

JBSA LEGACY

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JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO

AUGUST 6, 2021



SENIOR AIRMAN TYLER MCQUISTON

U. S. Air Force Capt. Nathan Raymond, an instructor pilot assigned to the 435th Fighter Training Squadron, drinks water from a smart water bottle before a flight, July 14 at Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph. This water bottle pairs directly with a mobile app that tracks the daily recommended amount of water and keeps users on track.

435th FTS pilots test new wearable technology

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Distinguished Army veteran, veterinarian celebrates 100 years

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Masks required
in all DoD
facilities



JBSA implements HPCON
BRAVO PLUS, updates
mask mandate

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Senate confirms Frank Kendall as newest Air Force Secretary

By Charles Pope

SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Frank Kendall won confirmation from the Senate July 26 to be the 26th Secretary of the Air Force, placing an official with decades-long service in defense issues in the top civilian job at a time when the department is navigating new global challenges and wide-reaching modernization efforts.

The vote reflected both Kendall's well-known record in previous active duty and policy jobs and his philosophy for leading the Department of the Air Force.

With his confirmation, Kendall will be able to more fully articulate his priorities and policy preferences for how best to position the Air and Space Forces to contend with China, Russia and other strategic competitors, as well as continue to modernize the force and adapt to budget pressures.

The broad strokes, however, are already known.

"If confirmed, my priorities would be straightforward and mirror precisely those articulated by Secretary of Defense (Lloyd) Austin as they apply to the Department of the Air Force — taking care of our people, mission performance and building teams. Our military is people first and foremost," Kendall told the Senate Armed Services Committee during his confirmation hearing May 25.

"With regard to mission performance, I believe the range and severity of the threats that we face and will face, the rapid pace of technological innovation, and the need to rapidly harness that technology in new operational concepts demand a sense of



COURTESY PHOTO

Frank Kendall was confirmed by the Senate to be the next top civilian to lead the U.S. Air Force.

urgency and a like focus on getting our choices right," he said during that hearing.

Kendall also committed during his confirmation hearing that he would ensure the U.S. Space Force's continued growth and evolution.

The two-year-old Space Force, Kendall said in May, is "a critical contributor to our national security. If confirmed, I'll be honored to have a role in making it a success."

While the Senate's action marks the first time Kendall will work directly within the Department of the Air Force, he is hardly unfamiliar with the mission, the Department of

the Defense and national security.

He previously served in a number of senior positions for the Department of Defense, including as the Pentagon's No. 3 official for four years during the Obama administration.

Kendall assumes the seat occupied by John Roth, who has served as Acting Air Force Secretary since Jan. 20.

A graduate of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, New York, Kendall served to years on active duty in the Army, a tenure that also included a stint teaching engineering at West Point. Kendall spent time in the Pentagon as director of the

"With regard to mission performance, I believe the range and severity of the threats that we face and will face, the rapid pace of technological innovation, and the need to rapidly harness that technology in new operational concepts demand a sense of urgency and a like focus on getting our choices right."

**Frank Kendall,
Air Force Secretary**

tactical warfare program before moving to become assistant deputy undersecretary for Strategic Defense Systems. Kendall also worked in the private sector in defense-related jobs, most notably as Raytheon's vice president of engineering during the mid-1990s.

In addition to graduating from West Point, Kendall earned a master's degree in aerospace engineering from The California Institute of Technology. He earned his law degree from Georgetown University Law Center as well as an MBA from C.W. Post Campus of Long Island University.

JBSA LEGACY

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**SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS 78297
210-250-2052**

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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: Why don't the pharmacies publish when they will be down in temporary situations, e.g., when there's a "stand down" or they are having unannounced training or technical issues?

Many people, including retirees and others, drive in from off base, sometimes over long distances just to get refills or prescriptions.

This is really unacceptable and whoever manages the communications for the JBSA-Randolph pharmacy should be removed. I hate spending time away from work, let alone wasted time.

Thanks for letting me vent, but this is not the first time this has happened.

A: Pharmacies announce their closures on the 59th Medical Wing Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/59mdw>. Additional information can also be found at <https://www.jbsa.mil/Resources/Medical/JBSA-Pharmacies/>.

We are always looking for ways to continue to improve communication efforts, so if you have an idea, please feel free to let us know!

Q: Will Basic Military Training graduations be canceled again due to the rising number of COVID-19 cases in the San Antonio community?

My son is due to graduate from



COURTESY GRAPHIC

Basic Military Training in a couple of weeks, and I would hate to miss this milestone in his life. I know that any decision made is for the safety of your Airmen and as a proud parent, I appreciate that very much.

A: Currently, there are no plans to have the Basic Military Training graduations canceled, but we will continue to have minimal guest invites with required

vaccinations and mask wear.

We will also continue to virtually stream Basic Military Training graduation ceremonies on Thursdays at 9 a.m.

To view BMT graduations visit the USAF Basic Military Training Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/USAFBMTT> or the Joint Base San Antonio Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/JointBaseSanAntonio>.

Express Scripts mobile app makes for more convenient Rx service

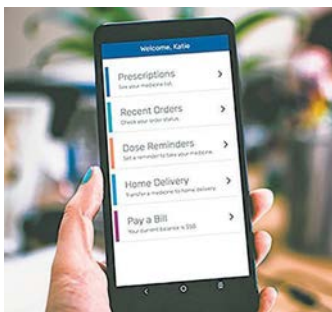
By TRICARE Communications

Looking for an easier way to manage your prescriptions? Tired of waiting at a pharmacy to pick up your medications? The Express Scripts mobile app can help you access your TRICARE pharmacy benefit and securely manage the medicine you take.

"The mobile app is convenient, accessible, and simple for you to use," said U.S. Public Health Service Cmdr. Teisha Robertson, a pharmacist with the Pharmacy Operations Division at the Defense Health Agency. "It's like a pharmacy-on-the-go. It lets TRICARE beneficiaries refill and track their prescriptions anytime and anywhere."

The mobile app is free and people can visit the Apple App Store or Google Play Store to download it.

To get started, log in to the app with your TRICARE Express Scripts username and password. If you don't have an account, you can register for



MILITARY HEALTH SYSTEM

The Express Scripts mobile app can help TRICARE clients access their TRICARE pharmacy benefit and securely manage medicines.

one. Once you've signed in on your phone, you can use the app to:

► **Order prescriptions.** You can view which prescriptions are due for refill or renewal, and reorder medications. If you have any

questions about your order, you can connect with a pharmacist 24/7.

► **Track orders.** You can track your current order's estimated ship date and then track the order in transit.

► **Set up automatic refills.** If your medications are eligible, you can set up and manage automatic refills through the app. Express Scripts will refill and ship prescriptions when 25% of your current prescription is remaining. That way, you never run out of medication.

► **Pay bills.** You can make secure payments from the mobile app. The app will show your current balance on your account. You have several payment options as well as the option to set up automatic payments.

► **Manage medications.** You can set dose reminders that alert you to take your medication. This will help you stick to a steady routine and be less likely to miss a pill.

► **Move prescriptions to home delivery.** If you have an existing prescription at a military or retail

network pharmacy, you may be able to request home delivery. You can see which medications are eligible for home delivery within the mobile app.

As stated in the TRICARE Pharmacy Program Overview, you can get up to a 90-day supply of most medications mailed to you for the applicable copayment with free standard shipping with home delivery. You can also see if your medication is covered through home delivery by using the TRICARE Formulary Search Tool. Keep in mind, some limits on home delivery may apply overseas.

Do you have questions about your pharmacy benefit or prescription costs? Be sure to check out the TRICARE Pharmacy Program Handbook and TRICARE Costs and Fees Sheet.

Take command of your TRICARE pharmacy benefit. Download the Express Scripts mobile app today for an easy way to manage your prescriptions.

Courses, resources available to help JBSA members deal with financial stress

By David DeKunder

502ND AIR BASE WING
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Editor's note: This article is the third and final in a series of articles being published to mark Social Wellness Month.

At some point during their service or careers, Joint Base San Antonio members may experience the effects of financial stress on their budgets.

According to The Balance, a personal finance website, there are several causes for financial stress that can affect individuals and families, including being in debt, not earning enough money, the expense of raising a family or having a spouse who isn't good at managing money.

Alma Guivas, JBSA-Fort Sam Houston Military & Family Readiness Center work life consultant, said the well-being of individuals and families is tied to their finances.

"Money is very emotional," Guivas said. "It's tied to stress; it's tied to happiness."

Fortunately, Guivas said, there are resources and classes available at JBSA Military & Family Readiness Centers, or M&FRCs, for active duty, military family members and government civilians on financial topics focused on budgeting, savings, investing and other financial subjects which can help them to avoid the pitfalls of financial stress on their budgets.

"One great way to help lower and manage the feelings of worry to our military is to have them receive that financial literacy education information from our military resources," Guivas said.

Financial classes offered at M&FRCs include how to create and maintain a budget

and spending plan, debt and credit management, savings, investments and retirement. A monthly schedule and information on these courses is posted on the JBSA M&FRC website at <https://www.jbsa.mil/Resources/Military-Family-Readiness/>, by clicking on the calendar of events.

Guivas said the classes offered instruct JBSA members about the basics of finance, including budgeting, savings, how to be proactive with money, helping them to prepare for unexpected expenses, such as if a vehicle needs to be repaired or medical bills.

Besides classes, Guivas said JBSA members have the option of meeting a financial counselor or consultant to discuss their financial needs on a confidential one-on-one basis or through a referral by their commander or

supervisor.

"When we do a budget class with them, we're creating a budget together," Guivas said. "We're showing them where they can save and by how saving this much and putting it away in savings, that's going to alleviate that stress if something unexpected comes."

"Maintaining and creating that budget and being aware of it is going to relieve you of a lot of that stress that comes from worrying," she added. "What if something happens, will I have the money? Those unexpected expenses, are they going to be covered?"

In addition, JBSA M&FRCs offer specialty courses in managing finances for couples who are or about to get married and/or having a child, individuals who are divorced, consumer protection and for buying a vehicle or home.

There are also courses in which JBSA members learn

how they can get the most out of their money if they are promoted, or their options for utilizing funds from their Thrift Savings Plan or Social Security when they are ready to retire.

Guivas said Social Wellness Month is a good time for active duty, military family members and government civilians to take a look at their finances to see where they are at.

But, Guivas said, keeping track, reviewing their finances and gaining additional financial skills is something JBSA members should do year around.

"I advise our couples when they come in here and do a budget together. I always tells them this is not the end," Guivas said. "I always recommend to come back and see a JBSA financial consultant or counselor, see where you are at, what you can improve on and what you

have improved on."

She said it's important for individuals and couples to save as much as they can throughout the year, even saving as much as \$5 per paycheck can help in building up a savings plan.

The status of a service member's finances can even determine whether or not they are granted a security clearance, Guivas said. She said a M&FRC financial counselor or consultant can provide guidance and advice to an active duty member in helping to get their clearance re-instated if it has been revoked because of their finances.

For more information on financial courses and resources provided at JBSA, contact M&FRCs at JBSA-Fort Sam Houston, 210-221-2705; JBSA-Lackland, 210-671-3722; or JBSA-Randolph, 210-652-5321.



COURTESY GRAPHIC

Fires involving smoking materials are preventable

By **Jessie R. Moreno**

902ND CES FIRE PROTECTION INSPECTOR

Home is the place where we are supposed to feel the safest. However, home is where most structure fires, deaths, and injuries due to smoking materials occur.

In fact, smoking materials are the leading cause of fire deaths. These fires are preventable.

According to the National Fire Protection Association, or NFPA, from 2021 to 2016, an estimated annual average of 18,100 (5%) reported home structure fires started by smoking materials, including cigarettes, pipes, and cigars, killed an average of 590 (23%) people annually, injured 1,130 (10%) per year, and caused \$476 million in direct property damage (7%) per year.

One in 20 home (5%) home structure fires were started by smoking materials. These fires caused almost one in four (23%) home fire deaths, and one in 10 (10%) home fire injuries.

Smoking was the leading cause of home fire deaths for the five-year period of 2012-2016. Overall, one of every 31 home smoking material fires resulted in death.

The leading area of origin for home smoking fires in 2012-2016 was an exterior balcony or open porch (18%).

Forty-three percent of the deaths were caused by fires that started in the living room. One-third (34%) were caused by fires that began in the bedroom.

The NFPA has developed a number of safety tips to hopefully reduce these tragic numbers:

Smoking safety

- » If you smoke, use only fire-safe cigarettes.
- » If you smoke, smoke outside. Most deaths result from fires that started in living rooms, family rooms, dens and bedrooms.
- » Keep cigarettes, lighters, matches, and other smoking materials out of the reach of children or in a locked cabinet.
- » Never smoke in bed.
- » Be alert. Do not smoke after taking medicine that makes you drowsy and tired.

Put it out

- » Use deep sturdy ashtrays. Place it away from anything that can burn.

» Do not discard cigarettes in vegetation such as mulch, potted plants or landscape, peat moss, dried grasses, leaves or other things that could ignite easily.

» Before you throw away butts and ashes make sure they are out. Also, dousing in water or sand is the best way to ensure that they are, in fact, completely out.

Smoking and medical oxygen

- » Never allow anyone to smoke where medical oxygen is used.
- » Medical oxygen can cause materials to ignite more easily and make fires burn at a faster rate than normal. It can make an existing fire burn faster and hotter.

Electronic cigarettes

- » Fires have occurred while e-cigarettes were being used, the battery was being charged, or the device was being transported.
- » Battery failures have led to small explosions.
- » Never leave charging e-cigarettes unattended.
- » Of the 15 e-cigarette incidents reported in 2015, 13 were described as explosions and two as ignitions. Five incidents resulted in fires, three of which occurred while users were in the act of smoking and two while batteries were being charged. Twelve incidents resulted in injuries requiring medical treatment.

Facts

- » The risk of dying in a home structure fire caused by smoking materials rises with age.
- » One out of four fatal victims of smoking material fires is not the smoker whose cigarette started the fire.

For more information about smoking and home fire safety, visit the NFPA website at www.nfpa.org/education or contact the fire prevention offices at JBSA-Fort Sam Houston at 210-221-2727, at JBSA-Lackland at 210-671-2921, or at JBSA-Randolph at 210-652-6915.

Editor's note: Information contained in this article was reproduced in whole or part from www.nfpa.org.



COVID-19: Masks and HPCON Bravo Plus

This comes from the 29 July 2021 memorandum: JBSA COVID-19 Guidance Memorandum #57 – Implementation HPCON Bravo Plus and Categorical Exception to Guidance on Use of Masks, signed by Brig Gen Miller, Commander 502 ABW, JBSA



DoD is requiring all service members, federal employees, onsite contractor employees and visitors, regardless of vaccination status, to wear a mask indoors on installations and in facilities owned, leased or otherwise controlled by the DoD.



Beginning July 30, 2021 Joint Base San Antonio will transition to Health Protection Condition (HPCON) BRAVO PLUS. Our current trends meet the Department of Defense criteria for implementing this HPCON increase, based on JBSA reported increases in daily case rate and in the 14-day positivity at our Military Medical Treatment Facilities as well as a review of the Bexar County Hospital Stress Score. The intent of this change is to protect our community and prevent further spread of COVID-19

<https://www.jbsa.mil/coronavirus/>

COURTESY GRAPHIC

JBSA officials have announced the implementation of Health Protection Condition BRAVO PLUS measures beginning July 30, 2021, and updated the installation mask wear policy. According to JBSA Guidance Memo No. 57, effective immediately, individuals are required to wear masks when indoors on federal installations regardless of vaccination status.

JBSA implements HPCON BRAVO PLUS, updates mask mandate

By Steve Elliott

502ND AIR BASE WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Officials at JBSA implemented Health Protection Condition BRAVO PLUS July 30 and updated the installation mask wear policy.

According to JBSA Guidance Memo No. 57, effective immediately, individuals are required to wear masks when indoors on federal installations regardless of vaccination status.

"We must minimize spread of COVID-19 to avoid reversing the trends and gains we have made," said Brig. Gen. Caroline Miller, 502d Air Base Wing and Joint Base San Antonio commander. "We all must do our part to implement public health recommendations that include physical distancing, wearing face masks, practicing good hand washing, and taking appropriate actions if

feeling sick."

The recent change in policy aligns with a directive issued by the Office of the Secretary of Defense requiring individuals in areas of substantial or high community transmission to don masks, regardless of vaccination status.

The updated mask-wear requirement applies to all service members, federal employees, onsite contractor employees and visitors. The OSD memorandum further states that service members, federal employees, onsite contractor employees, and visitors who are not fully vaccinated must continue to physically distance consistent with applicable CDC and DOD Force Health Protection guidance.

JBSA officials continue to emphasize the need for compliance with public health precautions in accordance with established city, state, and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

guidelines and limits.

According to local health officials, getting the COVID-19 vaccination is still the best weapon against the virus. As COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations surge there is greater risk of fatalities as well as an increased probability additional variants could emerge as the SARS-CoV-2 virus mutates, officials state.

Vaccines are available at all San Antonio Market health care facilities. Beneficiaries can book an appointment, including same-day appointments, by visiting TRICARE Online, <https://www.tricareonline.com>, or by calling CAMO during duty hours at 210-916-9900. Due to COVID-19 safety precautions, only patients receiving a vaccine may enter the clinic, with the exception of patients under age 18, who must be accompanied by their legal guardians.

All DOD personnel should continue

to comply with CDC guidance regarding areas where masks should be worn, including within airports.

To stay informed of the latest COVID-19 guidance and available services, monitor the JBSA COVID-19 webpage, <https://www.jbsa.mil/coronavirus/>.

CDC guidance and definitions of low, moderate, substantial, and high spread can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/70/wr/pdfs/mm7030e2-H.pdf>. Data on levels of community transmission can be found at the CDC COVID-19 Data Tracker website found at <https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/>. The DOD memorandum can be found at <https://media.defense.gov/2021/Jul/28/2002814362/-1/-1/1/UPDATED-MASK-GUIDELINES-FOR-ALL-DOD-INSTALLATIONS-AND-OTHER-FACILITIES-OSD006862-21-FOD-FINAL.PDF>.

FORT SAM HOUSTON

BAMC medic competes for MEDCOM Best Leader

By Lori Newman

BROOKE ARMY MEDICAL CENTER
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

A Brooke Army Medical Center combat medic has been one of 16 Soldiers competing in the U.S. Army Medical Command 2021 Best Leader Competition July 25-30, on the Island of Oahu, Honolulu, Hawaii.

Army Staff Sgt. Edward Nelan, a BAMC Soldier Recovery Unit squad leader from the Quad Cities region in Illinois, was selected to represent Regional Health Command-Central in the year's competition.

"Staff Sgt. Nelan is living proof that Army medicine is Army strong," said BAMC SRU Army Command Sgt. Maj.

Gabriel Camacho. "He's already proven his technical expertise providing competent and compassionate leadership to his Soldiers in recovery and their families. By competing at the Army Medical Command Best Leader Competition, he is demonstrating his tactical craft as a Soldier."

The Best Leader Competition is designed to promote "esprit de corps" throughout the Army while recognizing Soldiers and noncommissioned officers who demonstrate commitment to the Army values and embody the Warrior Ethos.

The competition recognizes those Soldiers demonstrating superb military bearing and communication skills, knowledge of various military subjects and the ability to perform a variety of Soldier/Warrior skills above their peers.

To earn the right to compete in the annual MEDCOM competition, the Soldiers first competed and won at the unit and Regional Health Command level.

In preparation for the competition, Nelan spent two weeks at Fort Polk, Louisiana, participating in the Expert Infantryman Badge testing lanes. This allowed him some needed hands-on experience. He also went to Fort Hood, Texas, for some additional training.

"We did obstacle courses, swimming, ruck marches, land navigation and practiced overall Soldier skills," he said. "We even did a mock board."

The Best Leader competition requires competitors to complete in a variety of tasks including marksmanship, land navigation, an obstacle course, combat water survival, hands-on medical tasks, and



Army Staff Sgt. Edward Nelan competes in the water survival portion of the 2021 U.S. Army Medical Command Best Leader Competition July 26 at Schofield Barracks on the Island of Oahu, Honolulu, Hawaii.

culminates in a 30-plus mile foot march.

Nelan feels he excels in land navigation and Army warrior tasks.

"My swimming during the regional competition wasn't the best, but I've improved," Nelan said. "I'm really looking forward to doing another swim event."

"He carries our Soldier Recovery Unit's mantra to adapt and overcome, the same spirit he charges his Soldiers in Recovery to maintain," Camacho said. "Regardless of the rigors and challenges the competition brings, Staff Sgt. Nelan will always fight to win!"

Nelan's advice to other Soldiers who want to excel in competitions like the Best Leader is to "work on the basics."

"In the hospitals and clinics, it's a lot harder to work on the basic Soldier tasks, but it's really helped me to become a

better Soldier," he said. "I also have those skills to be able to teach others. At the end of the day, we are Soldiers first."

Nelan said it would be "extremely cool" if he can make it to the Army-level Best Warrior Competition.

"It would be a good step in my career and a pretty big challenge, so I wouldn't mind having the opportunity to try," he said.

"Staff Sgt. Nelan is the perfect combination of professional Soldier, determined athlete, and compassionate Squad Leader," said Army Lt. Col. Sheryl Justice, BAMC SRU commander. "He goes above requirements and exceeds expectations daily to assist his Soldiers and fellow Soldier Recovery Unit teammates. We are very proud of his accomplishments to date, and look forward to how far this exceptional Soldier will go in the future."



PHOTOS BY CPL. ANDREW GARCIA

Army Staff Sgt. Edward Nelan jumps in the pool during the water survival portion of the 2021 U.S. Army Medical Command Best Leader Competition.

U.S. Army Installation Management Command hosts AMC commander

By Scott Malcom

U.S. ARMY INSTALLATION
MANAGEMENT COMMAND
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Gen. Edward Daly, commanding general, U.S. Army Materiel Command, visited Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston July 23 to discuss the important missions U.S. Army Installation Management Command performs to take care of the Army's people.

"I love coming to IMCOM," Daly said. "While every part of the Army is focused on taking care of people, it is IMCOM who is at the tip of the spear of that effort. You are worth your weight in gold. You approach your incredibly important mission set in a thoughtful, strategic way. I could not be prouder of you."

Lt. Gen. Doug Gabram, IMCOM commanding general, emphasized his focus on three priorities IMCOM leads for AMC and the Army: Soldier, Family and Civilian Readiness; Installation Readiness; and Strategic Power Projection.

"The IMCOM Campaign plan is the AMC Campaign plan," Gabram said.

"One thing I think is so special about IMCOM is that you operate successfully in both the tactical and strategic realms," Daly said. "You simultaneously ensure tactical readiness by doing things like maintaining ranges and operating improved quality-of-life programs, while at the same time focusing on strategic issues like energy resiliency and implementing an integrated investment strategy to modernize our facilities for the long term."



SARAH LUNA

Gen. Edward Daly (right), commanding general, Army Materiel Command, is welcomed to the U.S. Army Installation Management Command by Greg Kuhr, IMCOM Director of Logistics (G4), at the IMCOM Operations Center at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston July 23.

The two commanders received updates from various subject matter experts about recent IMCOM-wide activities to

improve PCS moves, base housing, child care, spouse employment, environmental issues and more.

Regardless of the topic, one

theme that remained constant throughout was the integration of activities so the whole is greater than the sum of the parts.

In this way IMCOM uses the power of the patch — it is one of 10 major subordinate commands which wear the AMC patch and are able to leverage the capabilities of the other 10 — to optimize and accelerate capabilities on behalf of Soldiers and families.

As Daly said, this integration is done tactically by garrison commanders and strategically by the IMCOM headquarters team.

For example, just as it did two years ago to integrate focused energy to improve privatized housing on post, IMCOM recently stood up an integrated Crisis Action Team to help resolve issues for garrison commanders as they smooth the PCS process for Soldiers and Families assigned to their installation.

The IMCOM CAT then ties into a similar group at AMC headquarters who can leverage capabilities from across the Army to further improve PCS moves for our people in the years to come.

"People are the Army's number one priority," Gabram said. "The Army will do everything in its power to facilitate successful PCS moves for our Soldiers, civilians and families."

Before departing, Daly left the IMCOM team with more words of encouragement.

"Every day you grind through obstacles, but you are truly making a huge difference. You drive effects for the Army," he said.

"Every place I go I see the work IMCOM is doing, and I know every one of you is contributing," Daly added. "I appreciate everything you do every day. It is absolutely phenomenal and you get continually get better. I'm honored and privileged to spend time with you."

METC reopens graduations to guests



LISA BRAUN

Medical Education and Training Campus Air Force students attend a graduation ceremony prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

By Lisa Braun

MEDICAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING CAMPUS
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

For the first time since the start of the Coronavirus pandemic, the Medical Education and Training Campus is re-opening graduations and class closings to a limited number of guests, beginning with the Air Force Aerospace Medical Service Apprentice program graduation Aug. 3.

The new policy is subject to change based on local health protection conditions.

Although the U.S. Army Medical Center of Excellence began opening graduations for its Army students in METC single-service and consolidated programs, starting with an open graduation pilot program in June, the Air Force AMSA program will be the first METC-run graduation to welcome guests.

The program, which trains Air Force medical technicians in various aspects of emergency, nursing, and primary care, will graduate approximately 28 students who are trained to the standards of the National Registry Emergency Medical Technician, or NREMT.

All graduates must pass the NREMT certification examination, and are certified in Healthcare Provider Basic Life Support. In addition, graduates of this program are awarded college credits by the Community College of the Air Force.

Because METC's mission plays a critical role in training the nation's enlisted medical force, the training pipeline continued operations despite the pandemic.

In order to continue supporting this mission-essential function as safely as possible, METC implemented several measures in March 2020 to protect students, faculty and staff from contracting COVID-19.

To lessen the safety risk, steps were taken to cancel all visits to the campus and suspend all guest attendance for mass gatherings, including graduations, which were not deemed mission essential.

Since then, each service component has conducted their own graduation and class closing events separately, without guests. Some programs were able to live stream their graduation ceremony when able.

"We are excited to finally be welcoming family and friends back to METC and look forward to sharing this special milestone in the lives of our newest medics, corpsmen and technicians."

Chief Master Sgt. Donald "Brent" Cook,
METC senior enlisted advisor

While the COVID vaccine has helped lower the infection rate on JBSA-Fort Sam Houston and the San Antonio community, the re-opening of graduation and class closing ceremonies will take place under certain safety conditions to mitigate any further risk to service members and the community.

Each student is allowed up to two fully-vaccinated guests. Guests are considered fully vaccinated if two weeks have passed after their final dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, and will be required to show their official COVID vaccination card before entering a campus building.

Children who have not been fully vaccinated, regardless of age, will not be permitted to attend. Properly worn face coverings are required for all guests and personnel inside METC buildings.

Additionally, room capacity where the graduations take place may not exceed 50% of its maximum occupancy.

"We understand how challenging the pandemic has been for our students and their loved ones, especially when they're not able to celebrate graduations together," said Chief Master Sgt. Donald "Brent" Cook, METC senior enlisted advisor. "We are excited to finally be welcoming family and friends back to METC and look forward to sharing this special milestone in the lives of our newest medics, corpsmen and technicians."

Distinguished Army veteran, veterinarian celebrates 100 years

By Lori A. Bultman

502ND AIR BASE WING
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Retired U.S. Army Brig. Gen. Charles V.L. “Chuck” Elia celebrated his 100th birthday July 27, 2021, at a ceremony hosted by U.S. Army North (Fifth Army) at their Quadrangle headquarters at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston.

The event featured jazz music played by members of “Fort Sam’s Own,” the 323d Army Band, then special guests highlighted Elia’s many accomplishments and contributions to the U.S. Army.

As part of the celebration and in honor of Elia’s dedication to Army veterinary medicine, a Percheron draft horse from the JBSA-Fort Sam Houston Caisson Platoon was led into view and officially renamed Elia. The retired general, in turn, donated the brown leather veterinary kit his mother gifted him when he joined the Veterinary Corps to the U.S. Army Medical Museum.

A native Texan, Elia was born in Marshall and attended the North Texas Agriculture College, now the University of Texas at Arlington. He was commissioned into the U.S. Army in 1942 as a second lieutenant in the Medical Administration Corps.

In 1943, the proud Aggie graduated from Texas A&M as a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine, moving on to attend the University of California, George Washington University, and Johns Hopkins University, and graduating with a Master’s in Public Health.

Elia went on to become the 16th Chief of the U.S. Army Veterinary Corps and retired from military service in 1976.



COURTESY PHOTO

Retired U.S. Army Brig. Gen. Charles V.L. “Chuck” Elia feeds a carrot to his namesake at his 100th birthday celebration hosted by U.S. Army North (Fifth Army) at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston July 27.

Throughout his service, Elia held numerous prestigious positions, including consultant to the Greek Army; deputy director of Public Health and Welfare and veterinary consultant to U.S. Civil Affairs, Ryukyu Islands, Japan; commandant to the U.S. Army Medical Department Veterinary School; chief Army Veterinarian to the 4th, 5th and 6th Armies; and finally, chief of the U.S. Army Veterinary Corps.

Elia is a distinguished diplomate of the American Board of Veterinary Public Health and a recipient of the Surgeon’s General “A” proficiency prefix.

Elia, along with other volunteers, assisted in gathering the funding to build the U.S. Army Medical Museum at JBSA-Fort Sam

Houston, which averages 52,000 visitors each year. This group of volunteers also created the museum’s foundation.

“Brig. Gen. Charles ‘Chuck’ Elia’s unstinting leadership and mentorship as a pioneer member of the Army Medical Department Museum Foundation have been invaluable and continued for over 40 years,” said retired U.S. Army Col. Dawn M. Smith, speaking for the museum’s foundation. “Brig. Gen. Elia served as one of the original members of the museum foundation’s board from its incorporation in 1978. He became treasurer of the foundation in August of 1979, and in that role was a key player in the early fundraising campaigns of the late 1970s and 1980s.”

Smith said Elia completed vital and dedicated work as a member of the foundation board, helping bring about the museum’s groundbreaking in April 1988 and the opening on July 24, 1989.

“Brig. Gen. Elia continued to be a visionary supporter for additional phases of museum expansion, including the installation of the hospital train car, and other indoor and outdoor exhibit areas, outdoor amphitheater, and the Medal of Honor Walk,” Smith said.

As the decorated veteran celebrates becoming a centenarian, he continues many of his volunteer activities, to include working at the museum and in the community.

Since his retirement, Elia has held many positions with the City of Garden Ridge, a

“Gen. Elia is a shining example of someone who dedicated his life in service to his country and his community.”

Robb Erickson,
mayor of Garden Ridge

San Antonio suburb, including leading efforts involving planning and zoning, revitalization of park spaces, mobile security forces, water department board of directors, and he led efforts for the revitalization of city hall. He and his wife became the 180th and 181st citizens of the city in 1977.

“Gen. Elia is a shining example of someone who dedicated his life in service to his country and his community,” said Robb Erickson, mayor of Garden Ridge. “Long after he retired from military service, Gen. Elia continued to build the community he lives in and strengthen the bonds that make Garden Ridge such a wonderful place to call home. He is a great American and resident of Garden Ridge and we honor him on this momentous occasion.”

Elia’s service awards include the Distinguished Service Medal, Legion of Merit with one oak leaf cluster, Defense Service Medal, Army Commendation Medal with one oak leaf cluster, American Defense Service Medal, WWII Victory Medal, and the National Defense Service Medal with one oak leaf cluster.



PHOTOS BY PFC. JOSHUA TAECKENS

A U.S. Air Force C17 Globemaster III lands at Tolemaida Air Base, Nido, Colombia, July 21. The C17 carried U.S. Army paratroopers assigned to 2nd battalion, 501st Parachute Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division for a Dynamic Force Employment with the Colombian military.

Army South participates in Dynamic Force Employment exercise in Colombia

By Pfc. Joshua Taeckens
U.S. ARMY SOUTH PUBLIC AFFAIRS

U.S. Army 82nd Airborne Division paratroopers arrived at Tolemaida Air Base, Nilo, Colombia, July 21 for a Dynamic Force Employment exercise with members from the Colombian army, navy, marines and air force.

U.S. and Colombian paratroopers are participate in the exercise through July 30, which will include multiple jumps, jungle and water survival training and a medical evacuation rehearsal.

The purpose of this U.S. and Colombian military exercise was to build collective interoperability and readiness.

"The goal of the dynamic force employment exercise with Colombia was to continue the partnership we have already established with the Colombian military forces," said Sgt. 1st Class Grover Muirheid, Army South G3 battle non-commissioned officer. "In addition, we are looking to understand how the Colombian military operates, so our army

can work well with them in the future."

This is not the first time the U.S. and Colombia have collaborated for an airborne operation. In January 2020, 82nd Airborne Division and Colombian military partners conducted an Airborne Assault Exercise.

"On the last airborne operation with Colombia we only did the jump and returned to the United States," said Capt. Sergio Bustos, U.S. Southern Command operations officer for Army missions in Colombia. "That created the foundation allowing us to expand on the engagement with a field training exercise, which will create even more interoperability between our militaries."

The bilateral airborne exercise provides valuable experience for all Army personnel involved. This experience helps ensure the U.S. government is able to rapidly respond in support of partners within the region and provides an excellent training opportunity away from home.



U.S. Army paratroopers assigned to 2nd battalion, 501st Parachute Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division arrive at Tolemaida Air Base, Nilo, Colombia for a Dynamic Force Employment exercise July 21.

LACKLAND

Air Force CEC begins rollout of upgraded EOD imaging tech

By Emily Mifsud

AIR FORCE INSTALLATION AND MISSION
SUPPORT CENTER PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The Air Force Civil Engineer Center's Readiness Directorate has begun delivering upgraded portable imaging X-ray systems to explosive ordnance disposal flights around the Air Force.

The new Vidisco Guardian 12 Digital Radiographic X-ray system enhances EOD capabilities by making it easier to view the internal contents of suspicious packages, improvised explosive devices and unexploded ordnance. The first of 53 digital X-ray systems went to Hill Air Force Base, Utah, recently and distribution, along with training events, continues through 2026.

The first training event was held in conjunction with the equipment rollout July 22 at Eglin Air Force Base, Florida. Because of proximity, EOD flights from three Florida bases — Eglin, Hurlburt Field and Tyndall — were trained and took delivery of the new systems together.

The Guardian 12 is replacing three commercial off-the-shelf systems serving as interim solutions until the new system is fully deployed. This includes a large system weighing over 99 pounds, that primarily serves as base support and requires a wired connection to operate; an X-ray that serves as the wireless mobility system; and a third system that has been obsolete for several years.

"The new system essentially consolidates all the capabilities of previous systems," said Dave Hodgson, EOD logistics lead for AFCEC. "It meets all of the requirements necessary to support the mission."

Tech. Sgt. Quentin Tubbs and other EOD technicians with the 436th Civil Engineer Squadron at Dover Air Force Base, Delaware, understand the value of the new equipment and are looking forward to receiving it next month.

"The digital X-ray technology will make a world of difference for our EOD forces," Tubbs said. "It will increase the



SAMUEL KING JR.

Explosive ordnance disposal technicians connect the Guardian 12 Digital Radiographic X-ray system tablet with its components down range July 22 at Eglin Air Force Base, Florida.

reliability of capturing clear and concise images and reduce the amount of time we have to spend next to hazardous devices."

Compared to the analog technology of the previous systems, the digital X-ray technology provides a much sharper and clearer image, making it easier to detect explosives such as IEDs or unexploded ordnance, he said.

Featuring both wired and wireless technology, the new technology combines the capabilities of the off-the-shelf systems currently in use. The wireless capabilities enable remote image capture and can reduce the amount of time Airmen spend in close

proximity to potentially deadly devices, Tubbs said.

"With the older systems, every time we took an image, we had to go down range and retrieve a panel, bring it back and run it through a machine to verify if the X-ray worked. Many times, we thought a good image was captured only to realize later there was something dense in the way blocking the image."

The new digital radiographic X-ray system also includes features to improve resiliency. It is lightweight at less than 22 pounds and is housed in a compact carrying case for easy mobilization for fly-away missions. The system is also designed to work in extreme

temperatures, ranging from minus 14 to 140 degrees Fahrenheit.

Procuring the new systems was an Air Force Installation and Mission Support Center collaborative effort between AFCEC and the Air Force Installation Contracting Center's 772nd Enterprise Sourcing Squadron. The \$30 million acquisition puts 331 new systems in the hands of EOD Airmen by 2026.

"We're committed to ensuring our EOD forces have the training, equipment and resources required to accomplish their duties in garrison and downrange," Hodgson said. "The new systems will allow Airmen to conduct missions safely, rapidly and effectively."

Antiterrorism measures still important as ever

By Rachel Kersey

502ND AIR BASE WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

This September marks the 20th anniversary of the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

"The significance of this date has never been greater," said Master Sgt. Adrian Rodriguez, Antiterrorism Program Manager, 902nd Security Forces Squadron, Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph. "This has a dual meaning for us as a country: we have successfully prevented another big attack on the motherland, while on the other hand, we continue to grieve the lives lost in not only the attacks, but also those waging the struggle against terrorism."

In order to continue to keep JBSA and the United States safe, everyone needs to be waging the struggle against terrorism together. August is Antiterrorism Month and to protect all essential personnel and resources against terrorist attack, it is essential that the community maintains alertness and awareness about suspicious activities.



ALEJANDRA ZIER

As manager of the antiterrorism program, Rodriguez provides guidance to wing, group, and squadron leadership on integrated defense, risk management, and mitigation procedures for 166 aircraft and \$2 billion in assets.

He also provides direction and training to squadron commanders and unit representatives around the installation to ensure that antiterrorism regulations and requirements are followed at their respective facilities and uses risk management principles to develop immediate plans of action across JBSA to address threats, vulnerabilities, and countermeasures.

"Lone actors and insider threats who seek to attack vulnerable targets with freely accessible weaponry offer the greatest threat we face in the country," Rodriguez said. "Regrettably, these situations happen far too frequently and are notoriously difficult to forecast."

That is why it is important that community members are engaged in the fight against terrorism. Vigilance is of the highest importance. Reporting suspicious activities is one of the most important things a person can do.

"If you see something unusual, say something," Rodriguez said. "When it comes to boosting awareness and safety, we often hear that every Airman is a sensor. You can safeguard your family, neighbors, and neighborhood by being vigilant and reporting suspicious activities. If you see something suspicious, please call local law enforcement."

The Random Antiterrorism Measures, or RAM, program is another way the JBSA community maintains security. It allows unit commanders to enhance alertness as well as knowledge of prospective adversaries.

Every day, security forces officers conduct RAM exercises throughout the installation at unpredictable times and locations to deter, detect, deny, delay and defend against any terrorist threats and to increase situational awareness for active duty personnel.

"The RAM program is a defensive tactic designed to reduce predictability in the installation's force-protection plan and to provide an effective manner of securing our people and resources, and it involves everyone," Rodriguez said.

Antiterrorism measures are a joint effort.

"The overall goal," Rodriguez said, "is to work together to share critical information and strengthen our ability to combat terrorism."

As Rodriguez emphasizes, if you see something, say something. Call 911 or the JBSA-Randolph Antiterrorism Program phone number at 210-652-8298. People can also call the Emergency Control Centers at any of the JBSA Installations:

- JBSA-Fort Sam Houston: 210-221-9331
- JBSA-Randolph: 210-652-5700
- JBSA-Lackland: 210-671-2018

433rd Aerospace Medicine Squadron welcomes new commander

By Tech. Sgt. Iram Carmona

433RD AIRLIFT WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Col. Luis A. Berrios, 433rd Aerospace Medicine Squadron commander, was promoted to the rank of colonel shortly before he assumed command of the 433rd AMDS at a ceremony in the Wilford Hall Ambulatory Surgical Center at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland July 10.

Col. Michael A. Brice, 433rd Medical Group commander and the event's presiding officer, spoke about Berrios during the ceremony, which was attended by family, friends and key 433rd Airlift Wing senior leaders.

"I've worked with him; I've seen him in various leadership positions and he's done an incredible job; always giving 110 percent," Brice said. "I've seen how he interacts with people, whether you're an airman basic or a general, he treats everyone with respect, so I know he is more than capable."

After accepting the guidon, which signifies the acceptance of command, Berrios had a few words for squadron members.

"This is an incredible honor to command and lead one of the best Air Force medical squadrons," Berrios said. "I look forward to working with 120 of the best Air Force medical professionals and seeing how they're motivated and dedicated."



Col. Michael A. Brice (left), 433rd Medical Group commander, presents the 433rd Aerospace Medicine Squadron guidon to newly promoted Col. Luis A. Berrios during an assumption of command ceremony at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland July 10.

TECH. SGT. IRAM CARMONA

RANDOLPH

435th FTS pilots test new wearable technology

By Airman 1st Class
Tyler McQuiston
502ND AIR BASE WING
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The 12th Flying Training Wing innovation office at Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph recently began testing new wearable technology on eight voluntary 435th Fighter Training Squadron pilots. The technology's purpose is to help track, manage and acquire additional data for a pilot's operational risk management, or ORM, process.

"Our goal is to reduce risks and increase safety through an improved ORM process," said Capt. Nathan Raymond, 435th FTS instructor pilot. "We want to foster and create better habits for improved health and human performance."

Pilots were issued a Garmin smartwatch, a 21-ounce Hidrate Spark smart connected water bottle, and an Oura personal health tracking ring. Each piece of gear pairs directly with a mobile app to track the user's daily hydration, steps, heart rate, exercise patterns, sleep cycle, stress level and overall readiness.

Pilots were asked to wear the watch throughout the day and the ring overnight to get consistent data throughout the test, Raymond said.

The smartwatch has an altitude reader that helps pilots monitor how high or low they are flying, and pilots can set it to flash whenever they go over 10,000 feet.

"Using the (smartwatch) is a great tracker for my physical fitness," said Lt. Col. John Matchett, 435th FTS commander. "It's also useful

as a canopy pressurization indicator during a flight as a cheaper solution than replacing hardware in an aircraft."

Before every flight pilots are required to fill out an ORM form, which helps pilots track different conditions throughout a flight such as bad weather, the type of flight formation, if a student pilot is flying solo, or if they are flying at a low altitude.

After going through the checklist, pilots get a composite number for each condition they selected in the ORM form and the higher the number, the more at risk the pilot is. Typically, the composite number remains the same with each flight, however there are two items that are more subjective when filling out the ORM, such as if the pilot is sleep deprived or having any personal factors.

"This technology is a must-have as a T-38 instructor pilot for safety and wellness," said Maj. Luke Seaman, 435th FTS instructor pilot.

Giving pilots the ability to track how well they slept, and their overall readiness can improve the way they measure if they are sleep deprived or dealing with more personal factors than usual. Pilots have also noticed that following a hydration schedule and drinking the right amount of water each day has improved their G-strain endurance.

"I have been flying for more than 12 years and what I am really interested in is helping the younger pilots who don't have as much experience," Matchett said. "We are trying to figure out if this technology will improve their decision making process and become better fighter pilots."



PHOTOS BY SENIOR AIRMAN TYLER MCQUISTON

U. S. Air Force Capt. Nathan Raymond, an instructor pilot assigned to the 435th Fighter Training Squadron, removes his Oura Ring before a flight July 14 at Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph. The ring uses sensor technology and pairs with a mobile app to deliver personalized health insights from the wearer's body.



U. S. Air Force Capt. Nathan Raymond, an instructor pilot assigned to the 435th Fighter Training Squadron, checks his Garmin fenix 6 watch before a flight, July 14 at Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph. Pilots are able to track their heart rate, calories burned, and the change in altitude during flight.

Technology transforms, modernizes training with VR

By Miriam A. Thurber

AIR EDUCATION AND TRAINING COMMAND
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Futuristic training, the kind of immersive simulations seen in sci-fi TV shows, is no longer a fictional dream. It's almost here.

With the Tech Training Transformation, or T3, team's creation of a virtual reality, or VR, training system coordinated by artificial intelligence (AI), Air Education and Training Command officials are transforming the Airmen development process. At the forefront of this development stand the cruxes of modern technology, high completion rates and an agile speed of learning.

In partnership with officials at Sheppard Air Force Base, Texas, the T3 team has re-engineered the foundational Crew Chief Fundamentals Course into a VR experience. In July and August of 2020, 29 students donned VR gear and took the program for a spin. They examined tools, maintained simulated aircraft and completed objectives, all within a 3D, on-the-job environment.

The results were impressive. On the end-of-course assessment, scores from students within the program were comparable to those of students using traditional methods. However, both students and instructors commented on the quality of T3's program, emphasizing how Airmen-centric and approachable the program made the training, and how the personalized modalities built upon AETC's world-class standards of quality. They also finished the course 46% faster, completing the 27-day course in just 12.5 days.

"It's proven that T3's program is an effective learning model," said Senior Master Sgt. Toby Caldwell, 362nd Training Squadron assistant superintendent, who has been actively involved in overseeing T3's training initiative at Sheppard since the program's beginning. "As we continue to meet the accelerate change mission, we in the training environment are teaming up at the forefront of technological enhancements."

In June 2021, T3 will prove an additional component: non-player characters. Once launched, students will interact with AI Airmen by asking them questions and receiving



STAFF SGT. KEITH JAMES

Air Force Staff Sgt. Renee Scherf, Detachment 23 curriculum engineer, MC-130H subject matter expert, demonstrates a virtual reality training system.

instructions within the simulation. For example, a student maintaining an aircraft could have a conversation with an AI security forces Airman patrolling the flight line and learn about safety protocols or ask questions about the area.

This AI interaction will assist with the formation of multi-capable Airmen and agile combat employment, as students will have the ability to essentially swap places with AI characters. A maintainer can learn basic flight line security from an AI security forces Airman, or a security forces Airman could enter the program and familiarize themselves with aircraft maintenance from AI.

The AI system will also continuously measure the student's ability to complete tasks and foundational competencies, and it will track performance throughout the Airman's career, not just during technical training. This education-focused career model relies fully on competency-based learning and an Airmen-centric, mission-focused mindset that meets the students where they are.

The T3 team is developing and testing an app for courses that don't require VR. In the future, Airmen will log in on their phones and begin consuming course information according to their preferred learning style. For example, visual learners can

watch videos and audio learners can listen from anywhere, even while on a run. Along the way, the AI capability will personalize the program. For instance, it will provide suggestions like, "Hey, I've noticed you listened to the lesson three times but still haven't scored well on the assessment. Why don't you try watching this video or completing this exercise instead?"

"This training is all about you. We're no longer making you fit our content, we're changing our content to match your needs," Maj. Jesse Johnson, the commander of Det. 23 and T3, said. "Not only does this program give more resources to students, it also keeps up with a new generation of learners who perform best outside of a traditional classroom. It allows for continued learning and the formation of multi-capable Airmen who can cross-train and expand their skillset anytime, anywhere."

According to Johnson, this program will bring Air Force training to the cutting edge of education around the globe. He and his colleagues credit this success to the strong network of partnerships across the Air Force.

"Our plan is to partner with Air Combat Command's Agile Battle Labs and with AETC's Force Development Team (A3) to develop the agile combat employment, multi-capable Airmen training philosophy," Col. Leonard

Rose, AETC's Analysis and Innovation director, said.

The T3 team views training instructors, or force generators, as a first line of partnership. The initiative aims to empower instructors by eliminating the need to lecture at length, allowing them to focus on facilitating and answering questions instead of fitting into the typical "teacher" mold.

This kind of student-centered instruction flips the traditional teaching method, where instructors stand at the center of the learning process distributing information to students, on its head. In a student-centric model, students have the power to explore and learn through discovery and practice while instructors act as mentors and coaches.

Learner-centric initiatives and an improved training infrastructure speed up the training pipeline by allowing Airmen to progress at the speed of learning. We're creating more well-rounded Airmen who are better prepared for an era of great power competition and developing a more resilient training enterprise that can continue to operate in disrupted environments. All of this directly addresses Chief of Staff Gen. Charles Q. Brown Jr.'s call to accelerate change or lose, and AETC's priority to advance force development.

"We're excited to continue utilizing virtual and augmented reality to enhance our technical training courses here at Sheppard Air Force Base. I think this type of training capability could also eventually be used to help train our multi-capable Airmen in austere locations," said Chief Master Sgt. Jason C. Groth, 82nd Training Group superintendent.

Plans are in place for two fully operational courses to launch at Sheppard in 2022 with additional courses to follow. The two initial courses will be Crew Chief Fundamentals (2AX01 Air Force specialty code) and Logistics Planning (2GOX1 Air Force specialty code). The order for updates to training courses is determined according to the requirements necessary to grow multi-capable Airmen.

Schoolhouses that want to explore VR training in their field can contact aetcdet23.css.workflow@us.af.mil.

Call for topics now open for 2022 Air Force Learning Professionals' Consortium

By Larisa Langley

AIR EDUCATION AND TRAINING COMMAND
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The call for topics for the 2022 Learning Professionals' Consortium, or LPC-22, has been released by Air Education and Training Command's A3B Learning Professionals Branch.

With a successful virtual event in 2021, the LPC-22 will also take place virtually on Zoomgov. Taking a cue from previous attendees, there will be a shift in how the event is presented.

"We know attending a virtual three-day event can be challenging," said Dr. Angela "Angi" Canada, AETC/A3B division chief. "The LPC-22 gives attendees the option to attend three unique individual events."

The single-day events will take place Feb. 16, April 20, and June 22. The single-day events are intended to better accommodate attendees' schedules, giving them an opportunity to learn best practices, hear successful collaboration stories, and gain solutions to learning issues. Each day will have presentations, interactive workshops and discussion forums, focusing on topics relevant to Learning Professionals.

Learning professionals (personnel who analyze, design, develop, deliver, support, administer, manage, or evaluate

education and training) from the Air Force and sister services, as well as industry and academic partners, interested in presenting at the LPC-22 can submit their topic here. Topics should support development of the Learning Professionals community.

Presenting to this audience will give the opportunity to share best practices, successful collaboration stories, studies, skills or solutions to learning issues. Presenters are welcome to submit more than one topic. Topic submission forms are due no later than Sept. 30, 2021.

The theme of this year's event is "Explore — Engage — Accelerate" and is an opportunity to bring together and develop the community of knowledgeable and committed Learning Professionals.

"We are excited to be able to offer this new single day format to enhance learning opportunities for the men and women we serve. Although it will be virtual, the three events offer flexibility and the ability for more Learning Professionals to interact, collaborate, and grow," said Col. Shelly Mendieta, AETC/A3/6 deputy director for force development.

The Learning Professionals' Consortium is designed for Learning Professionals across the Air Force to meet, interact and ultimately collaborate on innovations that will enhance learning



COURTESY GRAPHIC

for the men and women we serve. AETC/A3B's goal is to build a community of Learning Professionals who work together to accelerate the transformation of the military learning paradigm.

If there is an issue with the submission link, visit: <https://docs.google.com>

/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeEvKbY-4VoSkscavDhOvontQ3dWO_kPZRsnYgcygVO2vJyQ/viewform.

For more information on Air Force Learning Professionals, visit <https://www.learningprofessionals.af.mil/> or <https://www.facebook.com/AFlearningprofessionals/>.

Department of the Air Force approves special leave accrual for fiscal year 2021

By Secretary of the Air Force Public Affairs

Air Force and Space Force members performing active service, and Reserve and Guard Airmen on Title 10 or Title 32 orders, can now accrue up to 120 days of annual leave for fiscal year 2021 instead of the typical 60 days of leave.

Members will automatically be approved for the special leave accrual and can carry over use or lose leave earned Oct. 1, 2020, through Sept. 30, 2021 until Sept. 30, 2024.

This update comes as many Airmen and Guardians have been unable to use their existing leave balances due to travel restrictions and the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Rest and recuperation are vital to morale, unit and personal performance, and overall motivation

for Airmen and Guardians. The Department of the Air Force recognizes the importance to provide opportunities for its service members to use their earned leave in the year it was earned and provide respite from the work environment," said Acting Secretary of the Air Force John Roth in a memo.

More detailed instructions are forthcoming, but leave accountability is based on a last-in, first-out system, so members are urged to plan and use leave accordingly. In addition, commanders are encouraged to provide service members opportunities to take leave in the year it is earned.

For more information, see the Department of the Air Force Guidance on Special Leave Accrual Related to Coronavirus Disease 2019 for Fiscal Year 2021 memorandum on myPers.