

Careers shaped by what is done, said during first days on the job

SEE PAGES 8-9



FORT LEE TRAVELLER

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Hometown Tribute

Community supporters, Fort Lee personnel gather for Prince George County bridge dedication honoring sacrifice of fallen Soldier

SEE PAGE 3

FAMILY MEMBERS SHARE FIERCE DIAMOND DESIRE

Sarah and Laura Thompson were part of the powerhouse Lady Royals squad that achieved a 23-1 season and laid claim to a state championship title

SEE PAGE 5



CONQUERING CREEPY THINGS

Kenner pediatrics team provides tips for safe, effective application of insect repellants

SEE PAGE 2

CASH'S ARMY SUCCESS STORY

From 'unreachable dream' to full-fledged career, doctor thanks military for opportunity

SEE PAGE 10

PARK OFFERINGS ARE PLENTIFUL

Along with its historic mansion, Maymont offers wildlife exhibits, gardens, youth camps

SEE PAGE 14

Preventive steps important to deter insect bites, stings in warm weather

Alison Gwinn, CPNP

Wilkerson Pediatric Clinic, KAHC

Warmer temperatures mean more outdoor family time. Before heading outside, it is imperative to think about safety. This includes protecting one's skin from harmful UV rays and to guard against potentially harmful insect bites and stings.

Children playing outdoors during the warmer months are susceptible to getting insect bites and stings from spiders, ticks, mosquitoes, ants and bees/wasps. While most only result in mild local irritation, sometimes they can cause more serious conditions such as anaphylactic reactions, cellulitis and Lyme disease.

Ticks are the most common carriers of Lyme disease as well as other bacteria and viruses. Lyme disease is spread by deer ticks, and reported cases are on the rise. Symptoms include fever, aches and fatigue. There also may be a bullseye rash around the site of the bite.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports 30,000 cases of Lyme are diagnosed every year in the U.S. Virginia is in the top third of states with confirmed cases.

Mosquitoes can transmit West Nile, Zika, Chikungunya and other viruses. West Nile and Zika are the most recent mosquito-borne illnesses in the news. They can cause flu-like symptoms in



Metro Creatie

some people, but they also can cause serious complications, particularly among pregnant women.

To protect children and other family members from insect bites, the American Academy of Pediatrics and the CDC recommend the following safeguards:

- Wear insect repellent containing DEET when going outside.

The Academy of Pediatrics states insect repellents containing DEET are safe for children as young as two months old. Parents should choose an insect repellent with the lowest concentration of chemicals that still provides the required length of coverage. For children older than two months, the AAP recommends using repellents with 10- to 30-percent DEET. Keep in mind that 10 percent of the chemical provides about two hours of protection.

Parents who are still worried about the safety of DEET can find alternative insect repellants such as those made with

Picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, and IR3535. Products containing oil of lemon eucalyptus should not be used on children under the age of three years.

Always follow the directions as they appear on the product label. Generally, repellent with DEET should not be applied more than once a day if it can be avoided – meaning shorter playtimes outdoors during times when insects are most active.

- Practice safe repellent application procedures.

The strategy of insect protection is to make yourself a less-tasty target. Only exposed skin and clothing needs to be treated. Repellents should not be applied under clothing. Avoid areas near the mouth and eyes and apply sparingly around ears. Never use repellents on cuts, wounds or rashes. Avoid spraying products directly onto the face.

Never allow children to handle or spray the repellent. Parents should put the product on their hands first and then rub it onto the child's skin, avoiding the hands because youngsters are known to put their hands in their eyes and mouths.

- Do not use products containing both an insect repellent and a sunscreen. The latter needs to be applied more often than insect repellent and should be used separately.

- Upon returning indoors, use soap and water to wash off the repellent. If a child

gets a rash or other reaction, stop using the product. If the problem is mild and persists, make an appointment with your health care provider. For severe reactions, call the poison control center (1-800-222-1222) for guidance.

- Wearing long pants tucked into socks and long-sleeved shirts are additional safeguards against mosquitoes and ticks. Light-colored clothing makes ticks easier to spot and makes children less attractive to bees.

- Check children frequently for ticks when outdoors or in the woods.

- Make sure there is no standing water in your yard such as water in buckets, fire pits and birdbaths. Mosquitoes like to lay their eggs in standing water.

- Be careful at picnics and outdoor events. Sweet foods and drinks attract bees and wasps. Keep food and the trashcan covered.

- Do not use sweet-smelling perfumes/sprays, lotions or hair products when planning a day outdoors.

- Instruct children to stay away from beehives/wasp nests and ant hills.

- Don't try to swat bees or wasps with your hands. Stand still and they should go away.

- Be careful near woodpiles, sheds, dark corners of the garage and other places where spiders may hide.

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ON THE COVER



Lyndon German / progress-index.com

A sign for the late Sergeant Lawrence G. Sprader Jr. is unveiled at a bridge dedication ceremony for the fallen Soldier in Prince George County on June 19. For story and more photos, see Page 3.

Prince George County bridge renamed in honor of Sgt. Lawrence G. Sprader Jr.

John Adam

Progress-Index staff writer

“After today, your son will never be forgotten in Prince George County.”

Those were the words spoken by Alan Carmichael, chairman of the PGC Board of Supervisors, as he addressed Lawrence G. Sprader Sr., and his wife Pok Sun, the parents of an Army staff sergeant who died 11 years ago during a training exercise at Fort Hood, Texas.

Carmichael was speaking at a special event on June 19, honoring the renaming of the bridge on Middle Road as the Sgt. Lawrence G. Sprader Jr. Memorial Bridge.

A Prince George native, Sprader Jr. – or “JR” as he was known to family and friends – graduated from Prince George High School in 2000 and joined the Army almost immediately afterward. He served two combat tours in Iraq, garnering numerous awards including the Army Commendation Medal, the Army Achievement Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Medal, the Combat Lifesaver Badge and the First Class Driver’s Badge.

“JR was one of the finest young men I’ve ever come across,” said Col. Clint Hodder, a family friend. “He always had a plan, and what made him special is that he had the character to do it.”

Numerous community members and local officials came out to pay their respects to Sprader Jr. during the bridge dedication, which took place at Faith Baptist Church.

After the Fort Lee Color Guard presented the colors for the national anthem and Pledge of Allegiance, multiple speakers came up to pay tribute to Sprader Jr. and talk about his life.

Prince George Police officer John Vasquez, who was a classmate of Sprader Jr.’s, said they had reconnected several years after graduating from high school.

“I never saw him change what he was or



Army Photo

The military service and sacrifice of Sgt. Lawrence G. Sprader Jr., (pictured above left), was memorialized at a bridge dedication ceremony June 19 in Prince George County, his hometown. The guests of honor at the event included Sprader’s father, Lawrence Sr., (pictured above right), his mother, Pok Sun, and representatives from Fort Lee and the Virginia legislature. A Fort Lee Color Guard comprised of 244th Quartermaster Battalion Soldiers is pictured below.



Lyndon German /progress-index.com



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who he was for anybody,” he said.

Vasquez joked that he and Sprader Jr. always seemed to run into each other at the local Best Buy when the Soldier was home. Vasquez recalled the last time he saw Sprader, when he mentioned that

he was thinking about getting into law enforcement.

“As we parted that day, he made sure to look me in the eye, give me that smile, and tell me that if there was anything I needed to let him know,” Vasquez said.

Sgt. 1st Class Tristan Key, who was Sprader Jr.’s “Battle Buddy,” also paid tribute to his fallen friend.

“This is not just a bridge,” Key said. “This structure represents someone’s son. It represents my comrade, and it represents an American hero.”

Chief Warrant Officer 4 Destria Denise Gladney, who got to know the Spraders after their son’s death, talked about how caring Sprader Jr. was, telling the story of when he surprised his mother one Christmas after being stationed in Germany.

“This young man was well-put together. He loved everything about the Army,” she said, addressing the Spraders. “Thank you so much for the life you brought into this world.”

Prince George County Administrator Percy C. Ashcraft cited the “honorable, exemplary service” of one of Prince George’s native sons.

“We vow never to forget his bravery in service to our country,” he said.

After the speakers, the bridge sign was officially unveiled.

Sprader Sr. ended the ceremony, crediting Del. Emily Brewer, R-64th, and the other local officials who had helped make the renaming of the bridge possible.

“It’s been a long road, and believe me when I say that I would rather have JR standing next to me,” he said. “He would do anything for you. If you needed him, he would be there.”

Brewer was a patron of House Bill 1159, which called for the renaming of the bridge. The bill was signed into law by Gov. Ralph Northam on March 2.

“I know JR is looking down on all of us, the county he loved and the friends and family he loved,” Sprader Sr. said. “I’m hoping he’s up there saying, ‘Dad, job well done.’”



Virginia Department of Veterans Services

Governor Ralph Northam holds up the new MMAC legislation he signed June 25. He is flanked, from left, by Virginia Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs Carlos Hopkins, Senator Bill DeSteph (8th District), Delegate Chris Stolle (83rd District), and John Newby, Virginia Commissioner for the Department of Veterans Services.

Signing ceremony cements military medic hiring program

NORFOLK – At a special ceremony in the Hampton Roads Veterans Employment Center here June 25, Governor Ralph Northam signed legislation making the Virginia Department of Veterans Services’ Military Medics and Corpsmen Program permanent. He also charged the MMAC team with hiring 300 qualified veterans through the program by the end of his administration.

“As a former Army doctor, I worked alongside military medics while treating Soldiers injured during Desert Storm,” said Northam. “Our medics and corpsmen have extensive training and valuable experience, but unfortunately until Virginia took the lead in establishing the MMAC Program that recognizes this service, it was difficult for them to use these skills as they transitioned to the civilian workforce. Over the past two years, working with our partner health care systems across the commonwealth, MMAC has proven to be a great success. I am pleased to sign this legislation, making the program permanent.”

Assembly as a pilot program in 2016, MMAC provides a path to careers in the civilian health care industry for recently discharged Army medics, Navy and Coast Guard corpsmen, and Air Force medical technicians. MMAC collaborates with major health care systems to provide employment for former medics, corpsmen, and technicians, allowing them to maintain their clinical skills while obtaining the required civilian medical credentials. Since the program’s inception, 76 veterans have been hired in civilian health care, and 43 of them met the qualifications to practice specific advanced skills learned in the military.

“I extend my thanks to all of our members of the General Assembly who supported this program that again shows why Virginia is the most veteran-friendly state in America,” the governor further noted.

MMAC is modeled after the highly successful Veterans Health Administration Intermediate Care Technician Pilot Program, which operated in 15 federal Veterans Affairs

NEWS BRIEFS

SAMC Induction Ceremony

The Fort Lee Chapter of the Sergeant Audie Murphy Club will hold an induction ceremony July 6, 1:30-2:30 p.m., in the Petroleum and Water Department Auditorium, Bldg. 11300, corner of 40th Street and Grant Avenue. The event is open to all service members and community supporters.

Say ‘Thank You’ with Exchange Gift Cards

To show appreciation for their service and to celebrate this July 4 week, Exchange gift cards can be sent to military members deployed to Afghanistan, Kuwait and other contingency locations to redeem through the Army and Air Force Exchange Service.

While only authorized shoppers can redeem Exchange gift cards, anyone can send one by calling 800-527-2345 or by visiting www.shopmyexchange.com and clicking “Purchase Gift and Phone Cards” at the bottom of the page. Gift cards can be addressed to a specific individual or sent to “any service member.” Recipients can use the gift cards to purchase snacks, electronics, books, clothing, jewelry and more at any Army, Air Force, Navy or Marine Corps exchange.

Warrant/LOG-C3 Icebreaker

The annual Warrant Officer /LOG-C3 icebreaker is scheduled for July 27, 4-6 p.m., in the Army Logistics University multipurpose room, 2401 Quarters Road.

The event offers a social, networking and mentorship opportunity for students enrolled in WO Basic and Advanced courses as well as the Logistics Captain’s Career Course.

For details, contact CWO 3 Truman Ward at 804-765-9431 or 760-957-5785.

Petersburg High School Painting Project

Local Rotary Clubs are seeking volunteers for a community project to paint Petersburg High School through July 30.

All are welcome to help during four-hour shifts, scheduled between 8 a.m. - 8 p.m., weekdays. The goal is to make students and teachers proud of their school in September.

To signup, call 804-861-4996, visit <https://bit.ly/2tfGiWD> or email rularence@petersburg.k12.va.us.

Exchange Increases Medical Equipment Offerings

The Army and Air Force Exchange Service is increasing its online selection of durable medical equipment – braces, fitness bands, crutches and other devices that may not be covered by health insurance plans.

More than 200 items are available at shopmyexchange.com. By the end of 2018, the Exchange plans to grow its online offerings by 25 percent. In 2019, the Exchange wants to triple its online products.

Free Panera Bread at USO

Military ID cardholders can receive free Panera Bread every Wednesday beginning at 10:30 a.m. at the Fort Lee USO, building 4005, 1611 B Ave.

The bread will be distributed until the supply is depleted. People must bring a bag.

For details, email kasinda@usohrcv.org.

Exchange Salad Wednesdays

Every week at Fort Lee Exchange restaurants, diners can take \$2 off any salad priced \$4 or more as part of its Salad Wednesday BE FIT initiative.

In addition to Salad Wednesday savings, diners who use their MILITARY STAR card will receive an additional 10 percent discount at Exchange eateries.

T. Anthony Bell

Senior Writer/Special Projects

TRIUMPH AMONG TRIPLETS: Thompson girls help PGHS team take title at state-level tournament

Astute *Traveller* readers may have noticed an unusual occurrence in the centerspread display of student photos that was part of the June 21 edition's high school graduation insert.

Three of those individuals shared the last name Thompson, and they are the first set of triplets to grace the pages of the supplement since it was introduced to the post newspaper 12 years ago. Andrew, Laura and Sarah graduated from Prince George High School on June 16.

What the *Traveller* also learned is that two of those 18-year-olds were starting members of the PGHS Softball Team that won the Class 5 state title June 9. Shortstop Sarah and pitcher Laura – daughters of retired 1st Sgt. Keith Thompson and spouse Yong Thompson – played important roles on a Lady Royals squad that achieved a historic 23-1 season capped off by an 11-4 shellacking of Brooke Point in the championship game.

(Read Progress Index coverage of the contest at www.progress-index.com/sports/20180609/prince-george-softball-state-champions)

Sarah, explaining the team's success, said a strong sense of unity made all the difference between this season and those in the past.

"This year, we really played as a family," she said. "Last year, we really didn't get along, so to recover from that and win the whole thing ... it really is a great feeling."

What's the difference between playing as a team and a family?

"When you play as a family, you actually communicate with each other and you like each other," said Laura. "When we bought that out to the field, I guess it did good things."

The Lady Royals finished 18-4 in 2016 and 22-2 last year when they were sent home with a loss in the first round of the state championship.

If the family factor was indeed the decisive element of the Lady Royals' success, the Thompson brood who has been primed since early childhood to work together could only make the team that much better. They grew up on or within the shadow of military installations and were immersed in the



T. Anthony Bell

The Thompson family – from left to right, Sarah, Yong, Laura, retired 1st Sgt Keith and Andrew – pose for pictures June 13. Sarah, Laura and Andrew are 18-year-old triplets and recent graduates of Prince George High School. Sarah and Laura were members of the school's softball team that won its first class 5 state championship.

strong community bonds of those environs. Furthermore, the trio of siblings were treated to constant lessons of teamwork and common purpose by way of their father.

"As a first sergeant, I helped to develop the uniqueness of a family unit (among company Soldiers), and I tried teaching that to my kids – functioning together as a tight-knit group," said Keith Thompson. "I think it's unique because a lot of families today do their own thing (head in separate directions morning, noon and night) when 95 percent of the time we still sit down and eat at least one meal together as a household. It doesn't always happen – as they've gotten older with sports and work – but we try to do it every day. As parents, we also try to teach them values and the importance of living by those positive traits."

The Thompson girls, along with Andrew, were exposed to team sports early on. They have played T-Ball since age 6 and once dabbled in soccer and basketball. The girls

also took a shot at cheerleading, however, they developed a love for diamonds.

"Softball was our decision because we enjoyed it so much," said Laura. "The other (sports activities) were just something we did in the off-season so we could stay busy."

The girls played softball all through middle school on recreation and traveling teams, said Keith, who often helped to coach his daughter's teams. Additionally, many of the young ladies they played with as tweens are their championship teammates today.

"It started with these girls in 4th and 5th grades in rec ball," Keith elaborated. "There was a handful of kids back when they were 8 or 9, and they threw together on a travel ball team. They called themselves the Little Lady Royals – the Lady Royals nowadays. We actually played travel ball with two of the girls for six or seven years. Some of them are really close."

The triplets are close as well. Sarah, the oldest by one minute, said the siblings are

relationally tight despite the fact Andrew is prone to be a thorn.

"I think we have a very good relationship," she said. "Like any other family, the brother is going to annoy you. It's just a part of growing up."

Sarah also said she grew closer to Laura over the years because they were perennial teammates.

"When we were younger, we argued a lot," she recalled, "but as we grew older and kept playing together, we had to agree and finally got closer. Andrew, too. He hasn't distanced himself; he just plays a lot of video games."

With high school graduation behind them, the Thompson household is focusing on college. It's a time that Yong, for one, struggles to accept. The mere mention of the triplets going off to further their studies generates a bit of emotion.

"It's sad," she said, wiping her eyes, "but they are grown up."

Laura and Sarah are set to matriculate at Concord University in Athens, West Va., where they received partial athletic scholarships. Andrew is scheduled to attend Mary Baldwin University in Staunton.

Keith, acknowledging things will not be the same at home, said the girls still have traveling team games scheduled for the summer, and each are opportunities to do things together as a family unit. It will not be a "last hurrah," but a retrospective on how quickly time flies.

"It's amazing to me – my wife would say the same thing," he said. "It's been 18 years, but it truly doesn't feel like it's been that length of time. It feels like it's just been a short journey."

In looking toward the triplet's future, dad feels the anticipation any parent feels on the cusp of sending kids off into the world.

"I'm excited, anxious and nervous because the way the world is today, you've got to be ready to tackle it," he said. "My hopes are that as parents we've taught them the proper lessons to move forward, and understanding some of the arguments we may have had as a family were more of tools for training and trying to develop them to understand the ways of life. It's going to be a sad time, but at the same time a joyful opportunity to see their success."

RECOGNIZING CIVILIANS | SPOTLIGHT

Kara Luton

Hometown: South Chesterfield
Length of federal service: 10 years
Job title: Director of Mission Support, Defense Contract Management Agency International

Job duties: “Mission support is all the budgeting and personnel – any international support for the embassies and passports for the whole agency.”

What do you love the most about your job? “The customer service and the people I deal with. I’m a people person. Making people happy and keeping them happy is why I like it.”

What do you consider your greatest achievement? “My volunteer work with investigating equine cruelty.”

You were recently recognized for your professional dedication and off-duty volunteerism – how did that feel to earn the award? “I was kind of embarrassed because I didn’t know I was

even put in for it. I like to fly under the radar. I’m glad they recognize people on base who do these types of things so the external community knows we’re not just working – we’re helping out.”

What kind of volunteering do you do? “I foster horses at my house. I also deliver dogs for Kindred Hearts Transport, which is a program that sends dogs to different (rescue shelters). I do a variety of other volunteering, and most of it involves animals.”

Why do you volunteer? “I’ve always been an animal person. I started riding when I was five, and it kind of just migrated into helping more.”

What do you expect from your leaders? “Support. Backup. Help in taking care of my people.”

Where would you most like to live? “Farther in the country. I would love to have more land.”

When and where were you happiest? “Right now. Doing what I’m doing. I love DCMA, and I’ve got a good



Amy Perry

group of people working for me. I like international. I like Chesterfield.”

Do you have any pet peeves? “Rude people and late people. People who get animals and don’t take care of them.”

Which historical figure do you most identify with? “I’ve always liked Winston Churchill because my family is related to him. I also liked Lady Diana,

and I think about her often. She came from nothing and became famous, but she still cared about volunteerism.”

What is your marked characteristic? “I’m very artistic. I draw a lot.”

What do you consider to be your spirit animal? “A horse. A few years ago, I had a friend draw up a holiday card for me that had horses on motorcycles, since I ride both. The saying was ‘Ride like the gate was left open’ because I like to live life to the fullest. Horses, if the gate is open, are going to run and have fun.”

What is your greatest fear? “I’m scared of heights. Not being happy is another fear – that’s probably why I like animals because they make me happy.”

What is your greatest extravagance? “Vacation. I love to go to the beach. We go to the Caribbean.”

Which talent would you most like to have? “I would like to be better at public speaking. I’m not really good at it.”

SEE KARA LUTON, next page

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KARA LUTON, cont. from page 6

What's your motto? "Live life to the fullest. You have to live life to the fullest and give back."

Who is your role model? "My mom. She never gives up, and she gives back to everyone. The poor lady, she had breast cancer in her 40s, lost my dad when she was 60, then her house burned to the ground. However, she is still the first one there to give back and is floored when people want to do good things for her."

What is it that you most dislike? "People mistreating animals or children – things that can't take care of themselves."

What is something people would be surprised to know about you? "A lot of people think I'm an extrovert, but I'm not. I'm an introvert. Also, I ride a Harley."

What are your future aspirations? "Starting a nonprofit to help horses."

– Compiled by Amy Perry

Sergeant shares water-making wisdom



Contributed Photo

Sgt. 1st Class Elain Colonsilva reinforces some of the operational teaching points associated with the 3,000-gallon-per-hour Reverse Osmosis Water Purification Unit during a recent training session for Water Treatment Specialist Course students. The instruction takes place at a field site that allows students to rehearse the actual skills they'll need for future support missions, be it providing drinkable water during a humanitarian mission or in support of deployed U.S. military forces and their allies. An important moment of this particular training session is when the instructor drinks the water that the students purified, thus showing confidence in their abilities. The Water Treatment Course is one activity of the Quartermaster School's Petroleum and Water Department.

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TEAM BUILDING

Personnel experts, employees tout career-shaping impact of onboarding

Adriana King and Matthew Margotta

Contributing Writers

The manner in which employees are welcomed during their first days on the job should be a source of organizational pride and a clear reflection of its professionalism.

A new staffer's opinion – as well as their long-term desire to stay or leave a government position – is often shaped within the first few weeks of arrival. Research has established a strong connection between how new workers are initially welcomed, integrated and prepared to perform their responsibilities, and their level of engagement, sense of belonging, and overall long-term productivity and effectiveness. In short, an effective onboarding process is like a great first impression: It can be impactful and lasting.

To ensure new team members feel welcomed, informed, prepared and supported, the

Installation Management Command developed a comprehensive onboarding program as one of the pillars of its Service Culture Campaign. The guidelines under this program promote proud and engaged team members who demonstrate the values and principles of IMCOM, furthering the Army's mission, goals and productivity.

In the same way that successful companies devote considerable effort toward employee integration and development, IMCOM's Service Culture onboarding guidelines are seen as a proactive step toward protecting its investment in new team members across the command.

Lisa Passalacqua, Army Community Service information and referral coordinator at Fort Irwin, Calif., reflected on the importance of a deliberate and well-planned onboarding program.

"Onboarding is the strategic process of welcoming new team members, establishing responsibilities and familiarizing them with the Army culture," she said. "We need to start with a

bang, grab our new team members immediately and welcome them to the wonderful world of civil service."

"Studies show that 33 percent of employees decide to stay with an agency or start making plans to leave within the first 30 days of employment," said Dr. Robin Ellert, chief of workforce development at Fort Stewart and Hunter Army Airfield, Ga. "Onboarding is the opportunity for IMCOM to give new employees reasons to stay engaged."

Onboarding also provides garrison leaders and managers the opportunity to engage with new team members and make them feel valued, respected and a part of the team. It introduces IMCOM as a caring organization that focuses on and looks out for its people.

"That first month is a swirl of new names, procedures and a culture shock," said Allie Vallery, workforce development program specialist at Fort Hunter Liggett, Calif. "When

new team members realize there is a plan to assist them, they will bond to IMCOM – a professional and caring environment."

Success factors

The most critical component of a successful onboarding program is leadership's active participation. Leaders set an example of caring. They communicate expectations and standards. They convey the mission, values and goals of the organization. They instill a sense of pride in serving within the organization. How they accomplish this is an indicator of genuine care and concern for the welfare of the IMCOM team.

"Our involvement is top-down," said Brian R. O'Connor, training resource specialist at Fort Drum, N.Y. "Our garrison command team makes it a priority to be at every Team Member Orientation. They are among the very first people to speak to the new team members."

The experience of mature organizations in the private sector and other anecdotal evidence

support the value of allocating appropriate resources to a robust onboarding program. For example, the Disney Institute, which advises large businesses – including IMCOM – on best practices, stated the onboarding process is critical because it reinforces the culture of the activity and sets the stage for the new employee's experience with the organization in the future. Every Disney employee must attend the corporation's onboarding program before contacting any customer or performing any of their duties.

A few years ago, Keri Anne Smialek, commercial sponsorship coordinator at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., did not attend her orientation day as part of the garrison's onboarding program because the presenter fell ill. Sometime later, a member of the leadership team insisted she attend the next orientation day. Her perception of her importance to the organization changed completely.

"The orientation day created enthusiasm about



New employees at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., get ready to "leave their mark" on a wall as part of the garrison's "One Team" approach to onboarding.



Fort Leonard Wood Garrison Commander Col. Tracy L. Lanier participates in the handprint exercise to demonstrate his belief in its importance as a teambuilding tool.

the mission of my organization and showed development opportunities I was unaware of," Smialek said. "I was improved both personally and professionally. Had it not been for the onboarding program and the tools it afforded me, I might have abandoned my employment altogether."

Best practices

Since the operating environment varies from one IMCOM organization to another, the approach to establish a new – or improve an existing – onboarding program must take local circumstances into consideration. IMCOM garrisons, in many cases, are incorporating the initiative with unique and innovative ways to reach the hearts and minds of their new team members.

Megan O'Donoghue, chief of the Service and

Support Directorate at Fort Leonard Wood, said that new team members at her garrison leave a mark on the wall. "They literally leave their handprint (dipped in paint) on the wall," she said. "The handprints signify unity, 'One Team.' We make a difference in Soldiers' lives. We are here for each other, to lend a helping hand, anywhere, anytime."

Installation tours are often considered a highlight in many onboarding programs. "On each tour, there is always someone saying, 'Wow! I had no idea!' It is as if a light switches on for them," said Mike Alley, management analyst at Fort Leonard Wood. "Tours help new team members begin to understand our mission and learn to treat all customers with respect as a result."

"We developed an onboarding program for both Appropriated Fund and Non-Appropriated Fund employees," O'Connor said. "We are 'One Team.' Our onboarding program provides them direction, guidance and purpose."

Christine Donovan, workforce development specialist at Fort Wainwright, Alaska, stresses the importance of communication in a successful onboarding program. "Always ask for leaders' and frontline supervisors' feedback to improve the program. They will be the ones implementing and enforcing the system."

Additionally, periodic assessment of programs is vital to keep up in a changing environment. "We follow the innovate-survey-adjust cycle to adapt dynamically," said Travis Mobley, chief of the Plans, Analysis and Integration Office at Fort Stewart and Hunter Army Airfield. "This is because the operating environment is constantly changing and so is our workforce."

Lt. Gen. Kenneth R. Dahl, IMCOM Commanding General, regularly highlights the importance of his organization's robust onboarding program guidelines for new team members and the Army.

"Onboarding is vital to our success in taking care of people and creating and maintaining a professional and positive work environment," Dahl said. "They need to feel appreciated by their leaders, co-workers and IMCOM as a whole. They need to understand why their work and service are important to the Army and where they fit into the organization. Serving with IMCOM should be deeply satisfying – our IMCOM professionals should be proud of that service. Ultimately, this is about taking care of our workforce."

Growing up in poverty, Kenner doctor says Army provided chance to follow his dreams

Amy Perry

Production/News Assistant Editor

“You’re not smart enough to be a doctor.”

That statement, spoken by Daniel Cash’s mother when he was 10, became the mind echo that motivated him to prove her wrong.

Now a doctor and a lieutenant colonel serving as the deputy commander for Clinical Services at Kenner Army Health Clinic, Cash said a childhood accident was the impetus for his desire to practice medicine.

“When I was 10, I crashed a moped into a house when the accelerator got stuck,” he said, “and I almost died.”

He was rushed to the hospital by ambulance and monitored for 24 hours. In those days – the early ‘80s – CAT scans weren’t readily available at most medical facilities, so Cash said he was fortunate they kept him for monitoring because he had an undiagnosed subarachnoid hemorrhage, where there is bleeding in the space between the brain and its outer tissue.

“I’ve been told I went a little crazy in the hospital, and they had to do an emergency burr hole in my head to release pressure,” he said. “After I recovered, that’s when I knew I wanted to be a physician. However, my parents didn’t think school was important, and when I told them, that’s when they said I wasn’t smart enough.”

Reflecting on the moment, Cash said he didn’t think the comment was meant to hurt him but had more to do with their life situation. Since his parents didn’t push education and his family was very poor, advanced schooling was hard to fathom – and a run at a medical degree clearly pie in the sky.

“It was an issue of poverty for sure. The way they saw it, I would never have



Amy Perry

(ABOVE) Lt. Col. Daniel Cash, the deputy commander for Clinical Services at Kenner Army Health Clinic, has served in the Army for 13 years and credits the service for paving the path for practicing medicine. (RIGHT) Cash poses with his wife Enereida and daughter Maria following a 2005 graduation ceremony in which he received his bachelor’s degree from Nova Southeastern University College of Osteopathic Medicine, Fort Lauderdale, Fla. From there, he enrolled in the Health Professional Scholarship Program offered by the Army and continues to serve today.

enough money to pay for school,” he mused. “That made education a luxury ... and they didn’t care about that. It was all about work.

“I don’t think my mom even remembers what she said,” Cash continued, “but when you’re a child you always remember a putdown. That kind of thing sticks with you.”

Painting an even broader picture of his childhood, Cash said his family was continuously in need of an immediate paycheck and at times struggled to keep a roof over their head. When he was 14, the family moved from their home in South Carolina to Homestead, Fla., where his father had a job lined up as a correctional officer. He was fired two months later.

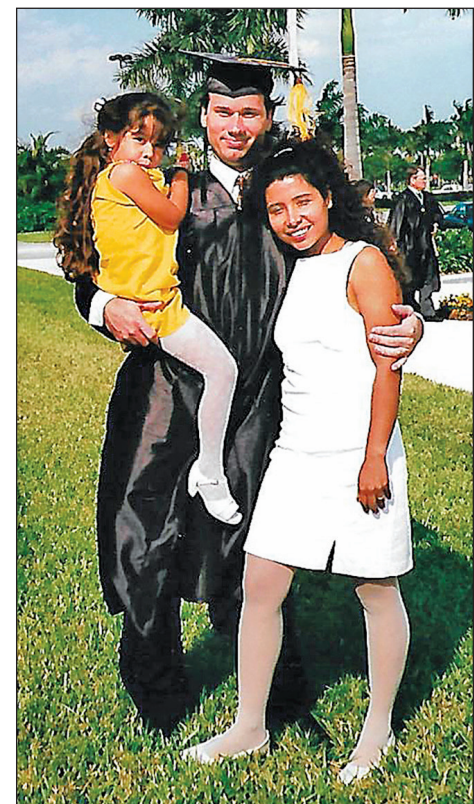
“We relocated to Fort Lauderdale where my father continued to look for work because there were no jobs available in Homestead,” he said. “We were homeless

for 2-3 weeks, and we sort of lived in a park; then we lived in a shelter for two months before my parents got enough money for a place to live.”

Despite his tough childhood, Cash – the fifth of six children – was the first in his family to graduate high school. While he was anxious to begin his medical school journey, the first order of business was to get a job and earn some money. A year later, he applied for financial aid for advanced schooling and was told he had “made too much money” as a landscaper to qualify for the assistance. So, he put his dreams back on hold and returned to the blue collar grind.

“Over the next 9-10 years, I worked at the same job,” he said. “In the evenings, I ran orders for places like Pizza Hut and Dominos hours after an already full day of landscaping.”

During those years, Cash married



Contributed Photo

Enereida, an immigrant from Panama. When their daughter was born, his college aspirations returned with a fervor. He enrolled at a community college and worked a full-time job while also juggling his undergraduate coursework. He managed to earn a bachelor’s degree in 3 years by increasing his credit hours each semester. After he graduated, he was accepted into medical school.

“Throughout this process, my wife was pitching in big time. She was working full time while also taking care of our daughter,” Cash said. “She worked as an au pair so it was great because our daughter could go with her and grow up and play with those kids.”

Despite earning mostly A’s and a few B’s and maintaining at least a 3.5 grade point average, Cash said he couldn’t shake the nagging suspicion that he wasn’t good

MMAC, continued from page 4

Medical Centers. Virginia is the first state to create a program of this nature with others across the nation beginning to implement similar programs.

“The MMAC Program is a true example of the innovative initiatives and public-private partnerships that help our service members transition to the civilian workforce and contribute to the economic well-being of the Commonwealth,” said Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs Carlos Hopkins at the signing event.

Delegate Christopher Stolle also spoke highly of the measure, looking at it from the perspective of a retired Naval officer and physician. “I can personally attest to the relevant, real-world experience military medics and corpsmen hold from their extensive military education and training,” he said. “They are outstanding candidates to fill gaps in Virginia’s health care workforce. I am pleased to see so many health systems making moves toward capturing the clinical skills and overall talent and experience that our veterans bring to the health care industry.”



Metro Creative

Exchange expands layaway program to facilitate back-to-school purchases

College-bound community members and military parents who want to get a jump on end-of-summer back-to-school purchases are getting some budget-friendly help from their Post Exchange.

The Army and Air Force Exchange Service has expanded its layaway program for authorized customers, adding an assortment of electronic devices that can be purchased with easier-to manage monthly payments, along with the usual clothing, household items and more with the extra benefit of tax-free pricing.

Through August 31, just in time for back-to-school season, authorized military shoppers can use layaway at the Exchange

to hold computers, notebooks, tablets and iPads – items that are not typically eligible.

“Using up-to-date technology is vital to succeeding in the classroom,” said Main Store Manager Candace Ford. “The extended layaway program helps parents and students manage their budget for back-to-school expenses.”

A \$3 service fee and a deposit of 15 percent are required to hold items on layaway. Items must be picked up by August 31. Shoppers are encouraged to visit the Exchange customer service counter for further details and assistance.

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Teen representatives share experiences during annual Youth Leadership Forum

Susan A. Merkner

IMCOM Public Affairs

Nearly 100 teenagers from Army communities around the world gathered last week in Massachusetts for the second annual World Wide Youth Leadership Forum, an event that fosters service leader awareness of issues faced by those growing up in a military community.

The event is sponsored by the Installation Management Command's G9 Family and MWR Child and Youth Services.

Planning for the forum is handled by the 15-member Army Teen Panel, which serves as the "voice of Army youth" for the service branch's senior leaders, as well as adult staff. Members of the teen panel are selected through a competitive process.

Teens attending the Youth Forum are selected by their local installations, along with a CY5 staff member.

A long list of issues – presented by teenagers who had gathered input from their peers at the Army's 68 garrisons and installations –

were discussed and whittled down to the top three key points participants then presented to Army officials for potential resolution.

Last year, at the inaugural World Wide Youth Leadership Forum, the top three issues were workforce preparation, peer-to-peer communication, and collaboration between local and regional youth programs.

"In response to last year's issues, Army programmers are offering forum sessions on career preparation, peer-to-peer communication, key elements of relationships, and programs coordinated with the Boys and Girls Clubs of America, Search Institute, Kids Included Together, and other organizations," said Joseph Marton, IMCOM G9 CY5 Youth Program manager.

"The teens' issues must connect to the Army mission and have a positive impact on Soldiers and their families," Marton said. "We emphasize leadership, citizenship and community service."

The peer-to-peer training is designed to give the teens skills to help them commu-



Susan A. Merkner, IMCOM Public Affairs

Teens from Army garrisons around the world participate in a group discussion about key issues faced by those growing up in a military community during the second annual World Wide Youth Leadership Forum last week in Boston.

nicate among themselves and with adults on topics such as depression, stress, suicide and frequent moves, he said.

"Key components of the forum will include training in the Socratic method of cooperative debate, using digital technology and learning resiliency through the arts," Marton said.

The Youth Forum featured a sun-up to lights-out itinerary for participants. Activities included the Army's Resiliency through the Arts program, Military Youth of the Year training, and programming for inclusion in

wellness, fitness and sports.

At the end of the week, teens traveled by bus from Boston to the Edward M. Kennedy Institute for the U.S. Senate, where they wrote and presented an out-brief bill. They also toured the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum to learn more about the process of citizenship, and visited the University of Massachusetts Boston campus.

After the forum, the teens returned home and are expected to brief their leadership and share the ideas, skills and knowledge gleaned from the meeting with their peers.

Air Force claims kickball crown



Contributed Photo

Members of the Air Force team proudly pose for a picture after capturing the 2018 Advanced Individual Training/Initial Entry Training Kickball Championship at the A Avenue softball field June 8. The victors defeated Bravo Company, 832nd Ordnance Battalion, 4-1. Sixteen teams were entered into the two-day, single-elimination tournament also played at Nowak Field and the B Avenue facility.

McBride shares command perspectives



Contributed Photo

Brig. Gen. Douglas McBride Jr., the new Quartermaster General, conducts an introductory briefing in Mullins Auditorium on June 27. Addressing a near-capacity crowd of military and civilian personnel, he discussed the three "driving forces" of his life – faith, family and formation. McBride also highlighted the importance of relevant training, honorable living and the Quartermaster School's role in generating Army Professionals who are ready on "day one" when they join the operational force. He challenged the school to examine how it uses resources and trains Soldiers to ensure the Army is prepared for tomorrow's threat.

DR. CASH, cont. from page 10

enough to follow such dreams.

“The thought still lingered in the back of my mind; that I wasn’t smart enough to be a doctor,” he said. “Going through it, I wondered ‘am I really able to do this?’ In a lot of ways, I still saw myself as the blue collar worker landscaping under the hot sun and doing back-breaking work. How could I become something totally different?”

A lucky break from the draining effects of constant work and seeking loans to keep his dream alive came in the form of a Health Professional Scholarship Program offered by the Army. It would pay for his medical school on top of a monthly stipend. He signed on, and reap the reward of the free ride through the remaining three years of medical school, after which there would be a three-year service obligation.

Cash did his residency at Womack Medical Center, Fort Bragg, N.C. Other highlights of his now 13 years of military

service include a squadron field surgeon gig while deployed to Iraq; a stint as 108th Air Defense Artillery Brigade surgeon; and several postings as a family practice or primary care physician in Army clinics.

In reflection, Cash realized he had never been in doubt that he had signed up for the long haul.

“I did a lot of stuff (hard labor) over the years and didn’t have much to show for it,” he said. “I didn’t want to do my time in the Army and not have anything to show for it.

“So, I tell anyone who comes through Kenner and is thinking about getting out to remember things like the great military retirement plan,” Cash continued. “You’re going to be working most of your life. What makes it easier, in my opinion, is working toward something. To be able to retire after 20 years is worth it, and some can have a full second career after that.”

There are moments along the path he has traveled, Cash said, when it felt like a dream.

“I wondered how I was doing it – how I was attending school, making good grades,” he said. “But here I am, 13 years later, and I’ve been working up the chain. I’ve done ... pretty well.”

Now, Cash knows his mother and entire family are proud of what he has made of his life. To this day, his younger sister uses him as an example where she works.

“My sister graduated high school after me, the second one in my family to do so,” he said. “She’s now a police officer, and when she arrests someone and they try to make excuses about being poor and having to make a living, she tells them about me and how I became a doctor. She doesn’t let anyone use being poor as an excuse. She says, ‘If I could do it, anyone could.’”

And it seems as though Cash’s daughter, Maria, will be walking in his footsteps. She’s set to attend his civilian medical school alma mater – Nova Southeastern University College of Osteopathic Medicine – at the end of July. She’s

also using the same military scholarship program her father did but will contribute her skills to the Air Force.

In her formative years, while he was going through undergraduate coursework, medical school and his residency, Cash said she was always interested in what he was learning about.

“One day while in first grade, Maria came home crying because other kids made fun of the drawing she made for show and tell,” he said. “She drew a picture of a brain with all the optic nerves coming out, the circulatory system and a bladder with the kidneys. The kids were laughing because the bladder is where the urine comes out.

“I told her she shouldn’t be upset because the children did not understand all the stuff she did,” Cash continued.

When Maria told her father she wanted to be a doctor, he recalled saying, “You can be whatever you want to be. You can do anything.”

Transportation Artifact of the Month



File Photo

The L-19 Bird Dog observation plane pictured is on display at the Transportation Museum at Joint Base Langley-Eustis. It is one of the first all-metal, high-flying military aircraft. In 1950, the Army sought a light plane to replace the World War II L-4, L-5, and L-16 aircraft. Cessna was awarded the initial contract for 418 planes that had an impressive ability to take off and land in short distances. Many were fitted with large all-terrain landing wheels, so they could land in many of the forward combat zones. Others had skids placed on them for landing on snow and ice during the Korean Conflict. Use of the L-19 continued throughout the Vietnam conflict redesignated as the O-1. The Army discontinued the plane in 1974 after 24 years.



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LOCAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE FORT LEE COMMUNITY

Queen of Hill Tournament | July 6-8

The Queen of the Hill Softball Tournament will be held July 6-8 at Harry Daniel Park - Ironbridge, 6600 Whitepine Road, Chesterfield.

Around 80 youth teams will compete in the fast-pitch tourney, all vying for a spot in the SoftballNation Fast Pitch Nationals set for July 19-22.

For details, visit www.sportsnation.org/event/show/400445950 or call 804-378-2285.

PGC School Job Fair | July 11

Prince George County Public Schools will host a Job Fair for individuals seeking employment as bus drivers and custodians July 11, 9 a.m. - noon, at the PGCS Board Office, 6410 Courts Drive.

For details, call 804-733-2712 or 733-2700.

Pocahontas Program for Kids | July 12

Youth participants will hear how Pocahontas lived, worked and learned as a child in the Powhatan Indian world 400 years ago during a program July 12, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m., at Henricus Historical Park, 251 Henricus Park Road, Chester.

The event will include hands-on activities, demonstrations, make-and-take projects and more. All children must be accompanied by an adult. Registration is required by July 10.

For details, call 804-318-8797.

Fishing for Our Troops | July 14

The USO of Hampton Roads and Central Virginia, in partnership with B.A.S.S. Pro sponsors, will offer a free fishing seminar for active duty troops and military veterans July 14, 7:30 a.m.- 1:30 p.m., at Hopewell City Marina, 1051 Riverside Ave.

Participants will spend time on the water with professional anglers. Food and drinks will be provided.

To register, visit www.fishingforourtroops.com.

CYS Sports Registration | July 16-27

Child and Youth Services will hold registration for fall cheerleading, tackle football and flag football July 16-27 at Parent Central Services, building 10624, Yorktown Drive.

Cheerleading is for ages 5-13. The cost is \$45 for military, DOD Civilians and contractors, and \$55 for non-DOD civilians. Tackle football is for youngsters, 7-13. The cost is \$70 for military, DOD Civilians and contractors, and \$80 for non-DOD civilians. Flag football is for youth, 5-7 years old. The cost is \$45 for military, DOD Civilians and contractors, and \$55 for non-DOD civilians. Coaches are needed for all fall sports and cheerleading.

For details, call 804-765-3787.

'Stop the Bleed' Class | July 17

The Army Community Service Exceptional Family Member Program is organizing a free First Aid and "Stop the Bleed" training workshop July 17, 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., at Fire Station No. 2, across from the Main Exchange.

Personnel with Fort Lee Fire and Emergency Services will teach family members how to provide care for a victim before professional help arrives. Registration is required.

For details, call 804-734-6393 or 734-7965.

Youth Reality Store Simulation | July 19

A Youth Reality Story Simulation is set for July 19, 10 a.m. - noon, at the Youth Center, building 10619, Yorktown Drive. It is hosted by the Army Community Services Financial Readiness Program and Child and Youth Services in partnership with the Virginia Cooperative Extension.

The free event will teach teens how to make wise financial decisions such as balancing a family budget, building savings and understanding how lifestyle decisions affect individual personal finances. Free pizza will be served to participants.

Pre-registration is required by July 16 at the Youth Center or by calling 804-734-2870 or 734-2871.

OFF DUTY IN THE COMMUNITY | MAYMONT MANSION & PARK



File Photo

Maymont offers a wide variety of activities for the family including a Children's Farm, where kids can pet animals.

Picturesque setting in bustling city includes gardens, wildlife, museum

A day trip to Maymont in Richmond offers a wide variety of activities for visitors, young and old.

The estate occupies 100 rolling acres above the James River, and it's easy to forget you're in the city.

Visitors can first stroll through the original Italian and Japanese gardens, and next join a tour of the opulent 33-room Victorian mansion and view its magnificent architecture. The 12,000-square-foot stone museum will celebrate its 125th anniversary with special events Sept. 23, noon - 5 p.m. During summer hours through Sept. 30, guided tours are available 11 a.m. - 5 p.m., Tuesday - Sunday. For a group tour, it's best to call a day or two before -- 804-358-7166, ext. 329.

Families should be sure to wander over to the Nature Center to view the wildlife habitats, watch otters play and visit the Children's Farm where little ones can pet the animals. There is a small fee to visit the center - \$3 for children and \$4 adults - but the rest of the estate is donation-based visitation except for special events.

Families also can enjoy a picnic on the lawn or even take a carriage ride through the park. A private golf cart tour also is available.

For a description of the estate's wide offerings, visit <https://maymont.org/visit/>.

Maymont offers a special animal experience that includes a behind-the-scenes look at the bobcat exhibit. Patrons also can look at the nature center's giant aquarium system and enjoy a relaxing stroll to see black bears and other wildlife. Individuals can adopt an animal, which helps with food and general care.

Maymont offers seasonal events as well as educational programs and camps. For details, visit <https://maymont.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/2018-Spring-Summer-Calendar-of-Events-Booklet-FINAL-1.pdf>.

Maymont is the former home of James Henry and Sallie Dooley who purchased the tract of farmland in 1886 and began building the Gilded-Age estate that reflected their status as one of America's wealthiest families. Major Dooley died in 1922, and upon Mrs. Dooley's death in 1925, Maymont was bequeathed to the city of Richmond.

Maymont grounds and gardens are open 10 a.m. - 7 p.m., April - September, and 10 a.m. - 5 p.m., October - March. Admission is free. The entrance is at 1700 Hampton St.

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YOU'RE INVITED TO THE TRICITIES ER 1st YEAR Anniversary Party!

Saturday, July 14 10AM - 2PM

FORT CLIFTON PARK

100 Brockwell Lane, Colonial Heights, VA



TriCities ER

HCA Va

A CAMPUS OF JOHN RANDOLPH MEDICAL CENTER

Come celebrate our 1-year anniversary with a party in the park. We will have face painting, train rides, refreshments, free give-aways, and more. **EVENT IS FREE!**