

EL MORRO

SENTINEL
OF THE CARIBBEAN



Story on page 4

Command Sergeant Major Roderick W. Hendricks accepts the Fort Buchanan Garrison guidon from Garrison Commander Colonel Tomika M. Seaberry, thus accepting responsibility as the 11th Garrison Command Sergeant Major during the Change of Responsibility Ceremony held at the Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Félix A. Santoni Reserve Center, June 29, 2022.



Col. Tomika M. Seaberry Garrison Commander

The importance of giving back

“Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we’ve been waiting for. We are the change that we seek.”

~ Former President of the United States Barack Obama

On July 28, 2022, during the 93rd League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) Convention and Exposition, USAG Fort Buchanan received the prestigious 2022 LULAC Excellence in Service Award. Every year LULAC recognizes “Department of Defense personnel from the military and DOD civilians for their dedication and services to the country and their community.” The award is a reflection of servant leaders embedded within Fort Buchanan.

The Fort Buchanan family understands that the role of the Army is more than ensuring our national security. It is also about giving back to our community; we demonstrate our tenderness through multiple outreach initiatives thanks to the extraordinary voluntary contributions of garrison employees, our tenants, and other members of the Fort Buchanan family.

Our community family continues to overwhelm me with joy by their actions. In the first year of my command, I have seen our community unselfishly unite and collectively give one of the few things we never have enough of, our time. Together, we donated our skills and services to assist Corazón Azul, a non-profit independent living center for adults over 21 years of age with severe autism. Spending the day helping the staff paint, clean and fix minor repairs to the facilities. Understanding our

time and services helped create a safe place for the students to learn life skills to help them have a more productive and independent life.

Another initiative we conducted throughout the year was food drives. In coordination with the Religious Support Office, we collected donations and delivered them to non-profit organizations. We collaborated with the Puerto Rico Food Bank, La Fondita de Jesús and Bill’s Kitchen. Like many non-profit organizations, these three organizations provide hot meals to people who are facing a financial crisis and unable to put food on their table. They also support the homeless, people with HIV/AIDS, and families in need.

The Fort Buchanan family strives to be exemplary neighbors and develop positive role models within our community. I see we are on target, as I have witnessed our community taking every opportunity to participate in events to give a hand to those in need. Once again,

our Fort Buchanan family opened their hearts to foster children and called the day February Foster Fun Day. We took a simple thought of kindness and turned it into a special day for a group of exceptional children. Volunteers from the garrison, tenants, Soldiers and Service Members provided military displays, a K-9 unit demonstration, and bags of toys for them to take home. They played volleyball and board games, and some went bowling for the first time. They could see the goodness of our Fort Buchanan community, and they had a wonderful day. The children and the staff from Casa de Niños Manuel Fernández Juncos and Hogares Teresa Toda foster homes gave the volunteers an emotional thanks. Both non-profit institutions provide a home for children victims of abuse, abandonment and neglect. We ensured the children and the staff had a good time by providing a cheerful environment full of love, care and fun.

These are only a few examples of the many initiatives we conducted and continue working on in the future. Thanks to the servant leaders within our Fort Buchanan family. The satisfaction of giving back is enormous. The contribution to our society is unparalleled. Our actions, whether big or small, influence the local community. Giving back to the community enriches our lives and connects us to people.

A special thank you to our partners and volunteers for their contributions, time, energy, commitment and kindness. If we give back only a little of what we have received, we better our communities, our world and ourselves. God bless you, your family, our community and our nation.

We are Fort Buchanan! ¡Somos el Fuerte Buchanan!



USAG Fort Buchanan received the 2022 League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) Excellence in Service Award during the “Defenders of Freedom” event, July 28, 2022, at the 93rd LULAC National Convention and Exposition held in San Juan. Every year LULAC recognizes “Department of Defense personnel from the military and civilian services for dedication and service to the country and community.” Photo by Robert Carrasquillo, Command Group Administrator



Command Sgt. Maj. Roderick W. Hendricks Garrison Command Sergeant Major

Honored to be your next Garrison Command Sergeant Major

Team Fort Buchanan,

It is a privilege and honor to be your next Garrison Command Sergeant Major and I look forward to serving the Soldiers, Families, and Civilians of Fort Buchanan. I want to thank everyone for their warm welcome and support in the transition of Command Sgt. Maj. José A. Banks and myself. I especially want to thank Command Sgt. Maj. Banks for his warm welcome, integrating me with the team here at Fort Buchanan. Command Sgt. Maj. Banks is known to be a gentlemen, a great leader, and is one of the most respected Command Sergeants Major in our peer group. Thank you Command Sgt. Maj. Banks, and I wish you and your family the very best in your next assignment.

People First has been an Army campaign strategy for a few years now. Complete with Lines of Effort and strategic outcomes. Outcomes, that the Army recognizes that for us to remain the world's premier combat land

force; we have to see people as our greatest capability and resource. People are foundational to our readiness, our modernization, and any reform efforts in the Army Strategy. This motto of People First is seemingly kind of common sense.

Harriet Beecher Stowe was one of the earliest Christian abolitionist in the United States. Her faith was the driver in her understanding of People First or loving your neighbor. In regards to her common sense she is quoted saying "Common sense is seeing things as they are, and doing things as they ought to be." Her positions on the political debates at that time on lack of civil rights for both, women and slaves, earned her the reputation of being out of touch of reality and arrogant. All because she was trying to do things as they ought to be. She was in fact very much in touch with reality because she recognized wrong.

As leaders, we generally know what wrong looks like. The question is, will we address it appropriately with the proper corrective actions? Good intentions do not equal correct actions. Our formations continue to fight sexual assault and harassment, suicides, which we are up by three suicides (19) this time last year. We must continue to make People a priority. Our audio has to match our visual. Then all of these types of atrocities in our formation no longer become a metric that Commanders are chasing but a downward strategic trend as a result of doing things as they ought to be.

As your Garrison Command Sergeant Major, my Commander and I are focused and committed to providing you the critical enablers, quality of life, resources, proper authorities, and People First culture that will assist you in the readiness of your Soldiers, Airmen, Marines, Sailors, and Coast Guardsmen stationed here on Fort Buchanan.

It is a true honor and absolute privilege to be your next Garrison Command Sergeant Major. We are Fort Buchanan. Sentinel of the Caribbean. Thank you. Col. Seaberry and I are focused and committed.



After assuming the responsibility of becoming the 11th Fort Buchanan Garrison Command Sergeant Major, Command Sgt. Maj. Hendricks thanked the attendees in person and on Facebook Live for their support, "I am excited to be here and to serve alongside of you as your Command Sgt. Maj."



EDITORIAL INFORMATION

Garrison Commander

Col. Tomika M. Seaberry

Garrison Command Sergeant Major

Command Sgt. Maj. Roderick W. Hendricks

Deputy Garrison Commander

Lt. Col. Brian M. Mandock

Deputy to the Garrison Commander

Yvette L. Castro

Public Affairs Officer

Grissel Rosa

Command Information

Rosie Irizarry

Mailing address-

Public Affairs Office

ATTN: IMSE-BUC-PA

390 Double Eagle Ave., Suite 311

Fort Buchanan, Puerto Rico 00934-4616

Story Submissions-

Email to:

rosario.irizarry.civ@army.mil

Telephone numbers

(787) 707-4013/4486

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US Army Garrison Fort Buchanan conducts Change of Responsibility and welcomes its 11th Command Sergeant Major

Story and photos by Rosie Irizarry, Public Affairs Specialist

U.S. Army Garrison (USAG) Fort Buchanan welcomed its 11th Command Sergeant Major during an in person and Facebook Live streamed, Change of Responsibility Ceremony held at the Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Félix A. Santoni Reserve Center, June 29, 2022.

The reviewing officer for this ceremony was Fort Buchanan Garrison Commander Colonel Tomika M. Seaberry. Command Sergeant Major José A. Banks relinquished his responsibility as the command's senior noncommissioned officer (NCO) Fort Buchanan to Command Sergeant Major Roderick W. Hendricks.

Among the special guests present were Civilian Aide to the Secretary of the Army (CASA) Luis A. Soto; CASA Emeritus Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Félix A. Santoni and his spouse Carmen; 1st Mission Support Command (1st MSC) Commanding Officer, Col. Carlos M. Cáceres and his spouse Sonia; 81st Readiness Division (81st RD) Command Sgt. Maj. Dennis J. Thomas; Puerto Rico Army National Guard (PRNG) Command Sgt. Maj. Luis Cora; Miami Recruiting Battalion Command, Command Sgt. Maj. Marcos J. Bandy; Deputy Garrison Commander, Lt. Col. Brian Mandock; military leadership; retired and senior NCOs; garrison directors and staff.

Also present, Command Sgt. Maj. Hendricks' wife, Elizabeth and their daughter Macayla; his uncle Lt. Col. (Ret) Frederick Hendricks and his aunt Jacqueline; and his pastor Noble Vator and wife, Estrella. During the ceremony Elizabeth Hendricks received from Army Sgt.

Javier González, a bouquet of yellow rosebuds, symbolizing a new beginning upon her arrival at Fort Buchanan, which will continue to bloom as well as her relationship with the Soldiers, Civilians and their families.

Carolina Banks received a bouquet of red roses from Army Sgt. Imar Cruz, "Red is the color of the heart, the roses are in full bloom and reflects the loving concern that she has shown for the Soldiers and Civilians of the Garrison and their families over the past two years," said Master of Ceremony and Installation Legal Office Paralegal NCO, Staff Sgt. Patricia M. Landrau.

The invocation was presented by Garrison Command Chaplain, David S. Keller.

The members of the PRNG Honor Guard were, Sgt. 1st Class Emiliano Agosto; Staff Sgt. Luis Román; Sgt. Isaac Negrón; Sgt. Josue Cruz; Sgt. Yehiel Hernández and Spc. Saúl Estremera. The 248th PRNG Army Band provided musical support with the playing of "La Borinqueña," National Anthem and The Army Song. "Through the years the role of the noncommissioned officer has continued to evolve from the pre-revolutionary period, to the role as it exists today. Our two basic responsibilities remain the same, accomplishment of the mission and the welfare of our Soldiers. The Command Sergeant Major additionally ensures that military customs and courtesies are upheld within the unit. The noncommissioned officer corps has always been the key link between the officers who provide intent, and the Soldiers and Civilians who execute. In recognition of their essential role in the success of the garrison command," said Staff Sgt. Landrau.

Sgt. 1st Class Megan C. Kelly assisted in the transfer of responsibility, passing the colors to outgoing Command Sgt. Maj. Banks who in turn relinquished his duties and responsibilities by passing them to Col. Seaberry, who passed them to incoming Command Sgt. Maj. Hendricks charging him with the responsibilities of the unit. After accepting the colors Command Sgt. Maj. Hendricks passed the colors back to Sgt. 1st Class Kelly symbolizing his first official act as Fort Buchanan Command Sergeant Major.

"I enjoy the Army...and I enjoy the Army because of its rich traditions," said Col. Seaberry as she welcomed all the distinguished guest and those watching on the Facebook Live transmission. "It is an incredible honor to be here talk about Command Sgt. Maj. Banks and his family. I thank



you. Command Sgt. Maj. Banks... it has been a fantastic journey. You are the epitome of a servant leader; you are a sounding board; you have been the gate keeper; a true professional and most importantly, a friend. You made me stay balanced. To the entire Banks family thank you for your unwavering support to our Fort Buchanan community," she said.

"Let us welcome the Hendricks family. Command Sgt. Maj. Hendricks, I look forward to your leadership as a senior advisor and based on conversation we've already had, I think it is going to be a seamless transition. You are also great. . . make your mark, we're going to have a wonderful journey together, welcome to the team I look forward to your being my Battle," Seaberry concluded.

"Thank you Col. Seaberry for your kind remarks. It has been an honor and privilege to serve as your Garrison Command Sergeant Major. I thank God for giving us the opportunity to be part of this community, you all made a tremendous impact in my life, I worked hard to give you my best, I just hope it met your expectations," said Command Sgt. Maj. Banks.

"I look forward to working with you and making Fort Buchanan an even better installation than it already is," said Command Sgt. Maj. Hendricks as he introduced the members of his family, he continued, "My family...is a family that at our core we are about serving people and loving our neighbor, so when the Army adopted the People First strategy, the Hendricks' family was all in. It is a true honor and absolute privilege to be your next Garrison Command Sgt. Maj., We Are Fort Buchanan, Sentinel of the Caribbean. Thank you," said Hendricks.



USAG Fort Buchanan conducts 3rd Quarter Newcomers Briefing “Arrive Strong”

Story and photos by Rosie Irizarry, Public Affairs Specialist



The US Army Garrison Fort Buchanan, Directorate of Family and, Morale, Welfare and Recreation, Army Community Service (ACS) conducted its 3rd Quarter Newcomers Briefing at the installation’s Community Club and Conference Center, June 16, 2022.

Garrison Commander Col. Tomika M. Seaberry welcomed virtually 24 new members of the Fort Buchanan community Service Members and Civilians, providing general insight on the installation, COVID-19 protocols, “Welcome to the Fort Buchanan family! You will see me walking around the installation, at the Exchange, the Commissary, please feel free to talk with me about how it is going for you and your family on the installation,” said Col. Seaberry.

Deputy to the Garrison Commander, Yvette L. Castro who supports the Garrison Commander in accomplishing the mission of overall base operations management for the garrison and tenant activities, also welcomed the 24 newcomers in attendance.

Among the new arrivals were the Rodriguez Army Health Clinic Commander, Lt. Col. Alex C. Montgomery and 1st Mission Support Command, Command Inspector General, Lt. Col. Rafael G. Pérez accompanied by his wife, Natalia Curbelo and their children Lucas G. and Sofia.



“This was a very informative briefing. It was high energy starting with the Garrison Commander’s opening remarks. It is one of the best briefings I have attended in my 20 years of service,” said Lt. Col. Pérez.

Presenters from twenty nine garrison directorates and tenant organizations such as the directorates of, Emergency Services, Police, Fire and Security; Human Resources; Safety Office; Resource Management, Equal Employment Opportunity; Religious Support Office; Rodriguez Army Health Clinic; Tricare, Red Cross, and the Army Air Force Exchange Service, briefly explained their services, locations and points of contact. Each had information tables where, after the presentations, the new members of the Fort Buchanan community walked around, received personal orientation and gathered printed information, in some cases they were even able to establish appointments for service.

AUSA PR Chapter celebrates National Caribbean – American Heritage Month at Fort Buchanan

Story and photos by Rosie Irizarry,
Public Affairs Specialist



In keeping with the June 2005 unanimous adoption of US House Congressional Resolution 71 recognizing the significance of Caribbean people in the history and culture of the United States, the Association of United States Army (AUSA) – Puerto Rico Chapter celebrated National Caribbean – American Heritage Month dedicated to Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Félix A. Santoni at Fort Buchanan’s Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Santoni Reserve Center, June 24, 2022.

Master of Ceremony and Garrison Public Affairs Officer, Grissel Rosa presented President of the AUSA PR Chapter, Chief Warrant Officer (Ret.) Cristino Lozada Cruz, who provided welcome remarks and, a brief history and description of Caribbean – American Heritage Month, “Thank you for joining us in this event to

recognize many Caribbean – Americans that have served with distinction in the Armed Forces of the United States throughout the military conflicts which the United States has participated,” said Lozada.

Present were representatives and guest speakers from various military organizations such as US Army Garrison (USAG) Fort Buchanan Commander Col. Tomika M. Seaberry; 1st Mission Support Command (1st MSC) Commanding Officer Col. Carlos M. Cáceres; 1st MSC Deputy Commanding Officer Col. Richard Avilés; Civilian Aide to the Secretary of the Army, Luis A. Soto; US Army Reserve Ambassador Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Fernando Fernández; Vietnam Veterans of America and Military Order of World Wars (MOWW).

“It is my humble honor today to stand before you and to be a part of this celebration. The 2021 US Census recorded there is 331.9 million people that actually live in the US, and there are about 500 different ancestries. We are so enriched by all the different cultures and that’s something we should celebrate. The beauty of the United States is comprised of the DNA of Caribbean – Americans. I am proud to say what a great nation we have, we’ve recognize our mistakes, we’ve recognized the contributions of all and especially the contributions of Caribbean – Americans,” said Col. Seaberry.

“Today we recognize and reflect on who we are as Caribbean – American citizens of our great nation. There are many contributions from the Caribbean before us, for example, General Colin Powell who was born from Jamaican immigrants in New York City, Alexander Hamilton who is responsible for many things we have in place today like, our banking system, our military, our Navy, West Point, was actually born in Nevis, in the West Indies. A young patriot who came from the Caribbean and rose up to have a profound impact on our nation. The fact that Puerto Ricans fought in the war for US independence and CASA Emeritus, Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Santoni, who could not join us but is honored today for a lifetime of devoted and selfless service and, who continues to serve our nation. The strength of our nation stems from the diversity that we have in the social fabric in the US. As a Puerto Rican, it’s a day of great pride,” said Col. Cáceres.

The CASA, Luis A. Soto representing Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Félix A. Santoni received from AUSA PR Chapter President Lozada the AUSA Certificate of Appreciation for Santoni’s outstanding contributions to the members of the Caribbean – American community. Soto also accepted on behalf of Santoni, a Merit Award for Outstanding Service from MOWW PR Chapter Commander, Air Force Col. (Ret.) Adalberto Rivera.



Fort Buchanan celebrates diversity during Army Heritage Month event

Story and photos by Rosie Irizarry, Public Affairs Specialist



1st MSC Commanding Officer, Col. Cáceres presented the Keynote Speaker, Army Reserve Ambassador, Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Fernández a plaque.

The US Army Reserve 1st Mission Support Command (1st MSC) conducted the first Army Heritage Month event at Fort Buchanan with the support of the US Army Garrison at the installation’s Community Club and Conference Center, June 15, 2022.

Present was host, 1st MSC Commanding Officer, Col. Carlos M. Cáceres and his spouse Sonia; Civilian Aide to the Secretary of the Army, Luis A. Soto; Garrison Commander Col. Tomika M. Seaberry; Deputy Garrison Commander Lt. Col. Brian Mandock; Garrison Command Sgt. Maj. José A. Banks; Deputy to the Garrison Commander Yvette Castro, Military Equal Opportunity Advisors from several units, representatives of the Puerto Rico National Guard and Civilians from military services. 1st MSC Family Life Chaplain Maj. Joseph F. Okpe offered the invocation.

There were six displays, four with tasting stations, representing National Hispanic Heritage; Asian American, Pacific Islander Heritage; National American Indian Heritage; Days of Remembrance for Victims of the Holocaust; Women’s History and Black History months.

“The United States Army is the only Army in the world that when you join, you join a family. A family that is all green, it is diverse. It is an organization where we treat each other based on a code of conduct, values, and morals. Our Army is a source of pride and an example for our nation and what makes our Army great is its diversity,” said Col. Cáceres before presenting Keynote



(L to R) 1st MSC Commanding Officer, Col. Cáceres; 1st MSC Military Equal Opportunity Advisor, Sgt. 1st Class Yesenia Pagán Rosario; 1st MSC Equal Opportunity Specialist (EOS), Ivan López; Fort Buchanan EEO Director, Magda E. Figueroa and PRNG EOS Elicier Vázquez.

Speaker, Army Reserve Ambassador for Puerto Rico, Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Fernández.

Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Fernández provided a brief history highlighting the diversity of the US Army Reserve in PR, which turns 100 this year, “The contributions of the

Army Reserve in PR will forever be part of the proud history of the US Army,” said Fernández.

“I hope you can take time out, to reflect on the Army’s heritage we are celebrating in this event today,” said Cáceres before presenting the Keynote Speaker with a plaque for his participation.



(L to R) 1st MSC Sexual Assault Response Coordinator, Evelyn M. Franco; 1st MSC Suicide Prevention Program Manager, José A. González; Deputy to the Garrison Commander, Yvette L. Castro and Garrison Commander Col. Tomika M. Seaberry.

“This is my first time as a master of ceremony. It has been a pleasure and a great opportunity to pass on the word that the Army is all about diversity. I am honored to be a “Latina” female serving for the past 14 years this great Army,” said 1st MSC Military Equal Opportunity Advisor, Sgt. 1st Class Yesenia Pagán Rosario.

In 2019, the Secretary of the Army signed Army Directive 2019-20, which established June as Army Heritage Month. It recognizes the achievements and contributions of Soldiers, families and civilians. This month enhances a sense of inclusion and unit cohesiveness, cross cultural awareness, understanding, focusing on interaction to promote equal opportunity education and training objectives and honoring all those who have served in our Army and our nation, over the past 247 years.

USAG Fort Buchanan celebrates the US Army 247th Birthday “Defending America 24/7”

Story and photos by Rosie Irizarry, Public Affairs Specialist



The US Army Garrison Fort Buchanan’s Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation prepared and served 220 complementary lunches sponsored by the Gary Sinise Foundation in celebration of the US Army’s 247th Birthday at the installation Community Club and Conference Center’s Borinquen Patio, June 14, 2022.

Service Members from all branches and services as well as Veterans and Military Retirees enjoyed the complementary meal. At noon Fort Buchanan Garrison Commander Col. Tomika M. Seaberry; Garrison Command Sgt. Maj. José A. Banks; the newest Soldier with four months of service with the 756th Eng Co. 1st Mission Support Command (1st MSC), Pvt. Eli J. Vera and the most experienced Soldier with 38 years of service from Joint Forces Headquarters Puerto Rico National Guard (PRNG), Sgt. 1st Class Wilfredo Vélez conducted the traditional Army Birthday Cake Cutting Ceremony with a sword before over 50 Service members.

“It is so good to see everyone represented, Air Force, Marine Corps, Navy, Coast Guard, PRNG and 1st MSC taking part in celebrating the founding of our Army,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Banks as he welcomed the attendees.

“It’s always an honor to share with our brothers and sisters from the services, that although we have different mothers and fathers we can come together as one,” said Col.



Seaberry. “Who knows how old the Army is today? Yes that’s correct the United States Army celebrates, 247 years of 24/7 global readiness and the service of the people who make that capability possible. Throughout the years our Army has not just protected our interest but also protected abroad. When you use your time, energy and talents to help other nations... that makes us great!” she concluded.

“Thirty eight years is a life time and I would do it all again. I entered the service here at Fort Buchanan in 1976. To be recognized today was a wonderful surprise,” said Sgt. 1st Class Vélez.

Happy Birthday United States Army!

Fort Buchanan Commissary takes the lead conducting the Feds Feed Families Campaign

Story by Rosie Irizarry, Public Affairs Specialist, Fort Buchanan, PR
Photos courtesy of Fort Buchanan Religious Support Office and by Rosie Irizarry



Sunday, June 12, 2022 Defense Commissary Agency (DeCA) at Fort Buchanan initiated the 13th annual government-wide Feds Feed Families (FFF) campaign which encourages employees from all federal departments and agencies to give in-kind contributions -- food, services, and time -- to food banks and pantries. In the eight hours since the campaign began, the Commissary at Fort Buchanan has sold well over 150 – eight pound bags to customers for a total of 1,200 pounds of food to feed the needy.

Fort Buchanan leadership set the example as Garrison Commander Col. Tomika M. Seaberry; Deputy Garrison Commander, Lt. Col. Brian Mandock; Deputy to the Garrison Commander, Yvette L. Castro and Garrison Command Sgt. Maj. José A. Banks, contributed to the campaign by buying bags of food June 14, 2022.

“We prepared each bag with non-perishable food items, each weighing eight pounds with a bar code on the sealed brown bags. The commissary customer comes in and located in the entrance, grabs a bag and pays for it upon check out. The bag is then placed in a large collection point that will be given to the Fort Buchanan Religious Support



Office for delivery to Soldiers and military families in need; food banks and pantries,” said Commissary Director of Store Operations, Joseph E. Dobrovolc. “The campaign begins in June until September, with seasonal reminders to donate throughout the year,” said Dobrovolc.

As of June 30, 2022 the Fort Buchanan Commissary has sold 1,187 bags of food, with a sales value of \$17,805 and weighing 11,632.6 pounds. In collaboration with the installation Religious Support Office, Garrison Command Chaplain, Maj. David S. Keller and Religious Affairs Noncommissioned Officer, Staff Sgt. Juan Merced Jaipersad

have distributed 907 bags of food to the Puerto Rico Air National Guard; Puerto Rico National Guard; Army Reserve, 1st Mission Support Command; Iglesia Alianza Cristiana (Christian Alliance Church) Santurce, which has a homeless community program; Navy Reserve; installation Department Emergency Services (DES); Fort Buchanan Fire Department; Casa Protegida Julia De Burgos, first shelter established in PR, for women and children survivors of domestic violence; installation Police Department; Fort Buchanan Casualty Assistance Center and the US Coast Guard. A total of 7,256 lbs. of food has been distributed to needy Service Members and their families, homeless people, and shelters.

“At Fort Buchanan we are a family, and as a family it is important we support and help each other,” said Col. Seaberry.

“I’ve been amazed at the providence in giving shown by our Fort Buchanan community. Thank you DeCA team for being so organized and enthusiastic about this season of donations. And thank you for allowing us the opportunity to bless hundreds of families in our footprint!” said Chp. (Maj.) Keller.

Traditionally commissaries world – wide compete with each other, to see who collects the most donations and the Fort Buchanan commissary team led by Store Director, Emmanuel A. De Leon and Dobrovolc are so excited and committed that the cashiers are competing amongst themselves to see who out sells the other. So far Cashier Migdalia Santiago has the lead with a total of 207 food bags sold.



Fort Buchanan celebrates the United States 246th Independence Day

Story by Rosie Irizarry, Public Affairs Specialist
Photos by Neysa Maldonado, Illustrator, Marketing Office
Family and, Morale, Welfare and Recreation

Due to torrential rains and local flooding the Fort Buchanan Independence Day Celebration was rescheduled from July 2, 2022 to the actual 4th of July with live music by “Los Mismos Son,” “Son Divas” and headliner, Melina León and her band. The event organized by the installation’s Directorate of Family and, Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) was attended by over 1,600 people who enjoyed the great weather, food trucks, artisans and spectacular fireworks show. Kids had fun at the inflatables, rock climbing and clowns.



children from the Fort Buchanan community.

“ Welcome , “ Bienvenidos!” This is my second 4th of July event!

The rain couldn’t stop us but we moved it till today, and this is even better because the weather is great. This is a wonderful event. I am here with my Command Sgt. Maj. who will say a few words.” said Col. Seaberry as she introduced for the first time at this event, the new Garrison

Fort Buchanan’s leadership, Garrison Commander Col. Tomika M. Seaberry and Garrison Command Sgt. Maj. Roderick W. Hendricks presided over the igniting the brilliant fireworks show with the assistance of

Command Sergeant Major.

“It is great to be here and I am real excited to be your next Garrison Command Sgt. Maj. It’s a privilege to be

back as I was stationed here about ten years ago, so I understand the culture. I’m thrilled to be here and am looking forward to the fireworks this evening. I want to give a thanks to our MWR team, let’s give them a round of applause and thank all our garrison staff, because events like these don’t just happen. We appreciate the staff and Commander for putting all this together,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Hendricks.

“I brought a couple of friends (indicating the



children). So I need all my friends to come up and as we count down to zero and get this party started!” said Col. Seaberry as they excitedly began the highlight of the evening, discharging the fireworks and patriotic music display.

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Connecting Families, Schools & Communities

Summer: a great learning opportunity

Story by Karina Altagracia Espada, Fort Buchanan
Child, Youth Service School Liaison Officer

It's summer! You and your family should be having fun and enjoying the warm weather, our beautiful beaches and all the wonderful activities that Fort Buchanan has planned for our community. It's the perfect time to be flexible (not unstructured), let go of the school year systems and routines you established with your kids and welcome a more relaxed and stress-free time. Nevertheless, you also want them to maintain and perhaps increase their math, reading and writing skills. But connecting the words, summer and learning, can be challenging.

One of the main reasons why summer learning is important is because it keeps the kids brain stimulated. Research suggests that children that are not exposed to any mentally challenging activity during the summer tends to present some sort of regression within fundamental math, reading, writing and comprehension skills. Also, not having the pressure associated with school translates to the child being able to focus, imagine and create in a more organic and intrinsic way which result in kids being happy and emotionally ready to learn. When we use this opportunity to develop fun educational activities, the learning process becomes a tool of not only improving the academics but to boost the child's sense of accomplishment in their abilities, meaning that they will be willing to embrace challenges, understand that talent can be developed, view failure as an opportunity to grow and recognize that effort leads to success.

All of this happens because it is during the summer that children develop more control over what they want to learn and how they

want to learn it. It is our responsibility as parents, legal guardians, or caregivers to be the source they reach out to for support and guide them during the process of developing activities that will help them satisfy their curiosity and construct their own knowledge.

Summer learning is a great opportunity to naturally make children realize that what they learn in school can be used in daily life, to nurture that child's autonomy, to foster positive relationships, improve communication, enhance their emotional competencies and self-awareness, and develop problem solving skills while still having fun. If we can instill in our children a sense of love for learning regardless the environment, then we are setting them up for success. In the words of Jo Boaler, a Stanford University professor: "...the difference between those who succeed and those who don't is not the brains they were born with, but their approach to life, the messages they receive about their potential, and the opportunities they have to learn." So, let's take advantage of the summer and start making those little brains and hearts grow!

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Chaplain's Corner

Keeping Your Head On a Swivel

Column by Garrison Command Chaplain
Maj. David S. Keller – "Serving with You!"

Have you ever heard the term, "keep your head on a swivel"? It means that you should take care to observe your surroundings. It is good advice, and one I greatly benefited from in my earlier years as an Infantry Soldier.

As I walked through many training exercises in the woods or in urban areas, leadership would always emphasize looking at your surroundings with intent. In fine Army fashion, it would typically go something like this, "Hey Keller, keep your head on a swivel!" or "What are you thinking? You're not on a walk in the park!" It may have sometimes been a loud reminder with a few other words injected, but in my days on deployment to various areas of the world, this piece of advice was a lifesaver.

Keeping my head on a swivel is just as pertinent today as it has been in other times in my life. It implies that I am aware of my surroundings and am ready to act. It is as simple as looking both ways when I cross the street, or as complex as monitoring the physical and emotional landscape in my family. An awareness of what is around me allows me to be ready for life's events, both expected and unexpected.

Today, I would encourage you to be proactive about looking around you. What are the needs of your family? How are your neighbors doing? Is there something in your community that is breaking

apart? When you are looking, it provides opportunities to share a kind word, lend a hand to help, or take part in a community effort to make your town better.

Keeping your head on a swivel can also be a part of your effort to be physically, mentally, and spiritually ready for the days ahead. A popular Christian author, Henry Blackaby, wisely offers this prayer, "God, give me eyes to see where you are working around me, and the courage to join you in your work." When we are open to God's leading, we can experience and share the blessings of God in the world around us.

If you'd like to practice spiritual readiness this weekend, come join the Chapel community for one of our Protestant and Catholic services at the post chapel, Sundays:

Protestant Service: 9:30 a.m.
Catholic Mass: 11:30 a.m.

For more information, Fort Buchanan St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Community: <https://www.facebook.com/Fort-Buchanan-St-Francis-of-Assisi-Catholic-Community-115141189921692/> or the Fort Buchanan Chapel Protestant Service: <https://www.facebook.com/Ft-Buchanan-Chapel-Protestant-Service-101189707958782> which continues to be live streamed every Sunday.

American Legion Department of PR in partnership with USAG Fort Buchanan hosts a Transition, Employment Workshops and Career Fair

Story and photos by Rosie Irizarry, Public Affairs Specialist

The American Legion Department of Puerto Rico in partnership with the US Army Garrison Fort Buchanan, hosted a Transition, Employment Career Fair and Workshop providing opportunities for job seekers from the military community to meet with employers, network, and interview, at the installation's Community Club and Conference Center, June 24, 2022.

The workshops available to service members were Military to Civilian Translation/Resume where participants were taught how to communicate their military expertise in to their job applications and interviews; Federal Resume offered how to make the resume fit Federal internship and application requirements; Financial Literacy, provided knowledge on budgeting, emergency preparedness and long term investing; LinkedIn gave information on how to get noticed by hiring managers; a Networking Luncheon hosted by the Hiring Our Heroes, U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation for transitioning service members, military spouses, and veterans and in the afternoon a Career Fair.

“This is how communities develop, when you help



people develop. Today's event is all about moving ahead and helping each other. Together is better!" said Fort Buchanan Garrison Commander Col. Tomika M. Seaberry during her welcome remarks at the career fair.

“We are here to serve you, take advantage of this event and the American Legion Dept. of PR thanks you all for your service,” said Commander Carmen I. Rosario, the first female American Legion Dept. of PR Commander.

During the Career Fair, through over 30 informational booths the American Legion provided additional

preparation, education, and resume prep. Many agencies had online job application stations and points of contacts for military seeking jobs or persons transitioning from military service to the private sector. Some of the federal and private agencies present were, Internal Revenue Service (IRS); Federal Bureau of investigations (FBI); Homeland Security/Secret Service; KFC; Taco Bell; IHOP; local television channel, WAPA TV; Amazon; Veterans Administration; Banco Popular; Hiring Our Heroes; SkillMil; various posts from the American Legion; Core Civic and the PR Department of Employment and Human Resources to name a few.



USAG Fort Buchanan conducts 3rd Quarter Newcomers Briefing “Arrive Strong”

Story and photos by Rosie Irizarry, Public Affairs Specialist

The US Army Garrison Fort Buchanan, Directorate of Family and, Morale, Welfare and Recreation, Army Community Service (ACS) conducted its 3rd Quarter Newcomers Briefing at the installation’s Community Club and Conference Center, June 16, 2022.



Garrison Commander Col. Tomika M. Seaberry welcomed 24 new members of the Fort Buchanan community Service Members and Civilians, providing general insight on the installation, COVID-19 protocols, “Welcome to the Fort Buchanan family! You will see me walking around the installation, at the Exchange, the Commissary, please feel free to talk with me about how it is going for you and your family on the installation,” said Col. Seaberry.



Deputy to the Garrison Commander, Yvette L. Castro who supports the Garrison Commander in accomplishing the mission of overall base operations management for the garrison and tenant activities, also welcomed the 24 newcomers in attendance.



Among the new arrivals were the Rodriguez Army Health Clinic Commander, Lt. Col. Alex C. Montgomery and 1st Mission Support Command, Command Inspector General, Lt. Col. Rafael G. Pérez accompanied by his wife, Natalia Curbelo and their children Lucas G. and Sofia. “This was a very informative briefing. It was high energy starting with the Garrison Commander’s opening remarks. It is one of the best briefings I have attended in my 20 years of service,” said Lt. Col. Pérez.

Presenters from twenty nine garrison directorates and tenant organizations such as the directorates of, Emergency Services, Police, Fire and Security; Human Resources; Safety Office; Resource Management, Equal Employment Opportunity; Religious Support Office; Rodriguez Army Health Clinic; Tricare, Red Cross, and the Army Air Force Exchange Service, briefly explained their services, locations and points of contact. Each had information tables where, after the presentations, the new members of the Fort Buchanan community walked around, received personal orientation and gathered printed information, in some cases they were even able to establish appointments for service.



Rodriguez Army Health Clinic conducts Change of Command Ceremony

Story and photos by Rosie Irizarry,
Public Affairs Specialist

The Rodriguez Army Health Clinic (RAHC) at Fort Buchanan conducted a Change of Command Ceremony, whereby Lt. Col. Joseph W. Walker relinquished his command to Lt. Col. Alex C. Montgomery at the Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Félix A. Santoni Reserve Center June 9, 2022.

The host and reviewing officer was Dwight D. Eisenhower Army Medical Center Commander, Col. Heidi P. Mon, who participated in the ceremony with Command Sgt. Maj. Natasha Santiago virtually via Teams. Present for the ceremony were RAHC staff; Civilian Aide to the Secretary of the Army (CASA), Luis A. Soto; CASA Emeritus Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Félix A. Santoni; Deputy Garrison Commander Lt. Col. Brian Mandock; various military leaders; Fort Buchanan tenants and garrison directors; Tricare / International SOS Government Services leadership and Veterans Affairs Caribbean Healthcare System, Executive Director, Carlos R. Escobar, among other distinguished guests.



A bouquet of red roses was presented to outgoing commander's mother on behalf of his spouse Kim, in gratitude for her dedication and support during his command, and a bouquet of yellow roses was given to incoming commander's spouse Michelle, welcoming her and the family to the RAHC and Fort Buchanan.

RAHC Executive Officer Maj. Juan C. Cancel serving as Master of Ceremony provided history and lineage of the RAHC in Puerto Rico and its role during times of war and peace in over one hundred years of Army medicine. "Key to the Change of Command Ceremony is the passing of the unit colors. The colors represent not only the heritage and history of the unit but also the unity and loyalty of the Soldiers and Civilians. These colors are the Commander's symbol of authority and represent his responsibility to the organization. Wherever the Commander is, there also are the colors," said Maj. Cancel as Lt. Col. Walker passed the RAHC Colors to Lt. Col. Montgomery.

Col. Mon during her remarks highlighted all of the impressive successes of the RAHC during Walker's command and said, "Joe (Lt. Col. Walker) many thanks for all you have done, we wish you well and are excited for you in your new adventures."

"Now we welcome the Montgomery family taking the reins of the Rodriguez Army Health Clinic. Having served with Alex (Lt. Col. Montgomery) in a previous assignment recently, I am absolutely thrilled he is joining this amazing team. This multitasking, agile and skilled leader is exactly what RAHC needs to continue

in its tradition of excellence. Army Medicine is Army Strong!" said Col. Mon.

During his farewell Lt. Col. Walker said, "I have been honored and humbled to serve as the RAHC Commander at such a pivotal and dynamic period," thanking his spouse and family for their love and encouragement, his staff and the representatives of military and government organizations for their team work and support. "Col. Mon and Command Sgt. Maj. Santiago, I greatly appreciate the trust and confidence in allowing me to serve in this prestigious organization for the last two years. To the wonderful amazing Team Rodriguez thank you for the warm acceptance into your organization and community and for your trust in me to lead our team of professionals," he concluded.

"Thank you for attending today's ceremony it's an absolute honor to be here with you. Col. Mon, I'm excited and motivated to again be a part of your team. Lt. Col. Walker, thank you for your leadership, mentorship and friendship. The team you constructed and the relationships you created drove this organization to exceed mission requirements in a time of unprecedented operational and medical demands. Sustaining those relationships and the lines of communication that you have built is one of the most important things that I can do help the RAHC to continue to excel in our mission to provide ready and sustained health service support and protection. To the RAHC Team it is an honor and a privilege to be your commander, I am excited to lead the organization and learn from you," said the Commander of the RAHC Lt. Col. Montgomery.



Fort Buchanan Women's Empowerment Week 2022 donations delivered to Puerto Rico's Casa Protegida Julia de Burgos

Story and photo by Rosie Irizarry, Public Affairs Specialist



During Fort Buchanan's Women's Empowerment Week 2022 held this past April, five boxes of adult and child clothes, food, detergent, toilet paper, hygiene products and diapers, gathered at various collection points throughout the installation were delivered to Casa Protegida Julia de Burgos (Casa Julia), June 23, 2022.

Executive Assistant to the Director of Casa Julia, Shareliz Andino and Social – Educational and Prevention Workshop/Activities Technician, Hectomarie Rivera met with Garrison Commander Col. Tomika M. Seaberry; Garrison Command Sgt. Maj. José A. Banks; Internal Review Audit and Compliance Officer, Katsi Y Medina; Grissel Rosa, Public Affairs Officer and Mary Keller garrison volunteer and spouse of Garrison Command chaplain, Maj. David S. Keller. Medina, Rosa and Keller were event organizers of the Women's Empowerment Week 2022,

among other garrison staff and volunteers.

Andino and Rivera expressed their thanks to Fort Buchanan for the support to survivors of domestic violence and their children. Col. Seaberry said she was proud that Fort Buchanan's Women's Empowerment Week 2022 not only served to enlighten, educate and recognize the contributions of women in the community but is able to help Casa Julia in their mission.

Chp. (Maj.) Keller and Religious Affairs Noncommissioned Officer Staff Sgt. Juan Merced Jaispersad added to the donations 20 bags, equivalent to 160 lbs., of food from the Fort Buchanan Commissary, part of the Feds Feed Families campaign. Chp. (Maj.) Keller and Staff Sgt. Merced Jaispersad delivered all the donations to Casa Julia. Casa Julia is the first shelter for women survivors of domestic violence, established in Puerto Rico in 1979.

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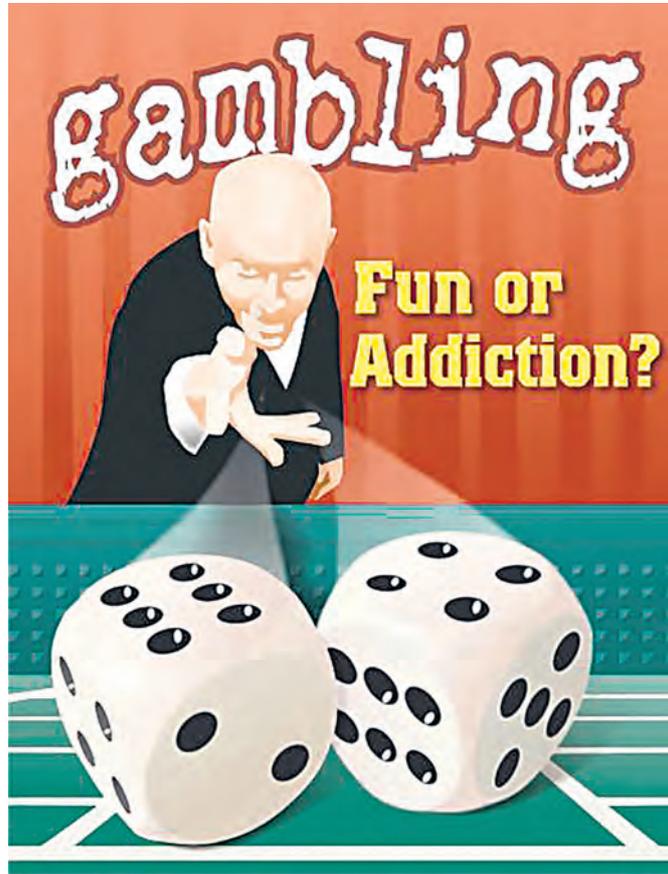
Gambling, Fun or Addiction?

Story by Maria N. Ortiz, Fort Buchanan Army Substance Abuse Specialist and Suicide Prevention Programs Manager

Gambling addiction, also known as compulsive gambling, is an addictive disorder that refers to the compulsive urge to gamble. Gambling is when something of value is risked in the hope of gaining something of greater value. This often involves the risking of money, but can include material goods or property as well. Gambling can occur most often, in the form of online or casino games, it can take place in all kinds of settings, i.e., lottery tickets, scratch cards, slot machines, and betting (e.g. sports, fixed-odds, virtual, spread).

Why is gambling addictive?

Gambling addiction can act very similarly to drug addiction. In both cases, the reward pathway in the brain can be stimulated, creating a sense of satisfaction. More specifically, the stimulation of this reward pathway triggers the release of a chemical messenger called dopamine, which leads to a euphoric feeling. Gambling products that enable easy and fast play, seen in particular with fixed-odds betting, can also be addictive, as ‘near wins’, which are losses disguised as a win, also excite the reward pathway in the brain. Eventually, gamblers can build up a tolerance, causing their brain’s neurons to adapt and produce less dopamine in response to that behavior. In order to overcome this, compulsive gamblers will often engage in riskier ventures to create the same sense of satisfaction and may find it difficult to stop gambling, leading to addiction and gambling disorder. However, it



problems or stresses. Additionally, individuals may lie in an effort to hide the extent of their problem and often put at risk important relationships and opportunities because of gambling. In some cases, individuals may have an increased likelihood of committing crimes such as theft—typically, in an effort to generate more money to gamble. When attempting to cut back on gambling, individuals may experience signs of withdrawal, such as depression, insomnia, cravings, anxiety, and irritability. The majority of people with gambling addictions are men. But this type of addiction can also affect women.

Most signs of this addiction are difficult for the individual themselves to recognize, and they may often display increased denial. If gambling addiction is suspected it is important that family and friends keep a watchful eye on these signs. If your loved one’s addiction is causing problems for yourself, such as anxiety, it is recommended to also seek mental health support for yourself.

Resources: USAG Fort Buchanan ASAP Tele: (787) 707-3125 Email: usarmybuchanan.usag.mbx.asap@mail.mil <https://recovered.org/addiction/behaviors/gambling-addiction>.

is important to note that not all individuals who gamble will develop a gambling addiction.

What are the signs of gambling addiction?

Gambling addiction is often described as being a silent addiction. However, it can cause a wide variety of signs and symptoms primarily manifested as behavioral changes. Problem gamblers often appear preoccupied with gambling by reliving past gambling experiences or planning future ones. A compulsive gambler may also resort to gambling in order to cope with personal

Compulsive Gambling Addiction Prevention Programs:

- Employee Assistance Program (EAP) - 1-866-580-9046
- Veterans Affairs Medical Center (787) 641-7582 x 12332
- Puerto Rico:
 - Hogar Divino Nino Jesus Inc (787) 794-0020
 - Hogar Santisima Trinidad (787) 799-1977
 - Consultores Psicologicos de PR (787) 721-4960



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Fort Buchanan Garrison Commander joins Grand Opening of new Exchange Medical Supply Service

Story and photos by Rosie Irizarry, Public Affairs Specialist



Fort Buchanan's Army and Air Force Exchange Service (PX) held the Grand Opening of its new Janz Medical Supply Store where Fort Buchanan Garrison Commander Col. Tomika M. Seaberry, Garrison Command Sgt. Maj. Roderick W. Hendricks, PX General Manager Andrea B. Frazier, PX Service Business Manager Marisol Rosario and Janz Store Manager Yesenia Hernández participated in the Ribbon Cutting Ceremony at the store located in the PX Mall, July 14, 2022.

"The Exchange is excited to bring this new resource to the Fort Buchanan community," said PX General Manager Andrea Frazier. "We're committed to making life better and more convenient for our Soldiers, retirees, Veterans and military families."

"This service and what Janz will bring, is important for our community," said Col. Seaberry. She also asked, because "we are in the midst of hurricane season, what about the stock available in the case of an emergency?"

"We always have a three to six month stock of medical supply and equipment and continually re-stock. We are prepared," said Janz Manger Hernández.

The Janz Medical Supply Store offers Soldiers, retirees, disabled Veterans, military families and other shoppers' convenient access to braces, crutches, CPAP supplies, maternity devices, mobility aids and more both on line and at the PX mall. The Janz shop at Fort Buchanan is part of the Department of Defense retailer's priority to expand these services on military installations worldwide, they are at 30 locations, mostly military bases and many are veteran owned. The store accepts TRICARE and most medical insurance. They are presently working on an agreement with the Veterans Administration (VA) on supplying VA patients with medical equipment and supplies. Customers may purchase in store, online with delivery to their home or online with in store pick-up.

"They're here, they're happy and ready to serve," concluded Frazier.

Janz is open Monday through Saturday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information, call (787) 289-5626.



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- Repatriación de Restos Mortales

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- Indemnización por perdida definitiva de Equipaje

- Localización de Equipaje retrasado o extraviado
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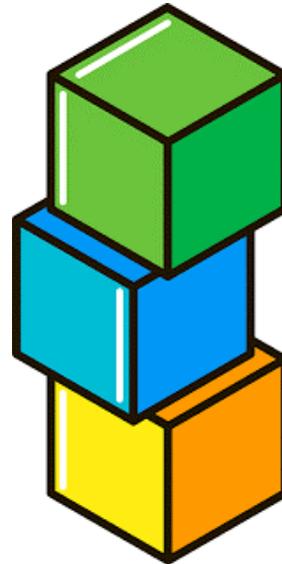


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Building Blocks Tips on building your child's development

Story by Soide Y. Rodriguez, Speech Language Pathologist,
EDIS (Educational and Developmental Intervention Services)



Playing with water is not only fun, but it can also improve a child's physical and cognitive development. When children play with water, they develop skills in "scientific exploration, mathematics, gross and fine motor skills and creative expression."

For more information:

<https://www.busybees.edu.au/blogs/the-benefits-of-water-play-for-childhood-development>
<https://empoweredparents.co/benefits-of-water-play/>





USAG Fort Buchanan Installation Safety Office **HEAT ADVISORY**



The National Weather Services has issued Urgent Weather Message Warnings about high heat index values for this summer. Take preventive measures.

Ways to Protect Yourself and Others

Ease into Work. Nearly 3 out of 4 fatalities from heat illness happen during the first week of work.

- ✓ **New and returning** workers need to build tolerance to heat (acclimatize) and take frequent breaks.
- ✓ **Follow the 20% Rule.** On the first day, work no more than 20% of the shift's duration at full intensity in the heat. Increase the duration of time at full intensity by no more than 20% a day until workers are used to working in the heat.

	Drink Cool Water Drink cool water even if you are not thirsty – at least 1 cup every 20 minutes.		Dress for the Heat Wear a hat and light-colored, loose-fitting, and breathable clothing if possible.
	Take Rest Breaks Take enough time to recover from heat given the temperature, humidity, and conditions.		Watch Out for Each Other Monitor yourself and others for signs of heat illness.
	Find Shade or a Cool Area Take breaks in a designated shady or cool location.		If Wearing a Face Covering Change your face covering if it gets wet or soiled. Verbally check on others frequently.

First Aid for Heat Illness

The following are signs of a medical emergency!

- Abnormal thinking or behavior
- Slurred speech
- Seizures
- Loss of consciousness

- 1** > CALL 911 IMMEDIATELY
- 2** > COOL THE WORKER RIGHT AWAY WITH WATER OR ICE
- 3** > STAY WITH THE WORKER UNTIL HELP ARRIVES

Watch for any other signs of heat illness and act quickly. When in doubt, call 911.

<p>If a worker experiences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Headache or nausea Weakness or dizziness Heavy sweating or hot, dry skin Elevated body temperature Thirst Decreased urine output 		<p>Take these actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Give water to drink > Remove unnecessary clothing > Move to a cooler area > Cool with water, ice, or a fan > Do not leave alone > Seek medical care if needed
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