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'Be part of the solution': Army leaders urge Soldiers to get COVID-19 vaccine

Thomas Brading
Army News Service

Although safety guidelines are in place to stem the spread of COVID-19, vaccines are what will end the virus, top Army medical leaders said during a virtual town hall Monday, in an effort to encourage Soldiers to get vaccinated as soon as possible.

For now, the coronavirus vaccine is voluntary for Soldiers, but following full approval from the Food and Drug Administration, FDA, or if the president waives the option for them to receive it, the vaccine may become mandatory,



A service member prepares a COVID-19 vaccination dose on Feb. 4, 2021. Army senior leaders encouraged all Soldiers to take the vaccine when it's available to them during a virtual town hall Feb. 22, 2021. (Photo by Joshua J. Seybert)

similar to the influenza shot.

But with limited supplies, it's unlikely either will happen soon. Instead, Army medical leaders are

implored all Soldiers, when their time comes, to take the vaccine and "be part of the solution," said Army Surgeon General Lt. Gen. Scott

R. Dingle during the town hall.

"If you get vaccinated, you're doing [your part] to protect someone else who might be at risk," said Dr. Steven Cersovsky, deputy director of the Army Public Health Center. "As long as you remain unvaccinated, you can become infected and pass it along to other people. You're part of that transmission chain."

But many Soldiers remain nervous about the COVID-19 vaccine's safety, said Lt. Gen. Leslie Smith, the Army's inspector general, whether it's a choice based on their medical history, appre-

hensiveness because of its expedited approval, based on something they read online, or simply because they declined to offer a reason at all.

Soldiers may even "just want to wait and see how others react to the vaccine," Smith said. But, like with the rest of the senior leaders on stage, he assured all Soldiers the vaccines are safe.

Why it's safe

Both Pfizer and Moderna vaccines were given the green light for emergency use by the FDA, which means although they have not completed every meticulous round

of testing required by the administration, a process that often takes a decade to complete, they were determined safe following rigorous reviews of the clinical trials.

During the initial trials, researchers tested the then-experimental vaccines on a small group of people for the first time. In Phase 2 trials, the experimental vaccines were given to a larger group of people to see if they were effective and to further assess their safety. Phase 3 trials were administered to an even larger

See **VACCINE** on page 3

History Snapshot

Alcan Highway – the Prairie Route

After much debate, the so called "Prairie Route" through Canada and to Alaska was chosen because it was determined to be far enough inland to avoid enemy attack, and it connected existing air bases along the Northwest Staging Route, which was completed the year before.

Costing \$138 million to construct, the road was completed in a mere eight months and 12 days. It was opened Nov. 20, 1942 at a ceremony held at Soldier's Summit near Kluane Lake, Yukon, Canada. (Photo courtesy of the Library of Congress)



Army IG to Soldiers: 'We celebrate the differences that make us stronger'

Joseph Lacdan
Army News Service

The Army's inspector general preaches building trust when he meets with Soldiers and civilians at Army installations throughout the country.

Lt. Gen. Leslie Smith demonstrates that in the way he listens to Soldiers as they tell their life stories or talk about their backgrounds. With Southern charm and a humility that comes from a blue-collar upbringing, the Atlanta native speaks to Army members the way he speaks to his family or old friends.

He and his wife of more than 30 years, Vanedra, have also instilled trust and respect for others in their two daughters, Taylor and Tori. Tori, the youngest, is an Army officer attending medical school at Howard University and plans to be-



Lt. Gen. Leslie Smith, the Army's inspector general, swore in his daughter, 2nd Lt. Tori Smith, who is now attending medical school at Howard University to become an Army nurse. Also pictured is Smith's wife, Vanedra. (Courtesy photo)

come an Army doctor.

The couple taught their children that building trust comes from treating others equally.

"We always fall back on things that our parents taught us," Vanedra Smith said. "My mom always said, 'It's important to treat peo-

ple the way that you want to be treated.' And that's one of the things that I've always instilled in my daughters, and I also let them know that there's one race: the human race."

Leslie Smith also believes that a more diverse force will make the Army stronger. Smith also joined acting Secretary of the Army John E. Whitley to speak virtually with cadets at Alabama A&M and Alabama State universities Feb. 18 and 19, as part of the Army's wider effort to recruit more African-Americans into its ranks.

"We want to make sure that we focus on a diverse group of people coming into our Army and into our armed forces, because we are representative of the nation," Smith said by video conference on Feb. 9. "So we need to fight for that talent." Smith also recorded a

special Black History Month message for the NBA's Washington Wizards to air during the team's historically black college and university night on Feb. 27. Later this year, Smith will visit Army installations as part of the Project Inclusion listening tour.

Smith praised the efforts of Project Inclusion, an initiative that includes listening sessions that are scheduled to continue on Feb. 23-25 at Fort Irwin, California. The program collects data from the sessions to identify social issues related to diversity and inclusion that can be brought up to Army leadership.

To mold the Army into a welcoming, inclusive place for all backgrounds, Smith understands Army units must be united from the

See **INCLUSION** on page 2

WEEKEND WEATHER

Friday



Mostly sunny with a high near minus 3. Lows around minus 25.

Saturday



Sunny with a high near 4 above. Lows around minus 10.

Sunday



Sunny with a high near 16. Low around minus 5.

IN BRIEF

March 15-19 visit our MWR facilities and take a selfie with the 4-leaf clover to be entered to win one of our prizes!

Be careful, you may see 3-leaf clovers trying to trick you.

Find all of the clues on our Facebook and Instagram pages @WainwrightMWR. Learn more at wainwright.armymwr.com

Nutrition Corner: Nutrition 101

Taste is at the top of the list that drives what food Americans choose.

Making the choice to eat healthy does not have to be a sentence to have a bland diet. Make healthy eating taste good to help you keep up with your healthy lifestyle.

Enhance the flavor of your meat, poultry and fish with high heat/lower fat techniques such as pan searing, grilling and broiling. These will

help to brown meat and enhance flavor. Try this even with your slow cooked roasts, and you will see the difference in taste! Brush your vegetables with some herbs and heart healthy olive oil and roast them at a high temperature (450oF). Use different colors of peppers with different flavors to spice things up a bit.

Even small amounts of hot pepper sauce can enhance recipes.

Acidic ingredients like lemon and orange peel help to balance flavor. Don't forget the low calorie condiments like wasabi, salsas and mustards to add a delicious pop to your recipes.

When you use onions in your recipes, try caramelizing them in a small amount of oil to bring out their flavor. Remember that, most of the time, you can cut some sugar, salt and/or fat from recipes without al-

tering the flavor and quality.

Don't blindly follow recipes — make alterations to make them both delicious and nutritious.

Featured Food:

Figs. Figs are a great snack on their own or as part of a recipe.

Figs are naturally low in fat and sodium but contain almost 1g of fiber per fig.

Recipe Spotlight: Chocolate Covered Figs:

¾ cup dark chocolate
12 fresh black figs
1/4 to 1/2 cup finely chopped walnuts or pecans

- Melt chocolate in double boiler or microwave
- Dip figs into melted chocolate

- Sprinkle with nuts and place on parchment paper
- Refrigerate for 30 minutes

References:

Cunningham, Eleese. Seven ways to enhance the flavor of your meals. The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics website. <http://www.eatright.org/resource/food/planning-and-prep/cooking-tips-and-trends/enhancing-the-flavor-of-your-meals>.



Fort Wainwright Exchange rewards classroom excellence with You Made the Grade Program

Carina DeCino

Army and Air Force Exchange Service Public Affairs

Whether learning at home or in the classroom, the Army and Air Force Exchange Service is recognizing military students for academic accomplishments through its You Made the Grade program. First- through 12th-graders who maintain a B average or higher are eligible for a \$5 Exchange gift card every grading period during the 2021 school year.

Students who make the grade qualify to enter a worldwide sweepstakes to win a \$2,000, \$1,500 or \$500 Exchange gift card. Drawings are held in December and June. The most recent sweepstakes winners were from Fort Bragg, Yokota Air Base and U.S. Army Garrison Baumholder.

“Military students have experienced a great deal of uncertainty and disruption to traditional learning in the last year,” said Fort Wainwright Exchange general manager Gloria Sylvia. “You Made the Grade, now in its 21st year, celebrates their resiliency and commitment to thriving in the classroom.”

To receive the \$5 Exchange gift card, students simply visit the Fort Wainwright PX, present a valid military ID and proof of a B average or higher at customer service.

You Made the Grade sweepstakes entry forms are on the back of the \$5 gift card sleeve. Students can send completed forms to:

You Made the Grade
PO Box 227398
Dallas, TX 75222-7398

MEDDAC Minute

Important Phone Numbers

Emergency: 911
24 Hour Nurse Advice Line: 1-800-874-2273 Opt. 1

Appointment Line: 361-4000

Behavioral Health: 361-6059

Benefits Advisor: 361-5656

Immunizations: 361-5456

Information Desk: 361-5172

Patient Advocate: 361-5291

Pharmacy Refills: 361-5803

MEDDAC-AK Website:

www.bassett-wainwright.tricare.mil

MHS Patient Portal:

<https://myaccess.dmdc.osd.mil/>

Health Net:

www.tricare-west.com,

1-844-8676-9378

the care received at MEDDAC-AK, can contact our Patient Advocate at 361-5291.

Town Hall

MEDDAC-AK will conduct a Facebook Live event Monday, March 1 at 6 p.m. to discuss the COVID-19 vaccine and answer questions from our beneficiaries.

Talk with a registered nurse

Think you should go the emergency room but aren't sure? Wondering if you need an appointment? A registered nurse is standing by 24 hours a day, seven days a week to help.

Call the Nurse Advice Line for your immediate health care needs. The nurse can even book you an appointment if necessary. Call 1-800-TRICARE (874-2273).

Clean out your medicine cabinet

The new year is a great time to check your medicine cabinets for expired prescription and over the counter medications. A MedSafe box, located inside the main entrance of Bassett ACH across from the information desk, is in place to securely receive your expired or no longer needed medications.

INCLUSION

Continued from page 1

ground up.

Sergeant Major of the Army Michael A. Grinston strives to foster trust at the squad level through the “This is My Squad” initiative to build greater team unity, similar to the bonds formed in special forces units. Other Army leaders, including Smith, have taken it upon themselves to spread that message throughout the force.

As the Army's inspector general, Smith doesn't take his position of influence lightly.

“If I say one thing and I do something else, that's a problem,” Smith said. “So I have to make sure ... I demonstrate what I expect [Soldiers] to be. So if I expect someone to be in good physical shape, I have to be in good physical shape. If I expect people to treat everyone with dignity and respect, I have to do the same.”

“All of it comes back down to trust at the individual level, the team level, the organization level and then on the Army level.”

Needed change

After recent events at Fort Hood, Texas, which included the deaths of missing Soldiers, the focus on race relations and accountability within the Army's ranks has been pushed to the forefront.

Last summer, then-Secretary of the

Army Ryan D. McCarthy ordered an independent review that revealed significant improvements must be made to the Army's Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention program as well as Soldier accountability procedures.

“There are areas that we need to work on,” Smith said. “I think the Fort Hood independent review showed us some things that we need to continue to highlight. But for me, it comes down to how we're building trust. And the only way you build trust is getting to know the people that are around you.”

Smith spoke at a Martin Luther King Jr. celebration at Fort Lee, Virginia, last month and has participated in similar events over the years. He said he encourages Soldiers to honor King's legacy by acting against incidents of sexual harassment/assault, racism, extremism and bullying, and reporting occurrences to their chain of command.

Vanedra Smith supports the Army in any way that she can, as a member of the Army Spouses' Club of the Greater Washington Area and by attending events that promote diversity. General Smith said that Soldiers must not only know their peers better, but should also encourage their families to become involved.

“The atmosphere of a

place, or the success or the failure of it, starts at the top,” Vanedra said. “So in order for an organization or person or people to succeed, we need everybody involved.”

Knowing where you came from

Smith said understanding the nation's diverse history will help foster that trust. At speaking engagements, he talks about Black pioneers such as Benjamin Banneker, a surveyor or who helped Andrew Ellicott map the initial layout of Washington, D.C., in the late 18th century.

The Atlanta native also frequently speaks about his summer visits to Mound Bayou, Mississippi, a farming community where his family originated. Mound Bayou became a prosperous Black community amid racial segregation in the Deep South. Smith spent time learning from his uncles and cousins about his background and what was expected from him.

“To this day, my relatives still have high expectations of me as a leader, not only in the Army but in my family and community,” Leslie Smith said.

He also spoke of Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III, a close friend of the Smiths who became the nation's first African-American to hold

the position on Jan. 22.

Austin broke several barriers in his military career, becoming the first Black operations officer of the 82nd Airborne Division at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. A native of Thomasville, Georgia, Austin also became the first Black commander of U.S. Central Command and the first Black vice chief of staff of the Army. He retired from active duty after 40 years in the Army.

“He's been blazing a trail for a long time,” Smith said. “We have to talk about those things.”

Smith said that the Army must continue to honor not only Black

History Month, but other months that celebrate diversity including Asian Pacific American Heritage Month in May and Hispanic Heritage Month during September and October.

“We celebrate the differences that make us stronger,” Smith said.

Tori Smith, who graduated from her parents' alma mater, Georgia Southern University, is now a first-year medical student at Howard, a historically Black institution. Vanedra said her daughter chose to attend the school in part to gain a greater understanding of her heritage. Tori wanted to become an Army doctor after noticing a dispar-

ity in the number of Black doctors.

“She really wanted to go somewhere where she could learn a little bit more about her history, and so as an African-American, she can give back to the African-American community,” Vanedra said.

In that way, Tori can continue to follow in her father's footsteps. Taylor, the Smiths' elder daughter, said her Army experiences helped her become a global citizen. These experiences enabled her to bring a multifaceted perspective as an advertising graphic designer in Austin, Texas.

ALASKA POST

The Interior Military News Connection

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The Chaplain's Corner: Seasons

Chaplain (Capt.) Jeremie Vore
70th Brigade Engineer Battalion Chaplain

I grew up as an Army brat, wandering the country and the world as my family followed my father wherever the next assignment took us. However, we maintained a close family connection to the Midwest region of the United States, and we also found ourselves stationed in the Midwest many times.

Since I'm familiar with the Midwest, I am also familiar with the seasons of the Midwest. By that I mean I am familiar with all of the seasons, even the ones called "construction" that pretend to be summer.

Unlike more severe climates of the world, where there is no proper winter (Florida), or where there is no season other than "nice" (San Diego), the Midwest experiences all of the seasons as well as the bumpy transitions in between

them. As I reflect on that seasonal eagerness, I'm struck at how often the seasons instill in me a yearning for the next season no matter what time of the year it is. In the late, steamy days of summer I begin to harbor a longing for the arrival of that crisp fall air and the chance to wear a sweater.

As fall gives way to cooler temperatures, I grow tired of the soggy, damp rainfall and eagerly await the first snowfall of winter. Snow is great for a while, but eventually its allure wears off and I find myself grumbling at the audacity of the clouds to produce more driveway shoveling chores even as the air warms up and teases the hopefulness of spring. And by the time that allergy season has claimed me again as its annual victim, I once again find myself anxious for the promises of summer, promises like baseball, warmth, vacation, and cooking outside.

This week I am reflecting on my seasonal eagerness for two reasons. First, even though the rest of the Lower 48 states are well into spring, I am still shoveling my driveway.

Therefore, my eagerness to be done with winter is perhaps more acute than it usually is at the tail end of winter. And second, I am realizing that this longing for a new chapter isn't tied just to the weather outside.

In fact, my family will PCS soon, and that move brings with it the same kind of eagerness to leave the place that we are at in order to begin a new adventure. And on a far greater scale, the "season" of anxiety, crisis, and sickness that our world has been plunged in for more than a calendar year also has me yearning for a new chapter, for the next page to be turned.

Perhaps it is the length of this "COVID-season" that

we have endured together, or perhaps it is the severe calamity of it. Certainly, it is also the heightened sense of almost being past the worst of it based on the promise of vaccinations and the hope of declining infections.

Perhaps you, too, are feeling an eagerness to be done with winter, done with plugging your car into an electrical outlet, done with COVID, and done with some other reality of where you are at as you look forward to what is to come. I know I am. In that place of yearning for what is to come, please allow me to encourage you with the message of presence from a faith leader that has helped me often, particularly when I'm eager to move on to the next season.

The Buddhist monk Thich Nhat Hanh says, "The present moment is the only time over which we have dominion." Likewise, mathematician and philosopher Alfred North Whitehead said,



"The present contains all that there is. It is holy ground, for it is the past, and it is the future."

When I'm yearning for what comes next, I am often best served by a reminder that where I am at is what matters. When I'm anxious to get on with the transition, I'm often best served to remember that the journey in between two experiences is the experience itself.

When I'm longing for the next chapter, I'm often best served to remember that the chapter I'm writing along the way is the exactly where God has called me to be.

Even if you are looking forward to the life after COVID, the life after the Army, or the life after some other present moment you are in, may your presence in this moment become a gift to those around you.

Worship Services on Fort Wainwright

Good Shepherd Catholic Community

Mass: Sundays, 9 a.m., SLC
Holy Hour Adoration: Thursdays, 6 p.m., SLC
Catholic Women of the Chapel: Wednesdays, 9 a.m., SLC

St. George Anglican Parish

Holy Communion: Sundays, 11 a.m., SLC
Mid-Week Holy Communion: Wednesdays, noon, BACH

Cornerstone Protestant Community

Worship Service: Sundays, 11 a.m., NLC
Protestant Women of the Chapel, Wednesdays, 6 p.m., NLC
Cornerstone Youth, Sundays, 1 p.m., NLC

Congregación Protestante Piedra Angular

Servicio de adoración: Domingos, 1 p.m., SLC
Northern Lights Chapel Nov. 22, 2020

Fort Wainwright Religious Support Office, 353-6112

1051 Gaffney, Unit 10
Southern Lights Chapel (SLC), 8th St & Neely Rd.
Northern Lights Chapel (NLC), Luzon & Rhineland Avenues

Want To Start Your Own

BARBER SHOP

At Ft. Greely ???

Contact Dan Hill at (907)353-6054
hilldani@aafes.com

VACCINES: Safe

Continued from page 1
pool of people.

The trials give researchers enough data to confirm effectiveness, gauge potential side effects, the ability to compare it to other commonly used treatments, and to collect additional information needed to allow the experimental drug or treatment to be safely used.

The FDA also combs through all the raw data collected by researchers to ensure safety, immune response, and efficacy from the trial stages before they are allowed for use and distribution.

Safety and effectiveness is a top concern with the development of the vaccines and researchers believe women trying to get pregnant in the short and long term will not have complications, Cersovsky said.

"Each person needs to make an individual decision with their health care provider regarding getting the vaccine while pregnant, lactating, or if they plan on becoming pregnant soon," he added.

"I urge you to make

certain that your families also get the vaccines," Dingle said as if speaking directly to individual Soldiers. "Do your part to protect yourselves, your family, and friends, and remain combat-ready. Let me emphasize these vaccines are equally effective on everyone — I have received the vaccine, and I hope you follow suit and get the vaccine when it is available."

Myth versus reality

The town hall also gave the medical leaders a chance to set the record straight on misbeliefs concerning the vaccine. For example, despite some theories, vaccinations have no serious side effects, said Col. Jennifer McDannald, Army Public Health Center director, in a pre-recorded video leading into the town hall.

For individuals who have reported side effects, the most common is pain at the injection site, which usually subsides within 24 hours, she said. Although some people have experienced

fever, chills, tiredness and headaches; those minor cases are resolved within a few days and are not signs of COVID infection.

While the vaccines may likely stop COVID-19, Soldiers should continue using preventive measures to ensure the vaccine has the most effective chance of working, said Command Sgt. Maj. Diamond D. Hough, senior enlisted leader of U.S. Army Medical Command.

"Vaccines are among the most important accomplishments in modern medicine," Dingle said. "They have saved more lives around the world than any other medical innovation, including antibiotics and surgery itself."

If someone does have a negative response to the first of the two-shot vaccine, such as difficulty breathing, they should not take the second dose, Cersovsky said. However, previously experiencing adverse reactions to flu shots does not predict potential complications from the COVID-19 vaccination.

For Hough, taking the vaccine isn't a

gamble. It's an assurance. "[The vaccines] are safe for everyone," he said. "The vaccines for COVID-19 are only made available after being demonstrated to be safe and effective. [They] have been manufactured and distributed safely and securely as well."

Maintaining readiness

One of the town hall's top messages was trust. The senior leaders urged Soldiers to trust the science, and the Army, because that was the biggest way to ensure overall readiness, they said.

"Our people are important, and safely navigating this pandemic is critical because it's a matter of Army readiness," Hough said. "These vaccines are an important part of ensur-

ing we are fit. We need you to stay healthy, not just our Soldiers, but our families, civilians and contractors as well.

"To ensure maximum Army readiness, we are asking for your assistance and your trust," he added. "We must continue to maintain the highest level of readiness to meet our worldwide responsibilities."

Right now, over 100,000 Soldiers are deployed in 140 countries. According to Hough, fighting COVID-19 is just as important as any of their deployments because "we must be ready to win decisively here at home, and that means beating this pandemic."

To date, the Army has vaccinated over 300,000 personnel. That tally, along with the individuals follow-

ing health guidelines, has offered protection against COVID-19, said Christopher Lowman, the senior official performing the duties of the undersecretary of the Army.

In the meantime, the undersecretary said the prevention guidelines haven't changed: individuals still need to cover their nose and mouth, maintain social distancing, clean and disinfect their workspaces and wash their hands.

"I understand the concerns about getting vaccinated, however, safety has been the No. 1 priority in developing and administering these vaccines," Lowman said, who said he has received the vaccine with no adverse effects. "Building a defense against COVID-19 helps your office or unit, helps our Army, and our nation."

People first: Task force seeks Army-wide changes

Devon Suits
Army News Service

Leaders of the new People First Task Force said Wednesday they are committed to restoring an Army-wide culture of dignity and respect as they work to aggressively address the results of an independent report.

Army senior leaders recently established the PFTF to respond to the list of findings and recommendations within the Fort Hood Independent Review Committee report released Dec. 8.

Lt. Gen. Gary M. Brito, deputy chief of staff, G-1; Diane M. Randon, assistant deputy chief of staff, G-2; and Sgt. Maj. Julie A.M. Guerra, deputy chief of staff, G-2 sergeant major, will serve as the tri-chairs.

The task force has “three tri-chairs who have committed their lives to this institution,” Randon said. As a member of the senior executive service, Randon has 35 combined years of federal service and a record of leadership expertise pertaining to Army personnel, installations and quality of life issues.

“We are all team members and leaders,” Randon added. “We are going to actively and aggressively address these findings and recommendations ... that will change the trajectory of the Army’s culture.”

Plan of action

The PFTF will develop a plan of action to address the report’s findings as they reassess current policy and programs. Recommendations will then be submitted to Army senior leaders for review and implementation as



Capt. Joseph Wishart, a company commander assigned to 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, provides feedback following the completion of an infantry squad situational training exercise at Fort Carson, Colorado, June 3, 2020. (Photo by Capt. Daniel Parker)

quickly as possible.

A list of recommendations could come as early as this spring, said Brito, who serves as the lead officer responsible for the development, management, and execution of manpower and personnel plans, programs, and policies.

The independent review committee focused on the command climate and culture at Fort Hood. Findings in the report identified flaws in the implementation, reporting and adjudication of the Army’s Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention program.

The report also identified a series of problems with the Fort Hood Criminal Investigation Command field

office activities tied to chronic understaffing and a lack of experience.

“There has been a lot of reaction and discussion about this report,” Randon said. “It will take each one of us to reflect role-model behaviors, the Army values, and actions that show that we care for our teammates. Whether we are civilian or military, we are part of the team and we all have to be a part of the solution.”

The PFTF plans to look into other issues, such as suicide and racism, as they aim to build responsive programs that increase prevention, and ensure trust and accountability, Brito said.

“We have already taken the liberty to

talk to some of our other sister services,” he said. “Although the focus is on [Fort Hood], I would argue that [the report] challenges” the entire military.

“We own this as an Army,” Brito added.

Soldier, civilian feedback

To develop an action plan, tri-chairs will receive support from a range of subject-matter experts, to include the Army provost marshal general, inspector general, judge advocate general, assistant secretary of the Army for manpower and reserve affairs, and external to Army advisors.

The task force will also look to incorporate feedback from younger Army personnel to provide a different perspective and shape the future force, Randon said.

Army senior leaders expect the PFTF to develop “big [and] bold ways we can move forward,” Randon added.

“When we talk about dignity and respect, we are talking about what happens inside of those formations,” Guerra said.

For the past 26 years, Guerra has developed a wealth of experience training, mentoring and leading Soldiers in units around the world.

Leaders need to remember that there is an element of empathy, compassion and

care that comes with being a leader and it is a pivotal aspect of the Army’s culture, she said.

“We have to care – we have to actually care,” Guerra said. “We have to take the time to know our Soldiers” on both a professional and personal level.

Each task force leader acknowledged the long road ahead, but all of them said they are inspired to make a difference.

“The most important thing that we do as leaders every single day is set the culture, climate and tone of our organizations, so America’s sons and daughters come inside of our formations ... and know that they are safe,” Guerra said.

Army scales up joint capabilities as Project Convergence grows

Thomas Brading
Army News Service

The Army is ambitiously expanding efforts to develop and integrate joint force technologies needed in future warfare as part of Project Convergence, head of the

Army’s Joint Modernization Command said Tuesday.

Army leaders have zeroed in on emerging technologies that could help the joint force achieve all domain operations, like new software, weapons, and tactical networks,

said Col. Tobin Magsig during the virtual International Armored Vehicles Conference.

Project Convergence is the Army’s contribution to the military-wide Joint All Domain Command and Control, or JADC2, concept, where data will link together land, air, sea, cyber and space capabilities.

Last year, the Army held its first Project Convergence series of exercises to test JADC2 tactics. As it comes more into focus, Army senior leaders are taking those lessons learned and applying them to future iterations, Magsig said.

The first iteration, held at Yuma Proving Ground, Arizona, centered on the Army’s tactical fight, he said.

“[We’re] making sure the Army, as part of a joint and multinational force, can rapidly and continuously integrate emerging technologies and convert [them],” Magsig said, “through intelligence gathering, data sharing and interoperable systems to ensure we’re able to act more rapidly than our adversaries.”

For example, Army leaders believe the center of gravity behind joint operations comes down to tactical networking “and how we achieve the most

amount of bandwidth and how we can ensure we have a resilient network that can pass data back and forth,” he said.

Scaled up tactical networking capabilities will aid artificial intelligence-enabled systems on joint battlefields, with testing set to kick off in both a lab-based virtual environment and in the field. “When you put scientists with Soldiers together, that’s where the real learning occurs,” he said.

This is evident at the Joint Systems Integration Lab, or JSIL, at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland, where some of those virtual tests are taking place, according to an Army news release last week.

These tests hope to figure out ways to transmit more data with less bandwidth, the release said.

“[JSIL] is basically where experimental networks [will] connect all our joint services, Army battle labs, and we’re able to integrate the technology in a distributed way,” Magsig said.

The JSIL plans to continue testing networking technologies ahead of Project Convergence 2021, slated to be held this fall again at Yuma. Although the missions

are similar, the scale and execution will be much different.

“When you put people in the dirt together for five weeks, you get real synergy out there and you [have] an opportunity to capture data,” he said. And “recode and rework algorithms at scale. This has caused us to relook at how we do talent management in our Army.”

In his experience, Magsig said groups with diverse backgrounds find better results. Especially in a field where technology has developed rapidly. Last year, Project Convergence 2020 was ambitious in its own right: connect any sensor with any shooter to destroy targets.

But, compared to what’s ahead, Project Convergence 2020 was “very small,” Magsig said. “But we got out of it what we needed. So we’re going to increase complexity by focusing on multiple threads.”

This year, the project won’t be limited to nuanced thinkers from Army Futures Command. Units like the 82nd Airborne Division and the Army’s newest formation, the Multi-Domain Task Force, will play a role.

“We’re going to have those commanders and their staffs run vignettes of [various]

operational tasks,” he said. “We think it’s going to be powerful in terms of what we’ll learn and gain from unit insights instead of just Soldiers who live in this stuff every day.”

Besides those formations in the mix, the Army assembled a joint data collection team from the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force.

Every service, already integrated in yearlong testing efforts, are playing their part to connect everything, and will link every sensor across their system with any shooter to destroy virtually any target, he said.

By 2022, British and Australian militaries will be invited to take part in future iterations of Project Convergence, Magsig said in the virtual conference, which was made up largely of foreign troops.

“We need to train and experiment alongside [our allies] to make sure the technology we’re developing is interoperable with the technology you’re developing,” he said. “We want to do this openly and transparently, then invite the UK and Australia to bring their technology and take part alongside us in Project Convergence 2022.”

Army researchers acquire two new supercomputers

**U.S. Army DEVCOM
Army Research
Laboratory Public
Affairs**

Army researchers are upgrading their computing capabilities with the acquisition of two new supercomputers.

The U.S. Army Combat Capabilities Development Command, now known as DEVCOM, Army Research Laboratory is home to the Department of Defense Supercomputing Resource Center, where computer scientists are welcoming the bi-annual technology refresh as part of the DOD High Performance Computing Modernization Program.

The two supercomputers, named Jean and Kay, recognize the remarkable achievements and enduring legacies of Jean Jennings Bartik and Kathleen “Kay”



The Kay system is a single system of 48,480 Intel XEON Cascade Lake Advanced Performance compute cores and 76 NVIDIA Ampere A100 General-Purpose Graphics Processing Units, or GPGPUs, interconnected with a 200 gigabit per second InfiniBand network and supported by 240 terabytes of memory, and 10 petabytes of usable non-volatile memory express-based solid state storage. Kay has a theoretical peak capacity of 3.4 petaflops. (Photo by U.S. Army)

McNulty Mauchly, key contributors and computing pioneers as part of the original team of programmers of the Electronic Numerical Integrator and Computer, or ENIAC, the world’s first general purpose computer. These systems will join the Betty system

in the center’s production high-performance computing infrastructure. The Betty system is named in honor of Frances Elizabeth “Betty” (Snyder) Holberton, another key member of the original ENIAC programmer’s team.

The two systems are

both Liquid Computing platforms containing 48 core Intel XEON (Cascade Lake Advanced Performance) processors integrated with the largest solid state file systems the DOD has deployed to date.

The systems are expected to enter pro-

duction service in the mid-fiscal 2021 timeframe, and will join the center’s Centennial and Hellfire systems towards establishing a cumulative computational capability of 23.3petaflops.

“Jean and Kay will allow ARL to support many of DOD’s most significant modernization challenges to include digital engineering and other emerging workloads,” said ARL DSRC Director Matt Goss. “By adding specialized technology to augment traditional high performance computing with data analytics, these machines will serve as a spring board on which DOD scientists can make game changing discoveries.”

According to ARL computer scientist Bob Sheroke, these systems significantly enhance the program’s ability to support the DOD’s most demand-

ing data-intensive computational challenges, and include emerging technologies and tools for artificial intelligence, data analytics and machine learning.

The systems include embedded capabilities to support persistent services in addition to traditional batch-oriented processing.

“The DOD High Performance Computing Modernization Program, established in 1992, has invested over \$1.2 billion at the ARL DSRC, which has maintained the center’s posture as one of the program’s primary HPC centers and one of the top supercomputer sites in the national supercomputing infrastructure,” Sheroke said.

Visit www.arl.hpc.mil to learn more about center’s computational capabilities and support services.

IVAS goggle amplifies mounted capabilities

Courtney Bacon

The Integrated Visual Augmentation System is being developed to address capability gaps in the dismounted close combat force identified by Army leadership via the 2018 National Defense Strategy. The intent is to integrate key technology systems into one device to provide a single platform for Soldiers to fight, rehearse, and train.

IVAS looks at the Soldier as a weapons system, carefully balancing weight and Soldier load with its enhanced capabilities. Therefore, the Army is looking to amplify the impact of one dismounted Soldier equipped with IVAS and apply its capability set to mounted platforms as well.

“Up until this point IVAS has really been focused on the dismounted Soldiers and getting that fighting goggle right,” said MAJ Kevin Smith, C5ISR Night Vision and Electronic Sensors Direction Research and Development Coordinator and PM IVAS Platform Integration Directly Responsible Individual. “So in parallel, we in the Night Vision Electronic Sensors Directorate have been working to build-in applications to leverage both new and existing sensors on the vehicles to give the Soldier not just enhanced visual situational awareness, but also C2 [Command and Control] situational awareness while they’re inside of a platform or vehicle.”

The integrated team made up of Project Manager IVAS, Soldier Lethality Cross Functional Team, NVESD and C5ISR Prototype Integration Facility, PM Stryker Brigade Combat Team, PM Bradley, Army Capability Manager Stryker and Bradley, and industry partners came together at Joint Base Lewis-McCord to tackle how to best amplify the capabilities of IVAS onto vehicle platforms.

“In the past, as the Soldier in the back who’s going to actually be dismounting on the objective you may have a single screen to look at that can maybe toggle between the driver’s view or the commander’s view, or the gunner’s view, or perhaps you’re looking through periscope blocks or asking the crew themselves what is actually happening around you,” said Sgt. 1st Class Joshua Braly, SL CFT. “But overall when



Soldiers don the Integrated Visual Augmentation System Capability Set 3 hardware while mounted in a Stryker in Joint Base Lewis-McCord, Washington. (Photo by Courtney Bacon)

you are buttoned up in the back of a platform you have very limited situational awareness to what you’re walking into.”

Beyond the original problem set, IVAS is looking to be applied to an additional capability gap in order to allow the mounted and dismounted Soldier to maintain both C2 and visual situational awareness seamlessly across Army vehicle platforms.

Soldiers from 1-2 SBCT and 3rd Infantry Division joined the multi-dimensional team to learn IVAS and provide feedback on what would be most operationally effective as the technology integrates onto larger platforms.

SOLDIER EXPERIENCE

“I struggled when I was a squad leader getting out of the bay not knowing where I was because we get dropped at different spots in the op order,” said SGT John Martin, Bradley Master Gunner from 3rd Infantry Division.

“Not having information on the ground was definitely a challenge that tripped us up.”

The squads took turns in the Stryker and Bradley vehicles testing each camera view and function, power management, communications, and the ease of mounting and dismounting with the IVAS. The Soldiers quickly saw that the capabilities being developed for dismounted Soldiers via IVAS are amplified by integrating the system into platforms using World View, 360 degree, and See capabilities that leverage

the view of external sensors to be transmitted to the Heads Up Display of each individual Soldier.

“There’s always a line between the squads and the tracks, and having this equipment is going to help tie them in so the dismounts in the back can see the actual optics of the vehicle itself and then they can seamlessly work with the crew because everyone can see around the vehicle without actually having to step outside of it,” said Martin.

“It has countless uses like land navigation, being able to track things while on the battlefield, moving through urban complexes, moving through open terrain, it’s insane.”

Each Soldier with IVAS can “see through” the vehicle to what its external sensors are feeding into the individual HUDs, as if the vehicle has invisible armor. Soldiers with the Stryker Brigade Combat Team understood the implications to not only C2 situational awareness management and safety, but also overall lethality of the force.

“This changes how we operate honestly,” said Sgt. Philip Bartel with 1-2 SBCT. “Now guys aren’t hanging out of vehicles in dangerous situations trying to get views on what’s going on. Leadership will be able to maneuver their elements and get view-on-target without having to leave the safety of their armored vehicles. Maneuvering elements with that kind of information will minimize casualties and will overall drastically change how we operate and increase our

effectiveness on the battlefield.”

“The fact that we are going to be more lethal on the ground, the fact that we won’t be losing as many guys because everyone can see and track the same information, the capabilities and possibilities and implications of this technology are endless,” added Martin.

SOLDIER CENTERED DESIGN

Soldier Centered Design is a driving principle of IVAS technology development. It calls for the Soldier and squad to be understood and developed as a comprehensive weapons system and prioritizes Soldier feedback. By addressing operational capability gaps with a holistic view, it allows the physical interface and load requirements of Soldiers to be better managed and balanced while integrating leap ahead technology to increase lethality on the battlefield.

“Right now the technology is in prototype phase, so we’re getting some really good feedback from actual Soldiers here on the ground today that we can take back and make some critical improvements with, which is awesome,” said Smith. “The reason why we do this is because these requirements need to be generated from the bottom up, not from the top down. So enlisting Soldier feedback is really important to us so that we understand what they need and what their requirements are.”

The program is revolutionizing the way that ac-

quisition requirements are generated. Though engineers and industry experts have always been dedicated to develop effective products to meet Soldier needs through requirements, best practices have now shown that requirements should be developed hand in hand with and by the end user.

“Whereas before requirements were generated, in my opinion, inside of silos, we really need the Soldier’s feedback in order to generate a proper requirement that’s best for the Soldier, period,” said Braly. “It’s really important because we can’t build something that Soldiers are not going use. We have to get that feedback from Soldiers, listen to Soldiers, and implement that feedback. Then it becomes a better product for the Soldier, and they’re going to want to use it. If they don’t want to use it, they won’t, and it’s all for nothing.”

FUTURE OF IVAS

The event was another step towards developing IVAS, which was recently approved to move from rapid prototyping to production and rapid fielding in an effort to deliver next generation capabilities to the close combat force at the speed of relevance.

“One of the goals of IVAS was that it’s going to be a fighting goggle as well as a training goggle and we are 100 percent attempting to bring both to reality,” said Braly.

“This is one of those key moments in our military’s history where we’re able to look back and acknowledge that we’re not where we want to be and we’re willing to make bold strides to get there. IVAS is without question an effort to do that, and we’re working diligently every day to make this a reality.”

Team IVAS continues to iterate the hardware and software prototype towards the Operational Test planned for July 2021 and FUE in 4QFY21.

“This is something that none of us imaged we would see in our careers,” said Martin. “It’s futuristic technology that we’ve all talked about and seen in movies and video games, but it’s something that we never imaged we would have the chance to fight with. It’s definitely technology that we are really excited to use as soon as they can get it to us.”

Weekly Events

March 13 - 20

13 **Snowmachine Ride Along**
 March 13
 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.
 10 - 18 year olds can enjoy a Snowmachine Adventure with Youth Sports & Fitness! Snow jacket, snow pants, hat, gloves, snow boots, & face mask are required. Cost: \$70

Youth Sports & Fitness, Bldg 1045 Basement
 Call 353-7713, registration required

15 **SFRG Leader Training**
 March 15
 9 a.m. - Noon
 SFRG Leader Training provides information on the Soldier & Family Readiness Group & how the SFRG Leader can assist the Commander. Training held on MS Teams.

Army Community Service, Bldg 3401
 Call 353-4227, registration required

17 **Virtual Hiring Fair**
 March 17
 Noon - 4 p.m.
 Join the MWR Team! We have a variety of positions available for you to apply to. Find a list of current vacancies and how to apply on the web: wainwright.armymwr.com.

NAF HR, Bldg 1045 First Floor
 Call 353-6408, application required

18 **B.O.S.S. Meeting**
 March 18
 1:30 - 2:30 p.m.
 Join us for an Installation B.O.S.S. Meeting every first and third Thursday of the month! Meeting is held at Last Frontier Community Activity Center.

B.O.S.S., Bldg 1045 Top Floor
 Call 353-7648

20 **Family Ice Climb with YSF**
 March 20
 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.
 10 - 18 year olds can enjoy an Ice Climbing Adventure with Youth Sports & Fitness! Snow jacket, snow pants, hat, gloves, snow boots, & face mask are required. Cost: \$70.

Youth Sports & Fitness, Bldg 1045 Basement
 Call 353-7713, registration required

★ FAMILY & MWR PRESENTS ★

MARCH MADNESS Bracket Challenge

March 8 - April 5
FREE

March 8-18: Check in at two of our participating MWR facilities (Melaven, PFC, Wolf's Lair, Warrior Zone) to be eligible to submit a bracket and to be entered into a prize drawing!

*Participants are ineligible to submit bracket until they visit two of the participating MWR facilities listed above.



MWR

Special Events
 Bldg. 1045 Gaffney Road (907) 353-2731
www.wainwright.armymwr.com
 @WainwrightMWR #WainwrightZone #WainwrightFitness



March 15 - 19 visit our MWR facilities and take a selfie with the 4-leaf clover to be entered to win one of our prizes! Be careful, you may see 3-leaf clovers trying to trick you. Find all of the clues on our Facebook & Instagram pages @WainwrightMWR. Learn more at wainwright.armymwr.com.
 @WainwrightMWR #WainwrightMWR

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ARMY'S WORLD MADE BY WOMEN

NATO recognizes Army researcher for innovation

U.S. Army DEVCOM Army Research Laboratory Public Affairs

A U.S. Army researcher received high honors from NATO for driving innovation for military communication systems.

Dr. Niranjan Suri, a researcher with the U.S. Army Combat Capabilities Development Command, now referred to as DEVCOM, Army Research Laboratory, received the NATO Science and Technology Organization's Information Systems Technology Panel Individual Excellence Award.

NATO instituted the award to recognize outstanding personal and group contributions to STO



DEVCOM ARL researcher Dr. Niranjan Suri, will receive the NATO Science and Technology Organization's Information Systems Technology Panel Individual Excellence Award. (Shutterstock)

Collaborative Network activities.

NATO recognized Suri as a driver for innovation in the development of novel architectures and approaches to integrate Internet of Things ca-

pabilities into military command and control systems, as well as for promoting and critiquing work by organizing workshops and special sessions to enable public dissemination and discussion of the

work developed within the NATO science and technology framework. "Working with various NATO research task groups has been an honor and a privilege all by itself, as it means that I get to collaborate with leading, world-class military scientists from many allied countries," Suri said. "Receiving this award is further validation of the value and contribution of these collaborative research efforts."

Suri has provided support to NATO since 2002 and has contributed to a number of research task groups.

A key highlight of his time with the groups is fostering the development, publication and distribution of the Anglova Scenar-

io, which delivered one of the first and unique coalition open research datasets that enabled realistic experimentation for tactical edge networks.

Suri provided a vision and methodology for the development and dissemination of the Anglova scenario for emulation-based experimentation - one of the largest and most detailed military-vetted scenarios that has been released into the public domain.

As a result, the scientific accomplishment, involving complex military scenarios comprising urban IoT was born, contributing to an emergent science of contemporary military system-of-systems.

Suri stated that

moving forward, he will continue to pursue game-changing research for our Soldiers and our allies. "I want to continue to push the edge in terms of novel and innovative research that brings value, first to the United States and the U.S. Army, but also to all of our NATO partners and allies, recognizing that many of our military operations are now joint and coalition in nature," Suri said. "The ultimate objective is to see the results of these research activities transition to our military and for there to be a real and lasting impact."

Suri will receive the award at the IST 48th Panel Business Meeting later this year.

Sgt. Maj. of the Army Michael A. Grinston spoke during a monthly Army Resilience Directorate webinar Feb. 17, 2021. He said that leaders at all levels need to take responsibility by educating themselves on the Army's standards toward sexual assault/harassment and take action when necessary. (Courtesy of SHARP)

SMA emphasizes awareness, ownership during resilience webinar

Devon L. Suits
Army News Service

Since the release of the Fort Hood Independent Review, the Army's top enlisted leader has doubled his efforts to meet with Soldiers as he continues to stress the importance of cohesive teams, he said during a webinar Wednesday.

Leaders at all levels need to take responsibility by educating themselves on the Army's standards toward sexual assault/harassment and take action when necessary, Sgt. Maj. of the Army Michael A. Grinston said.

Grinston recalled his initial feelings of anger and disappointment as he read through the results of the review, which were released in December, and learned that installation leaders had created a culture of tolerance toward the acts of sexual assault/harassment.

"I was so angry that our Soldiers had to live in an environment like that," Grinston said during a monthly Army Resilience Directorate webinar.

Participants in the monthly discussions include Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention program, or SHARP, experts as well as suicide prevention and substance abuse program man-

agers, and ready and resilient integrators. The forum serves as an educational tool by exchanging the latest research, policies, tools and best practices.

"I was disappointed that our leaders, especially our noncommissioned officers, did not enforce the standard," Grinston said.

Grinston was quick to blame himself for the report's findings, he said. As the Army's top enlisted leader, he is responsible for setting and enforcing the Army's standard.

"I feel that I failed to communicate the importance of being a part of a cohesive team that is highly trained, disciplined and fit," he explained. "I talk about 'This is My Squad,' [and] how to take ownership and treat people with dignity and respect. I failed to get [my message] down to the NCOs on Fort Hood."

Need for change

Army senior leaders have acknowledged that sexual harassment/assault, suicide, and racism/extremism are considered the top threats to Army personnel, said Jill Londagin, the SHARP program director.

"The Army is working with the Department of Defense to

develop a more standardized, integrated model for addressing sexual harassment and sexual assault across the board," she said.

A 2018 survey analyzing the workplace and gender relations of active-duty personnel estimated that 5.8 percent of women and .7 percent of men across the military experienced a sexual assault during fiscal year 2018. The survey also determined that 16 percent of Army women experienced a sexual assault throughout their careers.

Data also identified a strong correlation between rates of sexual assault and sexual harassment amongst military personnel. The survey indicated 24 percent of women and 6 percent of men had experienced sexual harassment during their careers. In turn, 1 in 5 women service members who experienced sexual harassment was also sexually assaulted.

Increased leader engagement and perpetrator accountability will be necessary as the Army moves forward, she said.

Program improvements

Although the Army's People First Task Force is currently

reviewing SHARP and other programs to address corrosives such as sexual harassment and sexual assault, many changes were already in progress before the Fort Hood Independent Review, Londagin said.

SHARP program leaders are currently working to bolster the number of personnel by developing standardized position descriptions and comparable pay. They are also setting career ladders to promote job progression within the SHARP field.

SHARP officials are also working on a stand-alone SHARP regulation, slated for release this fiscal year, Londagin said. The regulation will consolidate close to 15 different regulations and directives.

"It is frustrating for folks on the ground and commanders when you don't have one regulation to understand what needs to be done to counter sexual harassment and sexual assault within our formations," she said.

Commanders will be required to complete a SHARP Command Team Trainer within the first 60 days of assuming command, she said. The training provides commanders a series of scenarios to help evaluate their understanding of the SHARP program and victim support.

Performance is assessed throughout the practice exercise and feedback is provided in a self-guided, after action review.

The Army has started to roll out new training requirements for commanders and SHARP professionals in support of the expedited transfer policy. Under the policy, Soldiers and adult dependents who are victims of sexual assault can request a move to a new unit or installation if their current environment is impacting their safety or emotional well-being or the command's ability to function.

The Army is also working to improve its prevention efforts through consistent messaging across all echelons. To enable a climate of cohesion and trust requires a comprehensive approach tailored to each unit and environment, she said.

"We know that numbers matter [as] we call upon everyone to play an active role in preventing sexual harassment and sexual assault within our formations," she said. "We need to revamp our training and education down to the tactical level, so that commanders and leaders focus on prevention efforts to decrease the number of incidents within our formations."

Awareness support

While the Army continues to improve or adjust policy and programs to address sexual harassment/assault, suicide, and racism/extremism, Grinston challenges all leaders to be more mindful and take time to know and care for their Soldiers.

"As crazy as it sounds, I fundamentally believe about 90 percent of the time we don't know the person in the room standing right next to us," Grinston said.

"We have to know what is normal for a person and then do something about it."

He said leaders would garner trust if they could develop a genuine relationship with their personnel. Superiors should also move past just sending a Soldier to get help and go with them to ensure they receive the support they need.

"We all have to [do our part] to make our Army better," Grinston said. "I think it is going to get better. We have to show ownership - all of us - and I need your help."

"We have to look at this a different way. If we don't do that, we will continue down the same path, [which] is not a good path, in my opinion," he added.