

JBSA

LEGACY

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JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO

JUNE 11, 2021



STAFF SGT. AMANDA STANFORD

Air Force Capt. Kimpreet Kaur, an anesthesiologist with the 59th Medical Wing, Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, anesthetizes a patient before surgery at Hospital del Sur in Choluteca, Honduras, May 21.

59th MDW medics assist at Honduran hospital

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JBSA members clean during Proud Week

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Nurse named among top 20 nurses in Texas

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Reducing the stigma, encouraging mental health care in the military

By Claudia Sanchez-Bustamante
MHS COMMUNICATIONS

In the military, the stigma of mental health is grounded in the cultural misperception that a service member must have “zero defects” to be mission-ready.

While the Department of Defense strives to identify and eliminate barriers to care that service members face regarding mental health treatment, stigma remains a significant issue within the military.

Eliminating stigma starts with the individual, their immediate network (family, friends, and colleagues), and the broader community understanding that mental health is an element to overall health. Just as you would see your dentist to maintain oral health and a cardiologist to maintain heart health, seeking treatment for mental health concerns will help keep you in check to ensure you live a healthy, productive life.

Disseminating factual information about mental health care and engaging with service members to bust myths about mental health stigmas in the military can have the effect of encouraging someone who needs care to seek help.

The stigma around mental health care in the military may extend to career concerns, confidentiality, and perception of mental health care.

“These are all barriers to care,” said Marjorie Campbell, a clinical psychologist who leads the Psychological Health Center of Excellence’s Prevention and Early Intervention program.

“As a society, we place a premium on being able to take care of ourselves,” she said. “In a nutshell, mental health is invisible, and people tend not to



AIRMAN 1ST CLASS QUENTIN K. MARX

Staff Sgt. Bradley Borytsky (left), a 28th Operational Medical Readiness Squadron alcohol and drug prevention and treatment technician, talks with Tech. Sgt. Andrew Collins, the 28th OMRS Mental Health flight chief (right), at Ellsworth Air Force Base, South Dakota, Oct. 7, 2020.

believe in things that they can’t see.

“Cultural and historical factors contribute to the belief that mental health disorders are in your head because you can’t see them in the way you would a broken limb or a bleeding wound, so acknowledging them must mean you’re weak,” she explained. But this notion doesn’t consider the physical symptoms of mental health on the brain.

She explained our thoughts are physical occurrences that result from the release of electrical and chemical activity. There are physiological underpinnings to every mental health disorder we experience, she said.

“Everything is interconnected,” Campbell said. “You can’t just separate out mental health and not consider that it’s part of the organism.”

Campbell, who has studied mental health stigma over time, noted the No. 1 reason service members give for not wanting to seek mental health care is they think they can handle problems on their own.

“That reveals preconceived stereotypes of self-reliance: ‘I can do it,’ ‘I should be able to do it because I’m tough,’” she said.

Another issue is treatment dropout, she said. An individual may start treatment because their spouse or their leadership may be pushing them, but they later drop out because they feel they can handle problems on their own. In the studies she saw, 63% of the people who dropped out said it was because they felt they could handle their problems on their own.

To reduce stigma, there are different levels at which an individual’s community can intervene.

“As a provider, it’s important to address an individual’s concerns with stigma at the onset of treatment,” she said. “If nothing is on the table, you can’t deal with it.”

She recommends providers be proactive and ask their patients how they feel about being there if they are concerned about what other service members think or what their leaders think, and if they

think it makes them feel weak.

Separating the individual from the diagnosis clarifies that the diagnosis is a medical disorder, not one of choice or will.

To reduce stigma and reach those people reluctant to seek care requires a multi-pronged approach, “from the individual provider to Michael Phelps doing a commercial on TV for mental health to the policy work to the leader getting trained on how to support mental health, to the DOD’s Real Warriors public awareness campaign,” Campbell said.

It also takes ensuring service members know the facts around mental health.

“They worry they won’t be able to deploy or will get separated out of the military, or that their unit leaders will find out about their diagnosis and perceive them as weak and make fun of them,” Campbell said. “And, although sometimes those things happen, in general, we found that service members’ perceptions of these barriers are not accurate.”

She said that presenting the facts to them helps them realize mental health is not a deal-breaker.

“They might have heard one person say something, but this is not a career-ender, even if sometimes some service members get medically discharged if they’re not fit for duty.”

PHCoE has more information on the barriers to care service members face regarding mental health diagnoses and treatment. It offers some do’s and don’ts to consider when talking about mental health as well as some statistics on the barriers to mental health care impacting service members.

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. This is in reference to ID checks at the gate during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The morning of May 6 at JBSA-Lackland, I was coming in one of the gates, I noticed a Security Forces Squadron member taking everyone's Common Access Card for a brief moment, and thought, that's a good way to cross-contaminate while we are dealing with COVID-19. There was no cleaning of hands in between, which would slow the process down.

I was hesitant to hand mine over because I didn't want my CAC to be contaminated. I showed both sides of the CAC and the member still had to take hold of it. The defender stated it was policy, which I know there are the "occasional" checks, but everyone's ID?

This is the first time in the past year anyone other than myself has touched my CAC. This is true for all the personnel I work with who also came through this gate. No one was comfortable with getting a "dirty" CAC handed back to them.

Is there not a more sanitary way while we deal with COVID-19 when the Defense Biometrics Identification Systems (DBIDS) is not being utilized? Or perhaps we stick to the SFS member simply asking us to flip over our ID as we have been?

A. Thank you for your question about Security Forces handling ID cards at the gates. It is Department of Defense policy that anytime the DBIDS is not functioning or available, all ID cards



COURTESY GRAPHIC

must physically be handled and checked to validate authenticity.

In addition, Defenders have the authority to physically handle ID cards anytime they believe there is a need. This is done to ensure the safety and security of the installation and mission.

We recommend you clean your ID card off as soon as possible to minimize any concerns you may have with it being physically handled. Thank you again for your feedback, patience, and for assisting us in protecting personnel and our critical missions

Q. I am a resident of JBSA-Fort Sam Houston. I would like to make a request/voice a frustration.

The transmission of the Giant Voice (GV) information is consistently, and painfully, difficult to understand. It is not occasionally, it is every time. If the purpose of the Giant Voice is to disseminate information quickly, to help those on post get to safety, it is woefully lacking. It creates chaos that doesn't need to be and puts people on alert when there is

"lightning within 5 nautical miles."

Although I am confident that the man who has been chosen to convey these messages is a lovely person, the male voice is inherently difficult to hear over the radio, especially when there is interference, such as winds/heavy rains/etc. The pitch of the female voice (assuming her to be a mezzo-soprano or higher) is much easier to hear.

Please, fix this. And to clarify, making the Wednesday test come out as, "This.... Is.... A.... Test.... Of..." is not an improvement.

I personally am a huge fan of Charlie Brown specials, but I would rather save them for Christmas than when danger is imminent. Thank you, for your time.

A. Thank you for your feedback. The Giant Voice system that is used across all JBSA locations (-Lackland, -Randolph, -Fort Sam Houston, and -Camp Bullis) is a U.S. Air Force and Department of Defense mandated and regulated program.

The Giant Voice often uses a pre-programmed voice, on a sound

card at the GV towers. The sound card is provided by the Department of Defense and the U.S. Air Force.

Only on extremely rare occasions, command post personnel will utilize their own voice to inform the base populous of important warnings.

While we are unable to control the speech patterns and dialects of the voices on those occasions the Command Post is able and willing to look into other pre-programmed voice sound cards. However, this may consist of removing one sound card from a tower and installing a new card. Replacing the sound cards would take time, funding, and coordination between our radio shop, vendor, and certain towers would be offline for an unknown amount of time to replace said cards.

The Wednesday GV tests are mandated tests that are conducted in accordance with USAF and DOD guidelines to ensure our towers are working and operational. In addition, lightning within 5 nautical miles are GV messages that are relayed across each JBSA location to notify the base populous (residents, trainees, students, outdoor personnel) the potential to be struck by lightning exists and to seek immediate shelter indoors.

The command post uses an additional software program called AtHoc to push the warning messages to all bases quickly and to allow the on-shift controller to multitask more efficiently.

Whenever a GV message is relayed across the base, a simultaneous message is sent via AtHoc to a respondent's NIPR desktop computer, cell phone, work email, etc.

In this regard, if a person is unable to hear a GV message and/or if they are in a location that would make it impossible to hear the warning message (i.e., inside the FSH Commissary, high winds, etc.), the emergency message would still be able to reach the audience.

Please see more information about the AtHoc system at <https://www.jbsa.mil/News/News/Article/u88987/updated-athoc-alert-system-delivers-urgent-news-directly-to-subscribers-fingert/>.

DOD budget request boosts research, nuclear modernization, includes 2.7% pay raise

By David Vergun

DOD NEWS

The fiscal year 2022 Defense Department budget request includes the largest-ever research, development, test and evaluation request — \$112 billion, which is a 5.1% increase over fiscal 2021. It also includes \$27.7 billion for nuclear triad modernization.

The budget totals \$752.9 billion. It includes \$37.9 billion for the Department of Energy and other agencies. It reflects a 1.6% increase from the fiscal 2021 enacted budget.

The budget provides a 2.7% pay raise for both military and civilians while investing nearly \$9 billion in family support programs.

Spotlight: Military Family Support

In a statement May 28, Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III said the budget invests in people, supports readiness and modernization, combats threats posed by climate change and provides capabilities needed to meet the pacing threat from Beijing.

Deputy Secretary of Defense Kathleen H. Hicks briefed the media May 28 on the fiscal 2022 Defense Department budget. She reiterated Austin's comments and said the budget also addresses the COVID-19 pandemic and drawing down U.S. forces from Afghanistan with an exit date of Sept. 11, adding that the department will provide an over-the-horizon capability for counterterrorism and Afghan National Security Forces support.

Spotlight: Coronavirus: DOD Response

"The budget also documents some of the tough choices we had to make, as we lessen our reliance on vulnerable systems



COURTESY PHOTO

Marines with Echo Company, 2nd Recruit Training Battalion, march during a graduation ceremony at Marine Corps Recruit Depot, San Diego, May 20. The Defense Department's fiscal year 2022 budget calls for a 2.7% pay raise for both military and civilians.

that are no longer suited for today's advanced threat environment or are too costly to sustain," she said.

Those resource reallocations, she said, are going to fund advanced technologies like microelectronics, hypersonic missiles, artificial intelligence, cyberspace capabilities and a 5G network.

Spotlight: Artificial Intelligence

DOD also has invested in its workforce, particularly in billets where there are critical needs, she said. "The request also looks to build an increasingly resilient force, one that recognizes and embraces its diversity as a strength."

The budget also provides funding to strengthen the department's ability to identify and address insider threats in its ranks and to combat sexual assault and harassment, she said.

Spotlight: Independent Review Commission on Sexual Assault in the Military

The budget request slightly lowers total military active and Reserve component end strength from FY21 authorized 2,150,375 to 2,145,900. The only service to get an end-strength increase is the Space Force, which had 6,434 Guardians authorized in FY21, with a request to bump that up to 8,400.

Anne McAndrew,

performing the duties of undersecretary of defense (comptroller) and chief financial officer, said that the budget also reflects capabilities for managing threats from Russia, Iran, North Korea and violent extremist organizations, in addition to China.

The budget also invests in taking care of people. "Their physical, mental and emotional health is among the department's highest priorities," she said.

Navy Vice Adm. Ron Boxall, the director of Force Structure, Resources and Assessment, Joint Staff, said the department will work with Congress to divest legacy platforms that overburden readiness accounts.

Budget request highlights include:

- » \$20.4 billion for missile defense
- » \$6.6 billion to develop and field long-range fires
- » \$52.4 billion for fourth- and fifth-generation fighter aircraft
- » \$34.6 billion for a hybrid fleet of manned and unmanned naval platforms
- » \$12.3 billion for ground force weapons and next-generation combat vehicles
- » \$20.6 billion for space capabilities
- » \$10.4 billion for cyberspace activities
- » \$122.1 billion for training, installation support, and support to allies and partners.



COURTESY PHOTO

The 502nd Air Base Wing, in coordination with the 502nd Civil Engineer Squadron, is conducting Proud Week Fall Cleanup June 14-18, an event that will unite mission partners, tenant units, organizations and agencies throughout Joint Base San Antonio.

JBSA celebrates Proud Week with installation cleanup

By 502nd Civil Engineer Squadron

In keeping with Joint Base San Antonio's culture of installation excellence, Brig. Gen. Caroline M. Miller, 502nd Air Base Wing and JBSA commander, has designated June 14-18 as JBSA Proud Week.

During Proud Week, JBSA asks mission partners across the installation to join forces to improve and maintain the appearance of the installation.

Mission partners are asked to organize teams of personnel to help clean up and improve the appearance of their respective areas. Items to look for are trash, debris, old pallets, sandbags, deteriorated picnic tables, tree branches, old cones and other unsightly items.

For items too large for organizations to safely transport, the 502nd Civil Engineer Squadron will offer curbside service to assist in removing large debris. Teams are asked to place items at the curbside to allow for easy access by the 502nd CES team; please do not put items in the street.

Customer service numbers for assistance with these items are JBSA-Lackland: 210-671-5555; JBSA-Fort Sam Houston/-Camp Bullis:

210-466-5555; and JBSA-Randolph: 210-652-5555.

The 502nd CES has designated U-FIX-IT locations at JBSA-Lackland at building 5497; JBSA-Fort Sam Houston/-Camp Bullis at building 4197, Bay F-4; and at JBSA-Randolph at building 891, to provide clean up and appearance improvement items for organizations to use in this effort.

Rakes, brooms, trimmers, trash bags, wheelbarrows, gloves and safety goggles will be provided on a first-come, first-served basis from the designated U-FIX-IT locations.

Organizations are asked to augment the items provided to help ensure adequate safety and cleanup supplies are available for Proud Week. Once trash bags are filled, they should be deposited in one of the designated dumpsters in the organization's respective area. Dumpsters will be available for green waste and regular trash.

Though Proud Week is a focused JBSA cleanup effort, base appearance is a continuous effort that requires year-round involvement and dedication by all. Let's work together to keep JBSA the premier installation in the Department of Defense!

FORT SAM HOUSTON

Longtime Brooke Army Medical Center volunteer leaves legacy for others to follow

By Lori Newman

BROOKE ARMY MEDICAL CENTER
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

A longtime volunteer is hanging up her burgundy vest after more than 36 years of service at Brooke Army Medical Center.

Joy Moore began volunteering in 1985 and was one of a core group that started the BAMC Retiree Activities Group, affectionately known as BRAG. She is also the wife of retired Army Col. Bobby Moore, Fort Sam Houston commander from 1985-1987, and a longtime volunteer at BAMC.

Michael Dulevitz, chief of the BAMC Volunteer Services Office, describes Moore as a “pioneer,” who helped establish the CareMobile program in 1990, and the driving force behind the Patient Library.

“I was volunteering at the old main hospital (on Fort Sam Houston) when I decided that we needed some libraries,” Moore said. “In those days, the hospital consisted of two buildings; the main hospital (Brooke General Hospital) and Beach Pavilion, so anything that was done at Main had to be done at Beach.”

When the new hospital was built in 1996, Moore’s patient library moved to the new building. Since then, the Patient Library has relocated six times, and each time Moore was instrumental in ensuring patients never had a lull in the books and magazines available to them, explained Dulevitz.

“Joy is a genuine, giving, empathetic, and compassionate person,” Dulevitz said. “That’s



LORI NEWMAN

Volunteer Joy Moore sorts books in the Patient Library at Brooke Army Medical Center at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston May 27. Moore is retiring after 36 years of volunteer service.

why she was here — to help with healing; to help people.”

Both the Moores drove the CareMobile, shuttling patients to and from the parking lot to the entrances and back.

“Joy drove one day a week, week in and week out, rain, cold or shine for 17 years,” Dulevitz said. “From the old gas carts at Brooke General and Beach Pavilion to the new electric version at the new BAMC, she has driven them all.”

“That was the most fun,” she said. “No matter what the weather, of course, the weather in San Antonio is never that bad. We got to meet and talk to so many people. It’s nice to give them that kindness while you’re driving them up to the door. It was nice to get acquainted with folks.”

During her time at BAMC, Moore said she enjoyed getting to know the patients and staff.

“I greatly appreciated that everyone treats the volunteers

like they are part of the staff,” she said. “Many of the volunteers are completely dedicated to their positions at BAMC. Such loyalty is impressive.”

“I’m also, of course, a patient at BAMC, and I have never seen such kind, compassionate medical folks,” Moore said. “I’m speaking as a volunteer, but I’m also speaking as a patient. They are just so caring and so helpful. There is a lot to be said for that.”

She encourages others to volunteer if they have an opportunity.

“The Volunteer Services Office staff is always available to help and support the volunteers,” Moore said.

“Anytime we need them or we want to talk, they are there.”

Dulevitz said she will be greatly missed, but he understands why the 80-plus-year-old needs to step away from her volunteer service at BAMC.

USAISR Burn Center nurse named among top 20 nurses in Texas

By Dr. Steven Galvan

U.S. ARMY INSTITUTE OF SURGICAL
RESEARCH PUBLIC AFFAIRS

A retired Army nurse and current U.S. Army Institute of Surgical Research civilian at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston has been named as one of the top 20 nurses in the state of Texas by two major professional nursing organizations.

Retired Lt. Col. Maria L. Serio-Melvin received the “20 for 2020 Nurse Award” for her dedication, perseverance, compassion and commitment to Texans during an exceptional year marked by the ongoing novel coronavirus pandemic.

Serio-Melvin, USAISR Clinical Research Support Group deputy chief, was selected from a large pool of nominations made at the end of 2020 to the Texas Nurses Foundation and Texas Nurses Association.

Grateful for the award, Serio-Melvin said she was initially unaware the award existed.

“After finding out what the award was about, I was very humbled and honored,” she said. “I am also extremely grateful to the people who took the time to write the nomination and letter of support on my behalf.”

Lt. Col. Chris VanFosson, USAISR Clinical Research Support Group chief, was a key contributor in nominating Serio-Melvin for the recognition and was excited and proud to learn that she selected for the award.

“I have known Maria [Serio-Melvin] for almost eight years and have always viewed her as an amazing nurse and leader,” he said. “She is compassionate and empathetic toward patients and colleagues alike, and is utterly devoted to our research

and patient care missions.”

Serio-Melvin has been a nurse since 1989 when she graduated from Niagara University in New York with a bachelor of science in nursing. She earned her degree with an Army Reserve Officers’ Training Corps nursing scholarship and was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Army Nurse Corps on the same day she graduated.

“To this day, it is still one of the proudest days of my life,” she said.

Serio-Melvin chose nursing as a career field because she wanted to help people who were sick or injured.

“I also went into nursing because Niagara University offered me an annual \$1,000 scholarship — a big deal in 1985 — to enroll in their College of Nursing, instead of their College of Education,” she added.

During her 22-plus years as an Army nurse, Serio-Melvin served at the USAISR Burn Center twice — first from 1994-1997 and then from 2006-2011.

She retired from active duty in 2011 and continued serving as a Department of the Army civilian at the USAISR. While on active duty, she worked in several roles in the Burn Center to include being a staff nurse, charge nurse, clinical nurse officer in charge, acting and interim chief nurse, clinical nurse specialist, senior clinical nurse specialist, Burn Flight Team nurse and the BFT administrative officer, now called the BFT Chief Nurse.

“I like to call myself a USAISR ‘repeat offender,’” she said of her multiple tours of duty at the facility.

Shortly after arriving at the Burn Center for her first tour of duty in 1994, she completed her burn orientation just prior to



DR. STEVEN GALVAN

Retired Army nurse Lt. Col. Maria L. Serio-Melvin and current U.S. Army Institute of Surgical Research civilian at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston has been named as one of the top 20 nurses in the state of Texas by two major professional nursing organizations.

the infamous “Green Ramp” disaster at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, where more than 90 paratroopers suffered burn injuries and many were transported to the USAISR Burn Center for treatment.

“We received about 21 vented [ventilator, also known as a respirator] patients in about 24 hours,” she said. “We cared for those patients for over a month. This mass casualty literally seared the love of burn care into my heart.”

Supporting the ISR’s mission to “optimize combat casualty care” is why Serio-Melvin believes she earned this award.

“I did everything I could to ensure that mission was accomplished,” she said. “I tried to live by the Army values whenever I came to work. My

goal was, and still is, to serve others the best way that I can, hoping that I can make a positive difference in other people’s lives, no matter who they are. Working in all of those different roles has provided me the opportunity to do just that.”

VanFosson said Serio-Melvin works countless hours to ensure physicians, nurses, and others understand the intricacies of burn resuscitation, particularly when using the Burn Navigator® device — a device invented by the USAISR and University of Texas Medical Branch.

As the Integrated Product Team co-chair, she worked with U.S. Army Medical Research and Development Command through their decision gate

“I have known Maria [Serio-Melvin] for almost eight years and have always viewed her as an amazing nurse and leader. She is compassionate and empathetic toward patients and colleagues alike, and is utterly devoted to our research and patient care missions.”

**Lt. Col. Chris VanFosson,
USAISR Clinical Research
Support Group chief**

process and was instrumental in getting the device Food and Drug Administration cleared and distributed to the USAISR Burn Center and other Army medical field units. The Burn Navigator® is a clinical decision support software tool that guides and monitors fluid resuscitation therapy for severely burned patients.

“Since transitioning to her new role in the Clinical Research Support Group, she is actively engaged in the development and execution of all of our clinical studies,” VanFosson said. “In this prolonged ‘Year of the Nurse,’ I felt like she deserved public recognition for her years of service and dedication to our mission. Additionally, I thought that her unique role should be shown as an example for other nurses across Texas.”

“It has been an honor and privilege to serve our nation and work at the USAISR,” Serio-Melvin said.

NAMRU-San Antonio gains new commanding officer

By Randy Martin

NAVAL MEDICAL RESEARCH UNIT SAN ANTONIO PUBLIC AFFAIRS

More than 100 people attended the Naval Medical Research Unit-San Antonio, or NAMRU-SA, change of command ceremony at Brooke Army Medical Center's Carolyn D. Putnam Auditorium at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston May 21, where Navy Capt. Gerald DeLong relieved Capt. Andrew Vaughn.

Navy Capt. Gerald DeLong (left) salutes Capt. Adam Armstrong, commander of Naval Medical Research Center, Medical Corps, during a change of command ceremony at Brooke Army Medical Center at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston May 21.



BRIAN J. VALENCIA

DeLong is NAMRU-SA's sixth commanding officer since the unit was established May 6, 2009.

The ceremony adhered to COVID-19 limitations for social distancing, with dozens more watching live through social media and government-provided streaming services. It featured the hallmarks of Navy customs and tradition, including piping aboard distinguished visitors and the ringing of a bell to render honors for high-ranking officers.

Capt. Adam Armstrong, Naval Medical Research Center commanding officer, presided over the ceremony. NMRC is NAMRU-SA's higher headquarters in Silver Spring, Maryland. NMRC's higher headquarters is Naval Medical Forces Pacific which is located in San Diego, California.

"With Capt. Vaughn, at the helm, this command has navigated a steady course," said Rear Adm. Tim Weber, Naval Medical Forces Pacific commander, during his remarks as the guest speaker. Vaughn has commanded NAMRU-SA since Aug. 6, 2019.

The medical research and development unit conducts gap-driven combat casualty care, craniofacial, and directed energy research to improve survival, operational readiness, and safety of Department of Defense personnel engaged in routine and expeditionary operations.

NAMRU-SA has more than 100 military and civilian members assigned with offices and workspace at two separate buildings at JBSA-Fort Sam Houston. For more than a year, however,

NAMRU-SA has operated with much of its staff teleworking to comply with Department of Defense and Joint Base San Antonio guidance.

Weber said NAMRU-SA has met the challenge and excelled.

"Capt. Vaughn delivered high-quality research solutions and well-trained medical experts for the Navy medical mission of providing high-performance teams who project medical power," Weber said.

Among other accomplishments within the last year, NAMRU-SA collaborated with the U.S. Army Institute for Surgical Research at JBSA-Fort Sam Houston and the Air Force's 711th Human Performance Wing at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, helping to develop an intensive care unit for COVID-19 surge requirements and it assisted operational units with directed energy initiatives.

According to Weber, NAMRU-SA's scientists had secured funding for research initiatives and contributed to medical and dental science knowledge by developing 64 abstracts, 22 journal articles, 20 posters, seven presentations, four technical reports, and four manuscripts that highlighted research findings.

The admiral presented Vaughn with the Legion of Merit, the second such award in a military career that has spanned 30 years, including duty as a Navy line officer and, since 1996, as a medical doctor deployed worldwide.



DR. STEVEN GALVAN

Sgt. Maj. Larry D. White II (left) takes responsibility of the U.S. Army Institute of Surgical Research from Col. (Dr.) Mark E. Stackle (right), USAISR commander, during a change of responsibility ceremony May 26.

USAISR welcomes new sergeant major

By Dr. Steven Galvan

U.S. ARMY INSTITUTE OF SURGICAL RESEARCH PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The U.S. Army Institute of Surgical Research at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston welcomed a new Senior Enlisted Leader during a change of responsibility ceremony May 25 as Sgt. Maj. Jennifer A. Francis relinquished responsibility of the unit to Sgt. Maj. Larry D. White II.

"I am excited to be a member of the team and look forward to utilizing my experience, knowledge and lifelong learning attributes to add to the efficiency of an already stellar organization," White said. "As the world's premier research organization, the ISR has a history of innovation and cutting-edge discoveries. I am humbled to now be a part of that amazing history."

Col. (Dr.) Mark E. Stackle, USAISR Commander hosted the ceremony to bid farewell to Francis and welcome White.

"Sgt. Maj. Francis joined the USAISR Team in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic, but she didn't let that stop her from transforming the quality of Soldier training in the unit," Stackle said. "As a result of her leadership, our Soldiers got back to doing our Warrior Task Training, returned to the range, and Soldiers started attending key developmental schools again."

Francis departs the USAISR to serve on the staff of the Army's Surgeon General in Falls Church, Virginia. "This year has been a remarkable one," Francis said. "The memories, the people and mission successes alone make the command team look fantastic."

"It has been an honor to serve as the USAISR sergeant major," she added. "I am proud of all our people who execute their duties here and around the globe, and are always ready to launch and deploy the Army's only Burn Flight Team."

White's previous assignment was as operations sergeant major at the Medical Center of Excellence at JBSA-Fort Sam Houston.

4th Expeditionary Sustainment Command supports community vaccination centers

By 1st Lt. Christina Winters

205TH THEATER PUBLIC AFFAIRS SUPPORT ELEMENT

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 4th Expeditionary Sustainment Command has deployed more than 20 teams throughout the nation in support of federal vaccination efforts.

These Forward Assessment Sustainment Teams have been responsible for providing multi-component logistical support to military medical service providers assisting at state-run community vaccination centers in over 20 different states and territories, allowing the providers to focus on their mission.

The effectiveness of the 4th ESC FAST support efforts is largely due to the hard work and dedication of the first-line leaders and Soldiers who have been deployed to vaccination sites since the beginning of the pandemic response.

One such leader, 1st Lt. Earnisa Brent, is the officer in charge of Forward Assessment Sustainment Team 7, also known as "FAST 7-St. Louis."

A native of San Antonio, Brent received her commission through the Army ROTC program at Prairie View A&M.

Teamed with two Soldiers from the 1st Infantry Division Sustainment Brigade from Fort Riley, Kansas, Brent and her team of 2 Soldiers supports Navy medical service providers at the Dome at America's Center in St. Louis, Missouri.

The 140 Navy personnel supporting the St. Louis CVC arrived April 2.

According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency, a Type 1 vaccination team can administer up to 6,000 vaccinations a day, while a Type 2 Team can administer up to 3,000 vaccinations a day. FAST 7-St. Louis is a Type 2 team.

Two areas of assessment and support that Brent is responsible for are implementing government contracts and logistical support for the service members on the ground in St. Louis.

Along with her team, Brent ensures that the military medical service providers have lodging, meals and transportation. This contributes to mission success.

Brent said that she volunteered for the mission to get more experience and to do something that was challenging.

"When I first got into ROTC, I thought that being a leader would mean making decisions in the heat of the moment, but what I learned is that everything is planned, pre-planned, and then you execute," Brent said.

Another first-line leader, 1st Lt. Maryna Williams was first deployed to Medford, Oregon, as the officer in charge of FAST 27. She later deployed to Memphis as the lead for FAST 22 to assist with the community vaccination mission there.

With the help of Staff Sgt. Corey Jackson and Staff Sgt. Joseph Gomez, Williams supports Marine and Navy personnel assisting at the community vaccination center at the Pipkin Building near Liberty Bowl Memorial Stadium.

A native of Milpitas, California, Williams graduated from the University of Hawaii and joined the Army in 2018, receiving her commission through the Army Officer Candidate School.

Before she volunteered for the COVID-19 federal response mission, she was a platoon leader with the 217th Transportation Company in San Antonio.

Williams said she volunteered for the mission because she wanted to build her skills in organizing, managing and communicating. She is confident that she acquired those skills and encourages other junior officers to do the same.

"Before they sent us out, they put us through these courses, but it's nothing like being on the ground," Williams said. "I've worked with the Marines more closely, Sailors, Coast Guard, and the National Guard."

Both Brent and Williams offered advice for other junior leaders in positions of authority.

"Network and soak up as much information as you can," Brent said. "Regardless of it not being pertinent to the mission you're on right now, you can use it somewhere else."

The 4th ESC is a subordinate command of the 377th Theater Sustainment Command. The 377th TSC, headquartered in Belle Chase, Louisiana, is a multifunctional headquarters that has been the sustainment lead for the Department of Defense COVID response since operations began in March 2020.

LACKLAND

BMT graduation ceremonies opening for guests July 22

502nd ABW and 37th TRW
Public Affairs

A limited number of family and friends will once again be able to watch their loved ones graduate from Air Force Basic Military Training at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland beginning with the ceremony scheduled for July 22.

"We're excited to welcome back visitors to JBSA-Lackland and the greater San Antonio area to witness our Air and Space Force's newest members start their military journey," said Brig. Gen. Caroline M. Miller, 502nd Air Base Wing and JBSA commander. "Recent changes to our local health protection conditions and CDC guidance have contributed to this decision. We have assessed COVID-19 impacts and associated risk factors and have determined we are in a good place to welcome families back."

The Air Force suspended guest attendance at mass gatherings, including Basic Military Training graduations, in March 2020. The graduation ceremony and activities beginning in July will be different than they were prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We truly understand the personal value and meaning attending graduation events in person has to our



JOHNNY SALDIVAR

Families and friends will once again be able to witness their loved ones graduate from Air Force Basic Military Training at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, Texas, beginning July 22.

trainees' families," said Col. Rockie K. This was her first time attending the symposium at JBSA-Lackland and the third time in her Air Force career. She has learned something new at each one and sees the training as essential.

experience with others so we can continue to inspire and recruit young men and women to join our ranks."

Opening day is subject to change if local conditions and COVID-19 protocols change.

BMT graduations are currently

scheduled for every Thursday and will include the following changes:

- » Each graduating trainee will be allowed to invite two guests only (infants and children are considered a guest).
- » All visitors must be fully vaccinated (last shot plus 14 days) according to current CDC guidelines, and must show proof of their vaccination (i.e., the vaccine card); photos or copies will not be accepted.
- » All guests of trainees — including Department of Defense ID cardholders — MUST be on the visitor list to enter the ceremony. No exceptions will be made. Trainees will provide their guests the required information to access the installation and ceremony.
- » Graduates will have the opportunity for on, or possibly off-installation, liberty following the ceremony to spend time with their guests. In order to mitigate risk to other trainees and cadre, trainees will be required to be fully vaccinated to participate in off-installation liberty. All other trainees will be able to spend that same time with their families on JBSA-Lackland.

Information about graduation and COVID-19 protocols will be posted to <https://www.basictraining.af.mil/> and the BMT Facebook page at www.facebook.com/USAFBMT. Information will be updated regularly.

Joint Base San Antonio hosts biannual First Sergeant Symposium

By Rachel Kersey
502ND AIR BASE WING
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The biannual Air Force First Sergeant Symposium was held at Forbes Hall on Joint Base San Antonio-Chapman Training Annex from May 17 to 21.

Over the course of five days, attendees were trained on first sergeant responsibilities. In addition, several JBSA agencies, outside agencies, and spouses gave briefings on a variety of topics.

"We had 134 people attend. It was a mix of technical sergeants and master sergeants," said Master Sgt. Jamar Selvy, 59th Surgical Operations Squadron first sergeant. "They were from various squadrons across JBSA-Lackland, -Kelly Field, -Fort Sam Houston and -Randolph."

One such attendee was Tech. Sgt. Faith Evans, non-commissioned officer in charge of the Installation Support Operations Cell at the Air Force Services Center at

JBSA-Lackland and -Kelly Field.

This was her first time attending the symposium at JBSA-Lackland and the third time in her Air Force career. She has learned something new at each one and sees the training as essential.

"Everyone has different experiences in life and in the Air Force," Evans said. "Knowing the true nature and intent of the position of first sergeant, while learning how to better lead, makes attending the symposium a critical step before

being selected to fill the position."

The job of a first sergeant is a unique and challenging role. A first sergeant acts as a liaison for Airmen, leadership, and commanders, and has to maintain a base of knowledge that supports the constantly evolving needs of each tier.

"The best thing I can do to apply what I learned is to understand that no situation or Airman is the same," Evans said.

Whether advising the

commander or an Airman, Evans learned to treat each situation as a new one and ask questions, so that she is able to not only give "correct" advice but advice that is right for that person's individual situation.

"I was reminded that being a first sergeant is one of the hardest and most rewarding, assignments in the Air Force," she said. "I will ask to attend the symposium again in the future as the information is current, and the networking and support are irreplaceable."

59th MDW medics assist Honduran hospital

By Staff Sgt.
Amanda Stanford

12TH AIR FORCE (AIR FORCES
SOUTHERN) PUBLIC AFFAIRS

U.S. Air Force and Army military doctors were in Choluteca, Honduras, May 12-27, to assist the local hospital with urologic surgeries during Resolute Sentinel 21.

The exercise provides joint training and improved readiness for U.S. civil engineers, medical professionals and support personnel through humanitarian assistance activities in Honduras.

Essential surgeries were performed on pre-selected Honduran patients and the surgical readiness training exercise, or SURGRETE, team completed their nine days of surgeries at Hospital del Sur May 27.

During their time in Honduras, the team of Air Force and Army medics completed more than 40 surgeries, ranging from simple transurethral resections of the prostate, or TURP, to extensive kidney and gallbladder removals.

"It was very important to have the team here with us to assist with surgeries," said Maria Antonieta Castro, director at Hospital del Sur. "Our list of surgeries had gotten longer since COVID-19 and having the team here allowed us to conduct surgeries that these people really needed. Not only were we able to do the surgeries, but they were done with Honduran and American medical staff, which creates a union between communities and countries."

While the locals received long-awaited care, the medics were able to hone their skills on more invasive surgeries, keeping their deployment skills sharp.

"Surgeries like this don't happen in the U.S.," said Air Force Lt. Col. Necia Pope,



STAFF SGT. AMANDA STANFORD

U.S. Army Lt. Col. Andrew Mendedorp (left), the chief of urology at Tripler Army Medical Center, Honolulu, Hawaii, and U.S. Air Force Lt. Col. Necia Pope (right), a urologist with the 59th Medical Wing, Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, operate on a patient at Hospital del Sur in Choluteca, Honduras, May 21.

urologist with the 59th Medical Wing at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland. "We have different equipment, and in this environment where equipment is constrained, being able to figure out a way through surgery without the equipment you're used to is huge for readiness."

The SURGRETE has also been the training ground for two anesthesia residents from the 59th Medical Wing. The procedures and limited resources have offered an opportunity for the residents to learn skills that they wouldn't be able to gain in garrison.

The anesthesiologists attached to the team played a critical role in the life-changing surgeries being provided. Without anesthesia, surgeries would be longer operations and put the patients

under extreme stress.

While the surgeries had challenges, this was an opportunity for the anesthesia teams to hone their skills and expand their skillsets which sets them up for future deployments.

"When we work in garrison, we have additional doctors, technicians and machines available if something goes wrong," said U.S. Air Force Capt. Kimpreet Kaur, a 59th MDW anesthesiologist. "These limited conditions help prepare us for what we might see if we deploy downrange in the future, which in turn will help us save countless lives."

"The job of an anesthesiologist is simple: we make sure patients stay safe during the preoperative period from a cardiopulmonary perspective," said Air Force Maj. Dan Sehrt, an

anesthesiologist with the 70th Human Performance Wing, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio. "We accomplish this while doing our best to minimize their pain from some of the larger, more invasive surgeries."

"Missions like this provide an excellent opportunity to apply the residents' training in an environment different from what they experience at Brooke Army Medical Center," Sehrt added. "Our residents on this mission have done an excellent job being creative and operating independently. They've done this while using their clinical reasoning to navigate hurdles, due to a resource strained environment not seen in garrison."

"During this mission, our team of four staff and resident anesthesiologists have had to rely heavily on each other to

get through the surgeries safely and to overcome limited resources," said Air Force Capt. Courtney Hood, a 59th MDW anesthesia resident. "We have to walk into each surgery prepared to treat anything we encounter. This has taught me to be as prepared as possible for all my anesthetics, choose patients wisely, and consider the entire preoperative course in my management."

The SURGRETE team also learned important lessons that will help their patient care back in garrison and during deployed environments.

"Our experience working with the local surgeon taught us to work through situations that we hadn't yet encountered which will be extremely valuable in emergency situations back home and in the deployed environment," Pope said. "When we came here, I thought we would be helping the Hondurans, but I have been awed by the grace and kindness of the locals here. I am leaving here with a deeper respect and friendship with the Honduran people."

The team also headed home knowing they've changed the lives of every single patient they saw and the friendships they built.

"While there was an exchange of information, there was also a building of friendships, both personal and between countries," said Dr. Jose Maria Paguada Mungia, the Choluteca Regional Health Director. "That is the goal with this exercise. We thank you for what you did these past two weeks, and what we can hopefully continue to do together. We look forward to Resolute Sentinel 22, and the work that will be done in the future through these exercises."

Editor's Note: Staff Sgt. Amanda Stanford is assigned to 59th Medical Wing Public Affairs at JBSA-Lackland.

19th Air Force commander visits Alamo Wing



SENIOR AIRMAN BRITTANY WICH

Maj. Gen. Craig Wills (left), 19th Air Force commander, and Chief Master Sgt. Kristina Rogers (right), 19th AF command chief master sergeant, talk with Col. James C. "JC" Miller, 433rd Operations Group commander, in the cockpit of a C-5M Super Galaxy at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, Texas, May 21.

By Senior Airman Brittany Wich

433RD AIRLIFT WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The leadership of the 19th Air Force — Maj. Gen. Craig Wills, commander, and Command Chief Master Sgt. Kristina Rogers — visited the 433rd Airlift Wing and the 733rd Training Squadron at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland May 21.

The tour began with a mission brief from Col. Terry McClain, 433rd AW commander, followed by Wills' brief on the pilot training transformation initiative.

"The main point is that we need to continue to improve our training systems and tools to prepare our Airmen for the 21st-century fight," Wills said. "The pilot training system hasn't changed in decades and we're long overdue for a fresh look. We have the world's best Airmen and we owe them the world's best training."

Wills' visit allowed 733rd TRS Citizen Airmen to provide feedback about the initiative and ideas on how to train C-5M Super Galaxy pilots under the updated program. Lt. Col. Brandi

King, 733rd TRS director of operations, led an additional briefing on the C-5M pilot training breakdown.

"He came to learn about our mission, to discuss ways that we can work together to produce a very competent and confident C-5 pilot at the end of our formal training," King said.

Maj. Paul Lentz, 733rd TRS assistant director of operations, said it was an important opportunity to gain knowledge on previous shortcomings and learn alternative ideas for future growth.

"He came down and he offered ideas," said Maj. Paul Lentz, 733rd TRS assistant director of operations. "He offered partnerships and, if anything, just advice from somebody down the street who's done this before, and that was more than I could really ask for."

The visit also included a C-5M tour and a flight simulation experience.

"Chief Rogers and I really enjoyed our visit," Wills said. "The Airmen of the 433rd are clearly a motivated and professional team. It's always great to be surrounded by fired-up Airmen!"

DLIELC supports upcoming Puerto Rico Project Language

Defense Language Institute English Language Center

In 1975, the Defense Language Institute English Language Center began providing English-language training and cultural immersion to U.S. Army trainees who were permanent residents or U.S. citizens from English-as-a-second language communities.

Today, the United States Army Echo Company and DLIELC's legacy of training the military for success continues to inspire innovative approaches in how the U.S. Air Force recruits, trains, and develops its diverse force.

A year after the 10 enlisted U.S. Air Force trainees, dubbed Echo Flight, graduated from the beta test, DLIELC is ready to execute an immersive training program for 45 additional Air Force ROTC cadets from Puerto Rico and various CONUS locations.

This program — called Puerto Rico Project Language, or PRPL — will take place this month at Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama. The training aims to develop the necessary skills to pass the Air Force Officer's Qualifying Test, including the verbal skills and confidence needed to communicate during live training events.

"Both Puerto Rico Detachments have high STEM enrollment; highly recruited by industry and can easily choose a different career path. Yet, they chose to serve," said Lt. Col. Angelic Gonzalez, University of Puerto Rico-Mayaguez AFROTC Detachment 756 commander. "They stay in the AFROTC program because they know what it means to take the oath because of the Air Force Core Values.

"Cadets will face four years of obstacles in the hopes of meeting the Verbal/English Air Force standards to earn a commission in the U.S. Air Force/U.S. Space Force."



COURTESY PHOTO

Cadet Alondra Hernandez takes aim during field training in 2020 as part of the Air Force ROTC Detachment 756 program at the University of Puerto Rico-Mayaguez.

Alongside its partners at the Jeanne M. Holm Center, DLIELC stands poised to prove the English language is not a barrier to joining the U.S. Air Force.

"The PRPL program provides an opportunity to deliver these cadets the tools to meet those standards — it gives them hope. In return, the Air Force will receive leaders who are not only bilingual but also culturally attuned to be able to work effectively with our partner nations. Officers who are diverse in

thought also bring new ideas, innovation, and new ways of modernization," Gonzalez added.

The five instructors selected from DLIELC's permanent cadre of language training professionals will deploy with tailored curriculum that will allow participants to develop and refine skills quickly and efficiently so that they can continue on at field training, all the while meeting the milestones of their accessions timelines.

Alamo Wing welcomes Air Force Reserve Command inspectors

By Senior Airman Brittany Welch

433RD AIRLIFT WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The 433rd Airlift Wing anticipated the arrival of Air Force Reserve Command inspectors for the unit effectiveness inspection, also known as the capstone, at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland June 3-7.

The UEIs are maintained on a 24-36 month cycle, which evaluates all areas of the wing and gives program managers the ability to ask for help and generate new ideas for shortcomings.

Lt. Col. Fred McMahon, 433rd AW Inspector General of Inspections director, whose role during the UEI is to monitor and provide training and assistance to the unit, discussed the purpose of the inspection.



COURTESY GRAPHIC

The purpose of the UEI is "... to verify we are doing our mission safely, correctly and effectively," McMahon said.

According to McMahon, the efficient way to approach the inspection is for program managers is, to be honest about shortcomings and offer solutions to fix the problem or request a waiver to generate new methods to improve the unit.

"As IGI, we are facilitators; we're hoping the plan is no preparation," said McMahon. "It should be business as normal so if there is any last-minute prepping, it's kind of a waste of their time because they have already been looking at us. They have already seen our weak spots and strengths long before they even get here."

McMahon said the UEI is

continuous; as one inspection cycle closes, the next one starts.

Before the in-person visit, the inspectors are able to review an electronic data set on the Management Internal Control Toolset program. This program allows program managers the ability to upload their data and findings regularly for the purpose of tracking effectiveness within the unit.

Inspectors visit in-person, areas of the unit that they were unable to examine online or had further questions for the program manager.

McMahon said there will be an open forum with one-on-one and group sessions members can give feedback to inspectors for the improvement of the unit.

January 2018 was the last inspection for the unit.

Four-legged students to train in new 'classroom' designed for explosive detection

By Christa D'Andrea

37TH TRAINING WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Canines enrolled in the Military Working Dog training program here now get to put their skills to the test in a new "classroom" designed specifically for explosive or narcotics detection training.

The 9,000-square-foot MWD lab officially opened its doors May 3. This is the first new training lab the 341st Training Squadron has received since 2007 and is the first of six additional labs to be constructed over the next few years.

"The mission has grown over the years and we are working to continue infrastructure enhancements to modernize our training environment for our canines and handlers," said Maj. Tate Grogan, 341st TRS Director of Operations.

The new lab will reduce the deficient space issues the mission has experienced since its growth, Grogan added.

The MWD lab is designed to look like an office or dormitory building



MAXINE ABABA

Lt. Col. Matthew Kowalski (left), 341st Training Squadron commander; Brig. Gen. Roy Collins (center), Director of Security Forces for the Air Force; Dakota Riddle (right), 341st TRS dog handler; and K-9, Rambo, "cut" the ribbon for the opening of the new Military Working Dog lab at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland May 3.

with long hallways and multiple rooms equipped with furniture to create a realistic setting in which the dogs can train. Training substances will be planted throughout the lab and instructors can observe the training from the elevated catwalk area.

The canines aren't the only students to benefit from this new lab. Canine handlers will also gain experience and knowledge while training their dogs.

The 341st TRS executes the training of military working dogs, handlers, trainers and kennel masters for the Department of Defense. Handlers from all the military services train here.

While it takes approximately six months to train an MWD in the art of explosives and narcotics detection, an Airman, Soldier, Sailor or Marine learn to become a handler in about 11 weeks. Dogs are trained in either detection or patrol in order to detect unsafe or illegal substances, like explosives or narcotics, and also search for and apprehend aggressors. There are approximately 800 canines in various stages of training at the MWD schoolhouse.

AFIMSC releases diversity survey results taken by global members

By Joe Bela

AIR FORCE INSTALLATION AND MISSION
SUPPORT CENTER PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Air Force Installation and Mission Support Center leaders recently released results of the AFIMSC section of the Air Force Materiel Command Diversity and Inclusion Survey conducted late last year.

Nearly 900 members from across the worldwide AFIMSC enterprise took the survey for a 26% response rate.

Aggregate data from the report confirms a significant organizational commitment to diversity and inclusion with no major areas of concern. However, results indicate a disparity in awareness of D&I initiatives and positive climate perceptions among differing supervisory levels, with those at lower ranks and grades viewing command efforts less favorably.

Consequently, D&I program officials expressed a need for additional

emphasis in the following areas:

- » Raising awareness of current Air Force and Air Force Materiel Command diversity activities;
- » Increasing participation in sensing sessions by emphasizing their value;
- » Developing awareness of personal psychological safety when discussing sensitive topics like backgrounds and experiences;
- » Communicating leadership actions following identification of concerns;
- » Providing more transparency in hiring practices and promotions; and
- » Communicating the process the command follows to allay the fear of retaliation and reprisal for those who report discrimination or other illegal personnel practices.

"Achieving diversity and inclusion is about having an open dialogue amongst ourselves — at every level of our organization," said AFIMSC Commander Maj. Gen. Tom Wilcox. "Let's talk about those sensitive topics.

Some of us may be reluctant or afraid at first, but let's do it and learn from one another. We need to listen with an open mind as respected and valued members of our enterprise. As I've said in the past, ultimately, this is about becoming a better team by building lasting and meaningful trust relationships. Our focus is to make AFIMSC a better place for everyone."

As a result of the survey, the AFIMSC D&I Council is developing action plans to enhance education and training across the enterprise.

"We've identified some areas for improvement, particularly with sensing sessions," said Robert Jackson, director of personnel, who oversees AFIMSC D&I efforts. "Our emphasis on sensing sessions requires us to address psychological safety when discussing our own backgrounds and experiences in a diverse group setting. Although we encourage free and open communication, we know now we need

to shape the sessions and better define them."

The survey helped determine a baseline for D&I perceptions across AFMC, with future assessments planned to evaluate progress and further diversity, equity and inclusion across the command. More than 14,000 military and civilian Airmen in AFMC responded to the survey, which ran from Nov. 30-Dec. 21, 2020. Participants provided more than 3,500 comments in response to the open-ended section.

According to AFMC officials, information gathered will be used to adjust some of the command's ongoing activities, including modifying the communication strategy to target those who may not be aware of the efforts and to encourage increased engagement by first-line supervisors.

For up-to-date information on AFMC diversity and inclusion efforts, visit <https://www.afmc.af.mil/About-US/Featured-Topics/Diversity/>.

RANDOLPH

502nd ABW conducts Major Accident Response Exercise

502nd Air Base Wing
Public Affairs

The 502nd Air Base Wing conducted a Major Accident Response Exercise May 26 in order to test and validate the 502nd ABW and Joint Base San Antonio mission partners' ability to accurately assess and quickly respond to a simulated on-base aircraft crash.

The exercise include the simulated crash of a 12th Flying Training Wing T-6A Texan II aircraft near the west runway at JBSA-Randolph.

In the exercise, one pilot was killed and another was transported to San Antonio Military Medical Center for treatment.

The primary objective of the exercise was to assess Team JBSA's Disaster Response Forces at JBSA-Randolph, the Emergency Operations Center at JBSA-Lackland, and the Crisis Action Team at JBSA-Fort Sam Houston.



A pilot posing as a crash victim from a simulated T-6 Texan accident is being prepared to be moved during the 502nd Air Base Wing's Major Accident Response Exercise May 26 at Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph.

AIRMAN 1ST CLASS TYLER MCQUISTON



SEAN M. WORRELL

Tech. Sgt. Cristina Salinas, 902nd Security Forces Squadron, radios the status of the scene after arriving at a simulated T-6 Texan accident during the 502nd Air Base Wing's Major Accident Response Exercise May 26 at Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph.



SEAN M. WORRELL

Officer Richard Coon, 902nd Security Forces Squadron, coordinates security forces support at the scene of a simulated T-6 Texan accident during the 502nd Air Base Wing's Major Accident Response Exercise May 26 at Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph. MAREs are used to assess Joint Base San Antonio's ability to respond to on-base aircraft incidents.



SEAN M. WORRELL

John Vasquez (right) and Tech. Sgt. Taylor Hydrick, 902nd Civil Engineering Squadron firefighters, use a firetruck hose to put out a simulated T-6 Texan accident during the 502nd Air Base Wing's Major Accident Response Exercise May 26 at Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph.

Top AETC mentors offer advice on growing from good to great

By Miriam A. Thurber

AIR EDUCATION AND TRAINING COMMAND
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force JoAnne S. Bass, along with other senior enlisted leaders, spoke to more than 700 virtual attendees during AETC's Good to Great through Personal Perspectives, a Panel of Mentors event May 25.

The panel, sponsored by AETC, also featured Chief Master Sgt. Erik C. Thompson, AETC command chief, alongside Chief Master Sgts. Keith Castille and Stefan Blazier from Headquarters, Air Force AID, and addressed the importance of good mentors and what it means to go from good to great, both personally and professionally.

"Encourage those around you and push each other to be better — that's when greatness happens," Bass said. "In order to excel as an Airman, you need to surround yourself with growth-oriented people and become one yourself."

According to Bass, this kind of peer-to-peer, circular mentorship helps Airmen remain in a receiving posture, open to constructive criticism from anyone, and focused on becoming the

FROM GOOD TO GREAT THROUGH PERSONAL PERSPECTIVES: a panel of mentors



COURTESY GRAPHIC

Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force JoAnne S. Bass, along with other senior enlisted leaders, spoke to more than 700 virtual attendees during AETC's Good to Great through Personal Perspectives, a Panel of Mentors event May 25.

best versions of themselves.

"Chief Bass helped me realize I have very low emotional intelligence, so I work really hard to ask questions and be more empathetic," Thompson said. "Understand what you're not good at and specifically try to stretch those muscles."

The panel recommended finding a

formal or informal mentor who excels where you need growth and will offer honest advice. Thompson recommends once you identify someone, confirm that they have a desire to mentor, will make themselves readily available through frequent communication and are in it for your success. For Bass, many of her mentors were informal, but still had a

lasting impact on her.

"It takes a village, we always need to focus on how to become better, how to inspire the people around us towards greatness," Bass said. "Good leaders help others get better at work, great leaders help others get better at life."

Each of the panelists stressed the importance of holistic care for yourself and others. They encouraged Airmen to take ownership in their role as a teammate and, no matter their rank, to support their colleagues towards greatness.

"We have got to make sure we're reaching out and taking care of each other," Thompson said. "Don't be afraid to look your coworker in the eye and ask the hard question 'how are you doing?'"

Those interested in finding a mentor are encouraged to utilize the Air Force mentoring tool, MyVector, when formally selecting a mentor. On MyVector, mentees will be able to, in real-time, invite participants to serve as mentors, select mentors based on preferences, chat with their mentor online, and complete a mentoring plan. Additionally on MyVector, mentees can find the Air Force competencies, a tool for self-development.

AFRC launches Digital Age Resiliency tool on AF Connect

By Jessica Dupree

AIR FORCE RESERVE COMMAND
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Reserve Citizen Airmen are now able to access Developing Resilient Leader, or DRL, content on demand on any device from one easy-to-access location on the Air Force Connect app.

The DRL Digital Age Learning Content Wall of the Air Force Reserve Command's AF Connect page was designed to be an easy-to-access and user-friendly hub for DRL-related information, documents and links. The content will provide resiliency material for AFRC's 74,000 Airmen, with new content added on a scheduled basis for commanders to use and present as needed.

DRL was the main focus of AFRC's Executive Steering

Group this past March and is one of Lt. Gen. Richard Scobee's main priorities.

"When I was asked to come on board and help the Digital Age Learning team bring their DRL vision to AF Connect, I knew I was the person for the job," said Jamal Sutter, 413th Flight Test Group public affairs specialist. "The AF Connect platform is a great tool to present information to our Airmen. I just wanted to make sure I could take full advantage of AF Connect's capabilities and create a DRL space that was visually pleasing, easy to navigate and, of course, useful."

The DRL Digital Age Learning Content wall has content broken down into four categories: Digital Force Protection, Unclassified Intelligence, Lead Yourself First and Leadership Development. This will provide Airmen with

the resources to develop all facets of leadership and resiliency both professionally and personally.

This new content delivery system is the result of AFRC's Digital Age Learning team led by Brig. Gen. Tanya R. Kubinec, Mobilization Assistant to the Commander, with a cross functional team from the Manpower, Personnel and Services directorate (A1) and about 50 experts from across the command to help her carry out the strategy for growing resilient Reserve leaders at all levels.

"We've centered our strategy around two main goals — Educate and Engage," Kubinec said during a recent interview. "Our focus is on promoting both professional and personal resilience for all of our Airmen and their families, with a special emphasis on resilience

in the digital age."

The new app is just one step to build resilience in the digital age. Various digital learning resources and content geared for Reserve Citizen Airmen is hosted on the new DRL feature in the AF Connect App.

"Though I had my hand in creating the end product, all the hard work was done by the Digital Age Learning team," Sutter said. "They are the ones who spent months implementing the program's structure and compiling all of the information and material."

To install the Air Force Connect app, simply visit your device's app store and search for "Air Force Connect", then follow these four easy steps to add AFRC to your favorites:

- » Open the favorites tab in the lower right-hand corner
- » Search for "Air Force Reserve Command"

» Click the add button

» Exit out of the favorites tab and swipe left from the USAF Connect home screen to navigate to the AFRC homepage

» Then click on the DRL button to explore the new digital age learning features

To stay up to date on the most current information and events in the command, click the notifications tab on the AFRC homepage, and enable push notifications in your device's app settings.

AF Connect users can "favorite" up to 10 organizations, and utilize other functions such as the built-in physical fitness test calculator, phone directories, and access to Common Access Card-enabled sites like the Advanced Distance Learning System and the Defense Travel System using a mobile CAC reader.

340th FTG IT team earns 'On the Spot Award' recognition

By Tim Gantner

340TH FLYING TRAINING GROUP PUBLIC AFFAIRS

There's a one-two punch for the 340th Flying Training Group.

It all started when Master Sgt. Melissa Klinksiek overheard Master Sgt. Christian Delgado having a conversation about providing communication support for the commanders' summit.

"I happened to hear the phone call, and I let him know my spouse lives in the area, and I can assist with setting up," Klinksiek said.

Klinksiek and Delgado are the hidden assets that run the 340th FTG communications mission. Unlike other years, their expertise would be at the forefront of this year's summit.

The commanders' summit took place in Fredericksburg, Texas, at the Hangar Hotel, April 19 and 20. The summit happens twice a year, but due to COVID-19, guest briefers could not attend. Klinksiek and Delgado stepped into the spotlight, determined to provide the correct video capabilities for the summit.

"Melissa and Christian knocked it out of the park," said Col. Brent Drown. "We've had video conferencing capability in the building forever, but



COURTESY GRAPHIC

Master Sgt. Christian Delgado and Master Sgt. Melissa Klinksiek, 340th Flying Training Group information technology team, were named the group On the Spot award winners for May 2021.

for the first time ever, to go off station and make that capability possible is greatly appreciated."

The commanders' summit brings together leaders and senior staff members from the group headquarters and all seven squadrons to discuss concerns and share notes; it's an opportunity to get out of their bubbles and come together to plan for the bigger picture, Drown explained.

The IT duo teamed up on Sunday, April 18, to set up video equipment, tested all the connections, and

ensured communication would not be hindered.

Delgado said they were still uncertain if there would be issues on the first day. "Klinksiek volunteered to be there and provide communication support, which allowed me to support the members at the office building."

The biggest challenge facing the communications team was the internet connection at the Hangar hotel, but they set up redundant systems to keep everything running like magic. Their hard work paid off, and the summit didn't experience technical issues. As a result of their go-get-the-job-done attitude, the summit was a success.

"We just do our jobs every day; it's nice to get recognized," Klinksiek said.

"Providing the support needed to accomplish the mission makes me feel like I'm out on the front lines," Delgado added.

The "On the Spot Award" is presented to highlight exceptional performance. Klinksiek's and Delgado's complete communication mastery and laser-like focus ensured guest briefers and other invitees could attend without issue. The evidence of success is irrefutable. Despite the pandemic and coordinating at multiple locations, the IT team was recognized for their contributions to the group.

Airman's Foundational Competencies: An Air Force Initiative

By Jennifer Gonzalez

AIR EDUCATION AND TRAINING COMMAND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

In the latest episode of The Air Force Starts Here podcast, we explore the Airman's Foundational Competencies.

The Air Force has identified 24 Airman's foundational competencies for all Airmen, as part of a systematic competency-based approach to develop the force.

"These foundational competencies can only be foundational if they apply to every single Airman and that's from E1 to O10 and from the most junior wage grade member to the most senior SES grade civilian," said Col. Mark Coggins, competencies division chief. "They must apply to every Airman regardless of where they work, wherever an Airman finds themselves those foundational competencies are identified as relevant and significant."

These foundational competencies are universally applicable to all Airmen and are categorized into four groups: Developing Self, Developing Others, Developing Ideas and Developing Organizations.

In episode 51 of "The Air Force Starts Here" podcast, we speak with Coggins and Maj. Gen. William Spangenthal, Air Education and Training Command deputy commander, about the first category of developing self.

"All of the categories under the Airman's Foundational Competencies are all importing, but Developing Self is one where your individual drive can go a long way," Spangenthal said. "If we do not become lifelong learners, if we don't continue to improve

ourselves we are going to struggle and it is that drive that we see in our Airmen that helps make us the best in the world."

Developing self includes the following foundational competencies:

- ▶ Accountability is when an Airman demonstrates reliability and honesty; takes responsibility for actions and possesses behaviors of self and team.
- ▶ Perseverance is when an Airman displays grit in accomplishment of difficult long-term goals.
- ▶ Communication means an Airman effectively presents, promotes and prioritizes various ideas and issues both verbally and non-verbally through active listening, clear messaging and by tailoring information to the appropriate audience.
- ▶ Decision Making is about making well-informed, effective and timely decisions that weigh situational constraints, risks and benefits.
- ▶ Information Seeking Airmen demonstrate an underlying curiosity; desire to know more about things, people, one's self, the mission or issues; an eager, aggressive learner. Information seeking requires personal initiative.
- ▶ Flexibility describes an Airman who adapts to and works with a variety of situations, individuals or groups effectively.
- ▶ Resilience means an Airman negotiates, manages and adapts to significant sources of stress or trauma.
- ▶ Initiative is doing more than is required or expected to improve job results. Initiative as a foundational competency means an Airman takes action appropriately without being prompted. With initiative,

an Airman strives to do a better job and thinks of creative ways to complete the job.

▶ Self-Control means keeping emotions under control and restraining negative actions when under stress. Self-control begins with emotional intelligence by knowing how to identify our own emotions and respond positively. Knowing what to do if you feel frustrated, angry, overwhelmed, anxious and sad is valuable for positive outcomes.

Understanding where an Airman scores on individual Foundational Competencies will help an Airman take ownership of his or her development.

Airmen who want more information on the Airman's Foundational Competencies and to participate in a self-assessment can log in to MyVector and select Air Force Competencies from the main menu.

The myVector competency assessment tool also allows Airmen to request feedback from their supervisors and/or 360-degree feedback from subordinates, peers and higher-ranking members. Also, the member is provided links to educational resources to address areas for improvement.

You can stream The Air Force Starts Here Podcast at:

- ▶ Apple podcasts: <https://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/developing-mach-21-airmen/id451609095>
- ▶ Google Play: https://play.google.com/music/m/Im6uewr45nczxt404xzucvucgpi?t=The_Air_Force_Starts_Here
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