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**JBSA Sexual Assault Hotline**  
 808-SARC (7272)  
**JBSA Domestic Abuse Hotline**  
 367-1213  
**JBSA Duty Chaplain**  
 221-9363

A PUBLICATION OF THE 502nd AIR BASE WING – JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO-FORT SAM HOUSTON



**SAMMC SIMULATION CENTER**

**PAGE 3**



**NAVY NURSE HONORED BY RED CROSS**

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**CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTING**

**PAGE 14**

## Warrior and Family Support Center celebrates 10-year anniversary



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Christopher DeHart

Lt. Gen. Perry Wiggins talks about the importance of the Warrior and Family Support Center during the open house celebrating the 10th anniversary of the WFSC Dec. 4. Wiggins is the commanding general for U.S. Army North (Fifth Army) and senior Army commander for Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston and JBSA-Camp Bullis.

By Sgt. 1st Class Christopher DeHart  
 Army North Public Affairs

The Warrior and Family Support Center at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston celebrated its 10-year anniversary with a full house of guests from the JBSA-Fort Sam Houston and San Antonio communities, as well as wounded warriors and their family members Dec. 4.

From its humble beginning in an on-post hotel in 2003, the WFSC has grown into a place where wounded warriors and their families can relax and receive essential elements of healing provided by the staff and volunteers there.

Everything from the floors to the doors and everything in between

**See WFSC, P13**

## 502nd ABW transforms organizational structure to streamline support functions

By Lori Newman  
 JBSA-Fort Sam Houston Public Affairs

The 502nd Air Base Wing held a transformation ceremony Dec. 4 to recognize its new organizational structure.

The transformation restructures the 8,000-person 502nd ABW to improve command and control, simplify operations and reduce overhead across functional support areas.



(From right) Brig. Gen. Bob LaBrutta, 502nd Air Base Wing and Joint Base San Antonio commander, receives the wing's colors from Chief Master Sgt. Alexander Perry, 502nd ABW/JBSA command chief master sergeant; and Army Col. Jim Chevallier, 502nd ABW/JBSA vice commander during the 502nd Air Base Wing transformation ceremony at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston Dec. 4.

Photo by Steve Elliott

**See 502, P4**



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# Learn to beat the blues during the holidays

By Jessica Rawlings  
U.S. Army Public Health Command

It's that time of year again. Festive music fills the air, fireplaces crackle and holiday cheer abounds. It's the most wonderful time of the year, right?

Not necessarily. Many people can find themselves dealing with the holiday blues and can be sad, lonely or even depressed.

There are many reasons why people might find themselves struggling with the holiday blues: pressure to feel merry, reminders of lost loved ones and financial hardships are just a few.

Military families can add one more reason to that list: deployment. Coping with deployments can take a toll on one's emo-

tional well-being, and this is only increased when a loved one's deployment spans the holidays.

Here are a few tips to help beat the holiday blues:

**Take it one day at a time.** Try to avoid looking at this time of year as the "holiday season." Instead, try to break it down day by day, think of it as Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, or New Year's Day. Often, it is easier to think "I can get through this day" rather than thinking "I can get through this season."

**Get in touch.** Reach out to family members by writing letters, visiting or making phone calls.

**Try to avoid retail therapy.** Fight the temp-

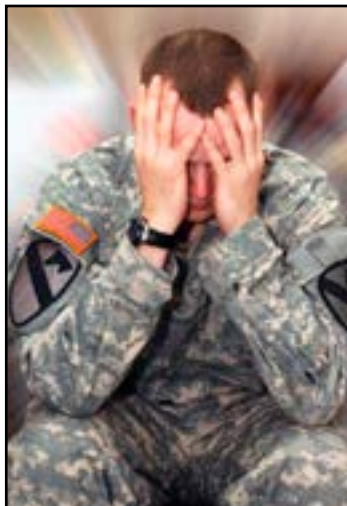


Photo illustration by Pfc. William Hatton  
Service members away from their loved ones this holiday season need to be especially alert to signs of stress so they can seek help or get others to seek help.

tation to spend extra money to feel better as this can lead to increased stress or depression when the credit card

bill arrives.

**Give yourself permission to have fun.** It is normal to be sociable during the holidays, even if your loved one is not available to attend events with you.

**Ask for help.** You don't need to be superman or superwoman; you do not need to wing it alone, depend on close family and friends to help you through this time.

**Stay busy.** Avoiding unstructured time may help to minimize difficult feelings. Try to fill your calendar with fun events and give yourself something to look forward to.

It is also important to know when "the blues" are a sign of something more. Depression is common around the holidays and recognizing the symptoms is a key step in getting the help you

might need. Symptoms of depression include lack of sleep or over sleeping, over eating or not eating at all, crying for no reason or any reason, as well as loss of interest in activities.

If you are experiencing these symptoms for an extended period of time and are concerned that you may be depressed, contact your primary care provider for help.

There are many ways to beat the holiday blues, but remember it is okay to feel what you are feeling. Forcing yourself to be happy can often make it worse.

Try to incorporate some of the tips above if you find yourself feeling down during the holidays, and remember: you are not the only person experiencing the holiday blues.

## WARRIOR SALUTE

**Sgt. 1st Class Jason Ruiz**

U.S. Army North (Fifth Army)

**Unit:** Operations, Headquarters, Headquarters Battalion, U.S. Army North (Fifth Army)

**Time in service:** 10 years

**Future goals:** Continue to become a better leader and train Soldiers

**Latest accomplishment:** Promotion to sergeant first class and named Best Warrior NCO of the Year for Army North.



Jason Ruiz (left) stands at attention Dec. 3 while Command Sgt. Major Alvin Chaplin, Headquarters, Headquarters Battalion, U.S. Army North (Fifth Army), promotes Ruiz to sergeant first class. Ruiz was also named Best Warrior NCO of the Year for Army North.

Photo by Master Sgt. Kimberly Green

## Holiday Gate Hours

The following access control points at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston will be closed during the holidays. ACP's not listed will continue normal operating hours.

<b>SAMMC I-35</b>	Closed Dec. 20 through Jan. 5
<b>Jadwin</b>	Closed Dec. 25 and 26 and Jan. 1
<b>Wilson</b>	Closed Dec. 21 through Jan. 1
<b>Army North Pedestrian</b>	Closed Dec. 21 through Jan. 1
<b>New Braunfels</b>	Closed Dec. 21 through Jan. 1
<b>SAMMC Beach</b>	Will be open 24/7



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<http://www.jbsa.af.mil>  
<http://www.samhouston.army.mil/pao>

## News Briefs

### **SAMMC gate closes Dec. 20 through Jan. 5**

Officials from the 502nd Civil Engineer Squadron have announced the San Antonio Military Medical Center entrance at Interstate 35 and George Beach Avenue will be temporarily closed due to ongoing construction to build the new access control point and visitor control center. The closure starts at 8 p.m. Dec. 20 and ends at 8 p.m. Jan. 5, 2014. Traffic will be directed to the Binz-Engleman and George Beach Avenue entrance. The new commercial vehicle gate at the I-35 access control point will continue normal operation hours for commercial vehicles. Detour and warning signage will be in place in advance of the closure period. The closure ends when the SAMMC ACP and VCC will be opened with two inbound lanes and one outbound lane, until the last outbound lane is completed by the contractor. For more information, call 221-3514 or 221-3110.

### **U.S. Army All-American Bowl Ticket Vouchers Available**

A limited number of free ticket vouchers for the U.S. Army All-American Bowl at the Alamodome Jan. 4, 2014, are available at the ticket office in the Sam Houston Community Center, building 1395 on Chaffee Road. Call 808-1378 for more information.

### **Civilian Personnel Advisory Center Early Closure**

The Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston Civilian Personnel Advisory Center will close at 11 a.m. today and re-open Monday at 7 a.m. Regular business hours are from 7 a.m. to 4:15 p.m.

### **Flu Vaccination Clinic Update**

Flu vaccinations are available at Military and Family Readiness, building 2797, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. today and Wednesday. Shots will also be given at the San Antonio Military Medical Center on the first floor by the information desk from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday. It will also be available Dec. 20. The shots are available for all active duty service members, retirees, civilians, family members, volunteers and children 6 months and above.

### **Legal Office Closure**

The 502nd Force Support Group legal office at 2271 Reynolds Road will be closed all day today. For emergencies,

See NEWS BRIEFS, P6

# San Antonio Military Medical Center's Simulation Center receives accreditation

By Maria Gallegos  
Brooke Army Medical Center  
Public Affairs

San Antonio Military Medical Center's Simulation Center recently received a rare accreditation by the Society for Simulation in Healthcare in the areas of simulation teaching/education, training and research.

The center is one of 33 centers accredited by the SSH, which oversees the quality of simulation centers around the world.

"This accreditation validates the high quality of the medical simulation training at SAMMC," said Lt. Col. Rhonda Deen, SAMMC Simulation Center medical director.

"It confirms we have an active simulation program covering multiple disciplines, our individual programs use objectives to measure outcomes for improvements, and we use standards by which we evaluate our simulation instructors," Deen added. "All of these factors equal high-quality, realistic medical training that leads to positive impacts in patient safety."

The center is also the second in the Army to receive an accreditation in research. Madigan Army Medical Center, headquarters for the Central Simulation Committee, was the first to be recog-

See BAMC, P15



Photo by Robert Shields

Maj. Heather Delaney (right), neonatologist critiques pediatric residents (from right) Air Force Capt. Manisha Patel and medical students Austin Baltensperger and Kimberly Wical after their simulated neonatal resuscitation exercise at San Antonio Military Medical Center Simulation Center.

# 917th Contingency Contracting Battalion activates

By Lt. Col. Cynthia Donna  
Army Reserve Sustainment  
Command Public Affairs

In an uncasing ceremony at the Maj. Gen. James Earl Rudder Army Reserve Center in San Antonio Nov. 17, Lt. Col. Jeffrey Hartsell and Col. John McFassel uncased the colors of the 917th Contingency Contracting Battalion to signify the unit's historic activation.

Hartsell is the battalion commander and McFassel is commander of the Acquisition Support Brigade, which comes under U.S. Army Reserve Sustainment Command.

The unit is one of only two contingency

contracting battalions in the Army Reserve, both reporting to the Army Reserve Sustainment Command.

The battalion consists of a headquarters element at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston, as well as 10 contingency contracting teams, consisting of five Soldiers each, located throughout the central and western United States. The CCTs are responsible for obtaining critical supplies and services for warfighters deployed globally.

"Brig. Gen. (Phillip) Jolly and Col. McFassel, thank you for the privilege of commanding the 917th Con-

tingency Contracting Battalion as its first commander, as well as the honor and unique experience of activating a unit," Hartsell said.

Jolly is commander of the ARSC – based in Birmingham, Ala. – and joined Brig. Gen. Norman Green, commander of the San Antonio-based 4th Expeditionary Sustainment Command, as guests at the ceremony.

"This activation is especially significant with the entire force structuring taking place in the Army Reserve. It's also the first time in my career to activate a unit," McFassel said.



Photo by Lt. Col. Cynthia Donna

(From left) Master Sgt. Karen Huntley, Col. John McFassel and Lt. Col. Jeffrey Hartsell uncasing the unit colors of the 917th Contingency Contracting Battalion during an activation ceremony Nov. 17.



## 502 from P1

“Over the past three-plus years since we reached full operating capability, the men and women of the 502nd Air Base Wing have worked diligently to provide installation support and service at the largest joint base in the Department of Defense,” said Brig. Gen. Bob LaBrutta, 502nd ABW and Joint Base San Antonio commander.

The blueprint for joint basing wasn't specific and the way ahead wasn't always clear, explained LaBrutta. “In fact, you could say that joint bases were designed to be innovative and a work

in progress.”

Brig. Gen. Theresa C. Carter, the second 502nd ABW/JBSA commander, realized the traditional wing structure was neither efficient nor effective.

The former commander said the wing was operating in triplicate and was slow to respond to the customer's needs. Positions were being eliminated and JBSA was still operating as three separate installations and resources and assets needed to support the missions could not be transferred between locations.

Carter made a “bold decision” to reorganize the wing from a tra-

ditional structure into a functional structure, LaBrutta said.

To help solve these issues a new organizational structure was formed to streamline support functions into a single organization while retaining critical customer service centers at each location.

“Her vision and efforts are the catalyst that brought us here this morning,” LaBrutta said. “As the third 502nd ABW/JBSA commander, I am honored to propel this organization forward to the next level in our journey, in our evolution.

“It is so important that we fine tune our structure and our processes within the wing so that we can provide premier installation support and service to the mission partners who depend on us so they can concentrate on executing their critical missions in



Photo by Steve Elliott

Brig. Gen. Bob LaBrutta, 502nd Air Base Wing and Joint Base San Antonio commander, salutes the flag during the playing of the national anthem during the 502nd Air Base Wing transformation ceremony at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston Dec. 4.

defense of our nation,” LaBrutta said.

The new structure realigns command and responsibly under functional support groups. It removes additional

integration steps currently necessary at the wing level, enhances responsiveness and allows implementation of consistent processes and procedures across JBSA.

During the ceremony the 502nd, 802nd and 902nd Mission Support Group squadrons inactivated to make way for the new functional structure. Following the inactivation, new groups were activated.

The 502nd Mission Support Group is redesignated as the 502nd Force Support Group at JBSA-Fort Sam Houston.

The 502nd Force Support Group includes two force support squadrons, with one focused on morale, welfare and recreation, which includes fitness, child and youth programs and community and student activity centers. The other is focused on personnel and manpower policies/procedures, military and family readiness, dining facilities and lodging.

The 802nd Mission

**See 502, P5**



Col. Christine Erlewine (left) cases the 902nd Mission Support Group colors for inactivation while Chief Master Sgt. Jeffrey Martin, 902nd MSG command chief, holds the flag in position during the 502nd Air Base Wing transformation ceremony at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston Dec. 4. The 902nd MSG, which Erlewine commanded, was redesignated as the 502nd Security Forces and Logistics Support Group at JBSA-Randolph.

## 502 from P4

Support Group was redesignated as the 502nd Installation Support Group at JBSA-Lackland.

The 502nd Installation Support Group consolidates and provides civil engineering; communications and operations support squadron functions and sustainment across JBSA. Airfield operations support will be limited to JBSA-Lackland.

The 902nd Mission Support Group was redesignated as the 502nd Security Forces and Logistics Support Group at JBSA-Randolph.

The 502nd Security Forces and Logistics Support Group now includes one logistics readiness squadron, three security forces

squadrons and a trainer development squadron.

Three contracting squadrons merge into one squadron and three comptroller squadrons also merge into one.

“Hundreds of people put in countless hours of effort in analyzing and developing this restructure and coordinating it with our mission partners, higher headquarters and air staff,” LaBrutta said.

“We are doing something fundamentally different,” LaBrutta added. “We are now organized in a functional vice traditional structure – the first that I know of in the Department of Defense.”

“I firmly believe that through this action, the 502nd Air Base Wing is formally organized the way that provides us



Photos by Steve Elliott

Brig. Gen. Bob LaBrutta, 502nd Air Base Wing and Joint Base San Antonio commander, makes a point during his comments at the 502nd Air Base Wing transformation ceremony at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston Dec. 4. “Hundreds of people put in countless hours of effort in analyzing and developing this restructure and coordinating it with our mission partners, higher headquarters and air staff,” LaBrutta said.

the best opportunity to achieve our vision ... to provide premier installation support to our more than 200 mission

partners and 80,000 professionals who come onto Joint Base San Antonio each and every day,” the general said.



## News Briefs

Continued from P3

call the command post at 221-9363, 221-9364 or 221-9365.

### Holiday in Blue

The U.S. Air Force Band of the West presents its annual Holiday in Blue concerts at 3 p.m. Sunday and 7 p.m. Tuesday at the Bob Hope Theater, 1560 Stewart St., Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland. The concerts are free and suitable for all ages, however, tickets and base access are required. Tickets are available at the JBSA-Lackland and JBSA-Randolph IIT offices and the JBSA-Fort Sam Houston MWR office. Visit <http://www.bandofthewest.af.mil> for more information.

### Thrift Shop Holiday Schedule

The Thrift Shop at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston run by the Spouses' Club of the Fort Sam Houston Area at 3100 Zinn Road is open 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Wednesday and Thursday. The monthly Saturday opening is Saturday. The store will close from Dec. 20 until Jan. 6, 2014. For more information, call 221-5794/4537 or visit <http://www.scfsh.com>.

### Lincoln Military Housing Offices Closure

The Lincoln Military Housing Offices will be closed Dec. 24 and 25 in observance of the Christmas holiday. Normal operations resume at 8 a.m. Dec. 26. Call 225-5564 for maintenance emergencies and 911 for all other emergencies.

### Army Medical Officer Programs Briefings

The Inter-Service Physician Assistant and Army Nurse Corps Commissioning program qualifications and application procedures will be briefed from 9:30-11:30 a.m. Jan. 7 in the auditorium of the Warfighter and Family Readiness Center, building 2797. For more information, visit <http://www.usarec.army.mil/armypa> or <http://www.usarec.mil/mrb/aecp>.

### Self-Help Service Unavailable at JBSA-FSH Visual Information

Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston Visual Information no longer offers self-help services. For a list of services provided, visit <http://www.jbsa.af.mil/library/multimedia.asp> or call 221-5453.

# Reserve Sailor honored with DOD-wide award

By L.A. Shively  
JBSA-Fort Sam Houston  
Public Affairs

Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Lance Tillman's service as an intelligence specialist was recently recognized by the Department of Defense with a 2013 Blacks In Government Meritorious Service Award.

He was the lone Reservist and one of only 11 awardees this year.

Tillman earned the BIG award for his work with the U.S. Strategic Command Joint Electronic Warfare Center in San Antonio.

His drill time is split between administrative duties at the Navy Operational Support Center on Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam

Houston and intelligence duties at the electronic warfare center.

Tillman is the leading petty officer pay clerk and monitors the monthly muster report that includes coordinating drill re-schedules for his unit.

He is the U.S. Strategic Command Joint Electronic Warfare Center gaining command (active duty component) reserve liaison and supervises updates to the electronic warfare database. He also posts changes to the website for his shipmate's use for monthly drills and career enhancement.

He has previously de-



Courtesy photo

Petty Officer 1st Class Lance Tillman

ployed to Naples, Italy, to support Combined Task Force 66 where he monitored and reported naval vessel activity in the Mediterranean area of operations, plotting ship transit routes and

activities in order to spot illicit merchant activity.

Tillman also assisted with coordinating vessel interdiction with the U.S. flagship in the area.

The Sailor said he sees his service as giving back to the community and the country.

"I believe that when people see your altruism, they are inclined to support you in your efforts," Tillman said, adding that his primary role model was Martin Luther King, Jr.

"As a kid, I saw the social challenges that he endured and how he chose to respond to them," Tillman said. The Sailor said he has endeavored to touch people in a positive way like the late civil rights

leader did.

Tillman also said his success is due to an ability to meet challenges "head on."

"Do not be afraid to fail because failure can be part of success," Tillman said. "You learn from taking some calculated risks in life."

The BIG Meritorious Service Award is awarded to military members and DOD civilian employees who have significantly contributed to the war on terror through outstanding support to the missions of their organizations and demonstrated support for the full integration and promotion of African-Americans within the armed services or federal civilian work force.

## BOWLING IN THE HOLIDAYS



Photos by Staff Sgt. Corey Baltos

Soldiers, civilians and family members from Headquarters, Headquarters Battalion, U.S. Army North (Fifth Army), gathered Dec. 3 at the Fort Sam Houston Bowling Center to celebrate the holidays. The event, which featured a visit from Santa Claus, pizza and bowling, was sponsored by the battalion's family readiness group.











# Navy nurse honored by Red Cross for work in combat zones



Courtesy Photo

Navy Lt. Cmdr. Lynn Redman poses with her Florence Nightingale Medal certificate after the ceremony in Washington, D. C.

By L.A. Shively  
JBSA-Fort Sam Houston Public Affairs

Lt. Cmdr. Deborah "Lynn" Redman's deployment to Afghanistan landed her in prison. Not as an inmate – but as a Navy Reserve nurse.

On her arrival in the war-ravaged country, she realized a strong desire to help Afghan women and children through outreach missions, first from Forward Operating Base Farah, near Iran, and then later from FOB Wright in the Kunar province to which she was assigned.

At first her requests were denied. But after successive appeals, Redman was allowed to work with a Special Forces team training the Afghan Army and together with a provincial reconstruction team, she embarked on missions outside the wire.

Her first mission took her to an Afghan prison in Farah and brought her into contact with 500 men, several women, and an 8-month-old little girl who had a fever of 102 degrees.

She also encountered an Afghan woman dressed in men's clothes who identified herself as half woman, half man. She was arrested for transporting drugs, but the woman told Redman she had come to the prison to "turn in" drugs she took from her family.

Redman was able to complete gynecological exams on the women and gave the sick baby antibiotics. Although she felt that first mission was quite successful, she was concerned with being unable to treat the high

blood pressure she found among nearly every Afghan she examined at the prison.

"I will never know the outcome of the sick baby," Redman lamented, but she found courage among all of her patients.

Redman particularly admired the fortitude of the woman who dressed in male clothing.

"She wanted to help others. By cutting her hair short and wearing men's clothes, she was able to go places and do things she otherwise would not be able to accomplish."

Among other missions, the Navy nurse was able to instruct a team of Afghan soldiers on triage in the field, allowing an IV to be started on her by one of the soldiers.

A partnership between the Kunar PRT and the Iowa National Guard's 734th Agribusiness Development Team gave her the opportunity to educate



Navy Lt. Cmdr. Lynn Redman examines one of the village children in a remote area of Afghanistan.

Photo by Army Capt. Peter Shinn



Photo by Army Capt. Peter Shinn

Navy Lt. Cmdr. Lynn Redman focused on helping women and children during her deployment to Afghanistan.



Photo by Army Capt. Peter Shinn

One of the villages in Afghanistan Redman visited to help the women and children who live there.



Photo by Army Capt. Peter Shinn

Although Navy nurse Lt. Cmdr. Lynn Redman does not speak the same language as the people she visited and treated during her deployment to Afghanistan, she still manages to share a light-hearted moment with several Afghan women.



Photo by Army Capt. Peter Shinn

Redman and her team navigate a rugged terrain and walk and climb up steep mountains to arrive at their destinations in Afghanistan.



Afghan Dr. Ismat Shinwary (center), Asadabad Hospital general surgeon, explains the types of injuries that come through the hospital's operating theater to U.S. Navy Lt. Cmdr. Lynn Redman, Kunar Provincial Reconstruction Team nurse practitioner. During the hospital visit, the PRT began preliminary discussions for transporting highly complicated surgery cases to the forward surgical team located at Forward Operating Base Wright in order for Afghan surgeons to learn the latest techniques and procedures while assisting American doctors.

Photo by U.S. Air Force 1st Lt. Nicholas Mercurio

Afghan health professionals on effective rabies control, during a conference at the Asadabad Hospital, where she visited with ill and injured Afghan patients.

A previous visit to the Asadabad Hospital with her team resulted in a re-engagement of communications between American and Afghan surgeons.

Her work inside the wire at FOB Wright was not without challenges.

A group of 17 American service members and local nationals arrived at the base aid station with injuries sustained during a firefight with Taliban insurgents. At one point when the doctors took the most serious patient into surgery, she triaged a patient who had a bullet near an aorta, while looking after the rest of the 15 patients.

"That was scary," Redman said. "I was responsible for caring for so many people with serious injuries."

Afghanistan was only one of several deployments. As an active duty Air Force nurse in Balad, Iraq, Redman held the hand of a 22-year-old Army sergeant and stroked his hair, comforting him as he died from untreatable wounds received from a roadside bomb while he was on patrol.

Her humanitarian efforts include traveling to Guyana, South America, where she cared for more than 2,000 people. Redman was also stationed in West Germany while working as a soldier coordinator for the American Red Cross in the late 1980s.

Recently, the nursing community honored Redman for her work. The Red Cross International Committee presented Redman with the Florence Nightingale Medal during a ceremony in Washington, D.C. The medal is the highest award a nurse may receive.

Redman is the first Navy nurse to receive the Florence Nightingale Medal and one of only five Americans named among 32 recipients from 16 countries selected by the International Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva, Switzerland this year.

Only 1,408 nurses have received the

medal since its inception in 1912. The award recognizes nurses who have distinguished themselves through exceptional courage and devotion to victims of armed conflict or natural disasters during war or peacetime, or for exceptional nursing service in the areas of public health or nursing education.

Although the Florence Nightingale Medal marks a milestone in Redman's career, she says her journey was rocky and fraught with obstacles.

"As a single mom with three kids, I was at a crossroads early in life. I thought about teaching while I was working as a seamstress on food stamps. I knew poverty," Redman said. She said she chose nursing because she saw a lot of job opportunities in the want ads.

Redman applied and was accepted into a nursing program but did not have the tuition. Her counselor suggested loans. Through perseverance, Redman completed her education and then fulfilled a dream – she fell in love with nursing. She said she adores her patients and the relationships she has with them.

Redman still encounters difficulties in her life, but sees each as a chance for growth. She did not complete anesthesia training, for instance, but that gave her the chance to deploy to Afghanistan.

"Failure is an opportunity," Redman emphasized. "If you don't like your life, then change it. Only in America can an unwed mom find success. It's a choice."

Writing children's books that educate them about illness and disease is Redman's next dream.

"Children are amazing. They will be sick and vomit one minute and then be ready to play the next. They don't know how to be victims yet."

Redman drills with the Navy Reserve at the Navy Operational Support Center on Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston. She is employed as a civilian nurse in cardiology at the San Antonio Military Medical Center.





## WFSC from P1

was donated in one form or another by the people and organizations of South Central Texas and beyond.

WFSC director Judith Markelz manages the facility with just nine employees and it is operated through donations and the dedicated time of numerous volunteers.

While there is a diverse number of individuals and entities who have given much to create and run the WFSC over the past 10 years, the common denominator is the love and support for service members who have been injured or wounded and their families who move through every step of their recovery with them as they heal.

“The work we do here involves working directly with wounded warriors and their family members who are in need of reassurance, who are in need of love, who are in need of a place to go where they can feel like they’ve come home,” Markelz said.

“It’s ordinary people accomplishing extraordinary things,” she added. “Each of us must do what we can and this is what we must do. Everything that this community has brought and built is for our wounded warriors and their families.”

Markelz is also known as “Mom” to the extended family at the WFSC and



Judith Markelz, director of the Warrior and Family Support Center, expresses her thanks to the wounded warriors, families and guests who attended the open house Dec. 4 celebrating the 10th anniversary of the WFSC.

it’s a moniker she said she wears with absolute pride.

It is not just a word to her, but something she takes to heart and is evident in how she protects those she cares for as well as how others view her. It is plain to see by any who visit, both in Markelz, her staff members and volunteers. No one who works there does it because they have to – they are there for the Soldiers, Airmen, Sailors, Marines and Coast Guardsmen who come to the facility to heal mind, body and spirit.

“Everybody is here because they have a different injury and/or illness,” said Staff Sgt. Christopher Armstead, an Army medic who came to the WFSC six months ago

with his wife, Gretchen, and 5-year old daughter, Imij, after he was diagnosed with cancer. “But here, it’s common ground.”

Armstead just reached 20 years of active service this year. It was also when he got the phone call from his doctor telling him he had cancer. He had just completed a physical and it had turned his world upside down.

“It might as well have been an (improvised explosive device),” Armstead said of the news.

But despite this, he and his family made the best of it and he has since had surgery in August to remove what cancer they had found and has been recovering and waiting, using the resources of-

fered by the WFSC and the support and comfort of the staff to get through this difficult time.

Gretchen said she felt almost overwhelmed knowing so many people had come together to help them and others there.

“It’s a huge facility,” she said. “We have luncheons here all the time. They have craft classes that anyone can come to. The garden here is beautiful ... there is a butterfly garden and a kid’s park. It’s wonderful.”

Armstead summed up what the WFSC meant to him and his loved ones, as well as what this day meant.

“Since we arrived, we’ve been considered family here,” he said. “This is a getaway. The



Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Christopher DeHart

Staff Sgt. Christopher Armstead walks toward Freedom Park with his wife, Gretchen, and daughter Imij, 5, for an after-celebration stroll Dec. 4 following the Warrior and Family Support Center 10th Anniversary open house. Armstead, one of the more recent additions to the WFSC family, has been here with his family for six months following a cancer diagnosis in his 20th year of active service as an Army medic. (Freedom Park is a no-hat zone.)

moment you walk through these doors, it causes your worries to melt away. I’m very thankful to have my family here with me and to have a place like this to be at.”

During his speech to the guests who attended the open house event, Lt. Gen. Perry Wiggins made it clear how important it was to have a place like the WFSC that is so vital to our wounded warriors and their loved ones.

“When you think about the genesis of this facility, from its very inception, it is out of the genuine concern and love of individuals who reached out

and wanted to do for our soldiers something special,” he said. “It is easy to serve a grateful nation, but it is a blessing to be serving here in San Antonio – Military City USA – where they take that to a whole new level.”

Wiggins is the commanding general for U.S. Army North (Fifth Army) and senior Army commander for JBSA-Fort Sam Houston and JBSA-Camp Bullis.

“San Antonio has a lot to offer and the kindness is always there, but this place is absolutely indispensable,” Armstead said.



# JBSA-FORT SAM HOUSTON CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTING BRIGHTENS UP HOLIDAY SEASON

Lt. Gen. Perry Wiggins (right), along with several students from Fort Sam Houston Elementary School, officially opened the holiday season by lighting the holiday tree Dec. 4 at the Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston main flagpole. "This is a time where families get together and celebrate," said Wiggins, commanding general for U.S. Army North (Fifth Army) and senior Army commander for JBSA-Fort Sam Houston and JBSA-Camp Bullis. "We celebrate the reason for the season, which is really an opportunity for us to be together and rekindle friendships and be together as family. On behalf of the school and these great kids, I want to thank them for all that they do for our children here at JBSA-Fort Sam Houston." Music for the ceremony was provided by the 323rd Army Band "Fort Sam's Own."

**Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Christopher DeHart**



Children from throughout Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston were able to get photos with Santa's helpers, both elves and horses.

**Photo by Jermaine Coleman**



**Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Christopher DeHart**

Children play in the snow Dec. 4 following the annual Christmas tree lighting ceremony at the Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston main flagpole. In addition to having snow brought in to enjoy, Santa Claus also visited with the children and listened to Christmas wishes.

## DOD, TSA partner to provide military expedited precheck at 100 airports

Members of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force and Coast Guard, as well as reservists and National Guard members are eligible for expedited Transportation Security Administration screening beginning Dec. 20.

San Antonio International Airport is among the airports participating in the program, according to the TSA website at <http://www.tsa.gov/tsa-precheck/airlines-airports>.

As part of the ongoing effort to move away from a one-size-fits-all security approach and provide more of the traveling public the ability to participate in expedited screening, the TSA and the Department of Defense partnered to expand TSA Precheck expedited screening benefits to all service members. Currently, members



of the armed forces can utilize TSA Precheck lanes at 10 domestic airports by presenting their Common Access Card. The partnership expands the program to the military at all 100 airports offering TSA Precheck, allowing service members to keep their footwear on as well as light outerwear, belts, keep their laptop in its case and their 3-1-1 compliant liquids/gels bag in a carry on in select screening lanes.

"Expanding TSA Precheck screening benefits is great news for our service members and is

a tangible sign of this nation's gratitude for the men and women who serve this nation bravely each and every day," said Mary Snively-Dixon, the director of the Defense Manpower Data Center. "We will continue to work with the Transportation Security Administration to help expand this program further."

The new process being established under this agreement allows all active duty, Coast Guard, Reserve and National Guard service members to use their DOD identification number when making reservations. That ID number will be used as their known traveler number.

When arriving at the airport, service members will then be permitted access to TSA Precheck

lanes for official or leisure travel on participating airlines.

"TSA joins with the American people in showing its appreciation for the service and sacrifices of our men and women in the armed forces," said TSA deputy administrator John W. Halinski, a 25-year Marine Corps veteran. "Providing expedited screening while on travel is the least we can do for these courageous men and women."

More than 18 million passengers have experienced TSA Precheck since it launched in October 2011. TSA has recently expanded this expedited screening program to 60 new airports in addition to the existing 40, bringing the total number of airports with TSA Precheck to 100.

TSA has long recognized our men and women in uniform as nearly a quarter of TSA's workforce is a veteran or currently serves as an active duty service member in the armed forces.

In addition to expanding TSA Precheck to service members, TSA offers the American public about the Wounded Warrior Screening program.

According to TSA officials, this program makes the overall experience for wounded service members as simple as possible. This includes personalized service and expedited screening to move through security checkpoints without having to remove footwear, light outerwear, jackets or head wear. Wounded warriors or their care coordinators can contact TSA Cares toll free

at (855) 787-2227 with details of the itinerary once flight arrangements are made with the airline.

TSA will always incorporate random and unpredictable security measures throughout the airport, TSA officials said. No individual will be guaranteed expedited screening. Travelers can check the TSA Precheck Participating Airports page (<http://www.tsa.gov/tsa-precheck/airlines-airports>) for information on locations and hours of active TSA Precheck lanes.

Further information on TSA Precheck for military members can be found at <http://www.TSA.gov> and <http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil>.

*(Information provided by American Forces Press Service)*

# Hispanic Heritage Month founder celebrates contributions

By Neal Snyder  
U.S. Army Installation  
Management Command  
Public Affairs

“The more you understand Hispanic heritage, the more you begin to understand what America is all about,” Gil Coronado, a veteran and civil servant who campaigned for the establishment of Hispanic Heritage Month, told a crowd of military members and civilians at the Sam Houston Community Center Dec. 4.

Coronado, a San Antonio native, visited Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston as guest of honor at a celebration of America’s Hispanic heritage hosted by the U.S. Army Installation

Management Command headquarters. Originally scheduled for Hispanic Heritage Month, which was Sept. 15 through Oct. 15, the official Fort Sam Houston event was postponed due to the government shutdown and furloughs.

Though observances of National Hispanic Heritage Week began in 1968, by the 1980s, Coronado, then an Air Force colonel, saw a need for an expansion. Other observances crowded into the time allotted.

It wasn’t a matter of wanting more fiestas, he said, “It was a matter of educating [all] Americans on the contributions of Hispanics.”

Hispanic family values – honor, duty, integrity

among them – have served the nation well, according to Coronado.

“Hispanic Americans have been at the forefront of every battle America has fought,” he said.

Three years of working with congressmen, staff and advocacy groups culminated in 1988, when President Ronald Reagan signed legislation declaring National Hispanic Heritage Month.

Coronado went on to be deputy assistant secretary of Veterans Affairs and later director of the Selective Service System.

His story, he said,



Photo by Neal Snyder

Former Selective Service director and veteran, Gil Coronado, and his wife, Helen, honor the flag as the U.S. Army Installation Management Command headquarters hosts a celebration of America’s Hispanic heritage for Fort Sam Houston Dec. 4 at the installation community center.

shows how one person working hard can make a difference.

“If you want to make a change, you need to be prepared.”

## BAMC from P3

nized in 2009.

The research studies at SAMMC include “educating healthcare providers to care for burn patients using high fidelity human patient simulation,” “external validation of a virtual reality transurethral resection of the prostate simulator,” “assessment of users to control simulated junctional hemorrhage with the combat ready clamp,” and “trauma resuscitation evaluation times and correlating human patient simulation training differences.”

The center served more than 8,000 people and conducted more than 40,000 simulation

hours last year.

“As one of the busiest of the 10 facilities that are supported by the Army Central Simulation Committee, we would not be able to achieve this accomplishment without the efforts and support of two groups,” Deen said.

“The first are the dedicated simulation champions from different departments who consistently advocate the benefits of Medical Simulation Training. The second are the SAMMC simulation center staff who worked tirelessly to increase productivity during challenging times and made this goal a reality. These people make my job easy.”

## Did you know?

One of the best things about ICE is that people can let service providers know when they do a great job, not just for poor service. It takes 5 minutes or less to submit a comment at <http://ice.disa.mil>.







### Youth Skate Night

Middle School and High School age children can enjoy music, fun and roller skating 6-8 p.m. today at the Middle School Teen Center, building 2515. Call 221-5002 or 221-4058.

### Child Safety Seat Clinic

The JBSA-Fort Sam Houston Fire Department will inspect children's safety seats 1-3 p.m. Dec. 19 for recalls, functionality and proper installation. Registration is required. Children must be present for proper weight and height measurements. Call 221-0349 or 221-2418.

### Lock-In for High School Youth

Dec. 20, 9 p.m. to 7 a.m., JBSA-Fort Sam Houston Youth Center, building 1630. The event is for children in grades 9-12. Cost is \$7. Call 221-5002 or 221-4058.

### Youth Midnight Basketball

Dec. 21, 7 p.m. to midnight, JBSA-Fort Sam Houston Youth Center, building 1630. Families are invited to see what the Youth Services Program has to offer. This is a free event open to all DOD ID card holders. Call 221-3502.

### Harlequin Dinner Theatre presents "Step into Christmas"

Show runs Thursday, Friday and Saturday through Dec. 21. For more information, call 222-9694.

### Holiday Junior Golf Classes

Two junior golf classes are scheduled to meet for five sessions starting Dec. 26-28 and Dec. 30-31. Ages 8 through 11 will meet from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and ages 12 through 15 will meet from 1-2:30 p.m. The fee is \$40 per player and includes a rule booklet, golf balls and instructions by a PGA teaching professional. For more information, call 244-3415.

### EFMP Family Movie Time

Dec. 30, 1-3 p.m., Military and Family Readiness, building 2797. The featured movie is "Turbo." After the movie, there will be an open group discussion about self-esteem. Popcorn and drinks will be provided. Bring your own chairs, lawn-chairs, blankets, pillows, beanbags or whatever makes you comfortable. Call 221-0946.

### New Year's Day Run

There will be two events, a 4-mile race starting at 10 a.m. and a 1.4-mile walk starting at 10:10 a.m. Jan. 1 at the Pershing Sports Complex by the RV Park on JBSA-Fort Sam Houston. These events are free and open to all Department of Defense ID card holders. Call 221-3593 or 221-4887.

### Youth Basketball Registration

Child and Youth basketball registration is ongoing through Jan. 2. Child and Youth must have a current physical that meets the complete season, January through March. First game begins the second week of January. Cost is \$45 for 3-4 year olds and \$65 for 5 years and up. Call Parent Central at 221-4871 for information.

### New Squadron Commanders and First Sergeants

JBSA Family Advocacy Program is required to provide new squadron commanders and first sergeants a desk side briefing within 90 days of their arrival or assumption of command, even if temporary or as an additional duty. The briefing includes information on FAP services/classes, in an effort to assist them in promoting mission and family readiness. Call Family Advocacy at 292-5967 to set up an appointment or for more information.

### Computer Lab

The computer lab is available 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday to Friday at Military and Family Readiness, building 2797. Call 221-2705 or 221-2418.

### How We Roll

Monday through Friday, 9-11 a.m. at the Fitness Center on the Medical Education and Training Campus, the "How We Roll" program provides parents and strollers use of the indoor track. Mondays from 9-10 a.m., a fitness trainer

is available for assistance and instruction. Call 808-5709.

### Fitness on Request Kiosk

The Fitness Center on the Medical Education and Training Campus hosts an innovative group fitness system including free virtual classes ranging from 20 to 60 minutes. Call 808-5709.

### Belly Dancing Class

Learn the art of belly dancing 6 p.m. Wednesdays at the Jimmy Brought Fitness Center. The class is free and open to all DOD ID cardholders. Call 221-1234.

### World Climb Tower Challenge

Sign up at the Jimmy Brought Fitness Center for the World Climb Tower Challenge. Call 221-1234.

### JBSA-Fort Sam Houston Ticket Office

The ticket office located in the Sam Houston Community Center, building 1395, Chaffee Road, is open 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Friday. The following tickets are on sale now: the Nutcracker Ballet by Mejia Ballet Company Dec. 20-21 at the Lila Cockrell, the Moscow Ballet at the Majestic Dec. 23, and Disney Live presents Three Classic Fairytales at the Lila Cockrell Jan 4. Call 808-1378.

### Sportsman Range

The Joint Base San Antonio-Camp Bullis range is open 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. DOD card holders may shoot their

personal pistols, rifles and shot-guns. Firearms must be registered at JBSA-Camp Bullis. The range may close unexpectedly because of weather or troop use. Range users should call 295-7577 before coming out for target practice.

### Hunting on JBSA-Camp Bullis

Now through Jan. 5, Department of Defense cardholders can bow hunt big game and turkey at Joint Base San Antonio Camp Bullis. Call 295-7577.

### SKIESUnlimited Classes

SKIESUnlimited classes for children ages 18 months to 18 years include Tae Kwon Do, private piano lessons, creative dance and ballet/tap. Call 221-3381 for dates and times.

### Equipment Rentals

The Outdoor Equipment Center has all the items needed for a backyard party, unit organizational day or weekend getaway. Rental items include canoes, boats, campers, camping equipment, outdoor games, barbecue pits and more. Call 221-5225.

### Horseback Riding Lessons

The Equestrian Center offers both private and group lessons for Western and English style riding. Therapeutic riding lessons are also available and taught by certified instructors. Horses, saddles and tack for lessons will be provided if needed. Patrons must be at least 7 years old. Call 224-7207.

## COMBINED FEDERAL CAMPAIGN POINTS OF CONTACT



The 2013 Combined Federal Campaign has been extended and now runs through Jan. 15, 2014. The points of contact for Joint Base San Antonio are:

**502nd Air Base Wing:**  
221-4321  
Alternate: 671-6705

**502nd Force Support Group:**  
221-1844  
Alternate:  
221-2207

**502nd Installation Support Group:**  
671-2528  
Alternate: 671-5511

**502nd Security Forces and Logistics Support Group:**  
652-3797  
Alternate: 652-6915  
Alternate: 652-3088

### Theater Arts Program

Children, ages 4 and up, can take the stage after a long day at school in the Theater Arts Program at School Age Services, building 1705. The cost is \$80 for a month of biweekly classes. Classes are 4-5 p.m. for ages 4-6; 5-6 p.m. for ages 7-10; and 6-7 p.m. for ages 11 and up. Call 221-3381.

# Tuition assistance changes to take effect in January 2014

By David Vergun  
Army News Service

Beginning Jan. 1, 2014, there will be a cap on the number of semester hours that can be taken using tuition assistance, and tighter TA eligibility rules.

Soldiers will be able to use TA one year after graduating from initial entry training, known as IET, said Brig. Gen. David. K. MacEwen, adjutant general of the Army,

Human Resources Command, Fort Knox, Ky.

Also, Soldiers can take up to 16 semester hours per fiscal year. TA can be used for a post-baccalaureate degree after completing 10 years of military service.

If a Soldier earned a BA degree without using TA, then they do not need to wait 10 years to use TA for a post-baccalaureate degree.

This policy affects all Soldiers in the active and

Reserve components.

Based on current participation rates, Dr. Pamela L. Raymer, director, Army Continuing Education System, forecasted the number of Soldiers impacted as follows: Those who would have used TA with less than one year's service after IET: 4,030 active, 3,017 Army National Guard and 1,216 Army Reserve.

Soldiers who would normally have taken more than 16 semester

hours per year: 20,271 active, 6,206 Guard and 12,007 Reserve. Soldiers with less than 10 years' service pursuing post-baccalaureate degrees: 1,315 active, 220 Guard and 367 Reserve.

Other TA policies from 2013 will remain in effect next year, she said, including allowing Soldiers to use up to \$250 per semester hour.

The cap of 130 semester hours for bacca-

laureate degree completion and 39 semester hours for a master's degree remains in effect.

This coursework must be from the Soldier's approved degree plan in GoArmyEd, a plan Soldiers develop with their education counselor and their home school, she said.

Also remaining in effect, Raymer said, is that TA cannot be used for a second, equivalent degree. For instance, if a

Soldier has a master's degree, he or she can't use TA for a second master's degree.

Soldiers still cannot use TA for their "first professional degree." Such degrees include Ph.D, MD and juris doctor. The Department of Education categorizes these degrees as "first-professional" degrees.

The Army has fully-funded education pro-

# OUTSIDE THE GATE

## Women's Survivor Group

A women's survivor group has been created for women who have experienced sexual trauma. The goal is to increase survivors' understanding to their response to victimization and the impact on their lives. The group offers a safe, open atmosphere for discussion and support to facilitate understanding of sexual victimization and the healing process. The group meets from 6:30-8 p.m. Mondays at the Rape Crisis Center group room at 7500 U.S. Highway 90

West, Building 2, Suite 201. Call 521-7273 for more information.

## Teen Survivors Group

A teen survivors' group has been created for teens who have been victims of sexual trauma. The group's goal is to help teens learn and talk about sexual abuse in a safe environment and help survivors connect to others who have been in similar situations. Females from 13 to 17 years of age who are currently attending individual psychotherapy are encouraged to attend. A therapist's recommendation is required. The group meets from 6-7:30 p.m. Wednesday at the Rape Crisis Center group room at 7500 U.S. Highway 90 West, Building 2, Suite 201. Call 521-7273 for more information.

## Van Autreve Sergeants Major Association

The SMA Leon L. Van Autreve Sergeants Major Association meets at 5 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month at the Longhorn Café, 1003 Rittiman Road. All active duty, Reserve, National Guard and retired sergeants major are invited and encouraged to attend. Call 539-1178.

## Foster a Puppy

The Department of Defense dog breeding program needs families to foster puppies for three months. Potential foster families need time and patience to raise a puppy age 12 weeks to six months, a stimulating and safe home environment and a desire to help raise a military working dog. Call 671-3686.



**FOR SALE:** Set of two German beer glasses (0.5 liter) \$10. Ladies Stäpf Tyrolian Alps sweater, burgandy color with silver buttons. Size small. \$40. Ladies Austrian Tyrol jacket, green wool, size small, \$60. Call 495-2296.

To submit a Fort Freebie, e-mail [fsnewsleader@gmail.com](mailto:fsnewsleader@gmail.com). Freebies run for one week unless the submitter calls to renew. Limit of five items per entry. For more information, call 221-2030.

# HOLIDAY CHAPEL SERVICES



## CATHOLIC SERVICES

### Main Post (Gift) Chapel

Building 2200, 1605 Wilson Way  
Saturday, Dec. 21 and 28 – 5:30 p.m.  
Sunday and Dec. 22 – 9:30 a.m., Advent Worship  
Dec. 24 – 10 p.m., Mass  
Dec. 25 – 9:30 a.m., Mass  
Dec. 31 – 5:30 p.m., Mass  
Jan. 1 – 9:30 a.m., Holy Mass

### Army Medical Department Regimental Chapel

Building 1398, 3545 Garden Ave.  
Sunday – 8 a.m., Mass

### Dodd Field Chapel

Building 1721, 5844 Dodd Blvd.  
Dec. 24 – 5 p.m., Children's Mass  
Sunday, Dec. 22 and 29 – 13:30 p.m., Mass

## PROTESTANT SERVICES

### Main Post (Gift) Chapel

Building 2200, 1605 Wilson Way  
Sunday and Dec. 22 – 8 and 11 a.m., Advent Worship  
Dec. 22 – 8 and 11 a.m., Christmas Cantata  
Dec. 24 – 7 p.m., Christmas Eve Candlelight Service  
**Army Medical Department Regimental Chapel**  
Building 1398, 3545 Garden Ave.  
Sunday, Dec. 22 and 29, 11:01 a.m., Regular Worship  
*(Note: The 9:20 a.m. service will conduct worship on Sunday. There will be no 9:20 a.m. services Dec. 22 and 29.)*

### Dodd Field Chapel

Building 1721, 5844 Dodd Blvd.  
Dec. 24 – 7 p.m., Samoan Christmas Eve Service  
Dec. 31 – 7 p.m., Samoan New Year's Eve Service  
Dec. 31 – 10 p.m., Gospel Watch Night Service

## TUITION from P16

grams that support these degree programs.

Soldiers who have been flagged for adverse action or failure of the Army physical fitness test or weight standards will not be able to use TA, she continued.

Soldiers may also continue using TA for non-degree language courses published on the Defense Department's Strategic Language List as "immediate investment" or "emerging" languages. TA cannot be used for "enduring languages." To see this list of languages, see a unit education advisor.

Finally, TA is authorized for one post-secondary certificate or diploma such as welding or computer certification.

TA can continue to be used for courses leading to initial teacher certification programs.

Soldiers who are precluded from using TA or limited by the number of semester hours they're eligible to take can, nonetheless, use their GI Bill education benefits.

The intent is to provide TA to Soldiers "who are in good standing, meet Army requirements and have no adverse flags," such as not meeting weight standards, MacEwen said. This portion of the policy has already been implemented.

The Army did a "very comprehensive review of the program," he added. "We found it had gotten a little off track from its original intent, which was to provide for Soldiers a part-time, off-duty way to continue their education. So we capped it."

The second part of it was that "we wanted young Soldiers to understand the Army and ensure they're in good standing" before starting TA, so the one-year wait after IET will be implemented Jan. 1.

The third part was that TA is designed "to help with lifelong learning.

If TA paid for a four-year degree and a Soldier wants a post-baccalaureate degree, we want them to wait until they reach the 10-year mark,"

which MacEwen defined as the point they become "careerists."

In this way, TA could be used as a retention tool.

Soldiers achieved about a 90 percent completion rate of about 413,000 courses in fiscal year 2013 using tuition assistance, Raymer said.

Of the 10 percent who failed to complete their courses, one percent were due to military duties and the remainder were caused by failures or withdrawals.

In fiscal year 2013, active duty Soldiers took an average of 2.71 courses, Guard Soldiers took an average of 3.58 courses, and Reserve Soldiers took an average of 3.40 courses.

The average cost per course in fiscal year 2013 was \$618 for the active force, \$571 for the National Guard and \$572 for the Army Reserve.

Raymer also noted that in fiscal year 2013, TA funded the completion of 8,525 degrees for active Soldiers, 1,359 for Guard Soldiers and 1,469 for Reserve Soldiers.

MacEwen lauded the education advisers who help Soldiers formulate their degree plans because this enables them to achieve "good completion rates."

Raymer said some of the changes to TA for next year came about due to the "fiscally-constrained environment" with a focus on providing funding to meet the intent of a voluntary off-duty education program.

Nevertheless, the changes reflect the Army's effort to "maximize education support to Soldiers" with funding that's available.

MacEwen concluded that TA is one of a number of educational opportunities the Army affords with the intent of "lifelong learning, helping Soldiers transition to civilian life, and ultimately, helping them become better Soldiers. The tweaks we did to the program will serve Soldiers well."

For more information, call the Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston Education Center at 221-1738.

### Weekly Weather Watch

	Dec 13	Dec 14	Dec 15	Dec 16	Dec 17	Dec 18
San Antonio Texas	58° Showers	63° Partly Cloudy	60° Partly Cloudy	63° Sunny	68° Sunny	64° Partly Cloudy
Kabul Afghanistan	60° Mostly Sunny	65° Mostly Sunny	63° Mostly Sunny	61° Partly Cloudy	57° Mostly Sunny	54° Sunny

(Source: The Weather Channel at [www.weather.com](http://www.weather.com))

## WATER CONSERVATION TIPS

1. Winterize outdoor spigots when temperatures dip below freezing to prevent pipes from bursting or freezing up.
2. Insulate hot water pipes so you don't have to run as much water in order to get hot water to the faucet.
3. When possible, use the trash instead of flushing it to save gallons of water each time.
4. Make suggestions to your employer on how to save water – and dollars – at work.
5. Support projects that use reclaimed wastewater for irrigation and other uses.

(Compiled by 502<sup>nd</sup> Civil Engineer Squadron)