

# Bluegrass Guard



Vol. 21, Issue 2 - July 2018

Serving the men and women of Kentucky's Army and Air National Guard

**PACK  
LEADER**

**KENTUCKY'S  
BEST WARRIOR  
DRIVES ON**



**BACK TO  
ECUADOR**  
p. 12

**ONE SIMPLE  
MOVEMENT  
TO GREATER  
STRENGTH**

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# AROUND THE GUARD

## AND IN OUR PAGES



ON THE COVER - Sgt. Jordy Brewer, 1st Battalion, 149th Infantry leads the pack during the ruck march portion of the Region III Best Warrior Competition in Tullahoma, Tenn., April 26. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Adam Riens)



**75th TC** - Sgt. Jordy Brewer with the 1st Battalion, 149th Infantry was named Kentucky's NCO of the Year for 2018. He followed that up with the same title in the National Guard Region III Best Warrior Competition in Tennessee in April. Two weeks earlier, Brewer represented Kentucky in the U.S. Army Best Warrior Competition at Fort Benning, Ga. He will compete for the national title of NCO of the Year at the National Guard Best Warrior at Fort Indiantown Gap, Pa., in July.



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## BLUEGRASS GUARD

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**JFHQ** - Kentucky Guardsmen, families and Veterans commemorated Memorial Day with a ceremony at the Kentucky National Guard Memorial in Frankfort, Ky., May 28. Fourteen names were added to the monument bringing the total to 269 Kentuckians who have fallen in the line of duty since 1912.



**238th RTI** - Lt. Col. Frederick Bates receives the colors of the 238th Regiment from Col. Jeffrey Casada during a change of command ceremony in Greenville, Ky., May 20.



**138th FAB** - The 138th Field Artillery Brigade recently participated in Dynamic Front 18 Training Exercise in Grafenwoehr, Germany. The exercise focused on U.S., NATO and multinational units working together to test interoperability in theater-level fires operations. *Read more on page 8.*



**123rd AW** - Family members of Joyce Gordon, state judge advocate for Headquarters, Kentucky Air National Guard, pin colonel rank insignia to her uniform during a promotion ceremony April 14.



**63rd TAB** - A Soldier with Det. 4, Charlie Co., 2nd Battalion, 245th Aviation carries his gear to a C-12 Huron prior to departing Frankfort, Ky., March 16. Members of the unit trained in Fort Bliss, Texas prior to deploying to the Middle East.



**149th MEB** - Soldiers from the 198th Military Police Battalion patrol the streets along with the Louisville Metro Police in Louisville, Ky., April 21 for Thunder Over Louisville.

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# MCP-OD DEPLOYS

## GUARDSMEN TEAM UP WITH ACTIVE DUTY

Story by Spc. Alan Royalty; photos by Sgt. 1st Class Scott Raymond

Kentucky National Guardsmen assigned to the Main Command Post—Operational Detachment (MCP-OD), 101st Airborne Division, conducted Eagle Talon II, a comprehensive deployment simulation, alongside active duty Soldiers at Fort Campbell, Ky., Jan. 2-12, 2018.

Eagle Talon II marks the latest chapter of partnership between the Kentucky National Guard and the 101st.

MCP-ODs result from a unique Department of Defense directive to augment and assist active duty units with high-caliber Guardsmen during training exercises and on deployments. The additional personnel and skillsets are critical as changes in Army force structure have reduced the availability of division staff.

While this served as annual training for the Guardsmen, Eagle Talon II also prepares both MCP-OD and 101st Soldiers for an upcoming warfighter exercise, leading into deployment overseas.

Lt. Col. Tom Roach, commander of the MCP-OD, regularly coordinates with the division headquarters to organize and conduct training exercises that accurately simulate the demands and expectations of every Soldier while on deployment.

“The division staff has worked to maximize our training opportunity and it has paid off,” said Roach. “By look, conduct, and professionalism, the team is indistinguishable between Active and Guard.”

Kentucky Guardsmen come to the 101st equipped with training and knowledge from a variety of military occupational specialties. In addition to their Army expertise, Guardsmen also bring a wealth of valuable skills and insight from their civilian jobs.

“Guard Soldiers have a lot of job experience in the civilian world,” said Spc. Nicholas Krug, a help desk technician with the Signal, Intelligence and Sustainment Company, Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion, 101st Airborne Division.

Having never trained with National Guardsmen prior to Eagle Talon II, Krug said he now appreciates the advantages of a Soldier who also lives a civilian life.

“They bring that knowledge in here and it really helps out,” he said.

Eagle Talon II included training opportunities on conducting battle damage assessments, erecting security measures, installing communication wiring, and collaborating with division headquarters to accomplish additional mission goals.

Members of the 101st MCP-OD deployed to Afghanistan in March alongside the 101st Airborne Division for a scheduled year-long tour.

Kentucky’s MCP-OD is one of 13 such units across the National Guard, each associated with an active duty Army command.

READ FULL STORY AT [KENTUCKYGUARD.COM](http://KENTUCKYGUARD.COM)



Soldiers with the 101st Main Command Post - Operational Detachment are honored during a departure ceremony in Louisville, Ky., Feb. 19.

### LETTER TO EDITOR POLICY

*The Bluegrass Guard values opinions*

To comment, keep remarks under 150 words, include your name, rank and address and send them to:

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E-Mail [PAO@kentuckyguard.com](mailto:PAO@kentuckyguard.com)

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We reserve the right to edit letters for tone, length, clarity and factual accuracy.

### CHANGE OF ADDRESS

*Don't miss an issue*

All change of address requests should be made by the unit clerk using RCAS for all current Army or Air National Guardsmen. The Bluegrass Guard is mailed out via alert roster addresses at the unit level.

Army Retiree address changes should be made through the Kentucky National Guard Personnel Services Branch at 502-607-1497.

Air Retirees should request changes through retired Chief Master Sgt. James Turpin at [jturpin1945@gmail.com](mailto:jturpin1945@gmail.com).



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# WIFE OF “TEAM BROOKINS” NAMED NATIONAL GUARD SPOUSE OF THE YEAR

Story by Sgt. 1st Class Rebecca Wood; photos by Military Spouse magazine

Visit Bowman Field Readiness Center in Louisville, Kentucky and it won't be long before you hear about “Team Brookins.” Sgt. First Class Darrell Brookins, the senior human resources noncommissioned officer of the 198th Military Police Battalion and his wife of 18 years, Shelia Brookins, are known as “Team Brookins,” for their big personalities and volunteering.

“We call ourselves “Team Brookins,” said Darrell with a laugh, “and that is what we do – we volunteer. She is always right there with me. We truly believe volunteering betters the individual, it betters the family. It's just so important.”

Earlier this spring, Shelia was named Military Spouse of the Year for the National Guard by Military Spouse magazine.

Darrell is currently the president and serves as a chaplain of the Enlisted Army National Guard Association (EANGUS). He has volunteered with Job Corps and also coaches children's basketball, but he still points to Shelia as the standard of a perfect volunteer.

“This title is perfect for her. She does so much for so many people and our family as a whole,” said Darrell. “I am the good idea fairy in Team Brookins, but she is the one who makes it happen.”

Shelia has an extensive resume of making it happen. She has volunteered in churches all her life, assisted women in Job



Corps prepare for interviews, earned the title “team mom” in all six of her children's schools and extracurricular activities, currently serves as president and a chaplain of the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of Kentucky Auxiliary and has assisted National Guard families in some capacity for more than nine years. That's just the tip of the iceberg.

Darrell said he wanted to somehow recognize her publicly for all the amazing work she has done for people and so he and the 2017 Kentucky National Guard Spouse of the Year, Robin Pruitt, nominated Shelia for the 2018 title. “When we were filling out the application and I saw everything that she has done right there on paper, I knew she was going to win.”

On May 10, 2018, Shelia was recognized in Washington, D.C. for her service to her family and the National Guard when she received the 2018 National Guard Spouse of the Year Award.

Shelia was in awe at the support she received from her surrounding community and National Guard family.

“It's just so unreal,” said Shelia, during a phone interview. “People I haven't seen in five, 10 or 15 years came out of nowhere and publicly supported and voted for me. As a family assistance center specialist and when I worked as a family readiness support assistant, a lot of the work I did was confidential and for people in hard times. You just have to know you have done the right thing and have made a difference. [Receiving this award] and seeing their recognition and support shows me all of that work didn't go unnoticed.”

Shelia said she wants to use this award as a platform to encourage other military spouses to volunteer in their Guard family program and/or in the community.

READ FULL STORY AT [KENTUCKYGUARD.COM](http://KENTUCKYGUARD.COM)



## DID YOU KNOW?

When your **marital** status or the number of **children** you have changes, you need to update both the DEERS system and IPERMS through your readiness NCO. The systems do not talk to each other.



## THE PERFECT AIR SQUAT

by  
Staff Sgt. Johnny Martinez

CROSSFIT  
COVALENCE

The air squat is the most basic and fundamental of all the movements we teach. Everyone needs this skill to stay mobile and strengthen their legs. It helps with simple movements like sitting down or getting out of bed, to the more complex movements like a sub 7 min mile or climbing a steep hill. Most people that train the squat make the mistake of using machines. Free weights allow your body to compensate where muscles may be weak, making free weights more beneficial as it makes the squat a full body movement. Machines limit to a single or small group of muscles.

Air squats or bodyweight squats strengthen the thighs, calves, hamstrings and glutes.

Squats will not burn too many calories, but strength training exercises indirectly help you lose fat. So work air squats into your workout routines for lower body strength. Add a number of air squats or jumping air squats to interval training.

*Martinez serves as an infantryman with the 1st Battalion, 149th Infantry. He owns and coaches CrossFit Covalence in Louisville, Ky. For the last 9 years he has been dedicated to bettering his own fitness but also the health of the Louisville community.*

### 7 Steps to the PERFECT Air Squat

- 1) Set feet under your shoulders (a little wider than the hips but not outside the shoulders).
- 2) Before lowering, take a deep breath and keep your eyes on the horizon.
- 3) As you lower, keep your weight evenly balanced throughout the mid to rear of your feet.
- 4) Maintain a flat back with your torso upright through all of the descent.
- 5) Lower all the way down until the crease of your hip is below the top of your knee.
- 6) Now rise, standing up tall.
- 7) Repeat.



# KENTUCKY GUARDSMEN ATTACK FITNESS

By Staff Sgt. Benjamin Crane

Soldiers from across the state got the chance to learn a total fitness experience during the AXE fitness camp Apr. 19-22.

Defined, AXE stands for Attack Exercise through Education and that is what the camp aimed to provide the 30 plus Soldiers who were invited to attend the four-day event at Boone National Guard Center.

The cadre were brought together by Lt. Col. Eddie Simpson, camp officer in charge and 1st Battalion, 149th Infantry commander, based on their diverse background in the fitness world and CrossFit with several of them owning their own CrossFit gyms or being their unit's Master Fitness Trainers.

"We are here to educate them on fitness, how to work out, how to eat right, how to have resiliency, set goals for themselves and take what they've learned, leave the camp and be successful on their own," said Simpson.

One of the goals for the leadership was to keep the Soldiers motivated and create a little more relaxed environment than a typical military school. This was accomplished by having the cadre wear t-shirts and no one having their rank displayed.

With several of the campers attending due to lower levels of physical fitness readiness, the camp leadership could not overstate the importance of the camp.

Campers were taught correct lifting, squatting and running techniques as well as in-depth nutritional information in a classroom setting each day but then broke out into small groups of 5 to 6 to get the hands-on experience and more personalized instruction by the cadre. After each day of instruction, the class would come together to compete in a workout of the day and really put into practice the techniques they had been instructed on.

At the end of day two, the cadre took the campers to CrossFit Frankfort to experience firsthand how a local CrossFit affiliate operated.

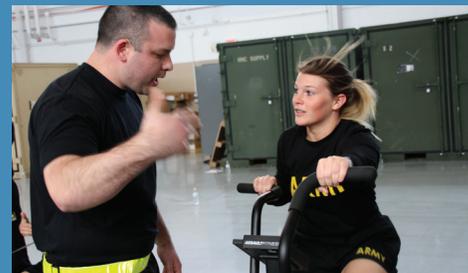
But the instruction that was given will be information the Soldiers can even use without a gym to be successfully fit.

"Not every Soldier has the capability to go workout all the time, so if we give them the basic tools for them to go out and do fitness with little or no equipment and prepare themselves to be a well rounded Soldier, the intent of the camp will be met," said Master Sgt. Jay Taheny, AXE Camp non-commissioned officer in charge and a Master Fitness Trainer with Kentucky's Recruiting & Retention Battalion. "But the standard is passing the PT test, so we still teach them how to run, do sit-ups and pushups properly."

Expectations for the camp were mixed for both participants and the Cadre at the outset of the camp.

"Our expectations coming into this were really unknown," said Taheny. "The Soldiers came in a little wide eyed and scared thinking this was going to be a four day smoke session, but at the end of the day everyone had settled in and they were very much at ease in the small group instruction. And the cadre were phenomenal in the way they delivered instruction."

[READ FULL STORY AT KENTUCKYGUARD.COM](http://kentuckyguard.com)





# 138TH COMPLETES DYNAMIC FRONT TRAINING EXERCISE

By Capt. Gus Lafontaine

“When faced with a challenge, you hit them head on and figure out the solution.”

Those were the words of Lt. Col. Mike Woodson, training officer for the 138th Field Artillery Brigade, as he reflected on Dynamic Front 18. Soldiers of the 138th participated in the training exercise in Grafenwoehr, Germany Feb. 23 - March 10. Brig. Gen. Scott Campbell visited the 138th March 8, to recognize the performance of the Soldiers who, when faced with a challenge, hit it head on and figured out the solution.

Two of the Soldiers recognized by Campbell had key roles in improving processes that led to quicker, more efficient fire missions. Sergeant William Wickstrom identified one of the first challenges they faced during Dynamic Front. “We were not designated any air control whatsoever for this exercise.”

Influencing the use of air space is important as field artillery operators fire artillery rounds that can reach altitudes higher than commercial airliners.

First Lt. Cody McMillen expanded, “the

biggest challenge we faced in the beginning was working with our Air Force counterparts. We had to figure out a solution on how to share and clear the air space with them so that we could be quick and effective on the battlefield.

He added, “it was a challenge to come to terms and agreement with each other, however with a lot of coaching from our Observer, Coach, Trainer (OCT) as well as a lot of assistance from our Air Force liaison from the Kentucky Air Guard, Lt. Col. [Ash] Groves, we were able to sit down and figure out the best solution.”

The teamwork paid off. “When we implemented our practices, our times for firing and counterfiring were drastically cut,” said Wickstrom.

According to Brigade Commander, Col. Dennis Hawthorne, Soldiers like Wickstrom and McMillen played an integral role in the success of this training exercise. “These Soldiers not only provide the leadership and professional understanding in their specialized fields, but also challenged fellow team

members to improve their proficiency. Their dedication is just one example of how Soldiers in the 138th stepped up to the challenge of working in a multinational environment.”

Woodson reflected on the benefit of participating in the joint exercise, “conducting a multinational exercise is something that we don’t do very often. This exercise allowed us to gain a better understanding of how we would fight under a NATO corps.”

Although the NATO training mission concluded last week, the 138th will soon begin preparing for their next warfighter exercise in 2019.

Hawthorne concluded, “the successful completion of this training exercise not only prepares us for any possible future mission, but also highlights some items to focus on for our next warfighter in 2019. The integration and interoperability lessons learned at both individual and unit level has greatly enhanced our readiness.”



# ARMY & AIR TOGETHER IN DYNAMIC FRONT

*Story by Capt. Gus Lafontaine*

Lt. Col. Ash Groves has been an Airman for 21 years. He was a member of the United States Air Force from 1998-2005 whereupon he joined the Kentucky Air National Guard. During his time in the Air Guard he's held a wide variety of positions. However, Groves recently found himself serving in a position he'd never served in before.

He was attached to the 138th Field Artillery Brigade as a Liaison Officer during Dynamic Front 18, a multinational field artillery training exercise held in Grafenwoer, Germany. Groves was the lone Airman among a formation of more than 100 Kentucky Army National Guard Artillerymen.

Groves' inclusion in the training exercise was by a specific request of 138th Field Artillery Brigade Commander, Col. Dennis Hawthorne. "The addition of Lt. Col. Groves to the mission provided the basic level of joint integration of fires, both ground and air. His knowledge and experience in the Kentucky Air National Guard provided a level of proficiency to the 138th that we identified as a priority prior to the training exercise," said Hawthorne.

Groves brought his skills to the Dynamic Front exercise. "I think the way the Airmen that are participating in this exercise do. For example, an Airman might say 'we own the air space.' That's always going to be the answer from an Airman. In reality, it's common use air space. Airmen and Soldiers have to work together to find the best way to manage that common use air space."

Airspace management is a critical component to field artillery operations because field artillery munitions can travel thousands of feet high in altitude.

His expertise was cited as a key contribution by his 138th counterparts. First Lt. Cody McMillen cited Groves as a key contributor to increasing the speed of fires missions during Dynamic Front.

Speaking of the Air Force's role in controlling air space during the training exercise, McMillen said, "It was a challenge to come to terms and agreement with each other, however with a lot assistance from our Air Force liaison, [Lt. Col. Groves], we were able to sit down and figure out the best solution."

Groves sees a bigger picture to the benefits of Kentucky Airmen and Soldiers training together. "We're a joint state. It seems to me that very few of us understand what the other one does or even what capabilities they have. We need to understand that we're not so



dissimilar. We can compliment each other."

Hawthorne agreed, "Not only does this opportunity of collaborative training provide greater training proficiency, but enhances the understanding of what both services bring to the fight." Groves felt the experience was mutually beneficial.

"I enjoy bringing the air perspective to the Army formation. I enjoy what the Army brings to me. The Army will think of things from a different angle than I do. A lot of times their solution and my solution is combined to create a better solution than I would have come up with by myself."

His experience has also increased his confidence in both fighting forces. "Having worked with Army and Air officers, enlisted service members senior and junior, all the way down to the E1, I can say that there's some really good, talented people in the Kentucky National Guard. Without a doubt, hands down, if I had to go into a fight tonight I know where I'd want to be."

Groves feels strongly that his experience can be expanded to include more Kentucky Guardsmen. "The sky's the limit on the potential here. We've got to have leaders on both sides that find those niches that can be filled with Soldiers or Airmen during training events. This is how the Kentucky National Guard will become the best version of itself." 🇺🇸



Left: Spc. Justin Stinnett (left) and Spc. Casey Brandle (far right) share a photo op with David Hamilton in Owensboro, Ky., March 19. Stinnett and Brandle are credited with saving Hamilton from an auto accident in flood waters in Owensboro Feb. 27.

# SELFLESS SERVICE DRIVES SOLDIERS TO HEROIC RESCUE

Story by Staff Sgt. Scott Raymond; photo above by Sgt. Brooklynd Decker

A pair of Kentucky Guardsmen are being hailed as heroes after saving the life of an elderly man Feb. 27 in Owensboro, Ky.

Spcs. Casey Brandle and Justin Stinnett, both with the 206th Engineer Battalion, are credited with pulling 87-year-old David Hamilton from his vehicle after he lost control and drove into floodwaters, trapping him inside.

“The Army taught us Selfless Service,” said Stinnett. “And what was going through my mind was how Mr. Hamilton has a family and how we each have our own... and family always comes first. I’m just thankful that we were there at the time to be able to help.”

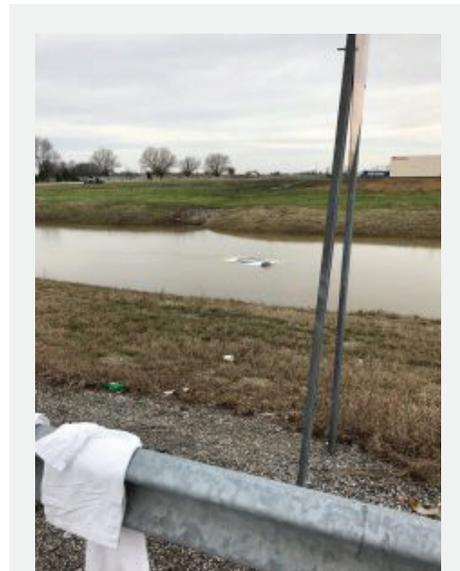
A Daviess County Sheriff’s Deputy reported that Hamilton lost control of his vehicle and plunged into the waters along a stretch of highway. The deputy witnessed Brandle and Stinnett “selflessly and without hesitation” jump into the water, swim to the vehicle and assist Hamilton out of the car and up the embankment where emergency personnel would arrive to care for him.

“We were on our way to the armory when we noticed the car drive off the road and into the flood water,” recalled Brandle. “We stopped to see if anyone needed assistance and we saw the car was sinking and someone on the inside trying to get out, so we jumped in to help.”

As the two Soldiers made it the vehicle,

Stinnett applied his weight to the rear of the car to keep it from nose diving more into the water, while Brandle pulled Hamilton from the driver’s side window.

“I’d say my military training helped me stay focused on what needed to be done, there was really no time to stop and think things through, we just acted,” Brandle said. “I didn’t think too much after hitting the water. It was just keep moving and don’t stop. Afterwards it



David Hamilton’s car rests submerged in flood waters off Southtown Boulevard in Owensboro, Ky., Feb. 27. Spcs. Casey Brandle and Justin Stinnett are credited with saving Hamilton from the sinking car following an auto accident, (Courtesy photo).

was a little surreal. I kept thinking ‘did that just happen?’”

Hamilton was treated by the deputy and EMTs who noted that he sustained no serious injuries. Hamilton paid a visit to the 206th armory in Owensboro March 19 to say thank you again to Brandle and Stinnett, and to honor the new friendship with a group photo.

“I might forget what happened that day, but I’ll never forget them,” said Hamilton. “They are heroes. And you don’t have to go to war to be a hero.”

Brandle serves the 206th Forward Support Company as a wheeled vehicle mechanic and Stinnett as an allied trade specialist. Both have been in the National Guard for six years.

First Lt. Marvin Lawrence, commander of the 206th FSC also called the Soldiers’ actions heroic with the type of “core morality we want for all our Soldiers in a crisis.”

“Their willingness to react and engage with their first thought being to save a life, while putting themselves in harm’s way is a selfless attitude that we should all strive to have,” said Lawrence.

Brandle and Stinnett both remain humble for the ordeal and are thankful everyone is alive and well to commemorate the experience. Stinnett said he joined the Guard to gain a greater understanding of what he wanted out of a career as a machinist and welder. February 27 taught him a lot more.

“It’s an honor to me having our actions considered heroic,” Stinnett said. “But, it’s one of those things that to me I feel as if anyone with a good heart would do the same. And I like to believe everyone else would have done the same.”

# KENTUCKY ENGINEERS NAMED **BEST** IN GUARD

Story by Stacy Floden; courtesy photos

There's a first time for everything and the saying has never rang more true for the 207th Engineer Company, as they were first time winners of the Itschner Award.

The Itschner Award goes to the most outstanding engineer unit in each component of the Army. Units are evaluated on mission planning and execution, professional development programs, retention, morale and welfare, safety programs, community relations, and their contribution to the image of the Corps of Engineers.

"As most Commanders do, I've told the unit countless times that they were the best and how proud of them I was," said Capt. Brian Ladd, commander of the 207th. "Being recognized by the Engineer Regiment as the best engineer unit in the National Guard for 2017, affirms that I meant what I said, and wasn't just being cliché or biased. This award is a testament to the quality of Soldiers we have, and the excellent leadership of our NCOs and officers."

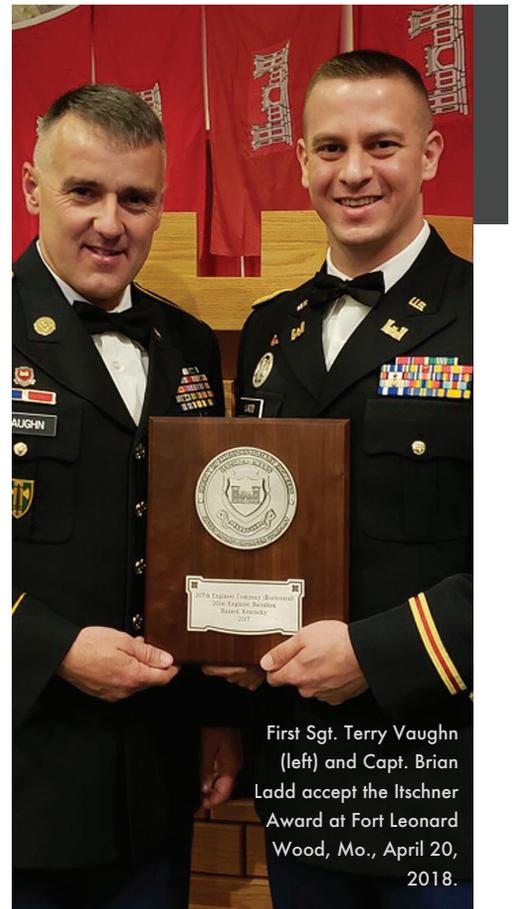
The 207th was deployed in 2017 to the U.S. Central Command Area of Responsibility to support the Over the Horizon engineer mission. While headquartered in Kuwait, the unit sent squad and platoon size elements to

conduct engineer construction missions at 22 forward operating bases in seven different countries throughout the Middle East.

The company's tremendous effort resulted in the completion of 44 major projects and over 100 work orders, valued at more than \$10 million. The intensive planning by leadership and efficient execution by the 207th led to producing high quality products being completed ahead of schedule and with no serious injuries to Soldiers.

"The 207th performed outstanding service during 2017 for the commonwealth and the nation. Their success while conducting a challenging mission in seven different countries throughout the U.S. Central Command Area of Responsibility is impressive," said Maj. Gen. Stephen Hogan, adjutant general for Kentucky. "Their unbridled spirit in their service to the nation is a strong example for all of us to emulate."

The Itschner Award, first awarded by the Society of American Military Engineers in 1960, is named in honor of Lt. Gen. Emerson C. Itschner. In 1974, the competition for the Itschner Award was broadened to include the Army National Guard and the Army Reserve.



First Sgt. Terry Vaughn (left) and Capt. Brian Ladd accept the Itschner Award at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., April 20, 2018.

The award is given annually to outstanding Army engineering units.

"Winning required a relentless determination, day in and day out," said Ladd. "Before the deployment, I told the unit during our departure ceremony, if you put forth your absolute best effort into every task you are assigned, there will be no obstacle we can't overcome, and no limit to what we can achieve."

The Soldiers answered this call beyond what I could have imagined. We created a culture where striving for perfection was the standard, and we all worked together towards that goal."

The unit conducted construction operations at 22 locations, across seven different countries, often relying on junior non-commissioned officers and commissioned officers to lead their teams and accomplish their mission with minimal oversight from the company and higher echelons. The Itschner award is evidence of the high standards of leadership, training, and readiness the Guard and 207th upholds at home and overseas.

This award is not a first in Kentucky however. The 201st Engineer Battalion, 1123rd Sapper Company and 206th Engineer Battalion have also received the award.





# KENTUCKY MAINTENANCE TEAM VISITS ECUADORIAN MILITARY

By Staff Sgt. Alexa Becerra

The Ecuadorian military hosted a team of Soldiers from the Kentucky National Guard recently during a military-to-military event through the State Partnership Program (SPP).

The event focused on vehicle maintenance procedures, involved Guardsman visiting maintenance shops at an Army base in the capital, Quito, and also a Marine base in Guayaquil, June 3-9.

The Kentucky National Guard has been partnered with Ecuador since 1996, and has collaborated in more than 70 missions in both countries.

The partnership is enhanced by conducting exchanges focusing on military and civilian best practices in areas which include: air and land forces interoperability, disaster management, professional development, engineering, aviation, medical support and communications.

“This trip re-establishes the partnership with the Ecuadorian military,” said Capt. Eric Green, 149th Brigade Support Battalion operations officer and Maneuver Area Training Equipment Site assistant superintendent. “Our focus was to assess the status of the Army and Marine maintenance and supply programs, while introducing them to new equipment and systems.”

With the SPP, the Ecuadorian military has the ability to purchase U.S. products through a Letter of Request.

“This visit means to revive cooperative relations between the military institutions of both countries regarding the aspects of doctrine, techniques, in the determination of needs and processes of obtaining the necessary spare parts and also the execution of the maintenance plan for the HMMWV vehicles,” said Lt. Col. Milton Sanchez, Ecuadorian Army Maintenance Battalion commander.

The Kentucky Guard maintenance team conducted training on preventative maintenance, plans, and shop procedures with the mechanics and leadership of the Logistics Command “Reino de Quito” Number 25.

“The support we receive when it comes to technical knowledge is extremely beneficial,” said Staff Sgt. Manuel Calvopina Soto, mechanic for the Ecuadorian Logistics Command. “Just for example, knowing we have the ability to restore several vehicles we thought were dead-lined assists us greatly, thanks to the team’s expertise.”

According to Maj. Jamie Carta, State Partnership Program Coordinator, cooperative training exercises such as this, and key leadership engagements help our Service Members learn from each



other and build lasting relationships that will continue to build our forces for the future.

“This visit was very productive because it allowed both our militaries to come together and determine a proper form of executing the maintenance and operability of our vehicles,” said Sanchez.

“The vision we have for this partnership is to become a model of cooperation between our military technical institutions that will allow the successful recovery of American tactical vehicles.”

The Guardsmen left confident in meeting the intent of their leadership to assess the Ecuadorian vehicle fleet and supply systems.

“I believe this trip helped to establish a sense of trust in our abilities and dedication to helping the Ecuadorian military,” said Green.

“Moving forward we hope to further strengthen the partnership with training opportunities in Ecuador and in Kentucky.”





# AIR GUARD TRAINS IRAQIS

By Staff Sgt. William Banton

In a small office space at Al Muthana Air Base, U.S. Air Force 370th Air Expeditionary Advisory Group air advisors and Iraqi airmen enjoy a small cup of tea together. Iraqi Air Force Col. Yossif Halo, the base air terminal operations center commander, sits with the team and casually highlights the familiarity he has with his American counterparts.

According to Halo, his airmen's confidence in their proven capabilities has only grown larger as the U.S. Air Force and Iraqi Air Force have begun to work closer together.

"To be honest, all the (U.S.) air advisors, before and now, are super good. They do an excellent job," Halo said. "Our relationship is going to get stronger with more training and more interaction."

April 2018, the joint training was put to the test when critical Iraqi equipment needed to be shipped back to the U.S. for routine service. The Iraqi aerial port technicians, along with 370th AEAG air advisor observers, who are part of the Coalition Aviation Advisory and Training Team, loaded three C-130J Super Hercules engines on to a U.S. Air Force aircraft. It was a cooperation that is rarely seen, according to the U.S. air advisors and is a sign of trust between partner nations.

"They drove those loaders as well as any of the U.S. Airmen do, straight up to the plane," said Capt. M. Luke Piro, a logistics readiness air advisor deployed from the 123rd Air Wing from the Louisville Air National Guard Base, Kentucky. "To see them involved and seeing them caring was a unique experience."

The C-130 flying the mission was a Kentucky Air National Guard aircraft, manned with Piro's home station Airmen.

The pre-existing relationship allowed the aerial porters and aircrew to instantly trust each other, Piro said. This trust quickly carried to the Iraqi airmen, after air advisors updated the aircrew loadmasters of the Iraqi capabilities. They had gained plenty of experience over the past few years before Iraq declared victory over the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria in December 2017.

An Iraqi Air Force aerial port technician said that the high tempo during the war with ISIS had Iraqi airmen working 24 hour days, seven days a week schedules and required them to load large objects and vehicles regularly.

Since ISIS's fall, the operational pace has slowed, allowing the Iraqis to work more closely with U.S. personnel. Refining their skills and building on the foundation of knowledge the Iraqis already had, the partnership has formed a gratifying relationship between advisors and advisees. The Iraqi airman said that the information they have been able to receive from the U.S. has allowed for greater efficiency and a safer work environment.

"You don't want to hurt yourself or the aircraft, so they are always teaching us about safety," the same airman said. "We were having a hard time understanding how to quickly get a vehicle inside of an aircraft but with the air advisors it became super easy for us."

Piro said that for his guys, who go over to Al Muthana Air Base every day, seeing the fruit of their efforts pay off with the recent mission, was very important and great to watch.

For many Iraqi airmen, the experience of working with U.S. Airmen has allowed them to take their gained knowledge back home to their family and friends.

"I'm from a country city outside of Baghdad, so when I go to visit my family, I'm farming and taking care of my land," the airman said. "Here (air advisors) are teaching me about the equipment and teaching me about safety. I take all this information back and try to teach my family (to be safe)."

In addition to family, conversations over tea often can be about sports, hobbies or other individual interests in addition to work, Halo explains. He hopes his unit's close relationship with the U.S. will continue so they can grow their skills and be ready for the future.

"There is no mimicking the U.S. Air Force," said Halo. "But we are trying, as much as we can, to reach the U.S. Air Force's standards."

# DERBY



By Staff Sgt. Benjamin Crane

As a record rainfall of nearly three inches fell, more than 157,000 spectators filled Churchill Downs for the 144th Kentucky Derby, May 5. Making sure the day was safe and organized were Soldiers of the Kentucky Army National Guard's 198th Military Police Battalion.

Roughly 200 MPs of the 198th augmented the Louisville Metro Police and Churchill Downs in providing security, directing traffic and crowd control during the "most exciting two minutes in sports."

The crowd size and high profile nature of an event like this one drives the necessity of having additional trained personnel on hand to help local law enforcement.

"Without the National Guard here, we simply couldn't do our job," said Matthew Meajher, a lieutenant with the LMPD. "There's no way we could secure this facility without having them here to help us.

"We use the National Guard to augment security for our entire backside of the Downs. The challenge is covering all the gates and gaps and keeping up with all the vehicular traffic, pedestrian traffic and there is just so many people that you can have all kinds of issues," Meajher added.

Standing between the gates where the racehorses enter and exit the track were MPs making sure things run as smooth as a well-oiled engine.

"We are providing security for the horses and for the pedestrians having a good time but we want to make sure they do that safely and keep them aware of cars and horses that are coming through this area," said Pvt. Austin Culpa with the 438th MP Company.

Being able to assist in missions like this one is the National Guards specialty. Building relationships with local entities builds trust and a bond that makes the Guard unique.

"We've got a healthy relationship with the LMPD and we are here for them when they need us," said 2nd Lt. Jonathan Sturdivant, security officer in charge. "As National Guard



Photo by Sfc. Scott Raymond

members we are here to build rapport with the local populace and to make sure they stay safe for this event."

A lot of challenges are faced when you bring in a crowd this size. Having as many hands on deck really helps make things go according to plan.

"The biggest challenge has been dealing with the pedestrians in traffic. Everyone wants to get where they are going right now rather than follow directions from the signs and law enforcement," said 2nd Lt. Angel Pagan, traffic officer in charge. "So far though everything has been running smoothly getting the civilians into the track and hopefully later tonight getting them out as safely as possible."

This is a special event that isn't lost on the Soldiers asked to work at the Derby. Likened to the Super Bowl, as far as notoriety and television coverage, the stage is very large and exciting for everyone involved.

"It's a great feeling for me to assist with derby when I found out I was going to be working the biggest horse race in the world, I got really excited because it's a big deal," added Sturdivant.

As the hours of rain fell, and the more damp everyone got, it was the attitude of the Soldiers that impressed the ones they were working with.

"We're all here in the elements and standing for long periods of time today and not one time did I hear the Soldiers complain about anything," said Meajher. "They seemed generally happy to be here to help out."

National Guard Soldiers weren't just used for security purposes outside the grounds, rain drenched Guard Soldiers were guarding the Derby trophy, while other Soldiers and Airmen provided a rope detail in the winners circle to maintain the media after the race.

This was the 112th time the National Guard has been involved with the Kentucky Derby out of the 144 years Churchill Downs has been hosting the event. 



# OPERATION IMMERSION

## A GLIMPSE INTO A SOLDIER'S LIFE

Story and photos by Stacy Floden

“How am I supposed to carry all of this. How do you open an MRE? We weren’t told to bring knives or scissors. I’ve been yanked out of my comfort zone. I can’t wait to eat a salad.”

Just a few of the comments made by participants early in the week at Operation Immersion at Wendell H. Ford Regional Training Center in Greenville, Ky. Operation Immersion is designed to provide a small portion of what Soldiers go through while preparing for deployments and their subsequent return along with expanding the knowledge base and skills of professionals and providers who support Kentucky’s Service Members, Veterans and their Families (SMVF).

“Anyone who works with Soldiers on a regular basis this training will help better understand the military atmosphere and give them an idea of what Soldiers go through,” said Cpt. Dale McKee, Kentucky National Guard Chaplain with the 1st Battalion, 149th Infantry. “You can see the impact on the civilians at the end of the week and they walk away going I really want to help my Soldiers. I have a better idea now of what they are dealing with and what they are going through.”

The training is presented by the Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS), Kentucky Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities (DBHDID), and the Kentucky National Guard with classroom workshops taught by field experts and first-hand military experiences taught by military leaders.

“It’s great to get a better perspective on what the Soldiers go through and their family members. This has really been great to speak with so many Soldiers and hear about their experiences. This has provided a greater perspective,” said William Taylor, Kentucky Department

of Veterans Affairs, social worker. “It has also been nice to hear them thank us for our work, because we really rely on them and greatly appreciate them.”

Just as the military prepares its members by putting them through boot camp and training in order to face what lies ahead, the hands-on experience at Operation Immersion equips participants with the knowledge and understanding to support Kentucky’s SMVF population on the home front.

“This experience has been empowering, on both a scary side and an encouraging side. I can do anything now because of what they put me through. The abilities that they know you have... they kind of show you how to get to that point,” said Jessica Cascio, Comprehend Inc., outpatient substance abuse and mental health therapist.

“When we were running and they were doing the chanting and singing, I thought oh my, I realize these people sacrifice their lives for us,” commented Shawn Freeman, Bluegrass.org, director of prevention. “I think it will give a different perspective when a Soldier comes in for treatment knowing we have gone through this training. A very humbling experience.”

Participants slept in barracks, ate Meals Ready to Eat (MRE’s), rode on a UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter, participated in mock combat simulations to include buddy rushes and room clearing with paintball guns, humvee rollover training, an obstacle course, shoot house instructional training and classroom courses that allow for a better understanding of what Soldiers face on duty.

“It’s not easy, it’s not easy to live in close quarters with a lot of



people. It's not easy to be physically and mentally tired and have the stresses of having a job in the military and worrying about your family at home," said Taylor. "So, worrying about all of that, but then having to still take care of yourself. It's a lot."

By weeks end the attitude and demeanor had changed. "I put my contacts in, in ten minutes, an all-time record. You guys know your stuff. PT, I was terrified, but this is awesome. I feel like I can move mountains. This has given me a sense of pride, a sense of accomplishment."

"These guys have reached out and halfway carried me and have been there and supported me this week," stated Cascio. "They really care. The military is a team, we have to be a team. There are several agencies here and we all have to play a role in helping one another make it better for our Soldiers and Veterans."



# Does it make CENTS?



Finding a way to fund a college education can be tiresome and difficult. Still to this day many servicemembers do not utilize all of the resources they have available to help cover their costs of a higher education. Below is a summary of what the Kentucky National Guard can provide Soldiers and Airmen to assist in their financial aid for earning a college degree.



## RETENTION BONUSES

### Army National Guard

2 YEAR: \$4,000  
6 YEAR: \$20,000

### Air National Guard

6 YEAR (Enlisted): \$15,000  
4 YEAR (Officer): \$20,000

### State Tuition Assistance

Program may be used toward the first Bachelor's degree, or when a lifetime cap is reached (total cap is adjusted for annual inflation).

- \$20,000 Community and technical colleges
- \$40,000 Public university or approved private college
- \$50,000 Research university (Universities of Louisville or Kentucky)

### Federal Tuition Assistance

FTA will pay up to \$250 per credit hour, up to 16 credit hours. Lifetime limit of 130 Undergraduate semester hours. Lifetime limit of 39 Graduate semester hours.

### GI Bill

- \$375 Monthly
- \$200-350 Monthly Kicker

### Loan Repayment

- \$50,000 Loan Repayment
- \$240,000 Health Professional Loan Repayment

### Testing Reimbursement

Many service members are not aware that DANTES can be used to pay for college entrance exam preparation courses. Entrance exams, like the SAT, ACT and GRE are often required or used to gain admission to a college or graduate school. You can also take tests like the CLEP, AP, or DSST to get college credit for prior knowledge or experience.

### Other Educational Benefits

#### Morehead State University:

FREE Dorm Room for ROTC members as well as transfer students that have a 3.0 GPA and are a Guard member

#### Western Kentucky University:

Textbooks for Troops Program: provides free books for military students, veterans and eligible dependent students enrolled at WKU.

*These are just a few options available to Service members in attaining your education goals. Contact the school of your choice or below for more options*

### Contact

For more information contact the Education & Incentives office at 502.607.1307.

## The Cost of Higher Education over Four Years



### CIVILIAN

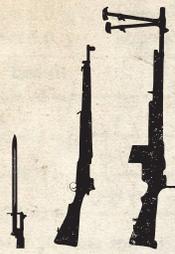
If a civilian attends a public research university for four years then the accumulated debt will be approximately \$80,600. This calculation did not include what a civilian makes at a part-time or full-time job nor did it include other debts that a civilian may accrue.

CIVILIAN		GUARDSMAN
- \$50,000	Tuition	+ \$50,000
- \$29,000	Living Expenses	- \$29,000
- \$1,600	Books	- \$1,600
\$0	M-Day Pay	+ \$16,000 (E-3)
\$0	GI Bill	+ \$15,000
\$0	Retention Bonus	+ \$20,000
- \$80,600	TOTAL	+ \$20,400



### GUARDSMAN

If a Kentucky Guardsman attends an in-state public research university for four years then the net gain will be approximately \$20,400. The M-Day pay calculation consists of monthly drill pay and annual training pay at a pay grade of E-3.



# KENTUCKY NATIONAL GUARD

## IN



# WORLD WAR ONE

### August 1916

**Mexico Border Patrol** - The Kentucky Brigade were stationed at Camp Owen Biene some two miles from Fort Bliss. They were attached to the 10th US Provisional Division under the command of BG Charles G. Morton. Their mission was to conduct patrols along a sixty-mile stretch of the Rio Grande River from El Paso to Fort Hancock, Texas. Service on the border for the Kentucky National Guard would prepare them for the much larger conflict which was looming on the horizon.

### August 1917

**Activation** - Word came of a Presidential proclamation drafting state troops of all states into federal service and Kentucky troops would receive final preparation for service in France at Camp Shelby in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, and were to proceed to that camp on the 5th of August.

### November 1918

**End of War** - The division remained in the LeMans area until its return to the United States in December, 1918. During the later months of 1918 and early months of 1920, the various units and elements which had composed the Kentucky Guard would be returned to the United States, individually and by unit.



### July 1914

**Start of WWI** - The assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo on June 28, 1914, it triggered a chain of events that resulted in the start of World War One.

### February 1917

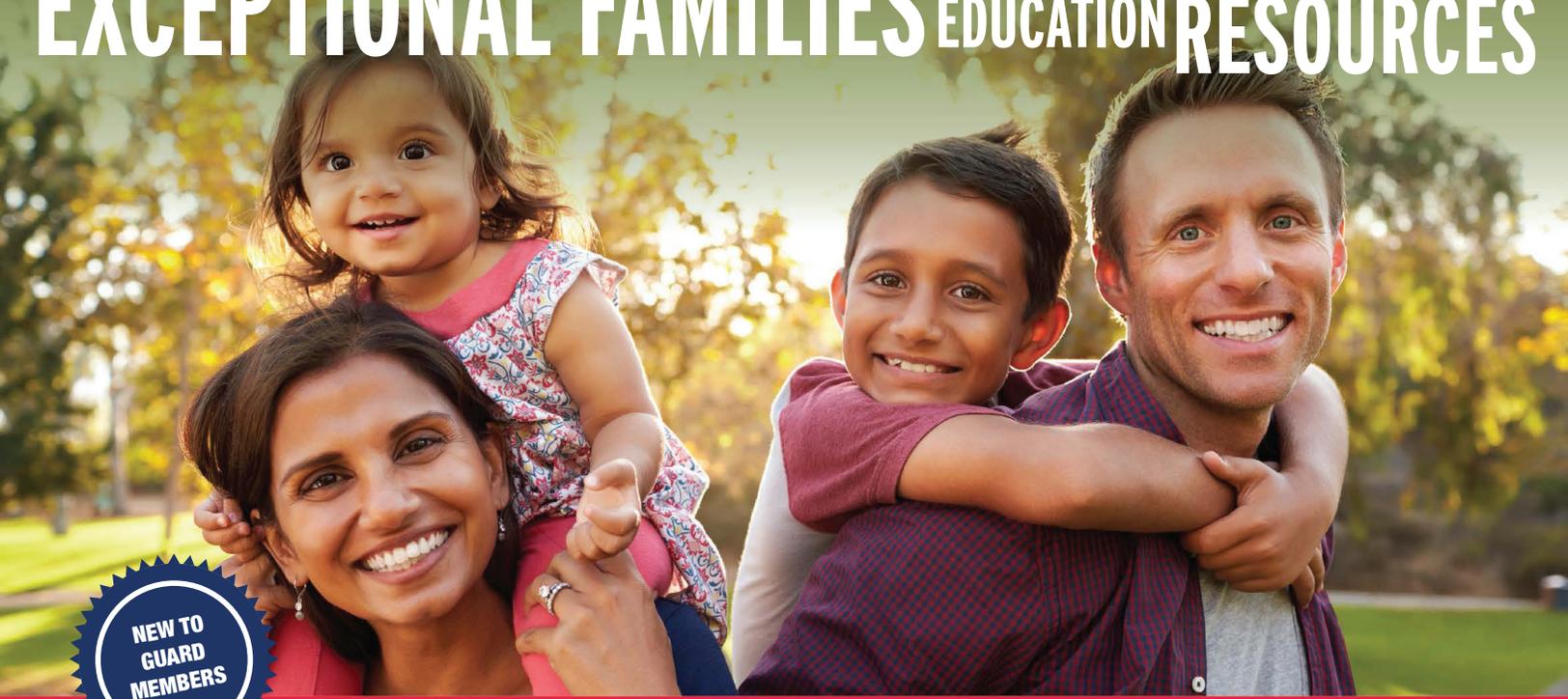
**Return to Kentucky** - In February 1917 they were ordered back to Kentucky, mustering out at Louisville and Fort Thomas. Kentucky Guardsmen were detailed to guard duty within the state. The mission of these men was to guard and protect railroads across the state, to include railroad tunnels, bridges, and water supplies. Some units were assigned to police duties; the protection of prisoners and preservation of peace during a coal strike in Western Kentucky.

### September 1918

**France** - Kentucky Guardsmen were assigned to the 38th Division and went overseas as a unit. Upon arrival in France the division was sent to the LeMans area, where it was continued as a replacement division. The personnel of most of the units had been withdrawn and sent to other organizations, leaving the division skeletonized.



# OPTIONS ENHANCED ACCESS CONSULTATIONS EXCEPTIONAL FAMILIES EDUCATION RESOURCES



NEW TO  
GUARD  
MEMBERS

## Introducing EFMP ROC — enhanced support from Military OneSource

The Exceptional Family Member Program is proud to introduce EFMP ROC — a ready, one-source access to Resources, Options and Consultations through Military OneSource. EFMP ROC offers enhanced support for families with special needs.

**Expertise** — Families can consult subject matter experts on topics including education, the military health care system, TRICARE coverage, state and federal programs and more.

**Ways to Connect 24/7** — Call or live chat any time to schedule a specialty consultation by phone or video. We can arrange three-way calls with health care and other experts to help your clients.

**Robust Resources** — One click to [www.MilitaryOneSource.mil](http://www.MilitaryOneSource.mil) connects families to a comprehensive collection of online tools, information, forms, directories, resources and much more.

**Get Your Toolkit and Get the Word Out** — Let your families with special needs know how EFMP ROC can help. Find a toolkit with fliers, social media graphics, posters, PowerPoint presentations and more at [www.militaryonesource.mil/-/2018-efmp-roc-toolkit](http://www.militaryonesource.mil/-/2018-efmp-roc-toolkit).

[www.MilitaryOneSource.mil](http://www.MilitaryOneSource.mil)  
800-342-9647





# AIR GUARD EARNS 7TH FLYING PLAQUE

Story by Lt. Col. Dale Greer; photo by Jay May

The 123rd Airlift Wing has earned its seventh National Guard Bureau Distinguished Flying Unit Plaque, for outstanding performance in operations, human resources, accident prevention and community engagement.

The award is bestowed annually on the top 10 percent of all Air Guard flying units. It was presented to Col. David Mounkes, wing commander, by Lt. Gen. L. Scott Rice, director of the Air National Guard, during the National Guard Association of the United States annual conference Sept. 10 in Louisville, Kentucky.

“I continue to be amazed by the outstanding dedication of the Airmen in our wing,”

Mounkes said after accepting the honor. “This award is the direct result of their hard work, personal sacrifice and pursuit of excellence every day of the year.”

The 2017 award recognizes achievements from Jan. 1 to Dec. 31, 2016. During that time, the wing deployed 61 Airmen to seven countries and five geographic commands for a total of 3,176 Title 10 days.

Among the missions supported were several multinational airlift exercises, including Operation Sabre Junction in Italy and Operation Maple Flag in Canada. The wing also deployed special operators to four overseas theaters, conducting more than 100 combat missions and controlling over 120 coalition

aircraft. The wing’s civil engineers deployed overseas as well, training with the Moldovan military while helping renovate a school for deaf children.

Back home, the wing’s 123rd Medical Group served as the lead agency for an Innovative Readiness Training program that provided no-cost medical, dental and optical care to more than 4,000 underserved residents in three Western Kentucky counties. The effort provided 13,000 procedures with an economic impact of \$1.3 million over 10 days, including 1,800 pairs of prescription eyeglasses and \$20,000 worth of medication. 

# FROM THE FIELD



## 2123RD TRANSPORTATION COMPANY COMMANDER A MACARTHUR AWARD WINNER

Story by Stacy Floden; photo above by Sgt. 1st Class Andrew Porch

Kentucky National Guard's Capt. Shannon Price has received the 2017 General Douglas MacArthur Leadership Award for the Army National Guard. Price is with the 2123rd Transportation Company. She represented Kentucky in Washington, D.C., at the Pentagon on June 7.

"This was a big surprise. I'm honored to be selected. My focus has always been to train my Soldiers effectively and do what's right for them and the organization," said Price. "I appreciate the support from my leadership in the nomination."

"Capt. Price's principles and values are directly in line with the ideals for which General MacArthur stood: duty, honor, and country," said Maj. Gen. Stephen R. Hogan, Kentucky's adjutant general. "She is a consummate professional, dedicated Soldier, and exemplifies selfless service through her continued contributions in and out of uniform."

Selection is based on overall leadership performance, the ability to influence others to accomplish the mission by providing purpose, direction, and motivation; developing cohesive teams that anticipate requirements and exercising initiative within the commander's intent. The nominee exhibits intangible aspects of leadership relating to people skills, interpersonal communication skills and the

quality of the leadership climate.

For the Army National Guard division, only seven officers will be selected for the nationwide award (6 officers and 1 warrant officer). The MacArthur Award recipients come from the active Army, National Guard and Army Reserve.

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## KENTUCKY GUARDSMEN RUN MARATHON, HONOR SOLDIER

Story by Sgt. 1st Class Michael Embury; photo courtesy of the Nebraska National Guard

160 marathoners from the nations Army and Air National Guard representing 45 states and two U.S. territories beat the heat and competed in the 41st Annual Lincoln National Guard Marathon May 6 in Lincoln, Nebraska.

Led through inspiration to honor a fellow team member the Kentucky National Guard Marathon Team succeeded on all levels in the recent National Guard Marathon Championships.

In December (2017) Sgt. Angela Sullivan, a member of the 201st Engineer Battalion and the Kentucky National Guard Marathon Team for 3 years, was diagnosed with osteosarcoma, a bone cancer that



typically develops in the shinbone near the knee. Sullivan underwent amputation of her left leg and is currently receiving doses of chemotherapy to complete her treatment.

"This was for Angela," said Maj. Varinka Ensminger of the Kentucky Medical Detachment, who finished as the fifth overall female and the second overall National Guard female runner.

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## KENTUCKY GUARD CHAPLAINS AND DJIBOUTI RELIGIOUS LEADERS STRENGTHEN THEIR PARTNERSHIP

Story by Stacy Floden; photo submitted

As part of the State Partnership Program (SPP), Kentucky National Guard Chaplain Col. Yong K. Cho, state command chaplain and Chaplain Lt. Col. Bill Draper, senior state support chaplain, visited Djibouti, Africa, in May during Ramadan.

The trip marks a first for the Guard Chaplaincy Corps yet Cho hopes it will not be the last. "We are grateful to the AFRICOM chaplain office, CJTF-HOA religious affairs team and our Kentucky State Partnership program director and senior leaders for the opportunity to visit Djibouti during their holy season of Ramadan."

During the visit the chaplains attended two separate Iftars, the evening breaking of the fast celebrated by Muslims during the month of Ramadan.



“The importance of our visit cannot be under-estimated. The potential to form lasting relationships between the Kentucky Guard chaplain corps and religious leaders in Djibouti will help in the overall strategic goal of bringing our two nations closer together,” said Draper. “This partnership can increase our efforts to earn the trust and respect of all Djiboutians thus strengthening our ability to be an effective state partner.”

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## NEW LESSONS FOR KENTUCKY GUARD MECHANICS

By Staff Sgt. Benjamin Crane

Soldier mechanics from around the state got hands on training from the developers of the Nuclear, Biological and Chemical Reconnaissance Vehicle April 16 -May 3 at the Maneuver Area Training Equipment Site facility at Fort Knox, Ky.

This two-week course given by contractors from General Dynamics out of Joint Base Lewis McChord, Washington, addressed the main problems for these vehicles that are keeping them dead lined across the Guard, Reserve and Active Duty components. The specialized maintenance



training focused on enhancing the mechanics’ knowledge and skills on the vehicles for the 103rd Chemical Battalion.

“We’re here to teach them the chassis part of it, not the NBC equipment; anything from the wheels to the sweep, to the general drivelines. The engines, transmissions, transfer case, things that General Dynamics has seen over time that are tougher tasks to get fixed,” said Helmut Nunez-Morales, General Dynamics field level maintenance supervisor.

Since the Kentucky National Guard has several Stryker armored fighting vehicles

fitted to be NBCRV’s, a need was identified to have further training on how to make repairs and keep up these vehicles and be ready to be deployed.

Sgt. 1st Class Douglas Hall has worked on Strykers before but still was soaking in all the information the instructors were giving.

“The vehicles are (relatively) new in the Kentucky Guard and we needed to get more hands on training and more familiarization of certain items,” said Hall. “The class is excellent and it’s been challenging at times but it’s good training.”

• • • •

## 203RD COOKS PAST THE COMPETITION

Story by Stacy Floden; courtesy photo

The 203rd Forward Support Company is heating up after winning their state and regional competition in the 50th Annual Phillip A. Connelly program. They participated at the national level as one of four finalists in February.

The 50th Annual Department of Army Phillip A. Connelly Program (PACP) includes finalists representing Military Garrison, Active Army Field, Army National Guard Field and Army Reserve Field.

“This is a great accomplishment for the unit. This is a new stand up unit that was put together four years ago,” said Sgt. 1st Class Travis May, 203rd Senior Culinary NCO. “We have all young Soldiers that have been cooks just a very short time, or people like me, that was an artillery man for 20 years then re-classed.”

The competition provides recognition, promotes professionalism and excellence throughout the Army food service corps. The cooks are critiqued on their appearance as well as proper food preparation procedures. The dining facility is evaluated on sanitation and overall appearance. The evaluators also graded the unit on the maintenance of the equipment and records, licensing as well as knowledge of tactical operations.

“When you have only been a cook section with three years of experience it is hard to pull all this together,” said May. “We

had help from all the J-4 staff to make this possible.”



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## FIVE YEARS STRONGER – GOLD STAR FAMILIES GATHER FOR ANNUAL RECOGNITION

By 1st Lt. Michael Reinersman

Surviving family members of fallen U.S. military service men and women set sail for a riverboat ride on the Ohio River, June 10, in Newport, Ky. These families, known as Gold Star families, are recognized by Survivors Outreach Services’ (SOS) for their sacrifice and in remembrance of their troops.

This event marks the fifth year in a row B&B Riverboats has sponsored the event to support Gold Star Families.

“It’s always nice to get together once a year and see all the smiling faces,” said Terri Bernstein, captain of the B&B Riverboats. “I look forward to seeing everyone next year as well.”

Bernstein is the widow of Staff Sgt. Nicholas R. Carnes, a Kentucky Guardsman who was killed in Afghanistan in 2007. Carnes was a Ludlow, Kentucky, native, and served as a riverboat captain.



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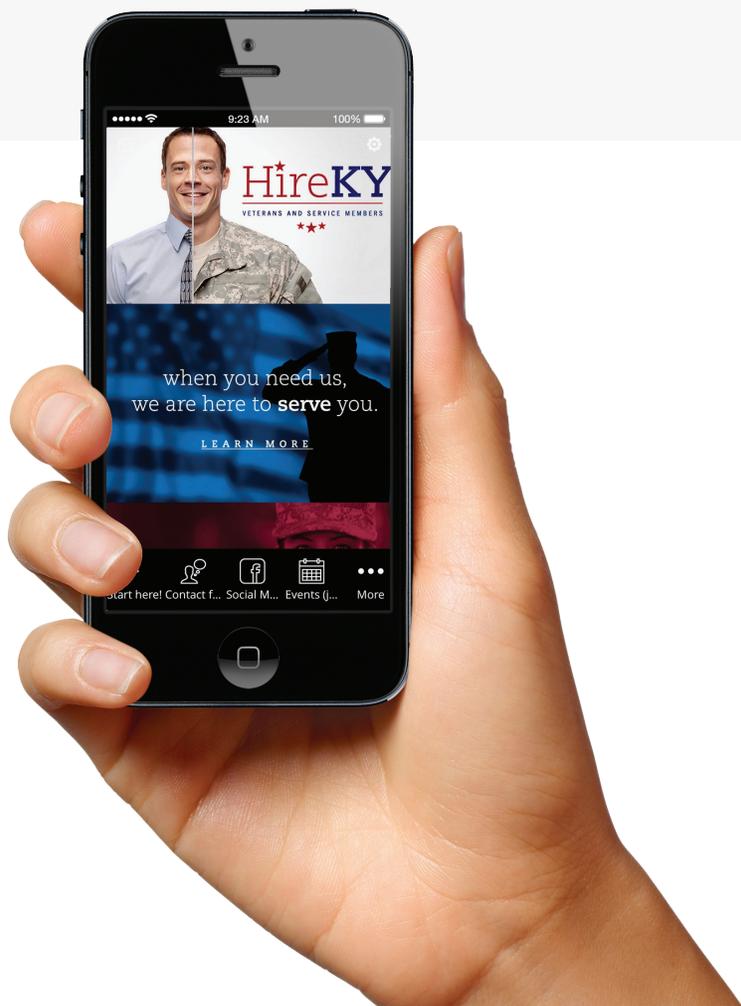


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“This is another opportunity our troops have to market themselves and showcase their skills and leadership responsibilities they have learned in the Guard.”

-Maj. Gen. Stephen R. Hogan

# NEW EMPLOYMENT APP FOR VETERANS AND SERVICE MEMBERS



The Kentucky National Guard is making it easier for Guardsmen, Veterans and Service Members to find a job with the new Hire KY employment app. The mobile app is designed to connect employees with employers, find jobs in the area, find employment resources and locate job fairs and workshops. The app is already available for download on both Apple and Android by searching, “Hire KY”.