

FRONT & CENTER

Why do we serve?

For many, it is an honor to serve in an all-volunteer military force. We all join for different reasons of course, but regardless of the reason, we make a decision to join.

For some it is a choice of conviction and love for this country, for some the thrill of the challenge, for others a chance for something new by leaving home and exploring the world, and then there are those that simply just join on a dare.

Regardless of our reasons, we all chose to be a part of a unified team much greater than ourselves. With that choice, we choose to uphold the Army Values and set an example for our comrades, our communities and our Family. Thank you for your dedicated service and your choice to serve.

There will be an opportunity to

celebrate our service during the upcoming National Guard Association of Mississippi Officer and Enlisted Officer conventions.

The enlisted officer convention will be April 19-21 at Whispering Wing Hotel and Conference Center, Olive Branch. The point of contact for further information is Keith Ales at (662) 816-6452.

The Officer's Convention will be May 3-5 at the Natchez Convention Center, Natchez. The point of contact for further information is Maj. Pat Lowery at (601) 467-1028.

Team, we continue the task of preparing service members for their mobilization missions as we welcome the 838th Military Police Company, Ohio Army National Guard; 278th Military Police Company, Georgia Army National

Guard; 437th Military Police Company, Ohio Army National Guard; 3/114th Infantry, Texas Army National Guard; 79th Infantry, California Army National Guard; 204th Movement Enhancement Brigade, Utah Army National Guard and the 128th Joint Assessment Team, Minnesota Army National Guard.

These are just a few of the units that will be passing through our gates as they train and prepare for their upcoming missions supporting Overseas Contingency Operations.

This month we will welcome home members of the 1/181st Field Artillery Battalion, Washington Army National Guard; 19th Special Forces Group, Utah Army National Guard and the Alpha Company 3/20th Special Forces

Group, Florida Army National Guard. Thank you, team, for your continued support and sacrifice during your deployment to a grateful nation.

As we embark on new challenges and opportunities, always remember safety and mission preparedness. It is important to keep an emergency kit available at home for the unexpected inclement weather that can present itself rapidly in the Pine Belt. Always ensure you have your team's alert roster readily available at work and at home in the event of an emergency.

Thanks, team, for your continued hard work and steadfast attitude for success. God Bless you, your Families and the United States of America!

SOLDIERS FIRST!

Why d



Col. Brad Smith

SOLDIER

Continued from Page 1

NRA Life of Duty

The National Rifle Association is offering free annual memberships for military service members, law enforcement officers and first responders through the Life of Duty program. For more information or to sponsor a membership, go to the NRA Life of Duty website at <http://www.nralifeofduty.-tv/#/home>

MS degree in....

A team from the USM Center for Logistics, Trade and Transportation will deliver a presentation on the MS Degree in Logistics, Trade and Transportation April 18. This unique degree is in demand and could pave the way for a career on the Mississippi Gulf Coast and other areas. The presentation will be held from 11 a.m. until 1 p.m. in building 1813, Camp Shelby Education Center. Reservations are being accepted. POC is john.junkins1@us.-army.mil

College Credit Exams

The Camp Shelby Education Center has fifteen (15) college credit exams (undergraduate) which are available at no cost for Soldiers. Each exam is worth three semester hours. Online study guides are available through AKO and Petersons. For a listing of the exams and web site study guides, send an email request to john.junkins1@us.army.mil

GoArmyEd

Family Members (Spouses) are encouraged to set up an education record in GoArmyEd. Although Federal Tuition Assistance is not yet provided there is a wealth of education information provided in the GoArmyEd system. There are 2,500 colleges listed, multiple scholarship sites and tutorial sites which are available for review and exploration. Visit or call the Camp Shelby Education Center at 601-558-2029 for more information, or email hannah.c.traphagan@us.army.mil or john.junkins1-@us.army.mil

Engineer, Const. Camp

The Society of American Military Engineers (SAME)/US Army is hosting its annual Engineering and Construction Camp June 16-22 in Vicksburg, Miss. The camp provides high school students with a great hands-on experience in engineering and construction activities. Vicksburg's wide-ranging engineering community provides a wealth of offerings in cutting edge engineering topics. The one-week

program is supervised by professional engineers and volunteers from engineering organizations in the lower Mississippi Valley. The crewmates (campers) are exposed to a wealth of knowledge about the various career choices in the fields of engineering and construction, focusing primarily on water resources engineering. Applications are normally distributed to high schools in January for submission to the camp Student Affairs Committee by the middle of March each year. For more information and the application process, go to <http://samecamps.org/>

MI classes

The National Alliance on Mental Illness of Mississippi is offering free classes for Family members, friends, and other caretakers of adults with mental illness (such as serious depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia). The free 12 session course is designed to help Family members understand and support their ill relatives while maintaining their own well-being. Topics include: symptoms, treatments, strategies for handling crisis and relapses, coping skills, problem solving and more.

■ Hattiesburg: Tuesdays, through May 21, 6 - 8:30 pm, St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church, 3117 W. 4th St

■ Jackson: Tuesdays and Thursdays, through April 25, 6- 8:30 pm, NAMI MS, 411 Briarwood Dr., Suite 401

For more info and to register, call Ann Jensen at NAMI MS 601-899-9058 or 1-800-357-0388.

Services support

This portal (Joint Services Support) and its program sub-portals, is designed to give you a "one stop shopping" location where you can get important information on a variety of programs that have been created to support you - <http://www.joint-servicesupport.org>

Military One Source

Whether its help with child care, personal finances, emotional support during deployments, relocation information, or resources needed for special circumstances, Military OneSource is there for military personnel and their Families... 24/7/365! <https://www.militaryonesource.com/skins/MOS/home.aspx>

VWIP program

Oak Arbor, a division of Pine Belt Mental Health, has received a VWIP grant and is partnering with Pearl River Community College Workforce Development to provide services focused on enhancing the employability of eligible veterans within the Perry, Lamar and Forrest County areas. The programs will be

Pipefitting, Commercial Truck Driving, EMT, Electrical and Welding. Additional training will be offered in Forklift training and Microsoft applications. Those completing the respective program will also get a Career Readiness Certificate. ACT scores are not required; only high school or GED. CDL training doesn't require high school or GED. EMT, CDL and Welding will be in Hattiesburg. Pipefitting will be in Poplarville. The program will pay for tuition and supplies. The point of contact at Oak Arbor is Latibiyatta McLendon, at tbuckhalter@oak-arbor.com or 601.545.2925; at Pearl River CC POC is Deborah Hewitt at dhewitt@prcc.edu or 601.554.5503. For more information, contact John Junkins at john.junkins1@us.army.mil

Veteran status

Mississippi Senate Bill 2461 was passed and signed by the governor during the 2012 Legislative Session. The bill amends Sections 63-1-35 and 45-35-3, Mississippi Code of 1972.

The bill authorizes the Commissioner of Public Safety to provide a "Vet" designation on driver's licenses and identification cards for eligible Veterans.

For assistance, veterans may contact the Mississippi Veterans Affairs Board at 601-576-4850 or toll free at 877-203-5632, or contact their local County Veterans Service Officer. Veterans are encouraged to visit the Mississippi Veterans Affairs Board web-site at www.vab.ms.gov

Enlisted Education

The Enlisted Education Program (EEP) provides an opportunity for entry-level Soldiers in Combat Arms MOSs in Career Management Fields (CMFs) 11 Infantry, 13 Field Artillery, 14 Air Defense Artillery, and 19 Armor to obtain an associate degree during their first term of enlistment. A list of participating colleges offering degrees through EEP is available at the Education Center. For more information, call 601-558-2029 or contact john.junkins1@us.army.mil

H2H – Find a job

Are you, or is someone you know looking for a job? Hero2Hired (H2H) is a Department of Defense program created to help Guard and Reserve members find employment. In addition to searchable job postings of military-friendly employers all over the country, H2H provides many other valuable tools to find a job, all in one place. Visit www.H2H.jobs and sign up today!

DSST tests available

DSST (Similar to CLEP) tests are available

at the Camp Shelby Education Center. With DSST, you can earn college credits, and everything you need to know is a result of your life experience. College credits are available in 37 unique subjects. Disciplines include Business, Humanities, Mathematics, Physical Science.

From personal accounting to public speaking, from your health to law enforcement or ethics, there's a DSST subject you already know well. Most tests must be ordered but we currently have two exams; "Ethics in America" and "Introduction to World Religions" available for immediate testing. Each exam is worth 3 semester hours.

Information fact sheets, study guides and sample tests available! More information is available at the Education Center, Building 1813, 18th Avenue, Camp Shelby, 601-558-2029 or john.junkins1@us.army.mil

AARTS Transition

The Army/American Council on Education Registry Transcript System (AARTS) is in the process of transitioning to the Joint Services Transcript (JST). The JST will produce a FREE uniformed transcript of all military training and experiences to Service members from all branches. The new electronic transcripts will include Enlisted, Warrant Officer and Officer training, joint military training, and DANTES-funded standardized test scores. The transition to JST is expected to be completed by January 1, 2013. Formore information contact john.junkins1-@us.army.mil



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