

# JBSA

# LEGACY

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JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO

DECEMBER 3, 2021



SPC. ASHLIND HOUSE

*City of San Antonio Mayor Ron Nirenberg (left) signs the ceremonial agreement reaffirming the commitment between the city of San Antonio and the U.S. Army for the Partnership for Youth Success, or PaYS, Program by signing a memorandum of agreement alongside U.S. Army North Commanding General Lt. Gen. John R. Evans Jr. (right) at the Plaza de Armas Gallery in San Antonio Nov. 19.*

## U.S. Army North, City of San Antonio conduct signing ceremony

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## METC instructor aids car crash victims

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## JPPSO undertakes beautification effort at JBSA-Lackland

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# TRICARE beneficiaries ages 5-11 now eligible for COVID-19 vaccine

By TRICARE Communications

On Nov. 2, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, or CDC, endorsed the use of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine for children ages 5 to 11. It's the latest of several important steps taken by the federal government to end the pandemic.

"As we approach the holiday season, we all have one more thing to be grateful for and that's the news that kids ages 5 to 11 are eligible to get the COVID-19 vaccine," said Donna Hoffman, a family nurse practitioner with the Defense Health Agency's Immunization Healthcare Division. "Vaccinating your child is the best way to keep them safe from COVID. It will also help keep them from getting seriously sick even if they do get COVID-19."

Although children are at a lower risk of becoming severely ill with COVID-19 compared to adults, COVID-19 cases in children can result in hospitalizations and in some rare situations, deaths.

According to the CDC, the vaccine will reduce children's risk of severe disease, death, or long-term COVID-19 complications. Vaccinating children will help prevent them from passing the virus to others, like brothers or sisters who aren't yet eligible to receive the vaccine. And it will help protect family members who are at the highest risk from severe illness. Getting kids vaccinated will also limit disruptions to in-person learning and activities, like sports and playdates, by helping to reduce the disease's spread among groups of children.

The vaccine has the same active components as those found in the Pfizer-BioNTech product for those age 12 years and older. Children will receive two doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine, given 21 days apart. Each dose contains 10mcg of the vaccine, which is one-third of the adult dose. The CDC recommends this formulation for children ages 5 to 11 only. The formulation is identified by having an orange cap on the vial.

The vaccine is safe and effective. Clinical trials showed the two-dose shot was nearly 91% effective at preventing infection in young children. This is similar to what was seen in adult vaccine trials, according to the CDC. And children had mild vaccine side effects similar to those seen in adults and with other vaccines recommended for children.

You can use v-safe, the CDC's



PETTY OFFICER 3RD CLASS CONNER HOUGHTALING

*Seaman Chandler Story administers a Pfizer COVID-19 vaccination to a Department of Defense dependent at Sullivans Elementary School during a vaccination event for children aged 5-11 onboard Commander, Fleet Activities Yokosuka.*

smartphone-based health-monitoring tool, to complete health check-ins after your child receives the vaccine. V-safe will also send you vaccine dose reminders.

The vaccine process is the same for children as it is for adults. To get your child vaccinated, you can take them to:

- ▶ A military hospital, clinic, or Department of Defense (DOD) vaccination site (You may be able to use the DHA Appointing Portal to schedule an appointment.)
- ▶ A civilian provider (You can search the provider directory to find a provider near you.)
- ▶ State- and local-run vaccination sites
- ▶ Pharmacies participating in the Federal Retail Pharmacy Program

You can also check with your child's health care provider to see if they offer COVID-19 vaccinations. And check with your local pharmacy to see if the vaccine for children is available.

If your child receives the vaccine outside of the DOD, let their primary care manager, or PCM, know. And provide your child's PCM with a copy of the vaccine card for them to add to your child's health record. The COVID-19 vaccine itself is free. However, there may be a cost based on your child's health plan for an office visit with a

provider, or if your child needs follow-on care.

Currently, the Pfizer vaccine is the only approved COVID-19 vaccine for children ages 5 to 11. The Pfizer vaccine is authorized by the CDC for children age 12 years and older, so don't forget to get your older children and teens vaccinated as well. This can also be a good time to get your children caught up on other vaccines, such as the flu vaccine. A medical professional can administer both vaccines at the same appointment.

"Don't put getting the vaccine off," Hoffman said. "If you're unsure whether the COVID-19 vaccine is right for your child, you should discuss their medical conditions, including prior reaction to vaccines, with a health care provider."

You and your family can help slow the spread of COVID-19 in your community. Schedule a vaccine appointment for your child as soon as possible, so that they can enter the new year fully vaccinated. Find COVID-19 vaccines for children and teens near you, and keep up with vaccine updates.

At the time of posting, this information is current. Visit [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) or TRICARE COVID-19 Guidance for the most current COVID-19 information.

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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](mailto:jbsapublicaffairs@gmail.com) using the subject line "Feedback Fridays."

Questions will be further researched and published as information becomes available.

**Q: I am a civilian with no ties to the military and wanted to see if it was possible for individuals like me to visit the military museums located at JBSA-Lackland and JBSA-Fort Sam Houston.**

**I have two young kids who want to serve in the Air Force one day. I would love to take them to these museums to show them the history in the Air Force in hopes that they continue with these dreams of being an Airman.**

**Thank you for your time in advance and thank you and everyone for protecting our great nation!**

**A:** Great question!

All United States citizens, regardless

of military ties, with a valid state- or government-issued identification card can visit our museums to see our rich Air Force history.

In order to obtain access at JBSA-Lackland, visitors must stop at the Luke East Visitor Control Center and request a pass to visit the museum. All visitors in the party will be vetted upon entry, and if cleared, a pass to visit the museum would be granted.

Passes are only granted during museum hours of operations:

## Enlisted Heritage Museum

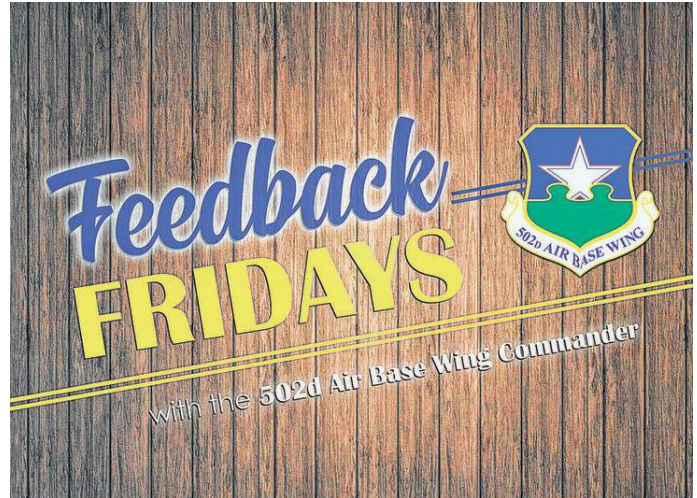
- ▶▶ Wednesday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- ▶▶ Thursday, 10:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
- ▶▶ Friday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- ▶▶ Federal Holidays, closed

## Security Forces Exhibits Annex

- ▶▶ Wednesday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- ▶▶ Thursday, 10:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
- ▶▶ Friday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- ▶▶ Saturday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- ▶▶ Federal Holidays, closed

To see information about the museums and to get directions to Luke East VCC, visit the following link: <https://www.airmenheritage.com/plan-your-visit>.

**For the U.S. Army North Museum at JBSA-Fort Sam Houston**, visitors without a DOD ID card must stop at the Visitor Center on Walters Street. All visitors 18 years or older must present a picture ID card. If you have any access questions, call the Visitor's Center at 210-221-2651. The museum is located at



COURTESY GRAPHIC

1405 E. Grayson St., building 16.

## Hours are:

- ▶▶ Monday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- ▶▶ Tuesday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- ▶▶ Wednesday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- ▶▶ Thursday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- ▶▶ Friday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- ▶▶ Saturday, closed
- ▶▶ Sunday, closed

For more information, call 210-221-1886 or email [fshmuseum@gmail.com](mailto:fshmuseum@gmail.com).

The U.S. Army Medical

**Department Museum** is located at 3898 Stanley Road, building 1046. The phone number is 210-221-6358 and more information can be found at <https://armymedicalmuseum.org/>.

## The museum's hours are:

- ▶▶ Monday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- ▶▶ Tuesday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- ▶▶ Wednesday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- ▶▶ Thursday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- ▶▶ Friday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- ▶▶ Saturday, closed
- ▶▶ Sunday, closed

# VA adds six new presumptive conditions related to service

## Department of Veterans Affairs

Over the course of the last six months, the Department of Veterans Affairs has begun processing service-connected disability claims for six new presumptive conditions related to environmental exposures during military service.

In May 2021, VA started implementing provisions of the William M. Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021, adding bladder cancer, hypothyroidism and Parkinsonism to the list of medical conditions presumptively associated with exposure to Agent Orange. A few months later VA added asthma, rhinitis



COURTESY GRAPHIC

and sinusitis (to include rhinosinusitis) on a presumptive basis based on particulate matter exposures during military service in Southwest Asia and certain other areas.

Any veteran who was previously denied service-connection for any of

these six conditions but had symptoms manifest within 10 years of military service would need to file a supplemental claim. Officials advise using VA Form 20-0995, Decision Review Request: Supplemental Claim, when filing. The claim form should

include the name of the condition and specify that the condition is being claimed because of in-service exposure to environmental hazards.

Officials also advise veterans to stay plugged into <http://www.va.gov> for the most recent developments around environmental exposures during military service, as VA is constantly conducting research and surveillance as well as reviewing the scientific literature for conditions that may be related to exposure during military service.

For more information about VA benefits and eligibility, or how to file a claim, veterans and survivors can visit VA's website at <http://www.va.gov> or call toll-free at 1-800-827-1000.

# JBSA First Sergeant Diamond Sharp Awards

Joint Base San Antonio First Sergeants Council

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

## Staff Sgt. Savanna B. Smith

Unit: Air Force Medical Readiness Agency  
Duty Title: Theatre Lead Agent for Medical Materiel Reachback Technician

Staff Sgt. Savanna B. Smith distinguished herself by



Staff Sgt.  
Savanna B. Smith

management of medical material in support of Operation Allies Welcome for 70,000 refugees at eight stateside locations. She led purchases of an \$8 million medical supply budget and established an expedited supply chain for \$18 million in vaccines for special immigrant visa screening requirements. Smith ensured initial medical screening capabilities at three sites by packaging and shipping

\$170,000 in personal protective equipment, delivery accomplished within 48 hours of notification. Her knowledge and skills directly limited disease and lice outbreaks at six locations and protected 48,000 at-risk refugees.

## Senior Airman Tiyana O. Jackson

Unit: Special Warfare Human Performance Support Group

Duty Title: CSS Technician

Senior Airman Tiyana O. Jackson is the youngest in the group by age and rank, but she executes her duties far beyond. She was vital in the Department of Defense COVID-19 vaccination mandate, dedicating eight hours for medical screening, providing 292 vaccines and raising the wing's readiness rate by 60 percent while shielding 400 pipeline students averting lost training time. She created and updated 92 evaluation sites, processed

33 evaluations, 13 citations and fixed 213 errors, which was instrumental in the reduction of management personnel service backlog by 13%. She also planned the group's first-ever UNITE-funded event, organized a team-building exercise that allocated \$315 and tackled the group's strategic priority for 15 Airmen.



Senior Airman  
Tiyana O. Jackson

## Senior Airman Clara J. Thurston

Unit: 502nd Comptroller Squadron  
Duty Title: Financial Services Technician

Senior Airman Clara J. Thurston has filled a staff sergeant certification role, leading and training five civilian personnel. She corrected 1,000 trainee pay records and advanced \$1.3 million dollars to help Airmen in no-pay statuses.



Senior Airman  
Clara J. Thurston

Her efforts were recognized and coined by the 502nd ABW commander for her sustained excellence and outstanding leadership. Thurston also gave back to her community by

volunteering at the local humane society and, to date, has nurtured 25 pets back to health and enabled adoption for 51 animals.

## Senior Airman Dericka J. Walker

Unit: 502nd Operations Support Squadron  
Duty Title: Commander Support Staff

Senior Airman Dericka J. Walker dual-hatted as the unit deployment manager and unit training manager positions for nine months. As deployment manager, she oversaw 14 tasked contingency missions, scheduling newly tasked members for a total of 56 pre-deployment classes and 230 training hours.



Senior Airman  
Dericka J. Walker

She also administered the blueprints for completing 300 upgrade training core tasks for

members going through on-the-job training, leaving a 100 percent pass rate on the career development course final exams. Walker was nominated twice as the squadron commander's Spartan of the Week and contributed to her section's squadron team of the quarter award win.

## Airman 1st Class Joseph R. Ortiz

Unit: 502nd Security Forces Squadron  
Duty Title: Installation Access Controller

On Oct. 29, 2021, Airman 1st Class Joseph R.



Airman 1st Class  
Joseph R. Ortiz

Ortiz was performing duties as Installation Access Controller when an unauthorized vehicle attempted to enter JBSA-Fort Sam Houston. His control of the scene denied the vehicle further access.

His decisive actions enabled the diversion of outbound traffic to avoid any vehicle accidents due to the disabled vehicle, resulting in zero injured personnel. Lastly, due to a language barrier with the driver of the vehicle, Ortiz translated and transcribed the driver's statement, aiding with casework and responding patrols, ensuring unhindered operations for 136 mission partners.

## Airman 1st Class Corey D. Simmel

Unit: Air Force Band of the West  
Duty Title: Regional Band Horn

As one of the squadron's newest members,



Airman 1st Class  
Corey D. Simmel

Airman 1st Class Corey D. Simmel answered the unit's call to lead the squadron's 30-member performance team rehearsals for their largest production of the year due to the commander's absence.

Leveraging his years of professional experience, he led eight hours of mission preparation, enabling a seamless transition for the commander's return. Simmel also processed seven initial government travel card applications and educated Basic Military Training trainees on permanent change of station entitlements, eliminating the funding gap for Airmen reporting directly to their first duty assignment.



# FORT SAM HOUSTON

## Texas trip provides Peruvian Army delegation increased opportunities for interoperability

By Donald Sparks

U.S. ARMY SOUTH PUBLIC AFFAIRS

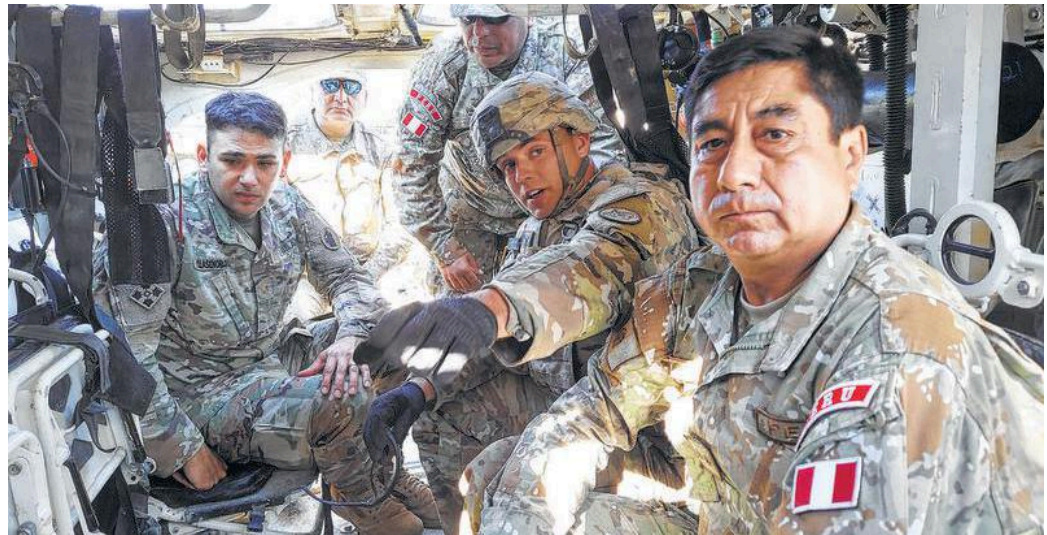
Emerging threats posed by narcotrafficking networks and the destructive aftermath of natural disasters have created security challenges for many nations in the Western Hemisphere. In an effort to defuse the threats and enhance security in the region, U.S. Army South's engagements with strategic partners, such as the Peruvian Army, has provided opportunities to build stronger relationships.

During a trip to Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston and Fort Hood, Texas, from Nov. 14-19, a delegation of Peruvian Army leaders, led by Brig. Gen. Carlos Bojorquez, 1st Multipurpose Brigade commander, discussed the importance and value of strengthening interoperability between the Peruvian and U.S. Army.

"Our nation (Peru) faces threats from transnational criminal organizations and recurring natural disasters," Bojorquez said. "Partnership with the U.S. Army affords our nation the ability to share critical knowledge for both of our Armies to better confront similar threats to our populations. Increased technical interoperability will enable our Armies to better tackle problems and face threats as cohesive teammates."

The delegation included Brig. Gen. Alberto Torres, Peruvian Army G-5, and Brig. Gen. Mario La Torre, International Military Affairs director, who received briefings on Exercise Southern Vanguard, Combat Training Center multi-year plans, Army Futures Command and took part in a key leader engagement with Maj. Gen. William L. Thigpen, Army South's commanding general.

Thigpen listened as the three Peruvian generals expressed how the U.S. Army could assist the Peruvian Army to conduct its fourth



DONALD SPARKS

*Brig. Gen. Carlos Bojorquez (right), Peruvian Army 1st Multipurpose Brigade commander, is given a briefing on the capabilities of the M1126 Infantry Carrier Vehicle Stryker from a trooper assigned to 3rd Squadron, 3rd Cavalry Regiment at Fort Hood, Texas, Nov. 17.*

transformation effort. According to the Peruvian Army senior leaders, their Army seeks to adopt U.S. Army doctrine, the modular Brigade Combat Team structure, and the Mission Command framework to conduct its fourth enterprise-wide transformation.

Thigpen stated the material acquisitions and doctrine exchanges were important in the transformation process; however, he emphasized that the most important aspect to transforming an Army starts with focusing on its personnel and the organization's values.

Currently, the Peruvian Army is modernizing its logistics doctrine and seeking training opportunities and exercises with the U.S. Army to enhance their multipurpose brigade and help establish a new mechanized brigade.

"The Peruvian Army will need to adopt U.S. Army doctrine, acquire U.S. Army equipment, and conduct bilateral training with the U.S. Army to serve as an effective partner in a potential future deployment," Bojorquez said. "To put it simply, we want to be ready to answer the United States' call for assistance in an international mission."

A highlight of the Texas trip was a chance to visit Fort Hood and observe a Stryker capabilities demonstration with 3rd Squadron, 3d Cavalry Regiment. Prior to the event, Maj. Gen. Steven Gilland, deputy commanding general, III Corps and Fort Hood, Texas, welcomed the delegation and addressed the need for mutual readiness for both armies.

"This is truly a team effort to meet our nation's objectives," Gilland said. "Identifying those gaps are critical and

how you fill those gaps; which include solutions in materiel, doctrine, training, and of course, the sustainability aspect. None of that happens overnight."

Impressed with the Stryker's ability to transition from a combat platform to conduct a wide array of humanitarian assistance and disaster relief activities, Bojorquez thanked the soldiers for displaying the vehicle's capabilities.

"I was also very impressed with the professionalism, tactical prowess, and technical knowledge exhibited by 3d Cavalry Regiment's Soldiers, noncommissioned officers, and officers," Bojorquez said. "Fort Hood's Troopers provided us with critical data on the Stryker variants' capacities, limitations, and methods of employment. For instance, the Infantry

TEXAS TRIP continues on 7

# Mission Installation and Contracting Command leader cherishes heritage, honors Native American contributions

By Joseph Lacdan

ARMY NEWS SERVICE

Brig. Gen. Doug Lowrey, commanding general of the Mission Installation and Contracting Command at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston, could trace the origins of his Native American ancestry to a two-by-four piece of plywood in his grandmother's Oklahoma home.

His grandmother had a poster board bearing the names of Lowrey's American Indian ancestors.

Inspired by his grandmother's research, Lowrey began inquiring on his own, which later revealed he descended from the Cherokee tribe that made its tragic pilgrimage west during the Trail of Tears. In the mid-1800s, federal decree forced Native American tribes to leave their homelands in the American southeast and embark on a 5,000-mile relocation journey to the Oklahoma territory. Many natives died from disease or starvation during the trek.

As a young man growing up in a small Oklahoma town, he learned about the life of his native ancestors including his seventh great-grandfather, a Cherokee Chief who reigned in the 1700s.

"Really what's inspired me is just a lifetime of learning about where did I come from?" said Lowrey, who has Scottish and Native American lineage. "And I think it's a pretty great story; I'm very proud of my Cherokee heritage."

As the lone Army general with American Indian ancestry, Lowrey has



RYAN L. MATTOX

*Brig. Gen. Douglas Lowrey addresses distinguished guests, military leaders and members of the Mission and Installation Contracting Command during a change of command ceremony May 27 at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston.*

spoken at public events, including a Facebook Live broadcast Wednesday night, where he discussed the importance of recognizing Native American contributions to the Army and the nation.

As the head of the Mission Installation and Contracting Command in San Antonio, he supports readiness requirements at 31 continental U.S. Army installations. He said that in the past 10 years the command has done \$220 million worth of transactions that directly impact readiness with Native American-based companies.

More than 20 Native Americans serving in the Army have earned Medals of Honor and American Indians have contributed to the U.S. military in every

major conflict since the Revolutionary War. Many of the Army's patches and insignias pay tribute to Native American designs including the Special Forces Patch depicts an arrowhead.

Native Americans have the highest rate of military service per capita among ethnic groups in the U.S. and also the highest percentage of women per capita than other ethnicities. Despite Native Americans' complex history with the U.S. government, they serve in the Armed Forces at five times the national average, according to the United Service Organizations estimates.

Lowrey also discovered that his fourth great-grandfather, who was part Scottish and Native American, married a Cherokee chief's daughter and served as an assistant principal chief during American Indian relocations. He said his great grandfather negotiated treaties between the Cherokee Nation and the U.S. government.

Lowrey later found the location of the plot of land his grandfather owned in Tennessee. The elder Lowrey passed down books of Cherokee fables, including one called "Journey to Sunrise: Myths and Legends of the Cherokee," that Lowrey shares with his children today.

Lowrey comes from a line of military service. His father earned two Purple Hearts during the Vietnam War and both of his grandfathers served during World War II. Lowrey said his family raised him with grounded moral values that reflect the core beliefs of the Cherokees

and the U.S. Army.

He said that Native American life centers on being part of a tribe or a team and serving a cause greater than themselves.

"That fierce loyalty to values and family extends not just into the blood family, but those around you that become your family," he said. "That's really what's ... shaped me as a person; is being part of something bigger than yourself."

Lowrey added that the Cherokee Nation sets an example for diversity and inclusion, which parallels the Army's current efforts to increase diversity. He said that the Cherokee people don't discriminate against members who have mixed or partial Native American heritage, but rather, accept diversity in their community.

"They're also very inclusive," he said. "There's very little discrimination on how much Cherokee Indian [by] blood you [are]."

Although Lowrey has spent time speaking about his Native American heritage and has attended American Indian events including powwows, he questioned whether he could do more.

He said that he didn't see much diversity in the Army's upper ranks when he was first commissioned into the service.

"Everybody's important, and that diversity is what makes us special," Lowrey said. "That's what makes the United States special ... It brings about different experiences, cultures and heritage."

## TEXAS TRIP

From page 6

Carrier Vehicle can have its weapons removed and be utilized to evacuate civilians from disaster-stricken areas that are inaccessible for traditional civilian evacuation vehicles."

At the conclusion of the week-long visit to Texas, the Peruvian senior leaders expressed their appreciation of Army South's collective team effort to provide their delegation with substantive and informative briefings, willingness to share technical data and to make them feel at home in San Antonio.

"The Peruvian Army seeks to conduct further personnel exchanges and acquisition focused visits to determine how to effectively transform our military into a force that is capable of operating in all domains," Bojorquez said.

Prior to the delegation's departure, Thigpen expressed his appreciation of the Peruvian Army's "steadfastness as a regional partner and friend of the United States."

Lt. Col. Jay Richardson, the Army Section Chief within the Military Advisory and Assistance Group, in Lima, also attended the visit to Army South and Fort Hood.

"This opportunity provided the

Peruvian Army's senior decision-makers and executive agents to gain firsthand knowledge from 3rd Cavalry Regiment Stryker operations, Army Futures Command senior leaders, Army South planners and security cooperation experts. These in-person and tangible interactions provided our Peruvian partners to gain data, insights, and opinions that cannot be attained via virtual interactions," Richardson said. "I believe this trip provided our Peruvian friends with the necessary information they need to determine which efforts they need to invest in to modernize and transform their Army in the coming years."

Maj. Teddy Villaseñor-Loya, Army

South's Peru Desk officer added, "Peru is eager to expand its capabilities to face both conventional and non-conventional threats to its sovereignty, stability, and abundant national resources.

"Army South stands ready to assist the Peruvians with obtaining the necessary training, opportunities to multi-national training events, and access to critical doctrine and technical data to increase interoperability with the U.S. Army," Villaseñor-Loya said. Increased interoperability between our Armies will further deepen and broaden our forces' capacities to conduct face mutual threats, in both the Andean Ridge and Pacific Rim."



# BAMC medic, family compete on Family Feud

By Lori Newman

BROOKE ARMY MEDICAL CENTER  
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

One hundred percent of Brooke Army Medical Center staff surveyed said the Barrera family did a (blank) job on the Family Feud. Survey says? "Awesome!"

Army Spc. Gabriella Patlan, a mobile medic at the Virtual Medical Center at BAMC, competed with members of her family on the long-running game show for a five episode stint Nov. 9-15.

The road to the show was long. In fact, it took years.

"A few years ago, like 2016, my family sent in an audition tape to the show," Patlan said. "They got called to do in-person auditions in Austin, but the show never called them back."

Last year, the show again announced they were looking for families from the Austin/San Antonio area. So, her aunt resubmitted the original audition tape, and the show called her back for another audition, this time over Zoom.

"We originally had six people on our team during the audition, but they only wanted five, so they ended up booting my dad," she said laughingly. "The producer of the show was very kind and he kept our energy up. He told us we needed to stand out, be energetic and supportive of one another."

They must have impressed the producers, because the Barrera team, consisting of Patlan, her uncle, two aunts and her cousin, flew all expenses paid to Atlanta, Georgia, in March.

"We taped our episodes in two days," she said. "It was really exhausting, but we enjoyed ourselves. Each episode is 30 minutes with commercials, but it took about an hour to tape each one."

Patlan said Steve Harvey was really funny. "There was a lot of banter back and forth that didn't air, and every commercial break he would talk to the audience."

A highlight for Patlan occurred during episode three. "We ended up in a tie, so we had to play sudden death and I had to go up to the buzzer. I won that game for our



COURTESY PHOTOS

*Army Spc. Gabriella Patlan competes with members of her family on the Family Feud game show during a five-episode stint Nov. 9-15.*

family," she said proudly.

In the end, the Barrera family won about \$41,500, but didn't get the car, which is given away if a family wins all five games.

"I didn't mind losing because, in the end, the family experience was the best part of the show," Patlan said. "We came out of it closer as a family."

Patlan isn't sure what she will do with her share of the money, but a honeymoon trip or home renovations may be in her future.

"A lot of my friends watched the shows and were calling me," Patlan said. "It was a really awesome experience."



*Army Spc. Gabriella Patlan, a mobile medic at the Virtual Medical Center at Brooke Army Medical Center, competed with members of her family on the Family Feud game show for a five-episode stint Nov. 9-15.*

# U.S. Army North, City of San Antonio conduct signing ceremony for Partnership for Youth Success

By Lauren Padden

U.S. ARMY NORTH PUBLIC AFFAIRS

City of San Antonio Mayor Ron Nirenberg and U.S. Army North Commanding General Lt. Gen. John R. Evans Jr. conducted a signing ceremony to reaffirm their commitment to the Partnership for Youth Success, or PaYS, Program agreement between the U.S. Army and the City of San Antonio at the Culture Commons Gallery at Plaza de Armas, San Antonio, Texas, Nov. 19, 2021.

"I want to thank the city for stepping up and telling these young men and women here today, but also but those who will be recruited in the future ... that they will have the ability to be able to step away, after they have served honorably, and then be guaranteed an opportunity to interview for a job here; that is significant," Evans said.

The PaYS Program is a strategic partnership between the U.S. Army and a cross-section of corporations, companies, and public sector agencies with a purpose to connect Soldiers to the civilian workforce by providing five guaranteed job interviews and possible employment with PaYS partner



SPC. ASHLIND HOUSE

*U.S. Army North Commanding General Lt. Gen. John R. Evans Jr. (right), presents City of San Antonio Mayor Ron Nirenberg (left) with a certificate of participation and plaque to the city of San Antonio on behalf of the U.S. Army PaYS Program at the Plaza de Armas Gallery in San Antonio Nov. 19.*

organizations.

"Transitioning from the military is not easy, and no one is guaranteed employment once they leave the active duty ranks. While PaYS does not

guarantee employment, it does guarantee that service members that serve their country are afforded a job interview with the city department," Nirenberg said. "And that is exactly

what this agreement will provide transitioning soldiers: the opportunity to interview for employment with the City of San Antonio."

Nirenberg expressed that there are currently approximately 303,000 military veterans and retirees who call San Antonio their home.

"I want this number to grow, and so I know that this agreement will pave the way for transitioning Soldiers, soon to be veterans, to also call San Antonio, Military City, USA, home," Nirenberg said.

In addition to the signing of the memorandum, Evans presented a certificate of participation and a plaque to the city of San Antonio on behalf of the U.S. Army PaYS Program, as well as swore in five PaYS future Soldiers.

This event was ceremonial in nature to highlight the official PaYS partnership between the U.S. Army and the City of San Antonio publicly as the official MOA was signed by the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command and the City of San Antonio in July 2021.

For more information on the PaYS program visit <https://www.army-pays.com/>.

## MICC officials announce 2022 virtual industry outreach

By Daniel P. Elkins

MISSION AND INSTALLATION CONTRACTING  
COMMAND PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

Mission and Installation Contracting Command officials announced the command-wide Advanced Planning Briefings for Industry taking place virtually March 7-11, 2022, forecasting contract opportunities with the Army for small and large industry representatives across the nation.

Mark Massie, the director of the MICC Office of Small Business Programs at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston, said the 2022 APBI follows the first successful, command-wide national industry outreach earlier this year that leveraged virtual capabilities.

"The use of Microsoft Teams to reach a large audience was a game-changer for us," Massie said. "It allowed us to meet our mission of providing transparency

to small businesses with the goal of increasing competition and increasing the defense industrial base."

The March 2021 APBI attracted more than 1,600 registrants and featured remarks by leaders from the Installation Management Command, Army Office of Small Business Programs, Training and Doctrine Command, and Army Test and Evaluation Command, as well as acquisition leaders from throughout the MICC.

Massie said new for the 2022 APBI is a change in format, allowing a day to be dedicated to each of the command's major subordinate units to expand upon their contract requirements.

The MICC includes two contracting support brigades at Fort Hood, Texas, and Fort Bragg, North Carolina, as well as two field directorate offices at JBSA-Fort Sam Houston and Joint Base Langley-Eustis, Virginia.

Following this year's APBI,

approximately 700 one-on-one virtual meetings were conducted with almost 300 small businesses as part of a two-day matchmaking event.

Heather Scherer, a MICC small business analyst at JBSA-Fort Sam Houston, said the combined APBI and matchmaking event contributed to the receipt of more than 100 capability statements from industry representatives.

These capability statements along with others received throughout the year are uploaded into a MICC database for easy access by contracting professionals.

"This becomes a quick reference guide when conducting initial market research. Our goal and our mission are to ensure small businesses are provided maximum opportunities to participate in government contracts," Massie said. "We accomplish that goal through events like our APBI and matchmaking.

These events allow small businesses to discuss capabilities with not only our small business professionals but also contracting officers and some mission partners who participate."

In fiscal 2021, MICC contracting professionals executed more than 27,000 contract actions valued at \$5.2 billion in support of installation support services, facilities maintenance and sustainment, logistics, and range and mission support services for the Army enterprise across the continental United States. This included more than \$2.6 billion to American small businesses allowing the MICC to achieve its small business goals for the seventh consecutive year.

As planners for the 2022 APBI continue their efforts to finalize the agenda for the industry outreach event, small and large industry representatives can follow any updates posted to <https://sam.gov> and register when available.



# METC instructor aids car crash victims

By Lisa Braun

MEDICAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING CAMPUS  
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Tech. Sgt. Jessica Lazaro, her husband and two small children were driving along the outer loop of South 1604 the night of Oct. 17 when they passed an accident scene on the side of the rural road.

“We drove past some traffic and I noticed one of the cars was pretty smashed up, so there had already been an accident that occurred and there was no EMS present,” Lazaro recalled.

Lazaro, an Air Force medical technician and instructor for the Air Force Aerospace Medical Services program at the Medical Education and Training Campus at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston felt uncomfortable just driving past the scene.

“Being there was no EMS and it looked like there was a pretty significant impact on the car that was on the shoulder of the road, I told my spouse I really think we should stop,” Lazaro said. “So, we turned around.”

After parking their vehicle on the shoulder and ensuring her children were safely asleep, Lazaro grabbed the gloves and first aid kit that she keeps in her car.

While her husband, a prior Air Force security forces specialist, used his cell phone to direct traffic away from the scene, Lazaro went to find the accident victims and began assessing their injuries.

“When I saw the victims, there was one 19-year old gentleman who was still inside the car on the passenger seat. He was complaining of trouble breathing and having some chest discomfort,” Lazaro said.

She learned that he was actually the driver and his passengers were standing outside the vehicle still trying to reach 911 to report the accident. Lazaro immediately started to assess the young man for injuries, using his cell phone for a light source as she looked him over.

“I didn’t see any type of significant lacerations, no bleeding, nothing that would visually concern me as far as bleeds,” she said.

Lazaro continued her assessment with an examination of the patient’s chest and took his vital signs.

“His chest probably hit the steering wheel, but for whatever reason, the



LISA BRAUN

*Tech. Sgt. Jessica Lazaro, an instructor in the Air Force Aerospace Medical Service Apprentice program at the Medical Education and Training Campus at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston, talks to her class about her experience helping victims of a multiple car accident recently. Lazaro took the opportunity to make her experience a teachable moment for her students.*

airbags didn’t deploy,” she noted. “There was definitely significant impact to the car.”

The passengers, who Lazaro determined were not injured, were finally able to get through to 911 so Lazaro provided the patient’s vitals, his condition, and other information to the dispatcher. Although his vital signs and breathing were stable Lazaro noted that the patient was in shock.

While she was relaying the information to dispatch, another accident occurred right in front of her. A small car that had stopped directly across the road from the first accident scene was rear-ended by a large SUV that did not appear to slow down prior to the impact. The smaller car was sent spinning toward Lazaro and her patient but ended up landing in a ditch on the opposite side of the two-lane road.

The driver of the SUV immediately jumped out of his vehicle and began to walk around in a confused state. When Lazaro approached him she could smell alcohol and found alcoholic beverages in

**“When I saw the victims, there was one 19-year old gentleman who was still inside the car on the passenger seat. He was complaining of trouble breathing and having some chest discomfort.”**

**Tech. Sgt. Jessica Lazaro, Air Force medical technician and instructor for the Air Force Aerospace Medical Services program**

the car.

She walked him to another location where he could safely sit and wait for further assistance, then approached the occupants of the second vehicle, two teenagers.

“There was a 17-year-old female and

an 18-year-old male, and they were so very blessed.”

Lazaro said the teens had gotten out of the car by the time she reached them and began to assess their injuries.

“The female did not have a lot of injuries, nothing I could visually see on her after I assessed everything, and she was coherent. The 18-year-old was in shock, and he had one laceration on his head,” Lazaro said. “From what I could see and feel, it wasn’t a significant bleed. He was just completely stunned, but they were really fortunate.”

Lazaro emphasized that car accident safety procedures were followed, something she said she and her fellow instructors discuss with their students.

“I was able to get their car in park and took the keys out and did all the correct things.”

Lazaro said it’s important to get the car stabilized so it doesn’t move anywhere and get bystanders safely away from the situation, especially

METC INSTRUCTOR continues on 18

# LACKLAND

## Joint Personal Property Shipping Office undertakes ongoing beautification effort

By Jason Wilkinson

502ND AIR BASE WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Once a month, the Joint Personal Property Shipping Office tackles area beautification around the Joint Base San Antonio-Kelly Field outpost. The program is headed by Staff Sgt. Darlinda Wright, storage management supervisor, JPPSO-South Central/Det. 3.

Volunteers meet once a month from the JPPSO office, to make an impact larger than one might expect from the smaller unit.

Volunteers meet once a month from the JPPSO office, to make an impact larger than one might expect from the smaller unit.

"We want to help the city of San Antonio with beautification around the base," Wright said. "We want to give back to the community that has been so good to us."

The program got its start when the JPPSO first sergeant, Master Sgt. Jewell Allen, was driving onto base, and noticed the area could use some help.

"He wanted us to be a part of the community, and he wanted us to make sure we were doing our part," Wright said. "Looking forward, I would love to get others to expand this effort."

The program has existed for about a year, with Wright leading the effort since July. She says that while the effort helps the community, there are also considerable benefits to the JPPSO team.

"Because of COVID-19, it's been hard to do group gatherings," Wright said. "But it's easy for us because we are outside and we can social distance."

Wright says it brings the team together for a chance to interact with people they might not see that often during the day.

"It's just a challenge to really get out, and interact with your people during the day," Wright said. "We're very busy with phone calls and emails from customers, dealing with the booking or tracking of shipments ... the majority of our day is spent inside of our cubicles."

Wright also sees the program as a way for the more experienced military



JASON WILKINSON

*Members of the Joint Personal Property Shipping Office complete an area beautification at Joint Base San Antonio-Kelly Field Nov. 19. The JPPSO staff focus on beautification efforts to give back to the community and present a positive military image.*

to mentor some of the newer Airmen.

"They're still learning the dynamics of being in the military, and they might be a little shy," Wright said. "It's good for them to meet people outside of their section and build that camaraderie."

Wright also thinks it is important that the military in San Antonio project as positive an image as possible.

"How well you take care of your work area is sometimes the first impression people may see of you," Wright said. "It shows a sense of pride you take in your work and in the mission."

**"We want to help the city of San Antonio with beautification around the base. We want to give back to the community that has been so good to us."**

Staff Sgt. Darlinda Wright,  
storage management supervisor,  
JPPSO-South Central/Det. 3



# San Antonio Market transitions to new electronic health record system

59th Medical Wing Public Affairs

On Jan. 22, 2022, the San Antonio market will be deploying a new electronic health record system called MHS GENESIS. This system will be a significant improvement in our ability to care for you across the entire continuum of care.

As with any new technology, it will take time for our healthcare professionals to learn how to implement and navigate the system.

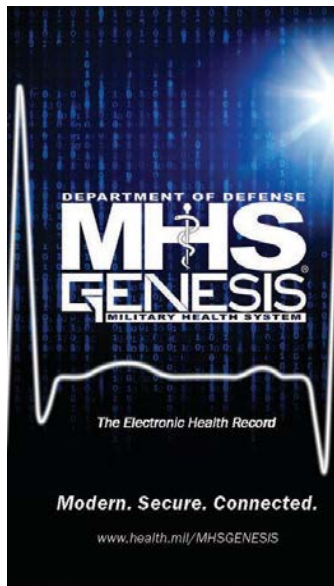
This focus on training will significantly decrease the number of available appointments and will result in longer than routine wait times for appointments and for services such as pharmacy, labs and radiology. We anticipate the most significant impact to be in January 2022, as we ramp up for implementation, and February, as we overcome some of the hurdles after implementation.

In the meantime, if you are in need of a primary or specialty care appointment between December and January, make your appointment soon to avoid delays during the MHS GENESIS transition.

Contact your Primary Care Team to issue prescription refills as needed or look into using the mail-order pharmacy service (<https://www.tricare.mil/homedelivery>), which includes convenient home delivery.

Additionally, we have partnered with our Managed Care Support Contractor (Humana Military) to assist us in providing as much access to care as possible. They have developed a team of preferred community-based Urgent Care Centers and Primary Care providers you can access during the months of January and February, without a referral, for any acute, urgent, or episodic care needs.

The Consult Appointment Management Office, or CAMO, will serve as your one-stop contact for



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same-day appointments, if available, or for assistance with authorized network care. Call 210-916-9900.

Please keep in mind that a referral is still needed for specialty care that's been deferred to the network.

During this time of transition, and to ensure better continuity, we ask that you continue to book your follow-ups for chronic or complex care needs and for health maintenance (i.e. preventive screening) in your assigned military primary care clinic.

We will be assessing the situation daily and will open additional appointments as able throughout implementation. We appreciate your patience as we work to improve our ability to coordinate and provide care for you!

For more information, visit <https://www.health.mil/Military-Health-Topics/MHS-Transformation/MHS-GENESIS>.

# AFIMSC helps Afghan civilians start new lives

By Mark Kinkade

AIR FORCE INSTALLATION AND MISSION  
SUPPORT CENTER PUBLIC AFFAIRS

On an early Friday morning in late August, three Air Force Civil Engineer Center project managers met in a conference room at Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida, to help 25,000 people start a new life.

Wayland Patterson, chief of AFCEC's Air Force Contract Augmentation Program, and his team didn't have much to go on. They knew it probably involved Afghanistan, but this tasking was vague — bed-down a lot of people at yet-to-be-determined facilities for an unknown period of time.

"We placed ourselves in the position of a person who had scaled the wall at Kabul Airport with just the clothes on their back," Patterson said. "We surmised the worst situation they could be facing. They had nothing."

The result: a \$267 million "wraparound support" contract to provide services that a small city of people suddenly transported halfway around the world might need, including water, food, shelter, toilets, hygiene supplies and more, Patterson said.

From those early urgent meetings in a conference room to the current steady operations at two host installations, teams from across the Air Force Installation and Mission Support Center have played a key role in Operation Allies Welcome, the evacuation and resettlement of thousands of Afghans and other civilians from Afghanistan, said Col. Bradley Johnson, AFCEC vice commander and lead for the CE center's response.

"This has been a massive effort to move, house and support thousands of people in a very short time," Johnson said. "Our first priority was supporting the installations, then the joint task forces that took over the operations. And throughout everything we're doing, we know there are people counting on us to help them. That's a powerful incentive."

For James Garred, the incentive to help drove his team's effort to turn the AFCAP requirement from idea to award in a matter of hours. Working with AFCEC and the host installations, Garred and Carolina



SPC. NICHOLAS GOODMAN

*Airmen assigned to Task Force-Holloman smooth fresh concrete in a newly poured recreational area for Afghan evacuees on Holloman Air Force Base, New Mexico, Sept. 24.*

Brost, a 772nd Enterprise Sourcing Squadron contracting officer, awarded the AFCAP contract to support up to 13,000 people at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, New Jersey, and up to 5,000 at Holloman Air Force Base, New Mexico. The contract also helped reconstitute operations at Ramstein Air Base, Germany, where the Air Force hosted about 4,500 Afghans and other civilians in the early days of the operation.

"Seeing the pictures of the Afghans holding on to an aircraft leaving Kabul was heartbreaking to me," Garred said. "I had much empathy for the Afghans who supported our American troops during the 20-year Afghan conflict."

Identifying installations to host Afghans and other civilians was the first step, Johnson said. AFIMSC's Installation Support Directorate supported early analysis for potential host installations, and AFIMSC detachments were key links between the major commands, installations and AFIMSC.

With potential locations identified, a team of AFCEC real estate experts worked with those installations to make sure the land could be used for relief operations. Then the AFCEC National Environmental Policy Act team launched required environmental assessments at JBMDL,

Holloman Air Force Base and Goodfellow Air Force Base, Texas.

NEPA Project Manager Erik Waldrip had been with AFCEC for about a month when he got the call to lead the environmental assessment at Holloman. The results, he said, have been rewarding.

"You often get to see your efforts come to fruition in a project several years later as an engineer," he said. "The impact of the project is rarely of such importance or so immediate."

AFCEC also helped installation commanders solve issues as they adjusted to the needs of the steady flow of people arriving at their bases, said Lt. Col. Brandon Rocker, Future Operations Branch chief with AFCEC's National Disaster Recovery Directorate at Tyndall.

"There was a lot of unique infrastructure and bed-down needs," Rocker said. "Some things we didn't anticipate, because we simply didn't know what to expect. Others were a little more in our wheelhouse and we had the tools to get after it."

For example, the influx of people into Holloman meant the base needed more electricity from the nearby Alamogordo power grid. To compensate, the AFCEC Civil Engineer Maintenance Inspection and Repair Team pulled generators from the installation's bare-base

preparation kits, prepped transformers and developed a hybrid solution to reduce the draw on the grid.

"We're engineers, and that's what we do," Rocker said. "We work with installation engineers on the ground to tailor solutions to each installation."

The Air Force Security Forces Center also stepped in to provide security infrastructure and logistical support. The Security Forces Logistics Detail team at AFSFC's Desert Defender Ground Combat Center at Fort Bliss, Texas, postured more than \$11 million in installation base defense capability sets and coordinated a convoy with three other agencies to transport the equipment to Holloman and JBMDL in four round-trip movements, said Lt. Col. Christopher Thompson, Desert Defender commander.

"The LOGDET team was up against grim odds to get the cargo trucks in such a time as needed due to location and other limiting factors," Thompson said. "They had to think outside the box from typical deployment operations for them and look within Desert Defender."

OAW is ongoing and while the need for innovative solutions will likely continue, Rocker's future operations team is already preparing for the next emergent response, he said.

"We may never have another situation exactly like this," Rocker said, "but we will probably see another short-notice requirement and the information we collect will help the next team succeed."

In the meantime, some who were part of the AFIMSC effort take their lessons learned from the faces of the Afghans who are now safely in the United States. Garred, for example, got to see the impact of the Air Force's effort firsthand during a trip to Holloman in late September.

"I loved seeing the Afghan kids playing and loving to chase after bubbles," Garred said. "I was touched by how many of the kids would give me fist pumps and many of the Afghan men would tap their chests as a way of thank you. It is my hope and prayer they get acclimated to American life and become happy, peaceful and productive members of our society."



# RANDOLPH

## Applications for Spring '22 Rated Prep Program now accepted

By Capt. Kenya Pettway

AIR EDUCATION AND TRAINING COMMAND  
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Active duty Air Force officers and enlisted personnel interested in becoming rated officers have until Dec. 31 to apply for the Spring 2022 Air Force Rated Preparatory Program, or RPP, scheduled for March 20-25, 2022, and March 27-April 1, 2022 in Denton, Texas.

U.S. Air Force rated career fields consist of pilots, combat systems officers, air battle managers and remotely piloted aircraft pilots.

RPP provides qualified Airmen interested in cross-training to an Air Force rated career field the opportunity to gain and strengthen basic aviation skills.

“The Rated Preparatory Program provides a unique opportunity for officers and enlisted personnel to become rated officers,” said Brig. Gen. Brenda P. Cartier, AETC director of operations and communications. “Through RPP, qualified Airmen gain skills they may have not had the opportunity or resources to gain before entering the Air Force. We want to provide our Airmen the tools to pursue their lifelong dream of flying in the Air Force — a dream they may have never thought possible.”

Program participants will receive self-paced ground training, about eight flight hours in a Civil Air Patrol Cessna 182 Skylane, and additional training in FAA-certified simulators — helping them become more competitive for rated selection boards.

“RPP has proven successful in improving students’ Air Force Officer Qualifying Test and Test of Basic Aviation Skills scores, which are considered at rated selection boards, by about 40 percent,” said Kathryn Gifford, AETC rated diversity improvement program analyst. “Of the 93 RPP students trained in fiscal years 19 and 20, 70 applied to the undergraduate flying training board, with 55 (78%) of



# RATED PREPARATORY PROGRAM APPLY TODAY!

## HAVE LITTLE OR NO EXPERIENCE BUT WANT TO FLY FOR THE AIR FORCE?

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applicants selected for a rated position.”

Airmen who can meet the requirements below are encouraged to apply.

- ▶ Officer requirements:
- ▶ Be of high moral character.
- ▶ Obtain group commander (or higher) approval and endorsement (on application).
- ▶ Score at least minimum passing for the Air Force physical fitness test.
- ▶ Take the AFOQT and TBAS to receive Pilot Candidate Selection Method initial scoring results prior to RPP. Then, retake the AFOQT and TBAS two-four weeks after completion of RPP. Note: The AFOQT and TBAS cannot be attempted more than three times total. RPP officials will provide an exception to policy for RPP graduates who require a waiver for retest intervals, and for those who have tested

twice already.

- ▶ Have less than five hours of total civilian flight time. Note: Applicants with greater than five hours of flight time will be considered on a space-available basis.
- ▶ Prior to attending RPP, obtain the appropriate Air Force flight physical specific to the rated carrier field. For example, Initial Flying Class 1 for pilots.
- ▶ Meet UFT board requirements post RPP in accordance with AFMAN 36-2100.
- ▶ Review Civil Air Patrol-assigned study material prior to class start date.
- ▶ Enlisted personnel requirements:
- ▶ Must be under 33 years of age on March 20, 2022.
- ▶ Prior to attending RPP, have or obtain a bachelor’s degree from an accredited university with at least a 2.5 GPA.

- ▶ After completion of RPP, apply to an Air Force officer commissioning source at the next available opportunity.

Airmen interested in applying to the program can find additional information via the call for nominations on MyPers.

For any questions, e-mail AF.Rated.PrepProgramWorkflow@us.af.mil with “Attn: Rated Prep Program” as the subject line.

The Air Force Rated Preparatory Program is led by Air Education & Training Command’s Rated Diversity Improvement Team, headquartered at Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph, Texas, and supported by Civil Air Patrol.

*Note: RPP is not a commissioning program, nor does it guarantee participants will be selected for an Air Force rated position.*

## METC INSTRUCTOR

### From page 11

when traffic is not yet controlled as was the case that night.

EMS arrived while Lazaro was assessing the second accident victim. Once she finished, she briefed the paramedics and turned the patients over to them.

Looking back on that night, Lazaro was satisfied with the care she provided to the victims in the first and second car accidents, but there was one aspect that she still has anxiety about. The safety of her children.

“It’s a huge thing to highlight because I think it’s probably the biggest part of the night for me.”

Lazaro said that she tries to not stop when she has her children in the car, especially when she’s alone.

“I had my spouse and he was able to stay with our car that was parked between another bystander’s car and the first accident,” she said. “Of course,

when the second accident happened my immediate response before I ran to anybody or did anything, was to yell to my husband to get them (the kids) out of here, to go move my car. He took them to the parking lot of a nearby gas station.

“Walking away from that night, as honorable and great as I felt to help people, I was glad I was there,” Lazaro added. “But I walked away with so much anxiety because I feel 100 percent confident that if the (suspected) drunk driver would have been approaching from the other direction it would have been my children in the car he would have smashed into. So that absolutely scared the life out of me. I was shaken for the rest of the night. That was my big takeaway.”

Ironically, Lazaro was a first responder in another accident that occurred almost a year ago on Christmas morning. That accident happened just two houses down from her home,

right after her kids opened their presents.

“We literally just finished unwrapping presents, and then I looked outside and there it was, all the commotion of a few people and the whole accident happening.”

A young woman and two small kids had flipped their 4-wheeler and crashed into a fence. Because the area firefighters are all-volunteer, Lazaro interacted with the EMS crew and assisted with getting the patients onto Life Flight and ground transports.

Fortunately for all those involved, Lazaro has been at the right place at the right time. Despite some of the safety risks, Lazaro said she wouldn’t hesitate to help if needed. “I would absolutely do it again. I believe it’s a great thing to be able to help.

“But,” she added, “I think it’s important to consider the safety piece because you never know when a second incident might happen.”