Critical Care Flight Paramedic Program hosts second pilot course

By Marla Garza
Critical Care Flight Paramedic Program training instructor

The Critical Care Flight Paramedic Program at the U.S. Army Medical Department Center and School, U.S. Army Health Readiness Center of Excellence at Fort Sam Houston recently hosted their second pilot course for Soldiers wanting to become a national registered paramedic.

The course ran from Sept. 14-25 and was held in Willis Hall, AMEDDC&S, HRCoE.

The course consisted of 100 hours over a two-week period, during which students participated in lectures on various critical care topics from subject matter experts and practiced critical care scenarios in the Training Mobile Transport Lab, which is a UH-60 Blackhawk platform designed to replicate combat conditions.

Hands-on training included performing focused assessment with sonography for trauma exams, military working dog assessments and treatment at veterinary sciences, advanced airway lab and an anatomy lab with synthetic cadavers.

The course provided flight medics with continuing education units needed to recertify as a national registered paramedic and half the amount needed to recertify the Flight Paramedic-Certification through the Board of Critical Care of Transport Paramedics.

Maj. Steve Carrol (right) teaches airway techniques on synthetic cadavers as students (from left) Sgts. Eric Emmons and Javier Carrillo observe.

Staff Sgt. Michael Baugher (foreground) applies direct pressure while applying a tourniquet to a mannequin during the pilot course for becoming a national registered paramedic held at the U.S. Army Medical Department Center and School, U.S. Army Health Readiness Center of Excellence at Fort Sam Houston Sept. 14-25.

Photos by Phillip Reidinger
“He loves me, he loves me not.” The phrase has been repeated by many looking for love.

In today’s world of online dating and social media sites, however, the phrase may have changed from the plucking of petals to a stroke of the keys with, “he is real, he is not.”

With millions of Americans turning to the internet for love and companionship, the U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command warns of romance scams and impersonation fraud that drains one both emotionally and financially.

In the last six months of 2014, online romance scams cost their victims more than $82 million, according to the FBI’s Internet Crime Complaint Center. The average financial loss from these romance schemes is between $15,000 and $20,000.

The Criminal Investigation Command, commonly known as CID, reports many of these cyber criminals pose as U.S. Soldiers or senior Army officers and noncommissioned officers. The criminals often post official Army photographs and biographies in an attempt to build trust with their victims and lure them out of personal and financial information.

Officials warn that the perpetrators use both social media and online dating sites, promising love and romance to unsuspecting victims. After the initial introduction, often through very personal, intimate conversations via instant messaging or email, the scammers attempt to manipulate and exploit their victims. Tactics used by cyber criminals include preying on their victim’s emotions and appealing to their sense of empathy and patriotism.

Before long, the cybercriminal makes a request for money. Complying with these requests often places the victim at risk financially and opens them up to the possibility of becoming a victim of identity theft.

“We cannot stress enough that people need to stop sending money to persons they meet on the Internet and claim to be in the U.S. military,” said Chris Grey, Army CID spokesman. “It is heartbreaking to hear these stories over and over again of people who have sent thousands of dollars to someone they have never met and sometimes have never even spoken to on the phone.”

Grey explained that the victims are most often unsuspecting women, 30 to 55 years old, who think they are romantically involved with American Soldiers on the Internet, when in fact they are being cyber-robbed by perpetrators thousands of miles away.

The perpetrators often take the true rank and name of a U.S. Soldier who is honorably serving somewhere in the world, or has even left the service, and post that information with photographs of a Soldier downloaded from the Internet.

Many of them state they are serving in a combat zone or foreign country, most often West African countries. The perpetrators give excuses for needing money, to include medical care, to return to the states, to sell their car, and to help their children.

“These thieves are very good at what they do. They manipulate the emotions of their victims and will make claims about Army regulations that the public does not know are incorrect,” Grey said. “The majority of the time, the service member is not even aware their name and photo is being used in this way.”

WHERE CAN PEOPLE GO FOR HELP:

Report the theft to the Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3) (FBI-NW3C Partnership) online at http://www.ic3.gov/default.aspx.


Report the fraud to the Federal Trade Commission on Nigerian Scams via email at spam@uce.gov.

(Source: U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command)
U.S. Army South takes part in Colombian army aviation conference

By Maj. Jamelle A. Garner
U.S. Army South Public Affairs

More than 30 countries and military forces participated in the three-day International Aviation Conference of the Armies held in Bogota, Colombia, Sept. 22-24. The Colombian Army hosted the event in downtown Bogota as they celebrate 20 years of Colombian aviation assets in their military.

The three-day conference highlighted the strengths and challenges within the aviation community as well as provided a forum to discuss future plans on addressing interoperability, tactics, techniques and procedures.

An overriding theme throughout the three-day conference was that no partner nation needed to defend their country alone. The shared capabilities of coalition partners can collectively bring to the fight a full range of operational, humanitarian or defense support to civil authority assistance in fighting the enemy.

In preparation for potential engagement, the Colombian army has the second-largest S-70/UH-60 Black Hawk utility helicopter fleet. The benefits of having a fleet so large include the Colombian army's ability to conduct combat rescue, training and security operations, as well as respond to natural disasters and humanitarian assistance.

Colombian Brig. Gen. Emiro Jose Barrios Jimenez, Air Assault Division commander, opened the conference highlighting the capabilities of the division, as well as the challenges they face.

"With a conference like this, we have the ability to communicate, share, understand and gain trust of one another," Jimenez said.

"We are the savers from floods and fires, serving, helping and giving a hand to the less protected, those suffering who really need our help," added Colombian Maj. Gen. Alberto Jose Mejia Ferrero, army commander, emphasizing the importance of the army's role.

With training and doctrine as the basis to building its organization, Mejia notes the need to improve protection plans in order to attack and defeat the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia, or FARC, with more modern operation concepts.

Lt. Gen. Kevin Mangum, deputy commander and chief of staff of the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command and former commander of the U.S. Army Aviation Center of Excellence, addressed the conference pointing out the commonality in using army aviation as a key enabler.

"The hardest thing we have to do, the hardest thing any aviation force in the world has to do, is, at night, enter into an objective, into a target that may be contested by an enemy force, overcome the elements and overcome the night," Mangum said. "For those young Soldiers, it is a given that the aviators and their crews supporting them will get them there safely and more importantly, bring them home at the completion of their mission."

Mangum emphasized the need for an inherent trust, for and in army aviation the world over, to be there when needed for Soldiers on the ground.

Maj. Gen. Richard Felton, commander of the Joint Helicopter Command in the United Kingdom, also addressed the aviation delegation and echoed Mangum's remarks.

"We don't have a monopoly on good ideas. One of the benefits of a conference like this is we have a forum rich in opportunity to share ideas," added Felton. "It's not about U.S. Army aviation, it's about army Aviation and being able to help the Soldier on the ground," said Felton.

U.S. Col. Jason Halloren, Army South deputy commander for support, represented the command and engaged with partner nations countries and representatives because of his history and background in Army aviation.

Mangum, a second-generation aviator, said he felt the conference, "reinforces important relations and builds trust, as well as creates an understanding between aviation armies across the world who will continue to have to interact in the future. It is remarkable to see what the Colombians have been able to do in 20 years. They are well integrated with their ground forces."
JBSA, community partners establish new Commuter Center and Rideshare program

By 2nd Lt. Avery Larkin
JBSA-Randolph Public Affairs

Joint Base San Antonio Community Partnership leaders signed a new memorandum of understanding to formally establish the JBSA Commuter Center and unveil the enhanced JBSA Rideshare program during a ceremony at the Port Authority of San Antonio offices Tuesday.

The JBSA Virtual Commuter Center will serve as the primary source of information regarding the JBSA Mass Transportation Benefit Program, which encourages the use of alternative transportation options with monetary incentives.

“The JBSA vCommuter Center website will be a one stop shop for anyone at JBSA considering alternative transportation,” said James Williams, for the 502nd Logistics Readiness Squadron deputy director. “The mass transportation benefit program provides several opportunities for our employees to be environmentally friendly, helping us become more successful at reducing our collective carbon footprint.”

The JBSA vCommuter Center was created through a partnership between the base, vRide, the Alamo Area Council of Governments, VIA Metropolitan Transit and Enterprise Rent-A-Car. Together, these partners will offer several alternative means of transportation to the JBSA community, including the RideShare program, through the JBSA vCommuter Center website at http://www.jbsa.mil/Resources/JBSARideShare.aspx.

The first part of this mass transportation benefit program is the RideShare program, a vanpool system that links JBSA employees with selected vanpool providers.

Once an individual applies for the program, they select a vanpool provider through VIA or vRide, after which they will be assigned a vanpool based on location and availability. Additionally, participants receive a monetary incentive for using the program.

According to officials, each established vanpool takes anywhere from four to 11 personal vehicles off the road, reducing automotive emissions and helping to minimize the stress individuals may feel during their commute. Currently, only 3 percent of eligible JBSA employees participate in the program.

RideShare will be one of several alternatives within the mass transportation benefit program which will eventually include specific processes for use of a bus, vanpool, train or light rail system.

“We are very proud to be working with our incredible community partners on this important traffic reduction and environmentally responsible initiative,” said Brig. Gen. Bob LaBrutta, 502nd Air Base Wing and Joint Base San Antonio commander.

“Utilizing alternative forms of transportation will not only decrease congestion on the highways and other traffic arteries in and around San Antonio, it will also have a positive environmental impact as we reduce emissions,” LaBrutta added. “Bottom Line: JBSA is a proud member of this tremendous community known as ‘Military City USA.’” The Commuter Center and Rideshare program is the simply the right thing to do, and we appreciate the teamwork and support of everyone involved.”

The JBSA Community Partnership Initiative works to increase the efficiency of JBSA installations partnerships with both public and private organizations. These working relationships are referred to as P4 (Public to Public, Public to Private) partnerships and allow military installations to join with nearby public and private entities to consolidate resources while reducing the financial burden.
Col. (Dr.) Richard L. Williams, U.S. Army Institute of Surgical Research director of dental and craniofacial trauma research and tissue regeneration, was selected to participate in the American Dental Association’s Institute for Diversity in Leadership 2015-2016 class.

The class consists of 16 active leaders of the dental profession from various regions of the country.

The leaders were selected by the ADA Board of Trustees for this unique leader development program which will be completed during three on-site training sessions in Chicago.

“It feels great to be selected for this program and I’m very proud to be a part of it,” Williams said. “It’s an opportunity for us to get involved at a higher level of organized dentistry and assimilate into those ranks, and hopefully transfer into those positions in the future.”

USAISR provides a diverse group of dental professionals with education and experience to develop their leadership skills, strengthen professional networks and set leadership paths in dentistry and their communities.

“Helping to encourage and inspire the future leaders of our profession through our diversity institute enriches our communities and our association,” said ADA President Dr. Maxine Feinberg in an ADA press release.

“Many of the program graduates have gone on to leadership roles in the organized dentistry,” Feinberg added. “I’d love to see more leadership development programs like this at the local level.”

The ADA Institute for Diversity in Leadership is sponsored by Henry Schein, Inc. and Procter & Gamble.

A key part of the program is to have each participant design and implement a personal leadership project for their community or profession.

For his project, Williams proposed an idea to a local underprivileged school district in San Antonio to promote opportunities in dental or medical education and Science, Technology, Engineering and Math.

“I have already consulted with academic leaders from the ‘Promise Zone’ from San Antonio’s east side. The director for Science and Technology for San Antonio Independent School District and I have already started collaborating and developing a plan to enhance the development and preparation of students of the Young Men’s Leadership Academy.”

Williams and his class members are scheduled to attend two more sessions at the ADA Headquarters – one in December and the third in September 2016.

During the sessions they will be working with leading educators from Northwestern University’s Kellogg School of Management and Duke University’s Fuqua School of Business.

“I’m looking forward to it,” Williams added. “It’s an opportunity not too many military dental officers get. It’s also a wonderful opportunity for me to represent the Army and the Army Medical Command.”
Four local Army medical organizations earn Lean Six Sigma Excellence Awards

By J.D. Leipold
Army News Service

Four Army medical organizations are among the 10 that streamlined their business operations by eliminating redundancies and saving the service millions of dollars were recognized Wednesday for their excellence in Lean Six Sigma practices.

Acting Undersecretary of the Army Eric K. Fanning hosted the Pentagon ceremony paying tribute to the winners of the 2014 Army Lean Six Sigma Excellence Awards Program, known as LEAP. He then presented framed certificates and plaques to the winners with Robert Swan, Army Office of Business Transformation deputy director.

Now in its seventh year, LEAP recognizes outstanding project teams and organizations, which have demonstrated excellence in implementing results-driven process improvement projects using the Lean Six Sigma, or LSS, concept to adopt new ways of doing business, while streamlining processes and reducing costs.

"It’s not just the cost-savings and avoidance that you realize...you actually introduce real efficiencies for our Soldiers, for their Families and our civilians,” Fanning said. “You make a difference in people’s lives every single day. You make their lives easier. "I just want to thank you again for all that you do on behalf of the Army and all the help that you are providing year after year,” he added. “Congratulations to the winners. Thank you.”

The U.S. Army Medical Command at Fort Sam Houston won the Lean Six Sigma Award for the 10-87 Organizational Excellence Award winners at a Pentagon ceremony Sept. 23.

See AWARDS, P16

Highlighting Hispanic Americans in Army South

By Sgt. Mahlet S. Tesfaye
U.S. Army South Public Affairs

Mely Childs, a first-generation Hispanic American immigrant who works at U.S. Army South headquarters, came to the United States of America in 2006 with her mother and younger brother from Mexico hoping for a better life.

At the time, Childs, which is her married name, did not speak English, which she said was “the biggest challenge I had to overcome.”

Childs lost her older brother, Spc. Sergio Diaz-Varela, in 2004 in Iraq when a homemade bomb exploded near him during a mission. Diaz-Varela, who she calls her “hero,” was assigned to 1st Battalion, 503rd Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, and was awarded his U.S. citizenship as a result of his death.

“He left us too soon,” Childs said. “He paid the ultimate sacrifice, but did what he loved most: being a Soldier.”

Childs is grateful she had a support system she calls “family” from her brother’s old Army unit and members in U.S. Army South, who supported her in her journey in becoming a U.S. citizen and in every aspect of her life in America.

Robert Pelegreen, Army South Regional Affairs Directorate deputy chief, is part of Childs’ support system and sponsored and helped Childs and her family settle in America.

“Mely is a hard working person who came to America as a family and is working her way to the American dream,” Pelegreen said.

Every day, Childs remembers her older brother’s advice to her “to face her challenges and keep fighting,” which she uses daily to push herself to accomplish her dreams.

Childs continues pursuing her dreams and has advanced from working at Blimpie’s to an office assistant at U.S. Army South headquarters. She hopes to pursue work in the medical field in the future.
JOINT BASE
San Antonio
2015
Air Show
Oct. 31 and Nov. 1 at JBSA-Randolph
featuring the Air Force Thunderbirds,
U.S. Army Golden Knights and the Air Force Wings of Blue
For complete details, visit us at http://www.jbsa.mil;
http://www.facebook.com/JBSARandolph
or follow us at http://www.twitter.com/JBSARandolph

his town hall at Fort Sam Houston Theater Sept. 25.

Inge Godfrey (second from left) Brooke Army Medical Center Fisher House manager and other
guests cut the cake to celebrate Fisher House Founder Zachary Fisher’s birthday Sept. 25 at the
22nd annual Fisher House BBQ at Fort Sam Houston. There was also a cake honoring the 25 years
of service by the Fisher House.

Members of the 323rd Army Band “Fort Sam’s Own” and the Order of Granaderos y Damas de
Galvez conduct the opening ceremony during a gazebo concert hosted by U.S Army South at Fort
Sam Houston Sept. 27. The concert was the last of the summer as members of the community
came out to listen to an array of music.
Not all super heroes wear capes:

BAMC holds annual event to celebrate cancer survivors

By Lori Newman
BAMC Public Affairs

The 9th Annual Cancer Survivors Day celebration was held Sept. 26 at San Antonio Military Medical Center on Fort Sam Houston to honor cancer survivors and their families.

“The event celebrates all cancer survivors and their families, and their brave fight against this insidious disease,” said Army Maj. (Dr.) Winnifred Wong, who helped to organize the event.

“We usually hold the event to coincide with the National Cancer Survivors Day in June, though this year we had to postpone the event to September.”

Don Doyle, a Vietnam veteran who served 22 years in the Army and another 22 years working for VIA Metropolitan Transit, attended the event for the first time. He was diagnosed with cancer in September 2014 and treated at SAMMC.

“I think this event is great. I’m pleasantly surprised because people are very positive. I was also surprised to see a lot of the staff here, because I know they work every day of the week and they still came in on a weekend,” Doyle said.

“The whole staff and everyone at the radiation clinic are amazing. I feel very fortunate to get my treatment here,” he added.

This year’s theme was “Not All Super Heroes Wear Capes” to symbolize the strength and perseverance of cancer survivors. Many of the attendees came dressed in their favorite superhero costume.

“It is a fun day dedicated to positively celebrating our cancer survivors and their families, which includes live music, free food, a costume contest, drawings for prizes and a health fair,” Wong said.

“This year we had 11 outside agencies and 17 SAMMC departments participate in the event and more than 200 patients attend.”

The event brings awareness not only to survivorship, but also screening and prevention, because cancers that are caught earlier tend to have more favorable outcomes.

“Patients and their families benefit by celebrating another year of survivorship and having access to our associated health fair, which provides information on new cutting edge techniques SAMMC departments provide and also interacting with our amazing cancer care teams,” the doctor said.

Cancer survivors and their families also benefit from sharing their experience with others.

Thanhphuong Halcomb has been in remission for almost six years. “It means a lot that there is an event like this for cancer survivors. I have attended this event for the past five years now,” Halcomb said. “Last year I came with my son and I met a really nice couple and we chatted.”

Pfc. Christopher Vandenberg’s entire family came out to support him. “It shows me that they care and support me,” he said.

“This event highlights the accomplishments of everyone who overcame their illness.”

Next year will be the 10th annual Cancer Survivors Day celebration here at SAMMC.

“In June 2016, we’re expecting a great turn out and celebration of life,” Wong said.
Court-martial, crimes and punishment at Joint Base San Antonio

The Joint Base San Antonio Judge Advocate General completed one Air Force court-martial in the month of August. The results of a court-martial are not final until the clemency and/or appeals process is completed.

All courts-martial are open to the public and upcoming courts-martial can be viewed at the United States Air Force Judge Advocate Generals website: http://www.afjag.af.mil/docket/index.asp.

Tech. Sgt. Chad S. Lukkes, 342nd Training Squadron, JBSA-Lackland, was tried by a general court-martial consisting of a military judge Aug. 11 at JBSA-Lackland. Lukkes pled and was found guilty of three specifications of false official statement (falsely claiming to have been awarded a Purple Heart and an Army Combat Action Badge) in violation of Article 107, Uniform Code of Military Justice, and six specifications of violation of the general article, (improperly wearing a Purple Heart and Army Combat Action Badge on his uniform and lying to a reporter about an injury and members of his unit about receiving said awards) in violation of Article 134, UCMJ. The military judge sentenced Lukkes to a reprimand, nine months confinement, and reduction to airman basic.

During the month of August, JBSA Air Force commanders administered 16 non-judicial punishment actions under Article 15 of the UCMJ.

The punishments imposed reflect the commander's determination of an appropriate punishment after considering the circumstances of the offense and the offender's record. Officers may not be reduced in rank as a punishment. A suspended punishment does not take effect unless the offender engages in additional misconduct or fails to satisfy the conditions of the suspension. The suspension period usually lasts for six months unless a lesser amount is specified.

JBSA-Lackland (12):
The Article 15 actions from JBSA-Lackland include, but are not limited to:

**Dereliction of Duty, Willful:** A senior airman misused her government travel card by making unauthorized purchases. The member received a reduction to the grade of airman basic, forfeitures of $773 pay per month for two months, one month of $773 pay per month suspended, 60 days restriction and a reprimand.

**Dereliction of Duty, Willful x 2:** Two airmen first class in technical training failed to remain inside the dormitory between the hours of 10 p.m. and 4 a.m. and fled from an NCO when seen attempting to leave. They received a suspended reduction to the grade of airman, 14 days restriction, 14 days extra duty and a reprimand.

**Absent Without Leave:** A senior airman without authority failed to remain in the local area as defined in a memorandum for all 543rd Support Squadron personnel. The member received a suspended reduction to airman first class, forfeitures of $1,027 pay per month for one month, 30 days extra duty and a reprimand.

JBSA-Fort Sam Houston (3):
The Article 15 actions from JBSA-Fort Sam Houston consist of:

**Failure to Go x 2 & Dereliction of Duty, Failing to have a 29B:** An airman first class failed to report to the physical training pad where the squadron performed PT. He also went outside the allowed radius without permission. The member received a suspended reduction to the grade of airman, 14 days restriction, 14 days extra duty and a reprimand.

**Absent Without Leave:** A senior airman without authority failed to remain in a designated duty location and failed to report to duty at the designated time. The member received a suspended reduction to airman first class, suspended forfeitures of $511 pay per month for two months, 15 days extra duty and a reprimand.

**Dereliction of Duty, Willful:** An airman basic in technical training failed to remain inside the dormitory between the hours of 10 p.m. and 4 a.m. The member was found guilty of an offense and the other member was also under the legal age of 21. The member received a reduction to the rank of airman and a reprimand.

**Dereliction of Duty, Willful:** An airman first class was found out of her dormitory after accountability was performed. The member received 14 days of restriction to JBSA-Fort Sam Houston and a reprimand.

JBSA – Randolph (1):
The Article 15 action from JBSA-Randolph consists of:

**Failure to Go:** An airman basic failed to go to his appointed place of duty. When contacted by his unit to determine his location, he lied about his whereabouts. The member received forfeitures of $773 per month for one month and a reprimand.

(Source: Joint Base San Antonio Judge Advocate General)
In the movies, kidnap victims or prisoners of war often come home paraled and muttering rhymes like a 1980s cheerleader. But the reality emerging from the airplane and wailing to the families... 

A few short days later, a wave of people would be present to embrace their father after an extended period of time apart. Loos in the movies is the realistic flow from the captive to a healthy lifestyle and their families, we are setting the precedent to rehearse the mission... 

One of the biggest challenges is that they don't know... 

“Bringing our teams out to... 

Fogging their medical evaluation... 

Normally, a third group would join the first for the reintegration process, but the medical team responsible for an initial health evaluation and treatment... 

The exercise at Fort Rucker, Ala., Sept. 18, was... 

Also...
JBSA committed to reducing energy consumption during Energy Awareness Month

By Andy Hinojosa
JBSA-Lackland
Base Energy Manager

October is Energy Awareness Month and JBSA-Lackland is committed to reducing energy consumption to meet all conservation directives.

The JBSA Energy Program is designed to comply with federally mandated energy goals while maintaining a healthy and productive workplace.

Energy reduction goals are specified by the new Executive Order 13693 and EISA 2007 which requires federal installations to reduce energy use by 2.5 percent every year for 10 years. The goal is to reduce energy per square foot by a total of 25 percent by fiscal 2025, based on a fiscal 2015 baseline.

With the start of a new fiscal year, 2016 begins the new energy reduction goal of 2.5 percent per year going through 2025. Everyone is encouraged to be vigilant and persistent in our efforts to reduce energy consumption in fiscal 2016.

San Antonio and JBSA utility providers are planning to promote energy awareness month by setting up energy conservation display tables at some of the installations through the month of October.

CPS Energy, San Antonio Water System and Civil Engineering Squadron will be handing out pamphlets on energy and water conservation, including informational tips on how to conserve our natural resources. Keep in mind; Air Force theme for energy awareness campaign continues to be “Power the Force. Fuel the Fight. I am Air Force energy.”

Here’s a checklist of ideas in the office or work area to reduce energy:

• Buy Energy Star certified appliances such as refrigerators, microwaves, desk lighting, etc.
• Turn off office equipment (monitors, printers, copy machines, fax machines) at night and on weekends.
• Report energy wastes, including water leaks, building deficiencies, and energy abuses.
• Check the age and condition of the major appliances, especially the refrigerator. Replace it with a more energy efficient model.
• Survey your incandescent lights for opportunities to replace them with compact fluorescents and light-emitting diodes lighting. LED lighting can be more efficient, durable, versatile and longer lasting. LEDs are now being incorporated into bulbs and fixtures for general lighting applications. Some LED light fixtures have LEDs built-in as a permanent light source.

Remember, do not over cool air conditioned spaces and report all energy problems in your building to the facility manager or energy monitor.

For questions or comments about energy conservation, call the JBSA base energy managers at 671-1537 for JBSA-Fort Sam Houston or 671-0252 for JBSA-Randolph and JBSA-Lackland.
U.S. Army Medical Command sergeant major visits USAISR combat casualty care research staff

By Steven Galvan
USAISR Public Affairs

Command Sgt. Maj. Gerald C. Ecker, U.S. Army Medical Command senior enlisted leader, visited the U.S. Army Institute of Surgical Research Sept. 8 to meet with the staff and become familiarized with latest combat casualty care research.

The call to the Fort Sam Houston-headquartered command was Ecker’s first and was an opportunity for the USAISR enlisted Soldiers and staff to showcase their research aimed at optimizing care for wounded warriors.

“The importance of this visit was first to thank every member of the team for their contributions in optimizing combat casualty care over the past 15 years of war,” Ecker said. “The USAISR has been and is central to understanding the science of how to provide effective combat medical interventions to very complex wounds and injuries far forward on the battlefield.”

Ecker, a combat medic, knows firsthand the importance of having well-trained medics with state-of-the-art equipment and material to save lives of those wounded on the battlefield.

“I want to ensure that our medical Soldiers performing their duties within the scientific walls of the ISR have a full appreciation for the battlefield art that our first responders and combat medics must master outside of a controlled environment” he said.

“In order for us on the Army Medicine team to master our profession of saving lives, we must understand not only the warfighter, the enemy and terrain, but also see ourselves within the overall situation” Ecker said. “I believe this methodology then provides the why of what we medics do, in whatever our capacity.”

Sgt. Maj. James L. Devine, USAISR senior enlisted leader, said he was pleased with briefs Ecker received on the latest research initiatives and burn care at the USAISR Burn Center.

“Our Soldiers and staff did a great job at providing Command Sgt. Maj. Ecker with a detailed description of the various research task areas at the USAISR,” Devine said. “I believe he now has a better understanding of our mission, capabilities and responsibilities.”

Ecker ended his visit at the USAISR with a talk to the Soldiers where he encouraged them to read and be familiar with the Army’s transformation and future outlook.

“The USAISR’s future endeavors of professional expertise will certainly be needed in order to meet the demands of our Army continuing to win in a complex world,” Ecker said.

Sgt. Francisco A. Rosario, USAISR NCO in charge of the Burn Intensive Care Unit and the Burn Flight Team, briefed Ecker on burn care, patient medical evacuations and inflight patient care.

Rosario believes that it is imperative for senior leaders to make these types of visits to gain knowledge of the command and for the Soldiers to receive the latest information directly from Army leaders.

“Command Sgt. Maj. Ecker was able to provide a detailed overview of the Army’s goal to ensure that every military treatment facility becomes a high reliability organization, while operating as a medical training and readiness platform,” said Rosario.

“Our USAISR Soldiers are extremely intellectually gifted, mission-oriented and impressive, and they provide a unique capability that will help our Army win,” Ecker said.
Army changing basic training this month

By C. Todd Lopez
Army News Service

Who’s the best judge of how well a young person is performing in Basic Combat Training, or BCT? It turns out the Army thinks that other basic trainees might be really good at evaluating how their peers are doing.

Starting this month, the Army is making some changes to how it runs BCT, which serves for enlisted Soldiers as their first introduction to soldiering. One of those changes includes peer evaluations, something that is already being done in places like Ranger School.

With peer evaluation, Soldiers in BCT units will evaluate each other on how they are adhering to standards, performing on tasks and even if they shine when the drill sergeant is away in the same way they shine when he’s glaring over them in formation.

“Nobody is going to know you more than the guy next to you,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Dennis Woods, with U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command’s Center for Initial Military Training.

“If I am the instructor, all of your buddies you are with know the things you are doing that the instructor never caught,” he said. “Maybe you are only spotlighting when the instructor is around. But when he’s not around, everybody has to pull your weight. This peer evaluation lets Soldiers see themselves through the eyes of their peers.”

The peer evaluation won’t be entirely new for basic training. Already at Fort Jackson, S.C., a peer evaluation pilot program was tried out. But in October, it will be implemented at all four Army basic training locations, including Fort Jackson; Fort Leonard Wood, Mo.; Fort Sill, Okla.; and Fort Benning, Ga.

Woods said that the peer evaluations will primarily serve as an indicator of character for Soldiers – that will allow the Army to better evaluate some of the things that are important about being a Soldier, but which are harder to measure through testing and performance.

“Some people will get all the warrior tasks, battle drills, and skills, because they are physically inclined,” Woods said. “But their character may have an issue. That peer evaluation will help us uncover that character. As a result, a Soldier may spend more time in basic training before he ships to that first unit of assignment.”

There are more changes to BCT than just the introduction of peer evaluations. The driving force behind changes to BCT is a shift in what the Army thinks Soldiers will need to have under their belt when they make their first salute at their first permanent unit – and this is directly related to the end of conflict in Iraq and Afghanistan.

During the 14 years after 9/11, Soldiers knew that they’d probably be going to the Middle East after basic training. During that time, the Army was well-equipped and well-funded to recruit, train and equip Soldiers for an ongoing war. That is no longer the case.

Additionally, Soldiers went to their first unit of assignment ready to fight the ongoing conflict. The Army trained those Soldiers in BCT with a focus on the desert, convoys, improvised explosive devices, and countering insurgents, for instance. And when Soldiers deployed, most would fall in on a combat environment that was already manned by American Soldiers who’d warmed all the seats for them.

Now, with conflict in Iraq and Afghanistan over for most all of the force, Soldiers must be ready to deploy almost anywhere in the world – not just the desert. And when they get there, they may not find American Soldiers already on the ground. Instead, they must be ready to clear the ground for Soldiers who will follow them.

Soldiers must be trained to execute decisive action through combined arms maneuver and must be trained up on wide-area security competencies.

“We are transitioning from an Army at war to an Army in preparation,” said James Walthes, a key designer of the new BCT program of instruction. “With that in mind, we got together at Fort Benning, Georgia, and we brought in company commanders, first sergeants and drill sergeants – the ones that actually deal with the program of instruction on a daily basis. What we looked at was how we could go about preparing our Soldiers to meet the new demands of Force 2025 and beyond.”

Army BCT includes a red, white and blue phase. Each includes lessons that focus on the social, physical and cognitive development of new Soldiers. At one time, the Army tested Soldiers to make sure they had learned what they were supposed to learn while in those phases of BCT.

“Long ago we used to do phase testing,” Woods said. “Then we quit doing that. We are bringing phase testing back. There’s red, white and blue phase testing.”

In October, the Army will re-introduce end-of-phase testing. Soldiers will be evaluated at the end of each phase for what they were supposed to learn – and each phase builds on and re-tests Soldiers on what they had learned in previous phases. “Testing at the end of each phase gets more difficult,” Woods said. “And blue phase testing includes everything.”

Woods said testing at the end of phases for ev-
Everything taught up until then is a change from how things had been done, which was to test Soldiers after each lesson was taught. He said that created problems with knowledge retention. There simply wasn’t enough time to get in the skill and knowledge application repetition that makes new ideas stick.

“I’d give you a bunch of first-aid training, and then test you on it,” he said. “And if you pass, we move on to the next subject. But we weren’t doing enough repetitions of these activities to make sure you have it under stress. There are more repetitions now and more time spent on a task.”

One reason there is more time, Woods said, is because less time is going to be spent in BCT on theater-specific knowledge. Soldiers have to have general knowledge now, rather than Iraq-specific knowledge. Clearing out lessons that prepared Soldiers for the desert means there is more room to hammer home the ideas that are more applicable the world over, he said. Soldiers failing to pass those end-of-phase tests might, at the discretion of the commander, be recycled back to an appropriate part of BCT so they can re-learn what they failed to capture the first time. Then they will be able to re-take those phase tests and prove they are good enough to be a Soldier.

Systems are in place now to recycle Soldiers back into earlier parts of BCT for such things as failure to meet physical fitness requirements, or for having gotten hurt. But those recycles are at the discretion of the commander and are also somewhat ad hoc in nature.

Thriso Hamilton Jr., who worked with Walthes on making changes to the BCT program of instruction, said recycles will now be standardized across all four basic training locations. “All BCT locations will be “on the same sheet of music” when it comes to recycles, he said.

“When commanders identify individuals who are not able to meet the requirements of BCT, they will have the opportunity to new-start or recycle those Soldiers to a point where they are able to go back over what they were not proficient at to begin with,” Hamilton said. “Those Soldiers – instead of them progressing though and possibly not meeting the requirements to graduate from BCT – are going to be afforded a second opportunity to go through the training and that will increase the numbers of those who graduate.”

In the new BCT Program of Instruction, the Army plans to increase focus on Army values and discipline, increase emphasis on physical readiness; update rifle marksmanship training; reduce theater-specific training; update the existing field training exercise; and increase the rigor of some existing training courses.

In the past at BCT, Soldiers learned 15 warrior tasks, 81 individual tasks and six battle drills. The new BCT will drop two warrior tasks and six battle drills. The new BCT will drop three warrior tasks and add one. The knowledge of those warrior tasks is not gone, however. TRADOC experts said that some of the warrior tasks were repetitive and could in fact be rolled in under other similar warrior tasks.

Gone is “perform counter IED” operations, “adapt to changing operational environments” and “grow professionally and personally” from the existing roster of 15 warrior tasks. Being added is “select a hasty fighting position.”

Among battle drills, “performs actions as a member of a mounted patrol” and “react to indirect fire, dismounted” have been dropped as well, reducing total number of battle drills from six to four.

TRADOC experts said that changes to warrior tasks and battle drills were changed based on a 23,000-person survey that concluded that WTBDDs needed to be refreshed based on changes to unit missions and doctrinal updates.

Some instruction in the current BCT will be moved out of BCT and instead placed into a Soldier’s first unit of assignment. For instance, lessons regarding interaction with news media, personnel recovery, and a class called “what is culture,” will all be moved to a Soldier’s first unit of instruction.

Instruction related to man-to-man combat, called “combatives,” will also be updated. New BCT instruction will combine the use of hand-to-hand fighting techniques with rifle fighting techniques to create a Soldier who is capable of operating across the full range of force,” read a TRADOC document.

Soldiers use Pugil sticks now to simulate how they might use their rifle as a weapon once it runs out of ammunition. That kind of training will be enhanced, as well as combined with combatives, which is hand-to-hand combat.

“If all I ever teach a
Employment Readiness Orientation

Mondays, 9-10 a.m., Military & Family Readiness Center, building 2797. An opportunity for the employment readiness team to get to know you and to assess how they can best assist you with your employment needs and desires. Call 221-2380.

Helping Us Grow Securely Playgroup

Tuesdays, 10 a.m. to noon, Middle School Teen Center, building 2515. An interactive playgroup for infants and toddlers; open to parents and their children ages 5 and under. Registration not required. Call 221-2418.

Facilitator Training Course

Tuesday-Wednesday, 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Military & Family Readiness Center, building 2797. A professional development course for individuals who have attended the instructor course. This training provides an overview of the facilitator training course and the skills and techniques that are necessary to be a successful Instructor. Call 221-2380.

Family Readiness Group Leadership Academy

Wednesday-Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., Military & Family Readiness Center, building 2797. This training covers key positions, roles and responsibilities. Establish a network, resources and communications. Call 221-2418.

Relocation, Overseas Orientation

Wednesday, 10-11 a.m. and 2-3 p.m., Military & Family Readiness Center, building 2797. Mandatory for personnel E-5 and below. This orientation focuses on pre-departure counseling, relocation planning, and preparing for a PCS move. Topics cover entitlement, shipping of household goods, emotional stressors of relocation, employment and education. Only one session is needed. Call 221-2705.

General Resume Writing Techniques

Wednesday, 9-11 a.m., Military & Family Readiness Center, building 2797. Creating a resume is one of the first steps in finding a job. Learn about the different resume formats and which one to use when writing a non-Federal resume. Call 221-2380.

Post-Deployment

Wednesday, Oct. 21, 28, 1-3 p.m., Military & Family Readiness Center, building 2797. Patrons returning from deployment are required to attend this briefing. Review ways to deal with the stressors associated with reintegration back into the home life. Call 221-2418.

Peer-To-Peer Support Group

Wednesday, 9-11 a.m. and Thursday, 12:30-2:30 p.m., Military & Family Readiness Center, building 2797. Caregivers have the opportunity to build a peer support network, share experiences and information with a safe place to talk. Lunch is provided after the morning session and before the afternoon session. This group meets at the SFAC, building 3659 near Brooke Army Medical Center.

Coffee Talk: EFMP Support Group

Wednesday, noon to 1 p.m., Military & Family Readiness Center, building 2797. This Exceptional Family Member Program support group meets monthly for a casual dialogue to share helpful resources and ways to overcome challenges. Call 221-2705.

Troops To Teachers

Thursday, 1-3 p.m., Military & Family Readiness Center, building 2797. Troops to Teachers assists eligible military personnel in pursuit of teaching as a second career. Topics include counseling, referral and placement assistance, identifies required certifications and employment opportunities. Call 221-1213.

Safety Seat Clinic

Thursday, 9:30-11:30 a.m. Make sure your child is safe while traveling on the road by ensuring restraints are properly installed and fit the child appropriately. Child and vehicle must be present; parents will be seen by appointment only at the Fire Station, building 3830. Prerequisite is Car Seat 101. Call 221-2418.

Career Technical Training

Thursday-Oct. 16, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Military & Family Readiness Center, building 2797. Service members will receive guidance and help in selecting technical training schools and technical fields. Topics covered: accredited institute applications, scheduling a session with a counselor or a career technical training expert, and Veteran Affairs vocational education counselors. Call 221-1213.

Super Heroes Howl Down

Oct. 23, 5:30-8 p.m., Military & Family Readiness Center, building 2797. Exceptional Family Members and the Joint Base San Antonio community are invited to eat, drink and be scary. This Halloween party includes a costume parade, haunted houses, sensory gross out stations, face painting, arts and crafts, a photo booth, scavenger hunt and trick-or-treating. For more information or to RSVP, call 221-2705.

Family Readiness Group Treasurer Training

Oct. 27, 9-11 a.m., Military & Family Readiness Center, building 2797. Provides information and guidance to leaders on how to help service members, families and units understand and respond when traumatic events occur. Call 221-2418.

Microsoft Office 2013 Excel Level I, Oct. 27, 8 a.m. to noon and Level II, Oct. 29, 8 a.m. to noon, Military & Family Readiness Center, building 2797. Microsoft Office 2013 Excel foundational classes provide novice users with the skills and knowledge needed to advance. To register, call 221-2380 or 221-2705. Trainings are held in the computer lab, seating is limited.

Salary Negotiation And Social Media

Oct. 8, 9-11 a.m., Military & Family Readiness Center, building 2797. Learn the skill of salary negotiation and tap into the power of social media to find jobs and market yourself. Call 221-2380.

Volunteer Orientation

Oct. 8, 9-10 a.m., Military & Family Readiness Center, building 2797. Newly assigned Military & Family Readiness Center volunteers will in-process and receive training on their responsibilities. Volunteers with other organizations will receive orientation from their host organizations. Call 221-2380.

Volunteer Management Information System

Oct. 8, 10-11 a.m., Military & Family Readiness Center, building 2797. Volunteers will receive hands-on training with the Volunteer Management Information System, or VMIS. Open to all registered volunteers. Call 221-2380.
BASICS from P15

Soldier is how to shoot a rifle or throw a grenade, then when they interact with a person, death is the only thing on the table,” Woods said. “Sometimes, a good smack to the face solves the problem. That’s hand-to-hand fighting. Or if you are in some mega-city, and you have combatants hiding among civilians, and the civilians are agitated too, maybe to create a safe space a push or shove will suffice.”

“When Soldiers come in, they know nothing about how the Army conducts physical fitness,” Hamilton said. “If you go to a gym to work out, one of the most important things the trainer can do for you is teach you proper technique.”

The Army will now ensure Soldiers are doing physical readiness training, or PRT, with the proper technique, so that they can do it safely, Hamilton said.

“Now, during the first two weeks of red phase at the beginning of BCT, Soldiers will learn how to do PRT in a session that is separate from where they actually perform the PRT. The Army estimates that with new Soldiers, their mental and physical capacity to absorb large amounts of new information during PRT sessions hinders the ability of a unit to exploit good conditioning.”

By separating the teaching of PRT from actually doing the PRT, new Soldiers will better be able to absorb instruction regarding correct movement patterns, cadence, precision and body positioning as they relate to PRT. The result, the Army estimates, will be Soldiers who are more knowledgeable on how to do PRT correctly, and this will result in fewer injuries and more physically ready Soldiers.

“This ensures the Soldiers conduct exercises properly,” Hamilton said. “When they do that and you train them correctly the first time, it reduces injuries because they aren’t performing exercises in an incorrect manner.”

To increase the ability of Soldiers to find their way home – or a combat objective – the Army has changed the land navigation portion of BCT by reducing the amount of classroom instruction, creating more demanding end-of-course land navigation evaluations, and changing from four-man land navigation teams in training to two-man land navigation teams.

Smaller teams means a decreased likelihood that Soldiers with less-developed knowledge of land navigation will be able to simply “tag along” with more skilled Soldiers.

Soldiers will also be introduced to fewer weapons than they have been in the past. The M-16 and M-4 series rifles are still the centerpiece of weapons training for Soldiers. But familiarization with weapons that are less common among Soldiers, or that are similar in function and operation to weapons that remain in BCT, will instead be moved to a Soldier’s first unit of assignment.

Soldiers coming into BCT in October can also expect to get more training and use of weapons optics, as well as expect to shoot more often in full battle gear – as they would in actual combat, Woods said.

While BCT changes in October, the curriculum over at the U.S. Army Drill Sergeant Academy at Fort Jackson, S.C., has already changed to prepare new drill sergeants to teach the new BCT program of instruction.

“There’s a lot more emphasis on ‘this is the weapon, this is how you use it’ and more in-depth detail on how to operate the weapon,” said Sgt. 1st Class Ryan McCaffrey, drill sergeant leader at the drill sergeant school. “It’s the same with PRT. We are trying to get the sergeants to understand the concepts of PRT and understand why we do movements the way we do.”

He said drill sergeants will be able to explain “why we do push-ups, or why we do the different exercise and condition drills, and tie it into the warrior tasks and battle drills. Then Soldiers understand how their physical training ties into what they do on the battlefield.”

McCaffrey, who was former Army Reserve drill sergeant of the year, said that new instruction in the drill sergeant school also prepares noncommissioned officers for incoming Soldiers who are accustomed to asking a lot of questions. He said there is a course now in drill sergeant school that addresses the topic of “Generation Y,” the generation now coming through basic training.

“They are more apt to ask questions, and question why we do things,” McCaffrey said. “I think once a person understands why you are supposed to do a task, they take more ownership of it, and they are more willing to execute it properly. We discuss that in class. We are not looking for Soldiers that just say yes and no. We want Soldiers who can think.”