," he said. "Our traditional [cyber operations] Soldiers bring a great deal of industry understanding and perspective to the fight. That experience engenders trust with our partner agencies."

According to Forbes.com, more than a million cyber-related jobs will remain unfilled by the year 2020.

"We need more people in this field; the Guard is a great place to get a start," LTC Rhodes said. "Our members become so much more marketable within the civilian sector; that's just one advantage of being on a National Guard cyber team." ●

**LEFT:** For the Vital Connection cyber exercise, LTC Rhodes, the team leader of the Colorado National Guard's Defensive Cyber Operations Element, built a rough but sophisticated model of a dam which is operated by a computer system. The exercise tests two teams. One attempts to defend the dam from a cyber attack and the other team attempts to access the dam's computer system and flood the simulated village.

**RIGHT:** CW2 Johnston provides a briefing on the Vital Connection cyber exercise.



An Army National Guard ROTC student pauses from study for a photograph on a university campus.

Photo courtesy of the California Army National Guard

# COLORADO NATIONAL GUARD STATE TUITION ASSISTANCE

**THE COLORADO NATIONAL GUARD STATE TUITION ASSISTANCE (TA) PROGRAM** is designed to assist Colorado National Guard members with reaching their higher education goals.

The program awards over a million dollars annually in tuition assistance.

Payments go as high as **\$4,250** in tuition payments per semester, and State funding can be combined with Federal Tuition Assistance for even more money to support your education.

Contact the Colorado National Guard State Tuition Assistance office for detailed information and for a list of qualifying in-State schools. Check to find updates on spring deadlines for the 2018 fall semester.

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**Website: [www.Colorado.Gov/DMVA](http://www.Colorado.Gov/DMVA)**

The State TA program covers in- state tuition only. Tuition is authorized on the amount after the Colorado Opportunity Fund (COF) stipend has been applied. The COF pays a portion of total in-State tuition when members are current Colorado residents and attend a participating college.



# Colorado Guard Relives its History at Glorieta Pass

STORY AND PHOTOS BY  
Lt Col Elena O'Bryan,  
COLORADO NATIONAL GUARD



The sounds of Colorado National Guard musket fire thundered across lonely Glorieta Pass. They quickly died. This time, there was no return fire.

Colorado National Guard staff traveled to Glorieta, N.M., to trace the actions of their predecessors at the Battle of Glorieta Pass, 154 years earlier.

"A staff ride is where the students are the teachers," said former Colorado National Guard historian MAJ Adam Morgan.

A cadre of Colorado Army National Guard chief warrant officers guided staff through the battle sites.

Also known as the Gettysburg of the West, the Battle of Glorieta Pass unfolded on sparsely wooded, steep ridges and within narrow, rugged canyons. For three days in 1862, March 26-28, Union regulars and volunteers from Colorado and New Mexico clashed with Confederates from Texas along the Sante Fe Trail at the southern tip of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, southeast of Santa Fe.

Glorieta Pass was a means to an end for the Confederates. Their objective was to take control of Fort Union, barely 100 miles to the northeast, and, from there, to launch a campaign that would appropriate the mineral wealth of the West for the Confederacy.

Only one thing stood in their way: the Union Army made up largely of the First Colorado Infantry Regiment. The territorial militia, established just two years earlier, was made up of men from different walks of life with little military training.

In response to the Confederate threat, the Coloradans, under the command of

COL John P. Slough, a Denver attorney, mobilized and began a march of 400 miles that they completed in only 18 days.

On the way to confront the Confederate force, the Colorado troops stopped at Fort Union to obtain supplies and grow their force.

COL Gabriel Paul, commander of the Fourth New Mexico Volunteers at Fort Union, tried to hold up the Colorado regiment, arguing that they should wait until reinforcements from California and Kansas arrived. He based his decision on orders from COL Edward R.S. Canby, commander of Union forces in the New Mexico Territory.

COL Slough disagreed, pulled rank on Paul, took command of Union forces at the fort, and led them towards Santa Fe.

"COL Slough didn't want to wait around at Fort Union," said the Adjutant General of Colorado MG H. Michael Edwards. "The Colorado National Guard is still like that. We don't want to deploy somewhere to do nothing. We want to get the mission done."

After a five-hour drive from their headquarters in Denver, the Colorado Army National Guard arrived at Apache Canyon, where Union Soldiers under the command of MAJ John Chivington, First Colorado Volunteers, encountered Confederate forces. A former pastor, the men under his command included a sheriff, a realtor, and a probate judge.

"The Coloradans had almost no experience. The Confederates were very confident," said Dave Schmidt, former Colorado National Guard historian.

Perched on a rise, Colorado Army National Guard warrant officers described how

Union forces took up positions on the sides of the canyon and fired down onto Confederate forces. The Union routed the Confederacy here, forcing the Texans to retreat.

One of the Colorado soldiers received a mortal wound.

"Right out here was the Colorado National Guard's first killed in action," MAJ Morgan said, pointing down into the canyon. "This is where we spilled our first blood in defense of our country."

The Federals lost four Soldiers. The Confederates lost three, but 71 Texans became prisoners, one-fourth of the Confederate force in New Mexico.

But the main phase of the battle had not yet begun.

Colorado National Guard staff visited various other points on the battlefield where Union and Confederate Soldiers fought, filling the air with explosions and acrid smoke from cannon and rifle fire.

They saw the areas where the Confederate Texans successfully pushed Union forces further down the Sante Fe Trail, until the late afternoon of March 28, 1862 when they came upon the Union center atop Artillery Hill. Union resistance there slowed the Confederate advance, which then switched from the Federal right to the Federal left flank, overrunning them at Sharpshooters Ridge. Federals quickly withdrew to a place called Pidgeon's Ranch, a waystation for travelers. After a firefight with Confederates there, Union forces retreated.

Meanwhile, MAJ Chivington and his 500 Soldiers marched the length of Glorieta Mesa, as part of COL Slough's plan to strike





the Confederates from the rear. The battle raged below, unbeknownst to MAJ Chivington and his, First Colorado Volunteers.

“MAJ Chivington didn’t know the battle was going on due to acoustic shadow caused by Glorieta Mesa,” said CW 2 Elisa Locke, a Colorado Army National Guard UH-60 helicopter pilot and civilian life skills teacher.

The First Colorado Volunteers came upon sparsely-guarded Confederate wagons filled with supplies at Johnson’s Ranch at the base of the mesa. MAJ Chivington’s men lowered themselves through 700 feet of steep terrain, regrouped, and attacked. They blew up the supplies and wagons.

Later that night, a snowstorm descended on both armies, in the midst of a truce to bury the dead and care for the wounded, and dropped a foot of snow.

With the loss of their supplies, and knowing that COL Canby was on his way from Fort Craig with a sizeable force, the Confederates soon left the field at Glorieta, never to return.

“It’s important to study history and to understand how a victory occurred,” MG Edwards said. “We learn from the failures. We learn from the successes. We also come to understand that a victory can involve luck in addition to skill.”

After firing rifle muskets provided by Civil War reenactors, Colorado National Guard staff stopped at Fort Union to survey what remained of its crumbling defenses. If the Confederates had made it that far, the Great Plains and a well-traveled route through Raton Pass would have sealed their conquest of Colorado and the West.

The actions of the First Colorado at the Battle of Glorieta Pass wove a different story for Colorado and for our Nation.

Reflecting on the significance of the time that has span from then until now, MG Edwards said, “We’ve built our organization on this past, on the Colorado Guard’s first campaign fulfilling its federal duties, and we continue to grow and succeed.” ●

**TOP LEFT:** View looking east through the Apache Canyon from what was a Confederate position during the Battle of Glorieta Pass in Glorieta Pass, N.M. The Union cavalry charge against the Confederates took place amid the rough terrain of this canyon.

**TOP MIDDLE:** LTC Shannon Espinoza (left), Senior Advisor to the Army National Guard, and CW4 John Mudlo of Colorado Army National Guard, discuss key aspects of the Apache Canyon terrain in Glorieta Pass, N.M.

**TOP RIGHT:** Former Colorado Army National Guard historian MAJ Adam Morgan (left) and CW2 Dominic Marchiano, study a topographical map of Apache Canyon near Glorieta Pass, N.M.

**BOTTOM RIGHT:** CW2 Elisa Locke, a teacher serving in the Colorado Army National Guard, describes to participants how the first Colorado Commander MAJ John Chivington led the attack on Confederate supplies at the Battle of Glorieta Pass.







# **NEED HELP WITH FINANCIAL MATTERS?**

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**LEFT:** SSG Sean Goodman works with a rope system during the Advanced Military Mountaineering Course at Fort Carson, Colo., Oct. 5, 2017.

**RIGHT:** Soldiers of the 1st Battalion, 157th Infantry (Mountain) practice evacuating an injured climber during the Advanced Military Mountaineering Course in Boulder Canyon, Colo., Oct. 10, 2017.



## Colorado National Guard Takes Mountain Unit to Higher Heights

STORY AND PHOTOS BY  
SPC Jennifer Lena  
COLORADO NATIONAL GUARD

**T**he 1st Battalion, 157th Infantry Regiment (Mountain), Colorado Army National Guard is one of only three mountain infantry battalions in the U.S. Army. Through the High-Altitude Mountain Training Initiative (HAMTI), a new partnership between the Vermont National Guard and Colorado National Guard,

Soldiers of the 1-157th Infantry now have the opportunity to further develop their unique skills right in their home State.

As a part of the initiative, in October of 2017, the Advanced Military Mountaineering Course (AMMC) was taught in Colorado for the first time. Previously, AMMC courses were offered exclusively at the Army Mountain Warfare School in Jericho, Vermont.

The AMMC mobile training team was brought to Colorado for the first time as part of a strategy to increase the number of military mountaineers and heighten units' readiness.

"If we are going to have a mountain unit here in Colorado, we need to facilitate and enable that unit to be able to do the home-station training necessary to accomplish missions," said 1SG John Gilliland, the HAMTI NCOIC.

The portion of the AMMC taught at Fort Carson, Colo. was an intense two-week exercise focusing on the fundamentals of analyzing and moving through rough terrain,

safely building and using rope systems, high angle rescue techniques and – perhaps most importantly – effective decision-making skills.

"We're not teaching systems for these students to memorize," said SFC Robert Niles, the AMMC Non-commissioned Officer in Charge. "We're hopefully teaching them more of a decision-making process, and along the way, giving them tools to solve terrain problems and come up with viable technical solutions to those problems."

Throughout the course, students learned how to calmly make high-risk decisions. According to the instructors, graduates will train other Soldiers on the same skill upon returning to their units. Graduates will also serve as advisors to their commanders.

"The big takeaway from this course was learning how to manage a training site, effectively teach skills to lower-level Soldiers and how to manage risks associated with



**TOP LEFT:** CPL Steven Schouweiler (left) and SGT Aaron Bogdanovich conduct high angle rescue training during the Advanced Military Mountaineering Course in Red Rock Canyon Open Space near Colorado Springs, Colo., Oct. 6, 2017.

**TOP RIGHT:** SFC Robert Niles (center) monitors students during the Advanced Military Mountaineering Course in Boulder Canyon, Colo., Oct. 10, 2017.

**BOTTOM LEFT:** Soldiers of the 1st Battalion, 157th Infantry (Mountain) practice evacuating an injured climber during the Advanced Military Mountaineering Course in Boulder Canyon, Colo., Oct. 10, 2017.



training someone who is not familiar with any of this gear,” noted SGT Michael Ricker, an AMMC student who participated in the October 2017 session.

The AMMC is open to all service members, regardless of rank or branch of service. The only prerequisite for attendance is graduation from the U.S. Army Basic Military Mountaineering Course. However, candidates are largely chosen by their units by demonstrating maturity and a continuing passion for perfecting the skill.

“Another big thing we are trying to do with these students is make this course fun so that they want to go climbing on their own,” SFC Niles said. “That’s where they are going to get the experience to teach as a part of sustainment training.”

Although the course is open to all branches and components, Army National

Guard Soldiers tend to experience longer lasting gains from the course. As Guard Soldiers often serve within their home State for extended periods of time, even for their entire career, the investment made in these students may persist longer than with their active duty counterparts – who frequently transfer to units and locations which do not require mountaineering skills.

This career longevity concept also applies to the AMMC instructors who each have at least 10 years of experience in military mountaineering. Class sizes are unusually small compared to other mountaineering courses. For every AMMC instructor, there are only two students. This ratio allows for a maximum of only 24 graduates from the winter phase of the AMMC and 48 from the summer phase each year.

Though the HAMTI has succeeded in

bringing quality mountaineering education to Colorado, the change in location presents instructors with a new set of challenges to overcome. The cadre must be able to find terrain features that are most applicable to the training in an area that is currently unfamiliar to them. They must also plan around abrupt Colorado weather changes while teaching to the strict standards of the course.

As forces specifically trained to conduct operations in mountain environments become increasingly relevant to U.S. military operations, the Colorado Army National Guard, along with the Vermont Army National Guard, is using the HAMTI to increase the number of their qualified mountaineers, heightening Soldier and unit readiness for both State and federal missions within the National Guard and active duty Army. ●



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### **GET THE ANSWERS YOU NEED.**

Reach out to the Colorado Guard's TAA with your questions.

**Amy Eagen**  
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Members of the Colorado National Guard and the Jordan Armed Forces-Arab Army participate in a CBRN defense exercise in Jordan.



## Colorado Guard Partners with Jordan for Chemical Threat Exercise

BY SSG Lally Laksbergs,  
COLORADO NATIONAL GUARD

Colorado National Guard photos by  
SSgt Michelle Y. Alvarez-Rea

**C**olorado Army National Guard Soldiers and the Jordan Armed Forces (JAF) Royal Engineer Corps conducted an exercise last winter at the Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Training Center of Excellence in Jordan.

The exercise, held by the Jordan Armed Forces-Arab Army Chemical Support Unit (CSU), focused on increasing service members' proficiencies and technical skills when responding to a

CBRN-related emergency.

The relationship with the CSU came through the long-term efforts of the U.S. Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA) – part of the U.S.-Jordan Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction initiative.

"[The] Colorado Army National Guard was the natural partner to conduct this training because of its existing partnership with Jordan," said Stacey Neal, the international project officer for DTRA.

The Colorado Army National Guard and JAF have conducted military-to-military exchanges through the National Guard State Partnership Program (SPP) since 2004.

"With current threat levels where they are, it is not a matter of 'if' but a matter of 'when' these skills will be needed and put into use," the JAF CSU commander said. "We're very happy with the relationship with the Colorado National Guard and look forward for it to continue in the future."

The exercise consisted of a fictional threat scenario, where a smell of unknown origin was detected in the nuclear medicine wing of a hospital that was under construction. To create a more realistic training environment, Colorado Army National Guard Soldiers and JAF members received few details about the

mock incident in advance of the training. As a result, participants had to think on their feet, relying on knowledge gained from previous training, to determine appropriate courses of action.

U.S. Soldiers and their Jordanian counterparts trained on proper procedures for handling chemical agents. They also focused on proper protocol for a rescue and extraction when a second scenario called for the removal of a fallen team member, followed by decontamination of the victim and rescuers.

"This partnership is helping develop our capabilities," the JAF CSU technical staff officer said. "Our unit is transitioning from traditional chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear duties to a civil support team. We don't have a National Guard in Jordan, so we provide support to civil authorities. The army is a second line of defense."

"Jordan and the United States have a strong and enduring partnership spanning six decades – one of the most mature military-to-military relationships around the world," said LTC Nicole David, Colorado National Guard bilateral affairs officer. "This is reflected in the high level of cooperation, as evident by this joint training exercise." ●





**TOP, MIDDLE AND BOTTOM PHOTOS:** Soldiers of the Colorado National Guard conduct a CBRN defense exercise with their State partnership members from the Jordan Armed Forces-Arab Army.



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In order to be eligible, Soldiers must have at least one year left on their current enlistment.



# Exercise Triglav Star Demonstrates Benefits of 24 Years of Interoperability

BY CPT Ron Bailey  
COLORADO NATIONAL GUARD

**T**he Colorado Army National Guard's 1st Battalion, 157th Infantry (Mountain) deployed nearly 100 Soldiers to Slovenia to participate in a multinational training exercise Sept. 11-23, 2017.

The exercise, called Triglav Star, consisted of company-sized elements from the Colorado Army National Guard and the Slovenian and British Armed Forces. The training included mountaineering, squad- and platoon-level tactics, and multinational operations. It culminated with a multinational mock attack on an objective in the mountains of Triglav, Slovenia.

Through the event, the 1-157th contributed to U.S. Army European Command's (EUCOM) strategic operating picture, while strengthening its relationship with the Slovenian forces. The Colorado National Guard and the Slovenian Armed Forces have been partners in the National Guard State Partnership Program (SPP) since 1993.

"Because of the enduring partnership between Slovenia and Colorado, Colorado National Guard members regularly take part in Slovenian Armed Forces exercises," said Air Force Maj Gen Michael Loh, the adjutant general of Colorado. "These joint exercises are very successful because we exchange best practices, tactics and techniques. [This allows us to] forge even stronger ties with our state partner."

The SPP promotes the development of long-term partner capacity through liaisons with National Guard personnel, the partner

country's military personnel and interagency coordination mechanisms. Through the partnership, military training teams from the Colorado National Guard and the Slovenian Armed Forces have deployed to Afghanistan six times to train and mentor units of the Afghan National Army. With the goal of cultivating a self-sufficient and effective Afghan security establishment, the Colorado Army National Guard served side-by-side with Slovenia in its responsibilities as a NATO contributing country in Afghanistan.

The 1st Battalion, 157th Infantry

(Mountain) is one of only three Mountain Infantry battalions in the U.S. Army. During October 2016, under the Army's associated units pilot program, the unit officially became a part of the historic 10th Mountain Division. The many pluses of the Colorado National Guard's partnership with Slovenia include the use of training areas near the Slovenian Armed Forces Multinational Center of Excellence for Mountain Warfare and training with experienced Slovenian Soldiers from the 132nd (Mountain) Infantry Regiment. ●



Members of Company A, 1st Battalion, 157th Infantry Regiment (Mountain), of the Colorado Army National Guard hike Slovenia's Begunščica Ridge during day-three of training while participating in the Triglav Star III exercise.

Colorado National Guard photo by SPC Ashley Low



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