

# Castle

M a g a z i n e



News and Information for the 412<sup>th</sup> Theater Engineer Command

January 2016

**The birth of a new unit: 363rd  
activates**

see story page 12

**USAR gets down, dirty with  
Tough Mudder**

see story page 22



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(Version 3)

## Social Networking Safety Tips

### Overview:

Social networking sites allow people to interact with others and find people with similar interests or backgrounds. Social networking sites enjoy worldwide popularity, underscoring the need to understand potential risks associated with the use of these sites. A person's online activities may inadvertently expose excessive information about their identity, location, relationships, and affiliations, creating an increased risk of identity theft, stalking, or targeted violence. A safer social networking experience is available by accepting some basic assumptions and following a few recommendations.

### Assumptions:

- Once something is posted on a social networking site, it can quickly spread. No amount of effort will erase it – the Internet does not forget.
- You are not anonymous on the Internet.
- There are people on the Internet who are not who they purport to be and will take advantage of you if afforded the opportunity.
- Participating in more social networking sites increases your attack surface and overall risk.
- Everyone on the Internet can see what you post, from where you post it, who your friends and associates are, the comments your friends make and your "witty" replies.
- An embarrassing comment or image will come back to haunt you...one day...when you least expect it...at the least opportune time.
- There is a complete record of your online activity...somewhere.

### Recommendations:

- Do not post anything you would be embarrassed to see on the evening news.
- Do not accept friend/follower requests from anyone you do not know; independently verify identities.
- Avoid using third-party applications; if needed, do not allow them to access your social networking accounts, friends list or address books.
- Do not post personally identifiable information.
- Be cautious about the images you post. What is in them may be more revealing than who is in them. Images posted over time may form a complete mosaic of you and your family.
- Do not allow others to tag you in images they post. Doing so makes you easier to locate and accurately construct your network of friends, relatives and associates.
- **Securely configure your social networking accounts to minimize who can see your information.**

### CONFIGURATION GUIDES

- [Facebook](#)
- [Twitter](#)
- [LinkedIn](#)
- [Google+](#)

CLICK FOR DETAILED RECOMMENDATIONS  
ADDITIONAL GUIDES FORTHCOMING



#### Contact Information:

**Cyber Criminal Intelligence Program**

**27130 Telegraph Road**

**Quantico, Virginia 22134**

**Phone: 571.305.4482 IDSN 2401**

**Fax: 571.305.4189 IDSN 2401**

**E-mail:**

**[usarmy.cciuintel@mail.mil](mailto:usarmy.cciuintel@mail.mil)**

**CCIU Web Page:**

**[www.cid.army.mil/cciu.html](http://www.cid.army.mil/cciu.html)**



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**"Do What Has To Be Done"**

# The Castle

January 2016



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## Contents

A Word from the Commander.....	4
The Command Sergeant Major's Corner.....	5
Chaplain's Corner .....	6
SHARPen the Spear.....	7
DTS guidance.....	8
Windows 10 on the Horizon .....	10
The birth of a new unit: 363rd Engineer Battalion activates in ceremony .....	12
412th TEC CG holds second senior leader development training.....	14
SecDef opens all military occupations to women.....	16
Photospread: Family Day around the TEC .....	18
More to Moore than first active duty female 12B.....	20
U.S. Army Reserve gets down and dirty with Tough Mudder.....	22
Photospread: Tough Mudder Philly .....	24
Army Reserve, civilian firefighter finds joy in helping community .....	26
The computer that saved the Soldier's back, and the helmet that saved his life.....	28
467th Eng. Bn. holds Best Warrior Competition .....	31
Soldiers can mix camo patterns for cold-weather gear.....	32
Photospread: Around the TEC .....	34
Living the Army Values: Respect .....	36
Reserve officer becomes third female to earn Ranger tab .....	40
Army Reserve engineer hold run, sign shirt for cancer victims .....	42
412th TEC donates food stuff for Thanksgiving .....	44
Army Reserve engineers provide critical support at home, abroad .....	46
Updated NCOER rating forms activated online .....	47

# 412<sup>th</sup> Theater Engineer Command 'Build To Serve'

About the Front Cover: U.S. Army Reserve Sgt. Eric Mills, 328th Engineer Company, high-fives Tough Mudders as they begin 21-challenge course of Tough Mudder Philly in Coatesville, Pa., Oct. 17. U.S. Army Reserve Soldiers were spread out across the course to provide encouragement. The U.S. Army Reserve was one of the sponsors of the event. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Bradley Miller)

About the Back Cover: A Tough Mudder exits an obstacle during Tough Mudder Philly in Coatesville, Pa., Oct. 17. Mudders completed the 21-challenge course spread over a vast, 10-mile rolling landscape. The Army Reserve was one of the sponsors of the event. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Hector Membreno)

# Major General Tracy Thompson

## Commanding General, 412<sup>th</sup> TEC

### A Word from the Commander

2016 is *The Year of the Squad Leader* in the 412<sup>th</sup> Theater Engineer Command. As I have said before, it is the most powerful, most influential position we have in the Army.

When I sit in meetings with the Army's top leaders – its 4- and 3-star generals – they spend almost half their time talking about two groups of leaders: company commanders and squad leaders.

I've given my battalion commanders guidance on how to mentor and train those company commanders. But this column is focused on Squad Leaders and all the members in those squads. It's your help I need, and I'm glad you are the generation in uniform ready to give it. If you are already in a squad leader position, I need you to do two very critical things: Do your basic job as a leader and build the bench.

The first thing I need you to do is your basic job as a leader. That has two components – one of them is simple and one is extremely hard.

The simple component is the "science" of leadership. It's just getting the checklist of things done for those you lead: Have they had their flu shot? Have they done their PHA? Unfortunately, many of our first line leaders aren't doing this right now, and when you add it up, it hurts our readiness.

The second component of leadership is much harder, and that's the "art" of leadership. It's why not everyone can be a good leader. It involves getting to know your Soldiers; taking time to teach them their profession; recognizing and enforcing their strengths; spotting and counseling them on their weaknesses. Although good leaders are often able to get both of these right – the art and the science of leadership -- many do not take the more broad and selfless approach we need to build tomorrow's leaders, which is what I mean by building the bench.

The second critical task for our squad leaders to do is grow their replacement. It seems like common sense, but many times we view our best subordinates as "too critical" to a mission to send to school or to release to a broadening assignment in a given year. We cannot and must not look at it this way. Also, seniority cannot equate with expectations of promotion or order of merit lists. Often a brand new specialist has more

potential and is more professional than a 3-year specialist who has never been proactive with his leadership or made an effort to sign up for school. Merit is merit, not time in grade.

The tasks above are what we need the current squad leaders to do if we are to achieve a high level of readiness. But I have just as important a task for the Soldiers in the squad: Ambition! I need you to want to be a future squad leader. If you don't like how something is being done, offer productive, professional solutions. Don't just grumble or whine. Your suggestions won't always be taken, but sometimes they will. If you are to lead, you must first learn how to follow. If you are to eventually give orders, you must also learn how to receive input, analyze its value and take the good and reject the rest. It's part of learning. Unlike what your parents told you when you brought your grade school art projects home, not every painting you did was "great."

I am going to ensure you have "Sergeant's Time" in the coming months to start executing some of the many requirements we place on your shoulders; a few of which are mentioned above. This is your year. I will do everything I can to ensure you have the tools and resources to succeed. Make the most of it.

Essays!  
Build to Serve!  
MG Tracy A. Thompson





# Command Sergeant Major Richard Castelveter

## Command Sergeant Major, 412<sup>th</sup> TEC

### A Word from the CSM

As I write this column, the year 2016 is fast approaching. We will begin to reflect on our successes, put behind us our failures, and most certainly, we will eagerly contemplate the future.

Many of us will make resolutions, some that will be kept and others summarily dismissed as they are overtaken by other priorities, personal and professional.

Our fulfilled and broken resolutions are expected and understood. For instance, some of us vow to exercise more, others make self-promises to lose weight, eat less, work more with charities, give more to the less fortunate, but how many of us pledge to strengthen our relationship with our family?

A writer/author named Ellen Barrier once wrote, "The strength of a man is in his character. A strong man is great man of wisdom who understands, his top priority is to his family."

As citizen Soldiers, what is, or should be our highest priority? Clearly we have more than one, many in some cases. When we put on our uniform, we commit to serving our country, protecting our nation's freedoms, eradicating aggression where it violates humankind and doing that while trying to find work and lifestyle balance.

Make no mistake, family is and should remain the mainstay of our core values. My strength in part comes from the honor I share with you in wearing the uniform of a U.S. Soldier. There is no greater privilege.

Yet, no day begins without me

giving thanks to my wife and my children. I thank them for their everyday support of my commitment to my military responsibilities and the sacrifices they make allowing me to serve.

Our Families accept the distance between us when we train and when we deploy. Husbands and wives of women and men in the Armed Forces know and understand that the limited time we have on this earth must be shared with the military services. Remember, war has no barriers and it does not allow equitable distribution of time. Our nation is at war and our time is consumed as a result.

In my role as Command Sergeant Major, I am obliged to see that you have the tools you need to train, to deploy and to serve valiantly at home and abroad. I also have an obligation to ensure that in the training and development process, we never neglect our families.

Guard and Reserve families often have little time to prepare for deployment, with even less time for reintegration. U.S. Army Reserve Commands, ours notwithstanding, routinely host "Yellow Ribbon" events to help families prepare for and stay strong during and after a deployment

I urge you, if you have not already, to work with family support coordinators to prepare yourselves and your families for your potential deployment. That means sustaining your family throughout the deployment, to include the reintegration process, where you will reunite with your families, those close to you in your communities and your employers.



The United States military services provide a wide array of benefits for Families of Soldiers to help them better cope with Army life. I strongly suggest you familiarize yourself with your local Family Readiness/Support Group, where you can engage with other family members, other Soldiers, volunteers, and civilians attached to Army command groups.

The Army family is a strong one but its strength comes first from the commitment you have made to them and from their commitment to you.

Our nation will remain strong and it will grow stronger through the work we do in service to the United States of America. Our individual strength also will grow stronger through the bond we build with our spouses, our children and our other family members.

The threat we face is a world fraught with violence: a very real and demonstrated violence. Our enemies are determined to cause

*CSM continued on page 6*

# Chaplain's Notes

## A year of new opportunities

As peace-loving peoples of all races, creeds and religions struggle to come to grips with the shattering terrorist attacks of 2015, we're reminded that evil is defeated by good, that light dispels darkness. Each of us affects the world in some way, so building a better world starts with me. But what's a person to do? Here are my suggestions.

Pledge to make 2016 your best year ever! Maybe it's just me, but it seems that the older I get, the faster time moves. Do you remember being a kid and starting a new year at school? It seemed like the year would never end and the much anticipated summer vacation never come.

Talk about moving fast, where did 2015 go? I trust and pray that despite everything, it was a year filled with blessing and good fortune. What makes a year good anyway? Is it simply being the recipient of good circumstances or do we play a role? I'd say an equal measure of both. Situations good and bad come into our lives all the time that surprise us. They may fill us with great joy or shake our foundations.

But are we mere passive observers in life's journey or can we make

a difference by the choices and decisions we make? Why not take some time for self-reflection and goal setting? Understand that if we keep doing the things we've always done, we'll keep being the people we've always been. Here are a few specific suggestions:

First, let us consider our spiritual lives. In my civilian role as a Hospice Chaplain, I'm confronted with mortality every day and am often blessed to preside at funerals of very Godly people who left life prepared to meet their Maker. How about us? Do we have habits that hurt others or offend a holy God? Why not make 2016 the year we get this squared away.

Second, let us consider our personal relationships. No person is an island. What we say, what we do and how we react to things is tremendously powerful. Each of us has the ability to be an instrument of blessing and healing or conversely an instrument of harm and hurt.

Finally, let us consider our physical bodies and invest in pursuits that honor and enhance the temple God has given us. The Army challenges each Soldier to maintain a standard



of physical fitness so we might be prepared for the unexpected.

So, are you excited about the possibilities 2016 brings? Let us consider our spiritual lives and make new strides, invest in personal relationships God has given us, treating them as precious as gold and care for our physical bodies that accompany us throughout life. Let's make 2016 our best year ever!

God bless you all richly!

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*CSM*  
*continued from page 5*

harm to the American people. That means the demands on you will grow proportionate with the threat.

Recent acts of terrorism in Egypt, France and West Africa are reminders that you may be called to action at a moment's notice. Whether you spend weeks in training or are mobilized for a longer term assignment, you will be, for some period of time, separated from your family.

I am confident that from the time I have spent with

you, providing for your family remains forefront in how you have been preparing for mobilization.

Confucius said, "The strength of a nation derives from the integrity of the home."

As we enter 2016, let us each recommit to strengthening our family relationships. Let us build on a sound foundation of support. Together, we will be stronger, as a military, as a nation, and a family.

CSM Castelveter  
Build to Serve!  
HOOAH

# SHARPen the Spear

Sharpen the Spear is a functional concept that Leaders, Soldiers and Civilians can adopt in their daily workplace interactions with one another. The methodology is based on building professional relationships on a personal level in order to further eliminate incidents of sexual harassment/assault by creating increased interpersonal communication at all levels, heightened awareness of situations that do not seem right, tendencies to report inappropriate behaviors and unified support for individuals who have experienced sexual harassment/assault during their recovery process.

The pillars upon which this initiative is built are an addition to the standard priorities set forth by current strategic plans, operational directives or command imperatives. These are simple respect-based techniques which all stakeholders can implement into daily workplace interpersonal interactions. The desired end state is to be a United States Army Reserve valued leader in preventing and responding to sexual harassment and assault.

This commitment to leadership can be exemplified in an environment where inquiries are answered accurately and promptly; professionalism and respect are at the heart of good relationships; collaboration is open and collective; trust is not a matter of technique but of character; leadership is the measuring rod of quality; Soldiers and Civilians work toward a common vision of achieving personal and organizational objectives.

## **For Leaders:**

Leader competencies are tools to facilitate dialogue, enhance trust, diminish the confusion incurred by complainants/victims and play an integral part in helping complainants or victims make a choice

to meet their basic needs in the aftermath of a traumatic event. Open and candid discussion is the cornerstone of this initiative. Emphasis must be placed on the importance of relationships: ensuring commanders and supervisors alike truly know the people that work with and for you. Talk and listen to workplace personnel often. Build professional relationships on a personal level.

## **Questions for Leaders:**

- Do you believe you can tell if a person is a harasser/offender just by looking at them?
- Do you assume a person is at fault when he/she is sexually assaulted?
- Do you assume how a person dresses or acts is a sign of how he/she wishes to be treated?
- Do you assume that when a person frequently does not report for work or duty this is a sign of substandard performance? Could there be other issues beneath the surface?

It is important to understand your team members' surroundings and to have a plan in place in the event that a subordinate becomes the victim of sexual harassment or assault. Don't be status quo. Revise and exercise plans often.

## **For Soldiers and Civilians:**

Soldier/Civilian competencies provide additional opportunities for success and encouragement through buddy aid, peer-led groups, support and empowerment from staff who are survivors and increased unit awareness and prevention measures. All core components of this initiative must be rooted in an understanding of the complex effects that trauma and other forms of oppression may have in a complainant's or survivor's life. Soldiers and Civilians are the tip of the spear; front-line stakeholders,

the primary force without whom prevention, intervention and mission accomplishment would be impossible. Understanding any assumptions you may have about the organization, your role in it, views on sexual harassment/assault and how you treat/respect others are necessary for the overall success of the organization and each team member.

## **Questions for Soldiers and Civilians**

- Are you generally trusting of others? Do others genuinely trust you?
- Do you account for a peer/buddy if she/he has unexcused absences from work or duty? Do you know of other issues beneath the surface?
- Do you assume you are immune to harassment or assault because you have a good rapport with peers? Subordinates? Leadership?
- Do you believe you can tell if a person is a harasser/offender just by looking at him/her?

How you understand the organization, your role within it and sexual harassment/assault will influence how you respond to such an incident in its aftermath and long-term effects. Don't be status quo. Revise and exercise understanding often.

If you or someone you know is or has been a victim of sexual harassment or assault contact the 412th Theater Engineer Command SHARP Office at 910-273-5905 (Mobile First Response), or [fredrick.a.conley.civ@mail.mil](mailto:fredrick.a.conley.civ@mail.mil).

For additional SHARPEN the SPEAR information or a training support package, contact the 412th TEC SHARP Office at 910-273-5905 (Mobile First Response), or [fredrick.a.conley.civ@mail.mil](mailto:fredrick.a.conley.civ@mail.mil).





DEFENSE TRAVEL  
MANAGEMENT OFFICE

## Information Paper: Updating your Government Travel Charge Card in DTS

### Introduction

This info paper outlines the steps you must take to prepare to use your Government Travel Charged Card (GTCC) in the Defense Travel System (DTS). This paper will guide you through how to update your DTS profile with your current GTCC information.

### Update Your DTS Profile

After you receive and activate your new GTCC, you must update your DTS profile before using it. Failure to do so may result in your card and related reservations being declined by your local Commercial Travel Office (CTO). To update your profile:

1. After logging onto DTS, on the Welcome screen, hover over **Traveler Setup** and select **Update Personal Profile** (Figure 1).

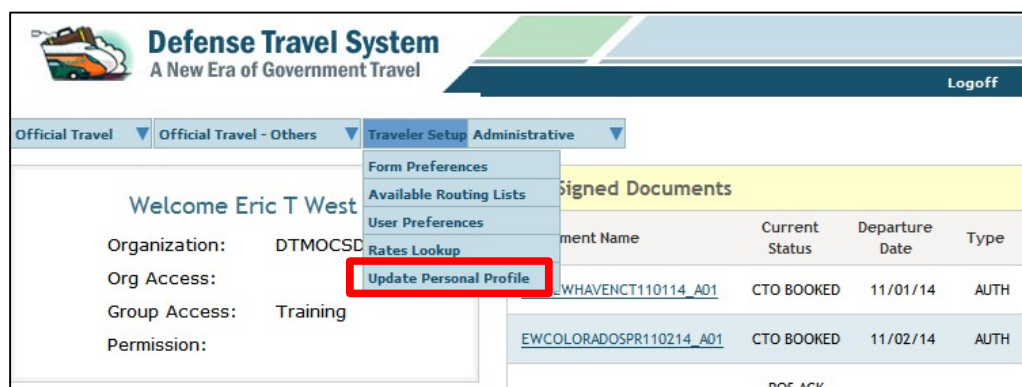


Figure 1: DTMO Welcome Screen – Traveler Setup

2. When the **My Profile** screen opens, select **My Account Information** (Figure 2).



Figure 2: My Profile Screen





DEFENSE TRAVEL  
MANAGEMENT OFFICE

**Update Your  
DTS Profile  
(Continued)**

3. When the **My Account Information** screen opens, scroll down and update the GOVCC details (Figure 3). If you've been re-issued an expiring card you will only have to change the **Expiration Date**. If this is a newly issued card, you will have to enter the **Account Number** as well.
4. While you are here, update any other information that has changed. Having up-to-date contact information, particularly email addresses, is very important. For example, did you recently change to a "mail.mil" account?
5. When you are done making updates, select **Update Personal Information** to save the changes.

Enter only one account with a routing number.

Mandatory EFT Payment: ☒ Yes ☐ No

GOVCC Account Number: 42424242424242

GOVCC Expiration Date (mm/dd/yyyy): 03/31/2016

Checking Routing Number: 114000653

Checking Account Number: 101010101

Saving Routing Number:

Saving Account Number:

Update Personal Information

Figure 3: My Profile Screen

**Existing Travel  
Authorization  
with Expired  
GTCC info**

If you have a SIGNED travel authorization that has NOT been ticketed, and has either an expired GTCC or an invalid account number in the travel document, you must either:

- 1) Contact your CTO directly and provide them your new account information
- OR**
- 2) Update your DTS authorization and resign to route the travel document back to your CTO

For detailed instructions on how to update a DTS travel authorization with invalid account information, refer to the information paper at:

[http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/Docs/Updating\\_DTS\\_Auth\\_with\\_GTCC\\_Info.pdf](http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/Docs/Updating_DTS_Auth_with_GTCC_Info.pdf).

For any additional questions regarding this process— please contact your local Defense Travel Administrator.

# Windows 10 on the Horizon

The Department of Defense (DoD) Chief Information Office (CIO) intends to roll out Windows 10 across the enterprise.

There is no timeline announced however, initial migration will focus on Non-secure Internet Protocol (NIPRNET) desktops and laptops. Eventually, Windows 10 will become the operating system throughout the Army.

The U.S. Army Reserve CIO/G6 (Information Management) are working with Headquarters Department of the Army, participating in a Windows 10 Migration Implementation Planning Team (IPT) to identify necessary lines of efforts required to effectively and efficiently migrate the Army and Reserve to Windows 10.

Below are some things users can begin accomplishing now to ensure a smooth transition:

1. Move individual working files from C:/ drive locations to a shared network drive or written DVD. This single task will save hours and prevent the loss of critical information. Remember Personnel Identifiable Information (PII) CANNOT be stored on any shared network drive.

2. Ensure e-mail files and any personal storage tables (PSTs) are moved/backed up from the C:/ drive to a network location or written to a DVD.

3. Copy "Favorites" associated with any internet Browsers (Explorer or FireFox) to a network location or written to a DVD.

Additional information will be sent out via the 412th Theater Engineer Command operations center and directly to the appropriate G6 staff.

412th TEC G6 staff

## IG Guidance

✓ **Be sure you have a problem, not just a peeve.**

(Are the cooks turning out lousy chow or was it just one bad meal)

✓ **Give your chain of command a chance to solve the problem.**

(Many problems must be addressed to the chain of command for resolution anyway).

✓ **If IG assistance is needed, contact your local IG first.**

(IG's at higher commands will normally refer the case to the local IG for action)

✓ **Be honest and don't provide misleading information.**

(IG's will discover the truth quickly in most cases and there are penalties for knowingly providing false information)

✓ **Keep in mind that IG's are not policy makers.**

(If a policy is flawed you can submit proposed change on a DA Form 2028)

✓ **Keep in mind that IG's can only recommend, not order a resolution.**

(Only Commanders can order; the role of the IG is to advise the Commander)

✓ **Remember IG's can only resolve a case on the basis of fact.**

(Your claim that a supervisor has violated the rules doesn't make it fact. A claim must be supported with evidence)

✓ **Don't expect instant action on your request... Be patient.**

(Investigations take time, and IG's tend to have heavy workloads)

✓ **Be prepared to take "No" for the answer.**

(In any case "Yes" or "No", the IG will explain why)





604th FORWARD ENGINEER SUPPORT TEAM - ADVANCED  
BAGHDAD, IRAQ NOVEMBER 2015

# PROTECT YOUR EYES IN THE OFFICE

- » Use the 20-20-20 rule
- » Reduce screen glare with anti-reflective screens
- » Sit at arm's length from the monitor

**VISION CENTER  
OF EXCELLENCE**  
vce.health.mil



# The birth of a new unit: 363<sup>rd</sup> Engineer Battalion activates in ceremony

*By Staff Sgt. Debralee Best,  
412th TEC Public Affairs*

**KNIGHTDALE, N.C.** – “I’ve been in the Army 34 years and this is my first time in the delivery room,” said Maj. Gen. Tracy A. Thompson, commanding general, 412<sup>th</sup> Theater Engineer Command.

Thompson was speaking of the activation ceremony of the U.S. Army Reserve’s newest unit, the 363<sup>rd</sup> Engineer Battalion in Knightdale, North Carolina, Dec. 5.

Thompson compared the activation to the birth of a newborn.

“I call it a birth because it is analogous to that in

many ways: a lot of people prepared for it for a long time and eagerly anticipated it’s arrival. There is a new, vigorous entity here and there wasn’t just a while ago,” he said. “Right when it got here there were a lot of people already wanting to care for it and work hard to ensure that it thrives and is successful, but that’s probably where the similarity ends.”

“Unlike a newborn child, of which we expect very little, our new battalion headquarters comes out of the delivery room with not only grown-up responsibilities, but with parental responsibilities and expectations – very high expectation at that,” Thompson added.

The 363<sup>rd</sup> Eng. Bn. is a subordinate unit of the 411<sup>th</sup> Engineer Brigade, which falls under the 412<sup>th</sup> Theater Engineer Command. The battalion takes command and control of five companies.

While an activation may seem to be of little importance, they are uncommon within the Army Reserve.

“You just witnessed a pretty rare thing today,” said Thompson. “That flag, that has just been uncased today, it’s first day unleashed, that’s something you are unlikely to see again in your careers,” said Thompson. “We’ve all had the very good fortune to be present for something that’s pretty rare in our Army at any time, especially right now when the Army as a whole is shrinking and we’re witnessing the birth of a new unit. It’s really, as you heard in its history, the rebirth of another unit, but it’s never been called the 363<sup>rd</sup> before. Therefore, that particular flag has never been flown before.”

Like a birth, this event was cause for festivity.



*Above: U.S. Army Reserve companies under the newly activated 363<sup>rd</sup> Engineer Battalion, salute during the activation ceremony Dec. 5 in Knightdale, N.C.*

*Right: U.S. Army Reserve Col. Ralph Henning, commander, 411th Engineer Brigade, unfurls the 363<sup>rd</sup> Engineer Battalion’s flag during the 363<sup>rd</sup>’s activation ceremony Dec. 5 in Knightdale, N.C. (U.S. Army photos by Staff Sgt. Debralee Best)*



“This is really a day of celebration and I hope you grasp that as Soldiers,” said Col. Ralph Henning, commander, 411<sup>th</sup> Engineer Brigade. “We have just stood up a new organization within the United States Army that is preparing to serve the country that we all love so much.”

While the unit is new, the Soldiers and civilians within are not.

“We know it was really only that flag that was uncased today and although it symbolizes a unit born anew, the Soldiers and civilians working beneath it have been accumulating experience for many years,” said Thompson. “That beautiful new flag may be pristine, but in the formation before us our seasoned professionals, many with combat deployments, have put together some hundreds of years of wisdom and they’re already working hard doing the mission.”

Although the Soldiers and civilians in the unit are seasoned, there is still work to be done to establish the unit.

“This is a new challenge and it’s going to be an adventure, but we have the opportunity to shape it – to create the culture here that will belong to the 363<sup>rd</sup> and I look forward to that collaboration, to some of that hard work, the relationship building, getting to know each person in the unit,” said Lt. Col. Joseph Amon, commander, 363<sup>rd</sup> Engineer Battalion.

Amon also challenged the Soldiers within the new unit’s ranks.

“2016 is the Year of the Squad Leader and so I’m going to challenge our (noncommissioned officers) to set the pace for performance, culture and readiness. I know you guys are up to the challenge and I look forward to working with you arm and arm to make that happen,” he said. “Officers: I’m looking to you to lead. Commit yourselves to improving yourself and the unit and making sure every Soldier is taken care of. All Soldiers: I challenge you to train, listen and to develop that teamwork and collaborate.”

The unit has had two inactivations as well as two redesignations, but with this activation Amon is ready to lead the 363<sup>rd</sup> Eng. Bn.

“I want you to know the 363<sup>rd</sup> is open for business,” said Amon. “Clear, Build, Defend!”



**Top:** U.S. Army Reserve Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Boyd, senior enlisted adviser, 411<sup>th</sup> Engineer Brigade, uncases the 363<sup>rd</sup> Engineer Battalion’s flag as U.S. Army Reserve Col. Ralph Henning (right), commander, 411<sup>th</sup> Engineer Brigade, prepares to unfurl it during the 363<sup>rd</sup>’s activation ceremony Dec. 5 in Knightdale, N.C.

**Above:** U.S. Army Reserve Col. Ralph Henning (right), commander, 411<sup>th</sup> Engineer Brigade, passes the guidon to Lt. Col Joseph Amon, commander, 363<sup>rd</sup> Engineer Battalion, signifying Amon’s acceptance of command of the 363<sup>rd</sup> Eng. Bn. was activated in a ceremony Dec. 5 in Knightdale, N.C. (U.S. Army photos by Staff Sgt. Debralee Best)



## 412<sup>th</sup> TEC CG holds second senior leader development training



**U.S. Army Reserve senior Soldiers and civilians from throughout the 412<sup>th</sup> Theater Engineer Command's footprint, attended the second senior leader development training for the**

**command at Camp Atterbury, Ind., Nov. 13 to 15. The training focused on developing leaders to build the bench. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Debralee Best)**

*By Staff Sgt. Debralee Best,  
412<sup>th</sup> TEC Public Affairs*

**CAMP ATTERBURY, Ind.** — Every company attempts to develop its leaders and create a better company. Army units are no different.

The 412<sup>th</sup> Theater Engineer Command's commanding general, Maj. Gen. Tracy A. Thompson, hosted a second Senior Leader Development Training at Camp Atterbury, Indiana, Nov. 13 to 15.

"This is intense," said Thompson. "This is all the battalion commanders in my formation and all the brigade commanders in my formation, all the O-6's in my entire command, giving them exactly the topics I want to talk about, then building in time for them to give me feedback. It's the opposite of what I call drive-by mentoring ... It's the opposite of that where we can dialog, talk and discuss."

The training focused on a variety of topics including building trust with young Soldiers; the Army's future, budget and priorities; ethics, "The Year of the Squad Leader" campaign; and a book review of the Chief of Staff's reading list.

"I enjoyed the book review, when we went in smaller groups

and discussed the Chief of Staff's reading list and the books everyone chose. Everyone did a summary of the book they read and what it meant to them," said Maj. Mary Jo Vernon, 412<sup>th</sup> TEC medical advisor. "I felt that was very enlightening as I don't have time to read all those books, but it gave me a better understanding of, when they read the book, what they got from it. It also is giving me the opportunity to know, after hearing some of the summaries of the book, the books I want to read myself."

This training was focused on a main concern of the Army and 412<sup>th</sup> TEC leadership.

"One of the top priorities for the Army and also for me is to build the bench, which is looking deep into our ranks and growing our best talent, deciding where they should go and who is going to take our place. That's one of our most important missions," said Thompson.

One of the intents of the training was to build and shape the leadership in attendance.

"We, meaning the senior people, are closer to the end, the finish line, than the start line, so one of our most important jobs is to develop those who are going to take our place. This is how we do

it," said Thompson. "Schooling is institutional training, which is very important, but what we do in something like this is probably our biggest opportunity, especially in the reserve component, to speak to our junior people directly."

"I think it's great training," said Command Sgt. Maj. Dennis Jacques, senior enlisted advisor, 841<sup>st</sup> Engineer Battalion. "It's developing us as leaders and teaching us to develop our subordinates to be better leaders."

For others the training gave them parameters of what their leadership expects.

"Overall, I think the workshop was very successful from the standpoint that we knew what our expectations are as leaders and it gave us some left and right limits and guidelines to what the general expects from us from a leadership standpoint," said Vernon.

Members of the 412<sup>th</sup> TEC staff, including medical, inspector general, staff judge advocate and safety, were also in attendance to assist the battalion and brigade command teams with issue within their formations.

"As a member of the staff I feel like I'm available to the leadership,



if they're having issues or concerns they can come to me, we can take a look at what their needs are and then help them better understand what their commanders should be doing to improve, in my instance, medical readiness," said Vernon.

The other intent of the training was for continuation of the training at lower levels of the command.

"(I hope they take away) that this was useful and they turn around and recreate it at their own levels so three, four months from now the battalion or brigade commanders are doing a mirror-image version of it all the way down to their platoon leaders or at least their company-level leadership," said Thompson.

Battalion and brigade command teams at the training said are already planning this implementation.

"We are going to try to get into an open discussion with the units, the commanders and the first sergeants

because they are obviously successful too or they wouldn't be at the level they are at," said Jacques. "We're going to let their experience get shared across our battalion and take back a lot of the information we learned here to share with them."

Most participants saw this second Senior Leader Development Training as successful. Thompson's goal is to hold them twice per year.

"You just can't buy this type of mentoring and availability of all the senior leaders in a two-star command anywhere else, where everybody is right here; there is nothing distracting you. ... You just don't get that opportunity anywhere else unless you do something like this," said Thompson. "If I could do it four times a year, I would; they'd be sick of me then."

The next training is being planned for the spring, in conjunction with yearly training briefs, to continue to develop 412<sup>th</sup> TEC leaders.



**Top Left:** U.S. Army Reserve Command Sgt. Maj. Richard Castelveter, senior enlisted adviser, 412th Theater Engineer Command, speaks with other senior noncommissioned officers during a breakout session of the second 412th TEC Senior Leader Development Training Nov. 13 to 15 at Camp Atterbury, Ind.

**Top Right:** U.S. Army Reserve senior leaders with the 412th Theater Engineer Command, meet in a small group during a breakout session of the second 412th TEC Senior Leader Development Training, Nov. 13 to 15 at Camp Atterbury, Ind.

**Above:** U.S. Army Reserve Maj. Gen. Tracy A. Thompson, commanding general, 412th Theater Engineer Command, speaks to senior leaders from within the 412th TEC footprint at the second 412th TEC Senior Leader Development Training, Nov. 13 to 15 at Camp Atterbury, Ind. The training focused on a variety of topics including building trust with young Soldiers; the Army's future, budget and priorities; ethics; "The Year of the Squad Leader" campaign; building the bench by growing Soldiers; and a book review of a variety of books from the Chief of Staff's reading list. (U.S. Army photos by Staff Sgt. Debralee Best)

# SecDef opens all military occupations to women

By Cheryl Pellerin,  
DoD News

**WASHINGTON** – Defense Secretary Ash Carter announced that beginning in January, all military occupations and positions will be open to women, without exception.

For the first time in U.S. military history, as long as they qualify and meet specific standards, the secretary said women will be able to contribute to the Defense Department mission with no barriers at all in their way.

“They’ll be allowed to drive tanks, fire mortars and lead infantry Soldiers into combat,” Carter added. “They’ll be able to serve as Army Rangers and Green Berets, Navy SEALs, Marine Corps infantry, Air Force parajumpers, and everything else that was previously open only to men.”

## HARNESSING WOMEN’S SKILLS

Even more importantly, he said, the military services will be better able to harness the skills and perspectives that talented women have to offer.

Despite real progress in recent decades and lately, opening more than 111,000 positions to women across the services, Carter said that about 10 percent of military positions - nearly 220,000 total - have remained closed to women.

These included infantry, armor, reconnaissance, and some special operations units, the secretary said.

Over the past three years, he added, senior civilian and military leaders across the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps and Special Operations Command, or SOCOM, have studied the integration of women into these positions.

“Last month I received their recommendations [and] the data, studies and surveys on which they were based regarding whether any of those remaining positions warrant a continued exemption from being opened to women,” Carter said, noting that the Army, Navy, Air Force and SOCOM said none of the positions warranted exemptions.

The Marine Corps asked for a partial exemption in areas that included infantry, machine gunners, fire support reconnaissance and others, he added, “[but] we are a joint force and I have decided to make a decision



*Defense Secretary Ash Carter announces his Women in Service Review during a press brief at the Pentagon, Dec. 3. (Courtesy photo)*

which applies to the entire force.”

Marine Corps Gen. Joseph F. Dunford Jr., chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, was the Marine Corps commandant at the time, and Carter said that he and Dunford have discussed the issue many times.

“I just met with him and the other chiefs and service secretaries today, and he will be a full part of implementation,” Carter added, noting that he believes the issues raised by the Marine Corps can and will be addressed in implementation.

## DEPARTMENTAL MEMORANDUM

In a memorandum to the secretaries of all military departments and others, Carter directed the military services to open all military occupational specialties to women 30 days from today - a waiting period required by law - and by that date to provide updated implementation plans for integrating women into the positions now open to them.

Carter said Deputy Defense Secretary Bob Work and Air Force Gen. Paul Selva, vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, will oversee the decision’s short-term implementation, ensure there are no unintended consequences to the joint force, and periodically update Carter and Dunford.

Women will be fully integrated into combat roles

deliberately and methodically, the secretary said, using seven guidelines.

## **SEVEN GUIDELINES**

1. Implementation will be pursued with the objective of improved force effectiveness.
2. Leaders must assign tasks and jobs throughout the force based on ability, not gender.
3. Equal opportunity likely will not mean equal participation by men and women in all specialties, and there will be no quotas.
4. Studies conducted by the services and SOCOM indicate that on average there are physical and other differences between men and women, and implementation will take this into account.
5. The department will address the fact that some surveys suggest that some Service members, men and women, will perceive that integration could damage combat effectiveness.
6. Particularly in the specialties that are newly open to women, survey data and the judgment of service

leaders indicate that the performance of small teams is important.

7. The United States and some of its closest friends and allies are committed to having militaries that include men and women, but not all nations share this perspective.

## **INTEGRATING WOMEN INTO ALL JOBS**

Implementation won't happen overnight, Carter said.

"Fully integrating women into all military positions will make the U.S. armed forces better and stronger, but there will be problems to fix and challenges to overcome," he said. "We shouldn't diminish that."

The military has long prided itself on being a meritocracy, where those who serve are judged only on what they have to offer to help defend the country, Carter said.

"That's why we have the finest fighting force the world has ever known," he added, "and it's one other way we will strive to ensure that the force of the future remains so, long into the future."

# **Year of the Squad Leader Campaign**

**Are you an artist?**

**Do you excel at graphic design?**

**2016 is the "Year of the Squad Leader" and we're looking for campaign posters to hang around the 412th TEC footprint!**

**Posters should focus on one of two themes:**

**1. Squad Leaders and their mission taking care of Soldiers**

**2. Soldiers aspiring to be squad leaders and lead Soldiers**

**Submit posters to Staff Sgt. Debralee Best at [debralee.p.best.mil@mail.mil](mailto:debralee.p.best.mil@mail.mil) and Capt. Patrick Bishop at [patrick.l.bishop2.mil@mail.mil](mailto:patrick.l.bishop2.mil@mail.mil).**

**Deadline for submission is Feb. 1.**



# Family Day around the TEC









# More to Moore than first active duty female 12B

By Staff Sgt. Kelly S. Carlton,  
Fort Leonard Wood Public Affairs

**FORT LEONARD WOOD, Mo.** – There will always be a first -- the first to try something, the first to want to do something different or the first to make a leap into the unknown.

Of the 160 Soldiers graduating combat engineer bridge crew member Advanced Individual Training Friday, one of them is a first -- Pvt. Abrianna Moore.

An Army directive released several months ago made it possible for Moore and other female Soldiers to join the combat engineer military occupational specialty 12B as a career choice.

Currently, there are more than 60 female Soldiers following in Moore's footsteps at Fort Leonard Wood.

"I was a little tomboy. My sister was the girlie-girl. She played with the Barbie dolls, and I played with the Legos, the Connect, anything I could build with," Moore said. "I always found it more interesting to work with my hands."

She now has that hands-on opportunity.

According to [www.goarmy.com](http://www.goarmy.com), combat engineers construct fighting positions, place and detonate explosives, conduct route clearance of obstacles and rivers, install firing systems for demolition and explosives and detect mines visually or with mine detectors.

"My plan was to go to a community college for architectural and civil engineering, and then, out of the blue, I decided to see about the military," Moore said. "While talking to my recruiters, they told me how fun it was to blow up stuff as a combat engineer. I said 'sign me up,' but then they told me it's not open to women. I settled for carpentry and masonry specialist (military occupational specialty 12W)."

Moore's mother, Nichol Mason, said their first trip to inquire about enlisting in the Army was a disappointment when her daughter found out she

couldn't be a combat engineer.

"We knew she was going to be an engineer of sorts. She is very logical and analytical at the same time," Mason said in a telephone interview. "She loves math and science and always excelled in those areas. I would have preferred something without the verbiage 'combat' in it, but needless to say, she is an amazing young woman."

While waiting for an eyeglass waiver for 12W, the stage was set for Moore's dream to come true.

"It was the end of September when I went to (Military Entrance Processing Station) again to swear in and lock in my 12W job. The staff told me that slot was no longer available but 12B was now open to women," Moore said.

Moore arrived at Fort Leonard Wood the next day.

Although she had just become the first active duty female 12B in the Army, the reality hadn't sunk in.

"When I got to the 43rd (Adjutant General Reception Battalion), I didn't know I was the first one. Then one of the drill sergeants there yelled out for the 12B females," Moore recalled. "When she said 'females'



*Pvt. Abrianna Moore marches with her platoon as part of the 24 kilometer ruck march during the Combat Engineer Field Training Exercise near the end of Combat Engineer Advanced Individual Training. She will become the first female combat engineer when she graduates One Station Unit Training. (Photo by Stephen Standifird)*



I thought there was more than just me, but I was the only one to raise my hand. That's when I thought 'oh man, this is going to be tough.'"



**Above:** Pvt. Abrianna Moore practices using a mine detector prior to the test portion of mine-detection training during Advanced Individual Training. (Photo by Stephen Standifird)

**Right:** Pvt. Abrianna Moore received her Corps of Engineer crest from her platoon drill sergeant, Sgt. 1st Class Benjamin Fletcher, during an "Essayon" induction ceremony held at the Engineer Regimental Room of the Fort Leonard Wood Museum. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Kelly S Carlton)

Small in stature at just 5 foot, 3 inches tall, Moore, a native of Tulsa, Oklahoma, is very much like the bull associated with her zodiac sign Taurus, according to her mother.

"She is strong. She is bold. She's as bold as a lion when she needs to be," Mason said.

"She is very focused. When she sets her mind on something, she is going to make it happen but she won't do anything that would tarnish her moral compass. I have learned so much from her," added her mother.

Not a glory-seeker, Moore said she was somewhat reluctant to talk about her experience.

"I am not a cocky person. I don't think anything big of myself. I am here just like everybody else," she said.

Mason expressed to her daughter how her experience might help others.

"I told her that I knew this is not about her getting attention but that she has the ability and power to influence so many people," Mason said. "I couldn't be any prouder. For her to be my youngest and blaze this trail -- it's kind of overwhelming. I just want her to do what is in her heart."

Among all of the challenges of becoming a Soldier and a combat engineer, Moore said she believes females can do whatever males can do. However, she said separating men and women isn't what she's all about.

"If you know you are capable and you want it, then go do it. Don't give yourself any 'ifs, ands or buts' about it," she said. "There's nothing you can't do. It's a mindset -- if you think you can't, then you won't, and if you're going to do it, then don't quit."



# U.S. Army Reserve gets down



*A Tough Mudder competes in the U.S. Army Reserve Challenge, featuring a sled push, pull-ups, low crawl, pushups and sled pull with motivation provided by the drill sergeants, during Tough Mudder Philly in Coatesville, Pa., Oct. 17. The U.S. Army Reserve was a sponsor for the event. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Bradley Miller)*

*ing Tough Mudder Philly in Coatesville, Pa., Oct. 17. The U.S. Army Reserve was a sponsor for the event. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Bradley Miller)*

*By Staff Sgt. Bradley Miller,  
326th Mobile Public Affairs Det.*

**COATESVILLE, Pa.** - Cold temperatures are only the first of many obstacles ahead of the more than 9,000 service members and civilians arriving for the Philadelphia Tough Mudder competition in Coatesville, Pa., Oct. 17-18.

On the course, 21 challenges spread over a vast, 10-mile rolling landscape, await participants who are more than eager to test their physical and mental fortitude in a fun and exciting way. Tough Mudder began in 2010 with the inten-

tion of setting forth a challenge unlike any other.

Participants have to run, climb and crawl their way through the many obstacles to earn their victory headband and ice cold beer at the finish line. Whether or not they conquer all of the obstacles, no one goes home clean. This is all done with the plan to challenge and motivate people in a positive way.

"When is the last time you did something for the first time?" asks Sean Corvelle, the first-line motivator of Tough Mudder. Corvelle poses this question to each group

of participants before heading out onto the course to provoke a sense of joy and excitement in their lives. "Use this day to find something deep down inside yourself that so many of us lose as we grow up and get older; Fearlessness."

Corvelle stressed the point that Tough Mudder is not like a typical race.

"I don't care about your time, what I care about is that you embrace the camaraderie. Help each other complete the challenges and get through it together," said Corvelle. "Do it for yourself and



# and dirty with Tough Mudder

do it for the first responders and the Soldiers that put their lives on the line every day for us.”

Corvelle said this is where the involvement of the U.S. Army comes into play. By demonstrating teamwork every day to accomplish a common mission, putting words into action makes all the difference in the eyes of the people.

This year’s Tough Mudder is sponsored, in part, by the U.S. Army Reserve and the Wounded Warrior Project, an element that Corvelle feels draws more positive attention to the event. Event elements included a recruiting booth for the U.S. Army Reserve and a drill sergeant-run “Army Reserve Challenge” in the vendor area before the starting line.

The “Army Reserve Challenge” featured a sled push, pull-ups, low crawl, pushups and sled pull events with motivation provided by the drill sergeants. Participants completing the challenge within the allotted time received a free T-shirt. Corvelle feels this is a great way to spark interest in new recruits.

“It was tough, but once I got going, the adrenaline kicked in and it was exhilarating,” said Warren

Marcelino, from Virginia Beach, Virginia, who took part in the “Army Reserve Challenge” while waiting for his start time of the Tough Mudder.

“I respect what the military does and I understand that they do these things to keep themselves in top physical shape.”

The U.S. Army Reserve sponsorship of the Tough Mudder may be perfect match for motivating regular people to do incredible things.



**Above:** U.S. Army Reserve Spec. Christopher Washington, motor transport operator, 223rd Transportation Company, runs through the final obstacle of the Tough Mudder Philly course, the Electroschock, in Coatesville, Pa., Oct. 18. Washington completed the 21 challenge course spread over a vast, 10-mile rolling landscape. The Army Reserve was one of the sponsors of the event.



**Left:** U.S. Army Reserve Sgt. Raymond Nicholson, firefighter, 369th Engineer Detachment (Firefighting) offers a hug to a Tough Mudder during Tough Mudder Philly in Coatesville, Pa., Oct. 17. Reserve Soldiers provided encouragement at various locations on the course. (U.S. Army photos by Staff Sgt. Debralee Best)



# ***Tough Mudder Philly***









# Army Reserve, civilian firefighter finds joy in helping community

*By Staff Sgt. Debralee Best,  
412th TEC Public Affairs*

**COATESVILLE, Pa.** – U.S. Army Reserve Soldiers lined up just after the start line waiting for the “GO!” As it was shouted, the Tough Mudders poured through. The Soldiers cheered and high-fived as they passed.

One of the Soldiers, Pvt. Anthony Diamanti, a military and civilian firefighter, felt the excitement radiating from the Tough Mudders as they participated in Tough Mudder Philly, Oct. 17 to 18.

“It was great. I had a lot of fun interacting with the participants, especially at the start area, getting them pumped up at the Berlin Wall, helping them up that first hill to the Berlin Wall, getting to coax them through it. It was fun,” said Diamanti, a Soldier with the 369<sup>th</sup> Engineer Detachment (Firefighting).

Soldiers from the 369<sup>th</sup>, along with three other units local to Philadelphia, volunteered to cheer on Tough Mudders due to one of the event sponsors being the U.S. Army Reserve.

“It’s good to get interactions with other units outside of mine so I can see how to interact with (noncommissioned officers) and officers from different areas,” said Diamanti.

The Berlington, New Jersey, native, has impressed his leadership in the short time since he joined the Army Reserve.

“Diamanti: a nice, young, high-speed, brand-new Soldier who’s been in the Army for about a year,” said Sgt. Raymond Nicholson, a firefighter with the 369<sup>th</sup> Eng. Det.

“He came in wondering how to be an Army firefighter and we showed him how to do it. So now he’s an Army firefighter and he’s a civilian firefighter.”

Originally, firefighting was not what Diamanti had in mind.

“Since I was young I always wanted to serve. Originally I wanted to be an infantryman, but as I got older I started looking at career options and I’m a volunteer firefighter as well,” he said. “That’s something I want to do for the rest of my life so I figured what better way could I become a good firefighter than to become a great Soldier. They both kind of cross into each other.”

Diamanti pursued his dream and became a firefighter, but didn’t expect the impact from his military training.

“It’s definitely enhanced his civilian side. For his age you start out as a probationary firefighter and when we started training him he had just learned,” said Nichol-



*Top and above: U.S. Army Reserve Pvt. Anthony Diamanti, 369<sup>th</sup> Engineer Detachment (Firefighting), a military and civilian firefighter from Berlington, N.J., offers encouragement to Tough Mudders during Tough Mudder Philly in Coatesville, Pa., Oct. 17. (U.S. Army photos by Staff Sgt. Debralee Best)*



son. "We sent him to Goodfellow Air Force Base for the firefighter training. He came out firefighter one and firefighter two certified. So when he came back to his civilian side, he was now literally a master firefighter."

Diamanti expected to be helping people by fighting fires after he completed his schooling. He never expected to help them in other ways through the military.

"I completely expected a whole lot of (physical fitness) and all that, but I never expected to be working with the community and impact people's lives as much as I am,"

said Diamanti. "It makes me feel proud."

Nicholson believes events like Tough Mudder strengthen new Soldiers like Diamanti.

"(Coming to volunteer at an event like Tough Mudder) gives them that extra motivation, it reminds them why they became a Soldier to begin with because we all seem to forget," said Nicholson. "When you join, you go through basic training, you're getting yelled at. You go to (Advanced Individual Training), you're kind of getting yelled at. So, by the time you get back across the tracks you forget

what that is, then you see all the young and impressionable faces that are thanking you. That's important. That brings back the motivation that you need. Just those simple "thank yous" brings all the motivation back."

That motivation shows in Diamanti as he expressed what he has taken away from volunteering at Tough Mudder.

"Never quit," said Diamanti. "No matter what you do, just don't quit because as long as you're trying, you'll eventually get it. You'll eventually do what you want to do."

## 1SG John Ordway Leadership Award



*Representing the U.S. Army Reserve, 1st Sgt. James Jones was awarded the 1st Sgt. John Ordway Leadership Award Sept. 30. The award is presented annually to one first sergeant in the active, Reserve and National Guard selected by the Redstone-Huntsville Chapter of the Association of the United States Army. The award focuses on taking care of military families which the board believes presents the highest traits of leadership. Jones has spent more than four years performing company first sergeant and acting first sergeant duties, first while assigned to Forward Support Company, 926th Engineer Battalion in Montgomery, Ala., and now as first sergeant of Forward Support Company, 844th Engineer Battalion in Knoxville, Tenn. (Courtesy photos)*

# *The computer that saved the Soldier's*



**Spc. Nicolas Laboy, U.S. Army Reserve information technology specialist for the 416th Theater Engineer Command, poses in his wheelchair at his house in Bolingbrook, Ill., Sept. 29, holding his motorcycle helmet that saved his life during an accident three months earlier. Laboy is expected to walk again**

**after three more months of physical therapy. During his accident, Laboy broke his right leg, received a third-degree burn in his left thigh, severed his kidney and liver, fractured his lower spine and his right shoulder, and suffered internal bleeding in his brain. (U.S. Army photo by Master Sgt. Michel Sauret)**

*By Master Sgt. Michel Sauret,  
416th TEC Public Affairs*

**DARIEN, Ill.** – By the time Nicolas slammed on his motorcycle brakes, it was already too late. The Honda CBR 600 wobbled hard, fell over and he skidded across the road until he and the bike crunched against the pickup truck.

Nicolas Laboy doesn't remember the accident. He knows he was riding to work, but the entire memory of events has been lost in a sinkhole of his mind. For 10 days following, he lay in a hospital bed in a medically-induced coma.

As he and his mother recalled the injuries, it took them nearly five minutes to list all of them.

His left leg broke in two places: Both the fibula and tibia. He fractured his right foot. He suffered a third-

degree burn across his right thigh, likely from the motorcycle exhaust pipe pressing against him on the ground. His kidney and liver were severed. His spleen ruptured.

"His internal organs were mangled. His stomach was bruised beyond belief," recalled his mother, Ilda Laboy.

"He had to remain with his stomach opened while those organs were compacted to stop the bleeding for at least three-and-a-half days ... His stomach was bruised, and his intestines were not where they should have been. They got shifted, so they had to put everything (back) into place," she said.

But that wasn't all.

Nicolas also fractured his shoulder at the scapula and chromium, and he suffered three fractures in his

# back, and the helmet that saved his life

spine: Lumbar one, two and three.

“It would have been worse, but I had my backpack, which had a laptop and a cushion protecting my back. Otherwise, I probably would have been paralyzed because, I mean, a spine breaking ... you know? Yeah.”

He laughed as he listed some of his injuries, including the spine. The laughter expressed relief while disguising a hint of nerves. Still, he seemed in good spirit as he recalled the horrific details, looking much healthier than he did just months earlier.

Laboy said with confidence that the laptop and padding saved him from paralysis. Yet, it was his motorcycle helmet that saved his life. Without that helmet, none of the other injuries would have mattered.

“The doctor told me straight up, ‘If you didn’t have your helmet, you would have died instantly.’ And even with it, I still had a broken nose, and my brain was bleeding internally,” he said.

The accident happened three months ago, one day before the Fourth of July. In a way, it’s ironic that Laboy should suffer this trauma so close to the nation’s most patriotic holiday. He joined the Army

Reserve in late 2012, with a commitment to defend the country’s liberties.

Instead of celebrating Independence Day with family, he lay in bed, a dependent of tubes and medical professionals keeping him alive.

Adding to the irony, Laboy had become somewhat the face of the U.S. Army Reserve in the months leading up to the accident. He had posed for an Army photo shoot in Chicago, and those images had been used widely to promote the Army Reserve. In fact – not knowing about the accident – the command sergeant major of the Army Reserve used a portrait of Laboy to wish everyone a happy Independence Day on Facebook. In that photo, Laboy looks over his shoulder wearing his uniform, sporting ballistic glasses and a combat helmet.

Meanwhile, as Laboy’s photo wished everyone a happy Fourth, his life was on the line, with so much medical equipment attached to him that he looked nothing like the poster image he once embodied.

Yet the Army Reserve didn’t leave him behind, forgotten. In the first few hours of the accident’s aftermath, Ilda Laboy called everyone she could think of, from family, to coworkers and even Nic’s Army Reserve supervisors.

“I just remember before I could even hang up the phone, she was in front of me,” Ilda recalls, talking about Master Sgt. Dina Sharp, who was the information technology (IT) and communications (G6) non-commissioned officer in charge for the 416th Theater Engineer Command (TEC) at the time.

Sharp and her husband, Capt. Luc Roy, rushed to the hospital and informed their commander about Laboy’s accident. Roy even went to the scene of the accident to take photos. He saw that things didn’t add up as described in the police report. Laboy had been accused of crossing over into the other lane at an intersection, causing the accident.

“(Roy) got pictures of the crash site taken by first responders that showed the true story,” Sharp said of her husband.

Those photographs helped correct inaccurate witness statements, showing Laboy was innocent. They immediately referred the family to a friend who is a lawyer.



**Spc. Nicolas Laboy, U.S. Army Reserve information technology specialist for the 416th Theater Engineer Command, poses in his wheelchair three months after a motorcycle accident at his house in Bolingbrook, Ill., Sept. 29, next to the downstairs living room that has been turned into his bedroom. Laboy is expected to walk again after three more months of physical therapy. During his accident, Laboy broke his right leg, received a third-degree burn in his left thigh, severed his kidney and liver, fractured his lower spine and his right shoulder, and suffered internal bleeding in his brain. (U.S. Army photo by Master Sgt. Michel Sauret)**



“I was the first person, outside of family, who was allowed back to see Nic ... My heart broke to see Spc. Laboy, one of my Soldiers, lying in that bed with multiple IVs and hooked up to different types of monitors,” said Sharp.

Within days, Roy launched an online funding campaign that would raise more than \$35,000 to offset the costs of Laboy’s medical expenses. Roy, Sharp and other Soldiers took to social media to promote the campaign since they couldn’t officially endorse it through military channels due to Army policy.

Both Sharp and Roy visited the hospital as much as possible. They brought Ilda water bottles and food during mealtime visits. They kept the unit informed of Laboy’s progress so Soldiers could visit and pray for him. Soldiers invaded the hospital with get-well-soon cards and small gifts. He even received command coins from the 416th TEC and the command sergeant major of the U.S. Army Reserve.

“I’ve never seen so much love, commitment, honor, shown in my whole entire life. The Army has totally taken my breath away,” said Ilda Laboy with a quivering voice and tears held in her eyes.

“You guys were there for him as much as you were there for me in the worst time of our lives. It was ... ‘My cup runneth over,’ sincerely,” she said.

Laboy agrees. Those Soldiers proved not only their affection, but a type of leadership he admires.

“Going forward, it kind of shows you what an officer or a (noncommissioned officer) is supposed to be like. That is above and beyond what you’re told they’re supposed to do,” he said.

Laboy also received a lot of support from his civilian work, he said. He is an IT specialist at an Aldi corporate office in Batavia, Illinois. At the time of the accident he was a temporary hire, but they are holding a contracted position for when he returns. Through the dark times of his recovery, he looks to these blessings to keep him motivated, and remembers some of the funny moments in between.

After Laboy was out of his coma, but still sedated, a one-star general from the 416th TEC visited him. Laboy tried to lift his right arm, but he couldn’t move it, so he saluted with his left, but immediately worried over the mistake.

“It was just hilarious because he was like, ‘No, no, no, no! Stop! Don’t move, don’t move! Relax!’” Laboy recalled, laughing. “And after that it was like,

OK,” and he sighed in relief.

Laboy spent a total of six weeks in three different hospitals to treat his injuries and receive care for his recovery.

He returned home in Bolingbrook, Illinois, in mid-August and continued with another month of physical therapy. His mother and girlfriend moved his bedroom from upstairs to an open day room in the home’s first floor because he still can’t make it up the steps. However, Laboy is expected to walk again in three more months, a prognosis that seemed impossible in the first few hours after the accident. In fact, he’s fortunate to still have both feet today.

“There was a threat in the beginning. He couldn’t get circulation at the bottom of his left foot, so I had to choose whether to save his kidney or save his foot,” his mother recalled.

As later explained, Laboy needed a computed tomography (CT) scan which uses a dye that allows X-rays to map out his arteries and blood flow down to the foot. However, the dye is hard on the kidneys, one of which had been badly damaged during the accident. In order to do the scan to save the foot, Laboy might lose the kidney. Ilda chose to save the foot at the sacrifice of the kidney, but as it turns out the kidney survived as well.

“Oh yeah,” Laboy responds to whether she made the right decision. “I would have been upset if I woke up missing a leg.”

Now, Laboy has the hope of walking again. He plans on attending Army battle assembly at the unit as early as November, and might move around free of his wheelchair and walker soon after.

The thing keeping him back from a speedier recovery is the open burn on his right thigh. It hurts to touch or when it rubs against something when he moves. Yet, as he feels the burn on his thigh keeping him back, he also feels the burn of life calling him to move forward. It wasn’t just the helmet and laptop that saved his body, but also the love of Soldiers that encouraged him and his family through that journey of recovery.

The Laboy family would like to thank all of the medical staff at Advocate Good Samaritan Hospital (Downers Grove, Illinois), RML Specialty Hospital (Hinsdale, Illinois) and Rush-Copley Medical Center (Aurora, Illinois) and all of the first responders for saving Nicolas’ life and all the medical treatment he received.

# 467th Eng. Bn. holds Best Warrior Competition



**Cpl. Quintera Miquel Ilion, 380th Engineer Company, placed first in the enlisted category during the 467th Engineer Battalion Best Warrior Competition Nov. 5 to 8 at Camp McCain, Miss. Ilion will represent the 467th Eng. Bn. at the Combined 412th/416th Theater Engineer Command Best Warrior Competition in April. (Courtesy photo)**



**Sgt. Jared Fontaine, 375th Engineer Company, placed first in the noncommissioned officer category during the 467th Engineer Battalion Best Warrior Competition Nov. 5 to 8 at Camp McCain, Miss. Fontaine will represent the 467th Eng. Bn. at the Combined 412th/416th Theater Engineer Command Best Warrior Competition in April. (Courtesy photo)**



**U.S. Army Reserve Soldiers with the 467th Engineer Battalion competed in the battalion Best Warrior Competition Nov. 5 to 8 at Camp McCain, Miss. The four-day competition tested competitors on their Army aptitude through urban warfare simulations, board interviews, physical fitness tests, written exams, and Warrior tasks and battle drills relevant to today's**

**operating environment. This annual event determines the best candidates who will represent the 467th Eng. Bn. in the Combined 412th/416th Theater Engineer Command Best Warrior Competition. Winners from the TEC competition will move on to compete at the U.S. Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition. (Courtesy photo)**



# Soldiers can mix camo patterns for

By C. Todd Lopez,  
Army News Service

**WASHINGTON** – As winter weather approaches and temperatures drop, Soldiers turn to their cold-weather gear to keep warm outdoors while conducting training or operations.

Many Soldiers now wear their Army Combat Uniform, or ACU, in the new Operational Camouflage Pattern, or OCP. But their organizational clothing and individual equipment, or OCIE, such as their wet-weather gear and their Extended Cold Weather Clothing System sport the Universal Camouflage Pattern, or UCP.

Soldiers don't need to freeze so as to avoid a uniform faux pas, however, the Army wants Soldiers to know that it's okay to wear the foliage green fleece cold-weather jacket and other UCP cold-weather gear on top of their new OCP uniform.

"Soldiers should continue to use the equipment they have been provided to remain safe and warm in environments that call for it," said Sgt. Maj. Eva M. Commons, uniform policy sergeant major, Army personnel section. "This is why the Army gives you this gear to wear."

Cold-weather gear is not part of the "clothing bag" issued to Soldiers during basic training. Instead, Soldiers get items like the fleece cold-weather jacket, the wind cold-weather jacket, the soft shell cold-weather jacket and trousers, or the extreme cold/wet-weather jacket and trousers from the clothing issue facility, or CIF, at their installation.

Commons said that no matter what ACU Soldiers are wearing - the one in UCP pattern or the one in OCP pattern - they are allowed to wear the winter-weather gear that is issued by the CIF.

"Any item issued from CIF is permitted for wear," she said. "There is no restriction based on camo pattern or color."

The Army also has two different colored T-shirts available for wear under their ACU. There is the "sand-colored" T-shirt and the "Tan 499" T-shirt. Belts are also available in both of those colors. Boots are available in sand or coyote colors, as well.

The rule here, Commons said, is that when a Sol-



**An Intelligence and Sustainment Company team races through the snow transporting a simulated casualty to a landing zone during the Gauntlet Challenge on Fort Drum, N.Y. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Ferdinand Rejano)**

dier is wearing the UCP ACU, he or she must wear the undershirt, belt and boots designed for wear with the UCP ACU. However, when Soldiers wear the OCP ACU, they can wear "any combination" of boots, belt and T-shirt, in any of the available colors; the boots, belt, and t-shirt do not have to match each other.

Commons caveated that, however, by saying "both your left and right boot must be the same color."

The Army, Commons said, has an inventory of items including belts, boots, T-shirts, uniforms, and cold- and wet-weather gear. Each of those items has a certain wear life on them. Items such as cold-weather jackets last a very, very long time, she said. Other items, such as T-shirts, can be worn for less than a year before they ought to be replaced.

The liberal policy for how uniform items can be mixed with the OCP ACU allows the Soldiers more flexibility in the wear of their uniform, and additionally allows more time for the Army to eventually get OCIE in the new OCP pattern.

"With all these different uniforms, we have to give the widest range of allowance to Soldiers to properly wear, and not have that come out of pocket," she said. "It also allows the Army to make sure they have proper stock in issuing facilities to support demand."

Commons said that Soldiers can continue to wear the UCP ACU until Sept. 30, 2019. After that, they

# cold-weather gear

must show up to work wearing the OCP ACU.

Soldiers who are deploying or have an operational need are provided with OCIE items in the Operational Enduring Freedom Camouflage Pattern, also known as OEF-CP.

“Deployers will never go without,” Commons said. “The Army will ensure Soldiers get the appropriate equipment for their mission.”

The Army has been issuing the pattern to those deploying for some years and will continue to do so until the transition to OCP.

It will be some years before UCP OCIE is exhausted and is replaced with OCP OCIE because the items are “quite durable,” Commons said. Commons also said some Soldiers had expressed confusion about what camouflage pattern the name and service tapes should be in on their UCP-colored fleece jacket. She said the name and service tape pattern should match the color of the fleece jacket, not the pattern of the

ACU the Soldier is wearing underneath.

Commons said that for some time, the OEF-CP was worn only in Afghanistan. And while deployed to Afghanistan, the rule was to wear the tactical subdued American flag patch on the right sleeve.

“Soldiers had only seen the subdued patch on that uniform, so they assumed that is the only patch allowed with that uniform,” Commons said.

But that is not the case. According to AR 670-1, paragraph 21-18, “All Soldiers will wear the full-color U.S. flag embroidered insignia on utility and organizational uniforms, unless deployed or in a field environment.”

Commons said that the OEF-CP ACU, and the OCP ACU can, and should be, worn with the full-color American flag while in garrison. Soldiers should wear the subdued flag patch on those uniforms while deployed, or in a field environment.

First sergeants, she said, will let Soldiers know when they are going to be in a field environment, and the uniform requirements.

## Army Reserve Soldiers serve on Veteran's Day

*U.S. Army Reserve Soldiers with the 412th Theater Engineer Command, headquartered in Vicksburg, Miss., participated in Vicksburg's Veteran's Day parade and ceremony Nov. 11. The Soldiers provided the color guard, leading the parade through downtown. During the ceremony, which followed after the parade, at the Rose Garden, the Soldiers performed a 21-gun salute in honor those who have given their lives in the name of freedom. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Debralee Best)*





# Around the TEC









# Living the Army Values: Respect

## 412<sup>th</sup> TEC Soldier exemplifies respect

*By Staff Sgt. Debralee Best,  
412<sup>th</sup> TEC Public Affairs*

**VICKSBURG, Miss.** – Respect is usually visible in the way someone treats those around them, whether peers, subordinates or superiors. For one U.S. Army Reserve Soldier, this is seen in his day-to-day interactions.

Sgt. Terry A. Speck Jr., a medic with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 854<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion, exemplifies this value, according to his superiors.

Speck is the battalion medic, responsible for nine medics and a driving force for medical solutions in the battalion.

“He’s been the go-to guy for anything involving medical,” said Capt. Lawrence Lee, commander, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 854<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion. “He knows his job well, he knows who to talk to, he knows who the target audience is in order to get the medical readiness correct overall for our entire battalion.”

The Army defines respect as: “Treat people as they should be treated. In the Soldier’s Code, we pledge to “treat others with dignity and respect while expecting others to do the same.” Respect is what allows us to appreciate the best in other people. Respect is trusting that all people have done their jobs and fulfilled their duty. And self-respect is a vital ingredient with the Army value of respect, which results from knowing you have put forth your best effort. The Army is one team and each of us has something to contribute.”

Speck believes respect goes a

step further and also involves the approach of how you treat people, not just the act.

“To define respect I think a lot of people go to treat people as you want to be treated and I do believe that wholeheartedly however, I also believe that respect is something that is given and not earned whereas other people think it’s earned and not given,” said Speck. “In my opinion, to define respect it’s the way in which we treat people, but also how we go about treating those people. You can treat people with respect, but also be perceived as offending them because of the way in which you may carry yourself, the way in which you may do your job.”

Speck, a Reading, Pennsylvania, native, believes this approach is part of why his superiors see so much respect within him. He says he treats people the way they should be treated by recognizing variety in people.

“I think I do that by understanding that everybody is different and everybody’s position is different, everybody’s life situation is different. We may not have all the information about that person, but the one thing we can do is treat them the way people should be treated and respect goes very far in doing that,” said Speck. “Just addressing people in a proper manner, using positivity and a positive tone when you address people, goes a very long way. I think I do that and people recognize that because it’s very important to make sure you’re talking

to people the right way and I think that’s the start of it.”

Being a medical professional, his bedside manner also speaks to this treatment.

“His mannerism, he is extremely tactful. It’s kind of hard being a medic, you have to tell things as they are, but he does it in a way that is not demeaning,” said Lee. “As a medical professional his bedside manner is what I see is the best. He is very respectful. He knows his job. He will tell you in a very tactful way, but you feel good that you’re being treated by him.”



*U.S. Army Reserve Sgt. Terry A. Speck Jr., medic, Headquarter and Headquarter Company, 854<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion, reunites with his family: wife, Cass, son, Elias and daughter Isla, after returning from deployment in March 2014. (Courtesy photo)*

# with Army, unit, family

But it goes beyond just his patients.

“It does not matter if Sergeant Speck is working with enlisted Soldiers who are junior to him or officers which are senior to him, he treats all those that he contacts with the same type of utmost respect,” said Maj. Mary Jo Vernon, medical readiness officer, 412<sup>th</sup> Theater Engineer Command.

Another part of the Army’s definition of respect is to appreciate the best in other people. Speck does this whenever he treats a patient.

“I think he sees the good in everyone. All the things you see as a medic, you don’t normally see the best in people when the medic is seeing you ... but he does his job in that he will do everything possible to get the patient back onto their feet and back to where they need to be,” said Lee. “So, I think he looks at the best in people in that in the basis of his job, that’s what he’s trying to do: he’s trying to get the best out of you.”

Speck may be good at seeing the best in his patients, but he thinks he sees the best in people because they build something greater together.

“Everybody has a different role in the military and without the other person we may not be able to do our job. I respect the fact that I don’t have all the skills other people do and they don’t have all the skills I have,” said Speck. “I can appreciate that I don’t hold some of those skills or abilities other people do and that allows me to respect them in a way that helps me better do my job. I understand that I’m only one piece of the puzzle and everybody else is another piece

of the puzzle. Without all the pieces of the puzzle we can’t get a good picture of where we came from or where we’re going. I think by respecting people in that way, we can understand better where we came from and where we’re going.”

Seeing the best in people motivates Speck to assist any Soldier to the best of his ability.

“He has a quiet dignity when working with those Soldiers who everyone else has given up on or has written off as a Soldier who can’t be assisted. He works with these Soldiers, does not get frustrated and advocates for them day in and day out,” said Vernon. “He takes everyone’s workload into consideration, even when they may not following through and gives them a “gentle” push in the right direction. Including me sometimes!”

Trusting people to do their jobs and fulfill their duty is another aspect of respect.

For Speck, seeing the best in people and trusting them goes hand-in-hand.

“I think by having confidence and knowing I do my job to the best of my abilities and I put the effort forth to try and try until I can get the job done, I expect that in other people,” said Speck. “Instead of looking at them and trying to nitpick or pick things out that they’re not doing, I try to look it as: that person has been trained, that person has been given a task and now they’re going to do the task



***U.S. Army Reserve Sgt. Terry A. Speck Jr., medic, Headquarter and Headquarter Company, 854th Engineer Battalion, meets his daughter, Isla, for the first time upon his return from deployment in March 2014. (Courtesy photo)***

because that’s what’s required of us as Soldiers. I know that I would do that so I give the other people the benefit of the doubt and respect that they will do it as well.”

Speck not only trusts those around him to complete their missions, but has that trust from his superiors.

“He has the trust of everyone, being a battalion level asset here. He puts a lot of trust in people in that the guidance that he’s giving our commanders and leaders, that’s information they need for unit success,” said Lee. “He is putting a lot of trust in people in that they are taken to heed what he is saying and taking his guidance and applying it to their companies to ensure their own success. Being trustworthy and reciprocating that trust is a sign of respect.”

While Speck is trusted throughout the battalion, his self-respect is



what keeps him trying and pushing himself to earn that trust.

“It’s not so much a philosophy as way of which to do things: I was brought up that if you can’t do something the first time, continue to try. For me to have self-respect, I always just have to continue to try and try and try,” said Speck. “I’ve prided myself on knowing that I don’t know everything and I think some people don’t have that aspect in them because they don’t want to be looked down upon as not knowing something. For myself, I’ve always tried to come at it from a place of I can learn something everyday, I can help teach something everyday and if I do those two things, the people I work for will respect that I do the job and the people that work for me will understand I respect them for doing their job.”

The Army’s definition of respect says, “each of us has something to contribute.” Speck contributes, as seen by his superiors, focus on his Soldiers through training and the battalion through medical readiness.

“He’s definitely a contributor. Everything he does he is for the organization and for his team,” said Lee. “As a first-line leader making sure his medics are fully trained and qualified. He goes to great pains to research continuing education that his medics need in order to stay qualified so they can properly treat Soldiers.”

“He contributes by keeping myself and the battalion commander informed of where we stand on medical readiness, which is a huge part. It sounds like it’s a metricism, but it really is ensuring Soldiers are ready,” Lee added. “Medical is a big piece of being ready. He contributes to our readiness, that’s the bottom line.”

For Speck, that contribution can

be broken down to one word: availability.

“The biggest thing I think I contribute, especially from my direct subordinates, I try to contribute to them in a daily aspect. I think by understanding your Soldiers and letting them know you’re there for them, you will get more out of that individual because they will trust in you more,” said Speck. “I think I provide a value of trust into my direct subordinates at least and also into my command as well. They know if there is a job that needs to be done they can always rely on me to get it done. That goes for my Soldiers, too. They know my door is always open and if they need anything whether it’s on a professional level, a personal level or just to run something by me for advice, they know I’m always here. I think availability is probably one of those things I contribute.”

Speck believes this growth in respect really solidified from his recent deployment. He deployed to Afghanistan with the 333<sup>rd</sup> Engineer Company in 2013, returning in March 2014.

“I think in respecting that we were over there to help out gave me a good perspective and changed my perspective a little bit. You always hear the negative things going on over there, how bad things can be, but it helped change my perspective to look at it that we weren’t there to just do our jobs, we were there to influence life for people,” said Speck. “I think by respecting those people and wanting the best for them, it helped me in understanding how to respect people in general and respect them better.”

The deployment also gave Speck insight into his family life. His daughter was born while he was overseas and didn’t meet her until she was 6-months-old.

“At first I didn’t understand how

important it was to be a military spouse and honestly with my wife’s support and the way she handled things while I was deployed, it made me respect her even more for being willing to do those things,” he said.

Now, Speck sees that his family serves as well and deserves his respect.

“I take a lot of pride in my job and sometimes we get caught up in the Army because we’re away and we have so much to take care of and we want to do it the best that we can. I have a great respect for the sacrifices our families make, my wife in particular,” said Speck. “She sacrifices having a dual parent in the home for extended periods of time, my children sacrifice by understanding that their dad has to be away sometime because he does a demanding job and he takes a lot of pride in it. I feel like that gets lost in the shuffle sometimes and a lot of times we tend to overlook the small things. Just by respecting that your family does serve as well, it helps me to show the respect to them and an appreciation for what they do as well, for what they go through.”

While Speck’s respect of his family, himself and others has been an internal growth, he also realizes there have been outside factors.

“I really would like to thank those who have gotten me to where I am and that have respected me enough to trust me to get the job done,” he said. “I think that’s why I have some of the perspective that I do and the quality of respect. If it wasn’t for the leadership that has taught me to get where I am today, I would not be here.”

*Editors note: This is the third in a seven part series about Soldiers within the 412<sup>th</sup> Theater Engineer Command who exemplify the Army Values.*

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- ★ Combat Medic
- ★ Preventive Medicine Officer
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- ★ Hospital management

#### TRANSPORTATION

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- ★ Transportation officer
- ★ Cargo specialist
- ★ Motor transport officer



##### CITIZEN

- ★ Transportation vehicle operator
- ★ Port operator
- ★ Supply logistics

#### ENGINEERING

##### SOLDIER

- ★ Combat engineer
- ★ Petroleum supply specialist
- ★ Horizontal construction engineer



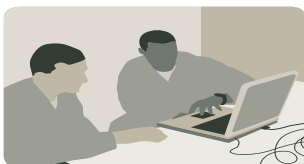
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- ★ Construction manager
- ★ Oil/Gas industry technician
- ★ Construction equipment operator

#### LOGISTICAL/QUARTERMASTER

##### SOLDIER

- ★ Human resources specialist
- ★ Inventory manager
- ★ Network technician



##### CITIZEN

- ★ Human resources professional
- ★ Inventory manager
- ★ Network technician

#### JAG/LAW ENFORCEMENT

##### SOLDIER

- ★ Military police
- ★ Paralegal specialist
- ★ Lawyer



##### CITIZEN

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- ★ Paralegal
- ★ Lawyer



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# Reserve officer becomes third female to earn Ranger tab



**Maj. Lisa Jaster, right, tackles the hurdles at the Darby Queen obstacle course as part of training at the Ranger course on Fort Benning, Ga., June 28. Jaster graduated from the Ranger**

**course Oct. 16. Jaster is the third female, and the first female Reserve Soldier to win the prestigious recognition. (Photo by Staff Sgt Scott Brooks)**

*By David Ruderman,  
U.S. Army HR Command Public Affairs*

**FORT KNOX, Ky.** - When Maj. Lisa Jaster graduated the grueling Ranger course on Fort Benning, Georgia, Friday, she was touted as the third female Soldier ever to master the traditionally rigorous training endured by all who wear the Ranger tab with pride.

A lesser known distinction setting Jaster apart is the fact that she is one of several thousand Soldiers, who serve their country under the auspices of a specialized component of the Army's Select Reserve - the Individual Mobilization Augmentee, or IMA, program.

"Whenever the announcement came out, she jumped right on it," said Maj. Doug Armstrong, chief of operations at the U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, or ESC, in Huntsville, Alabama.

Among other duties, Armstrong is the unit admin-

istrator for 24 IMA Soldiers presently assigned to the ESC, Jaster among them.

"She is a very motivated, driven Soldier. Anything you give her, she will do and do it well. And that's what you need for Ranger School," he said.

Jaster is a U.S. Military Academy at West Point, New York, graduate and mother of two, married to a Marine Corps Reserve officer. In her civilian career, she is a project manager with Shell Oil Co. - specializing in oilfield issues.

As a Soldier with military occupational specialty, known as MOS, 12A, engineer, she transferred from active duty to IMA status in May 2012, said Beverly Watkins, IMA program coordinator at U.S. Army Human Resources Command, or HRC.

The IMA program contributes to meeting military manpower requirements throughout the Army, assigning Soldiers with particular skills to active-duty units,

Watkins said. It services enlisted Soldiers in the rank of sergeant and up, and officers in the rank of captain through major general, she said.

“It’s a large chunk of the military support to the center,” Armstrong said. “I rely on HRC to make all the arrangements and do all the organization on the personnel side. They do all the work, I get all the credit.”

Pulling IMA Soldiers with particular skill sets gives the ESC, and units across the Army, a granular level of flexibility in finding the right Soldier to meet specific mission requirements. The IMA pool of expertise means that units can find individual Soldiers with the necessary depth of skill and experience in a host of professions and crafts, he said.

Take plumbers, for instance. An IMA Soldier with the 12K MOS - plumber - would make for the right Soldier in the right place with right skill set to meet the mission, Armstrong said.

“He’s an expert. He’s been doing it for years, in uniform and in the civilian world. You’re not going to find anybody better qualified or more experienced than that,” he said.

In Jaster’s case, the IMA program allows the Army to pinpoint where her professional expertise can best serve the Army.



**U.S. Army Maj. Lisa Jaster, a Reserve engineer officer in the Army Individual Mobilization Augmentee program, hugs her children after graduating from the Ranger course on Fort Benning, Ga., Oct. 16. Jaster is the third female, and the first female Reserve Soldier to win the prestigious recognition. (Photo by Staff Sgt Alex Manne)**

“She brings that experience back to the Corps,” Armstrong said. “The Corps has very specialized technical missions, so we focus on finding people with the right talents. For instance, the Corps provides technical expertise for medical facilities, designing hospitals for the Army and the Air Force. They also have some outside the continental United States missions, chemical demilitarization for instance. She supports whatever projects the center needs help with. It changes based on the commander’s priorities.”

As an IMA Soldier, Jaster can also avail herself of training and education support, such as attending Ranger School.

“There was excellent coordination between her agency [ESC] and HRC’s Officer Personnel Management Directorate, Army Reserve Officer Division, and the G3 to get orders sending her to this school,” said Maj. Christy Orser, an Individual Ready Reserve and IMA career adviser with HRC.

“The real key is, Maj. Jaster is an Army Reserve Soldier, who may not get the support that active duty members do. But as IMA supports the Corps, Jaster is being supported by HRC and OCAR [the Office of the Chief, Army Reserve] to further her education and training,” Armstrong said.

“That measure of success has been met. HRC and the unit supported the Soldier to get the training, the development, the experience she needed to be the best she can. And that’s the benefit to the Army,” he said.

“Army Reserve Soldiers have always been an integral element of our Army,” said Brig. Gen. B. Lynne Owens, HRC deputy commanding general. “IMA Soldiers play critically-important roles in many of our formations.” There are more than 4,000 IMA positions across the Army in numerous MOSs with more than 1,000 presently unfilled, Watkins said.

“There are many unique assignments that offer considerable flexibility in balancing service with other career and family considerations. IMA positions can be especially appealing to Soldiers who are in transitional stages of their careers. It is designed for the entrepreneur,” she said.

“The IMA program in particular offers Soldiers a range of opportunities to continue and advance their careers while rendering vital support to the Army and service to the nation,” Owens said.



*By Staff Sgt. Debralee Best,  
412th TEC Public Affairs*

For one section in the 926<sup>th</sup> Engineer Brigade, this was especially true when it was their week to plan the full-time staff's weekly run.

It was the last week of October and it came to the logistics section to plan the run. The property book officer, Chief Warrant Officer 3 John Penny, is married to a breast cancer survivor so he had an idea.



***U.S. Army Reserve Soldiers with the 926th Engineer Brigade signed a shirt in remembrance of cancer victims during one of their October team-building runs. Almost 20 names filled the shirt. (Courtesy photo)***

“That week happened to be the S4’s week to pick a color and a theme,” said Penny. “My wife is a breast cancer survivor and it happened to be in October, so I thought, ‘This is the last run of the month, nobody has done anything.’ I’m also an (equal opportunity) representative so I thought, ‘You know what, we haven’t done anything for breast cancer this month.’ So I picked pink and came up with the breast cancer theme for those reasons.”

Penny didn't think anything of picking the color or theme.

“October is breast cancer awareness month so in support of breast cancer awareness month I wanted to make sure that us as a group, as a community, showed our support and that we were out there being visible as an organization supporting the cause,” said Penny, a Litchfield, Kentucky, resident.

The last Wednesday of October, the full-time staff of the 926<sup>th</sup> Eng. Bde. gathered for their weekly run, but with such an impactful theme, this one turned out a bit different than previous runs.

“Most of the people knew (my wife is a breast cancer survivor), probably not everybody though. I just let them know in the beginning,” said Penny. “I’d done some research and provided the group, prior to the run, with statistics and the whole background on where the pink ribbon came from. I let the group know the history of October being breast cancer awareness month prior to the run.”

Then, the supply sergeant did something unexpected that really drove home the impact of cancer.

“I knew everyone had to go out and buy a t-shirt and I didn’t have one so I went and bought one,” said Staff Sgt. Stephen Cohen. “My shirt didn’t have anything on it. It was just a plain pink shirt ... My shirt had bleach splashed that reminded me of tears so I ended up drawing the ribbon and came to work the next day and asked everyone if they knew anyone who was a breast cancer survivor or passed from cancer to give me a signature on it.”

The shirt filled up with almost 20 names.

“I think that impacted everybody just as much to realize, ‘hey, no matter what, we are all tied to this in one aspect or another. If it’s not a family member, we at least know somebody who has been effected by cancer.’” said Penny.

# sign shirt for cancer victims

Cohen was motivated to have his shirt filled with memories, but didn't completely anticipate the impact.

"It worked out great. I walked around and touched some people's hearts and they shed some tears behind it because they knew someone who was very close to them when they put that name down on the shirt," said Cohen, an Andrews, South Carolina, resident. "That was just the motivation I had. I lost my uncle and cousin. My uncle was like my father-figure to me so he was one of my big inspirations for doing that, also."

While Penny and Cohen both knew they had been affected by cancer, they didn't realize how many other people in the unit had been touched.

"My uncle was the first name I put on their and as I walked around Chief Penny said, 'Man, Sergeant Cohen you went over and beyond for this, but you really hit a ballpark here.' Pretty much everyone in the unit knew someone who was affected by it," said Cohen.

The run brought the full-time staff closer through sadness.

"It felt great, not great to the point where we lost someone or someone was affected by it, but it was a touching situation that day," said Cohen. "That day seemed like it was a gloomy day once that shirt came around, but once we got out and ran everybody knew

we were doing it for a good cause."

Running for breast cancer brought Penny back to when his wife was diagnosed.

"I still have cold-chills thinking about it when we ran," said Penny. "I was in Afghanistan when my wife had to have her mammogram redone and was fortunate enough that our mission was ending. Literally, four days after getting back from Afghanistan in 2012 is when we found out that she had breast cancer so it was just a somber day at first. That's for sure."

The impact of the run's theme was much more than Cohen and Penny expected.

"I didn't expect it to go like this. It was just an event. I thought it would be appropriate to honor the breast cancer survivors and those who were lost and the whole cancer fight," said Penny. "It just happened to work out and it's more than what we expected."

While the 926<sup>th</sup> Eng. Bde. full-time staff has not done another themed run since this one, they are still choosing a color and building unit camaraderie with a run/walk every week.



*The last Wednesday of October, the full-time U.S. Army Reserve staff of the 926<sup>th</sup> Engineer Brigade gathered for their weekly run. The color of the run was pink and the theme was breast cancer awareness. The participants signed a shirt in remembrance of cancer victims and survivors before beginning their run. Almost 20 names filled the shirt. (Courtesy photo)*



# 412th TEC donates food stuff for Thanksgiving



*U.S. Army Reserve Soldiers with the 412th Theater Engineer Command donated food items for families to use during the holiday season to the River City Rescue Mission in Vicksburg, Miss., Nov. 25. Established October 5, 1994, the mission answers the call and meets the need, whether it be giving a man a new direction and a fresh start or providing a family with specific needs to help them maintain their household. The 412th TEC holds a food drive, asking for donations from their Soldiers and civilians, every year and donates the items to various charity organizations in the Vicksburg area. (U.S. Army photos by Capt. Patrick Bishop)*



# THE RISK COMES

**Staying safe in the cold means staying aware of your personal risk.** Know your limits and plan ahead for all your activities, both on and off duty.

# READY ...OR NOT?

**Ready ... or Not** is a call to action for leaders, Soldiers, Army Civilians and Family members to assess their "readiness" for what lies ahead—the known as well as the unknown.

Throughout our professional and personal lives, events happen all around us. We are often able to shape the outcome of those events, but many times we're not. Navigating life's challenges is all about decision-making.

So are **YOU** ready ... or not?



<https://safety.army.mil>



# Army Reserve engineers provide critical support at home, abroad

By Amy Phillips,  
Fort Hunter Liggett Public Affairs

**FORT HUNTER LIGGETT, Calif.** – Army Reserve engineers provide critical support to the Total Army mission during deployments and save the Army thousands of dollars through troop projects on installations like Fort Hunter Liggett, or FHL.

The 80th Total Army School System, or TASS, Training Center, or 80th TTC, conducts 30 percent of engineer training. Maj. Fernando Lavana, 80th TTC commandant, said its training load will increase in the near future with their new school house, which is expected to be completed in 2016.

“TTC FHL provides continual good weather, more open space to drive the vehicles and flexibility of training on the calendar for training [as compared to other TTCs],” Lavana said.

The Horizontal Construction Engineer (12N) Reclassification Course conducted at FHL is a two-phased course, which includes classroom instruction and hands-on training.

Phase I consists of 12 days of intensive training on how to safely operate and maintain a 10-ton dump truck, a 2.5 cubic yard loader and an hydraulic excavator. Phase II is a 14-day class on the backhoe, motor grader, a wheeled scraper, and D7R Dozer.

“At the end of each phase, the students are tasked with a 24-hour construction project that will enable them to get a chance to put their new skills into action while using critical thinking and work as a team,” said Sgt. 1st Class Lance Widner, noncommissioned officer of the 12N course.

Participants also have to learn about soil types and pass several written exams to successfully complete the course and be awarded the new skill identifier.

Soldiers reclassify or obtain a new skill by choice sometimes when the Army reclassifies a unit. Usually this occurs when Service members want to join the Army from other branches of the military

or switch positions that might offer better promotion opportunities.

The 80th TTC is part of the 80th Training Command. The 80th TC provides command and control for the Army Reserve TASS, which trains Soldiers in more than 50 military occupational specialties. The FHL TTC also hosts military police and civil affairs courses throughout the year.

Army Reserve engineers also save the Army and taxpayer money through troop projects at installations around the country.

“Projects that engineer troops construct at FHL realize a win, win, win scenario for all involved,” said Lt. Col. David Phillips, deputy director of plans, training, mobilization and security. “Not only do the engineer Soldiers and units gain essential experience and training, but in doing so, they build and enhance training facilities for other Soldiers to use when training at FHL.”

Engineers have supported FHL with sidewalk and road construction projects as well as helipad and facilities construction at the base camps.

These real-world missions provide Soldiers with hands-on experience that enhances their performance during deployments and provides them with tangible skills for civilian employment.

According to the Army’s Structure & Manpower Allocation System Report from July, the Army National Guard provides 47 percent of engineers to the Total Army Force.

The Army Reserve follows with 36 percent and the active component has 17 percent of the engineers.



*Army Reserve engineers provide critical support to the Total Army mission during deployments and save the Army thousands of dollars through troop projects on installations like Fort Hunter Liggett, Calif. (Courtesy photo)*

# Updated NCOER rating forms activated online

By David Ruderman,  
U.S. Army HR Command

**FORT KNOX, Ky.** – U.S. Army Human Resources Command announced Monday the availability of the DA Form 2166-9 series, the revised Noncommissioned Officer Evaluation Report, or NCOER, and its activation in the web-based Evaluation Entry System.

As detailed in MILPER (Military Personnel message) 15-395, the effective policy date for use of the 2166-9 series will be Jan. 1, 2016. Activation of the revised NCOER forms now allows Soldiers and raters to immediately begin to prepare NCOERs with a “through date” of Jan. 1, 2016 and later.

The 2166-9 series consists of three revised NCO rating forms based on grade plate that mandate distinct rater and senior rater roles, and incorporate a senior rater profile and rater tendency assessment.

Soldiers who are due to receive a mandatory report between now and Dec. 31 of this year will continue to receive that report, whether it be an annual, an extended annual or a change of rater report, using the DA Form 2166-8 series of report forms.

Sergeants first class who are eligible for the FY 2016 Regular Army and U.S. Army Reserve AGR Master Sergeant Promotion Boards will also employ the 2166-8 series NCOER form, said Sgt. Maj. Stephen McDermid of HRC’s Evaluation Branch. Details were published Oct. 27 in MILPER 15-340. For board eligible NCOs who have not received a mandatory report as outlined in MILPER 15-340, he or she will receive an HRC-directed Code 19 Evaluation with a through date of Dec. 31, 2015.

“This will ensure those individuals eligible for that board receive a close-out evaluation,” McDermid said.

Training modules for proper use of the revised NCOER forms and an EES test site have been and remain available on the HRC website for Soldiers and raters to practice with.

Detailed training modules have been posted to HRC Evaluations Branch website as well as S1NET and are available for download on DVIDS at <https://www.dvidshub.net/tags/video/ncoer>. The training modules lead NCOs and raters through the process, section by section, in an easy-to-understand manner, McDermid said.

In addition to the activation of the NCOER forms, MILPER 15-395 also announced an update to OER (Officer Evaluation Report) forms that incorporate the use of Department of Defense ID numbers (DoDID) in place of service member Social Security numbers.

The new NCOER forms will also use service member DoDID numbers in place of Social Security numbers. The DoDID, which appears on Soldiers’ Common Access Cards, is being phased in as part of the federal government’s effort to remove Social Security numbers from as many documents as possible.

The revised rating forms are also available on the Army Publishing Directorate website, [www.apd.army.mil/](http://www.apd.army.mil/).

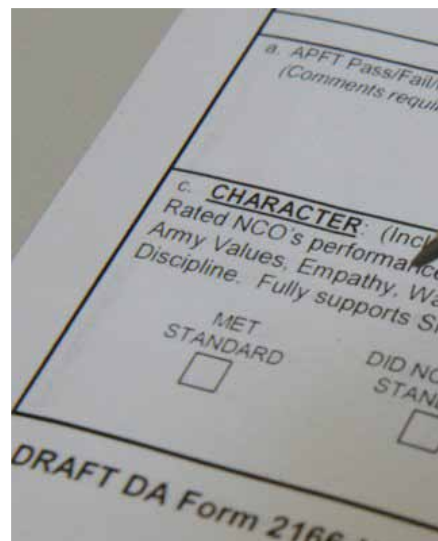






Photo of The Quarter