

JBSA

LEGACY

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JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO

FEBRUARY 21, 2020



PHOTO BY SGT. ASHLEY DOTSON

Staff Sgt. Jarvis Brummit, U.S. Army South broadcast technician, was determined to finish the Chilean army 300-meter swim during the Joint Armies Military Proficiency Competition at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston Feb. 7.

U.S. Army South hosts first Joint Armies Military Proficiency Competition

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Basura Bash volunteers clean up Salado Creek
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WW II veteran awarded French Legion of Honor
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DOD budget seeks 3% pay raise for service members

By C. Todd Lopez
DEFENSE.GOV

President Donald J. Trump released his fiscal 2021 budget request Feb. 10.

For those in uniform, the Department of Defense has asked for a 3% pay raise across the board, along with increases to the allowances for housing and subsistence.

DOD also is seeking \$8 billion for a range of programs to support military families, including professional development and education opportunities for service members and spouses, child care for more than 160,000 children, youth programs for more than a million family members, and support to the schools that educate more than 77,000 students from military families.

Top priorities for defense in the budget request include nuclear modernization, missile defeat and defense, space and cyberspace.

For fiscal 2021, DOD is asking for \$28.9 billion to fund modernization of the nuclear defense program, covering all three legs of the nuclear triad: land, sea and air.



SGT. SARAH SANGSTER

An Army UH-60 Black Hawk flight crew supports the validation of air assault instructors at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, Jan. 31.

Around \$7 billion is targeted at nuclear command, control and communications. Another \$2.8 billion is earmarked for the B-21 Raider long-range strike bomber. The Air Force eventually expects to get some 100 of the aircraft, which will carry the B61-12 and B83 nuclear gravity bombs, as well as the long-range standoff cruise missile.

The request for nuclear modernization also funds procurement of the Columbia-class ballistic

submarine at \$4.4 billion and the ground-based strategic deterrent at \$1.5 billion. The GBSD is expected to replace about 400 existing Minuteman III intercontinental ballistic missiles.

DOD's request also includes \$15.4 billion for the newly created U.S. Space Force, \$337 million for the Space Development Agency, and \$249 million for U.S. Space Command.

Defense officials said the research, development, testing

and evaluation budget request is the largest in history, at \$106.6 billion. Funding requests for hypersonics at \$3.2 billion, microelectronics at \$1.5 billion and artificial intelligence at \$800 million highlight DOD priorities with regard to the great-power competition, Pentagon officials said. The request for hypersonics would be an increase of 23% over last year, while artificial intelligence would get a 7.8% bump.

Much of the budget request goes toward modernization.

In the air, the budget request seeks \$3 billion for 15 KC-46 Pegasus tankers to replace aging Eisenhower-era KC-135 Stratotankers and KC-10 Extenders. The request also provides \$1.4 billion for 79 F-35 Lightning II variants.

On the sea, the budget request would fund a new Virginia-class submarine at \$4.7 billion and two DDG-51 Arleigh Burke-class destroyers at \$3.5 billion.

On the land, the Army and Marine Corps would receive 4,247 joint light tactical vehicles at \$1.4 billion, as well as \$1.5 billion for modifications and upgrades to 89 M-1 Abrams tanks.

DOD vows to help Exceptional Family Member Program

By Terri Moon Cronk
DEFENSE.GOV

The Department of Defense is working to improve the Exceptional Family Member Program with several initiatives, a DOD official said at a House Armed Services Committee hearing Feb. 7.

Carolyn Stevens, director of the DOD's Office of Military Family Readiness Policy and Navy Capt. Edward Simmer, chief clinical officer of TRICARE Health Plans at the Defense Health Agency, testified last week at "Exceptional Family Member Program: Are the Military Services Really Taking Care of Family Members?"

The Exceptional Family Member Program has mandatory DOD enrollment and works with military and civilian

agencies to provide comprehensive and coordinated community support, housing, educational, medical and personnel services around the world to military families with special needs.

"As a former military spouse, I care about issues impacting our military families and am personally committed to addressing quality-of-life issues," Stevens said.

DOD is aware that service members and spouses are concerned about the management and execution of the program, she said, acknowledging previous witness testimony.

"I want to reaffirm DOD's commitment in addressing challenges that the witnesses have brought forth today," Stevens noted. "These personal experiences we hear about and data we collect combine to offer a broader understanding of the challenges

facing our military families to help us better define our courses of action."

DOD can address some of the challenges head-on, while others — such as education and off-installation services require coordination — with partners in other federal agencies, states and local education agencies, she said.

"We're committed to balancing individual experiences with a ... strategy and have placed a special focus on the results of a recent department-wide survey and the conclusions of a recent [General Accounting Office] report," the director said.

Toward that end, Stevens said DOD has: ▶ Re-energized its coordinating committee for military families with special needs to

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DOD HELPS EFMP continues on 15

Feedback Fridays

By Brig. Gen. Laura L. Lenderman

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 RandolphPublicAffairs@us.af.mil using the subject line "Feedback Fridays." Questions will be further researched and published as information becomes available.

Personnel Issues

Q. Has the authorization for use of the Base Exchange and Commissary by veterans without normal access to the installation been put into place? If so, how do access to those services work? Thank you.

A. The directed implementation date for this system went into effect Jan. 1, 2020. This provision is in the John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act of 2019 and is a great opportunity to give back to those veterans that have disabilities and their caregivers.

Right now, we are awaiting additional official guidance and direction from the Department of Defense. From there, each uniformed service will add their specific guidance and it will be passed down to our installations so we may develop our implementation plan and advertising campaign. You should be hearing more in the near future!

Installation & Facilities

Q. Why isn't the gym staff at Rambler Fitness Center at Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph checking IDs at the entrance of the facility?

I've been asked on numerous occasions why so many unauthorized people are inside the facility. Use of this facility is only authorized to certain Department of Defense-affiliated personnel, and I know personnel are sponsored with passes using the facility.

Personnel not authorized are signed up for classes inside the facility, and the facility is always packed. What is the policy/responsibility of the gym staff to ensure only the proper people are using the facility.



COURTESY GRAPHIC

A. Thanks for your feedback and concern about ensuring only eligible patrons use the Rambler Fitness Center. Providing a secure, safe environment for authorized fitness patrons in all 11 JBSA fitness centers is a vital part of our support mission.

Air Force Instruction 34-101, Air Force Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) Program Use Eligibility, identifies eligible patrons for FSS MWR programs, to include fitness centers. To ensure only authorized customers use JBSA Fitness Centers, the FSS Fitness Center Staff on-duty conduct 100 percent ID card checks of those entering the facility and not wearing a military uniform or approved service or unit physical testing attire.

Occasionally, circumstances require staff members to leave the front desk for emergency situations, locker room checks, equipment cleaning, dealing with a customer issue, etc., but these

occasions should be short in duration.

If you see any patron entering any fitness center not in uniform and they are not asked for identification, please bring it to the attention of the fitness center staff who will verify the customer's eligibility. Thanks again for expressing your concern, and I look forward to seeing you the fitness centers soon!

Q. One of my favorite things about driving at JBSA-Lackland is how proudly Ol' Glory is displayed on what seems like every light pole on base.

Nothing is more motivational then seeing her displayed and nothing is more demoralizing then seeing her improperly flown.

What do I mean by "improperly flown"? Torn, tattered and tangled flags! If the base is going to continue to display the symbol of every veterans' sacrifice on the light poles, then someone MUST continually check and

replace them when they're damaged.

Additionally, what does it say to visiting parents and family members of BMT graduates when they see the symbol of our great nation torn, tattered or tangled on the premier U.S. Air Force installation? Something needs to be done.

A. Thank you for your concern, and I agree that the beautiful flags flown along our main thoroughfares on JBSA-Lackland bring pride to many of veterans, family members and JBSA mission partners.

Our Civil Engineer team generally replaces these flags approximately once every six months to ensure they are flown in a good condition, and recently replaced all of the flags in early January. Unfortunately, South Texas weather presents a significant wear-and-tear challenge for our civil engineers, and as

FEEDBACK FRIDAYS

From page 3

such they monitor the flags weekly, especially after storms, and schedule replacements of worn flags as soon as safely and reasonably possible.

The replacement of flags is normally performed on weekends due to decreased traffic and less safety risk to the work crews performing this task. We will continue to respect our flag and perform change outs as quickly as possible when any of them become damaged, and at no time do we intend to show disrespect to Ol' Glory.

Q. Can you please address the consistent water leak that has been going on for the last 30 to 45 days, if not longer, in the road at building 2075, across the street from Security Service Credit Union on Kirknewton Street on Security Hill at JBSA-Lackland.

This water has been leaking every day and there is a constant puddle in the road, no matter how sunny or when the last time it rained. We are paying for that water that is leaking and it needs to be addressed.

A. Thank you for bringing this issue to our attention. Our civil engineers are aware of this leak, and report that it is in fact a privatized utility line that is owned and maintained by the privatized entity. This line has leaked and been repaired multiple times over the past two months, with new leaks following each repair, and as such may appear to have been a constant issue. Our CE team has coordinated with the privatized owner on the latest repair, conducted Feb. 7, and is hopeful to have this issue permanently resolved soon.

Q. Do we have a Voting Assistance Program at JBSA-Fort Sam Houston?

A. Thank you for reaching out! We do have Installation Voting Assistance Officers, or IVAO, at JBSA-Fort Sam Houston. They are Ann Mancillas (primary) and Dwayne Lanier (alternate), both with our 502d Force Support Team. They can be reached through email or calling 210-221-2962.

If you'd like more information on the Federal Voting Assistance Program or need help with the absentee voting process, go to FVAP.gov or call FVAP at 703-588-1584 (toll free 1-800-438-VOTE or DSN 425-1584) or email vote@fvap.gov.

Q. I have a question about the bathroom availability in building 7065, the 'Carswell Administrative Building' at JBSA-Lackland.

We were told that there were no

'private bathrooms' in this facility due to the somewhat erratic layout of the many offices/agencies located in the building.

To this end, the JBSA-Lackland History Office made use of a restroom next door to our office as we have no water/bathrooms in our office space. However, new tenants have opted to deny us use of the bathrooms, claiming that they are protecting their millions of dollars worth of equipment.

Bathroom access is problematic outside of typical work hours and this office is quite often open serving our customers during these times. Many of our office visitors are elderly with movement issues.

I believe the restrictions placed on use of the bathrooms are unreasonable and fall outside the intent of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, or OSHA, guidelines. **A.** Thank you for bringing this matter to our attention. Our Civil Engineering team has coordinated with the tenants in your facility, and arrangements were made to ensure that the History Office now has access to the nearby common area bathroom. Thank you for bringing this matter to our attention so we could help resolve your concerns, and we apologize for any inconvenience you and your fellow staff may have experienced.

Miscellaneous

Q. Many Air Force and Army Base newspapers have a small section entitled the "PHOTO CAPTION CONTEST."

The newspaper places a funny or serious picture of someone or something in the photograph in the newspaper. Then newspaper readers are allowed to submit their favorite quotes/captions to describe what the picture is all about. The newspaper staff then select the first-, second-, and third-place weekly winners and announce them every week in the newspaper. Prizes can also be given out for the weekly winner such as a free movie pass, free bowling game, etc. Just a suggestion to help improve morale on base.

A. Thank you for the fun suggestion! This is something we can definitely look into. Space is at a premium in the printed JBSA Legacy, so we will want to ensure there is a broader interest in a caption contest before we dedicate the space required every week. However, a weekly caption contest is something we can consider doing on social media, where there is a larger audience and

immediate engagement, along with opportunities for readers to interact with each other or vote on submissions. Thank you again!

Q. Is your paper, the JBSA Legacy, an Air Force paper or a JBSA paper?

I ask because for a while now, I've noticed the articles in it are mainly regarding the Air Force and very little about the Army.

A case in point is your publication of Oct. 25 where someone asked about retirement from active military duty after June 2011. The response was about "Airmen."

In the area where it describes the publisher of the paper it says: Content of the publication is not necessarily the official view of, or endorsement by the U.S. government, the Department of Defense or the Department of the Air Force. Why is that?

A. Thank you for the feedback and question! We strive to be service-neutral when reporting topics and issues that concern not just Airmen, but Soldiers, Sailors, Marines, and Coast Guardsmen.

While the Legacy is a publication for all service members, employees, retirees, and their families at JBSA, it is published by the 502d Air Base Wing, an Air Force unit charged with the management of JBSA, and subject to both Air Force and Defense Department instructions in regards to the formatting and information that must be included in the administrative section.

However, you're correct, this is a JBSA paper, so we can work with our editors to review the content to see where we can improve on the diversity of the articles we publish. Over the past six months, we've published around 550 articles: 55% Air Force, 35% Army, 5% Navy, and 5% Marine Corps/DOD-wide news - this is fairly close to the population distribution of JBSA!

While each issue of the Legacy will vary based on the articles available, we will continue to strive to prioritize content from our sister services. If you have any feedback or suggestions, please feel free to send an email to RandolphPublicAffairs@us.af.mil with the subject line "Feedback Fridays." Thank you again!

Q. We see the black flag and other flag conditions announced on the JBSA email/Outlook for the heat conditions on base.

Isn't there a way to get the word out to everyone on base about these heat conditions since not everyone has access to the government email/outlook

system i.e. contractors, dependent, retirees, etc.

I would suggest the following recommendations:

► Put the heat conditions status on the base marquees so people entering the base know what is going on heat wise. Also, add more base marquees around the base at all base entrances, Commissary/BX area, etc.

► Place a flag pole at all of the base entrances and have the military police, civil engineers, or base safety personnel drive around and put the current flag condition up every flag pole.

► Use the "Big Voice" on base.

► Have a big sign posted at all of the main base entrances with the current heat condition posted on it.

A. Thank you for sharing your concerns on advertising flag conditions. The current procedures that we have in place in the Command Post is to push the Wet Bulb Globe Temp, or WBGT, notifications via AtHoc, which pushes out an audible notification via the Giant Voice.

Unfortunately, the only drawback to the giant voice is that you have to be outside in order to hear it clearly. This is why we use the Big Voice system you recommend, in addition to the AtHoc system.

All individuals with network access (many contractors and some dependents included) have the ability to update their AtHoc profile with their contact information to include home phone, personal cell phone and personal email were they can opt to receive notifications.

One recommendation we would like to share is the Blackberry AtHoc app on mobile devices. Once the app is downloaded, they are able to access the system using the email address that was updated in their profile. Once they've verified their email address they will need to enter the Mobile App Code: AFEMNSAETC. This will update their location for JBSA and ensure that they will receive pertinent information, such as lockdown or weather warnings.

The member can also add up to 10 devices to their account which allows for the members dependents to be able to have access to AtHoc notifications. This does not solve the problem when it comes to retirees but it should be a good start for dependents and contractors who have access to the network.

We will look in to using a sign or flag strategy to notify the individuals who cannot access the network. Thank you for the recommendations!

FORT SAM HOUSTON

A Peruvian officer competes alongside Soldiers and Airmen from Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston and JBSA-Lackland, as U.S. Army South hosted the first Joint Armies Military Proficiency Competition Feb. 7-8.



PHOTOS BY SGT. ASHLEY DOTSON



Soldiers and Airmen from Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston and JBSA-Lackland test their marksmen skills during the first Joint Armies Military Proficiency Competition Feb. 7-8, hosted by U.S. Army South.

ARSOUTH hosts first Joint Armies Military Proficiency Competition

By Sgt. Ashley Dotson
U.S. ARMY SOUTH PUBLIC AFFAIRS

A Peruvian officer competed alongside Soldiers and Airmen from Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston and JBSA-Lackland, as U.S. Army South hosted the first Joint Armies Military Proficiency Competition Feb. 7-8.

U.S. Army South, as the joint forces land component to U.S. Southern Command, works with partner nations in Latin America to strengthen regional security and counter transnational threats.

“One of the main lines of effort for the command is to build partnerships and to build interoperability with our partner nations,” said Maj.

Rene Diaz, Headquarters Battalion, U.S. Army South Operations Officer. “With those two ideas we decided to combine them and develop the competition.”

During the planning, Diaz said they also decided to also include the Air Force.

“This was the first competition so we started small due to a limited number of competitors,” Diaz said. “We would like to build up to a Joint Base San Antonio-wide event.”

The competition was broken into five events representing individual countries that partner with U.S. Army South. The first event was the Colombian army fitness test which essentially mirrors the U.S. Army fitness test.

During the brisk February

morning, competitors cooled off quickly as they jumped into the pool for the second event of the first day, the Chilean army 300-meter swim.

The first day ended at the range with the Argentina pistol qualification and the Peru rifle qualification.

Competitors tightened their equipment and weighed their rucks before sunrise Saturday morning. Everyone appeared eager to compete in the final event of the competition, the 15-mile Brazilian ruck march.

The U.S. Army’s saying, “NCOs lead the way” proved true as U.S. Army South G6 Sgt. Maj. Ulysses Otero was announced as the winner of the competition in a ceremony Feb. 13 and he completed every event of the competition with a

near perfect score.

Otero said the ruck march was by far the most difficult event of the competition. Although it was challenging he said he had a lot of fun.

“You never know what you are capable of unless you get out there and give yourself a chance,” Otero said. “Get out there and do it.”

Diaz described his plans for more robust competitions in the future. He said he would like to involve U.S. Army North, who has a partnership with Canada and Mexico, and also invite the foreign students from the Defense Language School at JBSA-Lackland, not only create a larger competition, but to also have a more diverse representation of U.S. Army partner nations.

“You never know what you are capable of unless you get out there and give yourself a chance. Get out there and do it.”

U.S. Army South G6 Sgt. Maj. Ulysses Otero, competition winner

BAMC Bariatric Surgery Clinic receives national recognition

By Lori Newman

BROOKE ARMY MEDICAL CENTER
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The Brooke Army Medical Center Bariatric Surgery Clinic has achieved national accreditation as a Comprehensive Center from the Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery Accreditation and Quality Improvement Program, or MBSAQIP.

"This accreditation assures our patients that Brooke Army Medical Center is committed to providing the best possible comprehensive bariatric care," said Joseph Gonzalez, bariatric surgery program manager.

MBSAQIP is a Joint Quality Program of the American College of Surgeons and the American Society for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery. ASMBS is the largest organization for metabolic and bariatric surgeons in the world, with more than 4,200 members.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates about 93 million adults in the United States are affected by obesity and that number continues to increase. The disease of obesity increases the risks of morbidity and

mortality because of the diseases and conditions that are commonly associated with it, such as type II diabetes, hypertension, cardiovascular disease, and cancer, among other health risks.

The MBSAQIP standards ensure that metabolic and bariatric patients receive multidisciplinary medical care, which improves patient outcomes and long-term success. MBSAQIP-accredited centers offer preoperative and postoperative care designed specifically for patients with obesity.

To earn MBSAQIP accreditation, BAMC met essential criteria for staffing, training, facility infrastructure and patient care pathways, ensuring its ability to support patients with obesity. BAMC also participates in a national data registry that yields semiannual reports on the quality of its surgical outcomes and identifying opportunities for quality improvement.

"This designation is important because it ensures quality, comprehensive bariatric care for our patients and helps our facility by supporting continuous quality improvement in bariatrics," said Army Maj. Pamela Masella, general and



JASON W. EDWARDS

Army Capt. (Dr.) Lexy Adams, general surgery resident, talks with a post-operation bariatric patient at Brooke Army Medical Center, Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston Jan. 31.

bariatric surgeon.

In 2019, the BAMC Bariatric Surgery Clinic performed 290 surgeries, equating to accumulative weight loss of more than 10,489 pounds.

BAMC provides three types of laparoscopic bariatric surgeries, adjustable gastric band, gastric bypass and vertical sleeve gastrectomy.

The clinic also offers a bariatric support group which meets the first Wednesday of each month in the main dining room on the lower level of

BAMC. The support group is open to all bariatric patients, former patients, and those considering bariatric surgery. No appointment is required to attend the bariatric support group.

After applying for MBSAQIP accreditation, BAMC underwent an extensive site visit by an experienced bariatric surgeon who reviews the structure, processes, and clinical outcomes data. Centers that earn accreditation are awarded a specific designation level, depending on how many patients it serves annually, critical care capabilities, the types of procedures provided, and whether it provides care to patients under the age of 18.

"Accreditation as a bariatric center highlights the commitment of San Antonio Military Health System surgeons to improving the health of our patients," said Air Force Col. Patrick Osborn. "The knowledge, skill and dedication of our Bariatric Surgery Clinic staff is responsible for the exceptional outcomes that provide long-term benefit to our beneficiaries."

TRICARE beneficiaries interested in bariatric surgery can call 210-916-9023 to set up an appointment.

Second Lt. David Cummings, a student at the U.S. Army Medical Department Center of Excellence at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston, does a deadlift during a workout.



COURTESY PHOTO

MEDCoE student scores perfect on Army Combat Fitness Test

By David DeKunder
502ND AIR BASE WING
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Second Lt. David Cummings is one who never backs down from a challenge, especially when it comes to pushing the limits of physical fitness.

Cummings, a student in the Army-Baylor University Doctoral Program in Physical Therapy at the U.S. Army Medical Department Center of Excellence, or MEDCoE, at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston, pushed himself to earn a perfect score on the Army Combat Fitness Test in October 2019.

He scored 600, the highest that can be attained on the test, while in the MEDCoE Basic Officer Leaders Course, or BOLC. Cummings was the

only servicemember in his BOLC class to earn a perfect score on the Army Combat Fitness Test and the first MEDCoE student at JBSA-Fort Sam Houston to do so.

The 23-year-old Cummings said he set a goal of getting a perfect score on the Army Combat Fitness Test, which tests Soldiers on six exercises and skills they will need to utilize in a combat setting. The new test replaces the Army Physical Fitness Test that measured the physical fitness of service members based on general fitness standards.

"It was a test that challenged me and I was excited to take it," Cummings said.

"Obviously, I felt proud I was able to max it."

Cummings aced the Army Combat Fitness Test, or ACFIT,

on his second try. He first took the test in late September while in the Direct Commission Course at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, scoring a 590. The Direct Commission Course is a month long orientation for direct commission officers entering AMEDD.

Cummings was not satisfied getting a near perfect score on the test. Before he took the test again in BOLC, Cummings trained on improving his performance on two exercises that he came up short of meeting the maximum standard on his first test: the hand release push-up-arm extension and the standing power ball throw.

"I was pretty bummed that I wasn't able to max it the first

FITNESS TEST continues on 18

Basura Bash volunteers clean up Salado Creek

By David DeKunder

502ND AIR BASE WING
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Hundreds of dedicated volunteers came out on a cool, crisp morning Feb. 15 to help clean up an important waterway that runs through Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston during the annual community-wide Basura Bash.

Approximately 300 volunteers turned out at Salado Creek Park, located at JBSA-Fort Sam Houston, for the Basura Bash, a one-day, all volunteer event to clean the San Antonio Watershed, which includes Salado Creek. This was the tenth year JBSA-Fort Sam Houston has participated in the Basura Bash.

Sarah Otto from the 802nd Civil Engineer Squadron and Basura Bash organizer said turnout was lower than in years

past but that the volunteers who participated did their part in helping to clean up and beautify a one-mile portion of Salado Creek.

“They did a good job,” Otto said. “The park looks really good.”

Edward Roberson, 802nd Civil Engineering Squadron chief, kicked off the event by giving the welcoming remarks to the volunteers.

Service members, including Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen, worked with families and members from community organizations such as the Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts and students from Cole Middle and High School in picking up all sorts of trash and debris from Salado Creek.

Volunteers were provided with gloves, bags and other equipment to pick up the trash and debris. For those volunteers



DAVID DEKUNDER

Master Sgt. Louis Lough (left), 381st Training Squadron senior enlisted advisor, and Staff Sgt. Derek Heers (right), 381st Training Squadron dental instructor, collect trash from Salado Creek during the Basura Bash at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston Feb. 15.

who wanted to go into the creek and clean up the tons of trash in the waterway, kayaks were made available for their use.

Master Sgt. Christeana Schwartz, 383rd Training Squadron senior enlisted advisor, was amongst a group of volunteers from the 59th

Training Group who were picking up trash along Salado Creek. The 383rd TRS is under the 59th TRG.

Schwartz said she volunteered to help clean the creek because of her son, who comes to Salado Creek Park often to play.

“My son comes out here and plays at this park and we’ve noticed (the trash),” Schwartz said. “Then I saw an email that said, ‘Hey, come out and help us cleanup.’ So, I figured what better way to keep it safe and

BASURA BASH continues on 18

Programs provide transitioning members with choices in training opportunities

By Lori A. Bultman

502ND AIR BASE WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Service members at Joint Base San Antonio transitioning from the military have several options for assistance when preparing for a new career.

SkillBridge, for the Air Force, Navy and Coast Guard, also called the Career Skills Program for the Army and Marine Corps, is a Department of Defense initiative geared toward preparing service members for their next career by connecting them with civilian education, job training and work experience opportunities. Some opportunities are also open to spouses, dependents or caregivers.

"This program affords transitioning service members and others an opportunity to get a head start on either their transition as they make their way into the civilian workforce or into a career after a move or finishing school," said Jose Ontiveros, Joint Base San Antonio Career Skills Program/DOD SkillBridge coordinator. "We do this through a few avenues; internships, apprenticeships, on-the-job training and even some credentialing programs."

While DOD established the military services' transition programs, each branch runs the program differently.

The Army facilitates the Career Skills Program by using transition centers, while the Air Force's SkillBridge program is administered through the education centers. All have the same goals, though: easing the transition to a successful civilian career.

The greatest benefit of either program is that transitioning service members may utilize up to 180 days prior to their date of separation to train and work with an industry partner, though Ontiveros said release for these programs is always mission-dependent, and the member's commander must authorize participation.

Once approved for a program, the work really begins as participants have several tasks to complete, including locating a training opportunity.

Dominique Lester, an Air Force Veteran, was amazed at how smoothly the process went.

"One of the big things for me was how simple it was. When I initially



LORI A. BULTMAN

Air Force Master Sgt. Cathy Ulmer (right), a medical technician and a superintendent of medical standards at Joint Base San Antonio, speaks with Vivencio Gaston, a medical assistant, while visiting a WellMed clinic in San Antonio.

heard about it, I thought it was too good to be true," he said. "The process was as simple as getting my commander to sign off on it and working with the education center. The resource centers on base were extremely helpful."

Lester, who now works in real estate thanks to SkillBridge, encourages others to seek programs that may help with their military-to-civilian transition.

"If you know what you want to get into, and are uncertain of whether you will get hired, contact the liaisons of SkillBridge or the Career Skills Program," Lester said. "For veterans who have been in longer than maybe myself, six years, they have been doing military processes for so long, they don't know what's out there. They don't know how it works. Having the six months, or however long you decide to do the program, really helps you to interact with people who are not veterans. That alone really does help."

Another key attribute of the programs is that service members continue receiving military compensation and are covered by military benefits while participating.

"Having the privilege of keeping my

military pay and benefits while transitioning into a civilian career was extremely important to me," said Air Force Master Sgt. Cathy Ulmer, currently a medical technician at JBSA who is preparing to retire. "My daughter has major health issues and is dependent on my insurance for her survival. We also recently bought a new home, and the steady income from not having a gap in employment has decreased a huge burden as well."

Ulmer attended school while on active duty and received her Bachelor of Science in Nursing at Texas A&M in 2018. Unfortunately, she was unable to transfer those skills to the military.

"I passed the Texas NCLEX-RN (registered nurse exam) in March 2019 and fulfilled my dream of becoming a registered nurse," she said. "I thought I would easily be commissioned and continue to serve the USAF as a nurse, but was not selected. Soon after, I heard about the SkillBridge program and it gave me hope again."

The new nurse will begin her training program in late February and is thankful for the help she received in getting to that point.

"Lynda Packett at the JBSA-Randolph Education Office has been my angel, guiding me through the process," she said. "Thanks to her assistance, I was offered an internship with United Health Group, where I will be working as an RN at various WellMed clinics."

Andera Alexander, a former civil affairs Soldier who retired after 20 years of service, did not expect his transition to military retirement to be so difficult.

"I thought my military skills were going to be an easy sell. It was not that easy. I had to explain what I did in the military in a different way," he said. "It takes a lot of confidence. It takes a lot of hard work and should not be taken for granted. There are a lot of people who have done it before. You have to get out and ask questions and participate in these programs. I would not be a process engineer at USAA today had it not been for the SkillBridge program."

During the program's first year at JBSA-Fort Sam Houston, Ontiveros said, 10 individuals were placed into career opportunities through the Career Skills Program. In the second year, 44 were placed; in the third year, 177; and in 2019, 310 participants were placed into various training programs.

Thankfully, many of these placements led to permanent jobs.

"We are sitting at an 86 percent job offer rate," Ontiveros said, referring to JBSA placements that occurred after a training period was completed. "We are really excited for what next year is going to bring."

For more information or to apply for one of JBSA's transition employment programs, contact the JBSA Career Skills Program/DOD SkillBridge coordinator at 210-221-1672, the Military & Family Readiness Center's Employment Readiness Program at 210-221-2705, or one of the base education centers at <https://www.jbsa.mil/Resources/Education/>. Air Force members should first contact their respective Education Centers to begin the process.

Editor's note: The mention of non-federal organizations is simply informational and not intended to imply endorsement by the U.S. Government, the DOD, or the U.S. Air Force.

LACKLAND

37th Training Wing bivouac exercise builds readiness, camaraderie

By Senior Airman Dillon Parker
502ND AIR BASE WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Personnel from the 37th Training Wing participated in a bivouac exercise Feb. 11-13, at the Basic Expeditionary Airman Skills Training (BEAST) site at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland Medina Annex.

The 3-day, 2-night exercise simulated the establishment and defense of a base in foreign territory with the mission of providing humanitarian aid to displaced civilians.

“The intent of this exercise was to provide a highly realistic scenario and environment,” said Capt. James Francis, 319th Training Squadron Flight Commander. “The specific priorities were building individual and team confidence, instilling a readiness mindset, and fostering stronger relationships across the wing.”

Over the course of the exercise, participants practiced weapons handling, self-aid buddy care, dismounted patrol missions, and operational security while demonstrating their ability to survive and operate in a hostile environment. Participants faced surprise attacks from role players acting as opposing forces, as well as a number of different civilian scenarios.

“An incredible team effort was required to be able to put on an exercise of this magnitude,” said Francis. “We had approximately 180 total participants, with every group in the 37th TRW being represented. Everyone did an amazing job making this feel like a real-world operation.”

All aspects of the exercise were completed with the goal of improving the comprehensive fitness of 37th TRW personnel in line with the Chief of Staff of the Air Force’s “Return to Readiness” mandate, said Col. Jason Janaros, 37th TRW Commander.



PHOTOS BY SENIOR AIRMAN DILLON PARKER

37th Training Wing personnel defend the base perimeter from an opposing force attack as a part of the bivouac exercise Feb. 13 at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland Medina Annex.

“Readiness is the Secretary of the Air Force’s number one priority,” said Janaros. “Unit readiness starts in the heart of individual Airmen, our ultimate weapon system. This exercise, which was focused exclusively on our permanent party personnel, will set us up for future success. You train and make mistakes in this environment so you won’t make mistakes in the combat environment.”

“We’ve got such a great environment out here at BEAST and we’ve got to take advantage of it,” said Janaros. “Our collective goal is to build hard targets — more ready, more lethal Airmen who are prepared for the challenges they might face downrange or even downtown. Whether it’s a lifesaving endeavor on the side of the road, defending themselves or a loved one, or facing a personal hardship, we’ve got to be prepared.”



37th Training Wing personnel assist a civilian with a mock injury inflicted by opposing forces during the bivouac exercise Feb. 13 Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland Medina Annex.

Child care app wins AFIMSC Innovation Rodeo

By Shannon Carabajal

AIR FORCE INSTALLATION AND
MISSION SUPPORT CENTER
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

An idea to centralize and streamline the subletting of short-term slots at military child development centers won the 2020 Air Force Installation and Mission Support Center Innovation Rodeo Feb. 7 in San Antonio.

Maj. Jacque Vasta, executive officer for the Air Force Materiel Command deputy commander at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, will receive a share of \$1 million in funding from AFIMSC to develop her idea for potential implementation across the Air Force and Department of Defense.

Vasta came up with the idea for a mobile application or web-based platform three years ago when she had her first child. The concept, called Kinderspot, helps parents of children enrolled in military CDCs sublease their child's spot to eligible families with short-term childcare needs. Her family's first experience with subleasing a spot at her local CDC didn't go smoothly. The process wasn't standardized, and CDC users were subleasing in an ad hoc manner using Facebook sites. It just "didn't feel right," she said.

"There are a lot of other people out there with this problem too, so I knew it was an enterprise problem I could solve," Vasta said.

Last year, she began developing her idea and looking for ways to get Air Force support. An opportunity to pitch her idea at the AFIMSC Innovation Rodeo helped her get the support she was looking for, and she's now eager to get her idea developed and fielded for military families.

"It feels amazing to win," Vasta said. "I'm excited to see where this can go now that it has the backing of AFIMSC. It



SHANNON CARABAJAL

From left: 2020 AFIMSC Innovation Rodeo panel members Chief Master Sgt. Edwin Ludwigsen; Brig. Gen. Stewart Hammons; Maj. Gen. Tom Wilcox; Lorna Estep and Brig. Gen. Alice Trevino deliberate following a presentation Feb. 7.

feels awesome to be the voice of (a service) we all need."

This second annual AFIMSC Innovation Rodeo concluded the center's call-for-topics campaign that ran Air Force-wide Nov. 1 through Dec. 31.

"Innovation is the future. If we ever stay stuck in our ways, we can never move forward," said Maj. Gen. Tom Wilcox, AFIMSC commander. "Innovation Rodeo reaches out to those people who have great ideas. We are able to grab those ideas and walk them all the way to reality. That's what's special about the AFIMSC Innovation Rodeo."

The campaign received more than 150 submissions from around the world, from every mission support group, said Marc Vandever, AFIMSC chief innovation officer.

"The caliber of this year's ideas are phenomenal," Wilcox said. "We had 2,000 active comments and votes in our Ideascale online ideation platform. These eight teams are the best of the best."

Throughout the week,

finalists worked with leading innovators to hone their ideas and fine tune their pitches before trying to convince a panel of five senior Air Force leaders that their innovations were worth funding.

The ideas ranged from leveraging the latest technologies to make work easier, safer and more efficient to establishing programs aimed at improving quality of life for Airmen and their families.

Other Innovation Rodeo winners are:
 ▶▶ Second Place: Augmented Reality for Utility and Communications Infrastructure, Senior Airman Tyler Strauser, 96th Communications Squadron, Eglin Air Force Base, Florida. This idea would replace the current manual mapping of underground cabling and wiring with the use of augmented reality glasses to save time and simplify processes.

▶▶ Third Place: Autonomous Mowers for Airfield Mowing Operations, Jason Griffith and Byron Icenogle, 375th Civil

Engineer Squadron at Scott Air Force Base, Illinois. Their innovation proposes using autonomous robotic lawn mowers to cut the grass in and around airfields at night, which would reduce aircraft bird-strike hazards.

In addition to the top three, judges surprised the teams by selecting two other ideas for further development:

▶▶ Additive Manufacturing, Staff Sgt. Nate Klingbeil and Airman 1st Class Jordan Vesey, 627th Logistics Readiness Squadron at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington. Their innovation uses 3D printing to create metal replacement parts for fire trucks and potentially other military fleet vehicles.
 ▶▶ Real Property Records Software Bots, Susan Lasiter and Catherine Ward, Air Force Civil Engineer Center at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, Texas. In order to attain and maintain complete data for Air Force real property, the bots capability would significantly reduce the time and cost to input and retrieve data and

reports.

Going forward, the AFIMSC Innovation Office will work with the winners to develop and implement an execution strategy for their ideas, Vandever said.

"Our team is committed. We are dedicated to getting these ideas implemented and into reality," he said. "We'll work the acquisition process and work with the small business and innovation research programs to find industry partners, marry them up and ensure they're successful."

Though only three ideas were awarded money during the rodeo, Vandever said the journey isn't necessarily over for the other teams.

"We love all their submissions," he said. "We think all eight today will move forward in some way, shape or form. We have three winners, but we'll work with all of them."

The AFIMSC Innovation Office stood up in late 2018 to tackle and solve complex challenges facing the Air Force installation and mission and support enterprise. Since then, the team has grown \$150,000 in initial seed money to \$6 million in funding through partnerships with leading innovation hubs, including AFWERX and the Air Force Small Business Innovation Research Program.

Over the next four years, Vandever expects that number to grow to more than \$40 million. Without programs like the AFIMSC Innovation Rodeo and input from Airmen, however, the office wouldn't be able to solve the challenges facing the enterprise.

"Innovation starts at our bases," he said. "It starts with our Airmen who are doing the mission every day. They are the ones who have these innovative ideas. It's our job to help them, to put them into a position to move their ideas forward and benefit Airmen across the Air Force."

68th Airlift Squadron welcomes new commander

By Staff Sgt. Lauren M. Snyder
433RD AIRLIFT WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The 68th Airlift Squadron welcomed its new commander, Lt. Col. Douglas P. Schoenenberger, during an assumption of command ceremony held at the 433rd Airlift Wing auditorium at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland Feb. 8.

Schoenenberger took command of the 68th AS after 16 years of piloting and training within the same squadron as a C-5M Super Galaxy instructor aircraft commander and flight commander.

Col. James C. "JC" Miller, 433rd Operations Group commander, officiated over the ceremony.

Schoenenberger began his career with the Air Force Reserve in 2002 and has been a part of the C-5 community ever since attending pilot training in 2003.

"He has a huge passion for making life better for others and trying to make

a difference," Miller said. "You know him from flying the line and that he's a confident pilot. He knows how to move the mission and encourage y'all. As someone who has now become the leader of this organization, everything he is today is because of what you molded him into by giving him an opportunity, which is all any of us ask for."

As commander, Schoenenberger is responsible for the unit's C-5 pilots, flight engineers loadmasters and administrative staff to fulfill their mission to operate movement of high-priority personnel and cargo in support of Air Force Reserve Command's and Air Mobility Command's worldwide airlift and contingency operations.

Schoenenberger officially accepted and has been working in this position since Jan. 17.



STAFF SGT. LAUREN M. SNYDER

Col. James C. "JC" Miller (left), 433rd Operations Group commander, presents the guidon to Lt. Col. Douglas P. Schoenenberger, 68th Airlift Squadron commander, during an assumption of command ceremony at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, Feb. 8.

59th MDW among Air Force Medical Service 2019 Award winners

From Air Force Surgeon General
Public Affairs

The Air Force Surgeon General announced the recipients of the 2019 Air Force Medical Service individual and team awards. Airmen from the 59th Medical Wing at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland were among the 2019 Air Force Medical Service annual award winners announced Feb. 7, 2020.

The nominations submitted reflect the extraordinary quality of Air Force medics. The accomplishments of those recognized demonstrate expertise, leadership and commitment across the full breadth of the mission support we provide to the Air Force, Combatant Commanders and Defense Health Agency.

Congratulations to all the award recipients who represent the many outstanding professionals of Air Force Medicine providing "Trusted Care Anywhere!"

Local winners included:

- ▶▶ USAF MSC Civilian of the Year
Michael D. Gaither
59 MDSS/SGSBT, Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, Air Education and Training Command
- ▶▶ USAF Biomedical Clinician Civilian

of the Year

Jason C. Wheeler
359 MDOS/SGOY, JBSA-Randolph, AETC

▶▶ USAF Dental Civilian of the Year

Nancy A. Hansen
59 DSS/SGDSL, Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, AETC

▶▶ USAF Public Health NCO of the Year

Staff Sgt. Seoany G. De Leon
559 AMDS/SGPM, Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, AETC

▶▶ USAF Medical Service Civilian Enterprise Leadership Excellence Award

Melissa M. Curreri-Levesque
AFMRA CAG, Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, AFMRA

Other winners included:

USAF Young Health Care

Administrator of the Year

Capt. Jamion S. Lewis

36 MDSS/SGSM, Anderson Air

Force Base, Guam, Pacific Air Forces

USAF MSC Commitment to Service Award

Lt. Col. Nathan T. Kellett

60 MDSS/CC, Travis Air Force Base,

California, Air Mobility Command

USAF Biomedical Clinician of the

Year - Company Grade Category

Capt. Cristina D. Benitez

18 MDOS/SGOW, Kadena Air Base,
Japan, PACAF

USAF Biomedical Clinician of the
Year - Field Grade Category

Maj. Joyanne E. Tesei
USAFCENT/SGX, Shaw Air Force
Base, South Carolina, Air Combat
Command

USAF Biomedical Specialist of the
Year - Company Grade Category

Capt. Jamie G. Olguin
460 HCOS/SGSC, Buckley Air Force
Base, Colorado, Air Force Space
Command

USAF Biomedical Specialist of the
Year - Field Grade Category

Maj. Mari M. Metzler
TRSS/HP, Joint Base Langley Eustis,
VA, ACC

USAF Biomedical Specialist Civilian
of the Year

Trevor D. Scott
75 OMRs/SGPB, Hill Air Force Base,
Utah, Air Force Material Command

USAF Clinical Dentist of the Year
Maj. Christin M. Giacomino

11 MDS/SGD, Joint Base
Anacostia-Bolling, Washington,
District of Columbia, Air Force District
of Washington

USAF Dental Educator of the Year
Lt. Col. Michael J. Silverman

375 DS/SGDD, Scott Air Force Base,

Illinois, AMC

USAF Enlisted Health Services

Management Airman of the Year
Senior Airman Christopher R.
Cedarstaff

60 MDSS/SGSI, Travis Air Force
Base, California, AMC

USAF Enlisted Health Services
Management NCO of the Year

Tech. Sgt. Mary Ann C. Pastor
633 MDSS/SGSD, Joint Base

Langley-Eustis, Virginia, ACC
USAF Medical Materiel Airman of
the Year

Senior Airman Brian Izaguirre
60 MDSS/SGSLB, Travis Air Force
Base, California, AMC

USAF Medical Materiel NCO of the
Year

Tech. Sgt. Matthew A. Campbell
353 SOSS/OSZ, Kadena AB, Japan,
AFSOC

USAF Biomedical Equipment Repair
Airman of the Year

Senior Airman Ryan S. Thomas
509 HCOS/SGGM, Whiteman Air
Force Base, Missouri, Air Force Global
Strike Command

USAF Biomedical Equipment Repair
NCO of the Year

Tech. Sgt. Michael J. Muschong
366 HCOS/SGSM, Mountain Home
Air Force Base, Idaho, ACC

RANDOLPH

Session at youth center designed to help students become ‘money smart’

By Robert Goetz

502ND AIR BASE WING
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The Air Force provides service members with ample resources to help them achieve financial readiness.

A session scheduled this month at Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph Youth Programs will help their dependents learn the basics of money management as they transition into adulthood.

The Money Smarts Youth Rally, set for 4:30-6 p.m. Feb. 26 at the youth center, building 585, allows students to learn about the value of money and how it affects their lives.

“The youth rally is an outreach event organized to improve financial literacy in our youth population,” said Sarah Henson, JBSA-Randolph Military & Family Readiness Center community readiness consultant.

Formerly part of Military Saves Week, which has been



COURTESY GRAPHIC

expanded to a monthlong campaign in April, the Money Smarts Youth Rally will be facilitated by representatives of the JBSA-Randolph M&FRC, Broadway Bank and Randolph-Brooks Federal Credit Union.

During the event, students will learn about money management, savings, investing and the basics of banking, Henson said.

“Many high schools now

teach personal finance courses, which is a giant step toward improving financial literacy in our youth,” she said. “Students today have access to more financial information than ever before. Our hope is that we can provide them the tools they need to put that information to good use.”

Although today’s students are more financially literate than previous generations, they are still vulnerable to some of the

“These two aspects of money management are where most young people — and adults — make mistakes. Avoiding debt as well as saving and investing consistently at an early age are key to financial health.”

Sarah Henson, JBSA-Randolph Military & Family Readiness Center

pitfalls of money management, Henson said.

“We encourage students to take responsibility for managing small amounts of money at an early age so they can learn the benefits of delayed gratification and compound interest,” she said. “These two aspects of money management are where most young people — and adults — make mistakes. Avoiding debt as well as saving and investing consistently at an early age are key to financial health.”

Henson called the youth rally “one of the highlights of our year for our personal financial readiness team.”

“We know that stress from

finances causes our military members to lose time in the workplace and at home,” she said. “Our goal is to plant seeds of financial knowledge in our youth that will ultimately grow to improve the financial lives of our military members and their families.”

The students attending the youth rally are part of the military family, Henson said.

“We want them to achieve their financial goals,” she said. “Many of them will become service members themselves. It is in our best interest to improve the financial literacy of all of our young people — they are our future.”

AFCLC’s LEAP featured on latest ‘The Air Force Starts Here’ podcast

From Air Education and Training Command Public Affairs

A deep dive inside the Language Enabled Airmen Program is the focus of the latest episode of “The Air Force Starts Here,” released Feb. 11, 2020.

Senior Airman Francisco Melendez from the Air

University public affairs team sat down with the director of the Air Force Culture and Language Center, Howard Ward, as well as Capt.

Christopher Price, a LEAP scholar, to talk about the AFCLC’s flagship language

program that is focused on cross-cultural communication and how it helps bring out diversity in the Air Force.

Ward goes into detail how the LEAP program spans an Airman’s entire career, including both building and maintaining a working proficiency in a foreign

language that allows them to think globally and use their skills as a force multiplier. Ward also talks to who is eligible for the program and dispels the myth that LEAP is an interpreter program.

Price details how he came to be in the LEAP program and his passion for it, as well as talks about his travels while in the program.

The professional development podcasts are designed to help communicate

and inform Total Force Airmen across the globe on relevant, timely topics related to the recruiting, training, education and development fields and can be listened to on the government network on the AETC website, or via mobile application as well as on Apple Podcasts, Spotify and Google Play.

Future episodes are set to cover a wide range of topics, including the special warfare recruiting, maintenance training, and much more.

DOD HELPS EFMP

From page 2

ensure senior executive service oversight.

- ▶▶ Begun to refine the program's data repository and a data collection system.
- ▶▶ Developed and implemented a standard family needs assessment form for the program that has a component for individualized services plans.
- ▶▶ Developed standardized travel screening forms for family members and is working with the Defense Health Agency to develop and publish policy.
- ▶▶ Engaged with the Department of Labor and university partners to assist in developing staffing. In addition, a pilot program was launched to assist the services in determining adequate staffing levels at each installation.

“In proving EFMP is a priority for the department, we know we have more work to do. We thank the witnesses for their appearances today and for continuing to advocate for both themselves and for others in this important topic,” Stevens said.

Simmer said the Defense Health Agency is committed to helping military children. “We’re committed to ensuring every military child — and especially

those with special needs — receives the health care services they need to reach their maximum potential,” he said.

Family readiness is a key part of service member readiness, the captain, a psychiatrist, said.

DHA works closely with the program at the installation, service and DOD levels, he said.

DHA's support for the program and families includes identifying and evaluating families who qualify for it, providing outstanding medical care and services to eligible family members, and the agency assists with assignment decisions by providing information about available medical services at potential duty locations worldwide, Simmer said.

“Tricare provides a very robust benefit, with some of the lowest out-of-pocket costs than any health plan in the country. Our beneficiaries who earned this benefit through their service to this nation deserve nothing less,” the captain said.

“Despite our best efforts, however, we know that we still have room for improvement,” he said. “Access to care, especially sub-specialty care, is challenging in some areas, particularly in remote areas where some of our bases are located.”

WW II veteran awarded French Legion of Honor

By Maj. Kim Garbett

AIR EDUCATION AND TRAINING
COMMAND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Longtime San Antonio resident and U.S. Army Air Corps World War II veteran Roland Dullnig was presented the French Legion of Honor medal in San Antonio in a ceremony Feb. 8, 2020.

The French Legion of Honor is a prestigious medal and has been recently awarded by the people of France to American Veterans who fought for the liberation of France during World War II.

“Mr. Dullnig represents the ‘Greatest Generation,’ a generation that also set the foundation for today’s United States Air Force with its roots in its historic predecessor, the Army Air Corps,” said Brig. Gen. Jim Sears, Jr., Air Education and Training Command director of plans, programs and requirements.

Dullnig served from June 1, 1942, until his discharge as a technical sergeant from the service in January 1946, in the 668th Bombardment Squadron of the 416th Bombardment Group as a crew chief



MAJ. KIMBERLY GARBETT

Army Air Corps World War II veteran Roland Dullnig (left) stands with the Consul General of France of Houston, Alexis Andres, after being presented the French Legion of Honor medal during a ceremony Feb. 8.

maintaining A-20 Havoc and A-26 Invaders light bomber aircraft in France.

Sears also noted it was special to honor both a WWII veteran and his service, as well as his unit’s service to the country, to democracy and to

our Allied partners.

“The 416th Bombardment Group’s contributions to today’s 21st century U.S. Air Force have evolved and come a long way since 1945,” Sears said.

The Consul General of

France in Houston, Alexis Andres, awarded Dullnig the medal on behalf of French President Emmanuel Macron.

Andres highlighted that this year marks the 75th anniversary since the end of WWII and noted that the partnership between France and America was forged during the American Revolution more than 230 years ago. He stressed that the Franco-American partnership has been renewed time and again through history into present day bilateral, multilateral and other Allied operations.

Dullnig received the French Legion of Honor award with a surprised “Wow, how about that?!” He said he recalled serving long hours during the ongoing war efforts and how WWII marked his “first trip to France,” although it proved not to be his last. Dullnig remembers while serving in France with his unit, he was always with the aircraft, always working.

During the ceremony, Andres also emphasized the number of WWII veterans in Texas.

“Texas has a long tradition of

fighting for freedom and standing against tyranny,” Andres said, while noting Texas paid a heavy toll during WWII as over 750,000 Texans served during the war, and 20,000 never returned home. Over 1.5 million troops were trained in Texas before being sent to war.

The 416th Bombardment Group was a Douglas A-20 Havoc light bomb group assigned to Ninth Air Force in Western Europe. The 416th BG participated in the battles and campaigns of Normandy, Northern France, Ardennes, Rhineland, Central Europe and Air Offensive Europe.

The group flew a number of missions against airfields and coastal defense in preparation for the Normandy invasion. It struck road junctions, marshalling yards, bridges and railway overpasses. In spite of intense resistance, the group bombed railways, rolling stock and a radar station to disrupt the German retreat. It later converted to Douglas A-26 Invaders while engaged in combat and continued to support ground forces until the end of the war.

PTN, Air Force ROTC partner for distance learning instruction

By Jennifer Gonzalez

AIR EDUCATION AND TRAINING
COMMAND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Pilot Training Next helped make Air Force ROTC history while pushing the limits of technology and training during their recent partnership with Clarkson University, Jan. 24.

For the first time ever, Air Force ROTC cadets with Detachment 536 at Clarkson University in Potsdam, New York, received real-time instruction remotely from a fully qualified Air Force instructor pilot sitting in an airport in Louisiana.

“Det. 536 cadets are now

able to practice their flying skills while closely following Air Force training standards,” said Lt. Col. Wesley Nims, ROTC Det. 536 commander. “This will give them a wing up on their counterparts at other AFROTC detachments.”

This proof-of-concept event is part of an ongoing effort by PTN to identify the impact of early access to content.

“From our past PTN classes, we know there is true value in students receiving content early on,” said Lt. Col. Ryan Riley, Det. 24 commander. “What we need to know is how early on we can give this information to student pilots, or left-load content.”

The use of virtual reality for distance learning was first used by PTN in 2018 prior to their second class, which started in January 2019. Leading up to the second class, PTN offered an immersive training device-only distance-learning program to students at the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

Eight students interested in joining PTN had full access to relevant learning materials and artificial intelligence supported training.

PTN leadership selected four of the eight students to join version two and upon their arrival, they possessed a

greater working knowledge of Immersive Training Device functionality, T-6 Texan II systems knowledge and basic instruments. Two of the early access students were also the first to complete every milestone event.

Now this same technology is being tested and used at Air Force ROTC Detachment 536.

“It is exciting to watch these students, and possibly future Air Force aviators, take to the ITD’s,” said Maj Eric Reichert, Det. 24 assistant operations officer and remote instruction lead. “The students really get excited and the VR keeps them engaged and helps them grasp the concepts they will need to

become a successful pilot in the Air Force.”

Additionally, Det. 536 has acquired headsets that allow both ground training and flight training in a fully functioning VR environment. Air Force ROTC Det. 536 will conduct a second distance training session with PTN Feb. 7.

“PTN is an initiative to ‘reimagine’ the pilot training pipeline. The program explores and could potentially prototype a training environment that integrates various technologies to produce pilots in an accelerated and learning-focused manner.

Resiliency: MTI shares journey from Article 15 to stan/eval leader

By Janis El Shabazz

340TH FLYING TRAINING GROUP
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

As a child, her life was less than ideal.

Drugs and alcohol everywhere reinforced every negative thing she had come to know and believe. Sudden, recurring changes resulted in changing schools — nine in a dozen years — and left no time to make friends, if that were even possible.

Statements directed at her more often than not started with “you’ll never be,” and mostly she believed it. Somehow she broke away, enlisting in the Air Force. Just when she thought things were looking up, she received an Article 15 — and the ink was barely dry on her enlistment contract.

She was at a crossroad. She could respond to past negative assertions, as she had always done, and view this as the result of a self-fulfilling prophesy, but she decided to try something different.

She took the opportunity to reset her life, and today she’s one of very few Reserve Military Training Instructors hand-selected to work for the active duty 737th Training Group standardization and evaluation flight at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, Texas.

Master Sgt. Nickole Rhodes shares her story to offer encouragement to Airmen who might be struggling to overcome hardships and adversity — past or present.

Rhodes, who enlisted in 2005, served as a security forces member for 10 years until being accepted four years ago for a special duty assignment as a military training instructor with the 433rd Training Squadron — the only Reserve MTI unit in the Air Force. Reserve MTIs partner with active duty MTIs to produce more than 40,000



DEBBIE GILDEA

Master Sgt. Nickole Rhodes (center), 433rd Training Squadron Reserve Military Training Instructor, and Tech. Sgt. Shane Vandewark (right), 737th Training Group MTI, assess flight performance during a basic military training graduation at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland.

new air and space warriors annually.

“Every day I was able to see the transformation of citizens into warrior Airmen. It’s one of the most rewarding blessings I have received,” Rhodes said. “When I got into trouble it was because I had retained negative habits from my life prior to the Air Force. I was used to disappointment, self-imposed and external, but this time was different. My commander’s punishment didn’t include loss of rank. Rather, after a severe talking to and some extra duty, she challenged me to be better, do better. She believed in me when I didn’t believe in myself. My desire to not let her down motivated me to accept the challenge and ‘get my head into the game.’”

As a Reserve MTI, Rhodes

has managed 44 commander’s programs, and spearheaded the training of 45 evaluators for two separate work centers. Additionally, she served as an interim in-house recruiter facilitating recruitment of 59 candidates for Reserve MTI duty.

“Master Sgt. Rhodes has done and accomplished more than most senior noncommissioned officers will. Having served a complete tour as a Reserve Military Training Instructor, she has joined a very small group of Airmen,” said Rhodes’ supervisor, Senior Master Sgt. Jason Wagner, 433rd Training Squadron operations superintendent.

Rhodes said the second chance from caring leadership made all the difference.

“After learning my lesson, I

was determined to not let this setback stop me from advancing in my career.” Rhodes said. “The guidance and support offered by my leadership and fellow Airmen gave me the strength to break old habits. Being in stan/eval gave me the opportunity to ensure our unit was getting the most accurate, up-to-date information and delivering it in a way that fostered a relationship of confidence and trust between our instructors.”

As a 737th Training Group stan/eval flight member, she was responsible for ensuring the effectiveness of more than 800 permanent party personnel. Rhodes has supported more than 1,200 group-wide instructor compliance operations inspections, leading to the highest pass rate in 18

months. She holds three associate’s degrees, a professional management certification, and is pursuing a bachelor’s degree.

“Her commitment clearly originates from a selfless heart of service but has certainly come at a cost,” Wagner said. “Her family has shouldered her burden with her in terms of a permanent change of station, long hours, temporary duty assignments and her husband’s recent deployment. These are monumental challenges that test any Airman. Rhodes is not a superhuman, she struggles like anyone else. What she has displayed is a superior ability to robustly embrace challenge and change. I am sure she’ll be just as impactful in her new job for the 737th TRSS discharge processing section.”

The Air Force Reserve provided her the stability and consistency that her life lacked, and she hopes to pay it forward by imbuing the lessons she’s learned about faith, perseverance and integrity into trainees and colleagues. She reveals that serving has also given her another tangible benefit — making her two kids proud and giving them someone to look up to.

“Pursuing instructor duty is one of the best decisions I ever made. Serving in BMT has immeasurably developed me as a leader and as a mother. I let my kids know everyone falls sometime but what’s important is to get back up and keep trying. I also stress to them not to let other people’s ideas and notions hold them back from achieving greatness,” Rhodes said. “I am grateful for every opportunity the Air Force Reserve has ever provided. I wanted a special way to give back, and serving as an MTI allows me — as a leader of men and women — to help shape the culture of the Air Force.”

FITNESS TEST

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time,” Cummings said. “I worked on those few things, technique and my timing, and was able to do it the second time around. It was definitely still challenging.

“After not maxing it (the first time), I had set the goal in my head to max it the next time I was able to take it. I felt very happy to max it the second time around.”

For achieving the perfect score on the ACFT, Cummings received a certificate at his BOLC graduation.

Cummings is into being active and living a healthy lifestyle. He played soccer and ran cross country while in high school in Huntsville, Alabama, and was a member of the soccer team during his freshman year at the University of Alabama in Huntsville.

He then transferred to Auburn University, majoring in exercise science and where he was a personal trainer to several students at the college.

Cummings said his training regimen consists of going to the gym four to five times a week, focusing on weight training to develop strength and running.

Cummings started classes in the Army-Baylor University Doctoral

Program in Physical Therapy in January.

He said his desire to serve his country while pursuing a career as a physical therapist comes from growing up in a military family. Cummings’ father, Timothy, is a retired Army lieutenant colonel who served for 24 years.

“I always had respect for Soldiers and for the Army,” Cummings said. “When I found out about the Army-Baylor University Doctoral Program in Physical Therapy, it gave me the opportunity to combine physical therapy and service in the Army.”

As a physical therapist, Cummings said his experiences taking and doing well on the ACFT will help him relate to the physical needs of the servicemembers who will be his patients.

“In the future, my job will be to rehab the Soldiers and help them get back to their former level of fitness,” he said. “So being able to be familiar with this test and to have done well on this test is certainly one, going to boost my credibility, and two, help me relate and be able to actually do my job better.

“I’ve always wanted to be a physical therapist and being able to have Soldiers as people who I treat is going to be a really cool thing. I think it’s ideal.”

BASURA BASH

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clean for my kid then to come out here and help clean it up.”

Airman Basic Brandon Whittaker, 381st Training Squadron student, rolled up his sleeves and got in a kayak to help cleanup a portion of the creek that was inundated with trash and debris. He said he was happy to do his part to help the environment along with his peers from the training squadron.

“We had a great turnout here today,” Whittaker said. “We’re getting a lot done and we’re having fun while doing it. I just know I’m playing my part in keeping the environment clean. It’s just good to see a whole bunch of people here trying to help the environment, cleanup the community. That’s always a good thing.”

Ed Vogel, 802nd Civil Engineering Squadron environmental toxic program manager, said trash and debris collected in and around the creek included wood, pallets, paint cans, needles and a tire. But mostly, he said, he was collecting bags of trash gathered by volunteers.

The effects of storm water runoff are one reason the Basura Bash creek clean-up is necessary. Storm water runoff occurs when precipitation comes down faster than soils can soak it up and the rain flows over the ground. Impervious surfaces like driveways, sidewalks and streets prevent stormwater runoff from naturally soaking into the ground.

Storm water can pick up debris, chemicals, dirt and other pollutants before it flows into a storm sewer system or directly to a lake, stream, river, wetland or coastal waterway. Anything that enters a storm sewer system is discharged, untreated, into the bodies of water that are used for swimming, fishing and providing drinking water.

Otto said the Basura Bash is an event that is making a difference in helping to keep the environment clean and keeping trash from contaminating and polluting waterways.

“It makes a lot of difference because we pick up this trash,” Otto said. “If we don’t pick it up here, it keeps going on down the river into our waterways, drinking water, lakes. It affects the fish population, turtles and wildlife around the creek.”