

# JBSA LEGACY

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JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO

MAY 29, 2020



JASON W. EDWARDS

U.S. Army Col. April Critelli, physician's assistant, screens a patient for COVID-19 at the McWethy Troop Medical Clinic at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston May 13. Critelli is the first medical Soldier to return to active duty from retirement during the COVID-19 crisis.

## After a lifetime of service, retirement can wait

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## Twins looking forward to being Sailors

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## DLIELC hosts first female Lebanese air traffic controller

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# New emergency leave available to DOD civilians

By Joseph Lacdan  
ARMY NEWS SERVICE

Department of Defense employees affected by the coronavirus pandemic will have the option of taking up to two weeks of emergency paid sick leave in addition to other paid leave entitlements.

The Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act, part of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, allows civilians across the Defense Department to take the emergency leave from April 1 through Dec. 31, provided that they meet certain conditions.

The new emergency sick leave will be separate from the normal sick leave civilians accrue and can be taken without using accrued sick leave.

"This is a new leave category that is provided to employees that may need to use this option to be able to care for family members or themselves, which is critically important as we all navigate our way through COVID-19," said Todd Fore, deputy assistant secretary of the Army for civilian personnel.

The leave is available to civilians required to remain in quarantine by a federal, local or

state quarantine order, employees who have been advised by a health care professional to self-quarantine; and to employees who experience COVID-19 symptoms and receive a medical diagnosis. Employees in these categories will qualify to receive full-pay emergency leave at their normal pay rate. They must, however, provide documentation of the government agency that issued the quarantine order or the name of the health care provider who advised the self-quarantine.

Fore said employees who wish to take the emergency leave should carefully read the requirements.

"It is complicated," he said. "I would highly encourage anyone or supervisors of anyone who's using the leave to familiarize themselves with the significant level of detail of the hours."

Employees who provide care for individuals who have been subject to a federal or local stay-at-home order or have been advised by a doctor to remain home can qualify but will be paid two-thirds of their normal pay rate. This includes parents who care for a child under the age of 18 whose school may be

closed or had their place of care closed due to quarantine restrictions.

"It could be that you don't have a leave bank and you don't want to go into advanced leave status," Fore said. "So this leave enables you to be compensated to be able to care for yourself or a family member."

He said the civilian pay system has not yet been adjusted for those that care for others and employees who take sick leave for caregiving may receive their normal full pay for now. Those employees would subsequently be asked to repay one-third of the sum.

Fore said that the Defense Finance and Accounting Service will take back the owed sum in future pay periods and increments. He added that DFAS has been working on updating the leave system so that employees will be paid the correct amount.

Fore reminds employees choosing to take the emergency leave option in the care provider categories that they should work closely with supervisors to develop a balanced schedule and closely monitor their pay stubs.

Part-time employees will also

be eligible for additional sick leave, but the maximum amount of leave will be based on the average number of hours that employee works over a two-week period.

DOD employees who fall under certain exemptions may not be eligible for the emergency paid leave. For instance, agencies can exclude essential health care providers from taking leave.

Employees must have scheduled work hours in order to take the emergency leave, meaning that civilians in furlough status, employees who have been suspended or employees who are in leave-without-pay status will not be eligible. Emergency paid leave may also not be used on holidays or in conjunction with other leave.

"Thus, an employee cannot receive two types of paid leave for the same hours," the summary of statutory and regulatory requirements in connection with the Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act states.

Unless an employee is allowed to use paid sick leave intermittently, leave must be taken in full-day increments.

# Officials forecast no meat, produce shortages

By Douglas Holl  
U.S. ARMY PUBLIC HEALTH CENTER

Reports of COVID-19 outbreaks in U.S. poultry and meatpacking plants may have concerned some defense commissary shoppers about the continued availability of fresh meat and poultry.

Veterinary health officials with the Department of Defense and Army Public Health Center who are charged with monitoring food safety and food supply for the DOD and Army say although there may be localized supply issues outside of the continental United States, there are no forecasted shortages of meat, poultry or produce.

"The Army Veterinary Service is working closely with the Defense Commissary Agency, the Defense Logistics Agency and other procurement agencies to expand the available sources of food," said Army Col. Nicole Chevalier, Defense Health Agency Veterinary Service chief. "This appears to be mitigating any potential shortages."

Chevalier said the Food and Drug Administration, U.S. Department of Agriculture and major DOD procurement agencies indicate that shortages in specific commodities in retail grocery stores are a result of increased customer demand and not supply chain shortages.

DOD Veterinary Services stood up an interservice operational planning team in late January to monitor food safety and supply in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. While many were focused on the human healthcare sector, DOD Veterinary Services was looking in another direction and focusing on potential impacts on food safety and availability.

"Our planning team put some deliberate measures and guidance in place to ensure an adequate, safe, and wholesome DOD food supply remained available to beneficiaries," Chevalier said. "The operational planning team continues to proactively

monitor the situation."

Chevalier says the major procurement agencies for the DOD are not projecting any food shortages in the supply chain for commissaries, dining facilities or exchanges.

"The availability of a plethora of sources for most critical commodities procured by DOD agencies mitigates major impacts from food plant shutdowns," Chevalier said. "The DOD COVID-19 Food Protection sub-working group has established relationships with DOD food procurement agencies and federal stakeholders and will continue to monitor and address any

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# Feedback Fridays

By Brig. Gen. Laura L. Lenderman

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 [RandolphPublicAffairs@us.af.mil](mailto:RandolphPublicAffairs@us.af.mil) using the subject line "Feedback Fridays." Questions will be further researched and published as information becomes available.

## Personnel Issues

**Q. Can I, a civilian with no military background, buy Air Force clothing (polo shirts, sweaters, long sleeve shirts, etc.) from the Exchange stores at JBSA-Fort Sam Houston?**

**Also, can you provide me an updated policy for the civilian employees? What can and can't they shop at? Many thanks!**

**A.** Thank you for your question. Regardless of background, all members that are authorized on base and in the Exchange are permitted to purchase and wear Air Force clothing that is provided at our stores.

Unfortunately, without a DOD ID card, civilians are not authorized to shop at the Exchanges or Commissaries at JBSA installations, unless they have an approved memo authorizing them to shop on base as Mission Essential Personnel during the current COVID-19 operations.

**Q. My questions are in regards to Brig. Gen. Lenderman's policy letter dated 5 April 2020, defining the local leave area as a 150-mile radius from the center of San Antonio.**

Texas is a pretty big state with a lot of open, rural country and small towns. Scenarios that have surfaced during the restriction for example are 1) inability to visit family members that live just outside the 150-mile radius and 2) visitation ability for single parents who have children outside the 150-mile radius.

While considering situations such as these, my questions are how long will the 150-mile radius be in effect? Will the 150-mile radius be extended with the initiation of the different



COURTESY GRAPHIC

**phases as the state of Texas begins to open back up? Is it possible that all JBSA military members could be restricted to "the State of Texas"?**

**A.** Thank you very much for your question. To clarify, the local leave policy restricting personnel to a 150-mile radius is for 502d ABW military personnel. 502d ABW civilian personnel are highly encouraged to also remain within 150-miles for their health and safety.

These restrictions are aligned with the DOD stop movement and travel restriction guidance issued by the Secretary of Defense in effect through June 30, 2020.

Presently, the 502d ABW local leave restrictions will remain in place until June 30, unless the DOD guidance is amended or rescinded.

That said, unit commanders may submit an exception to policy requests as outlined in JBSA IC DIR 20-042302 which allows members to travel outside of the 150-mile radius for child visitation, family emergencies, and other extenuating circumstances. To date, I have not denied any exception to policy requests.

**Q. What is the guidance on PT testing for June and going forward? Big Air Force came out with guidance early on for March, April, and May, but**

**June and July will be here soon. Thanks.**

**A.** Thank you for your concern for the health and wellness of your fellow Airmen. On 21 May 2020, Lt. Gen. Kelly (AF/A1) released a memorandum stating that effective immediately, official physical fitness assessments are suspended for the Total Force until 1 October 2020 to mitigate both exposure to and the spread of COVID-19 among our force. The memorandum is effective through 30 September 2021 unless rescinded sooner or suspended by other policies.

## Installation & Facilities

**Q. I was wondering what the policy is regarding dependent minors (17 and under) in the car with a parent having to provide their military ID cards to the gate guards if they are not driving.**

The JBSA Facebook page states "Passengers aged 17 & under ARE NOT required to show an ID card when under adult supervision." Yet, when I drove to the JBSA-Randolph Gate this past weekend, the civilian gate guard asked to see my daughter's ID card, in addition to mine.

Would I have been turned away at the gate if she did not have her ID

**card on her? If minors are not required to show an ID card, can you please pass this information on to all of the gate guards?**

**A.** Thank you very much for your question on if 100 percent ID checks in vehicles at JBSA gates apply to minors and dependents (17 and under).

You are correct – JBSA's policy is passengers are not required to produce an identification card when under the supervision of an adult who can provide the proper installation credential. Minors age 16 or 17 who are operating a motor vehicle are required to show a military or Uniformed Services ID card when asked for by the guard.

Any person 18 years or older, regardless of dependent status, is required to show a military identification card. There may be occasions when it is difficult to determine the age of a passenger – especially near the 17- to the 18-year-old threshold – so the guard may request identification or inquire about their age.

Please let the guard know that the individual is a minor, and they will not be required to produce an identification card.

## Miscellaneous

FEEDBACK FRIDAYS continues on 4

# TRICARE revises telehealth policy to respond to COVID-19

## From TRICARE Communications

To improve virtual access to health care during COVID-19, TRICARE recently revised its policy on telehealth services. This temporarily allows you access to care more easily during the constraints of the pandemic.

These changes will remain for the duration of the stateside public health emergency. They may be in place overseas beyond the U.S. national emergency end date, based on local conditions.

“Telemedicine has become an important tool in caring for patients while keeping providers and others safe during the COVID-19 pandemic,” said Christopher Priest, deputy assistant director, Health Care Operations, Defense Health Agency. “These changes will help TRICARE beneficiaries by making it easier for you to use telehealth services for your health care needs.”

Here’s what you need to know about each of these temporary changes to telehealth visits:

- ▶ **Addition of audio-only health care**

## visits

Covered telehealth visits required both live video and audio. TRICARE will now also cover audio-only telehealth services. This allows you to continue care with providers who may not usually use telemedicine. It allows those who don’t have in-home technology, such as smartphones or computers, to access care. This also makes it easier if you live in a rural area without broadband internet.

## ▶ No out-of-pocket costs for covered telehealth services

You won’t have out-of-pocket costs for telehealth services that TRICARE covers. TRICARE will now waive your cost-shares and copayment, and deductible (if applicable) for covered telehealth services you get from a military provider or TRICARE network provider. This waiver applies to all covered in-network telehealth services, not just the services related to COVID-19.

What if you do have to pay? TRICARE can’t immediately waive all copayments and cost-shares. You may



have to pay up front and file a claim with your TRICARE contractor for reimbursement. If you have questions, contact your TRICARE contractor.

- ▶ **More providers able to offer**

## covered telehealth services

TRICARE policy requires providers to have a license in the state where they practice and where the patient lives. TRICARE will now reimburse providers for interstate care to patients. The care must be permitted by federal or state licensing laws.

This change will allow providers to respond to areas of high-need (physically and via telemedicine) during the COVID-19 emergency without risking a loss of reimbursement.

This change will also apply overseas. But, the provider must hold an equal license in the other country and the country where the provider practices must permit such practice.

Remember that not all providers offer telehealth services. You may need to ask your provider if they do. Depending on your TRICARE plan, you may also first need a referral or authorization. Your TRICARE contractor can assist you.

Learn more about telemedicine and telehealth services that TRICARE covers. Stay safe and take command of your health.

## FEEDBACK FRIDAYS

From page 3

**Q. Hello! When are BMT graduations going to resume? The patriotism, love, and pride that is exhibited each week is inspiring. The families who come on base are so positively impacted by BMT graduations. BMT graduations provide a huge economic impact on the base (clubs, AAFES, food courts, etc.), the community, and the city of San Antonio. Thank you!**

**A.** Thank you very much for your question and support of our JBSA community, especially military training graduations. We are also looking forward to the return of military graduation ceremonies that are open to friends and families.

The health and safety of JBSA personnel remain my top priority as we execute a deliberate and phased approach to reopening JBSA based on public health officials’ recommendations and in alignment with national, state, county/city, and higher headquarters public health guidance.

The 37th Training Wing, in partnership with the 59th Medical Wing

and the 502d Air Base Wing, have and continue to take safeguarding the health of our newest Airmen as our top priority, and unfortunately that involves restrictive measures.

Due to the nationwide pandemic and public health crisis, we are not yet able to provide a date when the restrictions in place for BMT and other military graduation ceremonies will be relaxed or what future graduations may look like. We continue to assess the situation and request that you please continue to check our JBSA website for the latest information.

**Q. My question addresses the barbershop at the JBSA-Lackland Troop Store Complex on Carswell Avenue, building 7025.**

**I received a haircut at the barbershop recently and during casual conversation speaking with the barber, it was mentioned that the employees are not given the necessary sanitation solutions to sanitize the barber chair and the capes.**

**I was told that the employer only provides gloves for the employees. The employees must purchase and provide their own capes and are**

**responsible for sanitizing them by spraying with any disinfectant solution.**

**Considering how hard it is to get the sanitizing solutions on the market these days, the barber is worried that if the employer doesn’t start providing the solution they will run out by the end of this week.**

**The employee also mentioned only nine capes are available and they average 20 customers per day, so they have to reuse the capes on other customers. I was surprised to find out that AAFES does not own the barbershops and that they are privately contracted, which is now concerning since it seems to be a cost-saving issue for not providing sanitizing solutions for cleaning and with possible no oversight by AAFES and employees fear speaking out due for possible retribution.**

**I don’t know how often the barbershops are inspected by Base Public Health or AAFES, but hopefully with bringing this to light they can pay the barbershop a visit and find out what sanitizing solutions they are using and if it is safe and effective in killing the COVID-19**

**virus.**

**The barbershops on base could be the perfect environment for the community spread of the virus if proper procedures are not being followed or in place.**

**A.** Thank you very much for sharing your concerns and bringing this issue to my attention. Our leadership team has been checking the barbershops regularly and our Services Manager is in constant communication with the manager who handles all of our barbershops.

We confirmed that Public Health and the Exchange Services team visits all the barbershops weekly as this is a critical service and we want to ensure that sanitization is a priority. We also confirmed that there is a sanitizing solution available for all barbers, and there are capes available to ensure that one is in use and there are others being sanitized and prepped for the next customer.

However, if you or any other customers continue to hear there is a lack of sanitizing solution and/or sanitized capes, please let me know and we’ll address this supply issue with our mission partners at the barbershops. Thank you!



STAFF SGT. WARREN WRIGHT

*Sgt. Dawnavan Wysalde (right) and Sgt. Luis Colon (left), both veterinary food inspection noncommissioned officers with the Fort Drum Veterinary Treatment Facility, U.S. Army Public Health Activity, check the quality of produce at the commissary on Fort Drum, New York, April 24.*

## SHORTAGES

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potential impacts COVID-19 may have on food protection or food security for the DOD.”

“The food supplies in the commissaries are being replenished regularly,” Chevalier said. “DECA continues to fully support all commissaries impacted by this crisis and will maintain this support to ensure product availability. Patrons should buy enough food for a week at a time and avoid close contact with others, within about 6 feet, when shopping.”

Another question some patrons may have is how do they manage COVID-19 contamination risks when getting groceries from the commissary to their homes?

“The greatest risk, and one that is easy to forget about during the coronavirus pandemic, is an everyday foodborne illness, caused by common germs like norovirus, Salmonella, and E. coli,” said Lt. Col. Suzanne Todd, APHC chief of Food Protection and Public Health Sanitation division. “Washing your hands and cleaning food preparation surfaces prior to preparing your food, separating raw

meat from other foods, refrigerating perishables, and cooking meat to the correct temperature all continue to be very important practices to keep you and your family healthy.”

Todd says there is currently no evidence that the coronavirus can be transmitted through food or by food packaging, because of the poor survivability of the virus on surfaces.

A food safety 101 brochure can be downloaded from the APHC digital products catalog here: Food Safety 101

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the FDA and DECA have excellent websites on food safety, including food shopping during COVID-19. They can be found at:

- ▶ <https://www.cdc.gov/foodsafety/index.html>
- ▶ <https://www.fda.gov/food/food-safety-during-emergencies/shopping-food-during-covid-19-pandemic-information-consumers>
- ▶ <https://www.commissaries.com/coronavirus>

The Army Public Health Center enhances Army readiness by identifying and assessing current and emerging health threats, developing and communicating public health solutions, and assuring the quality and effectiveness of the Army’s Public Health Enterprise.

# Air University, Arizona State University partner to transform Air Force's online PME

By Air University Public Affairs

AIR UNIVERSITY PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Air Force students recently crossed a digital threshold by logging in to a new, custom Squadron Officer School portal made possible by an innovative collaboration.

Air University partnered with Arizona State University, one of America's leading public research universities with advanced learning and support systems, to transform the distance learning experience for Air Force officers and civilians worldwide.

By the first week of May, 1,650 SOS students had successfully on-boarded and embarked upon their new educational journey, completing 760 courses in the ASU environment, an enriched digital learning environment marked by enhanced accessibility, reliability and support.

This partnership, an integral part of the Air Force's efforts to enhance online

learning, was a long time in the making. Following a full year of dialogue and collaborative exchange of ideas, the two universities signed an Intergovernmental Support Agreement in September 2019. This agreement integrates, sustains and transitions the AU eSchool of Graduate Professional Military Education programs and curriculum to the enhanced ASU learning environment.

This is the first time a U.S. military service utilized a civilian university partner to enable the delivery of officer PME.

"Air University is committed to providing quality, relevant education anywhere at any time. This partnership with Arizona State University strengthens and demonstrates our resolve to honoring that commitment," said Lt. Gen. James Hecker, Air University commander and president. "This is a unique partnership for the U.S. military, and I believe our students will truly benefit from the enhanced online

educational experience it provides."

Air University's PME programs will still be developed, managed and taught by eSchool faculty, but will be delivered through the ASU Enterprise system and enhanced with access to over 130 digital learning technologies. In addition, ASU's Experience Center will supplement the AU Help Desk, providing 24-hour support to students enrolled in the online Squadron Officer School, Air Command and Staff College, Air War College, and the Online Master's Program, or OLMP. A combined 13,000 students are currently engaged in these eSchool programs.

This is a first for Arizona State University as well. The school has entered into numerous other partnerships, but none where the partner brought their entire curriculum to ASU to help deliver it to their students.

"This partnership represents the link between two commitments very important to Arizona State University —

our support and engagement with those who serve in our military and our ongoing efforts to make higher education accessible to everyone who wants it regardless of where they are in their life or in the world," said ASU President Michael M. Crow. "We are very pleased to be of service and to be a resource for the students of Air University."

For the past five years, ASU has been ranked as the "most innovative" university in the nation by academic leaders at peer universities, according to a leading national news magazine's ranking of academic institutions.

With the SOS distance learning program already nested in the ASU learning environment, the other programs — ACSC, OLMP and AWC — start transitioning this summer.

For more information on specific transition timelines, recommended student actions and the AU-ASU partnership, visit [www.airuniversity.af.edu/eSchool](http://www.airuniversity.af.edu/eSchool).

## The next transition from ABUs to OCPs: What to expect

By Airman 1st Class Ireland Summers

377TH AIR BASE WING  
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The next transition before the final uniform change from the Airman Battle Uniform to the newly regulated Operation Camouflage Pattern combat uniform will be effective June 1, 2020, for all Airmen.

"We are coming up on a big milestone requirement this year, as far as OCP wear," said Tech. Sgt. Tyler A. Highfill, Air Force Global Strike Command Airman Leadership School instructor. "On June 1, Airmen will be required to wear only a coyote brown T-shirt with the OCP uniform. Additionally, all boots must be coyote brown. The spice brown U.S. flag patch will be the only authorized version of the U.S. Flag to wear and only DLA-issued green socks or coyote brown socks

may be worn while in the OCP Uniform."

Highfill says that officers will be required to wear a spice brown rank insignia, with exception of first lieutenants and lieutenant colonels, who will use the black threading variant.

Currently, Airmen who had already begun wearing OCPs were authorized to wear the desert sand T-shirt, green socks and subdued black and green cloth U.S. flag patches with the new uniform.

As the final date approaches, Airmen are encouraged to start buying their uniforms now, as it can be costly.

"Most Airman will have to purchase their own OCPs with the clothing allowance they are provided," said Master Sgt. Michael A. Sumner, 377th Medical Group first sergeant.

Sumner advised Airmen to make the most of the last of the

allotted time to get their uniforms before the final date.

"Typical practice is to have four sets of uniforms available at all times," Highfill said. "Purchasing uniforms over time is, of course, the best option to meet stricter budgets. I'd recommend buying a set at a time, saving over two or three months if necessary."

Airmen can also expect to see about a \$20 increase in their clothing allowance per uniform for the 2020 fiscal year, Highfill added.

"For those of us that have been in longer than three years, we're looking at \$549.71 for clothing allowance, known as the standard allowance," Highfill said. "For those with less than three years, you're looking at \$428.77 for clothing allowance, known as basic allowance."

Airmen have 15 months left to ensure they have all the



U.S. AIR FORCE PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY AIRMAN 1ST CLASS IRELAND SUMMERS

required items for their uniform. To tackle the expenses of purchasing their uniform, a few options can be considered.

"There are online stores that sell the OCP uniform," Sumner said. "However, I would encourage you to do research on the uniform they are

selling."

Sumner says that although the uniform may be selling for less, it could be the incorrect uniform. Another option is to check the Airmen's Attic.

"You will often find very good deals on uniform items," Highfill said. "Additionally the local base cleaners and alterations sometimes have clothing items for sale that have been forgotten or left behind."

Highfill says that the best practice is to ask around and use fellow Airmen as a resource.

The official date for the overall Air Force to fully retire ABUs is April 1, 2021.

For more information on regulations and uniform guidance for the OCP uniform, check out AFI 36-2903 or visit <https://www.afpc.af.mil/Career-Management/Dress-and-Appearance/>.

# FORT SAM HOUSTON

## New combat medics tackle burn team duty

By Sgt. Bartholomew Taylor  
U.S. ARMY INSTITUTE OF SURGICAL  
RESEARCH PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The U.S. Army Institute of Surgical Research Burn Center at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston is the leader in burn treatment both on and off the battlefield for the Department of Defense. For the service members and civilians of this leading-edge treatment division, it means long hours, razor-thin margins of error, and life-saving decisiveness is a daily business, pandemic or not.

Thanks to a well-timed collaboration between the U.S. Army Medical Center of Excellence and the USAISR, a stop-movement order on 20 new Army combat medic specialists has become not only a welcome reinforcement to patient care but a critical one.

In a time when medical professionals are pivoting from conventional roles to pandemic-related care and even pathogen-mitigation, these newly certified medics provide the Burn Center with an opportunity to flex its capabilities in advance of a potential COVID-19 storm while still providing high-quality burn care.

“Their morale is high and they are eager to be here,” said Sgt. 1st Class Jason Smith, former Burn Center Progressive Care Unit non-commissioned officer in charge; now a drill sergeant awaiting movement to the 232 Medical Battalion at JBSA-Fort Sam Houston. “They show it every day as they interact with our staff and patients. They are entrenching themselves as members of the Burn Center



Lt. Col. Daniel Kim (left), a trauma surgeon at the U.S. Army Institute of Surgical Research Burn Center, conducts training on burns and burn care to combat medic specialists temporarily assigned to the Burn Center.

PHOTOS BY SGT. BARTHOLOMEW TAYLOR

team.”

Over the last few weeks, concurrent with patient care on the ward, the medics have been training with seasoned and battle-tested trauma surgeons, respiratory technicians, nurses, and other medical professionals.

Their training at the USAISR is preparing them for not only fighting COVID-19 here on our shores but also fighting similar life-and-death situations abroad in the Army’s future conflicts.

“These medics were up to the challenge and they launched head-first into the task,” said Sgt. Andrew Taylor, a licensed vocational nurse tasked with bringing the medics up to speed. “Both Sgt. Rebecca Hummer (a respiratory therapist) and I were extremely impressed with their eagerness and

ability to learn so quickly. We trained the medics on ‘code blue’ procedures and the differences with a patient that has COVID-19.”

For Army combat medics, the opportunity to serve in a brick-and-mortar hospital while providing patient care is an experience that generally comes later in the career timeline, if at all.

At the Burn Center, leadership notes the morale of the medics is exceedingly high and they are eager to help in any capacity. The medics themselves echoed those same sentiments.

“I became a medic because I wanted the opportunity to help people but I didn’t think I’d be doing it in hospital, definitely not a burn ward,” said Pfc. Francis Mangino, “I’m really thankful for the opportunity to do some real good instead of just sitting around watching movies on my phone in the barracks.”

“Being able to help these patients heal and finally doing real work like this is something I didn’t expect, but I’m really grateful, especially with everything that’s going on,” said Pvt. Amanda Perez-Garcia.

On the topic of execution management and impact, Smith commented that the medics are providing a “synergistic force multiplication to the manpower capabilities of the Burn Center.”

Clearly their youthful energy, eager minds, and characteristic American grit have proven — and will continue to prove — beneficial for the Burn Center, particularly in the days ahead.



Pvt. Sage Deemer, a combat medic specialist temporarily assigned to the U.S. Army Institute of Surgical Research Burn Center applies bandages and gauze to a burn patient.

# JBSA M&FRCs offering virtual services, classes

By Lori A. Bultman

502ND AIR BASE WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The Military and Family Readiness Centers at Joint Base San Antonio offer many resources to help military families connect during normal operations, and they are still offering a multitude of classes and support services even though their offices are physically closed.

## Conversational Corner

Conversational Corner was recently created to provide an opportunity for individuals to connect with others. The class is open to all Department of Defense identification cardholders, to include active duty members from any branch of the military, spouses, dependents, and civil service employees.

Sessions begin with a facilitator opening the conversation with a soft topic, presenting a general idea or concept, then the conversation opens to the attendees.

“The goal is to provide a safe place where connection and conversation create opportunities of personal growth and even exploration into new perspectives,” said Criselda Guerrero-Smith, a community readiness consultant who specializes in work-life balance and financial literacy at JBSA-Fort Sam Houston. “The program is in its third week of facilitation, and I am hopeful that as the word gets out, individuals will grab a cup of coffee and log into the conversation from wherever they are.”

Guerrero-Smith believes communication is key to maintaining well-being during the current crisis, and virtual classes are becoming the new norm.

“In a time when we cannot have face-to-face conversations, this class offers a virtual outlet that lets us reach out to one another and dive into meaningful conversations and communication,” she said, adding that recent session topics included: ‘Three tools for self-reflection’ and ‘Why do we apologize so much?’

“I feel that during this time, it is even more crucial that we foster the relationships we have in our lives and actively work to reach out to others,”

she said. “In a time where we may consider ourselves alone, this is an opportunity for us to grow alongside one another.”

To participate in Conversational Corner, call 210-221-2705 to register and receive instructions on how to participate in this virtual class.

## Exceptional Family Member Program

Participants in the Exceptional Family Member Program don't stop having questions just because offices are closed. That is why the program has a support group that offers a question and answer session with experts in EFMP areas of concern. These sessions are open to families of military personnel stationed at or in the process of moving to JBSA.

“The Q&A sessions allow families the opportunity to ask questions of experts in relation to their special needs family members,” said Melissa M. Reyes, Exceptional Family Member program coordinator, JBSA-Fort Sam Houston. So far, the group has held two Q&A sessions, one with the JBSA school liaisons and the other with Respite Care program specialists.

During those sessions, the questions families asked were in regard to services and support available during the pandemic.

Reyes assures families, EFMP services and programs are available to them, even though their offices are not physically open.

“Offering our classes and programs virtually has been beneficial for our families as it allows them to still connect while in the comfort of their home,” she said. “We are also able to provide one-on-one consultations virtually, as needed. Families can always reach out to us.”

To schedule a virtual, one-on-one consultation, or to participate in the support group Q&A sessions, call 210-221-2705 or email [usaf.502-fss-efmp@mail.mil](mailto:usaf.502-fss-efmp@mail.mil) to schedule an appointment or sign up for a virtual support group meeting.

For more information on other Military and Family Readiness Center virtual programs, services and classes, check out their Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/mfrcjbsa>.



# BAMC Soldier ready to run to raise suicide awareness

By Daniel Calderón

BROOKE ARMY MEDICAL CENTER PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Sgt. 1st Class Maité Bengoa, the enlisted advisor to the deputy commander of health readiness at Brooke Army Medical Center, is prepared to run for a good cause.

The Boise, Idaho native is set for the upcoming Texas Independence Relay run. Since Texas Independence Day is March 2, the run was originally scheduled for earlier in the year. But, due to COVID-19 concerns, the race was postponed to May 23 and 24.

Bengoa is the captain of her team, which they named "Don't Get in a Van with Strangers." The team is running to raise awareness for suicide prevention.

"Sometimes people have a hard time adjusting to life outside the military, or they have PTSD or some other issues," Bengoa said. "A lot of us have had thoughts of suicide or have had friends or one of our Soldiers who either tried or talked to us about it. We want people to know we hear them and that there are resources available for them."

She said she wants her Soldiers, her family and friends to know she is available as a resource if



COURTESY PHOTO

Sgt. 1st Class Maité Bengoa (kneeling front left), the enlisted advisor to the deputy commander of health readiness at Brooke Army Medical Center, and the members of her team, called "Don't Get in a Van with Strangers," pose before a practice run. The team will be participating in Texas Independence Day Relay run, scheduled from 6 a.m. May 23 to 6 a.m. May 24 to raise awareness for suicide prevention.

anyone has any thoughts of self-harm, or if they know of anyone who does. Bengoa can help direct them to help that can be provided to others in their

circle of friends and acquaintances. Running the relay is their way of raising awareness for people who might otherwise feel they have no one who will stand up for them.

The 24-hour relay run was originally scheduled to start in Gonzales, Texas, and finish in Houston, with up to 12 team members completing about 200 miles. Now the race will start in Pipe Creek, Texas, instead of the originally scheduled route.

Bengoa will be running in the number six spot on her team and each member will run three different legs of approximately five miles per leg. Members of the public are invited to attend and watch the run with appropriate social distancing.

For anyone who would like to attend and cheer on Bengoa's team, the relay will begin at 6 a.m. May 23 at 2059 Rio Ranchero in Pipe Creek. The race will start with all teams carrying an American flag. Once the Camaraderie Run portion is complete, the runners will begin their individual legs and the run is scheduled to last through 6 a.m. the following morning.

Anyone who needs support or resources for a loved one can call the Suicide Prevention Hotline 24/7 at 1-800-273-8255 or visit <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>.

# U.S. Army Medical Center of Excellence celebrates centennial

By Tish Williamson

U.S. ARMY MEDICAL CENTER OF EXCELLENCE

The U.S. Army Medical Center of Excellence, or MEDCoE, trains the world's premier military medical force: Army Medicine. There are many important dates in the school's history, but May 15, 1920, is acknowledged as the date the Army formally approved the establishment of the Medical Field Service School at Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, where MEDCoE traces its origins.

From the start, what is now known as Army Medicine has been a vital aspect of the Army's success — America's oldest fighting force established by the First Continental Congress on June 14, 1775.

In 1893, the Army Medical School was established to provide medical professionals post-graduate education in bacteriology, radiology, and preventive medicine. The Medical Field Service School was established to further train these professionals in the skills they would need to be effective medical leaders in the field. This more formalized field training came at a time when Army Medicine was evaluating lessons learned from World War I and the influenza pandemic of 1918.

Lewis Barger, the MEDCoE Historian said the field school was established when the entire Army was re-evaluating its approach to training, education, and the professionalization of all of the Army's branches.

"Army Medicine was unique," Barger explained. "It continued to operate the Army Medical School, providing post-graduate training in military and

preventive medicine, while it was opening the medical field service school, illustrating the dual requirements for the medical officer to be skilled both as a physician and as a leader."

The Surgeon General of the Army at the time, Maj. Gen. Merritte Ireland, made a formal request to the Department of the Army to establish the field school. His request was officially approved by the Department of the Army on May 15, 1920. On June 30, 1920, the Bureau of the Interior turned Carlisle Barracks over to the War Department. On Sept. 1, 1920, cadre began to arrive, students arrived May 1921 and the school's first formal course started June 1, 1921.

The location at Carlisle Barracks, which had housed General Hospital No. 31 until it closed in October 1920, allowed for training in various environments and served as a testing area for interwar field units.

From its beginning, the school worked to enhance the readiness of the medical force by training personnel to preserve the health of the Army in the field and in garrison. Their motto became: "To Conserve Fighting Strength." This foundation continues in Texas as the school was moved to Fort Sam Houston in 1946.

"In the 100 years since its inception, the MEDCoE has established itself as the Army's center of gravity for medical education and training, medical capability development and medical doctrine development and integration," said Maj. Gen. Dennis LeMaster, MEDCoE commander.

For the last few years, MEDCoE had the monumental task of transforming the way Army



COURTESY GRAPHIC

Medicine trains in accordance with the Army's modernization strategy. That mission continues while navigating the challenges associated with a global pandemic.

"Through several wars, times of National crisis and world-wide humanitarian efforts, our mission of training the world's premier military medical force remains unchanged," said MEDCoE Command Sgt. Maj. Clark Chappentier.

Visit [www.medcoe.army.mil](http://www.medcoe.army.mil) for future MEDCoE 2020 events.

# After a lifetime of service, retirement can wait

By Robert Whetstone

BROOKE ARMY MEDICAL CENTER  
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Many famous Americans have answered the call to duty in times when the nation needed them most. Former NFL running back Robert Patrick “Rocky” Bleier was drafted and volunteered for duty in Vietnam. Late Hollywood actor Charles Durning received three Purple Hearts for his actions in World War II. Mixed martial arts fighter Liz Carmouche served three tours in Iraq as a helicopter electrician.

And today, we have U.S. Army Col. April Critelli.

Critelli is one of the thousands of men and women who have served in peacetime and combat, to retire in quiet anonymity, a hero. And when the nation called for healthcare professionals to help fight the COVID-19 pandemic, Critelli came out of retirement and was the first retired reserve volunteer recall officer to be placed on active duty orders and assigned to duty.

“For as long as I can remember I wanted to serve in the military,” said Critelli, a physician assistant at Brooke Army Medical Center at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston. “1982 wasn’t a popular time to join, especially for women, but I just knew that I wanted to serve my country.”

Critelli is a graduate of State University of New York at Buffalo, about 20 miles south of her hometown of Niagara Falls. She was initially commissioned into the Chemical Corps and later received her Master of Physician Assistant Degree from George Washington University, then reassessed into the Army Medical Specialist Corps.

She spent 36 years in the U.S. Army, with time on active duty, in the National Guard and Reserve. She retired in 2018, only to realize she had to jump back into the fray when the novel coronavirus pandemic saw military healthcare personnel deploying to places like her home state to help fight the virus. “When the recall was announced, it (returning to duty) just seemed like the right thing to do,” she explained.

Like many organizations, the Army is built on values. Loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity, and personal courage can be seen as the ingredients that shape the very core of individual Soldiers. So much so, that in the case of Critelli, even retirement



JASON W. EDWARDS

*U.S. Army Col. April Critelli, physician assistant, prepares to end her work day at the McWethy Troop Medical Clinic, Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston May 13. Critelli is the first medical Soldier to return to active duty from retirement during the COVID-19 crisis.*

didn’t shake that foundation.

“As military healthcare professionals, it is part of our DNA to do all we can to help preserve life,” said Army Brig. Gen. Wendy Harter, BAMC commanding general. “What Col. Critelli did in terms of coming out of retirement to help in any way she could during this deadly pandemic, is the epitome of our Army values and our medical profession, particularly when it comes to selfless service. She is an example of what makes people our nation’s most valuable asset.”

For two years after the tragedy of 9/11, there was a noticeable jump in calls to recruiters and enlistments. To some analysts, it was an indicator that more young Americans felt the need to defend the country against a new kind of threat. Today, the threat requires an existing weapon with specialty training. A weapon that doesn’t have a shelf life.

Critelli was sitting at home watching the global response to the pandemic, wanting to contribute. She looked at contractor positions and temporary jobs with the Veterans Administration. That’s when Human Resources Command sent out an email requesting for healthcare volunteers. After discussing the possibility of a return to military service with her husband and adult children, she replied to HRC.

“I immediately drafted my email response because it just seemed right and I felt proud to be able to serve my country again,” she said. “About a week later, I received a call from HRC asking if I was willing to return to active duty and without hesitation, I said yes.”

No stranger to military moves, Critelli was physically and mentally prepared to take on the task of relocating to BAMC. Once she received orders from HRC, things got moving quickly. She started in-processing virtually. “I was able to complete a lot of paperwork through email prior to reporting,” Critelli explained. “I was then told to self-isolate for 14 days, during which time I found suitable housing. I found everyone I encountered to be very professional and welcoming.”

While at BAMC, Critelli will use her physician assistant skills, working in the Department of Family and Community Medicine. “This week I began screening patients at the McWethy Troop Medical Clinic for COVID-19, and I will fill any other provider gaps as needed,” said Critelli.

“It’s an honor to have Col. Critelli here to provide additional support during this global pandemic,” said Col. Timothy Switaj, chief, Department of Family and Community Medicine. “I applaud her

willingness to voluntarily return to active duty and help under these difficult times. Her background and experience will contribute greatly to the DFCM mission, enhancing our ability to care for our beneficiaries during this crisis.”

The Army has a Soldier For Life program and part of the mission statement says “reinforce the Soldier For Life (SFL) mindset throughout the entirety of the Soldier Life Cycle (SLC). “When you join the Army you join a family,” said BAMC Command Sgt. Maj. Thomas Oates.

“When you join Army Medicine from the military, you accept the invitation to become a member of an extended family that places people first. Col. Critelli received a call that her extended family needed her, and being the Soldier for life, she came back with open arms and sleeves rolled up ready to do her job,” Oates added. “Col. Critelli may have retired, but her willingness to don the uniform for her Family, for her Army, for our country, proves beyond doubt that she is a Soldier for life.”

“I have always liked the slogan SFL because there are so many ways to continue serving our forces even after traditional retirement,” Critelli added. “I never thought of it as returning to active duty, but it absolutely fits.”

The COVID-19 pandemic has ushered in public support for medical professionals on the front lines as seen in marketing ads, news stories and social media, recognizing them as heroes. For Soldiers like Critelli, the accolades are appreciated but they see much more work to be done.

“I, like many of our service men and women do not want to be singled out,” she said. “We do what we do for service and love of our country,” Critelli said this unusual, invisible enemy can strike and hurt the most vulnerable. Medical professionals are not the only ones at risk she added. First responders and personnel providing essential services selflessly put themselves at risk. “I thank them and call them heroes.”

“Like their civilian counterparts, Army healthcare providers are heroes at the tip of the spear, bravely fighting an unseen enemy,” said U.S. Army Chief of Staff Gen. James McConville. “When the Nation confronts a challenge, our Soldiers move to the sound of the guns. That’s what our retired healthcare specialists like Col. Critelli are volunteering to do.”

# JBSA blood centers in need of donors

## From Armed Services Blood Program Communications

The Armed Services Blood Program's blood donor centers at Joint Base San Antonio are in need of blood from the military community.

The Armed Services Blood Centers at JBSA-Fort Sam Houston and JBSA-Lackland are requesting donors to make up for a local blood shortage, but the request is a recurring one — the need for blood always exists for cancer patients, trauma victims and warfighters.

Anyone with installation access can donate at the Akeroyd or Lackland Blood Donor Centers, and staff are taking extra precautions to keep donors safe.

Over the past few months with COVID-related stay-at-home orders, there's been a significant reduction in traumas, including motor

vehicle collisions, but as the community posture changes and travel resumes, blood center staffs anticipate the need for more blood.

To ensure we are prepared to assist our military families and civilian emergency patients at Brooke Army Medical Center, we encourage everyone who is feeling healthy to consider donating blood through the Akeroyd Blood Donor Center at JBSA-Fort Sam Houston or the JBSA-Lackland Blood Donor Center.

These centers are part of the Armed Services Blood Program, the military's official blood collection, manufacturing and transfusion program, and is the direct provider of life-saving blood and blood products at BAMC and Wilford Hall Ambulatory Surgical Center.

Because JBSA remains open for official business only,

appointments are required; walk-ins will not be accepted at this time.

Here is how JBSA blood donors can book appointments online:

▶ Go to <https://www.militarydonor.com>  
▶ Click on "Locate a Blood Drive"

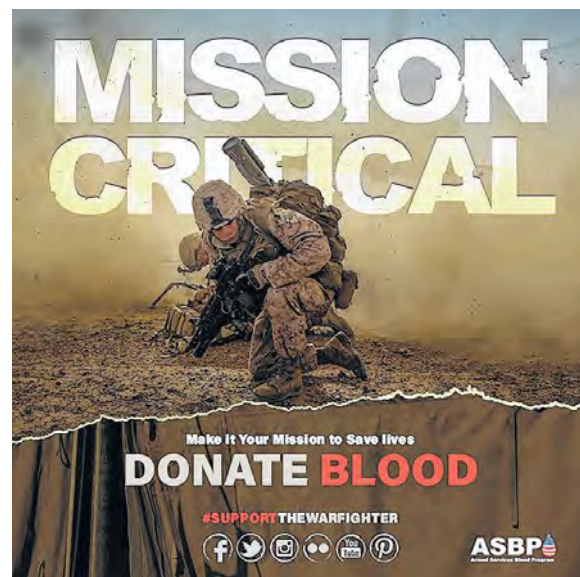
▶ Search by Sponsor Code: ABDC (for JBSA-Fort Sam Houston) or ASBBC-SA (for JBSA-Lackland)

▶ Click on "Search"  
▶ Click the date on which you can donate.

▶ Click the word "Schedule." Follow the prompts to enter your information.

▶ Remember to bring your cloth mask with you.

For questions, call Mark Salcedo at the Akeroyd Blood Donor Center at 210-295-4655 or Tracy Parmer at the Lackland Blood Donor Center at 210-292-8145.



COURTESY GRAPHIC

# San Antonio twins looking forward to being U.S. Sailors



Twin brothers Reynaldo (left) and Santos Vasquez of San Antonio are making final preparations to attend recruit training and becoming Sailors in America's Navy.

**By Burrell Parmer**  
NAVY RECRUITING DISTRICT SAN ANTONIO PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Twin brothers Reynaldo and Santos Vasquez of San Antonio are making final preparations to attend recruit training and becoming Sailors in America's Navy.

According to Reynaldo, he joined the Navy to change his life.

"I felt like it was time to start a new chapter," said Reynaldo, who graduated from John Jay High School along with his brother in 2012. "The time is right."

Santos says that he and his brother have been contemplating joining the military since high school, and during college at Northwest Vista Community College.

"I want to see the world and be a productive citizen," Santos

said. "Additionally, I want to be able to use the Navy's Tuition Assistance Program to pay for my bachelor's degree."

For the past few years, the brothers have been working at fast-food restaurants and supporting their church.

"Working in a fast-food restaurant is not the career that my brother and I envisioned," Santos said. "It's not very fulfilling as many may think, especially making minimum wage."

According to the brothers, they are looking forward to spending some time apart and explore what the Navy and the world has to offer.

Reynaldo will serve in America's Navy as a hospital corpsman and will receive advanced training in special warfare, search and rescue or serve as a corpsman in the Fleet Marine Force.

After recruit training, Santos will receive training in the Navy's submarine electronics/computer field and serve aboard nuclear-powered submarines.

"We currently have a brother serving in the Army, but serving in the Navy will be much cooler," Santos said. "Plus, it continues a family tradition; our grandfather and two uncles served in the Navy."

Both brothers were recruited by Petty Officer 2nd Class Jasmine Harris, assigned to Navy Recruiting Station Ingram.

Navy Recruiting District San Antonio's area of responsibility includes more than 34 Navy Recruiting Stations and Navy Officer Recruiting Stations spread throughout 144,000 square miles of Central and South Texas territory.

# LACKLAND

## DLIELC hosts first female Lebanese air traffic controller

By Annette D. Janetzke

DEFENSE LANGUAGE INSTITUTE ENGLISH LANGUAGE CENTER PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Airman Maria Abou Daher Maalouf from the Lebanese Air Force is the first female air traffic controller from her country to attend the Defense Language Institute English Language Center at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland for English language training.

Her road to this achievement began with her studying English when she was around seven years old.

"I always preferred it to French, knowing that it was my third language," Maalouf said. "In those years, I was, and still am, a Disney fan, so maybe that's what piqued my interest."

Before joining the Lebanese Air Force, or Al Quwwat al-Jawwiya al-Lubnaniyya, she studied for three years to be a teacher of French, biology, math and Arabic and attained her bachelor's degree in pre-school and primary education. With that degree, she ended up teaching English in a French-educating school to children in kindergarten and grades one, two and three.

Leaving her teaching career, she joined the Air Force out of loyalty to her country and the military. She did not seek to become an air traffic controller but said it found her.

"To be honest, when I joined the Air Force, I had never thought about my specialty," Maalouf said.

After testing for her qualifications, the test results led to this challenging field.

"My colonel saw my results and advised me that this is the best career for me to be in," she said. "His trust in me was my biggest motivation.

Additionally, my parents' support and belief that I can do

it stimulated me to do my best and to make them proud of me."

At 23 years old, Maalouf has never flown an aircraft, but has been a passenger in a helicopter and felt the stress the two pilots were under.

"That experience helped me in my job because now I can relate to their situation," she said. "Now I can see their maneuvers from the tower and understand their decisions and know that flying a helicopter is very risky."

When asked if she considered the risk to her health, she stated, "I did some research just to have an idea of it. All over the Internet, it states that being an ATC is one of the most stressful jobs worldwide. Believe it or not, when I read this, I couldn't wait to start my course. I love stress!"

She is well aware that her decisions as an ATC are a matter of life or death.

"It can really affect your health in the long term, but there are always ways to handle stress," Maalouf said. "The best way to help you overcome your tiredness, after a long day at work, is the satisfaction you feel when you love your profession, knowing you're good at it, and thanking God you ended your day without anyone dying — 'never on my shift!'"

She has been an ATC for one year and always keeps in mind each word she pronounces is a matter of life or death. However, she is always careful and wide awake on the job.

Her determination is also witnessed in the classroom environment by her classmates who support her completely.

"Maalouf is a dedicated



Airman Maria Abou Daher Maalouf from the Lebanese Air Force is the first female air traffic controller from her country to attend the Defense Language Institute English Language Center at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland for English language training.

student and a natural leader," said Joseph Leishman, one of her ESL instructors. "As an airman air traffic controller, she is very confident while interacting with officers in class who are more experienced in aviation than she is. It has been an honor working with her."

Maalouf said her long-range career plans are "up in the air."

"The future is ahead of us. I can't tell you about 10 years from now, but the first step is knowing more and more and improving my aviation knowledge," she said. "That's why I'm here at DLIELC and going next to Fort Rucker, Alabama, hoping to be one of the best, or at least doing my best to be an air traffic controller."

Her follow-on training is only for "choppers" and with all English-speaking students, which she is looking forward to. She prefers "choppers," but in Lebanon, she will be working with all types of aircraft.

Dec. 17, 2019, and experienced two weeks of jet lag and homesickness, but she said, "I'm good now."

She graduated March 6 from the 9-week Specialized English Aviation, Communicate, Navigate course, and is attending training at Fort Rucker until July 20.

"I can't wait for this next course. I'm so excited for it to begin," Maalouf said. "And then I look forward to finishing my course at Fort Rucker and going back to my country and family."

She has taken about eight 637th International Support Squadron Field Studies Program trips because she was curious about San Antonio and wanted to learn its culture. Now she loves San Antonio and Dallas.

"Somehow it reminds me of my country," Maalouf said. "It is similar in that you feel like the people you meet have known you forever. We are used to this kindness and generosity back home. I love Texas."

A comment from her Specialized English Instructor, Angie Stewart, sums up her gusto for her training and career.

"I had the pleasure of teaching Maalouf in M302 Communicate. In this module, our objective is to go over Air Traffic Control phraseology," Stewart said. "Experiencing the class with her was fun and quite insightful as she was willing to share her knowledge and experiences as an ATC in Lebanon. Her excitement in sharing was contagious, as soon as she would start talking, others would jump in on the conversation about radio communication. I was grateful to have had her in class."

Life has presented her with many choices and she is happy with each avenue she has selected. Considering the roads presented to her and her choices, she regrets nothing.

"It's been fabulous. Give me the stress. I feel I can handle it," Maalouf said.

All her family, including her nieces and nephews, have totally supported her in all of her choices.

"I can never thank them enough. I am what I am today because of them. They always give me the support I need and a shoulder to cry on," she said. "I will do my best to thank them for what they did for me. I'm ready to do anything just to make them proud of me. That's why I do what I'm doing."

She keeps in constant contact with her family, and they told her, "Although you are on the other side of the globe, we see you more on video live now than we did at home."

Maalouf arrived at DLIELC

## FLYING UNITS STILL DELIVERING DURING PANDEMIC

Aircrew members in the 433rd Airlift Wing prepare a C-5M Super Galaxy aircraft at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland for a flight to carry a team of medical technicians mobilized to respond to the COVID-19 crisis April 5. This deployment is part of a larger mobilization package of more than 120 doctors, nurses and respiratory technicians Air Force Reserve units across the nation provided over the past 48 hours in support of COVID-19 response to take care of Americans. Since March 1, the 68th and the 356th Airlift Squadrons, part of the 433rd Airlift Wing at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, have supported the COVID-19 crisis in New York and continued to train aircrew members here. The 68th AS departed JBSA-Lackland April 6 with nine 433rd Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron personnel, then the C-5M Super Galaxy aircraft went on to the Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base Fort Worth, Texas, to pick up to additional medical personnel. The Reserve Citizen Airmen, along with 4,000 pounds of cargo was delivered to Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, New Jersey, to battle the COVID-19 crisis just days ahead of the peak outbreak. The 356th AS has also continued training aircrew students on C-5M Super Galaxy operations. They have graduated eight pilot, six flight engineer, and six loadmaster classes during this pandemic.



TECH. SGT. SAMANTHA MATHISON

## 344th TRS participates in resiliency chat with CMSAF Wright

By Senior Airman Kelvin Ngo  
37TH TRAINING WING  
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Master Sgt. Robyn Pryor, a 37th Training Wing Airman, speaks on "The New Normal", a podcast hosted by Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force Kaleth O. Wright recently. Pryor, a member of the 344th Training Squadron, discussed the creation of the community, C3 (Care, Commit, and Connect), a community geared towards connecting women with women.

Formed November of 2019, C3 was inspired by "KMC Let's Connect" based out of Ramstein Air Force Base, Germany.

"I wanted to connect with women in the military and discuss issues that were unique to us," Pryor said. "Things such as deployments, PCSing, and not having that sense of sisterhood can be frustrating."

Pryor shared her personal perspective as a female in the



COURTESY PHOTO

Master Sgt. Robyn Pryor (bottom center), a 37th Training Wing Airman, speaks on "The New Normal", a podcast hosted by Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force Kaleth O. Wright (top left). Pryor, a member of the 344th Training Squadron, discussed the creation of the community, C3 (Care, Commit, and Connect), a community geared towards connecting women with women.

military. She recognized the unique issues women face especially being a minority.

She had mentioned that as a flight attendant, her career field was predominantly women, however, when she became a

technical instructor, she felt that she longed for a sense of sisterhood. C3 aims to be a community of women, bringing people together and offering that sense of sisterhood that can be difficult to come by.

Pryor mentioned that she loved the community and the idea of connecting a specific group with each other. She drew inspiration from how KMC cared, committed, and connected younger Airmen and

saw the potential to create a similar group for female Airmen at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland.

Watch the full event at <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=233541691336507>.

# Sexual Assault Prevention and Response in time of COVID-19

By Rachel Kersey

502ND AIR BASE WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

*Editor's note: With the implementation of shelter-in-place orders nationwide and new schedules for those still working, citizens at home have an increased risk of severe interpersonal and intrapersonal conflicts, such as sexual assault, domestic violence, child abuse and suicide, and those continuing to report for duty have relational difficulties to overcome as well. This is the first in a series about risk and resilience. Resources can be found at the bottom of the article. Please do not be afraid to reach out if you need help!*

Dr. Charlotte Moerbe is the Joint Base San Antonio Sexual Assault Prevention and Response, or SAPR, program director. According to Moerbe, people who are at increased risk for sexual assault during these uncertain times are those who live at home with partners, especially those with violent tendencies.

Family Advocacy is available to help victims in those situations. However, during this time, many JBSA personnel continue to go to work and live their daily routines out of necessity, and sexual assault can occur anywhere, in any environment, to include domestic and work or training environments.

"As the largest Department of Defense training installation in the world here at Joint Base San Antonio, training hasn't stopped," Moerbe said. "We serve a very high-risk population, 18-24 year olds, who unfortunately continue to be a majority of our sexual assault caseload."

As far as JBSA training goes, Basic Military Training only scratches the surface. There is the Medical Education and Training campus at JBSA-Fort Sam Houston, pilot training at JBSA-Randolph and other various forms of training across the installations.

A common misconception is that sexual assault only happens at home or at recreational areas like bars or clubs. However, sexual assault can happen anywhere and to anyone, including in the school and work environments.

Sexual assault is defined as unwarranted, non-consensual sexual behaviors that can range from rubbing or groping a person in different spots of the body for sexual gratification all the way to forceable intercourse, which is rape. Whatever the behavior, if it is sexual, non-consensual and tactile, it is assault.

The Sexual Assault Prevention and Response program cares for anyone over



## Sexual Assault Prevention & Response

**JBSA SAPR Hotline 210-808-7272**  
**DoD Safe Helpline 1-877-995-5247**

COURTESY GRAPHIC

the age of 18 who has been sexually assaulted by someone who is not an intimate partner or family member. These assaults can happen at the hands of a total stranger, an acquaintance, coworker, or even a close friend.

In addition, COVID-19 isolation could bring up painful memories of past assaults, and SAPR is available to assist anyone struggling with past incidents as well as recent ones.

It's always best to stop sexual assault before it happens, though. Whether abusers are abusive because of nature or nurture is still up for debate, but according to Moerbe, major societal causes include the desensitization of sex and the objectification of, most often, women.

"Issues in society make it more difficult for us, I think, to do our job of prevention because some things are just accepted or tolerated," Moerbe said. "People act out, and these societal challenges make it hard for us to eradicate sexual assault.

"Personnel at JBSA should continue to be active bystanders in this current situation," she added. "It is important to not let the current pandemic distract practicing good Wingmanship."

Ways to practice good Wingmanship including, watching your surroundings and looking for signs of an individual who may be vulnerable or susceptible to sexual assault. You should intervene when you see these situations.

"The number one thing that I would like people to understand is, despite the fact that things are ongoing with CO-

VID-19, we still have the SAPR resources that are available 24/7," Moerbe said. "Even if individuals have questions or concerns related to sexual assault, they can always reach out on our 24-hour

hotline. People don't have to identify themselves and can remain confidential."

As they say, if you see something, say something. And if you need help, don't be afraid to say that either.

"We are still here to support, day or night," Moerbe said. The phone number for SAPR's 24/7 hotline is 210-808-7272. Anyone can call with questions, to report a situation, or for emotional support.

There are also SAPR victim advocates, who are trained to support any individuals in crisis. They are available in-person or via teleconference.

Moerbe also encourages people to reach out to the San Antonio Rape Crisis Center. Their hotline phone number is 210-349-7273.

The DOD Safe Hotline is available for prevention response and emotional support. Their phone number is 877-995-5247.

Finally, for more information on sexual assault, the impact of it, and how to prevent it, visit [www.safehelpline.org](http://www.safehelpline.org).

# Fourth graders get ‘virtual’ look at K-9 training

By Rachel Kersey  
37TH TRAINING WING  
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The 341st Training Squadron conducts all military working dog initial training as well as all MWD handlers courses for the Department of Defense at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland. This elite team was able to share what they do with a class of fourth-grade students from Buda Elementary School during a virtual canine demonstration May 18.

“I knew this group of fourth-graders would love this topic, and they did,” said Dr. Cynthia Farest, the students’ teacher. “I wanted them to have a special memory of fourth grade, and I thought a visit with the group that trains the dogs would be just the ticket. I think it is very important that kids make real connections to their learning, and I believe this experience will do that.”

The students, their teacher, and their instructional coach tuned in at 10 a.m. to learn more about the work MWDs do for their detection and patrol missions during their study of animal soldiers and heroes, past and present.

Air Force Staff Sgt. Edward Fortuna Clase and Army Sgt. Milo Bunts led the demonstration and gave students information about the training these dogs go through to become an MWD and the capabilities they bring to the operational force.

“Our dogs have capabilities to save a lot of lives,” Bunts said. “They find bad things that people aren’t supposed to have, and they also find bad people. They’re the best dogs in the world, and I love them. I love my job.”

Bunts and Fortuna Clase shared their journeys of how they became dog handlers before beginning the demonstrations. Though they are from different military branches, both men’s jobs are



PHOTOS COURTESY OF 37TH TRAINING WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

*Army Sgt. Milo Bunts demonstrates the talents and capabilities of a Military Working Dog to a class of 4th-grade students from Buda Elementary School during a virtual canine demonstration May 18 at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland.*

under the umbrella of military police, known as Security Forces in the Air Force.

As an Army Soldier, Bunts trained to be a police officer and a canine handler at the same time, whereas Fortuna Clase first became a Security Forces Defender, performing those duties for a few years before applying to be a canine handler. When selected, he attended the handler’s course as a student at the 341st Training Squadron.

The two also shared details with the students about the journey the dogs go through in order to become a qualified MWD. The most common dog breeds to be trained as MWDs are German Shepherds, Dutch Shepherds, and Belgian Malinois, who all spend 65 days in detection training and 55 days in patrol training, for a total of 120 training days.



*A Military Working Dog runs the obstacle course during a virtual MWD demonstration for fourth-grade students from Buda May 18 at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland.*

The 37th Training Wing is not only the Gateway to the Air Force, as the location of Air Force Basic Military Training, but it is the Gateway to K-9 for the DOD,” said Maj. Tate Grogan, 341st TRS director of operations. “The military’s four-legged teammates started out right here at the 341st TRS.”

The first demonstration for the fourth graders was a detection demonstration, followed by patrol and obedience training and a display of bite capabilities, all of which ready the dogs for their duties as service members for the country.

“We need dogs to be

**“Our dogs have capabilities to save a lot of lives. They find bad things that people aren’t supposed to have, and they also find bad people. They’re the best dogs in the world, and I love them. I love my job.”**

**Army Sgt. Milo Bunts,  
341st Training Squadron  
Military Working Dog handler**

confident whenever they are in the field,” Fortuna Clase said. “We don’t want a dog that is afraid of heights or loud noises. These dogs are highly trained and there is no better teammate than them to have your back.”

The kids asked questions about how the dogs differentiated between scents, if the dogs get treats on the battlefield, whether or not the dogs have ever gone after the wrong person and many other things they were curious about. Fortuna Clase and Bunts answered every question and helped the kids to understand the big picture of what life is like for an MWD and an MWD handler.

“That was the BEST [virtual] class meeting ever! I know these kids will be talking about this morning for years to come,” said Melissa English, virtual class teacher. “A million thanks. It was a perfect morning of learning.”

To learn more about the Gateway to K-9 training and breeding program, visit [www.37trw.af.mil/Units/37th-Training-Group/341st-Training-Squadron/](http://www.37trw.af.mil/Units/37th-Training-Group/341st-Training-Squadron/).

# Motorcycle training courses resume at JBSA-Lackland with health measures in place

By Robert Goetz

502ND AIR BASE WING  
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Joint Base San Antonio's Motorcycle Safety Training program has resumed with public health and safety measures in place following a hiatus resulting from the implementation of COVID-19 social distancing and shelter-in-place guidelines.

The program, which comprises two basic courses and one advanced course, is being offered again to prevent any further delay in training that could place motorcycle riders at risk when day-to-day activities are set to resume, JBSA officials said.

Resumption of the program coincides with the expiration of the Motorcycle Safety Foundation's "no-training" recommendation May 15.

"Training resumed May 21, beginning with those students who were originally registered for a canceled class," said John Hernandez, JBSA Motorcycle Safety Program manager. "We have a significant backlog to work through before we can offer open availability."

Hernandez estimated open registration would begin next month.

"We expect to have open availability beginning the second week of June," he said. "Those students who were scheduled for a canceled class have been contacted individually and will be offered a one-time make-up class. If unable to attend they will fall into the normal first-come, first-served basis."

With the resumption of training, public health and safety will continue to be a priority. These safety measures that meet MSF guidance and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommendations



**“Training resumed May 21, beginning with those students who were originally registered for a canceled class. We have a significant backlog to work through before we can offer open availability.”**

John Hernandez,  
Joint Base San Antonio  
Motorcycle Safety Program manager

COURTESY GRAPHIC

will be implemented:

Class sizes will be limited to eight students and two instructors.

Students will be screened at the door and asked whether they have any symptoms prior to entering the classroom. Students showing potential symptoms will not be allowed to continue the class.

All CDC, World Health Organization and local guidance on COVID-19 protective measures will be followed closely.

Equipment and common areas will be sanitized at the beginning and end of each day.

Students will be required to bring their own riding personal protective equipment.

The use of shared items such as pens, pencils, training equipment and materials, will be strictly prohibited. Sign-in sheets will not be used; instead students will bring forms filled out in advance.

Classroom activities that normally require student interaction will be

demonstration only.

The courses, which are conducted at JBSA-Lackland's Chapman Training Annex, are free to eligible members, including active-duty military, Guard and Reserve who operate or intend to operate motorcycles; Department of Defense civilians who operate motorcycles in performance of their assigned duties; and operators of government-owned motorcycles.

The program has historically been open to other DOD civilians, military retirees and military dependents on a space-available basis, but registration for those individuals is temporarily postponed due to the backlog of military personnel, Hernandez said.

"We do expect to resume space-available training within the next few months once our obligation to military members is satisfied," he said.

The program's offerings are the Basic Rider Course, Basic Rider Course 2 and Advanced

Rider Course.

The BRC, which consists of a classroom session and on-range riding instruction conducted over two full days, is the best place to start once someone has decided to ride, Hernandez said.

"It covers the basics of operating a motorcycle and introduces risk-reducing strategies," he said. "It also meets DOD requirements for initial training and must be completed before riding on base."

The program provides motorcycles but is no longer able to provide loaner helmets due to health precautions, Hernandez said.

"Students must provide their own helmet certified to meet Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards No. 218," he said. "We will re-evaluate the use of loaner helmets at a later time."

The BRC2, which consists of only riding exercises and limited classroom instruction, is designed for riders who already have a permit/license

and possess basic skills and meets DOD requirements for intermediate training. For military riders, the course must be completed within 60 days and in no case more than one year after initial training.

The ARC, a one-day course that complements basic skills and helps with personal risk assessment, includes a fast-paced classroom segment with several fun interactive activities to improve perception and hazard awareness and range exercises that enhance basic operating skills, crash-avoidance skills, cornering finesse and improved braking. For military riders, it must be completed every five years and meets DOD requirements for refresher training.

Course instructors, volunteers from the JBSA community, are certified MSF rider coaches, and the program is always looking for experienced riders to join the cadre, Hernandez said.

"By committing to teach a certain amount of classes each year, we will provide the training required to become an MSF rider coach at no charge," he said.

Motorcycle safety training was postponed in an effort to ensure maximum protection against the spread of the coronavirus, Hernandez said.

"Our ultimate goal is the safety and well-being of motorcyclists," he said. "We offer not only initial but recurring training, which means riders get everything from fundamental skills and risk-management techniques to more advanced crash-avoidance skills necessary to safely operate a motorcycle on the streets."

To sign up for courses, go to <http://www.jbsa.mil/Resources/Safety>.



# RANDOLPH

## Month of the Military Caregiver: Hidden Heroes

By Shannon Hall

AIR FORCE WOUNDED WARRIOR PROGRAM

May is the Department of Defense's Month of the Military Caregiver. The time to honor, commend and show appreciation for those that care for wounded, ill and injured service members. The Air Force Wounded Warrior Program, or AFW2, has a Caregiver Support and Family Program to assist caretakers in multiple ways.

The Caregiver Program was founded in 2014 to improve caregiver resiliency by connecting them with other caregivers who can share experiences, provide guidance, and ultimately build trust and long-lasting relationships.

"We currently have 1,612 caregivers enrolled in our program who have created a network of support for each

other," said Tonya McGough, Caregiver Support and Family Program Manager. "They develop strengths from one another and establish healthy relationships that enhance the quality of life for themselves and their families."

Becoming a caregiver to a wounded, ill or injured service member can bring forward new challenges for a family. Without the proper training, guidance, and support system some can have a hard time thriving and being successful with this new lifestyle while still maintaining their own mental health.

"For the first time in 13 years, I felt like I wasn't alone anymore," said Sara Gray, a member of the caregiver program. "Through this program, I met people who understood all my emotions, provided tools to help me keep pushing forward and helped me realize how strong I truly am. The

best benefit is other caregivers I remain in touch with."

The Caregiver Support Program identifies, connects and improves caregiver resiliency by providing resources, workshops, resiliency tools and new skill sets to ensure caretakers reach their ultimate potential. During times like these of unpredictability and isolation, the program has turned to social media to stay connected.

AFW2, and the Caregiver Support Program, host daily virtual socials live on Facebook. Visit the program's Facebook pages to hear stories of resiliency and engage in activities hosted by Air Force Wounded Warriors and Caregivers. For additional information, visit [www.woundedwarrior.af.mil](http://www.woundedwarrior.af.mil) to refer an Airman to the program, read about the program's mission, or learn about additional services offered to caregivers and families.



COURTESY PHOTO

Sara Gray, and her husband Shawn, at Bay Harbor, Maine. Sara is a caregiver to her husband Shawn, who suffers from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and a traumatic brain injury. It was in the Caregiver Support and Family Program, where Sara found tools and a supportive network to help her through her caregiver journey.

The Air Education and Training Command's Instructor Monument stands in front of the command's headquarters at Joint Base San Antonio -Randolph May 14.



MELISSA PETERSON

## Monument recognizes AETC instructors' dedication

By C Arce

AIR EDUCATION AND TRAINING COMMAND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

During this time of uncertainty, the dedication of Air Education and Training Command's instructor corps has never been more certain. Like their dedication, a monument stands unwavering here in the honor of AETC's instructor corps.

The obelisk, or pillar, monument stands in front of the AETC headquarters building and was dedicated in July 1971. It is made of red granite and features a polestar, or the North Star, at the top of the monument.

"The obelisk symbolizes a ray of sunshine," said Gary Boyd, AETC History and Museum Program director. "That ray is pointed up toward the polestar and is guided by the instructor force of Air Training Command."

Instructors are the backbone of AETC

and for centuries have trained new Airmen to adapt to military life. The commander of what was then Air Training Command, Lt. Gen. George B. Simler, pointed out this very mission during his speech at the monument's dedication.

"We hope that we can make the nation realize that the Air Force is not just a consumer of manpower," Simler said. "The Air Force is also a provider of a solid, well-oriented, trained manpower base for the nation's technical workforce as well as defenders of national freedom."

According to the current commander of AETC, Lt. Gen. Brad Webb, the efforts of the AETC instructor corps provides the Air Force with highly trained, motivated, self-disciplined, and physically fit Airmen with an exceptional military bearing. It is because of their dedication to standards that the greatest

Air Force in the world is fueled with ready and lethal Airmen.

"No matter the era, including the great power competition of today, the air, and now space, domains have always required highly trained Airmen," Webb said. "Our instructor corps have always been an integral part of that equation to ensure we remain a ready and lethal force."

According to Boyd, building Airmen of character is no easy task and often requires long grueling hours, but these unseen tasks do not go unsung and are forever appreciated with a monument dedicated to the AETC instructor corps.

"A plaque on the monument reads 'knowledge is the polestar,'" Boyd said. "I like to say that knowledge is our true North and without it, we are lost."

Visitors are encouraged to see the monument located in front of building 900 on Main Circle at JBSA-Randolph.