

 FRONT & CENTER

The dedication to serve...

“The Soldier is the Army. No army is better than its Soldiers. The Soldier is also a citizen.

In fact, the highest obligation and privilege of citizenship is that of bearing arms for one’s country”

□ George S. Patton Jr.

I am so honored to be a part of this great organization in the Mississippi Army and Air National Guard as well as a member of the team here at Camp Shelby. The obvious is true; the one thing constant in life is change. No matter what change presents itself to us, always remember that you are a Soldier First! A warrior built on the foundation of the Army values; Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity and Personal Courage. It is the foundation

of these values that keep us strong and resilient, regardless of the challenges we are presented. It is with keeping these values that we can triumph over any obstacle.

Team, we continue the task of preparing service members for their mobilization missions as we welcome the 1/294th Infantry Battalion, Guam Army National Guard; the 3/116th Field Artillery Battalion, Florida Army National Guard; 222nd Military Police Company, New York Army National Guard; 1/214th Infantry Battalion, Georgia Army National Guard; 2/162nd Infantry Battalion, Oregon Army National Guard and the 160th Infantry Team, Georgia Army National Guard.

This month we will welcome home members of the 1968th Acquisition Team, Maine Army Na-

tional Guard; 1/181st Field Artillery Battalion, Tennessee Army National Guard and the 19th Special Forces Group, Utah Army National Guard. Thank you, ladies and gentlemen for your continued support and sacrifice during your deployment to a grateful nation.

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.

During the month of March, we will be observing Women’s History Month with the theme, “Women Inspiring Innovation Through Imagination: Celebrating Women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics.” A special observance hosted by the

158th Infantry Brigade and the 177th Armored Brigade will be held at 11 a.m. March 21 at the Post Theater.

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!



Col. Brad Smith

SOLDIER

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NCO Assoc. Conference

The Mississippi National Guard NCO Association Conference will be at the Whispering Wood Hotel and Conference Center, 11200 East Goodman Road, Olive Branch MS, April 19-21. We encourage everyone to attend this year’s conference in support of our association. With membership dropping, we need to make every effort to sustain our membership and search for ways to make it grow. We need full involvement in the association and ask that everyone please talk to your fellow Soldiers and Airmen about the NCO Association and the many benefits of association membership. This is going to be a great event, featuring bowling, fishing and golf tournaments, as well as ceremonies honoring our NCOs/Soldiers of the Year and outstanding Airmen. Maj. Gen. Collins is planning on attending, as well as many other special guests/speakers. For more information, contact Keith Ales at 662-816-6452.

Practice GTE Exam

The Practice GT exam will be offered at the Camp Shelby Education Center on the following dates:

- March 12
- March 26

Each exam begins promptly at 8:30 a.m.

To register for the exam, contact the Camp Shelby Education Center at 601-558-2029 or via email at 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 mid-

dle of March each year. For more information and the application process, go to <http://samecamps.org/>

Free NAMI 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, March 5-May21, 6- 8:30 pm, St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church, 3117 W. 4th St

■ Jackson: Tuesdays and Thursdays, March 19-April 25, 6- 8:30 pm, NAMI MS, 411 Briarwood Dr., Suite 401

■ Vicksburg: Mondays and Thursday, Feb 18-March 28, 6- 8:30 pm, Warren Yazoo MH Services, 3444 Wisconsin Ave

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>

Military HOMEFRONT

This is the official Department of Defense web site for reliable Quality of Life information designed to help troops and their Families, leaders and service providers. Whether you live the military lifestyle or support those who do, you'll find what you need! - <http://www.militaryhomefront.dod.mil/>

Turbo Tap

This is Department of Defense's official website providing information for service

members on transitioning from military service. This site is also supported by the Departments of Labor and Veterans Affairs. TurboTAP.org is intended to supplement the services offered by the Transition Assistance Offices and other groups. - <http://www.turbotap.org>

VWIP program

VETERANS WORKFORCE INVESTMENT 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 601545.2925; 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

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. During the transition, the process of requesting an AARTS transcript via GoArmyEd or the AARTS website will not change. The AARTS Team will continue to provide updates on the progress of transition. For More information contact john.junkins1@us.army.mil or call 601- 558-2029.

Veteran status

Mississippi Senate Bill 2461 was passed and signed by the governor during the 2012 Legislative Session. The bill amends Sec-

tions 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

Community Support Spec.

Pine Belt Mental Healthcare Resources, a behavioral healthcare company with more than 500 employees and over 40 facilities in South Mississippi, has an immediate opening for a full-time Community Support Specialist position. This position will serve Southern Mississippi from the City of Jackson, south to the Mississippi Gulf Coast. Veterans families from the PBMHR service area (Covington, Forrest, Greene, Jefferson Davis, Jones, Lamar, Marion, Perry, and Wayne Counties) will be primarily targeted; however, referrals from other counties will be included.

Applicants are encouraged to visit www.pbmhr.com to apply for the open positions. Open positions can be found under the “Employment Opportunities” tab. Applicants may also apply in person at the following address:

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CALL 601-268-2331

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