

JBSA

LEGACY

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JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO

JANUARY 10, 2020



PHOTO BY JOSE E. RODRIGUEZ

A Soldier checks a casualty's Mission Oriented Protective Posture, or MOPP, mask while training during a simulated Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear, or CBRN, attack at Joint Base San Antonio-Camp Bullis.

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Defense bill to fund pay raise for military, civilian personnel

By C. Todd Lopez
DEFENSE.GOV

The \$738 billion defense spending bill signed into law by President Donald J. Trump funds the largest pay increases in a decade.

According to Department of Defense officials, service members and families will benefit from a \$19.5 billion increase of the DOD's 2019 funding, including a 3.1 percent pay raise for military and civilian personnel and paid parental leave for civilians.

"This is a well-deserved pay raise for the men and women of the military, who continue to make great sacrifices for the nation as they stand watch all over the world to protect America," said Defense Secretary Dr. Mark T. Esper. "It will also ensure that we continue to recruit our country's best talent into the armed forces."

The fiscal year 2020 budget



MARY DAVIS

Congress provided \$110 million across the services for childcare programs in the fiscal year 2020 budget. Pictured is an Army Child Development Center in Baumholder, Germany.

gives the DOD a \$622.6 billion base budget, \$70.6 billion for overseas contingency operations and \$1.8 billion in emergency funding. The overall defense budget also includes funding in separate authorizations for military construction and \$8.1 billion in emergency defense funds.

Esper said the new bill also supports taking care of military families. Included in the law are programs to offset the costs of professional licenses for military spouses; reforms to privatized base housing; and provisions to increase childcare capacity on military installations —

including \$110 million across the services for child care programs.

"These are all very important to the readiness of the force and follow through on our commitment to take care of our service members and their families," the secretary said.

Disabled veterans, certain caregivers can shop in-store at JBSA Exchanges starting Jan. 1

From Army & Air Force Exchange Service Public Affairs

Starting Jan. 1, the Exchange welcomed home disabled veterans, Purple Heart recipients and certain caregivers with in-store shopping privileges.

Army & Air Force Exchange Service shopping privileges expand to all Veterans with service-connected disabilities, veterans who are Purple Heart recipients, veterans who are former prisoners of war and primary family caregivers for veterans who are enrolled in the Department of Veterans Affairs Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers. In all, 4.1 million Americans are eligible for the new benefit.

This new privilege was specified in the Purple Heart and Disabled Veterans Equal

Access Act of 2018, included in the John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal 2019. The Department of Defense officially announced the expansion Nov. 13.

"It is an honor to welcome our nation's heroes back to their Exchange," said Exchange Director and CEO Tom Shull, a Vietnam-era Army veteran. "They fought for us. They sacrificed for us. They deserve this."

The new patron group also has access to commissaries and morale, welfare and recreation retail facilities located at U.S. military installations. The Department of Defense advised it is still working through details of the expansion with the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Homeland Security. More information regarding installation access and the authentication process will be available

soon.

Before the expansion, only veterans with 100% service-connected disabilities could shop in person. Active-duty service members, their dependents and military retirees also have in-store and online privileges.

All honorably discharged veterans can shop the military exchanges online now, through a benefit that was secured in 2017. Since then, veterans have saved more than \$6 million in sales tax. Veterans can determine their eligibility to shop online at ShopMyExchange.com/vets.

Veterans who need additional information about the in-store patronage expansion can visit the Veterans section on the Exchange's Community Hub at <https://publicaffairs-sme.com/Community/veterans>.

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New entrance test to increase Soldier quality, reduce attrition

By Thomas Brading

ARMY NEWS SERVICE

A new military entrance exam is now being given to Army recruits to predict performance, behaviors, attitude, and attrition of potential Soldiers. The pilot program is designed to see how the Army can get best-fit recruits, even in jobs that require slightly higher standardized test scores than the applicant achieved.

The three-year pilot study authorized by the Department of Defense is for a talent management tool known as the Tailored Adaptive Personality Assessment System, or TAPAS.

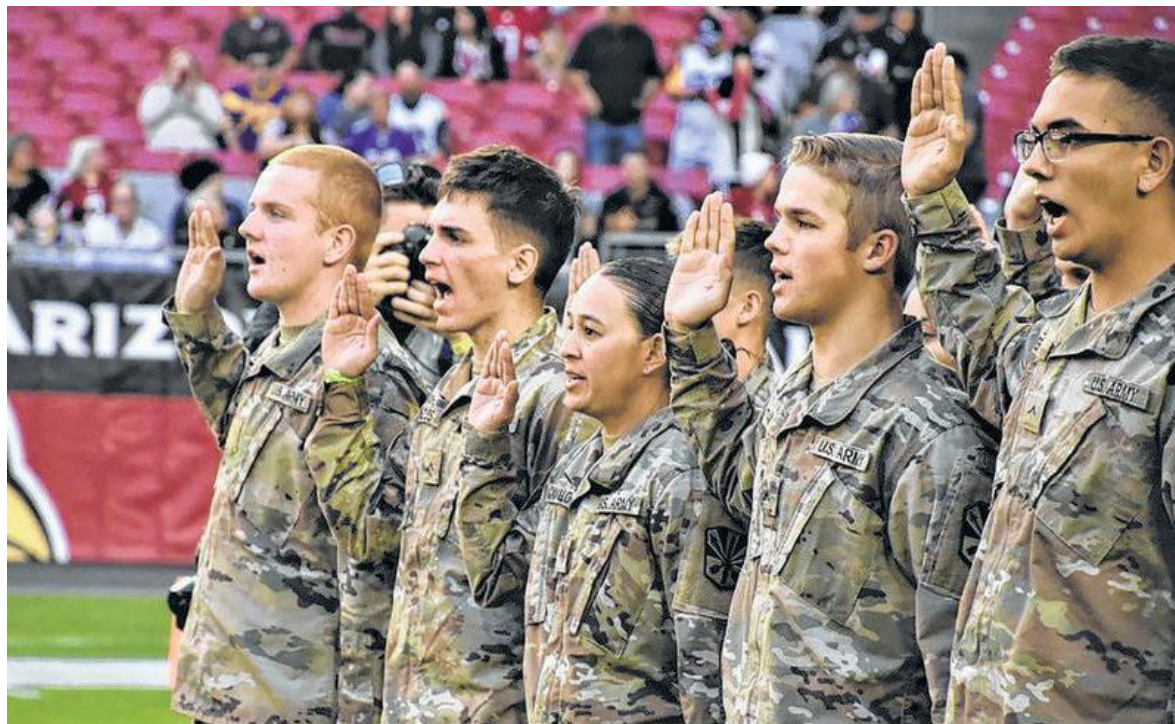
The TAPAS accession pilot will evaluate the use of personality testing to supplement the Armed Forces Qualification Test, known as the AFQT, or Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery, known as ASVAB.

TAPAS will “synchronize ways to improve all aspects of developing and maintaining the force at the individual Soldier level,” said Tonia Heffner, selection and assignment research unit chief at the Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences.

The 120-question, non-cognitive test has actually been used on recruits in conjunction with other entrance exams, such as the AFQT, since 2009. However, then it was used to collect data on individuals already entering their military occupational specialties.

The TAPAS pilot expands on current screening tools — like the high school diploma, AFQT, and the Occupational Physical Assessment Test — by defining the quality a potential Soldier offers the Army, she explained.

While TAPAS is expected to



ALUN THOMAS

Future Soldiers from the Phoenix Recruiting Battalion, National Guard and Marines, recite the Oath of Enlistment during a mass enlistment ceremony Dec. 1, 2019, at State Farm Stadium, Glendale, Ariz.

expand the market of eligible recruits, Heffner said it will not compromise Army standards.

“Anyone who enlists must meet standards,” she said. “Those enlisting in this pilot that expands eligibility must still pass the ASVAB, the OPAT, pass a drug and alcohol screening test as well as a criminal background check before selecting one of the Army’s occupational specialties.”

In the past decade, Heffner and her team has compiled data from enlisted Soldiers using TAPAS. The results have consistently shown that individuals with higher

motivation outperform what their below-average score indicates. They adapt better to the Army, and have less disciplinary incidents, Heffner said.

“Those who will enlist through the pilot program will be more qualified than what their cognitive test score says,” Heffner said. “I expect them to perform much higher than that. It’s not even a little bit, it’s noticeably higher than that. There will be lower attrition for the people in the pilot program and they will outperform many of their peers.”

“This is increasing the overall quality of the Army,”

she added.

Using this pilot, up to 6,000 applicants annually from the Army’s three components who score between a 45-49 on the AFQT and also score in the top 50% on the TAPAS test will be exempt from the AFQT grading scale. Whereas already fully qualified to enlist, this exempt population will be used to assess the effectiveness of TAPAS on new recruit screenings.

“If someone is within five points out of a 100-point scale on their AFQT,” Heffner said, “we’re saying they scored just below, but because of their motivation, they’ll behave like

someone who scores above.”

Allowing those who score in the top 50 percent of the TAPAS to enlist will help fill the Army with “high-quality, extremely-fit individuals who are capable of performing successfully as Soldiers,” Heffner said.

The Army has always competed against tough job markets without needing to lower standards, Heffner said, adding “this pilot simply offers more opportunities to qualified Americans willing to serve by taking into account other qualities beyond what a standardized education exam can identify.”

Are you being called to be an Army chaplain?

By Leanne Thomas

5TH MEDICAL RECRUITING BATTALION
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

As the chaplain for the 502nd Force Support Group at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston prepares to retire, Army Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Cloyd L. Colby felt prompted to send a message inviting prospective chaplain candidates to consider military ministry.

With more than 36 years of active military service, Colby is in a unique position to extend this invitation.

"To the prospective Army chaplain, though we have not met, I believe it isn't mere coincidence that you are reading this letter. In my faith, I honor your faith and commitment as a spiritual leader," Colby said. "I certainly had some concerns as I considered becoming an Army chaplain.

"First and foremost, how would it impact my family? What would it be like to be an officer with all the responsibility that implies? And, as I had served in the National Guard, would I be able to cut it in the 'real' Army? Finally, what would happen if I didn't stay until retirement — what would be my back-up plan?

"Looking back with the advantage of perspective, I see I need not have worried so much.

"My family has benefited greatly from engaging with military life and values. They have been enriched by the diversity of experiences and peoples and nations. While there is much expected of an officer, we are not required to



COURTESY PHOTO

U.S. Army Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Cloyd L. Colby,
502nd Force Support Group

master everything in the first assignment.

"Like any profession, chaplains grow from job to job. I have learned to value what both the U.S. Army Reserve and the National Guard bring to the table of our common defense. And I have learned to work with all ranks, enlisted and officer, to accomplish required missions.

"Although I haven't needed a 'back-up' job, I gained training and skills that transfer quite well to civilian ministry. Not everyone desires to stay 20 years, and that's just fine. Military ministry can develop your scope, depth

and capabilities.

"Along with concerns, I had my share of hopes. I had previously gone through basic training and noticed how our chaplain got things done through side-by-side leadership. By that, I mean he was not a directive authoritarian, but a mentor who was on our side, coaching us to solve problems before they escalated, and inspiring us to be our best selves amidst challenges. I noticed he had this same effect on the drill sergeants and the commander, too. That intrigued me, and I hoped to become that type of servant-leader.

"Here are some of the talents, gifts and skills I have developed and shared along the way:

1. Side-by-side leadership. The ministry of mentoring, keeping calm amid chaos, always engaging with my soldiers and their families.

2. Adaptability. I have worked with and supported a myriad of personalities, cultures and faiths. I have developed a deeper appreciation for people whose faith is different than mine but who have a reverence for what is eternally important and sacred.

3. Music. I love to connect with people through music, whether encouraging people to develop their talents, joining in choirs, and even composing music for various events. This connection via music has helped me quickly bond with other people and gain their trust and acceptance. I am deeply satisfied when I begin a training session by leading the singing of "God Bless America," a song, which is really a prayer.

4. Organization leadership. I learned how to organize projects, develop staffs, and create cohesive teams that serve thousands of people. I have learned to apply these skills in my personal and family life which provides incredible hope for tackling challenges in the civilian sector.

5. Ecumenical experience. I have grown professionally and personally as I have served and led within various faith traditions. Repeatedly, military ministry reminds me of how connected we are to each other and to Deity. I treasure these experiences, for they deepen my faith and help me realize my own connection to the universe.

"Now, as my formal career as a chaplain winds down, I invite you to consider military ministry as an Army chaplain. Like me, you have concerns and hopes for the future of you and your loved ones. And you have been blessed with gifts, talents and skills that would be wondrously utilized and developed as a chaplain.

"May God bless you in considering the call as an Army chaplain — not from the perspective of fear, but from the deepest source of your faith."

For more information about serving as a U.S. Army chaplain, visit www.goarmy.com/chaplain.html, connect with the 5th Medical Recruiting Battalion at www.facebook.com/5thmedicalrecruitingbattalion, or the U.S. Army Chaplain Recruiting Station -South Central at <https://www.facebook.com/SouthCentralChaplainRecruitingStation>.

Navy's newest submarines named for heroes at Pearl Harbor

From Acting Secretary of the Navy
Public Affairs

The Navy will name its two newest Virginia-class (SSN 774) fast-attack nuclear submarines after the American heroes of the "Greatest Generation" who perished in the former USS Oklahoma (BB-37) and USS Arizona (BB-39), bringing those hallowed names back into active-duty service after more than three-quarters of a century.

Acting Secretary of the Navy Thomas B. Modly proclaimed his decision to name the next two

submarines, SSN-802 and SSN-803, respectively, on Dec. 23.

"I am honored and humbled to name the next two Virginia-class nuclear fast-attack submarines to be built as the USS Oklahoma (SSN-802) and the USS Arizona (SSN-803)," Modly said. "It is my fondest wish that the citizens of the great states of Arizona and Oklahoma will understand and celebrate our Navy's desire to memorialize the 1,177 heroes who perished in USS Arizona (BB-39) and the 429 more in USS Oklahoma (BB-37) in Pearl Harbor, on Dec. 7, 1941.

"Truly, there is no greater honor I

can think of for the Navy, the Marine Corps, and the nation than to build and commission into active service two state-of-the-art American warships carrying the spirit of those heroes of the Greatest Generation, as well as that of their families and the Grand Canyon and Sooner states as they sail through a new American maritime century," Modly said.

Generations have visited the Pearl Harbor National Memorial in Oahu, Hawaii, comprising the USS Arizona, USS Oklahoma and USS Utah memorials, in addition to six officer bungalows, three mooring quays, and

the Pearl Harbor Visitor Center. The memorial commemorates the history of World War II in the Pacific from the events leading to the Dec. 7, 1941, attack to peace and reconciliation, and honors the thousands of Americans who served and died that day.

Virginia-class fast-attack submarines provide the Navy with the capabilities required to maintain the nation's undersea supremacy well into the 21st century. They have enhanced stealth, sophisticated surveillance capabilities and special warfare enhancements that will enable them to meet the Navy's multi-mission requirements.



DANIEL J. CALDERÓN

Brig. Gen. Wendy Harter (left), Brooke Army Medical Center commanding general, presents a gift basket from the BAMC Auxiliary to Airman 1st Class Anna Tritley and her husband, Sean, Jan. 3, to congratulate them on the birth of their daughter, Cora Noel, BAMC's first baby of the new year.

BAMC welcomes first baby of new decade

By Daniel J. Calderón

BROOKE ARMY MEDICAL CENTER
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Brooke Army Medical Center rang in the New Year by welcoming the hospital's first baby of 2020. The 7-pound, 9-ounce, 19.5-inch-long baby girl was born at 1 a.m. Jan. 1.

Although BAMC's first baby did not win the city-wide baby race conducted by local San Antonio hospitals, the parents did receive a gift basket, which was presented by BAMC and 959th Medical Group leaders Jan. 3.

"On behalf of the BAMC Auxiliary and all of our BAMC staff, congratulations," said Brig. Gen. Wendy Harter, BAMC commanding general, as she presented the gift basket.

New parents, Airman 1st Class Anna Tritley, and her husband, Sean C. Tritley, said they are thrilled to welcome baby Cora Noel into the world.

"This is our first baby and we're both very excited," he said. "She is our future and we are ready to take her home."

BAMC staff delivered 1,800 babies in 2019. In the Labor and Delivery and Mother/Baby wards, more than 100

active duty military and civilian personnel deliver care to hundreds of patients each month.

"We also have a robust GME (Graduate Medical Education) program for obstetrics, pediatrics and anesthesia," said Lawanda Clark, chief nursing officer in charge for BAMC's Labor and Delivery ward.

Over the past year, Clark said they have been working with the pediatrics department to integrate donor breastmilk as a supplement for breastfeeding mothers. The introduction of the supplement is meant to reduce the number of neonatal intensive care unit admissions and increase the rates of breastfeeding.

The units also serve as training platforms for new obstetrical nurses for the Air Force, Navy and Army Phase 2 students.

Sean Tritley said he and his wife are thankful for the gift from the BAMC Auxiliary and the visit from the commanding general.

"It's awesome and we appreciate the basket," he said. "It is pretty thrilling that our baby is BAMC's first baby of the year and of the decade."

JBSA Military Ambassadors promote long-standing relationship with local communities

By Kathleen Salazar

502ND AIR BASE WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Each year, 10 service members from across Joint Base San Antonio participate in the Military Ambassador Program to promote the military's commitment and relationship with the local communities around the installation.

Two representatives from each service will serve as military ambassadors at events throughout the community surrounding JBSA, with Fiesta being the highlight of the program. Ambassadors participate in the annual 11-day celebration with more than 50 activities associated with Fiesta San Antonio, as well as recognizing and celebrating San Antonio's rich diverse cultures.

Taking part in the program not only allows the military ambassadors to play integral roles for JBSA's community relations program, and it also provides another tool for the services to get their messages out.

The relationship between the U.S. military and the City of San Antonio dates back to the mid-1800s and honors the memory of the heroes of the Alamo. Today, San Antonio continues its tradition of more than 300 years that honors the historic relationship between San Antonio and the U.S. Armed Forces.

The 2020 Joint Base San Antonio Military Ambassadors are:

U.S. Army Military Ambassadors

► Sgt. 1st Class Ernie Nieves is assigned to the Park North Recruiting Station, 5th Recruiting Brigade at JBSA-Fort Sam Houston.

"Giving back and representing a community and culture is truly an honor."

► Sgt. Alejandra Valdes is a geospatial engineer at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston.

"I'm so excited and honored to be selected. This opportunity has a special meaning to me, as I grew up in San Antonio."

U.S. Marines Military Ambassadors

► Sgt. Loriany Del Rosario is a unit diary clerk from the 4th Reconnaissance Battalion.



COURTESY PHOTOS
U.S. Army Military Ambassadors: Sgt. 1st Class Ernie Nieves and Sgt. Alejandra Valdes.

"It is a privilege to be part of such a profound tradition that dates back 125 years. I am very grateful and look forward to celebrating the history and culture of San Antonio!"

► Staff Sgt. Hector Jaramillo is a company gunnery sergeant at the 4th Reconnaissance Battalion.

"It is an honor to represent the U.S. Marine Corps as a 2020 Fiesta Military Ambassador. Coming from the Southside of San Antonio, I know how much Fiesta means to all of us here in Military City, USA."

U.S. Navy Military Ambassadors

► Petty Officer 1st Class Wendy M. Cajas works for the Director of Administration at the Navy Medicine Training Support Center.

"It is truly humbling to be selected as a U.S. Navy representative for Fiesta San Antonio 2020! I am from Washington, D.C., and have never seen anything like Fiesta before. This is truly a life experience."

► Petty Officer 1st Class Alfredo Esquivel III is assigned to the Naval Technical Training Center, JBSA-Lackland as the leading petty officer for the Naval Corrections Academy.

"It is a true honor in being selected and I am extremely grateful for this opportunity to represent the United States Navy during Fiesta."

U.S. Air Force Military Ambassadors

► Senior Airman Miranda Leigh Lopez is a wing staff resource adviser at the 502nd Comptroller Squadron.

"As a native of Texas, it is an honor



U.S. Marines Military Ambassadors: Staff Sgt. Hector Jaramillo and Sgt. Loriany Del Rosario.



U.S. Air Force Military Ambassadors: Tech. Sgt. Benjamin Johnson and Senior Airman Miranda Leigh Lopez.

to be selected to represent the U.S. Air Force and serve as a 2020 Military Ambassador. I look forward to celebrating San Antonio's rich and diverse culture with all in Military City USA."

► Tech. Sgt. Benjamin Johnson is an instructor supervisor at the 343rd Training Squadron.

"I am truly honored and humbled to be selected as an U.S. Air Force Military Ambassador for 2020. I hope to learn from you about what makes the Military City USA so amazing! Viva Fiesta!"

U.S. Coast Guard Military Ambassadors

► Petty Officer 2nd Class Shawn Bittner works with the Coast Guard Cryptologic Unit-Texas.

"I am honored and excited to have been chosen as a 2020 Fiesta Military Ambassador to represent the U.S. Coast



U.S. Navy Military Ambassadors: Petty Officer 1st Class Alfredo Esquivel III and Petty Officer 1st Class Wendy M. Cajas.



U.S. Coast Guard Military Ambassadors: Petty Officer 2nd Class Shawn Bittner and Petty Officer 1st Class Bonnie A. Gonzalez.

Guard. San Antonio has treated my family and I with experiences like no other. I am humbled to be able to take part in this event. I thoroughly look forward to being a part of this exciting event, and hope we bring as much joy to you and your family as Fiesta does to mine."

► Petty Officer 1st Class Bonnie A. Gonzalez works at the U.S. Coast Guard Recruiting Office in San Antonio.

"Being approached and asked if I would be a Military Ambassador for Fiesta 2020 is a complete honor in its self. As a recent transfer to the San Antonio area, I am delighted to represent the U.S. Coast Guard in arguably the most recognizable military friendly cities in the United States. I look forward to creating lifelong memories and experiences with the many diverse cultures and communities that make up this beautiful city."

FORT SAM HOUSTON

Army Medical Department Board tests auto-injectors, gets feedback from Soldiers

By Jose E. Rodriguez

U.S. ARMY MEDICAL CENTER OF
EXCELLENCE PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The Chemical and Biological Defense Auto-Injector Device, or CBD auto-injector, is something no Soldier ever wants to use on the battlefield. The effects of chemical and biological weapons are horrific.

Nerve agents are the most toxic of the known chemical agents. They are hazards in both liquid and vapor states and can cause death within minutes after exposure. Nerve agents are the primary chemical warfare agent threat because of their high toxicity and effectiveness through multiple routes of entry. They are absorbed through the eyes, respiratory tract and skin.

Ensuring CBD auto-injectors are functional and usable are critical in savings lives. The CBD Auto-Injector Device is designed to be used in a Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear, or CBRN, environment.

Recently the U.S. Army Medical Department Board, or USAMEDDBD, assigned to the U.S. Army Medical Center of Excellence at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston, conducted a test of these devices at JBASA-Camp Bullis.

The Joint Program Executive Office for Chemical and Biological Defense, Medical Countermeasure Systems, or JPEO-CBD MCS, at Fort Detrick, Md., requested the AMEDD Board conduct a customer test of the CBD auto-injector device within the operational environment. The



JOSE E. RODRIGUEZ

A Soldier checks a casualty's Mission Oriented Protective Posture, or MOPP, mask while training during a simulated Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear, or CBRN, attack at Joint Base San Antonio-Camp Bullis.

data and test findings collected by the AMEDD Board will be provided to JPEO—CBD MCS.

The CBD Auto-Injector Device is a replacement for the currently fielded auto-injector for treatment against nerve

agent and insecticide poisoning, adjunctive treatment, and management of agent-induced seizures. The United States military adopted the auto-injector as the drug delivery device because of ease of use, packaging durability,

and drug product stability under varying storage conditions.

Soldiers donned Mission Oriented Protective Posture, more commonly known as MOPP protective gear, and tested the CBD auto-injectors

in a simulated battlefield exercise complete with smoke grenades. MOPP masks can limit visibility, so the injectors have clear, easy to understand pictorial instructions.

"A lot of these auto-injectors used to have wording, just written instructions," said Gary Cabigon, an operational tester with the AMEDD Board.

"What we learned over the years is that pictures are easier to comprehend, especially in a stressful environment."

Cabigon said that when under a CBRN attack vital seconds saved in dispensing the injector matter.

Sgt. First Class Elijah Williamson, an AMEDD Board test officer, talked about conducting the test in the field.

"I think it's great having the training asset here at Fort Sam," Williamson said. We have the austere environment where we can create the simulation of the battlefield. We do so much on slides and videos that you want to get hands-on and create that realism out at JBASA-Camp Bullis. You can't get that in the classroom."

The CBD auto-injectors are designed to deliver an intramuscular injection with a 22-gauge needle with a pressure-activated coil spring mechanism that triggers the needle after removal of the safety cap. When activated, the needle protrudes through the needle end.

To learn more about the Army Medical Department Board's mission, visit <https://www.cs.amedd.army.mil/ameddbd>.

JBSA-Fort Sam Houston Tax Center scheduled to open Jan. 28

By **Jesse C. Bolaños**
502ND FORCE SUPPORT GROUP
MILITARY TAX ASSISTANCE CENTER

With the Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston Military Tax Assistance Center, or MTAC, opening soon, it is important to understand who the center serves and the scope of the services provided.

The Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston Military Tax Assistance Center, or MTAC, opens Jan. 28, 2020, from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. weekdays. The center will be closed on federal holidays or Army North training days. The MTAC is located in building 133, 2450 Dragon Valley Road.

First, the MTAC serves all active duty military members, military retirees and their family members.

Unless you are otherwise authorized services as an active duty military member, retired military or their family

members, the MTAC cannot prepare returns for civilian personnel, military contractors and the general civilian population.

The center also does not provide services for Reservists and Guardsmen, unless they are on Title 10 orders for 30 days or more or just came off of extended active duty. The MTAC does not provide services for “gray-area” retired Reservists. If a retired Reservist or Guardsman is receiving retirement pay, they are eligible for services.

If you are not sure if you authorized to have your taxes completed at the MTAC, a good rule of thumb is if you can obtain medical treatment from the Brooke Army Medical Center, then you are eligible to utilize MTAC services. If you are not sure, contact the MTAC at 210-295-1040 beginning Jan. 21, 2020, to clarify your authorization.

Second, if you are authorized to have your taxes completed at the MTAC, then the next question is what type of services does the MTAC provide?

The tax center can prepare most personal income tax returns and the staff is certified by the IRS to complete advance and military tax returns.

The MTAC can complete tax returns covering wages, interest, dividends, capital gains with basis, residential rental real estate, IRA distributions, pension, unemployment, and Social Security incomes and also complete Schedule C-EZ business income returns for Child Development Center day care providers.

The MTAC can complete tax returns that require Schedule A itemized deductions and education, residential energy, dependent care, retirement savings, child tax, additional child tax and earned income credits.

The staff at the tax center is specifically trained to prepare tax returns for military members with combat zone excluded pay and other unique military tax situations.

There are certain services that are outside the scope of the MTAC. For example, the tax center does not provide tax services for day traders, capital gains without basis, people with three or more rental properties, sale of rental property, returns requiring K-1s beyond interest and royalties, farm income, foreign tax credits greater than \$600 and other returns deemed outside the scope by the MTAC Director.

The staff of the JBSA-Fort Sam Houston Military Tax Assistance Center looks forward to providing those eligible with personal income tax preparation services in the weeks and months ahead.

One more thing, and it's important.

The MTAC operates under the IRS Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program. As such, we have to operate under rules for that program. Those rules state that taxpayers must bring in Social Security cards (the actual card, not just the number) for themselves and everyone that will be listed on the tax return. That includes spouse and children and anyone else you might claim as a dependent.

Additionally, we can only prepare taxes for a married couples filing joint if both are present or one has a valid power of attorney. Please remember this as we do not want to have to turn anyone away.

Appointments can be made beginning Jan 21 by calling 210-295-1040. Appointment call-in hours will be between 8:30 a.m. and 4 p.m. weekdays, excluding federal and Army North training days.

Photos by Cole HS students part of exhibit

By David DeKunder

502ND AIR BASE WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Perspectives on military life, nature and architecture through the camera lens of Cole High School students is the theme of a new exhibit that opened at the Fort Sam Houston Museum Dec. 10.

Students, parents, teachers and administrators from Cole High School got to view the photo exhibit during a reception at the Fort Sam Houston Museum, located in the Quadrangle at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston, on the evening of Dec. 10. Also attending the reception were school officials and board members with the Fort Sam Houston Independent School District.

Cole High School is located on JBSA-Fort Sam Houston and educates the children of service members.

The photo exhibit contains 101 images from 17 students in the Cole photography program, with 31 photos displayed and spread out among five panels and 70 in a digital gallery shown on a screen in the exhibit area. Each of the photos displayed on the panels has the name of the student underneath it with a caption written by the photographer explaining the background and meaning of the picture.

The student images focus on the areas of military life, nature and San Antonio architecture.

Brenda Marafioti, Cole photography/journalism teacher, said the photos in the exhibit were taken by students in both the beginning and advanced commercial photography classes. The images were taken during the 2018-19 school year at locations at JBSA-Fort Sam Houston, downtown San Antonio and surrounding natural areas.

"We have a wide range of students' work that is being exhibited, from freshman to senior," Marafioti said.

Marafioti said the exhibit images capture the perspectives and viewpoints of the student photographers who took the photos.

"As we go to various sites, we look at how to show a location or an image in a way people don't always see it," Marafioti said. "We're always looking to capture someone's attention or capture their interest with a unique view of our everyday world. If you look at the exhibits, it's like our world, our city in that sort of thing and that's the kind of crux of what we're trying to show is that



MARICAH FRANK

Maricah Frank, a student at Cole High School located at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston, took this photo of upside-down troop helmets filled with personal items and equipment in the parking lot in front of the old Brooke Army Medical Center at JBSA-Fort Sam Houston. The above photo, titled "Field Day," is one of 101 images submitted by students in the Cole photography program that are included in an exhibit at the Fort Sam Houston Museum that opened Dec. 10.

we all share this space but we all don't see it the same."

A total of 132 images were submitted to the museum for the exhibit. Dr. Bryan Howard, Fort Sam Houston Museum curator, said a group including himself, Fort Sam Houston Museum director Jacqueline Davis, retired Army Lt. Col. William Meder and Master Sgt. Corinne Hotchkiss of the 93rd Intelligence Squadron at JBSA-Lackland, selected the photos that are in the exhibit.

"The quality of the images was top notch. You could tell these photographers knew what they were doing," Howard said.

Howard said the photos show the perspectives of military school-age children, an important segment of the military population.

"These students, they're the sons and daughters of active-duty military," Howard said. "Their experiences are part of the overall military experience and many of them are from Texas, but many are not. This is a vision of their world around them and what they experience as military families."

Two Cole students, Maricah Frank and Amanda DeLeon, spoke about their photos displayed in the exhibit.

Frank submitted a photo titled "Field Day" in the military life category. In her image is a row of upside down combat helmets on the ground in the parking lot in front of the U.S. Army South

headquarters, the former Brooke Army Medical Center building. Inside some of the upside down helmets are personal items of troops, including bananas, fruit, a can of vegetable juice, a notebook and a canteen.

She explained the meaning of her photo.

"It shows a lot of the story that's not told," Frank said. "The little things tell a whole other side, not just the training, but how they organize stuff, how they use their equipment in other ways like storing their food, notebooks when they're busy. I hope people really look at it and think about the stuff the soldiers do. It's a very simple picture, but I think it's very powerful and it tells a story."

DeLeon's photo is titled "Soaring." The image shows a huge bird flying above a tree in Brackenridge Park collecting branches to start a nest.

She said the photo she took of the bird reminded her of her experiences of moving from place to place as a military child.

"For me, the way I look at it is how they're making a home wherever they know they need to make a home," DeLeon said. "For me, that's how I saw my dad, wherever we moved he made that place our home. It may have not been our actual home, but it's kind of a military thing, wherever you go you find a way to make that place your new home and that's the way I see it."

A parent of a Cole High School student, Amanda Bennett, said she liked how the exhibit and exhibit opening reception was put together.

"I thought it was very well done," Bennett said. "It was more like a traditional gallery setting. I like how they included more photos on a slide show on a high definition TV."

Bennett said she likes the subject matters that Marafioti has the photography students focus on. She said the photos the students take on military life are emotionally moving.

This is the second time the museum has hosted an exhibit of photos done by Cole students. The first exhibit featuring the photography of Cole students opened at the museum in August 2018.

Marafioti said the Fort Sam Houston Museum has helped in the growth of the Cole photography program by giving it exposure to both the JBSA and San Antonio communities through their exhibits of the students' photos.

"They have been an incredible partner with us," Marafioti said. "They're so generous to give us space and printing so that the rest of JBSA-Fort Sam Houston knows what goes on at the high school because we are kind of tucked away. This let's everyone who's on post, whether they don't have kids or they're only here training or they're here for a short time, to see some of the family and the student life that goes on as part of JBSA-Fort Sam Houston."

Howard said the museum is pleased to provide space for the student photo exhibit. He said the museum hopes to continue the partnership with the Cole photography program.

"These students are all part of the military family," Howard said. "So that's our mission is to look at Fort Sam and its people. They're part of the community here, too."

The Fort Sam Houston Museum is free and open to both Department of Defense cardholders and the public from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday-Friday and noon to 5 p.m. Saturday. Visitors who want to come to the museum, but do not have Department of Defense access to get into JBSA-Fort Sam Houston, should refer to the JBSA website at <http://www.jbsa.af.mil/library/visitorinformation.asp> for base entry requirements.

To contact the museum, call 210-221-1886.

Learn to keep debt, budget under control with JBSA financial wellness classes

By Lori A. Bultman

502ND AIR BASE WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Bad credit? Out of control debt? Having trouble living within your means? Or, maybe you have everything under control but would like to know if you could be doing things better.

The Joint Base San Antonio Military and Family Readiness Centers have the perfect financial wellness classes for you.

The centers offer a wide variety of classes that are open to Department of Defense identification cardholders, to include: debt and credit management, how to budget, understanding your credit report and score and many more. Classes are offered throughout the year and are intended to teach attendees how to get their debt under control, manage their credit score and create a spending plan they can live with.

“The ‘How to Budget’ course is the first one people should take,” said Roy Bolton, JBSA-Fort Sam Houston community readiness consultant. “If they don’t have a budget prepared, how do they know what they can afford? How do they know they can buy a new car or a house if they don’t know what they have to spend?”

Without adequate planning, making a big purchase can put folks into a downward spiral quickly.

“They buy a new car and don’t have the money to pay the note, gas, insurance and tag, so they end up getting an emergency or payday loan. Then, they fall behind and can’t catch up,” he said. “Not everyone needs an expensive car or a large house.”

The MFRC also offers a “How to Buy a Car” class to assist with calculating the actual cost of owning a car.

“I would like to see more people in these classes,” Bolton said. “I would like to see more spouses attending as well.”

Bolton said it is important that couples come in together to learn how to share information and plan purchases together.

“We would rather see them work together,” he said. “If we are only seeing one and not the other, how can I help them budget and plan. Both spouses should know what is going on with their finances. One might deploy, and



“The ‘How to Budget’ course is the first one people should take. If they don’t have a budget prepared, how do they know what they can afford? How do they know they can buy a new car or a house if they don’t know what they have to spend?”

Roy Bolton, JBSA-Fort Sam Houston community readiness consultant

COURTESY PHOTO

the spouse needs to know how to make things work while the other is gone.”

It is also important for children to understand the family’s finances.

“I leave it up to the parents to decide how involved their children should be in the family’s finances, but it is important that they explain to their children what they can and cannot afford,” Bolton said. “It is hard to say that to your children, ‘We cannot afford to do that,’ but sometimes it needs to be done so they understand.”

“The intention of these classes and workshops is to help people,” Bolton said. “Everyone came from a different background; everyone has different ideas of what is important. We do not judge or make assumptions. We are here to assist and find the most efficient way to do things financially by creating a plan through the use of budget worksheets. The results of this planning will assist with establishing

short-, mid-, and long-term goals. We also get people to think about paying themselves first and generating a retirement plan.”

Bolton also assists participants with planning for raises and windfalls.

“When you get a raise, you should not think about spending it,” he said. “The whole purpose of the courses offered by the MFRC is to get people to think differently about money. You have to figure out what you can spend, what you should save, and how much debt you can pay off with a raise.”

Bolton encourages people to attend the centers’ financial wellbeing courses before they have a dilemma.

“It is much easier to resolve an issue early, rather than wait until it is affecting your job or security clearance,” he said. “We encourage anyone who feels they could benefit from these courses to call and register now, before they get overwhelmed.”

For those who are unable to attend a scheduled class, community readiness consultants are available for one-on-one sessions, or they can provide training at unit locations.

“We are ready to assist and provide all of our training individually or in a classroom setting,” Sarah Henson, JBSA-Randolph community readiness consultant, said. “We realize that, due to mission requirements and time constraints, attending classes at our centers may be challenging, so we are prepared to bring these classes to the units. We want to make sure we are doing all we can to meet the needs of our military members and their families where personal finance is concerned.”

For a full list of available classes, to register, or to schedule an on-site training, call JBSA-Fort Sam Houston at 210-221-2705; JBSA-Randolph at 210-652-5321; or JBSA-Lackland at 210-671-3722.



ROBERT WHETSTONE

Wounded warrior active duty service members and veterans lock in on their targets during the inaugural United Warrior Air Rifle Competition Dec. 10 at the Churchill High School Navy Junior ROTC building in San Antonio.

Air rifle shooting helps with adaptive reconditioning

By Robert A. Whetstone
BROOKE ARMY MEDICAL CENTER
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Churchill High School hosted the first United Warrior Air Rifle Competition at the Navy Junior ROTC building in San Antonio Dec. 10. Active duty servicemembers and veterans from throughout the San Antonio area came together to put their skills to the test, especially big game hunter Army Spc. William McCormick.

After finishing One Unit Station Training in 2015, McCormick would spend most of his time stationed at either the 1st Battalion, 501st Parachute Infantry Regiment, or the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska. It is here where he kept his shooting skills sharp by hunting big game.

"After we got back from a deployment, I took my neighbor, who was new to Alaska, on his first big game hunt ever," McCormick said. Black bear was in season at the time, and McCormick wanted

to share the experience.

"A bear was up the mountain a little bit, so I took a standing offhand shot from about 75 yards and dropped it," he explained. "As it fell off the mountain it knocked some rocks loose. I turned around to communicate with my neighbor about what had happened and a couple of 20-pound boulders hit me in the head."

Neither McCormick nor his neighbor saw the huge rocks coming toward him. He suffered injuries on both sides of his head, one severe enough to cause a bad fracture on one side, and he fell down the mountain. His neighbor emptied a handgun to get the attention of hikers nearby so he could borrow their satellite phone to call for an air medical evacuation.

McCormick's head injuries caused severe traumatic brain injury. JBER was not equipped to handle such an injury, so after he became more stable, he was sent to Brooke Army Medical Center at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston and assigned to the Warrior Transition Battalion to

get care for his injuries and begin the long road of rehabilitation.

A key component to McCormick's rehab is adaptive reconditioning. One of the activities that piqued this infantryman's interest is air rifle shooting.

"I had done air rifle before when I wasn't overloaded with homework," McCormick said.

He was taking masters classes online to prove to himself that his brain was functioning to his expectations. McCormick is an example of the Army Recovery and Care Program's motto of "Recover and Overcome." He took a break from classes to focus on a promotion board and returning to duty.

He heard about the inaugural air rifle event when physical therapist Dr. Benjamin Fogel and others mentioned it to him. McCormick recently placed second at a Halloween sporting clays competition.

"I think that fed into the conversations of people suggesting I try this UWAR as well," McCormick said.

"When participating in an adaptive reconditioning

activity, such as air rifle, Soldiers really benefit the most from the camaraderie that results from these competition-like settings," said Kersey Henderson, recreational therapist, supporting adaptive reconditioning. "Benefits from these events include social support, focus/concentration, adjustment to their technique, such as breathing and relaxation."

The UWAR competition is in its infancy, and getting the word out to wounded, ill and injured veterans is important to those who run the event.

"We wanted to get all of the local injured active duty and veterans together, not just for the shooting match but as a way to gain brotherhood and the camaraderie," said Scott Fitzgerald, Fire Arms Training Simulator instructor, Center for the Intrepid, BAMC. Fitzgerald said shooting is one commonality between every branch.

Adaptive reconditioning competitions like this would be one path of progression; others may want to return to live fire shooting like International Defensive Pistol Association

competitions, or hunting, Fitzgerald explained.

"Shooting air rifle and pistol does not have an age limit or a disability restriction," Fitzgerald said. "This is a sport where you could be completely blind and still shoot at a local, national or international level."

McCormick took second place out of the 14 UWAR competitors. Although it was a good showing for this event, he wasn't personally satisfied.

"Placing second just means I need to practice more," he added. "It is very overwhelming with a brain injury, so having something I am comfortable with and something I enjoy doing is a great way to get my mind off of negative emotions that come with a long healing process."

"Let's be honest, if we challenge warriors no matter the task, they will always step up and perform to the highest level and that's what was seen at this inaugural event," Fitzgerald said.

The date and location for the next UWAR match is still being worked out. For more information about air rifle shooting, call 210-916-8345.

LACKLAND



JOHNNY SALDIVAR

Military and civilian members of the 37th Training Wing hold positive messages of support at base gates Dec. 18, 2019, during the morning inbound commute as part of their new initiative, "We Care," at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland.

Volunteers at JBSA-Lackland gates show commuters 'We Care'

By Allison Miller

502ND AIR BASE WING
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Volunteer active duty members, spouses and civilians stood at two Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland gates holding signs with messages of support in the first-ever We Care event, Dec. 18.

This event, organized by the 323rd Training Squadron and Spouses Club, was created to convey the message that JBSA

community members stand together and support those struggling with mental health issues and thoughts of suicide.

"The main goal (of this event) was to welcome in all of our Lackland community to include active duty members, dependents, retirees, GS and contractors," said Capt. Jessica-Lynn Stanley, licensed clinical social worker and chief deputy of basic military training consult service. "And let them know that we do care about them and that they are

vital to the mission."

We Care was first presented to the 323rd TRS by spouses who had seen a similar event at Kirtland Air Force Base, New Mexico. It was then adopted by leadership and developed into a display for morning commuters.

Lt. Col. Ray Vann, 323rd TRS commander, stressed that his team felt it was important to push this message out before the holidays.

"The holidays are always a really important time. People

are busy, they are stressed, and we want to just take a moment to tell them 'Hey, you are important to all of us,'" Vann said.

Vann stated that after the success of the first event, they plan to host at least two more throughout the next year.

As part of their effort to support those struggling with mental health issues, Vann and the We Care team want everyone to know which agencies are available to help: If you or someone you know is

struggling with depression, please reach out to the Mental Health Clinic, Military & Family Life Counselors, Military OneSource or Chaplains.

If you are struggling with thoughts of suicide, go directly to the Mental Health Clinic or to your closest emergency room. You can also reach the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255. Above all — you matter and your Air Force Family cares about you.

AF graduates first all non-prior service basic flight engineer class

By 1st Lt. Kayshel Trudell
37TH TRAINING WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The Air Force's 344th Training Squadron Career Enlisted Aviator Center of Excellence graduated the first basic flight engineer class Dec. 13 at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, comprised completely of non-prior service students.

Nine students began training Nov. 8, and all of them earned their wings, becoming the first class in the history of the flight engineer three-level technical school course to become career enlisted aviator basic flight engineers.

For decades following World War II until the mid-2000s, an individual could only apply to become a flight engineer after serving in a maintenance career field. In the late 2000s, the Air Force began allowing airmen from career fields outside of maintenance to apply for flight engineer duty, with exception to policy approval. The active component had not yet opened up a pipeline for non-prior service airmen to become flight engineers until now.

These aviators will man air crew



1ST LT. KAYSHEL TRUDELL

Nine Airmen graduated from the Basic Flight Engineer Course at the 344th Training Squadron, Career Enlisted Aviator Center of Excellence, as the first-ever class comprised completely of non-prior service students Dec. 13 at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland.

positions on aircraft, where they'll be responsible for monitoring and controlling aircraft systems, computing aircraft performance, calculating weight and balance and cross checking pilot actions. Aircraft assignments include: KC-10 Extender, C-5 Galaxy, E-3 Sentry, E-8 Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System (STARS) and C-130

Hercules.
"I taught differently to adapt to younger students, but all-in-all, they worked just as hard," said Technical Sgt. Coty McCuddin, BFE course instructor. "These guys are hard workers, they're hungry and they want to go fly. I expect great things from them."

The flight engineer career field dates

back to World War II, when experienced mechanics and maintenance personnel flew aboard larger aircraft, including the Enola Gay and Bockscar B-29 Superfortress.

For more information on the CEA Center for Excellence, visit <https://www.37trw.af.mil/Units/37th-Training-Group/344th-Training-Squadron/>.

Security Forces ready for veterans' access to JBSA

Veterans will need the new Veterans Health Identification Card, or VHIC, and proper ID

By Alex Delgado

502ND AIR BASE WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Members of the 502nd Security Forces Group have been working hard to develop procedures that will grant base access to veterans and primary family caregivers since the Department of Defense expanded commissary and military service exchange access, as well as Morale, Welfare and Recreation facilities and programs.

Access will be granted to Medal of Honor recipients, former prisoners of war, Purple Heart recipients, veterans with service-connected disabilities and eligible caregivers with Veterans Administration-issued memorandum.

"This new program is a great way to honor the sacrifices of our disabled veterans," said Tim Heintzelman, 502nd Security Forces Group Plans and Programs chief. "Our Security Forces members throughout JBSA are ready to implement this program."

Veterans interested in gaining access to JBSA

locations will first need to obtain the new Veterans Health Identification Card, or VHIC. The VHIC must be presented at any Visitor Control Center, along with one of the following forms of identification to complete the registration process, which will include a criminal history check. Once registered, the veteran will only need to present the VHIC at the Installation Entry Control Point to gain access.

►► REAL ID-compliant driver's license or non-driver's identification card issued by a state, territory, possession or the District of Columbia.

►► Enhanced driver's license issued by a State, territory, possession or the District of Columbia.

►► U.S. passport or passport card.

Eligible caregivers will need to present a current VA caregiver letter at the VCC along with the same required identification. Upon registration, permissions will be added to the REAL-ID Act driver's license. The caregiver will subsequently gain access to the installation by presenting the REAL ID Act driver's license at the Installation Entry Control Point.

"With the large veteran population here in the greater San Antonio area, we expect a large influx of personnel wanting to get registered immediately starting Jan. 1, 2020," Heintzelman said. "We ask that eligible members be patient with the registration

process and that they have in their possession either the Veteran's Health Identification Card or the caregiver letter along with proper documentation in order to expedite the process."

Veterans are being asked to arrive at the installations after 8:30 a.m. to avoid the heavy traffic that's associated with service members reporting to duty. In additions, JBSA-Lackland requests veterans not visit the VCC on all Thursdays and Fridays between 6 a.m. to 10 a.m. due to increased patronage for the Basic Military Training graduations.

Please visit one of the following VCC to register the VHIC.

JBSA-LACKLAND:

►► Luke Blvd Gateway VCC: 2602 Luke Blvd., JBSA-Lackland

JBSA FORT SAN HOUSTON:

►► Walter Street Gate VCC: 892 Hood St., JBSA-Fort SAM HOUSTON:

►► I-35 SAMMC VCC: 3551 Roger Brook Drive (building 3704) JBSA-Fort Sam Houston

JBSA-RANDOLPH:

►► JBSA-Randolph VCC: Harmon Drive, JBSA-Randolph

For more information on REAL-ID visit <https://www.jbsa.mil/News/News/Article/1409065/real-id-act-compliance>.

RANDOLPH

Pilot Training Next begins third iteration

By Jennifer Gonzalez
AIR EDUCATION AND TRAINING
COMMAND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Pilot Training Next begins its third iteration January 2020, but before moving forward, Detachment 24 officials are looking back at lessons learned from PTN version two.

The PTN program is part of Air Education and Training Command's initiative to "reimagine" how learning is delivered to Airmen.

"As we innovate, we must take stock in the lessons we've learned through our first two classes," said Lt. Col. Ryan Riley, Detachment 24 commander. "We are finding ways to transform the way we learn in pilot training, and doing so, we are defining our challenges, finding our successes and identifying our failures, so we continue to evolve our training."

The second iteration of PTN capitalized on lessons learned from the first class by integrating new and emerging technologies as well as more individualized access to learning.

"Our second class demonstrated the value of emerging technology like artificial intelligence for pilot training, and PTN version three will build upon its success," Riley said.

PTN version two began Jan. 17, 2019, with 10 active-duty Air Force officers, two Air National Guard officers, two U.S. Navy officers, one Royal Air Force officer and five active-duty enlisted Airmen.

Throughout the class, several encouraging "lessons learned" emerged, including the importance of students' early



DAN HAWKINS

Royal Air Force Flying Officer Syd Janota, Pilot Training Next 2.0 student, observes a fellow student flying a virtual-reality training sortie at the PTN facility at the Armed Forces Reserve Center in Austin, Texas, March 18, 2019.

access to immersive training devices.

Prior to the class start date, PTN offered an ITD-only distance-learning program to students at the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Those students interested in joining PTN had full access to relevant learning materials and AI-supported training.

PTN officials selected four of the eight students to join version two, and officials found upon the students' arrival to PTN, the students possessed a much greater working knowledge of ITD functionality, T-6 Texan basic contact and T-6 basic instruments. Two of the early

access students were also the first to complete every milestone for the flying training.

"There is no doubt that there is great benefit in the use of ITDs in training," said Lt. Col. Robert Knapp, Detachment 24 operations officer. "We noticed that students with early access had a rapid ability to ingest data and perform, meaning they can perform faster and improve quicker."

In addition to early access, another key lesson learned was the value of students' access to ITDs 24-hours-a-day, seven-days-a-week, in their living quarters. While the access was invaluable, the home ITDs were underutilized because of

the students' lack of time due to their on-duty training schedules.

"Unlike traditional undergraduate pilot training, which can take up to a full year to complete, PTN students only have six to eight months to learn the content," Knapp said. "This leaves little downtime, so we will need to re-evaluate the need for in-home devices. Ultimately, we want to make sure we don't lose the vital element of 24/7 access."

Another lesson learned was that while PTN's curriculum is executed in a student-centric learning style, the need for instructor development is critical.

"The instructor pilot role here

"Unlike traditional undergraduate pilot training, which can take up to a full year to complete, PTN students only have six to eight months to learn the content."

Lt. Col. Robert Knapp,
Detachment 24
operations officer

is more important now than ever," Riley said. "The individualized approach to training can expedite the learning timeline, and it also creates unique scheduling challenges that our instructor pilots will need to address."

In addition to training provided by IPs, students also took advantage of an AI instructor tool known as VIPER, which played a vital element for the individualized and continuously accessible training environment.

"PTN provides an individualized training approach driven by student preference to accelerate learning," Riley said. "We are graduating students based on competencies — not time. Technologies like VIPER (virtual instructor pilot), immersive training devices and innovative students and instructor pilots are making it possible."

NCOs gain school attendance flexibility from EPME self-registration platform

By Kat Bailey

AIR FORCE'S PERSONNEL CENTER
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The Air Force's Personnel Center at Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph has created a self-registration scheduling system for all in-residence enlisted professional military education courses for active-duty noncommissioned officers.

The new scheduling system allows NCOs to choose when they attend the NCO Academy, Senior NCO Academy and Chief Leadership Course once they have been notified they are eligible to attend. Resident EPME completion became required for promotion to the ranks of staff, master and chief master sergeant beginning with the 2018 promotion cycle.

"The self-registration system gives NCOs flexibility and control over their professional education," said Chief Master Sgt. Dan Hoglund, AFPC's

command chief. "We're really focused on making the right adaptations to our processes to ensure we are enabling a system that is simple, transparent, agile and responsive to the Air Force's and Airmen's needs."

Eligible NCOs will receive an email from myPers in either June or December depending on when they become eligible. They will have 60 days to prioritize their preferred class dates for school attendance by first, second and third choice within a six-month window of available class dates from which to choose.

"For example, NCOs receiving their notification email this month will see a scheduling window for April through September of 2020," said Master Sgt. Jeremy Davey, EPME policy and program manager at AFPC. "The next window will include classes with start dates from October 2020 through March 2021 for those receiving the notification email next June."

The system saves the NCO's choices and once the self-registration deadline has passed, AFPC begins scheduling those who responded, in order of preference and availability. AFPC will then fill any remaining open seats with those eligible Airmen who did not respond to the self-registration requirement, based on rank and time-in-grade.

Davey stressed the need for NCOs to check their myPers profiles to ensure their current military email address is listed as the primary contact resource.

"If your email is current, you'll receive a message when the system says you meet the eligibility requirements for your next EPME opportunity. Simply follow the link and make your selections. If you choose not to respond, you'll be scheduled into the remaining class dates."

Some NCOs previously completed their respective Distance Learning

Course and were ineligible to attend resident EPME due to time-in-service restrictions, Davey said. Those NCOs will not receive an eligibility email as they have already completed their EPME requirement for that rank.

The self-registration system also offers a "Not Available" option due to a medical, personal hardship, mission or "other" requirement.

"We want Airmen to have the option to make decisions that make sense for themselves and their units, tailored to each individual situation and their mission needs," Hoglund said.

Airmen with questions about their EPME eligibility should contact their local Formal Training Office for assistance. If necessary, the FTO will elevate the case to the appropriate office at AFPC. For more information about EPME, visit the Enlisted Force Development page on myPers or the AFPC public website at <https://www.afpc.af.mil/Force-Development/EPME/>.

AF updates 2020 developmental education processes, policies

By Kat Bailey

AIR FORCE'S PERSONNEL CENTER
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The Air Force's Developmental Education Designation Board has implemented significant process improvements to the 2020 nomination procedures. The DEDB provides a process for active-duty officers opting to compete for intermediate- or senior-level developmental education in-residence.

"Developmental education is central to the continuum of learning that spans an officer's professional career," said Capt. Aaron Lee, chief of force development support at the Air Force's Personnel Center. "We want to provide our Airmen, their families and commanders added flexibility within the Air Force DE process."

Major policy and procedural

changes for Academic Year 2021-2022 include "Definitely Attend" distribution and "Deliberate Development" eligibility for IDE. According to Lee, all wing commanders and some senior raters for Line of the Air Force officers earned a Definitely Attend nomination last year. "Based on the success of the Definitely Attend program and attrition of those selected for IDE, the Air Force has implemented new distributions this year based on senior raters' eligible populations."

In another major policy change, officers in the LAF, health professions and chaplain categories are now eligible for IDE deliberate development, provided they meet all other eligibility criteria.

"The election for deliberate development allows officers to compete in the DEDB and if

"Developmental education is central to the continuum of learning that spans an officer's professional career. We want to provide our Airmen, their families and commanders added flexibility within the Air Force DE process."

Capt. Aaron Lee, chief of force development support at the Air Force's Personnel Center

designated, forgo having to attend school in residence," Lee said. "We operate in an unpredictable landscape which requires flexibility and responsiveness in our DE

processes. These changes provide this agility and ensure avenues are available to help us retain talented Airmen."

The nomination window is scheduled to open Dec. 16 in

MyVECTOR for officers to input their DE preferences and comments. The window is scheduled to close on Jan. 17, 2020, for officers in student status and Feb. 7, 2020, for all other officers.

Lee stated officers selected for DE will attend programs such as Air Command and Staff College, Air War College, National War College and others. "DE is designed to educate and professionally broaden individual officers into strategic leaders who can provide innovative solutions to the future complex challenges facing the Air Force," he said.

For more information about developmental education, visit myPers; click the Force Development link from the active-duty officer landing page or select the active-duty officer category from the dropdown menu and search "developmental education."

Air Force announces new name, same great content: “The Air Force Starts Here” podcast for the new year

From Air Education and Training Command Public Affairs

New year, new name, same great content on the latest episode of Air Education and Training Command's podcast series, released Jan. 2, 2020.

Renamed as “The Air Force Starts Here” podcast, Col. Erica Rabe and

David Crabtree from Headquarters Air Force A1 sit down to talk about talent management initiatives being worked in conjunction with total force development. Rabe is the chief of the AF Learning Division and Crabtree is the Force Development and Integration division chief.

Rabe and Crabtree discuss current

talent management strategy, designed to capture total force requirements and drive deliberate management that enables diversity and quality of the Air Force's collective expertise. They also go in depth on many programs regarding talent management for officers, enlisted and civilian personnel. Topics on the officer side include IDE/SDE programs, while enlisted programs include discussed include performance reports and promotion programs, as well as step promotions.

Crabtree also talks to the expanded talent management programs for civilians at the strategic, operational and tactical levels as well, including a refreshed OPM curriculum and service sponsored associate's degrees.

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



COURTESY GRAPHIC

fields and can be listened to on the government network on the AETC website, or via mobile application as well as on Apple Podcasts (iTunes). For Android or Google mobile users, the podcast can be found on their favorite third-party podcast phone application.