

THE CATALYST

Official magazine of the National Guard Counterdrug Program
winter 2011





**Air National Guard
Col. William Carle,
Chief, National Guard Bureau,
J32 Counterdrug Division**

CHIEF'S CORNER

'Actions speak louder than words' may be a well-worn phrase, but it is no less true. Lofty words don't serve the needs of the community, but tangible results do. In this issue, you will see the results and efforts of our Counterdrug personnel throughout the country. This magazine highlights what is happening locally in your communities and how partnerships with federal, state, local, law enforcement, community based organizations and schools truly make a difference.

As my time as Director of the National Guard Counterdrug Program comes to an end, I am filled with pride in the accomplishments of the incredible men and women of the National Guard Counterdrug Program, and humbleness in having had the opportunity to serve with each of you. I have been enriched personally and professionally by all the Counterdrug personnel I've come in contact with. Time and tenure aside, I believe this to be the perfect occasion for a new voice and a fresh perspective.

I am deeply grateful to the Counterdrug Family and to each of you for your innovative work, your dedication, your warm collegiality, and for everything you've helped me learn. I salute Col. Tracy Settle and the rest of the new leadership team, and I look forward to applauding all of you as the new strategy brings new success.

I leave Counterdrug with great confidence in the people here, knowing that they are capable of overcoming any hurdle that will arise, singularly, and more importantly, together.

We have managed to assemble a very competent and pragmatic group that provides excellent support to the management team. This provides me with a sense of pride and gratitude that is indescribable.

This past year has been more challenging than any other, but I have hope that the sacrifices we have made this past year will help us to be even better in the future. Our ability to adapt to future challenges is uncanny.

We are a growing innovative team filled with dedication and optimism in everything we do. During this challenging time in our nation's history, your contributions to the Counterdrug Program have helped immeasurably by defending the homeland. Performing your jobs with great distinction all the while protecting those who threaten the values we hold so dear, means a great deal.

Enjoy this issue, and I encourage you to continue to submit your photos and stories.

Will S Carle



THE CATALYST

This Army and Air Force funded quarterly magazine is an authorized publication for the members of the U.S. military services.

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Submissions

Articles:

- Include first and last names, rank and/or title, and verify spelling of all names of personnel in the story.
- Spell out acronyms, abbreviations and full unit designations.
- If there is a public affairs officer assigned to your unit or at state level, ensure that person reviews the article prior to submission.
- Send article and accompanying photo(s) separately.

Photographs:

- Make sure photo has been reviewed and approved for release (OPSEC).
- Highest resolution possible.
- NO retouched photos.
- Outline (caption): must include who is pictured, what is happening and date of the photo, where the event takes place. Be sure to include rank, title, unit.
- Byline: who took the photo.

Email submissions to:

NGGBJ32CDPAO@ng.army.mil

Cover Photo



A crew chief from the Florida National Guard Counterdrug aviation unit, Aerial Reconnaissance Team (ART), based out of Cecil Field in Jacksonville, Fla., prepared for a training mission. Over the years, the ART has grown to meet ever-increasing demands for counterdrug missions and currently flies UH-72A Lakota helicopters. Photo by Sgt. Lalita Laksbergs, National Guard Counterdrug Public Affairs.



Photo submitted by Master Sgt. Curtis Hanock, National Guard Bureau Drug Demand Reduction Non Commissioned Officer in Charge

The Missouri National Guard Drug Demand Reduction (DDR) program was awarded the Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA)'s Outstanding State DDR Program for 2010 during the 2011 CADCA Annual National Leadership Forum, Feb. 10.

(left to right) Arthur T. Dean, CADCA Chairman and CEO; Lt. Col. David Shaul, Missouri National Guard Counterdrug Coordinator; Sgt. Alis Brasen, DDR Coordinator; Staff Sgt. Sarah Cummings, DDR Coordinator; and Capt. Benjamin Bruening, DDR Administrator.

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ARE YOU A... C A T A L Y S T

cat·a·lyst \ 'ka-tə-ləst/
noun

: an agent that provokes or speeds significant change or action

Drug Demand Reduction, Intelligence Analysis, Interdiction, Aviation, Youth Camps, LEA Training, and on and on. What motivates you to go to work every day? What makes you proud to work in Counterdrug and/or with Counterdrug? Why is what we do important to you?

As a new feature within *The Catalyst*, we want to hear about the true Catalysts within our midsts. We want to hear about those people who are passionate about our mission and why it is so important to our communities and our country's safety.

Personal summary and photos submitted by Maj. Donna Jones, Louisiana National Guard, Drug Demand Reduction Coordinator

Working in the Drug Demand Reduction (DDR) field for almost 18 years has taught me many things, but one of the biggest lessons I have learned is that growth is a process. In order to have prevention impact that effects change, "you need to dig in for a while and remain as persistent as the problem."

As the DDRA for Louisiana, I had the honor and the privilege to be part of a team at both the state and community levels. The Louisiana National Guard Counterdrug DDR Program is proud of its recent Stay on Track (SOT) success in reaching 5,238 students. The program went from reaching 430 students last year to an additional 4,808 students. Our recent success is paving the way for other communities to emulate our efforts.

Our efforts are more than just a program. I agree that strategic planning is important, but I believe relationship and partnership cultivation is the "magic" that makes it all happen.

When I reflect on our recent progress, I don't necessarily see program numbers. Rather I see the organizational and community groundwork that was laid to launch a viable and essential drug prevention program called SOT. I think about all the faces that made it happen and the countless hours that went into shaping the landscape.

The most important aspect I would like for all prevention leadership to know is that this type of success doesn't happen overnight. It takes a group of dedicated, committed individuals to keep the vision and 'press the fight' long term while also overcoming barriers. In doing so, I believe it is important to recognize one of our first partners in this process which is the Governor's Drug Policy Board's Prevention Systems Committee.

As the La. Guard's DDRA, I was asked to serve at the inception of this committee. The committee had the charge of developing and carrying out Louisiana's Strategic Prevention Framework State Incentive Grant (SPF-SIG) immediately following Hurricane Katrina.

Dawn Diez, the SPF-SIG Project

Director, and Linda McIntyre, the Prevention Systems Committee Chair, were instrumental in embracing the Louisiana National Guard Counterdrug Task Force as one of the partners at the state leadership drug prevention table.

Along with all the other committee members, we worked side by side to introduce new policies, programs, and practices in Louisiana which would eventually be the adhesive material that held our

"Yesterday, I was in a very drug infested school doing post surveys all day in Lafayette. The instructor gave all these students the presentation on how much we care (resource officers, coaches, coalition etc.) and that Lafayette is paving the way for great things to happen all over our state. Don't you know that a student wrote on a post survey that they liked the program 'because we care.' So simple but they got the message."



prevention efforts together. This was not an easy process and it took many months and even years to see the state and community alignment that everyone worked so hard towards achieving.

Lafayette parish is a perfect example of how community systems thrive when this prevention alignment comes to fruition.

Lafayette Parish was one of the 10 targeted SPF-SIG Parishes that was awarded grant money to address underage drinking in Louisiana. The Guard's DDR Program was also asked to participate in Lafayette's community coalition at its inception. As I reflect, I realize just how instrumental the Knowledge Effect Lafayette Coalition has been in opening the door for the SOT Program to be implemented into the Lafayette communities. If it wasn't for the great work and partnerships this coalition developed in its growing stages, the National

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FL DRUG DEMAND REDUCTION PROGRAM 'TELLS IT LIKE IT IS' TO YOUTH OF ALL AGES

Story and photos by Sgt. Lalita Laksbergs, National Guard Counterdrug Public Affairs

The Florida National Guard Counterdrug (NGCD) Drug Demand Reduction (DDR) Program uses various resources to teach children about the dangers of alcohol, tobacco and illegal drugs.

From drug education awareness classes for kindergarteners, youth leader activities involving rock climbing walls and teen leadership programs for middle school age youth, to visits by the Aerial Reconnaissance Team (ART) Lakota helicopter for younger students, the Florida NGCD DDR programs are cost free and specifically designed to reach several different age groups.

The overall program focus is on the middle school ages where the initial risk of exposure to illicit drugs is shown to be the greatest.

At the Alice B. Landrum Middle School in Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla., the Teen Leadership Program is a 6th grade elective course that is scripted to the 'Capturing Kids Hearts' program in partnership with the National Guard DDR 'Stay on Track' program. This complete program emphasizes communication, better decision-making, and community service.

"Currently, more than 400 6th grade students participate, and out of the 1,200 students in the school, almost all of them have gone through the program," said Wayne King, principal.

King has seen a change in student community involvement since the program started. "I see the kids more involved with community service," emphasized King. "With the military involved in teaching the classes, the students get to see 'service in action' in class."

Teachers at Landrum have noticed the enthusiasm from the students as well.



Sgt. Jamaal Burris, a member of the Florida National Guard Counterdrug Drug Demand Reduction (DDR) program talked to a class of 6th graders at Alice B. Landrum Middle School in St. Augustine, Fla., in the Teen Leadership class.

***They [National Guard Counterdrug]
come in and talk to us and each lesson
has games, but I learn a lot.***

Zachary Knecht
Sacred Heart Catholic School

"At the beginning, the students didn't know what to expect from the program and the military instructors," said Susan Woeppel, 6th grade Teen Leadership Program teacher. "Now, at the end of class, they gossip throughout the day about what was taught."

The influence of military instructors is noticed by Woeppel. Woeppel understands that many students don't have experience with someone in uniform, and a military member's presence is unique.

"The students have respect and admiration for someone in uniform, and the message is more



Maj. Tom Warner, Aviation Operations Officer and UH-72A Lakota helicopter pilot with the Florida Air National Guard, spoke to more than 125 kindergarteners at Crookshank Elementary in St. Augustine, Fla.

powerful when it comes from them," stressed Woeppel during a lesson on Feb. 24. "The kids are realizing that Soldiers are people too."

The middle school curriculum that the Florida NGCD DDR program uses includes a Youth Leader program that emphasizes core values such as Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity and Personal Courage and stresses

skills like teamwork, communication and problem solving.


"Today's lesson was on personal courage," said Zachary Knecht, 6th grade student at Sacred Heart Catholic School, Jacksonville, Fla., after he succeeded in climbing the National Guard Rock Climbing Wall at the Camp Blanding Joint Training Center, Starke, Fla., Feb. 24. "They (National Guard Counterdrug) come in and talk to us and each lesson has games, but I learn a lot."

"It's priceless helping them with their future. I can relate, I am a parent of three boys," said Sgt. Jamaal Burris, DDR Youth Leader, Florida NGCD DDR program. "I know kids are more likely to listen to a person in uniform."

Younger children are provided instruction about the harmful effects of tobacco and alcohol through information and visual aids as opposed to curriculum for gateway drugs used for older youth.

At a recent event, the Florida NGCD ART landed a UH-72A Lakota helicopter on the playground of Crookshank Elementary in St. Augustine, Fla., Feb. 25. Pilots spoke to the kindergarteners about the Lakota helicopter and how the National Guard Counterdrug Program uses it to help police and other agencies find drugs and "bad guys."

"I like talking to the kids, they are always curious," said Maj. Tom Warner, Aviation Operations Officer and UH-72A pilot, Florida Air National Guard. "I have kids of my own, and I understand their curiosities."

The challenge to maintain one of the foremost Counterdrug Programs in the Nation is ever present. The focus of the NGCD DDR Program will always be to teach youth to be role models within their school and to make healthy and safe choices in life. 

MCTFT provides critical training to law enforcement for success and safety


Story and photo by Sgt. Lalita Laksbergs, National Guard Counterdrug Public Affairs

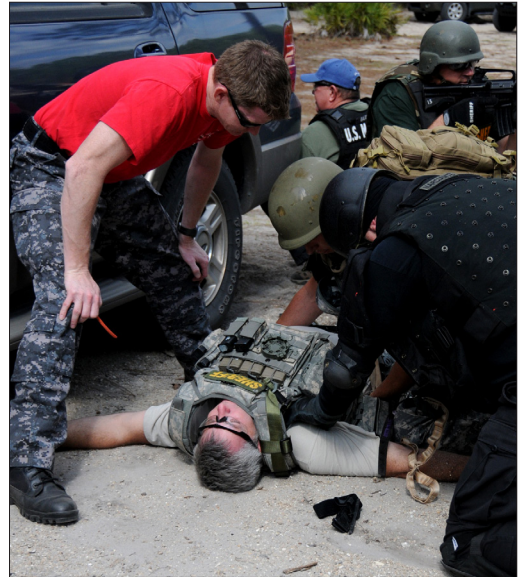
On a sunny day in February, members of the U.S. Marshals Service, Florida Regional Task Force, tactically cleared a home, rescued an injured officer while providing immediate medical care and evacuated from the scene. This 'hypothetical' training scene was located at the Multijurisdictional Counterdrug Task Force Training program (MCTFT) at Camp Blanding Joint Training Center in Starke, Fla.

"We love all you (National Guard) do here," said David Alred, Supervisory Inspector, U.S. Department of Justice, U.S. Marshals Service, Florida Regional Task Force. "This is our number one means of training."

Alred, a 23-year veteran of the U.S. Marshals Service, spoke of a recent officer-related shooting that occurred in Florida.

"An officer credited his success and survival during the incident to the firearms training he received with MCTFT/ National Guard just the week before," emphasized Alred. "He felt so strongly that he included those comments in the after action review of the incident."

The MCTFT program provides unique, tuition-free, courses covering all aspects of counterdrug law enforcement and training support for community anti-drug coalitions. This program is a federally funded partnership through the Department of Defense between the Florida National Guard and St. Petersburg College. This program is nationally responsive and is located at the Southeastern Public Safety Institute (SEPSI) of St. Petersburg College in St. Petersburg, Florida. 



Florida SWAT Association instructors trained Florida Regional Fugitive Task Force members from the medic profession at the MCTFT facility at Camp Blanding Joint Training Center in Starke, Fla., Feb. 25. The training is intended to prepare team members with the ability to give emergency combat first aid while in a tactical situation.

Dear MCTFT...

National Security Agency (NSA)

On behalf of the Personnel Security Investigations Division of the National Security Agency, I wish to extend my appreciation for your presentation of the Multijurisdictional Counterdrug Training Center's Interview and Interrogation Course to a cadre of NSA Special Agents. The feedback received from the attendees was overwhelmingly positive with comments such as, "Mr. Aschenbach was engaging, extremely knowledgeable and utilized relevant material," "The best Security course I've attended" and "I was able to use what I learned in the first case I ran after this class."

Special thanks also for tailoring the course to meet the specific needs of NSA Agents. I would certainly welcome a return visit to afford other NSA Security professionals the opportunity to enhance their investigative skills as well. For your dedication to educating and providing Security professionals with invaluable investigative tools, I sincerely thank you.

February 2011

Florida Sheriffs Association (FSA)

Back in July, 2010 (21-22) MCTFT provided a first class Meth Lab training hosted by FSA and the Washington County Sheriff's Office in Chipley, Fla. You may know this is a rural area in the Panhandle of Florida where training is often neglected. The instructors Brian Sallee and Bruce Liebe were able to connect well with the class and delivered an awesome and informative class. This was no surprise to me because of my familiarity with the MCTFT work product. At the end of the class, Sheriff Haddock thanked all concerned and reinforced the real need of that training for his people and the law enforcement community in that area.

Yesterday, our Executive Director was at the capitol at a drug law hearing and ran into Sheriff Haddock and his Chief of Investigations Captain who were there testifying. They had wanted to thank FSA and MCTFT for that class back in July. They relayed this story; It seems that they went from almost no meth lab cases being made previous to the training to shutting down 70 labs in the six months since the training.

To me, this exemplifies what the mission of MCTFT has always been about and the importance of keeping it going so that communities like Washington County can be made a safer place to live for its citizens.

January 2011

Multijurisdictional Counterdrug Task Force Training

A partnership between The Florida National Guard and St. Petersburg College

NE DRUG DEMAND REDUCTION "STAY ON TRACK" PROGRAM GRADUATION EQUALS FUN FOR STUDENTS

Story and photo by Tech. Sgt. Sharon Okra-Goll, Nebraska National Guard Counterdrug

This year, the Nebraska National Guard Counterdrug Drug Demand Reduction (DDR) unit once again partnered with York Middle School, York, Neb., to educate students in grades 6-8 on the dangers of alcohol and drug abuse with the Stay on Track (SOT) program. The SOT program also emphasizes healthy lifestyles, good decision making, better communication and practical goal-setting skills.

The Nebraska DDR team collaborated with the York National Guard recruiting office to bring the students a well-deserved graduation celebration they would not soon forget. York Middle School's first semester graduation on Dec. 16, was a tremendous success.

Sgt. 1st Class Mathew Wagner, Non commissioned

Officer in Charge of the York recruiting office, supplied the DDR team with the "Boot Camp Challenge" obstacle course for this year's SOT graduation celebration. The inflatable obstacle course took Wagner and the DDR team about 45 minutes to set up. After seeing the smiles on the kids' faces, their efforts were well worth it.

Not only did the kids enjoy tackling the obstacle course, several teachers and DDR members joined in the fun also.

The local York News-Times newspaper sent a journalist to cover the excitement at the school.

All in all, the Nebraska DDR program graduated over 200 SOT students during the semester and looks forward to many more collaborations with other schools to help develop successful, drug free students.



(left) Sgt. Jennifer VanDerPol, Tech. Sgt. Sharon Okra-Goll and Sgt. Travis Garrett (kneeling), Nebraska National Guard Counterdrug, Drug Demand Reduction Educators posed with Matthew Kerns' 6th grade York Middle School class from York, Neb., Dec. 16. More than 200 York Middle School students graduated from Stay on Track.



TX OPERATION FALLEN HERO – OPERATION BOMBARDIER

Houston area law enforcement join forces to apprehend mexican cartels and associates

Story and photo courtesy of Houston Police Department

As part of Operation Fallen Hero-Operation Bombardier, Houston area Federal, State, and local law enforcement officials joined forces in a series of coordinated strikes against Mexican drug cartels and their associates who operate across the United States. Law enforcement counterparts mobilized to increase pressure on these organizations at every level.

These efforts proved successful as illustrated by seizures Feb. 24 in the Houston area of approximately \$750,000, 322 pounds of marijuana, 13 kilograms of cocaine, 37 weapons, 10 vehicles, and the arrest of 33 individuals.

"The valiant efforts of our combined law enforcement resources came to bear this morning not by accident, but by necessity. The Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA), and all of our law enforcement partners, will continue to aggressively disrupt and dismantle the ruthless drug trafficking organizations and their partners in crime who are operating on both sides of the Texas/Mexico border," said Thomas Hinojosa, Acting Special Agent in Charge of the Houston Division, DEA.

"On a daily basis, throughout the United States and around the world, the U.S. Marshals Service works with our federal, state, and local law enforcement colleagues to track down violent offenders. This operation is a glowing example of the success that can be achieved

when all agencies stand together to combat those who deal in drugs, weapons and violence," stated Elizabeth Saenz, U.S. Marshal.

Participating in these joint operations were: ATF, ICE-HSI, DEA, FBI, IRS, U.S Marshals Service, United States Attorney's Office, Texas Department of Public Safety, Houston PD, Harris County SO, Pasadena PD, LaPorte PD, Ft. Bend SO, Montgomery County SO, Galveston City PD, Galveston County SO, Rosenberg PD, Texas National Guard, Brazoria County SO, League City PD, Freeport PD, Lake Jackson PD, TDCJ-OIG, Harris County Constables Jefferson County SO, and the Harris and Ft. Bend District Attorney's Office.



Members of the task force gathered to discuss movement activities during Operation Fallen Hero - Operation Bombardier on Feb. 24.

RC-26B MISSION IS CRITICAL

Story and photos by Sgt. Lalita Laksbergs, National Guard Counterdrug Public Affairs

Quantifying the success of a mission is essential for all operations within the National Guard Counterdrug Program. However, numbers and statistics are sometimes difficult to realize when providing intelligence to law enforcement agencies (LEAs) for use in ongoing investigations. Those investigations may assist in arrests, court proceedings and eventual prosecutions of drug dealers and criminals within the borders of the U.S.

One critical intelligence gathering mechanism which is part of the National Guard Counterdrug Program and vital to the Nation's counterdrug mission is the RC-26B twin turbo prop aircraft.

There are currently five RC-26B aircraft available for domestic missions throughout the U.S. These aircraft are divided into four regions, with 11 states sharing use of the aircraft for five months at a time. Mutual agreements between states allow for availability throughout the U.S.

We are the silent partner in helping catch the bad guys.

Capt. Brandon Morgan

"This aircraft brings a 'force multiplier' to the fight against illegal substances," said Lt. Col. Michael Prinzi, RC-26B Program Manager, 125th Fighter Wing, Florida Air National Guard. "This aircraft allows the LEAs to free up their own assets for other critical activities by providing real-time intelligence."

Prinzi spent several years working in the secret service and understands the value of surveillance aircraft.

"I'm passionate about law enforcement's role and understand how valuable it is," said Prinzi, a Jacksonville, Fla. native. "I've been on the ground, kicking in the door knowing that every bit of intelligence is used to make the best decisions for officer safety and success for the overall mission."

Law enforcement access to the National Guard RC-26B aircraft not only provides the physical resource of the aircraft, but also the skills and professional knowledge of two pilots and a Mission Systems Operator. With full motion streaming video, laser range finder, laser illuminator and other systems capabilities, the RC-26B provides LEAs with real-time monitoring and analysis critical to successful surveillance.

Because of the RC-26B's fly time of 4-5 hours, agents can view specific targets, undetected, at a range of up to two miles.

"We are the silent partner in helping catch the bad guys," said Capt. Brandon Morgan, RC-26B Training Officer, 125th Fighter Wing, FANG. "We are less noticeable due to our flying capabilities."

"We can surveil to assist law enforcement for the safety of their officers," said Morgan, a former C-130 pilot previously assigned to the 182nd Airlift Wing, Peoria, Ill. "This aircraft enables law enforcement to track activities (patterns of life) to better understand the movements of suspected criminals. Having the ability to see what the officers on the ground can't, helps the LEAs effectively and safely complete their mission."

LEAs who have used the RC-26B resources find the information and analysis critical for safe, successful operations.

"Our success over the years has been due in large part to the RC-26B. Mississippi is largely a rural state - where everybody knows his neighbors, the vehicles they drive and when anything is out of the norm,



Pilots aboard an RC-26B aircraft from the Florida Air National Guard, 125th Fighter Wing, based out of Jacksonville, Fla., analyzed systems data during a training mission off the coast of Jacksonville, Fla., Jan. 22. The RC-26B is equipped with imaging and communications equipment to assist law enforcement with reconnaissance and tracking of illegal drug traffickers and drug cultivation activity in addition to the ability to provide necessary support during natural disasters and national special security events.



FROM COAST TO COAST

said Lt. Col. Mike Perkins, enforcement commander for the Mississippi Bureau of Narcotics. "Use of the aircraft under such circumstances has given us a much-needed stealth advantage, which has aided in the arrest and conviction of numerous high-level drug dealers with interstate and international ties to major drug-trafficking organizations."

"How do you quantify providing intelligence to LEAs about safe entrance and egress on a location while keeping their agents safe, or providing secure, systems records to be used in court proceedings that take a lifetime criminal off the streets, or even providing intelligence over a short fly time that would have taken LEAs weeks, if not months, to accomplish?" emphasized Prinzi, a 26-year member of the Florida Air National Guard. "You can't. But that is what we do and that is why what we do is so vital to the country's mission to keep our citizens safe within our borders from drug dealers and criminals." 🇺🇸



An RC-26B mission systems operator from the Florida Air National Guard, 125th Fighter Wing, based out of Jacksonville, Fla., conducted preflight inspection of the optics in the sensor turret before a training mission off the coast of Jacksonville, Fla., Jan. 22. The RC-26B is equipped with full motion streaming video, laser range finder, laser illuminator and other systems capabilities which enables real-time monitoring during critical law enforcement surveillance missions.



California and West Virginia National Guards collaborate to support Northern California Law Enforcement Agency

Story by Capt. Amanda Ellison, California National Guard Joint Task Force Domestic Support Counterdrug

The California National Guard's Joint Task Force Domestic Support-Counterdrug (JTFDS-CD) program and the West Virginia National Guard joined forces for a total of 10 days in February to support a mission request from a local Counternarcotics Law Enforcement Agency (LEA) in Northern California.

Their request for aerial observation was generated to enhance an ongoing investigation of a drug trafficking organization suspected of conducting large-scale narcotics operations within California and throughout the nation.

The RC-26 aircraft is a "High Demand, Low Density" aircraft, meaning that the demand for the aircraft's unique capabilities are greater than the number available to support CONUS, OCONUS, and contingency operations. As California's RC-26 aircraft is currently deployed, the JTFDS-CD aviation Liaison Officer reached out to

other states and West Virginia's 130th Air Wing responded to the call.

After coordination occurred between the two states, the crew flew for a two-week period to assist the on-board law enforcement officer to collect key evidence that will ultimately result in the identification, arrest and prosecution of several organized criminal elements manufacturing and distributing narcotics throughout the country.

A representative from the LEA noted that the operation couldn't have been done without the Guard's additional support. But the benefits aren't just one sided.

"The opportunity to field requests from other states gives the crews occasion to experience diverse terrain, such as coastline or rolling hills, and areas of higher intensity inherent in large cities. The experiences develop skills sets and knowledge needed for future operations," said a California flight chief involved in the mission. 🇺🇸

STATE SPOTLIGHT...T E ★ A S

Trained to Maintain

Story by Master Sgt. Gerold Gamble, Texas Joint Counterdrug Task Force

The Texas National Guard Joint Counterdrug Task Force Counterdrug Aviation Elements (CDAE) mission is to combat the flow of illegal drugs on the Rio Grande River, the 1,200 mile boundary between Mexico and Texas. This mission is accomplished with a staff of 13 soldiers and an aircraft inventory of three OH-58 and six UH-72.

Needless to say, for a successful mission to occur, fully trained maintenance personnel are required to keep helicopters flying.

"Attending the maintenance course provided me the basic knowledge to maintain and care for the aircraft," said Sgt. Douglas Aquino, a new CDAE member who recently returned from helicopter maintenance school.

Daily inspection must be performed before and after each flight. Sgt. Jason Clawson, OH-58 crew chief, noted that an inspection can find many things, but one common problem that can occur is nesting of birds in compartments. This may seem minor, but situations like these could potentially cause major damage to the helicopter while in flight or prior to take off. Not only could an incident cause anywhere from 1-10 million dollars in damage, but the end result could cost the pilots' lives.

"Having trained maintenance personnel takes a lot of responsibility off of me," stated 1st Sgt. David Biester, CDAE maintenance supervisor. "Being able to trust my maintainers, means less time I spend in the shop and more time spent planning missions and managing staff." Biester also feels more



(left to right) Sgt. Doug Aquino, CDAE Crew Chief; 1st Sgt. David Biester, CDAE Non commissioned Officer in Charge; and Sgt. Jason Clawson, CDAE Crew Chief, pose in front of an OH-58A. All members of the CDAE crew are essential to safe, successful missions.

confident sending them on missions, knowing that they're qualified and trained to do the job to support the aircraft.

Currently, the CDAE basic maintainers are training to be crew chiefs on the OH-58 and the UH-72. Biester's current staff consists of five crew chiefs that maintain the aircraft. During a typical month, he has to account for one or two crew chief out on missions, leave and schooling. These cross-trained personnel will bring an added benefit to the program as they will add extra 'sets of eyes' in the sky.

The CDAE is a tenant of the Austin Army Aviation Support Facility and is independent in its daily operations, but dependent with respect to intense resource demand functions.

TX Joint Counterdrug Task Force "cracks down" known drug houses

Story by Staff Sgt. Jason Kendrick, Texas Joint Counterdrug Task Force - Public Affairs

On Dec. 9, after more than a year of planning, Soldiers and Airmen serving with the Texas Joint Counterdrug Task Force (JCDTF) conducted 'Operation Crackdown' for the first time in Dallas.

Operation Crackdown is an engineer mission, which provided qualified personnel and equipment to local communities for the purpose of removing structures identified with having ongoing drug activity. This operation worked as an active partner in reclaiming neighborhoods from the influences of illegal drugs and associated violence by removing structures that house these illegal activities.

"This is such a special day because this has been such a long, hard job," said Mary Suhm, Dallas City Manager. Suhm addressed the crowd, which included elementary students from nearby H.I. Holland Elementary School at Lisbon who had gathered to see a structure in the East Oak Cliff neighborhood knocked down.

"It [the destruction of the structures] restores the hope

for the community that they can now live safe and feel free to enjoy a better quality of life," said Dwaine Caraway, Dallas Mayor Pro Tem, after the demolition.

"The kids no longer have to live in fear of playing around or being involved in a drug-infested atmosphere."

Staff Sgt. Deshann Barnes, a Drug Demand Reduction representative from the JCDTF, gave a presentation at Holland Elementary prior to the house being brought down.

These "Crackdown" missions also provide invaluable training opportunities for Soldiers and Airmen of the Texas National Guard to work on the heavy equipment allowing them to hone their craft, preparing them for possible deployments overseas.

"When they build a base or a new building over there [overseas] on a deployment, they're getting the stick time over here to help practice that," said Staff Sgt. Michael Leslie, Non Commissioned Officer in Charge of Operation Crackdown.



MT Youth Coalition Members Attend Leadership Conference

Story and photos by Sgt. Lalita Laksbergs, National Guard Counterdrug Public Affairs

Spending a week in Washington, D.C. would seem exciting to most young people, but to 13 students and six adults from Montana, the week spent in D.C. in February at the Community Anti-drug Coalitions of America (CADCA) National Leadership Youth Institute during the National Leadership Forum held a special purpose.

"I think it has been motivational," said Barb Reiter, adult participant



(left) Magdalyn Rauser, a student from Boulder High School, Boulder, Mont., and Daniela Rosales, a student from Helena High School, Helena, Mont., tacked up their coalition poster during the National Youth Leadership Initiative (NYLI) session on Feb. 8.

from Boulder, Mont. "It makes them look outside themselves and look at the issues."

The 21st Annual CADCA National Leadership Forum included two specific forums for youth that were intended to equip them with essential skills and knowledge needed to make significant community-level changes. The National Youth Leadership Initiative nurtures the growth of committed, young leaders to enhance their work in safe, healthy and drug-free community coalitions.

This group was the first of its kind to represent Montana during the annual CADCA national conference. Eight Montana high school students were selected through an essay submission that was evaluated by Helena Youth Connections and the Montana National Guard Counterdrug Joint Task Force (CDJTF). Youth Connections and the Montana National Guard CDJTF organized the team and assisted the students in fund raising ideas, travel arrangements and ongoing leadership development.

"The kids and the adults came together from three different communities, developed a team, raised enough money to travel to Washington, D.C. and attended a national leadership conference to help develop their confidence in the prevention world," said Lt.



(left) Jenna Senechal, Jessica Newman and Brandon Kosola, all students from Jefferson High School, Boulder, Mont., followed along in the Leadership Workbook during the National Youth Leadership Initiative (NYLI) session on Feb. 8.

Col. Garth Scott, Montana National Guard Counterdrug Coordinator.

During the week in D.C., the Montana group attended social events, toured the White House, participated in workshops, rallied on Capitol Hill and met other youth coalitions from across the continental U.S. and territories.

One workshop included motivational speaker Milton Creagh, also known as 'Big Milt.' Big Milt is acclaimed for his hard-hitting inspirational talks to high school students.

"He (Big Milt) got us excited about what we are doing," said Jessica Ward, a Boulder High School student. "He talked to us in a way we could relate."

"He challenged us," confirmed Daniela Rosales, a Helena High School student. "He more or less told us it was up to us to do this and motivated us to 'step it up.'"

Approximately 290 students from more than 70 coalitions across the continental U.S. and territories attended the four-day conference.

"I think one of the unseen benefits of this conference is that the students are able to interact with other kids from different areas to get their perspectives on the important issues," said Reiter. "It's a lot of 'food for thought' for them."

"The kids have come back to Montana energized to keep prevention efforts alive and continue living a healthy lifestyle," emphasized Garth. "They have a greater appreciation for the effort that teachers and community leaders make to help kids achieve their goals."

The Montana National Guard CDJTF partners with many coalitions to support communities in combating the dangers of illicit drug use.



(left) Denver Pratt, a student from Helena High School, Helena, Mont., Barb Reiter and Jessica Ward, both representatives from Boulder High School, Boulder, Mont., worked with the other Montana coalition members on a project poster during the National Youth Leadership Initiative (NYLI) session on Feb. 8.



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- CATALYST from Page 4

Guard's SOT program would not be in the Lafayette Schools.

The Knowledge Effect Lafayette Coalition SPF-SIG Project Director, Kelly Mouisset, is truly a parish prevention systems pioneer. It was through her dedication, passion, and leadership to change her community that she took a risk to partner with the Louisiana National Guard to introduce the SOT Program.

The SOT program was a new program at the time and it was quite difficult to get into the schools during its piloting stages. We worked through the barrier of piloting the program by having a Lafayette Coalition SOT Project Coordinator work side-by-side with the DDRA.

Rikki Manahan, the Lafayette SOT Project Coordinator filled a crucial gap in the operational implementation process of the program. The DDR program did not have a Guardsman at the time in that parish and it was through Rikki's communication and coordination skills that the SOT program ran smoothly.

We knew we had a quality program and we needed it to be treated with quality care. Rikki met that challenge and continues to do so. Due to the coalition's efforts,



Cpl. Marty Deroussel, School Resource Officer, Lafayette Police Department, Lafayette, La. posed with a group of students at Edgar Martin Middle School during a Drug Demand Reduction lesson.

we now have partnered with the Lafayette Police Department Resource Officers through the Lafayette Crime Stoppers and the Lafayette School Athletic Department. The Resource Officers and the coaches are another integral set of partners that makes the Stay on Track Program effort viable. Without them being in the classrooms

Out of my 11 years within all areas of the Lafayette Police Department, this by far has been the most rewarding and fulfilling position I have ever held.

Cpl. Marty Deroussel

and teaching the curriculum, the students would not be able to receive the lessons.

Lastly, I would also like to mention how pivotal the support of the Louisiana Counterdrug Coordinator, Lt. Col. Raymond Schindler has been to the program's DDR efforts. The National Guard has many state and federal missions, and often times, drug prevention efforts are not always put at the top of the priority list. Schindler, helped to remove some significant barriers that allowed our DDR program to flourish. One of his major accomplishments was getting a Guardsman placed in Lafayette parish. In addition, the good working relationship he has with the leadership impacts our mission positively.

This has been a pivotal time for Louisiana's Counterdrug Task Force as we reached this major milestone with our long standing partnerships.

I have never been, in my 18 years of DDR work, so proud and excited for the Guard and our State. 🇺🇸



NE GROUND RECONNAISSANCE INSTRUMENTAL IN FELONY ARRESTS

Story by Tech. Sgt. Sharon Okra-Goll, Nebraska National Guard Counterdrug

The Nebraska National Guard Counterdrug Program Ground Reconnaissance Section (GRS) was instrumental in felony charges being brought against four Beatrice, Neb., residents.

Four individuals were arrested for conspiracy to manufacture methamphetamine and possession of pseudoephedrine with the intent to manufacture methamphetamine.

The GRS collected several hundred pages of pseudoephedrine logs (from various pharmacies throughout Beatrice). During the several weeks of collecting logs, Nebraska GRS personnel discovered possible persons of interest and possible drug trafficking corridors.

The Counterdrug GRS ultimately provided nearly 100 man hours of support and provided ground surveillance/observation during all phases of operations leading up to the arrests.

According to a Gage County Sheriff's Deputy, the arrests were a long time coming, but they wanted to be sure there was enough evidence to make a Federal case instead of a local one.'

This was a team effort in which Nebraska National Guard GRS personnel worked hand-in-hand with the Nebraska State Patrol, Beatrice Police Department, the South East Drug Enforcement Task Force and the Gage County Sheriff's office.

The successful effort of the Nebraska GRS reinforces the commitment that Nebraska Counterdrug has to interdiction and education! 🇺🇸

CA NATIONAL GUARD JOINT TASK FORCE DOMESTIC SUPPORT - COUNTERDRUG DRUG DEMAND REDUCTION PROGRAM - STATEWIDE ACTIVITIES

Photos by Capt. Amanda Ellison, California National Guard Joint Task Force Domestic Support - Counterdrug



(Left) Lt. Col. Chad Vogelsang, Director of the California National Guard Sunburst Youth Academy; Marilu Vachet, Program Administrator; Mayuko Nakanishi, Assistant Section Chief, Prefectural Narcotics Control Official, Pharma Affairs Division, Public Health Bureau; Sgt. 1st Class Michael Scott, Commandant; Capt. Ruel Fuentesilla, Southern Region Drug Demand Reduction Officer in Charge and Sakura Shibata-Pickford, translator.

Nakanishi was a visiting dignitary from Japan who was on assignment to learn more about California's drug demand reduction programs and resources. Nakanishi's two-week tour will assist authorities in adapting strategies tailored to the Japanese youth.



(Center) Capt. Ruel Fuentesilla of the California National Guard DDR program, and Staff Sgt. Curtis Cooksey, NGB Counterdrug Display Manager, explained the Counterdrug Drug Demand Reduction program capabilities to a school administrator at the National Association of Secondary School Principals conference in San Francisco, Calif. in February.



(Left) A Dana Hills student tried to walk a straight line while wearing Fatal Vision Goggles during one of the low ROPES courses at the Dana Point Underage Drinking Town Hall DDR event in Dana Point, Calif. in February. The National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence and the Orange County Community Alliance Network (NCADD-OC/CAN) organized a Town Hall Meeting at Dana Hills High School to address underage use of alcohol, tobacco and drug related issues in schools and communities Feb. 9. The Joint Task Force Domestic Support- Counterdrug DDR program supported the event by providing a drug/alcohol educational resource booth, fatal vision goggles presentation station, and a low ROPES course in conjunction with a short educational presentation that addressed underage drinking, drug use, and overcoming life challenges.

KS National Guard Counterdrug Task Force honored with Hero Award

Photo and story courtesy of Kansas National Guard Public Affairs

The Kansas National Guard Counterdrug Task Force was honored as the first recipient of the "H.E.R.O. Award" (Honoring the Enrichment of Red Ribbon Opportunities) awarded by the Kansas Family Partnership, Inc. The award was presented during the 11th Annual Kansas Red Ribbon Recognition Luncheon, Feb. 4, in Topeka. The luncheon was held in the Stormont Vail HealthCare-Pozez Education Center, Topeka, Kan.

The Task Force has been selected to receive this award for their outstanding dedication and support of the Kansas Red Ribbon

Campaign throughout the years. They are being recognized for the many years they have dedicated to working with students, educators,

law enforcement, families and communities to promote the importance of

remaining drug-free. The team's involvement and leadership at statewide conferences, summits and trainings provides significant support to promoting a drug-free lifestyle for all Kansans.

The Kansas National Guard Counterdrug Task Force is comprised of four



parts: Ground Reconnaissance, Drug Demand Reduction, Joint Substance Abuse Prevention and Criminal Analyst Support performed by Army and Air Guardsmen under the governor's control, but are federally funded.

The Counterdrug Task Force continues to be a relevant and cost effective partner in the Kansas counterdrug mission.

MCTC'S a stage, the employees, merely players

Story by Staff Sgt. Alisha Bell, Iowa National Guard

Shakespeare once wrote, "All the world's a stage, and all the men and women, merely players."

The full-time Soldiers and Airmen of The Midwest Counterdrug Training Center (MCTC) occasionally get to play on a very important stage, not as Shakespearean actors, but as MCTC role players.

MCTC offers classes that require someone to play the role of civilians. That's when the Soldiers and Airmen of MCTC step in to help.

According to Officer Chad Farrington, Ottumwa Police Department the police department, uses role players for training. A lot of times civilians are used and it typically turns into an OK Corral shoot-out. "I think it is important to have the MCTC staff as our role players," explained Officer Farrington. Farrington noted that the military training gives the MCTC staff the discipline needed to make the scenarios realistic.

The MCTC staff are given a specific set of parameters for a scenario and that they follow. This makes the training more realistic for law enforcement personnel.

Farrington had the chance to work with MCTC role players while attending all four of the High Risk Event Planning Courses. Officers taking tactical classes need as much practical exercise as possible before returning to the field. There is little learning curve and no margin for error when actually breaking down doors in the real world.

Each scenario and role is designed to give students situations they could potentially run into in the field. It teaches them how to properly handle different situations.

In some cases, they are asked



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Sara Robinson, Iowa National Guard Counterdrug

A Basic Narcotics Investigator's Course student arrested a 'bad guy' during a training exercise at Military Operations in an Urban Terrain (MOUT) site at Camp Dodge, Iowa. Many times, MCTC role players find themselves face down on a cold concrete floor while playing a combative bad guy.

to play a combative "bad guy;" other times, they might be asked to play an innocent bystander who happened to be in the wrong place at the wrong time.

"When we set up scenarios with role players, they're not all bad guys, so police officers, just like in the real world, have to make a split second decision," said

Dennis Wood, High Risk Instructor. [They have to decide,] "Is this just an innocent person who happened to be at this location, or is this a threat?"

Instructors describe the scenes to the role players and tell them exactly what to do, then it's up to the individual to create a character. Sometimes the scenario even requires a non-English speaking citizen and the officers need to communicate to the person using nonverbal communication.

No matter the character they are playing, their training and military bearing helps them take the role very seriously. Because, even in training, simulation rounds can leave a nasty bruise.

"It's a huge benefit to the students because they can only learn so much in a classroom," said Senior Airman Erika Eiten, MCTC role player. "They get the physical hands-on training as well as the 'by the books' training. It gives them room to make mistakes, and then correct those mistakes before they get in a real life situation."

Realistic, as close to real-world as possible, is what MCTC offers in every class. If it weren't for the employees giving up a day in the office and going out to the training area to be role players, some of this realistic training would not occur. MCTC continues to strive to provide excellent training for its students, in addition to role play opportunities for its staff, which makes for a complete training package to prepare law enforcement for success in the field.

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to you today, because I am concerned that you are possibly thinking of cutting the funding of the Drug Demand Reduction program. I personally think that, that is a bad idea. If you do cut the funding, the population of the children and teenage drug users will increase majorly. When Sgt. Atkinson comes to my school, Carlisle Middle School, he teaches me valuable lessons. Some of those valuable lessons are why drugs are so horrible, why I should never use drugs, and that using drugs not only hurt me but the loved ones around me. The reason I like Sgt. Atkinson is because he explains things so that I fully understand them. I'm sure that every kid in my school will never do drugs because of Sgt. Atkinson. Now, as I said before if you want the population to not only decrease, but increase in child and teen drug usage cut the funding of the problem.

Sincerely,
Mariah

We are on the Web at:

www.facebook.com/NGBCounterdrug

www.flickr.com/ngbj32counterdrug

<http://ngbcounterdrug.ng.mil>