



Fort Drum, New York EOD team wins all-Army competition

FORT LIBERTY, N.C. – A U.S. Army Explosive Ordnance Disposal team from Fort Drum, New York, won first place in the all-Army EOD Team of the Year Competition.

Staff Sgt. Tyler A. Grieve and Sgt. Tristin E. Lindsey from the 760th EOD Company, 192nd EOD Battalion, 52nd EOD Group, took top honors during the competition on Fort Liberty, North Carolina.

Staff Sgt. Corey L. Ver Doorn and Sgt. George H. Wang from the 53rd EOD Company, 3rd EOD Battalion, 71st EOD Group, came in second place and Sgt. Hunter L. Roth and Sgt. Jacob I. Blauser from the 65th EOD Company, 303rd EOD Battalion, U.S. Army Pacific, came in third place.

Sgt. 1st Class John M. Iseman and Sgt. Jesus Calixto from the 1108th EOD Company, New York National Guard, and Staff Sgt. Eric T. Burger and Spc. Nathan B. Landrum from the 720th EOD Company, U.S. Army Europe and Africa, represented their companies in the competition.

Grieve earned the Top Shot award and Lindsey was also recognized as the Iron Soldier for earning the highest Army Combat Fitness Test score. The most motivated team award went to Hunter and Blauser from U.S. Army Pacific.

The winning team earned Meritorious Service Medals and championship belts, among many other awards.

The five teams took on a wide variety of scenarios during the competition, from responding to chemical ordnance and other explosive devices to completing a live fire range and an all-night, 12-mile ruck march.

The Fort Liberty, North Carolina-based 192nd EOD Battalion coordinated the competition and planned it



Staff Sgt. Corey L. Ver Doorn from the 53rd EOD Company, 3rd EOD Battalion, 71st EOD Group, takes on an explosive device during the all-Army EOD Team of the Year competition on Fort Liberty, North Carolina, April 23. Five Army EOD teams took on a wide variety of technical and tactical scenarios during the intense week-long competition. U.S. Army photo by Capt. Michael Villahermosa.

around the history of the EOD profession and the 80th anniversary of the Battle of Normandy.

Col. Shawn Kadlec, the Army EOD commandant, and Command Sgt. Maj. Dave Silva, the senior enlisted leader for the 20th CBRNE Command, hosted the award ceremony.

A Master EOD technician, Silva has deployed seven times and served in Iraq and Afghanistan. Silva said the Army EOD teams proved themselves during the competition.

“The Army EOD Team of the Year competition represents the pinnacle of excellence in Explosive Ordnance Disposal, showcasing the bravery,

skill and dedication of the world's finest bomb disposal experts,” said Silva. “This year the prestigious competition honored our history and served as a bridge from our roots to our future.”

“By recognizing their outstanding achievements, we acknowledge the critical role EOD teams play in keeping our communities safe and supporting maneuver forces in large-scale ground combat operations,” said Silva, adding that the all-Army competition demonstrated why the U.S. Army has some of the bravest, best and most experienced bomb technicians in the world.

[Read full story](#)

From the Commanding General

Fellow Defenders,

Thank you for your continued service to our Army and nation. It has been my privilege and honor to serve with you the last two years. You are Extraordinary Professionals!

The 20th CBRNE Command comprises of highly trained Soldiers and DA Civilians in the Army's one-of-a-kind organization – the U.S. Department of Defense's only one. Our joint, interagency, and multinational partners around the world recognize our command for excellence.

We consistently rise to the challenges of the ever-changing global security environment as we prepare our CBRN and EOD units to enable our forces during large-scale combat operations. We remain ready to respond to short-fused deployment requirements and support geographical combatant commands abroad and other government agencies across the homeland. We continue to forge and strengthen relationships with our partners and allies to help build partnership capacity. We do this by being Extraordinary Professionals who lead, care for people, train, and maintain resources to WIN in any environment.

I know you will continue to excel when COL(P) W Maria Bochat assumes command on 06 August 2024. This command welcomes her as the next commanding general. She brings a wealth of experience. As examples, she served as a Senior Military Advisor, Counter Weapons of Mass Destruction Division, Office of the Secretary of Defense for Policy; commanded the 48th Chemical Brigade; served as the 2nd Infantry Division Chief of Staff; and recently, completed her duties as the 33rd Chief of Chemical and Commandant of the U.S. Army CBRN School.

As I close, I express my sincere gratitude for your professionalism and commitment to this command, FORSCOM, and the Army. Thank you, Defenders!

Liberty We Defend!

Daryl O. Hood, MG, USA
Commanding General
20th CBRNE Command



The Defender

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Chaplain's Corner

One of the fun things about living in different parts of the country, serving in the military is visiting the unique and historical sights each area has to offer. Here in the Northern Maryland area, we are very close to the hallowed grounds of the Gettysburg National Military Park, the haunting Antietam National Battlefield and all the great monuments in our Nation's Capital. Recently, my family and I visited Fort McHenry National Monument in Baltimore.

Fort McHenry is located on a point of land, jutting out into the Patapsco River, ideally situated to guard the approaches of Baltimore Harbor. This star-shaped bastion was built in 1798 and was in continuous use by the military through World War Two. The fort is most famous, however for its stalwart defense of Baltimore Harbor during an attack from the British Navy during the War of 1812. During the attack, a young lawyer from Baltimore named Francis Scott Key was stuck on a ship that was interned by the British some distance from the fort. At some point during the bombardment, Key was able to peer through the fog of war to see the large American flag still waving proudly, signaling victory. It was this view of the stars and stripes that inspired him to write the words to a melody that we now know as the *Star-Spangled Banner*, or the National Anthem. I hear the National Anthem frequently and as such the power of the words can get lost in repetition. Being at Fort McHenry, actually standing on the ramparts, imagining the roar of the American 24-pound cannon against the shriek of the Congreve rockets provided me a fresh and powerfully tangible experience of the words I've heard thousands of times.

Interestingly, during my visit back in April, one could look out towards where the British were thundering away and you could see the MV Dali, the container ship that struck the ... wait for it ... Francis Scott Key bridge, collapsing it into the Patapsco River back in March. I could not help but to think about how many decades Fort McHenry stood guard over the harbor but whose current presence could not deter an errant cargo ship.

In my mind this bizarre incident highlights what a crazy world we live in currently. We now have a couple of wars currently underway in Europe and the Middle East and the constant threat of conflict in so many other places. We have colleges under assault from agitators and protestors and constant drug cartel violence on our southern border. If all this isn't enough, the current political climate seems like a three-ring circus and only promises to get worse as November approaches.

As I was touring Fort McHenry, I saw a display illustrating the time when the large cannons were aimed not at the harbor but towards the city of Baltimore. During the Civil War, Maryland had the unique distinction of being a slave state that had never actually seceded from the Union. Maryland and its largest city, Baltimore was deeply divided on the issue of the day – slavery and states' rights. At that time Fort McHenry was under the command of the Union and Abraham Lincoln ordered the guns aimed at the city of Baltimore as a deterrent should Maryland think about secession.

Think about that. The guns once used to defend against the British at the time and place of the writing of the National Anthem were, fifty years later, turned on ourselves.

Our current political divide may seem insurmountable, but we've experienced worse. Between now and election day, we have or have had several opportunities to reflect on what binds us together rather than what separates us. We've had Memorial Day, the 80th Anniversary of D-Day, and Juneteenth, Flag Day and Independence Day are approaching. Just about every sacred religious text mentions unity and diversity. The Bible, which I am most familiar, teaches dwelling in unity, loving and respecting one's neighbors and that a house divided against itself surely will not endure.

I can't imagine a more poignant image of a house divided against itself than a fortress cannon aimed back at the city it once protected. As the fog of election year craziness begins to descend, I encourage everyone to peer through the fog as Francis Scott Key did, and catch a glimpse of our flag that is, after all these years, still there.

Behold its image, feel its presence and let its legacy unite us.

Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Ben Clark
20th CBRNE Command Chaplain
Office: 410-306-3098

Thai American officer molds future leaders through network



A U.S. Army lieutenant colonel has led the charge to connect and develop a new generation of military leaders in the Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander community. Lt. Col. Seth T. Varayon has championed connecting and developing the U.S. Army's AANHPI culture over the past few years. U.S. Army photo by Henry Villarama.



ABERDEEN PROVING GROUND, Md. – A U.S. Army lieutenant colonel has led the charge to connect and develop a new generation of military leaders in the Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander community.

U.S. Army Lt. Col. Seth T. Varayon has championed connecting and developing the Army's AANHPI culture over the past few years.

Varayon currently serves as the information operations officer and future operations planner for the 20th CBRNE Command on Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland.

A first-generation Thai American officer from McLean, Virginia, Varayon was commissioned as an infantry officer in May 2007.

He earned his bachelor's degree in management from Rensselaer Poly-

technic Institute in Troy, New York, and his master's degree in adult education and leadership from Kansas State University in Manhattan, Kansas.

Varayon has served in staff and leadership positions from the platoon to division level in light infantry and combined arms formations. During three deployments to Afghanistan, Varayon earned three Bronze Stars and a Purple Heart.

He has also served on a unit rotation to South Korea.

Varayon is the co-founder and chief administrator of the Asian and Pacific Islander Army Officers network, which consists of nearly 2,000 former, current and future commissioned and warrant officers across the U.S. Army, Army National Guard, Army Reserve and sister services.

"This group stresses inclusion, so there are officers from other services as well," said Varayon. "Over time, we have realized that the benefits of this group are universal, and that the next evolution will focus on an expanded group of Total Army AANHPI – that means Soldiers, NCOs, warrant officers, commission officers, families, Army civilians and Soldiers for Life."

Varayon recently moderated an FAPAC panel called the "SES pipeline" that included Dr. Michelle Zbylut, the Senior Advisor to the Secretary of the Army for Diversity and Inclusion; Young Bang, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army (Acquisition, Logistics and Technology); and Hong Miller, the Chief Human Capital Officer at Army Futures Command.

He also spoke at the Pentagon's Joint AANHPI Heritage Month Observance at the Pentagon Auditorium, May 15.

Varayon won the 2022 FAPAC Uniformed Services Award in the Army Category because of his involvement with the Asian and Pacific Islander Army Officers network.

He has volunteered to serve as the FAPAC Awards Committee chairperson for the past two years.

Varayon said the FAPAC Pentagon event theme of "Advancing Leaders through Innovation" applies to the important role that mentors and coaches have in molding the leaders who will guide the U.S. military and the nation it defends into the future.

He offered some examples of how Soldiers can advance leaders through innovation.

"I can advance leaders through innovation by introducing a mentorship program if my organization does not have one," said Varayon. "Mentoring and coaching aren't innovative in the sense that they have never been done before but being deliberate about innovating some aspect of yourself or your organization to advance leaders can be just as effective."

[Read full story](#)

US Army SHARP victim advocate named Civilian of the Year



Keioka J. "Kaye" Norfleet, the victim advocate for the 48th Chemical Brigade, was one of two U.S. Army civilians selected as the 20th CBRNE Command Civilian of the Year. Courtesy photo.

FORT CAVAZOS, Texas – A U.S. Army victim advocate for the Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention (SHARP) Program Office was named the 20th CBRNE Command Civilian of the Year.

Keioka J. "Kaye" Norfleet, the victim advocate for the 48th Chemical Brigade, was one of two Army civilians selected as the first ever 20th CBRNE Command Civilian of the Year.

Karen Diep-Arwood, the medical readiness coordinator for the 20th CBRNE Command Surgeon Cell, was also selected as the Civilian of the Year.

Norfleet was also selected as the Civilian of the Quarter for January through March 2024.

Originally from Oakland, California, by way of Kansas City, Missouri, Norfleet served in the U.S. Army for 22 years before retiring from Fort Cavazos, Texas. Norfleet retired as a sergeant first class healthcare specialist after serving as the Sexual Assault Response Coordinator for the 1st Medical Brigade. She earned her master's degree from in health

administration from the University of the Incarnate Word. She has served as an Army civilian for three years.

Norfleet directly contributes to the readiness of the Army's only operational Chemical Brigade.

"Part of my job is to ensure the members of the 48th know how to intervene and be active bystanders to prevent sexual assault and harassment," she said. "One Soldier taken out of the fight is one too many."

Norfleet said she enjoys serving as a U.S. Army civilian "to serve those who serve."

"My plan is to be a part of the SHARP program for as long as I'm able," she said. "I really enjoy training with the Soldiers. What has served me well thus far is the ability to relate to them and a little humility goes a long way."

[Read full story](#)

Awards

20th CBRNE Command

Col. Gregory J. Hirschey - Meritorious Service Medal
Col. Michael R. Boivin - Meritorious Service Medal
Lt. Col. William P. Mason - Meritorious Service Medal
Lt. Col. David C. Thomas - Meritorious Service Medal
Maj. Trevor S. Lanham - Meritorious Service Medal
Maj. Kurt R. Hebert - Meritorious Service Medal
Maj. Grant Severson - Meritorious Service Medal
Maj. Neal J. Trump - Meritorious Service Medal
Maj. Matthew B. Stokley - Meritorious Service Medal
Capt. Keith G. Buennemeyer - Meritorious Service Medal
1st Sgt. John Binot - Meritorious Service Medal
Master Sgt. Brennie Laracuenta - Meritorious Service Medal
Master Sgt. Clay J. Collins - Meritorious Service Medal
Master Sgt. Wade A. Wagley - Meritorious Service Medal
Master Sgt. Ralph W. Bailey - Meritorious Service Medal
Master Sgt. Ralph W. Bailey - Meritorious Service Medal
Sgt. 1st Class TJ J. Delacruz - Meritorious Service Medal
Sgt. 1st Class Christopher Panthofer - Meritorious Service Medal

Sgt. 1st Class Tarik A. Lewis - Meritorious Service Medal
Capt. Madeline J. Dooley - Army Commendation Medal
Staff Sgt. Kemafia D. Coleman - Army Commendation Medal
Staff Sgt. Nicholas A. Perkins - Army Commendation Medal
Staff Sgt. Eddie A. Edwards - Army Commendation Medal
Staff Sgt. Sean M. Anderson - Army Achievement Medal
Maj. Zachary D. Hildreth - Army Achievement Medal
Capt. William P. McKean - Army Achievement Medal
Capt. Keith E. Daniels - Army Achievement Medal
Capt. Michael J. Francis - Army Achievement Medal
Capt. William R. Hartman - Army Achievement Medal
Capt. Matthew J. Piranian - Army Achievement Medal
CWO 2 Catherine Hidalgoalmonete - Army Achievement Medal
Sgt. 1st Class Stephanie Beachley - Army Achievement Medal
Staff Sgt. Billy C. Dodds - Army Achievement Medal
Staff Sgt. Peache M. Georgepowell - Army Achievement Medal
Staff Sgt. Joseph L. Byrd - Army Achievement Medal
Staff Sgt. Lawrence S. Simpson - Army Achievement Medal
Staff Sgt. Nakenyah R. Singletary - Army Achievement Medal

Medical readiness coordinator selected as Civilian of the Year

ABERDEEN PROVING GROUND, Md. – The U.S. Army civilian medical readiness coordinator for the 20th Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, Explosives (CBRNE) Command was selected as the Civilian of the Year for the one-of-a-kind command.

Karen Diep-Arwood, the medical readiness coordinator for the 20th CBRNE Command Surgeon Cell, was one of two U.S. Army civilians selected as the first ever 20th CBRNE Command Civilian of the Year, together with Keioka J. “Kaye” Norfleet, the victim advocate for the 48th Chemical Brigade.

Diep-Arwood maintains technical links with Army, joint and interagency CBRNE organizations to ensure medical readiness. In addition to analyzing data on medical readiness requirements, she monitors, manages and interprets data to allow commanders to prioritize efficiently.

Diep-Arwood said her selection as the first 20th CBRNE Command Civilian of the Year also holds a special significance.

“It signifies not only personal achievement but a testament to the value placed on civilian contributions within the command and serves as motivation for others to strive for excellence in their roles,” said Diep-Arwood. “Being selected as the first Civilian of the Year was a moment of



Karen Diep-Arwood, the medical readiness coordinator for the 20th CBRNE Command Surgeon Cell, was selected as the first ever 20th CBRNE Command Civilian of the Year. U.S. Army photo by Marshall R. Mason.

pride and validation, but more importantly, it was a catalyst for continued dedication to serving the command and its mission to protect and defend our nation.”

[Read full story](#)

Awards

20th CBRNE Command

- Staff Sgt. Peache M. Georgepowell - Army Achievement Medal
- Staff Sgt. Joseph L. Byrd - Army Achievement Medal
- Sgt. Matthew A. Redic - Army Achievement Medal
- Sgt. Zachary G. Shahan - Army Achievement Medal
- Sgt. Keyonta A. Curgil - Army Achievement Medal
- Sgt. Corey C. Groholski - Army Achievement Medal
- Sgt. Quintelius M. Spates - Army Achievement Medal
- Cpl. Philip A. Olsen - Army Achievement Medal
- Spc. Mitchell R. Schad - Army Achievement Medal
- Pvt. 1st Class Vinny T. Yang- Army Achievement Medal
- Maj. James T. Nivens – Master EOD Badge
- Capt. William P. Mckean – Senior EOD Badge
- Sgt. Bradley K. James – German Armed Forces Badge
- Lt. Col. Matthew S. Giffen – Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal

48th Chemical Brigade

- Lt. Col. Zachary D. Brainard - Meritorious Service Medal
- Maj. Ronald J. Runyan - Meritorious Service Medal
- Maj. Eric E. Norgard - Meritorious Service Medal
- Maj. Azucena Towne - Meritorious Service Medal
- Maj. Dominic J. Kominos - Meritorious Service Medal
- Capt. Donovan G. Coleman - Meritorious Service Medal
- Capt. Cody L. Manning - Meritorious Service Medal
- Capt. Amy Swiateckimccabe - Meritorious Service Medal
- Capt. Michael W. Vane - Meritorious Service Medal
- Capt. Kiara Y. Martinezbentley - Meritorious Service Medal
- Capt. James R. Carignan - Meritorious Service Medal
- Capt. Shaun S. Shelton - Meritorious Service Medal
- Capt. Michael B. Schulte - Meritorious Service Medal
- CWO 2 Donjuan T. Brown - Meritorious Service Medal
- CWO 2 Robert A. McDaniel - Meritorious Service Medal
- CWO 2 Daniel N. Perez - Meritorious Service Medal

Medical Corps colonel retires after 33 years in Army uniform

ABERDEEN PROVING GROUND, Md. – A seasoned Medical Service Corps colonel retired from the U.S. Army after more than three decades of serving around the world.

Col. Matthew J. Grieser retired during a widely attended ceremony, April 11, at the 20th CBRNE Command Headquarters on Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland.

From July 2021 to September 2023, Grieser served as the commander of the 1st Area Medical Laboratory, which is part of the 44th Medical Brigade and 20th CBRNE Command.

Soldiers and Army civilians from the 20th CBRNE Command deploy from 19 bases in 16 states to confront and defeat the world's most dangerous hazards in support of joint, interagency and multinational operations.

Headquartered on Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland, Soldiers from the 1st Area Medical Laboratory deploy as a unit or in task-organized teams to perform surveillance, laboratory testing and health hazard assessments of environmental, occupational, endemic disease and CBRNE threats to support force protection and Weapons of Mass Destruction missions.

Activated in 1942, the 1st Area Medical Laboratory has served in World War II, Korea, Vietnam and Afghanistan.



Col. Matthew J. Grieser retired during a widely attended ceremony at the 20th CBRNE Command Headquarters on Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland. U.S. Army photo by Marshall R. Mason.

Grieser said he now plans to return home to his wife and children in Rhode Island. He also expressed his enduring gratitude to the many leaders who came to his ceremony and served with him over the past three decades.

"I thank you all for coming to share this moment with me," said Grieser.

[Read full story](#)

Awards

48th Chemical Brigade

CWO 2 Robert A. McDaniel - Meritorious Service Medal
CWO 2 Daniel N. Perez - Meritorious Service Medal
1st Sgt. Roderick M. Leftdwrige - Meritorious Service Medal
1st Sgt. Jeremy Washington - Meritorious Service Medal
1st Sgt. Mauricio A. Rios - Meritorious Service Medal
1st Sgt. Antonio L. Mccants - Meritorious Service Medal
1st Sgt. Thedros K. Poinsette - Meritorious Service Medal
1st Sgt. Martinique L. Ingram - Meritorious Service Medal
Master Sgt. Barbara A. Baber - Meritorious Service Medal
Master Sgt. Mark R. Garcia - Meritorious Service Medal
Sgt. 1st Class Daniel W. Murchison - Meritorious Service Medal
Sgt. 1st Class Nellie J. Fuihuicrichton - Meritorious Service Medal

Sgt. 1st Class Bobby D. Yanes - Meritorious Service Medal
Sgt. 1st Class Alex Echavarria - Meritorious Service Medal
Capt. Nicholas G. Williams – Army Achievement Medal

1st Area Medical Laboratory

Lt. Col. Cynthia L. Tucker - Meritorious Service Medal

52nd EOD Group

Maj. Nicholas A. Wright - Meritorious Service Medal
Maj. Bryan M. Smith - Meritorious Service Medal
Capt. Kalen A. Bryan - Meritorious Service Medal
Capt. David G. Moehling - Meritorious Service Medal
Capt. Brittany A. Stanczuk - Meritorious Service Medal
Sgt. Maj. Timothy D. Haar - Meritorious Service Medal
Master Sgt. Clifford H. Johnson - Meritorious Service Medal
Master Sgt. Ryan F. Thiers - Meritorious Service Medal

Information dominance critical to American military success



A cyber operations soldier searches for network intrusion as a "Blue Team" member during the Cyber Yankee exercise on June 16, 2022 in Niantic, Conn. U.S. Army file photo by Maj. David Pytlik.

ABERDEEN PROVING GROUND, Md. – The current operations chief for the U.S. Army Cyber Command emphasized the importance of information dominance during multidomain operations against near-peer adversaries.

Lt. Col. Garrick P. Minor, the current operations officer for Army Cyber Command, briefed leaders from the 20th Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, Explosives

(CBRNE) Command on the Army Cyber Command mission during a professional development session, April 2.

The U.S. Army published its first doctrinal publication (ADP 3-13) dedicated to information in November 2023.

Col. Vance M. Brunner, the operations officer for 20th CBRNE Command, said the professional development program is held for officers and senior enlisted leaders at the multifunctional and deployable CBRNE command.

Brunner said the program is designed to help the 20th CBRNE Command prepare to support maneuver forces during multidomain operations against near-peer adversaries. Brunner said the Army Cyber Command session was held to inform leaders in the 20th CBRNE Command on the importance of being ready to fight and win in every warfighting domain.

“Along with the physical and human dimensions of the operational environment, the information dimension is critical to the U.S. military’s success during multidomain operations,” said Brunner, a native of Kailua, Hawaii, and graduate of the University of Hawaii in Honolulu, who has deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan. “We have to be trained and ready to deter or defeat our nation’s adversaries across every dimension and domain.”

[Read full story](#)

Awards

52nd EOD Group

Staff Sgt. Tyler A. Grieve – Meritorious Service Medal
Sgt. Tristin Lindsey - Meritorious Service Medal
Lt. Col. Corbin E. Copeland and Capt. Eugene E. Osborne - Egyptian Jump Wings

71st EOD Group

Lt. Col. Nathan D. Hendriks – Meritorious Service Medal
Lt. Col. Chad R. Huggins - Meritorious Service Medal
Lt. Col. Ian J. Jarvis - Meritorious Service Medal
Maj. Beth M. Brooks - Meritorious Service Medal
Maj. Jacob A. Walsh - Meritorious Service Medal
CWO 3 Eric J. Linehan - Meritorious Service Medal
CWO 2 Gary T. Apatang - Meritorious Service Medal
1st Sgt. Aaron B. Moffett - Meritorious Service Medal
1st Sgt. Yashira M. Acostagray - Meritorious Service Medal

1st Sgt. Tyler M. Anderson - Meritorious Service Medal
Master Sgt. Drew A. Simmons - Meritorious Service Medal
Master Sgt. Christopher J. Storey - Meritorious Service Medal
Sgt. 1st Class Raymond J. Weinberg - Meritorious Service Medal
Sgt. 1st Class Christopher L. Gray - Meritorious Service Medal
Sgt. 1st Class Joseph W. Bridge - Meritorious Service Medal
Sgt. 1st Class Ethan M. Stall - Meritorious Service Medal
Sgt. 1st Class Adam Y. Long - Meritorious Service Medal
Sgt. 1st Class Douglas A. Dover - Meritorious Service Medal
Staff Sgt. Leon D. Robinson - Meritorious Service Medal
Staff Sgt. Matthew D. Helsten - Meritorious Service Medal
Sgt. 1st Class Preaunica D. Canady – Army Commendation Medal

Army safety officer helps to keep 48th Chemical Brigade ready

FORT CAVAZOS, Texas – An Army civilian safety officer helps to keep the U.S. Army’s only operational active-duty Chemical Brigade ready for missions around the world.

Rodney Munoz, the safety officer for the 48th Chemical Brigade, directly contributes to the health and safety of Soldiers and Army civilians at the one-of-a-kind formation.

Munoz was recently selected as the 20th CBRNE Command Civilian of the Quarter for January through March 2024.

Managing the safety program is no easy task since the 48th Chemical Brigade commands units stationed on nine installations in eight states.

“Safety has a major impact on this command’s readiness,” said Munoz. “Safety is not just #1 but always safety.”

Leveraging a wide variety of training aids, Munoz presents technical safety training to supervisors, Soldiers and Army civilians in the 48th Chemical Brigade.

Originally from Ozona, Texas, Munoz is a graduate of the University of Phoenix. He served in the U.S. Marine Corps as a non-destructive inspector for the F-18 program. During his 21 years in uniform, he deployed to Southeast Asia, Japan, South Korea and Europe.

As an Army civilian, he has deployed for Afghanistan for a year.

“The highlight of serving at 48th Chemical Brigade is the daily interaction I have with the awesome Soldiers,” said Munoz, adding that he also welcomes the opportunity to travel around the brigade’s footprint.

[Read full story](#)



Rodney Munoz, the safety officer for the 48th Chemical Brigade, contributes to the health and safety of Soldiers and Army civilians in the 48th Chemical Brigade. Munoz was recently selected as the 20th CBRNE Command Civilian of the Quarter for January through March 2024. Courtesy photo.

Awards

Department of the Army Civilian Writer of the Year

Walter T. Ham IV

FORSCOM Civilian Videographer of the Year

Marshall R. Mason

20th CBRNE Command Civilians of the Year

Karen Diep-Arwood

Keioka J. “Kaye” Norfleet

20th CBRNE Command Civilians of the Quarter

Rodney Munoz

Keioka J. “Kaye” Norfleet

20th CBRNE Command

Charles Hughes – Meritorious Civilian Service Medal

Tim L. Brochu – Meritorious Civilian Service Medal

Mary Alice Allan – Meritorious Civilian Service Medal

Dustin Shanahan – Civilian Service Achievement Medal

Steven Sieranski – Civilian Service Commendation Medal

Lakeitia S. Lewis – Civilian Service Commendation Medal

Frank Amemu-Golo – Civilian Service Achievement Medal

Emilio S. Sanchez – Civilian Service Achievement Medal

Dustin Shanahan – Civilian Service Achievement Medal

48th Chemical Brigade

Rodney Munoz – Civilian Service Achievement Medal

Keioka J. Norfleet – Civilian Service Achievement Medal

CBRNE Analytical and Remediation Activity

Delton L. Smith – Meritorious Civilian Service Medal

Tyler W. Hair – Civilian Service Achievement Medal

Kevin Hanuszcak – Civilian Service Achievement Medal

Michelle L. Mong – Civilian Service Achievement Medal

Taylor T. Phillips – Civilian Service Achievement Medal

Val J. Schultz – Civilian Service Achievement Medal

EOD Soldiers complete Washington Nationals training workout

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Explosive Ordnance Disposal Soldiers from a U.S. Army EOD Company completed the Washington Nationals high intensity interval training workout at Nationals Park field in Washington, D.C.

1st Lt. Madison E. Faust and Staff Sgt. Daniel S. Price from the 55th Ordnance Company (EOD) participated in the workout that the Washington Nationals host through their military support program called “NATS on Base.”

The Fort Belvoir, Virginia-based 55th EOD Company “VIPpers” are part of the 192nd EOD Battalion, 52nd EOD Group and 20th Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, Explosives (CBRNE) Command, the U.S. Department of Defense’s premier multifunctional and deployable CBRNE formation.

From 19 bases in 16 states, Soldiers and U.S. Army civilians from the 20th CBRNE Command deploy to confront and defeat the world’s most dangerous hazards in support of joint, inter-agency and multinational operations.

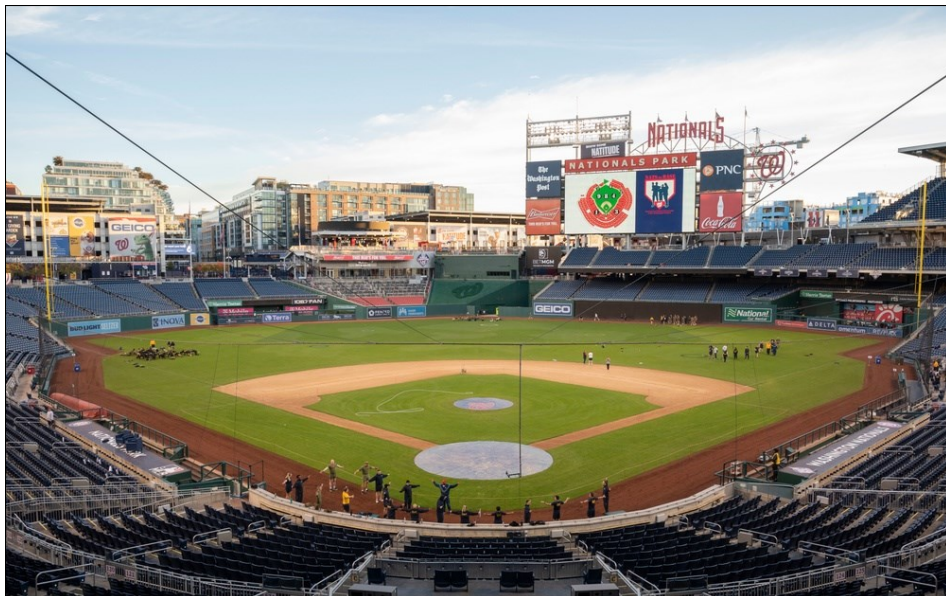
Working with joint service EOD technicians, Army EOD Soldiers from the 20th CBRNE Command defeated hundreds of thousands of Improvised Explosive Devices in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The 55th Ordnance Company (EOD) covers explosive response missions in most of Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, half of Pennsylvania, part of Washington D.C., and part of West Virginia.

The EOD company also supports the U.S. Secret Service and U.S. Department of State during Very Important Person Protection Support Activity missions to provide protection to the president, first lady, vice president and foreign heads of state.

Faust is the executive officer for the company and Price is an EOD technician in the company.

Originally from Allentown, Pennsylvania, Faust graduated from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point with a mechanical engineering degree.



Service members from around the National Capital Region participate in a circuit workout hosted by the Washington Nationals baseball team on Oct. 28, 2022, at Nationals Park in Washington, D.C. The workout included multiple stations focused on various muscle groups located throughout the stands, dugouts and field. U.S. Air Force file photo by Jason Treffry.



A native of Lexington, North Carolina, Price started his U.S. Army service as a Cavalry Scout before becoming an EOD technician.

He said his most memorable EOD mission was helping to protect the president and the first family during a trip to St. Croix as part of a Very Important Person Protection Support Activity mission.

Capt. Caroline C. Hamann, the commanding officer of the 55th EOD Company, said the Soldiers joined around 200 other troops from the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force and Coast Guard at the workout event.

“The workout included nine stations with activities, such as a push up challenge, bleacher runs with lunges and bunny hops and plank variations,” said Hamann, a native of East Greenwich, Rhode Island, and graduate of Fordham University.

“High intensity interval training (HIIT) is a cardio workout that involves cyclical short bursts of intense work,” said Hamann, who deployed to Baghdad, Iraq, in 2020 – 2021. “High physical fitness in EOD and the military allows for increased survivability as a Soldier and allows EOD techs to excel in the physical demands of EOD work while maintaining the mental acuity required to problem solve.”

Hamann said her company takes advantage of many locations around the national capital region for team building events.

“We try to participate or design events in the D.C. area as much as possible,” said Hamann. “Previously we did a hike to summit Old Rag Mountain in Northern Virginia and a run around the Washington Tidal Basin, Lincoln Memorial reflecting pools and the Washington Monument during peak cherry blossom bloom.”

[Read full story](#)

Soldiers excel at Best Squad Competition on Fort Stewart



U.S. Army Spc. Junxian Wu, assigned to the 48th Chemical Brigade, conducts the two mile run for the Army Combat Fitness Test in the Best Warrior and Best Squad Competition hosted by 20th CBRNE Command at Fort Stewart, Georgia, May 14, 2024. U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Deonte Rowell.

FORT STEWART, Ga. – Soldiers from the U.S. military's premier CBRNE command proved their grit, ingenuity and tenacity during the Best Squad Competition, May 13 - 17.

The 48th Chemical Brigade squad won the 20th CBRNE Command Best Squad Competition on Fort Stewart, Georgia.

The team will now compete in the U.S. Army Forces Command Best Squad competition.

Spc. Junxian Wu from the 51st Chemical Company won Best Soldier and Sgt. Grant I. Crank from the 744th Ordnance Company (Explosive Ordnance Disposal) was the Best Noncommissioned Officer.

Wu said his team prepared for the intense five-day competition with physical training and warrior tasks and drills.

Wu credited Sgt. Gustavo Lopes for helping him to get ready for the competition.

"He helped me prepare for the com-

petition by providing me with guidance on how to be successful as a Soldier," said Wu. "His teachings helped me be a better Soldier than anyone in the competition."

Wu said the biggest challenge of the competition was the 12-mile ruck march on the final day.

"I had to push through my exhaustion from the previous days to cross the finish line. I couldn't let my comrades down and their motivation helped me accomplish my goal," said Wu.

A graduate of John A. Rowland High School, Wu is currently pursuing his associate's degree in general studies from Columbia College. Wu said he joined the Army because he liked science and wanted to defend the freedom of the United States.

Crank said it took endurance to succeed at the competition.

"The most challenging part was not only the quantity but also longevity of physical tasks needing to be accomplished. There were also

many taxing events on the legs and your overall fitness," said Crank, who is a native of Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin. "I am an advocate for working out and going to the gym."

In addition to Wu, the 48th Chemical Brigade team included Sgt. 1st Class Allison Grover from Baltimore; Sgt. Jesus Perez from Chicago; Spc. Johnmichael Quibblo from Yigo, Guam; and Spc. Romeo Hall from San Antonio.

In addition to Crank, the 71st Ordnance Group (E)D included Staff Sgt. Keith Gentile from Marlboro, Connecticut; Sgt. Connor Chambers from Merritt Island, Florida; Spc. Fabian Lewin from Portsmouth, Virginia; and Spc. Wiyao Alaki from Togo.

The 52nd Ordnance Group (EOD) was represented by Sgt. 1st Class Jeremy Thornton from Minden, Louisiana; Sgt. Nikolai Krusenstjerna from Eugene, Oregon; Spc. Carmine Tufano from Mount Wolf, Pennsylvania; and Sgt. Levi Newhouse from Yakima, Washington; and Spc. Isaac Linton from Atwater, Ohio.

The 20th CBRNE Command Headquarters and Headquarters Company squad was represented by Staff Sgt. Christopher Hawkins from Clinton, Maryland; Sgt. James Bradley from Belle Chasse, Louisiana; Spc. Jonath Hoffman from Los Alamitos, California; and Spc. Antonio McNew from Sheridan, Indiana.

Command Sgt. Maj. Dave Silva, the senior enlisted leader for the 20th CBRNE Command, said the squads excelled during the grueling competition. Silva said that training events like the Best Squad and Best Warrior competition help to prepare the U.S. Army to succeed during large-scale combat operations against near-peer adversaries.

"The mission of our Army is to fight and win our nation's battles," said Silva, who is originally from Long Beach, California. "We just don't go to show up. We are there to win and we want to be so powerful and mighty that just our existence is a deterrent."

[Read full story](#)

EOD team leverages experience to win all-Army competition

FORT LIBERTY, N.C. – A U.S. Army Explosive Ordnance Disposal team leveraged its experience, flexibility and grit to take first place in the recent all-Army EOD Team of the Year competition on Fort Liberty, North Carolina.

Staff Sgt. Tyler A. Grieve and Sgt. Tristin E. Lindsey from the Fort Drum, New York -based 760th Ordnance Company (EOD), 192nd EOD Battalion, 52nd EOD Group, prevailed over the other highly qualified and well-trained EOD teams during the all-Army EOD Team of the Year competition, April 21 – 26.

Staff Sgt. Corey L. Ver Doorn and Sgt. George H. Wang from the 53rd Ordnance Company (EOD), 3rd EOD Battalion, 71st EOD Group, finished in second place. Sgt. Hunter L. Roth and Sgt. Jacob I. Blauser from the 65th Ordnance Company (EOD), 303rd EOD Battalion, U.S. Army Pacific, came in third place.

The winning EOD team earned Meritorious Service Medals and championship belts, among many other awards.

From responding to explosive devices to conducting night operations to completing a 12-mile ruck march, the EOD teams overcame a wide variety of technical and tactical challenges during the intense week-long competition.

The 760th EOD Company is part of the 192nd EOD Battalion, 52nd EOD Group and 20th CBRNE Command.

On behalf of the U.S. Army, the 20th CBRNE Command hosted the all-Army EOD Team of the Year competition.

Grieve, the winning Army EOD team leader, said the biggest challenge of the all-Army competition was staying ready to respond to the mission scenarios that covered a cross section of all the disciplines in the EOD profession.

“You have to be ready to do any mission every time you step up to the next lane,” said Grieve. “To overcome this, my team member and I would review what we did for the day, what we did well and what could have been better, as well as any tasks that we identified as being our weaknesses so that if those lanes arose, we would be better prepared for them.”

Grieve said preparation helped them to succeed in the different levels of competitions leading up to the all-Army EOD Team of the Year competition. His team first won the 192nd Ordnance Battalion (EOD) competition and then won the 52nd EOD Group competition.

Grieve and Lindsey then conducted more training lanes to be ready for the all-Army competition.

A native of Dalton, New Hampshire, who has served in the U.S. Army for nine years, Grieve said his EOD team will use what it learned to contribute to training for EOD techs in his company.

“Following our success at this competition, we will be building our problems that we ran at the competition and



Staff Sgt. Tyler A. Grieve and Sgt. Tristin E. Lindsey from the 760th EOD Company, 192nd EOD Battalion, 52nd EOD Group, took top honors during the intense week-long all-Army EOD Team of the Year competition on Fort Liberty, North Carolina, April 21 – 26. (From the left) Col. Shawn L. Kadlec, Grieve, Lindsey, retired Sgt. Maj. Dennis E. Wolfe, and Command Sgt. Maj. Dave Silva stand together at the award ceremony, April 26. Courtesy photo.

utilizing them as training for our peers and subordinates at our company so that they can be exposed to some new targets and scenarios,” said Grieve, who has deployed to Iraq and Kuwait.

Grieve decided to become an EOD technician after seeing wounded warriors and the effects of explosives on the battlefield. His first and most memorable EOD team leader mission was responding to a downed AH-64 Apache helicopter that had landed in the impact area.

Lindsey said the biggest challenge of the competition was fighting limited sleep throughout the week.

“My team leader and I would constantly sanity check each other,” said Lindsey, who is originally from Silver Springs, New York. “Communication was a key factor throughout the week, allowing us to keep each other in check.”

Leveraging the collective experience from other EOD team leaders and platoon sergeants in the 760th EOD Company was the key to getting ready for the competition, said Lindsey.

“I learn something new every day in this career field,” said Lindsey. “It is impossible to succeed as an EOD technician if you refuse to continue to learn.”

Lindsey, who served on a domestic EOD response mission when a hand grenade was discovered in an antique store in Syracuse, New York, said he became an Army EOD tech because he always welcomes a challenge and wants to protect people.

“I have always had a calling to help people,” said Lindsey. “I want to make the world a safer place for others. I couldn't think of a better career opportunity to do that.”

[Read full story](#)

Army team provides live coverage of EOD Team of the Year



A U.S. Army team provided live coverage of the 2024 all-Army EOD Team of the Year competition on Fort Liberty, North Carolina, April 21 – 26. Maj. Steven M. Modugno, the public affairs director of 20th CBRNE Command, and Capt. Michael Villahermosa, the commander of Echo Company, 73rd Ordnance Battalion, at the Naval EOD School, and Soldiers from XVIII Airborne Corps Public Affairs provided updates from the intense week-long competition. Courtesy photo.

FORT LIBERTY, North Carolina – A U.S. Army team provided live coverage of the 2024 all-Army EOD Team of the Year competition on Fort Liberty, North Carolina, April 21 – 26.

Maj. Steven M. Modugno, the public affairs director of the 20th Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, Explosives (CBRNE) Command; Capt. Michael Villahermosa, the commander of Echo Company, 73rd Ordnance Battalion (EOD), at the Naval EOD School; and Soldiers from XVIII Airborne Corps Public Affairs provided updates from the competition.

The team posted photos and video updates throughout the competition.

A native of Santa Clarita, California, Modugno directed the effort that brought together Villahermosa, a uniformed Army influencer, and the public affairs photographers.

Known as @EODHappyCaptain on X, Villahermosa has more than 18,000 followers that he leveraged to tell the story of the competition as it unfolded. He supported the competition follow-

ing a by-name request from the U.S. Army Office of the Chief of Public Affairs.

A native of Rosendale, New York, he joined the U.S. Army in 2008 and became an officer when he was an EOD staff sergeant. He has deployed to Afghanistan twice and served in Kosovo.

“Having the opportunity to be around my fellow EOD technicians and being able to bring their story to the Army and civilian population that may not know exactly who we are or what we do was the highlight of the competition,” said Villahermosa, who also hosts the “It’s A Blast” podcast. “Most people associate EOD with Improvised Explosive Devices, so showing off the vast capabilities of our formation such as chemical, biological and conventional ordnance and how we counter those threats was rewarding.”

Villahermosa said the challenging competition scenarios required the EOD teams to think outside of the box.

“The scenarios this year were fantastic and focused on what our EOD formation may see in large-scale combat operations,” said Villahermosa.

“From deep buried ordnance that needs to be dug down to and disarmed to drones, the all-Army Team of the Year competition highlighted the vast capabilities of the EOD force,” he said. “The scenarios were tough and realistic and forced the competitors to use creative and critical thinking to accomplish their mission and succeed on their lanes.”

Villahermosa said he hopes to cover future events for the Army.

“Bringing EOD stories to a larger population of Soldiers and civilians was a fantastic experience,” he said. “I absolutely loved being around my fellow EOD technicians.”

EOD teams representing the 71st EOD Group, 52nd EOD Group, U.S. Army Europe and Africa, U.S. Army Pacific and the National Guard participated in the competition.

Staff Sgt. Tyler A. Grieve and Sgt. Tristin E. Lindsey from the 760th EOD Company, 192nd EOD Battalion, 52nd EOD Group, won first place during the competition.

The all-Army EOD Team of the Year competition was hosted by the 192nd EOD Battalion, 52nd EOD Group and 20th CBRNE Command.

Modugno, the public affairs director for the 20th CBRNE Command, said the team coverage of the competition leveraged the power of social media to reach the largest audience ever.

“This was a great opportunity to showcase the EOD teams bonding together through tough, realistic training. These technicians displayed a high level of readiness and discipline, representing the EOD community as a whole,” said Modugno, a former Chemical Corps officer and U.S. Military Academy at West Point English professor. “We are grateful to Capt. Villahermosa and the talented Soldiers of the XVIII Airborne Corps.”

[Read full story](#)

Army, Air Force EOD technicians train together on F-16 fighter

BUCKLEY SPACE FORCE BASE, Colo. — U.S. Army and U.S. Air Force Explosive Ordnance Disposal technicians trained together on F-16 multirole fighters on Buckley Space Force Base, Colorado.

Army EOD technicians from the 764th Ordnance Company (EOD) honed their skills together on the high-performance aircraft with Air Force EOD techs from the 140th Explosive Ordnance Disposal Flight unit.

A highly maneuverable multirole aircraft, the F-16 Fighting Falcons can conduct both air-to-air combat and air-to-surface attack missions.

U.S. Army Capt. Cameron P. Clark, the commander of the 764th EOD Company, said eight Army EOD technicians participated in the training.

“The Army EOD technicians trained on locations of specific hazards for the F-16, render-safe and pinning procedures for different weapon systems and explosive hazard download procedures,” said Clark. “Many of the scenarios involved weapons malfunction and ‘failure to release’ scenarios.”

Clark added that most Army EOD technicians don’t get to train on fighter aircraft often after graduating from the Naval EOD School on Eglin Air Force Base, Florida.

“Army EOD techs rarely train on any aircraft as we are not usually co-located with an Air Force Base,” said Clark. “The two services do not often get to train together due to location. From my experience, the frequency of training together is about once every two years.”

Clark said joint service Explosive Ordnance Disposal training helps to build interoperability between the units.

“The joint training provides excellent hands-on training to re-energize lessons involving specific aircraft explosive hazards, such as chaffs, ejection seats and bomb racks,” said Clark. “Training with sister-service personnel allows EOD technicians to engage, compare techniques and provide experiences with others who have the same skill set.”



An F-16C Fighting Falcon from the Colorado Air National Guard's 140th Fighter Wing performs a low pass of the show site prior to landing for the Great Colorado Air Show, Oct. 15, 2021, Loveland, Colo. U.S. Air Force file photo by Capt. Kip Sumner.

A native of Cincinnati and graduate of the University of Cincinnati, Clark previously served as an enlisted Army EOD technician before commissioning through Officer Candidate School.

During his 16 years in the Army, Clark has deployed four times and served in Iraq, Afghanistan and Syria.

The Fort Carson, Colorado-based 764th EOD company is part of the 242nd EOD Battalion, 71st EOD Group and 20th CBRNE Command, the U.S. military's premier CBRNE formation.

American Soldiers and Army civilians from 20th CBRNE Command deploy from 19 bases in 16 states to take on the world's most dangerous hazards in support of joint, inter-agency and multinational operations.

Headquartered on Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland, the 20th CBRNE Command is home to 75 percent of the active-duty U.S. Army's CBRN specialists and Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) technicians, as well as the 1st Area Medical Laboratory, CBRNE Analytical

and Remediation Activity, five Weapons of Mass Destruction Coordination Teams and three Nuclear Disablement Teams (Infrastructure).

As the U.S. Army's explosive experts, EOD technicians take on everything from hand grenades to nuclear weapons.

From outside the wire and inside the cordon, Army EOD techs save lives and enable operations both at home and abroad.

Since 2006, the 764th EOD Company has deployed multiple times and served in Iraq, Afghanistan and Syria. Army EOD technicians from the company returned from a deployment in support of Command Joint Task Force - Operation Inherent Resolve in November 2023.

The 764th EOD Company also covers explosive hazard response missions on base and off base across Colorado, Wyoming and Montana.

“Our focus is to build a cohesive team of experts, realistically trained through scenarios that any technician could encounter one day,” Clark said.

[Read full story](#)

US Army EOD officer excels at Basic Mountaineering Course



Capt. Jason R. Walker, a platoon leader from the 21st Ordnance Company (EOD WMD), earned top honors for his performance during the course at the Army Mountain Warfare School on the Ethan Allen Firing Range in Jericho, Vermont, Feb. 3 - 16. U.S. Army photo by Capt. Jason R. Walker

JERICHO, Vt. – A U.S. Army Explosive Ordnance Disposal officer from an elite EOD company that combats Weapons of Mass Destruction was selected as the Distinguished Honor Graduate for the Basic Mountaineering Course.

Capt. Jason R. Walker, a platoon leader from the 21st Ordnance Company (EOD WMD), earned top honors for his performance during the course at the Army Mountain Warfare School on the Ethan Allen Firing Range in Jericho, Vermont, Feb. 3 - 16.

Staff Sgt. Nathan C. Peeples, who serves in the 21st EOD Company, also attended the course at the Army Mountain Warfare School, which provides tactical and technical training for mountain warfare and cold weather operations based on lessons learned by units currently engaged in mountain warfare.

As the U.S. Army continues to shift from decades of counterinsurgency operations to preparing to defeat near-peer adversaries in large-scale combat operations, American Soldiers are training to fight and win on any terrain.

"The purpose of the Basic Military Mountaineering course is to prepare Soldiers for sustained, effective combat operations in mountainous terrain," said Walker. "The specific iteration of this training I attended was the winter course which added the extra challenges brought on by cold weather and difficult movements through snow, ice and avalanche hazards."

Walker said U.S. Army and U.S. Air Force personnel from a wide variety of combat arms and combat support specialties participated in the course, including many members of the 10th Mountain Division and Vermont National Guard

The culminating event of the Basic Military Mountaineering Course was climbing up to Smugglers Notch, about 45 minutes from the school.

"We ascended nearly 1,000 feet up the side of the mountain, made our way through the trees on the ridge-line and ended with an icy 100-foot rappel down the side of the mountain," said Walker. "This trek solidified the various mobility techniques we had learned throughout the pre-

vious 12 days of training and ensured that we could trust the equipment we had been provided to safely navigate such terrain."

Walker said the Army Mountain Warfare School is a state-of-the-art facility with a knowledgeable and engaged training cadre.

"Soldiers and Airmen from all units benefited from the decades of experience that the cadre had in mountain operations and no question was ever left unanswered," said Walker.

EOD techs from the elite 21st EOD Company train to reach WMD wherever they are located. Walker said EOD techs from the company previously attended the Basic Mountaineering Course occasionally to prepare for any environment, adding that the training is ideal for team leaders.

"We are integrating it into our training program for Soldiers that are in or may be moving into leadership positions within our teams," said Walker. "The current trend is to send two to four technicians to the course every month with an emphasis placed on the winter course."

"Given the company's responsibility to be fully mission-capable and prepared to deploy on-order, world-wide, 24/7/365, we constantly seek out training opportunities that enhance our mobility and operational understanding of austere environments," said Walker.

He said he joined the 21st EOD Company to challenge himself and serve with other dedicated EOD techs.

"I wanted to join the 21st because I wanted to be part of a team that would challenge me both physically and mentally," he said. "I enjoy the science, engineering and history that surrounds this mission set. I constantly push myself and my team to be better and be ready to respond at a moment's notice. In no other organization have I been surrounded by driven individuals who genuinely want to excel in their positions and leave the unit better than they found it."

[Read full story](#)

Soldiers, Airmen validate capabilities during interagency exercise

JACKSON, Miss. – U.S. military units trained for domestic nuclear forensics missions with interagency partners during Exercise Prominent Hunt in Jackson, Mississippi.

Soldiers from the 20th CBRNE Command's Nuclear Disablement Team (Infrastructure) 2 and CBRNE Response Team 3, 46th Chemical Company (Technical Escort), certified to serve on the National Technical Nuclear Forensics Ground Collection Task Force during Exercise Prominent Hunt, April 30 – May 2.

As a part of the FBI-led interagency task force, the NTNF Ground Collection Task Force gathers and packages samples of radioactive fallout that enable partner agencies to conduct forensic analysis for attribution.

Airmen from the Patrick Space Force Base, Florida-headquartered Air Force Technical Applications Center also qualified for the task force during the exercise.

Nuclear Disablement Team 2 and CBRNE Response Team 3 are part of the 20th CBRNE Command, the U.S. military's premier CBRNE formation.

Lt. Col. Christopher Gundersen, the team chief of Nuclear Disablement Team 2, said the exercise enabled interagency partners to train for the high stakes mission of responding to a nuclear detonation in the U.S. homeland.

"To observe and participate in the Incident Command System in action was truly professionally gratifying," said Gundersen. "It truly was a whole of government solution with the Department of Homeland Security, Department of Justice, Department of Defense and state law enforcement – achieving unity of action through unity of effort."

Gundersen said teamwork is the key to success in interagency exercises like Prominent Hunt.

"It takes a team – a team of teams as a matter of fact. Knowing what the DoD brings to the fight, being ready and willing to apply it and possessing the ability to engage others across the interagency with a considerable degree of humility and cooperation is the key to successful interagency operations," said Gundersen.

"The DoD units don't have all the answers," said Gundersen. "We must establish, integrate and collaborate with our U.S. government partners to seek solutions to these sorts of challenges."

In addition to serving on NTNF Ground Collection Task Force, Nuclear Disablement Teams directly contribute to the nation's strategic deterrence by staying ready to exploit and disable nuclear and radiological Weapons of Mass Destruction infrastructure and components to deny near-term capability to adversaries.

"Most NDT Soldiers possess years of proven combat experience in terms of operating in challenging situations," said Gundersen. "We also bring world class equipment (communications, vehicles) to the fight and a level of oper-



Soldiers from the 20th CBRNE Command's Nuclear Disablement Team (Infrastructure) 2 and CBRNE Response Team 3, 46th Chemical Company (Technical Escort), certified to serve on the National Technical Nuclear Forensics Ground Collection Task Force during Exercise Prominent Hunt, April 30 – May 2. U.S. Army photo by Maj. Steven M. Modugno.

ational planning experience few of our interagency and incident command partners possess."

A native of Montclair, Virginia, and graduate of James Madison University, Gundersen is a Nuclear and Counter-ing Weapons of Mass Destruction (FA 52) officer.

"Exercise like Prominent Hunt deters threats to the U.S. homeland and our allies by demonstrating to our adversaries that the U.S. government can respond, project and apply technical nuclear forensics capabilities to such an incident in an expeditious and effective manner," said Gundersen. "The exercises send a clear message that the U.S. and its allies possess the intent, will and capability to be prepared to execute such missions in defense of our way of life."

FBI Special Agent Bomb Technician Brian Barrow, the Weapons of Mass Destruction coordinator from FBI Jackson Office, said the exercise gave him the opportunity to work with military units and other national assets.

"Throughout the exercise, it was evident across all military, state and federal resources that this mission truly is a 'one team, one fight' mentality," said Barrow. "The professionalism, teamwork and the ability to clearly communicate among each other was unparalleled."

Robert A. Eikhoff, the FBI Jackson Office Special Agent in Charge, said the exercise helped to keep the interagency National Technical Nuclear Forensics Task Force ready.

"Exercises like Prominent Hunt allow us to work together with our civilian and military partners across the U.S. government and to stay ready to conduct this important nuclear forensics mission," said Eikhoff. "They also let our adversaries know that we have the capabilities to track them down and bring them to justice."

[Read full story](#)

71st EOD Group strengthens ROK-US Alliance during meeting



A U.S. Army Explosive Ordnance Disposal Group recently helped to strengthen EOD interoperability with the Republic of Korea Army. Capt. Paul Sohn (second from right), the future operations officer for the U.S. Army 71st Ordnance Group (EOD), served as the action officer and translator for a visit by the ROK Army Logistics Command to the headquarters of the 71st EOD Group on Fort Carson, Colorado. Courtesy photo.

FORT CARSON, Colo. – A U.S. Army Explosive Ordnance Disposal Group helped to strengthen EOD interoperability with the Republic of Korea Army.

Capt. Paul Sohn, the future operations officer for the U.S. Army 71st Ordnance Group (EOD), served as the action officer and translator for a visit by the ROK Army Logistics Command to the headquarters of the 71st EOD Group, the group that commands U.S. Army EOD units west of the Mississippi River.

Headquartered on Fort Carson, Colorado, the 71st EOD Group commands three battalions and 18 EOD companies stationed on bases in Colorado, California, Washington, Texas, Kansas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, Missouri and New Mexico.

The group is part of the U.S. Army 20th Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, Explosives (CBRNE) Command, the U.S. Department of Defense's premier CBRNE formation.

The 20th CBRNE Command is home to 75 percent of the active-duty U.S. Army's CBRN specialists and EOD technicians, as well as the 1st Area Medical Laboratory, CBRNE Analytical and Remediation Activity, five

Weapons of Mass Destruction Coordination Teams and three Nuclear Disablement Teams (Infrastructure).

Col. Brennan C. Fitzgerald, the commander of the 71st EOD Group, hosted Brig. Gen. Yi Won Jae, the commanding general of the ROK Army Ammunition Support Command, at the headquarters. Sohn facilitated the delivery of the 71st EOD Group capabilities brief, an equipment walkthrough and discussions about EOD operations.

"This event improved our relationship through the opportunity to sit down, face-to-face and create a meaningful connection through humble conversation," said Sohn. "Thanks to heavy communication prior to the visit itself, we were able to prepare answers to all their questions when they had arrived."

Sohn said much of the discussion was focused on the EOD team leader process in the U.S. Army and future bilateral EOD training events.

"We believe this improved the interoperability between the 71st EOD Group and ROK Army Logistics Command because it provided them a platform to request integration into

future training exercises," said Sohn. "They departed with trust in the 71st EOD Group's forces, a heightened understanding of different lead times required for planning for joint exercises and an excitement for both nation's EOD technicians to grow their skills together."

Sohn said the ROK Army Logistics Command will work to integrate ROK Army EOD techs into the 71st EOD Group EOD Team of the Year competitions. He added that company-level events might also be conducted to leverage the collective expertise of both nation's EOD units.

A native of Glenview, Illinois, and graduate of the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Sohn lived in South Korea for four years during elementary and middle school.

"Being able to speak Korean was helpful as it provided a level of relief to the ROK Army party as well as ease to the 71st EOD Group's Commander Col. Fitzgerald to speak effectively without limitation," said Sohn. "As a team, we went above and beyond to ensure successful execution."

Sohn was the 1st platoon leader for the Fort Carson, Colorado-based 764th EOD Company during a nine-month deployment to Syria and Iraq in support of the 10th Mountain Division during Operation Inherent Resolve. He served as a team member during a response to an unmanned aerial system in Erbil, Iraq.

"I wanted to become an EOD officer because of the opportunity to work closely with some of the smartest people in a small team environment," said Sohn. "A typical platoon in the Army consists of 40 people. An EOD Platoon is comprised of eight techs including the platoon leader."

"You get to grow an exceptional bond with your teammates in an EOD platoon," said Sohn. "There's a deeper layer of trust that you get to operate from that may be rare to find elsewhere. I'm truly grateful that I got EOD as my branch."

[Read full story](#)

Sergeant provides first aid to man who suffered heart attack

FORT STEWART, Ga. – A U.S. Army sergeant provided CPR to a man who suffered a heart attack near his apartment complex in Hinesville, Georgia, March 28.

Sgt. Nicholas E. Maples from the Fort Stewart, Georgia-based 51st Chemical Company (Hazard Response) responded immediately and provided CPR for 20 minutes until paramedics arrived on the scene.

Maples then briefed the paramedics.

“I notified them of the whole situation that had happened. They said I did well,” said Maples, adding that his U.S. Army training helped during the incident. “In Army medical situation lanes, we are trained to protect the people to the left and right.

Maples serves as a Stryker Systems Maintainer and leads two other Soldiers in the Maintenance Platoon of the 51st Chemical Company.

U.S. Army Hazard Response companies conduct Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear (CBRN) reconnaissance, surveillance and decontamination operations with conventional and special forces around the world and provide support to civil authorities across the nation.

Maples said being a mechanic is always a high tempo job in the military.

“Helping our Nuclear, Biological and Chemical Reconnaissance Vehicles to find a safe path and allow the rest of the company to confront any mission is very rewarding,” said Maples.

A native of Jacksonville, Florida, who attended the Darnell Cookman School of the Medical Arts, Maples has been in the Army for six years.

He previously served in the Fort Cavazos, Texas-based 1st Squadron, 3rd Cavalry Regiment.

Maples is carrying on a family tradition of serving his nation.

“My great grandfather served in the Army in World War II, and I had very high respect for him,” said Maples.

In the future, Maples hopes to progress in his career, help his children through school and assist his wife with her master’s degree at medical school.

The 51st Chemical Company is part of the 83rd Chemical Battalion, 48th Chemical Brigade and 20th Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, Explosives (CBRNE) Command, the U.S. military’s premier CBRNE formation.

Headquartered on Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland, the 20th CBRNE Command is home to 75 percent of the active-duty U.S. Army’s CBRN specialists and Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) technicians, as well as the 1st



Sgt. Nicholas E. Maples from the Fort Stewart, Georgia-based 51st Chemical Company (Hazard Response) provided CPR to a man who suffered a heart attack near his apartment complex in Hinesville, Georgia, March 28. Maples serves as a Stryker Systems Maintainer and leads two other Soldiers in the Maintenance Platoon of the 51st Chemical Company. U.S. Army photo by Spc. Preston Ouzts.

Area Medical Laboratory, CBRNE Analytical and Remediation Activity, five Weapons of Mass Destruction Coordination Teams and three Nuclear Disablement Teams (Infrastructure).

Soldiers and Army civilians from the 20th CBRNE Command deploy from 19 bases in 16 states to confront and defeat the world’s most dangerous hazards in support of joint, interagency and multinational operations.

From outside the wire and inside the cordon, American Soldiers and U.S. Army civilians from 20th CBRNE Command save lives and enable operations both at home and abroad.

U.S. Army 1st Sgt. Christopher J. Noseworthy, the senior enlisted leader of the 51st Chemical Company (Hazard Response), said Maples had demonstrated the Army values by providing CPR to the man in his apartment complex.

“Sgt. Maples did what Soldiers are trained to do when they are confronted with a challenge. He exhibited both selfless service and duty from the Army Values while stepping up and taking charge by coming to the aid of a person in need,” said Noseworthy, a native of Phoenix who has served in the U.S. Army for 16 years and deployed to Iraq, Afghanistan and Kuwait.

“Soldiers like Sgt. Maples are the reason why we have the greatest Army in the world,” said Noseworthy.

[Read full story](#)

Army officers render assistance to diner at Colorado restaurant



Capt. Madison L. Turner (left) and Maj. Taylor S. Harrington (right) from the Fort Stewart, Georgia-based 83rd Chemical Battalion came to the aid of a diner who collapsed and hit her head in a restaurant in Colorado Springs, Colorado, Feb. 28. Courtesy photo.

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. – U.S. Army Chemical Corps officers came to the aid of a diner who collapsed and hit her head in a restaurant in Colorado Springs, Colorado, Feb. 28.

Capt. Madison L. Turner and Maj. Taylor S. Harrington from the Fort Stewart, Georgia-based 83rd Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear (CBRN) Battalion provided first aid to a woman until paramedics arrived.

Both officers were attending a planning conference on nearby Fort Carson, Colorado, when the incident occurred.

“We were out to dinner when a diner fell to the floor on her way to the restroom, right behind our table. She hit her head on the tile floor, resulting in a sizable gash above her eye and passed out shortly after,” said Turner, who serves as the plans officer for the 83rd CBRN Battalion.

Turner and Harrington ran to help her and called 911.

“We turned her on her side in the event of a seizure, applied pressure

to the gash and managed her vomiting as she slowly came to consciousness. We stayed by her side until paramedics arrived, which took close to 30 minutes,” said Turner. “When they arrived, she was fully conscious and was transported to the ER shortly after.”

Turner said Army Tactical Combat Casualty Care Combat Lifesaver Course training was very valuable in this incident, especially in prioritizing how to apply aid.

“While most diners and restaurant staff froze and hesitated to act, Maj. Harrington and I reacted with confidence,” said Turner. “I think it’s safe to say our confidence came from a combination of Army training, real-life experience and our strong working relationship.”

Turner said the restaurant staff was grateful for their quick response. The woman who fell down is married to a retired U.S. Army command sergeant major.

“When they realized Maj. Harrington and I were both in the Army, I could

sense their relief, knowing we were well trained to respond,” said Turner.

The 83rd CBRN Battalion is part of the 48th Chemical Brigade and 20th CBRNE Command.

A native of Parker, Colorado, Turner is a graduate of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point where she studied chemical engineering.

Turner has been selected to attend a master’s degree program and teach chemistry and biomedical engineering at the U.S. Military Academy during academic years 2027 through 2030.

Turner said she joined the U.S. Army and attended West Point because she wanted to serve her nation and lead Soldiers.

“I gain purpose and motivation from the Soldiers I work with and lead. I’ve been blessed to have served with some stellar Soldiers, noncommissioned officers, warrant officers and officers,” said Turner. “They deserve the best; they certainly deserve my best every day.”

Originally from Vestavia Hills, Alabama, and a graduate of Jacksonville State University in Jacksonville, Alabama, Harrington is the 83rd CBRN Battalion operations officer. Harrington has deployed to Afghanistan twice and served around the world during his 15 years in the Army.

The 83rd CBRN Battalion Commander Lt. Col. Cory S. Florence said Harrington and Turner personified the kind of leadership that keeps his battalion ready to save lives and enable operations around the world.

“Capt. Turner and Maj. Harrington exemplify why we have the greatest Army in the world,” said Florence, who is originally from Bainbridge, Georgia, and has commanded the 83rd CBRN Battalion since June 2023. “I couldn’t be prouder of them. We are a team of extraordinary professionals because we have great leaders in our ranks like Capt. Turner and Maj. Harrington.”

[Read full story](#)

American, Polish lab techs train on Aberdeen Proving Ground

ABERDEEN PROVING GROUND, Md. — U.S. Army and Polish Armed Forces laboratory techs honed their skills together during a mobile laboratory workshop on Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland, April 8 – 19.

American Soldiers from the 1st Area Medical Laboratory and U.S. Army civilians from the CBRNE Analytical and Remediation Activity (CARA) trained with laboratory technicians from the Polish Epidemiological Response Center and Polish Military Center for Preventive Medicine.

Col. Dubray Kinney, Sr., the commander of the 1st Area Medical Laboratory, said the bilateral training was designed to improve interoperability during mobile laboratory operations.

“The training also included Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear (CBRN) sampling, exploitation, decontamination and technical transport,” said Kinney, a native of Washington, D.C., and graduate of the University of Maryland at Eastern Shore who has deployed to Kuwait, Jordan, Iraq and Afghanistan.

“The workshop allowed a focused venue for the CARA and 1st AML laboratories to work on technical details important to sampling and escort that a field training exercise doesn’t permit due to time limitations,” said Kinney. “This was a great opportunity to train together with our partners in CARA and with one of our nation’s strongest allies.”

The workshop helped to prepare the 1st Area Medical Laboratory to support the U.S. Army Europe and Africa Surgeon Cell during the upcoming NATO Exercise Clean Care 2024 in Hungary.

The NATO Center of Excellence for Military Medicine said Clean Care is a biennial medical exercise conducted in a simulated CBRN environment that provides a collective training opportunity for medical CBRN defense entities and medical personnel.

Leaders from the 1st Area Medical Laboratory also previously visited Poland in April 2023.



U.S. Army and Polish Armed Forces laboratory technicians honed their skills together during a mobile laboratory workshop on Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland, April 8 – 19. American Soldiers from the 1st Area Medical Laboratory and U.S. Army civilians from the CBRNE Analytical and Remediation Activity (CARA) trained with laboratory technicians from the Polish Epidemiological Response Center and Polish Military Center for Preventive Medicine. U.S. Army photo by Maj. Steven M. Modugno.



Headquartered on Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland, the 1st Area Medical Laboratory identifies and evaluates health hazards through unique medical laboratory analyses and rapid health hazard assessments of nuclear, biological, chemical, endemic disease, occupational and environmental health threats.

An Army-civilian focused organization, CARA is a one-of-a-kind deployable activity that supports unified land operations with theater validation analysis of chemical, biological and explosive agents and materials.

CARA’s other sections provide additional capabilities to include worldwide response for Recovered Chemical Warfare Material, technical escort of surety and non-surety chemical material and remediation support to combatant commanders.

Franz J. Amann, the CARA director, said his activity always welcomes the opportunity to train with allied militaries and to partner with the 1st AML.

“This type of training makes all of the units involved stronger and more capable to conduct their high-stakes missions around the world,” said Amann, a retired U.S. Army Chemical Corps officer from Spartanburg, South Carolina.

“CARA is fortunate that its chemists and microbiologists remain with the organization for several years,” said Amann. “These scientists are able to hone their skills as they refine and improve their laboratory processes. With their many years of experience, our Army civilians at CARA are able to contribute to this valuable training opportunity with our Polish allies.”

[Read full story](#)

Army CBRN company assumes mission near Korean DMZ



American Soldiers from the Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington-based 45th CBRN Company (Hazardous Response) are contributing to the Republic of Korea-U.S. Alliance during a rotational deployment near the Korean Demilitarized Zone. The company assumed the Korean rotational force mission from the Fort Drum, New York-based 59th CBRNE Company on Camp Casey, South Korea, Feb. 28. Courtesy photo.

CAMP CASEY, South Korea – A deployed U.S. Army Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear (CBRN) company has assumed the rotational U.S. Army forces mission near the world's most heavily guarded border.

American Soldiers from the Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington-based 45th CBRN Company (Hazardous Response) are contributing to the Republic of Korea-U.S. Alliance during a deployment near the Korean Demilitarized Zone.

The company assumed the Korean rotational force mission from the Fort Drum, New York-based 59th CBRNE Company, Feb. 28.

During the deployment, the company is supporting the 23rd CBRN Battalion, 2nd Infantry Division Sustainment Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division and Eighth Army.

The 45th CBRN Company "Phoenix" is part of the 110th CBRN Battalion, 48th Chemical Brigade and 20th CBRNE Command.

U.S. Army Hazardous Response companies conduct CBRN reconnaissance, surveillance and decontamination operations with conventional and

Special Operations forces around the world and provide support to civil authorities across the nation.

Capt. Michael Vane is the commander for the 45th CBRN Company and 1st Sgt. Julian Ollivierre-Brewer is the senior enlisted leader for the company.

"We bring a unique capability to detect, protect, assess and mitigate CBRN hazards through our mounted Nuclear, Biological, Chemical Reconnaissance Vehicle (NBCRV) reconnaissance platoon and dismounted Hazard Assessment platoons," said Vane.

The company has also added Korean Augmentees to U.S. Army (KATUSA) troops to the company to improve cultural understanding and technical and tactical integration and interoperability.

"We have aggressively adopted the 'fight tonight' mentality as an enabler within 2nd Infantry Division," said Vane. "We conducted an emergency deployment readiness exercise (EDRE) six days after our main body flight arrived on the Korean Peninsula," said Vane. "By successfully alerting, marshalling and executing

our core mission essential tasks, we displayed our ability to 'fight tonight' and to be ready to answer our nation's call whenever needed."

Although he considers Santa Cruz, California, home, Vane has lived in many states while growing up as a part of an Army family.

Vane's father is a retired U.S. Army lieutenant general and his older brother and older sister are both Army majors.

"The reason I joined the Army and continue to serve is directly correlated to my parent's character and values that they instilled into our family," said Vane. "I joined to ensure that when called upon, our service members will be ready to support and defend our Constitution and its citizens as well as win our nation's wars."

A prior enlisted combat engineer and Army Chemical Corps officer with 11 years of service in the Army, Vane graduated from Christopher Newport University with a biology degree.

Vane and Ollivierre-Brewer are one of the few U.S. Army Chemical Corps company command teams to have two Ranger-qualified leaders.

Originally from Oceanside, California, Ollivierre-Brewer has served in the U.S. Army for 16 years and earned his business management degree from Penn State University.

Also from a military family, Ollivierre-Brewer said that he welcomed the opportunity to serve in the U.S. Army Chemical Corps.

"Growing up, each family member spoke so fondly of their service experiences, so I always wanted to contribute to our family's military service history," said Ollivierre-Brewer. "The thing that I enjoy most about the U.S. Army Chemical Corps is the diversity of duty assignments. It is one of the few occupational specialties that has assignment opportunities within most unit types and levels of warfare and analysis."

[Read full story](#)

Command supports Exercise Austere Challenge in Germany



ance and our global partners," recently said U.S. Army Gen. Christopher Cavoli, the commander of U.S. European Command. "Exercises like Austere Challenge enhance our integration with Allies and partners, bolstering the collective security of the Euro-Atlantic."

From 19 bases in 16 states, Soldiers and U.S. Army civilians from the 20th CBRNE Command take on the world's most dangerous hazards in support of joint, interagency and multinational operations.

The command is home to 75 percent of the active-duty U.S. Army's Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear (CBRN) specialists and Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) technicians, as well as the 1st Area Medical Laboratory, CBRNE Analytical and Remediation Activity, five Weapons of Mass Destruction Coordination Teams and three Nuclear Disablement Teams (Infrastructure).

The 20th CBRNE Command also participated in Exercise Freedom Shield in South Korea during the same timeframe.

Maj. Gen. Daryl O. Hood, the commanding general of 20th CBRNE Command, and Command Sgt. Maj. Dave Silva, the 20th CBRNE Command senior enlisted leader, met with Soldiers and senior leaders in Germany and South Korea during the multinational exercises.

Col. Vance M. Brunner, the operations officer for 20th CBRNE Command, said conducting simultaneous operations in the European and Korean theaters demonstrated the operational flexibility of the deployable command headquarters.

Brunner, a native of Kailua, Hawaii, said, "As the U.S. military continues to prepare for large-scale combat operations against near-peer adversaries, being ready to conduct dispersed operations in different areas of the world is critical to our ability to deter or defeat any adversary."

[Read full story](#)



The U.S. Department of Defense's premier deployable Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, Explosives (CBRNE) command participated in Exercise Austere Challenge in Germany, March 4 - 14. American Soldiers and U.S. Army civilians from the 20th CBRNE Command trained with V Corps and U.S. Army Europe and Africa during the exercise. U.S. Army photos by Sgt. Gregory R. Hazeltine.

GRAFENWOEHR, Germany – The U.S. military's premier deployable Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, Explosives (CBRNE) command participated in Exercise Austere Challenge in Germany, March 4 - 14.

American Soldiers and U.S. Army civilians from the 20th CBRNE Command trained with V Corps and U.S. Army Europe and Africa during the exercise, with some personnel in Wiesbaden and Grafenwoehr, Germany, and others supporting

from the 20th CBRNE Command headquarters on Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland.

U.S. European Command and component commands conducted the multinational exercise to prepare U.S. and NATO forces to operate in joint, trans-regional, multi-domain, multi-functional, integrated and contested environments.

"The U.S. is dedicated to our security commitments to the NATO Alli-

Command participates in Freedom Shield in South Korea

CAMP HUMPHREYS, South Korea – The U.S. Department of Defense's premier Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, Explosives (CBRNE) command participated in Exercise Freedom Shield in South Korea.

American Soldiers and Army civilians from the 20th CBRNE Command trained with Eighth Army and Combined Forces Command units during the exercise, with some of their personnel in South Korea while others supported remotely from Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland, March 4 - 14.

Conducted to strengthen the Republic of Korea-United States Alliance, Freedom Shield 2024 is a routine and defensive-oriented exercise designed to strengthen security on the Korean Peninsula and stability in Northeast Asia.

The annual exercise integrated live training and constructive simulations that brought together South Korean, U.S. and multinational sending states.

The training events focused on conducting multi-domain operations leveraging land, sea, air, cyber and space assets with emphasis on counter nuclear operations and non-kinetic effects.

From 19 bases in 16 states, Soldiers and Army civilians from the 20th CBRNE Command take on the world's most dangerous hazards in support of joint, interagency and allied operations.

Headquartered on Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland, the 20th CBRNE Command is home to 75 percent of the active-duty U.S. Army's Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear (CBRN) specialists and Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) technicians, as well as the 1st Area Medical Laboratory, CBRNE Analytical and Remediation Activity, five Weapons of Mass Destruction Coordination Teams and three Nuclear Disablement Teams (Infrastructure).

Soldiers and Army civilians from the 20th CBRNE Command routinely deploy to South Korea for exercises and



Maj. Gen. Daryl O. Hood (right), the commanding general of the U.S. Army 20th Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, Explosives (CBRNE) Command, speaks with Soldiers from the 23rd Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear (CBRN) Battalion on Camp Humphreys, South Korea, March 11. American Soldiers and Army civilians from the 20th CBRNE Command trained with Eighth Army and Combined Forces Command units during the exercise, with some of their personnel in South Korea while others supported remotely from Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland. U.S. Army photo by Chin-U Pak.

send a Chemical Corps company to support rotational forces.

The Joint Base Lewis McChord, Washington-based 45th CBRN Company (Hazardous Response) recently arrived in South Korea for a rotational deployment in support of the 23rd CBRN Battalion, 2nd Infantry Division and Eighth Army.

Soldiers from the 45th CBRN Company serve near the Korean Demilitarized Zone, the world's most heavily guarded border.

U.S. Army Hazardous Response companies conduct CBRN reconnaissance, surveillance and decontamination operations with conventional and Special Operations forces around the world and provide support to civil authorities across the nation.

Capt. Michael Vane is the commander for the 45th CBRN Company and 1st Sgt. Julian Ollivierre-Brewer is the senior enlisted leader for the company.

Maj. Gen. Daryl O. Hood, the com-

manding general of 20th CBRNE Command, and Command Sgt. Maj. Dave Silva, the 20th CBRNE Command senior enlisted leader, met with Soldiers at the 23rd CBRN Battalion Headquarters on Camp Humphreys, South Korea, during the exercise.

Maj. Steven M. Modugno, the public affairs director for the 20th CBRNE Command, said the 20th CBRNE Command routinely trains with Republic of Korea CBRN Defense Command forces on the Korean Peninsula and at combat training centers in the United States.

"The exercise focused on building stronger bonds and improving interoperability with our partners in the ROK-U.S. Alliance," said Modugno, a native of Santa Clarita, California, who previously served with the South Korea-based 2nd Infantry Division as a Chemical Corps officer. "For more than 70 years, we have trained with South Korean troops and we will continue to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with them on Freedom's Frontier."

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Army EOD tech who became admiral made lasting contribution

ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY, Va. — A Vietnam veteran, former Army Explosive Ordnance Disposal technician and retired Navy vice admiral made a lasting difference for his nation.

Vice Adm. John M. Mateczun was honored by U.S. military leaders during his interment ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery, Virginia, on May 9, 2024.

U.S. Army Explosive Ordnance Disposal leaders from the 20th Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, Explosives (CBRNE) paid tribute to retired vice admiral and former Army EOD tech.

Mateczun of Edgewood, Maryland, passed away Nov. 7, 2022, at age 76.

Originally from Albuquerque, New Mexico, near Kirtland Air Force Base, Mateczun enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1966 and deployed to Vietnam twice.

During his first deployment in 1967 - 1968, Mateczun served as an Army fire control instrument repairer in the 94th Maintenance Company, 25th Infantry Division, at Cu Chi, Vietnam, and participated in the counteroffensive to Tet offensive in early 1968.

His experience in Vietnam led him to volunteer to serve as an Army Explosive Ordnance Disposal technician.

He served as an EOD team sergeant with the 5th Ordnance Detachment (EOD) on Okinawa, Japan, and deployed to Korat, Thailand, for theater EOD operations.

In September 1969, Mateczun deployed again to Vietnam as an EOD team sergeant with the 184th Ordnance Detachment (EOD) at Qui Nhon, where he was awarded a Bronze Star for his heroism during combat. He cleared numerous booby traps from main supply routes.

Following his honorable discharge from the Army in 1970, Mateczun earned his bachelor's degree and medical degree from the University of New Mexico and graduated in the same medical school class as his brother in 1978.



U.S. Navy Vice Adm. John Mateczun (Ret.), president of the United Health Care Military Veterans, speaks to the audience during the Fisher House ground breaking ceremony aboard Camp Pendleton, Calif., Nov. 18, 2014. U.S. Marine Corps photo by Cpl. Ismael Ortega.



Often responding after traumatic events, Mateczun supported the crews of submarine USS Bonefish (SS 582) following a fire in 1988, the guided missile cruiser USS Vincennes (CG 61) in 1988 after it had mistakenly shot down a commercial Iranian airliner and the battleship USS Iowa (BB 61) after a turret explosion in 1989.

Mateczun commanded Naval Hospital Charleston, South Carolina, and Naval Medical Center San Diego. He was the senior medical officer at the Pentagon on 9/11 and led the medical response effort.

Mateczun later led the major merger between the National Naval Medical Center and the Walter Reed Army Medical Center (WRAMC).

During his 38 years in uniform, Mateczun became one of only two Navy psychiatrists to make three-star admiral.

Col. Gregory J. Hirschey, the deputy commander of the 20th CBRNE Command, and Sgt. Maj. Dustin R. Rolfe, the 20th CBRNE Command Operations Directorate (G3) sergeant major, attended the ceremony on behalf of the nation's premier CBRNE command, which is home to 75 percent of the active-duty U.S. Army EOD techs.

Hirschey said all EOD technicians share a common bond forged through confronting and defeating explosive threats.

"Vice Adm. Mateczun wore the same badge that bonds together EOD technicians across the services and throughout our history," said Hirschey, a native of East Helena, Montana. "He served our nation with great distinction both in Army green and Navy blue and we are proud to recognize his service on behalf of all EOD technicians."

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