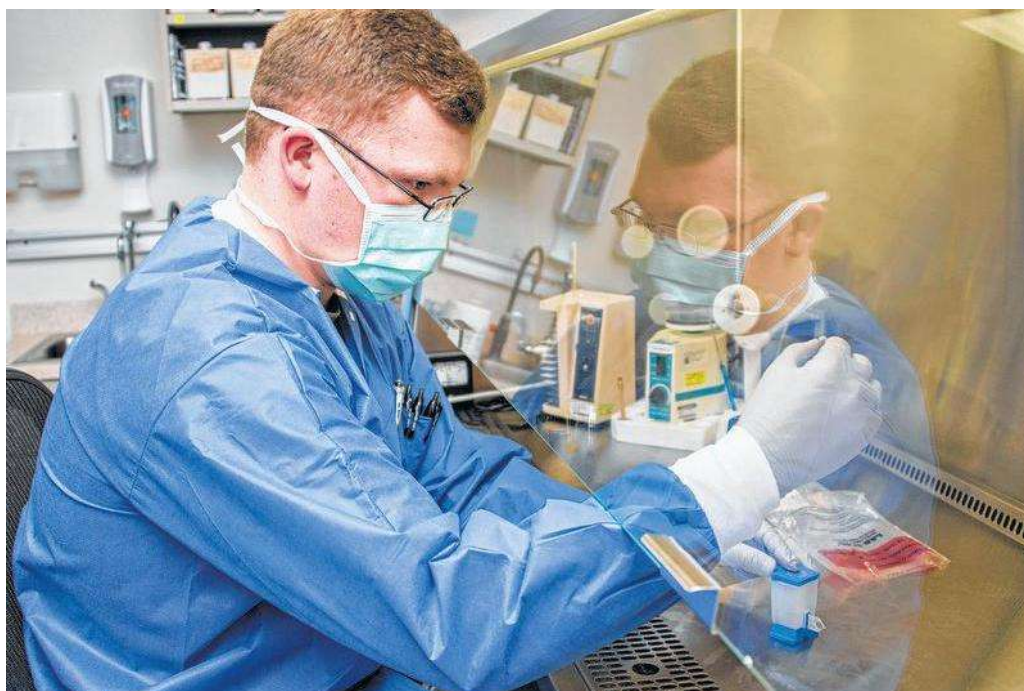


# JBSA LEGACY

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JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO

MAY 8, 2020



JASON W. EDWARDS / JASON W. EDWARDS

*Army Spc. David Pyke, medical laboratory technician, loads a patient sample for rapid COVID-19 polymerase chain reaction testing at Brooke Army Medical Center at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston April 9.*

## BAMC lends research expertise to global pandemic effort

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## Respiratory therapy students complete training at METC

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## 149th Fighter Wing assists with COVID-19 testing in Texas

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COMMENTARY

# How do we explain the experience of COVID-19 to our children?

By Master Sgt. Nick Choy  
142ND WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

I thought long and hard about how I should explain COVID-19 to my children. I settled on the truth because it's the best thing for them. But what "truth" and how much?

I have told them a lot of people are sick around the world, as well as here in our local community. I even told them that many people will die as a result of this pandemic before it is over. They responded with contemplative stares as if realizing the gravity of the moment. It was then that I had to check myself.

A lot of people have mixed thoughts and emotions about what, and how much to share with their children about the ongoing world health crisis. The thing is, children know and understand a lot more than we realize. They listen to our conversations, recognize our worried faces, see what's going on in the news on television, online and hear the reports on the car radio. And if you're anything like me, you try to catch updates throughout the day or have your car's radio station perpetually tuned to NPR wherever you go.

On what few grocery shopping trips we have ventured out for, they see the posted signs at businesses, and while they may not fully understand the impact, they get that something is just not right. In retrospect, they don't even need to read the signs — they can sense it in the air.

Never being one to hide the truth from my children, I'm convinced that my honesty and transparency will serve them well in a world that may never return to what we once thought was "normal."

Freeport Pennsylvania resident Dorothy Sellers was the same age in 1918 as my oldest child is today. In an interview with Newsday, she remembers a large tent being erected just outside her town. "Like one big circus tent," the 106-year old Sellers said.

Sellers', and others' vivid memories of that time underscore the impact the event made on these individuals. While at this writing, the world is in the first couple of months of this pandemic, it appears the repercussions — financially, emotionally, certainly legally and ethically — may last decades. I'm convinced that for our two children, the memories of this period will

last a lifetime, and may shape how they see, and live in, the world around them.

In March, Kids Health.org published an article titled, Coronavirus (COVID-19): How to Talk to Your Child. One piece of advice from the post that sticks with me is the phrase, "Focus on helping your child feel safe, but be truthful." So I knew I'd have to explain why they weren't going back to their day care (we pulled them out of The Goddard School on March 13), and why we weren't going to visit their grandparents who live just across town.

They had questions, and I did my level best to be honest and transparent with them. They had to know that their grandparents were OK and that their school, and the friends they have there, are safe. They also needed to know why there were no more scheduled play dates with friends, and why the hand-washing suddenly increased both in frequency and intensity.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has advice on what information to share with children regarding COVID-19. While it closely mirrors other online resources, they focus primarily on personal hygiene, cough/sneeze etiquette and social distancing. But while a lot of online advice for talking with your children about COVID-19 centers around "being present" and "active listening," knowing and understanding your child is a completely different ballgame.

Kate Boulduan, a reporter with CNN, said in an opinion piece published online March 17, that she found herself tongue-tied when she tried to explain to her two daughters, ages 5 and 2, about COVID-19. Her pediatrician, Dr. Bruce Brovender of Global Pediatrics, advised, "The fewer words, the better always. But always be honest," he said. "If you're not," he added, "You actually make things scarier and more traumatic because they don't know what the truth is and what [it] is not."

And we don't need scary. What we need is reassurance. Children look to their parents for that steady guidance.

Tovah Klein, director of the Barnard Center for Toddler Development at Columbia University said in the interview with CNN's Boulduan, "The most important thing across ages is that children need to know that they're going to be OK and

chances are their parents are going to be OK ... The first thing is to reassure them about that."

I'd like to think we are doing a great job of providing reassurance for our sons. My wife and I are home with them every day, so we interact together as a family on a regular, if not constant, basis. We have also committed to keeping some "normalcy" in a world that seems anything but. One small effort is to keep their academics moving forward — in the form of simple math problems and word memorization for our 5-year-old, and writing letters and numbers with our 3-year-old — things they were working on at Goddard School prior to us pulling them out in mid-March.

To complement these efforts, my wife also found a number of online resources being made available by agencies, learning institutions and other parents stuck at home during this health crisis. The saying, "It takes a village to raise a child" just went global as well as virtual.

Sure, it's not easy. The stress level ebbs and flows, and it isn't easy being cooped up in the house, or in our yard for the past two weeks. I don't see much changing in terms of getting out into the community. Any grocery trips will be done by one parent, and quickly — in and out, just as the store opens to avoid any crowds, in the interest of "social distancing." And only for absolute necessities. For the most part, our children will be stuck here, either in our house, yard, or neighborhood, with nary contact other than our immediate family.

My hope is they remember some of the disruption caused by the pandemic, and how their parents inventoried the family's emergency preparedness kit — perhaps it'll help them stay prepared for a winter storm, or the inevitable Cascadia Subduction Zone megquake expected to hit the Pacific Northwest anytime soon. But I hope they take away the good things from this experience; the board games, quality time spent with both their parents during their formative years, practical life skills taught at an early age, and the sublime intimacy only two parents who are fully present can bring.

If nothing else, I hope our children remember this time as a period when we stuck together, spent lots of quality time together, and the shared experiences we had as a family.

## JBSA LEGACY

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# Feedback Fridays

By Brig. Gen. Laura L. Lenderman  
502D AIR BASE WING COMMANDER

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

If you have a question or concern, please send an email to RandolphPublicAffairs@us.af.mil using the subject line "Feedback Fridays." Questions will be further researched and published as information becomes available.

## Installation & Facilities

**Q. Would you please address when/if Stanley Road at JBSA-Fort Sam Houston will be repaved? As a retiree, I access post facilities via Stanley Road. It has been a disgrace for a number of years.**

**A.** Thank you very much for your question. Currently there are eight significant road repair projects scheduled to occur at JBSA-Fort Sam Houston between April 2020 and February 2021.

The Stanley Road Repair Project has been awarded and is estimated to start on/about June 1, 2020 through December 2020. Our CE team will coordinate any necessary detours with impacted Mission Partners, as well as notify the community at large through Public Affairs well in advance of the phased construction efforts.

## Q. I have 3 questions for you.

**1) Can we get a new HVAC unit for building 7487 at JBSA-Lackland? The current unit blows hot air in summer and cold air winter. We work outside in the elements year-round and it would be nice to have AC/heat when we're on our lunch breaks.**

**2) We have trees that needed to be cut down/trimmed six years ago. Currently there are branches hanging over sidewalks and are a safety issue to personnel.**

**3) Is it possible to get a commander suggestion box installed at JBSA-Lackland. The previous unit commander had a Quarterly Commander's Call for us caretakers to express our concerns/suggestions. Our current commander will have been here**



**two years in June and hasn't talked to caretakers. We cannot go to Commander's Calls because of our work schedules.**

**A.** I greatly appreciate your questions and feedback. Regarding your first concern, CE has been working diligently, despite the COVID-19 impacts, to switch facilities back from Heat to Cool season configurations. The team visited your facility and made the switch from winter to summer and it should now be cooling.

Regarding the trees, our CE team funded a tree trimming task order to our current service contract vehicle, and they estimate the work to be complete before this response is published.

Regarding your last question, I recommend contacting the senior enlisted leader in your unit who can work to install a suggestion box and also help your commander schedule a Commander's Call. If you would like to discuss more, please reach out to our PA team at RandolphPublicAffairs@us.af.mil so that we can better assist you. Thank you again!

## Miscellaneous

**Q. Is it possible to waive Air Force Instruction 36-2903 on cold-weather accessories? Currently, you can only wear cold weather accessories (gloves/watch cap) with an out-**

**er garment (jacket).**

**A.** Thank you for your question! The Air Force uniform and standards are meant to present a neat, clean, safe, and professional military image.

Normally, cold weather accessories like gloves and watch caps are authorized only when wearing authorized outer garments. However, current AFI 36-2903 guidance allows for gloves to be worn with ABUs, service dress, or OCPs outdoors as an exception to the normal rule (see AFI 36-2903, p. 7.3.8).

However, the same exception does not apply to watch caps. Watch caps are authorized cold weather gear when wearing authorized outer garments outdoors only if the installation commander authorizes their use (see AFI p. 7.2.7).

When colder weather sets in, please work with your immediate chain of command to make the request so they can route the request for review and, if appropriate, approval.

**Q. I am inquiring as to current official status of JBSA on its "federal enclave" status - as in, has JBSA been ceded by the State of Texas to the federal government and was such cessation accepted by the federal government?**

**A.** Thank you for your question. JBSA is routinely recognized in United States District Court for the Western

District of Texas as being under the exclusive federal jurisdiction of the United States.

A cursory overview of the Texas State Archives provides that the State of Texas ceded jurisdiction to the United States on a number of occasions.

For instance, as early as 1881, Texas ceded jurisdiction to the United States with regard to Fort Sam Houston. However, it appears that additional cession of jurisdiction occurred as time progressed and, presumably, as Fort Sam Houston expanded its territorial boundaries.

As a starting place, some information may be found here: <https://legacy.lib.utexas.edu/taro/tslac/30070/tsl-30070.html#series2>. I would also encourage everyone to visit the state archives for more information.

**Q. It would be great if we could get regular updates in the newspaper on construction projects, particularly large ones like the new Exchange at JBSA-Fort Sam Houston. I heard a year ago that a movie theater was planned to be included in the new PX, but have no idea if that is true. I understand dates may move, but it would also be great to have estimated opening dates.**

The same goes for the recent Popeye's and Burger King project at JBSA-Fort Sam Houston. I found out it was open because a neighbor drove by and let me know. In addition, the Giant Voice is so hard to understand that every time there is an announcement, my entire neighborhood spends the next 10 - 15 minutes texting back and forth to try to figure out what it said and even then it's normally a guess.

I know my military spouse gets e-mails but that doesn't help since he is often TDY or in a meeting and can't let me know. Is there a way to let military dependents sign up to receive text alerts for Giant Voice announcements? If it's important enough to be announced on the Giant Voice, then it isn't helpful if no one understands the announcement.

**A.** Thank you very much for your suggestion! You are absolutely correct ... keeping everyone updated on major construction projects across JBSA is

FEEDBACK continues on 4

## FEEDBACK

From page 3

important.

I will ask my public affairs team to work with the Civil Engineer Group and the Executive Agents at each location to develop a construction information page for our website, JBSA.mil. This new section of the site will be

located under the Information tab at the top of the main page, and will contain an overview of the construction, any impacts to services, as well as estimated completion dates. You can expect to see this page become available sometime in the next few weeks.

Regarding the Giant Voice system, an unfortunate drawback is that you typically have to be outside in order to hear it. All individuals with network

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

One recommendation we would like to share is the Blackberry AtHoc app on mobile devices. Once the app is downloaded, you are able to access the

system using the email address that was updated in your profile. Once you've verified your email address your will need to enter the Mobile App Code: AFEMNSAETC. This will update your location for JBSA and ensure that you will receive pertinent information, such as lockdown or weather warnings. You can also add up to 10 devices to your account which allows your dependents to have access to AtHoc notifications.

# Service personnel policies help with retention during pandemic

By C. Todd Lopez

DOD NEWS

WASHINGTON — While the private sector suffers from social distancing and the effects of illnesses and forced shutdowns related to COVID-19, the U.S. military must continue to do its job.

And though it's too early to tell if challenges with employment among civilians have driven more people to military recruiting stations, one thing that has benefited is retention, the undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness said.

Speaking April 28 as part of an online discussion with the Mitchell Institute for Aerospace Studies in Washington, Matthew P. Donovan said that because of the increased social distancing and quarantine requirements, the military services have had to reduce the numbers they move through basic training.

That reduction might leave a gap in total end strength, he said, because service members might still retire or separate in the same numbers as usual.

To address that issue, Donovan said, the military services have adjusted personnel policies to get existing service members to perhaps stay longer — and many are doing so.

As the services put voluntary extensions on enlistments and voluntary extensions on retirement dates or dates of separation into effect, that is making up for some of that gap now, Donovan said.

"Folks are deciding to stay longer because they look on the outside and they say, 'You know, I've got a pretty good job now, so I want to stay,'" he added. "It's one of the things that we're tracking, but it seems to be evening out right now."

Over the long term, the military does face competition with the private sector for talent, Donovan said, and changes might need to happen in the future to



JOHNNY SALDIVAR /

*Air Force Basic Military Training graduation is held at the 320th Training Squadron's Airman Training Complex at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland April 16.*

address that competition.

One possibility, he said, is looking at existing "up-or-out" policies requiring service members to meet timed promotion milestones or risk being asked to leave the service. Some, he noted, may be happy in a particular place and in their current rank.

Other considerations include providing the opportunity for personnel to "take a pause" in their career without suffering a penalty. For example, service members might be able to leave or pause

their service to start a family and then come back at a later time and pick up where they left off.

"One of the things that we're working with the Congress is to apply more permeability, the ability to move between the different components at different times in your life," Donovan said. "It may be when you're younger and you want to start a family. And that applies to either males or females, depending on who has the career going at the time."

And many senior service members

have parents who may be aging and in need of care, he noted, and they may want to be able to take time off and return without any penalty.

Such policy changes wouldn't mean that during such a pause personnel would get promotions or advance in seniority, but "you ought to be able to come in at the same place you left," he said.

Donovan said the Defense Department is in close consultation with Congress on these types of personnel issues.



# Army veterinarians post FAQ for pet owners to Army Public Health Center COVID-19 website

By Douglas Holl

ARMY PUBLIC HEALTH CENTER

There have been a few stories recently reported in the news about the human-to-animal transmission of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. This has raised concerns with some pet owners about how to properly care for and safely interact with their pets during this time of social distancing and stay-at-home quarantines.

The Army Public Health Center has updated its COVID-19 website with a number of pet-related COVID-19 frequently asked questions.

In early April, a Malayan tiger at the Bronx Zoo in New York tested positive for SARS-CoV-2. This was the first case of an animal testing positive for COVID-19 in the U.S. and public health officials presume this large cat became mildly sick after being exposed to a zoo employee who was actively shedding virus.

Two dogs and one cat in Hong Kong, one cat in Belgium, and more recently, two cats in New York were reported to the World Organization for Animal Health after testing positive for the virus that causes COVID-19.

"In all cases, it is believed that the virus was transmitted to the animals after close contact with a COVID-19 positive human and animals showed very mild signs of disease," said Lt. Col. Sara Mullaney, an APHC veterinarian and division chief for Veterinary One Health, which works with other health professionals on health education, and the prevention and surveillance of animal, zoonotic, and foodborne diseases. "At this time, there is no evidence that companion animals, including pets, can spread COVID-19 to people or that they might be a source of infection in the U.S."

Studies are underway to investigate human to animal transmission in multiple animal species, said Col. Derron A. Alves, deputy director of APHC's Veterinary Services and Public Health Sanitation Directorate. However, most of the studies so far have involved experimental infection of animals with SARS-CoV-2 that don't always reflect natural conditions, so more studies are needed to better understand the

infectious behavior of the virus between species under normal settings.

"There are other types of coronaviruses that can make pets sick, like canine and feline coronaviruses," Alves said. "These relatively older viruses have been researched extensively, and we know they cannot infect people and are not related to the coronavirus responsible for the current COVID-19 outbreak. Army Veterinary Services is staying up to date to ensure personnel are fully informed on the latest data."

These recent cases of cats likely contracting the virus from an infected human, though rare, have reinforced the importance of following the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommendations that people who are sick with COVID-19 restrict animal contact, Mullaney said.

"Yes, the bond between people and their pets, particularly in lowering stress, increasing fitness, and bringing happiness is well documented and undeniable," Mullaney said. "We also recognize that for many, the human-pet relationship may be more comforting now especially during the COVID-19 pandemic in which physical distancing has proven helpful in the overall public health disease transmission mitigation strategy. However, in an abundance of precaution, people who are sick with COVID-19 should practice physical distancing of six feet from other people and pets."

In addition, because animals can spread other diseases to humans, it is ALWAYS a good idea to practice healthy habits around pets and other animals, such as washing one's hands before and after feeding or petting and maintaining good hygiene, said Mullaney. These healthy habits are especially important in immunocompromised or ill individuals most susceptible to contracting other diseases.

Mullaney said continuing veterinary medical care for pets, even during this pandemic, is especially important.

"Most states have deemed veterinary practices 'essential business', so limited veterinary services should still be available for your pet," Mullaney said. "Many veterinary practices are

**FAQ FOR PET OWNERS** continues on 18

# Army rolls out new app to improve PCS moves

From U.S. Army Logistics, G-4

The Army has released “Army PCS Move” — a mobile knowledge-based app designed to enhance the relocation experience for Soldiers, families, and Department of the Army civilians.

Those preparing for a permanent change of station move now have access to an organized central hub of information on entitlements, types of moves, how to plan/schedule a move, claims, and important moving information related to COVID-19.

The app also helps educate users regarding allowances and responsibilities in the event a claim for loss and/or damage needs to be filed.

“By using the app, you will become very familiar with the PCS process, your entitlements, and resources available to improve your household goods experience,” said Maj. Gen. Michel Russell, director of operations for HQDA, G-4.

The idea of the app began as part of the Chief of Staff of the Army’s people-first philosophy and the Army’s pursuit of innovative initiatives to ensure Soldiers and their families have predictable, flexible, and adaptable

quality of life programs.

Army G-4 and Combined Arms Support Command worked to develop the app prior to the COVID-19 pandemic with input from nearly 100 Soldiers, spouses, and civilians.

The Army incorporated several of their recommendations that provide an improved user experience such as a checklist to keep track of the steps to take for a successful move.

The checklist covers everything to do — from the time orders are received to after a move is complete. Highlights of the app include deadline reminders, a weight allowance calculator, instructional videos, and important documents and forms.

The primary goal of the Army PCS Move app is to educate and make information widely available to positively impact Soldiers, families, and civilians. A PCS move can be stressful; however, it doesn’t have to be if properly prepared. Equipped with this new app, those moving can be better informed, leading to a less challenging move.

The free Army PCS Move app is available in the Google Play Store and the Apple App Store.



COURTESY PHOTO

The Army has released “Army PCS Move” — a mobile knowledge-based app designed to enhance the relocation experience for Soldiers, families, and Department of the Army civilians.

## Questions on civilian leave during pandemic answered

From SAF/AAR, Office of the Administrative Assistant to the Secretary of the Air Force

The Office of the Administrative Assistant to the Secretary of the Air Force, or SAF/AAR, has answered frequently asked questions regarding civilian employee use or lose leave usage and time off award extensions during the 2019 COVID-19 Coronavirus pandemic.

**Q: During the COVID-19 pandemic, are there prohibitions on civilians earning or using certain types of leave?**

**A:** Civilians may earn: annual and sick leave, compensatory time off, compensatory time off for travel, credit hours and time off awards. There is no current service prohibition on the use of civilian leave; those decisions are made locally, based on command/organization mission requirements and the personal needs of an employee.

**Q: Does the Department of Defense plan to extend the leave year or grant automatic Restoration of Annual Leave due to the COVID-19 crisis?**

**A:** The DOD is continuing to monitor the situation and at this time, there are no changes to the end of the leave year or leave restoration policies.

Civilians may only carry 240 (CONUS) or 360 (OCONUS) hours of annual leave from one leave year to another. The current leave year ends Jan. 2, 2021. Regulations allow for the restoration of forfeited annual leave. Large scale or group restorations can be approved, based on exigency. Restoration under an exigency is only authorized if the use of the leave was scheduled in advance, in writing, and was approved for use before the start of the third biweekly pay period before the end of the leave year.

**Q: Does DOD plan to extend the time frame in which Compensatory Time Off and Compensatory Time Off for**

**Travel can be used due to the COVID-19 crisis?**

**A:** The DOD conducted research to see if there was any flexibility to modify or waive the provisions governing compensatory time off AND compensatory time off for travel given the impact the COVID pandemic is having on the DOD civilian workforce. After reviewing the statute and regulations, DOD has determined that there is no such authority to modify these provisions, even in a temporary manner. Such changes would require statutory or regulatory change.

The DOD is continuing to monitor the situation and may consider legislative relief depending on the duration of the pandemic. At this time, however, there are no changes to either of the compensatory time off policies. The current rules and authorities are as follows:

► Civilians must use their compensatory

time off within 26 pay periods or must be paid out (FLSA covered employees) or forfeited (FLSA exempt). For the latter group, if it is determined that the employee’s failure to use the time off was beyond the employee’s control, it will be paid out.

► Civilians must use their compensatory time off for travel within 26 pay periods or it will be forfeited. If forfeiture was beyond the employee’s control, an agency may extend the forfeiture deadline by up to an additional 26 pay periods (one year).

**Q: Does DOD plan to extend the time frame in which Time Off Awards can be used due to the COVID-19 crisis?**

**A:** Civilians must use their time off awards within one year of the effective date; no extensions permitted. Payout is not allowed. DOD is working on a policy to extend the expiration of time off awards awarded during 2019. More guidance on this issue is pending.



# FORT SAM HOUSTON

## Army Reserve chief sees COVID-19 fight during JBSA-Fort Sam Houston visit

By Sgt. John Onuoha  
DEFENSE DEPARTMENT SUPPORT  
TO FEMA COVID-19

Lt. Gen. Charles D. Luckey, Chief of Army Reserve and commanding general of the U.S. Army Reserve Command, visited U.S. Army North to meet with the 228-1 Urban Augmentation Medical Task Force, or UAMTF, as well as Lt. Gen. Laura J. Richardson, U.S. Army North commanding general, at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston April 28.

The general came to engage with the people managing U.S. Northern Command's Joint Force Land Component Command, or JFLCC, support to the U.S. Department of Defense COVID-19 response and learn about operations in the fight against COVID-19 by the two organizations.

"This is the fight that we are in now, and we are going to win it," Luckey said. "We are going to win it and part of that is going to be making sure that we are agile and fast to be able to respond quickly."

As U.S. Northern Command's JFLCC for the DOD's COVID-19 response, U.S. Army North supports the Federal Emergency Management Agency by deploying forces to areas of interest where the medical requirements have exceeded the capacity of the local providers. The JFLCC also monitors models to anticipate the next location that would need assistance.

"As Gen. Luckey said, we were tailored for this mission. Our strength is our mobility and the cross-section of talent we



SPC. ASHUNTEIA SMITH

*Lt. Gen. Charles D. Luckey (left), Chief of the U.S. Army Reserve and Commanding General, U.S. Army Reserve Command, demonstrates how to use an infrared thermometer gun with the assistance of Capt. Sahil Talwar (seated), 7-225th Medical Support Unit, during a town hall at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston April 29.*

bring for this specific mission," said Lt. Col. Paul Carsen, a physician assistant with the UAMTF. "We all contribute and we train. We teach each other and talk about our experiences."

The UAMTF team, made up of a wide complement of the Army Reserve medical specialists, was assembled in early April and is based at Fort Sam Houston. They are currently training and staying ready to deploy if needed.

The UAMTF consists of

about 85 personnel, including clinical and administrative staff, operational medicine, infectious disease, preventive medicine, nursing, respiratory therapist, clinical psychologists, occupational therapists, dietitians, pharmacists, and other medical subject matter experts.

Maj. Robert Berry, a dental specialist assigned to the UAMTF, used a sports reference to describe their enthusiasm to support the fight against

COVID-19 pandemic.

"There's a little bit of itchiness in the sense that, you know when you have football camp or basketball camp all summer long, you just want to play that first game," Berry said. "That's really what you're training for. Our entire purpose is for us to go down and perform in the mission that we are tasked to do."

Luckey expressed his appreciation for Soldiers' readiness and sense of pride in

**"This is the fight that we are in now, and we are going to win it. We are going to win it and part of that is going to be making sure that we are agile and fast to be able to respond quickly."**

Lt. Gen. Charles D. Luckey, Chief of Army Reserve and commanding general of the U.S. Army Reserve Command

serving their country at a time of need.

"You all should be very, very proud, and your family should be very proud of what you have already done," Luckey said.

"You are the absolute manifestation of RFS (rural fire service). If you ever see any pictures of me running around in my little RFS t-shirt, which I love, what it says is 'RFS, we are all in,' everybody is in it."

Carsen said the UAMTF is a different mission from what the Soldiers are used to, but it is what they have trained for, and they are proud to stand ready to help communities in need.

# BAMC lends research expertise to global pandemic effort

By Elaine Sanchez

BROOKE ARMY MEDICAL CENTER PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Within weeks of the pandemic's spread, Brooke Army Medical Center at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston drew on its deep bench of research expertise and joined the global race to find a COVID-19 treatment.

"We knew early on that with BAMC's strong research and academic foundation, our clinicians would want to quickly launch or join studies to help find answers," said Dr. Christopher A. Rábago, chief, Human Research Protection Office. "We took immediate action by reducing all nonessential research to enable us to focus our efforts on the pandemic."

BAMC explored every opportunity to participate in local, national and global studies and research efforts in a concerted effort to save lives and ensure the health and welfare of the force, said Air Force Col. Heather Yun, chief, Department of Medicine and professor of medicine, Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, Infectious Diseases.

"Research is truly a mission-essential activity, particularly in times like these where there is so much still to be learned about a novel and emerging infectious disease," Yun said.

## Promising treatment

Alongside military and civilian organizations, BAMC soon joined the nation's first clinical trial to evaluate an experimental treatment for the virus. The Adaptive COVID-19 Treatment Trial, or ACTT, centered on an anti-viral drug called remdesivir, formerly touted as a potential Ebola treatment.

The National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases-sponsored study enrolled more than a thousand people across the nation as it looked to determine if the antiviral drug was effective against COVID-19.

NIAID released promising preliminary results April 29 indicating that hospitalized patients with advanced COVID-19 and lung involvement who received remdesivir recovered faster than similar patients who received a placebo, according to an NIAID press release.

"As of yesterday, we didn't have a proven treatment for COVID for hospitalized inpatients and now we do," said Air Force Maj. (Dr.) David Lindholm, infectious disease doctor and BAMC's principal investigator on the remdesivir trial. "The trial started in late February, and we went from having limited information to promising results. To see the rapidity at which this has happened is unprecedented."

"This was an incredible opportunity to collaborate with national and international clinical research experts while exploring potentially lifesaving treatments," added Lindholm, who also serves as an assistant professor of medicine at Uniformed Services University



JASON W. EDWARDS

*Army Spc. David Pyke, medical laboratory technician, loads a patient sample for rapid COVID-19 polymerase chain reaction testing at Brooke Army Medical Center at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston on April 9.*

of the Health Sciences. BAMC will also have a role in NIAID's ACTT 2 trial, which is currently being designed, he noted.

Based on preliminary research on the drug, BAMC has joined an Army-sponsored force health protection clinical protocol that will enable providers to use remdesivir on a case-by-case, emergency basis to treat military personnel and protect deployed or remote service members as needed, explained Army Col. (Dr.) J. Shen-Gunther, chief, Department of Clinical Investigation.

"Doctors will be able to prescribe and use remdesivir under this expanded-access treatment protocol," Shen-Gunther noted.

The military is also looking into additional treatment options to include the use of convalescent plasma, which is blood donated by people who have recovered from the virus. Researchers are hoping this antibody-containing blood will boost COVID patients' ability to fight the virus.

While many of these research efforts are highlighted

in the news, Rábago cautioned people to keep experimental drugs and treatment trials in perspective; only a small, severely ill population will ever need them.

"Our doctors are doing normal, everyday standard of care, and patients are getting better. Not everyone needs an extraordinary intervention, but we are prepared to do that because BAMC is laying the groundwork to be ready."

## Behind the scenes

National-level studies are important; however, much of the work happens quietly and on a smaller scale behind the scenes, Rábago noted. "From documenting cases to process improvement efforts, our clinicians are doing their part every day. And their efforts are just as vital and important."

Shen-Gunther praised BAMC's participation in national and global registries, which are repositories of patient data that researchers and healthcare

**BAMC EXPERTISE continues on 9**



# New multi-food restaurant opens at JBSA-Fort Sam Houston

By David DeKunder

502ND AIR BASE WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The Army and Air Force Exchange Service has opened the doors to a new multi-fast food restaurant — that includes a Burger King and a Popeye's — to customers at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston.

The Burger King located in the new restaurant at Winfield Scott Road, across from the PXtra store, opened its drive-thru for customers April 22. That was followed by the opening of the dining area at the Burger King April 27 for to-go orders only, adhering to safety and social distancing guidelines because of COVID-19.

Eddie Devlin, South Texas Area Exchange general manager at JBSA-Fort Sam Houston, said the restaurant is taking safety precautions for both the well-being of customers and employees.

He said employees and customers at the restaurant are wearing masks, with employees also wearing gloves per AAFES requirements for the food business.

Signing and decals at the restaurant have been put into place to make sure proper social distancing is being practiced and tables have been removed from the dining room to support the grab-and-go, or to go, setup for the time being.

For now, customers will not be able to fill up their



NELSON Y. JAMES

*The Army and Air Force Exchange Service has opened the doors to a new multi-fast food restaurant that includes a Burger King and a Popeye's for customers at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston.*

beverages at the drink stations in the restaurant as employees only will be allowed to fill cups.

The opening of the Popeye's portion of the multi-fast food restaurant has been delayed until after training for Popeye's employees can be completed. Because of restrictions related to COVID-19, job trainers are not able to travel at this time.

Once the restaurant is opened to dining, it has the capacity to seat 245 customers.

The lobby and dining area of the Burger King is open for to-go orders from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m.,

Monday-Friday, and 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. Drive-thru hours are 5:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday-Friday and 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.

Devlin said customers will have an improved dining experience at the new multi-fast food restaurant because it is bigger than the Burger King and Popeye's restaurants it replaced at JBSA-Fort Sam Houston and has new furniture and up-to-date equipment.

The new Burger King is one of four Burger King restaurants serving customers at JBSA-Fort Sam Houston and JBSA-Camp Bullis. Once it opens, the new Popeye's will be the only one located at JBSA-Fort Sam Houston.

The multi-fast food restaurant was constructed on the site of the former Popeye's, which was demolished to make room for the new restaurant facility.

The Burger King housed in the new restaurant was originally located on the site of the new \$54 million JBSA-Fort Sam Houston AAFES exchange shopping center, which is being constructed across from the current exchange center at Henry Allen and Winfield Scott roads.

The site of the former Burger King was demolished and will be utilized as a part of the parking lot and the loading area for the new exchange building.

Devlin said the new 210,000-square-foot exchange center is planned to open Nov. 1.

## BAMC EXPERTISE

From page 8

professionals can use to increase understanding of medical conditions, track trends and more.

"Registries enable us to step back and look for trends that may offer a road map for a cure or different course of treatment," she said. "For example, we can look at certain populations based on demographics or condition, and make discoveries or change our technique."

Looking to the future, BAMC has joined a study launched by the Uniformed Services University's Infectious Disease Clinical Research Program called Epidemiology, Immunology and Clinical Characteristics of Emerging Infectious Diseases with Pandemic Potential, or EpICC-EID. This multicenter study follows patients with suspected or a confirmed case of COVID-19 for six months to better understand the varying characteristics of the virus, Lindholm explained.

### 'In our wheelhouse'

Spurred by this national emergency, research and subsequent approvals have been expedited through the system. Fortunately, BAMC, with the second-largest research portfolio in the Department of Defense, has some experience in swiftly and safely navigating the process.

"Being a Level I trauma center, we are well-versed in working with the Food and Drug Administration and dealing with emergency-use treatments," Rábago

said. "We are able to apply this knowledge locally while also providing guidance and insight to other military treatment facilities. Research is in our wheelhouse."

Along with COVID trials, over 300 studies and 150 clinical trials, which can't be halted due to patient safety or continuity, are ongoing at BAMC. In the weeks ahead, Rábago expects there will be a host of new studies and process improvement proposals from across the organization aimed at better understanding the pandemic and outlining best practices for the future.

"One example is a multidisciplinary new project, led by Dr. Lindholm, which looks at our drive-thru COVID screening operations and how to best refine testing criteria for optimal capture of COVID cases," he said. "That will be highly important not just for current operations, but also for future training and implementation."

While the pandemic is unprecedented, the collaboration taking place at BAMC is not, Shen-Gunther noted. "The collaboration between specialties and departments — infectious disease, public health, pharmacy, lab, emergency medicine, to name just a few — has been incredible, but we collaborate every day of every year."

"I can't speak highly enough about the researchers and clinicians working so diligently behind the scenes to aid our community and our nation," Rábago agreed. "I'm very proud to be a part of this incredible team of professionals who are making their mark on science and in history."

BAMC's focus on research is vitally important on

multiple levels, Yun said.

"If we are in a war against the virus, medical research is the intelligence operation that enables us to stay agile and one step ahead of the enemy," she said. "These are the studies that will drive innovation, change practice, and ensure that we have all the tools available to provide the best care for our patients, now and in the future."

# Respiratory therapy students complete clinical training at METC

By Lisa Braun

MEDICAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING  
CAMPUS PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Respiratory therapists the world over have been called to the front lines in the battle against the novel coronavirus, known as COVID-19. Preparing to join the fight are 27 military respiratory therapist students in class 19-015 who graduate training May 7.

The Army/Navy consolidated respiratory therapist program teaches students the skills necessary to function as competent respiratory therapists in critical care areas. The 32-week program is divided into two phases of training.

The first 16-week phase is the didactic portion conducted in the classroom and simulation laboratories at the Medical Education and Training Campus, or METC, at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston.

Training involves classroom instruction and hands-on practice in the program's mock intensive care units that utilize realistic, hi-fidelity manikins that simulate ICU patients. The manikins can be programmed to present a variety of vital signs and symptoms, as well as talk, cough, and make other sounds.

Phase 2 is the clinical training at the Brook Army Medical Center, or BAMC, where students apply their classroom and lab training in a variety of supervised clinical settings that involve hands-on patient contact.

Students rotate between different departments to gain more in-depth experience and knowledge of respiratory issues, to include hospital wards, intensive care units, pulmonary function laboratory, pulmonary rehabilitation, and a sleep laboratory.

It was toward the end of



LISA BRAUN

*Petty Officer 2nd Class Jawaun White (right), a phase 2 student, and Petty Officer 1st Class Gina Martinez (left), a phase 2 Instructor at the Medical Education and Training Campus Respiratory Therapist program, prepare to fit a neonatal oxygen mask on an simulated infant in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit.*

phase 2 clinical training for respiratory therapist class 19-015 that medical facilities began to postpone non-invasive and non-urgent procedures in support of the national COVID-19 response. Many departments in the students' clinical rotations at BAMC were either reducing or no longer seeing patients.

The new policy created a dilemma for the students who needed to complete their clinical rotations to graduate.

Like many educators who were compelled to think outside the box as schools began closing, the respiratory

therapist clinical instructors sought to create a workaround to this unique situation.

"The instructors wanted to ensure that training didn't cease during the COVID-19 pandemic," stated Staff Sgt. Joshua Dixon, non-commissioned officer in charge of respiratory therapist phase 2 clinical training.

So, they came up with a plan. The students would return to METC to complete their clinical portion in the simulated ICU labs.

"With the reduced capabilities and to ensure the safety of our students, we chose

to utilize the phase 1 mock ICUs at METC in order to test the students' abilities as newly trained respiratory therapists."

Dixon explained that to comply with social distancing guidelines, the class was split into smaller groups and each student assigned a specific time to conduct the simulation training.

Eight labs, or stations, were set up, each with a different scenario and staffed by the phase 2 clinical training instructor who normally teaches that scenario. One student was assigned to each of the stations and had 10 minutes

**"It was well put together by the instructors. This training helped me with the application of skills that respiratory therapists possess in lieu of seeing live patients."**

**Sgt. Jasmin Fabre, respiratory therapy student**

to work the scenario. When time was up the students rotated to the next station. It took 80 minutes to complete all the scenarios.

During the rotation, students were expected to troubleshoot a ventilator, assess a trauma patient, participate in a code blue emergency, attend a mock pre-term neonatal delivery and resuscitate the newborn, assist with a bedside bronchoscopy, intubation and extubation of a patient, and perform non-invasive ventilation. A COVID-19 scenario was also incorporated.

"It was well put together by the instructors," expressed Sgt. Jasmin Fabre, one of the RT students in the class, who thought the scenario simulations were worthwhile. "This training helped me with the application of skills that respiratory therapists possess in lieu of seeing live patients."

It is unclear whether phase 2 training will return to normal for the next class, but Dixon is hopeful that his team will be prepared.

"If restrictions are not lifted we will discuss how we will go about training during this pandemic," he stated. "We'll be ready."



# Survey says JBSA fire suppression capabilities rated exemplary

By Lori A. Bultman

502ND AIR BASE WING  
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Fire departments and civil engineers at Joint Base San Antonio recently received good news as a result of an extensive survey conducted by the Insurance Services Office, or ISO, an advisory organization that serves the property and casualty insurance industry nationwide.

The ISO inspects communities and assigns each a Public Protection Classification, or PPC, rating from 1 (the best) to 10 (the worst), based on how well they score on the ISO Fire Suppression Rating Schedule, according to the Texas Department of Insurance, or TDI.

To determine a community's rating, ISO inspectors assess all available resources and services in a community that might affect their fire protection ability.

"The items ISO inspectors evaluate to determine PPC ratings are water distributions systems, fire department manpower and equipment, fire alarm facilities, 9-1-1 communications, fire prevention programs, and training," said Mike Peña, assistant chief of operations, 902nd Civil Engineer Squadron, JBSA-Fort Sam Houston and JBSA-Camp Bullis.

Last year, the Texas State Fire Marshal Office began requiring inspections for any community that had not been inspected in the last 10 years.

"The ISO inspection itself is not a compliance requirement for the Air Force or the Department of Defense, but it does allow the department to measure against its local community fire departments



PHOTO BY SENIOR AIRMAN GWENDALYN SMITH

*Firefighters from Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph extinguish a fire during training April 11, 2018 at the Camp Talon fire training grounds on JBSA-Randolph. The training takes place quarterly and offers an opportunity for new firefighters to become more confident while fighting fires.*

and mutual aid partners," said Scott Ridenour, 502nd Installation Support Group deputy fire chief. "It also allows us to identify areas where we can improve our service capabilities."

Prior to this inspection, the rating for JBSA-Randolph and JBSA-Lackland was 5, and that rating was given over 10 years ago without an inspection, according to Ridenour. Previously, no ISO rating was assigned to JBSA-Fort Sam Houston or JBSA-Camp Bullis.

So, the inspection scores received in March were welcome news.

"For JBSA Fire, including JBSA-Fort Sam Houston, JBSA-Randolph and JBSA-Lackland, the new PPC rating is 2, and JBSA-Camp Bullis came in right behind at a 3," Peña said, noting the

slightly lower rating at JBSA-Camp Bullis is due to its remote location and available resources within the given aggregate response times.

"Only 350 Departments nationwide are an ISO 1, and only 1,500 departments nationwide have a rating of 2 or higher," he said. "So, as you can see, we fall in with the best of the best."

The new and improved ratings are beneficial to JBSA and the local community for several reasons.

According to the ISO, most U.S. insurers use PPC information as part of their decision-making process when determining what businesses to write, or issue policies to, coverages to offer, or prices to charge for personal or commercial property insurance.

"When a fire department receives its ISO rating from the Texas Department of Insurance, State Fire Marshal's Office, the lower the ISO rating is, the more beneficial it is to the businesses in the community because those establishments have to purchase commercial or residential fire protection insurance policies," said Gary Rake, 902nd CES assistant chief for fire prevention.

"On JBSA installations and throughout the DOD, we have businesses, such as AAFES, banks and credit unions, privatized housing and a few others that these ratings will be beneficial to because, the lower the ISO rating, the better rates they may obtain on their fire insurance policies," he said. "This includes renter's insurance purchased by the service members and retirees residing in JBSA's privatized base housing."

The PPC program and ratings also help fire departments and public officials plan, budget, and justify improvements, according to TDI. But, they said, the most significant benefit of the program is its effect on fire losses.

"The better the fire protection, the lower the fire losses," according to TDI.

"What this ISO rating means to JBSA and our mutual aid partners, like Universal City, Live Oak, Converse, Schertz, Cibolo, Selma, Windcrest, and Seguin, is that we maintain compliance with national governing standards," Rake said. "We are highly educated, highly trained, physically fit, and always ready to meet the needs of the public we serve!"

Peña also applauds the JBSA team, who responded to 1,594 alarms in 2019, for their hard

work earning the ratings.

"These ratings are a true testament to the level of fire protection we can provide to our local and surrounding communities," he said. "This should assure our community that we here at JBSA Fire and Emergency Services are highly trained and have some of the best firefighters ready to protect them."

The 902nd CES commander is also very proud of the achievement.

"The ratings are not only a reflection of the level of Fire and Emergency Services support delivered to the DOD's largest joint base, but they are also a reflection of the 220 firefighters who stand watch 24/7/365, and their commitment to the JBSA mission and greater San Antonio community," Lt. Col. Joseph A. Tortella said. "The JBSA firefighters exemplify the core values of our Air Force and all services represented across the installation — the recent ISO ratings are validation they stand among the best-of-the-best! They truly embody our motto, 'First In, Last Out!' and I'm crazy proud to be part of their team!"

Fire Chief Mark Ledford, 902nd CES, echoed the sentiment.

"The rating is a reflection of what an awesome team we have here at JBSA; water supply systems are available to support operations and well trained and motivated dispatchers do an awesome job alerting our team across the installation," he said.

"They are an all-hazards response force able to mitigate incidents, from combating structural fires to assisting with the delivery of a new baby. I couldn't be prouder of the team and those that lead them."

# LACKLAND

## 37th TRW Airman-In-Training saves fellow trainee

By Rachel Kersey

37TH TRAINING WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Airman Antonio E. Lopez received the Air Force Achievement Medal for Outstanding Achievement April 23 for performing the Heimlich maneuver, saving a fellow Airman's life.

Lopez, a Career Enlisted Aviator in technical training, was awarded the medal during a ceremony held in a hangar against the backdrop of a MODEL plane. All attendees wore masks and practiced social distancing as they honored their fellow service member.

At 11 a.m. April 15, the Airborne Missions Systems Operator Class 20012 students brought their To-Go meals from the dining room to the classroom, where they began eating their lunch. As the meal commenced, the classmate seated beside Lopez, Airman Terrell Long, began choking on his food and gasping for air.

Long attempted to clear his airway many times and also tried to wash the obstruction down with orange juice, but the food was so firmly lodged in his throat that his juice escaped up and through his nose. At this point, it was obvious to all watching that Logan was not able to clear his airway on his own. Lopez immediately stood up and



Airman Antonio E. Lopez received the Air Force Achievement Medal for Outstanding Achievement, a Single Action Achievement Medal April 23 for performing the Heimlich maneuver, saving a fellow Airman's life.

began performing the Heimlich maneuver. According to Lopez, it was more instinct than logical reasoning.

"It was a pure adrenaline reaction," Lopez said. "I saw him having trouble and I didn't really understand what I needed to do. I just started with the

Heimlich and it turns out that's exactly what I needed to do. I didn't really think. I just acted."

The abdominal thrusting removed the obstruction and cleared Long's airway, enabling him to breathe and saving his life. Lopez said he learned the Heimlich

maneuver in a course at community college in 2015 before he joined the Air Force.

Long and Lopez have been together since their days at Basic Military Training, where they were in the same flight.

"He's been right next to me. He picked the bed right across from me," Lopez said. "He was there through everything and we're on the same airframe now."

They will both be working on the E-3 airframe and are both Airborne Mission Systems Operator 3-level graduates. They have recently completed in-processing at the same location, Tinker Air Force Base in Oklahoma. They've had each other's back since the beginning and will continue to have each other's back in the future, Lopez said.

"This is incredibly rare for a student to receive a decoration," said Major Jordan Clark, commander of the 344th Training Squadron, speaking to a group of airmen at the ceremony. "Don't let the day get past you without understanding how important and how big of a deal this is for Airman Lopez and our team, as he is part of the family."

Airman Long pinned the medal on Lopez.

"We got each other," Lopez said. "Always," Long said.

## LRS installs plexiglass shields to prevent spread of COVID-19

By Rachel Kersey

502ND AIR BASE WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Back on March 17, Joint Base San Antonio logistics personnel installed plexiglass shields in the area surrounding the driver's seat of vans transporting service members and eligible Department of Defense ID cardholders around JBSA bases. In addition, as of April 1, all 22-passenger survey buses also had plexiglass installed to shield the drivers. The plexiglass replaces plastic shields, forming a more protective barrier

against the spread of COVID-19.

Ronnie Davis, JBSA-Lackland ground transportation site chief, 502nd Logistic Readiness Squadron, came up with the idea for plexiglass to replace plastic in early March. The concept came about as a result of a group discussion about the most effective way to safeguard public health.

"From a disinfecting standpoint, it's a lot easier to disinfect something that's a solid surface, instead of plastic," said Tech. Sgt. Cody Fleege, 502nd LRS noncommissioned officer in charge. "It's also a lot more transparent so that

passengers can be seen while the drivers are operating the bus, while still having that physical barrier between the driver and the passengers while they're loading."

The plexiglass is held shut by magnets, which increases the protection. In addition, plexiglass is a fairly flexible and sturdy material; it wouldn't shatter like regular glass does, nor would it become dangerous shards that could injure the drivers or passengers.

To streamline the process, LRS took measurements of the area around the driver's seat first. Then they made

cardboard mock-ups to know how much plexiglass would be needed.

"They used the cardboard mock-up as a stencil to cut the plexiglass," Fleege said. "That way, we would cut down on waste and we would know it would work the first time because we already had a cardboard version."

The plexiglass was put into the vehicles which have been labeled green, yellow, and red for healthy people, symptomatic people or people who have been exposed to COVID-19, and people who have themselves tested positive for COVID-19, respectively.



# 149th FW assists with COVID-19 testing in Texas

By Airman 1st Class Andrea Lee  
149TH FIGHTER WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The Air National Guard members of the 149th Fighter Wing are actively assisting communities across Texas with COVID-19 screening, most recently in Dumas, Texas, April 23, and in Friona, Texas, April 24.

Texas Gov. Greg Abbott established

these Mobile Testing Teams to increase testing capacity and help slow the spread of the coronavirus.

The Texas Military Department, in tandem with state partners, established these testing facilities to provide drive-in COVID-19 screenings to communities not served by a county health department, allowing Texas to curb the spread of COVID-19.

Second Lt. Monica Hutchinson and Staff Sgt. Hailie Anderson, Air National Guard members with the 149th Fighter Wing, finish up their day at a community-based testing facility in Dumas, Texas, April 23.



Air National Guard members with the 149th Fighter Wing prepare to administer tests at a community-based testing facility in Dumas, Texas, April 23.



PHOTOS BY AIRMAN 1ST CLASS ANDREA LEE

From left: Senior Airman Josh Escarèno and Tech. Sgt. Andrew Guevara, Air National Guard members with the 149th Fighter Wing, provide test site procedures to drivers and passengers of incoming vehicles April 24 in Friona, Texas.



Air National Guard members with the 149th Fighter Wing break down a testing station at a community-based testing facility in Dumas, Texas, April 23.



# AFIMSC helping Air, Space Forces remain ready

By Malcolm McClendon

AIR FORCE INSTALLATION AND  
MISSION SUPPORT CENTER PUBLIC  
AFFAIRS

The Air Force Installation and Mission Support Center is leading the effort to keep installations mission-ready as the Air Force and Space Force continue operations while contending with the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We have 77 installations, eight major commands, two direct reporting units, headquarters of the Air Force and Space Force, including personnel in the Pacific, Europe and the Middle East, conducting missions who rely on us every day," said Maj. Gen. Tom Wilcox, AFIMSC commander. "We have to keep the mission going."

Wilcox said AFIMSC's response to COVID-19 was swift and necessary to keep the Air and Space Force lethal and ready. The center continues to provide all infrastructure and base support, such as security forces, resourcing, child care, MWR programs, oversight of facilities, sustainment and modernization, MILCON projects and contracting tools.

"We're still performing our mission 100%," he said. "Our

mission hasn't stopped or been reduced at all. I would say, in fact, the mission has increased. We've had to respond to this in a different way, and our Airmen have to come up with innovative and creative ways to ensure the mission goes on."

As the Department of Defense rolled out its response to COVID-19, AFIMSC energized its primary subordinate units and detachments to support commanders and installations across the Air and Space Force with guidance, funding solutions and expertise.

The AFIMSC budgeting team that manages the \$7 billion installation and mission support portfolio worked a nearly \$2 billion funding request for COVID-19-related costs and potential infrastructure stimulus support, said Lt. Col. Laurie Lanpher of the Resources Directorate.

"The first part of the request covered costs associated with installations' COVID-19 response, and the other part asked for a list of unfunded requirements that, if funded, could help stimulate the economy," she said. "The infrastructure of our installations is important to maintain readiness no matter what challenges we

face. That infrastructure is also a good investment for the American taxpayer."

The day-to-day mission in AFIMSC's Financial Operations Division remains largely unchanged; however, the volume and scope have increased tremendously, according to Kurt Schmidbauer, financial operations supervisor. The division coordinates, interprets and distributes travel, military and civilian pay, and banking and disbursing guidance on behalf of the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Financial Management and Comptroller.

"Our team is working nearly 24 hours a day to ensure guidance is validated and released to the field as quickly as possible," Schmidbauer said.

The civilian pay team also provides support to civilian pay operations for installations that have closed or reduced operations. Team members coordinated with the Air Force Accounting and Finance Office on a policy to open current, plus two future weeks of time periods, in the Automated Time Attendance and Production System, or ATAAPS. The modified policy gives commanders and civilian employees flexibility to ensure payments without

delay.

The Air Force Installation Contracting Center, one of AFIMSC's primary subordinate units, immediately engaged all commands to ensure they had the latest operational acquisition and contracting guidance.

"We made it possible for contracting officers to have emergency acquisition authorities at their disposal to meet mission needs, while also taking measures to protect our workforce," said Brig. Gen. Alice Trevino, AFICC commander. "These special authorities include, but are not limited to, increases in the micro-purchase and simplified acquisition thresholds, exceptions to full and open competition due to unusual and compelling urgency, and exceptions to administrative requirements."

For example, the AFIMSC Installation Support Directorate responded by providing commanders the flexibility to modify custodial contracts.

"It was apparent that the current frequency of cleaning in a portion of facilities may not be sufficient to effectively minimize the possibility of transmitting the virus," said Lt. Col. Jon Jones, facility operations deputy branch chief. "The majority of

installation facilities on Air Force bases are cleaned at a frequency of two or three times a week. We addressed this gap by offering leadership, on a temporary basis, the latitude to decide if increased custodial cleaning frequencies are needed in their facilities."

Installation Support Directorate leadership also began using the Defense Collaboration Services platform to conduct COVID-19 teleconferences with mission support group leaders across the force. The four sessions to date provided installation and mission support portfolio information with experts on hand to answer questions, discuss solutions and offer support.

"AFIMSC is standing by to answer questions, and we're ready to provide assistance to installations," said Col. Seth Frank, deputy director of the Installation Support Directorate. "We recommend bases work through their respective AFIMSC detachments with any requests or questions. That will ensure AFIMSC leadership is aware of the challenges facing bases and can provide the right amount of resources and tools to best support and resolve issues."

## #RiseUp initiative focuses on mental health, resiliency at JBSA

By 1st Lt. Kayshel Trudell

37TH TRAINING WING PUBLIC  
AFFAIRS

Members of the Wilford Hall Ambulatory Surgical Center Mental Health Clinic and 737th Training Group Military Training Consult Service mental health team spent May 4 motivating others with words of encouragement for base personnel and community members as part of a mental health and resiliency effort during the COVID-19 pandemic at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland.

These morale posters were a way that these motivated Airmen could do their part to remind the JBSA team that we are in this together, that they matter, and to thank them for all they are doing to keep the team strong during these unprecedented times.

Volunteers in and out of uniform posted at the Luke East Gate and at Wilford Hall entrance to offer pleasant greetings to passersby throughout the morning.

"After worldwide tragedies related to COVID-19, the world

faces new challenges, and military and civilian members at JBSA-Lackland are continuously supporting critical missions every day," said 1st Lt. Amanda Mansour, Mental Health Flight Staff Clinical Social Worker at the 59th Medical Operations Squadron, and organizer of the effort. "During this time of uncertainty and stress, taking care of your mental health is extremely important. These signs are simple reminders that the Mental Health Clinic and other base resources are here to support you. You matter,

you are appreciated and we will get through this together."

Events like these and many others are taking place across all JBSA locations, as well as throughout the Air Education and Training Command, in an effort to rally together as a team and to support one another during COVID-19.

"There are so many incredible stories we are already hearing about, individuals and units across AETC stepping up, yet I know that each and every member of our community has a story of adapting and overcoming

during the COVID-19 pandemic," said AETC Command Chief Master Sgt. Julie Gudgel. "Whether you are serving on the front lines or overcoming challenges while working from home, I want to encourage you to share your story with us so we can recognize your extraordinary efforts."

Learn more about the #RiseUpAETC initiative here, <https://www.aetc.af.mil/News/Article/2153690/riseupaetc-campaign-highlights-positive-stories-of-aetc-airmen-and-community-me/>



# Second Air Force Command Chief guest hosts Airmanship 200

By Danielle Knight

SPECIAL WARFARE TRAINING WING  
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The senior enlisted leader of Second Air Force guest-hosted the newly established Airmanship 200 live stream with a Special Warfare Training Support Squadron military training leader Apr. 28 to discuss the topic of identity.

During the live stream, Chief Master Sgt. JoAnne Bass and Tech. Sgt. Christopher Traina spoke on their military experiences and how they identify as an Airman to viewers that tuned into the live stream.

“The values, heritage and pride you get for being part of the United States Air Force really start to cement into who you are,” Bass said. “I’ve had the opportunity to work with some of the best...and I think that is what’s made me proud of the Airman I am.”

Airmanship 200 is a standardized development program that houses courses that allow instructors to start an Airman’s day by covering topics such as the profession of arms, character, life skills and how to be tactically ready and technically relevant. The goal of the program is to shape Airmen who are technically proficient at their job, but also well-rounded in other areas.

“The addition of focused, professional development in the technical training environment helps our Airmen build a sense of identity,” Traina said. “This is a way our peers and leadership can implement mentorship and growth early on in an Airman’s career... that may not happen until well into your first duty location or Airman Leadership School.”

At the Special Warfare Training Group, MTLs have

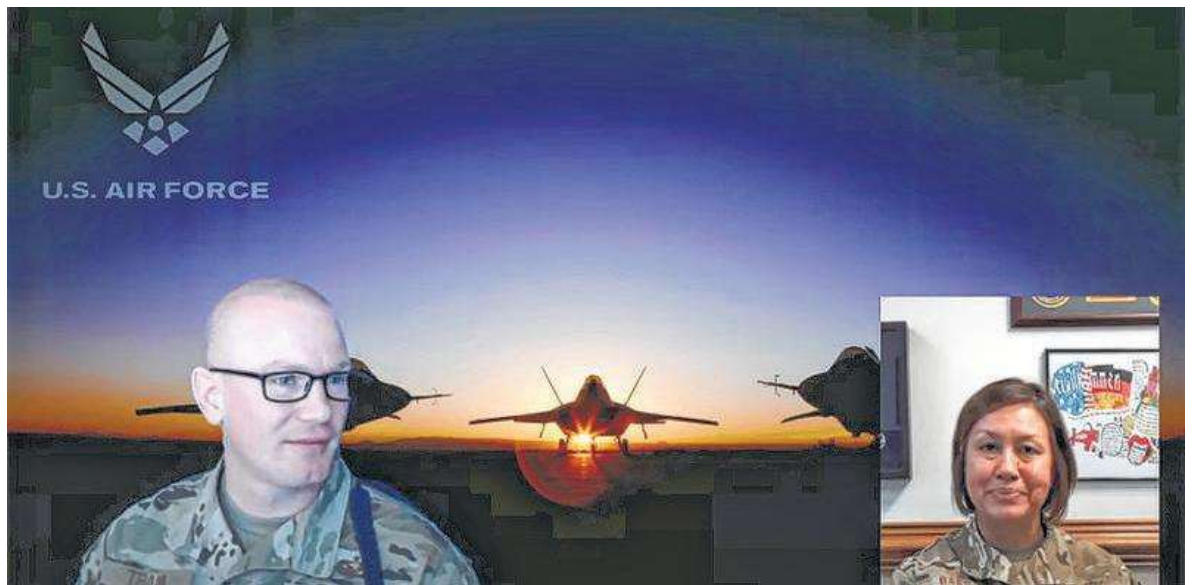


PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY DANIELLE KNIGHT

Chief Master Sgt. JoAnne Bass (left) and Tech. Sgt. Christopher Traina hosted the newly established Airmanship 200 livestream with a Special Warfare Training Support Squadron military training leader Apr. 28 to discuss the topic of identity. The livestream was created in an effort to continue to meet mission requirements for Airmen in tech training during COVID-19.

pursued new methods to maintain readiness and continue professional development training. One question they faced immediately was: how is discussion facilitated without a physical classroom setting? The answer was found with something the Air Force has utilized for events, ceremonies and graduations, but not as often for learning environments: live streaming.

As the Air Force finds a “new normal” during the COVID-19 crisis, Airmen have found new ways to continue meeting mission requirements while social-distancing and self-isolating. One requirement for Airmen in technical training is to complete a specific number of Airmanship 200 lessons, depending on their length of time in training,

before going to the First Term Airman Center.

“The restrictions of movement and stay-at-home orders reduced my ability to do my ‘normal’ job,” said Traina, who volunteered to pioneer the Airmanship 200 livestream in order to take care of his fellow MTLs.

Providing a live stream gave him a way to support those MTLs that were still working to take care of Airmen in the dorms during a time of restriction of movement and isolation, Traina said.

Airmanship 200 was initially rolled out by the 81st Training Group at Keesler Air Force Base in 2018 and was standardized by April 2019, aiming to build upon lessons learned in basic military training and support Airmen’s continued development during

the time spent in the First Term Airman Center and beyond.

“This type of professional development helps Airmen find a deeper connection and meaning to their service, hopefully resulting in a greater sense of job satisfaction and commitment to the Air Force,” Traina said. “We need to try to build personal connections to our Airmen so they know this isn’t a ‘job’ but a lifestyle — and their leaders are here to support their success.”

Traina’s creative efforts were met with support from his supervisors and command team.

“Our training team has leaned forward by finding creative solutions while maintaining the safety of our students,” said Lt. Col. Aaron Lemke, Special Warfare

Training Support Squadron commander. “Tech Sgt. Traina has championed this effort to continue offering our students the means for professional development, and perhaps even more importantly, has provided another avenue for them to connect with each other socially while maintaining physical distancing.”

Airmanship 200 can be found via YouTube live stream Tuesdays at 9 a.m. at <https://bit.ly/Airmanship200>. Prior recorded live streams can be found on the Airmanship 200 YouTube Channel.

*Note: YouTube is currently not accessible while on the network or while connected to VPN. Access the site through a different computer or after disconnecting from VPN.*

# RANDOLPH

## Virtual ceremonies provide templates for 12th FTW

By Robert Goetz

502ND AIR BASE WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

As social distancing and shelter-in-place efforts intensified in April as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, two 12th Flying Training Wing units at Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph kept in step with public health directives by conducting the wing's first virtual ceremonies.

On April 3, Lt. Col. Corey Hogue assumed command of the 558th Flying Training Squadron at Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph from Lt. Col. Eric Bissonette during a virtual change of command.

Two weeks later, on April 17, combat systems officer students earned their wings during the 479th Flying Training Group's initial virtual graduation at Naval Air Station Pensacola, Florida.

Both events are serving as templates for the wing's future ceremonies during the pandemic.

"The 559th Flying Training Squadron is our next change of command, tentatively scheduled for June 12," said Ben Faske, 12th FTW public affairs chief. "They are currently looking at using a

similar model to the 558th's change of command if the current restrictions on social distancing are still in place."

The 558th FTS' change of command was conducted by video recording ahead of time, Faske said.

"Both incoming and outgoing commanders recorded messages that were edited into the video, which allowed for appropriate social distancing," he said. "It is important to note that the mask guidance requiring mask use within 6 feet had not yet been handed down; otherwise the video could have been recorded live if everyone used face masks."

Social distancing guidelines, including mask wear when 6 feet of distancing cannot be established, will continue to be followed for all changes of command and graduations, Faske said.

Although the 558th FTS change of command was not a live event and family and friends were not invited to watch live, the video was recorded and released in a closed group on YouTube, he said.

The 479th FTG's CSO virtual graduation, which included comments by the group's commander, Col. Charles McElvaine, was also recorded and can be

seen on the group's Facebook page.

That graduation could also set a standard for 12th FTW units during social distancing, Faske said.

"The 558th FTS will be conducting their Basic Sensor Operator Course and Undergraduate Remotely Piloted Aircraft Training Course graduations using some of the best practices from the 479th," he said.

One of those best practices was a cyclic flow of graduates into the conference room maintaining spacing and exiting through the west doors, said Capt. Clarence Abercrombie Jr., 479th FTG CSO instructor and public affairs representative.

Setting up tablets in the hallways to show the livestream was another best practice, Abercrombie said.

"This allowed students to hear and see Col. McElvaine's opening comments and also aided in showing them how the ceremony was supposed to flow while they waited," he said.

Other best practices were giving students time to address their families after receiving their aeronautical orders, and presenting distinguished graduate and other awards at the same time as

aeronautical orders and having the proffer place items on the table in front of the graduates, which supported distancing guidelines and allowed a smooth flow for the ceremony.

By addressing their families, students felt connected to them, Abercrombie said: "The livestream also allowed family members to instantly respond back, which let them feel connected as well."

The 479th FTG set up the conference room two days prior to the event to test equipment and allow time to work contingencies, Abercrombie said.

In his post on the 479th FTG's Facebook page, Abercrombie said the ceremony provided graduates with a meaningful experience while meeting social distancing standards.

"It was necessary to consider limiting contact, 6-foot spacing and overall safety," he said. "However, it was equally necessary to ensure that the celebration of this moment accurately reflected its impact on our Air Force and our newest CSOs. We are glad that we were able to achieve that goal, but more importantly that we could share this occasion with all of those family members who couldn't physically join us today."



## Keeping both community, aircraft safe

*Wearing a face mask and gloves, Gaylon Davis, 12th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, provides routine maintenance by inspecting the wing of a T-6 Texan aircraft April 7, 2020, at Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph.*

PHOTO BY BENJAMIN FASKE



# Virtual hiring fair recruits STEM talent

By Marisa Alia-Novobilski  
AIR FORCE MATERIEL COMMAND

In conjunction with the Air Force Personnel Center, the Air Force Materiel Command held a virtual hiring fair April 23, to fill open science, technology, engineering and mathematics positions across the command.

More than 1,000 candidates applied to participate in the hiring event, which sought applicants for 700 positions at AFMC centers and installations across the U.S. Hiring officials were available to conduct on-the-spot interviews and had the ability to leverage direct hire authorities to extend job offers to candidates on the same day.

"While our efforts over the past several weeks have been focused on balancing mission with taking care of our Airmen during the COVID-19 pandemic, it's also important we keep our talent acquisition wheels in motion," said Bill Snodgrass, AFMC Director, Manpower, Personnel and Services.

This was the third virtual hiring event held by AFMC over the past year, part of an ongoing effort to leverage in-person and online recruiting events to reach a large number of candidates

**"Talent acquisition is evolving and even before social distancing driven by the current national emergency, AFMC was looking to leverage the benefits of online civilian hiring fairs to improve the speed, effectiveness and presence of our recruiting practices."**

Keri Poole, AFMC human resources specialist

for open opportunities.

"Talent acquisition is evolving and even before social distancing driven by the current national emergency, AFMC was looking to leverage the benefits of online civilian hiring fairs to improve the speed, effectiveness and presence of our recruiting practices," said Keri Poole, a human resources specialist at AFMC and event coordinator.

Interested applicants were required to pre-apply to attend the virtual event, allowing officials to review resumes and qualifications prior to issuing invites to promising candidates. Of the 620 applicants selected, 75 percent participated in the six-hour event, with more than 115 AFMC subject-matter-experts and hiring officials online to interact with the attendees.

Upon accessing the online platform,

participants transitioned between virtual booths to discuss job opportunities with various representatives. Almost 1,600 "chats" between job applicants and various AFMC members occurred throughout the day. While some interviews were conducted during the event, the primary goal was to line up high caliber talent for interviews to be conducted during the next two weeks.

"The virtual platform's ability to cast a wide net while gathering resumes and talking to diverse talent across the nation was beneficial. However, the real indicator of our success will be how many job offers result from the event and how many are accepted," said Snodgrass. "The SMEs and hiring officials were fully engaged online, ensuring our candidates understood our needs as a command and the

benefits available to them as civilian Airmen.- We're optimistic that we will have new members join the AFMC team as a result."

Though positions were available at center locations across the AFMC footprint, the majority of job openings were at the Air Force Sustainment Center and Air Force Life Cycle Management Center locations across the U.S. Electronics and systems engineering positions comprised the bulk of the positions available, though talent was sought for openings in the areas of general and mechanical engineer, computer science, operational research analysis and more.

"AFMC is a great place to work, and we need to continue to recruit and attract STEM talent as a fifth-generation Air Force needs fifth-generation talent," said Snodgrass. "I am grateful to the hard work of our AFMC hiring teams who worked closely together with the Air Force Personnel Center to make this event successful and anticipate holding additional virtual hiring events in the future."

To learn more about civilian opportunities at AFMC and across the Air Force, visit the Air Force Civilian website at <https://www.afciviliancareers.com/>.

## FAQ FOR PET OWNERS

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implementing social distancing and curbside procedures during this time. It's best to call ahead to see what procedures your veterinary clinic is following to minimize human-to-human transmission, and what veterinary services are being offered."

Owners who are sick with COVID-19 should not take their pet to the veterinary clinic themselves. They should find an alternate caregiver to take the pet in or contact their veterinarian to see what telemedicine options or alternate plans might be available, said Mullaney.

"It's important to try to identify an individual who is willing and able to care for your animals if you contract COVID-19 or have any other health emergency," Mullaney said.

Animal owners should have an emergency kit prepared, with at least two weeks' supply of food and medications, as well as copies of all animals' medical records. Animals should be properly identified with ID tags, microchips, brands, and rabies/license tags as applicable. In the event your animal needs to be transported, the appropriate crates/carriers and/or

trailers should be identified and available.

"You should also have a list of people authorized to make medical decisions about your animals, if different from the caregiver," Mullaney said. "Be sure to communicate your instructions for different levels of emergency medical care your animals may need in your absence. If you cannot identify an individual to care for your animals, there may be boarding facilities, local animal shelters or animal control facilities that can provide temporary emergency shelter. There is no reason at this time to permanently surrender pets to animal shelters out of concern for COVID-19."

Mullaney says social distancing and stay-at-home orders doesn't mean leave out exercise, which is good for human and pet health.

"Keep up your walking routine, but ensure you following physical distancing for your dog, just as you would for yourself," Mullaney said. "It's also best to avoid dog parks and other public places where a large number of dogs and people gather."

For cat owners, the CDC recommends that cats be kept indoors when possible to prevent their interaction with other animals or people. Keeping cats indoors is also good practice regardless of COVID-19 to minimize their risk of injury or exposure to standard feline diseases.

Information regarding COVID-19 is being rapidly produced and disseminated as efforts continue around the world to understand all aspects of this virus and the disease it causes, Mullaney said.

All that information can become overwhelming and even misleading at times so it's important to stay tuned to reputable sources such as the CDC, U.S. Department of Agriculture and American Veterinary Medical Association to help navigate topics related to animals and pets. Those organizations bring together experts from across the spectrum to carefully weigh the scientific evidence and how to apply it practically for the continued safety and welfare of animals and people. Installation veterinarians can also be a source of information for pet owners.

Answers to many pet owners COVID-19 frequently asked questions can be found under the heading "pets" at <https://phc.amedd.army.mil/topics/campaigns/covid19/Pages/Frequently-Asked-Questions.aspx>.

The Army Public Health Center focuses on promoting healthy people, communities, animals and workplaces through the prevention of disease, injury and disability of service members, military retirees, their families, veterans, civilian employees and animals through population-based monitoring, investigations and technical consultations.