

Warrior Ready

Iowa National Guard / March 2016



Happy 75th

Birthday

132nd

Wing





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On the Cover

Cutting the cake at the 75th anniversary of the 132nd Wing are (left to right) Maj. Gen. Tim Orr, Adjutant General of the Iowa National Guard, Master Sgt. Don Worrell, Airman 1st Class Justin Hopp, and Col. Shawn Ford, 132nd Wing commander. Worrell and Hopp continued an age-old military tradition of the oldest (Worrell) and youngest (Hopp) servicemember cutting their branch’s cake. (Iowa National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Chad D. Nelson)



At a glance:

The Enlisted Grades Review



The Enlisted Grades Review (EGR) process is not a new one, but it's significantly different from previous reviews. Historically, previous EGRs didn't account for differences between unit missions or enable development opportunities for all skill sets. The main driver of top enlisted grade positions was an enforced percentage cap on grades based on a regulatory requirement that didn't actually exist.

Rather than continuing to accept a broken process, a strategic vision to right-size the enlisted force was revealed to the Air National Guard Command Chiefs in early 2013. Twenty one-plus months of research and collaboration, thousands of man hours, and a focus on enlisted opportunities has resulted in the recently published EGR. The results have a positive readiness impact and have increased recruiting-retention opportunities.

A mock review was conducted in 2014 to review all positions. Data analyzed for every position on the manning document had to pass several qualifiers to achieve the end result. Duty skill levels had to be manned at the correct level to meet all deployable Unit Training Code requirements, plus there needed to be standardization of rank structures for all occupational series.

The results of these two data points had to obtain an acceptable pyramid of development opportunities with the

appropriate levels of responsibility for all Airmen. Staff functions were also standardized and the entire structure was compared to active duty manning documents.

There were five business rules applied to ensure the end result accomplished all the desired objectives. These guidelines also help us frame where have we been, why it wasn't working, and the right-sized way ahead.

1. The first rule concerns field involvement. Experts from each career field were solicited for input and the Enlisted Field Advisory Council members were involved throughout the entire process.

2. Secondly, as mentioned earlier, no preset grade limitations were applied. This rule was very significant as previous EGRs had allowed this specialty percentage cap to creep into the process without a regulatory requirement for it.

3. The third rule was grades go where they were needed. Scope of responsibility and mission requirements, both day to day and deployed, were matched appropriately.

4. Fourth was to build the correct career path in all specialties and to repair the pyramid structure so every Air Force Specialty Code (AFSC) had a minimum development opportunity to E-8. Additively, the Air Force Specialty Code for Group Supervisors, or 9G,

Group Chiefs were appropriately placed in the manning documents prior to release of the EGR, which further increases opportunity.

5. The final business rule was to ensure standardization across units and functions with an appropriately repeatable enlisted pyramid, regardless of assigned numbers and missions.

2015 was the year to apply the mock review results to the actual EGR and provide the Director of the Air National Guard with the results for his approval by the end of the calendar year. Results show significant benefits to the enlisted structure with an 11 percent increase or 750+ 9 Levels, and four percent or 1550+ 7 Levels.

Where are we at today?

Implementation is in the works. Manning documents have been sent to the Wings and appointments have been scheduled at NGB for Force Support Squadrons to learn the implementation. April 15, 2016 is the official manning document release that drives an effective date of April 1, 2017.

The hard work has paid off – levels of responsibility and the corresponding grades will be repeatable regardless of mission differences and a path now exists to develop all Airmen, regardless of AFSC, for competitive opportunities to serve in the top enlisted grades.



FORSCOM commander visits Iowa National Guard to observe Total Force training, Soldiers

By Master Sgt. Duff E. McFadden

A simple invitation was all it took for the commander of the U.S. Army Forces Command, the Army's largest command, to travel to Iowa to observe training and visit with Iowa National Guard Soldiers.

According to Maj. Gen. Timothy Orr, the Adjutant General of the Iowa National Guard, Gen. Robert Abrams, the FORSCOM commander, "came to the First Army Fall Regional TAG (The Adjutants General) huddle meeting and I had the opportunity to invite him to Iowa. I followed that up with a letter of invitation, and he accepted," Orr said.

The U.S. Army Forces Command is the land force provider for combatant commanders – both at home and abroad. Abrams became the 22nd commander of U.S. Army Forces Command at Fort Bragg, N.C., in August 2015.

The last time Camp Dodge played host to a U.S. Forces Command commander was in 1993, when Gen. Dennis Reimer visited the Johnston, Iowa-based facility.

"You have a great capability here in Iowa," said Abrams, during his Feb. 3-4 visit. "The Iowa National Guard's got a tremendous history and record of mission accomplishment. It was a pleasure for me to be here."



Gen. Robert Abrams, U.S. Army Forces Command commander, is in Des Moines for a two-day visit to observe training at the STC, and to have a one-on-one conversation. (Iowa National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Duff E. McFadden)

As soon as his plane landed in Iowa, Abrams was whisked away to the Distributed Training Operations Center (DTOC) at the Des Moines Air National Guard Base. Lt. Col. Troy Havener, the Air National Guard's Live Virtual Constructive Liaison, and Lt. Col. Todd Pierce, DTOC Commander, provided a brief and tour of this one-of-its-kind facility.

Operated by the Iowa Air National Guard's 132nd Wing, this global training center provides optimal cost-savings through a virtual battlespace linking a wide array of flight and mission crew simulators. Responsible for all network management, the DTOC also provides event control, scenario development, unit Distributed Mission Operations scheduling, remote maintenance and instruction, and realistic threat insertion.

Utilized by clientele as diverse as the Air Defense Artillery, Army Aviation,



Sgt. Chad D. Nelson gives a tour of the Sustainment Training Center to members of The Total Force – Active Duty, U.S. Army. The visit is part of an effort to engage Iowa Army National Guard Soldiers.

Joint Fires Observers, Integrated Fire and the Distributed Common Ground System-Army, it provides 10-20 events daily. The DTOC provides simulation platforms for aircraft as diverse as the McDonnell Douglas F-15 Eagle and F/A-18 Hornet, Boeing P-8 Poseidon, Northrop Grumman B-2 Spirit, General Dynamics F-16 Fighting Falcon and Remotely Piloted Aircraft.

Abrams then moved from the “virtual” world to one of sustainment, as he traveled the 14 miles from the Des Moines Airbase to the Sustainment Training Center (STC) at the 4,500-acre Camp Dodge Joint Maneuver Training Center in Johnston, Iowa.

The STC, along with the Mission Training Complex – Dodge, provides collective level training to support battalions, distribution companies, field maintenance companies, support maintenance companies, brigade support medical companies, and infantry brigade combat teams.

The four-acre STC campus includes 48 heated maintenance bays with heavy overhead lift capability and more than 100,000 square feet of technical maintenance/multifunctional logistics training space. Originally established in 1991 as the Equipment Maintenance Center - CONUS (Continental U.S.), it has since evolved into a one-stop shop for all sustainment training needs.

Abrams' tour ran the gamut of STC operations from M1A1 Abrams tank repair to ammunition handling, from petroleum distribution to Tactical Combat Casualty Care and Unified Land Operations.

Highlighting the facility's wide-ranging versatility, Abrams was able to observe three different Army components – the Oregon National Guard's 141st Brigade Support Battalion, the U.S. Army Reserve's 322nd Maintenance Company from Minnesota, and nearly 100 active duty Soldiers from the 5494th Support Maintenance Company (part of the U.S. Army's 101st Airborne Division) from Fort Campbell, Ky. – conducting cost-

effective Army sustainment training.

Both the Army's Active Component and Reserve Component forces have become more closely integrated due to The Army Total Force Policy, signed by Secretary of the Army John McHugh on Sept. 4, 2012. As Reserve Component forces comprise more than half of the Army's total force, it became important to integrate these components as a Total Force, since both are vital to fulfilling national military needs.

Abrams said he had heard a lot about the Sustainment Training Center and its capabilities. This visit, he said, was well worth his time.

“I learned quite a bit. I knew some of its capabilities, but there are some unique niche capabilities here at Camp Dodge that I haven't seen anywhere else. And they're doing great things. One of our priorities in Forces Command is to master the fundamentals. That training center is a big part of mastering the fundamentals for some specific Military Occupational Specialties in our Army,” he said.

Abrams then had occasion for some one-on-one conversations with company, battalion and brigade staff from the Iowa National Guard, meeting with Soldiers from the 186th Military Police Company, 1034th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion and 734th Regional Support Group.

“Part of the whole ideal was for our full-timers to discuss full-time manning and its impact on readiness,” said Orr. “Sometimes it's hard for the Army to understand, so we provided the opportunity for him talk to Soldiers at each of the three levels. Each Soldier explained what they do, their positions and how they affect readiness.”

FORSCOM visit

Continued on page 14

132nd Wing celebrates 75th anniversary



DES MOINES, Iowa - While it may have taken 16 years and six attempts, it was the vision of 12 individuals from the local community and Iowa National Guard 75 years ago that created the 132nd Wing as a force for the future.

From its humble beginnings on Feb. 25, 1941 as the 124th Observation Squadron, with 27 officers, 110 enlisted Airmen, and five Douglas O-38 aircraft, this Iowa Air National Guard unit has been home to 11 different aircraft and countless Air Force missions.

“What started as a recruiting effort in an old orange juice shop in the Chamberlain Hotel on the corner of 7th and Locust, is a wing that is postured for the future,” said 132nd Wing Commander, Col. Shawn D. Ford during the Wing’s 75th anniversary celebration on Feb. 26 at the Des Moines Airbase.

“The significance of these 12 individuals who came together for a common goal cannot be understated

and helps demonstrate the mutually beneficial relationship of the National Guard with the community. Individuals from the Des Moines Citizens Airport Committee, the Chamber of Commerce, the Greater Des Moines Committee, the Des Moines Register



and Tribune, Iowa Power and Light, Banker’s Trust, and the Des Moines City Council saw the value of bringing the 132nd to the Des Moines Airport, and the rest is history,” Ford said.

Over the last 75 years, the 132nd Fighter Wing has participated in numerous military operations, including World War II, and many aviation support missions for Desert

Shield/Desert Storm, Operations Northern and Southern Watch, Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom and New Dawn.

And while the missions and aircraft may have changed over the past eight decades, there is one element that has remained vital to the growth and success of the 132nd Wing – its Iowa Airmen. It’s those very Airmen who were recognized for their dedication and hard work during the anniversary celebration at the Iowa airbase.

“Four generations of 132nd Airmen have carried the values and the traditions of the Iowa Air National Guard forward throughout our proud history,” said Maj. Gen. Tim Orr, Adjutant General of the Iowa National Guard. “And that proud legacy continues here every day in Des Moines and it continues on in Iowa. As I travel around the country, we’re noted for what we do here.

“You’ve been here during peace, you’ve been here during war, and you

continue to support us for what we do,” Orr continued. “Regardless of the era and regardless of the time, and the mission and what we do for our nation.

“And I want to also thank the men and women who are still serving today. You know they represent the less than one percent of our nation that serve in the global fight across America and across the world. They continue to step up, they continue to serve, and I just want to say I’m honored to work with each and every one of you and I’m proud to serve with you.”

Orr also pointed out that over the past eight decades, by virtue of the 132nd’s increasingly technological missions and high-performance aircraft operations, tens of millions of dollars of critical infrastructure have been built at the Des Moines Airport, greatly benefitting the nation’s defense, as well as passenger air travel.

“Last year alone,” said Orr, “the 132nd Wing provided more than \$100 million in economic infusion to Iowa through salaries, unit purchases from the local economy, military construction, and indirect job creation.”

With three new highly-technological missions, the Iowa Air National Guard Base Des Moines has never been more important, nor as relevant, in its 75-year history.



Col. Shawn D. Ford, 132nd Wing commander, speaks during the 75th anniversary of the Des Moines-based Air National Guard unit. (Iowa National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Chad D. Nelson)

Today’s 132nd aviators now pilot the General Atomics MQ-9 “Reaper” Remotely Piloted Aircraft, and the unit has since evolved into two other unique operational missions: an Intelligence Surveillance and Reconnaissance Group and a Cyber Operations Squadron. The unit’s name change to the 132nd Wing was a reflection upon its past, while focusing on its evolving, modern mission as part of the national

defense strategy.

The mission of the 232nd and 233rd Intelligence Squadrons, subordinate units of the 132nd Wing, is to provide targeting and geospatial intelligence to the U.S. Air Force and Joint Warfighters. The 132nd Intelligence Support Squadron, another 132nd Wing subordinate unit, provides support functions to the 232nd and 233rd Intelligence Squadrons, as well as develops targeting training products for the Air Force targeting enterprise.

“You don’t get from 12 individuals to over 900 Airmen without the support and hard work of our community and its people,” Ford said. “I like to call it the ‘Iowa work ethic’ that can only be found in the Midwest, but this Wing was built on the backs of Iowans who know how to get the job done right.

“Not only did we survive for 75 years, we did it while transitioning through 12 aircraft from the O-38 to the MQ-9; supporting 10 wars or conflicts; and earning 10 Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards from 1965 until today. There have been many changes in the past and there will be changes in the future, but any organization that doesn’t adapt to their current environment will not survive.

“I look forward to the next 75 years,” Ford said.



Far Left - A March 1945 view of the Iowa Air National Guard base, located at the Des Moines Airport, looking north. The hangar, built at a cost of \$350,000, was completed in 1941. The hangar, known as Building 100, is still in use today.

(Left) - A wide variety of propeller-driven aircraft line the tarmac at the Des Moines Airbase on April 1944. These planes include a row of B-24 bombers (back) and in the front row, a fleet of P-51D Mustangs and a BC-1A trainer.

University of Iowa student is first to enlist as female Iowa National Guard Combat Engineer

By Master Sgt. Duff E. McFadden

In May 1959, the Iowa National Guard stood up its very first combat engineer unit, with the conversion and re-designation of the 224th Engineer Battalion in Burlington, Iowa.

More than 55 years later, combat engineers are again making headlines, as Megan Reaska became the first female to enlist as a Combat Engineer (Military Occupational Specialty: 12B) with Company A, Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 2nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry Division in Davenport.

Reaska, 20, a University of Iowa sophomore, enlisted Dec. 21, becoming the third woman to join an Iowa National Guard combat arms unit. Cheney M. Spaulding, 18, of Fort Dodge, Iowa, enlisted in September 2015 as a Survey Meteorological Crewmember (MOS: 13T) and Dakota A. Doocy, 17, from Lone Rock, Iowa, enlisted in October 2015 as a Field Artillery Firefinder Radar Operator (MOS: 13R). Both Spaulding and Doocy are members of the 1st Battalion, 194th Field Artillery, Iowa Army National Guard.

Reaska, who was born in Illinois and moved to Washington, Iowa in 2003, moved back to Illinois with her father after attending the eighth grade. She graduated from Northwest High School in Justin, Texas, a Dallas-Fort Worth area suburb, in 2014. She also played basketball for the NHS Texans.

Before deciding to attend the University of Iowa, her father put a strong emphasis on joining the military immediately out of high school. When Reaska mentioned joining the Iowa National Guard during her sophomore year of college, her dad was enthused. He told her how proud he was, but warned she had to mentally and physically prepare herself for the training.



Sgt. 1st Class Brandon Keeler, an Iowa Army National Guard recruiter with the Iowa City Recruiting Office, recently enlisted Megan Reaska as a Combat Engineer (12B Military Occupational Specialty) with Company A, 2/34th Brigade Special Troops Battalion in Davenport, Iowa. The 20-year old University of Iowa sophomore is the first female to enlist at a Combat Engineer in the Iowa Army National Guard. (Contributed photo)

“My father is my best friend who I thoroughly respect and strive to be like someday,” Reaska said. “For him to strongly encourage joining the military made me seriously consider it. After my first year at the University of Iowa

I began to think about the military more frequently, but I also wanted to attend school.

“Fortunately, the Iowa National Guard allows me to do both. I want to continue

on the tradition of service, as did my grandfather and uncle, and make my family and country proud," she said.

"Both myself and my office partner, Sgt. 1st Class Less, worked together as a team to enlist Megan," said Sgt. 1st Class Brandon Keeler, a recruiter at the Iowa City National Guard Readiness Center. "She's very smart and very driven. We both knew she was an ideal applicant because of her interest and passion for the military, her willingness to serve, and obviously her willingness to take a semester off to get the training to do what she wanted to do.

"I have no doubt she will be successful, because of who she is. She will definitely be a great asset to the Iowa National Guard," he said.

Reaska was originally interested in becoming a Medical Logistics Specialist (68J). When she completed her physical, she and Sgt. 1st Class David Mongar discovered there were zero training slots for 68Js in 2016. Mongar then sat down with her and discussed a few other options, including the 12B MOS.

"She was very excited about the position," Keeler said, "but didn't know she was going to be their first female until after she swore in."

While she looks forward to completing her Bachelors degree at the University of Iowa, she is also considering joining the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC), becoming a second lieutenant and then continuing her career within the military.

By joining the Iowa National Guard, Reaska will receive up to 100% of her college tuition paid through the Iowa National Guard Education Assistance Program, and will also receive a monthly stipend from the G.I. Bill, upon completing Basic Training and Advanced Individual Training.

Besides the numerous volunteer hours she gives back to the Iowa City community, including the Ronald McDonald

"My father is my best friend who I thoroughly respect and strive to be like someday, For him to strongly encourage joining the military made me seriously consider it."

**- Megan Reaska
University of Iowa student**

House and Table to Table, Reaska is also a member of the Gamma Phi Beta sorority. Their philanthropy includes a program called Girls on the Run.

"The program shows that girls can do everything males can, which is now kind of ironic," Reaska said, "since I just joined the Iowa National Guard as a Combat Engineer, which is a male-dominated job.

Reaska said being the third female to enlist into a combat arms position with the Iowa National Guard is a "mind-boggling feeling. It stuns me, but I am very proud to be one of the first few.

I strongly encourage more females to join, as there's no better feeling than proving to others you're capable of doing the same things as any male.

"The honor I feel to be the first female to enlist as a combat engineer in Iowa is indescribable.

I also think joining the combat engineer field would be an experience I would remember for the rest of my life. The skills I learn while in training. I'll carry with me forever.

"Besides" she said, "who wouldn't want to learn to build things and then

blow them up?"

Reaska will attend her first National Guard drill in January, with Company C, Recruit Sustainment Program, in Iowa City. She'll attend basic training at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., in July, immediately followed by 15 weeks of Advanced Individual Training there. She's taking off the fall 2016 semester and plans to return to the University of Iowa in time for the spring 2017 session.

Combat engineers provide expertise in areas such as mobility, counter-mobility, survivability and general engineering. Their job duties include: constructing fighting positions, fixed/floating bridges, obstacles and defensive positions; placing and detonating explosives; conducting operations that include route clearance of obstacles and rivers; preparing and installing firing systems for demolition and explosives; and detecting mines visually or with mine detectors.

On Dec. 3, Secretary of Defense Ash Carter announced that beginning in January 2016, 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 Department of Defense 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."

Though more than 111,000 positions had opened to women in uniform since 2013 until now, Carter said about 10 percent of military positions -- nearly 220,000 -- had remained closed to women. These included infantry, armor, reconnaissance, and some special operations units, the secretary said.

37th Iowa Infantry Regiment

Iowa recruits Soldiers 45 years and older into Civil War 'Greybeard' unit

by Tech Sgt. Michael B. McGhee

In early 1862, Iowa Governor Samuel J. Kirkwood and Adjutant General Nathaniel B. Baker worried as recruitment numbers began to dwindle.

Far to the east, the Civil War began its second year, showing signs of becoming a long, costly fight. In an act to bolster recruitment numbers, Iowa, in conjunction with the U.S. War Department, mustered the 37th Iowa Infantry Regiment, nicknamed the “Greybeards,” into federal service on Dec. 15, 1862.

The brainchild of George W. Kincaid, the regiment was primarily created for political reasons, as a way of raising enlistment and providing some level of service for the war effort. Edwin Stanton, Union Secretary of War, applauded the concept of a unique regiment comprised of men 45 years of age or older.

Early totals from the regiment indicated nearly 600 of the 914 officers and enlisted men were more than 50 years old. Approximately 48 were over 60 and nine were 70 or older, including a 72-year old drummer, Nicholas Ramey. The oldest known Greybeard was Pvt. Curtis King, at the ripe age of 80.

Every congressional district within the state was represented. Enlistments in the 37th Regiment surpassed original totals and Baker had the utmost confidence the unit would succeed. The command consisted of: Col. George W. Kincaid, a 50-year-old Iowa farmer and civic leader serving as Regiment Commander, Lt. Col. George R. West and Maj. Lyman Allen; as staff officers, and Sgt. Major Stephen B. Shellady.



Col. George W. Kincaid

It was generally understood the regiment was to be used for guarding military prisons, railroads, and arsenals. Even though they were exempt from the frontline and combat action, they weren't excluded from the everyday

rigors of Army life, including in-camp drills, with the occasional guard duty, or even a long march.

Shortly after the unit's authorization, the men made their way to Camp



In January 1864, the Greybeards received orders to move north up the Mississippi River for guard duty at the Rock Island Prison, built in mid-1863. During the Civil War, the prison held more than 12,000 prisoners. The regiment remained on duty at Rock Island until June 1864, when they moved on to guard and picket duty in Memphis, Tenn.

Strong, near Muscatine, Iowa, for formal training. On Dec. 26, 1862, the regiment broke camp and headed south toward St. Louis, Mo. The unit's first assignment consisted of guard duty around the St. Louis area, including the Gratiot Street Prison and the Pacific Railroad, located just west of the city.

Upon arrival in early January, the regiment marched through the streets of St. Louis and Maj. Gen. Samuel R. Curtis, Commander, Department of Missouri, declared he had seen many Union volunteers, but had never seen a finer looking group of men in uniform.

In July 1863, new orders came and they headed north to Alton, Ill. to relieve the 77th Ohio Infantry at the old Illinois State Prison, where the majority of detainees consisted of Confederate soldiers. The prison had a modest capacity of 950 Confederate soldiers, 164 Union soldiers, and 162 civilians. The number of prisoners would vary

from time to time, never surpassing the maximum capacity of 2,000.

By this time, the Greybeards' reputation had become well known up and down the Mississippi River for treating prisoners more humanely than most. They remained in Alton guarding prisoners until the middle of January 1864, with new orders to move north up the Mississippi to Rock Island, Ill.

The Rock Island Prison, built in mid-1863 wasn't completed before the first inmates arrived. During the Civil War, the prison held more than 12,000 prisoners. When the Greybeards arrived at Rock Island on Jan. 19, 1864, they remained quartered on the train for two full days. Col. Adolphus J. Johnson, commander of the prison, refused to accept the regiment as replacements, but was overruled when orders came directly from the War Department to accept the regiment onto the island. The regiment remained on duty at Rock

Island until June 1864, Their next stop was Memphis, Tenn. for another three months of guard and picket duty.

On July 5, while guarding a supply train, a detail of 50 men from the regiment were attacked by rebel forces at the Memphis and Charleston Railroad. The men quickly returned fire, but the effects on the rebels remained uncertain under cover of night. Due to the perseverance of the Greybeards aboard the train, however, the cargo made it to its final destination safely without further incident.

Casualties included Cpl. Charles Young and Pvt. Samuel Coburn, who were both killed, while four others members of the unit were wounded during the attack.

From Memphis, the regiment moved northeast to Indianapolis, Ind., where the regiment separated into two components – Kincaid took five companies and traveled to Cincinnati, Ohio, while West took the final three companies to Columbus, Ohio. The regiment remained at different commands until May 1865, when the companies met up in Cincinnati to make their final trek home.

On May 24, 1865, the unit stood in formation one final time, as they were ceremoniously mustered out of the Union Army. The 37th Regiment included a total enlistment of 1,041 soldiers – 364 were discharged due to disabilities, 145 died of disease, and three were killed in action. The largest portion of the deaths from disease came when the men were stationed at the Rock Island Prison during the winter months.

By war's end, the regiment accomplished its major goal of serving as a motivating and resourceful recruiting tool. It also triggered more than 1,300 sons and grandsons of these Greybeards to enlist.

Iowa is the only state that mustered a "Greybeard" regiment in support of the Civil War.

132nd Medical Group garners national recognition through responsive, innovative medical care

'MEDHAWKS' receive Outstanding Achievements in Innovation - Team Category Award

By Capt Brandon Cochran
132nd Medical Group, 132nd Wing

The 132nd Medical Group "MEDHAWKS" were recognized with a national-level award at its base clinic during a recent visit by Brig. Gen. Christopher J. Knapp, the Air National Guard (ANG) Assistant to the Command Surgeon – Air Combat Command.

The 132nd Wing received the Outstanding Achievement in Innovation – Team Category Award for 2015, following competition against the Air National Guard Medical Service's (ANGMS) other 88 Guard Medical Units (GMUs).

"It was awesome to see our Airmen take pride in their work, make contributions with real results, and get recognized for it at the national level," said Col. Jim Duong, Commander of the 132nd Medical Group. "It was icing on the cake that Brig. Gen. Knapp was visiting the 132nd Wing, and was willing to present the award to the medical group on behalf of the ANGMS.

"As a leader, I couldn't be more proud. This award proves you don't have to go out and do something over-the-top to get recognized. You can do the daily things and do them well, and reap the rewards of your hard work," he said.

In a fast-paced, but fruitful year, these inspired Airmen achieved many titan-



Brig. Gen. Christopher Knapp, the Air National Guard Assistant to the Command Surgeon – Air Combat Command (right), Col. Jim Duong, the 132nd Medical Group Commander (center), and Chief Master Sgt. Kris Rode, 132nd Medical Group Superintendent (left), stand at attention during the presentation of the Outstanding Achievement in Innovation – Team Category Award for 2015 to the 132nd Medical Group "MEDHAWKS." (Iowa National Guard Photo by Staff Sgt. Matthew T. Doyle)

sized feats. For starters, the MEDHAWKS consistently held a "Top 10" Individual Medical Readiness (IMR) rating for the whole of 2015, while being recognized as the "best in the region" five times and "best in the nation" in July 2015.

What is even more impressive, it came in the midst of a mission conversion from F-16 fighter aircraft to three new and enduring mission sets: a Remotely Piloted Aircraft (RPA) Squadron; an Intelligence Surveillance Reconnaissance (ISR) Group; and a Cyber Operations Squadron.

The MEDHAWKS didn't stop there, though, after taking a hard look at how

they conduct physical exams.

"Over the last year we implemented changes to the physical exam process that allowed us to reduce our patient wait time by 21 minutes. Allowing members to return to their duty section sooner," said Senior Master Sgt. Doug Harms, Non-Commissioned Officer-in-Charge of Nursing Services.

"By using the feedback from our customers and allowing our junior enlisted and Non-Commissioned Officers to champion the process improvement, we allowed them to have buy-in to a process that benefited all personnel involved," he said.

In the end, the MEDHAWKS returned 210 hours back to the Wing for use in training and mission operations, a major contribution towards efficiency and better care in a resource-constrained and task-heavy operating environment.

However, this is just the tip of the iceberg for the MEDHAWKS. In June, they orchestrated an RPA-centric health fair addressing sleep hygiene and fatigue, as well as grounding management and medical standards. They also hosted an active duty Air Force

psychologist in July to educate more than 100 flyers and their families on the psychological effects of remote combat.

In August, they participated in their first Unit Effectiveness Inspection, which culminated in an “Effective” rating. Their Senior Aerospace Medical Technicians were also recognized as a Superior Performance Team, and an Air Force Inspection Agency - Medical Branch Coin recipient. In September, they were chosen to support an Office of the Secretary of Defense Innova-

tive Readiness Training mission for the second time in three years.

The MEDHAWKS ended Fiscal Year (FY) 2016 on a high note. After scanning their first service treatment record into the electronic health record server in April 2015, the MEDHAWKS utilized an innovative mix of full-time and temporary federal technicians and Active Guard and Reserve personnel, as well as traditional drill-status Airmen to finish the FY at 74 percent complete – a full 34 percent above the ANGMS-mandated 40 percent completion by fiscal year end.

“Through hard work and a ‘can do’ attitude, this award points back to the outstanding team we have at the 132nd,” said Chief Master Sgt. Kris Rode, superintendent of the 132nd Medical Group. “It’s the above-and-beyond efforts of our Airmen that validate us as a proven top-tier GMU.”

The Outstanding Achievement in Innovation – Team Category Award, given annually, recognizes an individual or small group of military/civilians who have made substantial improvements in the quality and productivity of operations. These improvements must align with one or all of the Air Force Medical Service (AFMS) Strategic Areas: better care, better health, best value, and individual medical readiness.

These improvements are often fostered by out-of-the-box ideas, specialized/ tailored medical programs, or other continual-process improvement initiatives. In the end, they all result in a substantial improvement in clinic operations, care, and provide a savings to the AFMS and the ANGMS.

The Air National Guard uses their medical award program to identify and recognize outstanding performers in 36 different categories. Those selected at the ANG level then have the potential to compete at the Air Force level.



Brig. Gen. Christopher Knapp (right), the Air National Guard Assistant to the Command Surgeon – Air Combat Command, and Col. Jim Duong, 132nd Medical Group Commander (left), pose with the Outstanding Achievement in Innovation – Team Category Award for 2015. The 132nd Medical Group “MEDHAWKS” received the national award following competition against the Air National Guard Medical Service’s other 88 Guard Medical Units. (Iowa National Guard Photo by Staff Sgt. Matthew T. Doyle)

Abrams visit

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“The other great thing Gen. Orr let me do yesterday, was I got to meet a bunch of National Guard Soldiers,” Abrams said. “He took me around to a company orderly room and I got to see a battalion footprint. I got to go to a brigade and RSG footprint and I was probably about an hour-and-a-half talking to Soldiers.

“At my position, at my level, those opportunities are far and few between. So when I actually have those opportunities,” said Abrams, “I seize on those opportunities.”

Those Soldiers, Abrams continued, are really the credentials of the Iowa National Guard.

“You can tell me about programs and everything else, but the real strength, the real readiness indicator for the Iowa National Guard are Iowa National Guard Soldiers. And the ones I met yesterday, they were awesome.

“They were committed, dedicated professionals, very knowledgeable of their duties and responsibilities and had a very clear-eyed understanding of what their job was, of how it relates to building and sustaining readiness for their particular unit. It was just good to be around them,” he said.

The following morning Abrams concluded his visit by sitting down with National Guard senior representatives within Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Region VII – Orr, Maj. Gen. Lee Tafanelli, Adjutant General of the Kansas National Guard; Maj. Gen. Daryl Bohac, Adjutant General of the Nebraska National Guard; and Col. Anthony Adrian, Director of Operations, Missouri National Guard.

“It’s always good when I can sit down and have a personal one-on-one, or a small group discussion with our Adjutants General to share ideas, hear



Gen. Robert Abrams, Commanding General, U.S. Army Forces Command, examines an M110 Sniper System during his tour of the Sustainment Training Center. (Iowa National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Chad D. Nelson)

concerns, talk about opportunities, talk about policies and really enhance their understanding of our total Army,” said Abrams.

“I think this visit went very well,” said Orr. “I think his major highlight was to see our Soldiers and to have them tell him in person how they add value to our Army.”

“One of our recurring messages to everybody,” Abrams said, “is ‘We have one Army.’ I know I’m in the state of Iowa, but we have one Army. I tell people we got one Army, with one set of standards. It’s important that we look at ourselves as one Army regardless of

your component that you’re in, whether you’re a National Guardsman, or a U.S. Army Reservist, or an active duty Soldier.

“When I see Soldiers, sometimes I might look at what’s on their left sleeve, but the only thing that’s really important to me is what’s above their heart, which is the United States Army. And so when I go around, that’s all I see, I don’t differentiate between components, because we only have one Army.

“And the one Army we have, it better be a good one and it requires all three components for us to be a really good one,” he added.

How to build a positive relationship with your spouse

For service members, a loving, resilient marriage is both a matter of personal happiness and family readiness. When family relationships are strong and healthy, service members are free to focus on their mission and daily duty requirements. Like any good relationship, marriages take work and attention. From rediscovering dating, to navigating conflict, with a little effort you can have an amazing marriage.

How can you strengthen connections?

Every relationship can benefit from tips, techniques and resources to help keep your relationships strong and healthy.

- Adjust your expectations. Accept yourself, your spouse and your relationship as they exist today. People and relationships change over time, and each new milestone brings different dynamics and routines.
- Date each other. Time together without distractions can remind you of what brought you together. With the unique demands of military life added to regular family demands, you might have to schedule time to be together. Your marriage is important enough to be a priority.
- Take turns planning your activities. Romance should be an ongoing part, not just on special occasions. Be thoughtful and consider what your spouse enjoys.
- Create rituals. Routine and rituals can help hold a relationship together. A goodbye kiss before work, breakfast in bed with the crossword puzzle on weekends, weekly date nights or a walk after dinner are the little things that count.

How can you maintain relationships?

Just like our cars need maintenance, marriages also need care to run smoothly and last a long time..



- Take the pulse of your relationship. Figure out what's working and what isn't. Decide together on the compromises you're willing to make.
- Discuss how much time you spend together. Are you communicating clearly, honestly, and frequently about things that bother you? Make a habit of talking frequently. Being in contact can keep you both connected.
- Share household work. Running the household together takes work by both partners. Be willing to work out who does what so you're both satisfied.
- Give each other space. Your relationship will be stronger and more interesting if you give your spouse time and space without you. Both you and your spouse must keep and nurture outside friendships and interests.

Are there ways to fight fairly?

Conflicts and disagreements are a normal part of a healthy marriage.

- Don't say hurtful things when you fight. It's hard to show restraint during an argument, but your discussion will be more productive if you express yourself without being mean-spirited.
- Debrief after a disagreement. Talk

about what happened when both of you cool off. Choose a time that's convenient and a place where you can really concentrate and hear each other.

- Be respectful. Listen courteously while your spouse expresses feelings and needs, and acknowledge them.
- Use "I" statements to express your feelings. Try "I feel hurt when you leave the table without thanking me for cooking," instead of "you" statements, such as "You're selfish because you leave the table without saying thanks."
- Keep your focus on the issue at hand. Avoid resurrecting events and evidence from your history as a couple.

How can you solve conflict?

Learning to fight fairly is an important skill in a relationship. Learning to resolve conflict is another. Here are some ideas that may help:

- Over time, small annoyances can cause big problems. Strike a deal for both of you to drop a bad habit that bothers the other.
- Get into the habit of looking for your spouse's positive traits. For every dirty dish left in the sink, your spouse has likely done a dozen wonderful things you simply couldn't live without.
- Notice and acknowledge what your spouse is doing for you and your family. Saying thanks will remind you of your spouse's efforts, and hearing it will make your spouse feel valued.

Where do you turn for more support?

Military OneSource can help provide you with resources and connect you with a confidential non-medical counselor. Contact information for other counseling options, such as chaplains and the Family Advocacy Program, can be found on <http://www.militaryonesource.mil/>

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