

# JBSA

# LEGACY

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JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO

JULY 31, 2020



Tom Brewer, 12th Maintenance Squadron maintainer, wears a face mask as he repairs a T-38C seat hinge at Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph July 14.

PHOTO BY AIRMAN 1ST CLASS TYLER MCQUISTON

## 12th MXG supports mission while protecting workers

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## Wildland Fire Branch fights fires, COVID-19

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# New task force helps Soldiers, families

By Joseph Laccad  
ARMY NEWS SERVICE

The Army's new Quality of Life Task Force has reached full operational capability, the service announced July 21, as it continues to tackle six priorities to improve conditions for Soldiers and their families.

To address one of those priorities, increasing access to childcare, the Army will open 10 new child development centers by the fiscal year 2025, said Lt. Gen. Jason Evans, the Army's G-9.

Evans and other Army leaders make up the task force, which was formally chartered in March to also improve housing, health care, spouse employment, permanent-change-of-station moves, and upgrading the quality of living for Soldiers stationed in remote locations.

"We're focused on making life better for Soldiers and families wherever the Army takes them," Evans said during the task force's first media event to discuss its ongoing efforts. "We still have more work to do."

Through the help of the task force, child youth services have also provided incentives for care providers and added 100 more of them in the past year, Evans said.

Additionally, the Army will expand the Army Fee Assistance program, which provides financial aid to military families to offset civilian child care costs when on-post child care is not available or suitable. The service has been testing a pilot program in Maryland and Virginia to increase the number of civilian child care providers by expediting the certification process.

Helen Roadarmel, program manager for the Army's Child, Youth and School Services, said about 77 percent of the Army's CDCs have reopened after being closed due to the COVID-19 virus.

Children of care providers and mission-essential workers will receive first priority for

enrollment, followed by single and dual military parents, and service members with working spouses. During the pandemic, centers remained open on a limited basis with priority given to families of mission-essential personnel.

## Housing inspectors

Despite challenges under the COVID-19 conditions, task force leaders remained confident they can continue improving quality of life standards for Army families.

To address the service's top quality-of-life priority, housing, the Army has hired an additional 114 workers who will provide quality assurance and help oversee privatized housing inspections.

During PCS moves, Maj. Gen. Michel Russell, the assistant G-4, said the Army's installation transportation offices track the health of contracted movers and whether the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines are followed. The speed and efficiency of moves are monitored and appointments are tracked.

"Quality of life is something that can't be done overnight and it certainly has been a challenge in 2020 because of COVID-19," Evans said.

Additionally, more than 5 percent of all work orders will be randomly inspected. Jackson said home inspections will do more than a simple visual examination. A thorough evaluation of the functionality of home systems will be implemented including air conditioning, heating, and electrical.

Housing officers received special training on how to identify and locate different mold conditions and how to remove them. Army housing has been working to solve any potential problems with homes before a resident moves in.

To further keep residents informed, a mobile application is being developed that allows barracks and housing tenants to

track work orders and gain access to the fall 2019 housing survey results.

In February, the Defense Department released the Military Housing Privatization Initiative Tenant Bill of Rights to help residents identify their entitlements as well as standardize customer service at each duty station.

Army Materiel Command and Army Installation Management Command lead the effort to improve the quality of Army housing, along with representatives from the Army Staff and each of the service's major commands.

If residents still have concerns, they can call a resident hotline as well as report problems through a Soldier's chain of command.

## Spousal employment

To help Army spouses find adequate employment, the 2020 National Defense Authorization Act increased the reimbursable amount for spouse relicensing costs to \$1,000. However, spouses still face challenges when transitioning to another

state during PCS moves. Spouses who received a professional license in one state often must re-license or earn another certification in the new state at a cost.

"What we need there is reciprocity," Evans said. "And then all of the states to adopt that. We have the governors that have been engaged in this and to some degree, some of them have the laws implemented for state licensing and reciprocity, but it's not across the board. So that is one thing we'd like to see happen."

The Civilian Employment Assignment Tool has also expanded its reach to help spouses who are non-appropriated fund employees make a non-competitive transfer to other duty stations at the same pay grade and skill level.

The Army approved assignment incentive pay for Soldiers stationed at some locations in Alaska and is working to improve educational opportunities like advanced high school courses through virtual education, Evans said.

## JBSA LEGACY

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## U.S. SPACE FORCE RELEASES OFFICIAL LOGO, MOTTO



COURTESY GRAPHIC

The U.S. Space Force released its logo and motto, *Semper Supra*, which means "Always Above," July 22 at the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. The logo and motto honor the heritage and history of the U.S. Space Force.



# Feedback Fridays

By Brig. Gen. Caroline M. Miller

502D AIR BASE WING AND JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO COMMANDER

Feedback Fridays is a weekly forum that aims to connect the 502d Air Base Wing with members of the Joint Base San Antonio community. Questions are collected during commander's calls, town hall meetings and throughout the week.

If you have a question or concern, please send an email to [jbsapublicaffairs@gmail.com](mailto:jbsapublicaffairs@gmail.com) using the subject line "Feedback Fridays." Questions will be further researched and published as information becomes available.

**Q. I'm a certified firearms and hunting safety instructor who will soon be working on new qualifications.**

Presently, to go to the private range — which is about 5-10 minutes from the JBSA-Camp Bullis gate — I have to drive from work to my house to pick up my firearms and ammunition and then return to the range.

This trip can take anywhere from 1-2 hours depending on traffic. Is there an approval process I can work through that would allow me to bring my firearms and ammunition with me to work?

I would greatly appreciate the time and money saved, as well as, the extra practice time I will have without the drive home. Thank you for your time and consideration.

**A.** We understand this is not convenient and appreciate your patience and willingness to reach out to ask this important question. With JBSA-Camp Bullis being a satellite location, our Defenders don't have the capacity to provide temporary storage to the general public.

In addition, the only authorized storage areas for privately-owned firearms and ammunition are military family housing and the Security Forces armories at each main JBSA location on a space-available basis, per JBSA policy (Instruction 31-1131).

Should you be interested in storage at one of our three main locations, please contact their armory ahead of time to verify space availability. At JBSA-Fort Sam Houston, call 210-221-9165; at JBSA-Lackland, call 210-671-1492; and at



COURTESY GRAPHIC

JBSA-Randolph, please call 210-652-4365.

**Q. One of my troops was stopped at the gate and restricted from getting on base due to an expired registration.**

When I called the 502d Security Forces Squadron to get clarity on their policy, I was told that "per the governor's executive order" people have 60 days from their expiration date to renew their registration.

This executive order can be found at <https://gov.texas.gov/>. The SFS interpretation of this state policy is incorrect. The 60-day grace period does not begin on the expiration date, it begins when the Texas DMV's return to "normal operations" which has yet to happen.

Per the DMV website, Texas residents are still not required to have an updated registration. Bottom line, the SFS should not be citing the state policy to back the base policy because they are inconsistent. If the base wants to enforce this policy, they should acknowledge that they are deviating from the state policy and make that abundantly clear to all military personnel at JBSA.

**A.** We do apologize for your experience at the gate, as you are correct about the

current state exemption policy. All JBSA gate guards have since been reminded of this policy.

Expired Texas vehicle registrations are accepted from March 16 until 60 days after DMVs resume normal operations. Expired Texas drivers licenses are accepted from March 13 until that same exemption end date.

**Q. I wanted to know why there aren't three lanes set up for morning inbound traffic at the JBSA-Lackland Luke East Gate?**

What I have noticed is that at around 6:30 a.m., Security Forces only has two lanes open, then opens up the third lane closer to 7 a.m. Most people have to be at work at Wilford Hall Ambulatory Surgical Center and other parts of the base at 7 a.m.

We are told to leave earlier and plan accordingly. We have done that, but we still have the same issue about the gate. Security Forces has a tough job and I get that, but when the personnel are sometimes talking to each other at the gate at one lane, that person could man that third lane earlier to ease the traffic.

**What can be done to fix this? If you look at the traffic patterns on Military Drive, the lanes get backed up on Military Drive, and this is a**

**big safety violation for traffic as well as personnel.**

**Is there any way to get the Luke West Gate open, as it helps ease the traffic going to the Luke East Gate?**

**A.** We understand traffic is a challenge here in San Antonio, and our Defenders do their best to help limit delays when practical. For times when the third lane is not manned, it's because that gate guard needs a restroom break or to render assistance, such as with vehicle turnarounds or to help a customer at the Visitor Control Center.

Regarding the safety of Military Drive, we have had a long-standing partnership with the Texas Department of Transportation. While we have no jurisdiction over the traffic patterns and light timing, we will continue to offer recommendations and address concerns to improve and make those traffic patterns safer.

For Luke West Gate, it is one of several gates temporarily closed as a result of Health Protection Condition CHARLIE to minimize the risk and spread to our Defenders and base personnel.

We appreciate your continued patience and cooperation as the Lackland Defenders must take all this into account when balancing safety and security with expedient access to our installation.

# Army Greens slated to reach all installations by mid-2021

By Devon Suits  
ARMY NEWS SERVICE

Recruiters, drill sergeants, and initial entry trainees will be among the first to receive the new Army Green Service Uniform, as program officials look to distribute it to all installations by the middle of next fiscal year.

The uniform harkens back to the “greatest generation” of Soldiers who fought during World War II.

“For the past year, I’ve been wearing the Army Greens. Wherever I go, people tell me that they love the uniform,” said Army Vice Chief Of Staff Gen. Joseph M. Martin.

“As we transition to the next phase of the rollout, I’m excited for the Soldiers who are about to receive the uniform,” he added. “I think that when they see themselves in the mirror they’ll feel connected to the Soldiers of the past and realize that they’re writing the next chapter of what people feel about our Army.”

## Rollout schedule

Personnel in basic combat training and one-station unit training should receive the AGSU beginning in the first quarter of fiscal year 2021, said Lt. Col. Naim Lee, product manager of Soldier Clothing and Individual Equipment at Program Executive Office Soldier.

Fort Sill, Oklahoma, will be the first training location to issue the uniform, shortly followed by Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri; Fort Benning, Georgia; and Fort Jackson, South Carolina, he added.



COURTESY PHOTO

*Recruiting students at Fort Knox, Kentucky, receive their initial issue Army Green Service Uniform July 8.*

The Army had originally planned to begin issuing the uniforms at IET locations before the end of this fiscal year. However, Lee said, setbacks during production related to COVID-19 forced a short delay in the rollout process.

Soldiers attending the Army’s Recruiting and Retention College at Fort Knox, Kentucky, started to receive their AGSUs earlier this month, he said.

The Army is continuing to work through its distribution and production channels to ensure all recruiters are issued the uniform starting in November through April 2021.

“The Army prioritized recruiters and drill sergeants because they serve as the face of the Army,” Lee said.

After a select group of recruiters were able to wear the uniform as part of a pilot, they indicated that the new uniform may help attract quality

applicants. The uniform may also help inspire the next generation of leaders by connecting the “all-volunteer force” to its historical lineage, Lee said.

Moving forward, the Army and Air Force Exchange Service will supply the new uniform through a wave-based rollout approach, Lee said. The AGSU is currently available for purchase at the Fort Knox AAFES location.

The majority of AAFES locations within the U.S. are scheduled to have the new uniform by December. Stores in Alaska, Europe, Japan, and South Korea, along with National Guard and Reserve military clothing locations, should have a supply of uniforms by February 2021.

The mandatory wear date for all Soldiers is Oct. 1, 2027.

Active-duty enlisted Soldiers, including Active Guard and Reserve Soldiers, will continue to receive their annual clothing-replacement allowance to offset the new uniform’s cost, Lee said. Other Guard and Reserve Soldiers will begin receiving uniforms no later than the fourth quarter of fiscal year 2021.

## Everyday service uniform

The Army is currently the only service without an everyday business uniform, Lee said.

The current Army Service Uniform, commonly known as dress blues, was previously considered an optional purchase uniform prior to 2008, PEO Soldier officials said. Over time, leaders realized that the dress blues were too formal for everyday business use.

With the launch of the AGSU, Soldiers will now have an everyday service uniform, which will set an appropriate standard for professionalism within an office setting, Lee added.

Eventually, the Army will stop issuing the dress blues to all Soldiers. The uniform will continue to be optional and serve as a dress uniform for all Soldiers requiring formal attire.

## Limited user test, evaluation

As the Army delivers its new uniform, PEO Soldier will continue to conduct limited user testing and evaluations through May 2021, Lee said.

Early in the development process, the Army held an all-female uniform board that determined the design, components, features and fit of the female uniform. While both the male and female uniforms are similar, PEO Soldier officials said the female version allows for an elective skirt and shoe wear option.

In January, leaders held an additional uniform board to solidify minor changes to the uniform that were identified during ongoing user evaluations.

“Soldiers shared how the uniform is a better fit to their body,” when compared to the Army Service Uniform, Lee said. “In terms of comfort — we made changes through the limited user evaluation feedback process” to improve the Army Greens.

Feedback will continue to be solicited from a larger Army population, specifically from Soldiers who wear the uniform often.

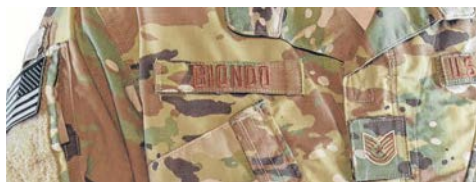
# Name, rank, service and badges will be more identifiable on OCP

## From Secretary of the Air Force Public Affairs

Air and Space Professionals will soon be more recognizable in their Operational Camouflage Pattern uniforms.

OCP rank insignia, badges, name, and service tapes will now feature a lighter, three-color background pattern, versus the current seven-color pattern, to increase readability and ease rank recognition.

“We received significant feedback that prompted this update,” said Lisa Truesdale, Air Force military force management policy deputy director. “The current rank insignia, badges, name, and service tapes on the OCP uniform are sometimes challenging to see against a seven-color background. Simplifying these features on a lighter, three-color pattern — while not compromising the overall functionality of the uniform



COURTESY PHOTO

*OCP rank insignia, badges, name, and service tapes will now feature a lighter, three-color background pattern, versus the current seven-color pattern, to increase readability and ease rank recognition.*

— will improve our situational awareness in day-to-day interactions.”

The Air Force name and service tapes will retain

their current spice brown letter stitching, while Space Force versions will still feature space blue stitching. Stitching for the Air Force rank insignia and badges will remain spice brown.

The Army and Air Force Exchange Service has already begun to transition inventories to the new three-color pattern name and service tapes. The Defense Logistics Agency is placing orders for the three-color pattern as seven-color backgrounds are phased out; some of the three-color insignia name tags should be in the inventory by Nov. 2020.

The U.S. Air Force Academy implemented the uniform change for the June 2020 class and Basic Military Training is on target for Oct. 2020.

The current seven-color background rank insignia, badges, name and service tapes are and will remain, authorized for wear.

# JBSA fitness centers keep doors open with safeguards in place

By David DeKunder

502ND AIR BASE PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Due to Health Protection Condition Charlie restrictions, fitness centers at Joint Base San Antonio installations are open to active duty, active Reserve and active Guard service members only at this time, with safeguards put into place to protect the health and safety of both customers and facility staff members during the coronavirus pandemic.

Doug Price, 502nd Force Support Squadron chief, fitness and sports at JBSA-Lackland, said there are several protocols military members must follow when they go into an installation fitness center.

“We are all navigating through a challenging time and environment,” Price said. “The focus for our JBSA fitness team is to safely provide facilities and programs to meet mission demands while maintaining current health protocols established for the safety of both our staff and valued patrons.”

Health and safety protocols include wearing a mask when entering the facility and undergoing a health screening process at the front desk by a



COURTESY PHOTO

*Michael White, 502nd Force Support Squadron recreation fitness specialist, takes the temperature of an Airman at the Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland Gateway Fitness Center.*

staff member to include individual temperature checks.

Price said anyone whose temperature is 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or above will be denied access to the fitness center. Military members who do pass the initial health screening protocols will receive a thorough brief on current facility rules and policies in place to help ensure their safety and the safety

of patrons around them.

Signage inside the fitness centers reminds customers to follow the six feet rule of social distancing. The exercise equipment in the facilities is set up to help maintain that rule, with equipment marked with social distancing signage.

Equipment signage is rotated appropriately and frequently to afford patrons a diverse selection of equipment to meet their fitness goals and for maintenance purposes to ensure equal distribution of volume usage.

Fitness center users are required to wipe down exercise equipment before and after each use. In addition, to help ensure the highest level of cleanliness is sustained, fitness center staff members are continuously sanitizing and cleaning equipment.

“Our dedicated fitness professionals are always visible in the facility, cleaning around patrons, and available in general for fitness-related assistance,” Price said.

Once inside the facility, face masks are required when social distancing is not possible.

Price said staff members diligently monitor the facility to help remind

patrons to follow the health and safety protocols in place.

Fitness centers are being limited to 50 percent capacity. Customers who use the fitness facilities are asked to limit their workouts between 45 to 60 minutes, giving other customers a chance to use the facilities without exceeding the 50 percent capacity threshold.

Locker rooms in fitness centers are open and also limited to 50 percent capacity. Only a designated few numbers of lockers are available for usage in each locker room. Price said this system identifies what specific lockers require thorough cleaning and sanitation maintenance throughout daily operations.

Price added that social distancing guidelines are established for restrooms, showers and locker room usage as well.

Basketball courts are open for group unit physical training sessions only and do require unit members to maintain social distancing protocols.

Information on JBSA fitness centers, including hours of operation and health and safety protocols, is posted <https://jbsatoday.com/events/fitnessopening>.



# FORT SAM HOUSTON

## Trinity Competition selects best of MEDCoE

By Tish Williamson

U.S. ARMY MEDICAL CENTER OF  
EXCELLENCE PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Each year, the U.S. Army Medical Center of Excellence, or MEDCoE, plans, coordinates, and executes the Trinity Competition at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston and JBSA-Camp Bullis to select the best medic, best warrior, and drill sergeant of the year.

After seven days of grueling, evaluated events, the winners were announced in a ceremony hosted by the MEDCoE Command Team of Maj. Gen. Dennis LeMaster and Command Sgt. Major Clark Charpentier July 20.

Thirteen MEDCoE Soldiers were challenged to negotiate a wide array of tasks designed to test their overall tactical and technical aptitude, as well as physical and mental endurance. They were assessed based upon their performance during an oral board, weapons qualification, the Army Combat Fitness Test, a 12-mile road march and a variety of other common Soldier tasks.

The Trinity Competition is an annual, multi-day, internal competition open to MEDCoE permanent party personnel to appraise and select the MEDCoE Best Medic, Best Warrior, and Drill Sergeant of the Year.

This year's competition marks the third year that these rivalries have been combined into a singular event with specialized sections for the three specific event categories.

The competition provides the command the opportunity to showcase the capabilities of the top Soldiers who are then eligible to compete in

higher-level Best Warrior, Best Medic, and Drill Sergeant of the Year, or DSOY, competitions.

Carefully selected events measured each Soldier's physical ability and demonstrated their proficiency in utilizing warrior tasks and battle drills, medical skills, and general Army knowledge as it applies to the current operating environment. Each event was meant to push the competitors, mentally, physically, tactically and technically to determine the best of the best.

"A lot of times the Soldiers discover that they can do things that they thought were impossible previously," said Sgt. Maj. Larry White, G3 operation's sergeant major. "Sometimes a Soldier doesn't know what they don't know; they don't know what they can do until they try."

The Trinity Competition planners implemented many mitigation measures to protect what began with 13 competitors, five lane evaluators and more than two dozen support personnel, from COVID-19. Extreme high heat was also a safety planning consideration, as local temperatures soared above 100 degrees each day of the competition.

Charpentier, the MEDCoE command sergeant major and senior enlisted advisor, validated the events and associated control measures through initial progress reviews, walk-throughs and rehearsals prior to the competition. He stressed the importance of conducting the competition with added safety measures to ensure it was done as safely and efficiently as



JOSE E. RODRIGUEZ

*Sgt. 1st Class Jeremy Shepler, Headquarters Medical Professional Training Brigade, prepares to administer intravenous fluids to a simulated casualty on the Best Medic lane.*

possible.

"Regardless of COVID-19 or other external things that are happening, it's still important that we continue training, that we continue evaluating our Soldiers and providing them opportunities to excel," Charpentier said.

This year's contest was as arduous as participants have come to expect, but not simply "business as usual."

The number of competitors was limited to allow for increased social distancing during each event, while some other events, such as day and night land navigation, were canceled due to concerns that increased tactical dispersion would put competitors at too great a risk in the harsh terrain at JBSA-Camp Bullis.

This year's MEDCoE Trinity Competition ran from July 7-13. The heat and COVID-19

mitigation measures played a factor in extending this year's event from a high concentration of evaluations over three or four days, as in the 2018 and 2019 Trinity Competitions, to the length of a full week.

Allowing DSOY competitors some recovery time between the more physical events was also a consideration unique to operating within COVID-19 constraints.

Since this year's U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, or TRADOC, and Army-level DSOY competitions are expected to be virtual, the scores collected by MEDCoE for in-person events like the 12-mile ruck march for time, weapons qualification and the Army Combat Fitness Test will go forward and be used to calculate the winner of the

higher-level contests.

"Having the competition cover a longer span also allowed us to meet Drill Sergeant of the Year prerequisites while not having the competitors at a disadvantage due to completing those events all within a three-day span," said Sgt. 1st Class Benjamin C. Radtke, MEDCoE Operations NCO and lead 2020 Trinity Competition planner.

In past Trinity bouts, the tight time period was part of the rigor of the MEDCoE event since the Army Level DSOY competitions re-assessed each area during those competitions. The unit scores that go forward for the virtual event will be used by TRADOC to help determine the Army-level DSOY winner, combined with scores from a virtual board.

The MEDCoE awards ceremony, conducted in a socially distant manner at JBSA-Fort Sam Houston, was attended by competitors and more than two dozen audience members. The announcement of each winner was also live-streamed on MEDCoE social media for those unable to attend in person.

"I want to say to each one of you competitors who are sitting in this room, you have already put yourself above your peers," Charpentier said during the award's ceremony.

He commended each Soldier for getting out of their comfort zone and thriving despite the challenges of the heat and COVID-19.

"I would say that each one of you is a better Soldier, a better leader, for having participated," the command

COMPETITION continues on 7

# JBSA's Joint Transition Readiness Center opens virtually

By Lori A. Bultman

502ND AIR BASE WING  
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Transitioning out of the military, whatever the reason, can be an overwhelming process for service members and their families. To assist in making the process easier to navigate, Joint Base San Antonio has consolidated its multitude of resources into a newly activated Joint Transition Readiness Center at the Brooke Army Medical Center campus.

The JTRC, which houses the Soldier for Life-Transition Assistance Program, can currently assist separating service members virtually through the many aspects of this life-changing event and offers full Department of Defense Transition services to transitioning members of all branches assigned to JBSA.

The Soldier for Life - Transition Assistance Program is the Army program responsible for providing Soldiers with the counseling, employment and educational workshops, and seminars required to achieve compliance with the law and policy Career Readiness Standards mandate. The program is intended to prepare and connect Soldiers to resources to ensure they have the greatest opportunity for success in their personal and career achievement upon transition from active duty.

"What makes SFL-TAP so unique is the fact that while the name of the program is specific

to the Army, the services are tailored to all service members, regardless of branch of service," said Sally Gonzalez, community readiness consultant and acting Transition Assistance Program manager at the center.

The Joint Center at JBSA is staffed with highly-educated personnel equipped to guide service members through the many facets of the transition process, and includes a transition services manager, administrative contractor officer representative, contracting installation manager transition services assistant, five transition counselors, a financial counselor, liaison officer, and two administrative assistants, all who play an important role in the transition process, Gonzalez said.

The first step in obtaining services from at the JTRC is establishing contact with one of the two administrative specialists who are the gatekeepers to the Transition program, Gonzalez said.

"Customers will begin the process by contacting administrative staff members, who then create personnel records and schedule appointments with transition counselors," she said. "They also schedule the service member for the required TAP classes, in accordance with the National Defense Authorization Act 19 guidance. Once these appointments are set, the service member will meet with their assigned transition



TECH. SGT. SHANE A. CUOMO

*Joint Base San Antonio's newly activated Joint Transition Readiness Center, located on the Brooke Army Medical Center campus, houses the Soldier for Life-Transition Assistance Program.*

counselor for the first appointment, or Initial Individualized Counseling, to determine what tier of service they need to prepare for transition."

There are also, among the staff members at the center, a number of contract employees, including the Department of Veterans Affairs benefits advisors. These specialists are trained facilitators there to help service members, Veterans, and their loved ones learn about and access benefits and services from the VA.

"Benefits advisors are available for one-on-one assistance sessions to explain benefits, answer questions and help transitioning service

members connect with resources, including VA Medical Centers and vet centers," Gonzalez said. "The VA portion of the mandatory Transition Assistance Program curriculum teaches transitioning members about VA benefits, introduces them to helpful services and tools, assists in creating an Individual Transition Plan, and demonstrates how to navigate VA web portals."

The center's SFL-TAP transition counselor provides transition and employment assistance services to clients.

"These counselors conduct individualized initial counseling services, self-assessments, pre-separation counseling and

capstone counseling," Gonzalez said.

"The counselor and service member also discuss future plans and goals, and what career track best suits the member's needs and desires," she said. "It is the counselor who will guide separating military personnel through SFL-TAP to help them complete and obtain their Transition Checklist. DD Form 2648, for out-processing."

Currently, the center is assigned five SFL-TAP counselors, with one assigned specifically to the wounded warrior population, and those who are going through the Medical Evaluation Board process, Gonzalez said.

To assist separating members with their financial plans after separation from the military, the SFL-TAP has a financial counselor who is responsible for providing financial planning education and resources for transitioning service members.

"The service members must develop a post-separation budget to analyze what financial needs are necessary to thrive after military service," Gonzalez said.

Transitioning service members who would like to contact the JTRC may call 210-916-7322 or 210-916-6089 to discuss their specific needs. The center, located in building 3639, 3931 Okubo Barracks Road, at the BAMC campus, is currently closed for face-to-face appointments due to COVID-19 restrictions.

## COMPETITION

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sergeant major added.

The 2020 MEDCoE Drill Sergeant of the Year is Drill Sergeant Travis Webster, 264th Medical Battalion. Webster will now go on to compete in TRADOC's DSOY event. The competition is usually held at an Army post; however, due to

COVID-19 concerns, it will be held virtually Aug. 3-5.

The 2020 MEDCoE Best Warrior (non-commissioned officer, or NCO Category) is Staff Sgt. Michael, Army Medical Department NCO Academy. The 2020 MEDCoE Best Warrior (Soldier Category) is Spc. Tristan Chandler, Training Support Activity.

Nguyen and Chandler will

go on to compete in the TRADOC Best Warrior Competition, or TBWC, scheduled virtually for Aug. 25. Winners of the TBWC will represent TRADOC at the Army BWC.

The 2020 MEDCoE Best Medic is Sgt. 1st Class Jeremy Shepler, Headquarters, Medical Professional Training Brigade. The runner-up is Staff Sgt. Ryan Morgan, 188th

Medical Battalion.

Both will go forward to compete as the MEDCoE Best Medic Team in the Army-level competition conducted by the U.S. Army Medical Command, or MEDCOM, at a date to be announced.

"Not knowing exactly what events we are going to have, or how the events are going to be held for the Army level competition, my plan is to

ensure that our team is as well rounded as possible," Shepler said when asked how he and Morgan will prepare themselves for the next level.

"In the event that we actually have an in-person event at the Army level, it is going to be important for us to remain physically fit and strong enough to have the endurance throughout the competition," he added.

# USAISR welcomes Col. Stackle as new commander

By Dr. Steven Galvan

U.S. ARMY INSTITUTE OF SURGICAL  
RESEARCH PUBLIC AFFAIRS

In a time-honored Army custom, Col. (Dr.) Jerome L. Buller relinquished command of the U.S. Army Institute of Surgical Research, or USAISR, to Col. (Dr.) Mark E. Stackle during a change of command ceremony at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston July 21.

The event was hosted by Stackle's new commanding general, Brig. Gen. Michael J. Talley, commander of U.S. Army Medical Research and Development Command and Fort Detrick, Maryland. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Talley hosted the ceremony virtually to welcome Stackle and his family to his new assignment.

During his remarks, Talley commended Buller's family for their support and love.

"The Army is grateful for the

many ways each of the four Buller women have supported Jerome so he could support the important work being done," Talley said. "Thank you, Col. Buller, for the many ways in which you have led USAISR during two challenging years. Thank you for giving nearly 36 years of service to the Army. I wish you a well-deserved retirement."

"Brig. Gen. Talley, thank you trust and confidence, and I sincerely appreciate your support and guidance," Buller said during his remarks. "It has been an honor to work with you once again. I have very fond memories of those long conversations we had working together at the Surgeon General's Office. Now, as our US Army Medical Research and Development Command, Commanding General, you and your staff have always been there for the USAISR Team and me."



COURTESY PHOTO

Col. (Dr.) Mark E. Stackle

Buller is retiring from the Army and is looking forward to spending time with his family before he moves on to the next chapter in his life.

"As I depart, the ISR gains a great leader in Col. Mark Stackle," Buller added. "He is an experienced clinician, operationally-savvy Soldier, and a trusted leader. I have total trust, faith and confidence that his fresh ideas and enthusiasm will bring this organization to

new heights. All of you at the USAISR can feel confident that you are getting an outstanding, new commander."

"Col. Buller, it is clear to me that you have made a tremendously positive impact on the USAISR over the past two years and the organization is better for it," Stackle said after taking command of the USAISR. "The members of the USAISR team stand ready to meet the challenges of the future as we continue to answer the ISR's mission to 'optimize combat casualty care.'"

Stackle's most recent tour was a one-year assignment at the U.S. Army War College in Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, where he earned his master's degree in strategic studies.

"Since its founding, the USAISR has consistently risen to address our nation's most complex challenges from revolutionizing the treatment of

burn patients, to achieving the highest survivability rates in history during the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, to its current efforts to combat the COVID-19 pandemic," Stackle added. "The members of the USAISR team stand ready to meet the challenges of the future as we continue to answer the USAISR's mission. I am excited to be part of this team, knowing together that we will 'Forge the Future.'"

Talley completed his remarks by welcoming Stackle and his family to the ISR and San Antonio.

"Col. Stackle is lucky to have such a fantastic staff. I thank all of you for the service you give to the Army, for your dedication to this command and the Nation," he said. "Col. Stackle is a genuine leader and I am confident that together this team will continue to optimize combat casualty care under his leadership."

## 'Stop the Bleed' kits installed throughout BAMC, clinics

By Zaria Oates

BROOKE ARMY MEDICAL CENTER  
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Brooke Army Medical Center is installing Stop the Bleed kits throughout the hospital to be used in the event of an active shooter or other scenario involving traumatic blood loss.

The kits, which contain items such as a tourniquet and trauma dressing, are part of the Stop the Bleed campaign, an initiative to aid an injured person in the event of uncontrolled bleeding.

The loss of an excessive amount of blood in a short period of time is deadly, and this campaign is a stepping stone so as to not lose lives because of a lack of resources on hand.

The kits will be installed at BAMC and its five outlying clinics (Schertz and Westover

Hills Medical Homes, Spc. Taylor Burk Health Clinic, Capt. Jennifer M. Moreno Primary Care Clinic, and McWethy Troop Medical Clinic), the Akeroyd Blood Donor Center, the four Soldier Recovery Units, as well as a few more locations.

At BAMC and its outlying clinics, the initiative will work by mounting large kits on walls near automated external defibrillators, or AED, machines. The large kits will each have five or eight smaller kits inside of them with the necessary equipment to stop uncontrolled bleeding.

Each of the small kits will be strapped onto the inside wall of the large kits and will be easily detachable for grab-and-go purposes in the event of an active shooter or other emergencies. The small kits can

be used for multiple people, as each of them will have the same materials: a tourniquet, trauma dressing, compressed gauze, gloves, trauma shears, and a polyvinyl chloride bleeding control patch.

The kits mounted on the wall will also have laminated sheets inside with simple instructions for civilians to use in the event of an active shooter.

Army Lt. Col. Gerry Sharp, Department of Hospital Education and Training chief, explains that while most kits at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston are identical to each other, some are different at the other locations.

Because the kits are located in multiple sites, the kits must account for travel time to the emergency room for the victim.

"After further discussion and



COREY TOY

Chris Talamantez installs a Stop the Bleed kit at Brooke Army Medical Center at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston July 17.

research, we needed additional funding to get the advanced kits that included more appropriate materials for areas outside of BAMC since the ER isn't as close to them," Sharp said.

The increase in funding led to 350 individual kits being purchased and approximately \$31,000 allocated to the Stop the Bleed campaign to have all of the kits in place by July 3, 2020.

With this many kits, BAMC realizes that many people will need training on how to effectively use the resources so the staff will train in phases.

Each section near where the

kits are located will have a point of contact who will learn how to use them first and then train other staff.

Along with the employee training, there will be infomercials on the hospital televisions on how to use the kits.

"BAMC is confident they have done a considerable amount of taking into account all areas necessary, but there's always room for growth," Sharp said. "This campaign leads to the reassurance of our staff, beneficiaries and patients who come here."



# JBSA chapels offer virtual options during pandemic

By Lori A. Bultman

502ND AIR BASE WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Religious freedom is an entitlement for service members guaranteed in Title 10 of the U.S. Code and the chaplains at Joint Base San Antonio are doing their best to ensure all service members, retirees, Department of Defense civilian employees, and their family members have options for practicing their faith during COVID-19.

“Due to COVID-19, we had to suspend in-person services at JBSA and go to an online format,” said Army Chaplain (Maj.) Demetrius Walton, 502nd Forces Support Group operations and plans chaplain at JBSA-Fort Sam Houston.

“Upon the closure of JBSA chapels due to COVID, our team brainstormed and came up with the idea of live-streaming services through Facebook Live,” said Tech. Sgt. Arnold Perez, non-commissioned officer in charge of chapel operations at the Freedom Chapel at JBSA-Lackland. “This allows us to continue to reach our parishioners and JBSA personnel to ensure their ability to continue to practice their First Amendment rights.”

Online services are currently being provided by live-stream for Buddhist, Catholic, Islamic, Jewish, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Orthodox, and Protestant traditional, gospel, liturgical, and contemporary communities.

“All services are posted on the page after the live stream so anyone can view them at any time, and they are clearly marked with the denomination in the title,” Perez said.

As JBSA health protection conditions continue to change, so will the availability of services. Recently, several services opened to in-person attendance with safety protocols, but live-streamed services will continue as well.

“When JBSA went to HPCON BRAVO for several services, we were able to let people attend in-person at 50 percent capacity,” Walton said. “But currently, we are at 25 percent capacity because JBSA is back at HPCON CHARLIE. We are utilizing face masks, hand sanitizer, cleaning between services, and ensuring everything is within the standards of protection.”

In-person services are currently open only to active duty service members and their families.

“We encourage all others to utilize the

online format to help prevent the spread of COVID-19,” Walton said. “We are making sure we have all the major faith groups represented, so no one is discriminated against.

Providing services virtually has been a creative and innovative process.

“There is a lot behind the scenes that goes into preparing for a service, from lights to sound and setup of worship items and materials,” said Perez, who does a great deal of the preparations for live streaming at the Lackland chapel by himself. “Typically, our parishioners are an extremely vital part in supporting our services, as I am the only enlisted support in our chapel. Due to the restrictions and not being able to have those volunteers, the service chaplains and myself provide a majority of the prep support ourselves.”

Walton said the time and effort to provide the community with continued support is important to all chapel staff members.

“We want to ensure COVID does not hinder service members Title 10 support, and that they know we care,” he said. “You matter, and especially in times like this, it is important that you have the resiliency to persevere if you are impacted by COVID-19.”

“Virtual chapel services can be a literal lifeline for the majority of our people,” said Air Force Chaplain (Maj.) Deborah Hughley, branch chief, Installation Ministries, at the JBSA-Lackland Chapel, adding that there are several advantages to having virtual services, including reaching people who may have never come to one of the JBSA Chapels.

“Our ministry is now global, and people can watch at their own convenience, from anywhere,” she said, adding there is a downside. “Virtual services keep people connected, but they do not build community. The way forward is to eventually find a blended approach, giving everyone the opportunity to choose between live services and live stream services.”

In the meantime, community members can find other ways to interact with their neighbors and friends.

“Doing good for neighbors, friends, family, coworkers, and even enemies - saying kind words, sending a postcard, paying for someone’s lunch behind you in the drive-through that you don’t know, or making someone laugh are all good ways to show compassion and

build your faith,” Hughley said, recalling the Golden Rule, “Treat others the way you want to be treated.”

Air Force Chaplain (Capt.) Damon Boucher, who is stationed at JBSA-Randolph, feels the same way.

“In order to maintain our spiritual resilience, it is important to seek out a purpose and look for opportunities to serve others,” he said. “This may involve starting a virtual support group or an online religious study. Others may find purpose in picking up trash in their neighborhood or mowing their neighbor’s lawn. Regardless of an individual’s religious and/or spiritual preference, we can all gain satisfaction and purpose by serving others.

Boucher also feels the pandemic is an opportunity to lean into faith as a way to increase resilience during difficult times.

“I’ve found that the best way to maintain my faith is to help others maintain theirs,” he said. “When you see someone struggling, give them a little encouragement — a word of hope, a lifeline of affirmation, or maybe just a helping hand. You’ll rejuvenate your

own faith in the process.”

All available JBSA chapel services may be found on the JBSA chapel Facebook pages. Each location has its own page, which may be found at <https://www.jbsa.mil/Resources/Chaplain-Services/>.

In addition to religious services, there are several other virtual opportunities for growth and religious fulfillment, such as religious education opportunities like Bible studies and workshops, which may also be found on the JBSA chapel Facebook pages, Walton said.

“We offer online devotionals, videos, and links to information and other resources,” he said. “As chaplains, we love the community here, and we will continue to adapt and overcome.”

For more information or to speak to a chaplain, call 210-221-5004 for the JBSA-Fort Sam Houston Chapel; 210-671-2913 for JBSA-Lackland; and 210-652-6121 for JBSA-Randolph. For emergency counseling or after-hours chaplain support, call the command post at 210-221-9363.



SGT. MAJ. FAITH LAUGHTER

*U.S. Army North hosted mission partners during the 2020 ARNORTH Hurricane Rehearsal of Concept Drill, held at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston both in-person and virtually, July 9.*

# U.S. Army North hosts hurricane ROC drill

**By Nicole Hawk**

U.S. ARMY NORTH PUBLIC AFFAIRS

U.S. Army North, federal, state, tribal and territorial partners are ready to respond as peak hurricane season draws near for the Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico.

More than 250 leaders gathered both in-person and virtually for a Hurricane Rehearsal of Concept Drill at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston July 9.

U.S. Army North, the Army component command of U.S. Northern Command, organized the Hurricane ROC Drill as part of its mission to support civil authorities during

disasters and synchronize active duty military support efforts with federal, state, and local partners.

Participants included state, tribal, and territorial partners as well as representatives from U.S. Northern Command, the National Guard Bureau, U.S. Transportation Command, U.S. Army Forces Command, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

According to Lt. Gen. Laura J. Richardson, commanding general of U.S. Army North and senior commander, JBSA-Fort Sam Houston and JBSA-Camp Bullis, the stakes are especially high this

hurricane season.

“Our nation is still very much in the fight against COVID-19 and we have to build health and safety considerations into all of our hurricane response planning efforts,” Richardson said. “Having the ability to plan with all of our partners during the Hurricane ROC Drill helps us think through the types of support we may be asked to provide to states, territories, and FEMA during a major hurricane response in a COVID-19 environment.”

Hurricanes are categorized from 1 to 5 with Category 5 hurricanes having winds that exceed 155 mph and the

potential to cause catastrophic damage. The U.S. Army North ROC Drill focused on a Category 4 or 5 hurricane scenario with multiple landfalls in Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and Florida.

“The entire event provided a valuable opportunity for U.S. Army North, the National Guard, and our interagency partners to identify and create solutions, enabling intergovernmental success in our efforts to save lives and stabilize devastated areas,” said Maj. Ian Benson, U.S. Army North G3 future operations planner.

In addition to providing time for hurricane season planning,

the day-long event, also gave senior leaders the chance to meet each other in-person and via videoconference before a major hurricane threatens America’s Atlantic and Gulf coasts.

“We all need to think quickly and react fast when it comes to crisis planning and response,” Richardson said. “These types of training and exercise events help ensure that all of us — military, federal, state, local, tribal and territorial partners — will be ready to rapidly deploy and seamlessly work together to help communities in need during a hurricane and amidst a pandemic.”



# Researchers complete study of deployed military members with respiratory symptoms

By Lori Newman

BROOKE ARMY MEDICAL CENTER  
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Researchers at Brooke Army Medical Center, Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, and Fort Belvoir Community Hospital recently completed the largest prospective study of redeploying military personnel with chronic respiratory symptoms.

This study was initiated to determine the types of pulmonary disease associated with chronic deployment-related respiratory symptoms and to serve as the basis for future evaluations.

The Study of Active Duty Military for Pulmonary Disease Related to Environmental Deployment Exposures, or STAMPEDE III, led by Dr. Michael J. Morris, BAMC pulmonary/critical care physician, is the third iteration of deployment-related studies. Similar studies, STAMPEDE I and STAMPEDE II, were completed in 2014 and 2019 respectively.

“Military deployments since 2003 are unique because of the number of areas our service members have deployed to and different types of particulate matter to which they were exposed,” Morris said. “This prospective study, which has been ongoing for the seven years, represents the largest and most comprehensive clinical evaluation of military personnel with deployment-related respiratory symptoms.”

STAMPEDE III enrolled 450 active duty and retired military personnel who were deployed for a minimum of six months in Southwest Asia (Iraq, Afghanistan, Kuwait or Qatar) who noted chronic respiratory symptoms, primarily shortness of breath or decreased exercise tolerance, after being deployed.

All participants underwent a standardized evaluation consisting of pulmonary function testing; CT scan of the chest; methacholine challenge testing (also known as a bronchoprovocation test); laryngoscopy (to examine the larynx), cardiopulmonary exercise testing, and fiberoptic bronchoscopy.

Three hundred eighty of the participants completed the standardized protocol. The primary investigators in this study reviewed all available clinical data provided to determine the clinical diagnosis.

“We put these study participants through a more formal evaluation process,” Morris said. “There have been no other studies like this, where we systematically investigated service members who deployed to these areas. We were looking to see if anyone had asthma, interstitial lung disease, constrictive bronchiolitis, or other pulmonary disorders that we could associate with deployment.”

According to the American Lung Association, interstitial lung disease is an umbrella term for a large group of disorders that cause scarring (fibrosis) of the lungs. The scarring causes stiffness in the lungs which makes it difficult to breathe.

Participants were classified into seven major categories to include: asthma, airway hyper-responsiveness, undiagnosed exertional dyspnea (shortness of breath during exercise), airway disorders (both upper and large airway), obstructive lung disease (including emphysema, bronchiectasis and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease), diffuse lung disease (widespread interstitial or small airway disorders such as pneumonitis or bronchiolitis), and nonspecific pulmonary function testing.

“We found very similar results to what we found in STAMPEDE I,” Morris said. STAMPEDE I was a much smaller study of 50 service members with acute symptoms within 6 months of returning from deployment. Nearly 40 percent of these individuals had no specific pulmonary findings.

“In the largest group of STAMPEDE III, about 30 percent, despite all the testing we did, we didn’t find any specific abnormalities,” Morris said. “They were short of breath, and they couldn’t exercise as well, but we couldn’t find anything specific. Another 20 percent had asthma, which was not surprising considering asthma is the most common lung disease we diagnose in a population this age.



COURTESY PHOTO

*Researchers at Brooke Army Medical Center, Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, and Fort Belvoir Community Hospital recently completed the largest prospective study of redeploying military personnel with chronic respiratory symptoms.*

“These were all people with new symptoms, not people who were previously diagnosed with asthma,” Morris added. “However, there is no way to determine whether the asthma started while they were deployed or was aggravated by deployment, but they clearly had symptoms when they returned from deployment.”

A smaller percentage of the participants showed signs of airway and laryngeal disorders, and only six patients were identified with interstitial or diffuse lung diseases.

“There were a few patients with diffuse lung diseases, so we are not saying nobody develops these,” Morris said. “But there are very few and this matches up with our clinical experience. The findings go along with what you would find in the typical military population.”

Based on the study findings, Morris believes that military personnel should be evaluated the same way the general population is evaluated and the use of lung biopsies should be very limited.

“We shouldn’t be doing anything outside our normal standard of care, to

be looking for unusual diseases first,” he said. “We don’t have evidence from this study that anything unusual is occurring. However, it is important to document their symptoms, their relationship to deployment, and ensure a complete and accurate diagnosis is made.”

Morris also noted that smoking, age, body weight, allergies and other factors such as sleep apnea and reflux play a key role in the respiratory health of military members.

“The bottom line is there is very limited evidence that deployment causes significant lung disease in a large number of our deployers,” Morris said. “It definitely can cause symptoms, but we are not seeing a big influx of service members with severe respiratory issues or lung diseases. They still need to be evaluated and our responsibility to each service member is to provide a timely and accurate evaluation.”

To see the full study, either visit [https://journal.chestnet.org/article/S0012-3692\(20\)30156-2/abstract](https://journal.chestnet.org/article/S0012-3692(20)30156-2/abstract) or <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/32017933/>.

# LACKLAND

## Wildland Fire Branch fights fires, COVID-19

By Courtney Strzelczyk  
AFMISC PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The Air Force Civil Engineer Center's Wildland Fire Branch hasn't let the COVID-19 pandemic stop it from protecting Airmen and their families as well as wildlife during this year's severe fire season.

"The Air Force recognizes the growing threat of wildfires to our installations caused by training and testing operations and naturally occurring fires in wildland areas on Air Force property," said Jeff Domm, director of AFCEC's Environmental Directorate. "Wildfires are expensive to control and can negatively impact sensitive and protected habitat and disrupt mission activity."

Along with the pandemic, some installations have had to cope with the threat of wildfires damaging training areas and shutting down bombing ranges. In an effort to continue its mission, the Wildland Fire Program team reprioritized its goals for the year and enacted COVID-19 safety protocols for its firefighters to follow, said Michelle Steinman, Wildland Fire branch chief.

"We have prevented COVID-19 from derailing our performance and efforts to support mission activity by utilizing air resources, such as helicopters, to attack wildfires from above and implementing procedures to keep our firefighters healthy so they can keep Airmen and their families safe," Steinman said.

For example, a contract helicopter crew assisted the Eglin AFB wildland support module in Florida to suppress a



ILKA COLE

*Brett Williams (left), Eglin Air Force Base, Fla., wildland support module lead, delivers a briefing to the ignitions crew prior to an 80-acre prescribed burn at Eglin AFB.*

May wildfire caused by a downed aircraft at the merging of the two streams providing habitat for the threatened Okaloosa Darter fish on the Eglin range, Steinman said. The helicopter crew released water bucket drops over the crash site while Eglin dozer operators worked on the ground to contain the wildfire to 91 acres with only minor disturbance to the darter.

The Wildland Fire Branch is also leveraging technology to mitigate COVID-19 by

conducting virtual training sessions and encouraging firefighters in wildland support modules to practice social distancing, reducing fire vehicle capacity and following CDC guidance. Florida's Avon Park WSM is following safety protocols in the office as well as at home to maintain a fully staffed crew. So far, the seven-member team has completed 16 prescribed burns across 3,400 acres and managed 12 wildfires across 1,044 acres.

"We have taken every precautionary step to ensure that our crew stays healthy because if one person gets sick, then the whole crew is out, which could stop Air Force missions," said Frank Gibbs, team lead for Avon Park WSM. "We have been very fortunate to be isolated on a range and keep our firefighters safe so that we can continue to do what we do best."

The Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson WSM in Alaska is also following

protocol to remain healthy in case there is a need to protect their local community. Recently, the module teamed up with the JBER Fire Department and a hotshot crew to prevent an intense wildfire from spreading and damaging critical infrastructure.

The fire was ignited from a ricocheted round during military training. Two weeks before the fire, the JBER WSM conducted prescribed burns surrounding the area where the wildfire took place. These burns stopped the progression of the fire and helped crews contain it to fewer than five acres. The fire was extinguished in three days, and the crews removed all hazards to prevent reignition.

"We have evacuated thousands of people and that's chaotic," said Jon Glover, team lead for JBER WSM, Alaska. "This pandemic is just a different type of chaos that we have learned to manage and have adjusted to. Firefighters are problem solvers and we will look at every solution to get the job done safely and effectively."

The Wildland Fire Branch, established in 2012, ensures military mission capability and increases lethality and readiness by reducing the threat of wildfires across 72 installations. The branch includes 14 wildland support modules comprised of qualified and equipped personnel who conduct prescribed burns, mechanical fuel reduction and wildfire suppression response at installations within their area of responsibility. Across the U.S., the branch averages 140,000 acres of prescribed fires and responds to more than 100 wildfires.



# ACC officially declares Full Operating Capability for Sixteenth Air Force (Air Forces Cyber)

By Sharon Singleton  
and Jennifer Spires  
SIXTEENTH AIR FORCE  
(AIR FORCES CYBER) PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Gen. Mike Holmes, Air Combat Command commander, and Lt. Gen. Timothy D. Haugh, Sixteenth Air Force (Air Forces Cyber) commander declared Full Operating Capability for Sixteenth Air Force during a virtual ceremony at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland July 14.

The declaration of FOC signifies that the Air Force's Information Warfare organization met a rigorous set of criteria, including an approved concept of operations and demonstrated performance of mission under stress in simulated and real-world conditions.

"Today's declaration of FOC demonstrates the Air Force's

trust and confidence in the Airmen of Sixteenth Air Force to deliver information warfare outcomes for the nation," Haugh said.

In nine months and three days, the Airmen of the Sixteenth Air Force proved they are able to fully employ and maintain readiness to meet operational requirements. This is a testament to the commitment of every Airman who ensures the IW force is ready to defend the nation.

Haugh highlighted the IW Numbered Air Force's readiness through the approach of convergence in response to our adversaries.

"We have adopted an approach of convergence that enables a clear focus on these hard problems," Haugh said. "Convergence takes a global viewpoint and uses access to data across each functional

area to generate insights and ... integrates IW capabilities to produce timely effects in the information environment."

As the Sixteenth Air Force looks towards the future, it will realize convergence by leveraging the inherent strengths of all the Sixteenth Air Force units.

"Convergence has brought previously segmented elements in our enterprise together...to synchronize on common operational priorities that cross combatant command boundaries," said Haugh. "As we scale and build upon convergence in the information environment and implement material solutions that automate data awareness and sharing...we will begin to generate global outcomes at the speed of the information war."

Holmes' shared Haugh's

sentiments and believes the new combined environment has streamlined the way the Sixteenth Air Force gathers, integrates, implements and communicates IW technologies and the opportunities the NAF has given to expedite experimentation and create these modes of ingenuity that we need as a Joint Force to maintain our advantage will be easier to come by.

"Listening to everything the units are doing filled me with certainty that pulling this Numbered Air Force together was the right thing to do," Holmes said. "You've worked relentlessly to optimize the readiness, employment, and presentation of not just [intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance] resources but cyberspace, electromagnetic spectrum, and other information operation assets.

It's a great day for our United States and our combatant commanders as you have now presented new ways to use our assets to maintain our global superiority in this ever-evolving fight."

Holmes concluded the ceremony by extending his thanks to the entire Sixteenth Air Force team and signing the FOC declaration.

"As you go forward I believe that it's going to be crucial for you to continually develop the United States multi-domain warfighting capabilities and to ensure that our methods are the most effective, most lethal and that they remain on the cutting edge. I believe that the establishment of the Sixteenth Air Force will help us to modernize the way information flows from Airmen to 4-star generals," Holmes said.

## WILFORD HALL UPDATES ENTRY POINTS, CHANGES COVID DRIVE-THRU SCREENING LOCATION

*The Wilford Hall Ambulatory Surgical Center COVID-19 screening/testing is now taking place at the bottom level of the WHASC parking garage. Days/hours remain from Monday through Saturday from 8 a.m. to noon. Patient entry into WHASC will be through the main doors at Entrance A. The Family Emergency Center, or FEC, will be open for FEC patients and staff only. All other patients/staff will be redirected to Entrance A. Expect 100 percent screening while WHASC continues with COVID-19 operations. Employees with badge access may enter the facility through the existing garden level parking garage door entrance, or through door 7, between wings C and D, near Women's Health. Anyone entering the facility is required to follow CDC guidelines to protect themselves and others.*

Road or Parking lot entrance blocked

59 MDW STAFF PARKING

Patient Parking

Symptomatic Patient Parking

59 MDW HEALTH SCREENING LOCATIONS

1 – Patient and Staff Screening

2 – Patient and Staff Screening

3 – Staff Only Screening

4 – Staff Only Screening

\*\*\*All exterior doors are disabled from badge access Starting 1800 15 March 2020\*\*\*

\*\*\*ALL STAFF must enter through screening locations 1,3 or 4\*\*\*

Current as of 13 Jul 2020 Ver. 4

# IAAFA wins 2019 EPME Center of the Year Award

By Rachel Kersey

502ND AIR BASE WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The Inter-American Air Forces Academy at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland received the 2019 Enlisted Professional Military Education Center of the Year Award from Headquarters Air Force June 17.

The award recognizes the outstanding performance and exceptional contributions made by the community of civilian and military instructors serving the Air and Space Forces during the 2019 calendar year.

“This award is the result of our efforts, dedication, and professionalism, from the instructors to the support staff in IAAFA, during the past year, culminating in this recognition as the best EPME center of the year for the entire Air and Space Forces,” said Maj. Eduardo Barajas, 837th Training Squadron director of operations.

IAAFA's primary mission is to teach PME to Spanish-speaking international military students in their native language for the purpose of enhancing interoperability between the United States and its partner nations.

This partnership establishes security cooperation between the U.S. and global allies for current and future operations. The academy also has courses that Spanish-speaking U.S. Air Force Airmen are able to attend alongside international students. The EPME Center of the Year award recognizes excellence in the education of both sets of students.

“IAAFA strengthens international partnerships through education and training while promoting peace, democratic values, and respect for human rights in the Western hemisphere,” said Barajas.

IAAFA competed against at least 80 other similar institutions across the Air Force and Space Force. It distinguished itself for the award by being the only academy with all three levels of EPME — Airman Leadership School, Non-Commissioned Officer Academy, and Senior Non-Commissioned Officer Academy.

The IAAFA teaches all three of these academies entirely in Spanish to both its Latin-American military and American students who participate in their courses both here at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, Texas, as well



*International and American service members and Professional Military Education instructors pose for a photo at the IAAFA headquarters building at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland. From left are Maj. Ronand Castillo from El Salvador; Maj. Marcio Teixeira from Brazil; Maj. Eduardo Barajas, a flight commander from the U.S. Air Force; Master Sgt. Aguedo Mendez, a flight chief from the U.S. Air Force; Chief Master Sgt. Elvis Garcia from Peru; and Master Sgt. Edwin Lara from Honduras.*

COURTESY PHOTO

as at developmental opportunities taking place within host nations.

This work helps to foster an atmosphere of global cooperation, which is one of the main missions of the academy, and is of interest to the Air Education Training Command.

“The significance and success of this community require vision, preparation, and attention to ensure faculty and support personnel have the right knowledge, skills and abilities to develop and deliver a responsive and relevant continuum of enlisted education to prepare Airmen to meet the challenges our Air Force confronts, both at home and abroad,” Barajas said.

More information about IAAFA can be found at: <https://www.37trw.af.mil/Units/Inter-American-Air-Forces-Academy/> or by following them on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/InterAmericanAirForcesAcademy/>.



# JBSA golf courses open with health, safety protocols

By David DeKunder

502ND AIR BASE WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Golf courses at Joint Base San Antonio remain open under Health Protection Condition Charlie restrictions as the 502nd Force Support Squadron is taking several measures to protect the health and safety of patrons and staff members during the coronavirus pandemic.

Service members and Department of Defense ID cardholders can go out and play the links at the JBSA-Fort Sam Houston Golf Course, the JBSA-Lackland Gateway Hills Golf Course and the Randolph Oaks Golf Course at JBSA-Randolph, adhering to guidelines and procedures meant to make their playing experience as safe as possible.

Fernando Brown, 502nd FSS assistant flight chief, community services, said cleaning is being increased inside the golf course facilities, as touchpoints within the facilities are being regularly wiped down by staff members. In addition, there are other health and safety protocols put into place to protect both customers and staff members.

"We have a sanitization station as soon as you walk-in, we have hand sanitizer at the counters, and we have Plexiglas barriers in front of the cash registers to reduce the chances of exposure between customers and staff,



COURTESY PHOTO

*A golfer tees up at the Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland Gateway Hills Golf Course.*

as well as everybody in the facility has to wear a mask," Brown said.

Before coming to the golf course, JBSA members are required to make reservations and pay in advance for tee times over the phone to limit the number of people coming into the pro shop.

When players go onto the course, golf carts will be restricted to one player unless patrons ride together in the same vehicle to the course. Group size is limited to four players per card. Brown said golfers aren't required to wear masks on the course, but it is

encouraged, especially in areas where they will interact with other players. They should also practice social distancing while on the course, and golfers should consider bringing their own hand sanitizer so they can clean their hands regularly.

On the greens, foam pieces have been placed in the bottom of cup holes so the ball doesn't sink all the way in the cup and golfers can remove the ball easily without reaching down into the hole, reducing contact with the surface.

Flag sticks are being left in the holes while golfers are putting so they do not

have to pull them out, reducing players' contact with another touching surface.

Golf course staff members are also disinfecting and cleaning carts after each use.

Golf course snack bars are still open with a limited seating capacity of 25 percent and with increased spacing between tables. Food is served prepackaged in disposable to-go containers, including condiments, and beverages are only available in cans or bottles. Fountain soda machines are turned off at this time and personal cups for beverages are not allowed in the snack bar area.

Brown said 502nd FSS staff members are trying their best to provide an enjoyable experience for patrons at JBSA golf courses during these challenging times.

"Our staff members are working hard," Brown said. "Everybody is excited to be there to take care of our customers because we know that we're providing a much-needed recreational outlet for them. Understanding that some of the measures in place, while we know may be inconvenient, are a requirement at this time for us to be able to operate safely."

Information on JBSA golf courses, including health and safety protocols, hours of operation, reserving tee times, and snack bar hours, is posted at: <https://jbsatoday.com/events/golf-reopenings>.

## AFCEC welcomes first active duty director

From Air Force Installation and Mission Support Center Public Affairs

The Air Force Civil Engineer Center at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland welcomed its new leader during an assumption of leadership ceremony July 13.

Brig. Gen. John Allen is the unit's first active duty commander since the organization activated in 2012. Previous leaders were senior executive service civilian directors. Allen took command following the June 26 retirement of former director Terry G. Edwards.

As the commander, Allen leads one of four primary subordinate units of the Air Force Installation and Mission Support Center.

AFCEC executes civil engineering services in construction, energy, environment, housing, operations, planning, real property and readiness and emergency management on behalf of the Air Force enterprise around the globe.

During the assumption of leadership ceremony, AFIMSC Commander Maj. Gen. Tom Wilcox said AFCEC is "absolutely lucky to have the right person at the right time to come and lead."

"Brig. Gen. Allen is that person who knows how to do the job, build lethality, build readiness, and operate within our mission sets to execute as the new commander for AFCEC," Wilcox said.

Allen said he is looking forward to being on the AFCEC and AFIMSC teams and partnering with all the directors to

deliver for the installation and mission support center.

"To the men and women of AFCEC, thank you for being the high performing organization you are and are known to be, and welcoming me into the fold," Allen said during the virtual ceremony. "Thank you for supporting installations and their commanders, supporting civil engineer squadrons by leaning into them to make them successful amongst installation leadership."

Allen now leads an organization of more than 1,900 people responsible for providing responsive, flexible full-spectrum installation engineering services. The center's directorates support the CE enterprise and the Air Force at more than 75 locations worldwide.



COURTESY PHOTO

*Brig. Gen. John Allen, new commander of the Air Force Civil Engineer Center, salutes Maj. Gen. Tom Wilcox, Air Force Installation and Mission Support Center commander, during a virtual assumption of command ceremony at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland July 13.*

# RANDOLPH

## 12th MXG supports mission while protecting workers

By Robert Goetz

502ND AIR BASE WING  
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

More than four months ago, Robert West, director of the 12th Maintenance Group at Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph, learned through a social media video sent to him from his uncle in Australia that the Czech Republic was encouraging its citizens to wear masks in an effort to slow the spread of the novel coronavirus, which was quickly gaining momentum.

About the same time, as the United States was feeling the effects of the coronavirus pandemic and JBSA was transitioning into Health Protection Condition C, the 12th MXG, like other base organizations, followed the advice of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, sending its most at-risk workers home — including those at its 812th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron at Naval Air Station Pensacola, Florida — to prevent contraction of COVID-19, the disease caused by the coronavirus.

“I sent folks home on hazardous and safety leave because of their age and underlying medical conditions,” West said. “I could have kept everybody here under mission-essential status, but we went the extra step to make sure there were folks who were protected because we still had so much that was unknown about the virus. And at that time there was such a run on the supply chain that it was very difficult to get hand sanitizer.”

But West said he circled back to the video that his uncle had sent him and went online to

find a suitable mask for the workers whose mission-essential duties kept them on base, especially the mechanics and other maintainers who support the 12th Flying Training Wing's pilot training mission.

“We knew that we couldn't get the N95 mask because those needed to be kept for those in the medical professions, so we went after a black cloth mask that was washable and we immediately got 1,000 of them,” he said. “We got them before the Department of Defense had made it mandatory. At that point it was almost impossible to get masks, so we beat everybody to the punch.”

The mask was a critical tool for the maintenance group, West said.

“You can social distance when you're at least 6 feet apart, but when the maintainers are working, they are side by side in a tug or they're up inside of an aircraft,” he said. “They're working in teams, so there's no way you can be 6 feet apart.”

The 12th MXG initiated a number of other mitigation efforts as well, West said.

“We separated everybody if they were capable of doing it,” he said. “If we had a one-shift operation, it became a two-shift operation. If they were a two-shift operation, they went to a three-shift. We also spread them out into another building so we could further distance our folks.”

Stay-at-home measures primarily affected office personnel, though it also impacted those who had underlying medical conditions and those who were at least 65 years old.

“There were members who were on situational teleworking to keep them away from the



AIRMAN 1ST CLASS TYLER MCQUISTON

office, but they could come in if they needed to take care of files they couldn't access at home,” West said.

The same challenges faced the 812th AMXS at Naval Air Station Pensacola, which supports two flying squadrons of the 12th FTW's 479th Flying Training Group.

“Like many agencies across the Air Force, we implemented COVID-19 mitigation strategies to support our most vulnerable employees,” said Brant Bushnell, 812th AMXS director. “This included employees on some form of teleworking and safety leave. Our lean civil service unit of 125 employees is approximately 30 percent smaller than a comparable active-duty unit, so any reduction in available manpower creates significant challenges to our ability to continue supporting the mission.”

The squadron partnered with the 479th FTG to develop a sustainable strategy that enabled the mission to continue

at a reduced rate while supporting COVID-19 mitigation strategies in both operations and maintenance, Bushnell said.

“Our biggest challenges were the ability to inspect the aircraft each evening in time for the next day's flying and maintaining our scheduled phase inspection requirements,” he said. “To address these challenges, we first looked internally to support our daily shortfalls. Personnel were shifted around to different work centers daily to fill the most critical holes each day, not a normal occurrence.”

The squadron also partnered with the 479th Student Squadron to secure the services of eight combat systems officer second lieutenants in casual status awaiting training, Bushnell said.

“They were trained to marshal aircraft in and out of the parking spots, freeing up mechanics to begin inspecting aircraft sooner for the next

sortie,” he said. “This has been very successful and critical to our ability to support the continuation of the CSO training mission.”

In addition, the squadron is leaning on the 12th AMXS at JBSA-Randolph to accomplish one of its phase inspections on its T-6A fleet.

“That inspection is currently in progress and will enable us to maintain our phase flow, which is extremely important to having aircraft available for training,” Bushnell said.

The squadron also mirrored its counterpart at JBSA-Randolph by using the CDC-recommended cleaning methods, wearing of masks and social distancing.

“We have used all available tools at our disposal including restricted movement and quarantine,” West said. “We wanted to make sure that they were all healthy,” he said. “When those folks returned to work they had to go through

Scott Matthews, 12th Maintenance Squadron crew member, seals a T-38C wing to prevent corrosion at Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph July 14.



# Curbside service helping JBSA vet clinics protect pets, staff, clients

By Robert Goetz

502ND AIR BASE WING  
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Joint Base San Antonio's veterinary clinics are taking a curbside service approach to pet care during the novel coronavirus pandemic, allowing only pets and clinic staff members into the facilities to reduce close contact.

"Currently, we are working as curbside service for wellness appointments such as vaccines, heartworm tests and annual blood work, but sick calls are being referred off-base at this time as we are minimally manned," said Dr. Daniela Roberts, Public Health Activity-Hood/South Texas Branch veterinarian. "The pets are collected from their owners, brought into the clinic for their appointment and payment is collected over the phone."

Staff members are wearing face masks, in accordance with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines, in the clinic and any time when social distancing is not possible, such as when a technician collects and returns pets to their owners outside the clinic, Roberts said. They are sanitizing areas in accordance with CDC guidelines as well.

"We are also only running one room for appointments so that we do not have multiple clients' animals in the clinic at the same time," she said. "We sanitize the room and all

equipment we use between each patient, and wipe down frequently touched surfaces multiple times throughout the day."

"Since most of the clinics' personnel are communicating with clients over the phone, clients should keep their phones close by and anticipate a call during the appointment time, Roberts said.

"We also ask that clients who are coming for appointments remain in the parking lot during the appointment time so we can finish the appointment and return their pet in a timely fashion," she said. "Also, since we are taking payment by phone, we are currently only accepting credit cards."

While there have been a few documented cases of pets living in COVID-positive homes testing positive, Roberts said there is currently no research to support that pets can transmit COVID-19 to people.

"In order to protect your pets, it is still a good practice that if you are sick with COVID, limit contact with your pets, and have a healthy individual care for the pet if possible. If not, be sure you practice good sanitation," she said. "In addition, limit exposure of pets to people outside of your household, since social distancing can help protect our pets, too."

It appears that pets infected with COVID-19 so far have only shown mild upper respiratory



AIRMAN 1ST CLASS TYLER MCQUISTON

*Dr. Daniela Roberts, Public Health Activity-Hood/South Texas Branch veterinarian, monitors a dog's breathing at the Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph Veterinary Clinic July 23.*

symptoms, Roberts said.

"If your pet develops any symptoms and has had contact with a COVID-positive individual, contact your veterinarian for further guidance," she said.

Although dealing with the threat of the coronavirus is of primary concern at this time, pet owners should also stay focused on their pets' routine care.

"It is extremely important to keep up with your pet's preventative care," Roberts said. "As we socially distance, our pets' exposure to other animals is also limited, but it is

still important to keep their vaccines up to date to protect them from illness."

Several other diseases in pets can cause upper respiratory symptoms similar to COVID-19, she said. These include feline rhinotracheitis, bordetella, parainfluenza and canine influenza.

"Vaccination is the best way to protect them from these diseases," Roberts said.

Pet owners should also keep their pets up to date on heartworm, and flea and tick prevention.

"Although COVID has slowed or shut down certain

aspects of our daily life, mosquitoes, fleas, ticks and intestinal parasites aren't taking a break and it is just as critical to keep our pets on year-round preventions to keep them protected and healthy," Roberts said.

Wellness appointments for pets are being booked at the veterinary clinics at JBSA-Fort Sam Houston at 210-808-6101 or 210-808-6104, and JBSA-Randolph at 210-652-3190, but due to minimal manning and safety protocols, appointments are limited. The JBSA-Lackland Veterinary Clinic is referring all wellness appointments to JBSA-Fort Sam Houston and JBSA-Randolph at the present time.

"We ask that our clients please not wait until the last minute. Call early to book appointments for future wellness visits so we can do our best to keep everyone up to date," Roberts said.

JBSA veterinary clinics are open from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., Monday through Friday; however, the JBSA-Randolph clinic will be closed on Mondays during August.

Roberts asked that clients be flexible and have patience during the pandemic.

"We are working hard to continue to provide exceptional pet care while using our new protocols to reduce COVID-19 risks for our clients and staff members," she said.

## 12TH MXG

From page 17

the public health protocols for JBSA. Either they had to have two negative tests to return or they had to have three days of symptom-free issues after the 14 days of quarantine."

After a series of HPCON

changes that is now back to HPCON C, more 12th MXG employees — except those who are 65 and older or have underlying medical conditions — are back at work, but the maintenance group remains focused on the 12th FTW mission while adhering to CDC guidelines.

One of the maintenance

group's biggest challenges has been achieving a balance between supporting the mission and protecting its most vulnerable employees, West said.

"My senior management team has been very good at articulating policy and keeping a good communications flow," he said. If anybody felt

uncomfortable, even if they didn't have underlying conditions, they could take leave."

The maintenance group benefited greatly from teleconferencing to keep the lines of communication open, West said.

"We were also the very first organization to have a virtual

unit effectiveness inspection, which we did very well on," he said.

West said his team has risen to the challenges it is facing during the pandemic.

"They're rocking along," he said. "We've had some of the best stats we've ever had in terms of aircraft availability and fixing aircraft."