

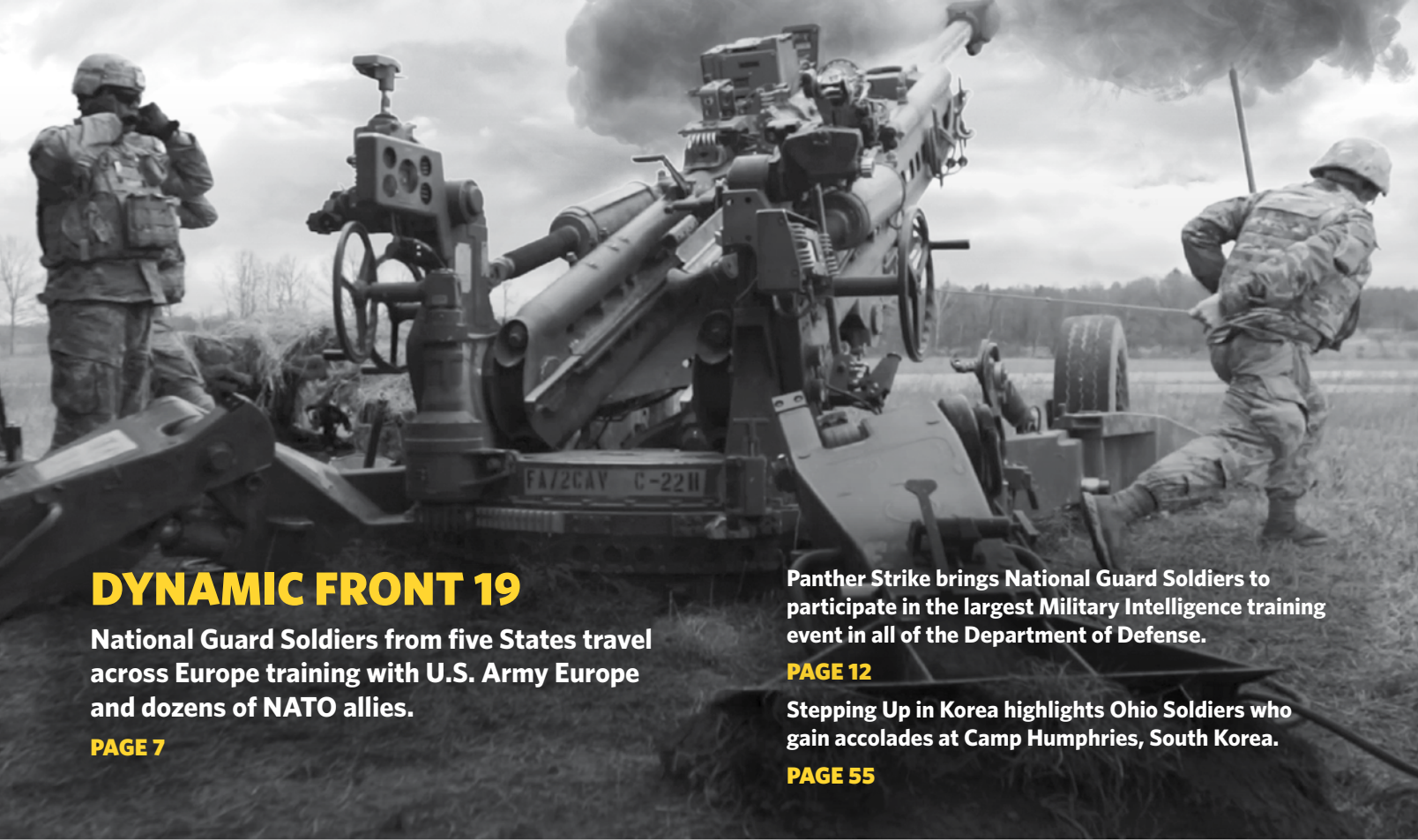
A Resource for the Soldiers and Families of the Army National Guard

CITIZEN-SOLDIER

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ISSUE 6 // VOL 2

THROUGH THE FIRE



DYNAMIC FRONT 19

National Guard Soldiers from five States travel across Europe training with U.S. Army Europe and dozens of NATO allies.

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Panther Strike brings National Guard Soldiers to participate in the largest Military Intelligence training event in all of the Department of Defense.

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Stepping Up in Korea highlights Ohio Soldiers who gain accolades at Camp Humphries, South Korea.

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FRONT COVER: Army National Guard and Reserve Soldiers participate in field artillery training during Dynamic Front 19, held in Torun, Poland, March 2019.

North Carolina Army National Guard photo by
SPC Jacob Hester-Heard

BACK COVER: Soldiers with 2-20th Special Forces Group (Airborne), Mississippi Army National Guard, conduct a high-speed combat offloading of their vehicles from a C-17 Globemaster on the Grenada Dam in Grenada, Miss., January 2019.

New York National Guard photo by SSgt Christopher S. Muncy

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SPC Erick Barksdale, a military policeman assigned to the 107th Military Police Company, New York Army National Guard, competes in a 12-mile ruck march during New York's Best Warrior Competition, March 2019.

New York Army National Guard photo by SPC Amouris Coss

**ARMY
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Office of Equity and Inclusion Reflecting a New Approach to Diversity

In a recent departmental change, the National Guard Bureau (NGB) has combined its diversity and equal opportunity offices, thus founding a new office designation—the Office of Equity and Inclusion.

According to NGB, the office is tasked with utilizing diversity and inclusion research and best practices to offer related guidance and support, not only to National Guard Joint Leadership, but also directly to unit commanders.

“[The office] ensures that our organizational environment is agile and inclusive, positioning us to recognize, harness and leverage the full capabilities of every Soldier and Airman,” said Col Aimee Storm, chief of the Office of Diversity and Inclusion. “If Guard members feel like they

are not part of the team, it will make it very difficult to come into work and give 100 percent.”

The new office merger is designed to increase efficiencies within the two arms of the office and emulates other Department of Defense organization configurations, said Col Storm.

“This approach is designed to improve performance and functionality of the two distinctly different, but interrelated areas of work,” she said. She expects combining Guard Soldiers and Airmen will result in improved service from the office as a consequence of the changes.

Col Storm compared the union to the combination of physical health care service and mental health care service with the same

medical office. It results in a more holistic offering to clients.

“In my mind, the patient in [that] metaphor is not the employee, but the organization,” she said. “Equity and inclusion can improve the health of the organization when we work in concert.”

Col Storm noted how the unification of the two Services should encourage National Guard members to consider diversity as mission-essential, not merely a human resources goal to be checked off on a list of objectives. Recognizing diversity as fundamental, Col Storm said she hopes more Guard Soldiers and Airmen will understand that guaranteeing equal opportunity goes far beyond the necessary regulations that combat potential discrimination. She noted that these



issues are not just talking points.

“[Equity also means the Guard] ensures every service member has equitable access to resources, training and professional development opportunities,” she said.

Recognizing equity and inclusion for present and future generations of Guard Soldiers also brings attention to how the Guard’s composition impacts the readiness and lethality of the force overall. New Soldiers and Airmen bring new strengths and skillsets to the Service. Leveraging those strengths can make for a better Guard.

“We continue to be in a ‘battle for talent,’” Col Storm noted. “We must ensure we are able to recruit and retain the best our Nation has to offer. The recruitable population has evolved and the communities we both represent and serve have evolved, as well. In order to maintain resilience, agility and effectiveness, we need to take a comprehensive approach to developing our service men and women and organizational leadership for a high-performing, actively engaged formation.”

Col Storm went on to say that the new office will increase NGB’s ability to offer support to individual Guard members, offering policy guidance on both diversity and equal opportunity subjects.

At the end of the day,

she said, both the new office and its new name reflect a change in approach regarding equity and inclusion in the National Guard.

“We wanted to concentrate on things that help our folks meet their readiness [requirements] and meet the mission,” Col Storm explained. “So, we chose [the equity and inclusion] terms as being the most important part for our office. This gives us enhanced synergy and push.”

An example of NGB’s ongoing effort to promote diversity and equal opportunity is the annual NGB Excellence in Diversity Awards. The event recognizes specific Guard members and units for executing diversity and inclusion programs.

“It helps us identify and highlight best practices from [Guard units],” said Andrea Browne-Phillips, a branch chief with the equity and inclusion office.

Phillips also noted that the awards serve to set the pace for other units around the country, informing the definition of what “good” looks like for the National Guard in terms of diversity.

“It’s like the old saying that ‘two minds are better than one’. Well, two diverse minds are better than one. We meet the mission when we have folks who think differently,” said Col Storm. ●

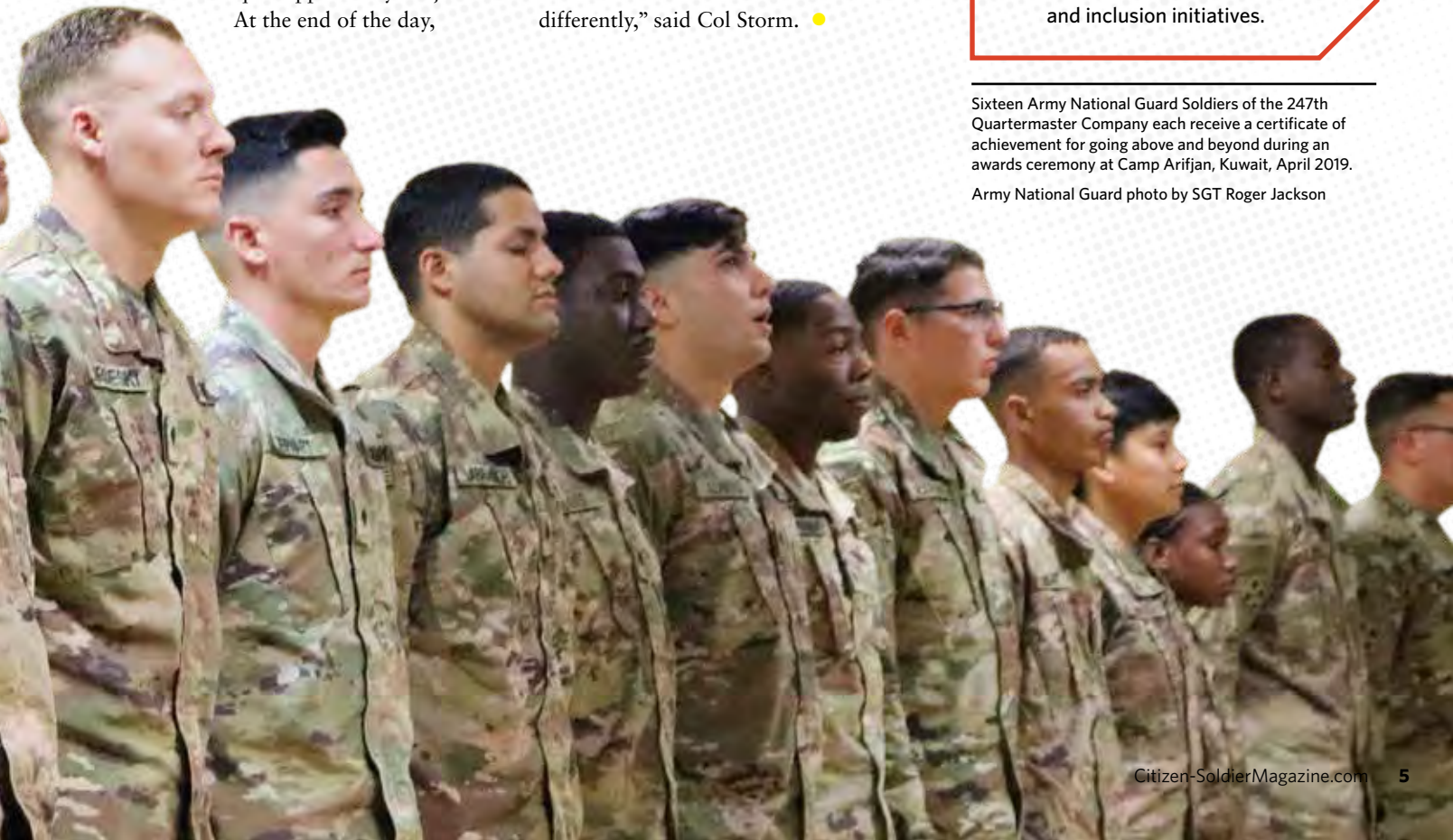
NGB’S OFFICE OF EQUITY AND

INCLUSION supervises the creation and implementation of diversity and inclusion programs, policies and training, and engagement across the following areas:

1. Implementing the Strategic Framework for the NGB Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan.
2. Developing programs and solutions for reducing and removing identified barriers that inhibit achievement and sustainment of diversity and inclusion within the National Guard Bureau and the National Guard.
3. Assessing and reporting on effectiveness of diversity and inclusion programs and initiatives.
4. Developing plans and programs for acquiring and managing resources necessary for implementation of NGB diversity and inclusion initiatives.

Sixteen Army National Guard Soldiers of the 247th Quartermaster Company each receive a certificate of achievement for going above and beyond during an awards ceremony at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, April 2019.

Army National Guard photo by SGT Roger Jackson





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THROUGH THE FIRE

DYNAMIC FRONT 19 TESTS JOINT FIRE CAPABILITIES

BY STAFF WRITER TATYANA WHITE-JENKINS

Soldiers assigned to Bravo Battery, 1st Battalion, 147th Field Artillery Regiment, South Dakota Army National Guard, fire rockets from M270A1 Multiple Launch Rocket Systems during exercise Dynamic Front 19 at Grafenwoehr Training Area, Germany, March 2019.

North Carolina Army National Guard photo by SFC Craig Norton

Army National Guard Soldiers from Illinois, New Hampshire, New York, Ohio and South Dakota traveled through Europe this past spring as part of Dynamic Front 19, an annual multilateral exercise hosted by the 7th Army Training Command, U.S. Army Europe (USAREUR).

Across a week in March, participants trained on a wide range of skills and techniques and built relationships with

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies. Consisting of approximately 34,000 participants from 27 NATO and partner nations, the exercise was geared at improving allied and partner nations' ability to deliver long-range fire capabilities.

Dynamic Front 19 tested the interoperability of Artillery Systems Cooperation Activities (ASCA) distributed across the nations of Germany, Poland

and Latvia with the Theater Surface Fires Command (TSFC) leading in Germany. TSFC is a USAREUR fires element concept used to plan, coordinate and execute joint and allied fires through organizational mission command. ASCA allows participating nations to receive or provide mutual fire support. The interface supports sharing key command and control fire support information. Currently, Denmark, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy,

Netherlands, Norway, Turkey and the United States use ASCA.

“It’s important to be able to come together as a coalition and control fire,” said SFC Andrew Wagner of New Hampshire Army National Guard’s 197th Field Artillery Regiment. “Artillery isn’t about just sending rounds down range, it’s also about being precise, it’s about being on time and making sure that we are controlled, shaping the operation. In order to do that, we need to be able to share information.”

The effective and efficient sharing of

information was the major goal of the Dynamic Front exercise. The exercise included simultaneous events in Germany, Poland and Latvia that involved shooting, artillery, testing processes, mission flow and data examination. Each day’s challenges built upon the challenges from the prior day, causing the event to escalate in difficulty and complexity as it went on.

“It went really well for us,” said SSG Cameron Paulson of the Illinois Army National Guard’s 2nd Battalion, 122nd Field Artillery Regiment. “We were able to create good interoperability between the

units both digitally and over the voice net. So, we were able to send missions from higher commands all the way down to the firing unit pretty seamlessly.”

Working with foreign allies in a blended training environment also played a factor in the participants’ ability to coordinate more efficiently and learn from one another’s skills.

“The more we work with [ally and partner nations], the more we learn from them, the more they are learning from us; we get to share different ideas,” said SFC Wagner.

SSG Jeffery Panttila, also from Illinois’ 2-122nd, served as an observer controller trainer during Dynamic Front, monitoring firing procedures and recording data. This was his first time participating in the exercise, and he said he enjoyed the opportunity to gain new knowledge and improve his skills.

“I thought the exercise was fantastic,” said SSG Panttila. “It was a great learning opportunity and experience. Being able to do something as exciting as Dynamic Front as a National Guard Soldier was an experience I will never forget and a taste of knowledge that continue to help me develop in the future.”

The variety of participants, hailing from various States, countries and components, offered Soldiers the opportunity to gain new perspectives on old tasks.

“Anytime you can get quite a few nations together to shoot and process missions together, it’s always a big success,” said CW2 William Sadlick of the 2-122nd’s Headquarters Battery. “Working with people from other countries is always a great experience. You get to see how other countries do what you do.”

Also working as an observer controller trainer, CW2 Sadlick worked alongside a Canadian unit to work on their counter fire processes.

USAREUR Army National Guard Deputy Commanding General MG John Gronski meets with South Dakota Army National Guard Soldiers assigned to Bravo Battery, 1st Battalion, 147th Field Artillery Regiment, during exercise Dynamic Front 19 at Grafenwoehr Training Area, Germany, March 2019.

North Carolina Army National Guard photo by SFC Craig Norton



“This experience has made a tremendous impact on my progression as a Soldier ... I can see tactics, techniques and procedures they use, take those lessons learned back to my unit at home and apply those so we can become better artillerymen and better Soldiers.”

— CPT James Nelson

Georgian soldiers fire mortars during exercise Dynamic Front 19 at Grafenwoehr Training Area, March 2019.

U.S. Army photo by SGT Christopher Stewart

“Anytime I can talk to other people, especially from other countries, as to how they handle managing their radars and how they manage the process, it’s always great career information to expand my knowledge base,” he noted. “I was able to bring home lessons not only from the Canadian unit I was working with, but also some other nations that were there like the Ukrainians, Danish and English.”

CPT James Nelson, a fire control officer of the Texas Army National Guard’s 56th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, echoed CW2 Sadlick’s sentiment.

“This experience has made a tremendous impact on my progression as a Soldier,” CPT Nelson said. “It helps me see what other units and other countries do in artillery. I can see tactics, techniques and procedures they use, take those lessons learned back to my unit at home and apply those so we can become better artillerymen and better Soldiers.”

With any multinational exercise, differences in language can cause initial obstacles, but in a properly developed environment these initial challenges often prompt soldiers to work more efficiently in an effort to understand each other and complete their tasks.

“There are certain commands that we take for granted that other countries either don’t use, or it means something a little bit different in their language,” explained CPT Dale Boughton of the 2-122nd Field Artillery. “So, that was a challenge [but] it was also the high point—being able to work through those small issues that just kind of popped up. You wouldn’t really think about it until you were actually doing it.”

CPT Boughton went on to note how working through these types of challenges during training serves to make a more unified, and lethal, allied front.

“Just these little nuances that we’re catching in the practice are so important,” he said. “NATO is a pretty big operation. You have to work out the kinks if you want it to work effectively and efficiently. Having the time to practice together, it’s like having an all-star game. If you have all these great players, but they don’t practice together, they’re not going to be able to work as a team.”

Along with working through one another’s differences in language, techniques and skills, Dynamic Front 19 also highlighted the similarities between the diverse range of participants.



“You think that other countries are so different, but when it comes down to it overall, we’re all kind of doing the same thing,” CPT Boughton continued. “It was really neat being able to connect those similarities. Having that peer-to-peer exposure, and being able to network and talk about best practices that I can use to take back to my unit internally, I thought was really valuable.”

In addition to developing interoperability with other NATO allies in general, Guard Soldiers from at least one State were also able to increase their working relationship specifically with a group to which they are tied through a popular National Guard Bureau program.

“[Texas’] State partner is the Czech Republic, and we’ll be working with them [during Dynamic Front 19],” said CPT Nelson. “It will be nice to make contacts with them, so, when we have future exercises together, the language barrier is broken down and we’re able to communicate effectively.”

Participation in Dynamic Front not only helped to improve the proficiency of entire units, but also of individual Soldiers. SSG Paulson noted gaining knowledge from an event that took place toward the end of the exercise when various units came together to meet and engage.

“It’s was kind of like a meet and greet where all the units brought their artillery pieces and their control centers down to one of the firing lines,” SSG Paulson explained. “They took all the foreign nationals and American troops and they let them go through and look at the different howitzers and trucks and things. I think that was really beneficial for not only me, but all of the participants.”

At the end of the event, Soldiers praised the exercise for its complexities and the beneficial opportunities it presented.

“[Dynamic Front] was outstanding for me,” said CPT Boughton. “It was neat to talk to and interact with different Soldiers from other countries and see their policies, procedures and how they actually just run a section.”

“[My favorite aspect] was the overall opportunity as a National Guard Soldier to participate in an exercise of this magnitude and to be a part of something dynamic and fun,” commented SSG Panttila. “It’s really rewarding.”

Dynamic Front 19 proved an eye-opening experience for many of its participants, leaving Soldiers with newfound perspectives and improved skill sets.

“I think the whole experience in general is great for anybody in the National Guard,” said CW2 Sadlick. “If you can get an opportunity to do this kind of exercise, it’s really mind opening. It gets you out of your own world of how things are done and you see how other people are doing things.

“It is a great learning experience and eye opening to get that cultural exposure working with other nations,” CW2 Sadlick continued. “The one piece of advice I would give to anybody that is able to do these exercises is just get on board and do it.” ●



National Guard Soldiers train for Observer coach trainer duties during Exercise Dynamic Front 19, an annual U.S. Army Europe exercise focused on the readiness and interoperability of U.S. Army, joint service, and allied and partner nations’ artillery and fire support, held at Grafenwoehr Training Area, Germany, February 2019.

North Carolina Army National Guard photo by SFC Robert Jordan



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PANTHER STRIKE

The Premier Military Intelligence Exercise

BY STAFF WRITER Tatyana White-Jenkins

National Guard military intelligence (MI) Soldiers recently participated in the largest military intelligence collective training event in the U.S. Army. Panther Strike 19, a two-week MI exercise, took place in June at Camp Williams, Utah. The annual multilateral, MI exercise serves to develop and enhance the technical competence of members of the counterintelligence, human intelligence (HUMINT), geospatial, all-source and signal intelligence communities. The exercise simulates full-spectrum intelligence-gathering



Soldiers from the United States, United Kingdom and Canada stand in formation as part of a ceremony during Panther Strike, June 2019 at Camp Williams, Utah.

Utah Army National Guard photo by SGT Nathan Baker

operations within a deployed combined joint task force.

Planned and executed by the Army National Guard's 300th Military Intelligence Brigade, Panther Strike is used to effectively train and prepare MI Soldiers for future deployments.

"The main goal of the Panther Strike exercises is to make sure that MI Soldiers are ready," said CPT Kevin Jardine of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 300th Military Intelligence Brigade. "At the end of the day, we're trying to make sure Soldiers are trained, ready and able to be validated. We're working on making sure Soldiers are assessed and validated so they are ready

to deploy and help utilize intelligence to support mission command."

The first Panther Strike exercise took place in 2003 as a company-level HUMINT exercise and has since grown into a large-scale exercise covering multiple aspects of military intelligence. Panther Strike garners approximately 700 participants each year, including support elements. Continuing in its growth, this year's exercise drew close to 800 participants, including members of the National Guard, Reserve, active duty and foreign partner nations.

The first week of the exercise takes place in a classroom environment where participants receive refresher MI training. As an event recognized by the Foundry—a Deputy Chief of Staff, G2 MI

training program—the exercise includes Foundry training that focused on teaching new and emerging intelligence skills to intelligence personnel.

"That first week, the quality of the instructors is always phenomenal," explained SGT Douglas Moxon of the Utah Army National Guard's Alpha Company, 142nd Military Intelligence Battalion. "We have subject matter experts that have a lot of experience in [their] specific fields and they help us refine our skills."

The second week of the exercise consists of a complex seven-day field training exercise.

"Soldiers are working from team level all the way up to division level in different intelligence roles, exercising the intelligence collection



U.S. military intelligence Soldiers participate in radio operation training during Panther Strike, June 2019 at Camp Williams, Utah.

Utah Army National Guard photo by SGT Nathan Baker



SPC Zachary Dixon (right) of the 223rd Military Intelligence Battalion, 300th Military Intelligence Brigade, California Army National Guard, practices screening techniques with a fellow Soldier during Panther Strike 2019 held at Camp Williams, Utah.

Utah Army National Guard photo by SGT Nathan Baker

process and the intelligence warfighter function,” CPT Jardine explained. “It’s a very dynamic scenario. It’s not lanes training, it’s not a typical scenario. [The training] adapts to how participants react and how well they do in the exercise.”

The dynamic scenario used for Panther Strike allowed Soldiers to problem-solve and better understand how their individual roles fit into the larger MI community. In doing so, participants not only improved their MI skills, but also promoted team camaraderie.

“All of the intelligence disciplines work together to solve a very detailed scenario puzzle that’s based on real events,” said SSG Lena Bochat, the plans noncommissioned officer in charge of Panther Strike and member of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 300th Military Intelligence Brigade.

“I love seeing hundreds of intelligence professionals from across the U.S. and abroad come together to work a scenario and build up the esprit de corps in the MI community.”

Boasting a larger number of participants than in previous years, Panther Strike 19 included partners from Canada and the United Kingdom.

“It’s really great to work with other people that aren’t just in our unit,” said SGT Moxon. “We get to work with people from all throughout the Utah Guard and all over the U.S. Army, and we get to work with our foreign nation partners, which is a really great experience. It’s cool to work with them not only to see how they work and how they handle intelligence, but to build relationships with those partners and meet people that you might never meet otherwise.”

This year’s exercise incorporated deeper levels of MI training as well as a larger focus on key foreign languages.

“Some of the things we looked forward to [this year] was the heavy focus on a tier three MI training standard validation for all the units attending. So, they got a team-level validation,” CPT Jardine noted. “And then we incorporated language training into it as well. So, we had some of the events take place in various strategic foreign languages.”

This type of training is valuable not only to the individual MI careers of the participants, but also to the overall mission of the Army’s MI community. The complexities of MI can make Soldier training a far more involved process in comparison to other military occupational specialties (MOS), making exercises like Panther Strike key to ongoing

Soldier development.

“MI is a crucial element of the mission command,” said CPT Jardine. “Training and building MI Soldiers that are able to support combatant commanders at every level is hugely important. MI Soldiers are kind of a different breed of Soldiers in the fact that it takes a little more for us to get trained in our Soldier skills than various other Soldiers. It takes extra money and extra effort.”

For many MI Soldiers, the Panther Strike exercise fills in the gap, allowing them to experience the vital training they need to succeed in their MOS.

“It’s an important exercise,” CPT Jardine continued. “It’s great to get Soldiers out here. I’ve had Soldiers from multiple units express to me over and over again that this is not only the best MI training they’ve received, but some of the only in-depth collective MI training they’ve received in quite a while.”

SGT Moxon also noted, “It gives us an opportunity to practice our MOS in a more realistic environment than just in the classroom.”

Panther Strike 19 marked SGT Moxon’s sixth year participating in the exercise. Through his years with the exercise, he has experienced the highs and lows that come with such a large and complex event.

“Because it’s such a massive event, whenever there’s a failure in communication or wires get crossed, random chaos comes into play,” he explained. “It’s difficult to deal with at times, but it’s realistic so it’s still good training.”

“In my opinion, it’s as realistic of a training as you can get without actually deploying,” SGT Moxon continued.



Soldiers playing the opposing force scout for BLUFOR Soldiers during the field portion of Panther Strike 18 held at Camp Williams, Utah.

Utah Army National Guard photo by SPC Jon Welch

“I think that it’s invaluable, especially for new Soldiers, to come and have this experience. They can see firsthand how all the different intelligences work together. We can actually see why our specific job matters and why other jobs matter as well, how to work with those [jobs] and how to use that to supplement our ability to do our job better.”

A role player, interrogator and source operations conductor for previous Panther Strike exercises, SGT Moxon implemented a new role for Panther Strike 19.

“I was working white cell—scripting, writing and putting injects in the exercise,” he said. “I was looking forward to the training. I had never actually done this for an exercise. I was excited to get this experience and work in this new area.”

2LT Adam Quinn, Panther Strike project officer, participated in the exercise

in 2013 as an enlisted Soldier conducting interrogations. Now on the planning side, 2LT Quinn was excited to experience the exercise in a different way.

“This is a unique opportunity to experience the exercise from a different perspective,” said 2LT Quinn. “I know the exercise provides an incredibly valuable training experience so just being part of the process

and seeing it through to completion was amazing.”

Engaging with exercise participants and being part of a rewarding endeavor are major highlights for 2LT Quinn.

“For me, [my favorite aspect] was the engagement I had with unit representatives and individual participants who were excited to come to the training,” said 2LT Quinn. “Knowing that what we are creating is impactful and beneficial for the intelligence community and not just my organization means a lot to me.”

As Panther Strike 19 came to a close, Soldiers walked away having participated in an incredible exercise that both trained and challenged, leaving them better and more capable MI Soldiers.

“In a world as complex as the one we occupy, we are in dire need of challenging training that helps us critically assess how we do things in all types of environments,” said 2LT Quinn. “I believe that Panther Strike has developed into an exercise that challenges MI Soldiers in a way, and to a degree, that cannot be found elsewhere in the Army regardless of component. Who wouldn’t want to participate in that?” ●



SGT Christopher Harris with B Company, 223rd Military Intelligence Battalion, 300th Military Intelligence Brigade, California Army National Guard, operates a radio as part of a training mission during the 2019 iteration of Panther Strike 2019.

Utah Army National Guard photo by SGT Nathan Baker

FORGED IN WAR: THE BIRTH OF THE JEEP IN WORLD WAR II

BY CONTRIBUTING WRITER LTC Darrin Haas

As Germany and Japan were wreaking havoc throughout the world in 1939, many Americans felt that the overseas wars decimating Europe and the Pacific were not their problem. U.S. military planners, however, knew that it was just a matter of time before the United States would be pulled into the conflict, quickly becoming known as World War II. The U.S. Army was dangerously ill equipped and suffering from neglect, restricted budgets and an overall sense of complacency. It needed to modernize now in order to fight and win in the impending conflict.

Planners knew one of the U.S. Army's biggest problems on the modern battlefield was its reliance on horses and mules to transport equipment. World War I showed that four-wheel drive trucks and motorized transports could haul more men and equipment farther and faster than any animal. The Army needed a small, four-wheel drive truck that could move personnel and equipment on and off road, quickly getting them to the battlefield.

In June 1940, the U.S. Army put together a commission to study the need for a light, motorized vehicle to support infantry and cavalry troops. After examining various vehicles that were already available in the civilian automotive market, the Army concluded that no vehicles were durable enough nor were they configured to meet the military's needs. At the same time, the Army was also looking for a vehicle that could be used as a small, go-anywhere reconnaissance scout car that could quickly deliver messages and function as a portable weapons carrier.

After the commission failed in its efforts to find an appropriate vehicle, the chief of infantry decided to see if any American companies could design such a vehicle from scratch. He subsequently drafted the vehicle's necessary specifications and sent them to the Quartermaster General for

comment, at which time the Quartermaster General took over the procurement process.

On June 27, 1940, the Quartermaster Corps sent out 135 bid invitations to companies that could possibly design such a vehicle. The bid, however, required prototype plans to be submitted in less than a month, which was nearly impossible. Only two companies responded—American Bantam and Willys-Overland. They were the only two U.S. manufacturers selling cars smaller than the standard American size and still building four-cylinder vehicles. Both companies were also small and flirting with bankruptcy.

In an attempt to stay financially solvent, the Bantam Car Company developed and submitted a comprehensive set of prototype plans by the deadline of July 22, 1940. They were then awarded the contract to build 70 vehicles for testing. The drawings submitted by

Bantam BRC-40, 1/4 Ton, 4x4, Light Reconnaissance photographed during Army Testing.
Public domain photo



Unidentified chaplains hold an impromptu service atop their Army Jeep while visiting Soldiers of the 82nd Airborne Division during WWII.

Public domain photo

finalized their vehicle's design for bidding; Ford called its vehicle the GP, Willys-Overland had the Willys MA, and Bantam had the BRC-40 and the MK II. Thousands of prototypes were built and tested.

During testing, it is believed that the vehicle earned its nickname "Jeep." All three prototypes shared the same common military designation: "truck, ¼ ton, 4x4," but historians cannot precisely determine who coined the nickname. Nearly all Army vehicles are General Purpose, or GP, and Soldiers often slurred the acronym together. Years before the development of the prototypes, Soldiers nicknamed a gun-hauling tractor the Jeep.

In February 1941, a journalist was being hauled up and down steep steps in a Willys MA. When the journalist asked the driver what the vehicle was, he replied, "It's a Jeep!" The journalist subsequently used the name in a story that ran across the United States, and the name eventually came to represent the MA. Recognizing its marketing potential, Willys-Overland would soon copyright the name.

Throughout the war, the vehicle had many

Willys-Overland were not as extensive and were subsequently rejected.

As Bantam's vehicles were being built, the Army grew increasingly concerned that it may not be getting the best vehicle possible for such a vitally important program. They also feared that Bantam was such a small company that it may not meet the nation's manufacturing needs should war break out. So they reopened bidding to two other competitors: Willys-Overland, because of their expertise in building small cars; and Ford Motor Company, which had tremendous production capabilities.

Willys-Overland and Ford were

invited to watch the testing of the Bantam car once it was built; they were also given an opportunity to thoroughly examine the vehicle and copies of its blueprints. After studying Bantam's prototype, both manufacturers designed and built their own vehicles to compete for the government contract. Ford developed the Pygmy and Willys-Overland built a vehicle they called the Quad.

All three vehicles were then tested and compared under some of the most grueling conditions imaginable. As weaknesses were found, each company would fix, and sometimes redesign, their vehicles. By the end of the trials, each company had

Soldiers of the 102nd Medical Battalion evacuate four wounded U.S. Soldiers to a rear area field hospital on an ambulance jeep in Okinawa, April 22, 1945.

Photo courtesy Otis Historical Archives, National Museum of Health and Medicine



nicknames, which included the Peep, Blitz-Buggy and the Soldier's Friend, among others, but "Jeep" inevitably stuck.

Vehicle testing continued unabated throughout the summer of 1941. Design changes were made, such as collapsible windshields so the vehicles could be stacked better during shipping, and the removal of key ignitions because Soldiers kept losing the keys.

With improvements continuously made to each prototype, the Army finally decided that the Willys MA, with a stronger motor than the others, was the best choice. Willys-Overland was awarded a contract to produce 16,000 vehicles by January 1942 for \$748.74 per vehicle. The final design was modified to use the Ford's slat-type grill and front end, which is now the iconic grill still seen on today's Jeeps. The new vehicle was called the MB.

Just before the order could be filled, Japan bombed Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. The United States was dragged into World War II and the Army immediately needed more equipment and men.

To move these vehicles to the troops as fast as possible, the U.S. military increased their order and then gave Ford contracts to build thousands of vehicles based on the Willys MB. Over the next few short

years, both companies produced 637,770 Jeeps, with Willys-Overland building the most with 359,874 MBs and Ford building 277,896 GPWs. Both companies were producing Jeeps at a rate of one per 90 seconds during the war. So many Jeeps were being built that some German soldiers, it was believed, thought that every U.S. Soldier was issued their own Jeep. Around 30 percent (182,597) were shipped to Allied countries as part of the Lend-Lease program. Bantam was awarded a contract to build trailers for the Jeep.

Soldiers raved about the vehicle and its versatility on the battlefield. Jeeps were believed to be able to go anywhere, delivering troops, supplies or serving as a weapons platform. Chaplains celebrated communion on the flat hood and officers used it to brief battle plans or stand atop it to address their troops. The engine manifold was often used to heat C-ration cans, and if a little water was drained from the radiator, it could be used for hot water to shave.

Jeeps were also modified to plow snow; operate in the desert; function as an ambulance, tractor or firetruck; lay telephone cable; and operate as a generator. Indeed, if given the right wheels, the Jeep could be reconfigured as a small railroad engine. Jeeps were small enough

to be loaded on aircraft and even fit in gliders for the D-Day invasion. They were customized to provide any need.

Soldiers raved about the durability and toughness of the Jeep. Ernie Pyle, a WWII Army correspondent, said, "Good Lord, I don't think we could carry on the war without the Jeep. It's as faithful as a dog, as strong as a mule and as agile as a goat."

GEN George C. Marshall, U.S. Army Chief of Staff during World War II, described the Jeep as "America's greatest contribution to modern warfare." ●

OLD FAITHFUL

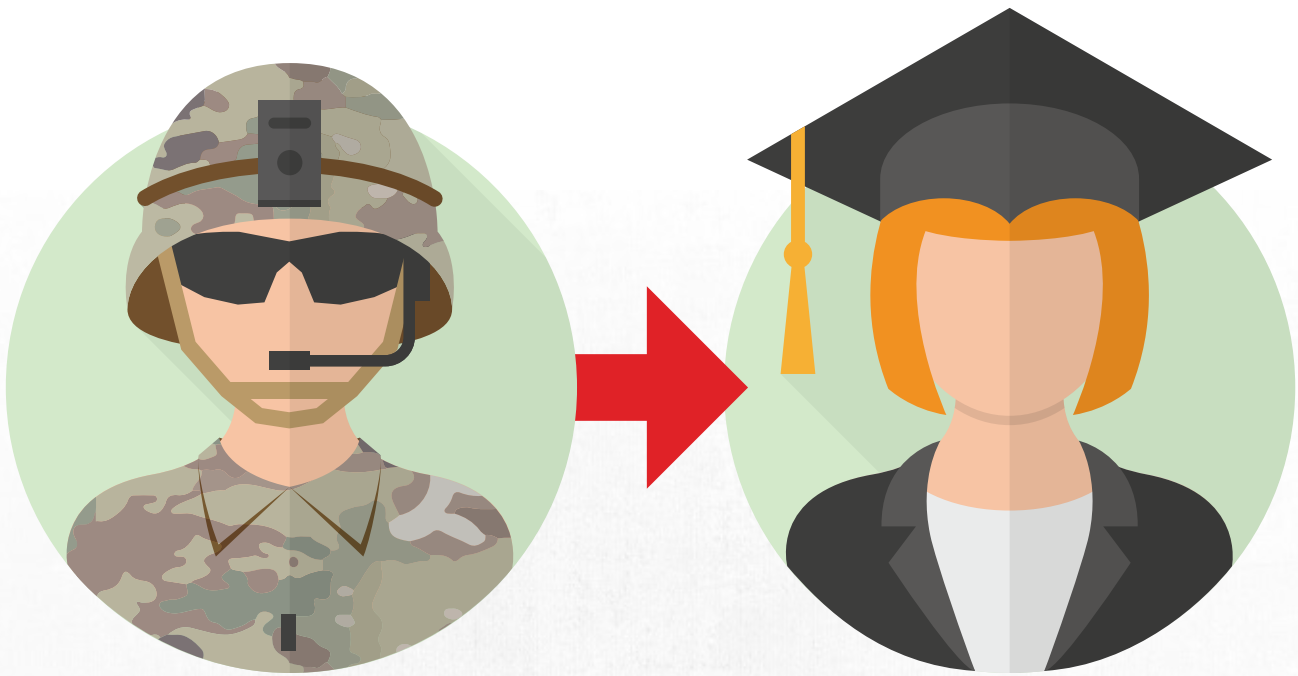
On October 13, 1942, a Willys MB, nicknamed "Old Faithful," received two shrapnel holes in its windshield while being shelled by a Japanese battleship on Guadalcanal. The Marines that she belonged to awarded her the Purple Heart for "wounds" received on Lunga Beach. The Jeep survived two beach landings; it was the first to land on Guadalcanal and among the first during the Bougainville invasion.

The Jeep was retired after 18 months on December 22, 1943, having traveled more than 11,000 miles of jungle terrain in Bougainville as a command car for four different Marine Generals. It was the first American vehicle ever decorated with a Purple Heart and spent the rest of the war on display during bond tours.

Old Faithful

Photo courtesy AP Images





OFFICERS WITHOUT DEGREES

Army National Guard officer candidates and company-grade officers are eligible for assistance with earning a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution prior to promotion to the rank of captain.

The following qualify for the program:

Officer Candidates
Officer Strength Managers
Commanders
Military Personnel Officers
Education Services Officers
Regional Training Institute Officers

Counseling is available to coach program participants from their current academic status through degree completion.

For more information, contact your State Education Services Officer or the Guard Support Center's Officer Counseling Team at **officers@ng.army.mil or 866-628-5999.**



PAIN-FREE IN SURINAME

South Dakota Soldiers Bring Humanitarian Relief to Their SPP Nation

BY STAFF WRITER Matthew Liptak

The tooth fairy was kept busy in Suriname this past April and she had the Army National Guard to thank for the extra work. The South Dakota Army National Guard has a State partnership with the small country of Suriname, which is on the northern coast of South America, and last spring nine of South Dakota's personnel helped residents from the town of Albina by extracting over 400 unhealthy teeth and treating over 300 other various medical cases.

"Our overall goal was to collaborate with local providers and the Suriname Defense Force to help in the continued effort to improve the medical and dental health of the people of this region," said COL Murray Thompson, a dentist and commander of the South Dakota Medical Command.

South Dakota Army National Guard's SPC Kirstin Gortmaker paints fluoride varnish on a young girl's teeth as part of a humanitarian services deployment to South Dakota's State Partner, Suriname, April 2019.

South Dakota Army National Guard photo by SSG Samantha Wempe





LTC Eric Unkenholz, a dentist with the South Dakota National Guard, examines a young girl as a Suriname Defense Force medic assists during South Dakota's humanitarian services deployment to Suriname, April 2019.

South Dakota Army National Guard photo by LTC Anthony Deiss

The dental care portion of the mission included the bulk of the work, though some notable medical cases were encountered as well. The nine Soldiers who attended included dentists, dental technicians, a physician, a physician's assistant and other support staff—all from the South Dakota Army National Guard.

The mission was put under pressure from the start, but the Soldiers of South Dakota bore up well under the strain. Due to a blizzard in South Dakota, the initial plan to pack up was thrown off schedule, but the problem was mitigated and the challenge met.

"We brought a few dental instruments and two autoclaves [instrument sterilizers], but had not seen the equipment until we arrived in country as we had another blizzard that [caused our normal drill weekend to be rescheduled]. That had been when we were supposed to help pack the equipment and inventory supplies," COL Thompson explained. "Due to the timing required for shipping, we had to have non-team members of the 730th ASMC [Area Support Medical Company] help us pack to the best of their knowledge based on our requests."

The team knew they would be short on required instruments, so they arranged to have the local Suriname dental school loan them necessary equipment. Once on the ground, they had one day to inventory, arrange, package, sterilize and obtain missing items. The very next day, without ever having been to the location, they had one hour to set up equipment and begin

patient care, COL Thompson said.

Considering that the mission came together in a very short amount of time, things went remarkably well. It was no doubt due to the level of commitment shown not only by the entire team but also the Suriname Civilians. COL Thompson went into further detail on the vital mission:

Dental equipment is very expensive and we relied on local cooperation and generosity," he said. "Without the help of the local providers and dental school, we could not have helped as many patients as we did. We had to find and borrow local dental instruments, supplies and disposable gloves. Basically, everything we were doing had never been done before in that area. We did not even know exactly what the facility looked like until one hour before we began seeing patients. This was an excellent exercise in mission planning on the fly and execution of a mission with minimal supplies.

The South Dakota group went from the freezing temperatures of The Upper Midwest to the 85-degree humidity of Suriname without missing a beat. COL Thompson lauded his Soldiers for their performance.

"It truly was a fantastic exercise in resilient mission planning," he remarked.

One of those working with the dentists was SSG Samantha Wempe, a dental hygienist with the South Dakota Medical Command. She was unequivocal in her

feelings on the mission. They seemed to reflect the same enthusiasm COL Thompson shared.

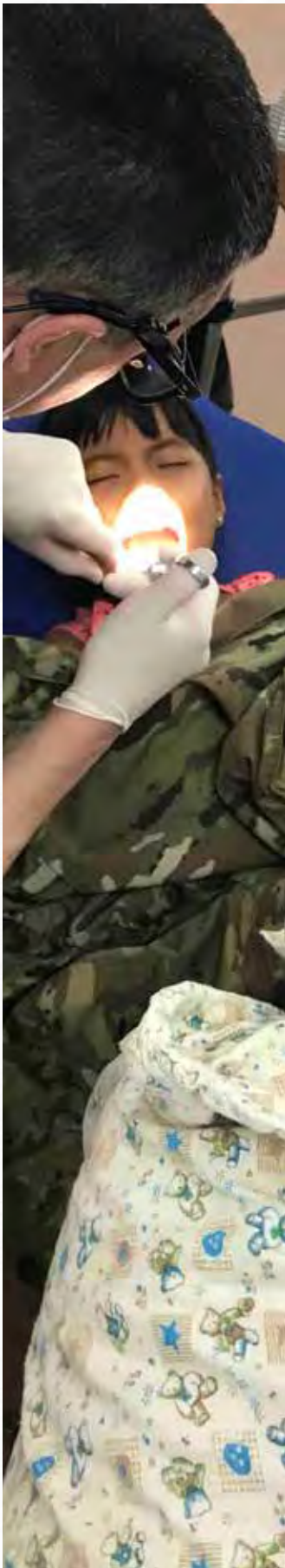
"My role was to assist the dentists with extractions, sterilize instruments, and maintain supplies and equipment," she said. "[It was] very successful. We did extractions only, and we extracted permanent and primary teeth. Our group was amazing and worked together perfectly."

She said this was her first time going overseas for the Guard and that there were some challenges, but nothing extreme. She did, however, fall in on the mission at the last minute, so that caused her to scramble a bit to prepare.

"Challenges were mainly environmental and operational—not enough gloves, etc.," she noted. "I was a last-minute add-on because another dentist was unable to go, and he pushed them to take another assistant and specifically recommended me. I was offered and accepted, then worked like crazy to get the required training and paperwork done [in time]."

The medical portion of the mission seemed to be more routine with most patients asking for help with illnesses common to Suriname, like aches and pains in elderly citizens and worms in children. For MAJ Ronovan Ottenbacher, a field surgeon in the 730th ASMC and provider in Medical Command, one attribute turned out to be critical to carrying out the mission.

In MAJ Ottenbacher's estimation, organization was the key ingredient to



LEFT: MAJ Kevin Donlin, a dentist with the South Dakota National Guard, performs a tooth extraction on a young girl as her mother watches in Albina, Suriname, April 2019.

CENTER LEFT: SSG Matthew Hanson, a medic with the South Dakota National Guard, applies a bandage to a patient with severe lymphedema in Albina, Suriname, April 2019.

CENTER RIGHT: MAJ Ronovan Ottenbacher, a field surgeon and physician with the South Dakota National Guard, poses with a Surinamese woman and her children as they prepare to receive a medical examination in Albina, Suriname, April 2019.

FAR RIGHT: South Dakota/Suriname humanitarian deployment team members: (Left to Right: SGT Lori Meyer (medic), Dr. Paul Aikman (medical director of the Paramaribo Military Hospital), SSG Matthew Hanson (medic), MAJ Katie Urban (physician assistant), CPT Betsy Suhr (Suriname liaison), Karen Williams (U.S. Ambassador to Suriname), LTC Eric Unkenholz (dentist), SSG Samantha Wempe (dental tech), COL Murray Thompson (dentist), MAJ Ronovan Ottenbacher (physician), MAJ Kevin Donlin (dentist) and SPC Kirstin Gortmaker (dental tech).

South Dakota Army National Guard photos by LTC Anthony Deiss



making the mission a success. Many of the details of the mission were not known until it was time to execute, and many aspects were last-minute tasks that needed to get done. To keep up with the quick-paced demand, equipment, supplies and personnel were organized as efficiently as possible. Some planning was done prior to the mission, some was done during the mission and the team coordinated with the Surinamese providers as much as they could.

“It was difficult because it was the first time we’d done one of these missions and it was from the ground up,” MAJ Ottenbacher said. “Organization was difficult because the details were a bit unknown and the logistics were a bit unknown, but we organized everything. It seemed to fit all the needs we ended up having with the mission, so it went well that way.”

As the team began to see patients, it became very clear just how much the mission was needed. Hundreds of Surinamese came to them seeking help. Although most cases were routine, in the short time the South Dakota Soldiers were there, the medical team saw a few cases that were out of the norm.

“We saw a couple of more unique cases—some sicker people—a gentleman who very likely had lung cancer and a



gentleman who had very severe leg swelling and open wounds on his leg. I think he actually had some maggots in there that we removed.”

MAJ Ottenbacher indicated that before they left, the Guard team helped set up long-term plans for those patients who would need continuing care with the Suriname providers. For the National Guard services, there were no costs charged to the local residents who received medical care and medication.

The medical contingent of the team was able to see all those patients who sought their attention, while the dental providers saw almost all their patients, but at some point they had to end treatment due to time constraints with the mission.

Both the South Dakota Army National Guard team and their patients were fortunate in that they had a new medical facility in Albina in which to treat patients. Initially, some concern emerged as to whether the electrical systems in Suriname would be up to the task of running the needed equipment, but the facility turned out to be well set up for the work, MAJ Ottenbacher said.

“We had brand new, well-stocked exam rooms,” he recalled. “The dental area was wide open—almost like an emergency room area. They had [plenty of] room



“
**It’s fun to see how
 a recognized need
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 years later.**
 ”

— COL Murray Thompson

to set up their equipment. The facility was very nice. It had all the services and support for patient flow and our medical needs. It was excellent.”

The mission had a positive impact on the Soldiers as well as the patients. Two of the Guard providers went on to say that their experience in Suriname helped solidify their focus for their future dental career track. They both noted wanting to continue to help underserved populations and bring much needed dental care to the less fortunate.

“Together we relieved so many people of pain. It was life changing for me in my personal career,” said SSG Wempe. “I’m trying to apply to dental schools and this really solidified the type of dentist I want to be—I want to get people out of pain.”

“In 2016 during my first visit to the area, I was told that there was a huge need for medical and dental care,” said COL Thompson. “It’s fun to see how a recognized need and a constant desire to help humanity resulted in a full-blown medical and dental humanitarian mission three years later. Many people are now pain-free. We hope that this relationship with Suriname, the Suriname Defense Force and South Dakota will continue to grow. I look forward to future partnered medical and dental missions.” ●

A REALISTIC TRAINING PLATFORM

BY STAFF WRITER Tatyana White-Jenkins
Photo courtesy Jedburgh Technology

For Soldiers needing to improve upon their foreign language and culture skills, Jedburgh Technology is introducing a cutting-edge approach.

Jedburgh Technology, a provider of Virtual Reality (VR) training software products tailored for America's warriors, is offering dynamic technology to help Soldiers enhance their foreign language and culture training with its Realistic Training Platform (RTP).

Collaborating with subject matter experts from Military Intelligence, Special Operations Forces, government contractors and leading technologists, RTP provides an innovative approach to immersion training for Soldiers.

"We connect a live student, who is fully immersed in [a VR environment],

with a live instructor who is represented as an avatar in the virtual environment," said Jason Starkey, co-founder and CEO of Jedburgh Technology. "They interact in several different virtual [scenarios] that are contextually relevant and practical for their specific mission."

Launched in 2016, RTP combines commercial off-the-shelf hardware with proprietary game-like software, real-world operator/linguist experiences and professional instructor subject matter expertise to immerse students in a rich, kinesthetic learning environment.

So far, the platform supports 89 languages, including 1,200 authentic cultural objects. The Army is currently the only branch using the RTP, but Jedburgh is planning to extend to other branches such as the Air Force and Marines.

Open to all Army linguist units, commanders can access the platform through two means. First, unit leaders can install VR hardware at their language learning facility to incorporate RTP into the normal training curriculum.

"For example, after spending the morning in the classroom learning vocabulary terms related to food, the afternoon will be spent using our product with the student and instructor applying those vocab words in our restaurant virtual environment," explained Starkey.

The second way the platform can be utilized is to install the student VR hardware at the individual unit location, which allows students to perform their language training on their own time without needing to travel to a language facility.

Regardless of which set-up is chosen, as long as both the student and instructor have internet access, they can interact with each other through the RTP's virtual environments. Instructors have the ability to easily document and annotate to give feedback in real-time, whether it is concerning grammatical, vocabulary or use of English, for review at home. Students can use RTP in exploratory mode to hone their skills when alone or use analysis mode to interact one-on-one with an instructor, while their proficiency and performance are examined.

Through the platform, students and instructors have their own dashboards that display key performance indicators such as average session length, number of target language words per minute/session, number of words in native language and mission-critical tasks completed. The dashboard provides access to instructor notes from past training sessions and the ability to listen to audio recordings of sessions for improved self-awareness and diagnosis. To encourage friendly competition, the dashboard displays

metrics from other students in the class or the same unit.

For units looking to access the platform, Command Language Program Managers can visit www.jedburghco.com or call 703-682-6840 for information. ●



WHAT DRONES MAY COME

Students Compete in Army Engineering Contest

BY STAFF WRITER Matthew Liptak
Photos courtesy Great Minds in STEM

The Army-sponsored inaugural Historically Black Colleges and Universities/Minority Institutions (HBCU/MI) Design Competition was held at the University of Texas at El Paso, April 2019. The drone competition tested 11 student engineering teams from HBCU/MI on their ability to master drone challenges developed for the event by the Army.

The contest was the brainstorm of Commander, U.S. Army Combat Capabilities Development Command (CCDC), MG Cedric Wins. It was not only an opportunity for young, minority college students studying in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) field to showcase their skills, but it also doubled as an avenue for the Army to gain new insights into potential solutions

for real-world challenges faced by the Army's various unmanned aerial vehicle research laboratories. The event was so successful that event judges recommended patent applications for several of the competing students.

"We designed this competition to showcase what goes on in the education and development of students at HBCUs and minority serving institutions," said MG Wins. "We know there is talent everywhere across the United States, and we want to tap into that for the Army."

The students were judged by senior CCDC leaders on their ability to present the details of their drone designs; how effectively that design solved the Army challenges; how the drone design could potentially be commercialized for Army use; and most importantly, the success of their flight demonstration.

Over 1,000 middle and high school students watched from the stands of Sun Bowl stadium as the competing teams took

their drones on a 30-second hover before directing their drone around pylons to land on a bullseye target. The teams then had to change out their drones' batteries, hover again and go back through the pylons. To win, the teams were required to keep the drones within a specific height range throughout the entire demonstration.

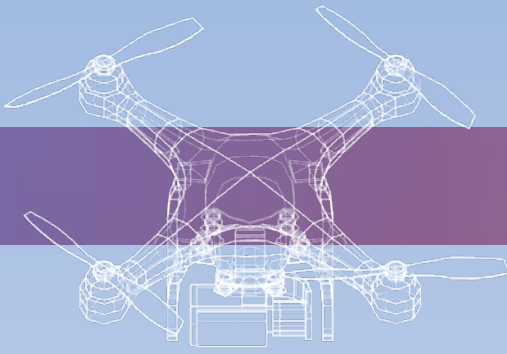
SFC Daniel Guenther, the military applications advisor for the CCDC and self-proclaimed "CCDC go-to drone guy," was bullish on the contest. He said he has 17 drones at home himself and is a Federal Aviation Administration-licensed drone pilot. He noted that the students—none of whom have professional experience in drone development—truly impressed him.

"We just told a whole bunch of [student] engineers, 'Hey, here you go. Have fun!' It was a quick learning curve. I don't know if you've heard the term drink from a firehose, but that's exactly what they were doing—trying to construct a drone out of nothing."

The competition featured two main design challenges. The first was to create a drone frame using biological material

SFC Daniel Guenther observes students from the University of Texas at Arlington as they prepare their unmanned aerial vehicle for a flight demonstration as part of the U.S. Army's inaugural HBCU/MI Design Competition held at the University of Texas at El Paso's Sun Bowl Stadium, April 2019.

An undergraduate student from Spelman College flies a small unmanned aerial vehicle during the U.S. Army's inaugural HBCU/MI Design Competition held at the University of Texas at El Paso's Sun Bowl Stadium, April 23-24, 2019.



produced from enzymes. The second was to develop a design that would eliminate the wire bundles traditionally needed for a drone to function. SFC Guenther indicated that the goal behind the challenges was to push students to think outside the box and imagine, for instance, a drone that could land in water and harmlessly disintegrate, or drones that could be fabricated by a 3D printer.

Also included as part of the event was a tech expo featuring various exhibits displaying current Army technology as well as University of Texas STEM programs.

The 2019 HBCU/MI Design Competition winning teams were:

1st Place – InterAmerican University of Puerto Rico

2nd Place – University of Texas at El Paso

3rd Place – University of Illinois

4th Place – Spelman College

The winning teams received cash prizes of \$5,000, \$4,000, \$3,000 and \$2,000 for first, second, third and fourth places, respectively.



A team of students from Tuskegee University explains the design of their unmanned aerial vehicle to the judging panel during the U.S. Army's HBCU/MI 2019 Design Competition.

Dr. Vallen Emory, project manager for the design competition, noted enthusiasm over the success of this first-time event.

"It was a win-win for everyone," he said. "This was the inaugural competition. We were flying blind throughout the whole thing, but it really worked out for everyone."

Next year's competition, which is currently scheduled to be held in the Chicago metropolitan area, is already in the early planning stages. Eligible higher learning institutions will be contacted by the Army in their ongoing effort to help spawn innovation and entrepreneurship among education partners.

SFC Guenther said he expects that all the universities that fielded teams this year will return to compete in next year's competition, with several new schools joining the competition. Given the increasing notoriety of drones in everyday society, administrations from minority colleges and universities across the country are keen to offer their engineering students as much exposure as possible to developing what is likely to be commonly used technology in the very near future.

"Drones are becoming an everyday part of life," said SFC Guenther. "They are [already] out there." ●

A student team from Grambling State University prepares an unmanned aerial vehicle for a flight demonstration as part of the U.S. Army's HBCU/MI Design Competition, April 2019.





OPERATION GUARD SUCCESS

BY STAFF WRITER Tatyana White-Jenkins

“The Guard’s success is our mission,” explained LTG Thomas James, commanding general of First Army.

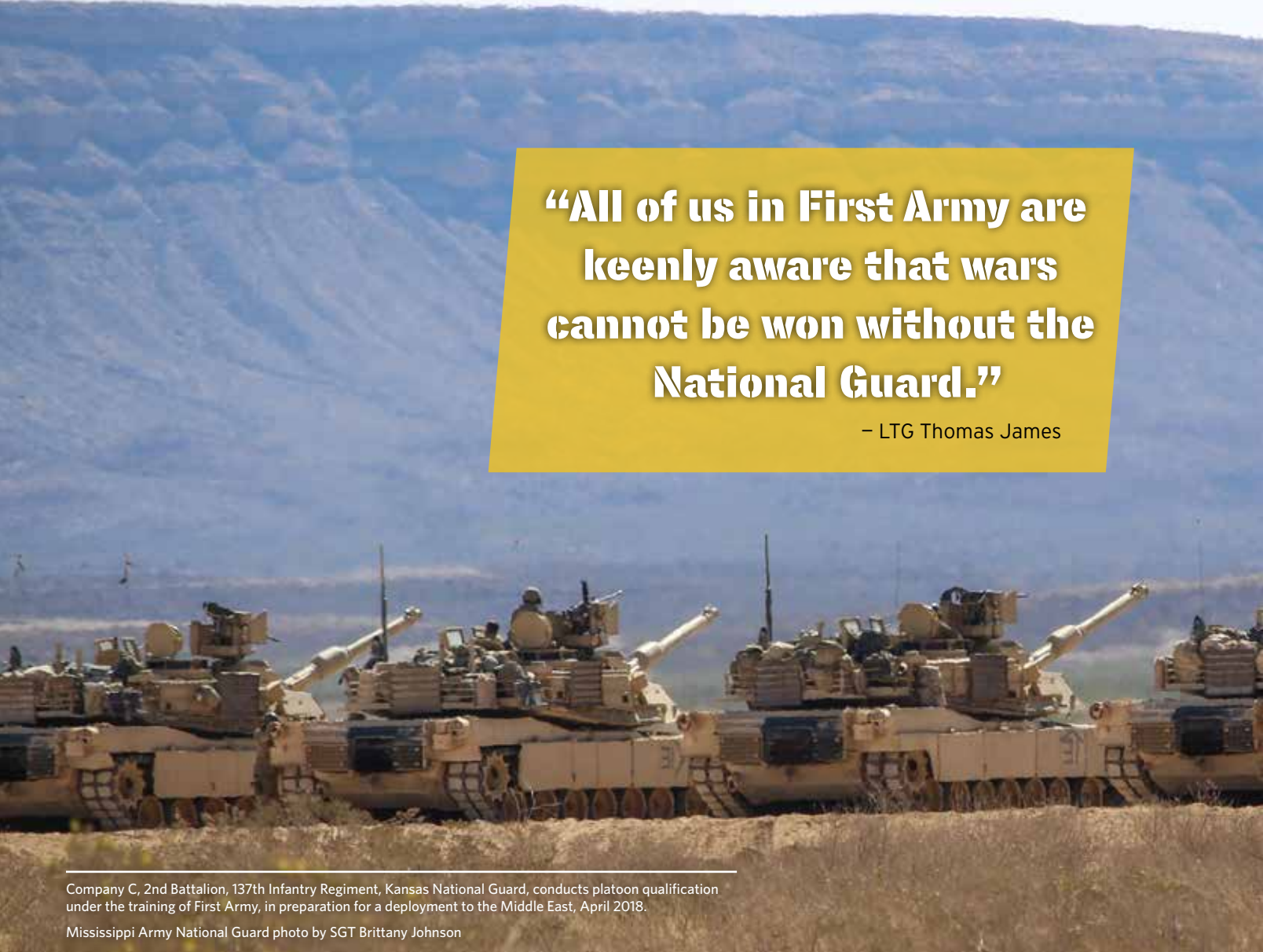
First Army is the oldest and longest established field army of the United States Government. Its history is rooted in encompassing Total Force Policy, a legacy they continue to carry out.

First Army was formed in 1918 by GEN John J. Pershing when he created the American Expeditionary Force (AEF), a formation of the United States Army on the Western Front of World War I. GEN Pershing was tasked with leading the AEF to France to aid America’s allies. Before his troops of active duty and National Guard Soldiers were sent to the front, GEN Pershing insisted the troops be trained to high standards by battle-seasoned Soldiers. Under GEN Pershing’s command, 500,000 American Soldiers were soon on French soil and First Army was established.

The Soldiers of First Army achieved their first victory when they drove German troops out of the Saint-Mihiel salient. This was the first U.S.-led operation of World War I. In regards to First Army’s formation, GEN Pershing made a statement that LTG James lives by in his role as the unit’s current commanding general.

A Soldier from the Tennessee Army National Guard’s 2nd Battalion, 278th Armored Brigade Combat Team, participates in a validation exercise under the training of First Army at Fort Hood, Texas, in preparation for deployment to Poland.

U.S. Army photo by Devon L. Suits



**“All of us in First Army are
keenly aware that wars
cannot be won without the
National Guard.”**

– LTG Thomas James

Company C, 2nd Battalion, 137th Infantry Regiment, Kansas National Guard, conducts platoon qualification under the training of First Army, in preparation for a deployment to the Middle East, April 2018.

Mississippi Army National Guard photo by SGT Brittany Johnson

“I’m going to paraphrase, but [GEN Pershing] said that no longer do we differentiate between active component, National Guard or Army Reserves. Our purpose is to think only of the American citizen and preparing him or her for the duties of war,” said LTG James. “That’s what First Army is committed to.”

LTG James continued, “Pershing was the first commander wearing this patch to realize that a reliance on an integrated, multicomponent Total Force is not just the best approach to national defense – it’s the only approach to national defense.”

Employing the Total Force concept, First Army commanded the entire D-Day invasion at Normandy during World War II, mobilized thousands of troops during the Korean and Vietnam Wars and, since 9/11, has mobilized 1.2 million troops.

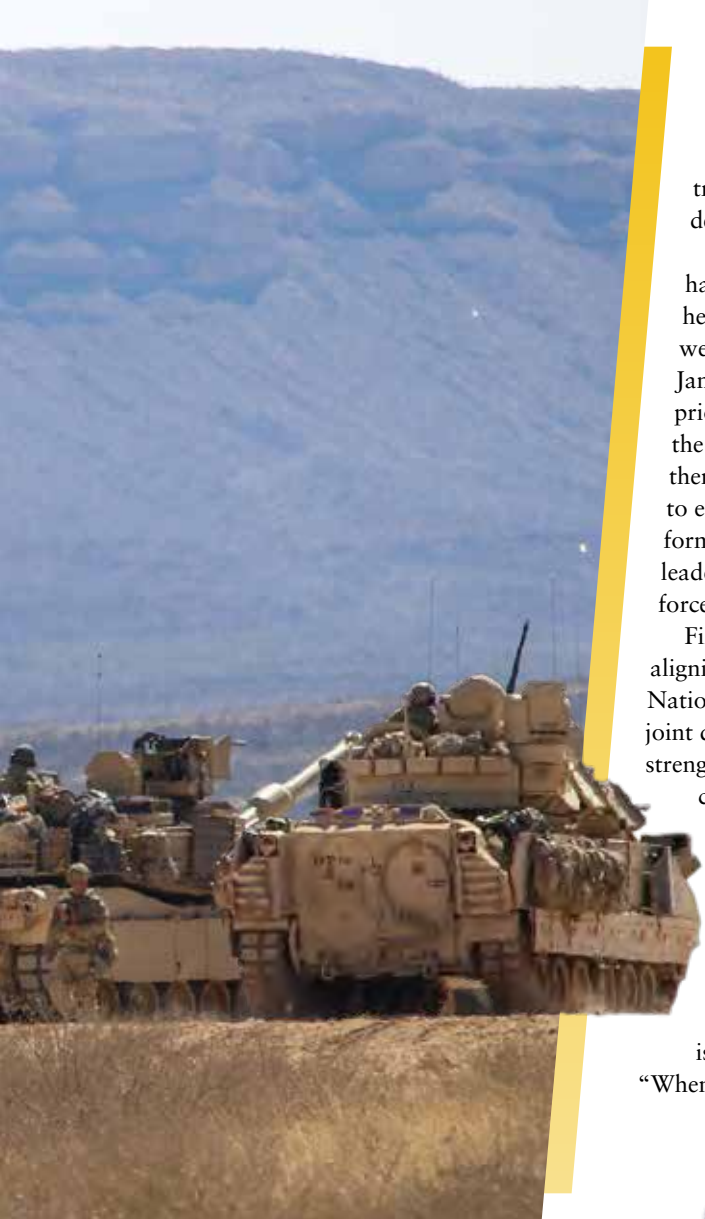
Today, the mission of First Army is still rooted in enabling Total Force readiness. Now serving as a mobilization, readiness and training command, First Army mobilizes nearly 45,000 Soldiers annually operating two Mobilization Force Generation Installations out of the State of Texas—one at Fort Hood and the other at Fort Bliss. All Army National Guard and Reserve units must pass through the installations before deployment. If and when needed, First Army is also equipped with the resources to rapidly stand up seven additional installations should large-scale troop mobilizations be required in response to a conflict.

First Army’s three-star joint headquarters is located at Rock Island Arsenal, Illinois. The formation includes multiple brigades spanning coast-to-

coast, from Joint Base Lewis-McChord in Washington to Fort Stewart in Georgia.

“We have a total of ten brigades that partner with our reserve component [counterparts], specifically the Army Reserve and Army National Guard,” explained LTG James. “We enable the commanders and leaders in those [partner units] to increase and generate readiness to meet [Army] requirements, whether it be global demand or just to build readiness for future missions.”

By helping to increase the baseline unit readiness of the entire reserve component, First Army is actively participating in the guaranteeing of the defense posture of the entire force, helping to ensure the Nation can react quickly to any global conflict. This is accomplished by providing guidance and advice to reserve component



train based on units' needs and deployment schedules.

"We have to look deep. We have to look out and get our headlights out ahead of us so that we can anticipate things," LTG James further explained. "We prioritize the resources we have to the units that we need to support, then we resource the training to enable readiness within those formations. We then empower unit leaders to execute the training to get forces ready to deploy."

First Army is responsible for aligning active duty brigades with National Guard brigades to create joint divisions. This alignment helps strengthen the cohesion between components that is vital during a deployment. Once First Army has aligned units and prioritized what training is needed, a strategic training plan that is rooted in fundamentals and other military training techniques is developed.

"Whenever we plan training, we do

an assessment of a unit to determine the unit's current level of proficiency and what they've already been trained for," explained LTG James. "Once we do that, we can effectively develop a plan."

When developing a training plan for the units, First Army members begin with the fundamentals of shoot, move, communicate, medicate, sustain and decontaminate. The second part of the training focuses on the military decision-making process (MDMP).

"We need to make sure our Guard partners are proficient at MDMP and you get good at those processes when you train on them a lot," LTG James said. "Unlike active duty Soldiers, Guard Soldiers don't have a lot of time to do orders and drills time and time again. So, we help with making sure that leaders, whether it be company, battalion, squadron, brigade, all the way up to division, understand the process of how to plan for future ops and align resources to make [sure] their Soldiers are successful if they employ them on the battlefield."

The next segment of training focuses on mission command—the ability to command and control forces in an operational environment.

leaders and facilitating multicomponent training that is demanding and realistic.

"In the National Guard, you have leaders that are responsible for building readiness in the formation daily," LTG James explained. "First Army is a unique formation that plugs in with those leaders and partners with them to build readiness in their formations, whether it be individual, small unit collective training, or all the way up to unit formation training, mission command and planning."

To effectively utilize their resources, First Army must strategically



Director of Army National Guard LTG Timothy J. Kadavy (left) and First Army Commanding General LTG Thomas James, discuss strategy during a working lunch at the Green Tab Commanders Conference at the Professional Education Center in Little Rock, Ark.

U.S. Army photo by
SGT Aaron Berogan



An observer-coach/trainer observes a Soldier from Tennessee's 2nd Battalion, 278th Armored Brigade Combat Team, during a validation at Fort Hood, Texas, to prepare for the 278th's deployment to Poland.

U.S. Army photo by Devon L. Suits

"It's based on issuing a clear vision. It also has to do with a commander's intent, mission-type orders and the building of a climate of trust with the subordinates," noted LTG James.

The final part of the training plan focuses on crucial warfighting functions.

"The intelligence, maneuver, all of those warfighting functions we have in our doctrine, we make sure that the leaders are proficient at understanding how to synchronize those so that we can create dilemmas [commonly presented by the enemy, thus allowing us to be successful on the battlefield]," said LTG James.

The successful implementation of accurate and effective, large-scale, joint training is not an easy feat. To accomplish this, strong collaboration between the Army National Guard and First Army is crucial. LTG James said he is committed to continuing to strengthen that alliance.

"This partnership is critical to what we do," he noted. "We want our partners to say, 'Wow, First Army provided us some really good help here. We want more of it.' It's important that we work on that relationship as we continue to build readiness."

LTG James highlighted his continued commitment to the Total Force concept earlier this year when he spoke to National Guard Division Commanders at the Green Tab Commanders Conference held at the Professional Education Center in Little Rock, Arkansas. The conference focused on promoting leader-to-leader exchange

and engagements while providing updates on the operational demand, Total Force priorities and readiness solutions driving the future of the Army National Guard.

"First Army's relationship with our Guard partners should never be [viewed] as a requirements generator," he said at the conference. "We literally exist in order to assist you in achieving excellence."

Recognizing the Nation's reliance on the National Guard and the importance of supporting Army National Guard Soldiers are also priorities LTG James emphasized at the conference.

"Our relationship with the Guard was forged over 100 years ago in blood going into World War I," he said. "All of us in First Army are keenly aware that wars cannot be won without the National Guard."

He continued, "A positive and productive relationship between us and the National Guard is essential to accomplishing our mission. We have to build and sustain a very powerful relationship with our Guard partners and be able to communicate lessons learned and enable them to have the best training possible."

It is this understanding of the unique demands of the Army National

Guard, that has dedicated the leadership of First Army to supporting the needs of Citizen-Soldiers through the Total Force partnership.

"I have to applaud the Army National Guard for their enduring commitment and contributions," said LTG James. "They build wartime readiness, support the global demand, support their States and the visions within the States and they have a civilian job. All of those things have to be taken into consideration from a First Army perspective because we're a Total Force formation. We are always focused on helping the readiness of the Guard so they can pull all that off. Our job really is to ease that burden." ●



A First Army observer-coach/trainer, assigned to the 1st Battalion, 306th Infantry, works to validate Soldiers from the Tennessee Army National Guard's 2nd Battalion, 278th Armored Brigade Combat Team, before the unit's then-upcoming deployment.

U.S. Army photo by Devon L. Suits

Deployment Health Assessment Program

Connecting Soldiers with the Right Care at the Right Time



The Deployment Health Assessment Program (DHAP) allows Soldiers to take proactive steps to protect their health plus ensure their military readiness. DHAP provides early identification of deployment-related health conditions and serves as a gateway to care and treatment.

Using a sequence of health evaluations, Deployment Health Assessments monitor the health of Soldiers during the deployment cycle and, if needed, direct Soldiers to treatment and additional care resources, such as Army Chaplains, TRICARE and counseling to ensure long-term wellness.

For more information about DHAP, go to ArmyG1.army.mil or talk to your command or unit medical personnel.



Various U.S. service members provide medical care to the community of Lares, Puerto Rico, during a joint Innovative Readiness Training, April 2019.

Minnesota National Guard photo by TSgt Amy M. Lovgren

INNOVATIVE READINESS TRAINING

REAL TRAINING, REAL HELP IN REAL TIME

BY STAFF WRITER Matthew Liptak

Innovative Readiness Training (IRT) is a Department of Defense military training opportunity exclusive to the United States and its Territories. This unique type of training delivers joint training opportunities that increase deployment readiness while simultaneously providing key services to American communities.

IRT is a collaborative program that leverages military contributions and community resources to offer needed assistance in American neighborhoods at what is a considerable cost savings for both groups. Communities typically provide operating materials and an event facility

while the military provides free service and professional expertise. In this win-win scenario, the community saves the cost of the professional services and the military gains valuable hands-on training for its members without the overhead cost of setting up a mock training environment.

IRTs fall under five mission types. They include medical, civil engineering, transportation, aerial spray and the newest, and still developing, mission-type cybersecurity.

According to the Commander, Delaware Army National Guard Medical Detachment CPT Jason Brooks, whose unit has done

two IRTs in the last two years, the missions are usually scheduled to take place during a unit's annual training and can take up to two years to plan.

"It offers direct, hands-on skills training in, in what we would consider a simulated, austere environment," CPT Brooks explained. "We also get the benefit of working with our sister Services in a unique joint operation and you just can't get all three of those things during a typical unit-planned [annual training] outside of the IRT program. Something like that is very, very difficult to come across."



ABOVE: MAJ Alexandra Dillion, a nurse corps officer with the Delaware Army National Guard Medical Detachment, creates directional arrows with strips of duct tape in preparation for a joint Innovative Readiness Training in Ponce, Puerto Rico, April 2019.

LEFT: Children play Tic-Tac-Toe with PFC Kwabena A. Anim-Appiah, a combat medic with Delaware Army National Guard Medical Detachment, during a joint Innovative Readiness Training held at Ponce, Puerto Rico, May 2019.

U.S. Marine Corps photos by Sgt Andy O. Martinez

While any group of armed U.S. service members can certainly benefit from IRT missions, National Guard members, arguably, see the most translatable impact from this training type, as National Guard members are those most often called on to help American communities in times of natural disasters and other domestic emergencies.

CPT Brooks spoke about the benefit of training in real-world environments with real civilians in real need of assistance. He noted that the “unknown” factor present at all of these events is not something that can be fabricated in a fictional training

scenario. He gave two examples of the unknown factor presenting itself in real time—how IRT missions can force Guard Soldiers into circumstances they are unable to predict, thus serving as invaluable training tools. One was during the Operation Empower Health IRT that took him and his unit to Savannah, Georgia, last year.

“We actually had a guy who was having heart attack symptoms [during a medical IRT last year in Savannah, Georgia]. They identified him right away, went through our emergency channels, got any EMS out there, and we actually took him [to] the

hospital. He was just shy of having a heart attack. So, you know, that’s a potentially life-saving operation right there.”

CPT Brooks gave another example experienced by a Soldier under his command on an IRT mission late this past spring.

“One of my [Soldiers] was actually a site officer-in-charge down in Puerto Rico just recently,” he explained. “It was wildfire season down there. Within a mile of her bed-down site, there was an active wildfire. Part of her emergency plan was to be able to have an evacuation plan up and running—make sure they were



ABOVE: Arizona Army National Guard Soldier SPC Aaron Tellez, a motor vehicle operator with the 259th Engineer Platoon, operates an excavator during a runway extension project at Innovative Readiness Training in Old Harbor, Alaska, April 2017.

LEFT: Alaska Army National Guard Soldier SGT Stephen McDowell, horizontal equipment supervisor with the 207th Engineer Utility Detachment, operates a D9R dozer during a runway extension project at Innovative Readiness Training in Old Harbor, Alaska, April 2017.

Alaska Army National Guard photos by
SSG Balinda O'Neal Dresel

monitoring and in touch with the civilians on the ground. She was in touch with the command post. You can't really simulate that. It's an actual fire out there, not a fake fire like a what-would-you-do scenario. You actually have to do it now. So again, there are real-world opportunities that really do exist."

A two-year timetable overall is required to execute an IRT mission. The community needing assistance begins the process by submitting an application. Once the application is reviewed and approved, the military notifies the community that its requested IRT has been approved and the process moves into a three-month planning phase before the mission is implemented.

"If you're actually on the planning team, then you know, plan to be living with it for about six months prior to

mission execution," CPT Brooks said.

"Between the initial planning meetings, all the phone calls, the mid-planning meeting, the final planning meeting, the [advance team], it is quite an amount of time."

North Carolina Army National Guard's now-deactivated 725th Engineering Support Platoon executed a horizontal engineering IRT mission in Asheville, North Carolina, in 2016.

The unit helped build a large parking lot from what was over four acres of woodland for an agricultural center. Bringing the heavy equipment over steep mountain roads was a feat in itself, but much of the benefit of the mission was taken from the real operational time Soldiers spent in using their bulldozers, graders and skid-steers.

"Just being able to go in the

community and do other things outside of the Guard [facilities] gives a lot of good interaction between the Soldiers and the [civilians]," said 1LT Erin Graham, who was then with the 725th, but now with North Carolina's 258th Engineer Utilities Detachment.

CPT Brooks added to this sentiment. "It's why we join. Giving back to the community, being part of the solution. It feels good to actually get out, do your job and actually see its benefits."

Commanders interested in applying for an IRT mission for their units should visit IRT.defense.gov/Military, click on the "Military" link in the main menu and then click "Apply Now" toward the bottom of the screen. For more information call 703-695-7060 or email osd.irt@mail.mil. ●



EAATS: TRAINING FOR EXCELLENCE

BY STAFF WRITER Tatyana White-Jenkins

The Eastern Army National Guard Aviation Training Site (EAATS) is a National Guard Bureau (NGB) directed training center that has been charged by The Army School System as a “Learning Institution of Excellence.”

Located at Fort Indiantown Gap in Annville, Pennsylvania, EAATS has been in operation since 1981 and functions under the vision of being the best aviation training site in the Army. The site is committed to supporting national warfighting objectives and Army aviation transformation initiatives in addition to carrying out the aviation needs of the State of Pennsylvania.

EAATS is the largest reserve component United States Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) accredited aviation training school. The site is focused on utility and cargo aircraft training. The 35-acre facility encompasses nine buildings and houses full motion flight simulators, a state-of-the-art multimedia classroom for Distance Learning classes, computerized classrooms to facilitate and support interactive multimedia instruction and automation initiatives, and an Aviation Life Support Equipment repair facility.

EAATS is organized into two subordinate training battalions and support staff: an Aviation Training Battalion-Utility and an Aviation Training Battalion-Cargo. The Enlisted Training Company conducts military occupational specialty (MOS) qualification/transition courses for 15T and hosts the Aircraft Crew member Standardization Instructor Course (UH-60). The Flight Training Company conducts aircraft qualification courses and instructor pilot training in the CH-47D/E, conducts MOS qualification/transition for 15U and hosts the EAATS CH-47 Flight Engineer Course. Together, the two battalions operate the largest flight simulation complex in the Army reserve component, providing virtual simulation and procedure training for the CH-47, UH-60 and UH-72 devices.

The training curriculum of EAATS includes more than 28 formal courses, which provide technical and functional training to more than 1,500 Soldiers annually from all 54 States and Territories and all three Army components—National Guard, active duty and Reserves. Training

options include individual aircrew qualification; noncommissioned officer professional education; and enlisted military occupational and additional skill identifier training offered in primary areas of focus for utility and cargo rotary-wing aircraft. Options for courses are offered both at the EAATS campus and online.

While the school offers training for Soldiers from all Army components, as an NGB-directed facility, EAATS courses are specifically designed with the lives of Guard Soldiers in mind.

“Citizen Soldiers generally work for corporations or have their own businesses, and it's difficult for them to go to a lot of these long aviation courses,” explained CSM David Dowling, EAATS command sergeant major and commandant of EAATS Noncommissioned Officer Academy. “You have some universities that go a full semester and some have a 10-week quarter. All of our courses are condensed. We’ve taken the same curriculum and [concentrated] it into six to seven 10-hour days.”

CH-47 Chinook helicopters parked on Muir Army Airfield, home of the Eastern Army National Guard Aviation Training Site, January 2019.

Pennsylvania Army National Guard photo by CPT Travis Mueller





ABOVE: A visiting dignitary participates in a demonstration of a simulator at the National Guard's Eastern Army National Guard Aviation Training Site.

Pennsylvania Army National Guard photo by SGT Zane Craig

Eastern Army National Guard Aviation Training Site, Fort Indiantown Gap, Pa.

Image courtesy Pennsylvania Army National Guard

EAATS operates much like a community college. Classroom sizes are small and everything is housed on a single campus with all facilities within walking distance of one another.

"I like how small it is and the fact that we have different simulators and cockpit trainers that are close so we have access 24/7," explained CPT John Barnes, a former EAATS student and member of the South Dakota Army National Guard's Charlie Company, 1-189th Aviation Regiment. "Not only do we get our time during the week with instructors, but if we want additional time at night or on the weekends, we have the ability to go in there and practice on the simulator [on our own]."

The dedicated aviation instructors of EAATS have a wide range of experience and expertise, offering students knowledge gained from an average of 22 years of service and 3,000 flight hours.

"Our instructors and staff are seasoned professionals who are driven, motivated and committed to providing an aviation maintenance and professional development experience that is superior to anywhere in the Aviation Enterprise," noted COL Todd Tuttle, commander of EAATS.

"The experience level here at EAATS is absolutely top-notch," said SSG William Andrews, Aviation Training Battalion-Cargo flight instructor. "The crew members come from all over the country and from different aspects of active and National Guard areas. We get a very large pool of experience and knowledge."

Given the wide-range of courses offered, the diverse levels of experience present at the school are also reflected in its student body.

"My favorite aspect [of EAATS] is the ability to interact with students on a daily basis," said CW4 Matthew Wilson,

an EAATS aviation training battalion-utility senior instructor pilot. "Each student comes to the schoolhouse with a different level of experience. To interact with them and share my knowledge is always awesome."

Utilizing 118 military personnel and civilian contractors, EAATS is fully supporting the development of the warrior spirit in the Soldiers that train at the facility.

"What I find the most satisfying is that students come in here and when we read their end-of-course critiques, they tell us how much they've [learned] and enjoyed being here with the instructors," said CSM Dowling. "That's what it's all about. I have happy students leaving this facility."

For more information about training opportunities at EAATS, go to Eaats.ng.mil or call 717-861-9860 for officer training and 717-861-9103 for noncommissioned officer training. ●

RESOLUTE CASTLE 19

Breaking Ground and Building Bonds

BY STAFF WRITER Matthew Liptak

CPT Edwin Higginbotham of 297th Regional Support Group, Alaska Army National Guard, guides a dump truck onto a work site during exercise Resolute Castle in Cincu, Romania, May 2019.

Alaska Army National Guard photo by PVT Grace Nechanicky

Resolute Castle 19 is a joint engineering training exercise supporting Atlantic Resolve. It takes place at the Cincu, Romania training area between March and September of this year with a goal of seeking to improve interoperability across the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) alliance, enhance the confidence and security assurance between participating nations, build readiness, deter aggression towards NATO allies and improve range capability and capacity.

The six-month exercise includes Army National Guard engineering units

from Alaska, Colorado, Illinois, Nevada, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island and West Virginia. These units are contributing to ongoing projects at the Cincu, Romania, sites in three-week rotations.

The Soldiers are working on multiple construction projects, including range target pits, road improvements and several base enhancement projects, including the construction of a gym. Resolute Castle offers a valuable opportunity for Guard Soldiers to work with NATO allies and partners to increase interoperability.

“The common benefit for all the participants is that by working together on

joint infrastructure projects, they will get to know each other better,” said Romanian Maj. Gen. Gheorghe Vlad, Romanian Land Forces staff representative. “They will improve skills and make a decisive contribution to strengthening cooperation and mutual trust.”

This is the 5th year of Resolute Castle. Each year, the exercise is structured to build on the past year’s projects, often involving more complex construction projects from year to year. To understand what to expect from this latest exercise, it is helpful to consider what took place at last year’s Resolute Castle, which was held in Poland.

“The largest benefit was retention,” recalled CPT Darrin L. Dunsworth, commander of the 616th Engineer Utilities Detachment (EUD), 123rd Engineer Battalion, Illinois Army National Guard. “This was the first trip overseas for the majority of our Soldiers. Besides the excitement of going to Poland, they felt appreciated for using their MOS. The Soldiers enjoyed the recognition for their hard work from visiting dignitaries and our hosts. Actually, when our State’s Assistant Adjutant General MG Michael Zerbonia visited, he did the oath for four re-enlistments.”

The benefits to Resolute Castle go further than retention, however. Heavy equipment operators worked many hours perfecting their craft, sometimes up to 12 hours on their machines in one day. The Soldiers of CPT Dunsworth’s detachment were kept busy with the myriad of projects they were assigned.

“We were the second rotation last year, so we were actually breaking ground on some projects,” he said. “We had to be flexible. We had anticipated the

“I enjoy seeing the United States helping and improving stability in Europe. This sends a huge message to everyone that the NATO alliance is strong and constantly pushing forward. Strong Army, Strong Europe.”

— SSG Curtis Twigg

first rotation would have had greater accessibility to equipment and job sites. But through no fault of anyone, just the challenge of moving a battalion’s worth of engineer equipment overseas, [caused] the schedule to be shifted to the left. Where we anticipated laying block for the foundation of two 50’ x 100’ buildings, we ended up digging those foundations.”

The 123rd Engineer Battalion was formed as a new battalion last year. Most of its Soldiers had transitioned from field artillery into engineering.

“Every day was a classroom,” CPT Dunsworth recalled. “It was very rewarding.”

This year’s Resolute Castle 19 is expected to be no different. The benefits of an engineering rotation overseas in Europe were clear to the Soldiers involved. Like the year before, there are many Soldiers for whom Resolute Castle will be their first mission overseas.





LEFT: Alaska Army National Guard's PVT Julien Harris of the 207th Engineer Utility Detachment, moves a roller in the motorpool during exercise Resolute Castle 19 at the Land Forces Combat Training Center Getica, Cincu, Romania, May 2019.

Alaska Army National Guard photo by PVT Grace Nechanicky

ABOVE RIGHT: Romanian Land Forces service members stand in formation during the opening ceremony of Resolute Castle 19, a multilateral engineer training exercise supporting Atlantic Resolve and allied interoperability, at Cincu Joint National Training Center, Romania, April 2019.

U.S. Army photo by SSG True Thao

"There are definitely a lot of troops that are new to being overseas, even for a short time," remarked SSG Curtis Twigg of the 1092nd Engineer Battalion, West Virginia Army National Guard. "This is a great opportunity for the younger Soldiers to get a real feel of deployment life and working together with allies, including the Romanians and the Dutch."

"The unit has never done this kind of exercise before," said 1LT Johnny Nguyen, also with the 1092nd Engineer Battalion. "There are a mixture of first-time deployment and some Veterans that have done previous deployments before. For the first-time guys, it has been a learning experience to be away from family and friends, but the Veteran guys help the first-timers make it easier. We hope to accomplish a better relationship with our NATO allies as well as improving the facilities and gaining experience while we are here."

In addition to the Soldiers of the 616th, engineers from the 661st Engineer Company, also under Illinois' 123rd Engineer Battalion, participated in the mission using heavy equipment operators and survey section to break ground on a 300-meter mobile target Armor range, CPT Dunsworth said. They prepped two landing pads (up to the point of creating

the concrete forms) at a forward arming refueling point. They also had projects improving tank crossings and water crossings, digging-in fighting positions for the South Carolina National Guard Air Defense Artillery assets and constructing tables used for terrain models at Resolute Castle.

This year the Army National Guard brought 67 pieces of heavy construction equipment to Romania to get the jobs done right. Those included dozers, graders, dump trucks, skidsteers and more.

The unit on the last rotation of Resolute Castle 19, returning in September of this year, is charged with the task of retrograding all that equipment back home as well as finishing up the projects. That too is a big responsibility. This year, it falls to the 631st Engineer Support Company, Illinois Army National Guard. They will comprise the seventh and final rotation of Resolute Castle 19.

CPT Kenneth Ferguson is the commander of the company.

"We're going to finish off all projects, and then move all the stuff from the mountains in Romania down to the port and then head back to the States," he said.

The move will require the entire company, including maintenance crews, to get the job done. According to CPT Ferguson, the unit will need to put the





Polish and U.S. service members stand in formation during the opening ceremony of Resolute Castle 19, a multilateral engineer training exercise supporting Atlantic Resolve and allied interoperability, at the Drawsko Pomorskie Training Area, Poland, April 2019.

U.S. Army photo by PVT Caleb Minor

SSG Sean Robles, 207th Engineer Utility Detachment, Alaska Army National Guard, operates a grader on one of the work sites at Land Forces Combat Training Center Getica, Cincu, Romania, as part of exercise Resolute Castle 19, May 2019.

Alaska Army National Guard photo by PVT Grace Nechanicky

equipment on the railhead and then make sure everything is in perfect condition for the long journey back to America. That means no equipment that leaks or has any issues after having been used by multiple units for over half a year.

“It’s got to be basically [like] a new piece of equipment before it goes on the ship,” CPT Ferguson explained. “It has to be inspected by customs to make sure that it can come back to the United States. We will probably be going nonstop to get that stuff on the ship to send it back to the Port of Charleston, where the Pennsylvania Guard will pick back up their equipment.”

CPT Ferguson, who has been an engineer for over two decades, said the most challenging portion of any engineering mission is found not in executing the construction projects, but in moving the heavy equipment to the site and then removing it. Variables including

road conditions, bridges and ports can all make just getting there and back the hardest part of the work.

“The most difficult part to any engineer mission, whatever kind of equipment you’re taking about, is always the movement there,” he emphasized. “The actual engineering part is actually simple compared to the movement. You have to make sure you don’t hit bridges, and the bridges will hold the weight of all the equipment that we have. And the railhead may not be the same as ours. All those kind of things can be actually really dangerous and difficult for engineers.”

He went on to say that the European theater in particular can be challenging because the ports of operations and security requirements may change without much notice. He recalled that a Black Sea port is normally used during Resolute Castle, but at last year’s exercise, the heavy equipment was rerouted.

“They dropped off the equipment in Germany. So, they had to go out to four or five countries to get their equipment to Romania.”

Although it’s challenging, or perhaps because it is challenging, CPT Ferguson said he enjoys the work involved with Resolute Castle.

“I just really enjoy it,” he commented. “You know, the quality people that are there with me keep me coming back.”

Taking part in Resolute Castle 19 is just another example of the rewards one can find in being a Guard Soldier, where an everyday American can make a difference on the world stage.

“I enjoy seeing the United States helping and improving stability in Europe,” SSG Twigg noted. “This sends a huge message to everyone that the NATO alliance is strong and constantly pushing forward. Strong Army, Strong Europe.” ●

OFFERING A LITTLE HELP

BY CONTRIBUTING WRITER
TSgt Erich B. Smith

A new National Guard Bureau (NGB) initiative has begun to benefit National Guard Soldiers and Airmen who require behavioral health care but live in remote locations not near a military facility or base.

The Veteran Center Outreach Initiative, a Veterans Affairs (VA) program, is designed to give Guard members access to the same type of counseling services often available in more populated areas, said Anthony Wickham, NGB's chief of Soldier, Airman and Family support.

"Some of our service members are literally hundreds of miles away from military medical facilities and, naturally, there are fewer behavioral health specialists, even on the civilian side," said Wickham. "This initiative increases our ability to reach those remote service members and their Families."

As part of the VA's Readjustment Counseling Service (RCS), Veteran Center Outreach staff members will travel to National Guard facilities around the Nation while offering counseling services that will be conducted while National Guard members are already drilling on site or participating in other additional unit training. Counseling services are available to both full-time and part-time Guard members.

The VA Readjustment Counseling Service offers a wide range of psycho-

social services to eligible Veterans, active service members and their Families, including:

- Individual and group counseling
- Family counseling for military-related issues
- Bereavement counseling for families who experience an active duty death
- Military sexual trauma counseling and referral
- Outreach and education including Post-Deployment Health Reassessment, community events, etc.
- Substance abuse assessment and referral
- Employment assessment and referral
- Veterans Benefits Administration benefits explanation and referral
- Screening and referral for medical issues including Traumatic Brain Injury, depression, etc.

According to Wickham, RCS representatives coordinate with National Guard behavioral health representatives at State and unit levels to determine the best times for center outreach staff members to travel to National Guard facilities and provide services to Guard members.

The initiative's development began in 2016, noted Wickham, when he and a VA official discussed gaps in official programs that addressed the general health needs of National Guard members.

"Part of that [discussion involved] behavioral health," Wickham said,

adding that studies from the Department of Defense and independent outside groups clearly state there is a significant population of "geographically dispersed Guard members who could benefit from behavioral health support."

Wickham said most Veteran Center Outreach counselors have military backgrounds and understand military culture. The hope is that the outreach initiative will help promote the continued normalization of the presence and use of behavioral health services in the Guard community. "Most of the counselors at the centers are themselves veterans," Wickham observed, "and understand what it's like to be in the military."

Wickham added the initiative, slated for full implementation this past April, is about improving the overall mental health of all Guard members.

"If they can get treated early in this continuum of behavioral health care, then that service member is [less likely to] become a retention or a separation case," Wickham said. "This contributes to [overall] readiness."

In the end, Wickham said this is all about promoting the use of behavioral health services.

"People get sick, and sometimes they get sick in the body, and sometimes they get sick in their mind. [Regardless, they] need a little help," he said. "That's what this [program offers]." ●

The Cornerstone to a Fit Soldier

ARTICLE SUPPLIED BY GoArmy.com

COMPONENTS OF FITNESS

Physical fitness, which is important for a successful career in the Army, is defined as the ability to function effectively in physical work, training and other activities, while still having enough energy left over to handle any emergencies that may arise. To improve their level of fitness in preparation for the Army Physical Fitness Test (APFT), Soldiers should focus on the following components of physical fitness: Cardio Respiratory Endurance (CR), Muscular Strength and Endurance, Flexibility and Body Composition.

CARDIO

Reaching Target Heart Rate

CR is the efficiency with which the body delivers oxygen and nutrients needed for muscular activity and eliminates waste products from the cells. To improve fitness, it is important for Soldiers to identify and reach their Target Heart Rate (THR), or Training Heart Rate. The THR is a desired range of heart rate reached during aerobic exercise, which enables the heart and lungs to receive the most benefit from a workout. In turn, this improves endurance. Experts recommend that Soldiers monitor heart rate during their exercise routine—the goal is to stay in the zone of 50 to 85 percent of THR.

To determine a target heart rate using the Army's online THR calculator, visit GoArmy.com/soldier-life/fitness-and-nutrition/components-of-fitness/cardio.html.

Oregon Army National Guard SPC Matthew Bringman, with Company C, 141st Brigade Support Battalion, completes the two-mile run during the fitness test portion of the 2018 Oregon National Guard Best Warrior Competition.

Oregon Army National Guard photo by MSG John Hughel

SPC Gabriel Dunn from the 223rd Military Intelligence Battalion drags a 90-pound sled during an Army Combat Fitness Test at the Parks Reserve Forces Training Area in Dublin, Calif.

California Army National Guard photo by
SPC Amy E. Carle



STRENGTH AND ENDURANCE

What It Takes for a Soldier to Keep Going

Muscular Strength and Endurance means how hard a muscle or muscle group can work in a single effort, and the ability of a muscle or muscle group to perform repeated movements for extended periods of time.

On today's battlefield, in addition to CR fitness, Soldiers need a high level of muscular endurance and strength. Although muscular endurance and strength are separate fitness components, they are closely related. Progressively working against resistance will produce gains in both of these areas. Before starting a resistance training program, Soldiers should choose exercises that work several muscle groups and try to avoid those that isolate single muscle groups. This will help train a greater number of muscles in a given time, help balance the body's development and avoid injury. For example, weightlifting is one way to train muscle groups, but injuries will occur when improper lifting techniques are combined with lifting too much weight. Before starting a strength training program, Soldiers should first understand how to do each lift correctly.

DID YOU KNOW?

Strength training falls under three different areas:

Weight training: Weight and resistance training are popular methods of strength training, which use gravity and weights or hydraulic resistance to oppose muscle contraction.

Resistance training: A form of strength training in which each effort is performed against a specific opposing force generated by resistance from pushing, bending, squeezing or stretching. Exercises are isotonic if a body part is moving against the force.

Isometric training: Isometric exercise, or "isometrics," is a type of strength training in which the joint angle and muscle length do not change during contraction. In isometric exercises, a body part is holding still against the force.

FLEXIBILITY

Helping Prevent Injury

Flexibility is the range of movement of a joint, or series of joints, and their associated muscles. Good flexibility can help accomplish physical tasks more efficiently like lifting, loading, climbing, parachuting, running and rappelling, with less risk of injury. Stretching during warm-up and cool-down helps maintain overall flexibility—it should not be painful, but should cause some discomfort because the muscles are being stretched beyond their normal length. Because people differ in their physical make-up, one person's flexibility shouldn't be compared with another's. If a person has poor flexibility, trying to stretch as far as someone else could cause an injury.

BODY COMPOSITION

Calculating Body Mass Index (BMI) for the Army

Body composition is the amount of body fat a Soldier has in comparison to their total body mass. To remain compliant with Army fitness requirements, Soldiers must meet the height and weight requirements per their appropriate age group. If they are over the prescribed weight for their height, they can still



qualify by being below the specified body fat for their age based on standards. Those in charge of administering APFTs can help Soldiers in determining their body fat percentage, but Soldiers can also monitor their own progress with the body fat calculator provided at GoArmy.com/soldier-life/fitness-and-nutrition/components-of-fitness/cardio.html.

Improving CR and muscle stamina will have a positive impact on body composition and will result in less fat. Excessive body fat detracts from the other fitness components, reduces performance and negatively affects overall health. A person's body fat depends on many factors, including body type, however, and one person's body fat should not be compared with someone else's.

FUELING A FIT SOLDIER

In addition to exercise, proper nutrition and hydration play a major part in maintaining total fitness. Good dietary habits greatly enhance the ability to perform at maximum potential and,

since water is important for good health because it plays an important role in maintaining normal body temperature, reaching maximum potential is dependent on both nutritional components.

HYDRATION

Water—What the Body Needs

Soldiers often fail to drink enough water, especially when training in the heat. Water is an essential nutrient that is critical to reaching best physical performance. It is also important for good health because it plays an important role in maintaining normal body temperature. The evaporation of sweat helps cool the body during exercise, so water lost through sweating must be replaced because lack of hydration can lead to poor performance and possible injury. Sweat consists primarily of water with small quantities of minerals like sodium. Cool, plain water is the best drink for replacing fluid lost as sweat. Experts recommend drinking water before, during and after exercise to prevent dehydration and help enhance performance.

Sports drinks, which are usually simple carbohydrates (sugars) and electrolytes dissolved in water, are helpful under certain circumstances. There is evidence that solutions containing up to 10 percent carbohydrate will enter the blood fast enough to deliver additional glucose to active muscles. Although this can improve endurance, there is no substitution for water.

During prolonged periods of strenuous exercise—1.5 hours or more—Soldiers can benefit from periodically drinking sports drinks with a concentration of 5 to 10 percent carbohydrate. Soldiers on extended road marches can also benefit from drinking these types of glucose-containing beverages. During intense training, sports drinks can provide a source of carbohydrate for working muscles. On the other hand, drinks containing more than 10 percent carbohydrate, like soda and most fruit juices, can lead to abdominal cramps, nausea and diarrhea. Therefore, these drinks should be used with caution during intense endurance training and other similar activities.



DAILY WATER REQUIREMENTS

Example for a 150-pound active person:

Pounds of body weight: 150 lbs.

Water requirements: (75% of body weight for an active person): 112.5 oz.

Add for dryness of climate: +16 oz.

Add for strenuous exercise: +16 oz.

Total per day: 144.5 oz.

Divide by the number of waking hours to find hourly water requirement: $144.5/16 = 9$ oz.

Drink 50-75% of your body weight in ounces.

Sedentary people: 50%; Active People: 75%

DIET

Making Healthy Choices

For Soldiers to get enough energy from the food they eat and to obtain the variety of foods needed for nutritional balance, at least three meals a day are required. Snacking between meals can contribute to good nutrition if the snacks consist of the right types of foods.

Proper weight is maintained as long as the body is in energy balance or when the number of calories used equals the number of calories consumed. The following guidelines may help build lean muscle mass and create more energy.

Eat high protein, low fat items such as: fish, beans, whole wheat pasta, egg whites, skim or 1 percent milk and low-fat yogurt. Avoid items such as: fried items, high fat meats, egg yolks and whole milk.

For a good source of vitamins, eat a diet rich in raw or steamed vegetables, green leafy romaine, whole grain breads and fruits with skin. Avoid fried vegetables, white bread and canned fruits in syrup.

Choose non-trans fat bread spreads and heart healthy margarine. Cook with

Virginia Army National Guard Soldiers of Charlie Company, 3rd Battalion, 116th Infantry Regiment, 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, train during a basic boxing workout in Leesburg, Va.

Virginia Army National Guard photo by Cotton Puryear

olive oil or sunflower oil, omit or use less lard and meat fat. Limit or omit creamy salad dressings high in fat content, cookies, cakes, pies and pastry goods. Avoid fast foods to help cut down on fat intake.

The most accurate way to control caloric intake is to control the size of food portions. A high intake of fats, especially saturated fats and cholesterol, has been associated with higher levels of blood cholesterol, so experts recommend eating less fatty food for better overall health. ●



Featured Podcast

HOW TO GET AN INTERNATIONAL DRIVING PERMIT

Plan to be driving while you are overseas? In this podcast, you will learn where to obtain a valid international driving permit.

To listen, go to: **MilitaryOneSource.mil/training-resources/podcasts/how-to-get-an-international-driving-permit**

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FROM THE GROUND UP

Command and Control Training for “America’s Worst Day”

BY STAFF WRITER Matthew Liptak

This year’s Vibrant Response exercise challenged Soldiers to mitigate, not one but two, simulated 20-kiloton nuclear explosions near the cities of Detroit and Phoenix. Army National Guard units were tasked with dealing with the aftermath of the notional Detroit detonation. It was an exercise which, for the first time, included a command and control structure built from the ground up at Selfridge Air National Guard Base in Harrison Township, Michigan.

“Last year after, after we got done with Annual Training, [our Commander] MG Michael Stone said that next year he wanted to do what we do in the field in cases where we go to an area and all we get [for command] is a big field,” commented COL Steven Gust, logistics lead for the 46th Military Police Command, Michigan Army National

Guard. “We don’t get a building. We don’t get power. We don’t get any of that. So, we immediately started looking at locations where we could do command operations in the field. And we went to a number of courses of action and selected the Detroit area.”

Exercise Vibrant Response is a disaster response training exercise held annually since 2009. Most of the non-command and control portions of the exercise took place at Camp Atterbury and the Muscatatuck Urban Training Complex, both in Indiana. The exercise is hosted by U.S. Army North, U.S. Northern Command’s Joint Force Land Component Command. The Michigan National Guard’s 46th Military Police Command—which is one of three Department of Defense (DoD) elements designated to provide command and control of DoD assets providing life-saving

disaster response, recovery and other support to civilian authorities in the event of a Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear attack—participated in Vibrant Response as the command control unit.

Over 3,500 military members participated in Vibrant Response this year, including National Guard personnel from 28 States. Also involved were personnel from the Federal Emergency Management Agency and several other federal and Michigan State agencies. The Guard units involved included the 46th Military Police Command and 507th Engineer Battalion from the Michigan Army National Guard;

Tactical operations center for the 46th Military Police Command, Michigan Army National Guard during Vibrant Response 2019.

Michigan Army National Guard photo by SGT Cambrin Bassett



the 369th Sustainment Brigade and 133rd Composite Supply Company from the New York Army National Guard; the 444th Chemical Company and 710th Medical Company Area Support from the Illinois Army National Guard; the 119th Combat Service Support Battalion and 154th Quartermaster Company from the

New Jersey Army National Guard; the 198th Expeditionary Signal Battalion from the Delaware Army National Guard; the 105th Human Resources Company from the Tennessee Army National Guard; and the 108th Chemical Company from the South Carolina National Guard.

The exercise put the command and

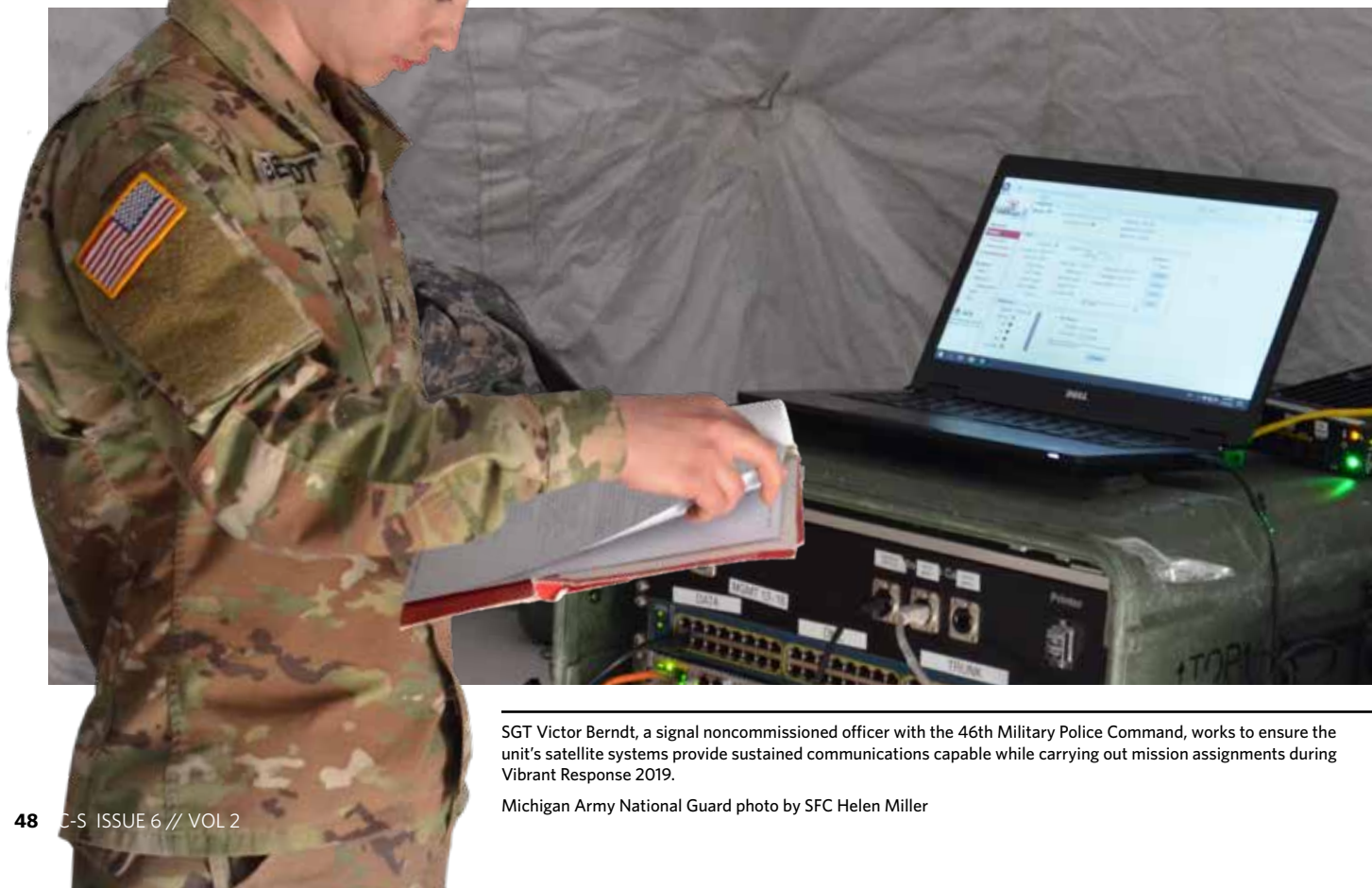
control element in austere conditions in the field with infrastructure that was only available from whatever could be flown or trucked into the area. This trend toward realism in exercises is thought to increase both unit readiness and Soldier proficiency.

During last year's Vibrant Response, command and control operated from a building on Camp Atterbury.

"The big difference for us is last year when we moved, we occupied basically a big cold storage building where we set up our mission command, and so it already had power and already had heating and cooling," COL Gust said. "All we really had to do was forecast what we would need to take us there. The logistics that were supplied down there were a heck of a lot simpler than what I've had to go through this year, because they had all classes of supply available at Camp Atterbury."

LEFT: British Armed Forces soldier, Corp. Michael Beasley-Wood from the 37th Royal Signals Regiment 4-8 Signal Squadron, takes direction from CPL Jack Rodriguez of the 46th Military Police Command in learning about the communication systems used during the Vibrant Response 2019, May 2019.

Michigan Army National Guard photo by SPC Aaron Good



SGT Victor Berndt, a signal noncommissioned officer with the 46th Military Police Command, works to ensure the unit's satellite systems provide sustained communications capable while carrying out mission assignments during Vibrant Response 2019.

Michigan Army National Guard photo by SFC Helen Miller



Commanding General of the 46th Military Police Command, MG Michael A. Stone speaks with (left to right) CPL Michael Beasley-Wood, a unit signal specialist; CPL Christina Roberts, a unit medic; and CPL William Salt, a unit military police member, during the 46th's expeditionary style training as part of Vibrant Response 2019.

Michigan Army National Guard photo by SGT Cambrin Bassett

Not so this year. The level of complexity for the in-field setup was exponentially more complicated than last year.

"In a field environment, we've got about 250 people that are on the ground here at Selfridge. I had to acquire enough tents, food, water, fuel and other classes of supply in order to pull this off, because I've got 250 people sleeping in tents," COL Gust noted. "And then I've got 250 people working in another set of tents. So, we've got a sleeping tent area and we've got an operations area in two different locations."

As part of the G6 for the 46th, COL David Hayes helped tackle the communication effort for the unit while at Selfridge. The large amount of training and preparation his section had done since last year's Vibrant Response was evident when it came time for this year's exercise.

"We had communication set up within 12 minutes of hitting the site," he said. "We had a satellite linkup and we were pushing data in 12 minutes."

COL Hayes cited four main reasons why the communication section saw improvement over last year's Vibrant Response. The Soldiers had not been idle during the year that had passed.

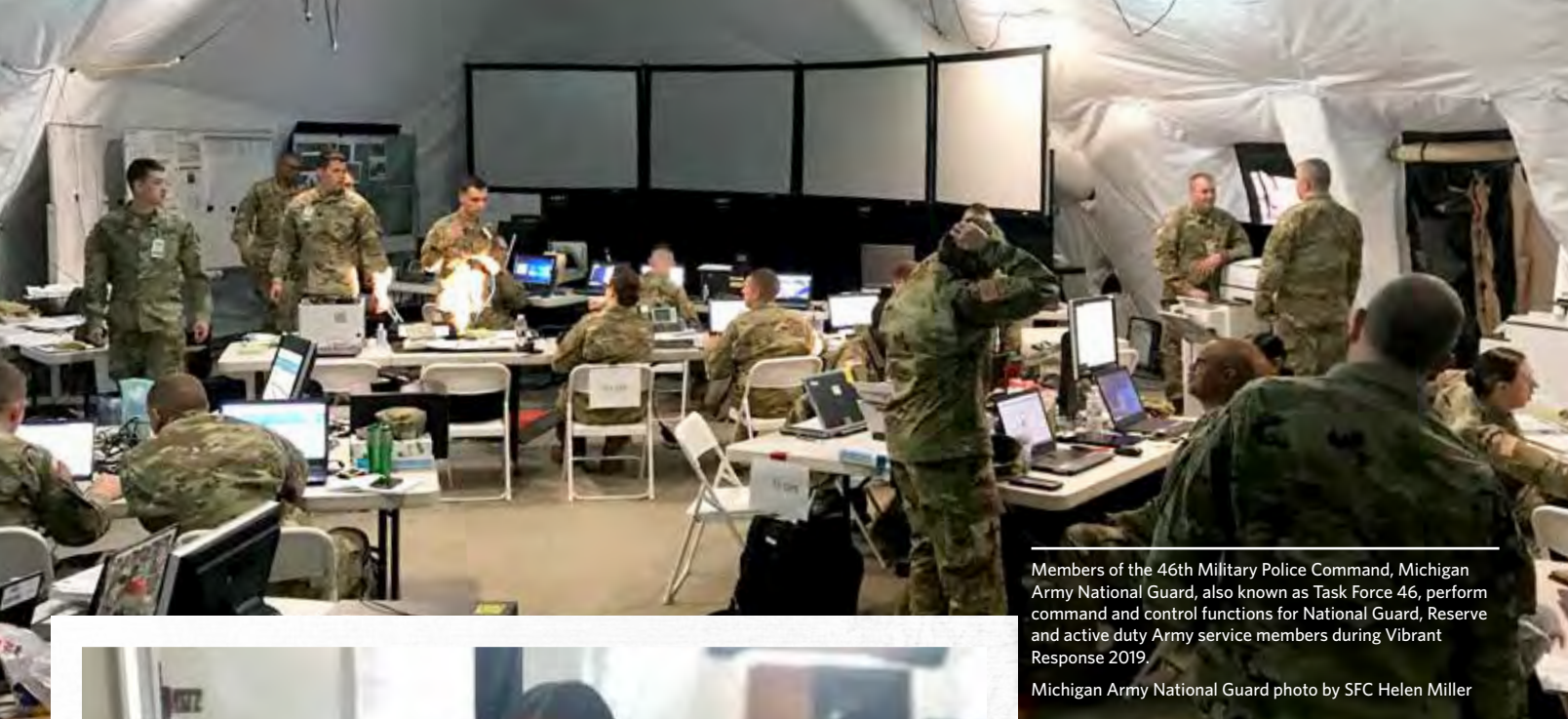
"I will say that from Vibrant Response 18 to 19, we probably doubled our knowledge capacity," he said "We really put a big effort towards getting the equipment we needed and trained the Soldiers across the board."

— COL David Hayes

COL Hayes explained that the United States is a bandwidth-intensive environment. As a National Guard element in the defense support of the civil authority arena, the 46th needs a lot of bandwidth as they have many large files that get sent back and forth across the task force. COL Hayes' section looked at how they could increase capacity and decided to invest in some additional satellite downlinks that would provide additional increased bandwidth. They employed those links at exercises throughout the year.

The next element COL Hayes had the unit focus on was the continued training of Soldiers. Attrition had occurred over the year. Soldiers leave and new Soldiers enlist. The unit had some gaps with training, so the command took time to send Soldiers to schools—not only Army schools, but also schools run by the manufacturers of the equipment they use. Soldiers went to the manufacturers and, on occasion, COL Hayes noted, the manufacturers came to them. Subsequently equipment were at several exercises to assist and support the unit.

The 46th also increased the amount of training exercises conducted during



Members of the 46th Military Police Command, Michigan Army National Guard, also known as Task Force 46, perform command and control functions for National Guard, Reserve and active duty Army service members during Vibrant Response 2019.

Michigan Army National Guard photo by SFC Helen Miller



A member Michigan's 46th Military Police Command performs command/control duties during Vibrant Response 2019.

Michigan Army National Guard photo by SPC Aaron Good

the past year. They held additional communications exercises to make sure that both the unit's personnel and equipment were able to manage expectations of the command.

Finally, the communications section looked at collaboration efforts. As the 46th could be assigned to a mission operating across hundreds of miles of area, figuring out how to communicate and collaborate effectively is critical. The 46th looked at its standard operating procedures and adjusted them accordingly to increase efficiencies.

SGT Victor Berndt, a team chief and signal support specialist with the 46th, believed deploying the unit's mobile equipment and putting both his team members and the gear to the test was essential to increasing readiness. He

embraced the old saying, "a used key always stays bright" and that definitely is the case, metaphorically speaking, when it comes to Soldiers keeping their skills sharp.

"If we don't actually pull up the equipment or utilize it, we may not prepare as well as we'd like to or should," explained SGT Berndt. "And the more prepared you are, the better we are able to support anyone [who needs us] for their worst day."

SGT Berndt noted this year's Vibrant Response had been executed better by his team over their performance last year. He cited Soldier feedback as an indication of the improvement.

"We were more prepared for this [Vibrant Response]," he said. "For example, usually people would complain the internet was slow. Now, we haven't really had very many complaints with those issues. So far, it's definitely improved immensely."

COL Hayes said he felt that not only did the 46th improve proficiency, but that the entire mosaic of units and personnel in the joint exercise had improved their abilities as well.

"I will say that from [Vibrant Response] 18 to 19, we probably doubled our knowledge capacity," he said. "We really put a big effort towards getting the equipment we needed and trained the Soldiers across the board."

The use of Selfridge was critical in making the austere expeditionary nature of this year's command and control elements successful. Commander of the Selfridge Air National Guard Base, Brig Gen Rolf Mammen, indicated that the type of working together he observed at his base during Vibrant Response 19 is a major key in how the American military wins in the field.

"I just thought it was a fantastic collaboration," he said. "I mean, it's the way things really come together as a joint force to be effective, to make sure we accomplish the mission."

Vibrant Response is likely to continue to evolve, becoming more realistic and more robust with each passing year. Being prepared for America's worst day requires both U.S. Army North and the Army National Guard to put their best feet forward.

"I think it's just going to continue to accelerate," said COL Gust. ●

MILITARY ACRONYM FINDER

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Supporting Tomorrow's Leaders:

ARMY NATIONAL GUARD SCHOLARSHIPS

ARTICLE SUPPLIED BY NationalGuard.com

For members of the Army National Guard, the high price of tuition does not need to stand in the way of a great education. The Army National Guard provides financial assistance to students who wish to attend college and commission in the Guard with three major scholarships for full-time students: the Dedicated Army National Guard (DEDNG) scholarship, the Guaranteed Reserve Forces Duty (GRFD) scholarship and the Minuteman (MM) Scholarship.

To receive one of these scholarships, students must be involved in the Simultaneous Membership Program (SMP) with a National Guard unit while in school and have a letter of acceptance from a local Guard unit stating it will accept the student in an SMP status. Following graduation, Cadets begin a new Military Service Obligation (MSO) contract and serve eight years in the National Guard, which includes training. ●

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify for these scholarships, students must:

- Be a U.S. citizen
- Have a minimum high school GPA of 2.5
- Have a minimum score of 920 on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) or 19 on the American College Test (ACT)
- Complete the ROTC Basic Course requirements or Basic Combat Training
- Be medically and morally qualified



DEDICATED ARMY NATIONAL GUARD (DEDNG) SCHOLARSHIP

Recipients receive full tuition, plus up to \$1,200 for books, and are paid a monthly allowance in the following amounts: \$350 during sophomore year, \$450 during junior year and \$500 during senior year. Grad students can also apply if they have only two years remaining until they graduate.

In addition to a monthly allowance, students can also receive the drill pay of a sergeant—approximately \$225 per month—when they participate in the SMP.

GUARANTEED RESERVE FORCES DUTY (GRFD) SCHOLARSHIP

Similar to the DEDNG scholarship, the GRFD scholarship is mainly for students entering their junior year of college with a GPA of 2.5 or higher. They also must join the SMP of a Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) unit on their campus. GRFD recipients (dedicated or not) can choose either full tuition and fees or room and board, and receive \$1,200 for books. They are given an ROTC allowance for 10 months of the year at \$420 per month. As a member of the Guard, they will also receive drill pay.

MINUTEMAN (MM) SCHOLARSHIP

Minuteman Scholarships can be either two-year GRFD scholarships or DEDNG-GRFD scholarships that cover up to four years. They guarantee that Cadets who commission as Army officers will serve in the Guard. A Minuteman Scholarship requires a nomination letter as part of the scholarship packet and offers either full tuition and mandatory fees or a room and board flat rate of \$10,000 per year, covering up to four years (or eight semesters) of benefits. Minuteman Scholarship recipients also receive a \$1,200 annual book allowance and a monthly stipend of \$420 for 10 months of the academic year. Minuteman Scholarship Cadets must participate in the SMP while attending college, which means they will also receive pay for attending a drill one weekend per month and a two-week annual training in a local Guard unit. In return for these scholarship benefits, a Minuteman Cadet will serve as a Commissioned Officer in the Guard in a drilling status for eight years after graduation.

Minuteman Scholarship Cadets can be nominated for a scholarship by The Adjutant General (TAG) from any State or any Civilian Aide to the Secretary of the Army (CASA) in lengths of two years, up to four years. These scholarships are limited each year, and applications require a nomination memo with a handwritten signature from the nomination source. For more specific information and to learn how to apply, follow this link: <https://www.cadetcommand.army.mil/arng.aspx>

Supporting Tomorrow's Leaders:

ADDITIONAL EDUCATION FUNDING RESOURCES

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Currently, Veterans, military personnel and their Families, and National Guard service members have many resources available to help them fund their college education. They may be eligible for loans, grants, work-study programs or scholarships—or a combination thereof—that can significantly reduce their tuition and other costs.

Financial aid is often awarded based on grade average or test scores, but it may be offered for a variety of factors, including:

- Specific majors
- Special interests or experience
- Students from specific States
- Minority students

It is definitely worthwhile to research and exhaust every resource. Toward that end, some basic information to assist in a financial aid search follows.

SCHOLARSHIPS

A large number of scholarships are available from many different sources, including private organizations. For a comprehensive guide on financial aid, including available scholarships, check out “Financial Aid for Veterans, Military Personnel and Their Families” (Schlacter/Weber; Reference Service Press, 2010). Often referred to as the “big white book,” this reference volume is updated annually with the most current information, rules and rates.

FREE APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID (FAFSA)

To evaluate financial need, the U.S. Department of Education requires everyone applying for a federal student loan or grant to complete the FAFSA. This document helps verify eligible students’ financial status to make certain they receive the full award amount to which they are entitled.

Eligible students can then fill out an FAFSA online or download a paper PDF version to be filled out manually. The online version helps eliminate delays and allows editing of the application. More information and online assistance is available at studentaid.ed.gov/sa/fafsa.

FEDERAL PELL GRANTS

A Federal Pell Grant can be an excellent starting block for college funding. Unlike a loan, the need-based Pell Grant does not have to be repaid, and it can be used in conjunction with other scholarships and loans.

Generally, Pell Grants are awarded only to undergraduate students who have not yet earned a bachelor’s degree or professional degree. Exceptions may be made on occasion for students enrolled in post-baccalaureate teacher certification programs.

To be considered for a Federal Pell Grant, submit an FAFSA as described in the previous section.

Award Amounts

The maximum amount for the 2019–20 award year (July 1, 2019, through June 30, 2020) is \$6,195. The amount an individual student may receive depends on a number of factors, including:

- Financial need
- School costs
- Whether attending full or part time
- Whether attending for the entire school year

Special consideration is given to eligible students whose parent or guardian died as a result of military service in Iraq or

Afghanistan after Sept. 11, 2001. This category of students must be under 24 years old or enrolled in college, either full or part time, at the time of their parent or guardian’s death.

Find out more about Federal Pell Grants at www2.ed.gov/programs/fpg/index.html.

STUDENT LOANS

Several types of federal student loans are available. These loans charge low interest rates, but repayment of the full amount of the loan plus interest fees is required.

The types of loans include:

- Perkins: Paid through the student’s school of choice, this low-interest loan is available to undergraduate and graduate students with the greatest need.
- Direct Stafford: Loans issued directly through the federal government to cover costs at a four-year college or university, community college, or trade, career or technical school. Stafford loans may be available to students with or without demonstrating financial need.



- Direct PLUS (for graduate and professional degree students): Allows graduate and professional degree students to receive federal loans to cover costs of their advanced degree.
- Direct PLUS (for parent borrowers): Allows parents of dependent children to help pay for the student's education costs.
- Direct Loan Consolidation: Allows the borrower to combine multiple federal loans into a single loan.

With any federal student loan, each student must also submit an FAFSA.

Loan Repayment

With some loans, students will not be required to begin repayment until a grace period (from six to nine months) following graduation. Others will require setting up a payment that will begin while the student is still in school. Borrowers may usually take 10 to 25 years to repay the full loan amount, depending on the plan.

Learn more about student loans at studentaid.ed.gov/sa/, or

contact a State education services officer (ESO) for more information.

OTHER RESOURCES

GoArmyEd is the Army's virtual gateway to tuition assistance. All eligible Active Duty, National Guard and Army Reserve Soldiers can access GoArmyEd online anytime to manage education records, including college classes, testing, on-duty classes and Army Education Counselor support.

Army COOL (Credentialing Opportunities On-Line) helps Soldiers get the necessary credentials and certifications to turn Military Occupational Specialties (MOSs) into civilian positions. Get information, find the right license and certification, and learn how to fill gaps between Army training and experience and civilian credentialing requirements.

Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges (SOC) is a national network of higher

education associations and over 1,900 member colleges nationwide. Receive a specific college plan and access the SOC Army Degree (SOCAD) and SOCAD Army Career Degree programs. These programs offer credit transfers, college credit for military training and many other educational benefits. Visit the SOC website or contact your State ESO.

If unsure whether a school is accredited, use the Department of Education's online School Finder database to find accreditation information on a specific school or see a complete list of accredited schools.

Current Guard Soldiers can get information on education programs by emailing the Guard Support Center or calling 866-628-5999. ●



STEPPING UP IN SOUTH KOREA

BY STAFF WRITER Matthew Liptak

Plans for the consolidation of Army forces in South Korea from U.S. Army Garrison Yongsan near Seoul to Camp Humphries, 50 miles to the south, began over a decade ago in 2004. More recently, Special Operations Command Korea (SOCKOR) also relocated to Camp Humphries with the help of two Soldiers from the Ohio National Guard.

SSG Kyle Brown and SPC Daniel Mize, both of the 1194th Engineering Company, Ohio Army National Guard, are currently deployed to South Korea on Active Duty Operational Support orders. The two Soldiers, whose expertise is in construction, have been instrumental in getting SOCKOR's facilities up and running over the past year.

The entirety of Camp Humphries is a \$10.7 billion project. The South Korean government is funding 90 percent of the bill for its construction, according to an Army report. By August of last year, almost 700 construction projects were already underway on Camp Humphries. That included a new Post Exchange and commissary, housing, medical facilities and schools. Enough dirt was trucked in during the revamping of the Army post to fill Yankee Stadium 29 times over. The post's population has grown from about 6,000 to 28,000 Soldiers, Family members, civilians, contractors and South Korean military members. The on-post population is expected to reach about 42,000 personnel by 2020.

Leading a team of construction workers, SSG Brown and SPC Mize converted three buildings—a vehicle bay, a training/storage area and a small headquarters building—into a fully functioning command headquarters complete with multiple facilities and layers of security.

The lead-up to SSG Brown's successful participation in these conversion efforts started when he decided he needed a "change of scenery" a couple of years ago. He saw the opportunity in South Korea posted on Tour of Duty, an online system that lists active duty assignments for reserve component Soldiers. He applied, and shortly after an officer got back to him about his interest.

Aerial view of Camp Humphreys, South Korea.

U.S. Army photo by Jim McGee





“The lieutenant colonel that I was talking to asked me what made me the best engineer fit [for the job] and why I wanted to come here. I just wanted to actually help a unit that was requesting the type of knowledge I can actually offer. We're always trying to become better engineers overall. I want to be a better NCO [noncommissioned officer] for the Soldiers back home. So when I go back, I'm more knowledgeable and have more active duty experience to take what I learned here and apply it back in the Guard as well.”

Within about two weeks, he went from drilling in Ohio to boots on the ground in Korea, arriving in January of 2018. He said he did not quite know what he had gotten himself into until he got on

site. Expectations were set high for the Soldiers serving as part of the SOCKOR renovation. The work ahead would require heavy manhours and a serious “can-do” attitude.

SSG Brown's civilian expertise as a construction project manager proved invaluable. They had three months to get the jobs done before SOKOR would officially move into their Camp Humphries facilities. He used his civilian skillsets to mitigate a few delays when getting the work started.

“The challenges, I would say, were that we didn't have the resources,” SSG Brown said. “The command really stepped up and said, ‘Hey, whatever you need, give us a list. We will buy the materials and the equipment.’ Within weeks, I gave a list of all the tools that I needed, all the building materials that I would need. There were no questions about it. Every time I needed something, they just gave it to me, right on the spot.”

One thing the command did not have, however, was standard quarters where SSG

Brown could lay his head down at night. He made do with the conference room.

“That was a big challenge, not having a place to sleep,” he recalled. “I had a cot. I had a three-day go bag. I slept [in

ABOVE: The new post exchange on Camp Humphries, Korea, is one of the nearly 700 new facilities constructed on the base as part of the major renovation project that included the development of the new SOCKOR headquarters.

U.S. Army photo by Sean Kimmons

SPC Daniel Mize (left) and SSG Kyle Brown conduct an informal hotwash of their participation in one of the movement exercises routinely practiced by SOCKOR to ensure Soldiers' ability to “Fight Tonight” in response to hostilities on the Korean Peninsula, May 2019.

U.S. Army photo by LTC John C Severns





Aerial view of Camp Humphreys while still under construction, July 2014.
U.S. Army photo by Edward N. Johnson



the conference room], got up, would eat, and then work all day till about eight, nine o'clock at night before getting some more sleep. I'd also work on the weekends. I was probably putting in between 16 to 18 hours a day." The SOCKOR chain of command recognized their new Guard Soldier needed more help. They left it up to SSG Brown to decide who that would be. SPC Mize got the call in the early hours one morning in the spring of 2018.

"Initially, it was not a hard decision to make, because SSG Brown

called me at three in the morning," SPC Mize remembered. "I just wanted to go back to sleep," he added with a laugh.

Able to make arrangements with the civilian job he had just started, SPC Mize decided to take on the Korean mission. Forty-five days later, on June 11, 2018, SPC Mize joined SSG Brown at Camp Humphreys' yet-to-be-completed SOCKOR facilities.

"Overall, it wasn't a hard decision for me," SPC Mize noted. "I can go back to a civilian job, but working in Korea SOCKOR is something that not many engineers will ever get the opportunity to do."

SSG Brown agreed with SPC Mize's sentiments, noting that working for SOCKOR has given him the chance to both supervise construction and get involved in plenty of hands-on work himself. For a few months, he took on several construction projects himself, but when SPC Mize arrived, he let the younger Soldier spearhead the hands-on duties.

"That's when I was reaching out to the conventional engineers, and actually sitting down having meetings and getting these guys over here to help us out," SSG Brown

SSG Kyle Brown, Special Operations Command Korea
Construction Engineer

U.S. Army photo by LTC John C Severns



Aerial view of the former command base for Special Operations Command Korea, U.S. Army Garrison Yongsan, South Korea.

Photo courtesy Army Garrison Yongsan

explained. Once he had gained the trust of SOCKOR leadership, SSG Brown said he was able to give more direct supervision of the projects, ultimately heading projects that had budgets in the millions of dollars. He even learned how to do drafting for the projects.

“So I’ve been doing a lot of drafting, supervising contractors,” he said. “It’s definitely a major learning curve for me. And it’s definitely not something that a normal carpenter would be asked to do.”

SSG Brown said he can see how this critical experience at Camp Humphries will translate to being a better Army National Guard NCO when he eventually goes back to the States. He added that he can also easily see how it may help his civilian career in construction as well.

“It’s definitely stepped up my ability to look at a project or look at a site and envision what needs to be done,” he said. “I mean, I was the architect. I was the foreman. I was a supervisor, all the way down to the guy swinging the hammer—being able to take what someone told me verbally, putting it into an email and into a design and then producing that product. And then they actually approved it with not very many revisions, because they trust me, a 29-year-old E6. I mean, I don’t know many 29-year-olds that are in charge of multimillion dollar projects.”

Like SSG Brown, SPC Mize noted that

“It’s definitely stepped up my ability to look at a project or look at a site and envision what needs to be done. I mean, I was the architect. I was the foreman. I was a supervisor, all the way down to the guy swinging the hammer...”

— SSG Kyle Brown

his opportunity to work in engineering at the SOCKOR facilities was unique and not something he wanted to pass up. He said he is glad he made the decision to join the project, although he admitted it was a big job to take on.

“I don’t believe in my time in the Guard—which is four-and-a-half years now—other than here, that I have ever seen a specialist spearhead a project before. I’ve only seen an E6 do it on Annual Training. It’s definitely a big responsibility with a lot for me to take on. I don’t think I’ll get to do this again until I get to E6.”

And how did the construction turn out? Everyone involved seems to be pleased with the final product.

“I think that the work definitely shows for itself,” SSG Brown said. “We’ve had command here, and we had other commanders doing a walk-through, say they were very impressed. [The visiting commanders] always wanted to talk to me or SPC Mize.”

SOCKOR command’s overall satisfaction with the work performed by the Ohio Soldiers went beyond just talk when both SSG Brown and SPC Mize were invited back to South Korea to continue the mission of maintaining the SOCKOR facilities at Camp Humphries. Both Soldiers said they have accepted the offers that signify a job very well done. ●

SAFETY SERIES:

EARTHQUAKE

BY STAFF WRITER Aryn Kitchell

Every year millions of people are affected by natural disasters and accidents. While Army National Guard Soldiers are most often at the forefront of the first responders working to save and protect individuals, National Guard members and Families are also susceptible to these same disasters and accidents. Some of the unfortunate outcomes from such events are unavoidable, but some can be prevented.

The tips below may serve as a guide to help avoid those preventable outcomes, as *Citizen-Soldier* continues its safety series with earthquake safety.

An earthquake is the rapid shaking of the earth, which is caused by the breaking and shifting of underground rock. Earthquakes can happen anywhere, without warning, and can cause other disasters like tsunamis, landslides and avalanches. The movement can damage buildings and make them collapse, damage roads and even cause fires. Most of the injuries and deaths in an earthquake are actually caused by falling items in and on buildings. Before you experience an earthquake, discuss safety with your Family and protect them by preparing your home.

Start thinking about earthquakes now and discuss with your Family what to do during an earthquake. Talking ahead of time can help reduce stress during an emergency. You should develop a plan that details a safe place in each room of your house, and even at your workplace or school. Safe places should have cover, like under a piece of furniture, and should

be away from windows, bookcases or any tall furniture that could fall and injure you. Emergency experts recommend “Drop, Cover and Hold On” as the steps to take during an earthquake, so practice them with your Family.

- Drop where you are, onto your hands and knees. Staying low protects you from being knocked down, but you can also crawl if needed.
- Cover your head and neck with one arm and hand. Crawl to shelter, either underneath a sturdy piece of furniture, or against an interior wall.
- Hold on until shaking stops—either hold on to the piece of furniture that you are using as shelter, so you can move with it if it shifts; or hold on to your head and neck with both arms and hands if you do not have overhead shelter.

You can prepare your home now by securing heavy items that hang on walls, anchoring top-heavy, freestanding furniture to wall studs, and moving heavy and breakable objects onto low shelves. Heavy wall hangings, like pictures and mirrors, should be moved away from beds, couches and anywhere people sleep or sit. Go through each room of your house and imagine what could injure someone if it fell; for those things that could be dangerous, ensure they can not fall by moving or anchoring them.

If an earthquake occurs, try to remember “Drop, Cover and Hold On.” You should move as little as possible, because many injuries during earthquakes happen from people moving, then falling.

Keep your head and torso protected as much as possible. Try to stay inside, but if you smell gas, get out of the building safely and move away. If you are outside when an earthquake hits, find an area away from buildings, power lines, trees and streetlights and drop to the ground.

Earthquakes can cause other disasters, so be prepared for aftershocks, landslides, tsunamis and fires. Fire is the most common danger after an earthquake, so stay observant and put out any small fires. Aftershocks can occur minutes or months after an earthquake; usually, they are smaller in magnitude, but sometimes they can have greater force. If you feel an aftershock, follow “Drop, Cover and Hold On” until it ends. Listen to the news and radio so you know about any disasters that could strike your area. If you are away from home, only return when authorities say it is safe. ●

Visit the sites below for more information on earthquake safety.

[Ready.gov/earthquakes](https://www.ready.gov/earthquakes)

[Redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies/earthquake#After](https://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies/earthquake#After)

[Fema.gov/media-library-data/1527865427503bbf6d7e61340e203c4607677cb83a69d/Earthquake_May2018.pdf](https://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1527865427503bbf6d7e61340e203c4607677cb83a69d/Earthquake_May2018.pdf)

[Earthquakecountry.org/dropcoverholdon/](https://earthquakecountry.org/dropcoverholdon/)



DoD Funded Child Care Support

BY STAFF WRITER Chase Whitlock

When military parents are activated or deployed for long-term missions, their child care needs often increase and with it, their out-of-pocket child care expenses. To assist with this additional cost, the Army and Department of Defense (DoD) offer Soldiers the Army Fee Assistance Program.

Army Fee Assistance is the Army's contribution toward the total cost of child care for Army Families. Fee Assistance pays down the higher cost of off-post care, allowing eligible Families to pay fees comparable to those charged at the Installation or Army Supported Joint Base for full-day services. Fee assistance compensates for the difference between a Community Based Provider's rate and an Installation's rate for similar services. The service member paid portion and the amount of fee assistance combined usually equal the provider's rate. A provider rate cap applies of \$1,500 per child per month.

Part of the U.S. Army Child, Youth & School Services, the Army Fee Assistance Program offers eligible Families monthly

monetary assistance (paid directly to the child care provider) to help offset the cost of civilian child care in their communities. Program guidelines state that if space is available for a Sponsor's child or children at an Army Child Development Center (CDC) or Family Child Care/School Age Care (FCC/SAC) Program, then said space must be used for the child care. In the event that the Army CDC or FCC/SAC does not have space available, then the Sponsor will be eligible to apply for Off-Post Community Based Fee Assistance.

ELIGIBILITY

- Families of active duty and activated/deployed Reserve Component Soldiers
- Department of the Army Civilians
- Survivors of Fallen Soldiers
- Wounded Warriors currently assigned to a Warriors in Transition Unit (WTU), Battalion (WTB) or Special Operations Command
- Military Spouses who are working a minimum of 16 hours or enrolled in school

Amore Cox stands with the help of her mother, SPC ShaTyra Reed, a public affairs mass communications specialist with the 22nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, XVIII Airborne Corps Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion, in Fayetteville, N.C.

U.S. Army photo by PFC Hubert D. Delany III

ARMY FEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM TYPES

Military Child Care in Your Neighborhood (MCCYN)

The Military Child Care in Your Neighborhood program provides fee assistance for Families of active duty Sponsors, Civilians, Guard/Reservist and Guard/Reserve Technicians who are unable to access on-installation child care. Guard and Reserves must be on orders for a minimum of 30 consecutive days.

Operation Military Child Care (OMCC)

The Operation Military Child Care program provides fee assistance for Families of service members with a status of Deployed, Recruiter, or Deployed Guard/Recruiter. Active duty orders are required to be submitted with the application for verification purposes. Guard and Reserves must be on orders for a minimum of 30 consecutive days.

Army Respite Care

The Army Respite program provides no-cost, hourly child care to support the unique child care needs for Army Families who meet certain criteria.

For Service Members with eligible deployment orders, Families are eligible for up to 16 hours of no-cost, hourly child care per child per month. Respite care pays up to \$10 per hour for the first child and up to \$5 per hour for any additional child, up to a cap of \$15 total per hour.

Per the Army guidelines, respite care is available for the following service members:

- Deployed Contingency Operation
- Wounded Warriors (must be assigned to a WTU or WTB)
- Rotational Forces
- Deployed Non-Contingency Operation
- Survivors of Fallen Warriors
- Army Recruiters
- ROTC Cadet Cadre (trainer)

Respite Care can be used for any of the following:

- Attending appointments
- Running errands
- Caregiver downtime
- Nights, weekends and overnight care
- Respite care may also be used during the day, but it must be outside of the regularly subsidized care if the Family already participates in the Army Fee Assistance Program
- Respite Family Eligibility

The spouse/second parent does not need to be working, going to school or looking for work to qualify for the Respite Care program.

For all Army Fee Assistance programs, Families must select a care provider that is eligible for the MCCYN program and may only use the provider for which they have been approved. To search for eligible MCCYN providers who are already enrolled in the program, visit USA.ChildcareAware.org. Once a provider has been located, Sponsors must contact Child Care Aware of America at 1-800-424-2246 to verify eligibility. ●

The Fee Assistance Program is administered by Child Care Aware of America.

For more information about eligibility requirements and fee assistance application instructions, call 800-424-2246, 703-341-4100, or visit USA.ChildcareAware.org.

SPC ShaTyra Reed with daughter Amore Cox.
U.S. Army photo by PFC Hubert D. Delany III



HOPE Almost Lost

—A Journey from Iraqi Translator to Texas Soldier

BY CONTRIBUTING WRITER CPT Nadine Wiley De Moura

An old pot filled with water boils on an electric stove to be used for taking a warm shower, drinking or cooking. The government-run electric supply is limited to five hours a day unless one can afford a generator. The streets are littered with trash and sewage, and sometimes it is unsafe to go outside due to chaos surrounding the regime.

Riddled with centuries of war and corruption, failing infrastructure and a people governed and controlled by Saddam Hussein's reign of terror, the state of life for the people of Iraq was one of utter despair.

For Baghdad native SPC Hussein Khairi, the realities of poorly managed resources and living under the rule of a corrupt government were interwoven into his daily routine as he studied passionately under his father's instruction to learn English—a language that would one day provide him with the opportunity to contribute to change in his country.

Shortly after U.S. troops began arriving in Iraq in 2003, his father was hired as one of the first translators. Seeing the positive impact his father had made, SPC Khairi eagerly applied to become a translator as soon as he was able.

"Helping translate for U.S. troops was something I really had a passion for and I believed in what I [was doing], helping both countries—Iraq and the United States," said SPC Khairi. "Our convoys had been hit many times by improvised explosive devices and snipers. But I really didn't care if something happened to me because that was the only way we would be able to stop terrorism."

For five years, SPC Khairi traveled on dangerous convoys

SPC Hussein Khairi

Texas Army National Guard photo by SGT Mark Otte

working as a civilian Iraqi translator. Translators like SPC Khairi, who speaks five different dialects of Arabic, as well as Egyptian, Levantine, Yemeni and Saudi, bravely put themselves and their family in harm's way by assisting U.S. troops.

"Translators were under threat 24-7 because, regardless of where you are, the enemy is always hunting for you," said SPC Khairi. "The translator would be with the troops and [the enemy would] actually try to target [the translator]. My family and I were targeted on my days off and in my civilian life, because they view translators as traitors."

SPC Khairi had been translating for U.S. military forces, to include the Navy, Army and Marines, from the time he was 18 years old. Seeking to secure a safe future for his family, SPC Khairi—then still an Iraqi civilian—applied for and received a special immigrant visa that allowed him to obtain permanent residency in the United States.

"After five years of living in the United States, I had the opportunity to become a U.S. citizen," SPC Khairi said. "In 2014, I was offered a job to work with the Department of Defense as a contractor. Because of the mission, I had to renounce my Iraqi citizenship. I was sent on

a deployment to Iraq and Kuwait as a contractor."

While overseas on his deployment, the Department of Defense offered SPC Khairi a three-year contract, which he declined. His dream was to serve as a U.S. Soldier.

"I realized the number of lives that have been sacrificed by the U.S. [Soldiers] helping people. So, the first thing I did when I moved here is try to enlist so that I could give back some of the support that [Iraqis] were given," noted SPC Khairi.

Upon his return from Iraq and one year shy of the Army age cutoff, SPC Khairi enlisted in the Texas Army National Guard in March of 2017 and is an information technology specialist for the 101st Information Battalion, 71st Theater Information Operations Group, 71st Troop Command.

SPC Khairi's path to completing Army basic training was not without obstacles. Enlisting as an older Soldier meant that he would have to keep up with his fellow 18-year-old basic trainees.



SPC Hussein Khairi sends a happy birthday wish to a family member during his days as a translator for U.S. troops.

Photo courtesy SPC Hussein Khairi

"It was hard to be treated as an 18-year-old kid when I was three years older than my drill sergeant," SPC Khairi recalled. "On an individual basis, I was treated well because they knew that I'd been deployed and had been through [a lot] while I was serving the United States."

Despite the seemingly physical drawbacks of being an older enlistee, SPC Khairi performed well at basic training. In fact, his 11 minutes and 10 seconds 2-mile run time was among the fastest in his class.

After graduating basic training, SPC Khairi joined the Texas National Guard Joint Counterdrug Task Force and now works full time as an analyst in support of law enforcement agencies. His job involves monitoring the U.S.-Mexico border for illegal activities and reporting any activity to the proper agency.

"Specialist Khairi has been instrumental in capturing a large number

Then-PFC Hussein Khairi sprints to the finish line of the 8-mile ruck march event during the unit-level tryouts for the Texas Military Department's 2019 Best Warrior Competition at Camp Swift, Texas.

Texas Army National Guard photo by CPT Nadine Wiley De Moura



SPC Hussein Khairi exercises on the obstacle course during the Texas Military Department's 2019 Best Warrior Competition.

Texas Army National Guard photo by SGT Mark Otte

of drug seizures in camera images along the border,” 1SG Demetrice Gonzales, SPC Khairi’s Counterdrug team leader, said. “His professionalism and keen attitude have [actually affected] how other Soldiers and Airmen are assigned to the Border Security Operations Center located in Austin, Texas.”

After a year on the task force, SPC Khairi volunteered to represent his unit in the 2019 Texas Military Department Best Warrior Competition.

CPT Cecilia Magana, of the 101st Information Battalion, and SPC Khairi’s commander said that SPC Khairi was the first in the unit to volunteer to compete.

“For any volunteer opportunities, he is the first to raise his hand,” CPT Magana said. “He is one of those top guys that you want to be a part of your team. If he stays in, he could go all the way up. He would be an amazing first sergeant one day.”

For SPC Khairi, his participation in the event is yet another opportunity to test his limits.

“I always like to get out of my comfort zone, try new things and test my ability to reach a new goal,” SPC Khairi said. “

At the competition, SPC Khairi, once again, had to compete against competitors almost half his age.

“I think it says a lot about an individual to be able to physically outperform or match people who should be in better shape than you,” said SGT Kristopher Celaya, SPC Khairi’s competition sponsor. “I reminded him how his own children and peers will look up to him. Knowing that helped him drive past the challenges that he faced.”

Age was not the only challenging factor during the competition. SGT Celaya explained that as a Muslim SPC Khairi can only eat meat that is halal—that is, meat

that has been slaughtered or prepared in the manner prescribed by Islamic law.

However, during the four-day competition, no halal meat was available. According to SGT Celaya, SPC Khairi compensated with fruit, extra eggs, fish and vegetables. While these foods are all very healthy options, they do not have the same level of protein as meat. This meant SPC Khairi was easily exhausted and had to push harder to complete the competition events. Regardless, he did not complain, he simply drove on.

“Don’t take what you have for granted,” SPC Khairi said. “I tell my kids, when food is served, don’t complain because there are other people who would be so happy to have what you have. So, appreciate what you have and work on improving it.”

SGT Celaya noted that after meeting SPC Khairi, he now has a better

understanding of what Middle Eastern people who are caught in the throes of the war against terrorism have to sacrifice for a better life.

“I think SPC Khairi’s story brings to the Texas National Guard a sense of understanding of the other side of the conflicts that are happening in the Middle East,” he said. “We are born here understanding that [we] are free and have these rights, but we don’t know what it is like to fight for and appreciate them. For someone to live there, put himself in harm’s way, fight for us, then come back, enlist and fight for America—it gives you a better sense that these freedoms should not be taken lightly at all.”

SPC Khairi did not make his journey alone. He credits much of his success to his wife, Otoor, and her unwavering support and sacrifice for him and their family.

SPC Khairi and Otoor had Iraqi college degrees that do not transfer to the United States. When the



SPC Hussein Khairi and his wife, Otoor.

Texas Army National Guard photo by CPT Nadine Wiley De Moura

couple made the decision to move, Otoor had to leave behind her family, her job and her credentials.

“It was her who sacrificed everything for me,” reflected SPC Khairi. “I had always worked with U.S. troops and was familiar with the language and culture. For her, it was all new. She did not speak English [back then]. She left a really good job with the Ministry of Oil. She left all of that for me.”

“We work together,” Otoor said. “Whether it be the military or counterdrug, in everything he does, he is the best. I like what he does and I like to see him be number one for his job and his family.”

Her ambition rivaling her husband’s, Otoor is studying for

her pharmaceutical degree at Austin Community College while SPC Khairi is studying for his criminal justice degree, also at Austin Community College.

In a few short months, SPC Khairi will take on a new adventure as a border patrol officer for U.S. Customs and Border Protection. The border patrol position will require six months of training in Georgia and an additional 10 weeks of Spanish classes.

SPC Khairi noted that it is because he has had to fight for his freedoms that he never passes up an opportunity.

“[I come] from a country that does not offer that many opportunities,” said SPC Khairi. “You have to fight really hard to get into something that you like. In fact, sometimes you have to fight really hard to get into something that you do not like. You just want to get a job and to be able to feed your family. Then I came to [this] country that is full of opportunities. All you have to do is keep on trying. Having lived in a country that has almost lost hope, [I came] to a country that is full of hope. I definitely strive to take advantage of every single opportunity that we have.” ●

Then-PFC Hussein Khairi prepares for the land navigation portion of Texas’ 2019 Best Warrior Competition Camp Swift, Texas.

Texas Army National Guard photo by SSG Melisa Washington



National Guard Soldiers, Airmen and industry partners conduct network surveillance at Camp Atterbury, Ind., April 2019, during Cyber Shield 19, the Nation's largest unclassified cyber defense training exercise.

Ohio Army National Guard photo by SSG George B. Davis

CYBER SHIELD 19

National Guard Cyber Warriors Prepare for Battle

BY STAFF WRITER Tatyana White-Jenkins

Armed with keyboards, data and technical jargon, Army National Guard Soldiers took to the cyber battleground to train and test their abilities during the largest unclassified cyber exercise in the Department of Defense (DoD).

Cyber Shield 19, held in April at Camp Atterbury, Indiana, as the latest iteration of the annual Cyber Shield event series, was an Army National Guard-sponsored exercise that brought together more than 700 participants from 39 States and Territories.

More than 500 of the participants were Army National Guard Soldiers, while the remaining participants were made up of members of the Air National

Guard, Army Reserve, law enforcement community, DoD and cyber defense industry partners, which included Microsoft and CISCO.

Each year, Cyber Shield brings together U.S. Soldiers, Airmen and civilians, State and federal agencies, and industry partners to focus on exchanging best practices and testing vital cyber skills.

"The main goal of Cyber Shield is defensive cyber operations training," said George Battistelli, the Army National Guard cybersecurity program manager, information technology strategy division chief and the Cyber Shield 19 exercise director. "It's a training and an opportunity for participants to put their hands on keyboards and actually identify and

respond to malicious events and activity."

The exercise took place over the course of two weeks. The first week focused solely on training. Participants received hands-on cyber training that would later be tested during the second week of the exercise.

"We bring in the top instructors in the nation [for] the exercise," explained COL Terry Williams, commander of Cyber Shield and deputy commander of the 91st Cyber Brigade. "They train our Soldiers, Airmen and service members on the latest and greatest techniques."

The second week allows participants to put what they learned during the first week into action through a series of scenario-based exercises. In its twelfth iteration, Cyber Shield presents new

scenarios, challenges and technologies every year. As cyber is an ever changing and developing field, Cyber Shield planners seek to embody that same type of constant evolution in the exercise's challenging scenarios.

"Every year we try to diversify the scenario because it's difficult for us to predict from what angle the threat actors may be approaching," said MAJ Dayna Sanders, J3 of Cyber Shield 19 with the Kentucky Army National Guard's Joint Force Headquarters. "We need to get better every year from different angles."

Cyber Shield 19 implemented new technologies like wireless and integrated Internet Protocol version 6 (IPv6). IPv6 is the most recent version of the Internet Protocol (IP)—a communications tool that provides an identification and location system for computers on networks and routes traffic across the internet. The incorporation of new technologies such as IPv6, contributed to the selection of this year's very timely event theme of election systems.

"We are pretty proud

we were able to get elections into the scenario," said COL Williams. "Essentially, they were preparing for [the 2020 election season]."

The election scenario allowed participants to practice their cyber skills as related to helping defense systems protect the elections process.

With previous exercise scenarios focused on cyber breaches within infrastructures, Cyber Shield planners decided to make a shift and have this year's exercise tie more to current events and ongoing concerns within the cyber field.

"Election systems have been a hot topic recently," explained MAJ Sanders. "We want people to know that we're paying attention, we're training and our training is relevant. We're working to better understand and to help our State partners to better defend our critical infrastructures, like the election system."

Growing in reputation, Cyber Shield 19 included a higher number of participants from a larger number of organizations than previous years. This year included participants from the Coast Guard, Navy and the FBI, who performed a mock arrest of a cybercriminal.

During the exercise, Soldiers performed in specific teams based on their role in the scenario. The blue team connected with a network owner, played by an actual participating industry partner, to defend their system. The red team attacked the blue team's systems while the white team

conducted assessments of the exercise. As there was a diverse range of experience and skillsets amongst participants, the exercise incorporated three tiers of attack to effectively challenge every participant.

"We have some States that send their top team for training and some States that

may send their second-tier teams to get training, depending on their rotation," explained Battistelli. "We have the ability to tailor that training for them, and we look at it like the gas pedal method. Sometimes we're going to push the gas pedal harder and give them deeper injects. If they're struggling, we can ease back and give them some [easier] injects or send help from one of the other cells. That allows them to identify and eradicate much more efficiently."

"WHEN A CYBER INCIDENT OCCURS, IT'S NOT ONE PERSON GOING ABOUT SOLVING THE INCIDENT. IT REALLY TAKES A TEAM."

— SPC Kaitlyn Christian

Florida Army National Guard Soldier CW3 Jim Tournade (left), works alongside Oregon Army National Guard Soldier SSG Jason Adsit during a practical exercise as part of Cyber Shield 19.

Illinois Army National Guard photo by SPC William Phelps

“Whatever level you were at, you were going to be challenged,” said COL Williams.

General feedback indicated that, based on the amount of knowledge and practice participants gained, the overall exercise was worthwhile and well received.

“It was an extremely successful exercise,” said SPC Kaitlyn Christian of the North Carolina Army National Guard’s 505th Engineer Battalion. “I know I personally learned so much. I’m just breaking into this field so getting the opportunity to learn from instructors during training week and learn from other individuals that do this as their full-time job was such a great opportunity.”

As a forensics cell member, SPC Christian assisted in analyzing digital evidence. She said since it was a new area of experience for her, she enjoyed the opportunity to push herself and advance her skills.

“The exercise challenged me by getting me out of my comfort zone,” SPC Christian explained. “Forensics isn’t something I’ve done before, so [it tested] me when new problems came about. I learned what systems to use to solve those problems, and the techniques and processes to go through to solve the problems that were sent to us.”

Working closely with other participants highlighted how deterring cyber threats is truly a team effort.

“I learned that when a cyber incident occurs, it’s not one person going about solving the incident,” SPC Christian went on to say. “It really takes a team and a lot of knowledge from that team to learn what happened and critically think to put the pieces together to solve the problem, figure out how to recover from that problem and mitigate future attacks.”

The opportunity to form bonds and sync with industry and State partners while gaining vital cyber expertise was also a major takeaway from the exercise.

“This exercise gives Guard Soldiers exposure to the cyber incident response, and it gets them exposure to

other members that do this full-time,” explained SPC Christian. “It gives them an opportunity to learn and take back different techniques and an opportunity to network and meet individuals that you can call up when you have an issue.”

By providing excellent training and a space to showcase Soldier skills, the Cyber Shield exercise proved to once again highlight the vital role Cyber Soldiers play in cyber defense.

“I truly believe that Cyber Guard members are national treasures for the future code wars,” said COL Williams. “I think they really bring a lot to the table in the sense that they are out in the civilian sector, they all see a plethora of different attacks and different technologies. Then you bring them all together and all that knowledge is residing in one area for two weeks. It’s amazing what they walk away with.” ●

Federal Bureau of Investigation team members demonstrate an execution of a search warrant in a potentially hostile environment during the exercise portion of Cyber Shield 19 at Camp Atterbury, Ind.

Illinois Army National Guard photo by SPC William Phelps

Members of the Kentucky National Guard complete scenario-based exercises in their “cell” during Cyber Shield 19 held at Camp Atterbury, Ind., April 2019.

Illinois Army National Guard photo by SGT Stephen Gifford





LET STRENGTH AND COURAGE DEFINE YOU

BY CONTRIBUTING WRITER SFC Scott Raymond

In late March of 2018, then-SSG Natalie Wamsley was finishing up warrant officer candidate school (WOCS), maxing her last Army Physical Fitness Test and taking another successful step in her 16-year military career. On April 6, she learned she had cancer.

While at WOCS, she felt a lump, but disregarded it as muscle soreness from the intense physical fitness. A couple weeks after she returned home, and many sleepless nights later, she went to her doctor. After an ultrasound and a biopsy, she was called into her doctor's office.

"I knew immediately what that meant," she said. "All they would tell me was I had cancer, not how bad, how big, nothing like that. When you don't know facts, your mind tends to spin out of control."

What SSG Wamsley did know was how

tortuous the week was before speaking with a surgeon. She was told she had an aggressive form of cancer that had spread to her lymph nodes and that it had developed three months prior.

Shock set in.

"I thought, 'I am too young for this.' I have a lot more life to live. I have a husband and two very small children. I have a lot to live for," she said. "But he said I was curable, so I continued to stay positive."

Thanks to recent developments in science, doctors said she had a fighting chance. And fight she did.

SSG Wamsley enlisted in the Guard while she was still in high school in 2003. She joined because of her grandfather's military service and her involvement in Junior ROTC. She comes from a long

Then newly appointed WO1 Natalie Wamsley salutes her husband, CW2 Ronald Wamsley during a commissioning ceremony in Frankfort, Ky., March 2019.

Kentucky Army National Guard photo by SFC Scott Raymond

line of Veterans, but was the first female to join. She served as a human resources specialist at the company and brigade level, including a deployment to Iraq in 2011.

When she took a job at the State's personnel office (G1), she met and was quickly mentored by CWO Larry Arnett. CWO Arnett told her she would make a great warrant officer. She already knew about warrant officers as her husband, CW2 Ronald Wamsley serves as a network engineer with the State information and technology office (J6). And he knew she would make a successful warrant officer.



TOP: WO1 Natalie Wamsley in Baghdad, Iraq, at Victory Base Camp, 2011.

BOTTOM: WO1 Natalie Wamsley and her husband CW2 Ronald Wamsley pose for a photo shortly before WO1 Wamsley undergoes cancer surgery.

Photos courtesy WO1 Natalie Wamsley

“She was already looked upon as an expert in her field,” CWO Larry Arnett said. “She has excellent physical training (PT) scores and shows good leadership skills.”

SSG Wamsley said that mentorship and the desire to be a better version of herself

she had cancer, she started a high-dose chemotherapy.

After six rounds, however, the doctors were not satisfied with her progress, so a more intense regimen began.

Then eight more rounds of chemo. Then surgery.

“I was told I had a ‘stubborn’ cancer, and the surgery didn’t get it all,” she said. “So they decided on more rounds of chemo.”

There were good days and not so good ones. Laughter and tears. Mentally she remained strong, but physically, she said,

“

Everyone has their idea of a hero, Sergeant Wamsley is a personal hero of mine.

”

— LTC Travis Carpenter

drove her to the warrant officer path.

“I hope that I can be a role model for my children one day and show them they can do anything if you work hard and have the right people to guide you.”

That aggressive nature runs through SSG Wamsley in all she does. Less than two weeks after learning

was a different story. Days when she could not pick her children up broke her heart, but not her determination.

“I was so scared I would lose her,” CW2 Wamsley said. “But we focused on one thing at a time. She made things so much easier by being so resilient.”

“She would apologize to me because she was too sick to help with the kids, but I said ‘Don’t worry about it, I got this.’ When she lost her hair, it didn’t even phase her. She still went to work and didn’t even cover up her hair loss. She always maintained a positive attitude.”

SSG Wamsley was then prescribed radiation therapy, which she is currently receiving five days a week. She went through all this while still preparing to be commissioned as a warrant officer.

“I was unsure how my appointment would go. I kept telling myself, if it is not my time, it’s not my time. There will be other opportunities,” she said. “But working out throughout my treatments helped my spirit, along with the strength and love of my husband, children and my Guard family.”

SSG Wamsley came off chemotherapy Jan. 30, and immediately came off profile early in order to take an Army Physical Fitness Test (APFT) in order to commission. She passed, impressing herself with her score. She was commissioned



March 19 in front of a large crowd of friends and colleagues, all inspired by the woman standing in front of them.

She was pinned by CW2 Ronald Wamsley, who said he had never been more proud to be her husband. Together, they are the only warrant officer husband-wife pair in the Kentucky Guard. Both remain so grateful for the support they have received from their Guard family.

When you ask those friends, Guardsmen and civilians, you get “hero,” “fighter,” or “inspiration,” as immediate words describing WO1 Natalie Wamsley. CW2 Ronald Wamsley called her a beast for her consistently solid PT scores. She, however, does not see or think of herself as a hero at all and said, “Everyone has their battles—this is just part of my fight and my story.”

LTC Travis Carpenter, deputy director of personnel for the Kentucky National Guard said a hero is someone who you wish to emulate and someone who has attributes you wish you had, like superpowers.

“Everyone has their idea of a hero,” he said. “Sergeant Wamsley is a personal hero of mine.”

“She’s gone through a lot of adversity lately, but comes to work every day with a smile on her face. She not only succeeded

The Wamsleys: (left to right) Jayden Wamsley, WO1 Natalie Wamsley, Jase Wamsley, CW2 Ronald Wamsley.
Photo courtesy WO1 Natalie Wamsley

in a time of adversity, she excelled in a time that others may not.”

CWO Jennifer Maggard works with WO1 Natalie Wamsley in the G1. WO1 Wamsley said she has looked up to CWO Maggard as a mentor and as one of the few female warrant officers in Kentucky. CWO Maggard said it is actually CWO Wamsley who is the real role model.

“One word to describe Warrant Officer Wamsley would be inspiration,” CWO Maggard said. “She has always been an inspiration even before the battle with cancer. She is a natural leader who always goes above and beyond with her no quit, no excuse attitude. She inspires me to be better every single day in every part of life.”

WO1 Wamsley said her mantra during treatment became, “Your illness does not define you—your strength and courage does.”

“Everyone has their own fight, it’s how you come out of the fight. I hope that I am a better person going through this and I hope through my story I can encourage someone to fight, because this life is worth living.” ●



American Cancer Society Guidelines for the Early Detection of Cancer

Screening tests are used to find cancer before a person has any symptoms. Here are the American Cancer Society's recommendations to help guide women about breast cancer screenings.

- Women ages 40 to 44 should consider starting annual breast cancer screenings with mammograms (x-rays of the breast).
- Women age 45 to 54 are strongly encouraged to get mammograms every year.
- Women 55 and older should get a mammogram at least once every 2 years, but may continue with yearly screenings if they like.
- Women should continue to receive screenings for as long as they are in good health and expected to live 10 more years.

Some women – due to family history, a genetic tendency, or certain other factors – should be screened with MRIs in addition to mammograms. Talk with a health care provider for personalized information on the risk of breast cancer and a customized screening plan.



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Just Another “Amazing” Soldier

BY STAFF WRITER Matthew Liptak

Maryland Army National Guard photos by MAJ Kurt Rauschenberg

As SSG Cassandra Black, 2nd Battalion, 70th Regiment, Maryland Army National Guard, crawled her way through part of the stress shoot in this year’s Maryland Best Warrior Contest, she dragged a heavy sandbag behind her. It was the part of the competition where she most wanted to call it quits, she said.

But she didn’t. She just martialled her willpower and told her arms and legs to move forward one inch, one foot, at a time. It may not have been the part of Best Warrior where she shined the most, but it was the portion where SSG Black was pushed almost to her limits, as she succeeded in becoming the first woman to win Maryland’s Best Warrior NCO Contest.

The Army has been pushing its female Soldiers to the limits for decades now, and those women have answered with an indomitable will no different than their male counterparts. Perhaps like that sandbag dragging behind SSG Black, they have even had the additional challenge of proving their mettle in a vocation that has been dominated by men for millennia.

A Soldier is a Soldier first and foremost. That is how SSG Black said she sees it. Her accomplishment should reflect her commitment to the Army National Guard first and her proficiency as a Soldier. It should not be limited by preconceptions of gender, she said she believes. If her service is to be seen as

something of an example, she wants it to be as an example of a Soldier excelling, not only as a woman excelling.

“I understand that it is an accomplishment being the first female to win the competition for the State of Maryland,” she explained. “But I think most of all, I see myself as another Soldier. I think it’s important for females to push themselves, I mean, for any Soldier actually, to always push themselves to be better and to continue to develop their strengths, whether it be emotional, mental or physical. And if there is any Soldier, being male, female, whatever, that is inspired by this, then that’s great. I want to inspire any Soldier to always do their job to the best of their ability, no matter what it is.”

Inspiring her Soldiers to do better is SSG Black’s day job. She is the Active Guard Reserve assistant course manager at

the 70th Regimental Training Institute at Aberdeen Proving Grounds in Edgewood, Maryland. There she oversees the basic military police course, combat medic refresher course, foundational instructor training course and the comprehensive Soldier fitness course.

SSG Black developed the comprehensive Soldier fitness course herself, revamping the previous course with the knowledge she had from being a master fitness instructor. She even brought in external experts to enhance the course, seeing that her students were fitted by staff from a running shoe store and making sure her Soldiers got all their wellness checks.

She made a good impression on more than one of her superiors. CSM Aarion Franklin



TOP: SSG Cassandra Black maneuvers up a Jacob's ladder during the obstacle course portion of the 2019 Region II Best Warrior Competition.

RIGHT: SSG Cassandra Black assembles her rifle during the Region II Best Warrior Competition, May 2019.

“I want to inspire any Soldier to always do their job to the best of their ability, no matter what it is.”

— SSG Cassandra Black

with the 70th Armored Regiment was forthright about his first impression of SSG Black.

“Amazing,” he said. “If you look at her biographical sketch, I mean, it’s impressive. I had the opportunity to see her sketch and her last few evaluations. And again, just from an administrative standpoint, those

qualifications were

impressive. And

then having

met her in

person,

I was

where SSG Black beat out every other noncommissioned officer (NCO) to take home Maryland’s best NCO title and move on to the regional-level competition.

“This was his first impression of not only the organization, but SSG Black as a person,” he noted. “And he had nothing but wonderful things to say and was impressed at how well she competed against everyone else.”

SSG Black has a competitive spirit. It was not her first time pushing herself hard in service to her country. She came to Maryland after 10 years in the Montana Army National Guard with a background as a Raven drone operator. She had also competed in the Montana Best Warrior contest, but did not do nearly as well as she did this year in Maryland.

“I was more prepared,” she explained. “I was more resilient this time, compared to the first time I did it in Montana. And I think in Montana, mentally I wasn’t at the level that I should have been, which does play a huge role when you’re competing in competitions like this.

Most people think of the physical aspect of these competitions, because it definitely is physical—it tests every fiber of your body. But

just as impressed—very well poised, very well spoken and very knowledgeable about her MOS.”

CSM Franklin said the new commander of the 70th Regiment, COL Dan Williams, had his first day with the unit when it was executing the regiment’s Best Warrior Competition,

TOP: SSG Cassandra Black dons face paint in preparation for field exercises during the 2019 Region II Best Warrior Competition.

LEFT: SSG Cassandra Black participates in field exercises during the Army National Guard Region II Best Warrior Competition held at Camp Dawson, W. Va., May 2019.

mentally, you have to be very strong to push yourself to the limit. Even when you think you're tired, you have to push yourself even farther. And I think I had that more this time competing in Maryland."

SSG Black said she had improved her mental competitiveness in the years between Best Warriors by reading about ways to improve mental stamina. She also felt she was probably just a better Soldier from having spent more time in the Guard.

She needed that experience to excel at the contest. There were 13 others vying for first place in their respective categories. Lanes included a ruck march, field navigation, standing before a board, a written essay and a shooting stress test with a physical portion.

SSG Black found the physical portion of the stress shoot to be the most daunting challenge, she said.

She said the stress test played out as follows: flip a tractor tire; sprint; transition into shooting targets with the pistol, then drag a sled that carried a 180-pound dummy through the mud around a building 100 to 200 meters in perimeter; throw smoke grenades; shoot with the M4 rifle; then perform a low crawl where competitors drag a sandbag, then pick up the sandbag, move it up a hill and place it on the back of a four wheeler; and finally,

SSG Cassandra Black tags a fellow Soldier during the ruck sack event of the 2019 Region II Best Warrior Competition.

grab two water jugs and carry them around a small open field to finish at the flagpole.

"I am not naturally gifted in my upper body strength, she explained. "That's something that I have to work on—like the tire flip. I just compensate by using more of my legs because I know that my upper body strength is not equal to my lower body strength. So, I struggled a little bit, but I did what I could and I got the job done."

The next step for SSG Black in her Best Warrior journey was the regional competition in Camp Dawson, West Virginia. She expected the competition to be tough, including the physical lanes in the hill country where the competition was being held. She was right. Unfortunately, she did not manage to take home the mantle of Best Warrior NCO from that contest. But she did place first in some of the lanes, CSM Franklin mentioned, who said he was very proud of the Soldier.

And that is how SSG Black said she would like to ultimately be thought of—as a Soldier, one among many. Even in describing why the Best Warrior competition is important to her, she put her explanation in the context of how the contest helps Soldiers from all over the country.

"I think it matters, because as Soldiers, we should always try to maintain our level of mental and physical fitness—keep up on our basic Soldiering skills," she said.

"That's what this competition is, testing our ability to do those warrior tasks that every Soldier should be

able to do. I think honestly, anybody and everybody should come to this competition, not with a goal of winning, but just to see what they should be maintaining throughout their entire career, and push themselves. Because when you do something like this, it helps develop your character

and it makes you a better Soldier. So I think it's important for the Guard and the Army as a whole."

While what SSG Black says is true, CSM Franklin noted an additional benefit to her accomplishments. It was the benefit where SSG Black and other female Soldiers like her are making it loud and clear to the Army what women warriors are capable of, that they can excel at being a Soldier as much as their male counterparts, and have just as much passion and dedication to their duty.

"You know, she's a Soldier. But, I mean, to me, I think it's changing perception," commented CSM Franklin. "There were several people at the State competition, who didn't witness all of the events and asked how she placed in the physical challenge. When I said that she won the ruck march competition in her category, their eyes got a little bit wide. We had a secondary fitness challenge, like grass drills, and she placed ahead of a number of the male competitors in that category. I think that, that got people's attention. I'd take SSG Black anywhere with me, I don't care what the mission was." ●

SSG Cassandra Black moves through the low-crawl segment of the obstacle course event as part of the Region II Best Warrior Competition, May 2019.

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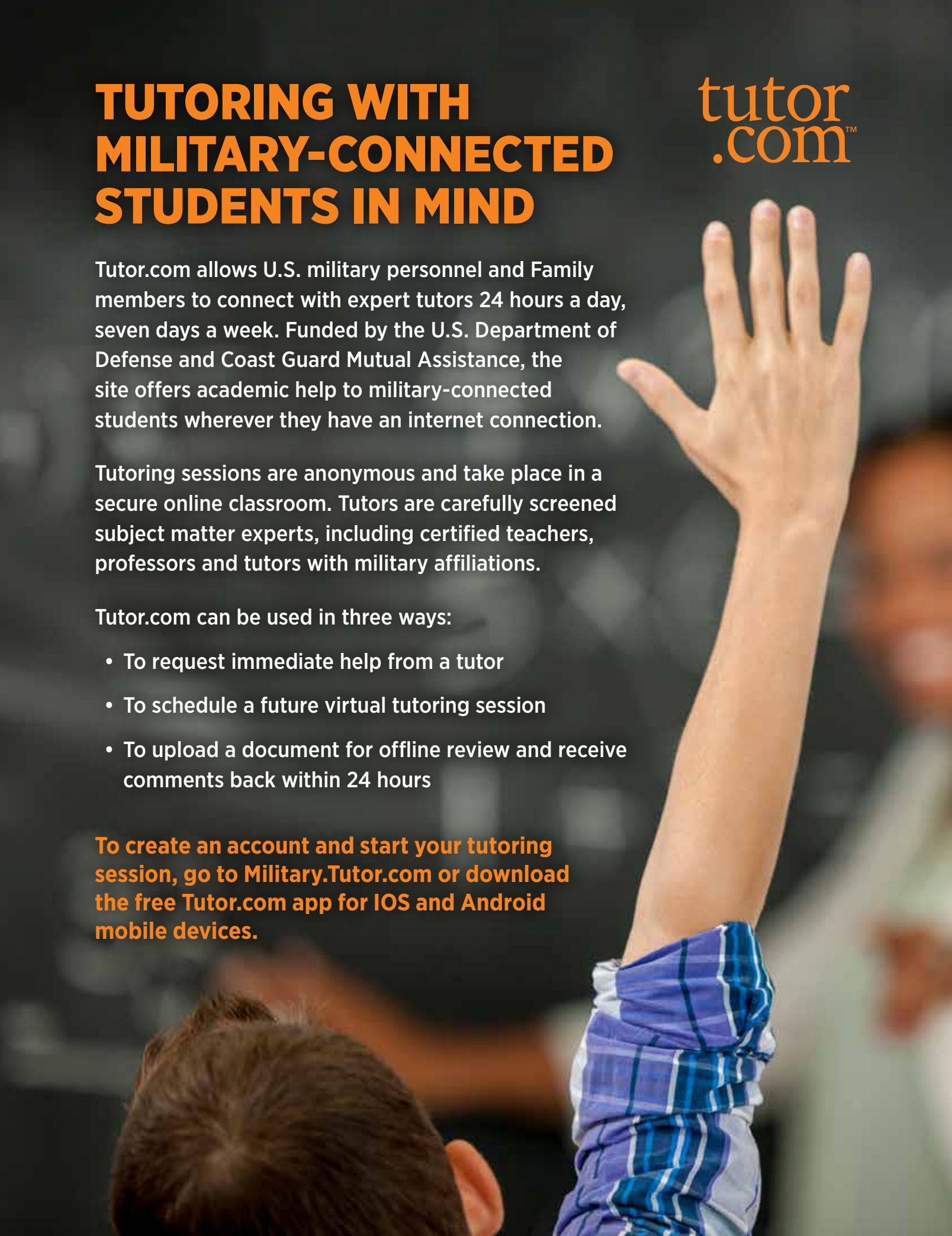
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PHOTOS FROM THE FIELD



MSG Glenn Worley is

quick off the start running to his shooting position during a combined arms event at the 48th Winston P. Wilson Rifle and Pistol Championships at the National Guard Marksmanship Training Center, Camp Robinson, Ark., April 9, 2019.

Wyoming Army National Guard photo
by SFC James McGuire





PHOTOS FROM THE FIELD



SPC Fernando Marzan,

a 15E Unmanned Aerial System (UAS) maintainer with Detachment 1, D Company, 177th Brigade Engineer Battalion, 48th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, conducts preflight inspections on the RQ-7B Shadow UAS in eastern Afghanistan. The unit conducts 24-hour operations to keep visibility over Train Advise Assist Command - East.

Georgia Army National Guard photo by SGT Jordan Trent





PHOTOS FROM THE FIELD



Bravo Company, 2nd

Battalion, 116th Cavalry Regiment, conducts platoon live-fire gunnery qualification Feb. 14, 2019, at the Orchard Combat Training Center. The Idaho Army National Guard Soldiers are preparing for the 116th Cavalry Brigade Combat Team's upcoming rotation at the National Training Center, Fort Irwin, Calif., later this year.

Idaho Army National Guard photo
by SGT Mason Cutrer





PHOTOS FROM THE FIELD



Alabama Army

National Guard Soldiers, with the 1-173rd Infantry Regiment, take part in a live-fire trench warfare exercise at Fort Benning, Ga., March 2019.

Alabama Army National Guard
photo by SSG William Frye





PHOTOS FROM THE FIELD



SGT Jermain Mendiola,

center, of the Guam Army National Guard, enters the finish line of a grueling 12-mile ruck march May 23 in Hawthorne, Nev., during the 2019 Army National Guard Region 7 Best Warrior Competition (BWC). SGT Mendiola is flanked by CSM Agnes Diaz, Guam National Guard senior enlisted advisor; SGM Bruce Meno; SSG Dino Cruz; and CSM Ron Brantley. The winner advances to the National Guard BWC later this year.

California Army National Guard
photo by SSG Eddie Siguenza





PHOTOS FROM THE FIELD



SPC Marina Grage,

HHC, 890th Engineer Battalion, Mississippi National Guard, takes part in an obstacle course competition at Camp Butner, N.C., during Region III Best Warrior Competition on May 15, 2019. The five-day competition consists of tests of physical and mental endurance that include physical fitness, army warrior tasks and drills, land navigation, a road march, weapon qualification, a stress shoot course, urban operations, and the Noncommissioned Officer/Soldier review board.

Alabama Army National Guard
photo by SSG William Frye





PHOTOS FROM THE FIELD



A firefighter with the

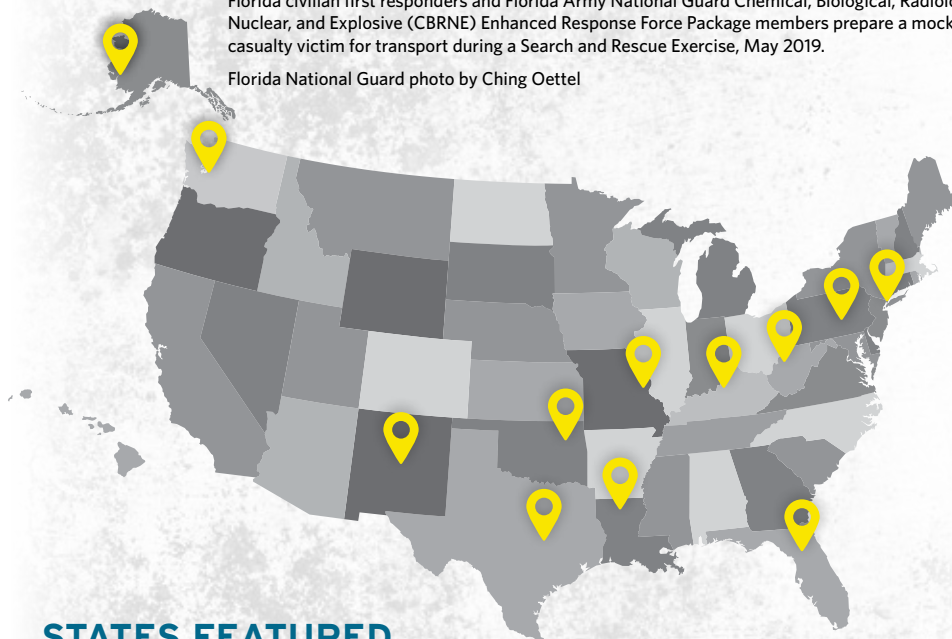
1050th Firefighting Tactical Group (FFTG), Montana Army National Guard, checks with the rest of the firefighting crew to make sure the hose is ready before heading into a simulator designed for aircraft rescue and firefighting training on May 8 at Volk Field, Wis., as part of their annual training at exercise Northern Lightning. The 1049th-1052nd Engineer Detachment FFTG spent May 3-17 training on wild land firefighting, structural fires and flightline response.

Montana Army National Guard
photo by SSG Britney Hiatt



Florida civilian first responders and Florida Army National Guard Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, and Explosive (CBRNE) Enhanced Response Force Package members prepare a mock casualty victim for transport during a Search and Rescue Exercise, May 2019.

Florida National Guard photo by Ching Oettel



STATES FEATURED IN THIS ISSUE

- **ALASKA**
- **FLORIDA**
- **KENTUCKY**
- **LOUISIANA**
- **MISSOURI**
- **NEW MEXICO**
- **NEW YORK**
- **OKLAHOMA**
- **PENNSYLVANIA**
- **TEXAS**
- **WASHINGTON**
- **WEST VIRGINIA**

ALASKA

BY LTC CANDIS OLMSTEAD,
ALASKA NATIONAL GUARD

Alaska Guard Save Two Hunters Through Yukon River Ice

Soldiers with the Alaska Army National Guard's 207th Aviation Battalion saved two hunters after they broke through Yukon River ice while traveling on their snow machines early on the morning of May 2, 2019 in western Alaska.

Alaska State Troopers contacted the Rescue Coordination Center at about 2:30 a.m. to request a search and rescue mission out of Bethel, where an Alaska Army National Guard UH-60 Black Hawk and aircrew are stationed full time.

"There were four hunters who were traveling in a group, each on a snow machine, over the Yukon River," said

CW2 Cody Bjorklund, the Black Hawk command pilot on the mission. “Three of them went through the ice and two of them lost their snow machines,” he said.

The men made their way to a small island sandbar in the river, about seven miles east of Mountain Village, which was their destination. Two of them were stranded, cold and wet, and due to the soft areas of the ice, could not ride out as a passenger on one of the other snow machines.

“We left Bethel within the hour and found them right away,” said CW2 Bjorklund. “It was dark out and they had a fire going, so it helped us find them more quickly.”

Two of the four hunters were transported via Black Hawk helicopter to Mountain Village, a coastal community in western Alaska that sits along the Yukon River. They arrived at about 5 a.m.

Pilot, CW2 Michael Miller and crew chief, SPC Jeff Hartmann made up the other aircrew on the mission, and the 207th Aviation Battalion was awarded two saves. ●



FLORIDA

BY SSG CARMEN FLEISCHMANN,
FLORIDA NATIONAL GUARD

Florida National Guard Rehearses with Civilian Rescuers

When disaster strikes, personnel from various civilian agencies across the State unite with members of the Florida National Guard’s Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, and Explosive (CBRNE) Enhanced Response Force Package (CERFP), forming multiple tactical response teams and task forces.

In early May, those same partners, comprised of personnel ranging from Duval to Palm Beach Counties, came together for a Search and Rescue Exercise (SAREX) to fine-tune response efforts for the next large-scale disaster.

“Any time you get with first responders, folks that we are going to respond with like we’ve done in Hurricanes Hermine, Irma, Michael – that’s value added,” said COL Michael Ladd, J2/J3 director of Military Support. “We’re getting best practices from everything they’re doing. Not only are we teaching and learning, but these are the response partners that have asked for our support to kind of round out their teams and round out their capabilities.”

After completing a swim test Tuesday morning, the Soldiers and Airmen of CERFP joined their civilian counterparts on their respective teams and traveled to Camp Blanding Joint Training Center

A 207th Aviation Battalion Alaska Army National Guard UH-60 Black Hawk makes a cross-country training flight from Anchorage to Juneau, Alaska, April 26, 2019.

Alaska Army National Guard photo by 1LT Benjamin Haulenbeek

INSET: Seen through night vision goggles, Alaska Army National Guard UH-60 Black Hawk crew chief, SPC Jeff Hartmann approaches a hunting party gathered by their campfire on a small island sandbar on the Yukon River in Alaska, May 2019.

Photo courtesy Alaska Army National Guard

to complete an extensive area search, structure collapse and maritime rescue.

In recent years, the SAREX has essentially become an annual exercise that factors in lessons learned from real-world missions during hurricane season. The first year, CERFP realized aviation assets were needed to perform reconnaissance of devastated areas immediately, in order to ensure the teams reach the most critical locations first.



A task force team comprised of Florida Army National Guard Soldiers and Florida civilian first responders rehearse a maritime rescue at Kingsley Lake on Camp Blanding Joint Training Center as part of the annual Search and Rescue Exercise.

Florida National Guard photo by Ching Oettel

Hurricane Irma was the first time those critical tools were put in place, and SFC Chuck Morrow, CERFP noncommissioned officer in charge (NCOIC), says once the helos arrived, what would have taken three days with CERFP’s land and amphibious vessels took merely three hours.

For the next SAREX, they decided to test prepositioning the aircraft instead of just calling in support from their base of operations. The success of this planning was demonstrated with how quickly help arrived during Hurricane Michael.

“By prepositioning the helicopter assets in Tallahassee when we knew it was going to hit Panama City, as soon as the wind died down enough for us to get into the birds and do reconnaissance, we were able to do that,” said SFC Morrow. “We were able to put the assets where they needed to be on the ground in Mexico Beach, Panama City, no matter what.”

Last year’s catastrophic Hurricane Michael also helped to identify yet another piece of the puzzle. After the category 5 storm ripped through parts of the Panhandle, communications broke down for nearly every agency. Even with tactical radios, CERFP and their partners had trouble relaying information as fast as possible back to State leadership. Without the updates coming in from ground zero, additional assets standing by at the ready did not know where to go or how to get there, which is why communications is an overarching theme of this year’s SAREX.

For this event, communications teams are integrating with CERFP and, come hurricane season, this fine-tuned asset will be ready to better support the citizens of Florida.

“The Florida National Guard [FLNG] has taken great strides in having the ability to come to your aid as soon as possible and get you and your family out of harm’s way, as quickly as possible,” said SFC Morrow. “We have just as much, if not more, capabilities than our first responders to tell the State of Florida, ‘sit tight, we’re coming quickly.’ Much more so than any other State.”

SFC Morrow has been a part of this program since it was created in 2004 when Florida was one of 10 States tasked with creating this capability from scratch. Today, 17 CERFPs are spread across the Nation, and SFC Morrow believes Florida’s is still the best, as he prepares to pass its reins onto the next NCOIC. He counts the growth of the CERFP as one of his proudest contributions to the FLNG. ●

KENTUCKY

BY SPC ALAN ROYALTY,
KENTUCKY NATIONAL GUARD

National Guard, Louisville Police Secure Kentucky Derby

During a historic weekend for horse racing, Kentucky National Guard members from around the State augmented first responders at Churchill Downs in support of the 145th Kentucky Derby.

Soldiers from the 198th Military Police (MP) Battalion, alongside the Louisville Metro Police Department (LMPD) and Churchill Downs security, ensured the safety of Derby fans and race competitors throughout the day.

More than 150 Guard members contributed their technical and professional expertise in support of the event. The vast majority of Guard members from the 198th worked alongside Louisville Metro Police officers to provide grounds security, traffic control and the official trophy security detail throughout the event. Other units in support of the festivities included Soldiers with the 41st Civil Support Team and Airmen from the 123rd Airlift Wing.

The sheer scope of the nation’s premier horseracing event

requires that local law enforcement be augmented with professionally trained personnel. Support from the 198th was warmly welcomed.

“Large-scale events are not successful without the help of all our partners in the first responder family,” said Officer Lamont Washington of the LMPD. “We at the LMPD rely on the working relationship we have built over the years with the Kentucky National Guard.”

This relationship with the Derby community, well over 100 years in the making, serves to strengthen the bond between Guard members and the communities they serve.

“If at any time the LMPD needs us, they know they can call on us and we will provide that support,” said SSG Trenton Dalton of the 438th MP Company and noncommissioned officer in charge of security at the event. “It’s a fun learning experience and a great opportunity to apply our training in a real-world setting.”

From any angle inside or outside the track, it was not difficult to spot a Guard member operating a gate or intersection.

“Honestly, it’s one of the very few times we get to interact with people that doesn’t revolve around a major disaster,” said SPC Michael Oxford with the 438th. “It starts on a good note and most of the time it ends on a good note.”

The more spectators who fill the grandstands, the greater number of law enforcement personnel necessary. The Derby draws a crowd from around the globe, and with over 150,000 people in attendance, potential dangers loom.

Soldiers with the 198th Military Police Battalion secure gates around Churchill Downs Racetrack during the Kentucky Derby in Louisville, Ky., May 4, 2019.

Kentucky Army National Guard photo by SPC Alan Royalty





Louisiana Army National Soldiers with the 527th Engineer Battalion, clean debris after tornados touched down in Ruston, La., April 2019.

Louisiana Army National Guard photo by SGT Daniel McWilliams

“It’s a very eye-opening experience, just the scope of working the Kentucky Derby,” said SSG Dalton. “The traffic control guys—we are able to help prevent injury and save lives through traffic control at the intersections.”

Many of the Guard members have worked the Derby for many years, but for some, this is a first-time experience. For the first-timers, the grandeur and excitement of their home State’s greatest treasure made for a day they will never forget.

“It’s been an awesome experience,” said SPC Michelle Warner with the 438th. “This is my first time working the Derby, and I was lucky enough to be placed working security at the VIP tent with the celebrities. We get to show off how the Kentucky National Guard operates and how we’re here for the community when they need us.”

For the Soldiers who come back to work the event year after year, the Kentucky Derby offers something more meaningful than glamorous horses and extraordinary hats; it is an opportunity to stand alongside their local law enforcement, to interact with the public, and to do what they signed up to do—serve their State and their country.

“The human interaction runs really deep for me,” said SPC Oxford. “When it comes to the national anthem or the posting of the colors, or playing “My Old Kentucky Home,” people want to know why the Kentucky Guard has such deep traditions and why we do things the way we do them. It’s very rewarding.” ●

LOUISIANA

BY SSG GARRETT DIPUMA,
LOUISIANA NATIONAL GUARD

National Guard Members Respond to Tornado

At the request of Gov. John Bel Edwards, the Louisiana National Guard (LANG) is conducting debris removal missions and moving Meals Ready to Eat (MREs), bottled water and other supplies into the areas affected by severe weather and in the aftermath of tornadoes that touched down in Ruston, Louisiana, on April 25.

The LANG activated approximately 25 local Guardsmen with the 527th Engineer Battalion, 225th Engineer Brigade, which has units in Ruston and West Monroe, to aid in the cleanup of their community and is prepared to bring more Soldiers on, as needed. The unit is equipped with chainsaws, dump trucks and front-end loaders.

“One of the unique attributes of the National Guard is that our members come from the same communities that we serve and protect,” said Louisiana National Guard Adjutant General MG Glenn H. Curtis. “These missions are always close to home for us.”

In addition to assisting in the cleanup, the LANG distributed bottled water and MREs to citizens who need them at the North Louisiana Exhibition Center.

“That’s our job and that’s why we do this,” said SFC Tracy Doss. “Being able to help our own community after a disaster is a privilege.”

Louisiana’s Guardsmen are trained, ready and equipped to stand up at any moment to protect lives and property, maintain communications, and ensure the continuity of operations and government. ●

MISSOURI

BY CPT PHIL FOUNTAIN,
MISSOURI NATIONAL GUARD

Missouri Farmer Recognized for Cyber Innovation

More than three centuries ago, American farmers set aside their plows to defend their homes and communities. Today, a Missouri farmer continues the National Guard's oldest tradition while protecting his State and Nation from 21st century threats.

SPC Taylen Winchell of Lamar, an intelligence analyst with the 35th Infantry Division at Jefferson Barracks in St. Louis, was awarded the Joint Service Achievement Medal on April 6.

SPC Winchell was recently selected to serve on a temporary active duty assignment at Jefferson Barracks to support the Missouri Army National Guard's Federated Intelligence Program (FIP) with the U.S. Transportation Command, a Department of Defense combatant command headquartered at Scott Air Force Base, Illinois.

The FIP provides Army National Guard Soldiers with the opportunity to provide real-world support to commands. All 54 States and Territories are eligible to participate in the program.

"We have Soldiers throughout the National Guard enhancing the mission of combatant commands while facilitating training through our Federated Intelligence Program," said COL Paul Hessling, the intelligence liaison officer with the National Guard Bureau. "It takes innovative solutions like this to meet today's challenges. SPC Winchell is a great example of this."

In addition to his National Guard service, SPC Winchell helps operate his family's cattle operation in southwest Missouri, which has been a lifelong passion. He said joining the Guard is a family tradition; his dad retired from the Missouri Army National Guard in the early 1990s.

"We're fourth-generation farmers,"



LTC Joshua Stewart (left), a division chief with the U.S. Transportation Command, presents Missouri Army National Guard Soldier SPC Taylen Winchell with the Joint Service Achievement Medal at Jefferson Barracks, near St. Louis, April 2019.

Missouri Army National Guard photo by
MAJ Chris Morales

SPC Winchell said. "It's more of a ranching operation now. We run cattle and maintain the land. We had dairy cows and now focus on beef."

He is committed to the farming lifestyle and supporting his family business, but saw the Guard as an opportunity to do more.

"I joined to better myself and experience new things," SPC Winchell said. "I've always liked analyzing stuff and enjoy working with computers. I've been able to use my computer skills more than I anticipated when I joined."

His computer skills and thinking

outside-the-box is what brought SPC Winchell's unique talent to his leadership's attention. While thinking about ways to improve his workflow, he wrote a program to automate routine tasks. The specialist's supervision took a look and realized the potential. Pretty soon, his ideas were being distributed to other Soldiers and States. SPC Winchell developed an application called ADAMS, a coded database that reduced execution time from one hour to 15 minutes. This new standardization has reportedly saved the command hundreds of hours in personnel and \$50,000 in labor costs.

"I was just doing my job," SPC Winchell said, not expecting to be formally recognized for his work.

His work was recognized—and through a unique medal not typically awarded to National Guard Soldiers, particularly at the State level.

According to DoD documents, the Joint Service Achievement Medal may be awarded in the name of the Secretary of Defense to service members who make exceptional achievements or perform commendable service while assigned to a joint duty activity. The success or service cannot have been otherwise recognized through a military department medal, such as an Army Commendation Medal.

SPC Winchell, a junior enlisted Soldier with about four years of service, is still looking at long-term career options, but ultimately expects to complete a career as a drilling Guard member while helping run the family farm.

"I like the camaraderie of the Intel community; we're able to solve problems on a different level," SPC Winchell said. "But I'll probably be a farmer all my life as well." ●

NEW MEXICO

BY REBECCA WESTFALL
(ARMY MEDICINE),
NEW MEXICO NATIONAL GUARD

New Mexico ARNG Soldiers Save Lives Thanks to SMART Program

Two New Mexico Army National Guard Soldiers were honored by The Christ Hospital in Cincinnati, Ohio, on May 16, 2019. SPC Roberto Sandoval and PFC RaeJean Lucero, both 68Ws (Combat Medics), were responsible for saving the life of a man who was seriously injured in a motor vehicle accident.

SPC Sandoval and PFC Lucero are

participants in the Strategic Medical Asset Readiness Training (SMART) program with The Christ Hospital in Cincinnati. The value of the training led to their quick response in saving a man's life.

After completing their shift at the SMART program, SPC Sandoval and PFC Lucero, both assigned to the 1209th Area Support Medical Company in New Mexico, were walking back to their hotel when a frantic woman explained that she had just been involved in a motor vehicle accident. When the Soldiers arrived on the scene, the medics found an unconscious man. SPC Sandoval and PFC Lucero immediately assessed the man and began performing CPR.

The two displayed outstanding communication and teamwork until local Emergency Medical Services arrived on the scene. Their actions contributed to saving this man's life. The Christ Hospital presented the Soldiers with the "Lifesaver Award" at a Leadership Conference on

May 16, 2019, in the presence of over 200 leaders in the organization.

Since August 2018, the SMART program has graduated 117 military medical personnel. The program helps to maintain the readiness of our Soldiers and our Nation to save and sustain lives on the battlefield. It also promotes a positive momentum in the relationship between the civilian and military medical community.

Operation Cincinnati SMART is the next step to the innovative, first-of-its-kind partnership, which focuses on high-quality, individualized specialty medical training for service members to improve their knowledge, skillsets and increase individual readiness. ●

SPC Roberto Sandoval (left) and PFC RaeJean Lucero, both Combat Medics assigned to the 1209th Area Support Medical Company, display their certificates of appreciation presented to them by The Christ Hospital in Cincinnati, Ohio, May 16, 2019, for saving the life of a man seriously injured in a car accident that occurred while the Soldiers were participating in a training class in conjunction with the hospital.

Photo courtesy The Christ Hospital





Soldiers of the 369th Sustainment Brigade, New York Army National Guard, man their command post during exercise Guardian Response 19 at Camp Atterbury, Ind., May 2019.

New York Army National Guard photo by SGT Deyanira Rios

an urban area hit by a 20-kiloton atomic weapon. One incident was followed by another during the exercise.

The 128 Soldiers from the 133rd Composite Supply Company, headquartered at Fort Hamilton, New York, were constantly on the go, moving critical supplies from one location to another, according to CPT Ismael Batista, the company commander.

“These truly are the epitome of disaster-ready Citizen-Soldiers,” said 1SG Tracyann Stewart, first sergeant of the 133rd Composite Supply Company.

“For a unit such as ours in Brooklyn, it can feel too close to think about such emergencies as these, which will test our resolve or will to help family, friends and neighbors,” she added.

The 369th will be responsible for their part in the mission for about two years, and during that time, will continue to improve interoperability between Guard, active and Reserve with civilian agencies for homeland response, specifically Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear incidents, according to COL Bousquet.

“This experience is different than our deployment in 2017. Then we were a brigade element supporting logistics in the Middle East; now we are working with different units assisting with vital urban search and rescue, and life-saving decontamination and medical care,” COL Bousquet said.

During the exercise, the Soldiers were continually performing command tasks, to include receiving reports, updating and assessing information and deploying simulated National Guard, State and federal forces to provide a scaled response to the disaster.

“No one is ever truly ready for a scenario where U.S. cities are attacked like this. Not every young Guardsman knows the danger of an experience such as deployment,” CPT Batista said.

“This exercise can remind them of the risk and responsibility we hold within our communities,” CPT Batista added.

The team trains under Department of Defense guidelines, which require the Soldiers to respond within 6 to 12 hours to assist local authorities after a Chemical,

NEW YORK

BY CPT JEAN MARIE KRATZER,
NEW YORK NATIONAL GUARD

New York National Guard Soldiers Hone Domestic Nuclear Disaster Response Skills

One hundred sixty New York Army National Guard Soldiers honed their emergency response skills during exercise Guardian Response 2019.

Guardian Response exercises validate Army units’ ability to support State and local authorities in the event of a

Chemical, Biological, Radiological or Nuclear attack.

New York Army National Guard Soldiers from the 369th Sustainment Brigade, headquartered in Harlem, took part in the exercise, which simulated a nuclear attack on Detroit.

Army units from eight State National Guards, the Army Reserve, and the Active Army took part.

Part of the exercise involved hands-on rescue and recovery missions at Muscattuck Urban Training Center.

“We started training last year; we are learning a lot from our civilian counterparts and, as a strong team, we have worked on our individual tasks and collective staff work,” said COL Stephen Bousquet, the 369th Sustainment Brigade Commander.

The exercise scenario was built around

Biological, Radiological or Nuclear attack or a hazardous materials incident, COL Bousquet explained.

“Every member of the 133rd can attest to hoping we’re never called up,” 1SG Stewart said. “But they are ready to do their jobs.”

“As we have geared up for this exercise over the past year, many Soldiers felt the strain of a higher op-tempo, but being here in person, running through the scenario, I think they are confident in their training,” 1SG Stewart said.

“I’m proud of how far this unit has come; leaders should rest assured that the 133rd remains vigilantly in place,” said CPT Batista. ●

SPC Jessica Post (left), a member of the 120th Medical Company, Oklahoma Army National Guard, shovels sand into a manual sandbag filler with the aid of fellow Soldiers in Bixby, Okla., during flood relief efforts, May 2019.

Oklahoma Army National Guard photo by SPC Jessica Todd

OKLAHOMA

BY PFC EMILY WHITE,
OKLAHOMA NATIONAL GUARD

Oklahoma Guard Support Communities After Storms

The Oklahoma Army National Guard was mobilized to parts of Northeastern and Central Oklahoma in response to flood and tornado damage on May 23.

More than 250 Oklahoma Army National Guard Soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 160th Field Artillery Regiment, 120th Engineering Battalion, and 1st Battalion, 279th Infantry Regiment, conducted various disaster relief missions, including the inspection of flood walls along the Arkansas River, filling

thousands of sandbags to be placed along fatigued levees, water pump setup and the stabilization of the historic WWII submarine, *USS Batfish*.

Oklahoma National Guard aviation assets from the 245th Aviation Battalion have flown their UH-60 Black Hawk and UH-72 Lakota helicopters more than 45 flight hours while assisting with rescue missions and relief efforts in the most devastated parts of the State.

CW2 David Zahn, a Black Hawk pilot with Company C, 1st of the 244th Aviation Battalion, headquartered in Tulsa, said he was proud of the work he and his crew members have done, especially the rescuing of flood victims.

“It’s very rewarding to see the sense of relief on flood victims’ faces as we fly in and load them onto the helicopter,” said CW2 Zahn.

CPL Steven Ward, a Soldier with the 120th Engineering Battalion, assisted in the evacuation of people from Braggs, Oklahoma, via a Black Hawk helicopter.



“It’s not about us, it’s about the people hurting and in need—they are our people,” CPL Ward said. “They are Oklahomans and Americans so they are family, and family takes care of each other.”

In El Reno, Oklahoma, 12 Soldiers from the 63rd Civil Support Team provided search and rescue assistance to the community dealing with the EF-3 tornado damage that occurred May 25. The Guard members searched a destroyed hotel and adjacent mobile home park. Fortunately, they did not find any trapped or injured individuals.

The damage from the record-breaking floods spanned across much of Northeastern and Central Oklahoma and continues to devastate the surrounding areas. The Oklahoma National Guard will remain on site working alongside Oklahoma emergency managers and other first responders until their mission is complete. ●

PENNSYLVANIA

BY SGT ZANE CRAIG,
PENNSYLVANIA NATIONAL GUARD

Pennsylvania National Guard Cyber Branch Supports Primary Election

Members of the Pennsylvania National Guard joined other State partners at the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) May 21 to reassure voters of the security of the commonwealth’s primary election.

“Your National Guard works every day to ensure that we have multiple layers of security in place to monitor and assess any potential vulnerabilities, to implement the necessary safeguards, to share resources and information, and to practice our response plans,” said COL Frank Montgomery, director of military support. “We train with our fellow State agencies to prepare for every election held

within the State, and are thankful that they include us as part of the common defense.”

According to MAJ Christine Pierce, Pennsylvania cyber branch chief, with the prominence of the potential for election interference and prominent cybersecurity failures in the news, it is important for Commonwealth residents to feel confident in the electoral system’s integrity.

Since 2016, Pennsylvania Guard cyber branch has partnered with the Pennsylvania Office of Homeland Security and expanded to working with the private sector, colleges and universities, and a range of agencies at the local, State and federal levels.

MAJ Pierce leads a team of nine, several of whom are currently in Lithuania providing cybersecurity assistance during that nation’s presidential election. Several Pennsylvania National Guard intelligence personnel are augmenting the cybersecurity efforts at PEMA by analyzing social media and other data to form a broader picture with regard to potential cyber threats and the spread of misinformation online.

“Being on site here at PEMA, ready to respond to anything, and having worked on the preparation phases leading up to the election, we know the systems, we’ve worked with the systems, and we’re

here and ready to respond if necessary,” said MAJ Pierce.

The field of cybersecurity is relatively new in the military, and MAJ Pierce said the field will need to grow rapidly in the near future to meet the growing demand and the growing range of threats to our Nation’s network infrastructure within the military and in State and local governments.

This election marks the first time the Department of State, the lead agency, has staged election day operations at PEMA. Other agencies involved include the Department of State, Office of Homeland Security, PEMA, Governor’s Office, Pennsylvania State Police, Office of Administration, Department of Military and Veterans Affairs and the Office of State Inspector General.

“Everyone is very supportive and appreciative of the extra help and they trust us. We’ve been working together and building relationships for awhile, so we have a great working relationship across the agencies,” said MAJ Pierce.

The Pennsylvania National Guard is always ready to ensure the safety and security of all Pennsylvanians and to support our partners in State government. ●

Members of the Pennsylvania National Guard who joined State partners at the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency May 21 to reassure voters of the security of the commonwealth’s primary election (from left to right) SGT Joshua Kleese, MAJ James Ailes, SSG Andrew Clancey, MAJ Christine Pierce, SFC Eleferios Ginnis, MSgt Aaron Whittington.

Pennsylvania Army National Guard photo by SSG Zane Craig



TEXAS

BY BRANDON JONES,
TEXAS NATIONAL GUARD

Texas and Chile Celebrate 10 Years of Partnership

It is a well-known fact the National Guard's core mission includes fighting America's wars and securing the homeland, but perhaps a lesser known mission is that of building enduring partnerships.

This past April, members of the Texas National Guard and Chilean Armed Forces converged in Austin, Texas, to discuss and celebrate their partnership that started one decade ago. As part of the Annual State Partnership Program (SPP) Planning Meeting, the parties met to discuss, plan and establish agreed-upon activities, in both countries, for the year ahead. The events, held throughout the year, focus on disaster/emergency response; aviation operations, maintenance and safety; military medical and engineer activities; as well as leadership, staff, officer and noncommissioned officer development.

"Both our State and their nation have significant responsibilities with regards to disaster response and experience is often one of the best teachers, so what better way to support one another than helping to share and improve upon best practices," said MAJ Mark White, State Partnership Program Director, Texas Military Department. "An experience our Soldiers and Airmen value, a great secondary benefit to SPP is the exchanging of our cultures and what makes Chile and Texas special places, respectively. We create lifelong friendships through every event together."

In addition to planning events for fiscal year 2020, this trip included multiple activities commemorating the 10th anniversary of the partnership. On April 12, the Chilean delegation was presented with a proclamation from the Deputy Secretary of State of Texas Jose A. Esparza, recognizing and honoring the important



Adjutant General of Texas MG Tracy Norris shakes hands with a Chilean military official at the Texas State Capitol in Austin, Texas, April 12, 2019, during a celebration of the ongoing State partnership between Chile and Texas.

Texas National Guard photo by Brandon Jones

partnership between the Texas National Guard and the Republic of Chile. This same group was further honored on the House floor of the Texas Capitol prior to signing the formal agreement on the Capitol steps.

"Today's events, in which representatives from Texas and Chile were standing side-by-side, exemplify the solidarity of our commitment to the program and one another," said MAJ White. "In 2020, we will jointly execute over 40 SPP events in both of our countries as we start our second decade of partnership, which strives to be the model for SPP in SOUTHCOM [Southern Command]."

In a *Strategic Studies Quarterly* article published in 2018, Chief of the National Guard Bureau Gen Joseph L. Lengyel stated SPP is future-focused and adaptive to geopolitical changes. Gen Lengyel says the National Guard Bureau (NGB) has seen the program grow, from assisting

nations in developing more modern and professional militaries functioning under civilian control, to partnerships that look to deepen interoperability with complementary capabilities and forces.

"Beyond the military benefits, we have witnessed the fruits of these relationships as they help the United States maintain and grow its alliances across the globe through enduring and personal relationships," said Gen Lengyel. "What began as a program of 10 partnerships in Eastern Europe has spread across five continents and currently encompasses approximately one-third of the nations in the world."

As part of the program and in addition to Chile, the Texas and Nebraska National Guards share a partnership with the Czech Republic. In 2018, the Czech Armed Forces and its State partners commemorated the 25th anniversary of the union. Under the NGB's SPP, 76 partnerships are currently in place that support 83 nations around the globe. ●

WASHINGTON

BY JOSEPH SIEMANDEL,
WASHINGTON NATIONAL GUARD

Washington Cyber Team Stands Up to Protect DoD Infrastructure

As the use of technology increases, so emerges the threat of a dangerous cyberattack that can shut down our utilities, cripple our transportation system and threaten our democracy. For several years, the Washington National Guard has been at the forefront of working with both public and private organizations to help harden information technology networks and identify, advise and respond to digital vulnerabilities.

A team of Washington National Guard Soldiers and Airmen will continue that unique work for a new customer.

Recently the Washington National Guard was selected to participate in the new Cyber Mission Assurance Team (CMAT) pilot program, designed to

protect critical infrastructure that services military installations.

“The Cyber Mission Assurance Team we’re piloting was designed to fill a gap in mission assurance for Department of Defense critical infrastructure outside the gate,” said COL George R. Haynes, chief of Cyberspace Operations, National Guard Bureau. “Inside the post, we’re able to do a pretty good job. But once we get outside the post, we don’t have a person that’s focused on the area of responsibility outside the post with our mission partners.”

Protecting critical infrastructure is nothing new for the Washington National Guard. In 2014, it conducted a utility grid assessment with the Snohomish County Public Utilities District, identifying some vulnerabilities and strategies to ensure a more secure network. Just this last fall, Washington National Guardsmen provided additional cybersecurity to ensure secure elections at the request of Washington Secretary of State Kim Wyman.

The focus of the CMAT, however, will be those companies that provide vital infrastructure to military installations like electricity, telecommunications and water. It is these aging industrial control systems that are vulnerable to cyberattacks.

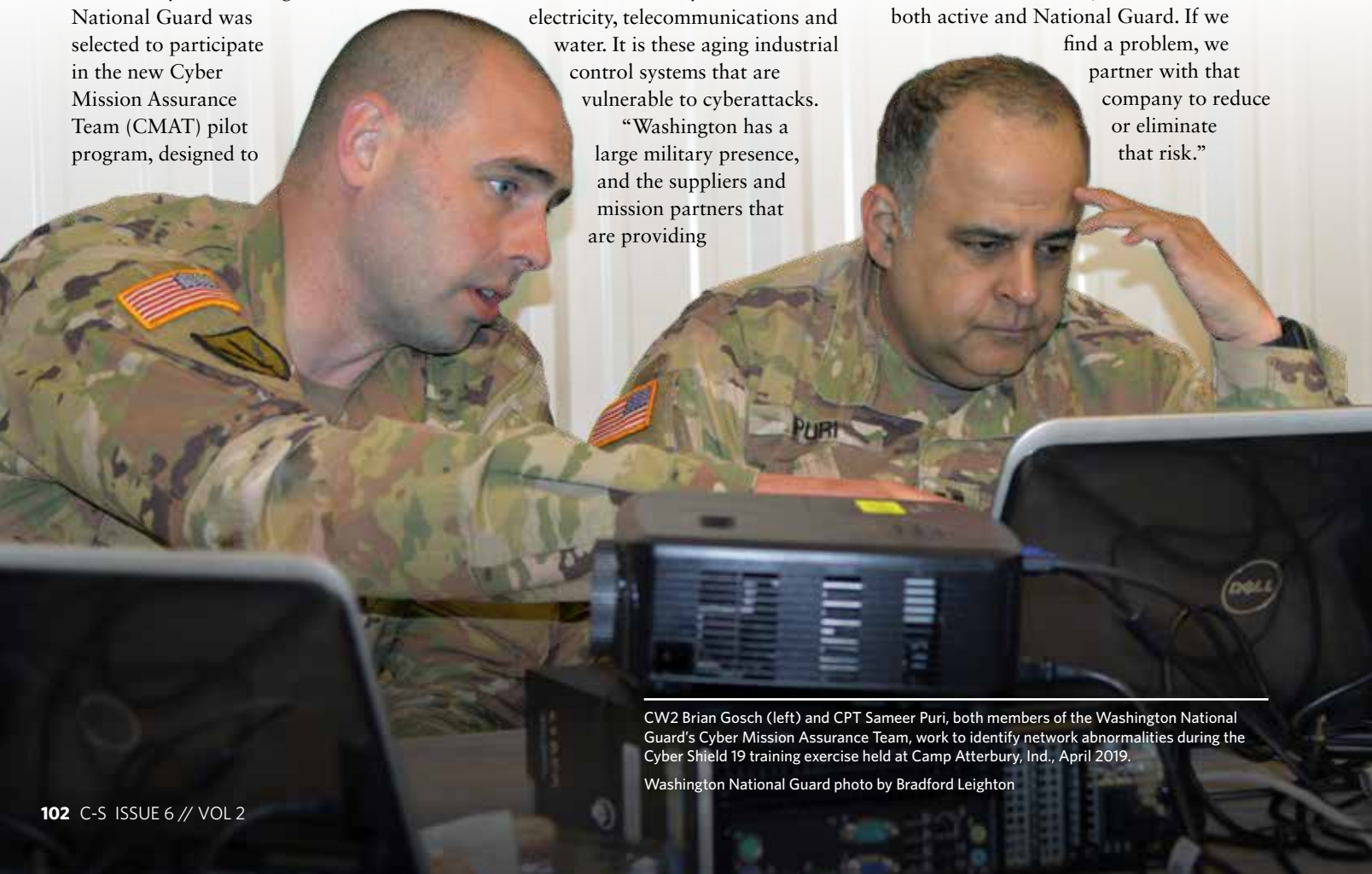
“Washington has a large military presence, and the suppliers and mission partners that are providing

services to these Department of Defense facilities use industrial control systems,” said LTC Adam DiPetrillo, commander of the Washington National Guard CMAT. “Industrial control systems include electricity and water distribution systems. Computer networks control these and therefore could be vulnerable to a cyberattack. We assess those vulnerabilities and can make recommendations to remediate those issues.”

The team reflects recent initiatives by the Department of Defense to develop partnerships with industry, and local and State government to address vulnerabilities in our Nation’s critical infrastructure.

“These systems are not DoD systems. They are owned and run by non-military entities, but the military has a vested interest in ensuring they are not vulnerable to cyberattack and that they are resilient,” said CPT Sameer Puri, Washington National Guard CMAT deputy commander and the director of Information Management for the Washington Army National Guard. “These are the utilities and companies that provide vital services to military installations, both active and National Guard. If we

find a problem, we partner with that company to reduce or eliminate that risk.”



CW2 Brian Gosch (left) and CPT Sameer Puri, both members of the Washington National Guard's Cyber Mission Assurance Team, work to identify network abnormalities during the Cyber Shield 19 training exercise held at Camp Atterbury, Ind., April 2019.

Washington National Guard photo by Bradford Leighton

The National Guard has the unique opportunity to partner with some of the more vulnerable infrastructure partners in the Nation. With armories across the smaller city and rural communities, National Guard installations have many infrastructure support mission partners.

The Washington National Guard CMAT team, comprised of full-time and part-time Citizen Soldiers and Airmen, will combine a vibrant mix of technology skills, including those working for some of the most prominent technology companies in the State of Washington.

“The National Guard is uniquely suited for this mission because we do have that combination of civilian- and military-acquired skills, and we do have those existing relationships with industry,” LTC DiPetrillo said. ●

WEST VIRGINIA

BY EDWIN WRISTON,
WEST VIRGINIA NATIONAL GUARD

Guard Medic in Right Place to Save Vehicle Accident Victim

Being at the right place at the right time with the proper training can make the difference between life and death. Just ask SSG Bradley Owens, a combat medic with the West Virginia Army National Guard (WVARNG), Company C, 2-104th General Support Aviation Battalion.

Late in the evening of April 12, SSG Owens was leaving the Williamstown armory near Parkersburg, West Virginia, after completing a training mission when he and two other Guard members witnessed a single-vehicle accident.

“We had finished our training for the night and were heading into town to grab a bite to eat,” SSG Owens said. “A vehicle drove off the interstate and landed in a ditch right in front of us. Debris from the accident hit one of our vehicles.”

SSG Owens immediately put his combat medic training to work.

Upon approaching the vehicle, SSG Owens sized up the scene and determined there was one individual, the driver, in the vehicle. He introduced himself and began doing a medical assessment to see how injured the driver might be.

“The driver was conscious and able to speak to me,” stated SSG Owens. “I asked one of my fellow Guard members to call 911 and the other to grab my medic bag from my vehicle. I was happy that there appeared to be no serious external injuries to the victim. The driver seemed stable, and it looked like he was no worse for wear.”

According to SSG Owens, a few minutes later the driver lost consciousness, became unresponsive to painful stimuli and stopped breathing on his own.

“When he suddenly lost consciousness, I began to suspect that he had a significant head bleed or that he was under the influence of some toxin,” said SSG Owens. “As his respirations slowed, I was concerned that he would stop breathing altogether. I knew that I had to act in order to protect his brain from further injury.”

SSG Owens opened the driver’s airway by executing a jaw thrust maneuver, then inserted a nasopharyngeal adjunct to secure the airway. He then applied a bag valve mask (BVM) and began squeezing the football-shaped device to breathe for the victim. He stabilized the driver’s spine to limit or prevent any possible damage and waited for first responders to arrive.

Once first responders were on-scene, SSG Owens gave them his assessment and treatment briefing, assisted them in extracting the patient from the vehicle and then relinquished medical control.

Happily, the driver was safely transported to a local hospital, arriving in stable condition.

“I believe very strongly that the National Guard is uniquely situated to help our citizens during times of crisis or natural hazard,” stated SSG Owens.

“I joined the WVARNG because I felt a strong sense of patriotism and duty. Because of my love and passion for the emergency medical field, becoming a combat medic was the natural best way for me to serve my Nation and my fellow West Virginians.”

“I am very happy my fellow Guardsmen and I were able to help the driver avoid serious injury,” said SSG Owens. “I think WVARNG members, regardless of their MOS [Military Occupational Specialty], are always ready to serve and assist those in need. Mostly, I’m just happy that we were there at the right place at the right moment and were able to facilitate a positive outcome.” ●



SSG Bradley Owens

Photo courtesy SSG Bradley Owens



Cartoon by Russell Nemec

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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.

ARMY VOLUNTEER CORPS

Support Your Army Community

The **Army Volunteer Corps (AVC)** helps Soldiers and their Families find local volunteering opportunities with organizations that benefit the Army community.

Volunteering with AVC gives Soldiers the opportunity to:

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- Learn new skills and build upon old ones
- Gain work experience
- Make a positive difference in the lives of others



To register or learn about volunteer opportunities across the Army,
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