

JBSA

LEGACY

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JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO

SEPTEMBER 18, 2020



PHOTO BY SEAN M. WORRELL

Master Sgt. Tiffany Arrington, 12th Operations Group first sergeant, waves at people driving past during the "We Care" event at Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph Sept. 10.

‘We Care’ message resonates across JBSA community

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ARNORTH supports Texas agencies during pandemic

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AMEDD board tests collar, app for MWDs

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DOD educates military service members, civilian employees on Social Security Payroll Tax Deferral

From DOD News

The Department of Defense is taking steps to notify and educate service members and civilian employees of changes to their payroll tax withholding starting in September 2020.

In order to provide relief during the COVID-19 pandemic, a Presidential Memorandum was issued Aug. 8, 2020, followed by Internal Revenue Service guidance issued Aug. 28, 2020, to temporarily defer the withholding of Social Security taxes for certain individuals beginning Sept. 1 through Dec. 31, 2020.

For Service Members

Service members whose monthly rate of basic pay is less than \$8,666.66 in any given month will have their 6.2 percent Old Age, Survivors, and Disability Insurance, or OASDI, tax — commonly known as Social Security tax — deferred until Dec. 31, 2020.

This means service members will see a temporary increase in their net take-home pay. However, this increase in net take-home pay is temporary, and under current IRS guidance, repayment of all deferred OASDI taxes will occur from Jan. 1, 2021 through April 30, 2021, in addition to Social Security taxes which are normally withheld from a service member's monthly pay.

For example, a service member whose monthly basic pay is \$3,306.30, could expect to see an increase of \$204.99 in their monthly net take-home pay from September through December 2020. Under current IRS guidance, beginning in January 2021, and continuing through April 2021, the \$204.99 deferred tax amount will be withheld from the service member's pay, in addition to his or her 6.2 percent OASDI taxes that are normally withheld each month.

Due to differences in pay systems, application of the Social Security (OASDI) tax deferral process will be different for most members of the National Guard and Reserves in the Army, Air Force, or Navy, than for active component members.

For these individuals, if they are eligible for the Social Security tax deferral, their initial net pay will have the OASDI taxes withheld. Two to three business days later a separate pay transaction will be processed to refund the Social Security taxes that were withheld from the initial pay. This will also result in an additional Leave and Earnings Statement being provided members in



MyPay with an entry labeled "FICA Refund" reflecting the refunded Social Security tax amount.

The Department is providing information to service members so that they know why their take-home pay will increase during the last four months of 2020 and so that they can plan ahead the withholding of the deferred taxes during the first four months of 2021.

Service members and families can contact Financial Readiness staff at their installation Military and Family Support Center, or Military OneSource at 1-800-342-9647, if they need assistance in reviewing their Leave and Earnings Statements (LES) or have questions in planning for changes to their net take-home pay.

For more information, service members may view the Defense Finance and Accounting Service page, <https://www.dfas.mil/taxes/Social-Security-Deferral/> and a list of Frequently Asked Questions, here. As more information is determined, updates will be posted on the site. For more information on financial readiness, visit www.finred.usalearning.gov or www.milspousemoneymission.org.

For Civilian Employees

Effective for the pay period ending Sept. 12, 2020, DOD will temporarily defer withholding of employees' 6.2 percent OASDI, commonly known as Social Security tax, if their wages, that are subject to OASDI, are less than \$4,000 in any given pay period. Employees can use the "Taxable Wages" on the LES as a good reference for whether they will have OASDI tax-deferred.

For Non-Appropriated Fund, or NAF, civilian employees, the deferral is effective for the pay period ending Sept. 9, 2020, or Sept. 16, 2020, depending on their respective pay cycles.

Civilians whose wages, subject to OASDI, are less than \$4,000 in any given pay period, will have their 6.2 percent OASDI tax-deferred until Dec. 31, 2020. These

civilian employees will see a temporary increase in their net take-home pay during the 2020 pay periods that their OASDI tax is deferred.

However, this increase in net take-home pay is temporary, and under current IRS guidance, withholding of all deferred OASDI taxes will occur from Jan. 1, 2021 through April 30, 2021, in addition to the 6.2 percent OASDI taxes that are normally withheld each pay period the civilian earns qualified wages.

For more information, civilian employees may view the Defense Finance and Accounting Service page, <https://www.dfas.mil/taxes/Social-Security-Deferral/> and a list of Frequently Asked Questions at <http://www.dfas.mil/taxes/Social-Security-Deferral/Civilian-Employee-FAQs/>.

As more information is determined, updates will be posted on the site. For civilian employees with concerns regarding withholding of the deferred OASDI tax, please consult with an Employee Assistance Program financial counselor or a private financial advisor.

For more information on financial readiness, visit <http://www.finred.usalearning.gov>.

Visit your installation Military and Family Readiness Center to speak with a Personal Financial Manager or Counselor, or contact Military OneSource at <https://www.militaryonesource.mil>.

The JBSA Military & Family Readiness Center Financial Readiness teams can assist all Department of Defense ID cardholders with budgets and information on other financial resources.

To schedule a one-on-one consultation or register for a Financial Readiness class contact one of our JBSA locations at:

- JBSA-Fort Sam Houston at 210-221-2705, 210-221-2418, or email usaf.jbsa.502-abw.mbx.mfrc@mail.mil.
- JBSA-Lackland at 210-671-3722, or email 802fss.fsfrc@us.af.mil.
- JBSA-Randolph at 210-652-5321, or email Randolphmfrc@us.af.mil.

JBSA LEGACY

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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. During the work week when I enter Luke Gate at JBSA-Lackland, I take the immediate first right to drive behind the parade field.

There are quite a few pedestrians who walk that route, but since there are minimal street lights and a lack of sidewalks, it makes it really difficult to see people especially when they aren't wearing any reflective material.

While there is a sidewalk for part of that road, there are parts of the street that do not have one. So, this forces pedestrians to either walk in the grass or to walk on the street.

I understand that funds are a constraint, however, I just wanted to share my experience for the safety of these members in the early morning hours that I've witnessed over the past several weeks.

While I know to expect them when I drive down that road, some others may not. So I'm hoping this forum will at least spread the word for others to keep caution when making that right as soon as they enter the gate.

I appreciate your time and consideration regarding this matter. Thank you and have a great day.



COURTESY GRAPHIC

A. Thank you very much for your comments regarding safety along Bong Avenue located near the Luke East traffic gate.

Our base engineers will submit your recommendation to the traffic and safety board to see if it fits into the comprehensive base master plan for lighting and walkways.

We always encourage Airmen to use reflective clothing and lights during periods of darkness. Thank you for the feedback.

Q. Is it possible to get stop signs for the center medians at the intersection of Harmon Drive and New B Street East and West, and also at the center medians of Harmon Drive and Third Ave East and West at JBSA-Randolph?

Civil Engineers have painted "stop bars" on the road and the word "stop" at both intersections, however, the way the median sits it may be hard for some drivers to see.

If CE cannot put up signs, is it possible to have CE repaint the

intersections with reflective paint to make it easier to see at night?

A. Thank you for the recommendation. Both of these suggestions — for repainting the surface with reflective paint and adding stop signs — will be placed on the agenda for the next JBSA-Randolph Traffic Safety Working Group.

Q. I am a PTU Soldier as well as a military technician working at JBSA-Fort Sam Houston. My question is in reference to the reopening of the gates, specifically when is the Winans Road gate scheduled to reopen?

In the meantime, would it be possible to open ALL the access lanes into the post at the Harry Wurzbach Entry Control Point during morning and lunchtime?

With the limited amount of time and places for lunch at the base, and the number of vehicles at those times, it is becoming impossible to meet time

requirements for work.

Thanks for your time in answering these questions.

A. Thank you for your question on gates and installation access, as we all look forward to returning to normal gate hours.

From June through July, Winans Road underwent needed repair which is now done. The Winans gate was one of several access points closed under Health Protection Condition, or HPCON CHARLIE, in order to minimize our Security Forces Defenders' potential exposure to COVID-19 while meeting JBSA-Fort Sam Houston's lower demand for vehicle access, as many people are teleworking.

We are prepared to re-open our gates and access points when our HPCON is downgraded below CHARLIE. Additionally, we regularly monitor the changes in gate traffic to determine if and where a closed gate or additional lanes of an open gate should be temporarily re-opened.

A Bag Full of Dreams: Celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month

Rachel Kersey

502ND AIR BASE WING
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

"I was born in Monterrey, Mexico," said Ismael Lopez. "My hometown is Villaldalma, Nuevo Leon."

It has been quite a journey to get to where he is now, from his hometown to a new life in America.

Villaldalma is a small community in northern Mexico — so small it does not even have its own hospital. Everybody from Villaldalma is born in Monterrey, Lopez said. But what it doesn't have in healthcare, it makes up for in food and culture.

"It is a beautiful small town in Mexico, located three hours down south of the Laredo border, with a population of 4,247 people," Lopez said. "The town is famous for its number of good bakeries, which still use traditional stone ovens where you can buy empanadas, hojarascas, and coyotas, among other pieces of bread."

Lopez grew up in the quaint town and transitioned from kindergarten through college, which he finished at age twenty-two. He graduated from law school at the Universidad Autonoma de Nuevo Leon, but was unable to find a job or develop his skills locally.

So, in 2007, he moved to the United States to look for more opportunities and to pursue his master's degree in law, which was one of his long-term goals.

"Here in the USA, I did plenty of jobs in the construction field until I learned English," he said.

The language itself was the most challenging part of immigrating to America, according to Lopez.

"Sometimes people are scared to try new things, like



THOMAS CONEY

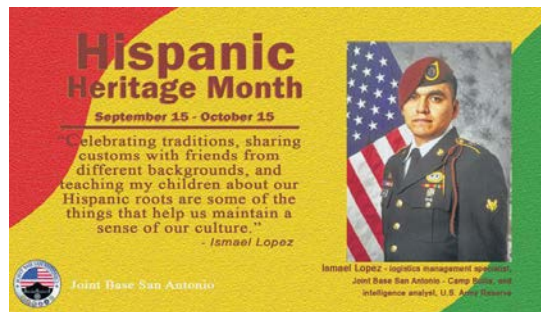
Ismael Lopez celebrates traditions, shares customs with friends from different backgrounds, and teaches his children about their Hispanic roots during Hispanic Heritage Month.

learning a new language, especially at an adult age of 22," he said. "English was challenging to me because I was feeling nervous at the beginning to talk in front of people, but at the end of the day, the resilience that I learned from the Army helped me to overcome my fears."

In 2012, Lopez joined the Army as an active duty Soldier and spent three years at the 82nd Airborne Division at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, where he was a logistical specialist.

"I joined the Army because I wanted to serve and give back to this country for the many opportunities that it gave me when I arrived with just a bag full of dreams," Lopez said.

In 2016, he joined the Army Reserve, where he now supports the 549th Military Intelligence Battalion, collecting, analyzing, and



LORI A. BULTMAN

evaluating information from a variety of database resources as an intelligence analyst.

Lopez is also working as a government civilian logistics management specialist at Joint Base San Antonio-Camp Bullis. As an LMS, he supports three U.S. Army companies for logistical requirements,

reports, and major equipment redistribution. As property book manager, he briefs the brigade on the battalion's equipment maintenance readiness.

Although he has become a naturalized American citizen, Lopez has not abandoned his Hispanic heritage. In a state

like Texas, it is easy for him to maintain his sense of his culture.

"Here in San Antonio, there is a huge Hispanic community that always promotes celebrations with parades, music, and historical representation events that help preserve the culture through the new generations," he said.

"Celebrating traditions, sharing customs with friends from different backgrounds, and teaching my children about our Hispanic roots are some of the things that help us maintain a sense of our culture."

Hispanic Heritage Month kicked off Sept. 15, and that night, Lopez and his family commemorated Mexican Independence Day.

"We like to see the celebration on television that consists of ringing the bells of the town councils around Mexico, recalling the historical fact of independence that began in the same way in 1810," he said. "We like to cook Mexican food, make horchata water, and enjoy the celebration with the family at home."

For people who are not Hispanic, but want to learn about Hispanic culture and celebrate with them, Lopez recommends learning their history and customs by visiting museums and learning the differences between many of their festivities, including the fact that Cinco de Mayo is not the same thing as Independence Day.

Cinco de Mayo celebrates the Mexican army's victory over invading French forces at the Battle of Puebla in 1862. Mexican Independence Day celebrates Mexican emancipation from 300 years of Spanish rule as well as redistribution of land and greater racial equality.

JBSA First Sergeant Diamond Sharp Awards

From the Joint Base San Antonio First Sergeants Council

The Diamond Sharp Award is sponsored by the Joint Base San Antonio First Sergeants Council and recognizes outstanding Airmen who continually exceed the standard to meet the Air Force mission.

Senior Airman Chance Capinia

Unit: 453rd Electronic Warfare Squadron

Job Title: Computer Programmer

Senior Airman Chance Capinia volunteered at the San Antonio Food Bank to organize meals for delivery to the local community. His efforts led to raising \$1,300 in support of the food bank. He is working on his bachelor's degree

in software engineering not only to further himself but enhance the unit's mission, maintaining a 3.7 grade point average. Capinia maintains reference databases for the operational system, allowing verification and fact-checking changes in the electronic warfare environment. He also sought training in web-based development.

Senior Airmen Malik D. Williams

Unit: 75th Intelligence Squadron
Job Title: Target Digital Network Analyst

Senior Airmen Williams sets the standard for other Airmen. In August, he led his team in initial target development to identify high-value targets that led to 100 megabytes of intelligence collection, shaping future offensive cyber operations for several

combatant commands. While continuing to pursue his associate's degree in intelligence studies and technology, he also completed the demanding Network+ certification. Williams also volunteered more than 60 hours of service to a local youth basketball organization where he fostered teamwork and sportsmanship.

Staff Sgt. Val Khalili

Unit: 33rd Network Warfare Squadron

Job Title: Content Development Staff Sgt. Val Khalili created the First Sergeant Database, which allows first sergeants to

electronically track family care plans and professional military education. The database has been shared with all first sergeants across two major commands and throughout Joint Base San Antonio, all of which have

given rave reviews on the ease of use. Khalili deserves this award because of his hard work, dedication and willingness to assist wherever needed.

Airman 1st Class Misty D. Nappier

Unit: 802nd Security Forces Squadron

Job Title: Emergency Control Center Operator

Airman 1st Class Misty D. Nappier has internalized and demonstrated outstanding leadership skills while embodying Air Force core values. She has organized three volunteer events supported by 60 unit members,

exemplifying the servant to the community mindset. She organized a San Antonio Food Bank event for Bravo Flight, ensuring all personnel were taking appropriate health precautions during the coronavirus pandemic. She also trained her teammates on Security Forces core tasks. Nappier took it upon herself to lead by example by mentoring flight members with college advice for their desired degrees while she obtained her master's degree. She is someone that is highly caring and displays what a true Wingman is, showing it daily in on and off duty activities.

Staff Sgt. Tykeria L. Dinkins

Unit: 616th Air and Space Communications Squadron

Job Title: Knowledge Operations Management

Staff Sgt. Dinkins Tykeria L. Dinkins volunteered to cover another member's shift for several months during the Enterprise Operations Center manning shortage, despite the COVID-19 pandemic. She recently received a

bachelor's degree in cybersecurity and continues to strive to enhance her technical skillset. She has streamlined the operations center's Authorized Scheduled Interruption process for our customers by revamping the SharePoint page. Dinkins also took the lead in getting the section's teleworking laptops set up and ready for use.

Tech. Sgt. Noah K. Paakaula-Cox

Unit: Joint Personal Property Shipping Office-South Central
Job Title: Cyber Logistics Section Chief

Tech. Sgt. Noah K. Paakaula-Cox chaired the unit's first-ever Professional Development Committee, facilitating a leadership course for 16 joint-service personnel over a virtual platform. He recently

completed his bachelor's degree in computer networks and cybersecurity and was able to further enhance the

information technology capabilities of his 106-member detachment during telework operations. He generated multiple "self-help" guides which included troubleshooting and security update standard operating procedures, with the detachment pushing more than 2,000 patches contributing to a reduction of 842 vulnerabilities. Paakaula-Cox laid the foundation for an \$8,000 technology upgrade by creating a computer image consisting of multiple pre-installed unit-specialized software. With this computer image, his team can significantly enhance the hard drive capabilities of 108 systems, which increased computer processing performance allowing unit personnel to enhance service to 31 installations. Paakaula-Cox's team resolved 99 percent of all trouble tickets, fixing 168 errors with a 52-minute average, surpassing the unit's three-day standard.

Airman 1st Class Sonja Trappe

Unit: 453rd Electronic Warfare Squadron

Job Title: Electronic Warfare Signals Analyst

Airman 1st Class Sonja Trappe participated as a tactical analyst at exercise Red Flag 20-3. During the exercise, she detected 11 hostile surface-to-air missile systems, while issuing 21 reports, ensuring exercise success and prepared

aircrews for future conflicts. She has also assisted in organizing three fundraisers for the 453rd EWS booster club, raising \$400. She also volunteered eight hours at the San Antonio Food Bank to organize and stock goods. Trappe is active with the Air Force Sergeant's Association and has made contact with 51 potential new members. She has also been elected to her homeowner's association board, where she is updating 37-year-old rules and regulations document to bring the developments bylaws current.

Airman 1st Class Jayla Tate

Unit: 502nd Security Forces Squadron

Job Title: Installation Entry Controller

Due to COVID-19, Airman 1st Class Jayla Tate's technical core training was cut short and she assumed her position as an entry controller, even though she was lacking essential training that most of her peers received. She

routinely sought after and completed flight training tasks early, earning her assignment weeks before her peers. Tate's skills were instrumental to apprehension during a high-stress gate runner incident, quickly subduing and gaining compliance of the irate suspect while performing a search for concealed weapons and drugs. Tate attended an educational brief with hopes to further her professional education, later briefing 36 flight members how to obtain tuition assistance.



FORT SAM HOUSTON

U.S. Army North supports Texas agencies during COVID-19 pandemic, beyond

By Lori A. Bultman

502ND AIR BASE WING
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

As COVID-19 cases began to surge this summer in Texas, U.S. Army North (Fifth Army), headquartered at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston, is joining forces with the Texas Military Department and Texas Division of Emergency Management to combat the disease.

Gov. Greg Abbott and the Texas Military Department announced in July the formation of Joint Task Force Texas, a partnership between the Texas National Guard, active duty military personnel and U.S. Army Reservists, including forces from U.S. Army North, to strengthen COVID-19 response efforts in Texas.

More than 1,200 service members comprise the task force, including members of the U.S. Army, Navy and Air Force, supporting hospitals in Houston, San Antonio, Del Rio, and the Rio Grande Valley.

"This formal partnership will help ensure a more effective collaboration among state and federal resources, and allows us to better meet the needs of Texans across the state," Abbott said in a July press release.

Texas Adjutant General Maj. Gen. Tracy Norris also appreciates the help from federal partners, who have provided much-needed support and relief to civilian health care workers who have been working tirelessly to care for the people Texas.



PETTY OFFICER 2ND CLASS CHRISTOPHER LANGE

U.S. Army Lt. Col. Jason Hughes (left), Urban Augmentation Medical Task Force-627 commander, pins an award to a Soldier under his command at Baptist Medical Center in San Antonio Sept. 3.

"The units of the Texas Military Department are not authorized with enough medical professionals to meet the current demand," she said. "We are proud to work with our brothers and sisters in arms from the active duty and Reserve forces to help our fellow Texans in need."

Texas Air National Guard Brig. Gen. Thomas Suelzer is the dual-status commander of Joint Task Force Texas and the commander of both Texas National Guard and federal service members.

"My position allows for collaboration between orders directed by Governor Abbott and those by the president,"

Suelzer said. "It is an incredible experience to work with our service members in this historic event and I am proud to see how effortlessly our forces have integrated with each other."

Texas Air National Guard Maj. Tanya Island, assigned to the 147th Medical Group, serves as the Joint Task Force Lone Star surgeon, positioning personnel and resources across the state.

"This operation really opened my eyes as to how critical a role the National Guard has in this response," she said, noting that since COVID-19 began, Joint Task Force Texas has coordinated

more than 320,000 tests.

Another partner U.S. Army North has supported in Texas during COVID-19 has been the Texas Division of Emergency Management, or TDEM, which manages the state's all-hazards emergency management plan.

The TDEM works closely with local jurisdictions, state agencies, and federal partners in ensuring Texas is ready and becomes more resilient for future disasters.

"The support U.S. Army North provided directly benefited Texans across the state," said TDEM's chief, W. Nim Kidd. "The Texas Division of Emergency Management appreciates the support and

"The support U.S. Army North provided directly benefited Texans across the state. The Texas Division of Emergency Management appreciates the support and collaboration of our military partners who answer the call no matter the hazard."

W. Nim Kidd, Texas Division of Emergency Management chief

collaboration of our military partners who answer the call no matter the hazard."

Providing that support to civil authorities in times of crisis is a key tenant of U.S. Army North's mission, now and in the future.

"We are committed to assisting those in need as part of the ongoing whole-of-America response to COVID-19," said Army Lt. Gen. Laura Richardson, U.S. Army North commander. "At the same time, we remain flexible and capable of providing other defense support to civil authorities as necessary."

Make your home a safe place for people with disabilities

By Richard C. Campos
502ND CIVIL ENGINEER SQUADRON

Disabilities come in all forms, mental and physical. For this reason, home safety is something that should be highly considered.

“People of all abilities need to prepare for any unplanned events that could occur, even in the safety and comfort of their home and community,” said Tom Scott, United Spinal Association. “Home safety is even more important for people with disabilities and mobility impairments.”

According to the National Fire Prevention Association, or NFPA, there are millions of Americans that live with physical and mental disabilities. It's important for the disabled and caregivers to know the actions they can take to stay safe from fire.

Each year, there are approximately 700 home fires involving people with physical disabilities and approximately 1,700 home fires involving people with mental disabilities. Kitchens and cooking areas are the primary areas where these fires start.

Having physical or mental

disabilities does not mean a person is unable to take the important steps to keep safe from fire. Learn to build your fire prevention plans around abilities.

Smoke alarms

Smoke alarms with a vibrating pad or flashing light are available for people who are deaf or hard of hearing. Smoke alarms with a strobe light outside the home to catch the attention of neighbors and emergency call systems for summoning help are also available.

Ask the manager of your building, or a friend or relative, to install at least one smoke alarm on each level of your home.

Test smoke alarm batteries every month and change them at least once a year. If you can't reach the test button on your smoke alarm, ask someone to test it for you.

Location, location, location

Although you have the legal right to live where you choose, you'll be safest on the ground floor if you live in an apartment building. If you live in a multistory home, arrange to sleep on the first floor. Being on the ground

floor and near an exit will make your escape easier.

Plan your escape around your capabilities. Know at least two exits from every room.

If you use a walker or wheelchair, check all exits to be sure you can get through the doorways. Doorways must be at least 32 inches wide. Make any necessary changes, such as installing exit ramps and widening doorways, to make an emergency escape easier.

Make sure stairway handrails are installed the correct way. Handrails should extend beyond the top and bottom so people have support when they get on and off the last step.

Make sure there is good staircase lighting. This means that there is no glare or shadows.

Keep stairways clear of extra objects. Outside should be kept clear of debris and leaves. Make sure there are no cracks, loose bricks or stones on outside steps.

If you build a staircase, make sure the tread (width of step) and riser (height of step) are the correct size. Risers should not be more than 7 inches. Treads should be wide enough

so that the feet do not extend beyond the edges of steps.

Do not throw rugs at the bottom of staircases as they may cause people to trip and fall. If you must use throw rugs, secure them with carpet tape or skid-resistant backing.

Inside, outside ramps

Inside and outside ramps should have slope no greater than 1 inch of height for each 12 inches of length. Ramps bigger than this may cause a problem for people in wheelchairs or those with limited mobility. As with stairways, ramps should have handrails and be free of extra objects.

The ramp surface should be nonslip. For wooden ramps, this can be done with nonskid deck paint or adhesive strips. On concrete ramps, a broom finish (side-to-side across the slope) can help.

The right fit

As mentioned earlier, kitchens and cooking areas are the primary areas where these fires start. To make sure a person can escape from a home fire,

HOME continues on 9

Former BAMC COVID-19 patient returns as plasma donor

BAMC continues to seek donations of convalescent plasma from eligible donors

By Daniel J. Calderón

BROOKE ARMY MEDICAL CENTER
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Thefety Tibbs, who was among the first COVID-19 patients treated at Brooke Army Medical Center, is now among the first of BAMC's former patients to donate convalescent plasma, which is currently being explored as a potential treatment for COVID-19.

Tibbs said the evening of April 10, he wasn't feeling well. He had already taken medicine for a headache but decided to go to the emergency room due to relentless sinus pressure.

After receiving X-rays and an initial diagnosis of pneumonia, the staff completed a swab culture. Shortly after,

he was informed that he had tested positive for COVID-19. He was quickly moved to a COVID-specific ward.

"It was a challenge from then on," Tibbs said. "I really didn't know what to expect. You see it on the news and you see people dying. And then they took care of me. I was worried that first night, but they took care of me all the way through."

He made a full recovery and was released to days after he had been admitted. He received a request about two weeks later to donate convalescent plasma. After some internal debate, he decided to accept the request.

BAMC continues to seek donations of convalescent plasma from eligible donors. The donations are specifically for BAMC patients and the program is being led by the Armed Services Blood Program. The science behind the potential treatment involves how the body reacts to the virus and speeds up the recovery.

When someone contracts a virus, that person's immune system creates antibodies to fight the virus. For people who successfully fight a virus, their plasma will now contain infection-fighting antibodies called "convalescent plasma." Thus, patients who have fully recovered from COVID-19 can donate their plasma as a potential treatment for others who are now fighting the same virus.

Anyone who chooses to donate convalescent plasma goes through the same process as someone who donates regular plasma, but there are some extra requirements for donors to be eligible to donate convalescent plasma.

Donors must be at least 17 years old, weigh at least 116 pounds and be in good general health. Additionally, to donate convalescent plasma, volunteers must have already had COVID-19 and be fully recovered for at least 14 days. This means donors must be symptom-free for the full two weeks before they will be

considered for donation and all donations are screened for COVID-19 antibodies.

All potential CCP donors must be prescreened before I can set them up for an appointment," said Mark Salcedo, the blood donor recruiter for the JBSA Fort Sam Houston Armed Services Blood Program. "If the donor is prescreen eligible, I'll forward it to our medical director for his review. He reviews their medical history and either approves or disapproves their donation. Once approved, I can schedule them for a plasma appointment. The staff does a lot on the front end of a CCP donation to protect the donor's health and the safety of the military's blood supply."

There are two ways eligible donors can give convalescent plasma. The first is by donating whole blood. This yields one dose of convalescent plasma.

The process takes about 15 minutes and donors can return to donate every 56 days. The

second is by donating plasma. This yields about three to four doses of convalescent plasma. The donation takes about 45 minutes. For their safety, the staff at the Akeroyd Blood Donor Center require a minimum of 28 days between convalescent plasma donations.

"I wanted to try and help somebody else who has the virus," Tibbs said about his decision to donate. "It was very efficient so I decided to keep on going in. The team is excellent. They made me feel very comfortable."

Salcedo said there are currently about 150 donors in their system, but they are still looking for more.

Anyone who is interested, and eligible, can donate at the Akeroyd Blood Donor Center at 1240 Harney Road on Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston. Interested donors can call 210-295-4655 or 210-295-4109 for more information. For more on the Armed Services Blood Program, visit <https://militaryblood.dod.mil/>.

HOME

From page 8

especially if the individual is in a wheelchair, measure the wheelchair from front to back, plus footrest, and knowing the turning radius of a wheelchair will assist the person to escape a fire in the home.

There should be enough knee space under the counters for wheelchairs users and those who need to sit while working. Knee space should be about 30 inches wide, 27 inches high and 19 inches deep. Ensure this space gives you enough height and depth for knee and toe clearance.

Add rolling storage carts if you lose storage space due to accessibility needs. The individual in the wheelchair can push away the storage cart to escape the fire.

Have nonskid floors surfaces and place a kitchen-grade fire extinguisher where it's easy to reach.

Speak to your family members, building manager or neighbors about your fire safety plan and practice it with them.

Contact your local fire department's nonemergency line and explain your needs. They can suggest escape plan ideas and may perform a home fire safety inspection if you ask.

Ask emergency providers to keep your needs information on file. Keep a phone near your bed and be ready to call 911 or your local emergency number if a fire occurs.

For more information about home safety for people with disabilities, visit the National Fire Prevention Association at

<http://www.nfpa.org/education>,
<http://www.amputee-coalition.org>,
<http://www.UnitedSpinal.org> or contact the fire prevention offices at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston at 210-221-2727, JBASA-Lackland at 210-671-2921 or JBASA-Randolph at 210-652-6915.

Digital giving now at Army chapels

By Brittany Nelson

U.S. ARMY INSTALLATION MANAGEMENT
COMMAND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Soldiers, their families and civilians who attend chapel at any Army post across the world can now give their tithes and offerings online.

"This gives congregation members the opportunity to donate 24 hours a day, seven days a week," said Master Sgt. Andrew Hagemann, chief religious affairs noncommissioned officer for the U.S. Army's Installation Management Command at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston.

Hagemann says this opens up the opportunity for people to give at any location at any time, even if they are downrange.

The process to donate online is simple, Hagemann said. Users can visit <http://www.armyctofdigitalgiving.com>,

select their installation, use the drop-down menu to select the category they want to support, and enter the amount they wish to donate. The website emails the user a receipt or gives them an option to print one.

Hagemann said that the website is easy to use and the Army has a QR code to display in the chapels and bulletins.

"We have been working on this for a while and when COVID-19 hit, we sped it up," he said. "This is something we needed to have because a lot of religious services are fully digital right now."

The website can be accessed from anywhere in the world using a mobile device or desktop computer. It is safe to use and protects people's information.

To give to your installation's religious institution, visit www.armyctofdigitalgiving.com.

ARNORTH's new senior enlisted advisor reflects on COVID-19 response

By Lori A. Bultman

502ND AIR BASE WING
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Command Sgt. Maj. Phil K. Barretto, the new senior enlisted advisor for U.S. Army North (Fifth Army), arrived in Military City USA in July from South Korea, where he served as the 2nd Infantry Division, Republic of Korea-U.S. Combined Division command sergeant major.

The new addition to the Strength of the Nation team looks forward to supporting homeland defense and civil authorities, while also securing initiatives to defend America.

Barretto, an Aiea, Hawaii native, served previously as the commandant of the Noncommissioned Officer Academy at Fort Drum, New York, and as command sergeant major of 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment. He has a

Bachelor of Arts from Excelsior College and an Associate of Arts from Hawaii Pacific University.

Upon his arrival, Barretto hit the ground running, visiting San Antonio medical centers where Urban Augmentation Medical Task Force members are providing support during the local COVID-19 surge.

"My first impression was the amazing medical teams I encountered on the ground," he said. "Right off the bat, I could see that they are caring professionals who work tirelessly every day to save lives throughout our communities."

The support U.S. Army North, as Northern Command's designated lead component to work with the Federal Emergency Management Agency, has provided locally and across the country is intended to relieve the pressure on the country's overwhelmed civilian medical facilities.



STAFF SGT. CHARLOTTE REAVIS

Lt. Gen. Laura J. Richardson (right), commanding general, U.S. Army North (Fifth Army) and the Joint Force Land Component Command, and Command Sgt. Maj. Phil K. Barretto (left), senior enlisted leader of ARNORTH, speak with Staff Sgt. Kathleen Caplinger, a combat medic specialist from Fort Carson, Colorado who is deployed with Urban Augmentation Medical Task Force-627 at Baptist Medical Center in San Antonio July 21.

"We work hand-in-hand to support to our lead federal agencies in all responses, to include COVID-19," Barretto said. "Coming from Korea, it's been an eye-opening experience to see first-hand how federal agencies respond to national-level crises."

Barretto is thankful to the joint-service men and women assigned to U.S. Army North who have answered the call during the coronavirus pandemic.

"I am both proud and thankful for their efforts," he

said. "Every single day, these men and women are putting on gear and facing one of the greatest challenges our nation has seen in a long time."

Part of U.S. Army North's mission is to remain continuously prepared to support those in need during homeland disasters or emergencies.

"As the Joint Force Land Component Command to U.S. Northern Command, we have to be ready at any time," Barretto said. "This response has sharpened our knife. As a

learning organization, we are always looking for ways to improve based on lessons we learn from each response."

The command sergeant major looks forward to continuing his support of the dedicated Soldiers of U.S. Army North during his tenure.

"This is a very challenging organization. I have never seen anything like this is my military career," Barretto said. "But I am so proud to lead an organization that works tirelessly to serve our nation and defend the homeland."

New Army Digital Garrison app serves as guide to on-post services

By Devon Suits

ARMY NEWS SERVICE

The Army has launched the new Digital Garrison mobile app that provides information and facilitates access to a full array of on-post services, as part of a partnership with the Army & Air Force Exchange Service, or AAFES.

The app, which can be downloaded on Android and Apple devices, provides users with secure access to facility information and other "quality-of-life" services by consolidating data from three related networks, said Scott Malcom, Army Installation Management Command public affairs director.

Within the easy-to-use app, Soldiers, families, veterans

and civilians living or working at a Digital Garrison-enabled post can access resources about their local exchange; Army Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation program; and other services.

More than 60 installations, including Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston, are represented on the app, with plans to add more in future updates, Malcom said. Joint bases operated by other services and select garrisons without sites on the networks that feed the app will not be incorporated in the initial launch.

Users can customize the app to meet their needs. Digital Garrison will include an installation directory, gate locations and hours, fitness

and recreation options, weather, event information, and more, he said.

Soldiers and families who are new to an area can also access in-processing and other newcomer material before a permanent change of station, Malcom said.

"When they do move, they enjoy the continuity provided by an enterprise solution," he added.

Digital Garrison also provides an in-app shopping function through ShopMyExchange.com, along with local AAFES shopping and restaurant details. It also features a mobile wallet function where shoppers can use their MILITARY STAR card.

Program officials are set to

continually improve the app through daily updates, based on in-app feedback from users, in addition to regularly scheduled major updates.

One of the first major updates will include local commissary information and a link to Click2Go, the Defense Commissary Agency's online grocery ordering portal and curbside pickup service, but only if the capability is available at a given installation.

"Feedback is very important to us," Malcom said. "The app includes a feedback portion where users can communicate and help us shape it going forward. This is not a 'one and done.' Users can count on the fact that we will continually optimize the app after launch."

Leaders will also have the ability to write their own customized messages and announcements to distribute to the force through the app after the first major update scheduled to occur at the end of August, Malcom said.

Residents of on-post housing can link to their installation's privatized housing partner, he said. Personnel living in military housing will eventually have a similar capability.

Digital Garrison will become the Army enterprise mobile app for installations, Malcom added. Local app solutions will cease, ensuring all applicable garrisons comply with the Federal Information Security Management Act and other cybersecurity protocols.

LACKLAND

LiDAR part of digital foundation for future

By Roger Clarke and David Foster
AFCEC PLANNING AND INTEGRATION
DIRECTORATE

Airborne imagery and light detecting and ranging, or LiDAR, data collected under an Air Force enterprise installations contract began in 2016 continues to build and fortify the digital foundation for installations of the future, including hurricane-stricken Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida.

High fidelity and accuracy of these data sources are critical elements for future deployment of autonomous vehicles on installations and for the effective placement of sensors powering smart facilities of tomorrow.

Under the enterprise contract, data is collected at each Air Force installation every three years, and by exception based on mission requirements. The centralized collection allows the Air Force to gather data once and use endlessly for a wide variety of missions, improving context supporting data-driven basing, support and battle-space decisions and investments.

This enterprise approach has resulted in a 40 percent costs savings over de-centralized execution previously conducted by installations, while simultaneously expanding access to the information by cross-functional and multi-domain users.

Today, following in the footsteps of civil engineer innovators and early adopters, this same data helps built infrastructure and environment management, force protection and flight safety decision making across the enterprise.

Current applications include:

- » Bridge and road condition assessments
- » Disaster preparedness, response and recovery
- » Erosion control
- » Endangered plants restoration
- » Flood predictive modeling and analysis
- » Imaginary surfaces - 3D modeling aircraft approach and departure obstructions

- » Irrigation system assessment
- » Line of site analysis supporting force protection, communications and flight safety
- » Roof condition assessments
- » Solar suitability analysis
- » Wildland fire management

Timely, relevant, compelling data

For example, a few days following Hurricane Michael striking Tyndall AFB, the Air Force Civil Engineer Center's digital response included the collection of airborne imagery to support initial facility damage assessments conducted remotely between structural engineers and geospatial analysts.

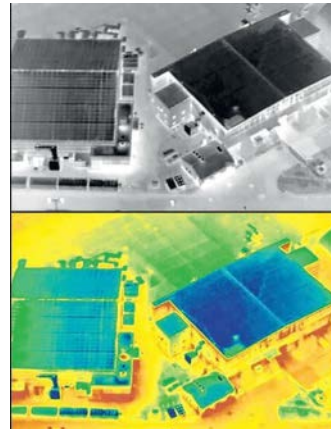
A six-month LiDAR collection, followed by annual imagery and LiDAR collection, continues to be used extensively by civil engineers and private industry partners for base reconstruction and installation of future pursuits.

"Making sure this data is visible, accessible, understandable, linked and trusted has resulted in significant cost avoidance by collecting it once for use by many, saving time and effort conducting surveys needed to perform engineering and design tasks," said Lt. Col. Ruben Choi, AFCEC's Planning and Integration Requirements Identification Branch chief.

Those needing Tyndall data can access it via the AFGIMS Imagery & LiDAR Widget on CAC and government network systems or by requesting it via Geobasesupport@dize.net, Choi said.

Geospatial engineering innovators

Numerous examples of Airmen leading the deployment of cutting-edge geospatial technologies include the use of LiDAR to survey and assess roofing systems at Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio, geographically separated unit radar sites, and the iconic U.S. Air Force Academy Chapel indoor environments, and deploying small unmanned aerial systems and thermal imaging to assess Installation infrastructure.



COURTESY PHOTO

Thermal imagery supporting roofing system assessments at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, in 2017.

Limited Air Force deployments of thermal imagery for infrastructure management have proven to be of substantial value for derived data supporting energy reduction objectives. Like LiDAR, thermal imagery makes the invisible — visible.

Several bases have successfully used airborne and hand-held thermal sensors to identify areas for improving energy management. Its use reduces costs by improving built and natural environment knowledge supporting program management and investments.

Adding airborne thermal imagery to the enterprise installations airborne imagery and LiDAR package is currently under consideration, and is expected to significantly reduce coordination required and eliminate acquisition costs for installations wanting to apply thermal imaging for assessing exterior building envelopes, conditions of windows, doors and other penetrations located on walls and roof systems.

Increased interest in geospatial technologies has caught the attention of

organizations like AFWERX and the Air Force Installation and Mission Support Center's Innovation Office.

For example, in the fall of 2019 AFIMSC's Innovation Office began field-testing an unmanned aerial system equipped with light detection and ranging, multi-spectral sensors and machine-learning algorithms to map, survey and inventory habitat for the golden-cheeked warbler at Camp Bullis, Texas. For more information, visit <https://www.afimsc.af.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/210518/afimsc-innovation-project-receives-3-million-award/>.

This incredible initiative is one of many where the Air Force GeoBase Program intends to place more emphasis on collaboration to maximize enterprise investments to achieve a greater understanding of the operating environment for strengthening force protection, improving readiness and enabling steps to achieve smart facilities and installations.

"Satellite and airborne imagery, airborne and terrestrial LiDAR and thermal imagery are engineering industry standards," said Scott Ensign, Air Force GeoBase Program Manager. "Their adoption by Air Force civil engineers provides comprehensive data sets enabling high-quality analysis supporting data-driven decisions for installation lifecycle management and force protection. Our aim is to expand enterprise awareness and deployment of these capabilities providing the digital foundation for and leading to installations of the future."

For more information on Air Force installation imagery and LiDAR data resources, future collection schedule and related geospatial engineering capabilities, email geobasesupport@dize.net. To stay current on the geospatial innovation discussion, join and follow the USAF GeoBase Program on milSuite.

Editor's note: Clarke is the AFCEC GIO support manager and Foster is an AFCEC GIO support contractor.

AMEDD board tests collar, app for MWDs at JBSA-Lackland

By Sandra Washington
U.S. ARMY MEDICAL DEPARTMENT
BOARD OPERATIONAL TEST OFFICER

The U.S. Army Medical Department Board, or USAMEDDBD, assigned to the U.S. Army Medical Center of Excellence, conducted an operational assessment of the Canine Thermal Monitor, Mobile Application and Collar at Joint Base San Antonio -Lackland Aug. 17-21.

Six noncommissioned officers assigned to the 802nd Security Force Squadron Military Working Dog Kennel, along with their assigned working dogs, assisted with the assessment.

The MWDs consisted of male and female canines, ranging in age from two to eight years. The purpose of the event was to assess the functionality and usability of both the CTM mobile application and collar to support the military working dog mission.

The primary focus of the assessment was on the

effectiveness to which the CTM mobile application and collar reduces risks of military working dogs to heat injuries when operated by typical users, MWD handlers and trainers, in a simulated operational environment.

Military working dogs are critical members of tactical missions and are susceptible to similar injuries as their human counterparts. Currently, exertional heat illness and dehydration are among the most common hazards, which require service dog trainers, handlers, and veterinarians to optimize training sessions and operational missions to mitigate heat illness.

The Warfighter Health Performance and Evacuation Project Manager requested that the USAMEDDBD conduct this event to assess the ability of both the CTM mobile application and collar to provide canine physiologic data in order to predict safe work durations and recovery times in an operational environment.

The five-day event took place at the 802nd Security Force Squadron MWD Kennel at JBSA-Lackland. The NCOs received six hours of training on both devices prior to putting them into use. After training, the NCOs used the application to plan the intended work cycle for the canine and then configured the collar to train the canine on the planned work cycle, and attached the collar to the canine to perform the intended work.

The mobile application provides physiological data analysis to allow military dog trainers, handlers, and veterinarians access to an operational planning tool designed to be readily installed and accessed on any hand-held mobile device like a smartphone or tablet. The collar is developed to predict safe work durations and recovery times, based on predicted body temperature, for specific training or operational scenarios.

The application takes into account environmental



COURTESY PHOTO

Staff Sgt. Jacob Howard, a Military Working Dog handler, and MWD P-puritan are evaluated by a U.S. Army Medical Department Board test officer.

conditions, the biophysical properties of the MWD like breed, size, weight and color, physical activity levels, and type of activity of the breed like detection versus patrol.

This MWD technology will enable MWD trainers, handlers, and veterinarians to assess mission safety and feasibility from the perspective of thermal

burden.

The results of the assessment will be provided to the U.S. Army Medical Materiel Development Activity, Warfighter Health Performance and Evacuation Product Manager in an operational test report to assist with future development and deployment decisions.

668th ALIS overcomes obstacles: ‘On the Road Again’



COURTESY PHOTO

Members of the 668th Alteration and Installation Squadron were sent to install materials and communication equipment in direct support of U.S. Cyber Command priorities.

From 668th Alteration and Installation Squadron

Amidst the pandemic, the 668th Alteration and Installation Squadron of the 543rd Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Group at Joint Base San Antonio -Lackland has rapidly evolved in an innovative way to maximize teleworking and remote solutions. When the mission calls, however, the Roadrunners of America's Cryptologic Wing remain ready to hit the road to answer that call.

Earlier this year, after the DOD-wide stop movement order was imposed, the 668th ALIS remained at home, for the most part, conducting training while also building a “Zero-Day” plan. This plan re-prioritizes the project flow and best assess how to support

customers on day zero, as soon as travel to respective destinations are green-lighted.

The unit is primarily composed of civil engineer, communications, and logistics competencies spread across 22 diverse specialties, and they secured an exception-to-policy to travel and continue fulfilling mission requirements during the pandemic.

Twenty-six Roadrunners were sent to install \$530,000 worth of materials and communication equipment in direct support of U.S. Cyber Command priorities. This massive project is scheduled to span 110 days and will contribute to just-in-time National Defense Strategy objectives.

“Our Roadrunners certainly live up to the motto of ‘On-the-Road Again,’ traveling the globe, averaging over 7,000

collective days TDY (temporary duty) each year,” said Lt. Col. Peter Nazarechuk, 668th ALIS commander. “Yet, not surprisingly, the ALIS mission has been significantly impacted by the recent COVID-19 pandemic.”

Nazarechuk says he is proud of the important work the Roadrunners accomplish each and every day. Particularly in how the Roadrunner team has risen to creatively address the challenges in this new environment. Due to their great teamwork, the ALIS is postured to not only execute their significant mission, but to do so safely and smartly, he said.

The ALIS is a selectively manned unit responsible for engineering, constructing, and installing both information systems and sensitive compartmented facilities around the world.

Summit charts future of installation, mission support innovation

By Shannon Carabajal

AIR FORCE INSTALLATION AND MISSION SUPPORT CENTER
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The Air Force Installation and Mission Support Center delivered an in-depth look into the Air Force innovation ecosystem during its inaugural Worldwide Innovation Summit Sept. 1-2.

With a theme of Evolution of Innovation, the virtual event brought more than 100 installation and mission support leaders and innovators together for a series of special engagements designed to help them empower Airmen and learn about opportunities available to pursue and cultivate innovative ideas.

The event also connected base-level leaders with Air Force and industry innovators, a valuable opportunity that helps break down barriers to innovation, said AFIMSC Commander Maj. Gen. Tom Wilcox as he kicked off the summit.

"We want to hear from you. We want to answer your questions. I'm absolutely excited about what we're doing in the innovation realm of installation and mission support," he said. "A huge shout-out to our innovators at the installations who continually bring us great ideas. It's our job ... to get the money and to see those ideas come to fruition."

The summit included discussions about the future of Air Force innovation and AFWERX, Small Business Innovation Research opportunities, Airmen Empowerment, rapid acquisition programs and more.

"If the Air Force is to maintain its competitive advantage across the air and space domain in this new realm of great power competition, it will take every Airman to continue to find ways to innovate and, more importantly, implement that innovation at the speed of relevance."

Col. Greg Beaulieu, 325th MSG commander

"We wanted to share what we've learned so far during our time as an innovation office, and provide an opportunity for the Air Force mission support group community to connect and learn from our ecosystem partners," said Emilie Miller, an innovation program analyst with AFIMSC Ventures.

Those relationships will help commanders empower and encourage their Airmen to innovate, according to Col. Greg Beaulieu, 325th Mission Support Group commander at Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida.

"If the Air Force is to maintain its competitive advantage across the air and space domain in this new realm of great power competition, it will take every Airman to continue to find ways to innovate and, more importantly, implement that innovation at the speed of relevance," he said.

Over the past 18 months, AFIMSC's innovation efforts have garnered \$65 million in Air Force and venture capital funding going toward installation and mission support initiatives. The staff at AFIMSC Ventures, the center's office charged with taking innovative ideas from the drawing board to implementation, believes opportunities to collaborate with commanders across the Air Force will help build on that momentum.

"We hope this event will grow our network, connecting the coalition of the motivated, and keep us learning as we connect and strive for even more innovative efforts," Miller said.

Organizers wrapped up the summit by sharing strategies for competing in the 2021 AFIMSC Innovation Rodeo. This year's theme is Base of the Future, a broad topic with endless mission support-centric possibilities. The competition gives Airmen a chance to help shape how installations will look and function in the future.

"While we live and breathe innovation (at AFIMSC), there's still a lot of culture change and outreach to enable innovation at every level across the enterprise. We will never be finished innovating, and striving to make life and work better for our Airmen," Miller said.

Additional summit sessions aimed at U.S. Air Forces in Europe and Pacific Air Forces leaders were scheduled for Sept. 8 and 9. For more information, contact AFIMSC Ventures at AFIMSC.Innovation@us.af.mil.

AFIMSC seeks ingenious ideas for 2021 Innovation Rodeo

By Shannon Carabajal

AIR FORCE INSTALLATION AND MISSION
SUPPORT CENTER PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The Air Force Installation and Mission Support Center kicks off its third annual Innovation Rodeo with a call-for-topics campaign which began Sept. 1.

The campaign, open through Dec. 1, gives military and civilian members of mission support groups around the world a chance to win part of \$1 million in funding and resources to pursue their ideas.

"We can't wait to see what ideas AFIMSC Airmen have for us this year," said Emilie Miller, an innovation program analyst with AFIMSC Ventures. "They keep impressing us with their passion and ingenuity and we're excited to continue working hard with them to change the Air Force."

The AFIMSC Innovation Office has evolved substantially over the last 20 months, and is introducing AFIMSC Ventures, serving as "angel investors for ground-breaking" ideas to better support AFIMSC's primary subordinate units

and Airmen across the enterprise, Miller added.

This year's theme is Base of the Future, a broad topic with endless mission support-centric possibilities. It's an opportunity to share how installations can look and function to move the Air Force forward.

»»»» The competition calls for Airmen to submit their ideas through the online Ideascale platform at <https://usaf.ideascalegov.com/a/campaign-home/181>.

Airmen with the top ideas will have an opportunity to learn from leading innovators and pitch their ideas to a panel of Air Force leaders at the AFIMSC Innovation Rodeo competition Feb. 5, 2021.

Over the past two years, AFIMSC received hundreds of amazing ideas and handed out millions of dollars to help Airmen get projects off the ground, Miller said.

Past winners include:
» Mobile apps to make life easier for

Airmen and their families, including one to centralize and streamline the subletting of short-term slots at military child development centers; one for base announcements and community events; and one to share feedback about customer experiences.

» An idea to replace the current manual mapping of underground cabling and wiring with the use of augmented reality;
» A project to leverage Geospatial Information Systems and aerial imagery for facility roof inspections;
» A proposal to use autonomous robotic lawnmowers to cut the grass in and around airfields at night to reduce aircraft bird-strike hazards.

Winning projects are in now various stages of development, including an idea from the inaugural event in 2019 — an app now called the Wing Feedback App — which is getting ready for a pilot test this fall.

Seeing it grow from an idea to a developed app undergoing testing has been exciting for Lt. Col. Karen Landale, a member of the pitch team who's still heavily involved in development and

testing.

"It feels incredible and it makes me believe that it really is a small group of committed people who can make a big difference for our Air Force. Anything is possible when you're willing to commit time and energy to important projects," she said.

Landale encourages Airmen to share their ideas and take advantage of opportunities like the AFIMSC Innovation Rodeo.

"Don't wait," she said. "When an opportunity like the Innovation Rodeo presents itself, sell your idea to the people who can help make it a reality.

"You'll be surprised by the number of people who'll want to join you when they see you have a good and important idea. The Air Force has no shortage of problems to fix and no shortage of talent to fix those problems. AFIMSC offers opportunities to provide the time, funding and attention needed to solve Air Force problems. I think it's one of AFIMSC's strongest value propositions."

For more information, email AFIMSC.Innovation@us.af.mil.



AIRMAN 1ST CLASS SETH HADDIX

Air Force Master Sgt. Melina Jimerson, basic military training supply lead for the 81st Logistics Readiness Squadron, organizes clothing inside the squadron's warehouse at Keesler Air Force Base, Mississippi, Aug. 26.

AETC teams come together to supply BMT uniforms

By Airman 1st Class Seth Haddix

81ST TRAINING WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

With Air Force Basic Military Training coming to Keesler Air Force Base, Mississippi, due to COVID-19, the mission of the base has become to not only train, but create premier warfighters.

A team of Airmen from different units around Air Education and Training Command worked together to help the 81st Logistics Readiness Squadron issue uniforms to trainees at Keesler.

"Our purpose in coming here as a team is to support the training mission of Keesler and BMT," said Air Force Master Sgt. Melina Jimerson, 81st LRS BMT supply lead. "Continuing to train through obstacles such as COVID-19 keeps our Air Force moving forward, so my team must stay resilient to do our part."

The uniforms being issued to the trainees were supplied from the 502nd

LRS at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland. The group had approximately a week to prepare and organize the process.

"We came in with limited equipment and time, and had to develop a system that would work," said Air Force Senior Airman Hope Curry, 81st LRS material management journeyman. "Through trials and tribulations, the process became more natural. We overcame and adapted quickly to equip the trainees with what they need."

Training Airmen safely and efficiently through COVID-19 has become possible with the units of AETC coming together as a team.

"Within our own units, we all have our own unique missions," Jimerson said. "However, we've been able to combine our skills to support the BMT mission, which is to motivate, train and inspire the next generation of Airmen with the foundation to deliver 21st-century airpower without interruption."

RANDOLPH

‘We Care’ message resonates across JBSA community

By Robert Goetz

502ND AIR BASE WING
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Signs proclaiming “We Care” greeted motorists as they entered the gates of Joint Base San Antonio installations on an unseasonably cool Sept. 10 morning.

Many of those motorists honked their horns in beautifully noisy response.

The show of support for the JBSA community — especially its young military members and veterans — came on World Suicide Prevention Day and was one of the highlights of this year’s Suicide Awareness and Prevention Month.

“Many people who suicide think that they are a burden on others or feel that others don’t care,” said Aaron Moffett, JBSA-Randolph community support coordinator. “We want to show our fellow Airmen, their families and the staff that we care.”

Jennifer Vann, JBSA-Lackland We Care event coordinator, said the event began last year to bring awareness to suicide prevention, but had an even greater impact this year.

“This year, it’s brought a bigger impact because we’re secluded because of COVID,” Vann said. “It’s showing to be a bigger impact for people because we’ve come out in greater numbers. I think people this year needed this even more.”

The signs, she said, are like “a handshake, a hug, opening the door for someone, just a simple gesture.”

Vann, whose husband is Lt. Col. Ray Vann Jr., 323rd Training Squadron commander, said, “We’re hearing the horns

honking, we’re seeing the waving, we’re seeing the smiling, windows are coming down, we’re getting the thumbs-up, so we’re definitely seeing that impact.”

Suicide is a serious public health issue in the United States that affects nearly every age group, and its impact on active-duty members and veterans is even more pronounced.

The active duty military’s rate of nearly 25 suicides per 100,000 is higher than the overall U.S. rate of 18 suicides per 100,000 in military-age adults, according to the Department of Defense. In addition, approximately 17 veterans die by suicide every day, according to 2019 data from the National Veterans Suicide Prevention Annual Report.

We Care Day and other events at JBSA this month are raising awareness of this public health crisis and letting service members and veterans know that the community cares and provides the help they need to overcome their feelings of helplessness and hopelessness.

An event that normally brings the JBSA community together at JBSA-Lackland’s Wilford Hall Ambulatory Surgical Center and JBSA-Randolph’s Heritage Park is going virtual this year because of the coronavirus pandemic, said Gina Ramirez, JBSA-Randolph Mental Health Outreach coordinator.

“This year we have created a Facebook group for the 59th Medical Wing 5K Run for Life to allow participants the opportunity to connect with each other from anywhere around the globe,” she said. “The group also offers support to those members who might be at risk by providing helpful



SARAYUTH PINTHONG

Volunteers at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland hold signs in support of the We Care Day event Sept. 10.

resources.”

Participants in the Run for Life will be able to complete their 5K walk or run at any time during the month and post their pictures in the Facebook group. National, local, and base agencies are part of the group and will be posting their resources throughout the month.

“It’s another way for our members and their families to feel connected during this difficult time,” Ramirez said. “It’s a space to honor loved ones lost and an opportunity to support those who may be at risk.”

Also scheduled this month is a presentation Sept. 16 by retired Master Sgt. Ashley Dunning, an Air Force Wounded Warrior ambassador who will speak virtually to the military community about resilience and recovery. For webinar login information, call 210-652-2448.

Another virtual activity,

Virtual Meditation Mondays, which happens every Monday of the month, promotes resiliency by providing participants with 20 minutes of breathing calmly in the middle of the day. Call 210-652-2448 for login details.

Although there is a special focus on suicide prevention during September, suicide is a serious issue among service members, veterans and their families that must be addressed more than once a year, Ramirez said.

“It is human nature to want to be a valued member of a social circle — to have friends and family to love and be loved by,” she said. “That is why the single most effective and immediate way that military units can reduce the rate of suicide is simply by investing meaningful time within their work teams.”

It is important for every member in the workplace to feel valued, Ramirez said.

“When we feel like a valuable member of the team, we not only feel good on the inside but we also feel a sense of camaraderie and commitment to each other; we don’t want to let our coworkers down,” she said. “This is a healthy work environment to be a member of and one that we should all strive to achieve.”

“We Care” is a special emphasis for the Randolph Community Action Team, which is working with the dorm council to develop regularly occurring resiliency events, Moffett said.

“Our major concern, especially with the dorm Airmen, is that everyone is socially distancing and is unable to socially connect,” he said. “They may be feeling alone so we want to show them that they are not alone, that they matter and that we care about them. Our theme this year is ‘Connect to Protect,’ so we want to make sure we are connecting with our Airmen.”

During these difficult times, JBSA mental and behavioral health clinics continue to be fully operational with mostly telehealth appointments, Ramirez said.

For any questions or concerns, call the Brooke Army Medical Center Department of Behavioral Health at 210-916-1600 at JBSA-Fort Sam Houston, the Wilford Hall Ambulatory Surgical Center at 210-292-7361 or the JBSA-Randolph Mental Health Clinic at 210-652-2448.

Another resource, the Veterans and Military Crisis Line, is available at 1-800-273-8255. Chat online at www.veteranscrisisline.net/get-help/chat or send a text message to 838255.



COURTESY GRAPHIC

AETC innovators invited to attend virtual innovation summit Sept. 24

From Air Education and Training Command Public Affairs

In an effort to fuel collaboration amongst Air Education and Training Command innovators, AETC's Analysis and Innovation Directorate (AETC/A9) will host the Command's next virtual iSummit from 10-11:30 a.m. Sept. 24.

The primary goal of AETC's

Innovation Summit is to allow innovators across the command to share knowledge, learn from others' experiences, and hear about unit successes and challenges.

"We had a positive event with our first virtual summit back in June, discussing opportunities available to innovation teams to overcome obstacles and identify pathways, in spite of the COVID-19 pandemic," said

Col. William Mamourieh, AETC/A9 director. "The event was widely attended with participants ranging from staff sergeant to brigadier general."

The upcoming iSummit theme is "COVID-19: Innovative Airmen Elevating through Crisis."

"Our agenda includes experts from multiple AETC units discussing how they accelerated innovation

opportunities while contending with the pandemic. We have also asked our AETC Historian to discuss COVID-19 lessons learned," said Mamourieh.

The AETC History office has been collecting COVID lessons learned across AETC since the crisis began.

For more information on how to access the virtual event, email the Innovation Advancement Division at aetc.a9a.workflow.2@us.af.mil.

Boyd's rite of passage, history as greatest tool of learning

By Capt. Kenya Pettway

AIR EDUCATION AND TRAINING COMMAND
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

A respected researcher and writer of history, Gary W. Boyd, the command historian of Air Education and Training Command, has lived through several significant periods of history—all of which he believes has determined our present and shapes our future.

On the day East German officials began sealing off more than 30 miles of free passage through the heart of Berlin for the framework of the Berlin Wall, Boyd was born.

Unbeknownst to him, the construction of the Berlin Wall and its imminent demolishment in 1989 would come to serve as a symbol in the course of his career.

Rite of passage into history

Very early on in his life, Boyd became enamored with history and his ability to extract meaning from the past.

In the first grade as part of an assignment, he was given the opportunity to perform a reenactment of a character in American history. He chose Alexander Hamilton, a founding father of the United States who was key in constructing and ratifying the U.S. Constitution.

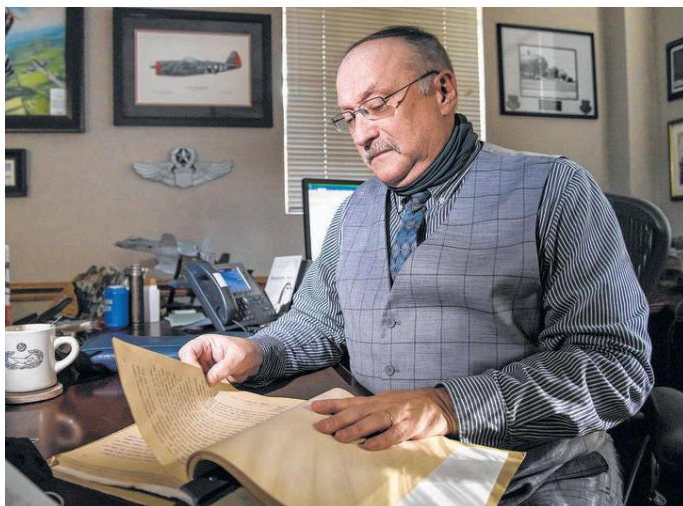
"I wanted to honor and understand where I came from, and how the world came to be," Boyd said. "That sustained me throughout my entire life."

A part of history that particularly interested Boyd was aerial history, a passion that led him to become a voracious reader.

At the early age of five, the first book he ever read was a chapter book on the Battle of Britain, featuring a narration of concentrated aerial attacks on convoys throughout Britain—an exciting account that first sparked his interest in aerial history.

In fact, his first toy was a P-38 Lightning, marked by its twin booms and distinctive shape. His fascination was not with the engineering of the plane, however, but with the people who flew them.

"Many historians are really intrigued by the technology; they want to know all there is to know about the A-10 Thunderbolt II or a B-17 Flying Fortress," Boyd said. "I was more



SEAN M. WORRELL

Gary W. Boyd, Air Education and Training Command historian, reads through documents of the formation of Randolph Field July 28 at Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph.

enthralled by the people who fly the aircraft and the Airmen who maintain them."

Boyd's love for aerial history and the Airmen who mark such history was solidified as he pursued history and art simultaneously at the beginning of college, and he ultimately chose history as his primary major.

Air Force historian

After graduating from college, Boyd wholly engaged his passion for aerial history and became an Air Force historian in 1988.

"I decided after I graduated that I wanted to roll the dice and see what I could do in the Air Force," Boyd said. "I became an Air Force historian and never looked back."

His career as an Air Force historian began at Sheppard Air Force Base, Texas, where he was able to dedicate countless hours to learning the craft of compiling history and chronicling the Air Force story.

"I really enjoyed the people and the stories of the Air Force," Boyd said. "Being a historian is a way that you can document the sacrifices made by Airmen around the world."

The Yukla 27 crash accident in 1995 during his third assignment at

Elmendorf AFB, Alaska, was what especially illuminated the gravity of his role as an Air Force historian.

"That is where I really began to understand my responsibility of posterity as a historian," Boyd said. "Telling the story, telling truth and honoring the people who sacrificed their lives—it was a solemn honor."

History as an instrument of learning

The posterity of history became even more important to Boyd at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

During the genesis of COVID-19 in the United States in February 2020, Boyd immediately began providing historic documentation to AETC leadership on the command's response efforts during crises in the past.

"It's important for us to know how people have felt, reacted and persevered in times of crises in the past," Boyd said. "Our ability to fight through COVID-19 has a lot to do with the resiliency we learned from history."

These historic documents proved to be valuable instruments of learning, as AETC stood up a secondary Basic Military Training base at Keesler Air Force Base, Mississippi — a mitigation effort mirrored after AETC's decision to relocate BMT to Amarillo Air Force

Base, Texas, during the meningitis outbreak in 1966.

"It's been one of the proudest moments of my career," Boyd said. "Being able to witness the command's efficiency in persevering through a crisis and maintaining the pipeline using guile, innovation and profound leadership—using mere history."

The better angels of our nature

The wounds endured from the social unrest following recent civil injustices this year is another crisis today that Boyd believes the examination of history can help mend.

"After the Civil Rights Era in the '50s and '60s, we weren't finished and we're still not finished," Boyd said. "The United States' history is never finished. We have the ability to move towards a better tomorrow if we listen to the past and the 'better angels of our nature,' as former President Abraham Lincoln would say."

Summoning the better angels of our nature is an endeavor that requires us to challenge ourselves daily—an endeavor Boyd knows doesn't always feel the most comfortable.

"It's uncomfortable for us to believe that there are flaws," Boyd said. "There's disparity, and there's still a lack of diversity in many areas of American society. It's uncomfortable because people who are comfortable don't want to challenge themselves, but we must fight that inclination and challenge ourselves always to ensure any one voice is as valued as the others."

In spite of these flaws, Boyd believes this current era, marked by unprecedented change and leadership, is "the greatest of all — and so it must always be."

The only way we can continue this unparalleled momentum of leadership, is to demolish the emblematic Berlin Wall which obstructs our ability to change for the better, and makes a "reappraisal of where we are and where we want to go," Boyd said. "That is the single most important thing a nation can do to be great and prosperous."

More importantly, Boyd believes we must commit to leaving a part of the goodness we tried to embody in the world when we're gone — an embodiment for future generations to observe through history, the greatest instrument of learning.