

# 1st MSC GAZETTE

1ST MISSION SUPPORT COMMAND  
U.S. ARMY RESERVE PUERTO RICO AND VIRGIN ISLAND



## 100 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE AROUND THE GLOBE

VOL. NO.12 ISSUE 1/2022



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Reserve-Puerto Rico**

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## CENTENNARY CELEBRATION BALL

SATURDAY DECEMBER 10, 2022  
5:00 P.M. - 11:00 P.M. AST  
1000 AV. EL CONQUISTADOR  
FAJARDO, P.R. 00738

## GET YOUR TICKET!

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/centenary-celebration-ball-usar-puerto-rico-tickets-401445914537>

## FOR ROOM RESERVATIONS:

<https://reservations.travelclick.com/110716?groupID=3628519>



# 1ST MISSION SUPPORT COMMAND LEADERSHIP



Colonel Carlos M. Caceres  
1st Mission Support Command  
Commanding Officer

It is an honor and privilege to serve as the commanding officer for the U.S. Army Reserve in Puerto Rico and Virgin Islands, the federal U.S. Army command in the Caribbean. Since the formation of the United States Army Reserve in Puerto Rico in 1922, our reservists have courageously fought in every major conflict with many of our brothers and sisters paying the ultimate sacrifice to preserve the freedom that we enjoy.

Furthermore, following 9/11, 100 percent of the Army Reserve units have mobilized and deployed to answer the Nation's call to protect democracy and freedom. It is with great pride and utmost admiration to convey my most sincere thanks to hundreds of thousands of men and women who have served and continue to serve.



Command Sgt. Maj. Michael P. Meunier II  
1st Mission Support Command  
Command Sergeant Major

I have been extremely impressed with the professionalism exhibited by the 1st MSC soldiers and civilians across the command. I am so proud to serve as your Senior Enlisted Advisor! It is imperative we continue to improve the quality of life for our Soldiers (military life and civilian). By doing so, this will create a soldier for life, improve retention across the formation and assist in recruiting efforts. Senior leaders: continue focusing on our priorities; people, readiness, and modernization. Noncommissioned officers: Exude the NCO Creed, lead by example, train our soldiers! Soldiers: continue living the Army Values and Soldiers Creed. Never quit, never give up!

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[usarmy.usarc.1-msn-spt-cmd.mbx.pao@army.mil](mailto:usarmy.usarc.1-msn-spt-cmd.mbx.pao@army.mil)

1st MSC Gazette is published by the Public Affairs Office  
located at the 1st MSC Headquarters  
BLDG 353-354, St. Citizen Soldier Way  
Fort Buchanan PR 00934-4608.



# Army Reserve Ambassador inducted into Quartermaster Corps Hall of Fame



**S**AN JUAN, Puerto Rico— Retired Brig. Gen. Fernando Fernandez, former commanding general of the 1st Mission Support Command from 2009 to 2013, still lives his commitment as a citizen-soldier serving as one of the two Army Reserve Ambassadors for Puerto Rico.

**"**My aspiration was to make it to captain," said Fernandez. "I never thought I would go beyond that but once you're in this organization the professionalism, loyalty and dedication from your peers motivates you to continue in this career." The Army Reserve Ambassador program was established in 1998 to spread awareness of the Army Reserve's mission and to identify initiatives and objectives put in place by the Chief of Army Reserve.

**A**s well as helping the commanding general who can't be in all places at once, it is important for Ambassadors to attend conferences and ceremonies on his behalf to show support and spread the word on the greatness of citizen-soldiers. "The ambassador program designates people with influence in the community to serve as liaisons or links between civilian communities, businesses, local government and the Army Reserve command," said Fernandez.

**B**eing an Ambassador also means doing their best to help with any issues or problems and most importantly disseminating information. This year the United States Army Reserve in Puerto Rico is celebrating its 100th year of service to the military and the Nation.

**W**ith the deactivation of the 373rd Infantry Regiment in 1922, members of that unit became the first element of what was known back then as the Organized Reserve in Puerto Rico, explained Fernandez. Since then, reserve soldiers from Puerto Rico have fought in World War II, Persian Gulf, the former Yugoslavia, Iraq and Afghanistan.

**L**ate last year Fernandez was also inducted into the Quartermaster Corps Hall of Fame, an honor for members of the quartermaster corps who have had a distinguished career and have enhanced the reputation and history of the corps. "That honor is not only for me, it's for all the soldiers in the Army Reserve Puerto Rico because very few army reservists get inducted into the hall of fame," said Fernandez. It's indeed an honor and I humbly accepted, he concluded.

**C**reated in 1986 the Quartermaster Corps Hall of Fame award is the highest form of recognition the Corps offers, a selection board appointed by the Quartermaster General reviews all nominations for this high honor. Since 1922, the Soldiers of the United States Army Reserve in Puerto Rico have proven to be trained professionals with specialized military and civilian skills ready to perform in a dynamic environment.

Story by: Sgt. Halayla Vega,  
363rd Public Affairs Detachment



# 1st MSC Soldier serves as linguist in France

**N**ORMANDY, France— Since most of the 1st Mission Support Command soldiers are bilingual in both English and Spanish, their language skills bring value to the Army and Joint Force. Staff Sgt. Xavier Guerra, assigned to the 402nd Civil Affairs Battalion, is an example, as he is a certified polyglot for French, Spanish, English, Italian and Portuguese.

**R**ecently, the U.S. Army Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Command requested Staff Sgt. Guerra to serve as a linguist during the 507th Parachute Infantry Regiment Memorial in Picaudville to commemorate the service members that served on D-Day.

**O**n June 6, 1944, more than 160,000 allied troops landed along a 50-mile stretch of the heavily-fortified French coastline to fight Nazi Germany on the beaches of Normandy. More than 9,000 allied service members were killed or wounded, but their sacrifice allowed more than 100,000 soldiers to begin the slow, hard slog across Europe to defeat Adolf Hitler.

**“**Every year, I take the Defense Language Proficiency Test, DLPT, in all languages to ensure I am current and prove my language proficiency,” said Staff Sgt. Guerra. “I supported Operation Overload 78th and participated in multiples ceremonies all over Normandy by writing speeches, in English and French, for guest speakers and serving as an interpreter for any service member requiring assistance.”

**S**taff Sgt. Guerra said he learned the languages through different phases of his life. As a native of Ecuador, he acquired Spanish. He learned French during his college years, Portuguese when he served with the Department of Defense in the U.S. Embassy in Mozambique, and Italian during his travels.



**“**It’s a great feeling to serve my country in a different capacity than my military occupational specialty,” said Staff Sgt. Guerra, an Army Reserve civil affairs soldier. “As an interpreter, I have been able to travel around the world and communicate with people from different cultural backgrounds.”



Story by: Staff Sgt. Katherine Ramos,  
363rd Public Affairs Detachment  
Photos from: Defense Visual Information  
Distribution Center



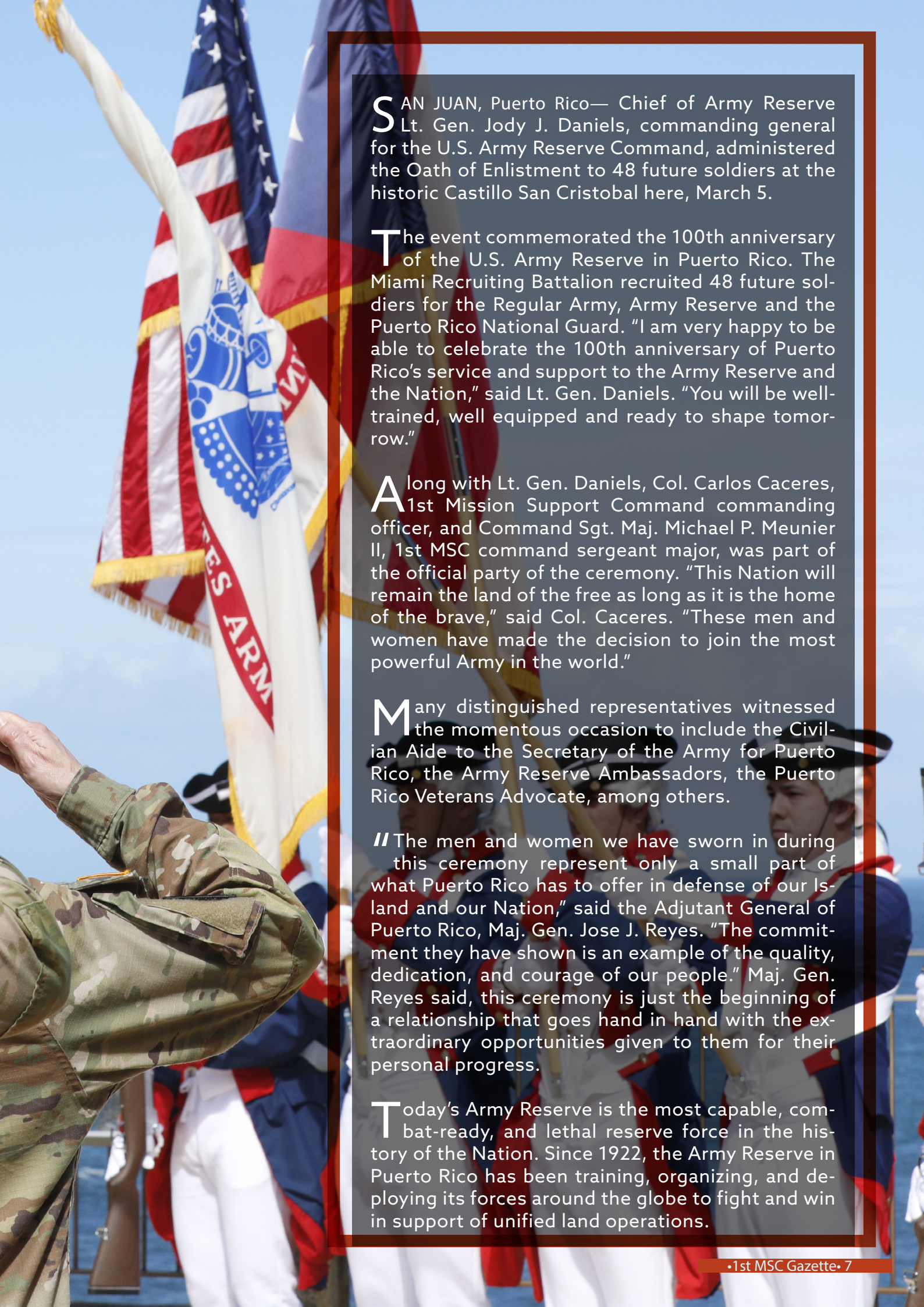
# Chief of Army Reserve administers oath of enlistment in Puerto Rico



Ready now,  
shaping tomorrow!

Story and Photo by: Staff Sgt. Katherine Ramos,  
363rd Public Affairs Detachment



A person in a camouflage uniform is holding a flag, likely the Puerto Rican flag, during a ceremony. The background shows other flags and people in uniform.

**S**AN JUAN, Puerto Rico— Chief of Army Reserve Lt. Gen. Jody J. Daniels, commanding general for the U.S. Army Reserve Command, administered the Oath of Enlistment to 48 future soldiers at the historic Castillo San Cristobal here, March 5.

**T**he event commemorated the 100th anniversary of the U.S. Army Reserve in Puerto Rico. The Miami Recruiting Battalion recruited 48 future soldiers for the Regular Army, Army Reserve and the Puerto Rico National Guard. "I am very happy to be able to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Puerto Rico's service and support to the Army Reserve and the Nation," said Lt. Gen. Daniels. "You will be well-trained, well equipped and ready to shape tomorrow."

**A**long with Lt. Gen. Daniels, Col. Carlos Caceres, 1st Mission Support Command commanding officer, and Command Sgt. Maj. Michael P. Meunier II, 1st MSC command sergeant major, was part of the official party of the ceremony. "This Nation will remain the land of the free as long as it is the home of the brave," said Col. Caceres. "These men and women have made the decision to join the most powerful Army in the world."

**M**any distinguished representatives witnessed the momentous occasion to include the Civilian Aide to the Secretary of the Army for Puerto Rico, the Army Reserve Ambassadors, the Puerto Rico Veterans Advocate, among others.

**"**The men and women we have sworn in during this ceremony represent only a small part of what Puerto Rico has to offer in defense of our Island and our Nation," said the Adjutant General of Puerto Rico, Maj. Gen. Jose J. Reyes. "The commitment they have shown is an example of the quality, dedication, and courage of our people." Maj. Gen. Reyes said, this ceremony is just the beginning of a relationship that goes hand in hand with the extraordinary opportunities given to them for their personal progress.

**T**oday's Army Reserve is the most capable, combat-ready, and lethal reserve force in the history of the Nation. Since 1922, the Army Reserve in Puerto Rico has been training, organizing, and deploying its forces around the globe to fight and win in support of unified land operations.





# GOLDEN KNIGHTS

IN PUERTO RICO





**A** GUADILLA, Puerto Rico— The United States Army Parachute Team, Golden Knights, performed tandem jumps for local patrons in Aguadilla from April 19-22. The USAPT conducts worldwide parachute jumps using a tandem orientation program that connects the U.S. Army with the American public and enhances the Army's recruiting efforts.

**T**he 1st Mission Support Command partnered with the U.S. Army Recruiting Command to announce the 100 years of the U.S. Army Reserve in Puerto Rico. The last USAPT performance in the island was in 2006 and for the team, this occasion represented the first tandem event of the year. "This event has been great for the island (of Puerto Rico) as there is a culture of service here," said for a press release Lt. Col. Brian Mandock, the deputy garrison commander in Fort Buchanan, Puerto Rico. "Puerto Rico sends more people per capita to the Army than any state in the union."

**D**uring the aerial show, the parachuters jumped from a C-147 aircraft 13,000 feet in height with civilians and service members strapped directly to themselves. "We were conducting tandem jumps which are jumps we do to bring people to the aircraft so they can see something different from the normal Army missions," said Sgt. 1st Class Jonathan Lopez, tandem instructor on USAPT. "Today we invited influential people to perform tandem jumps in hopes they have a positive Army experience so they can share that story to their public."

Story and Photo by: Staff Sgt. Katherine Ramos,  
363rd Public Affairs Detachment



# Honoring our past, Leading our present, Building our future

Opinion Column by Lt. Col. Francisco Vargas  
1st Mission Support Command



Photo from National Archives Catalog



**W**hile reflecting on the centenary of the U.S. Army Reserve in Puerto Rico, the first image that comes to mind is my grandfather. If he knew that I followed in his footsteps and joined the military, he would elegantly render a 'sharp' salute. He was a soldier from the 65th Infantry Borinqueneers. The day of his funeral, I witnessed an impeccable gesture of respect, honor, and courage when all of his comrades rendered military honors, along with his brother and cousin, both Borinqueneers, aswell. They all stood up with difficulty, raised their right hand to say "mission accomplished" to their brother in arms.

**B**ack then, joining the military was compulsory; they had no choice. The first World War and granting of United States citizenship to the creoles of the island in 1917 represented the beginning of military service holding the American flag. The U.S. Army Reserve centenary invites every organization member to reflect on our heritage, honor our lineage and reaffirm our commitment to serving. By integrating ourselves into an Army team to train and maintain readiness to deploy we are being part of something bigger.

**T**hroughout service, many men and women have fought for their beliefs, obtaining remarkable accomplishments that have significantly impacted our society. Today we enjoy civil rights, equal opportunities, and democracy thanks to the sacrifices made by service members. Freedom is not free and has never been.

**I**n Puerto Rico, thousands of men and women have served in the Army Reserve during major global conflicts like World War II, Vietnam War, Korean War, Persian War, and other contingency and support operations. Today, around 5,000 more continue to serve in the fields of logistics, transportation, civil affairs, engineering, and information technology, among others. Starting as an organized reserve unit in 1922, the 1st Mission Support Command has evolved into the most significant federal command in the Caribbean leveraging unique capabilities to support the Army and humanitarian assistance for disaster relief missions.



U.S. Army photos provided.

**Soldiers of the Army Reserve in Puerto Rico have served during major global conflicts like World War II, Vietnam War, Korean War, Persian War and other contingency and support operations.**



# Army Reserve Puerto Rico NCOs, a century of leadership

Opinion Column by:  
Sgt. Maj. Julio Linares,  
1st Mission Support Command

**W**hile U.S. service members were recovering from World War I, a total reorganization of the U.S. Army was going on. At the same time, the Army Non-Commissioned Officers Corps has evolved significantly since its creation. In 1922 word came down that the first Army Reserve unit in Puerto Rico, known as the 373rd Infantry Regiment, was being organized.

Like all successful units in the past, the U.S. Army Reserve in Puerto Rico needed capable NCOs responsible for maintaining and enforcing standards and a high degree of discipline. Between 1939 and 1945, NCOs of the U.S. Army Reserve in Puerto Rico acted as mentors, advisors, communicators, and primarily trainers in the successful deployment of over 700 soldiers to World War II, increasing the chances for more changes in the future horizon. From the creation of the Blue Book, the first drill manual by Baron von Steuben, an NCO was the one who trained proficient soldiers. In the late 1940s, NCOs trained soldiers of the newly organized units of the 448th Engineer Battalion and the 346th Transportation Battalion—today, both teams continue to be part of the 1st Mission Support Command formations.

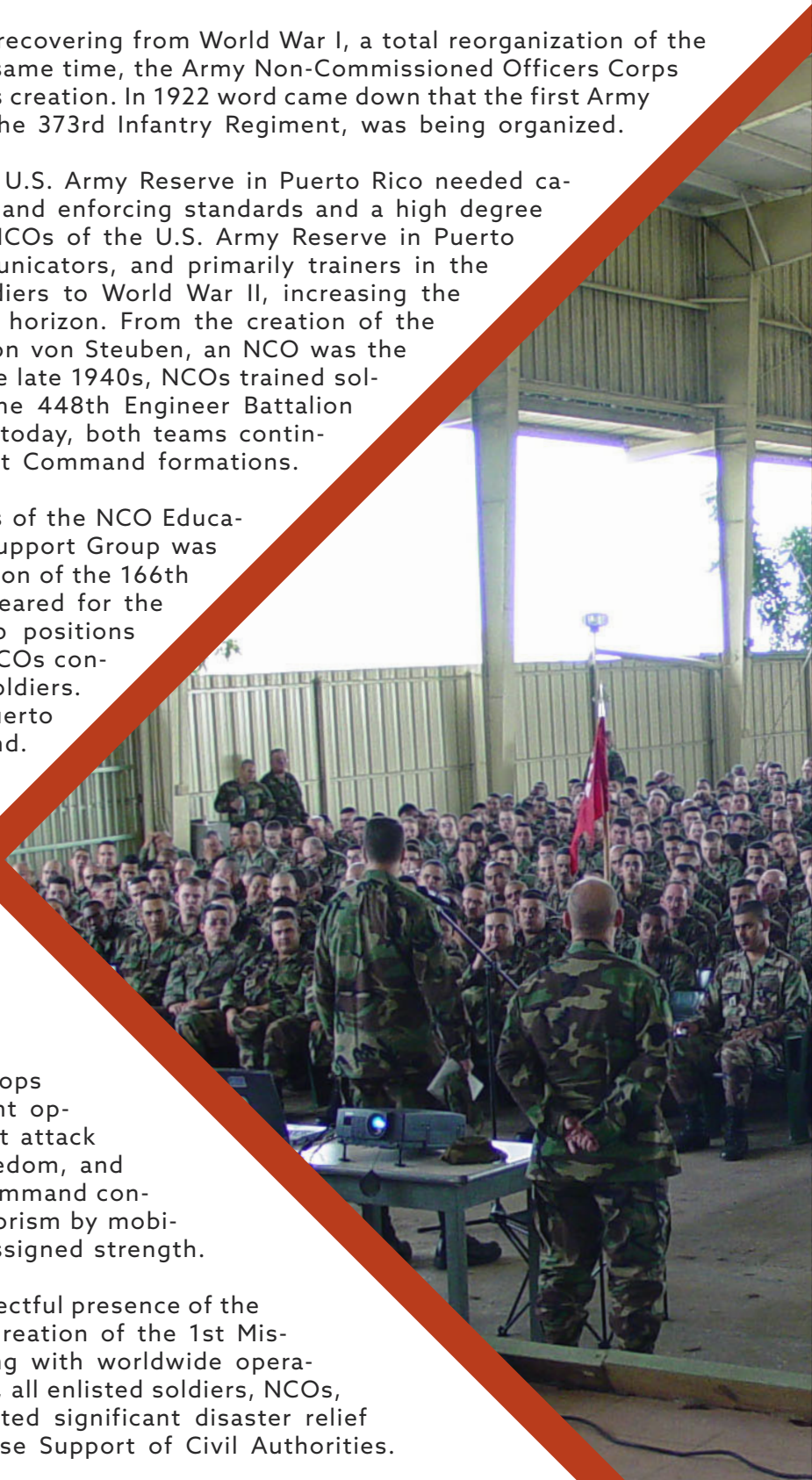
After the war in Vietnam and the reforms of the NCO Education System, in March 1968, the 166th Support Group was activated in Puerto Rico. With the activation of the 166th SG, new development opportunities appeared for the NCOs in Puerto Rico; formal leadership positions and education were available while the NCOs continued to do what they do best, train soldiers. By 1977, the U.S. Army Reserve in Puerto Rico became a General Officer Command.

While adapting to changes and new reforms in the 1990s, NCOs of the U.S. Army Reserve in Puerto Rico were also adapting to the command changes. In March 1998, they harvested the highest designation of an Army Reserve Command, the appointment of the U.S. Army 65th Regional Support Command.

Later, the NCOs continued to train troops from the command to support significant operations in response to the 9/11 terrorist attack including the Noble Eagle, Enduring Freedom, and Iraqi Freedom operations. By 2006 the command continued supporting the Global War on terrorism by mobilizing 98% of its units and 120% of its assigned strength.

During all these years, the sober and respectful presence of the NCO in Puerto Rico was crucial to the creation of the 1st Mission Support Command. While continuing with worldwide operations, from September 2017 to April 2020, all enlisted soldiers, NCOs, and Officers from the command supported significant disaster relief efforts on the island through the Defense Support of Civil Authorities.

Currently, the 1st Mission Support Command continues to support the Nation's call in support of several missions for Combatant Commanders across the globe. Undoubtedly, the NCOs have contributed to the Army's ability to develop highly trained, disciplined and fit teams with the skills to meet current operational requirements.





•Photo Below

CAMP SANTIAGO, Puerto Rico—Soldiers from the 65th Reserve Support Command during predeployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, December 8, 2003. Photo from National Archives Catalog



•Photo Above

FORT BUCHANAN, Puerto Rico — U.S. Army Reserve soldiers march during the Armed Forces Day Parade Celebration, held at Fort Buchanan, Puerto Rico, May 17, 2003. Photo from National Archives Catalog



## The 1st Mission Support

Command provides mission command to assigned units of the Army Reserve in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands to ensure their readiness to deploy to war and successfully execute their missions.



# MOBILIZATION



## 35th ESB in Poland

**P**OLAND—Soldiers from the 35th Expeditionary Signal Battalion, Bravo Company, 210th Regional Support Group, deployed last year to support North Atlantic Treaty Organization countries by providing critical battlefield communications for combat operations. Since then, they have been serving alongside service members from different components including the Polish Army.

**D**uring spring, the signal company represented the U.S. Army during a weapons competition against the 23rd Silesian Artillery Regiment stationed in Boleslawiec, demonstrating their warrior skills and team cohesiveness. They have also conducted different community and key leaders engagements to build trust and confidence with the public.

// Soldiers from the 35th ESB Bravo Company 'hit the ground running' by validating and repairing all communication nodes in matter of weeks," said Cpt. Jose Morales, company commander. "Our team has responded to all missions by providing reliable and secured communications, showcasing what top tier signalers do."



Story and Photos by: Pfc. Jofenell Ruiz Febus  
35th Expeditionary Signal Battalion

THE ARMY RESERVE IS  
READY TO FIGHT AND  
WIN AS A MEMBER OF  
THE JOINT FORCE



# Chief of Army Reserve visited the 166th Regional Support Group training operations



**S**ALINAS, Puerto Rico— Chief of Army Reserve, Lt. Gen. Jody J. Daniels, commanding general of the U.S. Army Reserve Command, visited the training operations of the 166th Regional Support Group, 1st Mission Support Command, at Camp Santiago Joint Maneuver Training site here, March 5.

**T**he brigade incorporated the operations Rise of the Jedi Best Warrior Competition and Oil Slick II-Defense Support of Civil Authorities Specialized Equipment Readiness. "This is Army training, this is cool stuff, this is getting our equipment out, using it and becoming proficient in what we do, knowing our battle task and drills," said the three-star general, Lt. Gen. Daniels. Lt. Gen. Daniels walked around the training site, had lunch with the soldiers, and asked them questions about the training. The 166th RSG leadership also had an opportunity to dialogue with the commanding general.

**C**ol. Brian J. Slaughter, 166th RSG brigade commander, said the intent was to maximize the overall readiness of the brigade. "We decided to push the envelope and maximize our resources to benefit the diverse skill set of the soldiers in the command," said Col. Slaughter. "This event exercise imagination, challenged the staff, and contributed to a cohesive team environment that we plan for this and next training year." The 166th RSG Command Sgt. Major Shahpour J. Eskandary said the brigade is continually working to enhance training and test their capabilities as they relate to the Defense Support of Civil Authorities. "There are several goals we achieved in these collective training engagements including increased equipment utilization, proficiency in tasks, cooperative and collaborative efforts, motivation and building cohesive teams," said Command Sgt. Maj. Eskandary. "The level of engagement in these combined exercises was remarkable from battalions down to detachments, each had a stake and value added."

**T**he staff members of the brigade worked for weeks coordinating with the different units, ensuring processes are following Army regulations and developing unique training opportunities. "An enormous amount of planning and effort went into this event," said Col. Slaughter. "That would not have been possible without the dedication and creativity of this amazing staff." Command Sgt. Maj. Eskandary said the 166th RSG staff did not take the easy way out of any obstacle they encountered, instead they found ways to train and meet the commander's intent.

**F**or Staff Sgt. Jose Roberto Vazquez, senior supply sergeant for the 166th RSG, the preparation process required a lot of meetings and communication among peers. "Having a clear vision was paramount for us to develop this event," said Vazquez. "We evaluated every aspect of the trainings to identify any equipment or support that we were missing in order to close any gaps." In the end all the hard work paid off, he concluded. The U.S. Army Reserve-Puerto Rico has thousands of citizen soldiers with highly technical, specialized, and professional skills in logistics, transportation, training, engineering, information technology, communication networking, among others.

Story by: Staff Sgt. Katherine Ramos,  
Photos by: Sgt. Eduardo Rivera Escobales  
363rd Public Affairs Detachment

# TRAINING





CAMP SANTIAGO, Puerto Rico—1st Mission Support Command Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment completed weapons qualification at the Camp Santiago Joint Training Center April 9, 2022. This weapons qualification assess a soldier's ability to employ situational awareness, safe weapon handling, and core marksmanship competencies. Photos by Pfc. Airam B. Amaro Millan, 363rd Public Affairs Detachment

# READINESS



FORT BUCHANAN, Puerto Rico—Chaplain Brig. Gen. Andrew Harewood, Deputy Chief of Chaplains for the U.S. Army Reserve, visited the 1st Mission Support Command to spread awareness of the spiritual readiness initiative and to say 'thank you' to the community for their partnership. Photos by Sgt. Halayla Vega, 363rd Public Affairs Detachment.

The Army develops highly trained, discipline and fit teams with the skills and equipment to meet current operational requirements.



# SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS AND PREVENTION

**F**ORT BUCHANAN, Puerto Rico— Col. Carlos Caceres, 1st Mission Support Command commanding officer, Command Sgt. Maj. Michael P. Meunier II, 1st MSC command sergeant major and Julio Aponte, 1st MSC command executive officer, signed proclamation during sexual assault awareness month, April 4.

**T**he 1st MSC commander stressed about the importance of supporting victims at all levels within the organization. "We will hold those offenders accountable," said Col. Caceres. "We are building a culture of cohesive teams that are highly trained, disciplined and fit, where everyone is treated with dignity and respect."

**E**velyn Franco Marrero, 1st MSC Sexual Assault Response Coordinator, and Maj. Amy B. Flores, 1st MSC victim advocate, led the event at the command's headquarters. "SHARP is a proactive U.S. Army program which aims to prevent and end sexual harassment and assault within the ranks," said Franco. "Sexual harassment and assault is a crime in the armed forces under the Uniform Code of Military Justice article 134."

**T**he SAAPM provides an opportunity for the Army to highlight SHARP program refinements resulting from continuous assessments and improvement efforts. "We are trained and available to respond to our soldiers and civilians 24/7, we are always only a phone call away," said Maj. Flores. "Whether it's a victim of assault or harassment or a commander that's unsure how to handle a SHARP related situation or even a soldier that 'thinks' something is happening that's in violation of the program—just call us." The 1st MSC SHARP team is available 100%, not just during SAAPM but every single day of the year, concluded Maj. Flores.



Story by: Sgt. Eduardo Rivera Escobales  
363rd Public Affairs Detachment



## SAAPM

Sexual Assault Awareness  
and Prevention Month



### 3250

Soldiers Reported  
a Sexual Assault  
in FY 2020



### 81%

Victims  
were female



### 65%

Victims were  
**E1 - E4**



### 58%

Happened on a  
military installation

### Everyday Actions

- Treat others with dignity and respect
- Live the Army Values
- Be a proactive bystander and take action if you notice someone needing help
- Speak up when someone makes sexist or racist comments
- Respect a person's right to say no

\* Statistics pulled from 2020 DOD Report



# IPPS-A Mobile App is Available for Download!



## Self-Service

through DoD username/password

## CAC Access

by Manager/HR Professional  
(card reader and software required)

### Manage Anytime, Anywhere



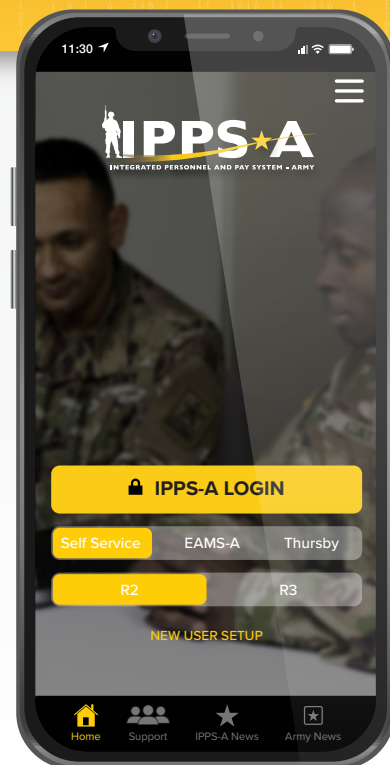
Whether its an office or training room, IPPS-A provides dynamic web applications that verify, modify or execute personnel data transactions.



The IPPS-A app is a game-changer, delivering access and situational awareness of personnel transactions at your finger tips.



Search for "IPPS-A" on the Apple and Google Play Stores.



**One Soldier ★ One Record ★ One Army**



## Individual Soldier Check List

Soldiers need to review current personnel records online from Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC), Army Training Requirements and Resources System (ATRRS), Electronic Military Personnel Office Soldier Record Brief (eMILPO SRB), and Reserve Component Manpower System Automated Record Brief (RCMS ARB) prior to conducting Personnel Readiness Reviews (PRRs) at the unit level.

By reviewing key online accessible systems, Soldiers can aid in correcting personnel data in preparation of the Integrated Personnel and Pay System - Army (IPPS-A) Release 3 Go Live for the Active and Reserve Components.

Individual Soldiers can log in and access current personnel records from the following authoritative data sources:

### DMDC

Personal Contact Information

Family Members (DEERS/TRICARE)

Health Benefits

Education Benefits



### ATRRS

Military Education

Military Training

Validate Courses are present and correctly identified



### SRB

Comprehensive overview of Soldier Data



# IPPS-A

INTEGRATED PERSONNEL AND PAY SYSTEM - ARMY

## AC & RC Soldiers

**The most authoritative source of correct HR data is the individual Soldier.**



### Take control of your financial readiness!

- Is your personnel data up to date?
- If not, your pay and benefits can be delayed or inaccurate.
- Make it your mission to:
  - Verify your personnel information on a regular basis,
  - Ensure errors are corrected, and
  - Avoid inconveniences and/or hardships later!

**One Soldier ★ One Record ★ One Army**



# 1st MSC Let's Talk About IPPS-A!

The Integrated Personnel and Pay System – Army (IPPS-A) is the Army's way of bringing their personnel and pay systems up to date.

The goal for **IPPS-A** is to have a fully auditable and compliant system with zero downtime, 24/7 on-demand online access, and mobile capability. Soldiers will have visibility and access to their personnel records through a website or an app on their phones.

We have seen improvements in the distance learning (DL) completion rates. As of April 30, 2022, 100 percent of the identified/enrolled Full-Time Human Resources (HR) professionals worked hard and completed the mandatory "R3 HR Professional", a 40-hour DL course. The course was designed to train HR Professionals on the many features and capabilities of IPPS-A. HR Professionals needing elevated access to IPPS-A, whether as Validator Administration, Validator, HR Supervisor, and more, must complete additional courses **NLT July 31, 2022**.

As of 31 May 2022, approximately 90 percent of the full-time HR Professionals assigned/attached to the 1st MSC have completed the mandatory 16 hours Instructor Facilitator Training course. Nevertheless, we still have work to do before IPPS-A projected "GO-LIVE" date of 20 September 2022. All Soldiers must complete the "**R3 Self Service Orientation**" NLT 31 August 2022. This course is designed for familiarization purposes. Also, Soldiers can research the many IPPS-A available resources, including guides, videos, and job aids by visiting the IPPS-A S1Net homepage under the resources tab.

**IPPS-A** is not just for 42A's MOS. The "R3 Self-Service Orientation" course is strongly recommended for all Soldiers. Remember that keeping your personnel record up to date is a milestone in your career success.

IPPS-A is innovative and represents a revolutionary leap forward in Army HR business practice.

Now it is time to take ownership of your military career. Once you complete the course, you may be able to: update your address/contact info, view your profile, promotion points, submit and track personnel actions, and view and apply for assignments, among other activities. It is accessible via DS Logon and/or CAC Logon.

Lastly, please help us spread the message throughout the command. Soldiers must be proactive, and as a security measure, they should start downloading their retirement points DA Form 5016 and their DD 93 before IPPS-A "Go-Live" on 20 September 22, to prevent any inconvenience. Share "Our future, let's talk about IPPS-A" weekly with your team.

Distance Learning, Trainings  
Issue 1 (July 2022)



## Resource Tab

More resources and content are coming your way, so keep an eye out on social media. As always, thank you for staying engaged in the program and for your support. Together, we will get this done.

**For more information check out these sites:**

IPPS-A websites:  
<https://ipps-a.army.mil/usar/>  
<https://www.usar.army.mil/IPPS-A/>

IPPS-A Facebook:  
<https://www.facebook.com/armyippsa/>

IPPS-A YouTube website:  
<https://www.youtube.com/armyippsa/>





# 35th ESB prepares for hurricane season by premiering new satellite systems

**J**UANA DIAZ, Puerto Rico—Soldiers from the 35th Expeditionary Signal Battalion of the United States Army Reserve in Puerto Rico, 1st Mission Support Command, receive new satellite equipment to optimize their level of readiness.

**T**hese are six deployable satellites called Transportable Tactical Command Communications, T2C2, Heavy, whose collective value exceeds 2 million dollars and allows soldiers to establish communications in austere locations. Upon receiving the equipment, the battalion leaders organized a day of training for the soldiers to test the new equipment and, at the same time, put their skills into practice. We are teaching classes on the T2C2 system that the government uses for communications and provide internet in the areas where you don't have access," said John Volkmer, a federal government employee. "This will be able to provide satellite communications pretty much anywhere."

**A**ccording to the source, this system could be rapidly installed. "Although the standard is around 35 minutes, the fastest I have ever seen it installed, fully making phone calls to other units and accessing the internet is 18 minutes," said Volkmer. "We have to realize that it's a government tactical equipment used to support our federal government entities," said Army Reserve Maj. Edward Simangan, 35th ESB operations officer in charge. "These can actually communicate with other signal equipment like a SNAP." The acronym stands for Secure Internet Protocol Router/Non-secure Internet Protocol Router Access Point. The official hurricane season in Puerto Rico goes from June 1st to November 30 every year, with September as the peak of the season and the month with more cyclone activity.

**S**ince the Caribbean is an area susceptible to hurricanes, the soldiers were lectured on environmental considerations if they are required to deploy the equipment in the area during missions that support the Defense Support of Civil Authorities. The DSCA is the process by which United States military assets and personnel can be used to assist in missions usually carried out by civil authorities.



**//** We have to be ready for mobilization, support disaster relief efforts, and provide humanitarian assistance," said Col. Carlos Caceres, 1st Mission Support Command commanding officer, to the 35th ESB soldiers during the fielding day. "Our mission as Army reservists is unique, and it's paramount that we continue training with our equipment and maintaining our readiness."

**B**y request of the Department of the Army the U.S. Army Reserve Command in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands responds to emergencies to save lives, prevent human suffering, and mitigate significant property damage through the DSCA mobilization authorization. Army Reserve Lt. Col. Mark Aldrich, 35th ESB commander, said this fielding is essential for the battalion because it enables soldiers to work with updated technology.

**//** When you look at upgrading signal communications, it's always imperative to have the newest equipment," said Lt. Col. Aldrich. "Nowadays we have bigger requirements, more people rely on technology to communicate, and we need to have equipment that gives us the ability to meet those requirements." The U.S. Army Reserve in Puerto Rico have become an essential part of the total force, with streamlined, deployable citizen soldiers who embody the warrior mindset and spirit.

Story by: Saff Sgt. Katherine Ramos  
Photo by: Sgt. Halayla Vega,  
363rd Public Affairs Detachment

## MODERNIZATION



# Army Reserve Drill Sergeants: training civilians into combat ready soldiers

Story by: Staff Sgt. Katherine Ramos

Photos by: Staff Sgt. Xavier Guerra

1st Mission Support Command Public Affairs Office

**F**ORT JACKSON, S.C.—The companies from the Army Reserve 1st 389th Drill Sgt. Battalion led the basic combat training at Fort Jackson, July 22.

The Army Reserve Drill Sergeant Battalion trains civilians into combat ready soldiers and transform the best noncommissioned officers into drill sergeants. "We transform them into soldiers through a very structured training environment that starts with a pick-up where they are suddenly given a wake-up... this is no longer your comfort zone, this is the Army," said 1Lt. Marcos Cruz, company commander for the Charlie and Delta company of the 1-389th BN.

Army Reserve drill sergeants delivers the same training as the active-duty soldiers. "We cannot do what we do as successful without the support of every U.S. Army Reserve drill sergeant that comes and support every basic combat training cycle," assured Lt. Col. Thomas Burns, 4th Bn 39 Infantry Regiment commander. "They bring different experiences and different backgrounds".

Every noncommissioned officer wanting to serve as a drill sergeant in the U.S. Army Reserve has to go through the U.S. Army Drill Sergeant Academy here, at Ft. Jackson, South Carolina. "I started as a trainee like all of these soldiers, then I became a drill sergeant with the Army Reserve for 10 years," said 1st Sgt. Juan Cruz, from Charlie company 1-389th DS BN. "I know that the Army Reserve has prepared me for my role, I deployed to Irak where I gained technical and tactical experience which I now share with all of these new soldiers."

The U.S. Army Drill Sergeant Academy (USADSA) trains, educates, certifies and validates a non-commissioned officer's abilities to execute and teach the core tenants of the Enhanced Basic Combat Training Program of Instruction, Physical Readiness Training, Drill and Ceremonies, Basic Rifle Marksmanship, and Warrior Tasks and Battle Drills. "Every day we wake-up hours before the trainees to make sure all the training of the day is completed," said Drill Sgt. Kevin Molina, from bravo company 1-389th DS BN. "The transformation of the soldiers is significant since many begin without mastering the physical exercises, yet they continue to work hard to achieve their goals."





Below: FORT BUCHANAN, Puerto Rico—Pfc. Sebastian Borges, assigned to the 448th Engineer Battalion, won Best Soldier title and Sgt. Cesar Santiago, assigned to the 166th Regional Support Group, won Best Non-Comissioned Officer title at the command's Best Warrior Competition, April 8.



## 1ST MSC BEST WARRIOR COMPETITION



Right: SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico—The 1st Mission Support Command Best Warrior Competition involved a series of events that tested the competitors' overall readiness, including rappelling, kayaking, and swimming, among others. Photos by Sgt. Halayla Vega, 363rd Public Affairs Detachment



# ARMY RESERVE CIVILIAN WORKFORCE



U.S. Army photos provided

**A** rmy civilians have been essential to the success of the total force as they fill critical non-combat positions to work towards the overall readiness. The civilian workforce has been around for a while, history marks its beginning in 1776 when the U.S. Congress appointed the first civilian as the Secretary to the Board of War and Ordnance. Today, more than 330,000 people serve the Nation through the Army Civilian Service.

**A** s the U.S. Army Reserve in Puerto Rico celebrates its centenary, more than 100 civilians continues to provide leadership, stability, and continuity to the daily operations of the organization. They bring knowledge, skills and abilities necessary for mission accomplishment. The civilian workforce has worked alongside our Soldiers and provided support on all successful deployments around the globe.

**T** he Army civilians are called to exercise various functions within the 1st Mission Support Command including general administration and management, safety, logistics, training and operations, information technology, intelligence, legal, among others. Civilian managers, directors and supervisors support the mission by exercising their assigned responsibility and being good stewards of the allocated resources, while representing their military counterparts. The U.S. Army Reserve in Puerto Rico is constantly seeking experienced hires to join the civilian workforce hence enable units to be successful. Vacancies can be found on [www.usajobs.gov](http://www.usajobs.gov). For more information, contact the Civilian Personnel Liaison Office at 787-707-4936 or send an e-mail to [jose.e.santosantos.civ@army.mil](mailto:jose.e.santosantos.civ@army.mil)

Story by: Jose E. Santos Santos  
Civilian Personnel Liaison Office

# CIVILIANS



# 1st Mission Support Command joins other federal and DOD leaders for a hurricane rehearsal of concept drill hosted by ARNORTH



## DSCA

The 1st Mission Support Command prepares for and responds to incidents by conducting Defense Support of Civil Authorities operations as requested by appropriate agencies to save human lives, prevent human suffering and mitigate severe property damage by deploying its Army Reserve forces.

Story and photos: Sgt. Halayla Vega,  
363rd Public Affairs Detachment

**S**AN ANTONIO, Texas— In preparation for the upcoming hurricane season, Lt. Gen. John R. Evans Jr., U.S. Army North commander, hosted more than 100 military and civilian leaders both in person and virtually for its hurricane rehearsal of concept drill here May 25.

**W**hat is known as ARNORTH was originally named Fifth Army in 1942, their primary mission has always been to conduct homeland defense, civil support operations and theater security cooperation activities. ARNORTH, partners with federal agencies such as the Federal Emergency Management Agency to conduct Defense Support of Civil Authorities training in response to natural disasters in an effort to save human lives, prevent suffering and mitigate severe property damage. FEMA is an agency belonging to homeland security and while they are the experts in hurricane response, Department of Defense is always able to supply all of the support they need in order to tackle the most catastrophic hurricane.

// This training is important, the command's ability to respond and mitigate suffering in the island of Puerto Rico will improve greatly as we deconflict and coordinate with some key federal and Department of Defense partners," said Col. Carlos Caceres, 1st Mission Support Command commanding officer.

**I**ncidents such as Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria in Puerto Rico and U.S. Virgin Islands are a common occurrence throughout the hurricane season every year starting June 1 through November 30, in the Caribbean. The ROC drill was held to prepare and make sure policies and procedures are in place to protect the Army during the 2022 hurricane season and is a good way for senior leaders to be in one room working through the challenges ahead and try to come up with ways to overcome those challenges.

// We are in a supporting role, that is our mission," said Caceres. "Should something happen in Puerto Rico, relief efforts are going to be led by the Puerto Rico Army National Guard while the 1st MSC brings its own capabilities to augment their efforts." The 1st MSC maintains constant vigilance for DSCA operations as a resource or capability provider.





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# ARMY HERITAGE MONTH



Staff Sgt. Katherine Ramos 2022



# U.S. Army Reserve soldier from Puerto Rico unique among Expert Soldier Badge recipients



**F**ORT BUCHANAN, Puerto Rico— Staff Sgt. Edward Singh Chollet, assigned to the 475th Engineer Company, U.S. Army Reserve-Puerto Rico, became the first and only Army Reserve Soldier from the island to be awarded the Expert Soldier Badge on May 15.

**T**he ESB is an equivalent of the Expert Infantry Badge and Expert Field Medical Badge; it is designed to recognize excellence in Soldier Combat Skills, highlight the Soldier's proficiency and expertise and increase unit/individual readiness. The events on which Soldiers are tested originate mainly from the Expert Infantry Badge and are divided into three parts, weapons skills, medical skills, and patrolling skills. Aside from that, contestants are also graded on day and night land navigation, the Army Combat Fitness Test, and a 12-mile ruck march.

**//** The events are tough but doable," expressed Singh. "The instructors we had with us were brought from the active-duty component, and they showed us it's more efficient to focus on one event at a time."

**T**he ESB was held in Fort McCoy, Wisconsin, through a period of 10 days; it was the first time that USAR Soldiers participated in the competition since it was exclusively for the active-duty component. The competition started with 26 Soldiers, each event was evaluated on a "go" or "no-go" basis, and only six were awarded the badge—three of those six belonging to the reserve component.

**S**ingh, who also competed in the 2019 Best Warrior Competition and won second place at the USAR level, expressed that he is always ready, constantly training and maintains his soldiering skills by supporting other Best Warrior Competitions held here on the island.

**//** I was very anxious and stressed throughout the whole event," said Singh. "When I finally crossed the finish line of the 12-mile ruck march, I was incredibly relieved and simultaneously so excited, physically my body was in excruciating pain, but my mind was overwhelmed with emotion."

**T**o qualify for the ESB, Soldiers must pass an ACFT, qualify as "expert" on the M4/M16 rifle, and be recommended by their chain of command.

**//** As a Reserve Soldier, it's our job to support the active-duty component, so whenever we are called, we should already be ready to go," said Singh. "My tip for those who would like to compete for the ESB is to take advantage of the Army's opportunities, train hard, be curious and put your skills into practice as much as possible." The U.S. Army Reserve in Puerto Rico is a dedicated Federal Reserve force that is ready today and prepared to meet the challenges of tomorrow.

**Story and Photo by: Sgt. Halayla Vega  
363rd Public Affairs Detachment**



# Feeding the force: Army Reserve Puerto Rico supports CSTX

Story by: Staff Sgt. Katherine Ramos  
363rd Public Affairs Detachment  
Photo by: Pfc. Elisaul Fairlie,  
166th Regional Support Group

**F**ORT McCoy, Wisc.— Around 4,000 service members from the armed forces are currently participating in the Combat Support Training Exercise of the U.S. Army Reserve Command and led by the 86th Training Division.

**T**he CSTX is a joint-training event executed in a live, virtual and constructive integrated training environment where service members test their tactical and technical skills. While each military occupational specialty begins its collective tasks, the Army Reserve food service personnel from the 767th, 768th and 769th Quartermaster Companies are conducting the first major field-feeding operation here Aug 16.

**//** The field feeding detachments are offering a unique experience for unit command teams; to provide 100 percent focusing on their training while we provide the field feeding and make sure their Soldiers are fully sustainable," said Chief Warrant Officer 3 Taj Keeler, commander. "This is the first time field feeding detachments participate on a CSTX scale of over 4,000 service members."

**S**ince 2020, the field feeding detachments fall under the 166th Regional Support Group of the 1st Mission Support Command, U.S. Army Reserve in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. Two years after its establishment, the Army Reserve units have acquired more than 85 percent of its assigned personnel to fulfill field feeding team and company operations.

**A**s a unique set of enabling formations, the 1st MSC could provide this field-feeding capability for humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations when civil authorities request.

**//** This ambitious initiative will pay major dividends as the critical data emerging from the exercise will enable U.S. Army Reserve planners to refine the concept of field feeding support to major exercises," said Maj. Heath Dickinson, 1st MSC mobilization officer. "This will not only lead to accelerated cost savings but will assist the two USAR sustainment commands in planning for the activations and utilization of the 74 additional teams projected to activate over the next two years."

**A**ccording to Sgt. 1st Class Regina Vargas, detachment's first sergeant, the food service personnel have the expertise to prepare standard and dietetic menus and operate field feeding systems such as the mobile kitchen trailer, containerized kitchen and field sanitation centers. These systems sustain tactical feeding and support personnel under adverse conditions. "We can provide field feeding services in remote locations," said Sgt. 1st Class Vargas. "We are not only supporting the Army, but we are also providing services to the Marines, Air Force and Navy service members."

**A**lthough the commander and first sergeant are responsible for the field feeding operation, the food service officer, the food advisor, culinary management non-commissioned officer, food service specialists and even the kitchen police (K.P.s) have a significant role in mission success.

**//** I am very proud to be a 92G because we make a change in the battlefield or any other field; we change the morale of the Soldiers," said Spc. Christian Rivera. "Happy stomach, happy Soldiers!" The Army Reserve develops highly trained teams with the skills and equipment to meet current operational requirements.







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