

**BUNDLED WITH THIS ISSUE:  
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**PT Test Update:  
As You Were**

**PAGE 12**

**82nd Airborne Division:  
The All-Americans**

**PAGE 30**

# NCO JOURNAL

**VOL. 21, NO. 10 • OCTOBER 2012**

**OPFOR**  
**EYES HOW TO**  
**BEST TRAIN UNITS**

**PAGE 18**





# October 2012

## FEATURES

- 12 PT test update: As you were ▲**  
After nearly two years of research and testing, TRADOC is shelving the five-event Army Physical Readiness Test first proposed in 2011. **BY CLIFFORD KYLE JONES**
- 18 JMRC's opfor: Going back to basics**  
In Germany, the Soldiers of the 1-4th Infantry have created an opfor attuned to future operations by looking to the Army's past. **BY MASTER SGT. ANTHONY M.C. JOSEPH**
- 24 Role-players make units ready for combat**  
NCOs of the 11th ACR act as insurgents, locals and host-nation police, helping every unit gear up for deployments to combat zones. **BY JENNIFER MATTSON**
- 30 The All-Americans**  
The NCOs of the 82nd Airborne Division keep customs, courtesy and history alive by passing on their knowledge to new paratroopers. **BY JENNIFER MATTSON**

## DEPARTMENTS

- 3 From the CSM**  
Back to basics means enforcing standards  
**BY COMMAND SGT. MAJ. GARFIELD SKYERS**
- 4 In Front**
- 38 In Action**
- 46 From the Field**
- 51 Final Salutes**

**ON THE COVER:** Sgt. Mike Chesser, a squad leader with C Company, 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment, the opposing force at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center at Hohenfels, Germany, looks through his rifle scope at the observation post of a unit conducting predeployment training Oct. 7, 2011. PHOTO BY RICHARD BUMGARDNER

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# Back to basics means enforcing standards

FROM THE CSM

BY COMMAND SGT. MAJ. GARFIELD SKYERS 18th Medical Command (Deployment Support)

If you were stationed at Fort Riley, Kan., in the mid-1980s and were told you were going “back to basics,” you would shake in your boots.

Back then, the term meant you were about to endure eight weeks of military training at the U.S. Army Retraining Brigade, re-learning what it meant to be a Soldier. Yes — basic training all over again.

Today, “back to basics” focuses on teaching Soldiers basic military customs and courtesies, Army traditions, history, leadership development, and standards — skills that should already have been taught during basic training or at NCO Education System schools, or learned by this point in their career.

During the past year, I have made numerous on-the-spot corrections with Soldiers on issues that range from proper wear and appearance of the uniform to grooming, saluting, customs and courtesies, standards of conduct, and other issues, some of which I learned during basic training or at my first duty station.

Sometimes they correct the deficiency before I start my mentoring. But increasingly, I receive an expression of total confusion or a dazed appearance and the response, “I did not know.”

In the 18th Medical Command (Deployment Support), we use a tiered approach to get back to basics. Through our Junior Enlisted Development Program, we focus on what junior enlisted Soldiers should know in order to become effective leaders.

For example, our promotion boards focus on the things that sergeants and staff sergeants should know at that point in their careers. All questions for the promotion board come directly from Army regulations, manuals and training circulars, instead of online or store-bought study guides. This one change forced our specialists and sergeants to read the regulations.

Our NCO professional development program centers on the fundamentals of NCO leadership and training. These fundamentals include topics such as range operations, marksmanship, supply discipline and inventory, counseling, and the Army writing program.

Soon, we intend to implement a certification program

for sergeants first class and below that will start on the 30th day after their arrival at the unit. This certification program will list tasks that these Soldiers must demonstrate with competency during the next nine months.

As one senior NCO told me, getting back to basics is about “enforcing standards.” I agree. Back to basics is indeed the enforcement of standards and a return to the basic of what right looks like across the Army.

In an age of ubiquitous computing, more information



Command Sgt. Maj. Garfield Skyers (center), command sergeant major of the 18th Medical Command (Deployment Support), and Col. Judith A. Bock, the unit's commander, talk with Capt. Patrick Givens, a nurse anesthetist, Sept. 1 in a combat support hospital set up in Sagami-hara, Japan, during a U.S. Army Pacific medical exercise. PHOTO BY SGT. 1ST CLASS RODNEY JACKSON

is available to Soldiers today than at any other time in history. Despite the ease with which information is available, Soldiers spend less time reading Army regulations and manuals than they did in the past. Reading so you know what the standards are and applying what you learn at the unit level are fundamental to returning to the basics. ¶

Command Sgt. Maj. Garfield Skyers is the command sergeant major of the 18th Medical Command (Deployment Support) at Fort Shafter, Hawaii.



News and  
information  
NCOs need to

**BE,  
KNOW,  
DO**

**NCO JOURNAL**



## SEAC: 'It's OK not to be OK'

Battaglia urges troubled troops to reach out

**BY CLAUDETTE ROULO**  
American Forces Press Service

**T**he military's top enlisted leader said he hopes service members will use lessons learned during September's National Suicide Prevention and Awareness Month to assist fellow service members, family members or veterans who need help.

Marine Corps Sgt. Maj. Bryan B. Battaglia, senior enlisted advisor to the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said service members who seek assistance — and those who are in a position to offer it — need to know that “it's OK not to be OK.”

“We can still operate and function as effective service members [and] effective family members within our armed forces, within life [and] as members within society and not be 100 percent fit,” Battaglia said.

“Like myself, for example — from some combat wounds and injuries over the years, I'm no longer 100 percent,” he said. “And that's OK by me, because I understand that it's OK not to be OK.”

Thanks to the resilience programs such as Total Force Fitness, Battaglia said, he has been able to better assess his fitness levels and return his mind, body and spirit to a new optimal level of performance.

“I believe each person has their own threshold of when they may need help or assistance,” he said. “The moment that indicator lights up within yourself that [you] need some help and assistance or things are not right ... it is time to reach out.”

Service members, family members or veterans shouldn't wait until they feel suicidal to take advantage of the services offered by the military and the Veterans Affairs Department, Battaglia said. And the need to reach out can involve any sort of adversity or challenge that arises in a person's life, he added.

But no matter what the situation may be,

▲ A Soldier from Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, looks into the distance as he waits to return home from the field June 21, 2011, at the National Training Center, Fort Irwin, Calif. PHOTO

BY SPC. DANNY D. WOO



asking for assistance is the crucial first step, Battaglia said, and there are many places to turn to for help. Each service has specific programs shaped and tailored toward its service members and families, he said, and the VA also has programs that provide for veterans.

The Military Crisis Line — 1-800-273-8255 — is “one common denominator throughout the entire department,” Battaglia said. Service members, family members and veterans in need of assistance, either for themselves or for a loved one, can call the number day or night to speak to someone.

“That someone who will answer will be a medical health official ... with the background and expertise to make some immediate assessments,” he said. “That phone call has complete confidentiality.”

Battaglia said he uses the acronym “NOW” to educate service members about suicide prevention.

The “N” means “there’s *no problem* too big that should cause an individual to take his or her own life,” he said. “If you have a problem that you can’t solve, come to someone — a leader, a chaplain, a commander — and, by God, we can solve it together.”

The “O” is for *outreach*, he said. “Outreach is literally a fingertip away — and that outreach can come from texting your team leader to knocking on your chaplain’s door or even notifying an immediate family member,” he explained. “Outreach is literally a fingertip away.”

Just as important, the “W” stands for *we care*, he said.

“As leaders, we understand and clearly recognize that as members of this professional organization, our men and women have committed to our nation and we are

committed to them,” he said. “This is an equal opportunity issue; it affects everyone. So whether it is junior leaders, senior leaders or nonleaders, anyone who comes abreast of a person who looks or appears like they may want to hurt themselves, it’s time to engage and act, immediately.”

Leaders have the added responsibility of dealing with the aftermath of a death by suicide, which can further chip away at morale, cohesion and unit readiness if left untreated, Battaglia said.

“As leaders, we are taught, molded and developed to be problem solvers,” he said. “Problem solving is good, but a goal for all of us is to be the problem preventer. Our ultimate objective [in prevention] is essentially removing suicide out of one’s decision making process or as a possible course of action in solving a troop’s personal problem.”

There’s no one reason or indicator that leaders can rely upon, in capturing the “why” of suicide, Battaglia said.

“However,” he added, “active leadership engagement is an area where many leaders, specifically my peer group, believe we can improve.”

Engaged leaders will be better able to detect and help troubled troops, Battaglia said.

“There’s so much time spent together that leaders will better know their people and can pick up changes from one’s normal disposition or behavior,” he said.

And it’s a year-round job, he added.

“While September is officially designated as Suicide Prevention and Awareness Month, this issue is so important to the health of our force that we need to treat every month as suicide prevention and awareness month,” he said. ♡

## Army mobilizes for its first financial audit

The Army is gearing up for an audit of its “Statement of Budgetary Resources” by 2014 and an audit of all financial statements by 2017. “Gearing up for an audit affects more than just the resource management community,” said James Watkins, deputy assistant secretary of the Army for financial operations. “It affects contracting, payroll, acquisition, logistics and other business functions. The Army is changing the way it does business, and people all over the organization are seeing the impact.”

More: <http://j.mp/oc12audit>

## Soldiers can now apply for multiple fellowships

Before last year, Soldiers applying for Army fellowships or scholarships could only choose one program per year. If they didn’t get that program, they’d likely miss the deadline for another. Based on feedback from applicants and their career advisors, Human Resources Command last year piloted a program in which applicants could choose to apply to multiple programs and rank their order of preferences. That program will now continue permanently, HRC officials said. This year, the application process will be even more user-friendly as multiple program applications can be placed on one form.

More: <http://j.mp/oc12fellow>

## Managing military ID cards to get easier

The Defense Manpower Data Center is making it easier for service members and their families to get and maintain identification cards. The center has launched its RAPIDS, or Real-time Automated Personnel Identification System, self-service portal to allow anyone with the Defense Department’s Common Access Card to apply for family or retirement ID cards or update dependents’ statuses online. “It’s really excit-

**BRIEFS CONT. ON PAGE 7 →**

### BY THE NUMBERS

Reported suicides in the Army in the 38 months through June 2012: — DEFENSE.GOV



# Former NCO sworn in as Guard's new chief

Once an enlisted Soldier, general now will lead National Guard

BY CHERYL PELLERIN

American Forces Press Service

**D**efense Secretary Leon E. Panetta hosted a ceremony Sept. 7 at the Pentagon, during which Gen. Frank Grass was sworn in as the new chief of the National Guard Bureau.

Grass, who received his fourth star during the ceremony, enlisted in the Missouri Army National Guard in October 1969. He attended the state's NCO academy in 1970, earning the NCO Professional Development Ribbon, and was commissioned as a second lieutenant after attending Officer Candidate School in 1981.

partners from several nations.

In his remarks, Panetta said the Guard is integral to the defense strategy released this year that calls for a leaner force that must be agile, flexible, quickly deployable and on the cutting edge of technology.

"But most importantly, it must be a defense force that can mobilize quickly in order to meet the crises that we may confront anywhere in the world," Panetta said. "That is what the Guard has done these past 10 years of war, and what it must do in the future."

In deploying the Guard, Panetta said, "we have made certain — and this is very important — that every community, every citizen, shares in the responsibility of defending

America. If we are to fight wars ... all of us need to be part of that effort if we are to succeed."

The United States is beginning to emerge from a decade of war that has seen more than 460,000 Guard personnel deployed to overseas operations, he said.

"Last year in Libya, the Air National Guard were there providing the bulk of the tankers that were so essential to that effort," Panetta said. "And today, more than 28,000 National Guardsmen remain deployed in support of operations in Afghanistan, Kosovo and elsewhere overseas."

Panetta said that when he travels to the war zone or abroad, he can't tell the difference between Guardsmen and the active-duty force.

"That's the way it should be," he said.

Grass' predecessor, Air Force Gen. Craig R. McKinley, was the first National Guard Bureau chief to serve as a full

member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. He was also the first Guard general officer to be elevated to four-star rank.

Grass served since 2010 as deputy commander of U.S. Northern Command, and as vice commander of the North American Aerospace Defense Command, responsible for protecting the nation's air and maritime approaches.

"As we draw down from these wars and face a complex and threatening international security environment, ... I know Gen. Grass will work hard to ensure that we retain that hard-won experience and expertise in the Guard," Panetta said. "That's something we cannot lose, [and] an investment we've got to protect."



He's "a patriot who's served for 42 years as both an enlisted Soldier and an officer, rising to the pinnacle of his profession," Panetta said.

Joining Panetta at the ceremony were Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano; Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric K. Shinseki; National Guard state adjutants general, former Guard Bureau chiefs and international

▲ Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta swears in Gen. Frank Grass as the new National Guard Bureau chief during a Sept. 7 ceremony at the Pentagon. PHOTO BY NAVY PETTY OFFICER 1ST

CLASS CHAD J. MCNEELEY



# Soldiers must meet body-fat, APFT standards to pass PME

BY CLIFFORD KYLE JONES NCO Journal

Since 2007, Soldiers attending professional military education courses could fall short on physical fitness or height-and-weight standards and still pass their courses. But as of next month, if a Soldier fails the Army Physical Fitness Test or does not meet body-fat requirements, he or she fails the course, too.

The new policy, under Army Directive 2012-20, begins Nov. 1. The courses affected include the Warrior Leader Course, Advanced Leader Course, Senior Leader Course and Sergeants Major Course.

In 2007, the Army began allowing Soldiers who did not meet APFT or body fat standards to continue their training at courses and graduate, but their Service School Academic Evaluation Report (DA Form 1059) was marked "Marginally Achieved Course Standards." The 2007 change came during the past decade of war in which the high operational tempo and frequency of deployments made it difficult for some Soldiers to maintain the Army's physical standards, said Sgt. Maj. Jeffery Wells, sergeant major of the Army's G-3/5/7. And the risks of inadequate training superseded the risks of substandard physical fitness.

The 2007 policy "was not meant to lower our standards, but really just to give Soldiers an opportunity to get themselves into shape and not disadvantage too many of them," he said. "The change now is due to the fact that we've all been back for a while. For the most part, we don't have as many Soldiers currently deployed. We have more dwell time. Soldiers have more time to get themselves back into physical condition."

Now, Wells said, "We're due for the change."

The new policy isn't exactly a return to the pre-2007 era, however. Before 2007, a Soldier who failed the APFT or body fat tests was barred from entry to the course, but "we couldn't do anything to a Soldier for failing," Wells said. It was as if the Soldier had never enrolled. Now, Soldiers' records will indicate that they enrolled in the course but failed. "That's something that the field has asked for," Wells said. ♡

► Read the new directive at <http://j.mp/oc12pme>

Speaking at the 134th General Conference of the National Guard Association of the United States in Reno, Nev., Sept. 11, Grass cited the National Guard's track record in the years since 9/11.

"In the past 11 years, the National Guard has seen its role in our nation's defense evolve from a strategic reserve to an operational force," he said. "The attacks of 11 years ago and the subsequent wars have thrust the National Guard into the front lines of our nation's defense overnight. We now have the most competent, relevant and battle-tested National Guard in the history of the nation."

Since the 9/11 attacks, more than 700 Guard members have died in the line of duty, he said.

As the military struggles to respond to the

challenges of a fiscally constrained environment, Grass said the National Guard is part of the solution.

"The key to reducing the overall size of the armed forces while maintaining capabilities and readiness is the National Guard," he said. And with more than 6,000 personnel serving in domestic operations, the Guard has a special role in the nation's military, he said.

"What makes the National Guard extraordinary is our home game," Grass said. "No other military organization has the unique dual responsibility to serve the nation and the state. ... The National Guard's versatility is what makes us such a unique treasure." ♡

*Sgt. 1st Class Jim Greenhill of the Army National Guard contributed to this report.*

← BRIEFS CONT. FROM PAGE 5

ing," said Mary Dixon, the center's director. "We've been working for some time now to try to improve and transform our whole ID card application process so people can do things online and not spend long hours going to [an ID card office] and waiting to be seen. ... You can do this from your desk. As long as your computer is CAC-enabled, it could be from your home or office."

More: <http://j.mp/oc12idcard>

## Army ready with vaccine for flu season

The Army has ordered nearly 2 million doses of vaccine to immunize all Soldiers, their families, civilian employees and retirees for the upcoming flu season. The vaccinations will be available at most installations this month, but each medical facility will set its own schedule for distribution. Seasonal influenza can start as early as October and run as late as May, but it generally peaks between January and March, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Army officials expect to have 90 percent of the force vaccinated by Dec. 17.

More: <http://j.mp/oc12flu>

## Half-million email accounts migrated

About 500,000 Army accounts are now part of the Defense Department's Enterprise Email, according to leaders in the Defense Information Systems Agency and the Army G-6 office. "When you consider that [another half-million] Army Knowledge Online-only users will be migrated in February 2013, we are well on our way to completing Army migration to DoD Enterprise Email by the end of March 2013," said Michael Kreiger, the Army's deputy chief information officer, in a recent blog post. According to Enterprise Email officials, the Army expects to save nearly \$380 million through fiscal year 2017 using the new system. ♡

More: <http://j.mp/oc12email>

# Chairman to military: You must be apolitical

BY JIM GARAMONE  
American Forces Press Service

Using the uniform for partisan politics erodes the trust the American people have in their military, Gen. Martin E. Dempsey said Aug. 22. Dempsey has been outspoken that service members have truly earned their right to vote, and that all Americans are entitled to private and personal opinions. But, the chairman said he and his fellow members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff are stewards of the profession of arms and must ensure service members don't cross an important line.

"One of the things that marks us as a profession in a democracy is it's most important we remain apolitical," he said. "That's how we maintain our trust with the American people. The American people don't want us to become another special interest group. In

fact, I think that confuses them."

Dempsey said he believes partisan groups made up of former service members cloud the issue as well. "If someone uses the uniform for partisan politics, I'm disappointed in that," he said. "I think it erodes that bond of trust we have with the American people."

He noted he has expressed this opinion before on his blog, and said he has had incredible conversations in the blogosphere on the subject. He said he also discussed this issue soon after a young Army reservist appeared in uniform at a campaign rally.

"We must understand why our military as a profession embraces political neutrality as a core value," he wrote in his blog in June. "We show fidelity to the Constitution every day by embracing this foundational principle. We are not elected to serve; rather, we elect to serve." ❧

# SSD now an NCOES prerequisite

BY CLIFFORD KYLE JONES NCO Journal

Structured Self-Development is intended to bridge the gap between institutional and operational knowledge, and the Army is moving to ensure that those gaps are filled before Soldiers move on to the next stage of their careers.

ALARACT, or All-Army Activities, message 216/2012 announced that an SSD module will now be a prerequisite for each stage of the NCO Education System, beginning with specialists and newly promoted sergeants completing SSD-1 before they can attend the Warrior Leader Course

starting after April 1, 2013. Effective June 1, 2013, SSD-3 will be prerequisite to attend the Senior Leader Course and SSD-4 for the Sergeants Major Course. SSD-5, which should be in the field by next year, will be required for nominative sergeant major assignments as of Jan. 1, 2015.

Sgt. Maj. Jerry Taylor, the G-3/5/7 sergeant major for Training and Doctrine Command, said that TRADOC has worked to improve the distance learning process for SSD.

"Many upgrades — consisting of content changes, network configurations and software upgrades — have been made to improve the experience for Soldiers taking SSD-1 and distance learning in general," Taylor said. "Additionally, equipment upgrades have been made to the Army Training Help Desk, and more operators have been hired to work the help desk to reduce the wait times Soldiers experienced in the past when they called in for assistance."

Taylor said the team working on the improvements conducted extensive tests to enhance the system and will continue to make adjustments to help Soldiers complete the now-mandatory course.

"With all the improvements and changes this highly qualified team has made over the past several months, I am confident that Soldiers can complete SSD-1 efficiently and meet the prerequisite requirement," Taylor said.

SSD courses can be accessed through the Army Career Tracker or Army Knowledge Online. For instructions on how to register for the SSD-1 course, please visit <https://ako.us.army.mil/suite/doc/37044226>. ❧

◀ A Soldier works through a Structured Self-Development module Sept. 17 at the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy at Fort Bliss, Texas. PHOTO BY SPC. SHANE BRIDGER





# Resilience training extended to spouses

## Comprehensive Soldier Fitness adapts for family members

BY J.D. LEIPOLD Army News Service

**T**hirty-two Army spouses are now qualified to serve as Master Resilience Trainers after completing a pilot program identical to the one Soldiers take to become MRTs under what was formerly called Comprehensive Soldier Fitness.

Reflecting changes to the newly renamed Comprehensive Soldier and Family Fitness program, or CSF2, the spouses attended a 10-day, 80-hour course at Fort Campbell, Ky., to learn how to train other spouses in psychological health and resiliency principles.

Col. Kenneth Riddle, director of CSF2, said teaching family members effective listening techniques, constructive response skills, optimism strategies and critical-thinking skills is OK, but sharing those communication tools are what builds strong families. That's a primary objective he said he's focused on as the program evolves.

"The spouses are the ones who came up with the idea," said Riddle, who participated in a 90-day strategic review of CSF before becoming its leader. "They said, train us as MRTs, and we'll turn around and train other spouses because we see them at Family Readiness Group meetings. We have yellow-ribbon events, picnics, coffee groups; we see each other every day and can teach the same skills just as Soldiers do."

Riddle said that not only was the curriculum for the 32 spouses identical to what Soldiers train with, the pilot class was mixed and included 29 Soldiers — something he noted could become the future of the training. He said his staff will spend the next 30 to 90 days studying how the pilot program worked.

"That's why it was a pilot, so we could collect data, look at how many spouses they touch; how many skills they're teaching; the frequency; the efficacy," he said. "If it's proven effective, we'll deploy the program Armywide."

If the program is found to be effective, Riddle said, he'd recommend to the chief of staff of the Army that spouses be allocated seats for Master Resilience Training at Fort Jackson, S.C., the University of Pennsylvania and Fort McCoy, Wis., where a new school was stood up to support primarily the Army Reserve and National Guard. He said he hopes spouses will be incorporated into MRT mobile training teams as well.

Presently, CSF2 trains 120 MRTs monthly at the Leadership Development Division, formerly called Victory University, at Fort Jackson. In addition to the 10-day Level I base MRT instruction, the schoolhouse

plans to open up instruction in Level II facilitator training. Training for Levels II, III (assistant primary instructor for breakout groups) and IV (primary instructor for the entire MRT course within a command) are taught at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, though the program will eventually become self-sustaining and independent of UPenn, Riddle said.

When the original CSF program launched in 2009, MRT training was limited to staff sergeant squad leaders and sergeants first class who were platoon sergeants because it was felt they had the maturity level and skills to



teach resiliency skills to their Soldiers. Since then, senior enlisted leaders have sought to open the training to sergeants who have proven capable team and squad leaders.

CSF2 officials are also working on creating a refresher MRT course for Soldiers who haven't been training the MRT skills or have transferred to other units in new capacities, and is looking to increase the requirement of one MRT per battalion to one per company, Riddle said. ♡

▲ Sgt. 1st Class Jon Benedict of the 188th Engineer Company (Vertical), North Dakota Army National Guard, embraces his daughters Aug. 17 after landing in Fargo, N.D. Benedict and 160 other Soldiers were returning from a one-year deployment to Afghanistan. PHOTO BY SENIOR MASTER SGT.

DAVID H. LIPP

## TOOLKIT

# Corrective action

BY JENNIFER MATTSON NCO Journal

All NCOs will need to correct Soldiers' actions at some point in their careers. How an NCO corrects a Soldier's action, though, can mean the difference between the NCO being a great leader or being court-martialed, charged with dereliction of duty or being chaptered out of the Army.

Sgt. 1st Class Jason Burke, the senior paralegal NCO at the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy, said most NCOs know how to conduct corrective training. But in his line of work, he's seen the misguided extremes of corrective action.

"The corrective training piece often gets misinterpreted," Burke said. "It's one of the big issues I've seen from working in brigade legal offices. It impacts junior NCOs, especially."

Corrective action is often misunderstood, Burke said. Some NCOs are afraid of corrective action because of what they've seen in the media, and they may believe that their hands are tied when it comes to training and correcting Soldiers. Other NCOs administer corrective actions as though they were punishments. But punishments — including restrictions to barracks, painting

rocks or pulling additional duties not related to the training — are reserved for the commander, Burke said.

"Adequate corrective training builds the best picture for the command to make those decisions on whether the Soldier should be kept in the military or not," Burke said. Misuse of corrective training "is inadvertently harming the commander's authority."

"For example, if an NCO ends up restricting a Soldier to the barracks, often the NCO will have them signing in at the staff duty desk every hour on the hour," he said. "That becomes tantamount to confinement, and is considered a form of restriction instead of corrective training."

"If the Soldier is later taken to the commander for [Uniform Code of Military Justice] action because the deficiency continues, the commander is restricted, because the Soldier has already been restricted for a week. The commander cannot give the Soldier full punishment under UCMJ because [he or she has] already served punishment. Now the NCO has tied the commander's hands; the commander can't exercise his or her full punishment because it's already been done by the NCO."

The chain of command is responsible for ensuring that corrective action takes place, Burke said.

"Staff duty's job is not to train Soldiers," Burke said. "Using the staff duty desk as a location for accountability is acceptable. But the staff duty Soldiers or NCOs should never be used for corrective training. The NCO prescribing the training should be the one who is conducting the training and should be the one who is there. Of course, if it's a platoon sergeant, he can delegate that duty to a squad

◀ Sgt. 1st Class Demetrius Chantz, an instructor at the U.S. Army Drill Sergeant School at Fort Jackson, S.C., corrects comedian "Pvt." Stephen Colbert on May 8, 2009.

PHOTO COURTESY OF U.S. ARMY





# Do's and don'ts

Corrective action is not meant to punish the Soldier but to help him or her learn from their actions. Below are a few guidelines suggested by the *Inspector General Guide to Corrective Training/Corrective Action Guide for Leaders*:

- |                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                  |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ✓ <b>COUNSEL THE SOLDIER</b> orally or in writing so he or she knows the importance of the task.                                          | ✗ <b>DON'T CONTINUE CORRECTIVE TRAINING</b> after the deficiency has been overcome.                              |
| ✓ <b>MAKE ON-THE-SPOT</b> corrections.                                                                                                    | ✗ <b>DON'T PUNISH</b> or give the appearance that the corrective action is punishment.                           |
| ✓ <b>TALK WITH THE SOLDIER</b> to establish why the corrective action is taking place and to set goals.                                   | ✗ <b>DON'T SHOW YOUR FRUSTRATION</b> with the Soldier as it will only escalate the issue.                        |
| ✓ <b>RELATE THE CORRECTIVE ACTION</b> to the deficiency so the Soldier understands.                                                       | ✗ <b>DON'T GIVE MORE</b> than one correction at a time; don't dump.                                              |
| ✓ <b>SUPERVISE THE TASK</b> and do not abdicate that responsibility to staff duty or another NCO or officer outside the chain of command. | ✗ <b>DON'T MAKE THE SOLDIER PERFORM A TASK</b> that is unrelated to the action that it is meant to be corrected. |

► Download the *IG Guide to Corrective Training* at <http://j.mp/oc12correct>

## Corrective action exercises

To avoid injuries, only one of the following exercises should be used as an “attention-getter” for corrective action. The number of repetitions should not exceed 5.

- Rower
- Squat bender
- Windmill
- Prone row
- Pushup
- V-up
- Leg tuck and twist
- Supine bicycle
- Swimmer
- 8-count pushup

Source: TC 3-22.20, *Army Physical Readiness Training*, para. 5-15

leader. It should happen directly within the supervisory chain of command.”

Though “smoke sessions” are often part of corrective action, there are some things to bear in mind when using physical training to correct a Soldier’s actions, Burke said.

“It depends on what the deficiency is,” Burke said. “There is a lot of controversy about ‘dropping’ someone and conducting smoke sessions. There are situations where that is acceptable as corrective training. What you have to answer is ‘What is the intent of that smoke session?’ and ‘Is that correcting a deficiency?’ A smoke session for someone who is consistently late for [physical training] and performing marginally on the [Army Physical Fitness Test] would be corrective training because you have an established deficiency that you are taking action to correct as long as you aren’t trying to injure the person.”

NCOs don’t need to justify on-the-spot corrections to their Soldiers, but they do need to thoroughly think through their reasons for why corrective training is taking place and whether the corrective training is appropriate, Burke said. In addition, for prolonged cases, NCOs should document the corrective training.

“They don’t need to tell the Soldier, ‘This is why I’m doing this,’” Burke said. “But they do need to reinforce why for themselves or to their own leadership, especially if it becomes an issue and there’s an allegation.”

► NEXT MONTH: BARRACKS INSPECTIONS

## 3 rules of corrective training

If commanders and NCOs follow these three rules, most will be able to conduct corrective training appropriately and consistent with Army policy.

1

### NON-PUNITIVE

The goal is not to punish Soldiers but to correct their behavior. Corrective training and action should not be considered punishment as it leads to the degradation of all training.

2

### TIMELY

The correction given to a Soldier to correct a deficiency must be directly related and should continue only until the training deficiency is overcome.

3

### SUPERVISED

Corrective training and actions should always be supervised by the appropriate leaders.





# LATEST ON NEW PT TEST: AS YOU

STORY AND PHOTOS BY CLIFFORD KYLE JONES  
NCO Journal





# WERE

Soldiers from Fort Bliss, Texas, take part in data collection on the proposed Army Physical Readiness Test. The five proposed events included one minute of pushups (background), a standing long jump (top left), a 60-yard shuttle run (middle left) one minute of the rower (bottom left), and a 1.5-mile run (not pictured).



**A**fter nearly two years of research and testing, Training and Doctrine Command has decided to shelve the five-event Army Physical Readiness Test that was first proposed in March 2011.

For now, Soldiers will continue to take the three-event Army Physical Fitness Test, and TRADOC will shift its physical fitness focus to ensuring that Soldiers are thoroughly familiar with the Physical Readiness Training standards unveiled in March 2010.

Though a new test has yet to come to fruition, the Army's efforts have not been wasted, said TRADOC's command sergeant major.

"I think we learned a lot when we tried to do this. We didn't make mistakes, but we gained a vast amount of knowledge on the processes and the outcomes of a physical fitness test by doing this process over the past two or so years," Command Sgt. Maj. Daniel A. Dailey said. "Ultimately, I think the leadership of the United States Army is going to make the right decision, release the right thing to the Soldiers, and [the new test] is going to, in fact, assess the qualities that we want to assess in a Soldier so they can be successful on the battlefield of the future."

The decision to suspend implementing the APRT came after TRADOC's commanding general, Gen. Robert W. Cone, asked groups of Army and civilian physical fitness experts to review collected research, which included times and scores from the more than 10,000 Soldiers from around the Army who tested the APRT last year.

The panels from the Department of Physical Education at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, N.Y.; the U.S. Army Medical Research and Development Command at Fort Detrick, Md.; and California State University-Fullerton all agreed that TRADOC needed further studies before implementing the APRT's five proposed events.

"Gen. Cone said let's take this out to our organizations — both within the Army and our civilian counterparts — ask them to take a look at the data and at the research we have done, and validate the five-event PT test against the [Department of Defense] requirement," Dailey said. "So we did just that, and the analysis was that, although the



**Above:** Soldiers are tested on their ability to do pull-ups before engaging in the Army Combat Readiness Test during a data collection exercise late last year at Fort Bliss, Texas. Officials with Initial Military Training tested more than 10,000 Soldiers while collecting data on the five events of the proposed Army Physical Readiness Test and the proposed diagnostic tool ACRT. Pull-up data were first collected at Fort Bliss, one of the last posts to take part in the data collection.





**At right:** A Soldier jumps over a barrier as part of the data collection on the ACRT late last year at Fort Bliss. The ACRT was suspended along with the APRT. Read more about the ACRT on page 16.

five events are good, they don't in fact test exactly what we want them to."

The Defense Department requires that all military services test their members for aerobic capacity, muscle endurance and muscle strength. One of the big problems with the events of both the APFT and the proposed APRT is measuring muscle strength.

The 2-mile run, common to both tests, measures aerobic capacity, the body's ability to receive and use oxygen, carbohydrates and fats to produce energy. (Initial plans for the APRT included a 1.5-mile run to measure anaerobic capacity.) The APFT's two minutes of pushups and situps and the APRT's one minute of pushups and rower exercises all test muscle endurance — the ability of a muscle group to perform repeated contractions for an extended period of time.

However, reviewers noted that only the APRT's standing long jump has any correlation to muscle strength — the maximum force that can be exerted in a single contraction of the muscles. And even that event is not a commonly accepted measure of muscle strength, according to the experts who reviewed TRADOC's data.

Pull-ups, which TRADOC collected some data on during its APRT studies,

can be indicative of muscle strength, as can tests involving free weights or weight machines. But the Army is limited by regulation to using equipment that is universally available when conducting physical fitness tests.

The APRT also was intended to better measure soldiering performance by testing the physical capabilities necessary to common soldiering tasks, particularly those found in the Warrior Tasks and Battle Drills. However, while reviewers noted that the five events of the APRT had "face validity," meaning they appeared to better test those abilities than the APFT, no data had been collected to prove that what the tests measured had a direct relationship with soldiering performance.

TRADOC's Initial Military Training unit will soon begin a new analysis of the physical fitness test, Dailey said. But in the meantime, the command is taking new steps to ensure that PRT is embraced throughout the force. Although the Army's physical fitness testing still needs to be refined, the Army's new physical fitness training has been an unqualified success where it has been implemented, he said.

"From an accessions standpoint, when we bring Soldiers into basic training and [Advanced Individual Training],







A Soldier drags a "casualty" and carries ammunition boxes during ACRT data collection late last year at Fort Bliss.

## Status of the Army Combat Readiness Test

When the Army rolled out plans for the Army Physical Readiness Test, it also considered a new diagnostic tool for combat units that would allow Soldiers to determine how they fared in common battlefield scenarios — the Army Combat Readiness Test.

In addition to shelving the APRT, the Army has also suspended work on the ACRT.

"That decision was made because of the complexity of issuing the test and the differing amount of equipment," said Command Sgt. Maj. Daniel A. Dailey, command sergeant major of Training and Doctrine Command. "We also need to do some analysis based upon whether it was testing the right thing."



The ACRT was to be conducted with the Army Combat Uniform, a helmet and weapon. It included

a 400-meter run, hurdles, a high crawl, a casualty drag, sprints and several other movement drills.



PRT has definitely worked,” Dailey said. “It has reduced injuries and increased scores dramatically across the force; it really has. And that was one of the reasons why we moved to a new physical training program — because of the amount of injuries that we were receiving, both at the Basic Combat Training and [AIT], and at the organizations.

“I think from a leadership perspective, we’re still struggling to push it across the Army. I’m not blaming anybody in the chain of command, because the Army’s been busy; they have been at war for a long time.

“But also, I think that the reason why PRT has not largely been accepted by the force is that ... we took the physical fitness experts at the unit level out of the Army; we got rid of the Master Fitness Training Program. I used to be one of those Master Fitness Trainers and [am] a huge advocate. I was the guy who, when the first sergeant or company commander needed something done in regards to fitness — building company training plans, managing height and weight and APFT — I was the person they turned to. We took that tool away, and we realized that we need to put that toolkit back in the rucksack of those company commanders and first sergeants, because the work that [the trainers] were doing down at the organization level was just phenomenal with regards to the emphasis and focus that it added to physical fitness training.”

TRADOC has already begun to reinstitute the Master Fitness Trainer Program, which will target NCOs.

“So far, with Master Fitness Training, we’ve dusted off the old [program of instruction], updated it with PRT and some other things, and we just launched a pilot at Fort Jackson (S.C.),” Dailey said. “So we have run the first Master Fitness Trainer Course already. It just concluded [last month]. Right now, we’re gathering the after-action review feedback from that, and then we’ll finalize the POI and the development of it, and take a look at what we need to add and improve. The goal, though, is to start training the force as quickly as possible.”

To help further ensure that PRT permeates the physical fitness training

## APRT events

- ▶ Timed 2-mile run, originally proposed as a 1.5-mile run.
- ▶ Pushups, one minute.
- ▶ Rower, one minute.
- ▶ Timed 60-yard shuttle run.
- ▶ Standing long jump (pass/fail)

of the entire Army, Dailey said that soon Physical Readiness Training will move from Training Circular 3-22.20 to Field Manual 7-22.

“What that really does is highlight the focus and the importance of physical fitness training to where it should be in the field manual series,” Dailey said. “Under the new doctrinal rollout, we have the [Army Doctrine Publications] and [Army Doctrine Reference Publications], and under those are the FMs. So the ADRPs are designed to support what’s written in the ADPs, and the FMs then back up what’s in the ADRPs. And that’s really where physical fitness needs to be: It needs to be a direct link to our doctrinal manuals, within that series, at that level, in order to bring the focus and the attention that it needs across the service.”

The new FM should be out this fall, Dailey said. A timeline for rolling out the MFTC across the force still awaits approval, but he hopes to have at least one certified Master Fitness Trainer for each company in the Army soon.

Those Master Fitness Trainers will be critical not only to boosting the physical fitness levels of Soldiers, but also in determining what a new physical fitness test will look like.

Once the Master Fitness Trainers are in place and the force is trained, Dailey said, “then we’ll go back to the force itself and solicit their feedback on what is required of a Soldier on the battlefield today.”

Dailey said that in addition to consulting the Army’s experts at IMT, TRADOC will also consider “what successes different organizations across the Army have experienced in physical fitness programs in the last 10 years — places like the Ranger battalions, special operations and our great brigade combat teams out there.”

And, he said, the Army, just as it did in reviewing the APRT, will seek input on a new physical fitness test from its civilian counterparts — “some of the institutions across the United States that have also dealt with physical fitness, from a standpoint of professional sports, or college athletics or any of those other great things.” That input helps provide “an aspect of outside-the-box thinking,” he said.

When research and feedback is concluded and the Army is ready to implement a new fitness test, Dailey said, it will be guaranteed to be an accurate measure of soldiering ability and it will take Soldiers’ needs into account.

“It’s not an easy task, and it’s not something you can afford to have prematurely launched to the Army. It’s not something we can afford to make mistakes on because Soldiers’ careers depend upon this,” he said. “Physical fitness not only gauges fitness for the Army, but it also places Soldiers in ranking for promotion. It places Soldiers in rankings in their organizations as they’re looked upon for leadership advancement, and the quality of the Soldier has always been determined by how he or she does on physical fitness. So we have to make sure we have it right. ... The commanding general of TRADOC made an excellent decision to suspend the five-event PT test and ask for a re-evaluation.”

And even though the test may be delayed, Dailey assures Soldiers that physical fitness training will remain as important as it has ever been.

“Physical fitness training may not be the most important thing a Soldier does in a day, but it’s the most important thing a Soldier does *every day*,” he said. “It’s a critical basic skill that all Soldiers need on the battlefield, regardless of what they do. Whether they pull triggers for a living or they’re doing the most complex tasks of satellite communications or intelligence gathering, every Soldier has to maintain physical fitness. I think we just need to bring the importance and the relevance of that back, and one of the main ways to do that is by putting the subject-matter expert back down at the small unit level.”

To contact Clifford Kyle Jones, email [clifford.k.jones.ctr@mail.mil](mailto:clifford.k.jones.ctr@mail.mil)





Armored vehicles roll into a mock town during decisive action training at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center at Hohenfels, Germany. PHOTO BY MASTER SGT. ANTONY M.C. JOSEPH





# JMRC'S OPFOR: READY FOR THE FUTURE

BY MASTER SGT. ANTONY M.C. JOSEPH NCO Journal

**F**or training to realistically simulate how Soldiers fight in the real world, it must put them through credible scenarios and enemy situations. This is especially true for the U.S. Army, which throughout its history has conducted combat operations in virtually every climate, terrain and environment imaginable. To this end, the Army has training centers throughout the world that provide training that is as true-to-life as possible, thanks to an opposition force that replicates the enemy. At the Joint Multinational Readiness Center in Hohenfels, Germany, the Soldiers of 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment, have created an opfor attuned to future operations by looking to the Army's past.





**Sgt. 1st Class Michael Mullahy, a platoon sergeant in A Company, 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment, speaks to his opfor troops before embarking on pistol marksmanship training at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center in Hohenfels, Germany.**

PHOTO BY MASTER  
SGT. ANTONY M.C.  
JOSEPH

For the past 10 years, the Army and its training centers have concentrated mostly on the counterinsurgency aspect of fighting the Global War on Terrorism. However, as the United States prepares to remove its troops from Afghanistan during the next two years, JMRC is anticipating the next generation of potential conflicts by shifting its emphasis to a Decisive Action Training Environment, or in layman's terms, a return to training conventional force-on-force tactics, said 1st Sgt. Shaun Pearsall, a first sergeant in the 1-4th.

"Most of the Soldiers and some NCOs have been in the Army for nine years or less, so they only know the COIN way of fighting; their training has always been influenced by that," Pearsall said. "So we have to train the NCOs first on the force-on-force tactics, which will make them better able to train the entire force."

Pearsall explained that JMRC's opfor is leading the rest of the force in training conventional warfare. When units come to Hohenfels, they now face an enemy that will challenge them in all aspects of warfare — from COIN, which most of them are now well-versed in, to DATE, in which they are resuming training. "Though we have switched to DATE, we still incorporate the COIN element in to the standard kinetic training," he said.

With units from the United States and other nations in Europe training at JMRC, the opfor's mission also incorporates multinational understanding, said Sgt. 1st Class Timothy Karnickey, a platoon sergeant

with the battalion's Headquarters Company.

"Because of the relationships built here during training, we are able to meld with the command and troops of other countries better," Karnickey said. "No other unit gets to train and work with troops from various different countries on this constant a basis."

Troops participating in training must overcome language barriers on their own because of the scarcity of available interpreters, he said. This, and the fact that part of the battalion routinely rotates downrange, keeps the opfor members' skills nimble and adaptable.

"Not only do we train units here, we deploy a company-sized element to Afghanistan, often under the command of [one of our] partner nations" to gain additional multinational experience, he said.

### **A different look**

One of the differentiating aspects of JMRC's opfor is how its Soldiers stay in character at all times.

"We dress in a different color and type of dress than the units that come here for training, to give the feeling of who we are," Pearsall said. "Even the vehicles and weapons we use are different, like AK-47s, and older and foreign armored vehicles."

Though the unit's standard, day-to-day uniform is a black version of the old Battle Dress Uniform, during rotations, upward of 12 different uniforms may be worn, Karnickey said. That includes regular U.S. Army uniforms, uniforms of partner nations,





and local clothing dictated by the environment and scenario being trained — such as the *perahan tunban*, the oft-seen trouser and waistcoat set that is popular in Afghanistan. The realistic environment extends to mock villages, decorated to look like any country in the world, which are inhabited by “civilians” in local dress. Clothing, equipment and vehicles are also equipped with the Multiple Integrated Laser Engagement System, Pearsall said.

“The MILES gear helps us monitor how many rounds were shot, as well as what went right and what can be improved upon in a fight,” he said.

The opfor’s hierarchy is normally set up with the same ranks and structure as any other U.S. infantry battalion, said Sgt. 1st Class Douglas Lodahl, a platoon sergeant in the battalion’s C Company. However, when the scenario dictates, “like when we incorporate the COIN element into the regular fight, we can change our structure to include hunter/killer teams and an insurgent faction to place [improvised explosive devices] and blockades,” he said.

Because the units at JMRC are training more in conventional warfare tactics, more vehicles are being included in scenarios, Lodahl said.

“The fundamentals are still the same. ... Soldiers just have to get used to the vehicles and the greater distances” in which battles are being fought, he said. “A slightly different mindset is employed. Not only do the Soldiers have to worry about IEDs and rocket-

propelled grenades, they have to worry about a tank being around the corner or villagers who have had their crops destroyed by a tank or heavy vehicle rolling through. Whether in COIN or DATE, bad techniques, such as bunching up when patrolling or upsetting village elders, is still going to get you hurt.”

Having the townspeople on your side is vital to the success of any mission in a foreign country, and opfor members routinely test units’ skills in that arena. After being part of the opfor in one particular scenario, Lodahl said, he learned a valuable lesson that he will take with him to future units.

“No matter what we do, the enemy can manipulate the community after we leave, so we have to be extremely careful how we come across to the villagers during our interactions with them,” he said. “Make sure that they trust us by what we show in our actions, not just by the words we speak.”

Another intricacy of conventional warfare that most Soldiers haven’t trained for recently is the threat from above. “The blue force (the unit going through training) has to plan for air defense and calling in air support. And the opfor has to plan for air cover and incoming artillery,” Lodahl said.

Whether training tactics emphasized by COIN or DATE, opfor members are cognizant of the uncertain world we live in and how they must constantly adapt, Lodahl said.

“The forces that come here will face an enemy that

**An opfor Soldier from 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment, fires at the “enemy” with a rocket-propelled grenade Oct. 23, 2011, during a training exercise at JMRC. PHOTO BY PFC. MICHAEL SHARP**





**Spc. Andrew Gile, an opfor member with the 1-4th Infantry, reads a map Oct. 7, 2011, while waiting for his mission during the 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team's full spectrum training event at JMRC.**

PHOTO BY  
RICHARD  
BUMGARDNER

adapts to the changing scenarios and will challenge even the most experienced unit," he said. Like the enemy that units may face, the training area is the opfor's backyard. "We know where all the pitfalls are. We get to be creative. So we force the units that come here to think critically before they act."

Opfor members are always trying to keep the units that are training on their toes, said Sgt. 1st Class Michael Mullahy, a platoon sergeant in the battalion's A Company.

"We don't have to unlearn any of the COIN lessons, but the blue force has to change some tactics," he said. "During the early part of the rotation, the visiting units get annihilated. But after the initial skirmishes and retraining, they start to hold their own."

Sgt. Jeremy Wade, a fire team leader, said that though mechanized infantry tactics were new to him, he quickly adapted.

"With multiple rotations, the learning curve is fast," he said. "This is good experience for an infantryman. It gives us an understanding of how the enemy thinks. We get more creative because of our experiences here."

"One company is designated as the insurgent



**Top: Spc. Andrew Jones, an opfor member with the 1-4th Infantry, fires for effect onto a 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team observation post.**

**Bottom: Opfor member Pfc. Jerrole Jackson searches for movement in the woods.**

PHOTOS BY RICHARD BUMGARDNER

company, the others are regular opfor," Wade added. "My goal is to make sure that my Soldiers understand the different aspects of infantry tactics and concepts, both mechanized and light. The main goal of the opfor is that the units that come here are ready for what they will face when they deploy."

Though most recent operations have been in urban areas, thus involving smaller vehicles and dismounted infantry, some countries still utilize tanks and heavy armor vehicles. Therefore, DATE-oriented training is key to units being prepared for what may come in the future, said Staff Sgt. Allen Parson, a master gunner and a platoon sergeant in Headquarters Company.

"It is nice to get back to what I joined the Army to do — be a tanker and fight other tanks," he said. "It is good to go back to the force-on-force training. There





will always be a force out there that will have tanks, and we don't want to be caught unprepared. We have to be on our game to challenge them. I tell the Soldiers that when it comes to maneuvering in tanks, it is very similar to dismounted tactics — you are pretty much doing the same thing except now you are mounted."

Parsons echoed his comrades in praising one of the great advantages of playing opfor — thinking and acting like the enemy.

"Being on the opfor, we get to see how the enemy thinks; we better understand how insurgency works and how another force would fight," he said. "I am glad I have had the chance to be opfor, because it gives me a better understanding of warfare and how to anticipate the enemy's tactics. So when I go back to a regular unit, I can bring this experience to them, and teach our brothers in arms to be better prepared."

Every unit that rotates through JMRC faces members of the 1-4th as its enemy — or the entire battalion, if the training unit's size warrants.

"With a battalion-sized element, we hardly have any downtime between rotations," Pearsall said. "If one company is in a rotation, another is the backup — ready

company. The third will be resetting from its rotation, and the fourth is either deployed or about to deploy to Afghanistan. This impacts a great deal on family time, and stress-related issues can come to the forefront."

Yet, the very same thing that makes for a high operational tempo — the size of the unit — also fosters cohesiveness and camaraderie, he said. "The NCOs here have their fingers on the pulse of their units and head off any issues before they get beyond control."

Pearsall said that the opfor's success is mainly due to the commitment of its noncommissioned officers. Even with the high optempo, the battalion's Soldiers excel because their NCOs set the example, he said.

"NCOs need to be at the forefront, learning and teaching," Pearsall said. "Every NCO needs to have the mindset of following the Army values — living them, not just giving them lip service. If I am not helping, mentoring and making Soldiers' lives better, I need to get out; I am no longer an effective leader. If NCOs are trained and ready, then Soldiers will follow suit." ♡

*To contact Master Sgt. Antony M.C. Joseph, email [tony.joseph@us.army.mil](mailto:tony.joseph@us.army.mil).*

**Sgt. Mike Chesser, an opfor squad leader with C Company, 1-4th Infantry, talks to his Bulgarian Special Forces contact during the 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team's full-spectrum training event.**

PHOTO BY  
RICHARD  
BUMGARDNER





Staff Sgt. Acie Gallon is searched by a member of the New York National Guard Oct. 12, 2011, at the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, Calif.  
PHOTO BY JENNIFER MATTSON





**11TH ACR ROLE-PLAYERS  
HELP MAKE UNITS**

# **READY FOR COMBAT**

**BY JENNIFER MATTSON** NCO Journal





Sgt. Sonny P. Mabuyo, a rifle team leader with A Troop, 1st Squadron, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, fires simulated ammunition from his M4 on Oct. 15, 2009, prior to a situational training exercise at the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, Calif. PHOTO BY SGT. CHRISTOPHER KLUTTS

**T**he NCOs of the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment at Fort Irwin, Calif., deploy two weeks every month for 10 months out of the year. But rather than heading to Afghanistan, their deployment is to “The Box,” the National Training Center at Fort Irwin. There, they ready units about to go downrange by acting as insurgents, locals and host-nation police. These NCOs help every unit gear up for deployment to combat zones, and most units deploy 45 to 60 days after they leave the NTC.

The NCOs of the 11th ACR say they take their mission of preparing other Soldiers for combat seriously. Command Sgt. Maj. Clinton Reiss, command sergeant major of the regiment, said his NCOs are among the most mature and responsible in the Army — many with years of combat experience themselves.

“The average NCO here has at least one, many have two or three, and some have been on four different deployments,” Reiss said. “They’re able to use that experience to help train up the unit and to equip the unit with all the tools they’ll need to succeed. We don’t let any unit leave here unless we’re absolutely sure they’ll be successful in their mission.”

### Dual mission

The NCOs with the 11th ACR have two missions. The first is to help train units at the NTC by acting as the opposing force, a national police unit or the local population. These NCOs, though, are also required to maintain their own skill sets and to be proficient and ready to deploy themselves, said 1st Sgt. Gary Beemster, the first sergeant of the 11th ACR’s Headquarters Troop. That includes running gunnery tables

and ensuring that Soldiers remain qualified on their weapons, he said.

“We’re ‘dual hat,’ because we not only have to train ourselves for our next combat deployment, but we have to also train other units across the Army and Canada,” Beemster said. “We focus in two directions.”

Even with its important mission at Fort Irwin, the 11th ACR remains a deployable unit. 11th ACR’s 1st Squadron deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom from January 2005 to December 2006, and previously the unit had deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom from June to December 2003. As part of a deployable unit, NCOs must continue to meet standards and excel in both missions, Reiss said.

“Not only do they have to concentrate on their duties to train the Army, they have to continue to train themselves and their Soldiers,” Reiss said. “When they leave here, after the short time they’re here, they go into a regular Army organization, and they haven’t lost any of their skills.”

### Force-on-force training

With a history that includes serving in World War II and Vietnam and guarding the Fulda Gap in Germany during the Cold War, the 11th ACR was reactivated Oct. 26, 1994, and was given the mission to act as the opfor at the NTC. As the opposing force, the regiment was organized as a heavy unit that would act as the enemy for units that were training.

In 2002, the 11th ACR significantly changed its mission as the war in Afghanistan called for a different kind of fight. From 2002 to 2011, the 11th ACR implemented urban and asymmetrical warfare scenarios.





Last year, though, it began adding combinations of force-on-force training as well as urban operations training. In force-on-force training scenarios, the whole regiment is deployed to act as an opposing force. In urban environment training, the 11th ACR is organized into platoons with varying missions.

"We use similar tactics, but as a [force-on-force] opposing force we have different uniforms, and our equipment has different markings," Beemster said. "It's similar to the way [the Joint Readiness Training Center at] Fort Polk (La.) does things; we're not so much civilians on the battlefield, we're acting as a larger Army."

## Role-players

Part of accomplishing the 11th ACR's NTC mission includes wearing a "uniform" that resembles local dress the troops will encounter in Afghanistan.

Sgt. Acie Gallon, a combat engineer and squad leader with the 11th ACR, said that he's played opfor during force-on-force operations, and during the urban training, he's role-played the Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police.

"This is a different assignment and a new experience for me," Gallon said. "Most of the other assignments I've had were blue force on blue force, and you don't have to dress up."

The roles NCOs play vary each time they deploy to The Box. They rotate among representing the Afghan National Army, local residents, Afghan police officers and insurgents.

Usually, the infantrymen and tankers play members of the Afghan Army or the insurgency, with other Soldiers acting as part of the local population. Still

other 11th ACR Soldiers remain in-garrison to attend to the daily business of running the regiment. Almost all roles in The Box are played by 11th ACR Soldiers, except for prominent speaking roles such as mayors or provincial governors, which are contracted out to Pashto-, Dari- or Arabic-speaking individuals, Reiss said.

"[Soldiers from the 11th ACR] play numerous roles, including playing the Afghan Army NCO Corps, so they'll replicate the Afghan Army," Reiss said. "Sometimes they'll replicate the Afghanistan police. The sergeants also act as being in charge of the insurgency groups that attack different [forward operating bases] or towns or groups or outposts."

Though they wear a different uniform, 11th ACR Soldiers are required to meet the Army's grooming standards and appearances. They're also called upon to provide a little drama, Reiss said.

"They have to be actors," Reiss said. "[But they also] have to do all the things a sergeant would do throughout the Army. They have all the responsibilities that NCOs have throughout the Army plus more. They have to act, and train to act, and train on their normal warrior skills."

## Gearing up units for deployment

Units that come to the NTC and encounter the role-playing NCOs of the 11th ACR have often said that it's 10 times worse there than during their worst day while deployed. That's a mark of pride to the 11th ACR NCOs, who sometimes inadvertently use their Army training and Army knowledge when acting as insurgents, which gives them a tactical advantage, Reiss said.

"We want to make their worst day in Afghanistan

**A New York National Guardsman takes photos and speaks with an "Afghan local" played by a member of the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment on Oct. 12, 2011, at the NTC.**

PHOTO BY JENNIFER MATTON





**A sergeant with the New York National Guard detains an 11th ACR role-player Oct. 12, 2011, after the "insurgent" was captured by U.S. forces at the NTC.** PHOTO BY JENNIFER MATTSON



**Top: 11th ACR Soldiers act as insurgents in NTC's city of Razish on March 16.** PHOTO COURTESY OF 11TH ACR

**Bottom: Spc. Alexis Azevedo, an 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment Soldier, prepares her pack mule April 16 at Fort Irwin.** PHOTO BY SPC. ANTHONY J. LECOURS

happen here," Reiss said. "Just like all Army training, we train for the hardest situation so when it comes down to it, it's an easier event for them."

"We are the premier training center for our Army," he said. "Our role is to replicate what these units who are getting ready to deploy will see at this point in theater."

To do that, the NCOs of the 11th ACR scour updates from the Center for Army Lessons Learned, as well as training, tactics and procedures that pour in from Afghanistan. They also read the latest reports from downrange to figure out what training scenarios need to be implemented at the NTC to help the units who come to gear up for their deployments.

"We have to make sure that each of these units across the Army is trained up and ready to go," Beemster said. "We have to ensure that we're giving them the best training possible."

Many of the regiment's NCOs go on to their next assignment with additional qualifications, including learning the most recent enemy tactics from CALL.

They then bring to their new unit insight into real-life scenarios that happen downrange. They also learn from the tactics implemented by units training against

the 11th ACR's opfor, Beemster said.

"Some tactics work and some don't," he said. "It's our job here to make sure the rotational unit is going to be relevant when they get overseas. The Soldiers here pick up on that and think about how this or that unit could've done it differently and been a little more successful. The units don't leave here until they're ready."

## NCOs of the 11th ACR

NCOs of the 11th ACR say they feel empowered to work on a small unit level. Most deploy as a platoon to the National Training Center's ranges and mock villages, and work in small squads or two-man groups to accomplish their missions. An intense responsibility surrounds their day-to-day interactions with the training unit, and the opfor members require responsible leaders, Reiss said.





"I'm given a wide spectrum as a noncommissioned officer," Gallon said. "I can either lead the whole group, or I can empower the E-3s to see how their leadership skills are and to see if they can handle being in a leadership position."

"It's also a learning objective for them as well to see if they can lead small groups, and I put them in strategic locations to see if they can accomplish the mission," he said.

NCOs sent to the 11th ACR come with a background rich in combat experience, and that experience is invaluable to their junior Soldiers, Reiss said.

"They're training their Soldiers under them who may not have deployed for what they'll experience in the conventional Army," Reiss said. "So once they leave here, they'll be so much better trained than a Soldier who is coming out of basic or [Advanced Individual Training] and who is getting ready to deploy."

NCOs also have the potential to grow as mentors and leaders, Beemster said. They're not only teaching their junior Soldiers Warrior Tasks and Battle Drills, they're also mentoring units as they go through their training lanes, providing them with additional insight.

"As with any organization, we serve as coaches and

mentors," Beemster said. "But with the 11th ACR, we also serve as coaches and mentors with leaders across the Army, with the units on the ground who are here. We work as role-players, and we act as a guide for them so they have the opportunity to encounter here whatever they may encounter overseas."

11th ACR NCOs must be mature and responsible, Reiss said. They're the cog that facilitates all the training. If they don't live up to standards, the unit out in the training environment won't be as ready to deploy, Reiss said.

"If you didn't have the maturity to handle being out on your own and operating a mission, it could be cowboys and Indians out there," Reiss said. "They understand why they're there and their role, so they know the most important thing is that unit out there is going to deploy after they leave here in 45 to 60 days. The most important thing in their mind is that the unit gets the best possible training that they can, because this is the last time for them to learn before they deploy." ♡

*To contact Jennifer Mattson, email [jennifer.mattson@us.army.mil](mailto:jennifer.mattson@us.army.mil).*

**Soldiers with the New York National Guard work with an interpreter to assess the situation as they approach a disabled vehicle Oct. 12, 2011, during predeployment training at the NTC. PHOTO BY JENNIFER MATTSON**









# THE ALL-AMERICANS

## A history of America's "911 Unit," the 82nd Airborne Division

BY JENNIFER MATTSON

NCO Journal

**K**nown as simply "the division" at its home in Fort Bragg, N.C., the 82nd Airborne Division is the only active Airborne division in today's Army. Though some may think the paratroopers are arrogant for their rich and storied history, the Soldiers of the 82nd are proud of their unit's accomplishments and continue to celebrate those historic successes.

The 82nd has fought in World War I, World War II, Vietnam, Grenada, the Dominican Republic, Panama, Iraq and Afghanistan. It is a quick, reaction force, capable of deploying within 18 hours anywhere in the world. A team of paratroopers keeps watch and ready at Fort Bragg, ready to go when the call comes.

"The 82nd is the premier division of the United States Army," Master Sgt. Tim Thede said. "We have been first everywhere. If someone calls, if the president needs a body of troops somewhere, he's going to call the 82nd."

Steeped in tradition and legacy, the NCOs of the 82nd Airborne Division keep customs, courtesy and history alive by passing on their knowledge to new paratroopers.

"The NCOs are the continuity between our traditions and how we operate," said Command Sgt. Maj. William Forro, command sergeant major of 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division. "They keep everything to how it needs to be, and this is how we do things here. Officers come in and stay 12, 16, 18 months, where that non-commissioned officer could be here for seven years. So they're the sounding board for why we do things the way we do them."

Being an NCO in the 82nd Airborne Division is to add a whole lot of badges and credentials to one's experience, Forro said. Most NCOs with the division are required to be Jumpmasters and to ensure that their paratroopers are properly equipped. They provide that first safety check, making sure that their paratroopers are able to perform any mission.

Soldiers assigned to the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, and Canadian soldiers with 3rd Battalion, The Royal Canadian Regiment, fill the cargo area of a U.S. Air Force Globemaster III aircraft during an in-flight rigging mission Feb. 9, a part of a joint operational access exercise at Pope Field, N.C. PHOTO BY AIR FORCE STAFF SGT. ANDY M. KIN



# Sgt. Alvin York

Sgt. Alvin York was an unlikely hero. He was a conscientious objector, and enlisted in the Army only after being persuaded that he was needed to help the World War I effort.

"Alvin C. York is one of the most famous Soldiers from World War I," Sgt. 1st Class Donald Workman said. "I read [history] when I was a private before I ever even got to the 82nd, and he's one of my favorite NCOs."

He was assigned to G Company, 328th Infantry Regiment, 82nd Infantry Division, in World War I. He earned the Medal of Honor on Oct. 8, 1918, when he took command of his platoon after three noncommissioned officers had been wounded or killed.

"The Germans sent five guys to rush him," Workman said. "And he methodically picks the last one to shoot so the other guys wouldn't know he had a bead on them. The German officer surrenders, when they get them back to the rear, they had 120 Germans, and he killed 28. The Germans thought they were surrounded because of York's skill as a shooter."

York's legacy lives on in the 82nd today.

"One person can make a difference," Workman said. "When



you find yourself alone on the drop zone, one person can make a difference and accomplish the mission."

York returned home after the war. He attempted to re-enlist in the Army during World War II, but was refused entry due to his age and health concerns.

**A tribute to Sgt. Alvin York is on display at the 82nd Airborne Division museum at Fort Bragg. It includes photos, his uniform and other memorabilia.** PHOTO BY JENNIFER MATTSON

## D-DAY INVASION



**82nd Airborne Soldiers check their equipment before boarding a C-47 bound for Drop Zone "T" near Sainte-Mère-Église in Normandy on D-Day, June 6, 1944. The 442nd Troop Carrier Group launched 45 C-47s with approximately 20 Soldiers in each aircraft.** PHOTO COURTESY OF THE HERKY BARBOUR ESTATE

## 1st Sgt. Leonard Funk

First Sgt. Leonard Funk deployed with C Company, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division, during World War II. On Jan. 29, 1945, Funk was in Holzheim, Belgium, when he captured 80 German troopers. Funk's company cleared 15 houses and took 30 prisoners. Those 30 prisoners joined 50 from other units and were brought to the rear and guarded by four American Soldiers.

The German prisoners of war captured the four American guards and prepared to attack the dwindling American forces. A German officer put a gun to Funk's stomach; Funk pretended to surrender. As he unslung his Thompson sub-machine gun, he used it to subdue the enemy. He then led his men in resisting the German POWs and recaptured them.

"Funk's bold action and heroic disregard for his own safety were directly responsible for the recapture of a vastly superior enemy force, which, if allowed to remain free, could have ... endangered the entire attack plan," his citation for the Medal of Honor reads.

Funk died Nov. 20, 1992, and is buried in Arlington National Cemetery, Va.

**Aug. 25, 1917** The 82nd Infantry Division is activated at Camp Gordon, Ga.

**June 25, 1918** The 82nd Infantry Division enters combat in France as a part of the American effort during World War I.

**Oct. 14, 1942** The 82nd Airborne Division is reorganized and relocates to Fort Bragg, N.C.



# DROP INTO NORTH AFRICA



**Troops of the 82nd Airborne Division jump en masse during a demonstration June 3, 1943 in Oujda, French Morocco, in north Africa, shortly before the invasion of Sicily.**

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE WORLD WAR II SIGNAL CORPS COLLECTION

## The 82nd in World War II

Soldiers with the 82nd were shipped out to north Africa in April 1943.

The first two combat operations included parachute and glider assaults into Sicily and Salerno, Italy.

The division moved from Italy to the United Kingdom in November 1943 to help with the liberation of Europe.

In the UK, the paratroopers prepared for Operation Neptune, the airborne invasion of Normandy, and Operation Overlord, the amphibious assault on the northern coast of France under Nazi control.

The paratroopers were among the first to fight in Normandy, France.

The 82nd fought for 33 continuous days without relief or replacements; it did not lose any ground that it had gained during the battle.

The 82nd moved to Holland in September 1944, and started to prepare for Operation Market Garden, which sought to seize and control key bridges and roads deep behind German lines.

The 82nd went on to fight in the Ardennes Forest when the Germans launched a surprise offensive there; the 82nd was able to stop them from going farther into the American lines.

After the war, the paratroopers with the 82nd were ordered to Berlin for occupation duty.

**May 10, 1943** The 82nd arrives overseas to Casablanca, Morocco, in north Africa, as a part of the World War II effort.

**July 9, 1943** 504th and 505th of the 82nd Airborne Division conduct parachute assaults in Gela, Sicily.

**Sept. 13, 1943** 504th and 505th conduct combat parachute assaults on Salerno, Italy, while the 325th conducts an amphibious landing in Salerno.



# Operation Golden Pheasant



Soldiers from the 82nd Airborne Division gather their gear after exiting a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter during Operation Golden Pheasant. PHOTO COURTESY OF U.S. ARMY

At the behest of President Ronald Reagan, the 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment conducted a parachute insertion and air-land operation in March 1988 into Honduras as a part of Operation Golden Pheasant. The deployment was scheduled as a joint exercise, but the paratroopers were ready to fight the Sandinistas. The paratroopers' presence caused the Sandinistas to withdraw to Nicaragua.

## Naming a division

The 82nd has gone by many names. Some have been given to the unit by ordinary Americans and some have been bestowed by top Army leaders. The nicknames of the 82nd Airborne Division include:

**ALL AMERICANS** Because members of the 82nd came from all 48 states when it was constituted on Aug. 25, 1917, the unit was given the nickname "All-Americans."

**AMERICA'S GUARD OF HONOR** Gen. George S. Patton bestowed on the 82nd one of its nicknames when he said: "In all my years in the Army and all the honor guards I have ever seen, the 82nd's honor guard is undoubtedly the best." This inspired members of the 82nd to refer to themselves as "America's Guard of Honor."

**AMERICA'S 911** When something happens in the world, the president calls his 911, the 82nd Airborne. The 82nd is a quick-reactionary force, meaning it can be anywhere in the world within 18 hours. The 82nd has been called "America's 911" as a testament to its ability to deploy to any hazard anywhere in the world.



## The patch

The AA on the patch stands for "All-Americans," the first nickname of the division.

## REMEMBERING THE FALLEN

The paratroopers of the 82nd remember those who have gone before them. A memorial on Fort Bragg reminds paratroopers of past sacrifices. "When new paratroopers come here, they need to remember that there are people who have been fighting to wear this maroon beret since the 1940s," said Sgt. Maj. Jonathan Brooks, a sergeant major with the 82nd Airborne Division Headquarters.



**June 6, 1944** The 82nd conducts a combat parachute and glider assault on Normandy, France.

**April 29, 1965** The 82nd's 3rd Brigade is deployed to the Dominican Republic during the Dominican Republic's civil war in support of Operation Power Pack.

**Feb. 12, 1968** The 82nd's 3rd Brigade is deployed to Vietnam. The 3rd Brigade served for more than 21 months and was instrumental during the Tet Offensive.





## The 82nd's last combat jump

Operation Just Cause was the last time the 82nd parachuted into combat. Its mission was to remove Panama's dictator Manuel Noriega and restore power to the president-elect, Guillermo Endara. The 82nd parachuted into Torrijos International Airport in Panama. After the night jump and seizure of the airport, the paratroopers conducted combat air assault missions on Panama City. They achieved their mission in January 1990.

## The maroon beret

The maroon beret is a symbol of the airborne soldier in many countries. Sir Frederick Browning, the commander of the British First Airborne Corps, granted the U.S. Army's 509th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division, authorization to wear the British-style maroon berets in 1943.



Paratroopers march past a reviewing stand during a division review of troops May 19, 2011, at Fort Bragg.

PHOTO BY SGT. MICHAEL J. MACLEOD

## Operation Desert Storm

The 82nd Airborne Division rode fast-moving armor and mechanized units inside Iraq. The division acted as a protective flank of the XVIII Airborne Corps, which acted as the headquarters for the operation.

It captured thousands of Iraqi soldiers, equipment, weapons and ammunition.

The 100-hour ground war was quickly over after six weeks of preparation to liberate Kuwait from Saddam Hussain.

**Members of the 82nd Airborne Division inspect an Iraqi MIL Mi-24 Hind-D assault helicopter abandoned during Operation Desert Storm.** PHOTO COURTESY OF U.S. ARMY



**Oct. 25, 1983** Elements of the 82nd Airborne Division deployed to Grenada in support of Operation Urgent Fury.

**Dec. 20, 1989** The 82nd Airborne Division's 1st Brigade Task Force deployed to Panama in support of Operation Just Cause. It was also the first time the 82nd conducted a combat jump since World War II.

**Aug. 8, 1990** The 82nd deployed to Saudi Arabia in anticipation of a fight against the Iraqi Army.





Paratroopers with 1st Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division, land Feb. 12, 2010, on a drop zone near Al Asad Airbase, Iraq, as part of a training exercise they hope will lead to combined U.S.–Iraqi training jumps. The jumper rolling on his back is performing a “parachute landing fall,” a maneuver that dissipates the energy of impact, avoiding injury to the paratrooper. PHOTO COURTESY OF U.S. ARMY

## The 82nd in Iraq

Units with the 82nd Airborne Division have served in multiple deployments in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The Division deployed to Iraq in February 2003; it was relieved by the 1st Marine Expeditionary Division in March 2004.

“When 3rd Brigade deployed in 2003 to 2004, we had Fal-lujah,” said Sgt. Maj. Karl Wilson, a sergeant major with the 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division. “We held it down. Everyone saw what happened when we gave it to the Marines. They got kicked out twice.”

The division controlled operations in and out of Baghdad. Paratroopers were rotated in and out of Iraq from 2004 to 2008.

While in Iraq, Soldiers with the 82nd provided security for western Iraq, including guarding the borders between Jordan and Syria. They also guarded supply lines and organized a counterattack on Iraqi paramilitary forces operating north of Samawa.

“People say this generation is soft,” Wilson said. “I’ve been around some hard-charging kids. The stuff we read about in World War II, these kids can do that. This last decade in Iraq and Afghanistan, when they write the history, it will hold up to the history of World War II.”

## AFGHANISTAN

The 82nd Division’s units have supported Operation Enduring Freedom since June 2002. The 82nd Airborne was instrumental in helping establish Afghanistan’s security forces. 82nd Airborne Division units also assisted with the September 2004 Afghanistan local elections and the July 2005 Afghan National Assembly elections.

The division deployed to Afghanistan in December 2006 and served a 16-month deployment. The division is currently deployed to Afghanistan as the Regional Commander (South). The 82nd Airborne Division’s mission is to continue to build up the Afghan economy, partner with Afghan national security forces and transition control to the Afghan people.

“The paratroopers of the 82nd bring a fighting spirit that is unequalled in Afghanistan,” said John Aarsen, museum director of the 82nd Airborne Museum at Fort Bragg. “For the past 60 years, someone has always been on alert, here, and ready to go at a moment’s notice. The paratroopers take pride in their accomplishments, in their history. This is the oldest museum outside of West Point. From the very start, from 1945, history and tradition have been important to this unit.”



Sgt. 1st Class Matthew S. Parrish, a mortar platoon sergeant for A Troop, 4th Squadron, 73rd Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, demonstrates the art of “high-fiving” to a group of Afghan children July 16, 2011, while visiting Hassan village in the Gelan District, Ghazni province, Afghanistan. PHOTO BY

STAFF SGT. MATT LEARY

**April 1999** Units with the 82nd Airborne Division are among the first to deploy to the Kosovo region of the Balkans.

**June 25, 2002** The 82nd’s 3rd Brigade deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

**Feb. 12, 2003** Division and 2nd Brigade deploy to Kuwait in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.





The Army's 82nd Airborne Division performs a mass jump with 120 members during the 56th annual Department of Defense Joint Service Open House on May 20, 2006, at Andrews Air Force Base, Md. The 82nd Airborne Division's real-world mission is to, within 18 hours of notification, strategically deploy, conduct forcible entry parachute assault and secure key objectives for follow-on military operations in support of U.S. national interests. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE 82ND DIVISION

## Division song

The division song inspires esprit de corps. "Soldiers stand at attention, and sing it," said Command Sgt. Maj. William Forro, command sergeant major of 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division. "They sing it proudly, and know all the words. ... To sing with your fellow Soldiers means you're a part of this division."

### THE ALL AMERICAN SOLDIER

Put on your boots, boots, boots  
And parachute-chutes-chutes  
We're going up, up, up  
And coming down, down, down.

We're All-American and proud to be  
for we're the Soldiers of liberty.  
Some ride their gliders to the enemy.  
Others are sky paratroopers.

We're All-American and fight we will,  
'Til all the guns of the foe are still.  
Airborne from skies of blue,  
We're coming through, Let's Go!

Put on your boots, your parachutes,  
Get all those gliders ready to attack today.  
For we'll be gone into the dawn,  
To fight them all the 82nd way, hey!

## The salute

**SALUTE:**  
'All the Way'

**RESPONSE:**  
'Airborne'



## ALL-AMERICAN WEEK

Every year, paratroopers gather at Fort Bragg for All-American Week. The units play one another in sports, host veterans on the post, participate in a division run and march the entire division on the parade field. The photo on the right shows the 82nd Airborne's 2011 All-American Week wrap-up, featuring a troop review by the commanding general.



**Aug. 25, 2003** The 82nd Airborne Division deploys to Iraq.

**Jan. 16, 2006** The 82nd Airborne Division is reorganized from three parachute infantry regiments to four brigade combat teams.

**January 2010** Paratroopers with the 82nd Airborne Division assisted with recovery efforts after the earthquake in Haiti.





# ACTION IN

*Stories of NCOs*  
**LEADING,  
TRAINING,  
MAINTAINING  
& CARING**

**NCO JOURNAL**



## 3 NCOs named top EOD team

First competition in 11 years tests skills with IEDs and chemical and conventional ordnance

**BY ANDREA SUTHERLAND**

Fort Carson Mountaineer

**A** three-man explosive ordnance disposal team from Fort Carson, Colo., emerged victorious in the EOD Team of the Year competition held Aug. 13–17 at Fort Knox, Ky.

“It was humbling,” said Staff Sgt. Christopher Thompson, the leader of the team from the 663rd Ordnance Company, 242nd EOD Battalion, 71st Ordnance Group (EOD). “We competed against many EOD Soldiers, and we competed in front of the entire command.”

Thompson, along with Staff Sgt. Josue Sandoval and Sgt. Matthew Bagley, completed a dozen tasks to defeat four EOD teams from across the Army. Because of competitors’ frequent deployments in support of Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom, this

year marked the first time the competition was held since 2001.

“For the EOD world, this is the Best Ranger or Best Sapper (competition),” Thompson said. “There wasn’t a lot of separation between first and last.”

Competition officials said only a few points separated the field, which also consisted of the top teams from the 52nd Ordnance Group at Fort Campbell, Ky.; the 49th Chemical Brigade at Fort Hood, Texas; and the 111th Ordnance Group (EOD), a National Guard unit from Alabama.

“Being able to compete against the best EOD techs in the field, it’s an accomplishment,” Sandoval said.

“This was basically a [Forces Command]-level competition,” said Capt. Clay Kirkpatrick, commander of the 663rd Ordnance Company. “The ultimate goal is for next year to make this an [Armywide] competition.”



◀ Staff Sgt. Christopher Thompson, the leader of the winning team from the 663rd Ordnance Company, 242nd Explosive Ordnance Disposal Battalion, 71st Ordnance Group (EOD), competes in a chemical warfare event while in full mission-oriented protective posture gear Aug. 15 during the EOD Team of the Year competition at Fort Knox, Ky. PHOTO BY MARVIN LYNCHARD

Hosted by the 20th Support Command (Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and High-Yield Explosives), the competition tested Soldiers with scenarios involving improvised explosive devices, chemical ordnance and conventional ordnance. It also measured basic Soldier skills such as land navigation and weapons qualification.

"It was challenging," Bagley said. "I honestly didn't think I was that good."

The teammates said remaining focused on one task at a time was essential.

"Staying motivated [throughout the competition] was tough," Sandoval said. "You only had 30 minutes to an hour to rest and reset before going back out for the next mission."

"Individually, nothing we did was all that difficult," Thompson said. "[Competition officials] did the best they could to throw everything at us. Focusing on that specific task was the biggest challenge."

Another challenge: 90-degree temperatures and high humidity.

"I could chew the air," Thompson said. "I wasn't dry a single second of the competition."

"Wearing the bomb and chem suit didn't make it any cooler," Bagley said. "It was 120 [degrees] on the asphalt."

Despite the heat, the team persevered through each task.

"They demonstrated they're good Soldiers first and excellent EOD techs," said Lt. Col. Gerardo Meneses, commander of the 242nd EOD Battalion. "We're excited and happy for their victory."

Meneses recognized the Soldiers as well as their leaders for the triumph.

"A lot of credit goes to Capt. Kirkpatrick and 1st Sgt. (David) Grotkin," he said. "They were probably the most aggressive as far as company- and team-level training. This victory is proof of all their hard work."

"A lot of skills had to be honed to succeed," Thompson said, adding that future competitions will help strengthen EOD troops as units from Hawaii, Alaska, South Korea and Europe are able to compete. ♡

# Golden Knights' Female 4-Way Team wins gold

BY DONNA DIXON U.S. Army Parachute Team

The Golden Knights Female 4-Way Team, or GKF4, part of the U.S. Army Parachute Team, brought home a gold medal for its recent performance in several concurrent competitions in the Czech Republic.

The team competed in the 18th International Parachuting Commission World Cup of Formation Skydiving, 11th Fédération Aéronautique Internationale European Formation Skydiving Championships, 9th FAI World Cup of Artistic Events and 8th FAI European Artistic Events Parachuting Championships. The skydiving events were held Aug. 26–Sept. 2 in Prostějov, Czech Republic.

The GKF4 Team includes Sgt. 1st Class Angela Nichols, the team leader and outside center; Sgt. 1st Class Dannielle Woosley, tail; Sgt. 1st Class Laura Dickmeyer, inside center; Staff Sgt. Jennifer Schaben, point; and videographer Sgt. 1st Class Scott "Scooter" Janise.

"We took first in the female category and managed to pull back ahead of the French by two in the end," Nichols said. "I'm so proud of my girls and Scooter!"

The Czech competitions allowed formation skydiving teams to qualify to jump in the World Parachuting Championships, Mondial 2012, in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, in December.

Team officials said the female parachutists made more than 555 jumps and spent more than 20 hours practicing in a wind tunnel in preparation for the recent competitions. The team completed multiple jumps during the three days to win in the Czech Republic.

"That first day of competition was probably the most in tune we have been as a team," Dickmeyer said. "We went up and let it loose. We gave it our all and it worked. All the hard work up to that point was paying off."

GKF4 will next compete Oct. 28–Nov. 1 at the U.S. National Skydiving Championships in Eloy, Ariz. ♡



▲ The Golden Knights Female 4-Way Team exits an L-410 Turbolet during formation skydiving competitions held Aug. 26–Sept. 2 in Prostějov, Czech Republic. The team brought home a gold medal. PHOTO BY SGT. 1ST CLASS SCOTT JANISE



BY EXAMPLE

# 'Soaking it all in'

Staff Sgt. Jessica Scott makes sure Soldiers get the highest quality care, no matter where they're deployed

*Staff Sgt. Jessica Scott is a 68W combat medic assigned to 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, at Fort Carson, Colo. Before enlisting in the Army, Scott served as a certified nursing assistant in a nursing home. She has deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan and has served in the Army for seven years.*

## Why did you join the Army?

I always wanted to be in the military; I always wanted to take care of people and take care of Soldiers. My way of giving back is to make sure that someone's family member gets home safely. I love what I do. I wake up every day and have pride in my job, and I look forward to going to work. I look forward to helping somebody. I look forward to traveling and being around Soldiers.

## What is your leadership style?

My leadership style is firm but fair. I believe every Soldier deserves a fair chance regardless of the situation. You always have people being categorized, but it doesn't mean that they don't deserve a fair chance of still being trained as a Soldier.

## How does your current role impact the Army?

It assures that there's a means for Soldiers to get a higher level of care. Not all the time will you have a Black Hawk available for a Soldier to get on to fly to the next level of care. So that's when I step in to ground evacuate the patients to the next facility and make sure they get there safely.

## What is good leadership?

If the simple things are enforced across the board with every Soldier you come in contact with, or every leader that you come in contact with, the Army will continue to progress and be as good as it is. Standards are the foundation of anything that we do. You meet an infantry NCO or a support NCO, and the way they train or the way they handle situations is different. You learn from it. You take all of it and make it your own. It's unbelievable how diverse the Army is and how we all work together once the mission comes into play.

## How do you lead Soldiers?

I lead by example. I don't ask my Soldiers to do anything I wouldn't do. When they see me doing a task, showing them what to do or what standard is supposed to be set, I make sure that I lead by example so they see what right looks like instead of just being told.

## What advice do you have for other NCOs?

Do what you know is right. Do what you can do to better the Army. Soldiers look up to NCOs as leaders, as the backbone of the Army. Be the leaders that everyone knows you can be, and train the Soldiers to the standards. Don't deviate from the standards.

## What does it take to be a good leader?

You can't be biased; you have to be open-minded to be a good NCO. You're going to meet all kinds of people, all kinds of different leaders, and have different situations thrown your way. You have to be very non-biased and open minded to be a good leader. Being receptive and soaking it all in is part of being "the backbone." You have to be willing to learn different aspects of your job or your career field, or you won't be successful. You have to be receptive; that's the way that I've been successful.

— INTERVIEW BY JENNIFER MATTSON

◀ Staff Sgt. Jessica Scott examines a Soldier on May 2 at her medical facility at Fort Carson, Colo.

PHOTO BY JENNIFER MATTSON





# 'It feels really good to give back'

## Fort Drum sergeant stands out as USO's Volunteer of the Year

BY SGT. JAVIER AMADOR

3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division

The USO recognized a 10th Mountain Division NCO as its national Volunteer of the Year during a ceremony Sept. 7 at the division headquarters at Fort Drum, N.Y. Sgt. Richard Schuh, a gunner with "Blackjack" Battery, 4th Battalion, 25th Field Artillery Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, received the Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal from Maj. Gen. Mark A. Milley, commanding general of the 10th Mountain Division and Fort Drum, as well as a certificate from the USO Headquarters acknowledging him as the top volunteer among thousands worldwide.

Schuh's selection as the Volunteer of the Year came after he was named the USO's Volunteer of the Quarter, and then the regional nominee for the Southwest Asia region for his work at the USO center at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan, while the 3rd BCT was deployed there in 2011. He beat out thousands of other volunteers nominated for the annual award from across the globe.

"Every USO around the globe submits a volunteer of the quarter," said Karen Clark, the director of the USO at Fort Drum. "[It's] somebody who we think is outstanding; who epitomizes what a volunteer should be; has the right attitude, the morals, the customer service attitude, and the ability to help."

Schuh contributed nearly 200 volunteer hours in a relatively short time last fall. He coordinated and managed various events at the USO in Kandahar, such as a "550-cord" cuff event in which he and 50 other service members used parachute cord to weave special bracelets they later gave to fellow service members, family and friends.

He also organized a basewide fantasy football league and ran the United Through Reading program in which video recordings of service members reading books were sent home to their children, allowing them to see their parents reading the book, easing the pain of separation.

Schuh said his introduction to volunteering came from his experience with several USO staff members at Kandahar who came to the wounded warrior housing where he was recovering from shrapnel wounds he received when his platoon was attacked while on a patrol.

"We heard that some of the USO staff members were coming by to make smoothies for us. Three of them came by, [and] they talked to us about volunteering," he said.

The experience left such an impact on him that shortly thereafter he made the decision to volunteer.



"It put something in my head, and I thought that maybe it could help me," he said. "It feels really good to give back to (the USO)."

Schuh is the first Soldier from the 10th Mountain Division to receive the national honor.

"Like all of our fantastic volunteers, he's humble, he's modest," Clark said. "I just am impressed, and inspired and I hope he will inspire other people in the community to volunteer somewhere."

Col. Sam Whitehurst, commander of Schuh's "Spartan" brigade, emphasized the importance of volunteering as he recognized Schuh's achievement.

"When you're engaging the enemy, you're focused on that. But then you also continue to focus on that idea of service, service to your Soldiers and service to our community," Whitehurst said.

"Really, when I look at Sgt. Schuh, he is that total package," he added. "He epitomizes what it means to be a warrior — a 'Spartan' warrior." 🍷

▲ Maj. Gen. Mark A. Milley (right), commanding general of the 10th Mountain Division and Fort Drum, N.Y., presents Sgt. Richard Schuh with a certificate acknowledging him as the USO's Volunteer of the Year at a ceremony Sept. 7. Schuh's wife, Beth, stands on the left. PHOTO BY SGT. MELISSA STEWART



# Children's rescuer gets Soldier's Medal

NCO and his father saved 2 young children from burning car

BY SGT. TRACY ELLINGSEN  
304th Sustainment Brigade

On his first day with his new unit, Sgt. James B. Bennett was presented the Soldier's Medal for exceptional heroism during an awards ceremony Sept. 8 at the El Monte, Calif., U.S. Army Reserve Center.

The medal was awarded to Bennett for his actions in Fresno on Jan. 28, when he and his father, James D. Bennett, saved the lives of two children by pulling them from a

to safety, they returned to the burning vehicle to rescue her brother, but were stymied by his seat belt.

"After desperately trying, they were able to use a pocket knife to cut the belt and free the boy," the narrator continued. "They then tried to free the mother and father as the flames grew, but were unable to get them out."

Though the parents had been killed on impact, the two children, 1-year-old Saleena Lopez and 2-year-old Paul Lopez, were saved with no permanent injuries.

The Bennett family have remained an important part of the children's lives since the accident, which was apparent from the crowd of Lopez family members who attended the ceremony and the two children who were never more than a few steps away from their rescuers.

"They asked us to be the godparents like within days of the incident," Bennett said.

He and his wife became godparents to Saleena. The elder Bennett became the godfather of Paul Lopez.

Maria Lopez, the children's aunt, said Bennett and his family visit often, traveling five hours to Central California where the children now live with their grandparents.

Bennett shrugs off most of the attention, insisting his reaction was the same anyone would have had.

"I think any Soldier would react the same way," he said. "You never forget what you learn."

Still, he knows that his and his father's actions saved two lives that night.

"If we hadn't stopped, by the time the next car drove by, it would have been too late," he said.

Bennett said he was overwhelmed by the attention given to him at the ceremony, his first day with the 250th Transportation Company. This was Bennett's first day back in the Army Reserve after leaving active duty in July.

"All these people were here to see me? I did not expect that," he said.

Bennett's former commander, Col. Carolyn Birchfield, commander of the 402nd Field Artillery Brigade, headquartered at Fort Bliss, Texas, flew to California to present the award.

"I think it was incredibly important to be here in person," Birchfield said. "The Soldier's Medal is a very rare thing."

With tears in many of their eyes, members of the Lopez family stood side-by-side with Bennett and his family as the award was pinned on.

Maria Lopez said she was thinking about her sister, the children's mother, the entire time.

"Thanks to him, we still have the kids," she said. ♡



car that caught on fire after a highway accident.

"Sgt. Bennett and his father stopped to render aid when the vehicle containing the family burst into flames," a narrator recounted at the ceremony. "Sgt. Bennett and his father, without regard to their own safety, began to struggle to release the two children from their car seats."

After freeing the young girl from the car and taking her

▲ Col. Carolyn Birchfield, commander of the 402nd Field Artillery Brigade, presents Sgt. James B. Bennett with the Soldier's Medal during an awards ceremony Sept. 8 at the El Monte, Calif., U.S. Army Reserve Center. Bennett received the award for his actions on Jan. 28 that saved the lives of two children. PHOTO BY SGT. TRACY ELLINGSEN



## THIS MONTH IN NCO HISTORY

# October 20, 1780

Like many other Continental Army Soldiers in October 1780, Sgt. Maj. John Champe, a 28-year-old serving in Maj. Henry Lee's "Loudoun Dragoons" cavalry unit, was utterly disgusted with Maj. Gen. Benedict Arnold's desertion to the British side a month before. But when Champe's unit found itself encamped across the Hudson River from Arnold's headquarters in New York City, it found it had a singular opportunity to capture the infamous traitor.

Gen. George Washington entrusted the mission to Lee, his most able cavalry officer, who in turn recommended Champe — a man "of tried courage and inflexible perseverance" — as the perfect double agent.

Champe set the plan in motion late in the night of Oct. 20, when he crossed the Hudson to present himself to British troops as a deserter. Interrogated over and over again by British officers, he stuck to his cover story — that he was inspired by Arnold's defection and wanted to do the same. Impressed, Arnold made Champe one of his recruiters, which gave him almost

unfettered access to Arnold's home.

Ten days later, unaware that Champe was about to kidnap him, Arnold moved his headquarters away from Lee's grasp. Champe was forced to go along, fighting for the British until he was able to

escape back to Continental troops a few weeks later.

Though unsuccessful, Champe's "daring and arduous attempt" became famous among Continental troops, and Washington excused him from further war service. He later served as the Continental Congress' doorkeeper before retiring in Loudoun County, Va. He died there in 1798 at the age of 46. His exploits were later told in Lee's memoirs, republished by his son, Gen. Robert E. Lee.

— COMPILED BY MICHAEL L. LEWIS



Champe

# CSM graduates from Ranger Course

BY SGT. GABRIELLE PHILLIP-PURVIS

6th Military Information Support Battalion (Airborne)

Command Sgt. Maj. Courtney S. Mabus, formerly of the 6th Military Information Support Battalion (Airborne) at Fort Bragg, N.C., graduated the U.S. Army Ranger Course on Aug. 24, one of 169 newly trained, Ranger-qualified Soldiers to graduate.

At the age of 40, Mabus is one of the oldest and highest ranking Soldiers to have graduated one of the Army's toughest schools. So why now, at his age, and with almost 22 years of service, would a command sergeant major attend Ranger School?

"It was unfinished business," Mabus said. "It would have been career regret if I had not had the opportunity to attend. What made me decide to go was watching the seats go unfilled month after month. Looking at the lack of Ranger-qualified NCOs in our career field, the excuse of me being 'too old' or 'too senior' doesn't feel right when we have slots being unfilled.

"I hoped that if I went, it would serve as an example and motivation to the junior Soldiers to attend as well," he added. "If I can do it at 40 years old, they can do it too."

The Ranger Course is 62 days long and consists of three grueling phases designed to give each candidate elite tactical and leader skills. Focusing on patrolling, reconnais-

sance, ambushing and raids, candidates are pushed to their limits while enduring physical and psychological stresses often found in combat.

Mabus said one of his biggest challenges was learning how to be a good follower with all his years of experience.

"As a command sergeant major, it's been a long time since I did basic Soldier tasks," he said. "The Ranger Course allowed me to gain respect and admiration by my peers on performance. I had to carry my own weight and not rely on my rank or position. It was challenging from an age perspective keeping up with and motivating Soldiers half my age."

His wife, Amber, said her initial reaction to her husband wanting to attend Ranger School was to say, "You're too old!"

"Then I saw how much work he put into getting ready for it," she said. "I don't think that most people truly appreciate the gravity or the difficulty of the course; I know I didn't."

Mabus said he hopes his experience motivates more NCOs to lead from the front.

"I view myself as the primary trainer of the battalion and the standard bearer for the unit," he said. "That's more than a statement. ... You have to be able to back that up with actions. If I can't do what I'm asking my Soldiers to do, it's impossible for me to lead from the front." ♡



Mabus



# Wig wags revive an old signal tradition

Using semaphore, NCOs silently signal change of command

BY CRISTA MARY MACK 311th Signal Command  
& MICHAEL L. LEWIS NCO Journal

The red-and-white flags flapped in the wind as they moved decisively in the semaphore bearer's hands, breaking the silence of a troop-filled Palm Circle at Fort Shafter, Hawaii, Aug. 15.

Long before the advent of the radio, battlefield communications took the form of wig wags — semaphore flags. With each position representing different letters, numerals and special signs, wig-waggers can signal an entire command to attention in complete silence.

The 311th Signal Command (Theater) paid homage to this historical means of communications by conducting its August change of command ceremony, during which Maj. Gen. James T. Walton assumed command from outgoing commander Brig. Gen. William Scott, utilizing the Signal Corps' iconic semaphore flags.

Two signalers from the 78th Signal Battalion, 516th Signal Brigade, at Camp Zama, Japan, silently communicated the orders for the entire ceremony using the two handheld semaphore flags. Sgt. 1st Class Faamasino Galoia, a satellite chief, signaled orders from the commander of troops on the ground to Staff Sgt. Neil Ward, the battalion's opera-

tions NCO, who stood on a 40-foot tower as he silently repeated the orders to all the troops on the field.

Galoia and Ward first conducted the unusual ceremony during their battalion's change of command in July. But they had to start from scratch, Ward said.

"When I first heard about doing a silent ceremony at our battalion change of command, I told my supervisor, 'I want to be the wig wag guy,'" Ward said. "But then, we had to learn how to do it. Sgt. Galoia and I did some research, we went online, and we found the signals."

"The Signal Center and School has these commands on file, and they have videos of it," Galoia explained. "So we had to go back and do a little digging. It's been a while since we've done anything like this."

Impressed with the NCOs' initiative in emphasizing their connection to the Signal Corps' earliest history, the leadership at the 311th Signal Command asked Ward and Galoia to repeat the wig wag ceremony at the division level, said Command Sgt. Maj. Kevin Thompson, command sergeant major of the 311th Signal Command.

"As you know, the sergeant major of the Army and the chief of staff are pushing this big campaign about getting back to the basics," he said. "When my boss was getting ready to depart the command, we decided to come up with an initiative that would help reinforce the skills that would get back to basics for the Signal Corps."

"When you talk about getting back to basics, you talk about how things got started originally, how standards actually got established," Thompson said. "When it comes to signal communications, the commander back on the battlefield in Napoleon's day, semaphore was his main tool to communicate; that's where it originated. What we wanted to do was to give our young Soldiers an appreciation for how far signal has evolved over the years. We decided, let's start from the beginning — almost the beginning of sig-



◀ Sgt. 1st Class Faamasino Galoia, a semaphore bearer in the 78th Signal Battalion, 516th Signal Brigade, from Camp Zama, Japan, signals commands to a tower during a change of command ceremony for the 311th Signal Command (Theater) on Aug. 15 at Fort Shafter, Hawaii. PHOTO

BY CRISTA MARY MACK



► Forty feet above the troops assembled for the ceremony, Staff Sgt. Neil Ward, a semaphore bearer from the 78th Signal Battalion, silently repeats the orders communicated from Galoia below. PHOTO BY CRISTA MARY MACK

nal — and let them know how important signal was and how effective it could be.”

To prepare, Ward and Galoia spent a few weeks literally going through the motions as they practiced the ceremony’s commands.

“As the commander of troops gave me the commands, I would signal them, and Sgt. Ward on the tower would relay my commands to the entire formation,” Galoia said. “There are certain movements for ‘attention,’ ‘order arms,’ ‘present arms’ and those types of commands.”

“There were no verbal commands given to the formation,” Ward said. “So as soon as I made the moves with the semaphores, every single person moved to attention or to present arms. It was really cool to see that. For them to do that all at once, seemingly out of nowhere, from my signal, it was really different.”

Though the assembled crowd included some of the most experienced Soldiers in the Signal Corps, almost none had been part of such a ceremony before, said Brig. Gen. Janice M. Haigler, deputy commanding general of the 311th Signal Command.

“As the commander of troops, I had seen [semaphore flag demonstrations] before, but had never been a part of actually doing it,” she said.

Haigler noticed that though it was announced that the ceremony would be silent, some guests still looked confused, which illustrates how unusual an experience it was.

“It was definitely different to not yell out the commands,” Haigler said. “The silence of it gives a different perspective to the change of command.”

Thompson said he hoped the ceremony would make all Soldiers reconnect with the roots of their chosen military occupational specialty.

“I hope that any Soldiers, no matter their MOS, would have a sense of pride in their job, and understand the importance of it and how it evolved over time,” he said. “For us, getting back to basics was getting back to the wig wags, even though today we use all this high-tech equipment.”

“It had to start somewhere, and it’s really something when you think about how young our country is and how young our Army is,” Ward said. “It came from doing things

“For us, getting back to basics was getting back to the wig wags, even though today we use all this high-tech equipment.”

— COMMAND SGT. MAJ. KEVIN THOMPSON

like wig wag and semaphore, and now we’re into the global network enterprise.”

Galoia said, for him, it was all about instilling a sense of pride in the Signal Corps.

“I hope Soldiers who see this are proud of their Signal Corps lineage,” he said. “These are things that we may have forgotten, but they should know that this is a part of them.”

Headquartered at Fort Shafter, the 311th is the designated signal command across the Pacific theater and includes active- and reserve-component Soldiers.

“The number and scope of this unit’s accomplishments are simply staggering,” Scott said. “The amount of opportunity that lies ahead here in the Pacific is absolutely unbelievable, and this team is the one that can and will seize it and take it to the next level.”



## Submit your article

The *NCO Journal* always seeks articles related to NCO professional development. If you have a story, photo or illustration, please send it to Master Sgt. Antony Joseph at [antony.m.joseph.mil@mail.mil](mailto:antony.m.joseph.mil@mail.mil). Text should be sent in Microsoft Word format or in an email message. Photos and artwork should be high-resolution digital files. Submissions will be edited for content, length and style.



# Throw out linear, flat leadership models

Junior leaders need mentorship and experience to grow

BY COMMAND SGT. MAJ. JEROD PALMER  
3rd Battalion, 410th Engineer Regiment

As an Army, we spend money, time and resources on ways to help us develop leadership. We spend countless more on organizational think tanks to rollout efficient leadership management processes that can be applied to our troops. We dwell on our need to translate, understand, master and, finally, dominate the concept and formula of leadership.



No matter how clever the warrior or scholar, the mastery of leadership is elusive and, once found, hard to sustain. Even when obtained, leadership skills must be maintained through rigorous practice. To remain an effective leader, one must practice self-development and embrace lifelong learning as a philosophy and way of life.

We hold on to our core Army definition of leadership as “the process of influencing others to accomplish the mission by providing purpose, direction and motivation.” The

Army added on a few more words within the last decade: “to improve the organization.” These words demanded a degree of selfless service and loyalty be threaded into true leadership, leadership that is commendable in its notion of individual sacrifices toward the greater good.

When I talk to my formation, however, very few Soldiers remember the first few words of the leadership definition. These words — “the process of” — change the dynamics of the definition completely, capturing the meat and potatoes of the real definition, and transforming it from cold terminology and the letter of the law to the spirit of a living, evolving and adapting definition. These three words change the perspective of the definition from that of a draconian behaviorist to one of a constructivist — a progressive scholar of Socrates.

The definition shapes how we as Soldiers and leaders weigh and place leadership within the art of war. The Army definition of leadership is linked with the Army definition of learning, particularly in the profession of arms. Lifelong learning and leadership development go hand-in-hand.

Leadership is a process. Since we are an Army of type-A personalities, you have probably already scratched out a leadership model on paper, breaking down key points and main efforts.

But linear and flat leadership models don’t work. Leadership models should be unending, free-flowing and dynamic, creating a path for the leader to navigate under the scrutiny of his or her mentor.

The Army Training and Leader Development Model captures some great critical thoughts in regard to leadership development. They show an interactive, dynamic relationship between leadership and learning.

The best way to grow leaders is to immerse them in a productive leadership environment where experience is gained and mentorship fostered.

The Army recognizes three domains of learning: operational, institutional and self-development. It also recognizes the framework of leader development as categorized into training, experience and education. Leadership ecology connects them both.

To master the art of leadership, one must travel through the interactive, ubiquitous world that is all around them. You must learn through success and through failure, which culminates in experiences that help you influence others to

▲ Command Sgt. Maj. Jerod Palmer speaks with members of his battalion’s staff Sept. 5 at their headquarters at Fort Bliss, Texas. PHOTO COURTESY OF COMMAND SGT. MAJ. JEROD PALMER



accomplish the mission and improve the organization by providing purpose, direction and motivation.

Senior leaders must find time for subordinates to get that leadership experience. Throw out the linear leadership models and find ways to challenge young leaders within leadership ecology. Become a leader who pushes junior Soldiers into uncomfortable, stressful positions, and demand they perform. Rotate subordinates equally, provide equal platforms to succeed from, counsel them, mentor them, set the conditions for them to not only succeed, but to learn, grow and have the skills to accommodate their subordinates with actual leadership experiences.

Today's junior leaders need mentors to provide them with purpose, direction and motivation. As Soldiers progress upward through the tactical level of war into the operational and strategic levels, they must master middle and upper management.

This is our time to burn the flat leadership development models and to grow the next generation of leaders. As senior leaders, it is our job to manage the leadership

experience of our subordinates.

This generation grew up in a web of technology, but they still need good mentorship, management and leadership. We need to be creative and get involved in subordinate career paths, set conditions for success, and get back to basic attribute and core competency development. Our training models need to be diverse and interactive; they need to envelop and surround our junior leaders.

We are not relieved of our duties of mentorship. It is our job to manage and nurture the development of core competencies, leadership skills and career progression. We must ensure that each Soldier is given the appropriate amount of leadership experience to meet his or her need to learn and grow. ♡

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**Command Sgt. Maj. Jerod Palmer is the command sergeant major of 3rd Battalion, 410th Engineer Regiment, 402nd Field Artillery Brigade, Division West, First U.S. Army, at Fort Bliss, Texas.**

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# How well you perform physically may depend on how fit you are mentally

**BY DR. JAMES BENDER**

Defense Centers of Excellence for  
Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury

When most people hear the words “psychologist,” “mental health” or “shrink,” they think “mental illness.” After all, why should you talk to those guys unless you have post-traumatic stress or depression?

It's unfortunate that some people think that way, because in addition to helping with serious conditions like PTS and depression, behavioral health specialists can offer much more. A big part of psychology concerns itself with improving physical performance.

All service members are called upon to perform physically throughout their careers. Everyone has to pass a physical training test; infantry Soldiers need to shoot and run; Navy rescue divers need to perform physically in harsh environments; security forces have to stay sharp while protecting flight lines and perimeters — the list goes on. When I was in Iraq, I told my Soldiers to think of themselves as athletes because they are.

Anyone who's endured endless PT knows that the military is very good at training your body to perform,

but that's only part of the solution. A huge part of your physical performance depends on your mindset, and that's where behavioral science comes in.

## Getting Worked Up

We'll start by talking about *arousal*, or how keyed up, excited or motivated you get while executing an action. This has to do with being alert, both physically and mentally.

Weightlifters and football players will often psych

**MENTAL FITNESS CONTINUES ON PAGE 49 →**

► **Soldiers competing in the 2012 U.S. Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition participate in the 2-mile run event during the Army Physical Fitness Test in the early morning hours July 16 at Fort McCoy, Wis.** PHOTO BY SGT. 1ST CLASS

MARK BURRELL





# Learning how to pass their knowledge on

Crew chiefs train in the best ways to teach the next generation

BY SPC. JENNIFER ANDERSSON

159th Combat Aviation Brigade, 101st Airborne Division

For almost five weeks ending in August, 10 crew chiefs with 4th and 7th Battalions, 101st Aviation Regiment, 159th Combat Aviation Brigade, 101st Airborne Division, at Fort Campbell, Ky., have been studying standards and immersing themselves in instruction as they complete the Aircraft Crewmember Standard Instruction course.

Soon, the crew chiefs who graduate from the course will be able to train and evaluate future crew chiefs. This means they will be even more proficient in tasks such as aircraft systems, malfunction analysis, aviation medicine

and other aviation safety subjects. The class also focuses on preflight, inflight and postflight tasks and tactical flight training tasks.

"In the ACSI, they are taught how almost every little component has a purpose and keeps the aircraft flying," said Sgt. 1st Class Clinton P. Bruce, the standardization instructor for the brigade.

Crew chiefs enter this course with the basics of aircraft systems. However, the most difficult part of teaching others is learning how to communicate effectively, said Staff Sgt. James Rubert, a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter standards instructor with F Company, 1st Battalion, 212th Aviation Regiment, 110th Aviation Brigade, at Fort Rucker, Ala., and a member of the mobile training team certifying the 159th CAB's Black Hawk crew chiefs. "It's all about communicating," he said.

The four-week, four-day course is intensive and somewhat overwhelming, said Sgt. Kyle Fletcher, a crew chief with A Company, 4th Battalion.

"It seems like it should be longer," he said. "It's a lot of information in a short time."

"It's the firehose effect," Bruce said. "They are given so much information very quickly; it's a lot to retain. Specifics on aircraft systems, in my opinion, are the most overwhelming."

It's those specifics — the technical parts of the helicopter — that are crucial to flight, however.

"[The instructors] need to teach every facet of the aircraft because we (the crew chiefs) are the mechanics on board, and we need to know how to diagnose a problem and have the knowledge of how to fix it quickly and safely," Bruce said.

Rather than the students attending the class at the U.S. Army Aviation School at Fort Rucker, the training was brought to the unit at Fort Campbell.

Having returned from deployment in Afghanistan about six months ago, Fletcher said he appreciated not having to be away from his family.

Sgt. Joseph Torchia, a Black Hawk standards instructor with the mobile training team, said it's more cost-effective for the Army this way. Because the cost to send a 159th CAB Soldier on temporary duty to Fort Rucker is equal

◀ Sgt. Dustin Moore, a crew chief with C Company, 7th Battalion, 101st Aviation Regiment, 159th Combat Aviation Brigade, 101st Airborne Division, does a careful preflight inspection of a UH-60M Black Hawk helicopter Aug. 17 during an aviation crewmember standards instruction course at Fort Campbell, Ky. PHOTO BY SPC. JENNIFER ANDERSSON







to sending a MTT instructor TDY to Fort Campbell, it's more resourceful for the Army to send three people TDY than 10.

"The MTT is a great tool for the CAB in the fact that when you send Soldiers to Rucker, it's onsies and twosies," Bruce said. "They have only so many classes per year. We have to schedule that time, and that time is also being shared with the rest of the Army — all the other CABs across the Army. So we have to try and get our guys in those classes piecemeal. When the course comes to us, we get to knock out [training for] 10 to 12 students all at one time."

Another major benefit to the MTT is the crew chiefs are able to become even more familiar with their own equipment and their own aircrew members.

"[The crew chiefs] have the added effect of going through the MTT here — getting to fly with their own pilots," Bruce continued. "If they go to Fort Rucker, they are flying with other students they may never see again."

Mitigating the risks involved with flying is the main reason for the class — to prepare the crew chiefs to train the next generation of crew chiefs to the same standard they learned without losing critical information. When passing the torch from one generation of crew chiefs to another, it is possible that some information could get forgotten or skewed, Bruce said. That's what makes their job so important.

"Because flight duties onboard any aircraft have to follow strict standards and safety procedures, [Soldiers] need dedicated instructors to teach them exactly what they need to be doing." ❧

▲ Sgt. 1st Class Clinton Bruce (right), the 159th Combat Aviation Brigade's standards instructor, steadies Spc. Jason Gustine, a crew chief with A Company, 4th Battalion, 101st Aviation Regiment, as Gustine guides a UH-60M Black Hawk helicopter Aug. 17. PHOTO BY SPC. JENNIFER ANDERSSON

#### ← MENTAL FITNESS CONT. FROM PAGE 47

themselves up before an event and almost work themselves into frenzies, while a concert violinist may breathe deeply or meditate to calm down and lower their level of arousal before a performance. A lot of things happen when you're at a high level of arousal or "really psyched."

Generally, we want to be very keyed up, with adrenaline flowing, when we're trying to perform a simple task that doesn't require much thought or complex action. Running and doing pushups and situps are activities where you want a high level of arousal. While in this state, you tend to feel pain and fatigue less and blood and oxygen are carried to your major muscles quickly.

On the other hand, when you're performing an action that requires concentration and fine motor skills, like shooting or land navigation, you want less arousal. Being too keyed up will actually decrease performance because the parts of your brain responsible for concentration, visual-spatial skills and creative thinking become less active, essentially shutting down.

#### How do you perform best?

Another point to consider is your personality type. Extroverts or thrill-seeking people generally perform better when they're more aroused while introverts tend to perform better when they're calmer, or less aroused. So, it's important to find your optimal level of arousal based on the task at hand and your personality type.

Things get interesting when you have to switch from high-intensity activities to low-intensity activities very quickly. Snipers are good at this. During training, they sprint and then drop to the ground and fire rounds into a target. They perform an activity (running) where a high level of arousal is needed and then suddenly transition to an activity (shooting) where a lower level of arousal is needed. Being in good physical condition lets them sprint without needing too much arousal, and breathing deeply before shooting lets them lower their heart rate and calm down, allowing them to shoot accurately.

**“A huge part of your physical performance depends on your mindset, and that's where behavioral science comes in.”**

— DR. JAMES BENDER

During the next few months, I hope to spend some more time writing about the mental aspects of human performance. Hopefully, you'll learn some things that will improve your execution on the job. ❧

Dr. James Bender is a clinical psychologist with the Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury. His monthly blog on psychological health concerns related to deployment and being in the military is available at <http://dcoe.health.mil/blog>.



# Paralympic shooter pioneers prosthesis

First active-duty Soldier to compete was already a trailblazer

BY SGT. 1ST CLASS TYRONE C. MARSHALL JR.  
American Forces Press Service

A sharpshooter who competed in the 2012 Paralympic Games in London last month also helped develop an innovative prosthesis that has helped countless wounded warriors.

Sgt. 1st Class Joshua Olson, the first active-duty Soldier to be a member of the U.S. Paralympic Team and who is also a part of the U.S. Army Marksmanship Unit at Fort Benning, Ga., missed qualifying for the finals in the mixed 10-meter air rifle prone event Sept. 1. He shot 595 points in the qualification rounds, but eight of his fellow competitors shot a perfect 600. Then Sept. 4, he shot 587 in the mixed 50-meter prone rifle event to earn 12th place.

The spectacle of the Paralympics was far different than where Olson was in October 2003, when he was wounded in Iraq by a rocket-propelled grenade during an ambush. Eight days later, he said, he woke up at the former Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C., where he spent about 18 months.

While rehabilitating at Walter Reed, Olson traveled to Florida to get fitted for a prosthetic leg with a unique socket that joins the prosthesis to the residual limb.

In discussing the origin of what is now known as the "Olson Socket," Olson was quick to note he didn't invent the prosthesis himself.

"I was just the first guy to wear it and help make it

work," he said. "In late 2004, I went down to Orlando, where Prosthetics and Associates is. ... Those guys got together [with me] and the actual designers, and originally drew it up on a bar napkin. And we tried it out, and we put it together and made it work."

Olson said as soon as he got back to Walter Reed with the prosthesis, officials there immediately began sending other service members down to Florida to be fitted for the same prosthesis and socket system.

"I was very fortunate and very blessed they named it after me. But I just happened to be the first guy to ever have one," he said.

As part of his recovery, Olson tried his hand at shooting as a form of therapy.

"In my stay at Walter Reed, there was an outdoor event every day in occupational therapy — shotgun shooting," he said. "I went out and shot sporting clay one day. I hit my first 49 out of 50."

Olson said his shooting caught the attention of the program director at Walter Reed, who contacted the Army Marksmanship Unit to see if a position was available for a competitive shooter or marksmanship instructor.

"I went down to Fort Benning from Walter Reed, had a tryout and was very successful," Olson said. "[I] got along great with the coaches and the other shooters on the team."

Olson was then assigned to the marksmanship unit in June 2005 and "slowly, but surely, started shooting."

"And I'm here today," he said.

Olson regrets that many Soldiers in his position wished to stay in the military despite their injuries, but couldn't.

"There's a lot of guys who have been wounded who want to continue to serve," he said. "I'm very blessed and very fortunate to be able to do that."

"I hope I inspire, not even [just] wounded Soldiers, but other Soldiers — just to [let them know], 'Hey, you might be going through something tough, such as [post-traumatic stress]. But if you work hard and give yourself goals to work on, it helps you get out of bed every day [and] helps you work hard and overcome things in your life.'"

◀ Sgt. 1st Class Joshua Olson, the first active-duty Soldier to be a member of the U.S. Paralympic Team, makes adjustments to his air rifle Sept. 1 during the competition at the 2012 Paralympic Games in London. PHOTO BY SGT. 1ST CLASS TYRONE C. MARSHALL JR.





# Roll Call OF THE FALLEN

FINAL SALUTES

**SPC. MABRY J. ANDERS, 21**

*Baker City, Ore., Aug. 27, 2012*

**SGT. CHRISTOPHER J. BIRDWELL, 25**

*Windsor, Colo., Aug. 27, 2012*

**STAFF SGT. JEREMIE S. BORDER, 28**

*Mesquite, Texas, Sept. 1, 2012*

**SGT. 1ST CLASS COATER B. DEBOSE, 55**

*State Line, Miss., Aug. 19, 2012*

**PFC. MICHAEL R. DEMARSICO II, 20**

*North Adams, Mass., Aug. 16, 2012*

**STAFF SGT. ERIC S. HOLMAN, 39**

*Evans City, Penn., Aug. 15, 2012*

**PFC. PATRICIA L. HORNE, 20**

*Greenwood, Miss., Aug. 24, 2012*

**SPC. JAMES A. JUSTICE, 21**

*Grover, N.C., Aug. 17, 2012*

**PFC. ANDREW J. KELLER, 22**

*Tigard, Ore., Aug. 15, 2012*

**SPC. KYLE R. ROOKEY, 23**

*Oswego, N.Y., Sept. 2, 2012*

**STAFF SGT. JONATHAN P. SCHMIDT, 28**

*Petersburg, Va., Sept. 1, 2012*

**SGT. LOUIS R. TORRES, 23**

*Oberlin, Ohio, Aug. 22, 2012*

**MASTER SGT. GREGORY R. TRENT, 38**

*Norton, Mass., Aug. 8, 2012*

**SGT. DAVID V. WILLIAMS, 24**

*Frederick, Md., Aug. 18, 2012*

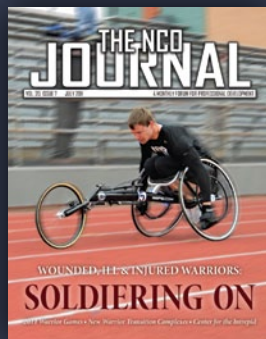
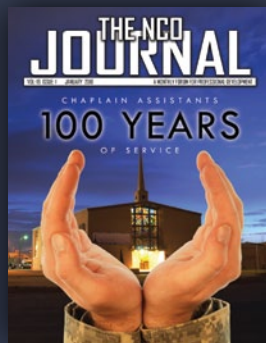
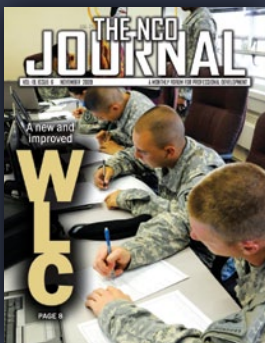
**STAFF SGT. JESSICA M. WING, 42**

*Alexandria, Va., Aug. 27, 2012*

## YOU ARE NOT FORGOTTEN

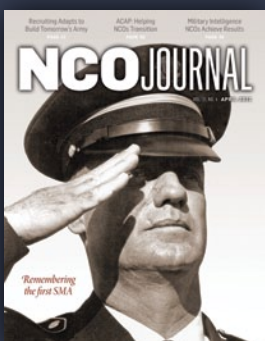
*This is a continuation of a list that began in the October 2003 issue of The NCO Journal and contains names released by the Department of Defense between August 11, 2012, and September 7, 2012.*





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