

A Resource for the Soldiers and Families of the Army National Guard

# CITIZEN-SOLDIER

CITIZEN-SOLDIERMAGAZINE.COM

ISSUE 4 // VOL 1

# QUALIFIED

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# MEMORIAL DAY

CELEBRATE ★ HONOR ★ REMEMBER

MAY 28, 2018



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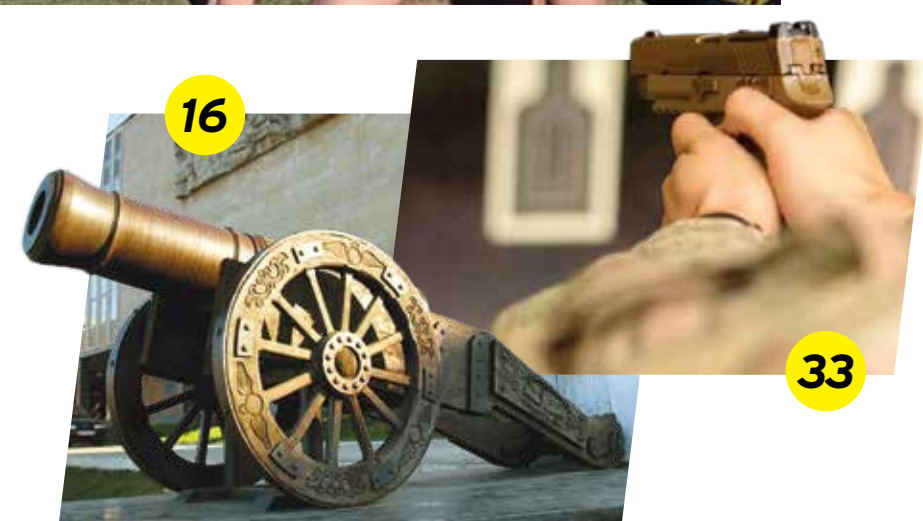
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**Mission:** To celebrate and support the Soldiers and Families of the National Guard. To provide today's Army National Guard members with information on becoming a better Soldier and better citizen. To encourage and assist Guard Soldiers in maximizing the benefits of their military career, as well as their personal and Family goals.

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## EXTEND TO DEFEND

Continue to serve and protect your Nation and retain a myriad of benefits for you and your Family including:

- Re-enlistment Extension Bonus Opportunities
- Access to Federally Funded Retirement Plans
- Money to Earn Your Degree or Continue Your Education
- Low-Cost Health Insurance
- VA Home Loan Eligibility



Soldiers who extend to serve between two and five years receive appreciation rewards of a commemorative coin and a stainless steel coffee tumbler. Soldiers who extend for six years receive a high-quality gym bag in addition to the coin and tumbler.

## An Easy Path to a CDL

BY STAFF WRITER Liam Griffin

**M**any jobs in the military seem like a perfect fit for similar positions in the civilian world. Undoubtedly, one of the greatest benefits of the Army National

Guard is the hands-on training in skills that can potentially transfer to the civilian workforce. For Soldiers whose MOS involves the operation of commercial vehicles, that transition of skills is now even easier. A new law has created a seamless path for qualifying Soldiers to easily and affordably acquire a commercial driver's license (CDL).

In 2015, Congress established the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act, more commonly known as the FAST Act. Originally, the FAST Act was designed to help veterans earn a CDL more quickly and easily.

The initial FAST Act allowed qualifying veterans to forgo the knowledge examination that is traditionally required for licensing, given the prevailing thought and overall assessment among Army leaders that the training veterans receive while serving demonstrates more than enough knowledge of the workings of commercial vehicles. While this was an immense help to veterans, it failed to account for service members who are currently serving.

In January of this year, Congress passed a bill into law that aimed to correct the noted shortcoming of the initial FAST Act. The bi-partisan effort, referred to as the Jobs for Our Heroes Act, expands the benefits of the FAST Act to include National Guard Soldiers, active duty Soldiers and Reservists.

The new law continues to allow all qualifying service members to bypass the knowledge examination. Additionally, it simplifies the process for past and current service members to obtain the required physical from a Department of Transportation (DOT)-approved physician. Typically, the physical required from all drivers seeking a CDL can only be performed by physicians who are listed on the National Registry of Certified Medical Examiners (NRCME). The registry is a Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) program, and all physicians who perform DOT physicals must be certified in the FMCSA physical qualification standards and listed in the NRCME. This requirement limited the number and availability of medical examiners qualified to conduct DOT physicals by a significant number. The decreased number of authorized physicians, in turn, often caused delays for CDL applicants seeking the required physical.

With the passing of the Jobs for Our Heroes Act, that delay has been removed for service members. Now, Soldiers have the option to obtain a DOT-approved physical from a doctor certified by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). This change should help relieve long wait times and curtail the long-distance travel necessary for some Soldiers to complete the required physical.

Thanks to this new legislation, not only can Soldiers now forgo a lengthy driver's examination, they can also more easily receive a physical by simply using a VA doctor, instead of hunting down an NRCME-approved physician.

The Jobs for Our Heroes Act has ensured that, now more than ever, Guard Soldiers working in an 88M MOS may have the assurance that the skills they have gained in the Guard can work to their advantage when transitioning into a civilian career. ●

PFC Jessica Kling, a horizontal construction engineer with the South Dakota Army National Guard's 842nd Engineer Company backs up a dump truck during the Battle of the Blades training exercise in Spearfish, S.D.

South Dakota National Guard photo by SGT Patrick Wolfe

# 2018 Incentive Bonuses Are In!

The 2018 Army National Guard Selected Reserve Incentive Program (SRIP) bonus amounts were announced in January. SRIP provides Soldiers with incentives in order to fill critical shortages while satisfying readiness requirements for the Army National Guard.

Here are just a few of the 2018 incentives offered through SRIP:

- **Re-enlistment/Extension Bonus (REB)**

The REB is available to eligible Army National Guard Soldiers who extend or immediately re-enlist. The bonus amounts are \$4,000 for a two-year commitment and \$12,000 for a six-year commitment.

- **Officer/Warrant Officer Accession Bonus (OAB/WOAB)**

The OAB and WOAB are offered to newly commissioned officers and newly appointed warrant officers who serve in a traditional status in the Army National Guard. The 2018 OAB is \$10,000 and the WOAB is \$20,000.

- **The Montgomery GI Bill-Selected Reserve (MGIB-SR) Kicker**

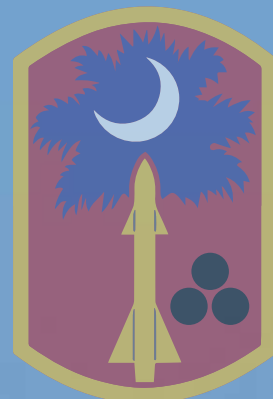
The MGIB-SR Kicker encourages qualified Soldiers to enlist in high-demand military jobs and units. The incentive applies to specific critical MOSs and certain deployable units. The 2018 Re-enlistment MGIB-SR Kicker for a six-year commitment is \$200. The Prior Service, Officer Commissioning and Supplemental MGIB-SR kickers are each valued at \$350 for a six-year commitment.

For detailed information about these and other SRIP incentives, contact your State Incentive Manager, State GI Bill Manager or your unit's Readiness NCO.

Incentives are subject to change and/or may be based off eligibility requirements, lengths of extension or may vary based on MOS/ROTC track.



# BRIDGING the GAP



## ***South Carolina Army National Guard Launches New Patriot Training Program***

BY STAFF WRITER Tatyana White-Jenkins

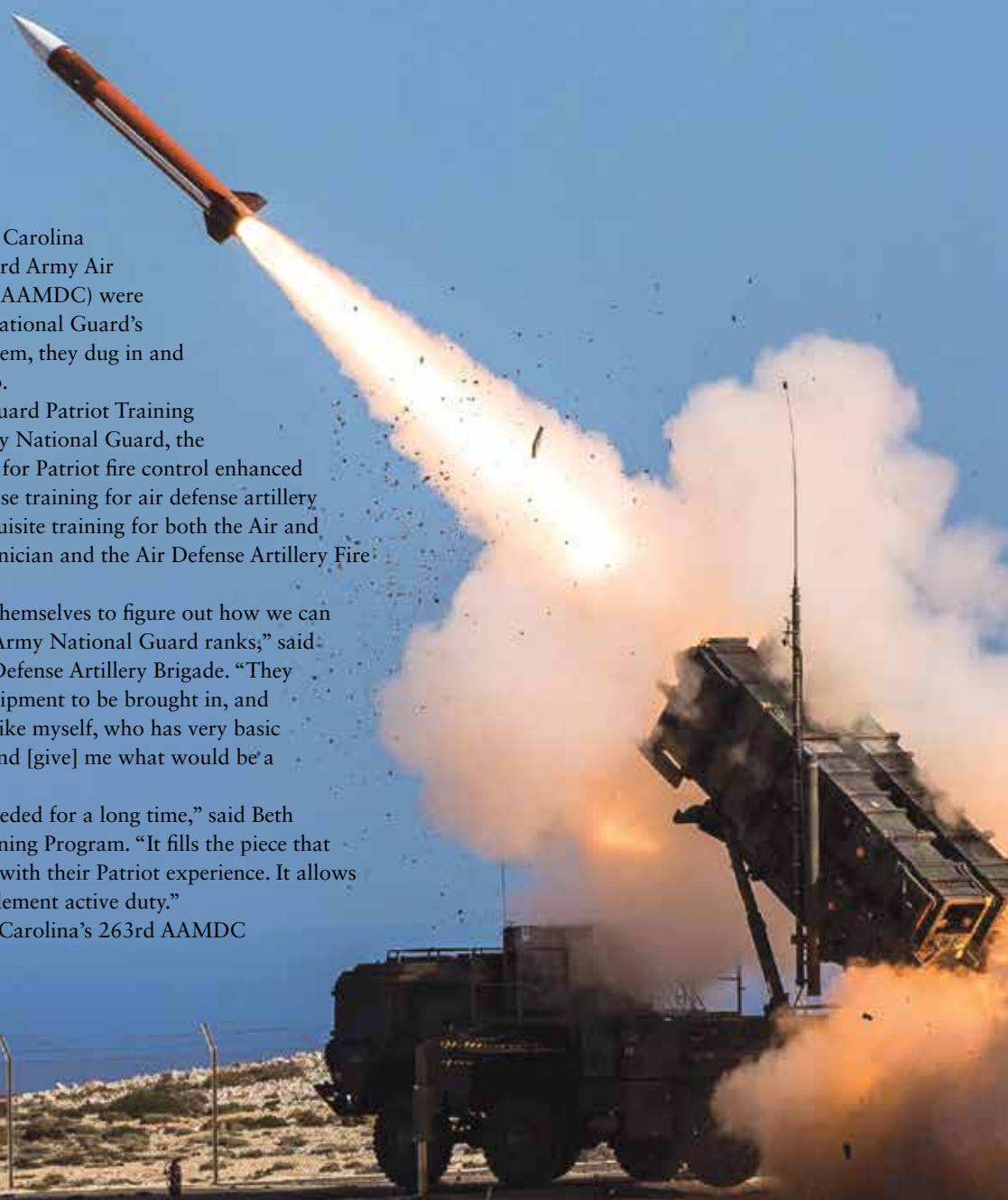
When the leaders of the South Carolina Army National Guard's 263rd Army Air Missile Defense Command (AAMDC) were confronted with the gap in the Army National Guard's experience with the Patriot Missile System, they dug in and began building a bridge to span the gap.

That bridge is the Army National Guard Patriot Training Program. A first of its kind for the Army National Guard, the program provides sustainment training for Patriot fire control enhanced operators/maintainers; Patriot air defense training for air defense artillery officers at the brigade level; and prerequisite training for both the Air and Missile Defense Systems Tactician/Technician and the Air Defense Artillery Fire Control Operations.

"The 263rd AAMDC took it upon themselves to figure out how we can gain the Patriot knowledge within the Army National Guard ranks," said MAJ Adam Williams of the 678th Air Defense Artillery Brigade. "They hired incredible instructors, funded equipment to be brought in, and then were able to take an air defender like myself, who has very basic knowledge of Patriot missile systems, and [give] me what would be a bachelor's degree-level [of training]."

"It was a great idea and has been needed for a long time," said Beth Turner, an instructor at the Patriot Training Program. "It fills the piece that the Army National Guard was missing with their Patriot experience. It allows them to have that knowledge and supplement active duty."

For eight months, Soldiers of South Carolina's 263rd AAMDC



and 678th Air Defense Artillery Brigade attended the inaugural classes of the Patriot Training Program during their drill weekends. This initial batch of training sessions gave the course instructors a unique opportunity to assist in tailoring the structure and content of the program from the ground up.

“I loved being able to develop something like this,” Turner said. “[The AAMDC] sought me out to help create the program, administer the training and instruction, and then develop what the growth of the program would be. We got to be creative, so it’s been a lot of fun. It started with needing to fill this gap with Patriot experience so that [Guard Soldiers] can be ready and relevant in any theater. By the end, we started doing more training on equipment and the overall concept of the weapons system, and how it integrates into the joint force.”

Along with required reading and exams, the program incorporates virtual environments to simulate how the missile system is used in theater. Soldiers learn basic knowledge about the Patriot system, as well as how to plan and integrate it into a joint operational environment.

Having a limited amount of time to digest the immense amount of information taught in the program proved to be somewhat taxing for Soldiers.

“The most challenging aspect of the training was trying to cover such a vast subject using only drill weekends,” said then SFC, now WO1, Travis Peacock of the 678th Air Defense Artillery Brigade. “Each student had to create time each month to study the previous month’s topics and prepare for tests while reading the necessary documents ahead of time to be prepared for

the upcoming session. This required a delicate balance of resources and time management.”

Despite challenges, Soldiers had positive feedback about the program. They noted feeling overwhelmed towards the beginning of the course, but by the end, said they could see how everything came together.

“The Soldiers love it,” said Jim Smith, assistant instructor of the Patriot Training Program. “As we progressed, they would come in wanting to do more. And when the class was over, they actually asked if they could continue training. They wanted us to teach more classes.”

Thanks to the knowledgeable and thoroughness of the instructors, Soldiers reported feeling confident in their ability to succeed using the Patriot Missile System in theater.

“The time spent in this training environment was excellent because of the experience of the instructors paired with the diversity of the students,” SFC Peacock said.

“It’s a lot of material to cover and a lot of technical information, but the instructors were outstanding,” noted MAJ Williams.

MAJ Williams’ participation in the program was particularly

“As a result of my participation, I feel confident in my ability to fall in with an active duty Patriot unit and be a useful part of the team.”

— LTC Benjamin Dunn

relevant, as the 678th Air Defense Artillery Brigade has an upcoming deployment that will put their Patriot knowledge to the test.

“We’re going to Germany as part of the European Deterrence Initiative, and we will be controlling Patriot battalions as well as other missile systems,” MAJ Williams said. “Having this knowledge and training has been invaluable. I feel like I’m prepared now for when my commander comes to me and asks me questions. I’ve got the basic knowledge to either provide him an answer, or I know the resources to seek out that answer, which we didn’t have before.”

The Instructors of the Patriot Training Program plan to follow the 678th’s deployment to Germany to gain real-time feedback on the effectiveness of the training.

**“It feels really good to have completed the training. Not just having it behind me, but knowing what benefits it will bring to the events that lie ahead of me.”**

— SFC Travis Peacock

training only. Some of us knew that this Germany rotation was a possibility, so we knew that the skills we were learning right then were going to be put to use in a few months.”

Along with gaining a solid understanding of the Patriot missile system, Soldiers also gained perspective on the connection between their Patriot system knowledge and its importance to the Army National Guard.

“It feels really good to have completed the training,” SFC Peacock said. “Not just having it behind me, but knowing what benefits it will bring to the events that lie ahead of me. I learned the importance of this particular Army equipment and the purpose it serves with keeping this Nation and other nations safe and secure. [I also learned] how important it is to constantly try to stay relevant by learning new skills that help make the Army National Guard, my unit and myself better.”

At the conclusion of this first set of courses, the South Carolina Army National Guard held a graduation ceremony on Jan. 6, 2018, in Columbia, South Carolina.

importance of the program all the more apparent to him, MAJ Williams said.

“It was a great opportunity to go into a drill weekend knowing what you were working on had meaning and value,” MAJ Williams explained. “Every weekend [has meaning and value], but as we were focused on the Patriot program, all of the distractions of a normal drill weekend were removed so that we could focus in on this



Students of the Patriot Missile Training Program participate in a scenario-based brainstorming session during the Introduction to Patriot Defense Planning Group Exercise.

Photo courtesy South Carolina Army National Guard



Soldiers and trainers from the 263rd Army Air Missile Defense Command and 678th Air Defense Artillery Brigade, South Carolina Army National Guard, at their graduation ceremony from the Patriot Missile Training Program.

South Carolina Army National Guard photo by SGT David Erskine

The 12 graduating Soldiers were presented with course certificates. During the ceremony, then-MAJ, now LTC Benjamin Dunn of the 281st Maneuver Enhancement Brigade gave a speech highlighting the significance the program holds.

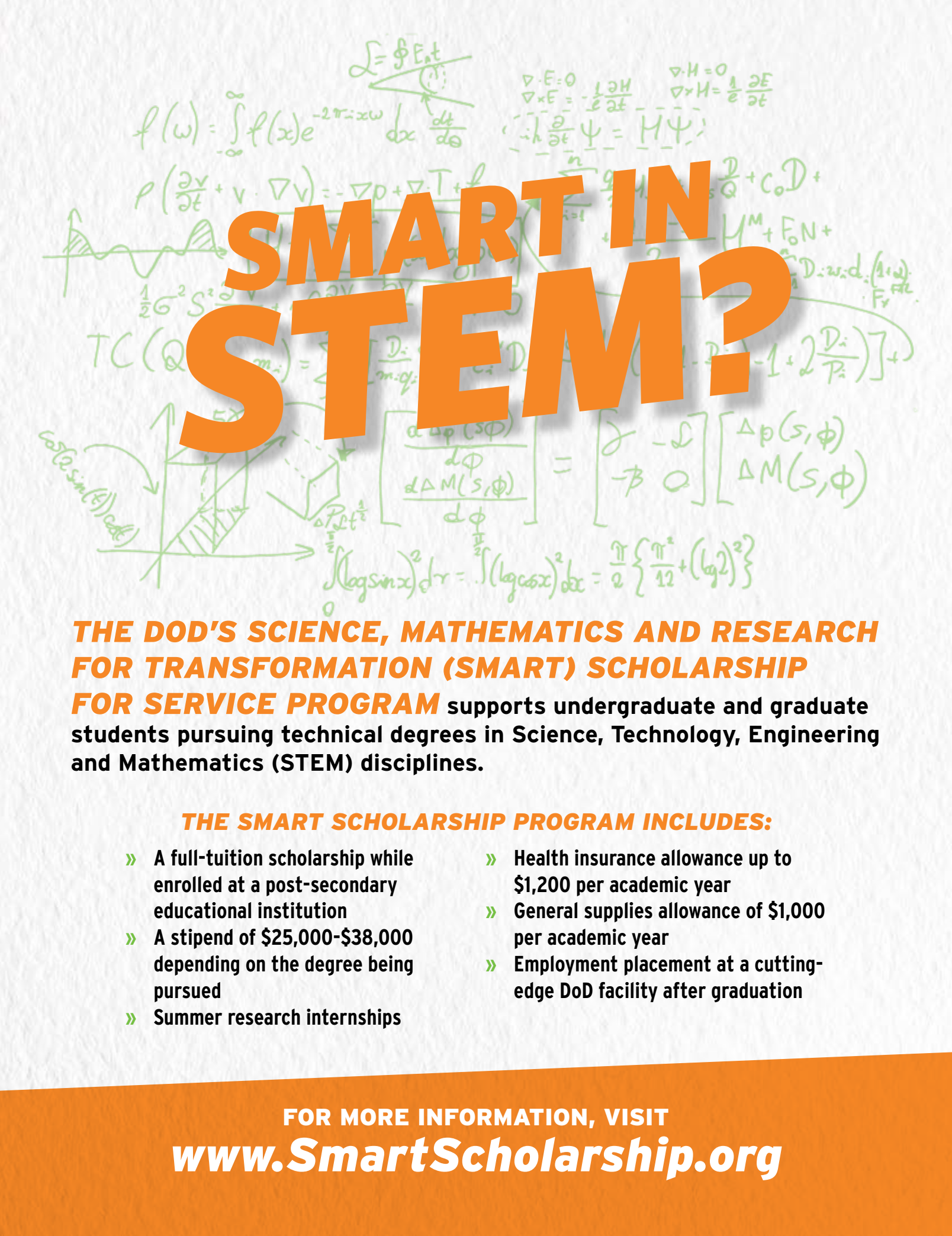
“The genius of the Patriot Training Program is that it is precisely tailored to solve a unique problem facing today’s Army,” LTC Dunn explained. “The active component does not need or expect me to walk through the door being the master of all Patriot knowledge, but neither do they have the time to fully train me on the job. What they need is a reserve component Soldier with a knowledge base that reduces the learning curve to full mission capability from weeks to a matter of days. This program fills that critical knowledge gap. Thus, as a result of my participation, I feel confident in my ability to fall in with an active duty Patriot unit and be a useful part of the team.”

When it comes to the future of the Patriot Training Program, plans are underway to expand the program to more units in the Army

National Guard and further develop it based on Soldiers’ feedback and experiences with their newfound knowledge and skills.

“The Army National Guard is being called on more now than in our entire history,” SFC Peacock explained. “We must be ready to step up and step in at any time. Relevance and readiness are words that come to mind. Training like the Patriot Training Program truly [delivers on] both of those terms.” ●





# SMART IN STEM?

## **THE DOD'S SCIENCE, MATHEMATICS AND RESEARCH FOR TRANSFORMATION (SMART) SCHOLARSHIP**

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**[www.SmartScholarship.org](http://www.SmartScholarship.org)**

A background image showing several soldiers in silhouette, walking away from the viewer through a misty, forested area. They are wearing helmets and carrying rifles.

# A REAL CALL *OF* DUTY

## *Activision Seeks Out Army National Guard Combat Vet*

BY STAFF WRITER Mathew Liptak  
Army National Guard photos by Luke Sohl

On a white, snow-packed mountainside in eastern France not long after New Year's Day 1945, PVT Harold Angle of the 28th Infantry Division, Pennsylvania Army National Guard, found himself in the mother of all shootouts.

Image courtesy Activision

He had just joined his unit as a replacement Soldier for I Company in the 112th Regiment. Now he was deployed as a scout on the forward left flank of his platoon as they climbed the Vosges Mountains. American divisions, including Pennsylvania's 28th Infantry Division, were pushing deeper into France and threatening the Nazi presence occupying the European country.

U.S. troops were moving steadily. Each march eastward was a step closer to ending forever the malevolent force that was

Hitler's Third Reich. But until then, the might of the German army would fight with everything it had to halt the U.S. advance.

Now a retired civilian, Angle was recently asked to describe these dramatic events that took place 72 years earlier. Members of the video gaming company Activision listened intently last October as the 94-year-old veteran told them his story. They were consulting with him and other vets to make sure their soon-to-be-released video game – Call of Duty: WWII® – was as authentic as possible.

Angle's days in combat so long ago were brief, but chilling. Reflecting back, he said that even though he didn't see a lot of combat before the war ended in 1945, what he did see was enough to last a lifetime.

The Guard Soldier took the fight to the Germans that January day when he and his platoon had attempted to assault a German machine gun position. But their sergeant tripped a wire hidden under the snow. Light from flares illuminated the mountainside like sunshine, and the Nazi

“  
**One of the bullets  
hit the brim of my  
helmet. That bullet  
went past my ear, and  
tore the wool-knit  
cap I was wearing all  
to shreds. It never  
touched my ear, but  
the bullet went to my  
right shoulder.**  
”

– Harold Angle

Harold Angle

troops began pouring machine gun fire onto the Americans’ position. Fortunately, protected by a depression in the earth, the Soldiers were able to avoid the onslaught of bullets but were pinned down until dawn.

The Soldiers didn’t give up on their mission. Instead, they decided to go up the mountain from the backside.

It was during this latter climb when PVT Angle spotted a group of soldiers across a clearing. Were they friend or foe? One of the advancing men had not pulled his white helmet-camo completely down, revealing the telltale signs of German headgear. PVT Angle immediately signaled his fellow Soldiers to hit the ground.

Then the shooting began.

Bullets rained between the American and German positions. PVT Angle aimed his M1 Garand rifle from a prone position and began firing on the Nazis. Just months before, the small-town boy from Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, had been helping his Dad with the family business, selling eggs and poultry to the residents of the Keystone State. Now he was a Soldier



Image courtesy Activision

in the Pennsylvania Army National Guard fighting to save the world.

“During the exchange of fire, one of the bullets came in,” Angle recalled. “I was in the prone position lying in the snow. One of the bullets hit the brim of my helmet. That bullet went past my ear, and tore the wool-knit cap I was wearing all to shreds. It never touched my ear, but the bullet went to my right shoulder. I didn’t know how bad I was hurt. When that bullet hit my shoulder, it stunned me so bad that I literally blacked out.”

When PVT Angle came to, he resumed returning fire on the Germans with the rest of his platoon. Then the potato masher came at him. The potato masher was a German-designed hand grenade that got the name because it somewhat resembled the kitchen utensil.

As he told the memory of the weapon flying toward him, you could still hear the alarm in Angle’s voice.

“It landed only two to three feet from where I was laying,” Angle recalled. “I saw it coming. I put my face down into the snow, covered my head as much as I could

with my arms, and I said a quick prayer. I said 'God, protect me.' That grenade landed two or three feet in front of me and it never exploded. It was a dud."

Later, after the skirmish was over and the Germans had retreated back into heavier cover, PVT Angle went toward the rear of his unit to have his shoulder checked out. The medic told him to take off his coat and shirt. When he complied, a spent bullet fell to the ground.

The German slug had lost its momentum before reaching PVT Angle's shoulder. He was not awarded a Purple Heart because he only had a bruise. He did keep the bullet though as a souvenir of his good fortune. He sent it home from Paris in a jewelry box to his mother, who had given him a steel-covered Bible to keep over his heart. Angle admitted that she was probably "pretty disturbed" upon receiving it from her son.

He still has the bullet today, and proudly shows it off when asked about his time in the war. Angle has lived in his home in Chambersburg since not long after leaving the Service in 1946. Once a small-town boy, he is now a small-town elder – one who is increasingly called upon for media interviews and memorial ceremonies as his peers pass away.

Angle is part of the Greatest Generation – the fading few who once made the world safe and championed democracy. They battled and defeated a rising evil that almost took over the world between 1941 and 1945. They were simply citizens, doing what they had to do. Many of them were Army National Guard Soldiers like Angle.

Call of Duty: WWII® is now a hit video game from Activision and Sledgehammer Games. The game allows players to perform some of their own WWII heroics, and the game makers wanted the option of heroics offered in the game to be as realistic as possible.

Activision contacted the Greatest Generation Foundation and brought Angle and several other World War II combat vets to Hollywood last October. It was a first-class affair – first-class airfare, five-star hotel, the works – all so they could learn more about the reality of World War II combat.



Angle displays the German bullet that grazed his helmet and landed on his shoulder during a battle with German troops in eastern France.



Angle holds a replica of a German hand grenade, commonly called a Potato Masher, that landed only feet from the then-private during a fire exchange with Nazi soldiers.



A 1945 photo of Angle shows the dent in his helmet where a German bullet shot at him by Nazi soldiers grazed past his head.



Image courtesy Activision

“The reason why Activision wanted to do this – they said a lot of the school districts in the United States do not teach WWII history anymore,” Angle said. “They felt that if they tried to incorporate the stories of actual veterans that were in combat during WWII, it would give them better insight as to what WWII was really like. In that respect, I’m glad I was able to do what I did. Hopefully, young people won’t have to do what we had to.”

The old adage “experience is the best teacher” takes on a new meaning when some argue that using gaming for education, including Army National Guard history, is beneficial to players. The Army already uses gaming in some aspects of Soldier combat training; why not also use it to teach Army history?

“I would encourage it,” said MAJ Darrin Haas, historian for the Tennessee Army National Guard. “I think not only are you entertaining, but you’re also teaching. You can never learn enough about your past, your heritage and where you come from.”

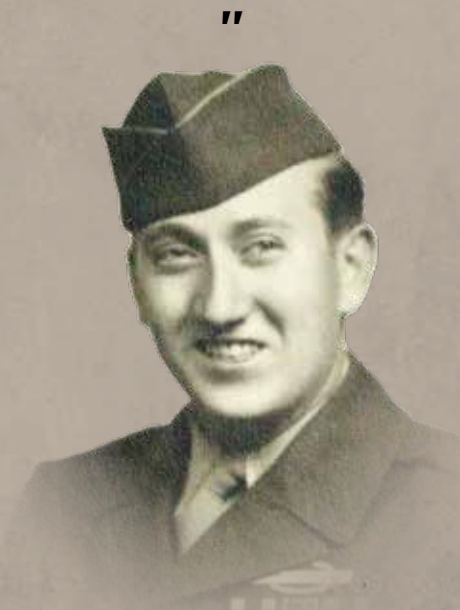
MAJ Haas went on to talk a little about the Army National Guard’s contribution to World War II.

“You’re talking about the 29th Division coming in at Omaha Beach,” he said. “You’re talking about the 30th Division –

“

**Don’t call me a hero...I’m just a survivor – a survivor of what was thrown at me. I think the game will give the young people somewhat of an education of what war is like, what it can be and the devastation that is involved.**

”



the workhorse of the Western Front – you never hear about those guys. I don’t think they get as much attention as they deserve. I think that’s a shame.”

The 28th and 45th Army National Guard Infantry Divisions also served in the European Theater of Operations during the war.

Those in the gaming industry are optimistic about teaching history through gaming. Perhaps that’s because it’s a popular medium for young people and it can actually put a player inside different historic (and action-packed) scenarios.

Angle is still looking forward to getting an up-close view of 1945 Europe through the lens of Activision’s final product. He has yet to play Call of Duty: WWII®, as he does not have Internet at his home, but said he would like to see it.

While the Pennsylvania Army National Guard veteran is humble about his contribution to the Allied victory, he is hopeful about what his contribution to Call of Duty: WWII® might bring to others.

“Don’t call me a hero,” he emphasized. “I’m just a survivor – a survivor of what was thrown at me. I think the game will give the young people somewhat of an education of what war is like, what it can be and the devastation that is involved.” ●



# **DEDICATED** **ARMY NATIONAL GUARD** **SCHOLARSHIP**

*The Dedicated Army National Guard (DEDNG) scholarship offers qualifying Guard Soldiers the opportunity to receive:*

- *Full tuition to an eligible college or university*
- *Up to \$1,200 for books*
- *A monthly allowance of \$350 during the sophomore year, \$450 during the junior year and \$500 during the senior year \**

*To receive the DEDNG scholarship, Soldiers must be current ROTC participants in the Simultaneous Membership Program (SMP).*

## Bringing the THUNDER: The 155mm Howitzer of World War I

BY MAJ Darrin Haas

In April 1917, when the United States declared war against Germany and entered what was then referred to as the Great War, the U.S. needed to quickly multiply its forces for the fight already raging in Europe.

**A**t the time, the U.S. Army had 127,000 Soldiers and the Army National Guard had 181,000. But the U.S. needed millions of trained and equipped Soldiers to help the veteran forces of France and England.

Within 18 months, the Army would increase its force to 4 million (and 2 million were fighting in France when World War I ended on Nov. 11, 1918). The U.S. needed to supply its expanded force with arms, and the weapon most difficult to acquire and master in training was artillery.

The Army had nine authorized artillery regiments before the war. After the United States declared war, it formed 12 more regiments to supplement the National Guard and organized reserve artillery regiments, but that wasn't enough. By the armistice, the United States had 234 artillery regiments.

Though the regiments were put in place, there weren't enough experienced artillerymen, guns and ammunition to quickly train the needed force. One of the quickest and simplest solutions was to supply the American Expeditionary Forces (AEF) with guns from

### The Advancement of the Howitzer



1814

**Licorne** —  
18th and 19th century muzzle-loading Howitzer produced in Luhansk, Russia.

**12-pounder Napoleon** —  
A "gun-Howitzer" of French design that saw extensive service in the American Civil War.

1853



1898

**Mountain Howitzer** —  
The longest serving artillery piece of the 19th century, the mountain Howitzer was in service from the time of the Mexican-American War to the Spanish-American War.

**Schneider Howitzer** —  
The standard Howitzer for the U.S. Army during WWI. The last American shot fired during the Great War was fired by a Schneider Howitzer called Calamity Jane, of the 11th Field Artillery Regiment.

1919



SGT James B. Aets uses a quadrant to determine the elevation of the 155mm Howitzer, while CPL Charles J. Hines sights on the aiming stake. Circa 1914 to 1918.

Photo courtesy the National Archives



1940



1950

## M102 105mm Howitzer —

Replaced the Army's M101 Howitzer during the Vietnam War, the new M102 was substantially lighter and could traverse a full 6,400 mils. With its low silhouette, the M102 was difficult for enemies to target.

1966



Current

## M1A1 75mm Pack Howitzer —

Developed between the two world wars, the M1A1 was the second most common Howitzer in WWII. It was transportable across difficult terrain and easily assembled and disassembled.

## M101 105mm Howitzer —

The standard U.S. light field Howitzer in WWII that saw action in both the Korean and Vietnam Wars. Entering production in 1941, it quickly gained a reputation for accuracy and carrying a powerful punch.



## M777A2 155mm Howitzer —

Made in part from titanium, the M777A2 is 41 percent lighter than its predecessors. It uses a digital fire-control system, allowing it to be quickly put into action.

Photos courtesy the Library of Congress

France. There were plenty of qualified French artillery instructors and plenty of guns and ammunition being manufactured. Using those resources would simplify maintenance and supply in theater.

Back then, the United States had only a few 3-inch guns and 6-inch howitzers, and those were replaced primarily with French 75mm guns, and 155mm and 240mm howitzers.

As it entered the war, the United States still believed that light artillery was the more suitable choice for warfare. When the U.S. Army organized its divisions for the American Expeditionary Forces (AEF), each would have one artillery brigade with three artillery regiments – two light regiments with 48 75mm guns, and one heavy regiment of six batteries equipped with 24 French 155mm howitzers.

However, WWI's trench warfare increased the need for heavy artillery pieces, such as the 155mm howitzer, and decreased the dependence on light field guns. Howitzers had a greater range and were more powerful, making them better suited for destroying fortified enemy targets and hitting rear areas.

Because rapid artillery movement was not as critical, the Europeans fortified their artillery positions by building pits to protect them from counter-battery fire and camouflaged them to conceal their positions from aerial observers. That meant larger howitzers could be better supported and utilized.

Howitzers have traditionally had a short barrel and used small charges to fire rounds at higher trajectories than traditional cannons. They're capable of both high- and low-angle firing. Guns like the French 75mm generally fire rounds at a low angle while mortars fire rounds only at a high angle. This made howitzers more versatile and better suited for trench warfare.

The howitzer adopted by the U.S. Army for the war was the French Canon de 155 C modèle 1917 Schneider. The United States bought over 1,500 howitzers from

**“WWI's trench warfare increased the need for heavy artillery pieces, such as the 155mm howitzer.”**

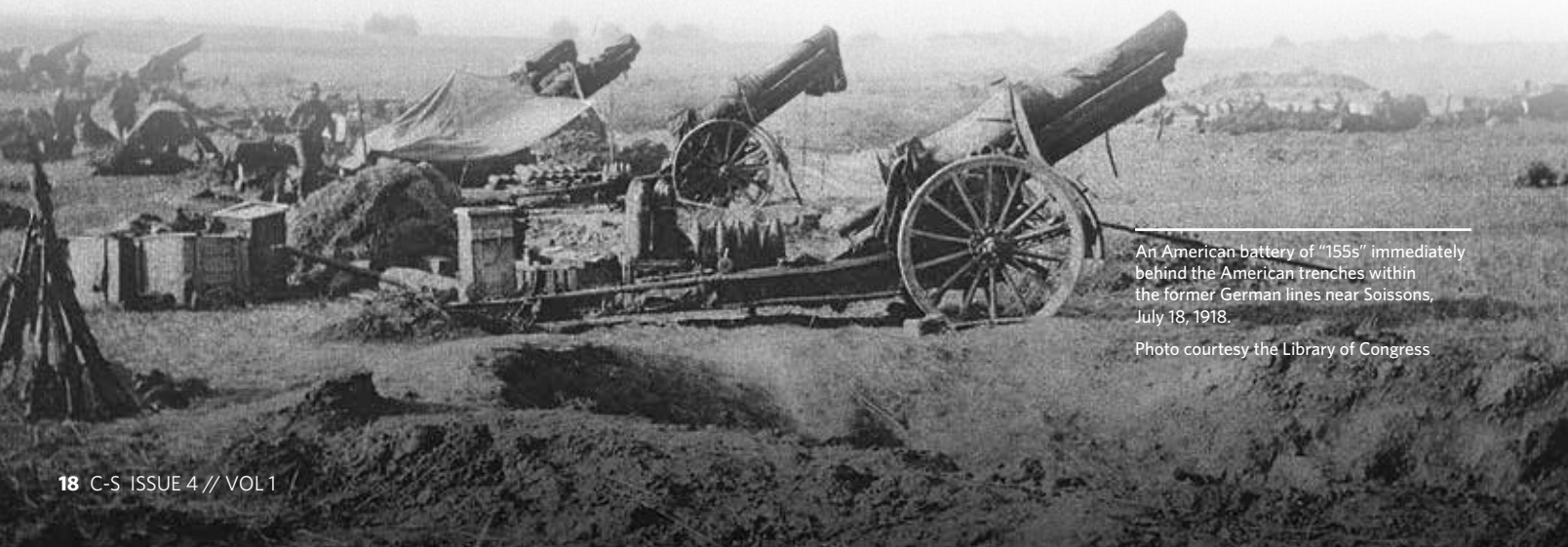
the French to arm the AEF. The U.S. also began producing its own Model 1917, the 155mm Howitzer Carriage, based on the French design.

The M1917 weighed roughly 7,300 pounds with a barrel over seven feet long. The shells weighed around 100 pounds, and an experienced gunnery crew could fire three rounds per minute. Each projectile exited the barrel at a speed of 1,500 feet per second and had a maximum effective range of seven miles. The U.S. Army also built the M1918 155mm Howitzer, which was also modified from the French design.

When the 1st Tennessee Infantry Regiment was mobilized, it was reorganized as the 115th Field Artillery Regiment of the 55th Field Artillery Brigade in the 30th “Old Hickory” Division made up of Army National Guard Soldiers from North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee. The 115th was a heavy regiment that fired 155mm howitzers, but learning to fire these weapons was difficult. There were no French weapons in the States when the National Guard mobilized and the draft began. Newly formed artillery units, like the 115th, had to find creative ways to train without guns. They would use make-believe artillery and pretend horses, eventually building fake howitzers out of logs and branches for training.

They didn't put their hands on actual howitzers until arriving at training camps in France.

Once the 115th received its howitzers, it became a lethal artillery regiment, firing rounds at the Battle of Saint-Mihiel and in the Meuse-Argonne Offensive, the largest and bloodiest battle in American history. Many other Army National Guard artillery units fought as well, helping bring World War I to a close and ushering in a more modern Guard force equipped with lethal weaponry. ●



An American battery of “155s” immediately behind the American trenches within the former German lines near Soissons, July 18, 1918.

Photo courtesy the Library of Congress

# (GUARD) MAN'S BEST FRIEND

**HOW A SOLDIER'S MISSION  
IN THE U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS  
SAVED A RESIDENT OF A  
DIFFERENT BREED**

BY STAFF WRITER Tatyana White-Jenkins



**AFTER DEPLOYING TO THE U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS IN RESPONSE TO HURRICANES IRMA AND MARIA, SPC STEFANIE DEMANINCOR OF THE NEW YORK ARMY NATIONAL GUARD'S 105TH MILITARY POLICE COMPANY RETURNED HOME WITH A FULL HEART AND A FOUR-LEGGED FRIEND.**

While working with the Virgin Islands Police Department in Frederiksted, St. Croix, SPC DeManincor was assigned to assist with patrolling, conducting crowd and traffic control, and enforcing the curfew that was put in place on the island to reduce traffic and safety risks in the weeks following the hurricanes. Next door to the police station, Soldiers transformed an abandoned building into an ad hoc base of operations that would set the stage for a heart-warming encounter.

Upon first entering the building, the Soldiers found a group of stray dogs on the balcony. One dog in particular caught SPC DeManincor's eye – a fearless and friendly six-month-old pit bull mix that SPC DeManincor would later name Ava.

"[Ava] and a bunch of other dogs were just hanging out on this balcony," SPC DeManincor said. "Me and a bunch of the members of my squad would feed her because she was the only one who actually wanted to come over [to us]. She wasn't scared of us like the other [dogs]."

Every dog has its day, and the day Ava locked eyes with SPC DeManincor marked the day both their lives changed for the better.

Ava's welcoming spirit stood out to SPC DeManincor and instantly won her over. The young pit bull's charm quickly garnered her popularity among the other Soldiers.

"Soldiers in



New York Army National Guard SPC Stefanie DeManincor with newly adopted Ava.

Photo courtesy ASPCA and SPC Stefanie DeManincor

other squads would see her as well, and everyone was talking about this friendly dog that was coming up and letting them pet her," said SPC DeManincor. "Typically, when dogs are in survival mode, they may show signs of aggression. But I didn't see that with [Ava] at all. She let us pick her up and pet her. She was just so sweet. I knew she was friendly and her temperament was awesome. That's what really drew me to her and I got a little attached."

During their deployment, SPC DeManincor and the rest of the 105th were housed on a cruise ship docked in Frederiksted. Other units and organizations also stayed on the ship, including the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA). The ASPCA had sent a response team to St. Croix to assist animals that had been abandoned or strayed as a result of the hurricanes. Hundreds of animals were left starving and homeless after their owners were forced to evacuate before Hurricane Irma hit the island. In the weeks following the hurricanes, the ASPCA and other similar animal welfare organizations worked desperately trying to provide food, shelter and medical care to dogs, cats, horses and goats that were left behind.



LEFT: A fellow Soldier of the 105th Military Police Company gives Ava a drink of water near the building used by the unit as a base of operations while in St. Croix.

RIGHT: Ava enjoys the snow as she plays in her new backyard in Rochester, N.Y.

Photos courtesy SPC Stefanie DeManincor

When SPC DeManincor heard about a Soldier from an Infantry group who adopted a dog from the island, she instantly thought about Ava.

"I thought 'well, if they could do it, maybe I could too,'" SPC DeManincor explained. "I asked around to anyone who would listen to find out how [to go about the adoption]. I got in touch with the ASPCA team on the boat and they were super helpful."

SPC DeManincor spoke with Joel Lopez, the ASPCA director of planning and field operations, and the process to officially make Ava her own began. Members of the ASPCA went to survey the building where Soldiers first saw Ava and the other dogs. They were able to locate the owner of the building, who surrendered rights to all the animals on the property. Ava was found wandering on a nearby street and was taken to the ASPCA's emergency shelter. SPC DeManincor later met the pet workers at the shelter and was overjoyed to see Ava again.

After spotting Ava, SPC DeManincor said she excitedly told ASPCA members, "Yep, that's the dog I want."

Once Ava received her vaccinations and health certificate, SPC DeManincor signed the adoption papers and Ava was on a flight that same day.

"I took her to the airport and Sali Gear, founder of Island Dog Rescue, was flying dogs [off the island]. So I got her on a flight to get to the States," explained SPC DeManincor.

Island Dog Rescue is a non-profit with the goal of saving animals abandoned in the U.S. Virgin Islands and finding them homes on the mainland. Before Hurricane Irma made landfall in the islands, Island Dog Rescue coordinated with local pet shelters and successfully evacuated over 300 dogs to the safety of Gear's farm in Virginia. Ava's flight with Island Dog Rescue brought her to Florida. SPC DeManincor was still deployed in St. Croix, so she had to find a way to get Ava from Florida to her home in New York.

"Out of the goodness of Sali's heart, she figured out a way to get Ava from Florida to Virginia where she lived," SPC DeManincor said. "She actually kept Ava for about a week and a half until I was able to get home."

Gear kept Ava on her farm, then coordinated a private plane to get Ava as close to SPC DeManincor's home as possible. Ava became quite the frequent flier before finally reuniting with her new owner at her new home in Rochester, New York.

"I think Ava was on four to five separate flights from Florida all the way up to Rochester," noted SPC DeManincor. "It took her a while, but honestly it was so worth it. I was running out of options since there weren't a lot of commercial flights flying out of St. Croix. I didn't know any [group] other than Sali and her organization that could help get my dog to where she is now. What they do is incredible."

Once her travel arrangements were established, the next big decision concerning Ava was selecting her name. SPC DeManincor's fellow Soldiers had their own ideas for what the charismatic pup should be called, but Ava's owner knew best.

"Other guys in my squad were naming her ridiculous things like Cinnamon and Patches. Some wanted to name her Ricky and I said 'no, that is not happening,'" SPC DeManincor laughed. "Ava just seemed to fit her so well, and was better than Ricky."

Ava is now thriving in Rochester, despite a drastic change from her native climate.

"She's adjusted to the snow really well," SPC DeManincor said. "She actually loves it. I have a huge backyard and she'll just run and play. I was so surprised. She's doing great and she loves her life now."

Reflecting back, SPC DeManincor said that deploying to the U.S. Virgin Islands to help the people there was an incredible experience.

"It was really humbling," explained SPC DeManincor. "You don't really understand the type of devastation that happens until you are actually there and you are in it. We really felt like we made an impact down there, not just with me adopting a dog, but in working with the local police department in general."

While, according to SPC DeManincor, the journey to bring Ava home still at times seems unbelievable, she said she feels lucky that her mission in St. Croix ended with a fetching souvenir.

"She's just a great dog," SPC DeManincor said. "There's a different appreciation rescue dogs seem to have. She seems so happy, and it seems like she appreciates what we did. Sometimes I still can't believe it. I look at pictures of her on the island and I'm like, 'Wow, what a difference.' It's an experience I will never forget." ●

# Save While You Serve Abroad



**THE DOD SAVINGS DEPOSIT PROGRAM (SDP) IS HELPING ARMY NATIONAL GUARD MEMBERS BUILD THEIR FINANCIAL SAVINGS.**

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# FORTIFIED THROUGH TEAMWORK



Soldiers of the 4th Squadron, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, return from a dry fire run using a Bradley Fighting Vehicle during qualifications at Fort Pickett, Va.

# ARMORED CAVALRY SOLDIERS OF THE 278TH PREVAIL THROUGH CHALLENGING QUALIFICATIONS

BY STAFF WRITER Tatyana White-Jenkins  
Army National Guard photos by Luke Sohl

**C**hilling air, blustering winds, gunfire, the sound of Bradleys firing in the night and, amidst it all, a palpable rhythm of teamwork – these are the elements that characterized the qualifications held at the Fort Pickett Maneuver Training Center in January and February of 2018.

Located in Blackstone, Virginia, Fort Pickett is a 42,000-acre Army National Guard training facility operated by the Virginia Army National Guard. With state-of-the-art facilities, like a Forward Operating Base and Live Fire Range, the facility has the capability to serve Soldiers from all branches of the military.

Fort Pickett has a goal of providing a realistic and challenging environment to support Soldier readiness. For the 3rd and 4th squadrons of the Tennessee Army National Guard's 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, that goal was realized during their two months of crew, section and platoon qualifications.

"The training conducted at Fort Pickett was above standard and it allowed

for our Soldiers to properly prepare for future missions and operations," said SGT Cory Fisher of the 3rd squadron.

"There were multiple drills we had to go through – anything from a simple battle drill all the way up to different types of react-to-contact drills. We started at the low



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A TEAM.  
"**

- MAJ Justin Cassidy

end with a buddy live fire, then went to team and then section. It's like a snowball effect – it just gets bigger and bigger, and the tasks become more intricate."

While leading his platoon through a Table 6 gunnery crew qualification, 1LT James Smith of the 4th squadron emphasized the importance of organization and harmony during the training.

"It's a crew-level task, so we have crews of three," said 1LT Smith. "We have a driver, a gunner and a Bradley commander. We go out on the range and it's planned by our master gunner to essentially test a different task, whether that be how to

utilize our auxiliary sighting systems, to practice [addressing] malfunctions inside of the turret, or to practice chemical gas engagements. [The qualification] takes a lot of multitasking, multilevel planning and coordination between different organizations."

During the qualifications, the 3rd and 4th squadrons simultaneously conducted Inactive Duty Training in support of one another – meaning while one squadron trained, the other squadron graded the performance of the training squad. This presented a unique environment of collaboration for the Soldiers of the 278th in that the 3rd squadron is made up of Soldiers from the Pennsylvania Army National Guard, while the 4th is made up of Soldiers from the Tennessee Army National Guard.

While the 3rd squadron remains under the administrative control of the Pennsylvania Army National Guard's 55th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, they are currently under operational control of Tennessee's 278th. The relationship between the two States creates a complex, and at times challenging, dynamic with which Soldiers had to learn to grapple during the qualifications.

"The challenge is just the transitioning from one training base to the other training base, and the different companies," said SPC Ryan Burch of the 3rd Squadron. "You have to get used to new people and how they work. The new company and the new leadership – they run things differently than what me and the other guys who came from [Pennsylvania] are used to. It's important to be patient and learn to move forward. It all comes together in due time."

"Serving two masters is a challenge," said MAJ Justin Cassidy, operations officer for the 3rd Squadron. "Distance is



a challenge. It's hard at first, but now that we know each other and can put faces to names, it's working itself out."

Under the 278th, the 3rd squadron will accompany the 4th squadron for a rotation at the National Training Center (NTC) in Fort Irwin, California, this coming May. The qualifications at Fort Pickett helped to prepare both squadrons for their NTC rotation and for future deployments.

Although the Soldiers of the 3rd and the 4th managed to work together as a collaborative team during their time at Fort Pickett, Mother Nature was not as accommodating. The weather was an uncontrollable factor during the 278th's time in Virginia. From high winds to full-blown snowstorms, weather created delays and challenges that Soldiers had to overcome.

"The first weekend we were here, we had 3 inches of snow," said MAJ Cassidy. "Then the second weekend, we were delayed a day and a half because of another snowstorm. Then, the third

weekend when we got here, it was 70 degrees. You can't predict the weather so we have to try to fight through the delays and get done what we can. What we can't get done, we make up."

Knowing the potential for delays and less-than-ideal weather, the 3rd squadron completed all of their individual requirements at Fort Indiantown Gap in Pennsylvania – referred to as The Gap by many Soldiers. The squadron then performed their live fire qualification at the Multipurpose Range Complex (MPRC) at Fort Pickett.


"The individual weapons qualification – Table 1, Table 2 and Table 3 – we did at The Gap because those have to be done prior to you going to a live fire," MAJ Cassidy explained. "The gates to live fire [must be completed prior] to participating in a live fire [at NTC]. We have to get these gates done and then they'll be checked by master gunners when we get to NTC to make sure everybody did the right steps, in the right order."

With efficient planning and scheduling executed by squad leaders, Soldiers were able to make up many of the qualifications that were deferred by weather conditions at Fort Pickett.

"We came down to Fort Pickett to shoot the live fire qualification," said MAJ Cassidy. "Because of the delays [3rd squadron] experienced with the weather, we brought guys in a little earlier and spent a day on the range before 4th squadron [came on], so we made up those crews. We've been pretty successful getting our crews through."

MAJ Cassidy emphasized the importance of the qualifications from a teamwork and confidence-building perspective.

"This training [time] worked to build confidence in their equipment and in their abilities – not only operating as individual Soldiers, but also operating as a team," explained MAJ Cassidy. "We build on the fundamentals, which is starting with the individual. Then they go into a team



2LT Matthew Howerter provides Soldiers of the 3rd Squadron, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, with performance feedback after completing their live fire run during the unit's qualification held at Fort Pickett.

and then they'll go into a squad. Then they'll go into a section and platoon. We are building on those fundamentals and building a cohesive team so that as we get to an NTC environment where we are training companies and platoons, it's not new to them. They'll have the confidence and ability to operate at those levels."

While setbacks and challenges can create frustration, a dedication to positive collaboration helped the Soldiers from Pennsylvania and Tennessee succeed during their qualifications.

"The most important aspect that we learned from this experience is teamwork," said SPC Alassane Coulibaly of the 3rd Squadron. "Teamwork can make everything better. And without teamwork, things can be much worse."

"It can be challenging when all of the moving components of the section come together," SGT Fisher said. "You have to have a good bearing and good understanding of the mission before and after. The training has given me a strong

foundation and the ability to use proper tactics and maneuvers if we are in need of them during deployment."

With the squadrons' synergy and dedication acting as a remedy for difficulties, Soldiers were able to focus more on their training environment.



SGT Trevor Cohenour of the 3rd Squadron, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, fires at targets as part of his live fire testing during the 278th's qualification at Fort Pickett.

"This is my second time being [at Fort Pickett]," said SPC Burch. "Before we transitioned to this company, most of the time I was at Fort Indiantown Gap. The field training here is really good and there are different things [Fort Pickett] has that I haven't seen at The Gap. It's definitely a



Soldiers of the 4th Squadron, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, fire from a Bradley during the final weekend of the regiment's qualification training held at Fort Pickett.



SSG Steven Angeles gives orders to Soldiers of the 3rd Squadron, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, as they complete the live fire exercise portion of the unit's qualification held at Fort Pickett.



A spent shell casing flies out of the chamber of SPC Michael Smrekar's rifle during his live fire qualification test at Fort Pickett.

new experience.”

MAJ Cassidy said he sees the challenges the Soldiers faced at Fort Pickett as a necessary learning experience, especially as their upcoming NTC rotation nears.

“The good thing is that with all the delays and all of the problems we had, we built experience,” he explained. “It’s good to go through a little bit of baptism by fire. An issue we have is that the equipment doesn’t get exercised as much as we would like it to be. As we get more towards NTC and more towards a mobilization where we are on the systems for a longer time, these bugs will work themselves out. Soldiers will get the experience on how to fight through and correct these things.”

While there were some unexpected hurdles, the qualifications at Fort Pickett provided exactly what they promised: challenging and realistic training. The Soldiers of the 3rd and 4th squadrons used teamwork to persevere through their

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 ”

- SPC Stephen Gerdner

challenges while gaining the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in their NTC rotation and future deployments.

“It got us away from the family and that’s one thing we need to get used to,” SPC Coulibaly explained. “Some of us haven’t had that experience. It helps us realize what it looks like when we are deployed because it can be a long time for some people who have a girlfriend or child. This kind of prepares us for that, not just training-wise, but also mentally. That’s what our Families need while we are away – for us to be strong.”

“It’s been fun and it’s prepared us pretty well,” said SPC Stephen Gerdner of the 3rd squadron. “We have to be well-coordinated and know how to move in parts. We all have our specific role. Every now and then, when we do these larger movements, we get to see how, even though we have a small role, it all connects to the bigger picture.” ●





# DELTA DELUGE

## **Arkansas Army National Guard Responds after Disastrous Flooding**

BY STAFF WRITER Matthew Liptak

**I** can tell you this – without the National Guard, I don’t know what we would have done,” said Pocahontas, Arkansas, Mayor Kary Story.

Mayor Story was referring to the deployment of dozens of Army National Guard Soldiers to the Northeast Arkansas town of Pocahontas. With a population of just under 7,000, Pocahontas’ levy overflowed last spring, causing major flooding in the small town.

Record flood levels in the Black River, which passes through Pocahontas, led to the levy overflow and ultimately the flooding. This was all undoubtedly due to heavy storms that pummeled the State, including the Delta region where Pocahontas is located, in late April and early May of 2017.

According to Melody Daniel, a spokesperson for the Arkansas Department

of Emergency Management, 50 hours of downpour dropped about 5 inches of rain on all of Arkansas, with isolated instances of 6 or 7 inches at some locations. While to some, that may not seem like enough rain to cause major damage, imagine an area where the main economy is agriculture and it is not hard to see how 5 to 7 inches of rain drowning miles and miles of growing crops could be catastrophic.

According to the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture, rain and flooding May 8–12, 2017, caused approximately \$175 million in losses to crops, affecting about 360,000 acres

of farmland.

According to Daniel, flood-related accidents also caused 10 deaths in the State, and almost \$20 million in infrastructure and personal property damage was recorded with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). In addition, 23 counties in Arkansas were declared disaster areas by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Pocahontas and the rest of Randolph

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Soldiers from the Arkansas Army National Guard’s 87th Troop Command work as high-water rescue teams to assist Randolph County authorities in Pocahontas, Ark.

Arkansas Army National Guard photo by Zac Lehr



Soldiers of the 87th Troop Command receive information from local authorities on Pocahontas' critical areas in need.

Photos courtesy Arkansas Army National Guard



Using a high-water rescue vehicle, Soldiers patrol flooded streets in the small town of Pocahontas, Ark.



SSG Jeremy Warnick reviews a map while manning a roadblock in Pocahontas, Ark.

County were particularly hard-hit because of a unique topographical trait.

"Randolph County is the only county in the state of Arkansas that has five different rivers that flow into it," Daniel said. "It's not just the Black River that is the problem. It's the Black River, Current River, Eleven Point River, Fourche River and Spring River."

For last year's flooding, PFC Spencer Saul was on duty at a traffic control point in Delaplaine, near Pocahontas. He was one of 104 Arkansas Army National Guard Soldiers called for deployment between May 2 and May 12 for the flooding.

The main mission of the Arkansas Army National Guard during the flooding was to provide support and relief for overworked police officers and first responders. According to Story, a similar flood in 2011 left the community's first responders exhausted and stretched extremely thin due to shortages in personnel.

"This time, with the National Guard mobilizing very quick and getting here, they [gave] us the needed manpower," Story noted. "I think that eliminated a loss of life. They were a blessing."

PFC Saul is a 42 Alpha with HHC 875th Engineer Battalion. He and three other Arkansas Army National Guard Soldiers were keeping drivers from traveling down the washed-out highway in the tiny community.

"We were all pretty much doing the same thing – making sure that no [civilians] were going into town that didn't need to be there," he said. "We had some high-water rescue teams, and we had some vehicles patrolling, making sure nothing was getting out of hand."

PFC Saul was stationed on the highway for four days. He said he managed to keep pretty dry, especially after the fire department opened its local firehouse as a place in which they could stay overnight. PFC Saul also said residents kept them well fed as the Soldiers worked to keep everyone safe.

"We had people coming by several times a day bringing us food and water, along with our unit bringing us food and water," he said.

The Pocahontas flood mission was a new experience for PFC Saul, who had just recently joined the Arkansas Army National Guard.

"That was actually my first time being with my unit. I was fresh out of AIT. I hadn't even gone to a single drill with them yet. My line leaders let me know that there

**“With the National Guard mobilizing very quick and getting here, they [gave] us the needed manpower. I think that eliminated a loss of life. They were a blessing.”**

– Mayor Kary Story

was an opportunity to go help out with the flooding. That's when I volunteered. I like to help people. I kind of jumped at that opportunity."

The instances of serious flooding in the State, according to National Weather

Arkansas Army National Guard Soldiers drive across a flooded highway in Pocahontas, Ark., while working to keep residents off the main thoroughfare.

Arkansas Army National Guard photo by Zac Lehr



SFC Brandon Hassell assists in the evacuation of residents of Pocahontas.  
Photo courtesy Arkansas Army National Guard



Arkansas Governor Asa Hutchinson, Arkansas National Guard Adjutant General Maj Gen Mark H. Berry and other State and national officials are escorted by the Arkansas Army National Guard in Lakota and Black Hawk helicopters to observe and assess damage caused by devastating flooding in portions of Northeast Arkansas.  
Arkansas Army National Guard image by SPC Stephen Wright

Center forecasts, may become a more frequent occurrence. Before the record-breaking 2011 flood, the last flood on the same scale was back in the early 1900s. But on May 3 of last year, just 6 years after the last flood, the Black River crested again at a new record level – 28.95 feet.

Again, this year officials are looking at a possible repeat of last year's flooding – as heavy rains inundated the State in late February.

“As we speak, we’re monitoring Pocahontas very carefully to see if they’re going to need more high-water teams,” said LTC Paul Jara, Joint Operations Center operations officer, in an interview with *Citizen-Soldier* this past January. “This flooding event is not as bad, but because the levy is not as tall as it was back in May of 2017, there’s a chance that this relatively minor event could be just as bad because the levies aren’t as robust as they were before.”

Data supports the lieutenant colonel's suspicion. Measurements from the National Weather Service show the Black River has had 18 historic crests since the year 2000, but recorded just 34 historic

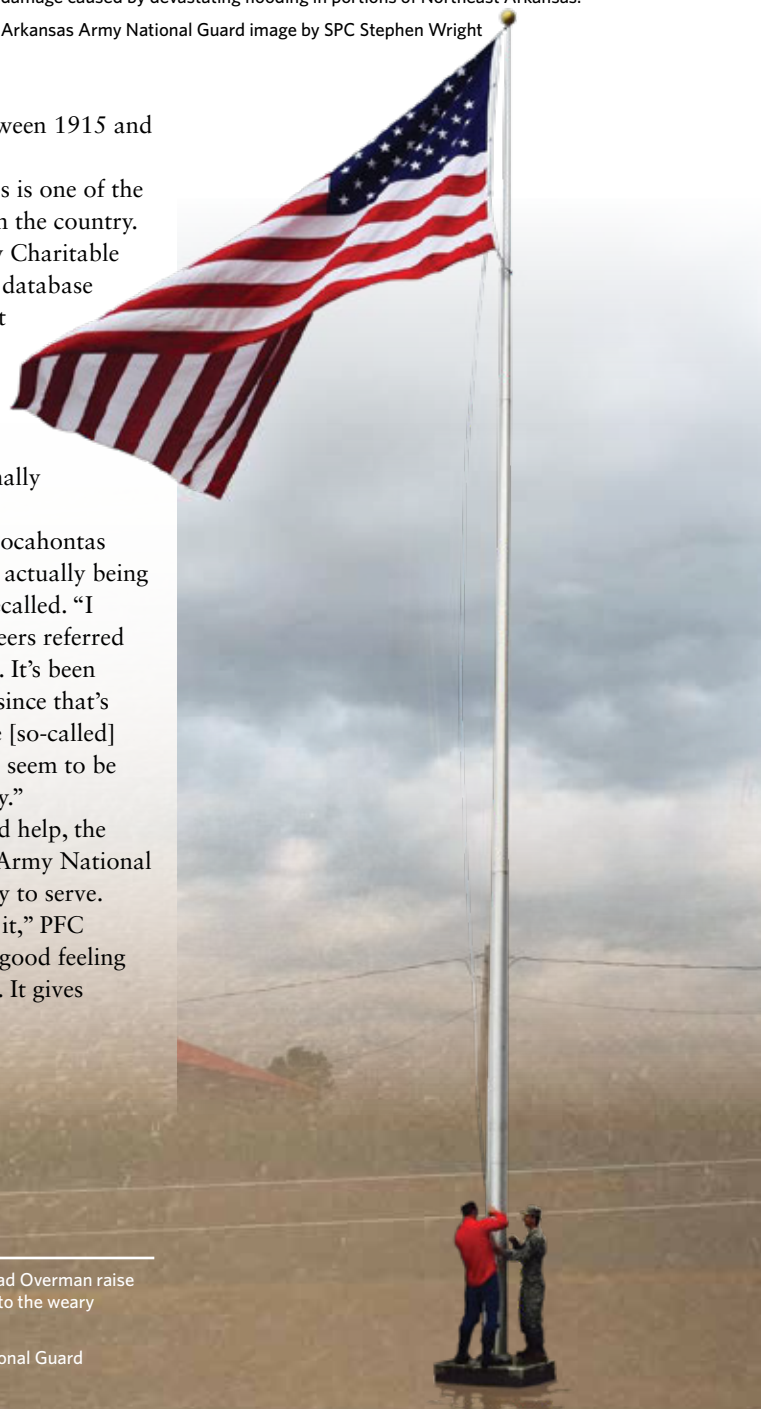
crests in the 85 years between 1915 and the turn of this century.

What's more, Arkansas is one of the most flood-prone states in the country. A study done by The Pew Charitable Trusts examined FEMA's database of disaster declarations. It revealed that Arkansas topped all other States for the most flood disasters between 2008 and 2017, with 17 nationally declared flood disasters.

“The challenge with Pocahontas was nobody saw the levy actually being overtopped,” LTC Jara recalled. “I think the Corps of Engineers referred to it as a ‘500-year flood’. It’s been theoretically a long time since that’s happened, although these [so-called] 100- and 500-year floods seem to be occurring more frequently.”

If the residents do need help, the Soldiers of the Arkansas Army National Guard will be there, ready to serve.

“I can’t really explain it,” PFC Saul said. “It gives you a good feeling [to serve the community]. It gives you purpose.” ●



SFC Brandon Hassell and civilian Chad Overman raise the American Flag as a sign of hope to the weary residents of Pocahontas.

Photo courtesy Arkansas Army National Guard

# GEAR + TECH



## THESE BOOTS WERE MADE FOR WALKING ... IN THE JUNGLE

By STAFF WRITER Liam Griffin

### NEW JUNGLE COMBAT BOOTS AND HOT WEATHER UNIFORM WILL SOON MAKE THEIR WAY TO SOLDIERS

**A**s one of the finest military forces in the history of the world, the United States Army is constantly improving. Currently, a plethora of policies, procedures, tactics, weapons and uniforms flows through an ongoing cycle of review and upgrade in order to ensure the Army maintains peak performance. The latest result of that ongoing improvement cycle is a new hot weather uniform, including enhanced jungle boots.

During the Vietnam War, the Army introduced a jungle boot that better protected Soldiers from the hot and damp weather of the jungle nation. In the 43 years since the end of the Vietnam War, that boot has remained largely unchanged. That may be somewhat due to the fact that the past 20 years in the arid deserts of Iraq and Afghanistan offered little moisture for the boot to contend with. However, as more training operations began to be conducted in the wetlands of the South Pacific, Soldiers once again were in need of a boot more suited to hold up in tropical environments. Responding to this need, the Army's Program Executive Office (PEO) Soldier began developing the new Army Jungle Combat Boot (JCB).

Incorporated into the JCB are features derived from both the M1966 Vietnam-era jungle boot and modern technology.

The M1966 had a solid rubber sole that Soldiers reportedly said had no shock absorbency. The JCB uses a similar tread as the M1966 – an “outsole” – to shed mud and provide traction, but an added “midsole” offers increased comfort and shock absorbency, according to Albert Adams of the Army Natick Soldier Research, Development and Engineering Center.

“The outsole of the new boot is connected to the leather upper via ‘direct attach,’” Adams said in an Army.mil interview. “That’s a process where a kind of liquid foam is poured between the rubber outsole and leather boot upper. [It’s] a lot like an injection molding process.

“The foam layer not only provides greater shock-absorbing capability, but it also keeps out microbes in hot, wet environments that in the past have been shown to eat away at the glues that held older boots together. So [now] the new boots won’t separate at the soles,” Adams continued. “It provides a high level of durability.”

The JCB also features a layer that prevents foreign items from puncturing the sole of the boot. This was accomplished with a steel plate in the M1966 boot, but the JCB uses a ballistic fabric-like layer to include the additional protection.

The boot also has additional drainage holes to let water out if it becomes completely soaked, speed laces so that Soldiers can quickly put on and take off the boots, a redesigned upper to make the new boots less tight, an insert that helps improve water drainage, and a lining that supports better ventilation and faster drying time.



LEFT: Soldiers try on the new Jungle Combat Boot. Units with a high need will begin to receive the boot as standard issue gear in 2019.

U.S. Army photo by SSG Armando R. Limon

CENTER: The Army's new Jungle Combat Boot – shown here are the sole and inner lining of the boot

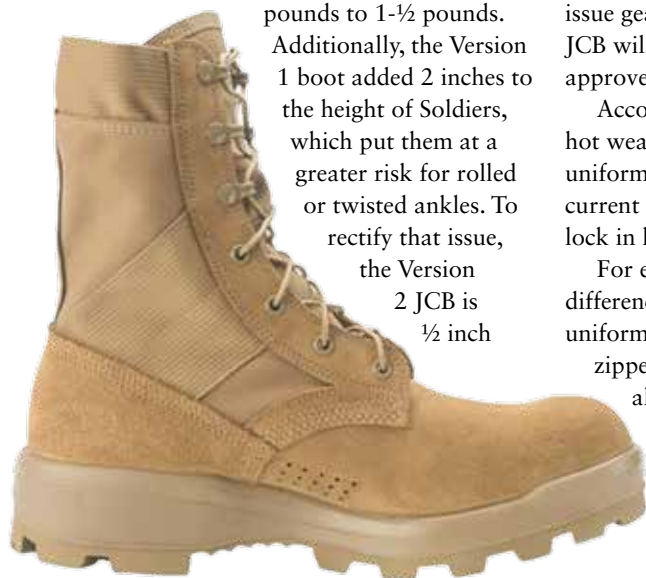
U.S. Army photo by C. Todd Lopez

RIGHT: The Army's new hot weather uniform is slated for a second round of field testing mid-late 2018.

U.S. Army photo by Devon L. Suits

A Version 1 JCB was issued to the Soldiers of the 25th Infantry Division in Hawaii for initial field testing in the middle of 2017. The Soldiers' feedback was incorporated into five variants of a Version 2 boot, all of which incorporate a variety of changes, including a decrease in weight and height, and an increase in flexibility.

The Version 1 boot weighed 2 pounds, which Soldiers thought was too heavy for a combat boot, according to PEO Soldier reports. With the new boot, the weight was decreased from 2 pounds to 1-½ pounds. Additionally, the Version 1 boot added 2 inches to the height of Soldiers, which put them at a greater risk for rolled or twisted ankles. To rectify that issue, the Version 2 JCB is ½ inch



shorter. Finally, to further highlight its ability as an effective piece of wet weather gear, the boot's drying time was reduced by one hour.

The Version 2 JCB went into field testing with the 25th this past February. According to PEO Soldier, feedback from this round of testing will be used to create a final version of the boot, and mass production will begin at some point in 2019.

While the JCB will be authorized for wear by all Soldiers, only units with a high need will receive them as standard issue gear. Soldiers who are not issued the JCB will be allowed to purchase them for approved wear.

Accompanying the JCB is an improved hot weather combat uniform. The new uniform removes several features from the current uniform that weigh it down and lock in heat.

For example, the most noticeable difference for Soldiers wearing the new uniform is the lack of zippers. While zippers may be more convenient, they also decrease the breathability of the fabric. Zippers hold in body heat, whereas the gap between buttons allows heat to escape.

Another notable difference is the flat-out removal of some

pockets. The breast and rear trouser pockets are removed from the new uniform for a very basic reason. The added convenience of extra pockets is outweighed by the extra heat that is trapped and contained by the additional fabric layer and seams.

Other major improvements include changes in the crotch and knee areas of the trousers. The two sections were redesigned to be sturdier, more breathable, and more resistant to tears. The seams that make up the crotch are now gusseted for a better fit and to give more room – allowing for better air circulation, making the pants more breathable. Similarly, the seams in the knee area were altered to give the fabric more flex. This should allow Soldiers to bend and maneuver more easily while wearing the pants. For any Soldier who will be wearing the new hot weather uniform, the improvements in fit and comfort are likely a welcomed change.

The improved hot weather uniform is slightly behind the JCB in its phase of development. According to program officials at PEO Soldier, the new uniform has gone through an initial field test, and depending on feedback from that field test, a second round of testing and usage may take place later this year. ●

# NATIONAL GUARD EMPLOYMENT NETWORK

*Free Employment Assistance for You and Your Family*

The National Guard Employment Network (NGEN) is a free service where underemployed Guard Soldiers and Guard Family members may connect directly with civilian employers, employment resources and service providers.


**NGEN resources include:**

- Resume development
- Job search assistance
- Interview preparation
- Certification and licensing assistance
- Virtual employment workshops



**For more information, call 1-877-696-7226.**

NGEN resources are offered through partnerships between the National Guard, Military Spouse Corporate Career Network, Corporate America Supports You, Direct Employers Association, Center for America and USA Cares.



A Soldier wears the new M17 holstered at his hip during a field test for the U.S. Army Operational Test Command conducted at Fort Bragg, N.C.

U.S. Army photo by Lewis Perkins

# NEW MODULAR HANDGUN SYSTEM MARKS A NEW ERA FOR MILITARY SIDEARMS

**D**uring the Cold War, the United States Army introduced the Beretta M9 as the Army's newest handgun. In the three decades since, the M9 has been used in the Gulf War, Somalia, Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts. Today, as the Army continues to evolve its equipment and technology, defense industry product developer Sig Sauer is launching a new Modular Handgun System (MHS) that is poised to offer advanced handgun capabilities to U.S. Soldiers.

This change may have, in part, come about in response to longtime, in-the-field shortcomings of the M9 as noted by military personnel. According to a joint survey conducted by the Center for Naval Analyses in 2006, only 58 percent of individuals who used the M9 were satisfied with its performance. This was the lowest satisfaction rate among all the weapons that were analyzed in the survey. Among the complaints voiced by service members was the weapon's lack of ability to accommodate attachments and the M9's lack of stopping power. Additionally, almost half of those surveyed expressed

a lack of confidence in the weapon's reliability. Service members also expressed concern regarding the difficulty of the maintenance associated with the M9.

In August of 2015, the U.S. Army held a long-awaited competition to determine the Service's new sidearm. The Army's competition demanded a modular system. This modular handgun would allow service members the ability to more easily add their desired attachments. Several other requirements were imposed to ensure that the new firearm would be a notable improvement over the M9. No specific caliber was required for the sidearm; however, manufacturers were notified that their firearm would be compared in a ballistics test with the current 9 mm round.

Additional preference was given to firearms that could be chambered in multiple sizes. The Army also expressed a desire for the handgun to be simple to clean and maintain, and consistently accurate and reliable. The M9 had previous issues with failures to feed, jams and other stoppages. With this in mind, the Army requested that entrants in the

BY STAFF WRITER Liam Griffin



MHS competition experience 2,000 rounds between stoppages and 10,000 rounds between failures.

Twelve pistol manufacturers entered the competition, including global powerhouses such as Smith & Wesson, Glock, Kriss, FN Herstal and Sig Sauer. After a year of lab testing and consideration, Sig Sauer was awarded the \$580 million contract to produce the Army's new sidearm. The contract includes production of both compact and full-sized models of the Sig Sauer P320.

The P320, referred to by the Army as the M17 in its full size and as the M18 in its compact size, can be chambered in multiple calibers – including 9 mm, .357 SIG, .40 S&W and .45 ACP. This variety of compatible rounds serves to address the concerns regarding the stopping power of the sidearm.

In addition to accommodating various calibers, the new MHS also has an external safety, self-illuminating sights for low-light conditions, an integrated rail for attaching enablers, an Army standard suppressor conversion kit to attach an acoustic/flash suppressor and interchangeable grips.

The Army will also be acquiring the full metal jacket, special-purpose, close-combat mission capability kit and blank ammunition.

According to officials at Program Executive Office Soldier, the specific performance improvements from MHS over the M9 include better accuracy, tighter dispersion and better ergonomics, which combined result in a far more lethal pistol.

Extensive field testing of the new system took place across 2017. After incorporating Soldier feedback into the final design, the MHS was approved to

move on to the next phase of testing.

In November 2017, the 101st Airborne Division became the first unit to receive the new M17 and M18 sidearms. The Soldiers had good things to say about the new firearm, especially in comparison to the M9. As reported by the Army, many comments from Soldiers noted the ease of use, simplicity and increased accuracy.

Reportedly, the Army plans to field the new MHS even more widely than its M9 predecessor with issuance going as far as the team leader level – the goal being to enhance the close-quarters' capabilities of Soldiers, especially while performing administrative tasks that make rifle use difficult.

Current plans call for expedited fielding, taking place across 2018 and 2019. The MHS is currently in limited production, with the first 4,649 handguns already issued to units at Fort Campbell, Kentucky (where the 101st is based); Fort Benning, Georgia; and Fort Hood, Texas, in November, December and January respectively.

Full-rate production is scheduled to begin by mid-to-late 2018. Fielding of the MHS to all units will take place over the next 10 years, with ammunition being procured in the first five years.

According to the Army, the MHS program is the first in a line of modernization efforts that it will pursue over the next few years. In a released statement, Army officials described the MHS as, "A more capable weapon system that is aligned with the planned force structure and emerging operational needs of the Army. It provides improved lethality, target acquisition, ergonomics, reliability, durability and maintainability." ●

TOP: A Soldier fires the new M17 or Modular Handgun System at the 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne) indoor range.

U.S. Army photo by SGT Samantha Stoffregen

TOP MIDDLE: The Modular Handgun System includes an integrated rail for attaching enablers, an Army standard suppressor conversion kit to attach an acoustic/flash suppressor, clips for multiple caliber rounds and interchangeable grips.

U.S. Army photo courtesy 101st Airborne Division

BOTTOM MIDDLE: The M17 is the Army's newest handgun currently being fielded to Soldiers.

U.S. Army photo by SGT Samantha Stoffregen

BOTTOM: The Sig Sauer P320 is produced in both full-sized (M17) and compact (M18) models.

U.S. Army photo courtesy 101st Airborne Division

# MASTERS OF THE FITNESS UNIVERSE

## HOW TO BECOME A MASTER FITNESS TRAINER

BY STAFF WRITER Ruth Ann Replogle  
National Guard photos by 2LT Alicia M. Lacy

Texas Army National Guard SSG Anthony Delagarza, a Master Fitness Trainer Course instructor, demonstrates a correct push-up on the parade field at Camp Mabry in Austin, Texas.



**D**id you know you have the opportunity to make a difference in your unit's morale and readiness by becoming a Master Fitness Trainer?

Launched Army-wide in 2013, the Master Fitness Training Course (MFTC) is designed to embed a Master Fitness Trainer in every unit. The program was developed as part of the Army Chief of Staff's directive to not only assist unit commanders in developing and teaching physical readiness programming to units, but also in advising individual Soldiers and monitoring their readiness.

Designed to train selected Soldiers in all aspects of the Army's Physical Readiness Training (PRT) system, the MFTC is an academic, as well as physical, course. It

focuses on the concepts of physical fitness and the readiness levels needed to continue the transition of the Army into an even more agile and ready force.

Soldiers who become Master Fitness Trainers are taught the skills required to increase Soldier physical readiness, decrease accession losses, reduce injury rates, standardize unit training in accordance with Army training doctrine and provide easier integration of new Soldiers into operational units.

### WHAT TO EXPECT IN THE MFTC

MFTC coursework includes instruction in exercise science; healthy lifestyle habits; PRT policies, procedures and



LEFT: SSG Anthony Delagarza and SFC Athan Schindler, both Master Fitness Trainer Course instructors, Texas Army National Guard, demonstrate proper form during a round of circuit exercises at Camp Mabry as part of the Master Fitness Trainer Course.

RIGHT: Master Fitness Trainer Course instructors SSG Sara Elkins and SFC Athan Schindler demonstrate shuttle runs during a round of exercises on the parade field at Camp Mabry as part of the Master Fitness Trainer Course.

responsibilities; PRT exercises, drills and activities; and individual/unit program planning considerations.

## THE COURSE IS TAUGHT IN TWO PHASES:

- » **PHASE 1:** 60 hours of exercise science classes in the form of a self-paced online course
- » **PHASE 2:** 76 hours of PRT exercises and drills in the form of a two-week in-resident course

The in-resident course for Guard Soldiers may be taken at the Yakima Training Center at Fort Lewis, Washington; Camp Mabry, Texas; or at the Warrior Training Center at Fort Benning, Georgia.

At the start of Phase 2, participants must complete the APFT. In order to continue in the training, Soldiers must earn a total passing score of at least 240 points and a minimum of 80 points in each event.

Upon graduation from Phase 2, Soldiers are awarded the Additional Skill Identifier (ASI) of P5, if enlisted, or 6P, if an officer.

## MFTC ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS

- » A rank of E5 up to O3
- » Recommendation by unit commander
- » Height and weight within Guard standards (including BMI)
- » Current APFT score of 240 or higher
- » General Technical (GT) score of 110 points or higher

If a Soldier meets the above requirements, the unit training officer or NCO may enroll them in the MFTC.

Soldiers 40 years and older may participate in the course, but must pass a medical screening prior to attendance and participate in a PRT program for at least 90 days before the course start date.

For more information about becoming a Master Fitness Trainer, go to [www.Benning.army.mil/Tenant/WTC/MFTC.html](http://www.Benning.army.mil/Tenant/WTC/MFTC.html) or call 706-544-6133. ●



# Army National Guard or Bust

BY STAFF WRITER Tatyana White-Jenkins

*Has anyone ever asked you why you joined the Army National Guard, or if you think it would be a good idea for them to join? Perhaps you know someone whom you believe would make a great Guard Soldier. Would you know how to approach them about joining?*

*As a Soldier of the Army National Guard, people in the community look to you as an expert about the Guard. Unquestionably, no one is more fitting to act as a referral source between citizens and the Army National Guard than a Guard Soldier.*

*If the Army National Guard has improved your life in any way, don't be shy about sharing that experience with others. Keep in mind that most States offer extra incentives to Soldiers who successfully refer a new recruit into the Army National Guard. (Talk to your Recruiting and Retention NCO for any incentives that may be available in your State.) Toward that end, listed on the next page are talking points that may prove helpful when referring someone to join the ranks of Citizen-Soldiers. You may find them as helpful reminders for yourself as well!*

**Talking Points**

## **Financial Benefits**

A career in the Army National Guard not only adds variety and excitement to life, but it also opens a host of financial benefits. From regular drill pay, to additional stipends paid during activations and deployments, to re-enlistment bonuses, the benefits of a steady, second source of income are sure to interest a potential Soldier.

## **Education Assistance and Development**

The Army National Guard's dedication to and support of Soldiers wanting to continue their education is certainly among the top reasons to join. Be sure to mention to prospects that Guard Soldiers have the unique benefit of being able to combine both federal and State funds to pay for education expenses, and Guard Soldiers can go to school while still serving.

## **Opportunities in Specialty Fields**

Don't forget to mention that some specialty and high-demand MOSs – like cyber operations specialists, interpreters, construction workers and helicopter repairers may offer incentive bonuses up to \$20,000.

## **Paid Training**

Paid on-the-job training in high-demand career fields is an invaluable Guard benefit that reaps lifelong rewards. The ability to choose from a variety of career options and receive paid training that is applicable, and often transferable, to civilian jobs saves Soldiers thousands of dollars that may otherwise have been spent on traditional school. It can also open the door to promotion opportunities on civilian jobs. When talking to a prospect, try to include an anecdote about how paid training has personally helped you.

## **Insurance Coverage**

Those considering a career with the Army National Guard may find it interesting that while the country struggles through national debates and changing policies around health care, members of the armed forces can remain secure in the knowledge that they will retain stable and affordable health insurance. Let them know that the Army National Guard offers health, dental and life insurance for Service Members and their Families.

## **A Changing Guard**

Remember that the Army National Guard is constantly evolving. Dated images of Guard Soldiers working solely in armories are no longer relevant. Eliminate any misconceptions by sharing that more missions, international training, deployments and opportunities to learn new skills are available within the Guard than ever before.

## **Serve Your Country**

When someone asks you why you stay in the Guard, rather than giving the standard “to do your duty” or “find your life's purpose” rhetoric, speak from the heart and share whatever passion for service is within you. While the benefits offered in the Army National Guard are great, greater still is the spirit of service that comes from within and compels some to step up when others sit down. Share your story and explain what your dual mission to State and country means to you. Share the story about the look of relief in someone's eyes when you arrived to help during an activation, or the hugs of gratitude given to you upon leaving a community that you helped keep safe during an evacuation. That may be all the inspiration someone needs to decide to follow in the footsteps of the many great Soldiers that have gone before them.

# FACILITATING EDUCATION — BYPASSING DEBT

BY CONTRIBUTING WRITER 2LT Crystal Farris

**I**daho Army National Guard SGT Seth Gaskins left Boise in 2011 to attend college in Oklahoma on a wrestling scholarship.

He was there for a year before returning home to continue his education, this time without a scholarship to pay the way.

That summer, he began working on temporary military orders and

SGT Seth Gaskins displays his diploma after graduating from Boise State University.  
Photo courtesy SGT Seth Gaskins

# TUITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS HELP SOLDIERS GET DEBT-FREE DEGREES

learned how the National Guard could help pay for his education through tuition assistance programs.

"In the summer of 2012, I worked in the supply section for recruiting and retention," SGT Gaskins said. "My sergeant at the time told me if I'm going to school, I need to talk to the education office. So, I went there and they helped me figure out how to use my benefits to pay for school."

Gaskins graduated from Boise State University with a bachelor's degree in exercise science. He is currently studying to get his certification as a strength and conditioning coach, while continuing to serve in the Idaho Army National Guard as a signal specialist in C Company, 116th Brigade Engineer Battalion.

"I worked my butt off to finish school," said SGT Gaskins. "I did it in five years, and I did it debt-free. I hope a lot of other Soldiers choose to do that because there are great benefits out there, some now that I didn't even have."

When SGT Gaskins began taking classes at Boise State, he said the only benefits available to him were the GI Bill and Federal Tuition Assistance. At that time, the two benefits could be used together, but only to pay for up to 16 semester credits per year. In his first year in the program, Gaskins took all 16 credits in one semester and had to cover the next semester's tuition himself.

"I buckled down and drained my bank account for the next semester," SGT Gaskins said. "From then, I was always flirting with that line of 'I'm going to run out of cash to go to school.'"

That was the case until the Idaho Army National Guard's State Education Assistance Program began in 2015. Gaskins said the opportunity to use federal and State tuition assistance together was the only

reason he was able to attend school full-time and finish his degree without the burden of huge student loans.

The State program was first designed to help Soldiers pay tuition and associated costs not fully covered by other education benefits, such as the GI Bill and Federal Tuition Assistance. Like other programs, it aims to support Soldiers' professional and personal development goals, but it offers more opportunities to choose various educational paths to achieve future employment.



“WE NEED OUR SOLDIERS  
TO BE ABLE TO GET AN  
**EDUCATION** THAT  
DOES **NOT** GIVE THEM A  
FUTURE OF **DEBT**.”

– CPT Sean Crow

### Idaho Soldiers Can Receive up to \$5,000 a Year

Of the 54 Army National Guard forces across the States and Territories, 52 offer tuition assistance programs. The assistance is offered at varying amounts depending on the State, and is always in addition to federal assistance benefits. Some States, such as Connecticut, Nevada and New Jersey, offer qualifying Soldiers 100 percent of the tuition cost to an eligible college, university, or trade school. Others offer tuition grants that cover a specific number of credit hours or a percentage of tuition fees. Still others, like Idaho, offer a specific

amount of coverage per semester or year.

“The State program helps Soldiers achieve a degree and find jobs without the burden of paying off student loans,” said CPT Sean Crow, Idaho Army National Guard State education officer. “We need our Soldiers to be able to get an education that does not give them a future of debt. They also need to keep employed so they are ready to serve at a moment’s notice without finances taking their minds away from doing their duty.”

“Education assistance is a great benefit,” said SGT Gaskins. “It’s really cool that we are educating the National Guard and sending Soldiers to school for free. All they have to do is use it.”

### Not Limited to an Associate, Bachelor’s or Master’s Degree

In Idaho, and many other States, both full-time and traditional Guard Soldiers who use State assistance may attend any regionally or nationally accredited vocational school, college or university that has a business office in the State. Soldiers are even able to earn certifications for career specialties such as welding, hairstyling or piloting.

Many State programs, like in Idaho, have no time limit for eligibility, limit of credit hours or limits attached to previously obtained degrees. That means Soldiers are eligible to use State assistance for as long as they need it and for any degree or certificate, regardless of degrees or credits previously earned.

1LT Phillip Bettis, a medical detachment clinical training officer, is receiving \$5,000 a year through the Idaho Guard’s State assistance to pay toward his doctor of pharmacy at Idaho State University. Since 1LT Bettis no longer qualifies for other funding benefits, he said every little bit helps.

“It definitely helps relieve a big burden – especially with having a family and having to worry about paying for food, diapers and living expenses,” said 1LT Bettis. “It takes a lot of that stress away.”

### Focus More on School and Less on Paying Bills

Soldiers who take advantage of their education benefits may have more time to focus on school, as well as the opportunity to take more classes at no additional cost to them.

SPC Matthew Garcia, E Company, 145th Brigade Support Battalion, and a student at Boise State University, only recently became aware of the opportunity to use both federal and State tuition assistance. For the past few years, he could only afford to attend school part time and would work any job he could find to help pay his tuition.

SPC Garcia is now attending school full time with no out-of-pocket cost by using both federal and State tuition assistance programs. With the money he is saving on tuition, SPC Garcia is able to pay other bills such as rent – focusing less on work and more on school.





“Since my tuition is being paid for, I can save the money I earn [at work] and put it toward paying rent and bills,” SPC Garcia said. “Next fall, I’ll have even more money saved up from working in the summer, so I’ll be able to relax and focus on school without worrying about making rent.”

### Learn About Your State’s Tuition Assistance Program

Requirements and amounts paid for tuition assistance vary from State to State. For instance, a few States require Soldiers to make a six-year commitment to qualify for State assistance. Some States require Soldiers to maintain a grade point average of 2.0 – Missouri requires a 2.50 GPA – to continue to receive tuition assistance. Some require completion of Basic Training to enter the program. Alabama has a 10-year eligibility cap after Soldiers begin receiving tuition assistance.

Kentucky covers tuition fees of 12 hours per semester at the in-State tuition rate while Montana pays \$100 per credit up to \$1,200 a semester. South Dakota pays 50 percent of all tuition fees.

North Carolina’s contribution varies year by year, as the amount is set by the North Carolina State Education Assistance Authority each fiscal year. In South Carolina, tuition for Army National Guard Soldiers is capped at \$4,500 per year and cannot exceed a total of \$18,000. Virginia covers tuition and fees of \$8,000 per year.

The Virgin Islands covers up to 32 credits across a Soldier’s entire service time in the State’s National Guard. Missouri pays \$276.20 per semester hour up to 100 percent of the in-State tuition rate. Michigan covers \$600 per semester hour up to \$6,000 per year. The District of Columbia pays up to \$2,000 per year for tuition and \$500 for fees.

In California, depending on the type of school, the maximum nine-month award amount for an undergraduate is \$12,240.

A quick summary of each State’s tuition assistance program can be found at [NationalGuard.com/Education-Programs/State-Tuition-Assistance](http://NationalGuard.com/Education-Programs/State-Tuition-Assistance).

### Contact Your State’s ESO

The Army National Guard offers a wide range of programs designed to help students attend and pay for school. For detailed information about your State’s programs, contact the Education Services Officer (ESO) in your State through this webpage: [NationalGuard.com/Tools/State-Education-Programs](http://NationalGuard.com/Tools/State-Education-Programs). Choose your State from the dropdown list to find the contact information for your local ESO, who can help you determine the best program fit for your needs. ●

State Education Programs

NATIONAL GUARD

ELIGIBILITY CAREERS BENEFITS RESOURCES GET STARTED

### STATE EDUCATION PROGRAMS

The National Guard offers many programs to help students attend and pay for school. Choose your state from the list below to see the contact information for your local Education Services Officer (ESO). These officers will be able to talk to you about the specific education programs available in your state and help you determine the best fit for your needs.

Connect with a State Education Services Officer

Alabama

SUBMIT

Share

EDUCATION  
FIND OUT MORE

CAREER FIELDS  
FIND OUT MORE

GET STARTED

First Name Last Name  
Email Address ZIP

GET STARTED

VIEW MORE

PRIVACY & LEGAL TECHNICAL SUPPORT 1-888-GO-NGARD

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TALK TO AN EXPERT

# BENEFITS SPOTLIGHT



## MYARMYBENEFITS HELPS SOLDIERS PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

BY STAFF WRITER Rue Emerson

**H**ave questions about your benefits? MyArmyBenefits can help.

MyArmyBenefits is the official online Army resource for all federal and State benefits. Guard Soldiers can access information on a wide range of topics, including:

- Family planning
- Financial planning
- Deployment preparation
- Benefits guidance
- Retention support
- Home buying
- Tax planning and preparation
- Service Transitioning
- Retirement planning

At [MyArmyBenefits.us.army.mil](https://myarmybenefits.us.army.mil), Soldiers have access to practical tools like pay calculators. When they need guided support, MyArmyBenefits offers Soldiers a staffed help desk to assist them in planning for a variety of situations.

For example, if you are moving to a different State, and are in the process of an interstate transfer to continue military service, you may want to know if the new State will assist with property taxes or provide interest-free college loans for your dependents, as many but not all States do. This is where MyArmyBenefits can help.

The website provides a comprehensive listing of benefits for each of the 54 States and Territories. There, Soldiers may find more than 150 federal and State benefits fact sheets that contain not only eligibility guidelines, but also summarized information on various benefits including education benefits, employment benefits, health insurance and more.

To view the benefits available in each of the States and Territories, go to [MyArmyBenefits.us.army.mil/Home/Benefit\\_Library/State\\_Territory\\_Benefits.html](https://myarmybenefits.us.army.mil/Home/Benefit_Library/State_Territory_Benefits.html) and select from either the dropdown menu or map. ●

**Use MyArmyBenefits to plan for your future today.**

# Get Orally Fit with TRICARE Dental

BY STAFF WRITER Ruth Ann Replogle

**T**he TRICARE Dental Program is a voluntary dental plan available to uniformed service members and their Families. Just like with TRICARE's health insurance – TRICARE Reserve Select – Soldiers may enroll for the benefit at any point in the year. Monthly premiums (the amount of money paid each month by a policyholder to an insurance provider) are based on military status and range from approximately \$11 a month for a Soldier to \$70 a month for multiple Family members.

Different from the TRICARE health insurance plans, Soldiers (referred to as the sponsor) must enroll separately from Family members. Soldiers should select a Sponsor Only plan and Family members should select either a Single plan for one Family member or a Family plan if there are additional dependents.

TRICARE Dental is operated by United Concordia and covers:

- Exams, cleanings, fluorides, sealants and X-rays
- Fillings, including white fillings on back teeth
- Root canals
- Gum surgery
- Oral surgery and tooth extractions
- Crowns and dentures
- Orthodontics and braces

Regular cleanings and diagnostic exams are covered 100 percent by TRICARE Dental. Soldiers will pay co-insurance (the percentage of the cost of health care service that is paid by the policyholder) for all other dental care. Depending on pay

grade and the service provided, a Soldier may pay 20–50 percent of the bill. Just like with TRICARE health insurance, most policies will cover a higher percentage of the cost of services performed by an in-network provider (health care provider who is part of the TRICARE system) versus an out-of-network provider (health care provider who is independent of the TRICARE system).

To enroll in the TRICARE Dental Program, go to the Defense Manpower Data Center's Beneficiary Web Enrollment site at [DMDC.OSD.mil/appj/BWE](http://DMDC.OSD.mil/appj/BWE) and log on using a CAC, DS Logon or a DFAS account. Then select the Dental tab to enroll or update dental coverage information. Enrollment information may be submitted online, over the phone or through the mail. The initial premium payment will be due at the time of enrollment. Soldiers may choose to pay the monthly premiums either by electronic funds transfer or by a recurring debit/credit card charge.

Learn more about TRICARE Dental for Army National Guard Soldiers at [tricare.mil/CoveredServices/Dental/NGRDental](http://tricare.mil/CoveredServices/Dental/NGRDental). ●



**The required annual Periodic Health Assessment (PHA) includes not only a comprehensive medical review, but also a dental review. As a Soldier, when you miss or skip your annual dental exam, and/or follow-up dental treatment and care, you risk becoming non-deployable. You also risk loss of pay for drill attendance. At present, about one in 10 Soldiers is medically non-deployable because of an overdue dental exam or missed dental treatment.**

**Do not risk losing pay or being unable to support your unit in deployment. Keep up with your PHA event dates at your designated military installation. Individual dental appointments scheduled with a military or civilian dentist are also acceptable. A TRICARE in-network dentist will provide the exam to Guard Soldiers at no cost. When visiting a civilian dentist, a form DD 2813 should be completed by the dental office for submission to your unit. The form can be downloaded at [ESD.WHS.mil/DD](http://ESD.WHS.mil/DD) or you can request a form through your chain of command.**

# #GuardYourSMILE: Why Dental Readiness is Key

**Did you know your dental health impacts your overall readiness for duty?**



**About 1 in 10** Soldiers is medically **non-deployable** because of an overdue dental exam or missed dental treatment.

As a Soldier, you are required to get a dental exam **each year**.



## What's in it for me?

Getting your annual dental exam means you:

- Are compliant with Army regulations
- Identify developing tooth or mouth problems early
- Help prevent oral disease or other health problems
- Keep yourself fit for duty

## What happens when I miss or skip my dental exam?

It may cause you to:

- Become non-deployable
- Not be paid for drill attendance
- Be unable to support your unit's mission
- Develop a dental condition or pain that can hinder your performance



## Ready to see a dentist?



Get a dental exam at your next **Periodic Health Assessment** or group event.

OR

Get a dental exam with a **civilian dentist**. Ask them to complete form DD 2813. Then, return it to your unit.



No follow-up treatment needed?  
**You're good to go until next year!**

## Need treatment?

Ask your unit to schedule an appointment for follow-up treatment with a local dentist at **NO COST TO YOU.**

OR

Schedule follow-up treatment with your civilian dentist.



Have the dentist complete form DD 2813. Return the form to your unit.

**Getting your annual dental exam will keep you (and your unit) smiling!**

## Helpful Dental Resources



Find a dentist through TRICARE  
<http://gyh.tips/TricareDentist>



Download dental form DD 2813  
<http://gyh.tips/DD2813>



Find low-cost dental care options in your area  
<http://gyh.tips/DentalCare>



# A GIFT FOR DRIFT

BY STAFF WRITER Matthew Liptak  
Photos courtesy CPT Ryan Quinn

**B**illowing smoke, screeching tires, racing hearts, screaming fans. The engine revs and you find yourself grasping your seat in nervous excitement. It all means one thing – it's time to drift!

Drifting is a fast-paced motorsport attracting growing attention over the past decade. Its objective? Driving a car sideways down a track at high speed. Rubber is burned and adrenaline is pumped at organized events all over the country. Some who do it say it is the most challenging car-driving competition there is.

Drifting originated in Japan in the 1970s. By the 1990s, it had reached the United States, but it wasn't until the new century that drifting began to gather momentum as a legal and regulated, professional sport.

Army National Guard Soldier and Gainesville, Florida, Police Officer CPT Ryan Quinn is using his gift for the drift to promote both his Christian faith and the Army National Guard.

"The driving itself is probably the most challenging thing

that you could ever do in a car," said CPT Quinn, assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 124th Infantry Regiment, Florida Army National Guard. "It's an adrenaline rush. In essence, it's a [controlled] roller-coaster ride."

CPT Quinn originally started with the sport when he was in high school. Back then, he volunteered at drifting events as part of the pit crew. But after graduating high school, he left the then-still-developing sport behind to pursue other goals.

"I left drifting in order to focus on college and always planned to return to it when I had established a career," he said.



In 2013, CPT Quinn took the motor sport up again with renewed enthusiasm. The captain had recently attained his master's degree and felt he was at a good place in his career. He purchased a Scion FR-S with a 502-horsepower LS3 engine, specifically outfitted for drifting, and named it D4J (Drifting for Jesus).

Today, CPT Quinn competes at Pro-Am (professional-amateur) drifting events and said that he has given serious consideration to going professional.

"I've done what's called the Formula Drift Pro-Am series," he said. "They have a Pro-Am series in the different circuits around the United States. It's basically the minor league element of the sport."

CPT Quinn's Pro-Am career has an impressive track record. Last year, he competed in the Formula Drift Southeast Drift Union Pro-Am series. He placed third in the second and third rounds, and then went on to place fifth overall in the series.

Even on the minor league level, the stakes in drifting are high and the competition is intense. The sport requires heightened focus and extreme hand-eye coordination. A drift is basically a controlled skid. The car moves sideways at speeds of up to 60mph. Drivers control their vehicle's momentum using rear drive and a hand brake or clutch to



CPT Ryan Quinn in his car, D4J, at the start of the third round of Southeast Drift Union Formula Drift Pro-Am competition.



CPT Ryan Quinn in Ft Myers, Fla., on State active duty in response to Hurricane Irma. In the aftermath of the hurricane, CPT Quinn and his company ran points of distribution through Lee County, Fla., where they were able to serve over 46,000 citizens.

propel the vehicle around a set course.

To the outsider, drifting may look like a crazy car race accidentally gone all wrong. But in actuality, drifting is a highly nuanced sport. Drivers are judged on their ability to create a precision drift. Judging criteria includes line, angle and style.

Line involves taking the correct line, or path, around the course. The line is predetermined by the judges at each individual track. This means the line has the potential to change from one competition to the next. Angle has to do with the angle of the turned wheels of the car. That is: how the angle of the front wheels, in comparison to the angle of the rear wheels and their angle to the car. Style includes such aspects as the amount of smoke created, proximity to the track wall and crowd reaction.

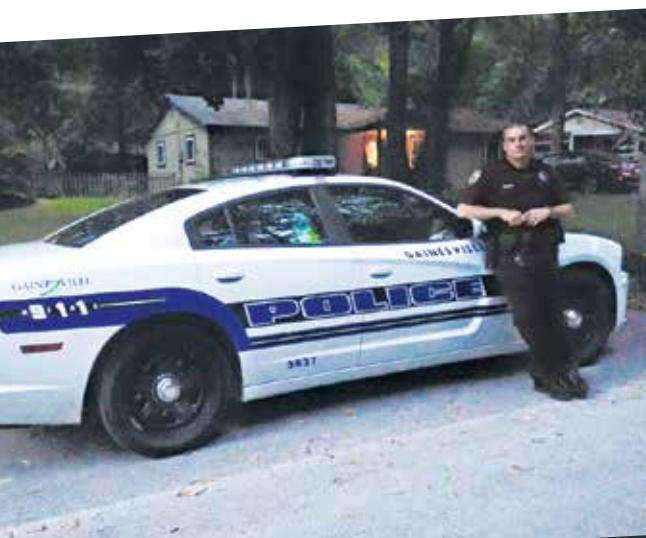
Competitors are only judged at the portions of a track that allow for both optimal visibility by the judges and safe drifting space for the drivers.

Formula Drift is the official professional drifting organization in the United States. At a Formula Drift contest, drifters each have two chances to qualify for the final competition. At the final event, pairs of cars compete in tandem. Thirty-two cars participate in all, drifting down the track two at a time.

With many competitive sports, peak performance requires teamwork. This is true of CPT Quinn and his team. While CPT Quinn is the most visible part of his team, his wife CPT Kimberly Quinn, also of the Florida Army National Guard, works behind the scenes as a key member of the pit crew. Together, the duo competes under the team name that they dubbed Slide United Motorsports.

"While he drives, I [watch] the tires and organize things," CPT K. Quinn said. "Depending on the track, the required tire pressure may change. Depending on how long the track is, the rear tires may only last three rotations [around the track]. I make sure I'm

CPT Ryan Quinn competes in the Gridlife South track event held at Road Atlanta in Braselton, Ga.



CPT Ryan Quinn with his police cruiser as he goes in for his first day back to work with the Gainesville Police Department after returning from deployment on the African continent.



CPT Ryan Quinn completing the final stretch of the 12-mile ruck march that was the culminating event to his earning an Expert Infantryman Badge in 2017. As the then-commander of his HHC, he proudly carried his regiment's colors.



CPT Ryan Quinn displays his gift for the drift as he completes a lap in a Pro-Am circuit drifting competition.

aware of how the tires are riding and that we ensure safety. It's an awesome sport, but you have to be calculated to minimize risk. The way that I describe it is that it's like dancing on tires."

Although CPT K. Quinn plays a critical role in the success of Slide United, she is quick to shine the spotlight back on her husband.

"Drifting is open to male and female [drivers]," she said, "But I really like to support [Ryan's] passion for the sport and not get into driving myself. He's basically awesome."

The Quinns regularly encourage others to get involved in formula drifting. They said they see it as a way to share their dream with those they care about.

"I recommend drifting because it's in a controlled environment," CPT K. Quinn said. "It's a blast. You're taking chances, but in an environment where you have safety and security. A five-point harness, a fire-resistant suit – everything is there in case of an emergency and it's legal."

For those who are interested in drifting,

but are not ready to drive, the Quinns said there are other ways to experience the sport. Many tracks will allow drivers to offer ride-alongs to passengers during competitions.

"Having people ride in the car with me at events and seeing those people experience [drifting] for the first time – that for me is a better payoff than winning a competition," reflected CPT R. Quinn.

1SG Brent Ludlow serves in the 124th Infantry Regiment. CPT. R. Quinn offered his friend a chance to ride along. 1SG Ludlow and his son took advantage of the opportunity.

"I thought he was a little crazy at first," 1SG Ludlow said of CPT R. Quinn. "Once I did the ride-along, I still thought he was crazy, but it was awesome."

1SG Ludlow went on to describe his first drifting experience. "I was a little nervous because you pull up to the starting line and you're waiting for the cars in front of you to go. You're hearing the sounds. And even though you've seen it before, now you're in the car getting to

experience it. But once we took off, it was nothing but smiles and screaming, and just a great time."

While he and his son had an exciting ride, 1SG Ludlow said for now they will remain only fans of the captain and his driving. There is no drifting on their own in the near future.

"I'm actually really proud of him," 1SG Ludlow said. "I know that he's getting close to being on the professional circuit."

While it's true that CPT R. Quinn's competitive record puts him in the running for a professional license and full-time drifting career, according to him and his wife, he has chosen not to go pro just yet. He is prioritizing his commitment to the Army National Guard.


"I plan on staying at the professional amateur level for at least the next two years," he said.

"The Army National



**“The way that I describe it is that it's like dancing on tires.”**

**— CPT Kimberly Quinn**



**“Once we took off, it was nothing but smiles and screaming, and just a great time.”**

**— 1SG Brent Ludlow**

Guard has invested heavily in our family,” noted CPT K. Quinn. “We’re very grateful.”

Both of the Quinns earned their post-secondary degrees in Finance from National Guard educational funding programs. CPT K. Quinn has a master’s in education and CPT R. Quinn has a master’s in business, both earned from the University of Florida.

According to CPT R. Quinn, drifting is much like the Florida Army National Guard in its shared sense of community. He said he enjoys the camaraderie of

the drifting culture even more than the actual driving.

Perhaps this similarity is what drives the Quinns to share the Army National Guard culture with their drifting fans in the same way that they share their love for drifting with their Army National Guard Family. The Quinns routinely take time to promote their passion for the Army National Guard at their sporting events.

The couple can often be found at the track wearing Army National Guard shirts or hats. Time in the pits is often used to chat with fans about the Army

National Guard and the opportunities it offers to Soldiers. CPT R. Quinn recalled introducing two young fans to the Army National Guard who later joined based on their preliminary connection with the captain.

The Quinns said they plan to continue to enjoy the dual benefits from their Florida Army National Guard experience and their passion for the sport of drifting. They are ready to continue to test their skills and push their limits, both as Soldiers and as a powerful drifting team. ●



Captains Kimberly and Ryan Quinn after performing in demonstrations at the Zero Gravity Outreach Veterans Weekend event held in Statesboro, Ga.

**For more on Army National Guard child care programs,  
and information on availability in your area, contact  
your State Family Program Director or Child and  
Youth Services Coordinator.**

## the Journey to Happiness

BY CONTRIBUTING WRITER  
CH (MAJ) Mark D. Phillips

**F**or most people, happiness is one of the primary goals of life. The desire to be free of stress and anxiety inspires civilians and Soldiers alike. The need to find happiness is so vital that our founding fathers saw fit to regard the “Pursuit of Happiness” as an “unalienable right” in the Declaration of Independence.

While most want to be happy, happiness can sometimes be difficult to find. And when found, it can be short-lived and fleeting. Caught in this cycle, one can find oneself stuck in a low state of depression wondering if true happiness will ever be attainable. To understand this phenomenon and avoid emotional extremes, the best course of action is to start with an understanding of the different levels of happiness. A full grasp of how these levels interact may help those striving to reach a solid ground of contentment.

Envision a pyramid with three different sections: top, middle and bottom. Rather than begin at the deeper level of

happiness, we will start at the top.

The top section of the pyramid is what we will call “experiential.” Happiness in this area constitutes events that happen to us or those things that we experience. The experiences could be anything from getting a good parking space at the grocery store, a promotion at work or enjoying a favorite meal. These types of occurrences are not meant to bring complete emotional fulfillment. They are temporary and short-lived. Thus, the top section is represented by the smallest section of the pyramid. While we all want to receive small daily blessings, one may find oneself on a joy roller-coaster if experiential happiness is all that is desired. A person continually living on this level constantly searches for the next good feeling or moment of happiness. Alcohol or drug addiction and uncontrolled financial spending may



A Soldier from the Virginia Army National Guard's 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team greets Family after serving on federal active duty for a year in Qatar.

Virginia Army National Guard photo by  
SGT Amanda H. Johnson

often be the result of one's search for experiential happiness. A telltale sign that one may be living at this level of the pyramid is that nothing seems to bring inner peace or contentment. Seeking help from a chaplain or behavioral health professional can be the first step to understanding this dilemma and overcoming it.

The middle level of the pyramid is labeled "relational." The relational level brings happiness into our lives that is based on the relationships we have with other people. At this level, daily happenings may be good or bad, but relational happiness tends to ground people in family ties and close friendships. People who build honest and open relationships are better equipped to handle life stressors because their coping skills are nurtured and strengthened through the support of friends and family members. Experiences may shake their emotional foundation, but honed relationships can bring steadfastness. An important aspect of our

Guard Family is building trustworthy relationships within Families and military units. Studies reveal that Soldiers who have strong relationships within their units tend to perform better at their work and have a more positive attitude toward their military service. Consequently, they tend to have stronger Family ties as well.

People who choose to isolate from others face a greater risk of depression, and possible suicidal ideations.

Perhaps the longest study on happiness is being conducted by Harvard University.

The study, which is still

ongoing after almost 80 years, reveals that building nurturing relationships is the number one indicator of human happiness – more so than attaining financial wealth or becoming famous. Dr. Robert Waldinger, the current director of the study, states, "Loneliness kills. It's as powerful as smoking or alcoholism." However, for some, building trustworthy relationships can be a challenge. Many often feel vulnerable opening up to others. If this is true for you, a good place to start opening up is with the people you are closest to right now. Set aside time each day to spend with your spouse, your children or your close friends. Make time to call a friend you haven't spoken with in months or years. Rebuild friendships by offering forgiveness and grace. Allow a certain amount of tolerance with others, while realizing that none of us are perfect. Enduring friendships work when people accept us as we are.

The third and bottom level of the happiness pyramid is what we will call "intentional." This level is the largest in size, in comparison to the experiential and relational levels, because it houses a foundational element that is more valuable than happiness – meaning. The intentional level of happiness is based on finding meaning in life and an intention for living. Here, people tend to focus more on the needs of others than on their own needs. Martin E. P. Seligman, one of today's leading psychological scientists, states, "You use your highest strengths and talents to belong to and serve something you believe is larger than the self." At this level of living, serving others becomes a priority. While one may still enjoy daily experiences of happiness and spending time with friends and loved ones, the purpose for relationships is to help those around them. Keep in mind that the form of help is not limited to financial or physical assistance. It can be an encouraging word, a smile or a listening ear. Experts believe people in this category become givers instead of takers. Paradoxically, the more you give, the more you will receive – also known as "the law of the harvest." A wonderful way to reach the intentional level of happiness is by devoting each day to encouraging someone. Encourage your Family members, co-workers and fellow Guard Soldiers.

Pay attention to what people are experiencing around you, whether it be a life stressor or a celebration. In time, you will find that service to others has simply become a way of life. ●



**experiential**



**relational**



**intentional**

# Serving those who Serve

BY STAFF WRITER 1LT Frank Greenagel

**I** joined the Army National Guard Feb. 29, 1996. I was 19 years old and a year and a half out of high school. I had washed out of college twice and had recently reformed my partying ways. After completing basic training at Ft. Knox, I returned to New Jersey and enrolled in community college. In addition to my classes and drill, I worked 20 hours a week as a security guard. There were times I dreaded drill – I was wiped out from work and school, and instead of having the weekend off, I had to report for formation at 0645. I was a lowly PFC that got the worst tasks. It seemed we were in the field whenever it was below 40 degrees or above 90. Yet there were other weekends that I welcomed drill – the master sergeant in charge of my section was organized, funny and down to earth. A few NCOs were wonderful storytellers and I thrilled in being around them.

I graduated college in 2001 and my contract ended in 2002. For a number of reasons, I did not re-up. But the most significant one was that I was 25 and unsure what I wanted to do with my life. A few months later, one of my

closest friends overdosed and died from a combination of alcohol and drugs. He was 27.

Not long after, I had an opportunity to move to Japan and teach English in Tokyo for a year. I thought about my deceased friend quite often while I was abroad. When I returned to the United States, I took a job in a drug and alcohol treatment center. I was there only a few weeks when I decided to pursue a Master's in Social Work (MSW). For the next two years, I engaged in full-time work and full-time school. My friends expressed amazement at my schedule, but it didn't seem that hard – probably because of my experience years earlier juggling school, work and drill.

I graduated with my MSW in 2006. For the next three years, I taught high school English during the day and worked at an outpatient substance abuse center at night. In 2009, I took a job at Rutgers University overseeing their Recovery House program. A few years after that, I was also hired as a university professor. In 2013, a new student enrolled who was a veteran. He had been other than honorably discharged from the military for being addicted to prescription drugs. His addiction began after being

## The most common reasons that Soldiers seek my advice (voluntary or involuntary) are:

- 1 Romantic relationship problems
- 2 Mental health issues, such as symptoms of depression or anxiety, including untreated PTSD and complex trauma
- 3 Substance abuse, which is particularly important because untreated PTSD, sexual assaults and suicidal ideation have a high correlation with alcohol abuse
- 4 College and career counseling
- 5 Chain-of-command conflicts
- 6 Unresolved grief

## “EVERY BRIGADE HAS AT LEAST ONE BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE OFFICER, AND WE ARE HERE TO HELP.”

prescribed drugs to deal with his PTSD and other physical injuries. His story angered and motivated me. In 2014, I rejoined the Army National Guard as a Behavioral

Science Officer. Because of the education I acquired during my 12-year gap in service, I managed to jump from an E-4 to an O-2.

I have been back with the Army National Guard for three and a half years, and I still don't like waking up really early or eating MREs. (I had heartburn during annual training last summer, and I realized it was because I was using hot sauce three times a day.) But I'm both very happy and very proud that I rejoined. I take great pride in the uniform, and I enjoy talking to and working with other Guard Soldiers.

During my first several drills, I saw the occasional Soldier who was ordered to see me and I taught a few classes. It took a while for Soldiers in my company to warm up to me. A few months after I rejoined, a PFC told me that he was afraid that I'd "haul him off to the loony bin." An E-6 said troops had learned to avoid head-shrinkers and to avoid talking about their problems. Time passed and people in my unit grew more comfortable. They started coming to see me without being ordered to

by their chain of command – a true mark of success in my book.

Every brigade has at least one behavioral science officer, and we are here to help. Most behavioral science officers

have a lot of experience and are well equipped to offer positive suggestions or, if it's more helpful, just to listen. The first few years in the Guard are often the most difficult, as Soldiers are usually in their 20s and are juggling work, school and Family on top of their military duties. Finances are often strained as well. Whenever I am on my way to or from drill and I stop for coffee or food, civilians come up to me and thank me for my service. I respond that I have the privilege of serving those who serve. Other social workers and psychologists feel the same way. Please reach out to us if you are struggling.

Over the next few months, I will write articles about the three major questions you should answer in your 20s: how to get through a breakup, resiliency and why hiking is such a positive activity. If you have questions about something else or would like me to write on another topic, please send an email with my name in the subject line to the Citizen-Soldier email address, [Editor@Citizen-SoldierMagazine.com](mailto:Editor@Citizen-SoldierMagazine.com). I look forward to hearing from you. ●

1LT Frank L. Greenagel talks with a client during an outdoor, relaxed-environment counseling session.

Image courtesy Guard Your Health

## GOT CYBER SKILLS?

BY STAFF WRITER Matthew Liptak

Your MOS might not require handling government secrets, but **CYBERSECURITY IS EVERY SOLDIER'S CONCERN**. Take a look at the questions below and see how many you can answer correctly. Get one or two right, and you will wear the tag of a Cyber Toddler. With three or four right, you're a Web Warrior. Five or six right means you're a Network Ninja. Get all seven answers correct and you've earned the rank of Digital Dominator!

### 1. IS FREE PUBLIC WI-FI SAFE? 2. WHAT ARE COMMON CYBER VULNERABILITIES?

- a As long as you don't access secure accounts.
- b As long as your screen can't be seen by others.
- c Public Wi-Fi is vulnerable to malware, man-in-the-middle attacks and other eavesdropping.
- d As long as you only access https websites.

- a Socially engineered malware.
- b Password phishing attacks.
- c Shark phishing attacks.
- d A & B.

### 3. WHAT IS THE CONCEPT OF TRUST NO ONE (TNO)? 4. WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ENCODING AND ENCRYPTION?

- a The nagging suspicion that everyone is out to get you.
- b The idea that no one except yourself should be trusted for the storage of the keys behind the applied encryption technology.
- c A random Army National Guard acronym.
- d A reminder to only exchange information that is need-to-know.

- a Encoding involves codes while encrypting involves cyphers.
- b Encoders rule, but encryptions drool.
- c Encoding maintains data usage and is reversible; encryption maintains data confidentiality and requires a key.
- d Encryption was invented in the 20th century and encoding was invented in the 21st century.

**QUIZ CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE ----->**

## 5. WHAT IS THE PRINCIPLE OF LEAST PRIVILEGE?

- a The principle of lower ranks getting less computer time.
- b Encouraging minimal user profile privileges, based on a user's job necessities.
- c A hierarchy of preferred coding languages.
- d A concept related to trickle-down economics.

## 6. HOW SAFE IS THE CLOUD?

- a Cloud computing may have password vulnerabilities.
- b Cloud computing may be susceptible to enroute exposure - hacking that occurs while data are in transport from a device to the cloud, and vice versa.
- c Clouds are pretty.
- d A & B (and maybe C).

## BONUS HOW OLD IS THE INTERNET?

- a Like Yoda-old.
- b The World Wide Web was developed by the National Security Agency (NSA) in 1957.
- c Al Gore developed the internet in 1994.
- d The first host-to-host message was sent on the Advanced Research Projects Agency Network (ARPANET) in 1969.

## NEVER FORGET:

According to the DoD, nearly 90 percent of the information collected by adversaries comes from open sources. Any information that can be legally and freely obtained is open source. Social network tweets and postings, text messages, blogs, videos, photos and GPS mapping are all examples of open source information.

As part of the DoD community, every Soldier should be constantly aware of OPSEC best practices. OPSEC is best employed daily when making choices about what communications to use, what to write in emails, say on the phone or post on social networking sites and blogs. Any information located in the public domain, whether printed, audiovisual or electronic media, may become accessible by our Nation's adversaries.

# AMERICAN LEGION LEGACY SCHOLARSHIP

## ***Honoring Legacy Through Educational Assistance***

The American Legion Legacy Scholarship awards needs-based scholarships of up to \$20,000 for undergraduate or post-graduate college education. The scholarship is designed to fill any financial gap that may exist after all federal and State grants and scholarships available to an eligible applicant have been utilized.

### **To qualify for the scholarship, applicants must be:**

- Children of U.S. military members who died while on active duty on or after Sept. 11, 2001, or
- Children of post-9/11 veterans with a combined VA disability rating of 50 percent or higher



For information about the scholarship or the application process, visit [\*\*Legion.org/Scholarships/Legacy\*\*](https://legion.org/Scholarships/Legacy).

## Strong Bonds for a Strong Life

BY STAFF WRITER Ruth Ann Repogle


**K**eeping any relationship strong takes work. This is especially true of relationships held by Soldiers. While Soldiers and their Families typically experience more excitement than perhaps the average family, they may also experience more challenges. Deployments and drills may often conflict with Family routines, planned events or financially related obligations. This can all put stress on even the strongest of relationships. Whether single, married with no kids or married and raising a house full of kids, learning to manage the challenges military life may bring, in order to maintain healthy relationships, should be a priority for every Soldier.

Strong Bonds is an Army program designed to help Soldiers discover the keys to building and maintaining strong and healthy relationships.

Started in 1999, Strong Bonds is

chaplain-led with the support of the commanding officer. Events are held in off-site locations and conducted in a retreat-style fashion. Soldiers and their Families attend with others in the unit who share the same drill and/or deployment cycle. During these retreats, attendees participate in small group activities that reveal common bonds and encourage friendships. In addition, Soldiers and Families gain awareness of community resources that can assist with concerns about health and wellness, even crisis intervention.





**Strong Bonds offers one-, two- and three-day events that are designed to meet Soldiers at different phases of the relationship cycle. Specific training is offered for the single Soldier, couples, Families with children, and all Soldiers and Families scheduled for or returning from deployment.**

- **Strong Bonds for Singles**

Here, Soldiers acquire practical information based on a nationally recognized curriculum. They learn to examine priorities, manage mate choice patterns and learn to evaluate a relationship's potential for long-term success.

- **Strong Bonds for Couples**

In this program, couples work in small peer groups and participate in activities structured to renew bonds. Soldiers and their spouses participate in relationship skill-building exercises that allow them to communicate and share intimate moments.

- **Strong Bonds for Family**

In the Families sessions, mom, dad and children gain skills to help sustain healthy relationships using a curriculum designed especially for military Families. Through small group and one-on-one activities, Family members learn how to maintain closeness during frequent or long separations. Strong Bonds for Families is open to Soldiers, spouses and kids ages eight and older.

- **Strong Bonds for Pre- and Post-Deployment**

This training is specifically for Soldiers, both single and married, and their Families when a deployment is in the near future or when a return from deployment recently occurred. Through small group and individual activities, participants gain skills on how to stay connected during a deployment and how to transition more effectively from separation to togetherness.

In addition to structured group activities and skills training, Strong Bonds events all include time for relaxation, recreation, fellowship and fun.

Strong Bonds started with four events and 90 couples. In 2017, more than 130,000 Soldiers and Family members participated in over 3,700 Strong Bonds events. The growth and success of the program is a testament to the positive impact it has provided to the tens of thousands of Soldiers and Families who have experienced the retreats.

With Strong Bonds, Soldiers and their Families learn how to develop the skills needed to keep relationships thriving, all while enjoying each other's company and having fun.

To learn more about Strong Bonds or to find a local event, go to [www.StrongBonds.org](http://www.StrongBonds.org). Soldiers may also contact their unit's chaplain for details. ●

A Soldier with the Ohio Army National Guard is greeted by loved ones after returning from deployment to Turkey in support of Operation Inherent Resolve.

Ohio National Guard photo by SSG Michael Carden

# 5 Myths

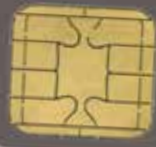
## about **CREDIT SCORES**

BY STAFF WRITER Rue Emerson

The world of credit and credit scoring abounds with myths. Understanding what's fact and what's fiction can help you navigate your personal finances with confidence.

### Myth#1

#### **CREDIT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO GET IF YOU DON'T ALREADY HAVE IT**



If you don't have a credit history, never fear! Building credit is easy. You can get a line of credit – a loan from a bank or lender – or a car loan by having a parent, family member or trusted friend added to the loan as a co-signer or authorized user. Once you start making payments, make sure you pay on time to keep your credit in good standing.

### Myth#2

#### **BAD CREDIT SCORES WILL FOLLOW YOU FOREVER**



Credit reports can be improved over time. Negative information on your credit report, like late or missed payments, drop off after seven years. As long as you do not continue to make late payments, you can raise your score by paying loans on time, lowering your debt-to-income ratio (the amount of debt you owe in comparison to the amount of money you make), and keeping low-to-medium balances on credit cards. Keeping credit card balances near the limit will cause your credit score to drop. Conversely, having more than one credit card that is routinely paid on time, and has low-to-medium balances can boost your score.

**Myth#3****CHECKING YOUR CREDIT HURTS YOUR CREDIT SCORE**

The truth is, accessing your credit report once a year has no bearing on your credit score. In fact, it's actually encouraged as part of good credit management. You want to do this annually to look for fraudulent activity and dispute errors. When you check your credit report, it's considered a soft inquiry, like a background check. It won't ding your credit score like applying for a credit card or a loan does.

**Myth#4****CARRYING A BALANCE ON YOUR CREDIT CARD HELPS YOUR CREDIT SCORE**

As touched on above, while showing regular and responsible use of credit cards is helpful to your credit score, high outstanding balances may be harmful to it. This is true even if you make payments on time each month. A maxed-out credit card tells lenders that a person is either irresponsible with money or living above their means. Credit experts recommend spending no more than 30 percent of your limit. For example, if you have a \$5,000 credit limit, it's best to have a balance of \$1,500 or lower.

**What is the Difference Between a Credit Report and Credit Score?**

- **A credit score** is the numerical value calculated from information in a person's credit file that is used by lenders to assess that person's level of credit risk. A high score suggests the person is a low credit risk, while a low score indicates a high level of risk associated with lending to the individual.
- **A credit report** is a summary of financial accounts held by a person. It is a history of a person's paying pattern for loans, credit cards and other bills. The information from a credit report is used to determine a credit score.

**Myth#5****MISSING ONE PAYMENT IS NOT A BIG DEAL**

Payment history is one of the most important factors in credit scoring. Missing a payment or paying even a single payment late will show on your credit report and stay there for seven years. It will also significantly drop your credit score, at times by more than 100 points. The silver lining here is that credit companies do not report a late payment to the credit bureaus until the payment is 30 days late. Meaning, if you make a payment late, but in less than 30 days past the due date, it will not affect your credit score – though you will typically be charged a late fee by the credit card company.

The bottom line is, to have a good credit score, you must use your credit wisely. The key to good credit is to create a budget and stay within it – i.e., don't overspend and make payments on time.



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## Mission: OLYMPICS

BY STAFF WRITER Tatyana White-Jenkins

**F**our Soldiers from the New York Army National Guard were sent on a special mission in PyeongChang, South Korea. The mission assignment – to compete in the 2018 Winter Olympics.

SGT Emily Sweeney, SGT Matthew Mortensen, SGT Justin Olsen and SGT Nick Cunningham put their skills and training to the test by representing the United States in the world's most preeminent athletic competition.

Each Soldier is a part of the Army World Class Athlete's Program (WCAP). Established in 1997, the WCAP provides Soldier-athletes with the support and training needed to succeed in national and international competitions leading to Olympic and Paralympic Games. To participate in WCAP, Soldiers must be nationally ranked in their chosen sport and complete required military training. The program pays Soldiers to train full time. In return, Soldiers host clinics and act as goodwill ambassadors for the United States and U.S. Army at international games. [See page 70 for more information on WCAP.]

"It's unique to wear both uniforms," SGT Cunningham said. "The Army has been gracious enough to let me chase this dream. They told me 'go win medals for this country,' and now that's my job."

"It's a very honorable position to be in," explained SGT Mortensen.

"You're not just carrying yourself as an American athlete, you're carrying yourself as an American Soldier."

Both SGT Mortensen and SGT Sweeney competed in luge, where competitors hurtle down a slippery ice track in a one- or two-person sled.

SGT Mortensen, of the New York Army National Guard's 1156th Engineer Company, compares the sport to the "fastest waterslide you've ever been on."

The Soldier-athlete started participating in luge at the age of 11 when his father saw flyers about the program.

"My dad just asked me if I wanted to go out and try the sport because I was a pretty athletic kid," SGT Mortensen said. "I played a bunch of sports already. I was

actively involved in soccer, baseball and basketball. And this was just another thing."

While he admits that he was not always the best at the sport, he remained persistent and determined to succeed. It took SGT Mortensen three attempts before he made the national team at age 13.



TOP: The Alpensia Sliding Center Track.

Wikimedia Commons photo by Jorge Ravenna

ABOVE: SGT Matthew Mortensen gives a "thumbs up" to fans at the 2017 World Cup competition in Lake Placid, N.Y.

U.S. Army photo by SPC Jennily Leon



SGT Emily Sweeney competes in her third heat during the women's luge final in Pyeongchang, South Korea, Feb. 13, 2018.

AP Photo by Wong Maye-E

"I didn't make it at first," SGT Mortensen explained. "I got cut, but I kept going back. I don't like being told no."

That perseverance proved to be highly beneficial, as PyeongChang marked SGT Mortensen's second Olympic Games. He also competed in the 2014 Winter Olympics. In PyeongChang, SGT Mortensen and his partner Jayson Terdiman, placed tenth in the doubles event. When it came to the team relay, Team USA barely missed out on winning the bronze medal. SGT Mortensen's team finished in fourth place with a time of 2:25.091, just behind Austria's time of 2:24.988.

"It was a tough day," said SGT Mortensen. "It's the Olympics. We all put it out there. Unfortunately, we fell just a little bit short, but fourth in the Olympics isn't the worst place to be. It might be the hardest place to be, but it's not the worst."

SGT Sweeney, assigned to the New York Army National Guard Joint Force Headquarters, dreamed of becoming an Olympian since the age of seven. Inspired by her sister, Megan, who competed in the luge program, SGT Sweeney started in luge when she was just 10 years old. She began traveling for the sport when she was 14.

Qualifying for the 2018 Winter Olympics was a dream come true for SGT Sweeney. After being a hopeful for the 2010 and 2014 Winter Olympics, but not qualifying, SGT Sweeney took a drastic break from the sport she loved. For six months, SGT Sweeney completely halted her training and withdrew from her family and friends. It was



SGT Emily Sweeney was the 2013 Luge Junior World Champion. She holds one World Cup Gold medal and three World Cup Silver medals.



SGT Matthew Mortensen is a five-time Norton National Champion. He won a Silver medal in the 2017 World Championship team relay, Silver and Bronze medals in the 2016-2017 World Cup and took second place in the 2017-2018 Sprint World Cup Standings.

not until she was called to attend the Warrior Leader Course (WLC), now the Basic Leader Course, that she received the wake-up call she desperately needed.

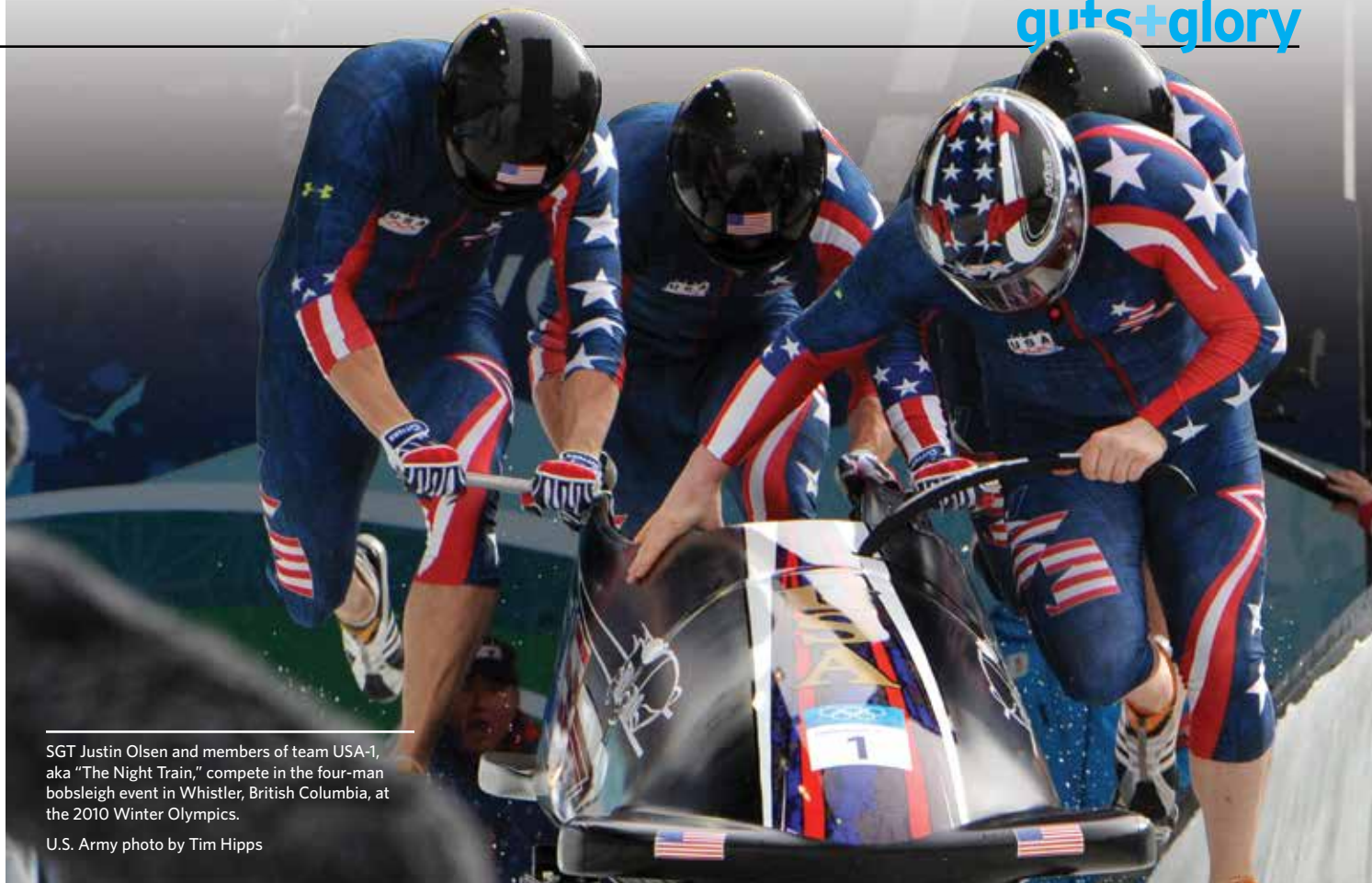
After stepping away from luge, and her strict training and exercise regimen, SGT Sweeney said she lost muscle mass and 20 pounds. As a result, for the first time, she failed to score a 300 on her Army Physical Fitness Test.

"[WLC] kind of pulled me out," said SGT Sweeney. "It gave me a schedule that I had to



SGT Matthew Mortensen celebrates in the finish area after the luge team relay in Pyeongchang, South Korea, Feb. 15, 2018.

AP Photo by Andy Wong



SGT Justin Olsen and members of team USA-1, aka "The Night Train," compete in the four-man bobsleigh event in Whistler, British Columbia, at the 2010 Winter Olympics.

U.S. Army photo by Tim Hipps

adhere to again. I got back into the military mode and then after that, I got back into my training."

After graduating from WLC, SGT Sweeney was committed to resuming her luge training – and it paid off. She went on to qualify to compete in the women's singles for the 2018 Winter Olympics.

During her fourth and final run of the competition, SGT Sweeney crashed after losing control on the track's most treacherous curve. She zig-zagged down the course, crashed into a wall and was eventually thrown off of her sled.

Just 20 minutes after the crash, she was able to get up on her own and assure the crowd that she was okay. While the crash resulted in her earning a Did Not Finish (DNF) for the competition, SGT Sweeney remains confident in her abilities.

"It's a bummer, for sure, and I know that I'm better than that," said SGT Sweeney. "But here we are – it happens."

SGT Olsen and SGT Cunningham competed in bobsleigh, a sport where teams of two or four competitors complete timed runs down iced, narrow and twisting tracks in a gravity-powered sled.

"Your first time down, it's worse than any roller coaster you've ever ridden," explained SGT Olsen.



SGT Justin Olsen joined the New York Army National Guard in January 2011. As a member of the 2010 Winter Olympics four-man bobsled team, SGT Olsen and his teammates won the first U.S. Gold Medal in the event in 62 years.



"There's some fear, but it's also an adrenaline rush."

For SGT Olsen, assigned to the New York Army National Joint Force Headquarters, the 2018 Winter Olympic Games was his third Olympic Games and his first as the pilot of the sled.

SGT Olsen started bobsleigh in 2007 after his mother heard a radio ad about the sport and encouraged him to try it out.

"I was hooked from the first time I went down the track," he said.

He soon became a force to be reckoned with in the sport. He was part of the history-making team in the 2010 Olympic Games that won the first gold medal by an American sled team since 1948.

His time at the 2018 Winter Olympics had an unexpected start when he underwent an emergency appendectomy just two days before he was scheduled to train in PyeongChang.

"I know that having surgery 12 days before a competition probably isn't ideal to most athletes," SGT Olsen released in a statement following his surgery. "But due to some great conversations with my girlfriend and mother, I am reminded that nobody's path is the same, and I don't feel sorry for



SGT Nick Cunningham competed on the two-man and four-man Team U.S.A. bobsled teams in the 2010 and 2014 Olympic Games. He won a Gold medal in the 2017-2018 Two-Man North American Cup in Park City, and Silver medals in the 2017-2018 Two-Man World Cup in Lake Placid and the Four-Man North American Cup in Park City.

The Alpensia Sliding Center - nicknamed "The House of Speed"-hosted luge, skeleton and bobsleigh events during the 2018 Winter Olympics. It is the first sliding center in Korea and only the second in all of Asia.

Korean Culture and Information Service  
photo by Jeon Han



would jokingly say that he should join bobsleigh because he was so fast. He ran track in college, but SGT Cunningham said he knew he could not reach his dream of becoming an Olympian in track. As a gift to himself, he decided to try out for the USA men's bobsled team.

"I figured it would be a graduation gift for myself to do something outside the box, outside my comfort zone," SGT Cunningham explained.

He competed in his first Olympics just 18 months later.

The 2018 Winter Olympics marked SGT Cunningham's third Olympic Games. His performance in the men's two-man event with teammate Hakeem Abdul-Saboor left him feeling disappointed. After their first three heats, they were two-tenths of a second away from ranking in the top 20, meaning they didn't qualify for the fourth and final run. However, SGT Cunningham kept a positive attitude and used what he learned from the two-man event to help his team place in the top 20 in the four-man event.

"I gave it my all and that's why we're still smiling at the end," said SGT Cunningham.

While the 2018 Winter Olympics presented challenges for some, these four resilient Soldiers and Olympians said they are appreciative of the opportunities and unwavering support they have received.

"I'm so well supported through the Army, through the National Guard, through my family and friends and everyone else," said SGT Sweeney. "That's what I'm going to take with me - that support can come from any direction. Everyone's there and everyone's cheering for you." ●

SGT Nick Cunningham (front) and teammate SGT Dallas Robinson slide to second place in the two-man event at the International Bobsled & Skeleton Federation's 2013 World Cup stop.

U.S. Army photo by Tim Hipps

myself in the slightest. I have no doubt that I will be ready to compete."

Less than two weeks after his surgery, he was back in the sled and ready to compete. In both the men's two-man and the men's four-man, SGT Olsen and his team placed in the top 20.

SGT Cunningham, assigned to the New York Army National Guard Joint Force Headquarters, is also a pilot on the United States Bobsled Team.

SGT Cunningham started competing in bobsleigh in 2008. His career was foretold by his mother, who

# NEVER STOP STRIVING

## Former Best Ranger and OCR Champ Reaches for Olympic Pentathlon

BY STAFF WRITER Matthew Liptak  
Photos courtesy CPT Robert Killian

CPT Robert Killian competes in the Hero Carry event during the Tough Mudder Carolina 2017 competition.

Captain Robert Killian has never been one to set the bar low. He is a ferocious competitor, with an indomitable spirit. Of the many winning titles under his belt, two of the most notable are his first-place win in 2015 of the obstacle-laced Spartan Race World Championship and his 2016 win of the Army's Best Ranger competition. CPT Killian and his partner, SSG Erich Friedlein, made history as the first-ever Army National Guard team to win Best Ranger.

Since winning the coveted title of Best Ranger, the Green Beret officer from Special Operations Detachment Korea (SOD-K), Colorado Army National Guard, has kept plenty busy. Last year he placed first in the Green Beret Challenge Operators Course, and he and SSG Friedlein placed third at the 2017 Best Ranger Competition. CPT Killian also

placed in 21 elite Spartan races in 2017, garnering 15 Gold, 2 Silver and 4 Bronze Spartan Medals.

Having championed in an impressive list of wins, CPT Killian said that for his subsequent move, he has set his sights on a higher tier of competitive challenges. His next goal: becoming a premier athlete of the Army's World Class Athletic Program (WCAP) and, one day, an Olympian.

With a long-term goal of going to the Olympics, it is understandable that CPT Killian would want to be a part of the renowned WCAP. Since 1948, the Army has sent 446 Soldiers, from all three Army components, to the Olympics – winning a total of 111 medals, according to a WCAP report. Fifty-five WCAP Army Athletes have won Gold, Silver and Bronze medals in both the summer and winter Olympic Games.

CPT Killian noted that he would like to enter the WCAP in order to train for the pentathlon. He is already off to a good start with this new genre of competition, as he placed second place in the 2017 USA Modern Pentathlon Laser Pistol National Championships. The modern pentathlon is similar to the obstacle course events CPT Killian has conquered in the past, in that they include several strenuous events. The current Olympic pentathlon includes pistol shooting, fencing, swimming, horse riding and running. These segments of the competition are all scheduled as a one-day event during the summer games.

Obstacle Course Racing (OCR) – CPT Killian's niche sport – is considered to be the fastest growing, large-group sport in the world, according to United States Obstacle Course Racing, the governing organization for obstacle sports in

A full-page photograph of a man, CPT Robert Killian, participating in a Spartan race. He is wearing a black athletic shirt, black leggings, and a black headband with "SPARTAN 32607" printed on it. He is carrying a large black bucket with both hands, and a red Spartan Race logo is visible on the front of the bucket. He is walking up a steep, rocky incline. The background is a vast field of dark, jagged rocks.

**"I THINK NOW, I'M OUT  
TO PROVE THAT AGE IS  
JUST A NUMBER..."**

**- CPT Robert Killian**



LEFT: As part of the 2017 Oberndorf/Tirol Spartan Beast race held in Oberndorf, Austria, CPT Robert Killian races down a man-made hill during the Bucket Carry segment of the race.

ABOVE: CPT Robert Killian digs deep to flip a giant tire during the Yokohama Tire Flip segment of the 2017 Seattle Super and Sprint Spartan Race.

America. CPT Killian said he believes, in addition to his overall skill as an athlete, his track record as a consistently high-ranking competitor in some of the biggest OCR venues in the world makes him a good candidate for WCAP. Based on initial conversations with WCAP leadership, CPT Killian said in order to solidify a slot for pentathlon training, he needs to rack up more pentathlon race wins. “So, I’m going to focus 2018 on [pentathlons],” he said.

But CPT Killian isn’t waiting on the WCAP alone to advance his career. As noted earlier, he has continued with OCR over the last year. In 2017—along with placing in the top three at several other races—he won first place at both the Dallas Ultra Beast and the Tougher Colorado. He took second place when he raced 105 miles in 24 hours at the World’s Toughest Mudder near Las Vegas, Nevada, and he took third place in yet another Spartan World Championship Race.

At the time of his interview with *Citizen-Soldier*, CPT Killian was in the midst of a six-week recovery phase of his competition cycle. He was taking time to let his body recuperate from the rigors of the multiple, back-to-back contests. But even in recovery phase, his body doesn’t get a total reprieve. He avoids high-intensity exercise, but still works out.

That more-relaxed workout usually consists of training three to four hours a day, six days a week. Ever mindful of his “dad duty,” he first drops off his kids at school, and then it’s on to the gym for swimming. After lunch, CPT Killian begins an afternoon run, followed by 20 or 30 minutes of functional fitness around the house—he has a pull-up bar, sand bags and some dumbbells in his home. On the weekends, he’ll go running in the mountains.

“The times I’m not working out, I have sponsorship obligations,” he said. “I’m either doing interviews or I’m meeting with sponsors for photo shoots or I’m filming B-roll for an episode that’s about to come out on TV.” (In 2017, CPT Killian was a regular on two television series—Spartan Ultimate Team Challenge and Steve Austin’s Broken Skull Challenge.)

That’s his downtime, and it does not include his Army National Guard duties.



CPT Killian is key-development qualified as a Special Forces commander and, regardless of his schedule that stays jam-packed even in his downtime, he keeps his service to the Guard a top priority. In 2017, with the exception of two drills that he made up, CPT Killian was on duty for every drill—including his unit’s two weeks of training in South Korea. In an effort to avoid conflicts, he said he forecasts his calendar far in advance, and gives his senior officers as much advanced notice as possible when conflicts do arise. As a last resort, he does split training to remain compliant with his Army National Guard obligations.

In fact, CPT Killian’s dedication to the Guard seems to outweigh his love of OCR. The master athlete said another of his goals is to attain 20 years of active duty service.

“I have 12 years’ active federal service. If I get on WCAP, I’ll actually be on active duty. If I was offered an AGR [Active Guard Reserve] job or an active duty position for five or more years, I would leave OCR. I’d still do OCR events, but I’d be like the guys who just do two races a year. I wouldn’t try to do all of the series races.”

Even with aspirations of working full-time for the military, CPT Killian is still a huge advocate for OCR as an up-and-coming sport. He is quick to encourage both Soldiers and civilians to get involved—just as he encouraged the man who would become his partner in the history-making Army National Guard Best Ranger team—SSG Friedlein—to get involved in the sport.

“I think anybody can do it,” SSG Friedlein said of OCR. “You don’t have to be an elite athlete like Rob. Everybody I’ve talked to, that has decided to do it, has

always enjoyed it.”

CPT Killian expressed a similar view. “Anyone can go out and do an obstacle course race,” he said. “Just go out and do one. That’s the best advice I can give someone. I went out and did it, and I got addicted to them. It’s so much fun. And the fact that it is different every race is so exciting. You don’t know what to expect.”

As challenging as OCRs can be, both CPT Killian and SSG Friedlein agreed that they do not compare to the way the Best Ranger Competition tests a Soldier. Best Ranger is a multi-day event with no scheduled sleeping or eating for the participants. Spartan World Championship is a two-hour obstacle course race.

There are similarities though. In fact, the Best Ranger competition now incorporates a Spartan race. On day two of Best Ranger, four hours after completing an up-to-20-mile ruck march, competing Rangers and Ranger-Qualified Guard Soldiers are up early at the starting line of a Spartan Race. The Army competitors share a course with civilians competing in the race, but the Soldiers start on the course a half hour before the civilian competitors to ensure continuity for the Best Ranger contest.

“It’s fun to be sharing the course with civilians because they get to see the Rangers out there, and then they get exposed to what the Best Ranger competition is,” SSG Friedlein said. “They realize that they can go watch it. A lot of people end up [coming] from the Spartan and sticking around to watch the Best Ranger competition.”

This year the Best Ranger competition was April 13–15. At the time of publication, CPT Killian had no specific plans to compete for what would be his sixth time at the Best Ranger event, but SSG Friedlein did. The Army National Guard planned to field four two-man teams for Best Ranger. The staff sergeant noted that oftentimes competitors get injured during the two-month training leading up to the contest and that contingency team members are sometimes needed.

“If somebody got hurt, Rob would be a perfect person [to fill in],” said SSG Friedlein. “He’s just always an animal. He could show up with very minimal specific training and do well because he is so strong and has that base already.”

If needed, CPT Killian said he told his old partner that he would be willing to participate in the 2018 event at a moment’s notice.

At 36, CPT Killian isn’t the youngest of athletes anymore, but the officer said he’s in better shape now than he was six years ago. He wants to stave off that most persistent and problematic of adversaries: time. He may be a hill climber, but he is far from over-the-hill.

“I think now, I’m out to prove that age is just a number,” he said.

For CPT Killian, in 2018, there will be more challenges, more races – this time pentathlons – and more stiff competition. He will be competing. He will be working. He will be waiting for the chance to reach his next goal – joining the WCAP and one day climbing an Olympic podium. If they call, he will be ready. ●

## WHAT IS WCAP? HOW DO I APPLY?

**THE ARMY’S WORLD CLASS ATHLETE PROGRAM** offers premier Soldier-athletes in the Army National Guard, active duty and Reserve components the support and training to compete and win around the globe.

**ONCE SELECTED,** Soldiers receive the highest caliber training from some of the best coaches and trainers in the country. WCAP teams include boxing, modern pentathlon, rugby sevens, shooting, track & field, para-sports, taekwondo, winter sports and wrestling. There are established Army training centers for boxing, taekwondo and wrestling. Training for the other teams may occur at Olympic Training Centers or similar facilities with proven track records in producing internationally competitive athletes.

**SERVING FULL-TIME FOR THE WCAP,** Soldiers also work to support U.S. Army Recruiting Command by conducting clinics and appearances at high schools and colleges, and serve as goodwill ambassadors at international events.

**ARE YOUR ATHLETIC SKILLS WORLD CLASS?** Are you nationally ranked in your sport? You may be a good fit for the WCAP. Learn more about the application process at [ArmyMWR.com/Programs-and-Services/World-Class-Athlete-Program/Applications](http://ArmyMWR.com/Programs-and-Services/World-Class-Athlete-Program/Applications).



CPT Robert Killian participates in the plate drag event of the 2015 Reebok Spartan Race, where he won first place.



# ALWAYS READY

## THE **SOLDIERS** **BEHIND** THE RANKS

**Citizen-Soldiers Use Unique Talents to Excel in Guard and Civilian Careers**

BY CONTRIBUTING WRITER SSG Tina Villalobos  
Kansas Army National Guard photos by MSG Mark Hanson

**G**uard Soldiers bring with them an abundance of diverse talents, skills and education. These attributes are often reflected in transferable work skills that enrich both Soldiers' military and civilian careers. At times, Army National Guard members hold leadership or subject matter expert positions as civilians, though their Guard ranks may not reflect the same level of requirement. Civilian careers may be compatible with an MOS or may vary widely.

This difference with Guard Soldiers, as compared to their active duty counterparts, gives Army National Guard leaders the unique opportunity to discover hidden assets that may exist on their teams. Soldiers may at times be tasked to do work outside of their MOS as missions dictate, and Soldiers' civilian experience and education may prove useful in aiding their command to complete a special project or task.

"One of the biggest things to know is what your Soldiers are doing in the civilian world, because you never know what is going to come up," said

CPT Jason Price, headquarters support company commander, 35th Infantry Division. CPT Price and the 35th ID are on deployment at Camp Arifjan in Kuwait in support of Operation Spartan Shield.

"A Soldier might be a mechanic in the Guard, but a financial advisor in their civilian job, and that knowledge may become useful," CPT Price continued. "You definitely want to tap into those resources. I can think of a few times here where we have asked for specific civilian career skills to help alleviate a problem. I think that's something Guard and Reserve Soldiers have that no one else does."

Some Soldiers enjoy the differences between their civilian and military work. Others have identified ways to incorporate their civilian education, skill and experience to benefit their unit, and enhance their own capacity to complete a mission. Still others may do the same work on both sides and have the opportunity to enrich their ability to contribute all around.

Here are just a few examples of such Soldiers:

### **MANAGING INTELLIGENCE, AND THE RESILIENCE OF A MONK**

SFC Sokly Lach, an intelligence analyst and B Company first sergeant of the 35th Infantry Division, is passionate about both of his careers. He notes how his civilian experiences have served to enrich his work within his Guard unit.

"My civilian skills and education have definitely been the backbone to my success [in the Guard]," said SFC Lach. "Everything I have learned on the civilian side has improved everything I do on the intelligence side."

According to SFC Lach, as an intelligence analyst, a great deal of his work is computer-driven, and having in-depth technological knowledge allows him to contribute at a higher level than would have otherwise been possible.

"In my civilian job, I am a lead data storage engineer," SFC Lach noted. "I was fortunate, in that I already had a security clearance. That was a requirement for my civilian job."

While SFC Lach's civilian job training has had an undoubtedly

positive impact on his performance in the Army National Guard, it could be said that it was his civilian life training that most prepared him for the disciplined life of a Soldier.

SFC Lach's parents fled Cambodia during the Khmer Rouge regime (1975-1979), a brutal period in which more than a million people were

her to sign. She did not speak English fluently at the time and relied on her then-young son to help with translating and writing in English for her. SFC Lach said that experience taught him a sense of leadership, responsibility and accountability.

"I really had a tough time growing up," SFC Lach

situations – a skill he would certainly put to good use later in life as a Soldier and intelligence analyst.

"The days were very regimented," he said. "You could only eat between breakfast and lunch. You had to fast the rest of the day. It was a tough six months. I was isolated. We just stayed in the temple."

SFC Lach is now a husband, a father of two young boys and a seasoned Soldier, currently in the midst of his third enlistment and fourth deployment. He has experienced challenges in his personal and professional life that have tested his resolve and built his strength.

"In Iraq, a lot of stuff changed," said SFC Lach. "It was a different type of warfare that we were not used to. It was an eye opener. There were a lot of scary moments with IEDs, RPGs and being shot at. Ultimately, I'm still here today."

As SFC Lach has his eyes set on the future, he is currently wrestling with a decision to either retire at 20 years of service or apply to become a warrant officer and continue serving.

"I am grateful to everyone I worked with and to the Soldiers who lost their lives. I want to keep that and carry it with me. There were people who sacrificed themselves so we can keep doing what we're doing."

**SFC SOKLY  
LACH**



murdered in the country. They walked from Cambodia to Thailand, and subsequently found themselves in a refugee camp. In a turn of good fortune, the family was able to move to America after being sponsored by a church group. Although born in Thailand, SFC Lach was raised in the U.S. and became an American citizen in 2004.

SFC Lach's father passed away when he was 4 years old, leaving his mother to care for her five children on her own. With a ready smile, SFC Lach explained that his fascination with numbers began at the age of 5, when his mother gave him the job of filling out checks for

commented. "We didn't have a lot. We struggled every day trying to survive."

Although he's now a Catholic, Lach became a Buddhist monk at 17 after urging from a cousin during a visit to California. He decided to become a monk as a way to honor his father. He explained that there are many misconceptions about being a monk—chiefly that it is a life-long commitment. Rather, SFC Lach said, it provides the individual with the knowledge to properly perform cultural and ceremonial rites. He explained that his monk training taught him patience and the ability to deal with a variety of

## CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND COWBOY SENSE

Essential to almost any high-level job is the ability to communicate well, analyze situations and think outside the box.

CW3 Billie Hancock, human resources officer, 35th Infantry Division, has not only proven, but also demonstrated these skills and more. With just five courses left to complete

CW3 **BILLIE**  
**HANCOCK**

his master's degree in criminal justice, CW3 Hancock brings not only an innate ability to understand laws and regulations, but also to conduct solid research.

"I work in administration, mainly to do with the officer promotion packets, boards, evaluations, transfers, discharges – it's all administration," said CW3 Hancock. "My [military] job requires a good understanding of written and oral communication abilities, and a lot of research."

A former active duty Marine, CW3 Hancock draws from that and other experiences to excel at his current military duties.

"During my last year in the Marine Corps, I was in the Criminal Investigation Division (CID)," said CW3 Hancock. "The investigatory process in researching is probably one of the main ways I use my education in my work. Many times, people will pose questions to me that require me to do a great deal of investigation and research to determine the answer. I sometimes have to go through regulations and histories of assignments to piece

together the puzzle."

CW3 Hancock credits his civilian experiences with the majority of his military successes. He grew up on a ranch, and his father mentored him on dealing with livestock, people and finances.

"I gained 99 percent of my leadership skills in the civilian world," said CW3 Hancock. "When you spend hours upon hours on horseback or out on these ranches, you really put your leadership skills into play. It was the leadership skills and experience I got on the civilian side that worked so well for me in the military and actually propelled me up to where I am today."

CW3 Hancock touts the value of Army National Guard troops in augmenting the modern military.

"The Guard component plays a valuable role in enabling the active military to complete their missions," he said. "If you look at brigades, they'll have a battalion of Army National Guard, a battalion of Army Reserve and a battalion or two of active duty Army. They all fit in, they all mesh together and they get the mission accomplished.

So, I think it would be very hard, especially to carry on a long campaign like we're doing now, without the Guard."

CW3 Hancock noted how Guard Soldiers enrich their ranks with specialized skills, diverse educations and vast experience.

"You see people doing jobs in the Guard that have nothing to do with their civilian jobs," he said. "A lot of them have professional degrees. It's all very interesting."



**PATRIOTISM, PATIENCE AND PERSEVERANCE**

Tenacity, drive and a heartfelt appreciation for democracy led 1LT Liyue Huang-Sigle, legal assistance attorney, Command Judge Advocate, 35th Infantry Division, to become a member of the Army National Guard. As an immigrant from China, 1LT Huang-Sigle said she was happy to experience the blessings of true freedom.

Originally from Shanghai, 1LT Huang-Sigle moved to the United States eight years ago. "I grew up in China until I was 30 years old," she said. "As a teen – when I was just about to graduate high school and I was accepted into college in China – the student movement, [the] Tiananmen Square protests of 1989 happened. I had been admitted to college, but because I participated in the protest, I was banned from ever going to college."

"During the Tiananmen Movement, we were asking for democracy, basic human rights and separation of power – the Western ideals of a democratic society. In the beginning, we thought it was a good cause. But then the government declared it illegal."

1LT Huang-Sigle went on with her

life. She married and had a child. Later, a business trip led her to Malaysia, where she met her current husband. That trip was the catalyst that changed her life forever.

She moved to Malaysia in 1999 and remarried in 2005. Although she is now bilingual, she did not speak English at the time she moved to Malaysia. During her 10 years in Malaysia, 1LT Huang-Sigle learned English, completed high school for a second time in English, then earned her law degree through the University of London.

Although she had participated in the Tiananmen Square protests, she had never truly been exposed to democracy until her law school experience.

"The concepts were explained in our law school classes," said 1LT Huang-Sigle. "It opened a whole new world to me. I could not stop reading those books. I can't tell you the shock that I experienced when I started understanding those concepts!"

Toward the end of 2009, 1LT Huang-Sigle and her husband (a U.S. citizen) decided it was best for their daughter to be educated in the United States. Although her husband's job kept him in Malaysia, 1LT Huang-Sigle and her daughter moved to the States.

Initially eager to continue on her legal career in America, 1LT Huang-Sigle was quickly disappointed when she couldn't find work.

"I wanted to be a lawyer, and I started looking for law firms and doing research," she said. "Then I realized nobody was going to hire me, and I would not practice law [in the United States] unless I went back to law school a second time."

Undeterred, 1LT Huang-Sigle earned her second law degree – at the University of Kansas School of Law in 2013.



## 1LT LIYUE HUANG-SIGLE

In the midst of her second journey through law school, 1LT Huang-Sigle decided to join the military. She wanted to serve and do something to give back to America.

"I wanted to contribute whatever I could to protect the lifestyle of the United States and its people," she said. "I am grateful to be here and to be an American citizen."

1LT Huang-Sigle went to see a recruiter, but she was turned away due to her age. Although the average person might have accepted that, 1LT Huang-Sigle took action. She paid another visit to the recruiter, who was impressed by her determination and submitted a request for an age waiver.

Her waiver was approved, and she was sent to boot camp.

"It was really hard," she said. "There was so much running and marching every day. I never ran so much in my entire life, [but] I made it through, thank God. I finished my JAG training in February 2017, and then they told me I was going on deployment."

With her husband having recently received a work transfer, the Huang-Sigle family has relocated to Texas. The end of 1LT Huang-Sigle's current

deployment will mark the beginning of a new chapter for her – a new hometown and a new position in her civilian job. She has become a partner in a law firm in Texas.

"Although I have been here for a few years, even now, sometimes when I wake up in the morning, I just feel blessed and privileged to be in the United States," 1LT Huang-Sigle said. "I know how lucky I am, so I wanted to do something. I wanted to serve this country."

### CENTURY FAMILY FARM - TRADITION, LOYALTY AND LEADERSHIP

"In the Midwest, we're about traditional values," said CPT Jason Price. "I believe if we let those go, we're losing a lot in terms of our heritage and our history. Once you lose it, you don't really get it back."

Tradition runs deep in the Price family. The family's initial 200-acre farm was founded five generations ago, in 1889, near Marshall, Missouri. Since then, the farm has been modernized and gained an additional 700 acres. CPT

Price learned Army values (which run parallel to his family values) riding on his grandfather's tractor.

He said that he began to learn wisdom and work ethic from his grandfather when he was just a toddler, and up through the time when he was in the third grade – when his grandfather passed away.

“He taught me the value of hard work,” CPT Price said. “If you put your mind to something and you want to succeed at it, then you’ll do it. We would get up with the sun. We would go out and do chores. I had pigs and sheep that I fed. We had some cows and calves, as well as a feed lot that we took care of. When the chores were done with the livestock, then we started on whatever crop or other chores we had.”

The effects of a stable, loving environment, and the inherent structure that often comes with it, were not lost on CPT Price.

“The little details and just the simple little things that we do in life sometimes really set us on the path to success – if we really analyze it,” he said. “It was about getting up, getting to work, getting your work done, and then you got to rest a little at night. The next day, we did the same thing. As I’ve gotten older and I’ve tried to instill those same values in my kids, we can liken it to the Army.”

CPT Price earned a college degree in agricultural education, then brought his knowledge back to teach at his local community high school. There, he inspired the next generation of farmers by teaching agricultural studies and farm management for 13 years. He also led the local Future Farmers of America (FFA) chapter.

The Price family has a demonstrated history of stability and resilience. The family farm has withstood the challenges of the dust bowl and the

Great Depression, as well as the recession of the 1980s. Sound money management and an understanding of living within one's means became second nature to CPT Price.

Now, serving his community in the capacity of community bank vice president, Price uses his agricultural and financial management knowledge to help others in his community realize their dreams and achieve success.

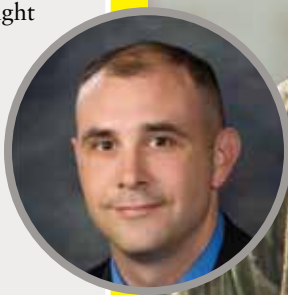
“I specialize in agricultural and commercial loans,” said CPT Price. “I know both sides of the desk. When someone comes in, I know what they’re really wanting, and I can help. Anytime you can help someone go from point A to point B, and you know all of the trials and tribulations that are in between those two points, it absolutely does feel good.”

Eight years ago, CPT Price joined the Missouri Army National Guard.

He initially wanted to parlay his agricultural knowledge to help the Army implement its agriculture business development program in Kandahar Province, Afghanistan. But by the time he had completed basic training, the program was no longer available.

“I don’t regret my decision to join,” CPT Price said. “I feel like I’m a natural born leader, and I like to help people. My current position as company commander is the most rewarding position I’ve had in the Army so far. I am looking forward to even more challenging assignments in the future. Some people join for various reasons, but I think we all have one common bond, and that is that we want to serve something bigger than ourselves. I am proud to be an American Soldier.” ●

CPT **JASON**  
**PRICE**







# PHOTOS FROM THE FIELD



## Two Missouri Army

National Guard UH-60 helicopter mechanics, SGT Christopher Parsons (left) and PFC Austin Villhard from Detachment 1, Company D, 1-106th Aviation, defrost a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter during an Annual Training exercise at Camp Clark, in Nevada, Mo.

Missouri Army National Guard  
photo by SGT Emily Finn





# PHOTOS FROM THE FIELD



## **South Carolina Army**

National Guard SGT Jamie Hair, a critical-care flight paramedic, and SGT Brandon Waltz, crew chief, respond to notional “9-line MEDEVAC” calls during their Annual Training at Army Aviation Support Facility-Location Number 2 in Eastover, S.C.

South Carolina Army National Guard photo by SSG Roberto Di Giovine





# PHOTOS FROM THE FIELD



## **Army National Guard**

Soldiers compete in the pursuit event of the 2018 Chief National Guard Bureau Biathlon Championships. The competition, which takes place at the Olympic course at Soldier Hollow, Utah, includes 12.5 km of cross-country skiing for men and 10 km for women. Competitors must also engage targets at the precision rifle marksmanship range in the prone and offhand firing positions.

U.S. Army photo by  
SGT Nathaniel Free





# PHOTOS FROM THE FIELD



## **Oregon Army National**

Guard SGT Dane Moorehead, with B Troop, 1st Squadron, 82nd Cavalry Regiment, 82nd Brigade Troop Command, high-crawls to the shore, through the surf in full battle gear during the Omaha Beach event at the 2017 Oregon Best Warrior Competition held at Camp Rilea, near Warrenton, Oregon. Moorehead is the 2017 Noncommissioned Officer of the Year.

Oregon Army National Guard  
photo by SFC April Davis





# PHOTOS FROM THE FIELD



## **Arizona Army National**

Guard Soldiers from the 2220th Transportation Company are engulfed by colored smoke after putting on their protective masks during a simulated chemical attack at Florence Military Reservation in Florence, Ariz.

Arizona Army National Guard photo by SSG Brian A. Barbour





# PHOTOS FROM THE FIELD



## **U.S. Soldiers assigned**

to Alpha Battery, 1st Battalion, 258th Artillery Regiment, 27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, New York Army National Guard, man an M119A2 Howitzer during a notional air assault artillery raid where Soldiers engaged a simulated enemy target at Fort Drum, N.Y.

New York Army National Guard  
photo by SGT Alexander Rector





# PHOTOS FROM THE FIELD



## **A Soldier performs**

emergency first aid during a simulated event while participating in the Region One Best Warrior Competition in Westhampton Beach, N.Y.

National Guard photo by  
SSgt Christopher S. Muncy

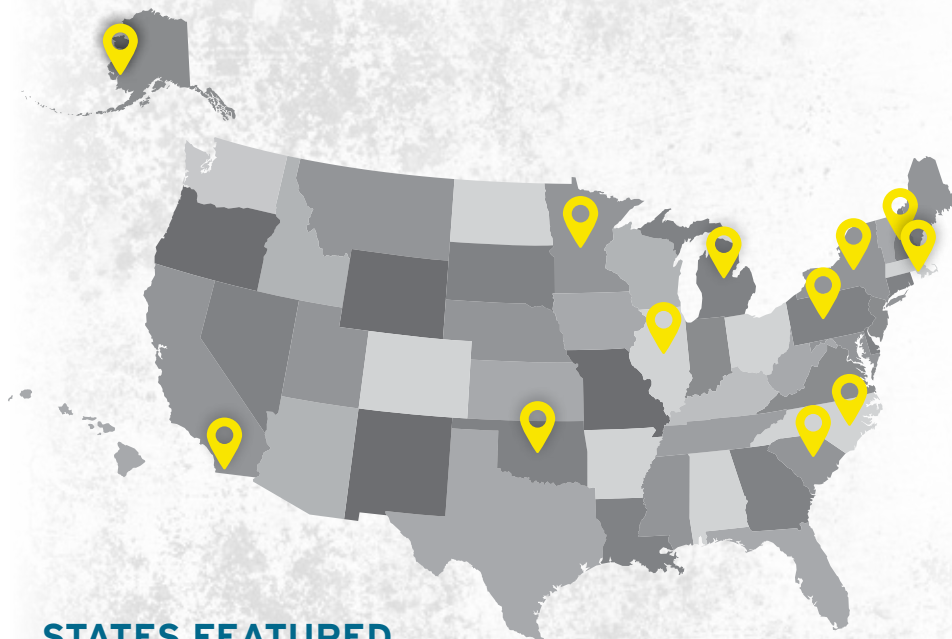
# ON YOUR RADAR

Army National Guard Spotlights  
from Around the Nation



SSG Thomas Carl (right) and a fellow infantryman assigned to Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 297th Infantry Regiment, participate in the Kuskokwim 300 dogsled race in Bethel, Alaska.

Photo courtesy Alaska Army National Guard



## STATES FEATURED IN THIS ISSUE

- **ALASKA**
- **CALIFORNIA**
- **ILLINOIS**
- **MASSACHUSETTS**
- **MICHIGAN**
- **MINNESOTA**
- **NEW HAMPSHIRE**
- **NEW YORK**
- **NORTH CAROLINA**
- **OKLAHOMA**
- **PENNSYLVANIA**
- **SOUTH CAROLINA**

## ALASKA

BY SGT SETH LACOUNT,  
ALASKA NATIONAL GUARD

## Alaska Guard Soldiers Brave Arctic Weather for Training, Dog Race

**N**ot many people willingly trek out to face blistering winds and sub-zero temperatures. But for the Soldiers of B Company, 1st Battalion, 297th Infantry, their training experience in the frozen tundra is just another part of serving in the Alaska Army National Guard.

The Soldiers arrived at the Bethel Armory in Bethel, Alaska, on Jan. 18, and immediately began their cold weather survival training by setting up three arctic 10-man tents, which they would sleep in later that evening.

They practiced digging stakes into hard, frozen ground and utilized winter field gear to stay warm throughout the training.

"I don't know of any environment to better train small unit tactics and accountability than in an arctic environment," said LTC Jeffrey Roberts, battalion commander of the 297th Infantry. "It really forces team leaders and squad leaders to pay attention to their Soldiers to make sure they're doing the right thing. If they aren't, they can get frostbite really quickly.

"Weapons can freeze, their equipment can malfunction, they can go hungry and, given the slippery and dangerous conditions out there, they can get themselves hurt. It really forces small unit leaders to focus on their tasks, focus on Soldier safety and tactical safety. Those skills are very translatable to any other environment, whether it's hot or cold weather."

After successfully staging the arctic tents, Soldiers trained on snow machines and tactical skis as a means of transportation across the frozen tundra.

The training coincided with the Alaska National Guard's participation in the Kuskokwim 300 dog race Jan. 19–21 in Bethel. SSG Thomas Carl, an infantryman with the 297th Infantry, represented the Alaska National Guard in the race for the first time. "There's no feeling that's close to running

the dogs. I love it," SSG Carl said. "The most important thing for me is to start and finish with all the dogs I came with, and to avoid any injuries."

CPT Vance Johnson, commander of B Company, 297th Infantry, said SSG Carl's presence in the race "is an awesome way to get visibility for the Guard in the local community. It's great to see one of our guys compete."

About a dozen Soldiers from the 297th Infantry loaded their gear into two small unit support vehicles and converged on the Kuskokwim River Jan. 19 for the four-hour drive to the Tuluksak checkpoint for the race. During the winter months in western Alaska, the rivers are used as a road system. The ice is so thick that a one-ton tracked military vehicle with personnel can traverse easily on the river.

At the Bethel checkpoint, Soldiers picked the smooth ice into a more jagged terrain to make it easier to walk on for the mushers. They also layered straw over the ice and brought hot water to revitalize the dogs and give them a place to rest.

"It's always great to have some able bodies willing to help us out," said Jen Peeks, a Bethel resident who works for the Alaska Fish and Game Department and volunteered to help run the checkpoint. "We're so happy to have these guys here."

The Alaska Guard was proud to provide support for the event.

"We are a very visible presence to the community, so when the community gets

to see Soldiers training in and around the town, that raises public awareness of what the Guard does," LTC Roberts said of the unit's participation in cold weather training and the Kuskokwim 300. "It helps with recruiting as well." ●

## CALIFORNIA

BY CPT JASON SWEENEY,  
CALIFORNIA ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

# 79th IBCT Trains for Kosovo Mission

**S**oldiers from the California Army National Guard's 79th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT) successfully completed a Mission Rehearsal Exercise (MRX) on Feb. 12 at Camp McGregor, New Mexico, in preparation for a nine-month security and stabilization mission in Kosovo.

On Jan. 23, the Soldiers from Headquarter and Headquarters Company (HHC), 79th IBCT, arrived at Fort Bliss, Texas, where they completed finance, medical, and dental processing. They then headed 30 miles north to Camp McGregor, where they conducted Military Decision-Making Process (MDMP) training, a staff exercise (STAFFEX), and the MRX, which simulated the duties and roles they would perform as a brigade staff once in Kosovo.

"This is a great training opportunity for the Brigade to prepare and train for peace support operations in Kosovo," said MAJ Edwin Rodriguez, the brigade operations officer. "The training at Camp McGregor enables the brigade staff to shape and establish common operating procedures typically found among multinational staffs in Kosovo."

Soldiers from the 79th Infantry Brigade Combat Team board a UH-60 Black Hawk from the 501st Aviation Regiment, to fly over Camp McGregor, New Mexico, as part of the unit's training in preparation for deployment to Kosovo.

California Army National Guard Photo by  
CPT Jason Sweeney



RIGHT: 1SG Joseph Bierbrodt of the 933rd Military Police Company, smiles at Cayleigh Hinton just before escorting her into the father-daughter dance at the Our Lady of Humility School in Beach Park, Ill.

BELOW: Cayleigh Hinton, daughter of the late SGT Terrence Hinton, dances with 1SG Joseph Bierbrodt, at her school's father-daughter dance.

Illinois Army National Guard photos by SSG Robert R. Adams



The training at Camp McGregor was conducted by the 5th Armored Brigade's 1st Battalion, 360th Infantry Regiment, also known as Task Force Warhawk, commanded by LTC Rob Paolucci.

"Task Force Warhawk trains and validates post-mobilized National Guard and Reserve units across the armed forces in preparation for worldwide deployment," LTC Paolucci said. "The purpose of the MRX was to train and prepare the 79th for a final validation exercise at JMRC (Joint Multinational Readiness Center) at Hohenfels, Germany."

LTC Paolucci said the 79th

came together as a brigade staff during the MRX and is well positioned to successfully complete the validation exercise at JMRC and then take on the role of the command element for Multinational Battle Group -- East (MNBG-E) in Kosovo.

MNBG-E is a composite brigade, consisting of Army National Guard, active duty and Reserve elements, as well as units from several NATO-member nations.

"This is a peacekeeping operation," LTC Paolucci said of the mission in Kosovo. "We are there at the request of the government of Kosovo to assist in providing a safe and secure environment and freedom of movement throughout their country."

After completing its training at Camp McGregor, the 79th headed for Hohenfels and the final validation exercise. Once the validation exercise was completed in March, the 79th left for Kosovo and relieved the 39th IBCT of the Arkansas Army National Guard.

"This mission is important in ensuring that peace is maintained in the Balkans," said COL Nick Ducich, commander of 79th IBCT. "Our Soldiers are well trained professionals [who are ready] to assist the institutions of Kosovo toward stability and sustainability

while strengthening our enduring relationships with allies and partners."

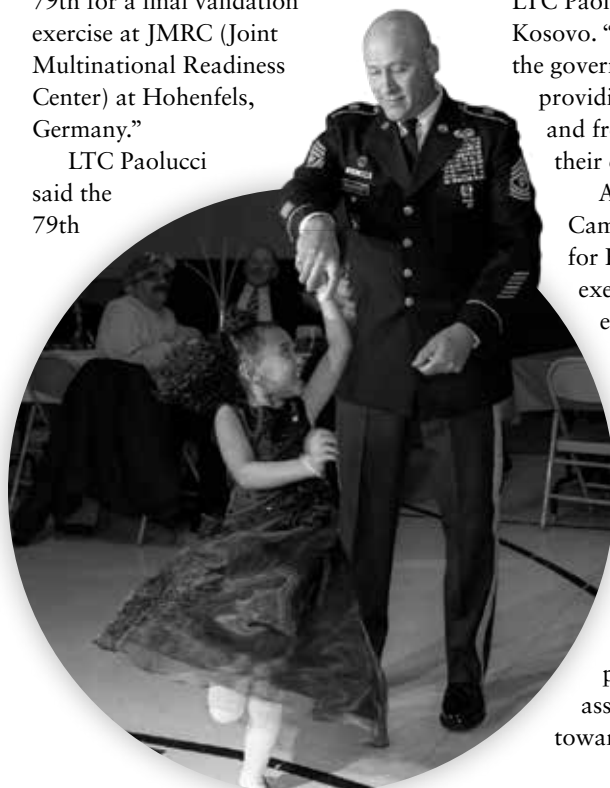
The Army National Guard has been a major contributor of troops to the Kosovo Force (KFOR) mission, which is the longest peacekeeping mission in NATO history. California Army National Guard Soldiers have participated in several KFOR rotations. The 79th IBCT will be part of the 24th rotation of U.S. troops into Kosovo. ●

## ILLINOIS

BY SSG ROBERT R. ADAMS,  
ILLINOIS NATIONAL GUARD

# Illinois Soldier Escorts Gold Star Daughter to School Dance

Illinois Army National Guard 1SG Joseph Bierbrodt escorted kindergarten student Cayleigh Hinton to her first father-daughter dance on Feb. 7 at Our Lady of Humility School in Beach Park, Illinois. Cayleigh's dad, U.S. Army SGT Terrence Hinton, who served with 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, based in Oahu, Hawaii, died in a



military training accident last year.

Cayleigh, 5, is described by her mother, Jillian Hinton of Winthrop Harbor, Illinois, as “daddy’s little girl.” Jillian said SGT Hinton would have been thrilled to see Cayleigh in her dress.

“He loved doing school activities with Cayleigh,” Jillian said. “He would have loved to take her to a father-daughter dance. We wish he could be here today, but we know that he is looking down on us and loves us.”

Cayleigh said she misses her dad and practiced dancing a lot to get ready for the night. 1SG Bierbrodt formally asked Cayleigh to the dance upon his arrival at the family’s home, presented her with a 6-foot-long stuffed dog in an Army jacket and then escorted her to the dance in a limousine.

1SG Bierbrodt of Sheridan, Illinois, said he wanted to do his best to make this a memorable evening for Cayleigh. “When I received the request to do this, it touched me,” he said. “This is something I felt needed to be done. Military is family to me, and as a family we need to be there for each other.”

1SG Bierbrodt said he was so touched by Cayleigh’s story because he is a father of four. He said he has taken his daughters to father-daughter dances and knew this would be a special night for Cayleigh.

“Cayleigh looks absolutely beautiful tonight, and she is priceless,” 1SG Bierbrodt said.

Cayleigh said the day was very special to her because everyone was celebrating her dad.

“When you’re 5 years old, everything happens in moments,” Jillian Hinton said. “I have seen her get excited over and over again tonight, and that’s what makes me so happy. I’m so thankful for all of this.”

SGT Hinton was killed when a military truck he was riding in spun out of control, hit a guardrail and overturned into a culvert. SGT Hinton enlisted in 2009 and served at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, before moving to Hawaii in 2016. He deployed to Afghanistan in 2010 and Kuwait in 2014 for a total of 21 months. ●

## MASSACHUSETTS

BY SFC WHITNEY HUGHES,  
MASSACHUSETTS NATIONAL GUARD

### Massachusetts Guard Major makes first All-Army Hockey Team

Sixteen years ago, 1LT Timothy Murphy wore the black and gold as the senior captain of the U.S. Military Academy hockey team. On Dec. 16, 2017, MAJ Timothy Murphy donned the black and gold again, this time skating for the first-ever All-Army hockey team.

Not only did he make the team, but he became the assistant captain and scored the first goal against a Canadian Armed Forces team. MAJ Murphy, 38, an executive officer with the Massachusetts National Guard’s 101st Field Artillery Regiment, was one of two National Guard members to make the team. He was also named the No. 2 star of the game after the All-Army team took home a 4-2 win at the Watertown Municipal Arena, near Fort Drum, New York.

“Whether it’s on the ice or as my XO

[executive officer], he has this innate ability to just motivate people,” said LTC Peter Fiorentino, MAJ Murphy’s commanding officer and teammate on the Massachusetts National Guard’s Redlegs hockey team. “There are fast skaters and there are smart players. Tim is both. He can skate fast, handles the puck well and understands the game.”

MAJ Murphy only had to submit his hockey resume to be invited to the tryout for the team. The South Boston native has been on skates since he was three years old. He played hockey for his high school, preparatory school and then was invited to play for West Point.

After leaving the Active Army, MAJ Murphy found a home in the Massachusetts National Guard, where he began skating with the Redlegs. His reputation on the ice led to his invitation to apply for the All-Army team. After a two-week tryout and practice sessions at Fort Drum, MAJ Murphy and his teammates took the ice against their Canadian opponents.

He wasn’t the only one to be caught up in the excitement. His wife Leah brought their son and infant daughter to the game.

“So, I scored the first goal,” MAJ Murphy said matter of factly. From the other side of the plexiglass, Leah



The first U.S. All-Army Ice Hockey Team stands on the ice ready to challenge their counterparts from the Canadian Armed Forces in an international competition held December 2017.

U.S. Army photo by Mike Strasser



Guntis Ulmanis, former president of the Republic of Latvia, speaks at a Latvian-American community center in Kalamazoo, Michigan, about the 25-year State partnership between Latvia and Michigan.

National Guard photo by 2LT Andrew Layton

recounted, “TIM SCORED THE FIRST GOAL!” and 3-year-old Thomas “was so happy seeing the crowd cheer for ‘Dada.’”

Throughout the game, the capacity crowd was exhilarated by the back-and-forth action. Early in the third period, the game was tied 2-2 when Murphy assisted on the tie-breaking goal.

Before the end of the 4-2 victory, MAJ Murphy skated over to his family and shared a high-five with his son through the glass.

“You could tell [players from both teams] love hockey, and they got to represent their country doing something they love,” Leah said. “It was really cool for my kids to see that, too.”

In late January, the All-Army team won the gold medal during an international military hockey tournament in Lithuania. On Jan. 26, the team defeated Lithuania 2-1 in the final of the Baltic Military Winter Games. ●

## MICHIGAN

BY 2LT ANDREW B LAYTON,  
MICHIGAN NATIONAL GUARD

# Former President of Latvia Emphasizes Importance of SPP

**F**ormer President of the Republic of Latvia Guntis Ulmanis, spoke to a crowd of nearly 100 Latvian-Americans Jan. 20 at the Kalamazoo Latvian Center during a special visit to Michigan.

From 1993-1999, Ulmanis served as Latvia’s first president following the dissolution of the USSR, which occupied Latvia for 50 years. He was introduced by Maira Bundza, president of the Kalamazoo Latvian Association, and Maj Gen Leonard Isabelle, Michigan’s assistant adjutant general.

Maj Gen Isabelle pointed out that the Michigan National Guard’s highly successful partnership with Latvia began under Ulmanis’ watch 25 years ago.

“He was the first president of a country that was reinvented after the Soviets left,” Maj Gen Isabelle said. “He was also the first president who agreed to be a part of the National Guard Bureau’s State Partnership Program (SPP), which has since expanded into such a great asset – not only for our national security but also for Department of State diplomatic efforts.”

Today, the SPP includes 74 unique security agreements with 79 countries around the globe, linking them with National Guard State forces. In November 1992, Latvia was the first country to be visited by a delegation from the National Guard Bureau while plans for the SPP were being formulated. The Michigan-Latvia

agreement was formally signed on April 27, 1993.

In an interview on Jan. 20, Ulmanis spoke of how Latvia’s close ties with the Michigan National Guard helped guide his country through a tumultuous period in history. He noted that in the immediate post-Soviet era, even something as simple as the sight of a Michigan National Guard member working side by side with a member of the Latvian military held tremendous symbolic value to the masses.

“When Latvia was on its path to independence, we needed to build our own institutions and our own defense,” Ulmanis said. “There was no blueprint for our country. We just had to ‘do’ – and the first priority was creating agreements with other countries. Our relationship with the Michigan National Guard, and the fact that they were willing to work with us to build our defense capabilities, was very important in that.”

Since then, the SPP has reaped enormous benefits in both Latvia and Michigan. This success has largely been attributed to the long-term personal relationships that serve as the program’s core. Today, there are ongoing collaborations between Latvian and Michigan personnel in cyber defense, firefighting, airfield operations, public affairs, security operations and military professional development, among other areas.

“The State Partnership Program is not yesterday,” Ulmanis said. “It is today – and it is the future. The world is now a much more dangerous place than it was in 1993, and for all the technological answers we may have, we must not forget these human relationships that serve as the foundation for peace and stability.”

As an example, Ulmanis cited his close friendship with Maj Gen E. Gordon Stump, adjutant general of the Michigan National Guard from 1991 to 2003.

“There are no cultural issues between old Soldiers,” Ulmanis said. “In the heart, we are brothers.” ●

## MINNESOTA

BY TSgt PAUL SANTIKKO,  
MINNESOTA NATIONAL GUARD

# Minnesota Guard Provides Security Support at Super Bowl

**M**ore than 400 Minnesota National Guard members served their local community by supporting security efforts in Minneapolis before and during Super Bowl LII. In the Feb. 4 game at U.S. Bank Stadium, the Philadelphia Eagles defeated the New England Patriots 41-33.

“This is what we do,” said MG Jon Jensen, adjutant general of the Minnesota National Guard. “When the local community can’t meet the public safety

needs, they come to the Guard. We’re their normal partner, we’re a natural partner, and we’re their preferred partner when it comes to filling in the gaps that they can’t fill.”

At the request of the city, Minnesota Gov. Mark Dayton authorized the Minnesota National Guard to provide support for security efforts leading up to and during the Super Bowl. Guard members provided direct support and worked alongside law enforcement officers from across the State.

Like their civilian law enforcement partners, Minnesota Guard members focused on ensuring a safe experience for the residents and visitors who attended the Super Bowl festivities.

“So far in our opportunities to get out and visit with our Soldiers supporting this event, every Soldier has been extremely happy with the opportunity to serve our local communities,” said CSM Douglas Wortham, senior enlisted advisor for the Minnesota National Guard. “Everywhere we’ve gone so far, members of the community have come up and thanked us for being here. They appreciate the visibility of the Guard supporting this

event, and they say they feel safer with us being here.”

Minnesota National Guard members regularly train for missions that involve support for civilian authorities. They frequently train alongside civilian law enforcement agencies to build relationships and share best practices.

The Minnesota Guard performs routine security tasks as part of its State duties, frequently conducting perimeter security and traffic control at the direction of the governor during emergencies.

“It’s been a great opportunity really to develop and continue relationships with all of the law enforcement agencies across the metro area, and the federal level as well,” MG Jensen said. “This is an opportunity for us to work from the federal to the State to the local level, so it’s been a great experience for us.”

The Minnesota National Guard’s involvement in Super Bowl LII was part of a coordinated response between local, State and federal agencies and was the result of months of planning and preparation.

“What’s been key to our success is early involvement,” MG Jensen said. “We

A Minnesota National Guard Soldier helps keep a watchful eye on downtown Minneapolis during Super Bowl week.

Photo courtesy KMSP-TV, Fox 9 News



were brought in very early to help plan. We participated in every group, every committee that we could across the whole spectrum of the public safety mission. So, coming into the Super Bowl, we knew everybody and they knew us.”

Most members of the Minnesota National Guard serve in the National Guard part time and go to school or work in communities across the State. When needed, they respond to help their neighbors and communities.

“We live here, we work here, we serve here,” CSM Wortham said. “So who better to support this type of event than the National Guard?” ●

## NEW HAMPSHIRE

BY SGT CHARLES JOHNSTON,  
NEW HAMPSHIRE NATIONAL GUARD

# New Hampshire Guard Troops Train in the Cold with Canadian Forces

A company of mountain infantrymen from the New Hampshire Army National Guard and a platoon of reservists from the Canadian Armed Forces convened here and at Fort Devens, Massachusetts, to conduct training, Feb. 10–15.

The multinational training comprised basic infantry operations, mountaineering and cold weather operations. Small unit tactics were the focus of the exercise, while participants from both sides gained familiarity with each other’s methods and terminology to improve interoperability.

The weekend featured very differently clad military combatants. Guard members wore Army Combat Uniform patterns; their counterparts were clad in Canadian Disruptive Patterned uniforms and equipment, known as CADPAT. And as the Canadians traversed the densely wooded terrain of Fort Devens, they fired training ammunition through their green-accented



Colt Canada C7 rifles.

But when it came to tactics, techniques and procedures, there was little difference, according to SGT Ian Ross, an infantryman with Armoured Reconnaissance, Prince Edward Island Regiment.

“Interoperability is the name of the game,” SGT Ross said. “It’s more so just in the SOPs and the day-to-day jargon that you really see the difference.”

Differences in military jargon surfaced with the most basic terms during after action reports and discussions following breaks in the action. While words such as “squad” and “Soldier” are common to U.S. forces, “section” and “troop” are their Canadian equivalents.

“We definitely refer to many of the same things with different words, even though we all speak English,” said CPT Sam Palmer, an infantry officer from Vermont who served as an observer-controller. “Little issues, but the kind of thing that after two days of training together, they tend to work out.”

With temperatures hovering just above freezing during most of the event, the training was conducted in cold, wet conditions marked by rains that were torrential at times.

“It was cold, but you get over it,” said SPC Gage Evans, an infantryman with

New Hampshire’s Charlie Company, 3rd Battalion, 172nd Infantry Regiment (Mountain). “It was still fun.”

CPL Alex LeBlanc, an infantryman with the Princess Louise Fusiliers, Halifax, Nova Scotia, likened the New England winter to a Canadian spring, but conceded its challenges.

“You burn a lot of calories just trying to stay warm,” CPL LeBlanc said. “It’s learning to be comfortable when you’re just consistently uncomfortable. I think it’s one of the hardest things to deal with mentally.”

Undeterred by weather, Canadian troops and Soldiers from Charlie Company eventually converged on the frozen waterfall at Cathedral Ledge in North Conway to strengthen their climbing skills. The 700-foot frozen waterfall offered a unique training opportunity for some of the troops from Nova Scotia who were unaccustomed to the steepness of terrain and scale of the ice formation.

“They can build their proficiencies, because we can provide the terrain and expertise,” said SSG Dustin Glidden of Charlie Company. “It makes other terrain easier to negotiate.”

Climbers donned spiked footwear, rope harnesses for rappelling and swapped out their Kevlar helmets for orange, half-domed models designed specifically for



## NEW YORK

BY CPT JEAN MARIE KRATZER,  
NEW YORK NATIONAL GUARD

# New York Guard Soldiers Compete in Biathlon Event

**T**hree New York Army National Guard Soldiers competed against 42 Soldiers from six other Eastern states Jan. 24–28 in the Eastern regional qualifying meet of the 2018 National Guard Bureau Biathlon Championship.

New York Guard LTC John Studiner of Arlington, Virginia, and married couple, CPT Katy Moryl and CPT Joseph Moryl of North Hudson, New York, participated in the regional competition at Camp Ethan Allen Training Site in Jericho, Vermont.

The qualifiers from the event advanced to compete for the national title Feb. 23–March 2 at Camp Williams, Utah.

Biathlon combines cross-country skiing with marksmanship. Winning depends on speed on skis and accuracy with a rifle.

All three New York Guard Soldiers serve in the Troy-based 42nd Infantry Division headquarters and have competed before. LTC Studiner, the New York National Guard biathlon program coordinator, has been on the team since 2003. CPT K. Moryl has competed for three years, and her husband is in his second year of competition.

Biathlon has always been considered a military sport, said LTC Studiner. “You prepare yourself, your equipment and your rifle for the event and train as you compete – just as you would prepare yourself and your equipment for a mission,” he said.

Biathlon competitions vary in length and shooting requirements. There are two individual events followed by two team events.

The first event is a sprint race that is 10 kilometers for men and 7.5 kilometers for women. Each competitor shoots both prone and standing.

The pursuit race is 12.5 kilometers for men and 10 kilometers for women. That event requires shooting prone twice and standing twice.

“You learn a lot about yourself while competing, especially at the longer distance races,” LTC Studiner said. “You learn that you have more left to give, when you think you’re at your limit.”

Because they’re part-time Soldiers who live in different places, the New York team members usually train on their own, LTC Studiner said. They get together each summer for a week-long training session at Camp Ethan Allen and other training venues, including Lake Placid, New York.

And, of course, they also practice their marksmanship. The team uses .22-caliber bolt action rifles designed for biathlon events.

“The sport is a true reflection of old military values and mission readiness that cannot be divorced from physical fitness,” CPT K. Moryl said. “The accuracy of the shot and ultimate success of the competitor depends upon the physical and mental agility of the competitor.”

Along with the camaraderie of the competitions, LTC Studiner said he appreciates the fact that biathlon has made him a better Soldier.

“I am a more disciplined, more confident Soldier,” he said. “I am more

mountaineering. SSG Glidden then guided them on how to ascend and react to falling chunks of ice.

“Try to get as small as you can under your helmet,” cautioned SSG Glidden, who stressed the importance of resisting the instinctive urge to look up when warned of falling ice. “If you look at mine, it has taken quite a beating.”

Each of the climbers repeatedly scaled the towering ice formation without incident.

CPT Darrin Pring, platoon commander for the Nova Scotia Highlanders assessed the entire exercise as the epitome of teamwork and cooperation between allied nations as they strive to achieve better interoperability. ●

ABOVE: New York Army National Guard Soldier CPT Katy Moryl competing during the ski portion of a biathlon event.

New York Army National Guard photo by Jean Marie Kratzer

RIGHT: New York Army National Guard CPT Joseph Moryl (left), LTC John Studiner and CPT Katy Moryl pose together after competing in a biathlon competition.

Photo courtesy New York Army National Guard





comfortable performing tasks while physically exhausted because I've pushed myself farther than I thought I could go and still hit the target."

"The sport is extremely humbling, as well as mentally and physically challenging, which are all the hallmarks of Soldier readiness," said CPT K. Moryl. ●

## NORTH CAROLINA

BY SSG MARY JUNELL,  
NORTH CAROLINA NATIONAL GUARD

# North Carolina Guard Aviation Soldiers Arrive in Lakota UH- 72 for Career Day

**S**oldiers with the North Carolina Army National Guard's 449th Theater Aviation Brigade (449th TAB) landed a UH-72 Lakota Helicopter on the field at Rogers Lane Elementary

School, Jan. 31, 2018.

The Soldiers were invited with the help of the school's Personalized Learning Coach, Heather Collins, whose husband is the commander of the 1-130th Attack Reconnaissance Battalion, 449th TAB, as part of a career and character event for the students at the school.

"The kids at the school benefit one hundred percent from seeing how they can apply their school skills outside the walls of the building," Collins said. "Any opportunity we have to connect real-world experiences to our students' learning, we take advantage of."

The Soldiers who arrived in the helicopter included pilots, helicopter maintenance, crew chiefs and administrative support, giving the children a wide scope of ways their education could be applied outside the workforce.

Collins said that leading up to the event, students learned about helicopters in the classroom, helping them to ask more thoughtful questions.

"The earlier we can get these character traits instilled in the children – those parallel skills to academics, those life skills

– the better we can get them progressed towards college and career readiness."

LTC Benny Collins, commander of the 1-130th Attack Reconnaissance Battalion, 449th TAB, said that it was important that the Soldiers talk to the students about skills that will help the children later in life, regardless of whether they join the military or not.

"One of the reasons we came out was to talk about a few specific things like integrity, honesty, being honest with each other and what it takes [in our job] for us to trust each other between pilot, mechanic and crew chief, and the fact that when we say something to each other, it's true," said LTC Collins. "We talked about having to finish school, to get a high school diploma – how in life and in the military that is very important." ●

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ABOVE: SPC Kendell Smith, an Apache Helicopter mechanic, 449th Theater Aviation Brigade, answers questions from students at Rogers Lane Elementary School in Raleigh, N.C.

North Carolina Army National Guard photo by SSG Mary Junell



## OKLAHOMA

BY SGT BRADLEY COONEY,  
OKLAHOMA NATIONAL GUARD

# Oklahoma Guard Welcomes Young Patriot as 'Soldier for a Day'

**S**ince Adrian Hinton was a little girl, she had a dream of becoming a member of the armed services. Specifically, she wanted to be a rifleman.

During a career fair at the Canadian Valley Technology Center in Chickasha, Oklahoma, Hinton, 19, met a recruiter with the Oklahoma Army National Guard, SGT Heather Davis.

Initially, there was excitement in the air as they discussed the benefits of being

in the military. But upon discussion of eligibility, there was one problem: Adrian has high-functioning autism with a terminal heart condition, which prevents her from joining the military. Once SGT Davis found out, she couldn't just let Adrian walk away. She wanted to give her something special.

Davis worked with the 45th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, Oklahoma Army National Guard, to give Adrian a day in the life of an Oklahoma Soldier.

"I wanted to make something happen for her – put some boots on her for a day, give her a memory to live with," SGT Davis said.

SGT Davis invited Adrian to the Armed Forces Reserve Center in Norman on Jan. 6 to spend the day with the Oklahoma Army National Guard. Adrian watched Soldiers work and saw the equipment they use. She sat in various military vehicles, met military leaders and received a tour of a Black Hawk helicopter by the crew.

"My experience with SGT Davis was amazing and a dream come true," Adrian said. "If I could say anything, I would say: 'I think I found my second family.'"

Adrian had been scheduled for heart surgery the week of her visit, but doctors delayed the procedure, saying it was not needed at that time.

As the visit revealed, Adrian holds an incomparable amount of patriotism and love for her country. She may not be able to join the Army, but her love for her country made her an honorary Soldier for the day.

"To me, this country is not just about land, but the people who are in it," Adrian said. "I would fight for all of you. If I happened to die because of my heart while in the field, that would be OK because I tried and that's all that matters. I would have died for something I believe in, and I believe in my country." ●

TOP: SGT Heather Davis, Oklahoma Army National Guard, shows Adrian Hinton the ins and outs of a fuel tanker at the Armed Forces Reserve Center in Norman, Okla.

LOWER INSET: 19-year-old Adrian Hinton gets a hands-on tour of an Oklahoma Army National Guard Black Hawk helicopter at the Armed Forces Reserve Center in Norman, Okla.

Oklahoma Army National Guard photos by SGT Bradley Cooney

## PENNSYLVANIA

BY SGT ZANE CRAIG,  
PENNSYLVANIA NATIONAL GUARD

# Pennsylvania Guard Supports Response to Record Snowfall

**T**wenty-one members of the Pennsylvania Army National Guard supported four Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) missions in northwestern Pennsylvania during a record snowfall Dec. 25–26, 2017.

Service members were positioned at locations in Erie and the surrounding area with equipment, including 10 high-clearance HMMWVs ready to provide requested assistance.

The four missions included: transporting Pennsylvania State Police officers; participating in ambulance calls and transporting medical personnel to work; conducting wellness checks on vulnerable populations; and stationing a

liaison at the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) to coordinate efforts.

Through the course of the storm, Guard members assisted disabled vehicles, cleared roads and removed snow at Manchester Commons, a nursing home in Erie.

“We were responding to a minor vehicle accident when we got a call from the EOC that the Manchester Commons nursing home needed help,” said 1SG Jarett Buchanan, C Battery, 1st Battalion, 107th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 28th Infantry Division. “We started shoveling and kept going for about three hours. They were really thankful, and we were happy to do it.”

During the State activation for the record-breaking 58.5-inch snowfall, Erie County requested assistance from PEMA, which then requested assistance from the Pennsylvania National Guard.

True to their call to be always ready, the Pennsylvania Soldiers were away from their families serving on Christmas Day and, to quote 1SG Buchanan, were still happy to say “that’s what we’re here for.” ●

BELOW: Pennsylvania Army National Guard Soldiers stand with State police officers and other Pennsylvania first responders while assisting during record-breaking snow in northwest Pennsylvania.

Photo courtesy Pennsylvania Army National Guard

## SOUTH CAROLINA

BY SPC CHELSEA BAKER,  
SOUTH CAROLINA NATIONAL GUARD

# VRT Supports Recovery Effort After South Carolina Ice Storm

**W**hen South Carolina is impacted by weather events such as ice, rain or snow, one of the most deployed assets for the South Carolina Army National Guard is the vehicle recovery team (VRT).

During an ice storm that hit South Carolina on Jan. 17, a VRT near the north central border of the State was called in again for support.





in the Army National Guard for 15 years. “It gives us access to food, restrooms and a warm place to stay while we wait for any calls.”

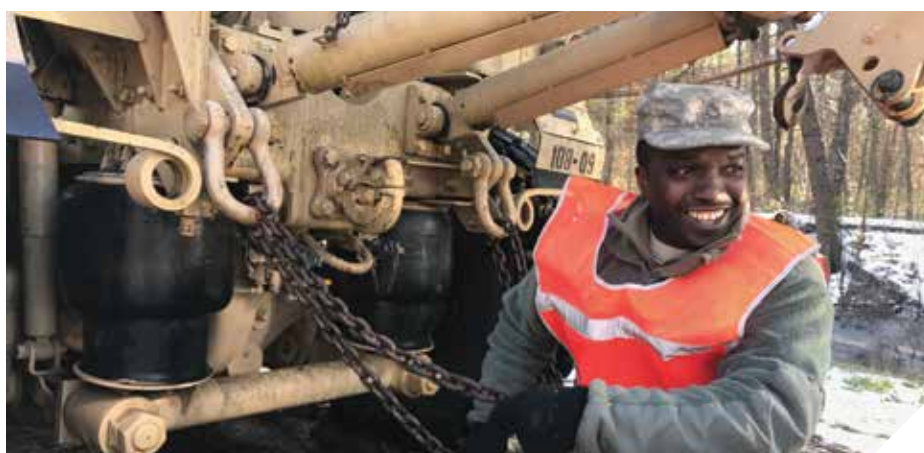
The early part of the year kept the recovery units busy. Charleston and areas along the coast were hit by a winter storm that began Jan. 3 and produced up to 8 inches of snow in some areas.

Military recovery trucks are equipped with several different towing mechanisms that are designed to tow and pull

heavy vehicles. For assisting civilian vehicles, they use specialized tow straps and chains.

“When towing a civilian vehicle, our concern is to not cause further damage, so we have adapters for our trucks,” SGT Watkins said. “It’s part of our 91B MOS as mechanics to work on vehicles, but we obtain the ASI [additional skill identifier] H8 for vehicle recovery.”

Asked what he likes most about his work in FMS 5, SGT Watkins said, “My favorite thing about this job is the people. You never know who you are going to encounter on a call, and the people are always very appreciative.” ●



TOP: Soldiers with the Field Maintenance Shop 5 Vehicle Recovery Team, South Carolina National Guard, assist State Highway Patrol with vehicle recovery during a major snowstorm in Rock Hill, S.C.

South Carolina National Guard photo by SPC Chelsea Baker

BOTTOM: SSG Howard Sanders, a senior mechanic on one of the South Carolina Army National Guard’s Field Maintenance vehicles, assists in clearing a tractor trailer from the interstate 95 corridor following a snowstorm that impacted South Carolina in early January 2018.

South Carolina Army National Guard photo by LTC Cindi King

With many years of experience working together, members of Field Maintenance Shop 5 (FMS 5) in Rock Hill have provided support during multiple weather events around South Carolina, including the flood of 2015, Hurricane Matthew and many ice storms.

“All of us in the shop, except for one new Soldier, have served together over 10 years,” said Army National Guard CW3 Colin Pressley, FMS 5 shop supervisor. “We’ve even deployed overseas together.”

A VRT is comprised of eight Soldiers who rotate in 12-hour shifts. They are assigned a HMMWV and a M984 Wrecker vehicle. Their primary role is to support the highway patrol in keeping routes clear from any vehicles that become stuck, are abandoned or block access.

“We run two shifts with four Soldiers on each shift,” CW3 Pressley said. “Two

are assigned to a HMMWV, and the other two are assigned to the wrecker.”

One of the team’s most memorable calls was during an ice storm years ago, after a vehicle was abandoned in the middle of the interstate.

“We had to move it with cars and trucks passing,” said Army National Guard SGT David Watkins, service maintenance mechanic in FMS 5.

VRTs are directed to locations along routes by the South Carolina Highway Patrol. The locations can vary depending on the conditions.

For the January winter storm that affected York County, FMS 5 was stationed along Interstate 77 off an exit ramp close to Rock Hill.

“It’s nice when we are able to be near a rest stop or gas station during the 12-hour shift,” said SGT Watkins, who has served

# HOW DO I...?

Get your questions answered by the experts

Dear *Citizen-Soldier* magazine,

## How do I prepare on my civilian job for my upcoming deployment?

The first step to ensuring a smooth transition when called to active duty is making sure to **proactively establish with your supervisor open lines of communication** about your service. Keep your supervisor informed about what you do in the military and when you do it. This will help to set the stage for a positive interaction when informing them about an upcoming deployment or activation.

**After receiving notice of an activation or deployment, let your employer know right away.** Federal law guarantees the right to take time off to attend to your military responsibilities. If you miss work days due to your military service, your employer is not obligated to reschedule you to make up the time lost. However, if non-military employees are allowed to make up time lost, you must be treated in the same manner. Further, you cannot be required to find a replacement worker for the days or shifts you will miss as a condition of being given the time off by your employer.

The more you and your employer know about reserve component, service member re-employment rights, rules and obligations that are protected by law, the less chance there will be for misunderstanding. **For more information on communicating with your civilian employer about your service, visit [ESGR.mil](http://ESGR.mil).**

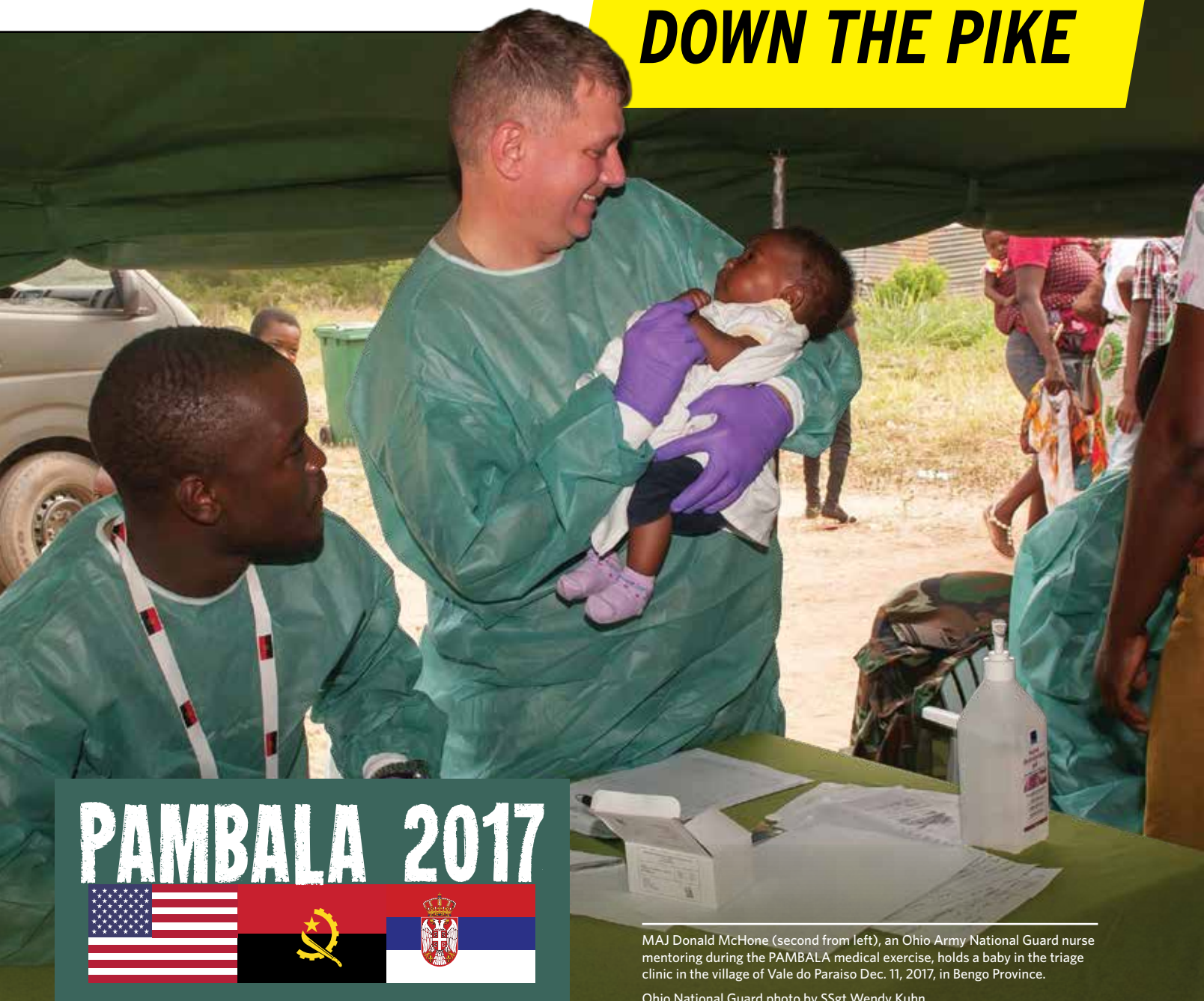
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# DOWN THE PIKE



## PAMBALA 2017



MAJ Donald McHone (second from left), an Ohio Army National Guard nurse mentoring during the PAMBALA medical exercise, holds a baby in the triage clinic in the village of Vale do Paraíso Dec. 11, 2017, in Bengo Province.

Ohio National Guard photo by SSgt Wendy Kuhn

## IN THE NEXT ISSUE

Last year, Soldiers from the Ohio Army National Guard found themselves participating in a historic trilateral medical engagement in the Bengo Province of Angola. Dubbed PAMBALA, this 2017 exercise marked the first time the United States has been invited to participate in a medical engagement with the Republic of Angola.

Find out how these Guard Soldiers rose to the challenge as part of the first group of American medical Soldiers ever to train together with Angolan and Serbian forces. Catch the full story in issue 1.5.

# JUST FOR FUN



Cartoon by SSG C.F. "Arik" Grant

## HAVE A FUNNY CARTOON THAT YOU'D LIKE TO SHARE?

If you have a knack for drawing and would like to see your original cartoon or illustration published in *Citizen-Soldier* magazine, send your drawing to [Editor@Citizen-SoldierMagazine.com](mailto:Editor@Citizen-SoldierMagazine.com).



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Discussing issues important to our Nation's defenders and first responders, American Heroes Radio features weekly guests from the military, police and law enforcement, and firefighting communities. Military topics include the war on terror, surviving basic training, military doctrine and tactics, the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and military recruitment. Previous law enforcement and policing topics have included: crime scene response, policing and stress, police corruption and police officer rights.

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