

# THE FALCON

## *Diversity is Our Strength*

"We must lead on these issues as America's most respected institution and as a global leader when it comes to building diverse, winning teams and creating opportunity for all."

-Secretary of the Army Mark T. Esper

## From Iraq to California

Iraqi-American citizen serves with purpose

## 79th WWII Veteran

95-year-old WWII 79th Infantry Division Veteran recalls his experiences in battle



**2020**  
**Issue I**





## 79TH TSC COMMAND TEAM

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*Cover photo: U.S. Army Reserve Sgt. Danh Danh, motor transport operator, 208th Transportation Company, poses for a portrait during Operation Cold Steel III at Fort Hunter Liggett, Calif., Feb. 13, 2019. Operation Cold Steel III trains and qualifies Army Reserve Soldiers on M2 .50 caliber machine guns, M19 40 mm automatic grenade launchers and M240 7.62 mm machine guns weapons systems in ground and mounted military vehicles, in order to provide lethal and combat ready units ready to deploy anywhere in the world. (U.S. Army Reserve photo by Staff Sgt. Heath Doppke)*

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## TWO STAR NOTES

BY MAJ. GEN. EUGENE J. LEBOEUF



Falcon Family and Friends,

First and foremost, our people are our most valuable resource, and I want to make sure that you are doing well, and taking care of yourself and your Families. That's important, and that's what matters. The health, safety, and welfare of you and your Families during this coronavirus outbreak are top among my priorities. I hope you are finding ways to stay creative and productive, and enjoying great Family time. Please continue to stay home as much as you can, wash your hands often, and if you find yourself closer than 6 feet from others, make sure you are wearing a mask. Hang in there, this too shall pass. Stand strong, lead well, and be of good courage. We will get through this together.

Next, I want to talk about diversity. Diversity is critical in today's Army; it is what makes us strong. Our Soldiers come from different cultures, backgrounds, genders, religions, sexual orientations, and hold different personal beliefs. Our Soldiers may speak different languages at home. They may have been born here in the U.S., or emigrated to this country and are now selflessly serving their new country of residence. The wonderful thing about the Army is, no matter your cultural background, no matter your religion, gender, or ethnic heritage, we all come together around a set of shared values; The Army Values. Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity, and Personal Courage transcend cultural backgrounds and orientations; they are values every Soldier can stand proudly behind. The Army Values create the framework for a shared culture that each recruit takes on as he or she dons a uniform for the first time. And that shared culture, the Army culture, is what brings so many people of so many different backgrounds and beliefs together like no other organization can.

Diverse perspectives and outlooks make us better. They encourage us to consider every angle when making decisions, and open our eyes to blind spots in our planning. Leaders, I cannot underscore this enough: you want your teams as diverse as possible. What other country can claim its military's ranks are as diverse as ours? This gives us an edge and our Diversity should not only be embraced, but celebrated. We must continue to recruit and retain the best diverse talent across the nation. In doing so, our Army Reserve, America's Army Reserve, will continue to bring in new knowledge and ideas, streamline processes, and solve complex problems.

Team, over the past year, we have cultivated a healthy and productive working environment because of our cohesion, our respect for one another, and our adherence to the Army Values: we are one Team, one fight! I encourage you to continue to get to know one another: learn about your fellow Soldiers' backgrounds and cultures. This will not only bring us closer together, but will strengthen teams and foster an environment of trust and mutual respect.

I will leave you with this final message; I want to say how proud and honored I am to have served with the Soldiers, NCOs, Officers, and Civilians of the 79th Theater Sustainment Command. You are phenomenal, and I am truly blessed to have had the opportunity to serve you, and this outstanding organization that is the 79th TSC! You have met and exceeded my expectations in every way, and I know you will continue making this command and the incoming commander, very successful. You have my deepest gratitude for your service and sacrifice. I also must salute our Family members, especially those who are taking on extra responsibilities while their Soldier is deployed. Our Nation owes you all so much. Thank you for your sacrifice!

Thanks again to all our friends, Family members, and Soldiers.

## "To Do For Country, Falcon Strong!"

## FEATURES:

### PG 5 FROM IRAQ TO LOS ANGELES: IRAQI-AMERICAN CITIZEN SERVES WITH PURPOSE

By Sgt. 1st Class Alexandra Hays



### PG 10 FROM THE DESERT TO THE COCKPIT

By Maj. Brandon Mace



### PG 18 TWIN SIBLINGS SERVE TOGETHER

By Maj. Thomas Piernicky



### PG 22 'TOUGH 'OMBRES' CARRY MORE THAN THE COLORS

By Maj. Brandon Mace



### PG 8 WHEN THE GENERAL MET THE GINGERBREAD MAN

By Laura M. Holson - New York Times



### PG 16 POSTAL WARRIORS

By Maj. Brandon Mace



### PG 20 851ST TC PREPARES VEHICLES FOR DEFENDER-EUROPE 20

By Maj. Brandon Mace



### PG 26 95-YEAR-OLD WWII 79TH INFANTRY DIVISION VETERAN RECALLS HIS EXPERIENCES IN BATTLE

Story by Sgt. 1st Class Alexandra Hays







Major General David W. Ling was born in Moline, Illinois. After serving in the Army Reserve as an enlisted Infantryman, he joined the ROTC Program at Iowa State University. He was commissioned into the Army Reserve in 1987 as an Infantry Officer and served in numerous light infantry leadership positions including platoon leader, company commander and battalion assistant operations officer (S3 Air) before transferring to the logistics field.

As a logistics officer, he has served in a number of positions including transportation and headquarters company command, as well as staff positions from battalion through Cocom level. Command assignments include the 1st Battalion 413th Regiment (Logistics Support), the 654th Regional Support Group, the Army Reserve Sustainment Command (ARSC), and now the 79th Theater Sustainment Command. Prior to his assignment at 79th TSC, Major General Ling was the Department of the Army Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff, G-4, Mobilization and Training.

As part of Operation Iraqi Freedom, Major General Ling led a Military Transition Team responsible for the stand-up, training, and initial operation of the Iraqi Army 2nd Motor Transport Regiment in An Numaniyah, Iraq. The regiment conducted transportation missions throughout the country.

Major General Ling has completed the Infantry Officers Basic and Advanced Courses, Senior Officers Transportation Qualification Course, Combined Arms and Services Staff School, Command and General Staff College, and the Army War College. His awards and decorations include the Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Bronze Star, Meritorious Service Medal with silver oak leaf cluster, Army Commendation Medal with oak leaf cluster, Joint Service Achievement Medal, Army Achievement Medal with oak leaf cluster, and the Combat Action Badge.

Major General Ling holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Industrial Engineering and three master's-level degrees in management and strategic studies. In addition, he is a licensed Professional Engineer in the State of Iowa. In his civilian occupation, he is responsible for the project management of renewable energy power plants and major energy savings contracts.

Major General Ling and his wife Linda currently reside in Ridgefield, Washington.

## TWO STAR NOTES

BY MAJ. GEN. DAVID W. LING  
Incoming Commander



Falcon Team,

I consider myself privileged to be able to write this as the new commander of the 79th Theater Sustainment Command. I use the word privileged because I know what a formidable, capable, talented team of Soldiers we have within the 79th TSC and not many Soldiers are able to say they can lead such a group.

In my first written push of thoughts, I want to address two key areas, Covid-19 and dignity & respect.

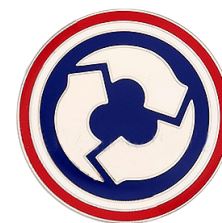
Covid-19 forces us to remain flexible. The first half of 2020 has forced us to change the way we train and has quite frankly changed the way we do business in the military. But we were ready for this; ready for complex problems and obstacles. Flexibility and adaptability are cornerstones of our profession. We adapt and we accomplish the mission. While 2020 might leave lasting changes on how we operate, we don't cling to the past, we embrace change and push forward.

My expectations are high, but I know you are up to the task. I expect all of you to capitalize on the resources available to you to creatively keep yourself and physically, mentally, and spiritually ready as possible. I also expect you to be leaders in following best practices in containing the Covid-19 virus, whether that be social distancing, wearing face masks, limiting travel or other guidelines from the medical community. We owe it to the Nation as its defender to do the best and maintain our ability to fight and win wars.

Dignity and Respect are core Army Values that remain vital in today's environment. While the military has been the greatest force for good in our Nation's history, taking routine opportunities to examine how we treat all of our members can only make us even better. As Army Chief of Staff Gen. James C. McConville has recently said, "The Army must continue to put People First by fostering a culture of trust." We foster a culture of trust foremost by treating our fellow service members with the dignity and respect that they deserve: as humans, as citizens, as fellow Soldiers. To that end we must continue to be an example of what right looks like – an example for our neighbors and fellow countrymen, and an example of a professional Army when we deploy internationally.

In the months to come and as conditions permit, I look forward to travelling throughout the formation, visiting units, and getting to meet many of you face-to-face. It certain that the 79th will continue to face challenges during my tenure, but I am confident in your ability to meet adversity head-on and accomplish the mission.

**"To do for country,  
Falcon Strong!"**



## FROM IRAQ TO CALIFORNIA: IRAQI-AMERICAN CITIZEN SERVES WITH PURPOSE

Story by Sgt. 1st Class Alexandra Hays  
79th Theater Sustainment Command

JOINT FORCES TRAINING BASE LOS ALAMITOS, Calif. – Ahmed Al Saedi's hands shook as the shuttle driver clicked his mobile phone closed and warned his passengers in Arabic, "If you have anything that identifies you as working for the Americans, get rid of it now."

This was exactly the kind of scenario Al Saedi lived in fear of. It was 2005 and Taji, Iraq, was rife with violence. Al Saedi, an Iraqi citizen working as a linguist for the U.S. Army at the time, was terrified. While sectarian tensions were complicated and often deadly, he knew that if a militia group from either religious sect caught him working for the Americans it was a death sentence.

"I was dead either way," the then-24 year old, explained. Not only was the armed checkpoint ahead of him manned by members of the opposite religious sect than he adhered to, but Al Saedi was carrying his American ID card and a very special American flag.

Dressed in paint-splattered coveralls, the guise he used every time he left the U.S. base in Taji to blend in with the civilian population, Al Saedi's mind reeled as he realized he needed to react immediately if he was going to walk away with his life.

As the dark blue minivan Al Saedi was riding in coasted closer to the checkpoint, he asked the driver to let him out. Adrenalized and more than aware that the checkpoint was not only within earshot, but also gunshot range of his location, Al Saedi made his best attempt at blending in with the locals around him. He'd been let out in front of a cluster of homes, and hoped it appeared that he was a resident in his own neighborhood, even though he wasn't quite sure where he was.

He ducked between houses, and as soon as he was out of view of the checkpoint, Al Saedi raced towards the main thoroughfare, Main Supply Route Tampa, and sprinted across.

With all of his senses engaged, he lost himself down rows of houses in an unfamiliar village. Knowing he could be stopped and questioned at any moment, getting rid of the U.S. flag he was carrying was paramount. In an alleyway beside a large house in an area that seemed quiet, he noticed a flattened piece of metal on the ground and started to dig.

"I could hear the echo of my breathing," Al Saedi said, explaining the tension he experienced.

Knowing he could be spotted and reported at any moment

by local residents at a time in Iraq when digging near a road usually indicated the planting of Improvised Explosive Devices, he completed his task wracked with anxiety. Covered in sweat, dirt, and cutting his hands repeatedly with the piece of metal he'd procured, he finally dug a hole he hoped was deep enough to safeguard the flag and protect his identity as a translator.

Al Saedi carefully placed the signature-covered flag, already packed in two Ziploc bags enclosed in a drawstring sports backpack, into the hole and packed down earth on top as best he could.

With his task complete, Al Saedi made his way back to MSR Tampa to see if the checkpoint was still in place. He was relieved to see it gone. Al Saedi waited for the next shuttle bus headed in the direction of his parent's home, got on, and left the flag and that harrowing scenario behind.

"Life moved on, and I never told anybody about the flag," Al Saedi said, of the flag that stayed buried for 11 years.

The incident was one of countless dangerous scenarios





Al Saedi found himself in, yet continued to work as a linguist and cultural advisor for U.S. forces from 2003 to 2011.

Al Saedi, now an Active/Guard Reserve staff sergeant in the Army Reserve's 155th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion in El Monte, California, said he found an organization he admires in the Army, and wanted to continue serving, officially in uniform, once he immigrated to the U.S.

"I will always be ready," Al Saedi said. "If they needed me to go to Iraq again, I would go tomorrow. Being in this uniform means a lot to me. I wanted to be in this culture because ... I fit in."

Al Saedi said he was inspired to join the U.S. Army by the American Soldiers he worked with in Iraq. The cohesion, leadership, diversity, friendship, loyalty and comradeship—he said in no other profession can you find all of these attributes among your peers.

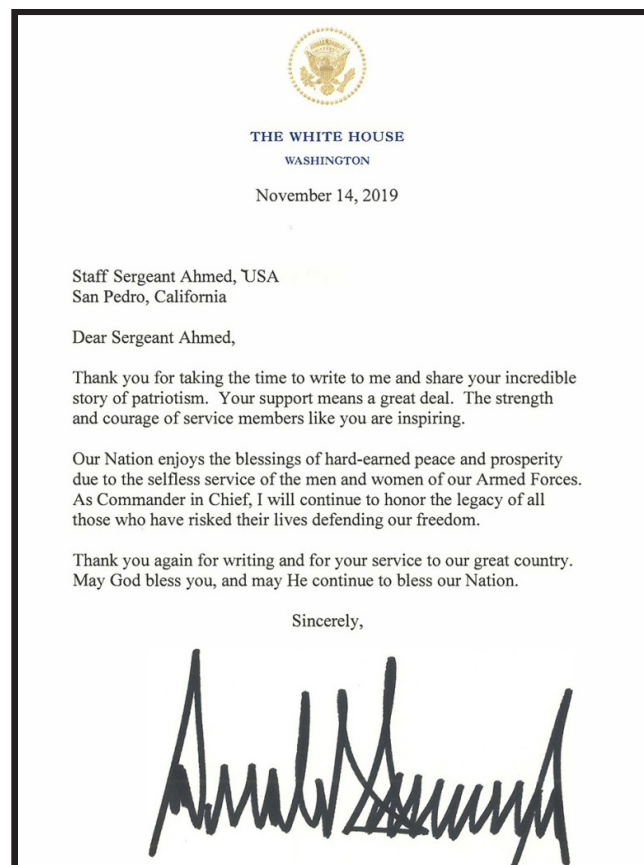
When Al Saedi began working for U.S. forces he was a 22-year old college student, who had a penchant for the English language. He said he didn't seek out a job with American Forces in 2003, and even turned down his first offer out of fear of being the target of violence, but said witnessing the communication barrier between his people and the Americans changed his mind.

"When I drove around with my dad, I saw the people were struggling to communicate with the U.S. military," Al Saedi explained. "I had no stake in the outcome other than true, genuine help for the public. That's it."

Al Saedi said a few times he passed by civilian interactions with U.S. military members that were going poorly until he stepped in. Each time, he said, U.S. military members gave him information on how to apply as a translator.

He said he finally decided to accept the job despite the risk of danger because he thought through communication and greater understanding on both sides, he could help save lives.

"In my eyes, I saw this as a true humanitarian mission," Al



In one of Al Saedi's early brushes with danger, he was working with the 1st Armored Division.

Like any other day, Al Saedi's services were requested on a Quick Reaction Force convoy to apprehend a man suspected of shooting off mortar rounds. Al Saedi, who was in the first vehicle, dismounted with all the other 1st AD Soldiers. He said as soon as he exited the vehicle, he rounded a corner in

"I will always be ready ... If they needed me to go to Iraq again, I would go tomorrow. Being in this uniform means a lot to me. I wanted to be in this culture because ... I fit in."

- Ahmed Al Saedi

Saedi of his work with U.S. troops.

Despite Al Saedi's motives for assisting the American troops, his tenure as a linguist and advisor was wracked with violence.

"We in kicked doors so many times; I got blown up so many times; we got into firefights so many times," he explained.

"We were outside the wire every day on patrols," explained retired Army officer John Wright in a Stars and Stripes article. Wright served with Al Saedi in 2005 and described him as "top notch."

an alleyway and came face to face with the muzzle of an AK-47. Unarmed, he used his hand to push the assailant's muzzle away with a shout, and a burst went off. Luckily, he said, his quick reflexes may have saved his life, or that of U.S. Soldiers.

After this incident, he explained, the 1st AD Soldiers began to treat him differently, as they felt he had protected them from injury, and could've very well been killed himself. He explained that they opened up to him as a friend and team member rather than just a translator.

Al Saedi explained that the Soldiers began to view him as a trusted asset, and in turn, Al Saedi began to provide vital

cultural insights with the American troops that made a difference in their interactions with the Iraqi citizens they came into contact with.

Al Saedi said his role became more than that of someone who simply translates other people's conversations. "I'm going to teach you how to survive," Al Saedi said of his attitude towards his employers.

Over time, Al Saedi became a cultural advisor, a de facto Combat Lifesaver trainer, and was trusted to carry a weapon on patrols.

He became close to the Soldiers he worked with.

"Everyone was a friend to me, but Larson and I developed a great bond," Al Saedi said of Spc. Scott Larson, one of the 1st AD Soldiers he worked with in April 2004.

Al Saedi explained he and Larson talked about family, religion, and the video games they both enjoyed—normal conversations for young men in their early 20s.

It was in this spirit of trust and friendship that the Soldiers of 1st AD decided to gift Al Saedi with an American flag. Their deployment

was coming to a close, and they would be leaving Iraq while Al Saedi would stay behind and continue serving U.S. troops. They told him they were all going to sign the flag and gift it to him right after they returned from one of their last missions in Iraq: escorting some Iraqi army troops to Falluja. Al Saedi

couldn't travel with them because he couldn't miss his college classes that day.

When they returned, they brought terrible news; the escort had been ambushed by insurgents and a firefight ensued. Larson was hit with shrapnel and didn't survive the mission.

With great sadness, Al Saedi accepted the American flag the 1st AD Soldiers all promised him—it was signed by all of them—all except Larson.

It was this very same special flag that Al Saedi was attempting to bring home to show his parents a year later. A flag he then risked his life to bury.

The flag stayed buried through many more years of Al Saedi working alongside U.S. troops, and was still buried when he immigrated to America.. It stayed buried when Al Saedi took the oath of enlistment and went to basic training,

joining the U.S. military in 2011.

The flag stayed buried until 2016 when Al Saedi's parents were planning a trip to the U.S. in celebration of the birth of Al Saedi's daughter.

Before their trip, when Al Saedi's parents asked him if they could bring him anything from home, Al Saedi explained there was one thing that he wanted.

Without revealing what was inside it, Al Saedi gave his father the most detailed instructions he could remember on how to find the buried backpack. While Al Saedi hoped it was still there, he knew there was a possibility it could have been found or destroyed by the elements.

Al Saedi's father made several trips to the alley before he was able to attempt digging without witnesses. When Al Saedi's father found the backpack and inspected its contents at home, both of his parents were confused as to why so much risk had been taken to retrieve the flag.

When Al Saedi explained the whole story to his parents, however, they were emotional and said it would be an honor

to bring it to him in America.

Al Saedi was also surprised at what good condition the flag was in—all those years later, it was pristine.

The flag now hangs in Al Saedi's home in California and for him, is a symbol of the risk and sacrifice he and his U.S. comrades made in Iraq, but also of the friendships forged

that he will never forget.

Al Saedi's story is beginning to garner national attention, and on Nov. 14, 2019, he received a letter from President Trump commending his patriotism.

Additionally, on Jan. 13, 2020, the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, a unit he once served with, held a ceremony for Al Saedi at Fort Irwin, California.

Now that he is able to share his story more openly, he wants both U.S. service members and civilians to know how honored he is to serve in the Army and wear the U.S. flag on his shoulder each day.

For Al Saedi, who has witnessed and endured more years of war than most, his service is personal.





# WHEN THE GENERAL MET THE GINGERBREAD MAN

By Laura M. Holson  
New York Times

Brig. Gen. Vincent Buggs was rummaging through an old footlocker last November when he came across a newspaper clipping from 2008. A group of Stillmore, Ga., kindergartners smiled in the photograph, holding small American flags and certificates the general had sent them.

General Buggs was stationed at an Army base in Iraq at the time and had been pen pals with the children, who sent him hand-drawn cards and boxes of sweets. Time passed, and General Buggs said in a recent interview that he had not heard from them in years.

"Still, it touched my heart to see them again," he said. "I needed to tell them how much they meant to me."

So, in January, he wrote a letter to the editor of The Metter Advertiser, which published the photograph from over a decade ago.

"There is a warrior who will never forget you," he wrote. "The simplest gestures in life often have the greatest impacts."

Last month he went a step further. He visited the students, now seniors, at their school, where he met them for the first time and regaled them with tales of his travels and words of advice.

Sandra Mosley, a mother of one of the students, stayed in touch with him over the years. "He is the type of leader our country needs," she said.

General Buggs and Ms. Mosley's friendship began over a gingerbread man. In 2007, the kindergartners' teacher at David Emanuel Academy assigned a project: The 13 students

were to send a toy gingerbread man to a family member or friend who would then pose with it for a photo somewhere in the world. The teacher would mark its journey on a map. Ms. Mosley asked a relative who worked at Georgia Southern University if she knew anyone who would participate. Mr. Buggs, an alumnus, was eager. "I was all over it, man," he said.



**Flags straight from Iraq!**

Members of the K-5 class at David Emanuel Academy are shown holding small American flags and certificates authenticating that these flags were flown over Iraqi headquarters. Currently, the students are corresponding with a soldier stationed in Iraq, Maj. Vincent Buggs, who had requested that these flags be flown over the headquarters.

He then obtained certificates with each student's name on them, stating that the flags were flown in their honor. Since then, the kindergarten class has gathered a care package of food and GSU items (the Major is a GSU graduate and a fan of GSU athletics). The class will also send a stuffed Eagle to represent both GSU and DEA.

A gingerbread man was packed and shipped to the Iraq desert. When it arrived, General Buggs was unsure what to do with it. Working with what he had ("There were a number of camels"), the general devised a story about a gingerbread thief who pilfered water from a thirsty camel. He took a photograph of himself giving water to the thirsty beast and sent it to the children.

They responded enthusiastically. "They sent me Christmas cards, some goodies to

eat for the holidays," General Buggs said. "And they wrote letters. The one that got me was a letter from a kid who thanked me for the gingerbread man story."

Ethan Wells, now a senior at David Emanuel Academy, was one the letter writers. "When we were little, we didn't understand all the impact we were making on him," he said. "We were just writing little letters."

General Buggs was taken with his newfound pen pals. Ms. Mosley said he emailed her months later and asked how their project turned out. He also asked for the students' names. At his base, the general had certificates made for them that accompanied a box of small American flags that had been flown

After helping kindergartners in Georgia with a class project in 2007, Brig. Gen. Vincent Buggs continued writing the students letters for years. Last month, he finally met his pen pals in person.

in their honor. After the shipment arrived, the kindergartners were interviewed by The Metter Advertiser. They mailed the clipping to their new friend.

Ethan said he and his classmates continued to write, usually group letters, to General Buggs until they were in third grade. General Buggs, for his part, sent videos from his travels

"I told him, 'You tore our hearts out,'" Ms. Mosley said. She said he promised that he would visit.

On Oct. 18, General Buggs arrived at David Emanuel Academy. He was passing through town on his way to an alumni event at Georgia Southern University. Ms. Mosley said she sneaked him onto campus to surprise his former



and chocolate he bought in foreign countries. "He would always send them Kinder chocolates," Ms. Mosley said. "They loved that." From time to time, she said, he would email and ask how the students were doing.

"Then life took over," General Buggs said. He had children of his own, and lost touch with the students. "I wanted to see them, but I couldn't work it out," he said.

Last November, while cleaning out a storage unit at his home outside Tampa, Fla., where he is in the Army Reserve, General Buggs came across the clipping. In January, he sent his letter to the local newspaper. It was published a few days later.

pen pals. Ethan was not on campus when he arrived, but later got to speak to the general on a conference call with the whole class.

"He was asking us what we wanted to do after we graduated," Ethan said. "He said, 'Never say 'I hope' or 'I think,' but say 'I will.' He told us he was proud of us, that we went from kindergartners to rock stars. It just shows that the little simple things you do can affect people, good or bad. Everything you say has meaning."





# FROM THE DESERT TO THE COCKPIT

Story by Maj. Maryjane Porter  
364th Expeditionary Sustainment Command

U.S. Army Reserve Capt. Leyla Zeinalpour, Commander of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 364th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), is the first in her family to join the military. Zeinalpour shares her story as an Army Reserve Soldier, Apache and Blackhawk pilot, and the values of hard work, teamwork, staying focused and always doing the right thing whether in or out of uniform.

From a young age while growing up in Iran, Zeinalpour

always knew she wanted to become a pilot. She had a passion for flying. In 2000, she immigrated to the U.S. with her family for better life and educational opportunities. While going through college at Indiana University in Kokomo, Indiana, and contemplating her future and



U.S. Army Reserve Capt. Leyla Zeinalpour, commander of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 364th ESC, is pictured with her father, Firouz Zeinalpour, and mother, Parvaneh Alipour, shortly after graduating from basic training in Fort Lee, Virginia, in Sep. 2003.

finances for school, she received an advertisement in the mail about "college money," and without hesitation she picked up the phone and connected with a U.S. Army Reserve recruiter.

Zeinalpour first enlisted in the U.S. Army as a 92A (Auto-

more than just about job opportunities. Gaining much knowledge and experience while in the Army made it possible for her to provide competent, capable, trained and ready personnel and leaders to get the job done.

For Zeinalpour, as a first-generation immigrant, assimilating to life in the U.S. came with its challenges: including language and cultural customs. But when she joined the Army in 2003, Zeinalpour felt a sense of belonging, like she

was welcomed into a professional organization where she had an opportunity to serve and grow.

In 2010, Zeinalpour went to the Army Aviation School at Fort Rucker, Alabama. She was trained on flying the TH-67 Creek helicopter, OH-58 Kiowa Warrior helicopter, and became a qualified AH-64D

Longbow Apache pilot. After graduating from aviation school in 2011, she returned to her unit, 8-229th Attack Reconnaissance Battalion (ARB), at Fort Knox, Kentucky, to further train and refine her skills as a new Longbow Apache aviator.

**"Regardless of who you are and where you come from, you are able to choose your own path on how to serve, as I was, and doors opened based on the willingness to work hard"**

- Capt. Leyla Zeinalpour

mated Logistical Specialist) and later branched as an Aviation officer after completing Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) at Indiana University-Purdue University of Indianapolis. Zeinalpour had not planned to join the military, and it came as a surprise for her parents.

"I was determined to get an education in a U.S. university and the military made that possible. I will forever be grateful for that because that also made it possible for me to support and take care of my family," she said.

Zeinalpour also understood that the Army Reserve was

In 2014, she deployed to Kuwait with the 90th Aviation Support Battalion from Fort Worth, Texas. After deployment, she took a company command position with the 1st Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment, 11th Expeditionary Combat Aviation Brigade in Conroe, Texas. Shortly after taking command, she went through the UH-60A/L Black Hawk helicopter qualification course and learned how to fly the U.S. Army's primary medium lift utility transport and air assault aircraft.

Zeinalpour said she has been successful in her military career because she has never hesitated to do what is required

to get the job done.

"It definitely has more meaning, representing all females, but also the people from the Middle East. Regardless of who you are and where you come from, you are able to choose your own path on how to serve, as I was, and doors opened based on the willingness to work hard," she said.

Zeinalpour explained that in aviation, you have to stay on your toes.

"The most important thing is to have the passion for it, because not only you are responsible for the lives of everyone on board the aircraft, you're also responsible for operating a multi-million dollar piece of equipment safely and competently, therefore you have to be a lifetime learner, constantly looking to refine your skills, increasing your knowledge, and becoming better each and every day," she said.

Zeinalpour later branch transferred to logistics with the 79th Theater Sustainment Command, located in her hometown of Los Alamitos, California. In 2018, she transferred to the 364th ESC in Marysville, Washington. In her current assignment as commander of HHC, she is responsible for the readiness, training, health, morale, and welfare of over 200 Soldiers, readiness of over \$11 million dollars' worth of equipment, and for providing company-level administrative, training, maintenance and logistics support to the ESC command group and staff sections.

As commander, a big part of her job requires planning, organizing, equipping and providing resources to support individual and collective readiness in many different areas of training, administrative duties, maintenance, and supply, all of which enable prompt and sustained operations of ESC staff sections so they could execute their mission of providing sustainment operations.



U.S. Army Reserve Capt. Leyla Zeinalpour, commander of HHC, 364th ESC, sits in the cockpit of a Black Hawk during a visit to discuss potential training opportunities and support with the 1-168th General Support Aviation Battalion located on Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Jan. 11, 2020.

"Innovative readiness training and monthly battle assemblies are some of the many ways we accomplish these tasks and through effective use of our time and resources," she said, noting that having a professional team of strong, competent, and hardworking personnel, who make it happen day in and day out, is crucial to help commanders achieve their vision and goals to meet mission requirements.

She attributes the company's success to the diversity of its Soldiers, creating a strong and innovative team who are able to balance the demands of their military and civilian careers, and adapting to the ever-evolving needs of the Army. "When we cross paths and engage with people from all walks of life, not only do we realize the similarities between us but also come to the opportunity of acceptance and respect for our differences and service in the military certainly makes that possible," she said.

The Army Reserve has also taught Zeinalpour the importance of balancing her military service and civilian ambitions. She is also grateful to her parents, her number one role models, for their unwavering love and support in all that she does, as well as the Army Reserve for helping her realize her potentials and becoming a better leader.

"I was always supported by the Army because of the values held by this great organization that reflects our American values," she said.

After her command time at the 364th ESC, Zeinalpour plans to move on to more challenging and broadening assignments, to gain additional experience as a staff officer and to complete her civilian aviation training to work as an airline pilot.



U.S. Army Reserve Capt. Leyla Zeinalpour, commander of HHC, 364th ESC, headquartered in Marysville, Washington, takes a break in front of a Black Hawk during a visit to discuss potential training opportunities and support with the 1-168th General Support Aviation Battalion located on Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Jan. 11, 2020.





# FIGHTING CRIME ONE SHELL CASING AT A TIME

Story by Maj. Thomas Piernicky  
4th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary)

She steps onto the grass in front of the house, careful not to disturb any evidence of the crime scene. Her bright yellow shirt stands out among the dark uniforms of the police near-by. Bullet casing litter the lawn in the afternoon sunlight. She examines the bullet holes in the house, the groups of different shell casings on the lawn, using science to reconstruct the scene of the attack.

The yellow shirted woman is U.S. Army Reserve Capt. Carolyn Fernan with the 211th Regional Support Group based in Corpus Christi, Texas. In her civilian job, she is a forensic firearm and tool mark investigator with the Corpus Christi Police Department. She is conducting forensic analysis of a shooting where several criminals shot up a house trying to kill a male occupant. In the ensuing gunfire, several women and small children in the house were injured. Within minutes, she gives the lead detective her analysis of the crime scene.

Fernan's rare skills are critical to solving violent crimes in this coastal region. Her years of training and experience are invaluable to solving crimes. Nearly two thirds of the homicides in Corpus Christi involve firearms and it is Fernan's duty to test each firearm and shell casing to help detectives match weapons to crimes or criminals.

"As a firearm examiner, for all firearms, I examine them for function and safety," said Fernan. "In addition to that, I do trajectory analysis shooting scene reconstruction."

"If a crime scene was a shooting and there's casings and bullets at the shooting, then I can take the question casings and bullets that are at the shooting, compare them to known samples that from a test fired firearm, and see if they match to a unique firearm or one particular firearm," said Fernan.

Local law enforcement officers rely on Fernan's skill set to assist them in

solving crimes. Officer Michael Pernell of the Robstown Police Department has worked with Fernan on cases where her skills cut down the time required to make an arrest.

"We worked several cases together and she's sped up our clearance time exponentially versus going to the state," said Pernell.

"We usually have to go to the Department of Public Safety, which can take months and months, which stalls your case," said Pernell. "Having a good working relationship with her, she's able to expedite some of our more critical homicide cases and we're able to get evidence back to put towards the case file to send the case off to the district attorney's office quicker."

With homicide cases, time is of the essence to find the murderer and take them off the street. After law enforcement shows up to a crime scene, they collect the evidence and get it to Fernan within several hours. Once the firearm and evidence are in her hands, she starts her scientific process.

"It really doesn't take that long, some guns actually mark very well," said Fernan. "With these markings, I can get it up on a microscope, and I can match them up. Maybe the whole process takes an hour to work up the gun to go test fire to match it to the casing."

Getting the skills to make quick turnaround in criminal investigations took years of schooling to refine. However, it was the encouragement of a friend that



U.S. Army Reserve Capt. Carolyn Fernan, a human resource officer with the 211th Regional Support Group based in Corpus Christi, Texas, poses for a picture in between working cases on April 14, 2019.

got Fernan on the path of law enforcement.

"Originally when I was in Army, I was finding out that physical therapy wasn't my path," said Fernan. "I was stationed at Walter Reed and a friend of mine and I kept going to these forensic nights at the Smithsonian. And she's like, 'Oh, did you know there's a forensic program at George Washington University,' and I'm thinking, you know this was like real stuff you could actually really do it."

Fernan applied to George Washington University the next week and started classes four months later.

After getting her second degree in forensics, Fernan rejoined the Army as a police investigator where she attended the Army's 10-week investigation

school. Once she completed serving for a couple years, Fernan transitioned to the Army Reserve as a Human Resource Officer.

Upon returning to the civilian workforce, Fernan was hired by the Corpus Christi Police Department and spent three years as a crime scene investigator. Having worked dozens of cases, she was selected for specialized training.

"I was chosen one out of 12 people in the whole United States, so we went to the National Firearms Examiner Academy," said Fernan. "It was a one-year-long program and was taught by ATF at their national lab, Maryland."

During that year, Fernan wrote papers, went on manufacturing tours for tools, ammunition, and firearms museums. After graduating from the program, she passed a 300-question test on firearm examination and crime scene investigation to get licensed in firearm tool mark analysis.

Thirteen years later, Fernan is considered an expert in her field and her specialized skills assist not only local law enforcement but also federal agencies to include the DEA, ATF, FBI and Homeland Security. Working out of an accredited facility assists local and federal agencies build their case against people accused of criminal activity.

Officers like Pernell are grateful to work with Fernan as her expertise helps them close cases.

"We know our standard is to prove beyond a reasonable doubt," said Pernell. "Having that expert testimony and forensic science being conducted, and those lab results coming out of an accredited facility, like hers, really is a credit to us when we present our case to juries. We could have a slam dunk case, but if you can't convince a jury, then your case is going to go nowhere."

With the contributions she makes to helping her fellow law enforcement officers, Fernan loves her job.

"It's the best job in the world and it's the only job that I ever want to do now" said Fernan.

## National Hotlines & Resources

### Domestic Violence

#### **National Domestic Violence Hotline**

Website: <http://www.thehotline.org/>

Phone: 800-799-SAFE (7233)

Email: [deafhelp@thehotline.org](mailto:deafhelp@thehotline.org)

Description: This hotline provides assistance related to domestic violence, including crisis intervention, information, and referral.

### PTSD

#### **DCoE Outreach Center For Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury**

Phone: 866-966-1020

Email: [resources@dcoeoutreach.org](mailto:resources@dcoeoutreach.org)

Live Chat: [https://chat.magellanhealth.com/Cutesoft\\_Client/CuteChat/DCOE\\_SupportClient.aspx](https://chat.magellanhealth.com/Cutesoft_Client/CuteChat/DCOE_SupportClient.aspx)

Description: This hotline provides information and resources on psychological health and traumatic brain injury.

### Sexual Assault

#### **National Sexual Assault Hotline**

Website: <https://rainn.org/get-help/national-sexual-assault-hotline>

Phone: 800-656-HOPE (4673)

Online hotline: <https://ohl.rainn.org/online/>

Description: This hotline provides support for victims of sexual assault and can direct you to a rape crisis center near your area.

#### **DoD Safe Helpline**

Website: <https://www.safehelpline.org/>

Phone: 877-995-5247

Live Online Help: <https://hotline.rainn.org/>

Safe HelpRoom: <https://www.safehelpline.org/safe-helproom>

Text message: LOCATION or REFERRAL to 55-247 (inside the U.S.) or 001-202-470-5546 (outside the U.S.)

Description: This hotline provides support for members of the DoD community affected by sexual assault.

### Suicide

Website: <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>

Phone: 800-273-TALK (8255)

Live Chat: <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/GetHelp/LifelineChat.aspx>

Description: This hotline provides assistance from a trained counselor at a crisis center in your area.



Greetings Fellow  
Falcons,

I am Master Sgt. Ismaro Carrasquillo, I recently assumed duties as the 79th Theater Sustainment Command Sexual Assault Respond Coordinator (SARC). I bring over eight years of experience in the Sexual Harassment and Assault Response Program (SHARP) arena. As your SARC, my most important obligation is to promote a safe work environment for you and your fellow Soldiers, one that encourages dignity and respect. Furthermore, I will work together with the leadership, SARCs and Victim Advocates (VA) within the 79th TSC footprint to ensure they are also committed to provide the most professional care to all Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault victims moreover we provide them with the advocacy and resources they need.

Here in the 79th TSC SHARP Office we advocate and enforce Maj. Gen. LeBoeuf's (79th TSC CG) ZERO tolerance policy while taking sexual complaints and misconducts very seriously. Our office provides all service members, civilians and contractors information on the depth of our SHARP program. Sexual assault victims are our number one priority; they are valued and protected while being treated with upmost dignity and respect.

Sexual harassments and assaults are offenses contrary to our values, warrior ethos destroying teamwork and affects combat readiness.

Prevention of sexual harassment and assault is everyone's responsibility. As an organization we must work together to provide the necessary resources and services to victims. It is incumbent upon all of us to create an environment of good order and discipline where every member of our team is treated with dignity and respect.

Immediate actions to take in the event of receiving a Sexual Assault complaint:

**REPORTING PROCESS—SOLDIERS**

- » Unrestricted Reporting Process
- » Restricted Reporting Process
- » Exceptions to the Restricted Reporting Process

**Unrestricted Reporting Process**

*NOTE: (Victim can report the incident to anyone)*

The following steps are provided as a reference for commanders, victims, Soldiers and others to follow if a sexual assault occurs. Victims may choose to file a restricted or unrestricted report or not to report.

This section outlines the **unrestricted reporting** process.



**SHARP OFFICE**

- Step 1. Ensure the victim's safety and seek emergency care
- » Step 2. Preserve evidence
  - » Step 3. Victim notifies SARC and/or unrestricted reporting chain
  - » Step 4. Seek medical care for the victim
  - » Step 5. SARC provides information
  - » Step 6. SARC assigns VA to provide assistance
  - » Step 7. Initiate Line of Duty investigation (RC only)
  - » Step 8. Victim may consult with legal assistance attorney
  - » Step 9. Victim's commander provides support and referrals as needed
  - » Step 10. Coordinate for "no contact order" MPO or CPO as needed
  - » Step 11. Victim may request expedited transfer
  - » Step 12. Investigation
  - » Step 13. Disposition of case

**Restricted Reporting Process—Soldiers**

*NOTE: Victim can report the incident to SARC, VA and/or Healthcare Provider (HCO) ONLY*

The following steps are provided as a reference for commanders, Soldiers and other first responders to follow if a sexual assault occurs. Victims may choose to file a restricted or unrestricted report or not to report.

This section outlines the **restricted reporting** process.

- » Step 1. Ensure the victim's safety and seek emergency care
  - » Step 2. Preserve evidence
  - » Step 3. Victim notifies SARC and/or restricted reporting chain
  - » Step 4. Seek medical care for the victim
  - » Step 5. SARC provides info
  - » Step 6. SARC assigns VA to provide assistance
  - » Step 7. Initiate Line of Duty investigation (RC only)
  - » Step 8. Explain option to switch to unrestricted report
- Exceptions to the Reporting Processes
- » Exception 1: Communications with chain of command or law enforcement
  - » Exception 2: Support from local or state healthcare or law enforcement
  - » Exception 3: RC and NG considerations
  - » Exception 4: Family member considerations
  - » Exception 5: DA Civilian considerations

*\*\*For more information see AR 600-20, Appendix G (Army Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program Sexual Assault Victim Assistance Actions)\*\**

**"To Do For Country"**

For further assistance please contact  
MSG Ismaro Carrasquillo, 79th TSC SHARP PM/SARC  
Office 719-317-5146, Mobile: 562-413-4338

THE **FALCON** AWARDS

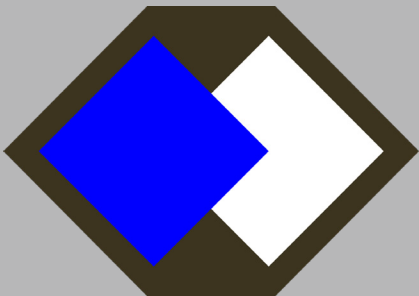
The 79th Theater Sustainment Command established the Falcon Award (Readiness) to recognize units of excellence within the command (Expeditionary Sustainment Command and Brigade-level) which best demonstrate the highest standards of sustained readiness. The Falcon Award Program highlights, annually (February - January), units with the highest overall score within 20 readiness metrics established by the Commanding General and is presented during the Senior Leader



*FOR OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT IN SOLDIER AND  
UNIT READINESS, THE 2019 FALCON AWARD (Readiness)  
IS PRESENTED TO:*



Top Expeditionary Sustainment Command:  
364TH EXPEDITIONARY SUSTAINMENT COMMAND



Top Brigade - Level Command:  
96th Sustainment Brigade







# POSTAL WARRIORS

Story and photos by Maj. Brandon Mace  
4th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary)

FORT DIX, N.J. – Postal Warrior 19 is a stand-alone, 21-day, task-focused exercise, designed to train and challenge postal units in the skill sets and competencies needed to support Theater Postal Operations and increase individual and collective readiness. The 4th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), headquartered at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, planned and led the exercise.

U.S. Army Reserve Lt. Col. Leo Devora, the Postal Warrior 19 OIC from the 4th ESC, was the commander of a postal unit when he was a captain in 2003. He led the 316th Adjutant General Company as they deployed to Iraq to conduct postal operations, so this mission is close to his heart. He wanted to ensure the training was high quality and as realistic as possible.

"In a real deployment, units are going to be responsible for delivering mail, and attacks like small arms or sniper fire are a reality," said Devora. "We want to give them an opportunity to experience that, and react and refresh their combat skills."

For this iteration, each unit drove their vehicles on mail delivery convoys where they were attacked by opposing forces using simulated artillery and blank ammunition. Devora said it raised the overall level of the exercise and the readiness of each Soldier.

"We are all Soldiers at the end of the day. We have to be able to defend ourselves and each other, and react effectively," said Devora. "We have to be able to survive to do our mission with a level of confidence that we can protect each other."

Pfc. Nicholas Rivers, a human resources specialist with the 678th Postal Detachment from Sheffield, Alabama, is at



U.S. Army Reserve Soldiers react to a simulated ambush during a postal operations convoy at Postal Warrior 19-2 at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, New Jersey, Aug. 10 to 30, 2019.

Postal Warrior 19 as both a trainee and as part of the opposing force conducting the simulated ambushes on his fellow Soldiers.

"It adds a more realistic feel," said Rivers. "You can see how an ambush would really play out and get to practice reacting to it."

Having an opposing force not only adds realism for the trainees but gives the opposing force a chance to see operations from the enemy's point of view. Rivers enjoyed his role,

"We have to be able to survive to do our mission with a level of confidence that we can protect each other."

- Lt. Col. Leo Devora

but more importantly, he feels it has improved his readiness as he saw the mistakes each unit made in reacting to the ambushes.

"I'm learning that as soon as we stop we are vulnerable. It is too easy to ambush," said Rivers. "We need to be prepared to act faster and keep our eyes open."

Another Soldier attending the training was Sgt. Jennifer Linnstaedter, a human resources specialist, from the 678th Adjutant General Company, from Nashville, Tennessee. To prepare her unit for the training convoys, or postal rodeos as she called them, she held a convoy brief where she and other leaders reviewed the actions they should take if they were



Sgt. Jennifer Linnstaedter, a human resources specialist from the 678th Adjutant General Company, conducts a convoy briefing during Postal Warrior 19-2 at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, New Jersey, Aug. 10 to 30, 2019.



Pfc. Nicholas Rivers, a human resources specialist with the 678th Postal Detachment from Sheffield, Ala., conducts a simulated ambush on Soldiers attending Postal Warrior 19-2 at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, New Jersey, Aug. 10 to 30, 2019.

attacked.

"We can utilize what we learned in the classroom here in the field," said Linnstaedter. "If the training ended after the classroom, and you never practice anything, you forget. Here we are getting the hands-on training we need."

Linnstaedter knows how important postal operations can be for Soldiers and their families. In addition to being an Army Reserve Soldier herself, she is also married to an Army Reserve Soldier.

"He was deployed to Afghanistan as a combat engineer in 2014-2015," said Linnstaedter, "and I sent him a lot of care packages. Now I get to be a part of that support and service."

That focus on postal support and service is what makes this training unique. In the past, many postal units have attended larger exercises where they have primarily trained on tactical Soldier tasks, while Postal Warrior 19 zeros in on postal skill sets. Devora said the challenge going forward is striking a balance between the two.

"I am recommending we do this again in combination with a larger exercise," said Devora. "It is critical that postal units do their mission combined with a larger exercise so that the other Soldiers actually become our customers and we do our Soldier tasks alongside other units."

After two iterations, seeing nearly 600 postal Soldiers from 12 Army Reserve units trained, the exercise has been a success. Devora said it was great to see everyone come together to complete the mission.

"There is definitely a sense of teamwork here, from those running the exercise in combination with the Soldiers being trained," said Devora. "Regardless of our roles, there is comradery and a common goal that everyone is working toward."



## ARMY DIVERSITY INFORMATION PAPER

### What is Diversity?

Our definition of Diversity: "The different attributes, experiences and backgrounds of our Soldiers, Civilians, and Family Members that further enhance our global capabilities and contribute to an adaptive, culturally astute Army."

Through our success in Equal Opportunity and Equal Employment Opportunity, the Army has been a national leader in providing opportunities across America's diversity and work environments free of discrimination. However, in the coming years, this will not be enough. We must build on what we have accomplished. Our diversity initiative includes every Soldier and Civilian—past, present, and future. We must proactively engage our Nation, attracting the best talent that American has to offer, while maintaining an inclusive environment and building high performing teams to fight and win our wars.

### Where are we going?

Through a comprehensive strategy and leader commitment that starts at the top, the Army is working to achieve the Vision for Diversity:

The national leader in embracing the strengths of diverse people in an inclusive environment...investing in and managing talent, valuing individuals, and developing culturally astute Soldiers and Civilians who enhance our communities and are prepared for the human dimension of leadership and global engagements.

### What are the benefits of Diversity?

The Army is the Strength of the Nation and historically a leader in opportunities for diverse people. The Army is a vast organization with a global presence. Our Army status as an employer of choice in a diverse labor market will provide a competitive advantage in recruiting talent across ethnicity, gender, culture, generations, and the many other attributes, experiences, and backgrounds. While the Army successfully draws its people from the most diverse nation on earth, further progress must be made since predicted demographic shifts and the shrinking pool of available talent can have consequences for sustaining our All-Volunteer Force.

The benefits of the Army's diversity efforts are many, including the opportunity to better understand our Nation's increasingly diverse population and attract the best talent to fill our Soldier and Civilian ranks. Personnel who feel valued are inspired to serve at a higher level.

## ARMY POLICY ON DIVERSITY

Men and women who serve our great Army come from all walks of life. While each thinks differently and brings different attributes and characteristics, together they make up the best Army in the world. Army diversity is defined as the different attributes, experiences, and backgrounds of our Soldiers, Civilians, and Family Members that further enhance our global capabilities and contribute to an adaptive, culturally astute Army.

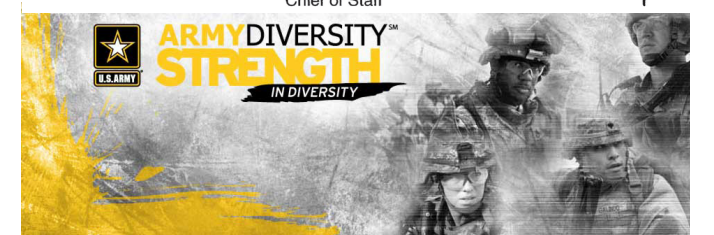
Diversity is a major strength of our Army. Our Army is the strength of this Nation. Our reflection of the Nation's diverse talent and our commitment to Army Values empower us to achieve the Army's Diversity Vision: The National leader in embracing the strengths of diverse people in an inclusive environment. We will achieve this vision by investing in and managing talent, valuing individuals, and developing culturally astute Soldiers, Civilians, and Family Members who support our communities, and who embrace the human dimension of leadership. Leaders must promote a common understanding of this vision and make it a reality; doing so strengthens our Army and continues our legacy of sustaining a high quality, Army Volunteer Force.

Leaders must advance the Army's diversity efforts. As we continue to expand the knowledge and understanding of the diversity within our ranks, not only will our strength, versatility, and efficiency be amplified, but we will be more effective at understanding the cultures and environments where we serve. We expect all leaders to develop and maintain an inclusive environment that will sustain the Army as a relevant and ready Force. We share in this commitment as a team.

Kenneth O. Preston  
Kenneth O. Preston  
Sergeant Major of the Army

George W. Casey, Jr.  
George W. Casey, Jr.  
General, United States Army  
Chief of Staff

John M. McHugh  
John M. McHugh  
Secretary of the Army







## TWIN SIBLINGS SERVE TOGETHER

Story by Maj. Thomas Piernicky  
4th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary)

BRASOV, Romania – Sgt. Leslie Hernandez and Sgt. Kenny Quintana, both U.S. Army Reserve Soldiers with the 211th Regional Support Group stationed in Corpus Christi, Texas, traveled to Romania as part of Operation Saber Guardian in June 2019. Hernandez and Quintana are fraternal twins, and this is the first time since either of them joined the Army that they are serving in the same unit while deployed overseas.

For the twins, this trip would not have been possible if it were not for the opportunities the U.S. Army Reserve offered them. In exchange for their service, the citizen-soldiers of the U.S. Army Reserve enjoy several benefits such as paid tuition for college, health insurance, specialty skill training and travel.

Quintana joined the Army in May of 2007 and went to basic training at Fort Knox, Kentucky, where he trained as an active duty aviation operations specialist. He felt inspired to join after his older brother started a career in the Army in 2003.

"It kind of motivated me to go that route too," said Quintana, "but I also wanted to be my own person, see the world in the active duty Army."

Hernandez left for basic training at Fort Jackson, South Carolina, five days after her twin, but she joined the Army Reserve and trained as an information technology specialist. She said that seeing her older brother join the Army motivated her.

"I got tired of eating the same food over and over at home," said Hernandez. "I also wanted to go to school and not use loans."

Hernandez said the education benefits have been by far the best of anything she has come across compared to any civilian employment she's had. She used her G.I. Bill to earn a

bachelor's degree in criminal justice and a master's degree in clinical counseling. Quintana used his educational benefit to earn a degree in aeronautical science.

"If it wasn't for the Army Reserve and being in the military itself, we probably wouldn't be able to be where we are at, being the first in our family to achieve all of this," said Quintana. "We were the first generation of our family to go to school, pass and graduate and move on to the next level."

In addition to the college education benefits, the pair

received specialized training from the Army which has been invaluable for them when seeking civilian employment. Quintana has received training in four different military occupational specialties since joining the Army. After switching to the Army Reserve in 2011, he received training as an all-wheel mechanic and later as an automated logistics specialist, and most recently as a transport operator specialist.

"They offer me training so I go," laughed Quintana.

Quintana used his training in logistics to land a job as a maintenance administrator supply technician in the city of Robstown, Texas. He said he likes having two jobs because it provides a

change from his routine to do something else.

"You get that chance to break off from one life into another life," said Quintana.

For Hernandez, the Army Reserve has given her a chance to experience a life she never imagined possible. She said she likes the challenges to step outside her comfort zone, to explore and better herself.

"It's a wake-up call in a good way," said Hernandez. "You get to understand and accept your flaws and learn how to

reconstruct them and improve each day. It has so many resources that people outside of the military don't have."

Resources provided by the Army Reserve allow citizen-soldiers to travel, often to places they have never been to. Hernandez said she appreciates the chance to get out and see new places. During her time in service, Hernandez has travelled to South Dakota, Georgia, California, Germany and Iraq.

"If I wouldn't have joined the Army, I wouldn't have been able to go anywhere," said Hernandez.

While they waited for their food at a Romanian restaurant, the twins reflect on what they'd seen on their trip to Romania thus far. They spent part of the morning seeing Dracula's castle and the historic Black Church. Hernandez said the best part was getting to spend time with her brother outside of the United States.

"We got to sightsee and just explore," said Hernandez.

"You get to understand and accept your flaws and learn how to reconstruct them and improve each day."

- Sgt. Leslie Hernandez

Hernandez and Quintana talk about how some of the people they know back home have never left Texas. She said joining the Army Reserve has given her the opportunity to meet and serve with different people from all over.

"It's such a diverse group of people," said Hernandez. "If you stay in your hometown or just move a few cities down, you are accustomed to the same people. In the military you meet all kinds of people. It's like another family."

Family is a big part of why Hernandez and Quintana are serving together in the Army Reserve. Quintana said being in the Army Reserve is more than just a second job, it is a



Sgt. Kenny Quintana and Sgt. Leslie Hernandez, fraternal twins, pose for a picture in the Brasov, Romania, town square while on a morale trip on June 24, 2019.

chance to be with his family while serving.

"The Army offers you all this and you got to pay nothing but your time," said Quintana. "You become part of a family. You have so much help and it opens another door to more opportunities."

Quintana and Hernandez both agreed they enjoyed the opportunity to spend time together while serving. Hernandez said they don't often get to see each other during their busy week, but drill weekends provide them a chance to catch up.

"I love my brother and it is pretty cool to serve with him," said Hernandez.

"I get to go to drill and see my family as well," said Quintana.

### SHARE YOUR STORY

Are you or someone you know exemplifying the Citizen Soldier lifestyle? We want to hear your story!

For your chance to be featured, please email us with a brief summary of how you're going above and beyond or doing something extraordinary in your life!

79TSCPAO@GMAIL.COM





# 851ST TC PREPARES VEHICLES FOR DEFENDER-EUROPE 20

Story and photos by Maj. Brandon Mace  
4th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary)

SINTON, Texas - U.S. Army Reserve Soldiers with the 851st Transportation Company were hard at work preparing equipment for overseas movement in support of DEFENDER-Europe 20, Feb. 8-9, 2020, here.

For the past several years, the main training focus for the U.S. military has been building the tactical readiness of service members and units. DEFENDER-Europe 20 builds on that foundation, demonstrating operational and strategic-level readiness by deploying a division-size combat-credible force from the U.S. to Europe. This operation requires the support of tens of thousands of service members and civilians from multiple nations. To read more about DEFENDER-Europe 20 visit <https://www.eur.army.mil/DefenderEurope/>.

Roughly 80 U.S. Army Reserve Soldiers from the 851st TC will travel to Europe as a part of DEFENDER-Europe 20. Capt. Elias Guerra is the 851st TC's commander, a traditional Reserve Soldier who is also an ROTC instructor at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley. He said the unit has really come together preparing its equipment for this mission.

"We are taking everything from generators and tents to PLS trucks and trailers," said Guerra. "This past battle assembly we started to clean and decontaminate the PLSs, so we were pulling 13-14 hour days to clean all these vehicles and get them ready to go."

The equipment preparations for overseas movement are no joke. Station one is cleaning dirt and grease off the equipment then it was on to station two for a decontaminating



U.S. Army Reserve Cadet Jose Montelongo, a simultaneous membership program ROTC cadet at the Texas A&M International University who serves with the 812th Quartermaster Company, based in Kingsville, Texas, helps the 851st Transportation Company clean vehicles in preparation for DEFENDER-Europe 20 at the 851st TC reserve center motorpool in Sinton, Texas, Feb. 9, 2020.

chemical spray. Once the vehicles were sprayed they were ready to be hauled to the port for movement overseas. Soldiers have been calling the job 'Operation Car Wash.'

Spc. Joseph Shuler, a utilities equipment repairer with the 851st TC, was part of the washing team. His father was a U.S. Army warrant officer, and Shuler spent some of his teen years stationed in Vicenza, Italy. He is excited to be heading back to Europe now that he's serving and recognizes the importance of decontaminating vehicles before they go.

"We've been getting the work done, it just takes some elbow grease," Shuler shared. "We have to make sure everything is clean and sanitized so we can limit our environmental impact."

In addition to members of the 851st TC prepping their own equipment, some local units sent Soldiers to assist with the preparation. The 812th Quartermaster Company, headquartered in Kingsville, Texas, sent several Soldiers including Spc. Joshua Tamez, to lend a hand. He said his unit put out the call for volunteers and he signed up.

"They needed volunteers, but I didn't know that I was volunteering for operation car wash," laughed Tamez. "I got put on the decontamination team."

Tamez and the other members of the decontamination team had the important job of spraying each vehicle with a chemical cleaning agent. The team had to receive some special training and were required to wear protective gear for the job. It was tedious, but knowing he was a vital part of



Spc. Cassandra Bravo, Pvt. Cecilia Cabrera, and Spc. Joshua Tamez decontaminate an 851st Transportation Company vehicle in preparation for DEFENDER-Europe 20 at the 851st TC reserve center motorpool in Sinton, Texas, Feb. 9, 2020.



Staff Sgt. Francisco Galindo with the 812th Quartermaster Company, based in Kingsville, Texas, helps the 851st Transportation Company clean vehicles in preparation for DEFENDER-Europe 20 at the 851st TC reserve center motorpool in Sinton, Texas, Feb. 9, 2020.



Spc. Cassandra Bravo and Pvt. Cecilia Cabrera decontaminate an 851st Transportation Company vehicle in preparation for DEFENDER-Europe 20 at the 851st TC reserve center motorpool in Sinton, Texas, Feb. 9, 2020.

DEFENDER-Europe 20 kept him pushing forward.

"I am helping a larger operation," said Tamez. "I might just be cleaning vehicles, but then I think about it, and we're part of a bigger picture. It's really motivating!"

Sgt. 1st Class Jaime Canales, the 851st TC's motor sergeant and acting first sergeant, is happy to have the extra help. These preparations are a valuable tool to push the 851st TC toward a higher level of readiness and Canales said it has highlighted areas where the unit needs work.

"It's shed a light on the struggles we go through to meet readiness standards and support the mission," said Canales. "It's a good measure of where we are, what we struggle with, and where we achieve."

While DEFENDER-Europe 20 specifically refers to the movement of personnel and equipment to Europe, once units are there they will participate in other exercises and operations in a joint and multi-national environment before loading up and redeploying to the U.S. The 851st TC will fly into Brussels where they will pick up their vehicles and then move to Poland to provide transportation support for many of these additional operations.

"We are really excited to do this mission," said Capt. Eliezel Jimenez, the 851st TC's officer in charge for this mission. "It will take our convoy approximately seven days, crossing two

countries, to get from Brussels to Biedrusko, Poland, where we will be providing transportation support."

The unit plans to split into three teams that will rotate in to provide continuous support for the exercises before the final team gets the vehicles ready for redeployment back to the U.S. Jimenez says the experience the Soldiers will get working with partner nations is the best part of the operation.

"We are going to do missions with multiple countries including Spain, Italy, Poland, people from all over," said Jimenez. "As we keep learning about different cultures, we gain respect, and then, if there is a real war or mission where we have to get together, we can understand how everyone operates."

No matter what, this mission will exercise the 851st TC's muscles and increase its readiness with real-world experience. It is an incredible growth opportunity for every Soldier regardless of rank and experience.

"Most folks don't get these cool missions and we are all pretty excited about it," said Jimenez. "It is going to be an awesome experience that will increase our resilience and confidence as we get to actually exercise our MOS skills."

"It's shed a light on the struggles we go through to meet readiness standards and support the mission," said Canales. "It's a good measure of where we are, what we struggle with, and where we achieve."

- Sgt. 1st Class Jaime Canales





# 'TOUGH 'OMBRES' CARRY MORE THAN THE COLORS

Story and photos by Maj. Brandon Mace  
4th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary)

NEW ORLEANS – Soldiers from the U.S. Army Reserve 90th Sustainment Brigade, headquartered in Little Rock, Arkansas, participated in the 90th Infantry Division Association's 101st Reunion July 24-28, 2019.

The 90th Sustainment Brigade is the only remaining unit in the U.S. Army that still carries the 90th Infantry Division colors and wears the famous 'Tough 'Ombres' T-O patch. For more about the 90th ID and their lineage visit <http://www.90thdivisionassoc.org/History/>.

The Soldiers provided a color guard at all of the events and U.S. Army Reserve Col. Daniel Hershkowitz, the current commander of the 90th Sustainment Brigade, was the guest speaker at the Friday night banquet where he shared experiences from the unit's recent trip to Normandy, France, for the 75th D-Day Anniversary.

"We were fortunate enough to take eighteen 'Tough 'Om-

bres' Soldiers," said Hershkowitz. "Along this 10-day journey around Normandy, these young Soldiers had the opportunity to interact with Soldiers from other countries, local townspeople and most importantly WWII veterans."

Five 'Tough 'Ombres' that served during WWII were present for the reunion. Hershkowitz was honored to be in the same room with them, and talked about the sacrifice and service of the 'Greatest Generation'.

"We can never forget what these men did for our country and the continent of Europe," said Hershkowitz. "It was them, and thousands more like them, who answered the call to defend freedom without thinking twice about it. They are the greatest generation and we must continue to keep their stories and legacy alive."

Hershkowitz closed his comments by assuring the 90th veterans and families that the 'Tough 'Ombres' are in good

hands. He talked about some of the current and future missions the unit's Soldiers are involved in around the world.

"The 90th is alive and well at 101 years old," said Hershkowitz as he addressed the guests. "The 'Tough 'Ombres' of today in the 90th Sustainment Brigade continue to carry on the storied lineage of our past and honor the T and O patch proudly."

Retired Army Reserve Col. Olin Findley Brewster, a U.S. Army Reserve Ambassador for the state of Texas, was in attendance. He previously served with the 90th as their Chief of Staff and Command Executive Officer and is very involved with the association.

"Associations like the 90th Infantry Division Association represent the Army's ideals," said Brewster. "When we wear that patch and come together like this, we assume those ideals, it's important."

Even more important, Brewster believes these kind of gatherings provide an opportunity for Soldiers to get together with their brothers and sisters in arms and work through experiences they don't normally get to talk about.

"Sometimes as Soldiers we can't talk about what we did, and we might be hesitant to talk about it with friends and family because of the questions or maybe they won't understand," said Brewster, "but here at these reunions we can talk about those things and get to a better life, a happier life. That's the real value."

Brewster also said it allows the families, especially of those who have passed on, to get better understanding of what their loved ones did. One of those family members was 17-year-old Alex Wright whose great-grandfather, Col. Arthur Meier, served in the 90th ID in WWII. While his great-grandfa-



U.S. Army Reserve Col. Daniel Hershkowitz, commander of the 90th Sustainment Brigade, headquartered in Little Rock, Arkansas, speaks at the 101st reunion of the 90th Infantry Division Association in New Orleans, Louisiana, July 24 to 28, 2019.

ther has passed away, he said these gatherings help him feel a connection.

"I want to be a part of remembering the legacy, I want a real connection" said Wright. "It resonates because when I'm older the Soldiers of previous wars will be gone, but I will still be here to share their stories."

Wright has also been to Normandy and said it really put WWII in perspective. He wishes everyone could visit the historic WWII sites and experience it first-hand.

"Normandy was amazing, to be there and breathe that air," said Wright. "People my age see war in video games or in movies, but it is different to actually be there and see where it happened."

He said not only was it a way for him to honor the past, but it made him think about the future world he will help create as an adult.

"I'm still young, but if we don't learn from what happened in WWII, I might have to be a Soldier that has to do something like D-Day," said Wright. "We are building a future and my generation should be more aware so we can maintain peace."

Next year the 90th Infantry Division plans to hold their 102nd reunion in San Antonio, Texas.



Soldiers with the U.S. Army Reserve 90th Sustainment Brigade, headquartered in Little Rock, Arkansas, perform color guard duties during the 101st reunion of the 90th Infantry Division Association in New Orleans, Louisiana, July 24 to 28, 2019.



Soldiers with the U.S. Army Reserve 90th Sustainment Brigade, headquartered in Little Rock, Arkansas, perform color guard duties during the 101st reunion of the 90th Infantry Division Association in New Orleans, Louisiana, July 24 to 28, 2019.



# 95-YEAR-OLD WWII 79TH INFANTRY DIVISION VETERAN RECALLS HIS EXPERIENCES IN BATTLE

Story by Sgt. 1st Class Alexandra Hays  
79th Theater Sustainment Command

Photos by Joe Katchka  
Official Photographer of the Reel Warriors Foundation

JOINT FORCES TRAINING BASE  
LOS ALAMITOS, Calif. – More than 75 years later, it's still painful for him to recall. The violence, the hardships, and the triumphs of surviving the European theater of WWII are clear to him although they occurred in the 1940s.

Fred G. Mora, who reached the rank of sergeant while serving in the Army, shared his wartime experiences in an interview via internet-based video software on April 16, 2020.

While deployed in Europe, Mora was a member of the 315th Infantry Regiment, one of the 79th Infantry Division's units.

"I lost a lot of them ... a lot of men over there," Mora said, who is now 95-years-old.

"When you go with a bunch of guys in the service, and you get to know them and talk with them ... and then war starts in and you have to hit the beach ... they're right there beside you. They're scattered all up and down the beaches. And when you lose them, you feel it," Mora recalled of his experiences assaulting Utah Beach in Normandy, France.

Mora, a native of Sierra Madre, California, enlisted in the Army to join the war effort in 1942 when he was just 16-years-old.

He explained that his two older brothers had already joined the war effort, and one day he decided he was going to enlist too. He said the recruiting station told him he was too young to join without his parents' permission, and that he'd have to get some paperwork signed. Mora left the recruiting station, paperwork in hand, forged his mother's signature, and returned to the recruiting office.



"They didn't even know I'd joined," Mora explained of enlisting in the Army. "I was either very dumb or brave," he joked.

Mora then undertook training in Oklahoma and a few months in England before the 79th ID entered into battle on the infamous beaches of Normandy.

Mora started as a Machine gunner, which he reports was a result of his excellent weapons scores during training, including perfect machine gun scores. Mora then made his way through the ranks, eventually being promoted to sergeant in charge of his own platoon.

Throughout his time in the European theater, from 1944-1945, Mora

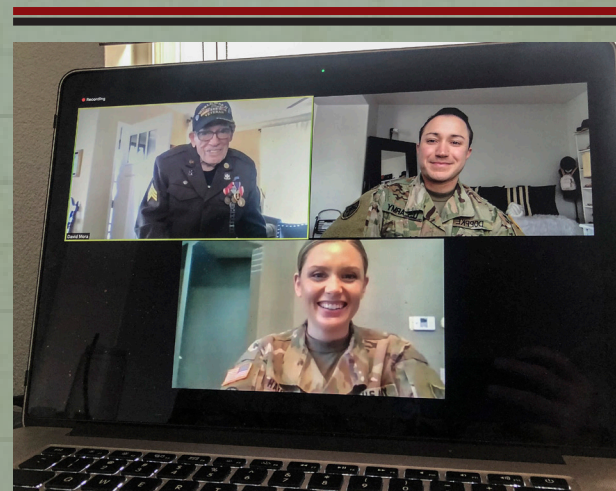
had several brushes with danger.

"We had to fight every inch of it. I got hit a couple of times," he said, smiling.

He recounted one scenario when he was fighting in open fields with his platoon and saw enemy tracer rounds. Soon after he felt something warm slap his arm and he fell into a shallow river where they were crossing. His men pulled him out of the river and they took cover until things quieted down. A few days later, Mora said he was marching with his men and he kept rubbing his arm—it was itching. His medic asked to take a look, and that's when it was discovered that Mora had actually received a gunshot wound and gangrene was setting in.

"I don't know how it happened," Mora said. In that incident, Mora was evacuated back to a field hospital to recover.

Mora described another time when a piece of chewing gum saved his life. He was pulling guard in a foxhole, and reached for a piece of gum. He said for some reason instead of bringing the



stick of gum up to his mouth like he would normally do, on this evening, he decided to bring his mouth down towards the piece of gum. As he did, a mortar shell exploded very close by, and a piece of shrapnel hit his helmet, which of course was at that moment pointed downwards.

"The chewing gum saved me!" Mora explained, saying that he had a headache for a long time after that, but was otherwise unharmed.

Mora recounted other hardships of war, like sleeping in the snow, yet ex-

plained, "you do what you have to do."

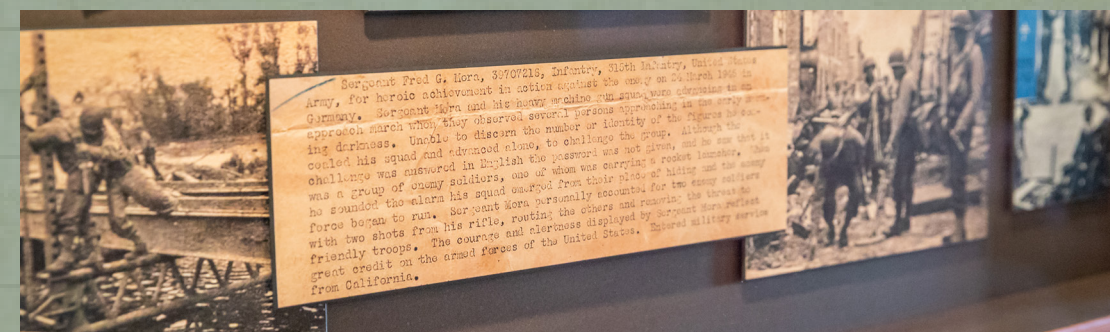
"He did a lot of hand-to-hand too," said Mora's son, David Mora, speaking of the fierce conditions his father lived through. "He doesn't talk about it anymore."

For Mora's service during WWII, he was awarded the Bronze Star, two Purple Hearts, and the Combat Infantry Badge, among others.

After returning from war, Mora worked for a time as a riveter for the Douglas Aircraft Company. While he left for war before he could finish high

school, Mora was awarded an honorary high school diploma in 2008 as a part of Operation Recognition. Mora also participated in the Honor Flight program in 2018, where he was flown along with other Veterans to Washington D.C. to be honored and view the WWII monuments.

"Life has been pretty well to me," said Mora, who currently resides in San Marcos, California with his wife Connie.



## The citation for his Bronze Star Medal reads:

"For heroic achievement in action against the enemy on 24 March 1945 in Germany. Sergeant Mora and his heavy machine gun squad were advancing in an approach march when they observed several persons in the early morning darkness. Unable to discern the number or identity of the figures he concealed his squad and advanced alone, to challenge the group. Although the challenge was answered in English, the password was not given, and he saw that it was a group of enemy soldiers, one of whom was carrying a rocket launcher. When he sounded the alarm, his squad emerged from their place of hiding and the enemy force began to run. Sergeant Mora personally accounted for two enemy soldiers with two shots from his rifle, routing the others and removing the threat to friendly troops. The courage and alertness displayed by Sergeant Mora reflect great credit on the armed forces of the United States."



# FALCON NEWS

## GEN. (RET.) PETRAEUS TALKS LEADERSHIP WITH 364TH ESC

Story and photo by Capt. James Kim

MARYSVILLE, Wash. – Staff members of the 364th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) conducted a Video Teleconference (VTC) session with Gen. (Ret.) David H. Petraeus and discussed his insights on leadership and experience with the U.S. Army Reserve.

As a Ready Force X unit, the 364th ESC is part of the ever growing need of the U.S. Army Reserve to deploy quickly to support active duty and other units in theater. As the threat around the world continues to evolve and the U.S. Army Reserve is focused on being an integral part of the total force, Gen (Ret.) Petraeus' words of wisdom and experience were more valuable than ever.

Petraeus expressed his confidence in the Reserve components, that regardless of the challenge of maintaining readiness without folks being called up for a year or so every few years, "The good news is that the reserve component has lots of people who have had lots of time downrange in recent years."

As the VTC session came to a conclusion, Gen. (Ret.) Petraeus ended with one final advice for the leaders of the 364th ESC, by saying, "Leading a huge organization and being the strategic leader, you are the person who decides; you

have to get the big ideas right. If you don't do that, all that is done will be building on a shaky intellectual foundation. In fact, during the Surge in Iraq, I often noted that the surge of ideas was more important than the surge of forces."



Staff members of the 364th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) conducted a Video Teleconference (VTC) session with Gen. (Ret.) David H. Petraeus and discussed his insights on leadership and experience with the U.S. Army Reserve.

## TRAINING NOW TO PREPARE FOR THE FUTURE

Story and photos by Capt. Thomas Piernicky

HARLINGEN, TEXAS - U.S. Army Reserve Soldiers with the 211th Regional Support Group and subordinate units spent the week training across Southern Texas from Harlingen to Sinton, in preparation for future missions.

Soldiers with the 319th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, based in Harlingen, Texas, conducted field training exercises including command post operations, check point operations, and convoy missions from November 15-17, 2019.

U.S. Army Reserve Staff Sgt. Ruben Gonzalez of the 319th CSSB, led his Soldiers in setting up a Tactical Operations Center field tent. Gonzalez said the training was essential to ensuring the unit was ready to quickly conduct future operations by familiarizing the Soldiers with their equipment.

The 319th CSSB Soldiers needed to learn how to properly assemble each section of the tent frame. For many of the Soldiers, this was their first time working with the equipment and they learned that teamwork was the key to success.

"It's pretty easy when you work as a team," said U.S. Army Reserve Spc. Julian Tapia, a generator mechanic with 319th CSSB. "You need a team. No one person can do this by themselves."

After the TOC was established, the support staff occupied it to coordinate the unit's other training missions. The staff ran Soldiers participating in the checkpoint and convoy operations through scenarios to test their reactions and improve overall efficiency of the team. This is critical as a TOC may be geo-



U.S. Army Reserve Sgt. Kelton Garza, a motor transportation operator with the 851st Transportation Company based out of Sinton, Texas, directs the driver of a M1075 Palletized Loading System vehicle during convoy operations training on November 16, 2019. Garza taught Soldiers in his unit to drive these vehicles by taking them on a 10-mile, preplanned route so they could gain familiarity with the equipment.

## YOU'VE GOT MAIL AT POSTAL WARRIOR 19

Story and photo by Maj. Brandon Mace

FORT DIX, N.J. – Postal units from across the U.S. Army Reserve came here for Postal Warrior 19-1 from Jul 13 to Aug 2, 2019.

Postal Warrior 19 is a standalone 21 day, task-focused exercise, designed to train and challenge postal units in the skill sets and competencies needed to support Theater Postal Operations and increase individual and collective readiness. The exercise was planned and led by the 4th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), headquartered at Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

Col. Robert Penn, the assistant chief of staff for operations at the 4th ESC, said his team wanted to raise the readiness of the units across the Army Reserve footprint. The exercise included classroom training before the Soldiers moved to the field to practice their skills in a realistic environment.

"Our goal was to level set," said Penn, "to train all the Soldiers in these units so we have a bench of experts. Every Soldier needs to know what to do and they need to be familiar with each other's duties."

Penn has been deployed and knows how important something as small as mail can be for the Soldier morale.

"Getting packages from loved ones can make a big difference," said Penn. "Just knowing they have that link, that tangible link back home, whether they are sending mail or mail is coming to them, it boosts morale."

All the feedback Penn has received from Soldiers has been positive. He is happy with the results of the first iteration of



U.S. Army Reserve Spc. Zachary Nichols, a human resources specialist with the 912th Adjutant General Company, headquartered in Orlando, Florida, weighs a customer's package during Postal Warrior 19-1 at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, New Jersey, July 30, 2019. Nearly 600 Soldiers from postal platoons across the country are participating in Postal Warrior 19, a training exercise that validates their ability to support Theater Postal Operations.

Postal Warrior 19 and looks forward to great results from the second iteration, which will run Aug. 10-30.

graphically separated many miles from their Soldiers conducting missions, and efficiency means the staff can send support to elements that need it.

While the 319th CSSB was hard at work, another 211th RSG unit was getting after readiness just 140 miles Northeast, in Sinton, Texas. U.S. Army Reserve Soldiers with the 851st Transportation Company spent five days running training exercises from November 13-17, 2019, to prepare for a mission to Poland next year. For their training, the 851st TC focused on driver's training, convoy operations, and vehicle maintenance.

"The most important piece of this training is safety," explained Lonzona, a motor transportation operator and driving instructor. "We want to ensure everyone goes home safe to their families and our equipment is safe too."

He said the training focused on driver awareness of other vehicles on the highway, crossing railroad tracks, and navigating through urban areas with narrow roads.

To keep their equipment running safely, the maintenance team from the 851st TC spent the weekend conducting annual services on their vehicles. Sgt. Philip Behee, an all-wheel mechanic, said the annual services were a way to keep the M1075 Palletized Loading System vehicles up and running.

"With a crew of four people, it can take a day to do annual services for a vehicle," said Behee.

As the annual services were completed, the Soldiers of the 851st TC turned to planning the other training requirements necessary to prepare for their deployment to Poland running convoy missions.



U.S. Army Reserve Spc. Jenai Satchell, an all-wheel mechanic with the 851st Transportation Company based out of Sinton, Texas, holds a light for U.S. Army Reserve Sgt. Jose Cuestas, as he installs a water pump in an M1075 Palletized Loading System vehicle on November 16, 2019. The 851st TC spent five days conducting field training exercises to improve their readiness by focusing on driver's training, convoy operations, and maintenance of their vehicles.





SEXUAL ASSAULT.  
SEXUAL HARASSMENT.  
**NOT IN  
OUR ARMY.**



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