

JBSA LEGACY

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JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO

SEPTEMBER 4, 2020



LT. COL. MARTIN O'DONNELL

Connie Thigpen (right), Baptist Medical Center Intensive Care Unit director, discusses the hospital's COVID-19 patient care with Lt. Gen. Laura J. Richardson (left), commanding general of U.S. Army North (Fifth Army) and Joint Force Land Component Command, during the general's visit to Baptist Medical Center hospital, located in San Antonio July 21.

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Food safety month

Commissaries raise customer awareness of foodborne illnesses

By Kevin L. Robinson
DEFENSE COMMISSARY AGENCY
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Although the COVID-19 pandemic has upped our public safety awareness, consumers cannot afford to lose track of the precautions recommended to help protect against foodborne illnesses.

That's the message the Defense Commissary Agency is reinforcing as it observes Food Safety Education Month in September, joining the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the U.S.

Department of Agriculture-Food Safety Inspection Service, the Department of Health and Human Services and other organizations.

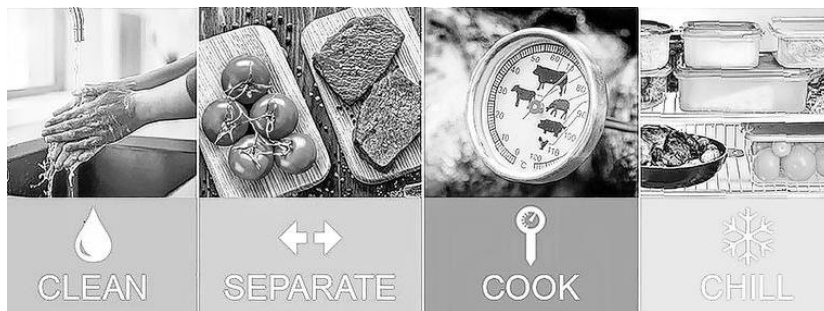
"Of course, we want our customers to be vigilant in guarding against the spread of COVID-19. However, we also need to remain aware of those foodborne illnesses such as E. coli and salmonella that can also be potentially harmful, even deadly," said Army Lt. Col. Angela M. Parham, director of DeCA's Public Health and Safety. "So it's important that we continue paying attention to the basics of foodborne illness prevention."

Every year, foodborne illnesses strike an estimated 48 million Americans, resulting in 3,000 deaths and nearly 130,000 hospitalizations, according to the CDC.

That's why military veterinarians and store food safety specialists inspect food sources, deliveries and products on the commissary shelves.

However, that's only half the fight, Parham said. Commissary customers have a responsibility to protect their families and themselves from foodborne illnesses and it starts the moment they exit the store.

Bacteria and viruses remain the leading causes of food poisoning, according to



COURTESY GRAPHIC

FoodSafety.gov. Thanks to awareness campaigns from the CDC and USDA, such as "Be Food Safe," commissary customers have the guidelines they need to help lower the risk of foodborne illnesses when they leave the store.

The "Be Food Safe" message is the basis for the following safe handling techniques:

Clean

- ▶ Wash hands with warm soapy water for 20 seconds before and after handling raw meat, poultry or seafood.
- ▶ Wash utensils, cutting boards, dishes and countertops with hot soapy water after preparing each food item and before you go on to prepare the next item.
- ▶ Food contact surfaces can be sanitized with a freshly made solution of 1 tablespoon of unscented, liquid chlorine bleach in 1 gallon of water.

Separate

- ▶ Separate raw meat, poultry and seafood from other foods in your grocery shopping cart and in your refrigerator.
- ▶ If possible, use one cutting board for fresh produce and a separate one for raw meat, poultry and seafood.
- ▶ Never place cooked food or foods that are eaten raw, like salads, on a plate that previously held raw meat,

poultry or seafood.

Cook

Cook meats to a safe minimum internal temperature as measured with a food thermometer — 145F for pork, 155F for beef, and 165F for poultry products and all ground or cubed meats.

Chill

- ▶ Chill food promptly and properly.
- ▶ Refrigerate or freeze perishables, prepared foods and leftovers within two hours (or one hour if temperatures are above 90 degree Fahrenheit).
- ▶ Parham reminds commissary shoppers to bring a cooler during a long trip to and from the store to help maintain proper food temperatures.

"The trip home can end up being a source of foodborne illness if you're not careful," Parham said. "Also, don't forget to wash your hands before, during and after handling food — that will help prevent a lot of problems."

- ▶ A few more tips for handling food safely can be found at www.homefoodsafety.org:
- ▶ Use hand sanitizer to wipe hands and the handle of the shopping cart.
- ▶ Clean hands before sampling food. Either bring moist towelettes or carry a bottle of hand sanitizer to use

before you taste.

- ▶ If you use reusable grocery bags, wash them often.
- ▶ Check food packages for holes, tears or openings. Frozen foods should be solid with no signs of thawing.
- ▶ Check for a loose lid on jars whose seals seem tampered with or damaged. Report a defective cap to the store manager.
- ▶ Avoid buying cans that are deeply dented, bulging, rusting or have a dent on either the top or side seam.
- ▶ Use plastic bags to separate raw meat, poultry and seafood before placing them in your cart to avoid contaminating ready-to-eat foods like bread or produce.
- ▶ When shopping, select perishable foods last before checkout and group them together.
- ▶ Take groceries home immediately and store them right away. If on an extended trip, bring a cooler with chill packs for perishable foods. Perishable foods must be refrigerated within two hours and only one hour if it is over 90 F outside.
- ▶ Keep perishable foods out of the hot trunk in summer and place in the air-conditioned car instead.

For more on food safety awareness, go to the CDC website or Eatright.org.

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Feedback Fridays

Brig. Gen. Caroline M. Miller
502D AIR BASE WING AND JOINT BASE
SAN ANTONIO COMMANDER

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

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

Q. Several months ago, I provided feedback regarding the lack of handicapped access at the JBSA-Randolph fitness center. The response was that the civil engineers would evaluate the situation.

Since nothing has been done as of yet, I'm curious to know if there are any plans or funding for this. After researching the Americans with Disabilities Act, it is evident that the gym is non-compliant, actually since 2013.

Respectively, and with our handicapped Vietnam vets in mind, some type of effort needs to happen. I would like to keep this local, rather than register a complaint as prescribed in the ADA. Thank you for your attention.

A. Thank you for your inquiries regarding Rambler Fitness Center ADA access. Our civil engineers addressed the ADA access issue as a result of your previous inquiry. The maintenance team found that the ADA access door activation system was inoperable and the doors were repaired in June.

Due to COVID-19, fitness center use restrictions were implemented to limit access during the day to

active duty, active reserves and National Guard personnel. As a result, the doors are currently inactive.

Gym staff at the fitness center can allow authorized personnel to enter by activating the doors, when necessary. Please let us know if there are further ADA access issues that require action.

Q. Why is the 343rd Training Squadron not allowed to leave the squadron while off duty? Other squadrons are phasing up and allowing their Airmen to wear civilian clothes and actually receive perks for working hard and not seeing their families since leaving for Basic Military Training.

Our Airmen are working long hours during day shifts and cannot even visit the gym or the big BX. Why? The gym in their squadron closes at 2 p.m. and is not open on the weekends.

The military constantly addresses that Airmen need to be in shape and the Air Force says they are a "priority" and are concerned about morale, yet the commander keeps taking away privileges and provides absolutely zero incentive to work and train hard.

Get with the program, Air Force!

A. Thank you for submitting your concerns to the Feedback Friday forum. The specific concerns you are referencing are from a 343rd Training Squadron Policy Memo, Non-Prior Service Technical Training (NPS TT) Student Guidelines during COVID-19 Public Health Emergency, which was last updated July 10, 2020.

Like the rest of the Air Force, the 343rd TRS must weigh the risk COVID-19 presents to its Airmen and its mission capability. The squadron's priorities during this

pandemic are to protect the force and to preserve the training pipeline.

Guided by those priorities and informed by legal, medical, public health, and training subject matter experts, proactive measures are being taken to reduce risks of COVID-19.

Limiting student travel around base to a smaller footprint or smaller time windows reduces the risk that a student will be exposed to COVID-19 from a source outside the training environment.

The health of our students and staff is our first priority and the safety of their training environment is critical to mission success. We take the morale and welfare of our team and student population seriously.

Students with questions or comments about these measures are encouraged to speak with their Military Training Leaders, first sergeants, or chain of command.



COURTESY GRAPHIC

New Army aviators to incur 10-year obligation

By Thomas Brading
ARMY NEWS SERVICE

Starting in October, commissioned and warrant officers selected for initial entry flight training will be required to serve at least a decade once they become an Army aviator, according to an all Army activity message published Aug. 12.

The new policy doesn't include Soldiers currently in training, said Chief Warrant Officer 5 William S. Kearns, aviation and officer policy integrator for the Army's G-1 office. "We're looking at troops selected for flight training in the fiscal year 2021 and beyond."

The change comes as the cost and requirements for aircraft have increased across the board, Kearns said.

"There are many complexities in these advanced helicopters, which translates to increased costs in-flight hours, maintenance, and training requirements," Kearns said. "They require more time for people to gain experience. There's the technical expertise that goes along with it as well. In the end, it's the Army getting a good return on the investments."

These investments set the Army



SPC. ANGEL RUSZKIEWICZ

Soldiers pilot a CH-47 Chinook helicopter during a training flight over the city of Erbil in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, May 23.

apart from all the branches, he said. For example, it's the only service that allows people to go into flight training with only a high school degree. "You don't have to have a college degree to apply or be accepted into it," he said.

The policy also applies to Army Reserve and National Guard components, but their obligated service will remain part-time, he said. "The service obligation begins on the date an officer attains an aeronautical rating of

Army aviator or is removed from attendance, whichever is earlier."

Before Army Secretary Ryan D. McCarthy signed a memorandum for the change in June, the Army had bumped up its incentive pay for aviators in January. The pay raise was the first in two decades to help balance pilot numbers at all ranks and stay competitive with the civilian market.

Across the force, warrant officer recruiters are actively on the lookout to

fill their ranks.

"We want as many applications as we can, so if anybody has any questions, be sure to contact that warrant officer recruiting team," Kearns said. "It's a great time to apply to become a pilot, and [Soldiers] can get in with a high school degree. There are some other prerequisites they have to meet. But, we want as many people as we can get to apply."

"We are very, very interested in seeing more applications," he added.

This call to action comes amid challenging times, with many civilian airlines running on reduced flight schedules, said Chief Warrant Officer 5 Jon Koziol, the Army's command chief warrant officer to the aviation branch, during a Facebook live-stream in June.

"This global pandemic has made unprecedented impacts on the world's economies and our way of life," Koziol said. "Some of the impacts may have directly affected Soldiers' ability to pursue their goals of working for the commercial sector, especially the airlines."

For anyone interested in becoming a warrant officer, individuals should contact a warrant officer recruiter or visit the Army's Warrant Officer Recruiting website.

New ID cards being issued for military family members, retirees

By David Vergun
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE NEWS

The Department of Defense began issuing Next Generation Uniformed Services Identification Cards July 31, the first time since 1993 that changes to the card have been made.

The complete transition to the new ID card, is targeted for January 2026, said Michael Sorrento, director of the Defense Manpower Data Center. In the meantime, the current cards will continue to work. In an effort to conserve resources and limit the impact on ID card issuance facilities, cards will not be reissued solely for the purpose of obtaining the Next Gen USID card.

Sorrento discussed the new ID cards that are for military family members, retirees and other eligible cardholders. The new ID card transitions the current laminated paper card to much more durable plastic material, similar to that used for the common access cards used by military members and DOD civilians, he said.

Also, the new ID cards feature enhanced security measures that will reduce the likelihood of them being compromised, Sorrento said.

Although the new ID cards are available now, Sorrento said, only about 20 Real-Time Automated Personnel Identification Card System sites currently offer the card because new equipment is required to produce them, and

that takes some time.

All RAPIDS sites worldwide likely will have the new equipment by the end of the year, he said. To reduce foot traffic — particularly in light of the COVID-19 pandemic — Sorrento said that unless a card is about to expire, it would be better to wait until next summer to get a new one. Even then, he added, it would be good to call ahead first to schedule an appointment.

The DOD is looking at future capabilities that can be provided with the new ID cards, Sorrento said. For example, users of the card may eventually be able to go online and order a card through a proper vetting process and have it directly distributed to them by mail, rather than sit



COURTESY GRAPHIC

A sample of the Next Generation Uniformed Services ID card.

in a RAPIDS office and wait for a card to be made. The underlying technology could support greater and greater

capabilities for a long time to come, he added.

More information can be found on [http:// www.cac.mil](http://www.cac.mil).

Update to law helps service members with auto, home lease payments

Amendment allows service members affected by stop-movement order to terminate auto or housing leases without 30-day notice

By Devon Suits

ARMY NEWS SERVICE

Lawmakers recently passed an amendment to the Service Members Civil Relief Act, or SCRA, allowing all service members to terminate an auto or housing lease agreement without a 30-day notice due to a Defense Department stop-move order.

Changes to the SCRA are retroactive, giving families an opportunity to request reimbursement for rental payments accrued during the previous stop-move order, said Melissa Halsey, legal assistance policy division chief for the Army's Office of the Judge Advocate General.

The recent impact of COVID-19 abruptly halted

DOD movements from March until June, forcing permanent-change-of-station orders to be placed on hold or canceled. Having secured new housing before a PCS, some Soldiers may have been inadvertently locked into multiple lease agreements, she added.

During normal conditions, service members need to provide the 30-day notice — or an additional month's rent — to end their lease with deployment orders that exceed 90 days or for a PCS move, Halsey said.

With no immediate provisions under the SCRA during the recent stop movement, Army legal officials encouraged Soldiers and families to reach out to their

property managers to resolve a leasing dispute. If Soldiers failed to fix the issue, they could then work with a legal assistance attorney, all while maintaining both rental agreements until resolved, Halsey said.

"Congress recognized that some service members had difficulty using the SCRA during the COVID-19 outbreak," she said. "The amendment to the SCRA will help address that problem."

Improved SCRA

Service members who chose to pay additional rent during the previous stop-move order can try to recoup those costs.

For example, an Army family could have been scheduled to PCS for their next assignment by April 1, Halsey said. In preparation for their big move, the family secured a rental property in February near their new installation. But when the

stop-move order went into effect in March, their PCS move was canceled.

After receiving legal guidance, the family may have tried to work with the new landlord to cancel or delay the lease, but their request was denied, she said.

Worried about the effect a contested debt may have on his career, the service member may have decided to pay for both properties until they ultimately were able to move later in the year, Halsey added. Under the new amendment, the Soldier could request that the landlord repay the rent for the home that went unoccupied due to the stop-move order.

Alternatively, if the service member chose not to pay for the home he was unable to occupy during the stop-move order, a landlord may be seeking restitution for the unpaid amounts. The SCRA

change makes it clear that property managers can't recoup those unpaid amounts.

Practically speaking, she added, service members should be aware that it may be difficult for some property owners to comply with the new SCRA change and pay back a military family, given the financial stress many are facing due to COVID-19.

Individuals should contact an Army legal representative to find out more information, Halsey said. Personnel currently facing a lawsuit or collections resulting from unpaid housing amounts during the stop movement should also contact their legal office for support.

"The SCRA is designed to help Soldiers proactively," Halsey said. "It is there to ensure service members aren't at a disadvantage when subject to the strict requirements of military life."

SAMHS releases Labor Day operating hours

From 59th Medical Wing Public Affairs

The San Antonio Military Health System has released its Labor Day weekend operating hours for Sept. 4-7.

For Sept. 4, the Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland (Wilford Hall Ambulatory Surgical Center) and JBSA-Randolph medical treatment facilities will have limited services available.

Primary Care Clinics (Family Practice, Internal Medicine, Pediatrics, Behavioral Health Optimization Program, Flight Medicine, and WOMC), as well as the Gateway Bulverde Family Practice Clinic (located at the intersection on Highway 281 and Overlook Parkway), will remain open for same-day prescheduled appointments. Limited specialty care clinics will be open for prescheduled appointments. Walk-in services

will not be available.

JBSA-Lackland's (WHASC) and JBSA-Randolph's main pharmacies will be open for same-day appointment services Sept. 4. The JBSA-Gateway Bulverde Pharmacy, JBSA-Lackland and JBSA-Randolph satellite pharmacies will be closed. Consider bringing in prescriptions or ordering refills for pick up prior to Sept. 3, since the day prior to and the day after a holiday are usually extremely busy and results in longer than normal wait times.

All clinics and pharmacies will be closed Monday, Sept. 7, in observance of the Labor Day Holiday.

San Antonio Military Health System's COVID-19 screening and testing sites will adjust hours of operation to the following:

► **BAMC's site**, located in the first-floor parking

garage, will be open Sept. 4, from 8 a.m. to noon. The JBSA-Lackland site will be closed.

► **JBSA-Lackland's site**, located in the first-floor parking garage, will be open Sept. 7 from 8 a.m. to noon. The BAMC site will be closed.

► **JBSA-Randolph's site** at the Randolph clinic will be closed Sept. 4-7.

For medical emergencies, dial 911 or visit the nearest Emergency Department. As a reminder, the JBSA-Lackland Family Emergency Center and Brooke Army Medical Center Emergency Departments are open 24 hours a day.

For non-urgent medical questions, the Nurse Advice Line offers nursing advice by phone, chat, or video and can be reached at 1-800-TRICARE (874-2273). Non-active duty patients can visit the nearest Urgent Care Center without a referral for urgent medical concerns.

'Connect to Protect' during Suicide Prevention Month

By Steven Mayfield

JBSA-LACKLAND VIOLENCE PREVENTION INTEGRATOR

September is Suicide Awareness and Prevention Month and this year's theme is "Connect to Protect."

During this month, and throughout the year, it is important to take the time to reach out to connect with and protect our Wingmen who may be in need or experiencing "life circumstances" that may be causing them a level of distress. With the current operational posture relating to COVID-19, these "connection" efforts become vitally important.

According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, there is an average of 123 suicides each day in the United States and suicide is the 10th leading cause of death in America. More alarming is the fact that suicide is the second-leading cause of death for persons ages 25-34, and the third-leading cause for youth ages 15-24.

If we look at those numbers through "an Air Force prism," it indicates exactly what we are seeing in the service ... suicide is primarily impacting our young Airmen.

However, there are also suicidal instances involving Airmen (active duty, Reserve, Guard and civilians) who are above the age of 35. The phenomenon of suicide is non-discriminatory with respect to age, as well as other identity-related categories.

When an unfortunate suicide event occurs, it may have wide-ranging effects on the health of others, particularly in a military unit environment where camaraderie and "team spirit" foster strong and binding ties.

Families, acquaintances, friends, and Wingmen typically experience myriad emotions associated with the unfortunate event, such as shock, anger, disappointment, guilt, and depression. This is where

the resiliency skills we've learned along the way help in coping with unfortunate situations/circumstances — such as a suicide or suicide attempt — that we may experience.

All of us are encouraged to remember and emphasize the important role of establishing "solid connections" and how those connections play a significant role in preventing suicides at Joint Base San Antonio, across the Air Force, and in our society as a whole.

We all should be encouraged and motivated to "check our connections" to our families, friends, co-workers, and the JBSA community. Additionally, we should ensure we are "connected" to sources of prevention information, suicide prevention resources, medical treatment facilities, and other local/national support organizations.

Although suicide is a serious public health problem, it is preventable. Suicide is a tragic end to a life, a permanent solution to a temporary problem.

If you personally become aware of a teammate/Wingman who is experiencing "negative life circumstances" and you feel they may be considering harming themselves, here are tips to ensure their safety:

► **Ask direct questions.** Even though it may be hard to do, ask a person directly if they're thinking about suicide.

► **Listen to their answers and be a good Wingman.** People with suicidal thoughts often feel alone, so be sure to let them know that you care deeply about what they have to say. Persons who are having suicidal ideations may feel as though no one is listening.

► **Initiate a "safety check."** If you're truly concerned for a Wingman's well-being, try to remove anything they could use to harm themselves, such as alcohol,

drugs, medications, weapons, and even access to a car. Further discussions/actions can now take place within a "safe environment".

► **Share what you know (or learn) about the situation.** Let your Wingman know that you will help them formulate a plan that includes involving a professional who can assist and help them access the many services/helping resources. DO NOT agree to "keep this a secret".

► **Ensure they access professional help.** Remember the ACE (Ask, Care and Escort) model. At this stage, it is important to "escort" your Wingman to the helping resource.

During this month and every month, educate yourselves in the ways you can identify those who are at risk for suicide and then get involved. Every life is a precious gift and every Airman is a valuable contributor. As Wingmen, we must connect to protect.

In addition to local resources, **persons with concerns can contact the Military Crisis Line at 1-800-273-8255, then press 1, or access an online chat by texting 838255.**

Connect to protect ... your Wingman and Battle Buddy is depending on you.

There are also two events for Suicide Awareness and Prevention Month in September.

► **Virtual JBSA 5K Run for Life, Sept. 1-30.** Run, walk or crawl your 5K at any point during these dates. Post your success on the Facebook group at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/314257323270765>. There is no registration. Copy and paste the link and request to join the group. Complete your 5K at any location that suits you.

► **Suicide Awareness Wounded Warrior Ambassador Webinar.** Join the webinar at 10 a.m. Sept. 16 to learn about this ambassador's story of hope for the future. More details to come.

FORT SAM HOUSTON

ARNORTH task forces on COVID-19 front lines

By Lori A. Bultman

502ND AIR BASE WING
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Service members from across the country belonging to U.S. Army North have converged on San Antonio as part of Urban Augmentation Medical Task Forces activated to support hospitals during the COVID-19 crisis.

U.S. Army North is U.S. Northern Command's Joint Forces Land Component Command responsible for the Department of Defense's response to COVID-19.

The first UAMTF to arrive in San Antonio, designated UAMTF-627, began treating patients at five local hospitals July 9.

Capt. Sarah Kopaciewicz, a U.S. Army nurse from Madigan Army Medical Center at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington, is one of those working hard to assist San Antonio medical personnel with their overload of coronavirus cases.

"We are working as critical care nurses, taking care of critically ill COVID-19 patients," she said. "Our nights are busy between managing patient care and communicating with their family members or loved ones."

Kopaciewicz said San Antonians have made her feel welcome in their facilities.

"The staff at Christus Santa Rosa Hospital Westover Hills has been very welcoming toward us," she said. "They have made it easy to ask questions regarding equipment, patient movement, and hospital policies."

The importance of the mission to those accomplishing



LUIS DEYA

Zahra Garza (right), executive director at the Sky Tower, United Health System, speaks with from left: Command Sgt. Maj. Phil K. Barretto, senior enlisted advisor U.S. Army North and Lt. Gen. Laura J. Richardson, commanding general of U.S. Army North (Fifth Army) and Joint Force Land Component Command, during a visit at Metropolitan Methodist Hospital, San Antonio, Texas, July 22.

it is clear.

"This mission has proven that the military can work anywhere, anytime, and in any environment to provide the best care for those in need," Kopaciewicz said.

Charles Reed, vice president and associate chief nursing officer at University Health System, is thankful the task force members arrived when they did.

"Seeing how patients overwhelmed healthcare systems around the world is something that you expect on the news or in the movies, it's not something that you would

ever expect to happen in your own community," he said. "We were under a lot of stress during the surge, and the military staff was able to come in and provide immediate relief to our COVID-19 units."

Reed said local hospitals were in urgent need of assistance when the task force members started arriving.

"We needed a lot more staff to care for COVID patients for several reasons: higher nurse-to-patient ratios, 'gatekeepers' to ensure staff was donning and doffing personal protective equipment appropriately, and more beds

converted to intensive care unit care," he said. "This higher level of acuity and the need for additional beds was not only stressful for the nursing staff but for the whole medical team, including physicians, respiratory therapists and technicians."

The military staff members provided support to the entire healthcare team quickly, Reed said.

"The ICU and acute care nurses were able to assimilate into our environment and become part of 'our' team," he said. "We had a 40 to 50 percent increase in the number

of ventilated patients, with the same number of respiratory therapists, and all working mandatory overtime. The military respiratory therapists provided immediate relief, allowing us to reduce the number of vents per therapist and giving us greater coverage in both the ICUs and in the acute care units, or ACUs."

The military licensed vocational nurses were also important to getting COVID-19 patients cared for, Reed said. "The LVNs helped us by taking over the oxygen therapy, assessments and breathing

ARNORTH continues on 16

BAMC Troop Command female commanders set example for Women's Equality Day

By Lori Newman

BROOKE ARMY MEDICAL CENTER
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

As the nation celebrated Women's Equality Day Aug. 26, Brooke Army Medical Center Troop Command marked a milestone. For the first time, the battalion and all five companies are commanded by women.

"It is an exciting time to be a female leader in today's Army," said Army Lt. Col. Meghan Muller, BAMC Troop Command commander. "I am so grateful for the strong, dedicated and driven women who have preceded me."

"The Army and the Army Medical Department's culture has continued to evolve in a positive and encouraging manner," she added.

"Over the last 18 years, I have been incredibly lucky to have had leaders, both male and female, that developed me and challenged me with tough missions, tasks and assignments. These opportunities were confidence-builders. There's really nothing women cannot accomplish in the Army these days."

Army Capt. Veronica Waites-Moore, Headquarters and Headquarters Company commander, agrees. She said being a company commander as a nurse is "awesome."

"As a nurse, generally, you are in charge of your patients, maybe a team and maybe even the floor," Waites-Moore said. "But, being a company commander, especially here at BAMC, I have more than 325 people in my company of all different (careers) and backgrounds. I love it. I think it's an amazing experience."

Originally from Oxnard, California, Waites-Moore began her Army career in 1993 as a motor transport operator.

"I wanted to join the Army to get away from the city I was in,"



JASON W. EDWARDS

From left: Brooke Army Medical Center Troop Command leaders: Capt. Arie Emde, Capt. Audrey Mosley, Capt. Veronica Waites-Moore; Lt. Col. Meghan Muller; Capt. Tamara Johnson-Caswell; 1st Sgt. Carrie Hurst and 1st Sgt. Melinda Griffin gather for a photo outside Troop Command Headquarters, Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston, Aug. 27. For the first time, the battalion and all five companies are commanded by women.

she explained. "My uncle, Steve, was in the Army, so I thought, 'I think I'll join the Army.' It just seemed like a way to get away."

Waites-Moore enjoyed driving trucks for the first 16 years of her Army career, but always wanted to become a nurse after caring for her grandmother who was terminally ill when Waites-Moore was a teenager.

"Originally I only planned on staying in the Army for three years and then going to college to become a nurse," she said. "My first duty station was at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, in the 82nd Airborne Division and I just loved it. As I started maturing in the Army and the Army started changing a lot, I started thinking it was a good time for me to look back into being a nurse."

Waites-Moore went to college, applied for the Clinical Nurse

Transition Program, and was commissioned at Fort Sam Houston in 2012.

"Capt. Waites-Moore is all-around impressive," Muller said. "She's exceptionally proficient technically, she's poised and confident, has the presence of a leader, and she understands people. I attribute her high degree of competence to her life experiences as a noncommissioned officer, nurse, mother and now company commander. She teaches me things all the time and I am incredibly lucky to have her on 'Team Titans.'"

Both Waites-Moore and Muller agree it is important to have strong female role models.

Waites-Moore said her role model was her first-line supervisor at 82nd Airborne Division, now-retired Army Command Sgt. Maj. Joleen

Walker. "She is probably the most amazing female Soldier I have ever met, setting standards for what females could do and how they can lead."

As for Muller, she said she has benefited from many female role models including Brig. Gen. Wendy Harter, former BAMC commanding general and current commanding general, Regional Health Command-Central, and Air Force Col. Heather Yun, BAMC deputy commander for medical services, among others.

"One of my female mentors is retired Army Col. Kimberly Smith," Muller added. "She is an Army Nurse Corps officer who served over 30 years. We deployed together in support of OIF with the 28th Combat Support Hospital out of Fort Bragg, North Carolina."

In retirement, she works as a

performance improvement lead for the Joint Trauma System, but back in April, she volunteered to return to active duty in support of our COVID response mission here at BAMC."

"Each one of the company commanders and first sergeants brings their own, unique set of talents to our organization," Muller said. "I think we are a really competent team right now. My goal is for us to be continuously improving processes, providing realistic training and leader development opportunities and enabling the direct health care mission. We are working hard to earn our Soldiers' trust and confidence."

"It makes me feel proud, motivated and inspired," she added. "It also makes me want to work harder to ensure I don't let them down and I keep the positive momentum going."

MEDCoE 2020 Best Warriors adjust to virtual, higher-level competition

By Tish Williamson

U.S. ARMY MEDICAL CENTER OF
EXCELLENCE PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Challenges associated with the 2019 coronavirus disease, or COVID-19, mean adjustments for the U.S. Army Medical Center of Excellence, or MEDCoE, 2020 Best Warrior Noncommissioned Officer, or NCO, and Soldier.

Staff Sgt. Michael Nguyen, the MEDCoE 2020 Best Warrior NCO, and Spc. Jesse Estrada, who is representing the MEDCoE in the Soldier category, competed in this week's higher-level competition.

The U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, or TRADOC, hosted the first-ever TRADOC Best Warrior virtual oral board Aug. 25 in lieu of an in-person competition.

Competitors are evaluated on a written exam, the virtual board and scores provided by their home station commands for in-person events like the Army Combat Fitness Test, a ruck march, weapons qualification and land navigation.

Nguyen, a 68E dental assistant assigned as an instructor in the NCO Academy at the MEDCoE said being named the MEDCoE 2020 Best Warrior in the NCO category was a great honor and he was not deterred from entering the competition this year despite the need for social distancing and use of masks for most events.

"It was truly a unique experience to compete in an environment that wasn't traditional," Nguyen said. He said that all of the control measures put in place by the MEDCoE leaders, planners and staff, made him feel at ease about the risk and allowed him to concentrate on the competition. "I don't regret



JOSE RODRIGUEZ

Command Sgt. Major Clark Charpentier (left) presents Staff Sgt. Michael Nguyen, the U.S. Army Medical Center of Excellence 2020 Best Warrior Noncommissioned Officer, with his official award during an informal awards ceremony at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston.

taking on the challenge to compete in the COVID environment. I think we do ourselves a disservice if we immediately say no to something just because it is more difficult."

Estrada, a 68 W combat medic assigned to MEDCoE's Training Support Activity, or TSA, also decided not to back down from the challenge. He was notified late last week that, as the 2020 MEDCoE Best Warrior runner-up in the Soldier category, he was being asked to represent the MEDCoE in the TRADOC board to replace the first place Soldier, Spc. Tristan Chandler, a 68W combat medic also assigned to the TSA.

Chandler, the official MEDCoE 2020 Best Warrior Soldier, developed respiratory symptoms, though he tested negative for COVID-19. Out of an abundance of caution,



JOSE RODRIGUEZ

Staff Sgt. Michael Nguyen, the U.S. Army Medical Center of Excellence 2020 Best Warrior Noncommissioned Officer, pictured outside of the U.S. Army Medical Center of Excellence Headquarters building Aug. 25.

MEDCoE leadership placed him on restriction of movement, or ROM, despite the negative test.



TISH WILLIAMSON

Spc. Jesse Estrada, pictured in front of the U.S. Army Medical Center of Excellence headquarters building, the represented in the Soldier category during the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command 2020 Best Warrior virtual oral board on August 25.

Last month, the MEDCoE conducted its annual Trinity Competition to select the best medic, best warrior and drill

sergeant of the year. After seven days of grueling, evaluated events, the winners were announced in a ceremony hosted by the MEDCoE command team of Maj. Gen. Dennis LeMaster and Command Sgt. Major Clark Charpentier July 20. Estrada was first runner-up in the Best Warrior Soldier category.

Estrada said that competing in the Trinity Competition was pretty difficult but that he was relatively happy to have come in second place in the challenging event. He was notified late last week that he, as the runner-up, would take Chandler's place in the virtual board. Though he didn't have as much time to prepare as his counterparts, he never considered turning down the opportunity to compete at the TRADOC level.

"I did not think about saying no," Estrada explained. He said he appreciates the opportunity to compete at a higher level. "I just wanted to prove myself. I take it as a fun challenge and good competition that goes with it."

Both Estrada and Nguyen agreed that that the experience alone of pushing themselves to compete at the installation and higher level is of great benefit due to the lessons learned and knowledge gained during the intense physical and mental preparation.

"The day after the TRADOC competition, whether I win or if I lose, nothing changes," Nguyen said. "I am going to continue to develop NCOs, to teach them, coach them and mentor them and develop the Army and future leaders."

Winners of the TRADOC 2020 Best Warrior Competition were announced in a virtual ceremony Sept. 1 and will go on to compete in the Army's Best Warrior virtual competition.

METC radiology instructor saves car crash victim

By Lisa Braun

MEDICAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING
CAMPUS PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Staff Sgt. Karrie Prescott, along with her wife, Tasha, and their 3-year-old son were in their car running errands on the afternoon of Aug. 19 when they witnessed a white SUV run through a stop sign and crash into a tree.

Prescott, a Medical Education and Training Campus radiologic technologist program instructor assigned to the U.S. Army Medical Center of Excellence at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston, was in the passenger seat so she was able to quickly jump out of their vehicle as it slowed to go check on the driver.

Tasha, also a staff sergeant and Army Reserve medic, parked the car in a secure location and made sure their son was safe



LISA BRAUN

Staff Sgt. Karrie Prescott, a Medical Education and Training Campus radiologic technologist program instructor assigned to the U.S. Army Medical Center of Excellence at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston, checks the angle accuracy on the portable x-ray machine following student testing.

before joining Prescott to help.

"As I approached the vehicle it was on its side and I had to

get some other witnesses to

help me move a large tree branch so that I could get to

the man who appeared to be unconscious," Prescott said. "My wife and I jumped into the vehicle with the man because we suspected that he might have a spinal injury and we didn't want to risk injuring him any further by moving him."

The man did not have a pulse and was struggling to breathe so the Soldiers began administering CPR inside the vehicle until emergency medical services arrived.

"We were able to regain a pulse and he was taking breaths on his own, but EMS instructed us to get out of the vehicle because it was unsafe," Prescott said.

After the San Antonio Fire Department stabilized the vehicle, EMS was able to get the man out and continue to perform interventions. Although the driver was taken to a local hospital his status is

currently unknown.

Prescott has served in the Army for 12-years and has had combat lifesaver training. She also teaches basic life support, but she attributes her actions that day to instinct.

"We were the first ones on the scene and I felt like it was up to us to help the man however we could."

According to Prescott, her medical training helped with knowing the steps for CPR and how to check responsiveness and breathing. She may also use this experience as a teaching moment for her students.

"To me, it didn't really seem like that big a deal," Prescott added. "But the next time I teach CPR I will possibly tell the story so that my students can know that learning CPR is not something that you learn just to learn. It can actually help them save a life one day."

ARSOUTH LEADER DISCUSSES JAMAICA DISASTER RELIEF PREPARATION

General-de-Brigada Alcides V. Faria, Jr., deputy commanding general of interoperability, U.S. Army South, participated in a virtual key leader engagement with personnel from the Jamaica Defence Force, Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (West) and the Office of Disaster Preparedness Management Aug. 17 to discuss humanitarian assistance and disaster relief preparations in Jamaica and assess capabilities in the event of a natural disaster. Other attendees included representatives from U.S. Southern Command, 12th Air Force (Air Forces Southern), U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command and U.S. 4th Fleet, U.S. Marine Corps Forces, South and U.S. Embassy Jamaica. Army South is committed to supporting the efforts of partner nations to increase institutional capacity and regional collaboration for humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.



U.S. ARMY SOUTH PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Amid COVID- 19 pandemic, Army program helps families get back to school

By Mia Robinson

ARMY RESILIENCE DIRECTORATE

Summer is winding down and the kids are heading back to school ... well, sort of.

The COVID-19 global pandemic has changed the trajectory of how we handle personal, professional, and educational matters. Parents are faced with deciding whether to send their children back to school for possible part-time, in-class instruction or commit to distance learning from home.

The biggest hurdle for families is finding ways to keep their kids engaged and resilient while balancing work, home, and school schedules, all while maintaining social distancing.

Nanette Pigg is no stranger to overcoming such an obstacle. As a military spouse and mom turned school program manager at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston, she has spent more than two decades working with school liaison officers, or SLOs all over the world to help make the transition between installations and educational systems as smooth as possible for Army Families.

Nanette Pigg is currently working to collect data on all the installations while trying to guide school staff should they decide to provide traditional education for the upcoming school year or implement a distance learning curriculum. She is also working with Master Resilience Trainers, or MRTs, to help support families with children to maintain their resilience and connection.

Still in the planning phases for this coming school year, Nanette Pigg will be helping installations implement a safe, protected, facilitated learning environment using the support of child and youth services professionals to help kids of all



COURTESY PHOTO

Two students who attend a Department of Defense Education Activity school in Vicenza, Italy, complete classwork from home through digital learning.

ages with their studies. The goal is to provide virtual support, problem-solving techniques, and activities for kids.

MRTs will assist Nanette Pigg in implementing ready and resilient techniques and exercises like mindfulness and deliberate breathing to help kids refocus and/or stay focused during instruction.

Veronica Pigg, a second-grade teacher outside of Fort Hood, Texas, (and Nanette's daughter), assures families that teachers will be there to assist however they can.

During the shut-down, Veronica Pigg conducted independent Zoom meetings with parents to help them assist and guide their children through the rest of the school year. Before then, parents didn't have much access except by way of Facetime and Facebook. Veronica Pigg used that as an

The biggest hurdle for families is finding ways to keep their kids engaged and resilient while balancing work, home, and school schedules, all while maintaining social distancing.

opportunity to connect with the families of her students to help reassure them they had the support they needed to finish the school year successfully.

Both women understand and have witnessed firsthand the stressors that have affected families and children since COVID-19 restrictions have been in place. They encourage Families to have open-ended conversations with their kids to let them know they can talk about how they're feeling.

Veronica Pigg said it's important to stick to a routine.

"Have a regular bedtime. Physical activity is the best way to combat stress — find creative outlets and ways to have fun with your kids, ride bikes, go hiking, or try a new recipe. Develop a schedule or build activities into your current schedule to help burn off excess energy and anxiety."

"Military Families rely on the community," said Nanette Pigg. "Socialization is key. Find people to talk to. Find a new way to find a new normal."

There are resources out there, and other military

families willing to step in and help, she said. Get involved with your local church, or Boys and Girls club; encourage your kids to join the Youth Sponsorship Program where they can connect with other youth their age. If your kids are transitioning to a new school this year, reach out to the local SLO; they know what's going on and what's happening with the schools in the area, she added.

"If you feel stuck or frustrated, don't stew," said Veronica Pigg. "Information can calm a lot of fears."

Most R2 Performance Centers also offer academic performance training skills to help parents and kids as they return to school online. Performance experts are available to provide training for large or small groups or individual one-on-one sessions free of charge.

LACKLAND

433rd AW welcomes Travis aircraft during wildfires

By Tech. Sgt. Iram Carmona
433RD AIRLIFT WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

In the late evening hours of Aug. 19, the 433rd Airlift Wing command post at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland was notified by the Tanker Airlift Control Center at Scott Air Force Base, Illinois, that eight C-5M Super Galaxy aircraft from Travis Air Force Base, California, would be evacuating to the airfield as a precaution against damage from the LNU Lightning Complex fires in Northern California.

The call, received by Master Sgt. Jonathan Starnier, 433rd AW command post controller, kicked off a chain of events in preparation for the incoming aircraft. The next call went to the wing commander Col. Terry W. McClain. After that call, coordination to help support the new mission began.

Several calls were made to the wing's leadership to start the ball rolling. After McClain, the next call went to Lt. Col. Stuart Martin, 433rd Maintenance Group commander, for maintenance support. Once word was received that the Travis aircraft would be inbound, the 433rd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron started preparing to receive and support the incoming aircraft.

Col. James C. Miller, 433rd Operations Group commander, was then notified for airfield approval. At 10 p.m., Tech. Sgt. Destry Taylor, 433rd AW command post controller, relieved Starnier in coordinating with wing organizations and keeping leadership informed on mission progress.

A short time later, the host wing's 502nd Logistics Readiness Squadron Air Terminal Operations Center was notified to prepare for incoming



PHOTOS BY TECH. SGT. IRAM CARMONA

Staff Sgt. Michael Hailemaskel and Senior Airman Glenn C. Bovino II, both with the 60th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron at Travis Air Force Base, California, move an aircraft ground support cart so the C-5M Super Galaxy can depart the airfield Aug. 24 at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland.

personnel. Since the 433rd AW is a tenant unit, the 502nd Air Base Wing was in charge of finding accommodations for the estimated 100 inbound Travis aircrew and maintenance personnel. At 3:36 a.m. Aug. 20, the first Travis C-5M arrived at JBSA-Lackland.

This is the second time this month the Alamo Wing has received aircraft from other wings for protection from hazardous conditions. Six aircraft from Dover Air Force Base, Delaware, made their home here temporarily Aug. 3 due to Tropical Storm Isaias on the East Coast.

"We always deal with transients that come in from all over, and as a C-5 specific flightline, we're more than

"It took us nearly two hours to get the flight line set up to receive the aircraft; it's what we do. It's what we're here for, and just like last time with the Dover C-5's, we're going to do it with Travis."

Master Sgt. David Ponce, 433rd AMXS, flightline expediter

capable of being able to take care of these aircraft," said Master Sgt. Gerard L. Ontiveros, 433rd AMXS production superintendent.

A lot of coordination takes place to make a mission like this happen, and as the call came in, command post did their part to make sure the right resources were notified for this effort.

"It's really rewarding to know that the hard work we put into making this happen is important and essential to the missions that come down," said Tech Sgt. Angela Lloyd, 433rd AW command post controller.

The various organizations and personnel involved with this were accustomed to working with this airframe; it was just a matter of working a greater number of aircraft.

"It took us nearly two hours to get the flight line set up to receive the aircraft; it's what we do," said Master Sgt. David Ponce, 433rd AMXS, flightline expediter. "It's what we're here for, and just like last time with the Dover C-5's, we're going to do it with Travis."



Staff Sgt. Michael Hailemaskel, 60th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron flying crew chief, performs preflight checks on a C-5M Super Galaxy Aug. 24 at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland.

403rd Wing evacuates aircraft to JBSA, continues to fly amid hurricanes

By Lt. Col.
Marnee A.C. Losurdo
403RD WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The Air Force Reserve's 403rd Wing relocated its 20 aircraft Aug. 23 as a pair of hurricanes made their way toward the U.S. Gulf Coast.

The wing's 815th Airlift Squadron, a tactical airlift unit, flew their C-130J Super Hercules to Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland and the 53rd Weather Reconnaissance Squadron, or Hurricane Hunters, relocated their WC-130Js and operations to Atlantic Aviation Charleston International Airport, South Carolina, where they will continue to fly both storms and provide weather information to the National Hurricane Center, which greatly improves their intensity and track forecasts.

Marco became a hurricane Aug. 23 and made landfall on the Louisiana coast Aug. 24, and Laura also became a hurricane and impacted the Gulf Coast Aug. 27, according to the National Hurricane Center.

"We are moving aircraft as a precautionary measure ahead of these storms for two reasons. First, to protect the aircraft from damage, and second, so we can continue to fly storm reconnaissance missions," said Col. Jeffrey A. Van Doottingh, 403rd Wing vice commander. "It's been an unprecedented year just keeping the mission going while mitigating the impacts of COVID. Now, for the first time in history, we could have two hurricanes simultaneously in the Gulf of Mexico. Whatever Mother Nature and 2020 bring our way, we have been able to get the mission accomplished thanks to our outstanding Airmen who ensure we are always ready."



LT. COL. MARNEE A.C. LOSURDO

The Air Force Reserve's 403rd Wing, Keesler Air Force Base, Mississippi, relocated its aircraft as Hurricanes Marco and Laura made their way to the U.S. Gulf Coast.

"It's been an unprecedented year just keeping the mission going while mitigating the impacts of COVID. Now for the first time in history, we could have two hurricanes simultaneously in the Gulf of Mexico. Whatever Mother Nature and 2020 bring our way we have been able to get the mission accomplished thanks to our outstanding Airmen who ensure we are always ready."

Col. Jeffrey A. Van Doottingh,
403rd Wing vice commander



TECH. SGT. IRAM CARMONA

Staff Sgt. Zachary Faith, 403rd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron crew chief, performs a pre-flight check on a C-130J Hercules cargo aircraft Aug. 25 at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland.

Virtual Fridays provide holistic resiliency programs to military spouses

By Lori A. Bultman

502ND AIR BASE WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Since May, the Joint Base San Antonio Key Spouse program has hosted Virtual Fridays for military spouses each week at 2 p.m. The learning experience includes a presentation, followed by a question and answer session.

"The goal has been to offer relevant, current information," said Valerie D. Barber, a work/life consultant at the JBSA-Lackland Military and Family Readiness Center. "We want to support spouses holistically, focusing on topics like resiliency, taking care of yourself, activities and school assistance while homeschooling, how to find employment, and other topics we collectively agree to bring to light to benefit and assist them."

Speakers have been from a wide variety of organizations, including Military OneSource, the JBSA School Liaison Office, Texas Workforce Solutions, Microsoft Technology Academy, Military Spouse Freelancer, and many more. The next virtual session will be presented Sept. 18 by Dr. Kendra Lowe, a veteran, psychologist, and military spouse of 19 years, who will discuss military spouse stress and how to combat it.

Virtual Fridays have been essential to Key Spouses JBSA-wide during the pandemic.

"I became a Key Spouse at the same time the COVID-19 pandemic started here in the U.S., and Virtual Fridays have been an important tool in teaching more about the resources available to all our wingmen and families," said Jenelle Miller, Key Spouse for the 90th Cyberspace Operations Squadron. "At a time when resiliency is as important as ever, Virtual Fridays with other Key Spouses give me the feeling of inclusion and sense community that I am missing while social distancing."

The virtual meetings are a good way for any JBSA military spouse to communicate with others while staying safe at home.

"We can schedule a virtual meeting and invite 15-20 spouses and answer their questions or concerns, while encouraging networking among each other," said Jennifer Wagoner-Gates, community readiness consultant at JBSA-Lackland.

"In addition to the virtual meetings, the Key Spouse program at JBSA-Lackland creates an informative

"I became a Key Spouse at the same time the COVID-19 pandemic started here in the U.S., and Virtual Fridays have been an important tool in teaching more about the resources available to all our wingmen and families."

Jenelle Miller, Key Spouse for the 90th Cyberspace Operations Squadron

email each Friday to ensure all JBSA spouses have current information," Barber said. "The Key Spouse teams at JBSA-Lackland, JBSA-Randolph and JBSA-Fort Sam Houston have joined forces to work closely as a Joint Base to support all spouses of all military branches stationed in the area."

Key Spouse training opportunities have also continued during the pandemic.

"The Key Spouse team has ensured spouses continue to receive their monthly, quarterly and annual training by offering all scheduled training virtually," Barber said.

The plan is to continue offering virtual opportunities after the pandemic restrictions have subsided.

"We started Virtual Fridays in an effort to support our Key Spouses and the spouses in their units in a more targeted, spouse-centric way during COVID-19," Barber said. "Our plan is to sustain these virtual sessions past COVID-19 as an option for spouses to attend training in general."

The Joint Base San Antonio Key Spouse program is a commander's program created to enhance units' family readiness and promote partnerships between unit leadership, families, volunteer Key Spouses, centers, and other installation and community agencies.

To register for the Sept. 18 session, call 210-671-3722 or email 802fss.fsfr@us.af.mil.

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



COURTESY PHOTO

Key Spouses from the 35th Intelligence Squadron, 390th Information Operations Squadron, 343rd Training Squadron, 91st Cyberspace Operations Squadron and the 960th Cyberspace Wing stand together at the Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland Military and Family Readiness Center Aug. 26.

COVID-19 patients can give back with plasma

By Airman 1st Class

Melody Bordeaux

59TH MEDICAL WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

With flu season fast approaching and no approved vaccine developed for COVID-19, supplies of life-saving measures such as blood and plasma are being put under strain.

To help hold back the tide, the Defense Department has established a goal of obtaining 10,000 units of donated COVID-19 convalescent plasma, or CCP, by Sept. 30, 2020, to combat the potential rise in cases.

A patient that has recovered from COVID-19 can donate within two to three weeks after recovery. Within this time frame, recovered patients have a concentrated group of antibodies that can help critically ill patients not producing enough antibodies on their own.

Donating CCP allows doctors to treat other infections caused by the virus, such as pneumonia, while the antibodies strengthen the patient's immune system and fight against COVID-19.

All service members and DoD civilians that meet these conditions can help donate to the Armed Services Blood Bank Center; each donation could save as many as three

lives.

"Do for somebody what they can't do for themselves," said Staff Sgt. Kiersten Zardee, Armed Services Blood Bank Center NCO in charge of aphaeresis operations. "Giving antibodies saves lives."

Even if a donor can't give plasma, they can still donate blood and support the everyday mission to provide blood products directly to military beneficiaries worldwide.

"Blood donated on military installations directly supports military beneficiaries and warfighters," said Maj. Sherry McWaters, director of the Armed Services Blood Bank Center. "We really are asking donors to choose us right now, to come on to the base, because we are limited to only doing collections on federal property."

While the prospect of donating plasma may seem daunting, especially in the uncertain world we now find ourselves in, the team at the Armed Services Blood Bank Center is happy to guide potential donors through the process.

"It's a scary time, there are a lot of things that we don't know, people have a lot of unanswered questions, but if you are nervous to donate just give us a call," said Lt. Col. Jeff Wisneski, commander of the 59th Medical Diagnostics and



AIRMAN 1ST CLASS MELODY BORDEAUX

Megan Keller, a recovered COVID-19 patient, donates COVID-19 convalescent plasma Aug. 20 at the Armed Services Blood Bank Center, Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland.

Therapeutics Squadron. "We'll answer any and all questions that you have so that you're not scared and that you're not nervous because at the end of the day we will find an answer."

Once a patient comes in for a screening they will receive a \$25 incentive and staff will determine if the recovered patient has the right amount of

antibodies to donate. This incentive is only available until Sept. 30, 2020.

Even if a patient does not qualify to donate CCP they will still receive the gift card and can still donate blood to support mission readiness, military beneficiaries, and military treatment facilities around the world.

The process to donate CCP

takes about 45 minutes to an hour and they provide patients with snacks, a movie, seat warmer, pillow, and blankets to relax.

When a patient donates, the automated blood collection machine separates the plasma from the blood cells and then returns the red blood cells rich in oxygen back to the patient, significantly reducing fatigue while still providing the most plasma, and antibodies, possible.

Many people have been affected by COVID-19 either personally or through the experience of their loved ones. Those who recover have the opportunity to help save someone else's life.

"Our donor center values the success of this CCP mission," McWaters said. "We truly appreciate everyone who has and who will schedule an appointment to help our nation overcome this pandemic."

For more information, call the Armed Services Blood Bank Center at 210-292-8142 or 210-292-8145. To schedule an appointment at the Lackland Armed Services Blood Bank Center, visit militarydonor.com and select Donate Blood in the top menu. Search by sponsor ASBBC-SA, and select the ASBBC-SA In-House Donors from the drop-down that appears.

ARNORTH

From page 7

treatments - the duty that we were going to have the registered nurses complete due to the shortage of respiratory therapists," he said.

To Reed and the staff members at University Health System, the task forces' assistance was essential to their ability to combat COVID-19.

"The military staff members provided us with the resources

to open up additional beds and provide care to patients that we otherwise would not have had the resources to support," he said. "They also supported us mentally, by improving the morale of our staff through their support, camaraderie, presence, knowledge, skill, and professionalism. We are extremely appreciative for all the military has done for our patients and our staff."

The UAMTF-627 commander, U.S. Army Lt. Col. Jason Hughes, said helping those in need is the purpose of

the UAMTFs.

"We, individually and as an organization, exist to save and sustain lives anywhere in the world," he said. "This mission is special, and our Soldiers brought a burst of energy to each of our five hospitals, and hope to the community."

Hughes said the hospitals in San Antonio welcomed the task force members, some of whom they had worked with before.

"The leadership at each hospital did an excellent job of integrating us into their team,

which was made easier because the local military health system has a strong relationship already in place," he said. "For example, University Health System understands how the military operates because of their day-to-day training partnership, so the process was seamless and some of the faces were familiar, which reduced the initial stress of onboarding."

"I cannot thank the hospitals enough; they welcomed us with open arms and took care of us like we were family,"

Hughes said. "I could not be more proud of how the military and civilian partners joined together to provide the care each American deserved in their time of need."

At the request of the Federal Emergency Management Agency and state officials, approximately 740 Department of Defense medical and support professionals from the U.S. Army, U.S. Navy and U.S. Air Force are assigned as part of the DOD's ongoing COVID-19 operations in Texas and California.

RANDOLPH

For historians, COVID-19 is big story, and they're working hard to tell it

By Robert Goetz
502ND AIR BASE WING
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

History offices throughout the Air Force are tasked with compiling a historical record that captures the performance of their organizations' operational missions at the moment and helps inform commanders' decisions in the future.

That task remains the same in 2020, but with one big difference: an X factor known as the novel coronavirus that is affecting everyday operations.

At Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph, historians at Air Education and Training Command and the 12th Flying Training Wing acknowledge the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on their organizations' missions, but it does not obscure the telling of their operational stories.

"It's an important topic, perhaps the most important topic in the wing's history this year, but the history itself hasn't changed, so other than what is covered, we're still going to tell the same story," said Lane Bourgeois, 12th FTW historian. "We're all going to do what we always try to do: capture those issues that affect our missions and our units' responses to those issues."

Historians try to collect as many good documents as they can to tell their units' stories and provide them with a good baseline of knowledge, Bourgeois said.

"Our focus is, as always, on mission accomplishment and on anything affecting that accomplishment," he said. "That



BENJAMIN FASKE

Lane Bourgeois, 12th Flying Training Wing historian, sifts through a pile of historical documents in his office at Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph June 12, 2019. Bourgeois and other Air Force historians are seeing the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on their jobs and the operational activities they document.

won't change."

Bourgeois listed bird aircraft strike hazards, encroachment, inspections, the budget, syllabi changes, maintenance issues, and changes in pilot instructor training and the remotely piloted aircraft program as important topics in this year's wing history.

"There are also the more routine parts such as the chronology and statistical back matter that we collect as a matter of course, including flying statistics, unit and key personnel changes, student production and organizational structure," he said. "Historians usually have no shortage of topics to cover; the challenge is to do a decent job within the time constraints."

Recently back from a deployment, Bourgeois said he is catching up and still determining COVID-19's overall impact on the wing, but he sees changes in how personnel work and communicate with one another.

"We're getting a lot of practice when it comes down to teleworking," he said. "We're using website tools to meet virtually. This is a new way of operating and there were some technological growing pains at the beginning. As we continue to operate this way, we'll probably get better at it."

Time will tell how it affects productivity and quality, Bourgeois said.

"I suspect it's going to have significant negative impacts on

"Our focus is, as always, on mission accomplishment and on anything affecting that accomplishment. That won't change."

Lane Bourgeois, 12th Flying Training Wing historian at Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph

both, but you never know until the data is in," he said. "In any event, what we discover as a result will have implications for the future."

At AETC, at least one historian has been in the office every day to capture the history of the organization fighting through the pandemic, said Gary Boyd, command historian.

"We have written a history through July 2020 and a set of lessons learned for Air Force leaders and have acted as AETC's lessons-learned source," he said. "We even contributed papers on previous pandemic responses prior to COVID-19 being declared a pandemic."

Historians are busier than ever during a crisis, Boyd said, making sure key data is saved for posterity and ensuring that interviews are conducted with key participants and that transcripts are made of key meetings.

"When the command's COVID-19 task force was up and running every day, we ensured a historical event log was up to the day in its entries for the commander's use," he said. "We also ensured we monitored and guided our field historians. Lane

was deployed during the crisis for the most part, so we tried to backstop him here as much as we could."

In addition, AETC historians engaged with future ops planners to smooth over issues that arose during the command's crisis response activities, Boyd said.

While dealing with the impact of the pandemic, the AETC history office has maintained its focus on the command's mission and expanded its outreach.

"We have used the time at museum activities to upgrade the visitor experience and work on training new Airmen in the heritage of the Air Force," Boyd said.

As history offices continue to document their organizations' significant events and everyday activities, the pandemic could continue to loom large in their stories.

"The wing has received guidance to be mindful that we're in this for the long haul and prepare ourselves to operate with this pandemic for the foreseeable future, be that months or years," Bourgeois said.

BMT high-intensity, interval training focus of 'The Air Force Starts Here' podcast

From Air Education and Training Command Public Affairs

The implementation of high-intensity, interval training as part of the Air Force basic military training fitness curriculum is the focus of the latest episode of "The Air Force Starts Here," released Aug. 25, 2020.

In this episode, Dan Hawkins from the Air Education and Training Command public affairs team sits down remotely with the team from the 323rd Training Squadron at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, known as the Mustangs, and talk about the evolution of the way Basic Military Training, or BMT, executes physical training.

Lt. Col. Ray Vann, Tech. Sgt. Sarah Mitchell and Tech. Sgt. Kenneth Snow talk about how, in partnership with the 559th Medical Group's Sports Medicine Team, they created, tested and are currently implementing BMT's first high-intensity, interval training, or HIIT, program.

This innovative program provides more

diversity than the baseline BMT exercise program and presents an opportunity to increase physical fitness assessment scores while simultaneously mitigating the risk of injury to trainees.

The team also talks about how the program is being administered in the unit and we also talk about the plans for cardio interval training to expand across the BMT enterprise as a whole, as well as the idea or potential for expansion into the 2nd Air Force technical training arena.

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

Future episodes are set to cover a wide range of topics, including force development programs and much more.

New Medical Provider Trends Dashboard available

By Toni Whaley

AIR FORCE'S PERSONNEL CENTER
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Airmen and Space professionals relocating on a permanent change of station with dependents are now able to access a Medical Provider Trends Dashboard that provides historical medical services information at Department of the Air Force installations.

"The dashboard provides two years of historical data or a two-year history of travel recommendations or non-recommendations by base," said Tamera Nelson, deputy assistant secretary for Strategic Integration. "It also allows a member to search by specialty provider, base or major command based on their family situation."

For example, if a family member needs a pediatric gastroenterologist, they can search for that specialty and see which bases have positive travel recommendation histories. Travel non-recommendations are based on wait times and distance to the specialty provider, Nelson said.

The one constant amongst requests made by members was for increased transparency of available choices that support career progression for Airmen and their families. The dashboard provides that transparency.

"The tool is not absolute," Nelson said. "It's directional and should be used as a guide to help members start planning. It's an answer to the requests, 'help us plan our careers knowing we want to balance the needs of our family.' An answer to Airmen wanting more visibility on what their options could be."

"This dashboard is an excellent tool and provides a summary of family member travel," said Col. Jennifer Hatzfeld, Air Force nursing

"We encourage our service members to log onto the dashboard with their families and review the data the tool has to offer. The EFMP families we work with daily are avid researchers and planners, and this is one more tool for their toolbox."

Kimberly Schuler, Exceptional Assignment Programs Division acting chief

operations director. "However, every family member has unique needs and medical capabilities may change at individual locations, so it is still important to continue personalized travel screenings prior to each change of station to ensure adequate healthcare is available."

The overarching goal is to holistically have Air and Space Professionals include their families in the decision-making process.

"This is just one of the tools the Department of the Air Force is providing our service members," said Kimberly Schuler, Exceptional Assignment Programs Division acting chief. "We encourage our service members to log onto the dashboard with their families and review the data the tool has to offer. The EFMP families we work with daily are avid researchers and planners, and this is one more tool for their toolbox."

Members can gain access to MyVector, where the dashboard is located, by using their Common Access Card to set up a profile.

Air Force releases technical sergeant /20E6 promotion cycle statistics

By Toni Whaley

AIR FORCE'S PERSONNEL CENTER PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Air Force officials have selected 8,246 staff sergeants for promotion to technical sergeant out of 28,358 eligible for a selection rate of 29.08 percent in the 20E6 promotion cycle.

The average overall score for those selected was 346. Selectees' average time in grade was 4.15 years and time in service was 9.18 years.

The technical sergeant promotion list is available on the Enlisted Promotions page of the Air Force's Personnel Center website, the Air Force Portal and myPers. Airmen can access their score notices on the virtual Military Personnel Flight via the AFPC secure applications page.

Increments began Sept. 1, 2020, which is a one-month delay from the pre-COVID



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timeline. Those who should have incremented Aug. 1, 2020, will be projected for a Sept. 1, 2020 promotion and will be retroactively applied to Aug. 1, 2020 with backdated pay.

For more information about Air Force personnel programs, visit the AFPC public website.