

# EL MORRO

SENTINEL  
OF THE CARIBBEAN



Story on page 4

Approximately 1,500 Soldiers from the 166th RSG Brigade participated in Fort Buchanan Garrison's tribute ceremonies and ruck march in remembrance of 9/11 conducted September 11, 2022 at the installation's Soldier Plaza. Fort Buchanan US Army Garrison Command Group, Police, Firefighters, Soldiers, Emergency Medical Service/First Responders, stand in honor and tribute behind the display in commemoration of 9/11. On the left is the wooden cross built by Fort Buchanan Firefighters to hold the placards with photos and information of the 400 fallen 9/11 Firefighters, First Responders, Police, NYC Port Authority personnel, the table with the bell for the observance of the "Last Alarm" Ceremony, the 9/11 Fire Helmet and 9/11 Flag of Honor. Photo by Rosie Irizarry, Public Affairs Specialist.



## Col. Tomika M. Seaberry Garrison Commander

Today and every day,  
we stand together

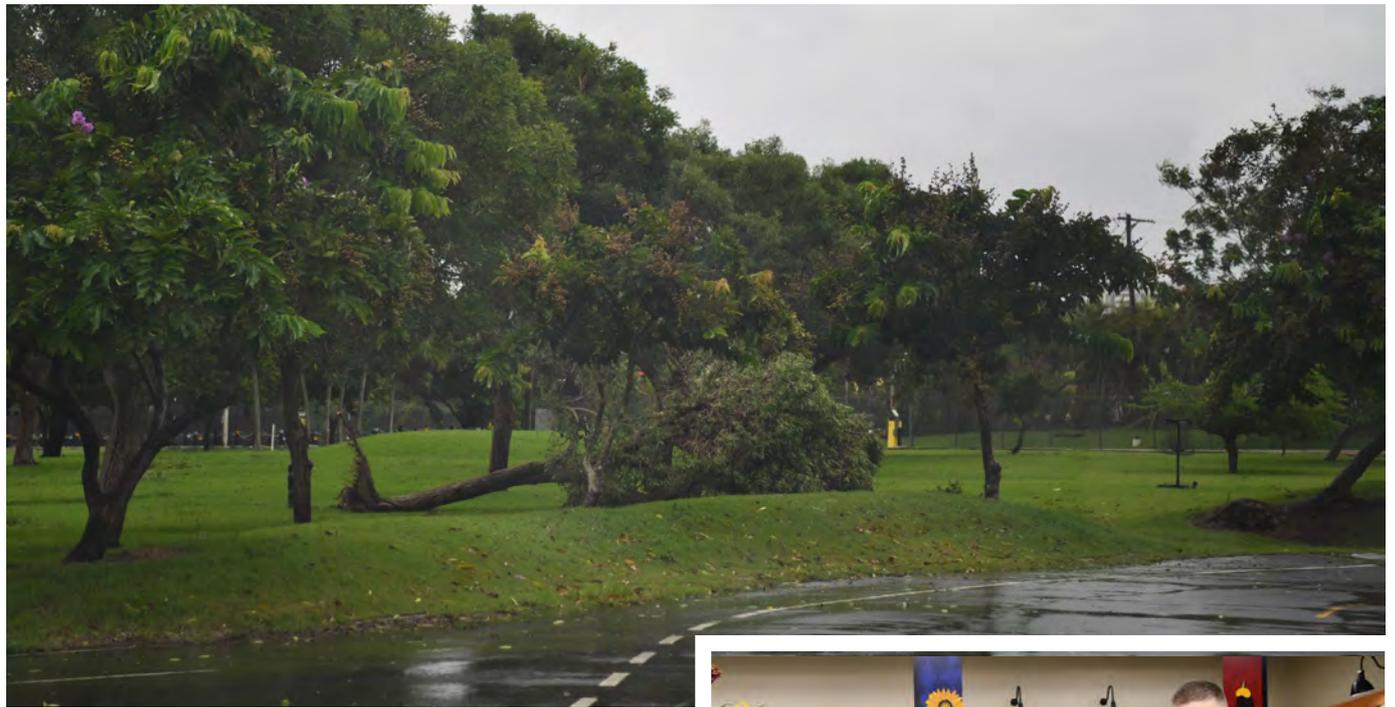
### To Our Fort Buchanan Community,

These last weeks have put our community to the test as we worked together to prepare for a Tropical Storm that later became Hurricane Fiona. As stressful as I know this experience has been and continues to be for many families around the island, I am uplifted and reassured by how people across Fort Buchanan worked and continue working to keep everyone safe.

The hurricane season is not over. We must remain vigilant. The strength and resiliency displayed throughout Fort Buchanan were heartfelt and inspirational, from our first responders to the garrison employees, tenants, and partners. Our collective efforts were critical in our response to protect our biggest asset, our people. We tried to share as many messages as possible to keep you informed regarding Fort Buchanan. Access to the installation remained open to all authorized personnel. Yet, some facilities provided limited services to optimize our support to operational missions while maximizing the safety of our workforce, service members, and families.

Dealing with changes is an inevitable part of life. In times of adversity, like that posed by Hurricane Fiona, we all must practice resilience and gratitude. I ask you to find that inner strength to see the rainbow after the storm. I know it's challenging and frustrating to have no lights, no water, or to be without both. Sometimes we are so busy adding up our troubles; we forget to count our blessings. There is always something to be thankful for, even in our darkest hours. I dare you to hunt for those good moments. When you do, you will find an abundance to be grateful for, even during the aftermath of Hurricane Fiona.

I especially thank our community for your patience, support, and strength during this emergency and your incredible empathy with our neighbors, the people of Puerto Rico. I know that many families around



Fort Buchanan prepared for the onslaught of Hurricane Fiona resulting in minor impact. Photo by Grissel Rosa, Public Affairs Officer

the island are still struggling with the aftermath of Hurricane Fiona. Our thoughts and prayers are with them. Saying thank you may not repay all the good things you have done. Fort Buchanan is a better place because of you. Someone is always ready to help others. Garrison military and civilian personnel, together with our tenants and partners, are always trying to make this installation a better place to live, work and train. I cannot thank you enough. You are a blessing to all.

Today and every day, we stand together to go through whatever may come our way. We are resilient and stronger than ever! Because...

We are Fort Buchanan! ¡Somos el Fuerte Buchanan!

Sincerely,

Colonel Tomika M. Seaberry  
Fort Buchanan Garrison Commander



While at a visit to the Commissary, during one of their many walks around the installation amid the emergency, Garrison Commander Col. Tomika M. Seaberry and Garrison Command Sgt. Maj. Roderick W. Hendricks met Puerto Rico National Guard Staff Sgt. Marquez, a Food Service Specialist with HHC Camp Santiago. Staff Sgt. Marquez, in an act of selfless service, left her four children with neighbors, while her husband was called to work, to buy food ingredients to prepare an "asopao" (Puerto Rican stew) for 30 Soldiers from the 190th Engineer Battalion on assignment in the municipality of Gurabo. "Thank you for your sacrifice to feed these Soldiers. It's hard to leave your family," said Col. Seaberry.



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

Be the leader your  
team deserves!

### Team Fort Buchanan!

As I write this, we are a week post Hurricane Fiona hitting our island, causing a lot of destruction for the people of Puerto Rico and for our team. I want to begin by thanking our Fort Buchanan community and partners for your continued support and resolve. It is because of you, that we were able to keep the post open and have all our services up within a few days.

Hurricanes are not the only crisis that we face as leaders. We wrapped up September as Suicide Awareness Month. The theme this year was "Creating Hope Through Action." This theme aligns with what the Army has been advocating for years; ASK, CARE, ESCORT (ACE). Hope is created for our struggling battle buddies when we ACT. If you, or someone you know, needs help, please contact the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline and press 1 for the military crisis line.

Whatever crisis we find ourselves in, be it a natural disaster, a suicide situation, or in a foxhole under fire; as leaders we are looked upon for leadership. Everyone in our formation is a leader. General George S. Patton is known for saying, "Lead me, follow me, or get the hell out of my way." Particularly in a time of crisis, we are looking to our leaders for guidance, while simultaneously leading our own teams. There are (at least) five leadership attributes to consider during a crisis.

**1- Be decisive.** If the decision is yours to make, own it. Make the decisions that rest at your level. Do not get so caught up in trying to make the perfect decision that you fail to make a decision (in a timely manner). And your decision will be better when you make time to include your team members.

**2- Be flexible.** In a crisis things continue to change. We have to be able to adjust fire and reset our target when necessary.



Command Sgt. Maj. Hendricks thanked Commissary staff for their service and helping the installation remain open during the passing of Hurricane Fiona.

**3- Be communicative.** To be flexible, we have to communicate. Change happens fast in a crisis and we need to ensure messaging reaches the lowest levels.

**4- Be confident.** We can be confident in our decisions when we KNOW that our people are trained in their technical and tactical tasks and physically fit. This is a result of knowing our people (TIMS – This is MY Squad).

**5- Be rested.** Even in battle our Soldiers need rest. Ensure your team is getting the necessary rest and recuperation.

**6- Be THERE.** Finally, we need to be there. Do your battlefield circulation to check on your team. This builds trust and provides leaders with firsthand knowledge. The first step to solving a problem, is to identify and define the problem. You will find that your team has no problem helping you with that!

Be the leader your team deserves!  
We are Fort Buchanan! ¡Somos el Fuerte Buchanan!  
Sentinel 7



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## USAG Fort Buchanan partners with the 166th RSG Brigade in remembrance of 9/11 “We Will Never Forget”

Story and photos by Rosie Irizarry, Public Affairs Specialist

September 11, 2001 has forever been engraved in the memory of Americans as they watched in horror the vicious attack on our Nation. US Army Garrison Fort Buchanan in partnership with approximately 1,500 Soldiers from the 1st Mission Support Command (1st MSC) 166th Regional Support Group (RSG) Brigade; Fort Buchanan’s Directorate of Emergency Services: Fire, Police and Emergency Medical Service Departments and with the participation of 100 Sailors from Navy Reserve Puerto Rico, US Marine Corps, Antilles High School Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps (JROTC), ROTC Battalions, family members, garrison staff, tenants and the community joined in remembrance with a 5k march carrying rucksacks weighing between 20 and 30 pounds September 11, 2022 at Soldier Plaza on post.

Prior to the initiation of the event, 400 photographs and names of 9/11 fallen Firefighters, Police, New York City Port Authority, Emergency Medical Service personnel and First Responders were given to participants to wear around their necks during the march. At the end of the event the placards were placed on a wooden cross built by FBFD firefighters.

The Garrison Commander called “Attention” initiating the formation of all participants and was immediately followed by the “Last Alarm” Ceremony conducted by the Fort Buchanan Fire Department (FBFD), narrated by Assistant Fire Chief Héctor Rivera. FBFD Firefighter Emilio Torres rang the Fire Bell three times as a tribute of remembrance to the victims of the tragic events of 9/11.

Some of the over 1,500 Soldiers filled and carried their rucksacks with canned food goods, which at the end of the march was collected by the Fort Buchanan Religious Support Office on behalf of the 166th RSG Brigade and delivered to the Puerto Rico Food Bank the following Monday. Approximately 2,500 lbs. of canned food was collected and donated.

“We acknowledge the participation of representatives of our armed forces and our first responders, members of our police and firefighting teams, as well as civilians who are here representing the countless valiant men and

women who became instant heroes on that fateful day. Today we recall the tragic events of September 1, 2001 and pay a tribute of remembrance to the victims of the act of terrorism that changed the spirit of our nation forever,” said Assist. Fire Chief Rivera in his opening remarks.

“I have asked Command Sgt. Maj. Hendricks to stand next to me because it is important for the leadership to be together. The 50 stars stand for the 50 states of the union, and the 13 stripes stand for the original 13 states. As I was reflecting on our symbol of freedom and I noticed another special magnitude of our flag. The stars are aligned in 9 rows and 11 columns. 21 years ago, critical infrastructures

like for our kids. As said by President Harry S. Truman, “America was not built on fear. America was built on courage, on imagination and an unbeatable determination to do the job at hand.” That is what our first responders represented during 9/11. I want to thank the 166th RSG Brigade for adding a food drive to our event, and you were encouraged to pack 30 lbs. of canned food to donate to the community. Even if only half of have that in your rucksack that’s thousand of pounds of food we will be donating to our community! To our heroes gone but not forgotten, let it be known they will always be with us in memory and spirit. To them and to each of you, you have earned your place among the greatest generations in the history of our Nation. We Are Fort Buchanan! God bless the families of those remembered, all of you, your families and God bless America,” said Garrison Command Sgt. Maj. Roderick W. Hendricks.

Fort Buchanan Firefighters carrying the US and Fort Buchanan 9/11 flags led the march, immediately followed by the Col. Seaberry, Command Sgt. Maj. Hendricks; Deputy Garrison Commander Lt. Col. Brian Mandock and Deputy to the Garrison Commander Yvette L. Castro.

In acts of tribute additionally to their rucksacks, service members carried litters-medical stretchers with 150 lb. mannequins, firefighting tools and varied sizes of hose packs some weighing 30 lbs. reenacting the sacrifices of first responders on September 11.

“Today is amazing. Look at all the folks we have here to commemorate the heroes of 9/11. I like working with Fort Buchanan Fire and EMS Departments,” said 166th RSG Brigade Commander, Col. Brian J. Slaughter.

“The Bell Ceremony is a touching way to remember the 9/11 fallen, a noble way to pay our respect. The Fort Buchanan Fire Department did a remarkable job and the march was conducted very well, with the water stations and all the participation. It was a great event,” said US Navy Reserve Puerto Rico Commanding Officer, Commander David F. Zerda.

Fort Buchanan Will Never Forget.



within our nation were destroyed or severely damaged and 2,996 people died from terrorist attacks. US Secretary of State, General Colin Powell said during September 11, 2001, “You can be sure that the American spirit will prevail over this tragedy... We have prevailed and we are stronger! Thank you for your support and service,” said Fort Buchanan Garrison Commander Tomika M. Seaberry.

“Twenty-one years ago, on September 11, 2001, I was a Staff Sergeant, attending an Army school, and at this Temporary Duty Assignment (TDY) I was permitted to have my family with me and together we watch the events unfold...we wondered what the future would look



# USAG Fort Buchanan receives the 2022 League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) Excellence in Service Award

Story by Grissel Rosa, Public Affairs Officer

Photos courtesy of LULAC and by Roberto L. Carrasquillo, Command Administrator



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.” This prestigious award recognizes the importance of giving back to our community through multiple outreach initiatives thanks to the extraordinary voluntary contributions of garrison employees, tenants and other members of the Fort Buchanan community.

Among the community outreach initiatives that were the basis for this award are: support to Corazón Azul, a non-profit independent living center for adults over 21 years of age with severe autism, where the team cleaned and painted the facilities; the year-long initiative conducted in coordination with the garrison’s Religious Support Office to collect food donations and deliver them to non-profit organizations; Foster Fun Day in which children from non-profit foster homes (boys) Casa de Niños Manuel Fernández Juncos and (girls) Hogares Teresa Toda participated in military displays, a K-9 unit demonstration, volleyball, bowling and board games, received bags with toys during a fun day that concluded with an afternoon at the water park.

These are only a few examples of the many initiatives USAG Fort Buchanan keeps doing and continues working on in the future, in conjunction with an outstanding team of volunteers. “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,” said Col. Tomika M. Seaberry, Fort Buchanan Garrison Commander.



# Fort Buchanan Garrison Recognition Ceremony for personnel support to LULAC “Defenders of Freedom” Award ”

Story and photos by Rosie Irizarry, Public Affairs Specialist



Over forty Fort Buchanan Garrison Staff, Tenants, and volunteers were, “gratefully recognized for their outstanding work and innovative ideas on community outreach initiatives that contributed to the US Army Garrison Fort Buchanan’s team becoming the recipient of the 2022 League of the United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) Excellence in Service “Defenders of Freedom” Award,” July 29, 2022 at the Fort Buchanan Community Club and Conference area.

“LULAC is the oldest Latino Civil Rights organization in the United States. It is not the community’s job to figure us (Fort Buchanan) out, it is our job to let them know who we are,” said Garrison Commander Col. Tomika M. Seaberry. She continued, “The most important thing we can give to others is our time and this is what you have done. Thank you and I look forward to more activities where we give of ourselves.”

“This is a testimony about what you all do as a team. Kudos to you and thank you,” said Garrison Command Sgt. Maj. Roderick W. Hendricks.

After the presentation of the Fort Buchanan Garrison Certificates of Appreciation a Retirement and Farewell Ceremony was held for Directorate of Public Works (DPW), Business and Integration Division Chief Carlos O. Guzman. Guzman was presented with the Commander’s Award for Civilian Service for outstanding and meritorious service for close to thirty years of service to the Army and the Nation and received the Certificate of the Honorable Order of the Sentinels making him a Honorary Member of “The Sentinels”.

“Fort Buchanan has earned a lot of awards because of the work DPW and Carlos have completed. Now the U.S. Army Garrison Fort Buchanan Honorable Order of ‘The Sentinels’ can only be earned for the selfless things you have done, thank you for everything, for making my job easier,” said Col. Seaberry.

“The Service Culture we all profess is inside of each if us. If you live that Service Culture, you will have joy and pleasure in your job every day. Thank you so much for permitting me the honor to serve,” said Guzman.



(See centerfold for more photos)

# Fort Buchanan conducts Active Shooter Exercise with DODEA and FBI partners

Story by Grissel Rosa, Public Affairs Officer

Photos by Sgt. Alexis Vélez, Public Affairs Specialist PR National Guard and Rosie Irizarry, Public Affairs Specialist

August 30, 2022, at 9:30 a.m., USAG Fort Buchanan Garrison reported an active shooter incident as part of an exercise during Antiterrorism Month. The incident occurred at the Antillas High School (AHS), part of the Department of Defense Education Activity (DODEA) schools in Puerto Rico. An Exercise-Exercise-Exercise Active Shooter Alert message was in place via the mass notification system, garrison social media Twitter and Facebook page, web site and mobile Digital Garrison App (DGA).

School personnel received instructions to lock-in to the nearest rooms, while the installation went into a lockdown, activating Force Protection Condition Delta. The highest and most protective level that limits access to the installation with closure, while members of Fort Buchanan's Police worked with federal and local agencies to ensure the security and safety of the community.

Based on the scenario, two active shooters arrived at AHS staff parking area carrying assault weapons. They opened fire killing some students that were in front of the school premises. They continued walking in front of the school, looking inside through the glass windows and producing additional casualties of people who were next to the school gym.

School authorities alerted Fort Buchanan Police who arrived immediately at the site, engaged the two active shooters neutralizing one. The other ran to the back of the school taking some hostages that were hiding inside a warehouse after listening to the shots. The first active shooter was identified as a current 12th grade student. Simultaneously, FBI Operations Center received Fort Buchanan's call and mobilized agents from San Juan Office to the area.

Keeping the public informed in real time via social media, web site and DGA, was key for the success of this scenario. DODEA parents, some who were on post at the time of the incident, worried about their children, received information from the schools' authorities regarding the reunification area available after receiving the "All Clear" message from Fort Buchanan Police.

At the same time, FBI SWAT Team and hostage negotiator arrived on site, while Fort Buchanan Police secured an area to allow first responders and emergency personnel to treat the injured and report casualties. Release of information on injured or deceased had to wait until consent was given by injured and next of kin were officially notified.

At the warehouse area, the FBI hostage negotiator dealt with the second active shooter. One hostage was released. Negotiations continued with the shooter, a former AHS student, who had various requests such as an exit vehicle, among others. FBI SWAT Team assessed the situation taking appropriate actions that neutralized the active



shooter thus completing the exercise. Fort Buchanan community received the "All Clear" message through social media and DGA to return to normal operations. The exercise concluded with a real press conference with the participation of local media that included Wapa-TV, Channel 4 and two main newspapers, El Nuevo Día and Primera Hora.

In the Army, we train as we fight. Prior to the actual Active Shooter Exercise, the Directorate of Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security (DPTMS) Antiterrorism (AT) office conducted a Rehearsal of Concept (ROC) Drill led by AT Specialist, Héctor R. Herrera Camerón, August 16, 2022. The ROC drill objective was to assess the readiness,

procedures and protocols of garrison and partners in response to an active shooter emergency.

Among the various elements participating in this exercise were DPTMS personnel who served as observers such as the Chief of Plans and Operations José R. Boria, Chief Observer and Controller; Stephanie Acosta, Administrative Assistant in charge of moulage make-up, other staff members provided support at the Emergency Operations Center (EOC). DODEA Mid – Atlantic Force Protection Officer, Jim Killilea and DODEA PR Community Superintendent, Vanessa Faerber's outstanding collaboration made this exercise possible using AHS premises as the incident site.

FBI brought various resources to the exercise to include the SWAT TEAM, hostage negotiator and Public Affairs Office. The Puerto Rico National Guard contributed with Sgt. Alexis Vélez, Public Affairs Specialist for photographic coverage of the active shooter incident. The Reserve component in Puerto Rico, the 1st Mission Support Command, provided over 10 Soldiers under the command of the Provost Marshal Noncommissioned Officer (NCO), Sgt. 1st Class Julián Rodríguez who posed as high school students, victims, hostages and distraught parents.

"The exercise and its positive results are proof that Fort Buchanan does everything possible to provide the greatest possible security to all the people who are here," said

Lt. Col. Brian M. Mandock, acting garrison commander.

Fort Buchanan remains resolute in its efforts to train garrison employees and tenants to understand the risks faced, how to react and the resources available in case of an active shooter incident. It is through repeated practice that we develop the ability to react quickly and decisively to defeat this enemy, the active shooter. By integrating these exercises with a constant state of readiness, we ensure the safety and security of our community comprised of military and civilian personnel, retirees, Veterans and family members as part of Fort Buchanan's overall protection plan reiterating that "If you see something, say something." (See photos on following page)



# Fort Buchanan Garrison Recognition Ceremony for personnel support to LULAC "Defenders of Freedom" Award





# Fort Buchanan Child and Youth Services and Antiterrorism Office provide Active Shooter briefing at The Palmas Academy

Story by Karina V. Altagracia Espada, Child and Youth Services School Liaison Officer and José R. Boria, USAG Chief Plans and Operations  
Photos by Karina V. Altagracia Espada and José R. Boria



Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation (FMWR) Child and Youth Services (CYS) School liaison Officer, Karina V. Altagracia Espada, August 16, 2022.

The Palmas Academy, is one of several private schools outside the installation that provides school services to active-duty military dependents through contractual agreement with DODEA. The Palmas Academy is a unique college prep institution that offers a demanding academic program. The academy requested support to receive the active shooter incident briefing in order to be better prepared.

US Army Garrison Fort Buchanan as part of the US Army Antiterrorism Awareness Month, expanding community outreach is an important element to protect US Army personnel and critical resources from the threat of terrorist action. Communicating and educating Soldiers, Army Civilians, Family members, retired service members, and Army contractors on the potential dangers and counter-defense against terrorists, is an Army-wide effort, it is important to

reach all corners of Army communities.

Altagracia Espada who serves as liaison between the DODEA school community, to include local public-school districts, private schools, home school families and the installation, coordinated this event which was beneficial for students from military families attending this school.

During the briefing, teachers and personnel were able to participate, learn and provide feedback, about how to proceed in the unfortunate event of having an active shooter in their institution and surroundings. Herrera also identified and provided guidance in areas where the school can improve and become safer.

Preventing an active shooter incident is a challenge, but working together, sharing information and educating the community can minimize the number of casualties in the event of this type of occurrence. Let's keep working together to support our community because that is what make us Fort Buchanan.

Teachers and staff of The Palmas Academy, a Department of Defense Education Activity (DODEA) affiliated school located in the municipality of Humacao, received an Active Shooter briefing conducted at the academy, by Fort Buchanan Garrison Antiterrorism Specialist, Héctor R. Herrera Camerón and coordinated by Directorate of

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# USAG Fort Buchanan celebrates August – Antiterrorism Month “Always Ready, Always Alert”

Story and photos by Rosie Irizarry, Public Affairs Specialist



August is Army-wide Antiterrorism Awareness Month and it is a good opportunity to raise awareness of the threat of terrorism, encourage vigilance, communication of potential threats and demonstrating how Soldiers, Civilians, Contractors and the community can be made aware and shielded from extremism, terrorism, insider threats, and vulnerabilities. Throughout the month of August, USAG Fort Buchanan conducted several events and activities with the goal of raising understanding and maintaining awareness of the threat environment surrounding its community.

The installation’s Directorate of Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security (DPTMS) Antiterrorism (AT) Office, led by AT Specialist Héctor R. Herrera Camerón kicked off AT Awareness Month with the signing by the Garrison Commander, of the Proclamation which declares “Now, therefore, I Colonel Tomika M. Seaberry do hereby proclaim August 2022 as Antiterrorism Awareness Month at

USAG Fort Buchanan and urge all citizens government agencies, public and private institutions and businesses to invest in the power of prevention and work together to make FORT BUCHANAN a safer, stronger, more caring community.” DPTMS and AT staff also handed out informative AT flyers at the installation’s Access Points at different times during the course of the month.

August 12, 2022 the Fort Buchanan AT Office conducted its 10th Annual Antiterrorism Symposium at the 1st Mission Support Command’s Sgt. Ramos Hall. The symposium was held in partnership with the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI). Present were Acting Garrison Commander Lt. Col. Brian Mandock; Deputy to the Garrison Commander, Yvette L. Castro; DPTMS Director, Héctor M. Morán and representatives of the 1st MSC Provost Marshall and AT Office; Puerto Rico National Guard; Criminal Investigations Division (CID); Fort Buchanan Directorate of Emergency Services, Police Department; Fort Buchanan Network Enterprise Center; Directorate of Human Resources; Logistics Readiness Center, Directorate of Public Works and Rodriguez Army Health Clinic.

“We cannot be complacent when it comes to terrorism. Thank you for taking the time to educate me and all of us,” said Acting Garrison Commander, Lt. Col. Brian Mandock in his opening remarks.

“Antiterrorism is a very important topic. We cannot tackle these threats alone, it has to be similar as in the military, to accomplish the mission the FBI has

changed, we share more information and more quickly – especially after 9/11. This includes domestic threats in Puerto Rico and among the topics we will be talking about today, Cyber Threats,” said FBI Special Agent in Charge of the San Juan Field Office, Joseph González during his opening remarks.

Agents in charge of specific groups provided the FBI’s Counterterrorism Overview; US Violent Extremist Mobilization Indicators; Domestic Terrorism Threat in Puerto Rico and the evolving threat landscape; Cyber Threat Overview (Computer Intrusion – Social Engineering); Cryptocurrency Overview followed by an open panel discussion.



**To provide the FBI with a tip go to: FBI - Tips and to file an online internet crime complaint from either the actual victim or from a third party to the complainant go to the FBI Internet Crime Complaint Center IC3 <https://www.ic3.gov/> .**

# Fort Buchanan Welcomes Back to School DODEA Teachers and Students

Story and photos by Rosie Irizarry, Public Affairs Specialist



Approximately 30 members of Fort Buchanan Garrison Command Group, directors and staff; Department of Defense Education Activity (DODEA) Mid Atlantic and PR Community leadership, and Army Air Force Exchange Service (Exchange) gathered on the main road towards the Antilles Elementary School (AES), Antilles Middle School (AMS) and Antilles High School (AHS) to welcome teachers on their first day back to school August 15, 2022.

Garrison Commander Col. Tomika M. Seaberry; Deputy Garrison Commander, Lt. Col. Brian Mandock; Deputy to the Garrison Commander, Yvette L. Castro; DODEA Mid-Atlantic District Superintendent, Kent Worford; Puerto Rico Community Superintendent, Vanessa Faerber and AMS Principal, Jared Collins carried balloons, welcome banners and signs. The Exchange provided colorful signs and donated gift baskets to teachers from the elementary, middle and high schools. Col. Seaberry; Exchange General Manager, Andrea B. Frazier; Worford and Faerber presented the gift baskets to the teachers as they drove by.

Teachers and school staff were all surprised by the bright balloons, cheering, whistle blowing and encouraging shouts they received as they drove by to report to their first day



at school. The first basket was given to Second Grade Teacher Lillian Hernández, “this is AWESOME! It is so unexpected. I really appreciate it,” she said.

“This is such a pleasant surprise!” said an enthusiastic Kindergarten Assistant Teacher, Yahaira Canales as she was presented a gift basket.

“¡Un Exitó!” exclaimed Middle School Teacher, Carmen Veray, “I feel honored, I am so surprised. We (teachers) need this!” she said as she walked back to her car with her gift.

“Teachers deserve this, to be recognized for their hard work. They do so much, and they have our kids for more hours than we do,” said Col. Seaberry. “This is incredible! In ten years of teaching here this is the first time an event like this is done for us. I was thinking of retiring ...but now I think no!” said Sixth Grade Teacher, Carmen Torres.

High School Special Education Teachers, Jazmin Cuevas and Michah John Hagood also received gifts, much to their surprise and appreciation.



Worford and Faerber expressed their excitement for students and teachers for the new year and their gratitude to Col. Seaberry, Command Staff and all participants for organizing the event; providing the banners, which were taken to each school for display, and for encouraging teachers and students. They also thanked Frazier and the Exchange for the signs, gift baskets and support.

Students began their return to school the following week. AES kids are welcomed daily with music, cheering and whistles by Acting Assistant Principal Dr. Veronica Rivera and paraprofessionals at the school’s main entrance, and by the main entrance of the middle school the Fort Buchanan Welcome Banners is in full display, as well as at the top of stairs inside the main entrance of the AHS.



“Fort Buchanan leadership is ready to contribute to empowering our children by providing a safe environment where they can thrive. The support of teachers, staff, parents and the community is the perfect combination to the success of our students. Welcome Back to School!” from USAG Fort Buchanan Command Group letter to DODEA partners posted on Facebook August 13, 2022.



# Back to school tips

Story by Karina V. Altagracia Espada,  
Child and Youth Service  
School Liaison Officer

We are at the beginning of a new school year. This is an adaptative period for school aged youth since they transition from summer vacations, a more relaxed experience, to a formal and systematic one. This is true for most kids, now imagine how stressful this process is to a military kid that might be starting school in a new place, with no friends, while facing the additional stressors of a parents' deployment. Here are a few tips to help kids and their families face the beginnings of a new school year with success.



### Talk about it

- Take the time with your kids to develop a plan for the transition back to school. Talking with your kids about this give them time to adjust to a new routine, face their fears or concerns and, if necessary, look out for support.
- If your child is having the typical stressors of a deployment look out for the Youth Sponsorship Program of your installation. This program connects



your child to another youth in the new community to help them through the transition process. The Fort Buchanan Youth Sponsorship Program takes place in the CYS School Age & Middle School Teen Centers. You can contact us by visiting building 1110, through phone (787) 707-3826 or reaching out to the School Liaison Officer at (787) 707-3400 or sending her an email to karina.v.altagraciaespada.naf@army.mil.

### Develop a sleep routine

- To ease into the transition of back to school successfully, start incorporating a bedtime routine two weeks prior the school year begins. This plan should incorporate a consistent time to turn off all electronic devices well before bedtime. It is proven that children with good sleep habits can focus, engage, and learn better than those who doesn't have such a routine.



### Build good homework and study habits

- If your kids don't have it already, create a designated space for studying without distractions. Make sure in this space they have all the school supplies and resources they might need.
- Develop a plan with your kids to include in their schedule a time for homework and for after school activities.



### Be present and a positive role model

- Keep in mind kids will learn through modeling and observation. So, the best gift you can provide to your children is to teach them how to be a successful adult by showing positive skills on how to embrace change and manage time and emotions. Be the person you would want them to become and show them all the time how much you love them.

#### Resources:

*End of Summer – Slump or Frenzy?* ([nexusfamilyhealing.org](http://nexusfamilyhealing.org))  
*Children Copy What They See: Here is What to Know* ([psychcentral.com](http://psychcentral.com))



## Seguros de Viajes

787-902-6566  
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- Servicios prestados por Médicos
- Medicamentos Recetados
- Exámenes y Procedimientos Diasgnósticos
- Servicio Dental por Emergencia
- Traslado por Emergencia Médica
- Repatriación de Heridos o Enfermos
- Estadía de Hotel durante Convalecencia ordenada
- Repatriación de Restos Mortales

- Traslado de Familiar para acompañarle en la Convalecencia
- Estadía de Regreso, en fecha diferente a la prevista
- Repatriación de menores, hasta los 15 años de edad
- Asistencia Legal en caso Accidente de Tránsito
- Reembolso de Gastos or demora o cancelación de Vuelo
- Localización de Equipaje retrasado o extraviado
- Indemnización por perdida definitiva de Equipaje

- Localización de Equipaje retrasado o extraviado
- Compensación por Equipaje no localizado (en 72 horas o más)
- Regreso por fallecimiento de un familiar
- Regreso por un siniestro en su domicilio
- Pérdida de Conexión Aérea
- Pérdida de Pasaporte



## Fort Buchanan Garrison Commander welcomes new guards at installation's The Borinqueneers Gate

Photos by Rosie Irizarry, Public Affairs Specialist



(Center) Fort Buchanan Garrison Commander Col. Tomika M. Seaberry poses with (L) Fort Buchanan's only female Police Guard, Yaliza Alvarez, and 1st Mission Support Command 215th MP Co. Spc. Velika Ruiz one of only two female military police on temporary duty assignment, supporting the Garrison at the installation access points. "I like what I do, I wanted to be a cop," said Alvarez.



While at The Borinqueneers Gate Col. Seaberry used the opportunity to welcome Veterans, Civilians, military and their guests on to the installation.

## Fort Buchanan FMWR staff recognized for making Fishing Fun Day at Las Casas Lake a success

Story and photo by Rosie Irizarry, Public Affairs Specialist

On a sunny Saturday in April the staff of the Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation (FMWR) held the Las Casas Lake first Fishing Fun Day for children 6-13 years old, in recognition of the hard work that resulted in the success of this event and the celebration of a second Fun Fishing Day in August Fort Buchanan Garrison Commander Col. Tomika M. Seaberry and Garrison Command Sgt. Maj. Roderick W. Hendricks bestowed on Greens Manager, Justin McEwen; Golf Course Laborers: Lupe Rosario de la Cruz and Amadeus Pérez with Fort Buchanan's Honorable Order of the Sentinels 3 X 5 Bronze Medal at the offices of the installation's Golf Course.

"It's important to recognize people for what they do. Recreational Specialist, Kevin La Luz Rivera and I had dreams to bring more Outdoor Recreational Ac-

tivities to the base, Kevin actually developed the Fishing fun Day Program and did the first Catch n' Release at las Casas Lake. We asked Justin and our Golf Course Maintenance Crew to clear areas and they took out trees and replanted extra bushes, made trails, chipped trees which resulted in the first Fishing Fun Day with the participation of US Coast Guardsmen, Navy and Army personnel and their kids. Thank you all for your hard work," said FMWR business and Recreation Chief, Thomas M. Kinney.

"Stay tuned for activities coming in the near future to Las Casas Lake!" said Golf Course Business Manager and Pro, José E. Rodriguez.





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## Taking joy in the simple things

Story by Maj. David S. Keller, Garrison Command Chaplain –  
“Serving with You!”



are dependent on others... and I would suggest that they are way more open to a dependence on a transcendent God who provides.

A great Bible passage to reflect on is Isaiah 26:3, “You will keep in perfect peace all who trust in you, all whose thoughts are fixed on you.” When we keep our eyes and thoughts fixed on the providence of God, we can take a deep breath and realize, we can have peace. Instead of focusing on what could have been, or what I can’t have, I can move to a place of thankfulness for what I do have, and appreciate the beauty around us that we all too often ignore.

Have you ever been worried? I mean, really worried about something? It sounds like such a simple question, but the answer to the question can reveal a lot about your life.

Of course, the answer is yes. Everybody has worried over something for a time, maybe even lost sleep over an issue, or wondered about the status of a relationship. You’ve probably even delved into the mental, “what ifs?” What if I don’t do well on the test? What if I don’t get the promotion? What if my health checkup reveals that I am not well? There is a lot to cover in each of those questions, but they all have something in common – anxiety.

An anxious heart robs you of peace and contentment in life. In 2017, the World Mental Health Survey Consortium released a report stating that Australia, New Zealand, America and Ireland had some of the highest recorded levels of anxiety in their population while counties with relatively modest economies suffered far less with anxious thinking. Why would that be, do you think? I would propose that the more affluent life we live, the greater the chance that we think that we can control all the outcomes, while those who don’t have much

So today, take a moment and reflect on your life. Appreciate those people who have meant a great deal to you. Reach out to them and thank them. If you are at odds with someone, if at all possible, seek forgiveness despite any bitterness you may feel. If you are worried, spend time in prayer. Go to church or spend time in meditation on what is good and pure.

Don’t let anxiety get the best of you. We are all prone to stress and worry, but God has given us a better way. Take joy in the simple things, reach out to God through prayer, and stay connected with friends and family.

**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.

## Suicide warnings on Social Media “We’re in this Together”

Story by Maria N Ortiz Navarro, Suicide Prevention Program Manager

Photos by Rosie Irizarry, Public Affairs Specialist



This year has been very intense for some people. One topic that no one wants to talk is suicide. September is National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month, an excellent time to share a message of hope and healing, connecting with family, friends and community, “We’re in this Together.” Fort Buchanan Directorate of Human Resources (DHR) Suicide Prevention Program conducted Suicide Prevention Training for its workforce August 26, 2022 and at the Exchange Main Store lobby, Fort Buchanan’s Acting Garrison Commander, Lt. Col. Brian Mandock signed the Suicide Prevention Awareness Month Proclamation, September 1, 2022.

“The US Army Garrison Fort Buchanan Suicide Prevention Program is committed to reducing the frequency of suicide attempts, deaths, and the pain of survivors affected by suicide of loved ones through an educational program and prevention services,” states the



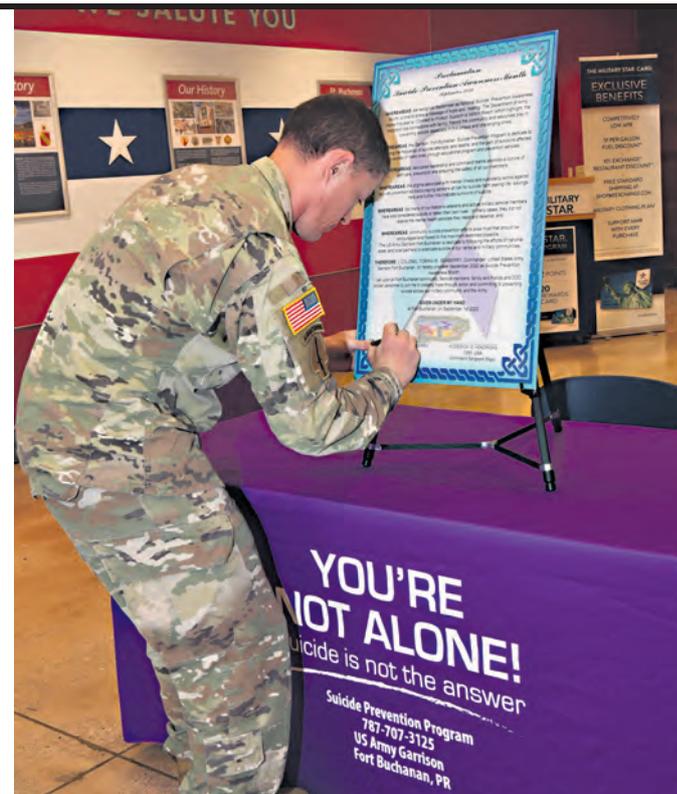
signed Proclamation. To put into action this awareness campaign, it is important to recognize the warning signs when a colleague or friend is struggling and this can include misuse of social media. Social media often creates a sense of community and closeness for Soldiers, family member’s and others. Beyond sharing viral videos and memes, it allows individuals to connect with one another outside of face-to-face contact. These platforms may also serve as an outlet to express vulnerabilities. You can help prevent suicide by actively intervening when a battle buddy shares suicidal ideation (thinking about, considering, or planning suicide) on social media.

When someone shares feelings of hopelessness, emotional pain, and/or self-harm on social media, take the posts seriously by acting quickly and responding compassionately. Responding to concerning messages on social media should not be different than engaging with someone in person. You don’t know then size of the issue or if they are just venting, blowing off steam, but you’ll never know unless you take two minutes to send them a message, call them on the phone, or visit them in person, start that conversation. If you see messages that seem out of character, don’t ignore them.

Reaching out may feel awkward but connecting could save a life. If you’re unsure of what to say, consider:

- Getting your friend’s backstory and listening without judgement.
- Relating to what they’re saying and validating their feelings.
- Giving hope.
- Remembering ACE - Ask, Care, and Escort so that they can get the help they need. Several social media platforms have built-in tools and resources for users to report messages that mention distress and self-harm.

You can also call the Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 988 for support if you encounter a message on social media that alludes to suicide or suicidal ideation. The new “988” number can be used by the individuals or those looking to assist people who are contemplating suicide or are experiencing other mental health crises’. We all have an important role in preventing suicide and as individuals, we can share messages of hope and healing, and remember that talking about suicide with our loved ones does not increase their risk of harm.



### Risk Factors:

- Owning a weapon – access to lethal means
- Poor coping skills – inability to handle stress and adversity
- Changes in behavior
- Relationship difficulty – breakup/divorce
- Drug and/or alcohol misuse

### Protective Factors:

- Social support (sense of belonging)
- Positive coping skills (manage stress effectively/ finding purpose/setting goals/exercise)
- Attitudes and beliefs (it’s OK to seek help; you don’t have to do it alone)

### Warning Signs:

- Talking about suicide/death
- Expressing hopelessness and helplessness
- Sleep issues (not getting enough sleep affects judgment, ability to manage emotions)
- Increased use of alcohol/drugs
- Concerning texts or posts (social media/text)

The Garrison Fort Buchanan Suicide Prevention Program is committed to empower and to build awareness to our community. #BETHERE, contact us at: DSN: 740-3125 COM: (787) 707-3125 USAG Fort Buchanan ASAP Email: usarmybuchanan.usag.mbx.asap@mail.mil Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 988. Employee Assistance Program (EAP) - 1-866-580-9046

For help, questions and additional information: <https://www.armyresilience.army.mil/suicide-prevention/index.html>

# Hurricane Preparedness during the height of the 2022 season

Story by Carlos J. Lebrón, Fire Department Assistant Chief of Training

Around mid-September we are in what is typically known as the peak of the 2022 hurricane season, it is important to review what we know about these atmospheric formations. Hurricanes are huge tropical storms that move in a counterclockwise spiral. They form in the eastern Pacific Ocean, the Caribbean Sea, the Gulf of Mexico, or the southern Atlantic Ocean. The storm's calm center, called an eye, is about 20 to 30 miles wide. The storm around the eye can extend outward 400 miles with winds in excess of 74 mph. It's important to know what to do before, during, and after a hurricane.

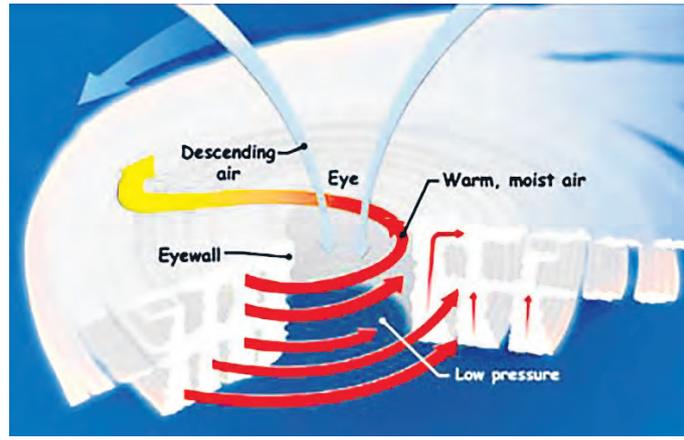
## SAFETY BASICS:

### BEFORE

Have a hurricane disaster plan: Locate local shelters. Map the route to a nearby shelter; this will cut down on the travel time. Make sure you know how to get there before an evacuation order is issued.

If you are not ordered to evacuate, find shelter in your home. The safest place during a hurricane is an interior room without windows. Get your home and yard ready for a hurricane. Install hurricane shutters; remove dead and diseased trees and branches; identify items in the yard that should be brought inside; clean rain gutters, outside stairwells, window wells, drain lines, and downspouts.

- Family members can become separated during a hurricane. Be prepared by creating a plan for how to reach one another. Establish an out-of-area contact (such as a relative or family friend) who can coordinate family members' locations and information should you become separated. Make sure children learn the phone numbers and addresses, and know the emergency plans.
- Prepare a family disaster supplies kit. Families with children should have each child create their own personal pack.



If you could slice into a tropical cyclone, it would look something like this. The small red arrows show warm, moist air rising from the ocean's surface, and forming clouds in bands around the eye. The blue arrows show how cool, dry air sinks in the eye and between the bands of clouds. The large red arrows show the rotation of the rising bands of clouds. Graphics courtesy of <https://spaceplace.nasa.gov/hurricanes/en/>

### DURING

If a hurricane watch has been issued for your area, conditions are favorable for and could produce a hurricane. Listen to the news and the weather updates and make sure you leave if an official evacuation is ordered. Cover your windows with hurricane shutters or plywood. Taping windows offer little or no protection against the winds. If a hurricane warning has been issued, a violent storm, possibly a hurricane, is expected within 24 hours.

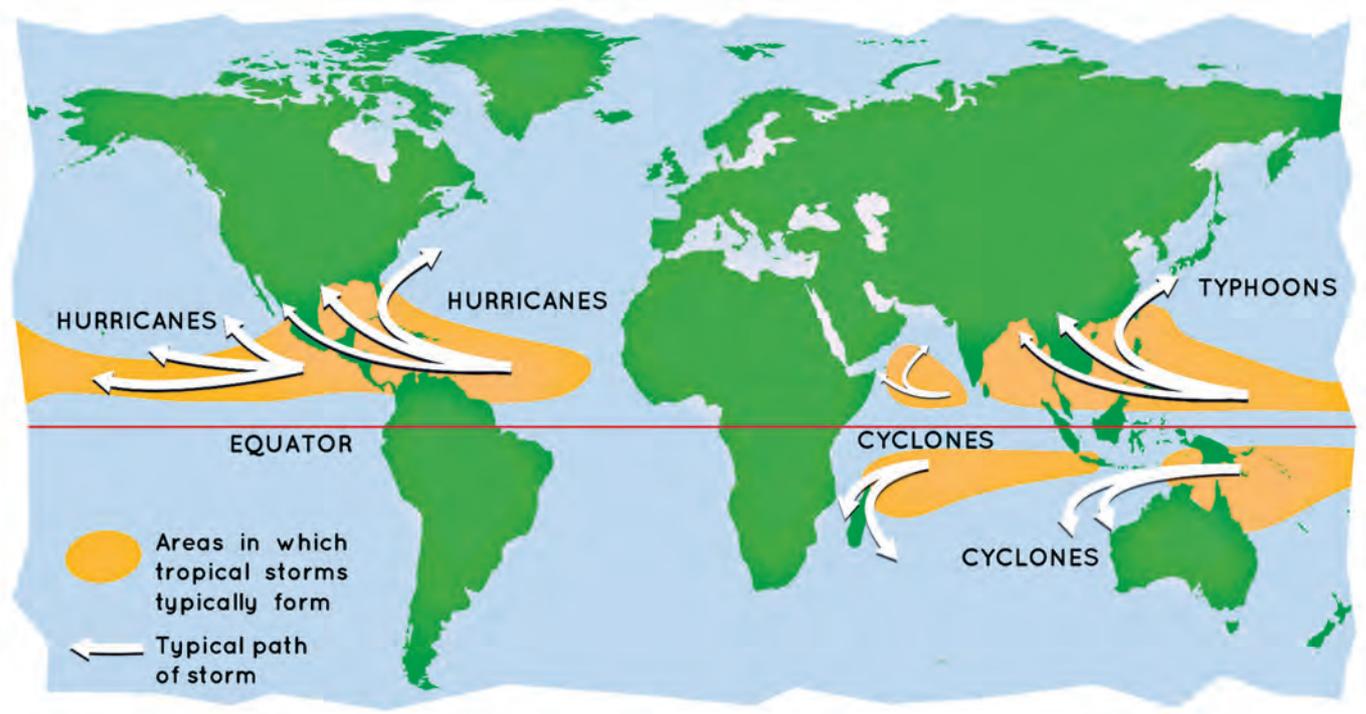
- Remain inside, away from windows and doors.

- During power outages try to avoid carrying a lit candle. Use flashlights instead. Don't use a lit candle when searching for items in a confined space. Never use a candle for a light when checking pilot lights or fueling equipment such as a kerosene heater or lantern. The flame may ignite the fumes. Read NFPA's candle safety fact sheet.
- Do not be fooled by the calm when the eye of the hurricane is above your area; the worst of the storm is probably yet to come.
- Be prepared for tornadoes caused by hurricanes; remain inside and at the center of your home or in a closet or basement.

If you are evacuated, take your family disaster supplies kit and leave immediately to a nearby shelter.

### AFTER

- Continue to listen to the news and weather updates. Often when the storm is over, damage still exists from floods, downed power lines, and electrically charged water.
- Stay out of buildings that have been damaged or flooded and obey detour and warning signs when driving. Never enter a flooded or barricaded roadway (even with a large vehicle) vehicles can be swept away by only two feet of water.



Source: NDEC (National Disaster Education Coalition), NWS

For more information contact the Fort Buchanan Fire Department Prevention Section at (787) 707-3410

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- 3 Somos expertos en beneficios financieros para Veteranos y sus Viudas.
- 4 Nos aseguramos de otorgarle todos los beneficios financieros que le correspondan a la hora de comprar una propiedad o refinanciar una hipoteca existente.
- 5 Mantenemos comunicación directa con la Administración de Veteranos para asistirlos en cualquier necesidad, aunque no sea financiera.
- 6 Con nuestro conocimiento usted obtendrá el mejor negocio financiero.
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- 8 Estamos sujetos a auditorías federales de las cuales hemos obtenido excelentes calificaciones.
- 9 Nuestro personal altamente calificado respeta y conoce las necesidades de los veteranos.
- 10 Llevamos 30 años en el negocio de Bienes Raíces en Puerto Rico y podemos orientarle de forma correcta.

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