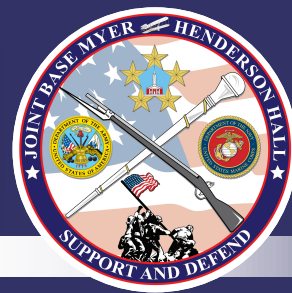


# PENTAGRAM

JOINT BASE MYER — HENDERSON HALL

ISSUE 10 • DECEMBER 2023



## In this issue:

Marine captain sets her sights on Olympics in 2026

Ironman in our ranks

Remembering a fallen hero: the man behind Smith Gym

Cyber officer brings home the gold

...And more

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# WELCOME



**Denise Caskey**

Public Affairs Specialist

Season's Greetings from Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall – “America's Post” – and welcome to the December 2023 issue of the Pentagongram!

In the issue we celebrate the athletes among us and remember a special Marine, Cpl. Terry L. Smith, for whom the gymnasium on the Henderson Hall campus is named. We also want to send a special shout out to the service members who medaled at the 2023 Pan American Games in Santiago, Chile.

Also, this year has flown by and it's hard to remember all the amazing things we saw and did at JBM-HH, so we put together a special Year In Review section with highlights from around the joint base, including The United States Army Band “Pershing's Own,” The 3d United States Infantry Regiment (The Old Guard), Headquarters Battalion U.S. Army and Headquarters and Service Battalion, Headquarters Marine Corps, Henderson Hall.

The next issue comes out in March 2024. As always, we welcome you to share with us any ideas you might have for future content.

## CONTENTS

**06** COMMANDER'S CORNER

**08** MARINE CAPTAIN SETS HER SIGHTS  
ON OLYMPIC GOLD IN 2026

**12** IRONMAN IN OUR RANKS

**14** CYBER OFFICER BRINGS  
HOME THE GOLD

**17** SOLIDER EMBRACES COMPETITION  
WITH MUSIC, ESPORTS AND JIU-JITSU

**20** 2023 YEAR IN REVIEW

**26** REMEMBERING A FALLEN HERO:  
THE MAN BEHIND SMITH GYM

**30** PEOPLE FIRST

**32** AN ASTOUNDING JOURNEY  
OF ENDURANCE AND VERSATILITY

**36** MY TIME AT THE DEFENSE  
INFORMATION SCHOOL

**40** CONGRATULATIONS  
PAN AMERICAN ATHLETES

### On the cover:

Capt. Riley Tejcek, left, and her teammate Emily Renna compete in the two-woman World Cup Bobsled competition in January 2023 in Winterberg, Germany. (Courtesy photo)

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# Commander's Corner



Col. Tasha N. Lowery

Happy Holidays, JBM-HH!

The holiday season is here, and as we celebrate, on behalf of myself and the command team, we extend our deepest gratitude to each and every one of you, both our service members and our civilian workforce who serve our nation. In the midst of festivities and joy, it is also essential to recognize the sacrifices of our military families who ensure and support your ability to secure our freedom.

I understand that many of you may be far from home during this special time of year. Your selflessness and dedication inspire us all, but that can also make the holidays a difficult time of year.

If you are struggling at any time, please know we are here for you, and you are never alone. There are many resources here on JBM-HH to help you – confidentially – whether you are a service member, family member or civilian employee. Tools such as crisis counseling and suicide prevention hotlines, and programs including Family Advocacy, SHARP/SAPR, Financial Readiness, and others offered by Army Community Service and the Military Health System can help you stay well and thrive. You can find these resources online at our website, [home.army.mil/jbmhh](http://home.army.mil/jbmhh). Please seek help if you need it.

Here at Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall, we are celebrating the season in many ways. From Thanksgiving meals to the annual tree lighting and everything in between, I hope you will join us at the many festive celebrations. To find out what's happening around the installation, I invite you to visit our website and follow us on social media.

May the coming year bring you success, good health and the fulfillment of your aspirations. Your service is a gift to us all, and for that, we are profoundly grateful.

Wishing you a peaceful and joyous holiday season.

**Tasha N. Lowery**  
**Colonel, AG**  
**Commanding**





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# Marine captain sets her sights on Olympic gold in 2026

**Denise Caskey**

JBM-HH Public Affairs

When she's not wearing fatigues, Marine Corps Capt. Riley Tejcek, a support specialist at Expeditionary Warfare School at the Marine Corps University in Quantico, Virginia, spends her time careening down a track at 90 mph on a bobsled, her sights set on Olympic gold in 2026.

"I love representing my country," Tejcek said. "I love everything that the United States stands for, which is why I wanted to join the military and serve. I'm so blessed and fortunate for what this country has given me."

Tejcek was born in San Diego, California, but calls Indiana home because that is where she grew up. Her father is a professional baseball player, and her mother is a vice president of a pharmaceutical company.

"I grew up really having to focus hard on sports and academics at the same time," Tejcek said. "That was very much ingrained into my younger sister and me as we were growing up."

Tejcek earned a Division I scholarship to play softball at George Washington University in Washington, D.C. Within her first few weeks on campus, she was approached by a recruiter and decided she wanted to join the Marine Corps. She completed the Marine Corps Platoon Leaders Class and commissioned when she graduated in 2019.

## Transitioning from softball to bobsled

Tejcek played softball all four years she was in school at GWU and when she graduated, she thought that would be the end of sports for her.

"That was hard, but I had the military, and



Capt. Riley Tejcek displays her medals and signs autographs in October 2023 at the commissary on Marine Corps Base Quantico, Virginia. (Courtesy photo)



that's where my focus was," Tejcek said. "I had a year of training. I went to basic, then to logistics school because that was my (military occupational specialty)."

At this point it was 2020, and Tejcek said she realized she had lost some of her motivation and was unsure what she wanted to pursue goal wise. She knew she wanted to do athletics, so she decided to give bobsled a try.

While Tejcek was still a student at GWU, she was tasked with presenting an award to Olympic bobsledder Elana Meyers Taylor. That was when the bobsled bug initially bit her.

"She won silver at Pyeongchang in 2018," Tejcek said. "I loved everything that she had to say about bobsled. I loved the fact that you have to be extremely fast and powerful. She was kind of the introduction."

Tejcek found an online combine, a sort of test to judge her abilities, and then in November 2020 was invited to try out.

### Using her military training on the track

Bobsled is a dangerous sport, and crashes are inevitable, Tejcek said. She credits the Marine Corps for giving her the grit, courage and mental fortitude to recover and get back on the sled. Being a Marine also helped prepare her for bobsledding by training her to make quick decisions.

"I'm going down a track at up to 90 miles an hour. I can't stop and think and gather information," she said. "The Marine Corps taught me that when I'm behind the bobsled, if I'm not on the right line or something happens really fast, I can make a quick decision and be confident in it."

Training to be a bobsled pilot and a Marine requires high mental acuity, Tejcek said, but different physical skill sets.

"Bobsled requires a lot more quick explosive movements and short-term sprinting," Tejcek said. "The Marine Corps is going to require a lot more body weight and long-distance running.



Riley Tejcek transforms from Marine Corps captain into a competitive bobsledder competing in the 2023 Bobsled World Championships in February 2023 in St. Moritz, Switzerland. (Courtesy photo)

I have to be very particular about training for both."

Finding a balance between her Marine Corps duties and piloting a bobsled requires her to be focused on what she is doing at any given time — another lesson being in the military taught her.

"My mind has to be where my feet are planted," Tejcek said. "Whenever it's time to put on the uniform and go to work, I'm 100 percent focused on that. And then when I'm in a bobsled and I'm about to go down the track, I have to be 100 percent focused on that. It's a little bit of compartmentalizing. It's prioritizing exactly what needs to be done and what's important for that day."



Capt. Riley Tejcek, Ms. Military 2023, poses with fans during an airshow April 24 at March Air Reserve Base in Riverside, California. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Oz Suguitan, 452nd Air Mobility Wing Public Affairs)

She said she also must be willing to sacrifice things she wants to do for things she feels she needs to do. She orders her priorities beginning with her faith, then the Marines and finally training and bobsled.

Tejcek's time training for bobsled is as structured and regimented as the time she spends as a Marine and is based on what she needs to do, leaving little time for extracurriculars.

"You have a regimented time to eat, to sleep, to train, to recover, very similar to the Marine Corps," she said. "Your schedule is given to you. How I navigate is the same way I approach ev-

everything. I want to be present where I am and see growth occur in whatever way possible. I have to be very on top of goal setting to be able to reflect and see how far I've come."

Being a Marine gave Tejcek the discipline and resilience she needed to compete as a bobsledder, she said.

In the Marines, she was taught how to successfully lead a mission, by paying attention to the small details that would ensure she brought everyone home safely. She uses that same attention to detail to successfully navigate a bobsled track.



“In bobsled, you have to be so precise with what you’re doing,” Tejcek said. “You have to understand every single curve. It takes discipline to be 100 percent mentally locked in and focused, like spending an hour walking the track to be ready for a minute bobsled trip or taking care of your equipment by turning every little screw to make sure the bobsled can safely get you and your teammate down the track.”

In her first World Cup race, Tejcek crashed and didn’t cross the finish line. She said that failure devastated her, but it also pushed her to do better the next race.

“I’ve had to own my mistake and do everything in my power to make sure I don’t make that same mistake,” Tejcek said. “That means I study even harder, analyze my mistake and do everything in my power to make sure it will not happen again.”

### **Facing challenges and inspiring others**

One of the hardest challenges Tejcek said she and other women bobsledders face is underrepresentation, and part of her mission is to find a solution and get more women interested in the sport.

“Men have two- and four-man bobsled. When you have a four-man team, that’s way more people that get to participate,” she said. “For women, we only have two-woman and mono, which is one person. We fought hard to get two disciplines in the Olympics, but there’s still a lack of women in the sport compared to men because of the different disciplines.”

Aside from becoming a bobsled pilot on the U.S. Olympic team, Tejcek, who was promoted to captain in September, said she looks forward to being deployed at some point in time and continuing to lead and inspire the next generation of Marines.

Tejcek was also recently crowned Ms. Military 2023. She said she plans to use her platform as Miss Military to inspire and encourage

other young women to look at the military as a career.

“Miss Military was something that I was intimidated to go for,” Tejcek said. “What it meant for me is that I’m able to be multifaceted. It also allows me to have another platform to reach young women to show them that you can be feminine. You can be involved in your communities and pursue additional hobbies (while) serving in the Marine Corps.”

She has also written a children’s book about bobsledding and the Marine Corps, which will be published in August 2024. With her book, she said she hopes to show other young women it is possible to succeed in male dominated spaces such as sports and the military.

Although Elana Meyers Taylor inspired Tejcek to pursue bobsled, she said her strong support network keeps her going.

“I wanted to be just like my dad,” Tejcek said. “I always wanted to make him proud. My mom grew up extremely poor, and now she’s a vice president of one of the biggest pharmaceutical companies in the United States. My mom taught me how to prioritize academics and my job and to go into places and do things that a lot of women aren’t doing.”

Aside from her parents, Tejcek also gives credit to her college softball teammates and her bobsled teammate, Keisha, for supporting her and setting such a high standard for her to work toward.

She said she is also grateful that her commanders at the Expeditionary Warfare School, Lt. Col. Jason Graul and Col. James Lively, allow her to pursue her dreams and believe in her ability to balance her Marine Corps duties with her bobsled training.

Tejcek’s place on the 2026 Olympic team isn’t set yet. Tryouts will be held in January 2026, but she will continue to compete in other races, such as (at the time of this article) the North American Cup races in Lake Placid, New York.

# Ironman in our ranks

**Jason Goselin**

JBM-HH Public Affairs

In the realm of endurance sports, the Ironman competition stands as the pinnacle of physical and mental challenges, pushing participants to their limits and beyond. Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall's deputy commander, Marine Corps Lt. Col. John Dexter, recently completed his first such competition.

The Ironman is consists of a 2.4-mile swim, a 112-mile bike ride and is topped off with a full 26.2-mile marathon – a grueling sequence that truly tests an athlete's will to continue. Dexter recently spoke about his experience and what motivates someone to strive for the title of Iron Man.

"You need to want to do difficult things," Dexter said. "I found that through physical challenge you learn a lot about yourself, and it makes life easier to manage."

The Virginia native and son of a naval officer has been active since high school, running cross country before rowing in college, and ultimately joining the Marine Corps, which boasts its own high physical standards.

"There's a symbiotic relationship in my mind between being a good Marine officer and being physically fit," Dexter said. "As I've continued down this Marine Corps journey, I've seen myself doing more challenging things, which challenges the mind and prepares you for things outside of athletics."

His training regimen began months in advance, balancing swim drill, cycling intervals and marathon practice. Dexter is no stranger to distance sports, having a couple marathons and some distance cycling under his belt; however, this was his first time combining all these endurance sports in a single-day event.



Lt. Col. John Dexter, deputy joint base commander for Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall, exits the water after the swim portion of the Ironman competition Sept. 16 in Cambridge, Maryland. After the 2.6-mile swim, contestants moved on to the 112-mile bike ride. (Courtesy photo)



Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall's deputy joint base commander, Lt. Col. John Dexter, poses for his Ironman photo after completing the competition Sept. 16 in Cambridge, Maryland. (Courtesy photo)



Lt. Col. John Dexter, deputy joint base commander for Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall, pedals during the second event of the Ironman race Sep. 16 in Cambridge, Maryland. The 112-mile bike ride is the second of the three Ironman stages. (Courtesy photo)

While seeking to better prepare, he found a book called “Be Iron Fit,” which he said really helped to structure his fitness efforts and set him up for success.

“Instead of just jumping in the pool once a week and swimming slowly for a long period, at peak, I was in the pool three to four times a week doing about 10,000 yards, which is about 10,000 more yards of swimming than I was doing before,” Dexter said. “I rode my bike mostly on the weekends, and I was running six to seven times a week.”

Even while training, Dexter made sure to be present for his family. He works out first thing in the morning before anyone is up, so he doesn’t miss any family time once he’s home from work.

This year’s competition was held in Cambridge, Maryland — an additional motivator, he said, since it’s close to his duty station and wouldn’t require a lot of extra travel.

After months of training, race day finally came. With the encouragement of his friends and family, and the lessons he’d learned along

the way, Dexter went into competition. On Sept. 16, he became an Ironman in just over 11 hours. While the clock displayed his finishing time, it also highlighted his dedication and determination to accomplishing his goal.

As for what’s next for Dexter, he’s applied to run the Chicago Marathon in 2024, with a target finishing time of under 3 hours and 30 minutes.

His advice to anyone looking to get into competitive athletics is simple: “Don’t try to do it all at once” and “Anything is Possible” — the Ironman motto.





Members of the All Army Sports women's team smile Oct. 29 after capturing gold in the competition during the 2023 Armed Forces Marathon Championship held in conjunction with the 48th Marine Corps Marathon in Washington, D.C. From left to right: 2nd Lt. Haley Seaward of Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri; 1st Lt. Kristen Gray of Fort Meade, Maryland, and 1st Lt. Samantha Coletti of Fort Bliss, Texas, with Marine Corps Lt. Gen. Edward Banta, deputy commandant for Installations and Logistics. (Photo by Steven Dinote)

## Cyber officer brings home the gold

**Pamela Kulokas**  
JBM-HH Public Affairs

Twenty-two miles of road to cover on a Saturday — alone and on foot — that's the challenge long-distance runner and U.S. Army 1st Lt. Kristen Gray sets for herself while training.

"The longer the better," Gray said.

A cyber operations officer with the 781st Military Intelligence Battalion, 780th Military Intelligence Brigade at Fort Meade, Maryland,

Gray's hard work paid off when she took home the individual gold in the women's division and led the All Army Sports women's team to victory at the 2023 Armed Forces Sports Marathon Championship Oct. 29 in Washington, D.C. The event took place in conjunction with the 48th annual Marine Corps Marathon.

This year was her first participating in All Army Sports. Gray also ran the 39th Army Ten-Miler with her unit Oct. 8, placing third in the military female category.

Going into the Armed Forces Marathon, Gray said she did not think of herself winning or taking home the gold for her division.

“I just wanted to win as a team,” she said. “The previous year, the Army didn’t send a team to compete and hadn’t won since 2018, so I just wanted to be of help getting our team back on the podium.”

And back on the podium they were. Gray finished with a time of 2:58:51, followed by 2nd Lt. Haley Seaward of Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, with a time of 3:05:00.

As Gray entered the 20th mile, on a particularly hot and humid day, she spotted some of her teammates right behind her as the course looped back on itself. The sighting was enough to refresh her motivation and push her to the finish line, she said.

Running has not always been Gray’s sport of choice. Growing up in Park Ridge, New Jersey, she was initially a soccer player and not the most competitive of athletes at her high school, she said.

What drew her to cross country and track was the realization that the bond runners form with each other is unique to the sport.

“The shared camaraderie that is built with running is unparalleled with any other activity that I’ve done,” Gray said. “(Seeing) other people do this shared really hard thing — that’s what drew me in.”

Despite the difficulty of the sport, forming bonds with other runners is nearly instantaneous, Gray said, because of the shared hardship.

Just when she hit her stride and began her freshman year of college in 2011, a knee injury took her away from the sport. Major surgery and a long recovery prevented Gray from running for a year and kept her from being able to do high mileage for several years.

It’s been a 10-year process to build back up to the distance she is now able to cover, Gray said.



1st Lt. Kristen Gray, a cyber operations officer with the 780th Military Intelligence Brigade (Cyber), took home the individual gold in the women’s division and led the All Army Sports women’s team to victory at the 2023 Armed Forces Sports Marathon Championship Oct. 29 in Washington, D.C. (Courtesy photo)

Unlike her high school years with a coach, now there is nobody overseeing her training schedule. It’s all done outside of business hours, and usually she is alone.

“I put a lot of time into running,” Gray said, noting that it requires most of her weekends and weekday time after office hours to prioritize running, stretching and recovery.





Army 1st Lt. Kristen Gray of Fort Meade, Maryland, crosses the finish line to win the women's division of the 2023 Armed Forces Marathon Championship held in conjunction with the 48th Marine Corps Marathon Oct. 29 in Washington, D.C. The Armed Forces Championship features teams from the Army, Marine Corps, Navy (with Coast Guard runners), and Air Force (with Space Force Runners). (Photo by Steven Dinote)

Finding other people to train with can be difficult, she said. When she does have people to run with, the mental challenge of running 22 miles is made lighter; this helps her stay dialed in, meet the paces she needs to hit and know how she's doing.

"I'm in a place now where I have learned what training looks like, have a supportive family and am able to find a good work/life balance to put in some good training," Gray said.

Although all her training happens outside of business hours, representing the Army while running in events is an opportunity

Gray said she deeply appreciates.

"Wearing 'Army' across your chest is something I'm very proud to do," she said. "It's my own version of running for Team USA. I won't make the Olympics, but it's still an honor to run for the Army team."

Gray just applied for Armed Forces Cross Country team for the second year in a row and said she would someday like to do a Conseil International du Sport Militaire race with service members from partner countries.

"Honestly, I feel like I'm just getting started with this level of training," Gray said. "Hopefully I have a few more good years."





Master Sgt. Megan Lomonof is the principal piccoloist for The U.S. Army Band and has been a member since 2007. (Courtesy photo)



Master Sgt. Megan Lomonof, left, started competing with the U.S. Army eSports Team in 2019 and eventually became a collegiate eSports coach. (Courtesy photo)

## Soldier embraces competition with music, eSports and Jiu-Jitsu

**Sherry Kuiper**  
JBM-HH Public Affairs

She may seem unassuming as the principal piccoloist for The U.S. Army Band's Concert Band at Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall, but make no mistake, Master Sgt. Megan Lomonof is as competitive as they come.

The Chicago-area native aspired to be in "Pershing's Own" after watching them perform at a convention while she was in high school.

"As I was finishing up in college in 2007, sure enough, the audition came up, and I was able

to win the audition and have my dream job," Lomonof said.

### Competing in Music

Although playing instruments since childhood and going to top music schools like Illinois State University and the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music helped Lomonof get her dream job, earning a spot on The U.S. Army Band's roster was no walk in the park.

"The auditions for the Army Band are very competitive, and this is known in the music field, but not often to other people outside of the field," Lomonof said.

"For my audition, I practiced five to eight hours a day leading up to it, and there were over 50 candidates who applied for the job."

Music isn't Lomonof's only area of competitiveness; she is also on the U.S. Army eSports Team.

### Overwatch & World of Warcraft

That's right, video games!

The team has opportunities from the casual to the professional level, and Soldiers are able to go into the program and see where it takes them, much like Lomonof's experience.



Master Sgt. Megan Lomonof stands on the top podium during one of her 12 International Brazilian Jiu Jitsu Federation gold medal wins. (Courtesy photo)

“I didn’t go in aspiring to be very competitive, but it ended up opening door after door,” she said.

Lomonof competed with the games “Overwatch” and “World of Warcraft” under the fitting gamer name “Flutey.”

ESports operates just like any other sport according to Lomonof, with tryouts, a practice schedule, strategy and, of course, competition.

And there are a lot of great benefits to eSports that many people may not think of, she said.

“You’re breaking things down and you’re practicing your skill sets, just like in music,” Lomonof

said. “It actually felt very synergistic, and I’d even say that eSports in particular has valuable skills for Soldiers. It improves dexterity, teamwork, leadership, communication — all things that make you better at your job too.”

Lomonof believes Soldiers are drawn to gaming and eSports because of the practical skills and development that come from it.

After competing with eSports, Lomonof ended up moving into the administrative side of the team, which led to coaching collegiate eSports for the game “Overwatch.”





Inspired during basic training, Master Sgt. Megan Lomonof started training and competing in Jiu-Jitsu, becoming a four-time Pan American Champion. (Courtesy photo)

Her biggest success came through coaching for her alma mater, Illinois State University, where she was a three-time Contenders Champion as coach, 2022 Fall National Collegiate Champion and the 2022-2023 Esports U Collegiate eSports Coach of the Year.

Her career in eSports came on the heels of another sports career, following injuries that took her out of competition.

### **Jiu-Jitsu Champion**

Lomonof is also a Judoka who was attracted to Jiu Jitsu after learning the practice during basic training.

“After I got out of basic training, I found a gym and started training and competing,” Lomonof

said. “I think a lot of musicians have this drive to practice and go really hard in everything they do, and you’ll see that across the Army Band for sure.”

That drive led Lomonof to an impressive competitive career, winning four Pan American Championships, two world medals and 12 International Brazilian Jiu Jitsu Federation Gold medals.

With music, eSports and Jiu Jitsu, Lomonof said she never walked in looking for greatness, and much of her success is because of the people she surrounded herself with.

“It was one step at a time, and I surrounded myself with the right people and people with expertise, and who I trusted could teach me,” she said.

# 2023 Year In Review

By JBM-HH Public Affairs

From the Grant Hall tours, where visitors learned about the trial of the conspirators in the Lincoln assassination, and Twilight Tattoo, which entertained thousands with a brief history of the United States Army, to the busy season of concerts and international tours for The United States Army Band “Pershing’s Own” and packed schedule of competitions and ceremonial services performed by the 3d United States Infantry Regiment (The Old Guard), 2023 was a busy year for everyone on Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall. Here’s a look back at some of the highlights.







**Facing page clockwise from top left:** The United States Army Blues, the premier jazz ensemble of the U.S. Army, traveled to Guanajuato, Mexico, in October to perform as part of The Festival Internacional Cervantino.

Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall Commander Col. Tasha Lowery, left, cuts the ribbon in Sept. 21 officially opening the newly renovated NCO housing on the McNair campus of JBM-HH.

Sgt. Lawrence Gaines, Headquarters Company, Headquarters Battalion U.S. Army smiles July 12 after being recognized for successfully completing the Career Skills Program. The program allows service members to prepare for their transition as a Soldier-for-Life.

Lance Cpl. Hannah Swanson, left, Headquarters and Service Battalion, Headquarters Marine Corps, Henderson Hall commander, Col. William Hood, and Sgt. Robert Darling, right, take part in the annual tradition of cutting the cake to celebrate the Marine Corps' 248th birthday on the Henderson Hall campus.

Soldiers assigned to the 3d U.S. Infantry Regiment (The Old Guard) provide ceremonial support during an Armed Forces Full Honor Arrival Ceremony held in honor of Gen. Thierry Burkhard, chief of the defense staff of France, Sep. 21 at Whipple Field.

~ Photos by Staff Sgt. Rachel Minto, Jason Goselin, Command Sgt. Maj. Towanda Sanders, Marisol Rivera and Sgt. Julian Patricio ~

**This page clockwise from top left:** Broadway star Christopher Jackson sings with The United States Army Band "Pershing's Own" for a special concert Nov. 4 at the Hylton Performing Arts Center in Manassas, Virginia. Jackson is known for his role as George Washington in the Lin-Manuel Miranda production of "Hamilton."

Soldiers assigned to the 3d U.S. Infantry Regiment (The Old Guard) conduct training alongside the Army Aviation Brigade to ensure readiness as part of the quick response team for the National Capital Region and U.S. Army Military District of Washington Feb. 6 on the Myer campus.

Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall Commander Col. Tasha Lowery and Virginia Governor Glenn Youngkin place a wreath Sept. 11 at the JBM-HH firehouse to honor the people who died in the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

Marines of Headquarters and Service Battalion, Headquarters Marine Corps, Henderson Hall participate in the Annual Commandant of the Marine Corps Birthday run Nov. 9 in celebration of the 248th Marine Corps birthday.

~ Photos by Staff Sgt. Rachel Minto, Sgt. Julian Patricio, Susan LeRoy and Marisol Rivera ~





**Clockwise from top left:** Joint Base Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Fisher looks on as Joint Base Commander Col. Tasha Lowery and the Assistant Air and Space Attaché from the Embassy of Australia in Washington, D.C., Group Capt. Hannah Jude-Smith place wreaths June 14 at the Bakers Creek Memorial on Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the 1943 crash in Bakers Creek, Australia that killed 40 American Soldiers.

Then-Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall Commander Col. David Bowling, second from left, accepts the guidon from outgoing Headquarters Battalion U.S. Army commander Lt. Col. Jay Bao, second from right, while the incoming commander, Lt. Col. Brian Hollandsworth, left, and Command Sgt. Maj. Tawonda Sanders, right, observe during the battalion's change of command ceremony May 24 at the JBM-HH Memorial Chapel.

The U.S. Army Ceremonial Band marches in the 2023 New York City Veterans Day Parade Nov. 11 in New York City.

Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall Commander, Col. Tasha Lowery, flashes a smile during the 248th Army birthday run June 15 on the Myer campus of JBM-HH.

Soldiers assigned to the 3d U.S. Infantry Regiment and the Military District of Washington train in preparation for Expert Infantryman Badge, Expert Soldier Badge and Expert Field Medical Badge testing March 6 at Fort Walker, Virginia.

A guest from the International Association of Firefighters burn camp holds a rifle with a bayonet attached Sept. 27 at the Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall firehouse.

~ Photos by Denise Caskey, Staff Sgt. Rachel Minto, Sgt. Julian Patricio and Jason Goselin ~





**Clockwise from top left:** A group of children await their turn during a Strong Beginnings graduation ceremony June 9 at the Cody Child Development Center on Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall. The CDC graduated three groups of preschoolers from the program designed to give them a jump start as they enter kindergarten.

The U.S. Army Herald Trumpets, the official fanfare ensemble to the President of The United States, support a White House arrival ceremony June 16 in Washington, D.C.

Almost 26,000 runners from around the world take part in the 39th annual Army Ten-Miler Oct. 8 in Arlington, Virginia. The race is the Army's premier running event, beginning and ending at the Pentagon while giving participants a view of some of the nation's most iconic monuments.

The Samoan congregation entertains the crowd with a traditional dance during the Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month observance May 22 at Spates Community Club and Conference Center.

About 2,500 people gather to worship during the annual Easter Sunrise Service April 9 at Arlington National Cemetery.

~ Photos by Denise Caskey, Staff Sgt. Rachel Minto, Sgt. Ethan Scofield, Jason Goselin and Sherry Kuiper ~





**Clockwise from top left:** The Presidential Salute Battery, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 3d U.S. Infantry Regiment (The Old Guard), conducts blank fire crew drills Oct. 12 on Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall.

Security specialist Donald Draper fingerprints a new hire candidate during the Sept. 21 mass hiring event held in the JBM-HH Education Center.

The United States Army Band hosts a special guest from The Make-a-Wish Foundation, Collin Morgan, over the Fourth of July holiday. TUSAB greeted Morgan and his family with a U.S. Army Herald Trumpet fanfare, included him in rehearsals at their headquarters on Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall and at the U.S. Capitol Building, and made him an honorary member of "Pershing's Own."

A group of children from the Cody Child Development Center participate in the annual Pinwheel Parade April 3 on Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall. The parade takes place annually to raise awareness about child abuse prevention.

Capt. Shawn Delancey, Military District of Washington, and Capt. Marisa Alexander, Headquarters Battalion, U.S. Army, participate in the "Wheel of Pain" – a pushup exercise - during a high-intensity interval training workout Oct. 24 hosted by the Washington Nationals.

Joint Base Commander, Col. Tasha Lowery, serves Soldiers Thanksgiving dinner with a smile Nov. 21 at the Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall Dining Facility.

~ Photos by Cpl. Christopher Grey, Denise Caskey, Sgt. 1st Class Sonia Dell'Omo and Lt. Col. Brian Hollandsworth ~





**Clockwise from top left:** Reenactor Bob Bowser portrays Dr. Samuel Mudd during the Nov. 4 open house tour of the historic courtroom at Grant Hall on the McNair campus where the Lincoln conspirators were tried.

Incoming Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall Commander Col. Tasha Lowery hands the guidon back to joint base Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Fisher as the outgoing commander, Col. David Bowling, right, Maj. Gen. Allan Pepin, then-commander of Joint Task Force-National Capital Region and U.S. Army Military District of Washington, second from left, and Davis Tindoll, director of Installation Management Command Sustainment, left, and members of the 3d U.S. Infantry Regiment (The Old Guard) look on during a change of command ceremony May 25 at Conmy Hall on JBM-HH.

Sgt. Maj. Roberto Guadarrama, left, Pvt. Kush Carter-Bey, center, and Col. David Rowland, right, all from 3d U.S. Infantry Regiment (The Old Guard), cut a cake to celebrate the Army's 248th birthday June 14 at the JBM-HH Dining Facility.

Soldiers from the Commander in Chief's Guard, 3d U.S. Infantry Regiment (The Old Guard), perform in the annual Twilight Tattoo May 14 at Summerall Field.

Soldiers of The U.S. Army Band Downrange perform April 27 for the Pentagon's "Bring a Kid to Work" day.

~ Photos by Courtesy, Pamela Kulokas, Denise Caskey, Sgt. Laura Stephens and Staff Sgt. Rachel Minto ~



# Remembering a fallen hero

## The man behind Smith Gym

**Denise Caskey**

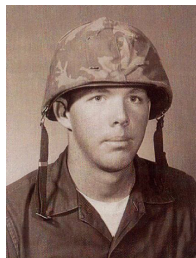
JBM-HH Public Affairs

Hanging on a wall at Smith Gym on the Henderson Hall campus of Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall and tucked away from view is a mural of a young man who gave his life so others could live.

The man's name is Cpl. Terry L. Smith, and he was a radio operator with Company M, Third Battalion, Twenty-sixth Marines, Third Marine Division, Fleet Marine Force in the Republic of Vietnam.

Smith was born May 13, 1947, in Nashville, Tennessee, to Henry and Dorothy Smith. He was an avid outdoorsman and liked to stay physically active. Among his many pursuits, some of his favorites were hunting and fishing with his father and playing football in high school.

After high school, Smith attended college at Middle Tennessee State University, but Smith's



Cpl. Terry L. Smith

sister, Donna Smith-Hagan, said after his first year, he felt compelled to step in line with his friends and volunteer to serve his country. He joined the Marine Corps on May 17, 1966.

"When he went into the Marines, he had just gone to college and was feeling that was not what he wanted to do," Smith-Hagan said. "I think that he decided to go into the Marines because, to him, he would want to be in the best, and he considered the Marines the best."

Smith was killed in action Feb. 20, 1968, on Hill 881S near Khe Sanh, Vietnam.

On that day, a helicopter landed in an area targeted by the North Vietnamese Army. Fearing for the safety of the Marines on the helicopter, Smith tried unsuccessfully to contact the pilot by radio.



A mural depicting Cpl. Terry L. Smith adorns a wall of Smith Gym on the Henderson Hall campus of Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall. (Photo by Denise Caskey, JBM-HH Public Affairs)


When contact failed, Smith left the safety of his bunker and ran out into the open field, manually signaling the pilot to take off. Before he could reach the safety of his bunker again, he was mortally wounded by mortar fragments.

“This helicopter that he was waving off turned around and came back to pick Terry up,” said Ron Smith, a lance corporal who served briefly with Terry Smith. “Something I didn’t know until years later, which was recounted to me by a sergeant up there that we called Sgt. Rock, was that Terry knew that he was mortally wounded and said he didn’t want the helicopter to come back and endanger anybody because it wasn’t going to do him any good.”

“He saved the guys in that helicopter, which I would have expected him to do,” Smith-Hagan said. “He went out there because it was necessary. He would do the necessary.”

Smith was recommended for a Silver Star within days of his death, but when the command bunker at Khe Sanh sustained a direct hit, all the paperwork was lost.

Upon hearing that Smith never received his medal, Col. William Dabney, who was a captain and commanding officer of another company un-



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For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action while serving as a radio operator with Company "M", Third Battalion, Twenty-sixth Marines, Third Marine Division, Fleet Marine Force in the Republic of Vietnam. On 20 February 1968, on Hill 881S near Khe Sanh, Corporal Smith observed a Marine helicopter landing in a zone on which he knew North Vietnamese Army gunners had registered heavy mortars. He realized that the aircraft would almost certainly be destroyed if it remained in the landing zone, and attempted unsuccessfully to contact the pilot by radio. Aware that the enemy rounds were probably already on the way, he restrained a Marine junior to him from going out on to the zone, and leaving the safety of his bunker ran across the open ground signaling manually to the helicopter crew to take off immediately. As the helicopter took off and before Corporal Smith could reach cover, he was fatally wounded by mortar fragments, gallantly sacrificing his life so that the crew might live. By his extraordinary courage in the face of overwhelming odds, his uncommon concern for others, and his self sacrificing efforts, Corporal Smith reflected great credit upon himself and upheld the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and the United States Naval Service.

For the President,  
/s/ **J. William Middendorf**  
Secretary of the Navy

Cpl. Terry L. Smith was posthumously awarded the Silver Star nearly 20 years after he sacrificed himself to save a helicopter full of Marines from being attacked by heavy mortar fire Feb. 20, 1968 in Vietnam. (Courtesy photo)

der the Third Battalion when Smith was killed, resubmitted the paperwork. The honor of the Silver Star was finally bestowed on Smith nearly 20 years later.

Prior to Smith’s death, he

also received the Navy Commendation medal, the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry and the Vietnamese Military Merit medal, which is equivalent to the United States Medal of Honor.





The updated facade of the Smith Gym on the Henderson Hall campus of Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall looks vastly different than it did when it opened in 1985. (Photo by Denise Caskey, JBM-HH Public Affairs)

“Terry personifies that there are things bigger than us individually, and he put others first,” Ron Smith said.

### A legacy worth honoring

It was Smith’s selfless act that inspired the late Gen. Paul Kelley to approve naming the new gymnasium at Henderson Hall after Smith, and on Sept. 30, 1985, the Cpl. Terry L. Smith Gymnasium at Henderson Hall was opened.

Smith-Hagan said when the decision was made to name the gym after her brother, her family was told it was because he represented a typical Marine.

“He had volunteered, and then he volunteered to go up there on the Hill again when he didn’t have to. He volunteered, and he



The original façade of the Terry L. Smith Gymnasium on the Henderson Hall campus of Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall as it appeared is seen in this photo taken prior to its 2003 renovation. (Courtesy photo)

looked after people,” Smith-Hagan said.

Smith’s selflessness didn’t stop at his fellow Marines. He also cared about the Vietnamese children who stood in harm’s way.

“I heard that he was talking with another radioman, maybe on another hill, and they were discussing how beautiful the land had been before it was being bombed and how those kids had a right to grow up like he had grown up in Tennessee — to be able to go



hunting or fishing and enjoy the land that God had given them,” Smith-Hagan said.

### **Cpl. Terry L. Smith Gymnasium**

Smith-Hagan said she felt a gymnasium was an appropriate tribute to her brother who always strived to be the best he could be.

“I know Terry would have been thrilled to have had a gym named after him,” Smith-Hagan said. “When they cut the ribbon to go into the gym, after we went in and all the dignitaries who were there for the ceremony went in, we were followed by all the Marines coming in to use the gym. It was wonderful because they were so excited to have this place that they could go and get stronger and better and just get closer to each other. (Terry) would have loved that.”

Today, the gym offers a variety of programs and services, including: personal training, spinning classes, yoga, HIT classes, fitness-related competitions and year-round intramural sports programs, said Willard Sturdivant, Semper Fit director at Henderson Hall. It’s open to anyone with a valid Department of Defense identification card and serves roughly 300 people each day.

“The mission of the gym is to assist our leadership in sustaining the transformation, and to be a force multiplier that helps maintain Marines as the nation’s premier warfighters,” Sturdivant said. “It benefits the community by providing the opportunity for active-duty service members to stay fit and mission capable.”

When the gym was renovated and expanded in 2003, the name on the façade was shortened to Smith Gym.

Smith-Hagan said her family didn’t know the gym had been renovated and expanded until the project was completed, and at first the shortening of the name bothered her, but she feels what is going on inside the building is more important than the name on the outside.



Army Master Sgt. Timothy Leaks works out with the free weights Nov. 29 at Smith Gym on the Henderson Hall campus of Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall. (Photo by Denise Caskey, JBM-HH Public Affairs)

She said she is happy it is nearly twice the size and offers Marines the opportunity to become the best that they can be.

“I think he would be thrilled that if there was some kind of memorial that went up, it would be something that would be a place where people were happy,” Smith-Hagan said. “I can just see Terry’s spirit hovering there, watching those guys and ladies bettering themselves.”

The Cpl. Terry L. Smith Gym is open from 4 a.m. to 10 p.m. weekdays and 7:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. For more information about the classes and services offered at the gym, visit <https://hendersonhall.usmc-mccs.org/recreation-fitness/fitness/fitness-centers>.





# #PeopleFirst

**Daniel Moore**

JBM-HH

Police Officer

## **How does the Army help you #BeAllYouCanBe?**

The Army has helped me in many ways, such as showing me how to be a leader and what leadership looks like. Between my 11 years in the Army National Guard and my four years as an Army civilian, it has made me a better Soldier and officer who holds to the highest standards and with the utmost respect.

## **What is your favorite thing about working at JBM-HH?**

Working in an environment surrounded by history is very inspirational. The ability to contribute to the protection of the JBM-HH community, and those that have fallen and rest in Arlington National Cemetery, makes the oath I have sworn more meaningful. I pride myself on community policing in an attempt to change the stigma associated with law enforcement. Every interaction with the public is a learning experience. I learn as much from those that I swore to protect as they learn from me.

## **From 3rd Watch Assistant Watch Commander Jeremy A. Davis:**

Officer Daniel Moore excels at the performance of his duties as a law enforcement officer assigned to the JBM-HH Police Department. He prides himself on community policing and has helped bridge the gap between the JBM-HH Police Department and the general public. He is a strong advocate of officer development. He takes the initiative in seeking guidance to better educate himself and excels in training opportunities that are presented to him.

Officer Moore is proactive as he patrols the roadways on the installation and educates traffic violators about their infractions. All traffic stops involving him have been positive, and some individuals who were stopped later advised supervisors of his professional demeanor and fair treatment. Officer Moore exemplifies the Army values, and his dedication to duty and commitment to public safety is in keeping with the finest traditions of public service.

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Maj. Wynton Smith (number 23825) moves through the crowd at the Army Ten-Miler race Oct. 8, 2023 in Washington, D.C. (Courtesy photo)

# A true warrior's quest:

## A journey of endurance and versatility

**Marisol Rivera**

Henderson Hall Public Affairs

One of Maj. Wynton Smith's definitions of endurance is exceeding the standard of what's expected. Smith is the Assistant Operations Officer at Headquarters and Service Battalion, Headquarters Marine Corps, Henderson Hall.

For many, the idea of running a marathon fits that definition. Running the annual Marine Corps Marathon this year for the first time is just one of the many athletic accomplishments he has conquered.

"I decided to run the Marine Corps Marathon as a way of progressing my overall health and well-being," Smith said. "I was always active in a variety of athletics even before enlisting in the Marine Corps in 2005. My training included endurance methodology, but it was always a lower priority behind strength, power and explosiveness. Long-distance running was just one method of making weight for wrestling or mixed-martial arts competitions, but now, it's the main effort. I'm planning to continue endurance competitions in 2024."



Maj. Wynton Smith, second from right, poses after a game of rugby with his NATO partners in 2017 in Afghanistan. (Courtesy photo)

This was only the latest in Smith's long journey of competitive sports, from playing football in high school and wrestling for the All-Marine Corps Wrestling team to participating in a triathlon, playing rugby with NATO partners in Afghanistan and entering a bodybuilding competition.

Although Smith has been active and participated in several sporting events, preparing to run a marathon takes a different state of mind, he said, noting he deliberately focused on building a mindset capable of withstanding the grueling race.

"The years of experience I have competing in wrestling, rugby and other sports may not have directly prepared me to go out and run a

marathon, but the competitive mindset is transferable," Smith said. "I knew I had very little experience in long-duration endurance competitions, so I began reading about similar races to gain a better perspective for the process. Reading and learning from other athletes' experience is no substitute for running a race, but it helped me set realistic goals and develop the endurance race mindset."

Although training for a marathon is different from training for other sports in many ways, the biggest change in his training progression for this race has been using data collection and analysis to his advantage, something not many may think of when preparing for a race.



“This is the first time I have used digital technology to record time, distance, heart rate and other relevant training variables,” Smith said. “Reviewing training performance has helped me make adjustments to perform better. I would add that my rest and nutrition plans have also been much more deliberate in this race ‘build.’ Rest was a lower priority for many past competitions, and I tended to overtrain right up to the event. I have added cold therapy, extended stretching sessions and mobility work to help me recover sufficiently, and my performance has increased significantly.”

From running the Army 10-Miler to running this year’s Marine Corps Marathon, his determination and drive have been the key to his success both on and off duty.

Smith plans to participate in long-endurance events in 2024, with more ultramarathons, triathlons and team endurance races. He also plans to record several power-lifting competitions. His goal is to compete in a major sporting event every 90 days with a few smaller events between.



Maj. Wynton Smith salutes the Headquarters and Service Battalion commanding officer (modified salute) while crossing the finish line at the Marine Corps Marathon 50K race Oct. 29, 2023 in Washington, D.C. (Courtesy photo)






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# My time at the Defense Information School

Jason Goselin

JBH-HH Public Affairs

In the ever-evolving landscape of information warfare, effective communication is a strategic imperative. The Defense Information School at Fort Meade, Maryland, is where all branches of the U.S. military train their communicators. Military photographers, videographers, journalists and graphic artists all learn here. In addition to our own military, DINFOS allows service members from allied nations to attend the school, truly making it an international institution.

In July, I was given the opportunity to attend the Public Affairs Communication & Strategy Qualification Course at DINFOS. The course is an intensive program designed to mold individuals into adept communicators within the context of military and defense operations. As a civilian Public Affairs Specialist for the Army, I'm always eager to increase my skills and be more prepared for leadership as I progress in my career.

This was my second time at the school, as I took the Mass Communications Foundations course as an Army Reservist in 2021. Having gone through that six-month course a year prior, I thought I had an idea



Jason Goselin, public affairs specialist at Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall, poses Sept. 15 with the DINFOS Grad sign on the school campus at Fort Meade, Maryland. (Photo by Susan LeRoy)

of what to expect; I was wrong. The focus of MCF is performing the task, for example: editing the video, writing the story and getting the photo; while PACS-Q is focused on applications of strategy, theory and scenario-driven exercises.

The course is divided into three functional areas. The first phase, foundations, is 28

days and focuses on research, communication planning and crafting operational documents. The pace is rigorous with multiple assignments due on top of one another throughout the entire functional area. While stressful, the fast tempo allows students to become comfortable operating competently in crisis communication environments.





The PACS-Q 040-23 graduating class poses for a group photo Sept. 15 at Fort Meade, Maryland. The class consisted of service members from all branches of the U.S. armed forces, as well international students. (Courtesy photo)

During functional area two, days 29 to 38, the class participates in a mock deployment scenario in which they set up and operate a public affairs office while reacting to a myriad of situations and crises thrown at them by DINFOS instructors and role players. Students take turns playing different leadership roles within the unit and gain practical experience implementing the processes learned.

The final days, 39 to 45, are spent preparing for the capabilities board, in which students present to a panel of senior public affairs and communications professionals. They are required to describe their competence as a military communicator and how they will utilize the skills learned to relay a commander's intent through communication efforts.



From left to right: Jason Goselin, Lt. Jeon Guiyoung, 2nd Lt. Amy Petrocelli, Ensign Lamar Badger, all members of group Bravo from PACS-Q graduating class, pose for a photo Sept. 15 at the Defense Information School at Fort Meade, Maryland. (Courtesy photo)



If it sounds ambiguous, it's because it's supposed to. It's a final test of a student's ability to think calmly under pressure and deliver a coherent verbal and visual presentation about themselves as a military communicator. This structure truly requires students to draw upon the lessons, doctrine and planning they've learned throughout the course.

PACS-Q is a one-of-a-kind experience that goes beyond earning a certification. It's an often-intense journey that molds individuals into skilled communicators, and arms them with the knowledge required to become a successful public affairs professional. The relationships developed with other professionals during the course is crucial



Jason Goselin, right, receives his certificate of completion from the Defense Information School's Public Affairs & Communication Strategy Qualification Course from Lt. Col. Malinda Singleton, DINFOS deputy commandant Sept. 15 at Fort Meade, Maryland. (Courtesy photo)

as duty stations change, new opportunities are taken and practitioners have the chance

to work with their former classmates in real world operations.

The image shows a white Tally Tumbler with a silver lid. It features three rings for scorekeeping: 'STROKE PLAY' (110, 120, —, 10, 20), 'FAIRWAYS HIT' (15, 16, 17, 18, 1, 2, 3), and 'GREENS IN REGULATION' (15, 16, 17, 18, 1, 2, 3). The brand name 'TALLY TUMBLER' is printed at the bottom.

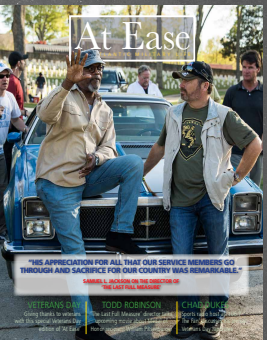
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# Congratulations, Pan American Athletes!

Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall congratulates all the service members who medaled at and competed in the 2023 Pan American Games in Santiago, Chile.



Army Capt. Sam Chelanga (top left and inset) runs in the Men's 10,000m final at the 2023 USA Track and Field Outdoor Championships July 6 in Eugene, Oregon. Chelanga won the silver medal in the same race Nov. 3 at the Pan American Games in Santiago, Chile.

Spc. Khalfani Harris (top right with inset) of the U.S. Army World Class Athlete Program delivers a kick to Colombia's David Felipe Paz Rocha during the 68kg taekwondo semifinals at the Pan American Games Oct. 21 in Santiago, Chile. Harris won the 68kg taekwondo gold medal.

Sgt. Ednah Kurgat (bottom left and inset) of the U.S. Army World Class Athlete Program runs during the women's 10,000-meter run Oct. 30 during the Pan American Games in Santiago, Chile. Kurgat, who won her first international medal, finished third in 33 minutes, 16.61 seconds.

Sgt. Ildar Hafizov (bottom right and inset) of the U.S. Army World Class Athlete Program grapples with Cuba's Kevin De Armas in the Greco-Roman wrestling finals of the 60kg weight class during the Pan American Games Nov. 3 in Santiago, Chile. Hafizov won his first Pan American gold medal by edging De Armas 7-5.

~ U.S. Army WCAP photos by Maj. Nate Garcia and Staff Sgt. Michael Hunnisett ~





Spc. Kamal Bey (top left and inset) of the U.S. World Class Athlete Program throws Brazil's Jilson De Brito during the 77kg gold medal match in Greco-Roman Wrestling at the Pan American Games Nov. 3 in Santiago, Chile. Bey pinned De Brito in the final for his first Pan American Games gold medal.

Staff Sgt. Nick Mowrer, right, of the U.S. Army World Class Athlete Program teamed with 1st Lt. Lisa Emmert of the Army National Guard (top right and inset) to win the bronze medal in mixed air pistol at the Pan American Games Oct. 27 in Pudahuel, Chile. Mowrer and Emmert swept their Brazilian counterparts 16-0 to win the bronze.

Sgt. Joanne Fa'avesi (bottom left and inset) runs upfield and 1st Lt. Sam Sullivan (bottom right and inset) carries the ball upfield during the U.S. Women's Rugby 7s team's shutout of Colombia during a Pan American Games quarterfinal Nov. 3 in Santiago, Chile. Fa'avesi and Sullivan helped the U.S. team win the gold medal.

~ Photos by Major Nate Garcia and Steve Warns ~





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