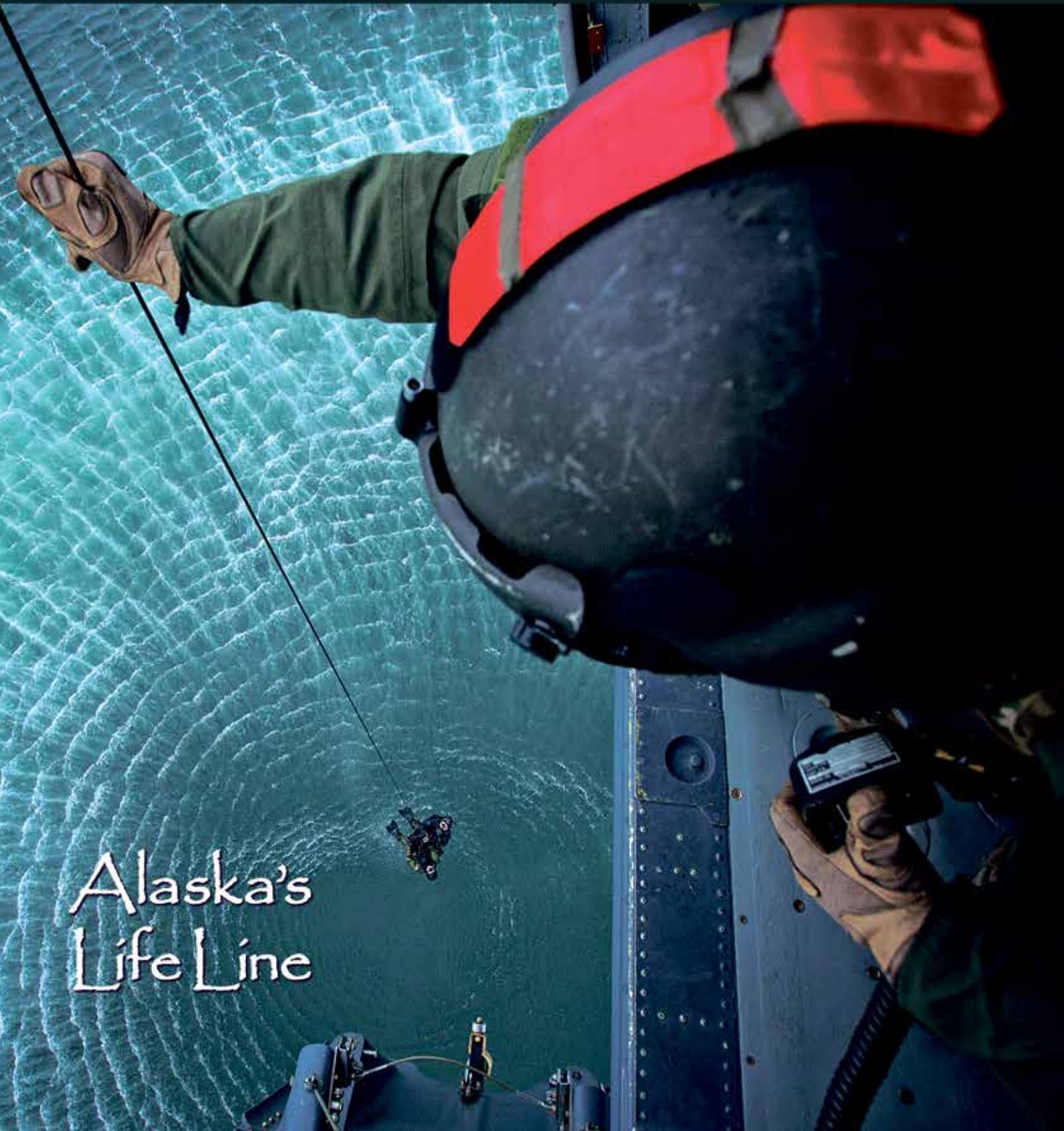


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**Maj. Gen. Thomas H. Katkus**  
Adjutant General, Alaska National Guard  
& Commissioner of the DMVA

**Ms. Kalei Rupp**  
Managing Editor/DMVA Public Affairs

*Contributors*

**Maj. Candis Olmstead**  
**Capt. Bernie Kale**  
**Sgt. Balinda O'Neal**  
**Sgt. Edward Eagerton**  
DMVA Public Affairs

**Capt. John Callahan**  
**Staff Sgt. N. Alicia Halla**  
176th Wing Public Affairs

**Master Sgt. Cornelius Mingo**  
**Senior Airman Francine St. Laurent**  
168th Air Refueling Wing Public Affairs

**Joint Task Force Guantanamo Public Affairs**

**Jeremy Zidek**  
**Julie C. Baker • Claude Denver**  
DHS&EM

**Verdie Bowen • Forrest Powell III**  
**Mercedes Angerman**  
Veterans Affairs

**Brig. Gen. Roger E. Holl**  
**Lt. Col. Art Saltmarsh • Sgt. 1st Class Helga Posey**  
Alaska State Defense Force

**Jamie Abordonado**  
ESGR

**Lt. Col. Kay Spear-Budd**  
Warrior and Family Services

**Kimberly Conkling • Sgt. Melinda Dawson**  
**Spc. Dakota Volkman**  
Alaska Army National Guard

**Capt. Shane Garling**  
**Staff Sgt. Vanessa Campbell**  
Alaska Air National Guard

**Master Sgt. Vernon Moore**  
**Zachariah Bryan**  
**Sam Dresel II**  
**Greg Tooke**  
**1st Class Theanne Tangen**  
**Sgt. William Banton**

# WARRIORS

Quarterly Magazine for the Alaska Department of Military & Veterans Affairs



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**On the Cover.** Tech. Sgt. Dave Torrance, special mission aviator, 210th Rescue Squadron, Alaska Air National Guard, mans the hoist cable system on a HH-60 Pave Hawk helicopter during a training mission above Homer, Alaska, in June. The cable hoist system is used to lower pararescuemen to treat and rescue potential victims when the weather or terrain does not allow for the helicopter to land. In a combat theater, the hoist system allows for an expedited rescue to minimize the vulnerability of the Pave Hawk and the crew members. Photo: Capt. Bernie Kale, DMVA Public Affairs



**Collaborative Training.** Soldiers from U.S. Army Alaska's 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division undergo fast rope training from an Alaska Air National Guard 210th Rescue Squadron HH-60 Pave Hawk helicopter at Bryant Army Airfield on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in May. Active-duty military forces often train with Alaska National Guardsmen as part of the military's total force integration in Alaska. Photo: Kalei Rupp, DMVA Public Affairs

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**Warriors** is a commercial enterprise publication, produced in partnership, quarterly, by the State of Alaska, Department of Military & Veterans Affairs, PO Box 5800, Camp Denali, Ft. Richardson, Alaska 99505-5800, phone 907-428-6031, fax 428-6035; and AQP Publishing Inc., 8537 Corbin Drive, Anchorage, Alaska 99507. Views and opinions expressed herein are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the Departments of the Army and Air Force, or the State of Alaska. All photos are Alaska Department of Military & Veterans Affairs photos unless otherwise credited.

**Distribution:** **Warriors** is published for all current civilian employees, military members, veterans, and their families, of the Alaska Department of Military & Veterans Affairs. It is distributed, free of charge, via mail and distribution, through each Division within the Department. It is also available at our website: <http://dmva.alaska.gov>.

**HOW TO REACH US**

**Letters:** *Letters to the editor* must be signed and include the writer's full name and mailing address. Letters should be brief and are subject to editing. **Submissions:** Print and visual submissions of general interest to our diverse civilian employees, Alaska National Guard military members,

veterans and families are invited and encouraged. Please send articles and photos with name, phone number, e-mail, complete mailing address and comments to:

**Warriors Magazine**  
Alaska Department of Military & Veterans Affairs  
Office of Public Affairs  
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# Dispatches from the Front...

## BLACK HAWK CREWS HELP FIGHT FUNNY RIVER FIRE

By Maj. Candis Olmstead, DMVA Public Affairs

**JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska ...** Two Alaska Army National Guard UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters and aircrews from the 1-207th Aviation Regiment helped fight the Funny River Fire, performing water bucket operations in May near Soldotna.

The fire originated near Funny River Road the evening of May 19 in the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge on the Kenai Peninsula. It grew quickly over several days and by May 23 had grown to 96,584 acres, according to the National Wildfire Coordinating Group. All available firefighting assets were being used, and the Alaska Interagency

Coordination Center contacted the Army National Guard to request Black Hawk water bucket assistance.

“We had a very dynamic fire situation,” said Pete Buist, a fire information officer with the Alaska Interagency Coordination Center, based out of Fort Wainwright in Fairbanks. “At that time, there was significant fire spreading toward areas with homes and cabins, and we were looking for additional resources to help slow fire spread.”

The aircrews’ first mission supporting the firefight at Funny River was May 24.

“At first, we were working the fire line that had jumped the fuel break,” said Black Hawk pilot Capt. Zachary Miller. “They had dozed a huge line to try and make sure the



**Water Bucket.** An Alaska Army National Guard UH-60 Black Hawk crew from 1-207th Aviation inspects a water bucket before taking it airborne to help suppress the Funny River Fire in May. Photo: Maj. Candis Olmstead, DMVA Public Affairs



**Water Refill.** Two UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters from the Alaska Army National Guard’s 1-207th Aviation Regiment scoop water from the Kenai River to help fight the Funny River Fire in May. Photo: Greg Tooker

fire didn’t push north and endanger that area, but embers shot over it and started spot fires on the north side of the fuel break.”

The next day, they started in the area where they had left off the night before because the fire had started to flare up again. Then they were sent to help ground crews protect a couple of cabins and a home that were eventually saved.

The aircrews — two pilots and a crew chief in each helicopter — dropped water buckets within 30 to 50 feet of the structures. They also “wet the line” each evening to help prevent flare-ups overnight.

The Black Hawk aircrews flew five missions, dropping 334 buckets in three days. They filled the buckets to about 630 gallons, weighing around 5,257 pounds, according to Lt. Col. Matthew Schell, commander of the 1-207th Aviation Regiment, Alaska Army National Guard.

1-207th aircrews receive annual water bucket training in classrooms and in flight, Schell said. The Department of Forestry instruction includes topics from wildfire behavior to airspace control and communication. The unit receives additional academic training, including performance planning and instruction on technique. Pilots must have completed six “picks” — dropping

the bucket into the water and filling it up — within the previous 12 months to be considered current with their training requirements.

“The bucket can be tricky when it’s in the water,” Schell said. “It can skid across the top of the water and not fill, or if you dip too deep, electrical connections can malfunction.”

Crew coordination and communication is standardized, concise and timely, which is crucial because only the crew chief can see the bucket. As the crew picks up a rhythm, it picks, takes off and drops with just a few phrases spoken. It also must adjust altitude and airspeed for the drop to distribute the water appropriately.

“Too slow or too low, and it doesn’t have time to spread out in the air,” Schell said. “Too fast or too high and it turns to mist, which isn’t effective.”

The Alaska Army National Guard has more than a dozen qualified Black Hawk water bucket operation crews, which is important during fire season because crews are swapped out at least every four days.

They were requested by the Alaska Interagency Coordination Center to provide support for three days.

“At the time, rain was in the forecast, so we determined that three days of additional assistance from the Army Guard’s helos might be just what we needed,” Buist said.

The Alaska Army National Guard Black Hawks and crew dropped about 210,420 gallons of water in three days to help fight the massive Funny River Fire. Army Guard operations, maintenance and refuel personnel also assisted in the effort. ■



**Destruction.** The aftermath of the Funny River Fire leaves charred trees and land. Photo: Greg Tooke



**Fire Suppression.** An Alaska Army National Guard UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter helps extinguish flames from the Funny River Fire in May. The Alaska National Guard provided three days of firefighting assistance with two UH-60s at the request of the Alaska Interagency Coordination Center. Photo: Greg Tooke

# Where in the World

## Air Guardsmen Deploy to Horn of Africa

By Staff Sgt. N. Alicia Halla,  
176th Wing Public Affairs

### JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska ...

Approximately 25 pararescuemen and support personnel from the 212th Rescue Squadron, 176th Operations Group and 168th Security Forces Squadron deployed from here in May to the Africa Command area of operations in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

The Guardsmen's main mission is personnel recovery in support of the Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa mission, and there is potential to be involved in the rest of the CJTF-HOA mission: supporting partner nation military operations in East Africa to defeat extremist organizations and conducting focused military-to-military engagement to strengthen East African partner nation militaries.

"We're really excited to go to the Horn of Africa," said Maj. Matthew Kirby, logistics officer and mission commander of the deploying detachment. "There's a lot of operational mindset and experience with this group. We're excited to get over there and make a difference."

This deployment allows 212th Rescue Squadron personnel to perform search and rescue in a different environment than where they normally deploy. Exercising different mission sets within personnel recovery enables the pararescuemen to remain well-rounded and on top of their game.

Mongolia



**Aviator Bond.** Maj. Jhonny Polanco and 1st Lt. Brian Binkley, pilots, and Master Sgt. Chris Willey, boom operator, all from the 168th Air Refueling Wing, take pride in flying KC-135s for the Alaska Air National Guard. "We're a real close-knit team, especially the aviators," Willey said. "I like that family aspect." Photo: Senior Airman Francine St. Laurent, 168th Air Refueling Wing Public Affairs

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**Best Warrior.** Sgt. Kenneth Pfeifle, left, Washington Army National Guard; Sgt. 1st Class Scott Stimpson, Oregon Army National Guard; and Staff Sgt. Trampas Vojtasek, Alaska Army National Guard, carry 40 pounds of gear, along with their M-16 rifles, during a 10.8-mile road march along the South Dakota George S. Mickelson Trail for the National Guard Bureau Region 6 Best Warrior Competition in May. The march is an individual event to see who finishes first, but these three Soldiers stayed together throughout the march to motivate each other. Photo: Sgt. 1st Class Theanne Tangen, South Dakota Army National Guard



**Africa Bound.** About 25 Alaska Air Guardsmen bid farewell to friends, families and co-workers before leaving Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in May for a deployment to the Horn of Africa in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. The Guardsmen are from the 212th Rescue Squadron, 176th Operations Group and 168th Security Forces Squadron. Photo: Staff Sgt. N. Alicia Halla, 176th Wing Public Affairs

Many of the deployers will remain in Africa on a 60-day rotation. All members are scheduled to return to Alaska by mid October.

The last 212th Rescue Squadron deployment was from June to September 2012 to Camp Bastion, Afghanistan. ■

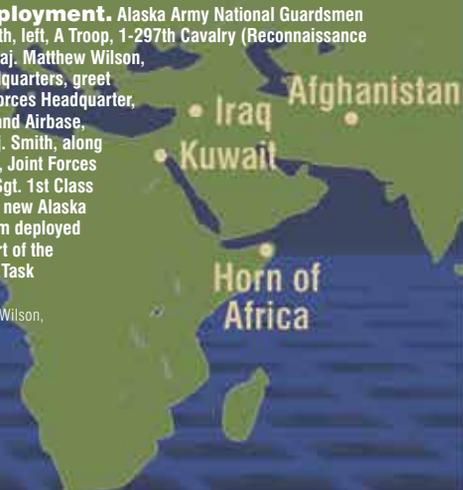


**Aerial Fuel Exchange.** A KC-135 from the 168th Air Refueling Wing, Alaska Air National Guard, refuels an F-16 during RED FLAG-Alaska training exercise in June. The Stratotanker refueled 11 F-16s with 63,300 pounds of fuel and typically carries a maximum load of 180,000 pounds of fuel. One pump transferred about 2,000 to 5,000 pounds per aircraft at a rate of 1,500 pounds of fuel per minute. Photo: Senior Airman Francine St. Laurent, 168th Air Refueling Wing Public Affairs



**Afghanistan Deployment.** Alaska Army National Guardsman Sgt. 1st Class Lance Smith, left, A Troop, 1-297th Cavalry (Reconnaissance and Surveillance), and Maj. Matthew Wilson, center, Joint Forces Headquarters, greet Maj. Doug Smith, Joint Forces Headquarters, Afghanistan, in April. Maj. Smith, along with Sgt. Maj. John Drew, Joint Forces Headquarters, replaced Sgt. 1st Class Smith and Wilson as the new Alaska Army National Guard team deployed as U.S. liaisons in support of the Mongolian Expeditionary Task Forces in Afghanistan.

Photo: Courtesy Maj. Matthew Wilson, Alaska Army National Guard



**Saipan Exercise.** Members of the Alaska National Guard's 103rd Civil Support Team train with other first responders in May during exercise Konfitma in Saipan. Konfitma is a multi-agency exercise that tests interoperability between Pacific region civil support teams and local first responders. The 36-hour exercise tested a variety of Alaska's CST capabilities, from hazard identification to producing common operating procedure for all responding agencies.

Photo: Courtesy 103rd Civil Support Team

## Alaska Guardsmen Finish Marathon

By Sgt. Balinda O'Neal, DMVA Public Affairs

**JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska ...** Four Alaska National Guardsmen competed in the Lincoln National Guard Marathon in May in Lincoln, Nebraska, running 26.2 miles alongside National Guard Soldiers and Airmen from across the nation.

The Guardsmen, Capt. Shane Garling and Lt. Kristine Laughlin-Hall, 176th Wing, Alaska Air National Guard; Command Sgt. Maj. Marc Petersen, 38th Troop Command, Alaska Army National Guard; and Staff Sgt. Thera Scarber, 168th Air Refueling Wing, Alaska Air National Guard, were selected based on running time to represent the Alaska National Guard as part of the AKNG Marathon Team.

The team finished in sixteenth place out of 27 teams with an average time of

3:28:09. The fastest finisher from the Alaska team was Laughlin-Hill, who completed the course in 3:18:03 and took first place in her age group. Nearly 200 National Guard members ran the marathon.

Registration for the renowned race was limited to 12,500 participants and sold out in less than 12 hours. Scarber attributes the National Guard family to making this annual event such a success.

"The National Guard is like a family, not only statewide but nationwide," said Scarber, the rookie of the team, who finished in 4:12:26. "So to take a sport such as marathon running, and compiling members from throughout the organization to share in the experience of something that we all love and relate to, is what I think makes this marathon so special."

For Garling, the team captain and most seasoned runner, the Lincoln finish line marked the completion of his 90th marathon.

"This is the marathon to qualify for the All-Guard Marathon Team," Garling said, "as well as seeing how you stack up against other National Guard runners."

The top 45 male and 15 female finishers of the National Guard marathon typically make the team.

Aside from physical fitness and esprit de corps, the marathon acts as a way to spread the word about the National Guard.

"It's not only promoting health and fitness and excelling above your service's physical fitness standards, it's also tied in with recruiting," Petersen said. "It helps promote the National Guard." ■



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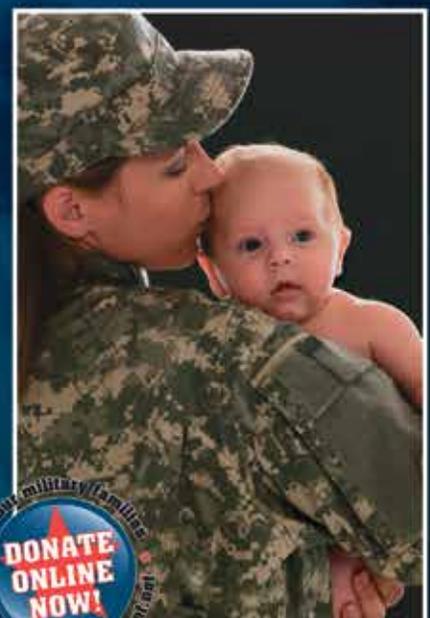
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# GUARDSMEN PARTICIPATE IN MARKSMANSHIP COMPETITION

**Ready, Set, Go!** Participants of the Alaska National Guard 2014 Adjutant General's Match sprint to the 300-meter line during the rifle portion of the competition. The TAG Match is an annual event that tests the participants' marksmanship skills in a battle-focused environment.

Story and photos by Sgt. Edward Eagerton,  
DMVA Public Affairs

**JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska** ... Approximately 40 Soldiers and Airmen with the Alaska National Guard participated in the Alaska National Guard's 2014 Adjutant General's Match here in June.

The TAG Match is an annual event that tests the participants' marksmanship skills in a battle-focused environment.

"The 2014 Alaska National Guard TAG Match represents an opportunity for the finest marksmen in the Alaska National Guard to get together every year and compete for a place on the state marksmanship team," said Capt. Jesse Schexnayder, assistant state training officer, Joint Forces Headquarters, Alaska Army National Guard. "It also is a chance for those essential military skills to be passed down to up and coming Soldiers and Airmen looking to improve far beyond just meeting the minimum qualification standards."

The competition consists of four disciplines that include pistol, rifle, light machine gun and sniper skill sets, Kennedy explained. With 40 participants this year, the AKNG focused on the M9 pistol and the M16 rifle.

In previous years, the competition had as many as 200 participants, Schexnayder explained.

"We're encouraging everybody to come out and shoot," said Master Sgt. Andrew Kennedy, senior operations sergeant, JFHQ,



**Rifle Range.** Spc. Jason Splain, an infantryman with the 297th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade, Alaska Army National Guard, fires his M4 carbine during the Alaska National Guard 2014 Adjutant General's Match on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in June.

Alaska Army National Guard. "Sometimes you can take a guy that has no experience and turn him into a well-experienced shooter in little time."

During the match, the shooters lined up on the rifle and pistol ranges with the Chugach Mountains towering in the background. On the rifle range, eight Soldiers and Airmen stood a short distance from the 400-meter line, a 10-round magazine in their hands.

Following the instructions of the range safety officer, they loaded their weapons. Upon the sounding of the horn, the shooters had two minutes to sprint to the firing line and engage their targets from the prone position.

They continued moving up the line, shooting in timed increments from various distances and positions until at 50 meters they engaged their targets with only three seconds at that distance. Like at the rifle

range, the shooters at the pistol range were timed and shot at various distances from different positions.

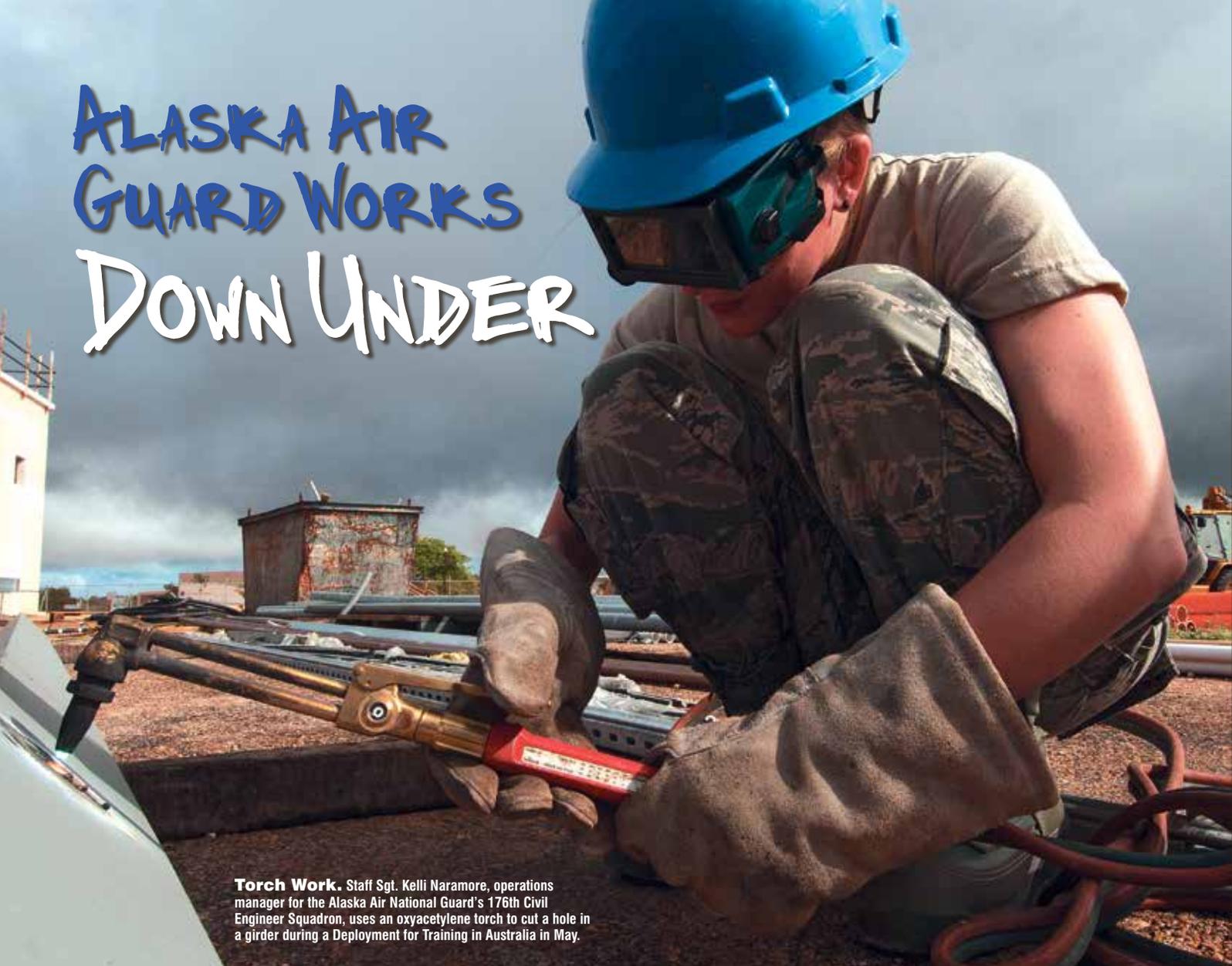
In the individual category, the top 10 shooters were announced and given the opportunity to compete in the national level.

"This is a state-level competition, and if they do well they can go down to the Professional Education Center in Little Rock, Arkansas," Kennedy said. "There they compete against 54 states and territories. There's a big exchange of ideas of tactics and techniques. You get a lot of cross training and a lot of experience."

The first-place overall team score was awarded to the 213th Space Warning Squadron, Alaska Air National Guard, from Clear Air Force Base. The 213th SWS team was also the first-place team in 2013.

Senior Airman Justin Smith from the 213th SWS took first place in the individual category with a score of 430 out of 600. ■

# ALASKA AIR GUARD WORKS DOWN UNDER



**Torch Work.** Staff Sgt. Kelli Naramore, operations manager for the Alaska Air National Guard's 176th Civil Engineer Squadron, uses an oxyacetylene torch to cut a hole in a girder during a Deployment for Training in Australia in May.

Story and photos by Capt. John Callahan, 176th Wing Public Affairs

**H.E. HOLT NAVAL COMMUNICATION STATION, Australia** ... Thirty-four men and women of the Alaska Air National Guard's 176th Wing spent two weeks in May working on a space radar at this remote base on the far western tip of Australia.

The Guard members helped prepare the facility to receive and install more than 75 tons of space-surveillance radar equipment being relocated to Holt from the Caribbean Island of Antigua. This relocation will allow the U.S. Air Force's Space Command to better track space debris and satellites in the Southern Hemisphere.

The Alaska Air Guardsmen, most drawn from the 176th Civil Engineer Squadron, were here as part of a 15-day Deployment for Training. These types of short deployments allow the Airmen to train in a broad range of skills while performing real-world work. The unit comprises a mix of apprentices, journeymen and highly skilled craftsmen in such trades as construction, electrical work, civil engineering, earthmoving and power production.

**Blueprints.** Maj. Kim Riggs, left, construction flight chief for the Alaska Air National Guard's 176th Civil Engineer Squadron, and Maj. Chris Mercer, the squadron's infrastructure flight chief, study blueprints for the facility at H.E. Holt Naval Communication Station, Australia, in May. The two were among 34 Alaska Air Guard members who deployed for two weeks to this tiny outpost to help build a space radar facility.



Initial estimates placed the total costs of the operation at \$70 million. By replacing contractors with rotating teams of Air Guard members, Space Command expects to save \$20 million to \$30 million from that figure.

“It’s a really innovative approach — one that could serve as a model for future projects,” said Lt. Col. Jack Evans, 176th Civil Engineer Squadron commander. “The Guard brings in a broad range of talent, from carpenters and electricians to structural engineers and heavy equipment operators. These men and women need to continually train to learn new skills and keep their current ones sharp, so this kind of work is something we would be doing anyway. It really is a win for everyone involved — including the taxpayer.”

The first rotation of Air Guard members at Holt took place in August 2013. The Alaska contingent comprises the sixth such group to work on-site. The radar is expected to come on line in 2016.

The facility will be the first low-Earth-orbit space surveillance network sensor in the Southern Hemisphere. Once completed, it will operate under the auspices of Space Command under a joint agreement with the Australian Department of Defense. The radar will be able to accurately track up to 200 objects a day, from satellites and space launches in Asia to “space junk” dropped by astronauts during space walks.

The 176th Civil Engineer Squadron gives its members the opportunity to participate in a Deployment for Training once a year or so. In recent years, squadron members have built a schoolhouse in Ecuador, remodeled aircraft hangars in Hawaii, renovated a Navy SEAL mountain warfare center near California’s Mexican border, repaired housing at a Coast Guard

air station in Puerto Rico, expanded a training facility on California’s remote San Clemente Islands and built dormitories in Israel.

“It’s kind of a nice reward for our members, who work hard all year round,” Evans said. ■

**Railing Welding.** Airman 1st Class Phillip Gifford, left, and Tech. Sgt. Mark Hill, both of the Alaska Air National Guard’s 176th Civil Engineer Squadron, weld a safety railing. Thirty-four Alaska Air Guard members, most from the 176th Civil Engineer Squadron, deployed for two weeks to a small outpost at the far western tip of Australia to help build a space radar facility to be jointly operated by Australia and the United States.



**Power Cuts.** Master Sgt. Bonnie Gardino, utilities supervisor for the Alaska Air National Guard’s 176th Civil Engineer Squadron, cuts structural support braces at a small outpost in Australia during a Deployment for Training in May.

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# Homeland Security & Emergency Management



## River Watch Prepares Riverside Residents

By Jeremy Zidek, DHS&EM

**JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska ...** Last spring, breakup flooding caused by ice jams ravaged communities along the Yukon River from Eagle to Alakanuk. Waters reached near historic levels and flooded several communities, slamming into the community of Galena with particular ferociousness.

This winter's mild temperatures, low to average snowfall and moderate ice thicknesses yielded to a gentle spring and a sun-soaked summer. As the rivers broke up, minor flooding took place at Red Devil on the Kuskokwim and at Circle on the Yukon, but the scope of damage was a fraction of last year's devastation.

To monitor river breakup conditions, provide early warning to river communities, and rapidly assist flooding communities,



**Community Brief.** A River Watch team briefs community leaders in Kwethluk about the ice condition upriver. The River Watch teams will often invite local leaders to fly with the team and observe river conditions firsthand.

Photo: Zachariah Bryan, Tundra Drums

the Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Management and the National Weather Service Alaska-Pacific River Forecast Center form a partnership called

River Watch. An emergency management specialist from DHS&EM, a hydrologist from the APRFC, and a local pilot fly along the sections of river that are breaking up and look for trouble spots.

The teams look for areas where the jumbled ice blocks the normal flow of the river. These stops can take place at bends in the river, on sand bars or when thick ice blocks stack up on one another. With high water and a continuous flow of ice, the river jumps its banks and forms temporary lakes that can cover several square miles.

Eventually the high water lifts the ice jam and carries it downstream. Nearby, communities can be damaged by temporary lakes from jams or by the flow of high water and moving ice that occurs when the ice jam is lifted.



**What a Difference a Year Makes.** This shows the flooding in Circle from 2013 that destroyed nine homes. This year the community was much more fortunate and experienced only minor flooding. Photo: Claude Denver, DHS&EM

The moving ice, or “ballistic ice,” moves quickly, battering everything in its path. Ballistic ice can drive buildings from their foundations, rip trees out of the ground, scour the river banks, plow through roads and in general, destroy everything in its path.

When a potential ice jam occurs, the team typically lands and helps the nearest communities prepare for flooding. If active flooding occurs, the DHS&EM emergency management specialist provides immediate support, technical advice and coordination of resources to help the community respond to the event. This enables the state to have a representative in place when it’s most needed.

“While the flood forecast this season called for a below-average risk of flooding, the anxiety of residents along several riverine communities was especially high due to the historic flooding last spring,” said Claude Denver, DHS&EM’s response manager and Upper Yukon River Watch Team leader. “Along both river systems, we saw communities actively planning and preparing for flooding, seeking information from the River Watch teams and acting quickly when minor flooding occurred.”

The minor spring breakup flooding that occurred in Red Devil and Circle was monitored by River Watch. When Circle was notified that an ice jam had formed downriver and water was backing up, they were ready to take action. The community notified all residents and urged them to move property away from the river. Food and water for their residents was moved to the community’s shelter. Elders who lived in low-lying areas were temporarily moved to friends and family members’ homes on higher ground.

“Based on the information provided by the River Watch team, Circle was able to take reasonable and appropriate measures to protect their residents,” Denver said. “There is a comfort in knowing far in advance the river and ice conditions, so there was plenty of warning when the flooding, however minor, occurred.”

Breakup this spring unfolded in an unusual manner. Typically the rivers begin to move on their upper reaches, and the breakup front is pushed down as snowmelt enters the river. This allows River Watch teams to stagger their activity with one team covering a stretch of river until the breakup front moves to a lower section, where another team takes up the effort.

This spring western Alaska experienced higher-than-normal spring temperatures, and a lack of snow in the mountains was reported by the APRFC and residents.



**Ice Jam.** Some ice jams can stretch for miles. This jam below Circle caused minor flooding. Communities near an ice jam are in danger until the jam is released. Photo: Claude Denver, DHS&EM

The rivers began to open up in several locations simultaneously with large open stretches of water followed by runs of ice. These unknown upriver runs of ice can pose a real danger to residents who put their boats on the river expecting open water. People have been trapped away from their community for several days as a late ice run moves past. Others have had their boats destroyed when they were put in the water too early.

The River Watch teams were able to give ice run updates to communities so residents could make decisions based on current conditions.

“The River Watch program is an excellent example of the intersection of science and emergency management. We gather the latest data, evaluate the information, deliver a forecast to the people who need it without delay and stand ready to help them take action and prepare their communities,” said John Madden, director of DHS&EM. “We cannot change the temperature, the yearly snowfall or the way in which our rivers breakup. We can, however, change people and their behaviors. The reason why the River Watch program has been successful for more than 30 years is a clear need for this information.” ■



**Cari-bou.** A small group of caribou casually float past Eagle. With ice-free rivers, residents can once again travel by boat to nearby communities and fish camps. Photo: Claude Denver, DHS&EM



# KHAAN QUEST 2014

## A Multinational Sharing of Experience and Culture

Story and photos by Sgt. Edward Eagerton, DMVA Public Affairs

**JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska** ... Training with service members from other countries not only gives participants of a multinational exercise a platform to learn different techniques in performing their jobs, it is also an opportunity to share cultures and develop stronger bonds between nations. For two weeks at the end of June, Exercise Khaan Quest 2014, which took place at Five Hills Training Center and around the city of Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, brought together nearly 1,200 participants from 24 nations for collaborative training.

KQ14 is a regularly scheduled, multinational exercise hosted annually by the Mongolian Armed Forces and co-sponsored by U.S. Army Pacific. KQ14 is the latest in a continuing series of exercises designed to promote regional peace and security. This year marks the 12th iteration of this training event.

“Training together and sharing our culture, capabilities and tactics creates a more robust network of peacekeeping forces capable of responding to the most challenging situations,” said Maj. Gen. Thomas H. Katkus, adjutant general of the Alaska National Guard, during the opening ceremony. “In addition to improving the capabilities of the military forces present, Khaan Quest also strengthens personal relationships in both military and civilian sectors.”

The exercise consisted of four primary components, which included a command post exercise, a platoon-level field training exercise, various engineering civic action program projects and cooperative health engagement events.

In the Songinokhairkhan District of Ulaanbaatar, U.S. Army medical providers teamed up with their counterparts from Mongolia, Canada, France, India and the

Republic of Korea for the cooperative health engagement portion of KQ14. The program provided local residents with preventative medical and dental care, and afforded the participants the opportunity to exchange techniques, methods and ideas.

“The cooperative health engagement provides a platform for interoperability with our allies while providing medical care to an underserved area,” said Maj. Phil Laird, a base surgeon at the Canadian Forces Health Services Center (Atlantic). “We have medical professionals from five different countries, all with very different approaches to medicine, with varying equipment and procedures.”

During the cooperative health engagement, the medical teams checked in approximately 3,800 people, treated 3,262 people and provided 4,165 prescriptions. Aside from the cooperative health engagement location, medical personnel also conducted 20 home visits, providing optometric and general care.

“We are gaining so much from the experience of working side-by-side with our allies and working under controlled circumstances,” Laird said.

In the Engineering Civic Action Program portion of KQ14, military engineers constructed a water distribution point in the 4th Khoroo, replaced the gym lighting system in the 42nd Elementary School in the Songinokhairkhan district and renovated the 114th Kindergarten in the Bayangol district.

Construction specialists from the Mongolian Armed Forces 017 Engineer Battalion, Republic of India Armed Forces, the Marine Corps 9th Engineer Support Battalion and the U.S. Army Reserve 465th Engineering Company (vertical) worked side-by-side using an array of skills including carpentry, masonry, plumbing and electrical work to the quality of life of



**On The Descent.** A member of the Mongolian Armed Forces heads down a mountainside during a course on rappelling during Khaan Quest 2014.



civilian residents in the exercise area.

“Not only in the future are we going to continue doing joint operations with a multinational effort but also with different military branches of the U.S. (armed forces),” said 1st Lt. Shane Bowermaster, commander of the Birmingham, Alabama-based 465th. “We have similar missions but are all specialized in different skill sets.”

The exercise provides an ideal platform for participating nations to demonstrate military-to-military interoperability, enhance relationships and increase multinational cooperation.

“Projects like this should be done a lot more often,” Bowermaster explained. “We get enough of the home station training. These projects have real world practical application, not only for exercise participants, but also for building up our global community.”

The command post exercise and the field training exercise portions of KQ14 took place at the Mongolian Armed Forces’ Five Hills Training Area, outside Ulaanbaatar. There, nestled in a valley between expansive rolling hills, participants exchanged tactics and techniques for controlling and conducting peace support operations on the global arena.

“Our partnership is extremely important to be able to enhance the Mongolian peace-support operations capabilities as they deploy throughout the world,” said Col. Chad Parker, the U.S. Khaan Quest exercise director and commander of the 297th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade, Alaska Army National Guard. “This is not only a broadening experience for the United States, but we bring in multinational partners from around the world to help train them on peacekeeping missions as they train to deploy around the world.”

The command post exercise was a multinational staff exercise, designed to



**Multitude of Nations.** Service members from participating nations salute during the playing of the Mongolian National Anthem during the opening ceremony of Khaan Quest 2014 at Five Hills Training Area, Mongolia, in June.

integrate different nations and organizations and teach the participants how to command and control forces using a scenario-based role-playing environment. There, the participants would be given fictional situations by the exercise directors

and would have to manage the situations and notional personnel while communicating with different elements of the exercise.

The field training exercise, on the other hand, was separated into different lanes where platoon-size elements of participating



**Training.** Mongolian role players, posing as an angry mob, push the shields of a riot control team made up of U.S. and Mongolian Armed Forces service members in a training event during Khaan Quest 2014 at Five Hills Training Area, Mongolia. KQ14 is the latest in a continuing series of exercises designed to promote regional peace and security.

forces would learn about various roles they might encounter in a deployed environment during a peace-keeping mission. The lanes included riot control, small boat operations, combat first aid, convoy operations and survival training.

Both the field training exercise and the command post exercise portions of KQ14 began with classroom instruction. During the classes, instructors from various nations would discuss their methods and procedures with the students. The classes combined the expertise of the different nations, and after the classes were completed, the students would conduct training based on the shared input between partnered instructors.

“We are here to collaborate, mentor, and extend our friendship to the Mongolian Armed Forces and other multinational forces,” said Sgt. 1st Class Timothy Ring, B Company, 1st Battalion, 143rd Infantry (Airborne) Regiment. “This is a great opportunity for our Soldiers who have little experience with other countries’ cultures and customs. It’s a good experience for them to learn. Such experience is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that they can share their stories with their friends and family.”

At the end of each day, one of the participating nations would host a culture day, showcasing a unique part of their culture. For some, it involved music and dance, for others, it was martial arts.



**International Campsite.** Staff Sgt. David Hockin, a survival lane instructor from 1st Battalion, 297th Reconnaissance and Surveillance Squadron (Insertion and Extraction), Alaska Army National Guard, cooks food at his campsite during Khaan Quest 2014.



**Teaching Others to Survive.** Staff Sgt. Colin Oppegard, a survival lane instructor with the Alaska Army National Guard, teaches a class on antenna theory to members of the Mongolian Armed Forces during a survival-training course as part of Khaan Quest 2014.

For the Mongolians, the culture day included archery, a 22-kilometer horse race and traditional Mongolian wrestling, known as Bokh.

“Every night was something new,” said 1st Lt. Danny Canlas, platoon leader, 207th Battlefield Support Company, Alaska Army National Guard. “All the cultures get together and socialize and learn about each other’s culture. I think that the point of this exercise is really the camaraderie that you have and just the understanding how everybody behaves and acts in their own homeland because when we do these nation exercises, it’s more important to know the personnel than the tactics and techniques — learn the person behind the uniform.”

After two weeks of training, KQ14

finished with a traditional closing ceremony. Each participating nation began the exercise with most only knowing their jobs and the people from their own units. Through the course of the exercise many friendships were made, and the participants not only had a better understanding of different ways to conduct peace support operations, but also a better idea of how similar each other was.

“My favorite part is just being able to sit down and have the exchange with my counterpart and learn more about the Mongolian culture, learn about their armed forces,” Parker said. “I think it’s a great opportunity for us to not only train with them but also to learn from them because they have a lot to teach us as well.” ■



**Survival.** A member of the Mongolian Armed Forces stands next to his shelter during a survival-training course as part of Khaan Quest 2014.

# 168th Guardsmen Provide FREE Dental Services

By Master Sgt. Cornelius Mingo, 168th Air Refueling Wing Public Affairs

**EIELSON AIR FORCE BASE, Alaska** ... Members of the Alaska Air National Guard's 168th Medical Group participated in Alaska Mission of Mercy 2014 in Anchorage, as volunteers treated more than 1,500 patients in April, providing approximately \$200,000 in care.

The Mission of Mercy concept, originating in Virginia, has spread throughout the United States, and this is the first time the event has been hosted in Alaska. Volunteers donated their time, resources and unique skill-sets to provide free dental care according to the Alaska Mission of Mercy web page.

"At first, I was intrigued to experience the similarities and differences between our Air National Guard humanitarian missions and this event hosted by the Alaska Dental Society. But ultimately, I was really just excited to be able to help out my fellow Alaskans," said Staff Sgt. Vanessa Campbell, 168th Medical Group dental technician. "It was sobering to realize that there is a strong need for all dental services right here with our neighbors and community."

Alaska Mission of Mercy provided care for those in need for two days.

Volunteers said an important element of the Alaska Mission of Mercy is patient education, which is the most cost-effective way to reduce oral disease. A program to help patients understand the importance of good daily oral hygiene practices, healthy diet and routine preventive dental care was an essential part of the care given. Patients learned about the negative effects of soda, sugary beverages, tobacco products, the link between dental health and overall health, oral cancer and more.

"When you pay it forward by holding the door open for someone, paying for their coffee or providing free medical services to someone in need, you are creating a domino effect and spreading goodwill and hope to others," said Senior Airman Kayla Kerstetter, 168th Medical Group dental technician. "I wanted to be a domino in the Mission of Mercy and be an advocate for serving others. As human beings, it's not only important for us to gain knowledge in what we are passionate about, but it's important for us to share that knowledge by volunteering our services to others."

The event was such a success that Alaska will host the program again in 2015 in Fairbanks. ■

*"When you pay it forward by holding the door open for someone, paying for their coffee or providing free medical services to someone in need, you are creating a domino effect and spreading goodwill and hope to others."*

— Senior Airman Kayla Kerstetter, 168th Medical Group



**Volunteers.** Staff Sgt. Vanessa Campbell, 168th Air Refueling Wing Medical Group dental technician, and Senior Airman Kayla Kerstetter, 168th Air Refueling Wing Medical Group dental technician, stand outside the 168th Medical Group main entrance on Eielson Air Force Base. They both volunteered at the Alaska Mission of Mercy 2014 held in Anchorage.

Photo: Master Sgt. Cornelius Mingo, 168th Air Refueling Wing Public Affairs



**Dental Care.** Senior Airman Kayla Kerstetter, 168th Air Refueling Wing Medical Group dental technician, assists the dental radiology technician at the Dena'ina Civic and Convention Center during Alaska Mission of Mercy 2014.

Photo courtesy: Staff Sgt. Vanessa Campbell, 168th Air Refueling Wing Medical Group

# Alaska Army National Guard Substance Abuse Program

By Kimberly Conkling, Alaska Army National Guard Substance Abuse Program

**JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska ...**  
Substance abuse is a manpower and personnel readiness issue that erodes Soldier fitness. The purpose of the Alaska Army National Guard Substance Abuse Program is to deter substance abuse by providing prevention education and referral resources to Army National Guard Soldiers and provide commanders with tools necessary to assess the security and military fitness of their unit.

The AKARNG SAP works to reduce risks, enhance mission readiness and support Soldier resilience by supporting efforts in prevention education, treatment resources, referral management and risk reduction.

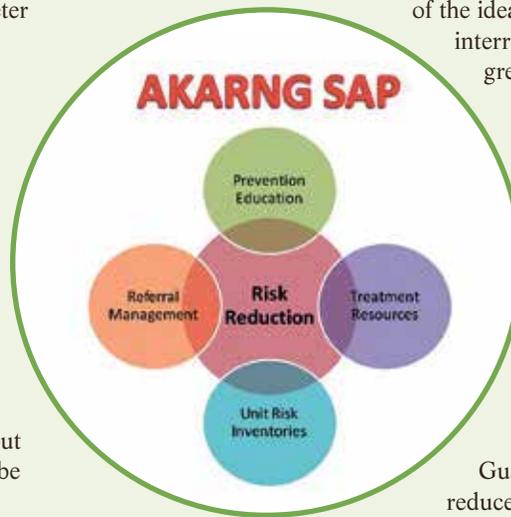
Accomplishing the mission of the AKARNG SAP is quite an undertaking, but the reward of a successful execution can be felt in many arenas.

A substance abuse program is not as simple as catching drug users through urinalysis or enduring a briefing

every year. It is recognizing that what deters one person may not deter another. It is understanding that risk-taking behavior (like substance abuse) does not occur in a vacuum. It is the acceptance of the idea that a substance abuse program is a series of interrelated and intentional components, with a greater effort to reduce overall risks.

The AKARNG SAP is moving forward with a number of efforts to ensure its mission is accomplished. Located at Camp Denali and aligned under G-1, the staff consists of an Alcohol Drug Control Officer, Prevention Coordinator and Drug Testing Coordinator. Each role is specialized, but together they implement the Substance Abuse Program in accordance with Army Regulation 600-85, as described in the key components below.

Ultimately, the Alaska Army National Guard Substance Abuse Program works to reduce risks and maximize personnel readiness. The need for a substance abuse program is clear and its benefits expand well beyond any of its single components. ■



- **Treatment Resources:** The AKARNG SAP acts as a clearinghouse for substance abuse treatment resources by building and utilizing a resource network to connect Soldiers with treatment based on the Soldier's eligibility and needs.
- **Referral Management:** A commander's program, the AKARNG SAP conducts intakes of Soldiers who self-identify or are command-directed for substance abuse issues, tracks him or her and keeps the commander updated on treatment progress.
- **Risk Reduction:** Identifying risky behavior through urinalysis and Unit Risk Inventories, the AKARNG SAP works to develop risk mitigation measures.
- **Substance Abuse Prevention Education:** This two (for M-Day Soldiers) or four (for active Guard and Reserve Soldiers) hours of required training must be conducted using evidence-based curriculum that is suited to the trainees. Through the utilization of Unit Risk Inventory results, requests from leadership or trends in unit issues, AKARNG SAP staff can provide training that is effective in reducing risky behavior.



*Being "Always Ready, Always There"  
begins, after all, with ensuring each Soldier is mission-ready.  
Contact the AKARNG SAP's alcohol and drug officer,  
Kimberly Conkling, at 907-428-6725  
or kimberly.w.conkling.ctr@mail.mil.*

# General Inducted Into Athena Society

Story and photo by Sgt. Edward Eagerton, DMVA Public Affairs

**JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska** ... Brig. Gen. Catherine Jorgensen, director of the joint staff, Joint Forces Headquarters, Alaska Army National Guard, was inducted into the Anchorage Athena Society at a luncheon at the Dena'ina Center in Anchorage in March.

The Anchorage Athena Society, a program of the Anchorage Chamber of Commerce, is part of Athena International, a nonprofit organization that supports, develops and honors women in positions of leadership.

"It's quite an honor to be nominated and recognized," Jorgensen said. "Getting nominated was an opportunity to have my eyes opened to what they do for empowering women in business and leadership positions and their commitment to mentorship as well."

Jorgensen is no stranger to leadership. In September, she was the first woman to be promoted to the rank of brigadier general in the history of the Alaska Army National Guard. With this rank comes a large amount of responsibility.

"She simultaneously wears two hats," said Brig. Gen. Mike Bridges, assistant adjutant general-Army, Alaska National Guard. "She is the Army land component commander and director of the joint staff."

For Jorgensen, being inducted into the Athena Society affords her the opportunity to act as an ambassador to the National Guard.

"For the Anchorage Chamber of Commerce, the military is a big piece of

what goes on here in Anchorage, and it really opens up another avenue for them to see what we do in the military," Jorgensen said. "A lot of times women don't realize the opportunities they have in the military because they aren't exposed to those things, and so being a part of this opens up opportunities for me to share what goes on in our organization and what other women can do." ■



**New Member.** Brig. Gen. Catherine Jorgensen, director of the joint staff, Joint Forces Headquarters, Alaska National Guard, is now a member of the Anchorage Athena Society.

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*"It's quite an honor to be nominated and recognized. Getting nominated was an opportunity to have my eyes opened to what they do for empowering women in business and leadership positions and their commitment to mentorship as well."*

— Brig. Gen. Catherine Jorgensen

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# GOING THE DISTANCE

## Guardsman Runs Marathon of Marathons



**Marathon Maven.** Capt. Shane Garling, 176th Wing deployment officer of the 176th Logistics Readiness Squadron, Alaska Air National Guard, runs in the Lincoln Marathon in Lincoln, Nebraska, in May 2009. To his right is Alaska Air National Guardsman 2nd Lt. Kristi Laughlin-Hall, whom Garling was pacing to qualify for the National Guard's elite running team. Photo: Master Sgt. Vernon Moore, Air National Guard

By Sgt. Edward Eagerton, DMVA Public Affairs

### JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska ...

At a distance of 26.2 miles, running a marathon is no small feat. Likewise, having the opportunity to visit each of the 50 states is a goal that not all people have a chance to accomplish in their lifetime.

For one Alaska Air National Guardsman, the goal was to run a marathon in each of the 50 states.

Capt. Shane Garling, the 176th Wing deployment officer assigned to the 176th Logistics Readiness Squadron, Alaska Air National Guard, ran his first marathon, the Humpy's Classic Marathon in Anchorage, in August 2000. He ran a half marathon each day to train for the full Humpy's Classic Marathon, he said.

"It was a small local race, and so I decided to go down and run the race," said Garling while sitting at a desk in his office with a reminiscent smile on his tanned face. On the wall next to his desk, a map of the United States hangs with little tabs over each state, marking the name of the race, the location, date and his finish times.

Although he was disappointed with his time of 3 hours and 18 minutes, Garling was inspired to run faster to eventually qualify for the Boston Marathon, which requires that runners meet qualifying time standards within their age and gender groups in a marathon certified by a governing body affiliated with the International Association of Athletics Federation.

"My qualification for Boston was 3:10, so I missed it by eight minutes," explained Garling. "Hence, it drove me to want to run faster and take all the things I learned the first time and run another marathon."

In May 2001, Garling ran his second in the National Guard Marathon held in Lincoln, Nebraska, with the Guard's marathon team. There, he ran a 3:08 and qualified for the Boston Marathon.

By the time he ran the Boston Marathon in 2002, he already had a couple of marathons under his belt and thought he might as well run one in all 50 states, he said.

In 2002, Garling began running at least five out-of-state marathons every year. As his love of running continued to grow, so did his appreciation for the running community he was part of.

"I'm always fascinated by people who have an interest in running," said Garling. "That is one of the things that I think running has become. It's more of a social event. It's more of talking to people, getting to why they're running or what marathon they're on or just the social interaction of it. I appreciate that side of running, and that's what I look forward to."

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*"I wanted to save Hawaii for number 50 because it was the 50th state. That wasn't the only reason, though; we also got married there during the race."*

— Capt. Shane Garling

The social element of his running community would eventually lead him to meet his wife, Julie, who lives in New York City, at the Medford Marathon in Wisconsin. Like Garling, Julie shared a similar penchant for running marathons and a desire to complete one in each of the 50 states.

“Four years ago, in 2010, that was when I met my wife,” Garling said. “For us to stay together and meet up every month, we decided to go do one marathon a month for the year. That’s how we get together every month. For me, running is about relationships because my wife and I get together and go to all of these great places to run these races.”

With his wife maintaining her residence in New York City, Garling’s marathon dates across the country increased. In 2012, he ran 15 marathons, all while also being deployed overseas for five months.

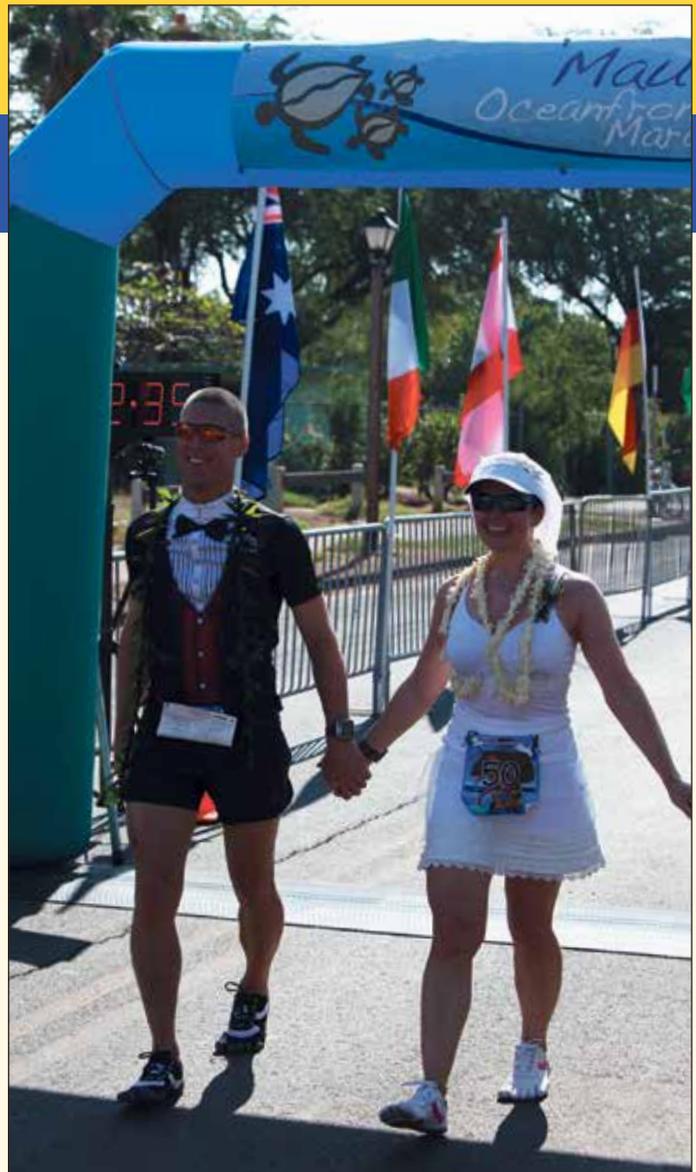
“While I was deployed, Julie completed many, many states and was sitting at 48, and she waited for me to catch up,” Garling said.

In 2013, Garling ran another 18 marathons, to include the Louisiana Marathon held in Baton Rouge. Garling proposed to his future-bride at the finish line of that race.

On Jan. 19, 2014, the couple completed the last state on their list.

“I wanted to save Hawaii for number 50 because it was the 50th state,” explained Garling. “That wasn’t the only reason, though; we also got married there during the race.”

Dressed in custom-made running clothes designed to look like a bride’s dress complete with a sun-visor veil and a tuxedo running shirt for the groom, the couple stopped during the race and exchanged wedding vows. Joining them were bridesmaids and the best man, also wearing custom-made running costumes.



**A Marathon in Each State.** Capt. Shane Garling, 176th Wing deployment officer of the 176th Logistics Readiness Squadron, Alaska Air National Guard, and his wife, Julie, cross the finish line of the Maui Oceanfront Marathon in Lahaina, Hawaii, in January. They were married during the race at the 17-mile marker, but Garling said the highlight of the race was that this race completed their goal of running a marathon in each of the 50 U.S. states. Photo: Courtesy Capt. Shane Garling, 176th Logistics Readiness Squadron



**Newlyweds.** Capt. Shane Garling, 176th Logistics Readiness Squadron, Alaska Air National Guard, runs with his wife, Julie, in the Maui Oceanfront Marathon in Lahaina, Hawaii, in January. During the race, they were married at the 17-mile mark during a 30-minute ceremony before completing the final 9.2 miles as husband and wife.

Photo: Courtesy Capt. Shane Garling, 176th Logistics Readiness Squadron

“At mile 17, we stopped and had a 30-minute ceremony and got married during the marathon,” said Garling, “and then we continued on as a married couple.”

For them, completing the 50 states was as much of an accomplishment as it was to get married.

“It’s funny because our highlight of the day was us finishing the 50 states,” Garling explained. “Our wedding was a big part of it, but finishing the states was a big deal.”

Though Garling says he is not as competitive as he used to be, running continues to be a big part of his life, especially with it being part of his unique experience with his wife. Since his first marathon in 2000, Garling has run 89 marathons, and his wife has completed 111.

“My life is about running,” said Garling, “and it’s primarily because my wife lives on the other side of the country. So this is our get together every month, and also we get to go on little vacations. We get to see all parts of the world and parts of the country. We love it.” ■



## Showing Veterans Our Gratitude

By Verdie Bowen, Veterans Affairs

**ANCHORAGE, Alaska** ... Supporting veterans is something that comes naturally to Alaskans, just like fishing and hunting. We do it with the greatest pleasure and ease.

Gov. Sean Parnell reflected this trait when he invited our military to call Alaska home while speaking at a quarterly function for the Association of the United States Army Last Frontier chapter.

"I've seen noble characteristic displayed again and again by Alaska's military. I would like you to call Alaska home even after your military service is complete," Parnell said. "You are just the kind of men and women we want to permanently reside in Alaska. Your character, courage, integrity, training, self-discipline and patriotism all lead me to ask you to make Alaska your permanent residence once you leave active duty."

One could not find a truer statement reflecting the values of our veterans and the heart of our state.

It is concerning, though, that some Alaskans believe that Memorial Day is just another three-day weekend or the beginning of the fishing and summer activity season. We, as veterans, can do something about that and keep our promise to those who have given their all.

Take the time to let everyone know what Memorial Day is all about, and don't just stop on Memorial Day. Share your stories with the families of your fellow Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen or Marines who were lost while serving in uniform. The stories of their courage never grow old and bear repeating so that our memory of their service spans the generations.

This year, the governor signed a bill marking March 29 each year as "Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day" in Alaska. For some of the Vietnam veterans present during the bill signing, it was an emotional occasion as it showed Alaska's recognition

that what happened to our service men and women during and after the Vietnam War was not our nation's proudest point in time. Now, with the benefit of the passage of time, we can see that, in fact, America is a stronger nation because of Vietnam veterans.

While time may have healed many of the hurts, it is not in our country's best interest to simply sweep under the rug what happened to our Vietnam veterans. What they gave in opportunity, endured in insults, suffered physically and emotionally changed their entire lives. Service for Vietnam veterans has been a lifelong enlistment in a club that, for too long, had no name.

There are not enough words for the appreciation of this lifelong service to our nation. Not enough words to say, "I am much obliged to you, as a veteran myself, for teaching our nation the meaning of respect." There are not enough ways to say "Welcome Home, Vietnam Veterans." ■



**Welcome Home.** Brig. Gen. Cathy Jorgensen, Alaska National Guard director of the joint staff, extends a "welcome home" to Vietnam veteran Allan Klatt while Brig. Gen. Timothy O'Brien, Alaska National Guard assistant adjutant general—Air, shakes the hand of Vietnam veteran James Leva during the "Welcome Home, Vietnam Veterans" event at the Egan Civic and Convention Center in Anchorage in March. Photo: Mercedes Angerman, Veterans Affairs

# “Welcome Home, Vietnam Veterans” Event Honors, Thanks Veterans

By Forrest Powell III, Veterans Affairs

**ANCHORAGE, Alaska ...** The Department of Military & Veteran Affairs is proud to announce its partnership in the Vietnam War Commemorative Partners Program, organized to help a grateful nation thank and honor America’s Vietnam veterans and their families for service, valor and sacrifice as part of the Vietnam War 50th anniversary.

DMVA kicked off the partnership with a celebration, “Welcome Home, Vietnam Veterans,” in March at the William A. Egan Civic and Convention Center in Anchorage.

“We are elated and proud that the State of Alaska has joined the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War commemoration to honor veterans and their families who have sacrificed so much for this nation,” said Verdie Bowen, director of the State of Alaska Office of Veterans Affairs. “Many have given their lives, to include those who returned with a large portion of their innocence forever gone.”

The event included a Vietnam War panel hosted by the Alaska Veterans Museum and also had vendors on hand offering services.

“I have to give our Vietnam veterans tremendous credit for their leadership and willingness to ensure that all veterans have

total access to earned benefits,” Bowen said. “Our Vietnam veterans have passed to this nation a legacy that we will always respect and honor returning warriors, support each one individually and stand behind their families collectively. I believe their bravery, resourcefulness and patriotism mark them as America’s finest citizens. I am honored to welcome home Alaska’s Vietnam veterans.”

Through the partnership agreement with the Department of Defense, Alaska will continue to properly honor and welcome Vietnam veterans until all have been welcomed home. ■



**Appreciation.** Harold Snoddy, Vietnam veteran and Distinguished Service Cross recipient, places a pin of appreciation on his wife, Carol, during a veterans appreciation ceremony in Wrangell in June.

Photo: Mercedes Angerman, Veterans Affairs



**Honoring Veterans.** Maj. Gen. Thomas H. Katkus, adjutant general of the Alaska National Guard, presents veteran Arnold Bakke with a Veterans Honor Coin during a veterans appreciation ceremony in Wrangell in June.

Photo: Mercedes Angerman, Veterans Affairs

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# ALASKAN VETERANS VISIT NATIONAL MEMORIALS

By Staff Sgt. N. Alicia Halla,  
176th Wing Public Affairs

**JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska** ... About 45 Guardsmen from the Alaska Air National Guard's 176th Wing assisted nearly 50 World War II veterans at the Ted Stevens International Airport in preparation for their May flight to Washington, D.C., as part of the Honor Flight Network program.

The veterans, who hail from across Alaska, traveled to the nation's capital to visit, for the first time, the memorials erected in their honor. The flight was sponsored by Alaska Airlines and arranged by the Golden Heart and Last Frontier Honor Flight programs — regional divisions of the national organization.

A few of the veterans were members of the Alaska Territorial Guard, a federally recognized militia during the occupation of Alaska in World War II from 1942 to 1947.

"It was an amazing day hanging out with all those heroes," said Master Sgt. Mark Eaker, 176th Operations Group aviation resource management superintendent. "I have 21 years in the military, and that was the coolest thing I've done."



**Honor Flight.** Forty-five World War II Alaskan veterans return from Washington, D.C., after traveling to the nation's capital to visit the memorials erected in their honor. Their trip was made possible through the Last Frontier Honor Flight Network, and they were welcomed home by the governor, the Alaska National Guard and members of the community.

Photo: Sam Dresel II, JBER Fire & Emergency Services

This trip is the second honor flight to go out of Alaska onboard Alaska Airlines, which provided tickets for the veterans and discounts to their guardians.

"The state of Alaska has a proud military history," said Marilyn Romano, Alaska Airlines regional vice president—Alaska. "We're honored to fly these brave men and women to Washington to pay their respects to those who gave the ultimate sacrifice for our country."

The veterans were met upon their return to Alaska by Gov. Sean Parnell and a public reception. ■



**Welcome Back.** Gov. Sean Parnell, along with members of the Alaska National Guard and the local community, welcome home more than 45 World War II veterans from Washington, D.C., in May after the veterans visited the nation's capital as part of the Last Frontier Honor Flight program. Photo: Sam Dresel II, JBER Fire & Emergency Services



**Alaska Territorial Guard Veteran.** Gust Bartman, who served in the Alaska Territorial Guard as a 17-year-old from 1942 to 1943 before entering the Army, waits for his flight to Washington, D.C., and talks to members of the Alaska National Guard. He and more than 45 other U.S. veterans flew to the nation's capital as part of the Last Frontier Honor Flight program.

Photo: Sgt. Balinda O'Neal, DMVA Public Affairs

*"The state of Alaska has a proud military history. We're honored to fly these brave men and women to Washington to pay their respects to those who gave the ultimate sacrifice for our country."*

— Marilyn Romano, Alaska Airlines regional vice president—Alaska.



# Warrior and Family Services

## Alaskans Serving Alaska's Military

By Lt. Col. Kay Spear-Budd, Warrior and Family Services

### JOINT BASE ELEMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska ...

In response to the national Joining Community Forces initiative, the Alaska National Guard State Family Program director and the Army OneSource Community Outreach specialist joined forces as the Coalition for Alaska's Service Members, Veterans and Families. The purpose of the coalition is to educate, inform and connect Alaskan communities, service members, veterans and their families to ensure a healthy future.

This initiative is also directly connected to the state's Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Service member, Veterans and Families initiative. In order to meet its purpose the coalition came up with the following focus areas:

- **Statewide coordination** — ensuring a consistent, comprehensive approach to supporting service members, veterans and families, as well as aligning national, state, and local initiatives and programs.
- **Community outreach and education** — providing information, training and resources to all sectors of the community on the military culture and how those impact the life cycle and our community, military and veteran population.
- **Strategic partnerships** — fostering collaboration and communication among partners and leveraging assets and decreasing duplication of efforts while maximizing funding efforts.

To achieve those goals, the coalition is divided into five alliances – Behavioral Health/Health, Child and Youth, Faith and Service, Finance (Education and Employment), and Legal – allowing each group to address specific goals identified as priorities throughout the state. Those alliances include federal, state and local agencies such as U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Alaska Department of Military & Veterans Affairs, Army OneSource, Department of Health and Social Services, Mat-Su Health Foundation, Vet Centers, Southcentral Foundation, Area Health Education Center, University of Alaska, Better Business Bureau, local banking institutions, North Star Behavioral Health, Alaska Legal Services and the Alaska Peer-to-Peer Consortium.

Through alliance efforts, the coalition has provided outreach to 1,850 service members, veterans, families and community members.

Some of the coalition's most notable accomplishments include:

- **"Ask the Question" campaign** — statewide provider campaign to ask their clients, "Have you or has a family member served or are serving in the Armed Forces, including the Guard and Reserve?"
- **Fairbanks Hiring Fair** — 19 employers participated; 100 service members, veterans and families attended; 31 individuals requested to submit an application; six scheduled an interview; three were interviewed on site; and 19 individuals were offered positions as a result of the event.
- **Alaska Bar Association** — added a Service member, Veteran and Military Families section to address the legal issues faced by SMVF and specialized education for lawyers.
- **Community outreach events** — held regionally to increase awareness of military culture for providers as well as to promote community and installation resources for SMVF including Alaska 2-1-1 and other partner agencies.
- **Division of Behavioral Health** — developing a map in partnership with the coalition to identify the gaps in service delivery. The map currently identifies the Alaska veteran population, military treatment facilities and which communities have access to services via the VA/Tribal Health Agreement.
- **Legislative and background information** — provided on specific legislative activities in reference to the SMVF population in Alaska.

Recognizing the coalition's efforts in Joining Community Forces and the support from Alaska's community, Gov. Sean Parnell will participate in a signing ceremony on Sept. 11. This ceremony will demonstrate the commitment organizations throughout Alaska have toward a healthy future for our military members. The governor and key stakeholders will sign a memorandum of understanding, agreeing to enhance ongoing, collaborative efforts and ensure comprehensive services are accessible and assistance is available for service members, veterans and families through the state of Alaska and honor all who have served our state and nation.

If you are interested in becoming involved with the Coalition for Alaska's Service Members, Veterans and Families, please contact Lt. Col. Kay Spear-Budd at [kay.l.spearbudd.mil@mail.mil](mailto:kay.l.spearbudd.mil@mail.mil) or Colette Morning at [Colette.morning@serco-na.com](mailto:Colette.morning@serco-na.com). ■

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# Alaska State Defense Force

## Active in Vigilant Guard-Alaska 2014

By Brig. Gen. Roger E. Holl, Alaska State Defense Force

**WASILLA, Alaska ...** After planning for more than a year, the Alaska State Defense Force participated in Exercise Vigilant Guard-Alaska 2014, a statewide exercise involving national, state and local agencies modeled after the 1964 earthquake and subsequent tsunami that ravaged Alaska.

The Alaska Medical Station was an emergency, mobile hospital that was set up at the state fairgrounds in Palmer for the exercise. The Alaska State Defense Force had earlier assisted in the inventory of the hospital. In addition, the ASDF provided traffic control for the hospital and chaplain services, as well as a doctor and emergency medical technician.

At the Joint Mobilization Center at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, the Alaska State Defense Force augmented the Joint Reception Staging and Onward Integration of National Guard troops arriving from outside Alaska.



**Communications Capabilities.** Lt. Col. Doyle Holmes, top left, Capt. Melissa Holl, bottom left, and Master Sgt. James York conduct statewide communications at the Alaska State Defense Force headquarters at the Alcantra armory in Wasilla.

Photo: Brig. Gen. Roger E. Holl, Alaska State Defense Force



**Disaster Response.** An Alaska State Defense Force engineer, center, works with National Guard members and other personnel to assess the Fairbanks rubble pile during exercise Vigilant Guard-Alaska 2014 in March. The rubble piles were used to simulate collapsed structures and hazardous materials situations.

Photo: Sgt. 1st Class Helga Posley, Alaska State Defense Force

Elsewhere, the Alaska State Defense Force had personnel in the Joint Operations Center to relay requests for information and assignments to the Alaska State Defense Force. The capability of the Alaska State Defense Force was enhanced by its communications capability through the use of satellite phones, other satellite communications and the Alaska Land Based Mobile Radio. Communications were conducted throughout the state from Juneau to Fairbanks, the Kenai Peninsula, Anchorage, Wasilla and Valdez.

The Alaska State Defense Force Headquarters was operating throughout the exercise. Messages were received from the Joint Operations Center and missions were carried out throughout Alaska.

In Anchorage and Fairbanks, heated warming tents were set up and maintained by ASDF personnel at rubble piles, which simulated collapsed buildings. The ASDF provided shelter management for first responders in Anchorage and Fairbanks. In addition to serving the hospital, the medical detachment was sent to the Anchorage rubble pile where simulated casualties would be in need of medical assistance. ASDF safety officers, soils geologists and a professional engineer reported to the rubble piles to perform damage assessment.

ASDF food handlers assisted in feeding National Guard Soldiers at Camp Carroll on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson. In Fairbanks, other ASDF personnel worked on snow machine repair.

The exercise provided an excellent platform to test ASDF capabilities to respond to a major disaster. ■



**Working Together.** Alaska State Defense Force Soldiers provide warming tents and shelter management at the Anchorage rubble pile during exercise Vigilant Guard-Alaska 2014 in March. Photo: Lt. Col. Art Saltmarsh, Alaska State Defense Force



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**Ready For Take Off.** An Alaska Air National Guard C-130 Hercules prepares to take off as part of a six-day Joint Forcible Entry Exercise on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in June. The exercise was a joint effort between active-duty Army and Air National Guard units from Alaska, Washington and Guam. Photo: Staff Sgt. William Banton, U.S. Air Force



# MASS AIRFIELD SEIZURE EXERCISE

By Staff Sgt. N. Alicia Halla,  
176th Wing Public Affairs

**JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska ...** More than 1,500 service members drawn from Alaska,

Oregon and Guam came together for a large joint-force exercise here and at Fort Greely, near Delta Junction, in June.

The Joint Forcible Entry Exercise — a giant undertaking by the Alaska Air

National Guard's 176th Operations Group, U.S. Army Alaska's 4-25th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), the Oregon Air National Guard's 125th Special Tactics Squadron and the Air Force's Guam-based 36th Contingency Response Group — demonstrated close cooperation and the ability to project combat power.

The six-day event involved a mock airfield seizure from enemy forces, multiple airdrops and airlift transport of more than 500 tons of cargo and more than 650 Soldiers and Airmen. It included a jump with more than 500 paratroopers, intelligence reconnaissance, simulated firefights, a medical evacuation exercise, air traffic control and more.

Exercise organizers attributed its success to the flexibility and positive attitudes of the entire team.

"Sometimes people focus on why we can't," said Col. Matt McFarlane, the Joint Forcible Entry Exercise ground forces commander and 4-25th BCT commander. "We focused on how we can."

Planning began in October 2013 and required considerable cooperation between participants and critical support from other agencies such as the 3rd Operation Group; the 176th, 773rd and 673d logistics



**Coordinating Forces.** Soldiers with the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division, coordinate with incoming paratroopers as part of a Joint Forcible Entry Exercise that involved more than 1,500 personnel including the active-duty Army and the Air National Guard. Photo: Capt. John Callahan, 176th Wing Public Affairs

readiness squadrons; and the 176th Maintenance Group.

The Alaska Air Guard's 176th Wing, with its wide range of missions, was able to furnish support normally requiring several wings. For example, the original plans called for preparing only 12 aircraft, but wing maintainers were able to provide 16 mission-ready aircraft — including the C-17 Globemaster III, C-130 Hercules, HH-60 Pave Hawk helicopter and HC-130 King aircraft — for more than 70 flying missions during the exercise. They were able to repair aircraft in 45 minutes, work that usually takes four days, according to Lt. Col. Michael Griesbaum, the 176th Operations Group deputy commander, who served as deputy Air Forces commander for the exercise.

Unforeseen factors required speedy cooperation by support agencies. Changes included moving the original drop zone for the paratroopers from Allen Air Field at Fort Greely to Malamute Drop Zone on JBER due to unsafe wind conditions.

The organizations achieved interoperability, working together to achieve service-specific training, learning each other's terminology and building stronger relationships.

"The intention is to continue these mutually beneficial large force exercises in the future," said Col. Blake Gettys, the 176th Operations Group commander, who served as the exercise's Air Forces commander. ■

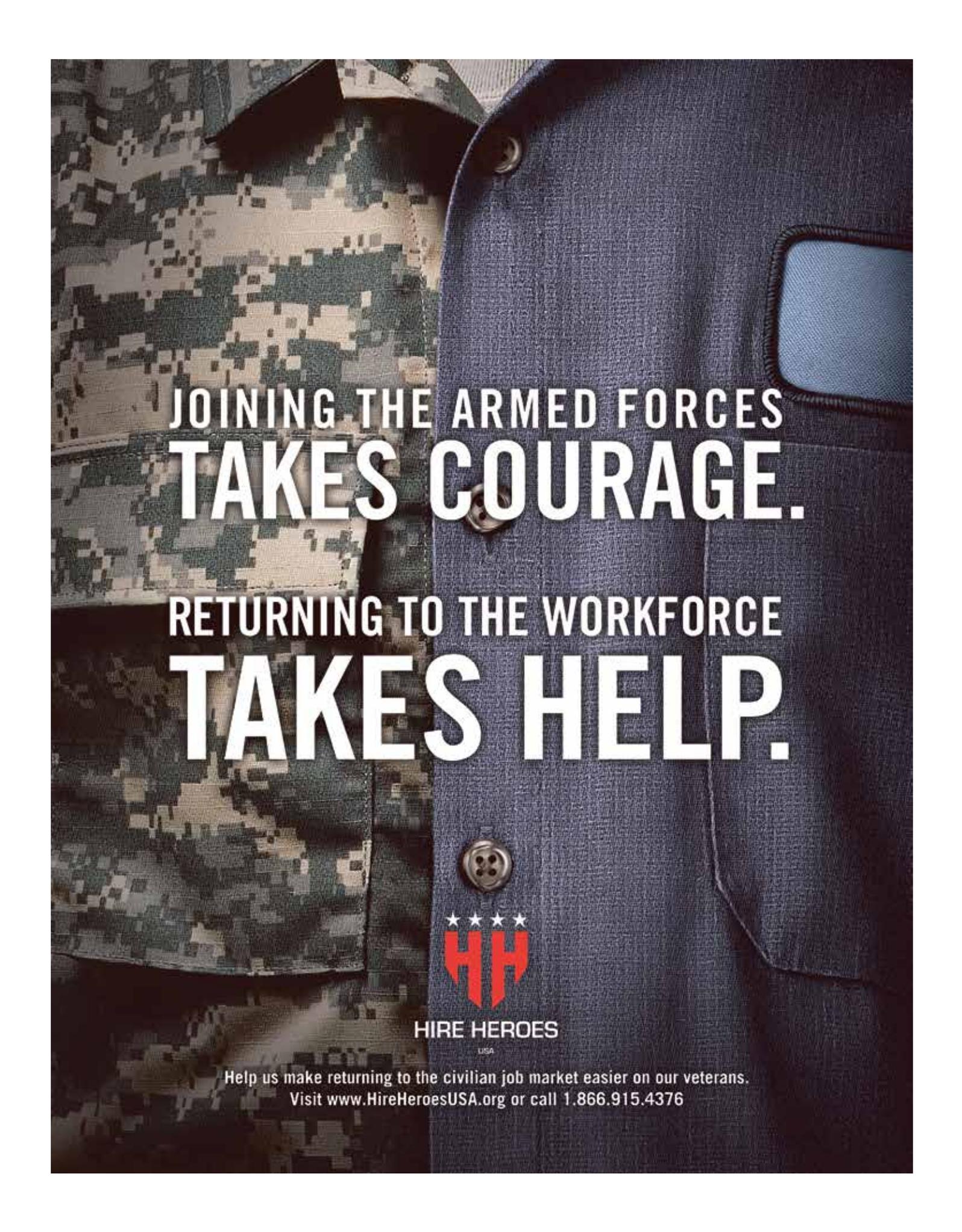


**Airborne.** Army paratroopers with the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division, jump from an Alaska Air National Guard C-130 Hercules as part of a Joint Forcible Entry Exercise in June.

Photo: Capt. John Callahan, 176th Wing Public Affairs



**Flight Preparations.** Crew members from the 144th Airlift Squadron, Alaska Air National Guard, set up a C-130 Hercules to accommodate Army paratroopers as part of a Joint Forcible Entry Exercise on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in June. The six-day exercise involved more than 1,500 personnel. Photo: Staff Sgt. N. Alicia Halla, 176th Wing Public Affairs



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## Recognizing Supportive Employers

Story and photos by Jamie Abordonado, ESGR

**ANCHORAGE, Alaska ...** The Alaska Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve committee celebrated in May the exemplary support that civilian employers give to their employees who also serve in the Alaska National Guard.

The support these employers provide ranges from giving time off to employees so that they can prepare for or recover after military duty, sending care packages and contacting the family while a service member is performing duty away from home.

The highest level of civilian employer recognition is the Freedom Award. It is a national-level award given only to 15 businesses that support their National Guard employees in a way that goes above and beyond what may be required by law.

In May, six Alaska civilian employers received their nomination certificates for the 2013 Freedom Award. Two of those civilian employers, the Alaska Military Youth Academy and the Hotel Captain Cook, were national semi-finalists. Both have supported their service member employees in exemplary ways. This is an amazing accomplishment as the number of nominations exceeds 1,000 nationwide.



**Patriotic Employers.** Craig Campbell, Alaska State Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve chairman; Bob Roses, Alaska Military Youth Academy director; Tom Jones, AMYA food services supervisor; and Mario Martinez, Alaska Air National Guard 176th Wing traditional Guard member also employed by the Alaska Military Youth Academy, display their awards during the Alaska ESGR awards breakfast in May. Martinez nominated Jones for a My Boss Is a Patriot Award, and the Alaska Military Youth Academy was a semi-finalist for the national Freedom Award.



**Awards.** Craig Campbell, Alaska State Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve chairman; Raquel Edelen, the Hotel Captain Cook director of sales; and Chris Block, Alaska Air National Guard 176th Wing Force Support Squadron and the Hotel Captain Cook employee, showcase their awards during the Alaska ESGR awards breakfast in May. Block nominated Edelen for the My Boss Is a Patriot Award. In addition, the Hotel Captain Cook was recognized as a semi-finalist for the national Freedom Award, as well as a Pro Patria award nominee.

In addition, the Hotel Captain Cook is a nominee for the Alaska ESGR Pro Patria award this year. The Pro Patria award is the state's highest distinguished honor. The awardee is selected by the Alaska state chairman, Craig Campbell, and is limited to only three employers per year.

Northern Industrial Training is another outstanding business in Alaska and received a Pro Patria award this year. The company was also a semi-finalist for the Freedom Award in 2013, having a history of unwavering support for its military employees.

Joey Crum, chief executive officer of Northern Industrial Training, takes great pride in supporting National Guard members and partners with the Hero2Hired program to explore education and employment options for military students.

Crum shared this process with the National Coalition of Legislators Veterans Affairs Task Force when the organization met in Anchorage in May. The main focus of his presentation was the dynamic teamwork that happens between Northern Industrial Training and Hero2Hired to evaluate the student's strengths and assist with marketing those to the local business leaders who are potential employers. Once the service member is identified as a potential fit for a local business vacancy, the appropriate training plan is created to tailor to the specific needs of that vacant position.

This team dynamic is unique to Alaska, and it works well for addressing the employment needs of those in the National Guard, according to the Alaska ESGR committee. Sharing the details of this collaborative effort can benefit other states as they can create these same opportunities for their service members. ■

# Alaska Guardsmen Deployed to Guantanamo Bay

By Joint Task Force Guantanamo Public Affairs

## GUANTANAMO BAY, Cuba ...

Honor Bound to Defend Freedom. That is the motto for those serving on the Joint Task Force Guantanamo in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

Eighty-two Soldiers from the Alaska Army National Guard's 761st Military Police Battalion served under the Joint Detention Group on a one-year deployment, with nine months boots on ground at Guantanamo Bay. The 761st MP Battalion Soldiers, under the command of Lt. Col. Emma Thyen and Command Sgt. Maj. Shawn McLeod, served as part of the Joint Detention Group brigade staff and the Joint Operations Center, with a platoon from the 297th Military Police Company, Alaska Army National Guard, conducting area security.

The mission of Joint Task Force GTMO is to conduct safe, humane, legal and transparent care and custody of detainees, including those convicted by military commission. The Joint Task Force conducts intelligence collection, analysis and dissemination for the safety and security of detainees and Joint Task Force Guantanamo personnel working in facilities as well as in support of ongoing overseas contingency operations. In addition, Joint Task Force GTMO also provides support to law enforcement, war crimes investigations and the Office of Military Commissions.

"I am extremely proud of the Soldiers performance on this mission," McLeod said. "From initial notification through train-up prior to mobilization and then deploying to Guantanamo Bay, they always had a great attitude and came together as a team to accomplish the mission. Whether it was working as a battle noncommissioned officer, working in the Joint Operations Center or delivering library books to detainees, they learned their duties quickly and have set the standard for follow on units. The Soldiers of the 761st Military Police Battalion stepped up at every task and performed outstandingly."

The mission of the Joint Detention Group is to perform detention and area security operations with safe and humane care and custody of detainees. Fifty-two Soldiers from the 761st Military Police Battalion made up the Joint Detention Group brigade headquarters staff, serving in many functions to include mission command, operations, communications, logistics, intelligence and administration.



**Leadership Visit.** Maj. Gen. Thomas H. Katkus, adjutant general of the Alaska National Guard, visits Alaska Army National Guard Soldiers of the 297th Military Police Company and 761st Military Police Battalion at Camp America during his trip to Joint Task Force Guantanamo in February. Photo: Courtesy Alaska Army National Guard

They also operated the only 24-hour Joint Operations Center, the center of detention operations, in the Joint Task Force.

"While assigned to Joint Detention Group, our goals were to support the JDG commander, be proficient in our duties and make positive and lasting contributions to the JDG mission. Our Soldiers performed

their duties in an outstanding manner," Thyen said. "I'm very proud of our Soldiers to be part of history here wearing the Alaska Army National Guard patch."

In addition to the 52 Soldiers serving in the brigade headquarters, Alaska also had a military police platoon, conducting area security and dismounted patrols in the area of operations.

"The platoon from the 297th Military Police Company had a very unique mission in performing area security," McLeod added. "This required them to spend 12-hour shifts working in harsh weather conditions. They performed exceptionally and received accolades from their chain of command on their outstanding efforts."

"During our command visit to Guantanamo, I saw our Alaska Soldiers performing their mission with pride, professionalism and a positive attitude," said Col. Jeffrey Roach, commander of the Alaska Army National Guard 38th Troop Command. "That confidence and mission focus was echoed by the Joint Detention Group leadership in their praise for the Soldiers. Every senior leader we spoke with complimented the Soldiers on their performance and the Alaska Army National Guard for sending a well-prepared team to support the high-profile mission at Guantanamo. I couldn't be more proud of our Soldiers." ■



**Awards Presentation.** Gen. John F. Kelly, left, commander of U.S. Southern Command, Rear Adm. Richard W. Butler, center, commander of Carrier Strike Group 4 and former commander of Joint Task Force-Guantanamo, stand at attention alongside Capt. John Bittle, 761st Military Police Battalion, Alaska Army National Guard, during an awards presentation to outgoing Joint Detention Group Commander Col. John V. Bogdan in June. Photo: Courtesy Alaska Army National Guard

## Camp Activities.

Child and Youth Program volunteers lead a group of military children to their next activity at Birchwood Camp in July as part of the organization's ninth annual summer camp.

Photo: Sgt. Melinda Dawson, Alaska Army National Guard

# YOUTH SUMMER CAMP

By Capt. Bernie Kale, DMVA Public Affairs

**JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska ...** Approximately 40 children of Alaska National Guard members spent a week at Birchwood Camp, participating in activities centered on resiliency in July.

The ninth annual summer camp was organized and led by the Alaska National Guard's Child and Youth Program.

Camp events and activities were linked to resiliency using the Sean Covey book, "7 Habits of Happy Kids," according to Joan Boltz, lead Child and Youth Program coordinator.

"The book and habits it introduces was a springboard to conversations about personal and interpersonal behavior and its impact," Boltz said. "We were very fortunate to have volunteers daily from the Alaska National Guard who helped out, and the kids greatly appreciated seeing them."

The first day of camp began on base with a group introduction at Camp Carroll. The rest of the week was spent engaging the children in a variety of activities at Birchwood Camp.

The campers had a variety of activity options to choose from such as swimming, boating and field activities.

"We have such an amazing volunteer group who donate their time to shaping the lives of these young individuals," Boltz said.

Spc. Cody Kelsoe, Alaska Army National Guard, volunteered his time to assist in the program because he believes military volunteers are laying a strong foundation for the children's future and setting an example of for military service by having fun and helping others.

"It's important that kids have positive military connections outside of their parents," Kelsoe said. "They may want to join the military one day because we made a positive impact and they have good memories of their interactions with us."

The Alaska National Guard's Child & Youth Program organizes more than 60 events annually.

Some of the other summer activities included a teen potluck in Anchorage, an Alaska National Guard Day celebration in Juneau and a Flattop Mountain hiking trip.

For more information, or to sign your child up for an event, contact Joan Boltz at 907-428-6670, or go to Alaska National Guard Child and Youth Program Facebook page. ■



**Summer Fun.** Child and Youth Program volunteers lead a group of military children in outdoor activities at Birchwood Camp in July.

Photo: Sgt. Melinda Dawson, Alaska Army National Guard



**Military Mentorship.** Spc. Cody Kelsoe, Alaska Army National Guard, volunteers at the ninth annual summer camp organized and led by the Alaska National Guard's Child and Youth Program in July. He participates in the program because he believes military volunteers are laying a strong foundation for the children's future. Photo: Sgt. Melinda Dawson, Alaska Army National Guard



## MISSILE DEFENDERS OF THE YEAR

By Sgt. Edward Eagerton, DMVA Public Affairs

### JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska ...

Eight Alaska National Guardsmen were recognized as Alaska Missile Defenders of the Year by the Missile Defense Advocacy Alliance at a ceremony at the Captain Cook Hotel in Anchorage in May.

The ceremony recognized the Guardsmen for their exceptional performance for protecting North America from intercontinental ballistic missile threats.

Two Alaska Air Guardsmen from the 213th Space Warning Squadron, Clear Air Force Station, were recognized for being the best two-person early-warning crew. The two-person crew included Capt. Erik Haugen, flight chief, Operational Support Flight; and Tech. Sgt. Brian Rowbotham, crew chief, Missile Warning Operations Center.

Five Alaska Army Guardsmen from Bravo Battery, 49th Missile Defense Battalion, from Fort Greely were recognized for being the best firing crew. The firing crew included Capt. Ryan Richard, senior tactical director; Capt. Jason Brewer, tactical battle analyst; Chief Warrant Officer 3 Jacob Moore, sensor operator; Staff Sgt. Derrick Holmes, engagement control team leader; and Sgt. John Sorrells, engagement control shift leader.

Also awarded was Capt. Eric Kraus, senior tactical director, 49th Missile Defense Battalion, Alaska Army National Guard. Kraus was presented with the inaugural Sen. Ted Stevens Memorial Award for being the single best missile defender in Alaska. The award was created in honor of the late Alaska Senator for his role in developing the ground-based missile defense system in Alaska.

"The thing about this award is it validates our hard work and the training we've done over the last year," Richard said.

"It means the command has complete confidence in our abilities to execute our wartime mission. These Soldiers are complete professionals."

The MDAA, which presented the awards, is a nonpartisan, membership-based, nonprofit organization located in Alexandria, Virginia, that advocates for the development and deployment of missile-defense systems, according Brandon Brunner, the director of operations, MDAA. It also works to educate the public about missile defense issues.

"This is the first time we've presented this award in Alaska," Brunner said. "We choose the target area we're going to focus on, and the chain of command from an organization then selects who is going to receive the award."

The crews that were selected for the awards were evaluated for their performance in a series of practical exercises and written exams, and the top-performing crews were selected, explained Richard.

"The biggest takeaway is that they worked more as a team than as individuals," Moore said. "This recognition helps build esprit de corps as a crew, and that they operated as team players directly resulted in us receiving the award."

Also in attendance at the event to recognize the Soldiers and Airmen were the widow of late Sen. Ted Stevens, Catherine Stevens; Rep. Don Young; Sen. Lisa Murkowski; Lt. Gov. Mead Treadwell; Maj. Gen. Thomas Katkus, adjutant general of the Alaska National Guard; Brig. Gen. Mike Bridges, assistant adjutant general-Army, Alaska National Guard; and Brig. Gen. Timothy O'Brien, assistant adjutant general-Air, Alaska National Guard. ■



**Award Winners.** Alaska Army National Guardsmen are all smiles after being presented with the Alaska Missile Defenders of the Year award at a ceremony in May.

Photo: Courtesy Spc. Dakota Volkman, Alaska Army National Guard



# Who We Are...

*What is your favorite summertime activity?*

**Col. David Wille**  
Joint Forces Headquarters



*"Hiking, biking and enjoying Alaska."*

**Capt. Terri Lopez**  
Medical Detachment



*"In Alaska, camping; but in my hometown of San Diego, sitting at the beach."*

**Sgt. Kristopher Fager**  
38th Troop Command



*"Spending time with my family and everything outdoors."*

**James Jarrell**  
DMVA Commissioner's Office



*"Hiking with my dog."*

**Senior Airman Samantha Smith**  
Joint Forces Headquarters



*"Hiking Flattop Mountain."*

## Denali Peak Performance Award

Story and photo by Julie C. Baker, DHS&EM



**Award Winners.** The 2014 Denali Peak Performance Award winners are honored during an awards ceremony in May at the Wendy Williamson Auditorium in Anchorage. The DHS&EM Spring 2013 Flood Response Team was selected from hundreds of nominations submitted by members of the public and co-workers.

**ANCHORAGE, Alaska ...** The Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Management, along with representatives from other state agencies, received the 2014 Governor's Denali Peak Performance Crisis Response Award for response efforts during the 2013 spring floods.

The Crisis Response Award is awarded to an individual or team who, by responding in a crisis, demonstrated effectiveness, determination and cooperation in the presence of an element of risk.

On May 17, 2013, a DHS&EM-led team responded to catastrophic flooding on the Yukon and Koyukuk rivers. The ice-jam induced flooding caused substantial damage in the communities of Eagle, Circle, Fort Yukon, Galena, Hughes, Emmonak and Alakanuk.

In Galena, more than 90 percent of all structures were flooded, resulting in a large-scale evacuation of residents and prolonged sheltering operations. The town's approximate 500 residents saw waters surge more than 15 feet in the span of one night. During the worst of the flooding, the town lost both water and electricity.

"This award acknowledges many individuals for their outstanding effort above and beyond the scope of their job description, but this recognition would not have been possible without the full support of the division, department and state agencies," said John Madden, DHS&EM director. "Effective disaster response requires cooperation and collaboration. This award is recognition of the strong partnerships formed during and prior to the 2013 spring floods for the benefit of the disaster survivors."

The Crisis Responder Award Team consists of state employees from the Department of Military & Veterans Affairs, Department of Health and Social Services, Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Department of Natural Resources, Department of Environmental Conservation and Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development.

Recovery activities continue today with the responder camp expanding to accommodate volunteers from around the world scheduled to assist with rebuilding efforts during summer. ■



# Awards • Decorations • Promotions

## Meritorious Service Medal



Col Claude C. Swammy . . . . . 168th MXG  
 Maj Leilani C. Frazier . . . . . 213th SWS  
 SMSgt Mark R. Slingerland . . . . . 168th MOF  
 SMSgt Shawn M. Morrissey . . . . . 168th ARW

SMSgt Ashley M. Hill . . . . . 168th FSF  
 SMSgt Rebecca L. Donovan . . . . . 168th FSF  
 MSgt Tyler J. Toth Jr . . . . . 168th FSF  
 MSgt David W. Pointer . . . . . 168th AMXS  
 Lt Col Edward M. Soto . . . . . 176th CES  
 Lt Col James J. Vanhoomissen . . . . . 176th ADS  
 MSgt Thomas L. Mcrae . . . . . 176th MOF  
 Lt Col Brent B. Buss . . . . . 249th AS

## Army Commendation Medal



CPT Brett Haker . . . . . JFHQ-AK (Army)  
 MSG Maureen Meehan . . . . . JFHQ-AK (Army)

## Air Force Commendation Medal



MSgt Jennifer A. Dooley . . . . . 176th CPTF  
 TSgt Michael L. Wachel . . . . . 176th ADS  
 2Lt Desalyn R. Whitlock . . . . . 176th ADS  
 2Lt Kristine A. Laughlin-Hall . . . . . 176th LRS

## Air Force Achievement Medal



SSgt Tia P. Boglin . . . . . 176th CPTF  
 MSgt Ariel O. Martin . . . . . 176th CPTF  
 SMSgt Robert W. Carte . . . . . 176th WG

## Alaska Legion of Merit



CW4 Benjamin Herning . . . . . 1-207th AVN  
 CW4 Katherine Sanders . . . . . JFHQ-AK (Army)

## Alaska Commendation Medal



CMSgt Kristine M. Joyce . . . . . JFHQ-AK (Air)  
 MSgt Daphne E. Rippey . . . . . 176th WG  
 SSgt Tia P. Boglin . . . . . 176th CPTF  
 MSgt Bernard J. Desena . . . . . 176th MXG  
 TSgt Andrew W. Swanston . . . . . 176th MDG  
 TSgt Darick J. Butman . . . . . 176th AMXS  
 SSgt Christopher L. Tidwell . . . . . 176th MXS  
 TSgt Shawna M. Dzedziak . . . . . 176th MOF  
 Lt Col Edward M. Soto . . . . . 176th MSG  
 SSgt Gloria J. Thompson . . . . . 176th FSF  
 MSgt Bryan S. Spake . . . . . 176th CES  
 TSgt Darren M. Hernandez . . . . . 176th SFS  
 MSgt Patrick E. Hancox . . . . . 176th LRS  
 MSgt Barron G. McLain . . . . . 176th CF  
 Lt Col Michael E. Cummings . . . . . 176th OG  
 Maj Matthew Calabro . . . . . 176th OSS  
 TSgt Corbett C. Ercolani . . . . . 210th RQS  
 TSgt Ronald D. Lerner . . . . . 210th RQS, Det 1  
 SMSgt Christopher F. Wilson . . . . . 211th RQS  
 MSgt Willis R. Strouse . . . . . 212th RQS  
 MSgt Brian S. Johnson . . . . . 249th AS  
 Lt Col Joshua D. Armstrong . . . . . 144th AS  
 MSgt Kim T. Groat . . . . . 176th ADS



**Unit Recognition.** Brig. Gen. Timothy O'Brien, far left, and Command Chief Master Sgt. Phillip Hunt, far right, present Lt. Col. Andrew Love, 168th Logistics Readiness Squadron commander, and Chief Master Sgt. James Wolverton, 168th LRS superintendent, with the Governor's Cup for their squadron's work in 2013. The Governor's Trophy is annually awarded to the most outstanding unit within the Alaska National Guard.

## 168th Logistics Readiness Squadron Awarded

Story and photo by Master Sgt. Cornelius Mingo, 168th Air Refueling Wing Public Affairs

**EIELSON AIR FORCE BASE, Alaska** ... The 168th Air Refueling Wing's Logistics Readiness Squadron won the 2013 Air Force Logistics Readiness Unit Award in March for its work implementing training and real-world efficiencies during the 2013 calendar year.

For the 168th Logistics Readiness Squadron, located at Eielson Air Force Base, this accomplishment is the first of its kind. This award recognizes Air Force individuals and units within the logistics community for outstanding contributions to the success of U.S. Air Force and Department of Defense missions, according to Lt. Col. Andrew Love, 168th LRS commander.

"Our folks work hard every day to ensure we support the mission of the 168th Air Refueling Wing, the Alaska Air National Guard and the United States Air Force," Love said.

The board of review received more than 331 Major Command nominations for consideration for the award. Nominations summarized mission-related assessments, displaying the efforts of the unit's contribution to the overall success of its organization. In addition, the 168th LRS displayed its contributions to the mission both stateside and on deployments, according to Love.

"It validates what I've said from day one of taking command — the 168th LRS is one of the best logistics organizations in the Air National Guard and the U.S. Air Force," Love said.

In addition, the 168th LRS racked up another accolade when it was awarded the Governor's Cup in March for outstanding work in 2013. ■

## PROMOTIONS

### Lieutenant Colonel

Charles Whitehead . . . . . 249th AS

### Major

Daniel Kelley . . . . . 176th MXS  
 Andrew Williams . . . . . 176th OG  
 Laura Grossman . . . . . 249th AS  
 Anthony Waliser . . . . . 211th RQS  
 Kirk Thorsteinson . . . . . 297th SB

### Captain

Justin Orenich . . . . . 176th MDG  
 Fidan Thornburg . . . . . 144th AS  
 Stacey Rother . . . . . 176th MXS  
 Joshua Lester . . . . . 210th RQS  
 Matthew Haug . . . . . 144th AS  
 Christopher Dailey . . . . . 1-297th R&S  
 Adam Lucero . . . . . 1-207th AVN  
 Zachary Miller . . . . . 1-207th AVN  
 Ronald Snyder Jr . . . . . JFHQ-AK (Army)

### First Lieutenant

Ben Montes . . . . . 176th STU FLT  
 Robert Nelson . . . . . 176th STU FLT  
 Christopher Brunner . . . . . 176th STU FLT  
 Thomas Berry . . . . . 144th AS  
 Zachary Roberts . . . . . 249th AS  
 Whitney Wigren . . . . . 176th OSS  
 Christopher Brill . . . . . 1-297th R&S  
 Danny Canlas Jr . . . . . 297th BfSB  
 Christopher Dominey . . . . . 1-143rd IN ABN  
 Sarah Frenzel . . . . . 297th BfSB  
 Raymond Ganacias . . . . . 207th BSC  
 James Tollefson . . . . . 1-297 R&S

### Chief Warrant Officer Four

Don Bradford . . . . . 1-207th AVN

### Chief Warrant Officer Two

Justin Ables . . . . . 1-207th AVN

### Sergeant Major

William Crowley . . . . . 761st MP

### Chief Master Sergeant

Eric R. Howell . . . . . 144th AS

### Master Sergeant

Julie Small . . . . . JFHQ-AK (Army)

### Senior Master Sergeant

Dana Nichols . . . . . 176th OSS

### Sergeant First Class

Noli Batac . . . . . JFHQ-AK (Army)  
 Elejahrose Beronilla . . . . . 1-207th AVN  
 Robert Etheridge . . . . . 49th GMD  
 Timothy Ring . . . . . 1-143rd IN ABN  
 Thaddeus Tikiun . . . . . 297th SIG

### Master Sergeant (Air)

Jacob T. Parker . . . . . 168th MXS  
 Sean K. Finney . . . . . 168th MXS  
 Justin W. Olsen . . . . . 176th OG  
 Peter F. Kaplan . . . . . 249th AS  
 Shana M. Robinson . . . . . 176th FSF  
 Ryan J. Conti . . . . . 211th RQS

### Staff Sergeant (Army)

Michelle Brown . . . . . 134th PAD  
 Gabriel Ives . . . . . 49th GMD  
 Robert Selfridge . . . . . 207th BSC  
 Adison Valentinroman . . . . . 49th GMD

### Technical Sergeant

Julia A. Kobernuss . . . . . 168th CF  
 Nikola V. Tomic . . . . . 176th OSS  
 Sebastian C. Oliva . . . . . 176th OSS  
 David J. Eggleston . . . . . 176th MXS  
 Jeanette A. Fuller . . . . . 176th MXS  
 Christopher G. Bowerfind . . . . . 212th RQS  
 Nickolas T. Watson . . . . . 212th RQS  
 Tenaya P. Stanton . . . . . 176th LRS  
 Oral W. Scott . . . . . 212th RQS  
 John P. Charron . . . . . 176th LRS  
 Adam M. Dermish . . . . . 144th AS  
 Todd J. Summey . . . . . 144th AS

### Sergeant

Aaron Gough . . . . . 297th BfSB  
 Kekoa Macloves . . . . . 207th BSC  
 Denis Sajaev . . . . . 297th BfSB

### Staff Sergeant (Air)

David Diamadi . . . . . 168th MXS  
 Shaundra M. Address . . . . . 168th MXS  
 Nathan A. Carey . . . . . 168th AMXS

## RETIREMENTS

LTC Michael P. Conner . . . JFHQ-AK (Army)  
 CPT Allen S. Hulse . . . . . 103rd CST  
 CPT James M. Johnson . . . . . 49th GMD  
 CW2 Richard L. Fleming III . . . . . 49th TG  
 CW4 Benjamin N. Herning . . . 1-207th AVN  
 CW4 Earston A. Hewitt . . . JFHQ-AK (Army)  
 CW5 Terry L. Rollie . . . . . JFHQ-AK (Army)  
 CSM Tim A. Dughman . . . . . 1-207th AVN  
 CSM Lillian C. Young . . . . . JFHQ-AK (Army)  
 MSG Lonzell Scott . . . . . 297th MP  
 SFC Lyle B. Johnson . . . . . R&R  
 SFC Brian K. Warren . . . . . 49th GMD  
 SFC Homer K. Nunooruk . . . . . 297th SIG  
 SFC Jerome T. Arisman . . . JFHQ-AK (Army)  
 SSG Henry A. Bendt Jr. . . . 1-143rd IN ABN  
 SSG Troy J. Johnson . . . . . 297th BfSB  
 SSG Michael T. Williams . . . . . 297th BfSB  
 SPC James H. Boschma III . . 1-297th R&S  
 SPC Benjamin E. Lupie . . . 1-143rd IN ABN  
 SPC Kameron R. Wagner . . . . . 297th BfSB  
 MSgt Kevin Pollard . . . . . 176th ADS  
 Arthur Clark . . . . . 176th ADS  
 Joseph Dziuban . . . . . 176th ADS  
 Brian Bowman . . . . . 211th RQS  
 Kevin Martin . . . . . 211th RQS  
 Scott Nelsen . . . . . 211th RQS  
 Douglas Echternacht . . . . . 176th OSS  
 Mariah Kusky . . . . . 176th OSS  
 Barbara Jackson . . . . . 176th OSS  
 Mary Younkins . . . . . 176th OSS  
 Mark Mommsen . . . . . 176th OSS  
 Toni Morse . . . . . 176th OSS  
 Tadd McCauley . . . . . 176th LRS  
 Eric Lee . . . . . 176th LRS  
 Kenneth Hardwick . . . . . 176th LRS  
 Wesley Mooty . . . . . 144th AS  
 David Glick . . . . . 144th AS  
 Donald Hoover . . . . . 144th AS  
 Maj John Owens . . . . . 144th AS  
 Brent Demoss . . . . . 144th AS  
 TSgt Kenneth Garris . . . . . 144th AS  
 Adam Blaum . . . . . 176th FSF  
 Claudia Walton . . . . . 176th FSF  
 Andre Morgan . . . . . 176th FSF  
 Brian Lewis . . . . . 176th CES  
 Keith Wilson . . . . . 176th CES  
 Mark Moraes . . . . . 176th AMXS  
 Duane Gonzales . . . . . 176th AMXS  
 MSgt Bernard Desena . . . . . 176th AMXS  
 MSgt Joe Winningham . . . . . 176th AMXS  
 SMSgt Kenneth Joyce . . . . . 176th AMXS  
 Ralph Taylor . . . . . 176th SFS  
 Kevin Pitchford . . . . . 176th MXS  
 Scot Lambert . . . . . 176th MXS  
 Harold Flegle . . . . . 176th MXS  
 SMSgt Richard Shull . . . . . 1176th MXS  
 Victoria Lambert . . . . . 176th MXS  
 MSgt Stephanie Shull . . . . . 176th MXG





# Start of the Trail

Welcome to our newest members & employees

## 297th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade

Valerie Rios  
Jan Bulaong  
John Zetterman  
David McCollum Jr.  
Adam Zamudio  
Karla Phillips  
Tyler Schlereth

## 207th Combat Support Company

Russell Spargo  
Elora Jannone  
Jeremiah Fogel  
Justin Kompkoff  
John Klingbiel Jr.  
Rafael Matias  
Samuel Middendorf  
Christopher Lowe  
Jazen Rodriguez  
Divine Guintu

## 297th Network Support Company

John Griffith IV  
Nicholas Watson

## 1-297th Cavalry

Alex Monkoskiboudreau  
Richard Marquis  
Jacob Hebert  
Jorge Bejarano  
Austin Pratt  
Charles Medlin  
Isaiah Yost  
Jason Freese  
Walter Winter  
Nahum Berrios

## 1-143rd Infantry Airborne

Mark McCarty  
Joshua Baxstrom  
Hunter Fitch  
James Bannish  
Sheila Workman  
Jonathan Savage  
Seth Davey  
Justin Hartle  
Scott Wolf  
Alan Margaja

## 1-297th Reconnaissance and Surveillance

Kyle Gallagher

Kage Zink  
Kekoa Foma  
Ted Mustain  
Anthony Mondelli  
Urena Perez  
Steve Gabrielsen

## 297th Military Police Company

Timothy Goodale  
Geoffrey Bagoy  
Chianeng Yang  
Adrian Hart  
Huncy Nielsen  
Jacob Perkins  
David Wright  
Samantha Knutson  
Mackay Kim  
Matthew Petruska  
Andrew Ensley  
Brandon Lumbab  
Timothy Holm

## 207th Equipment Support Platoon

Cark Moore  
Brodie Smith  
Gasmen Germaine

## 1-207th Aviation

Joshua Eaker  
Jasper Fischer  
Andrew Combs  
Lee Burston Jr.  
Tweedy Leblanc  
Tevin Hopper  
Justin Benavente  
Elijah Miller  
Cody Foster  
David Stephens Jr.  
Zachery Reou  
James Buendia  
Alexandra Lindsey  
Sean Hagensieker  
Jacob Morris  
Mor Lee  
Xenia Guy

## 297th Quartermaster

Benjamin Davis  
Giovani Arm Priest

## 176th Force Support Flight

Khue Yang

## 176th Medical Group

Malaina Krebs

## 176th Comptroller Flight

Jason Scheunemann  
Misieli Taufaeteau

## 176th Civil Engineer Squadron

Lt Col Jack Evans  
SSgt Klark Pennings

## 176th Security Forces Squadron

Marvin Weinrick  
Anthony Celia

## 176th Logistics Readiness Squadron

Eugene Espejo  
Matthew Kessler  
Corbin Smith

## 176th Maintenance Group

Michael Whelan  
Sean Russell  
Kirsten Alvarado  
Britani Dostal  
Gregory Walters  
Ellis Mercer  
Keith Kenagy  
Rex Sharp  
Jacob Willenbrink

## 176th Operational Support Squadron

Austin Levy  
Andrea Kilborn  
Tasha Hood  
Eric Fisher  
McKay Asay  
Kaelan Byrd

## 144th Airlift Squadron

Jeffrey Hicks  
Kody Schmidt

## 210th Rescue Squadron

Frankie Graham

## 176th Air Defense Squadron

David Nye

## Joint Forces Headquarters (Air)

Samantha Smith

## 168th Air Refueling Wing

Greg Guzman  
Laura Evans  
Zachariah Raby  
Casey Henry  
Erica Olson  
Melanie McManus  
Domonick Coleman.  
Ryan Seifert  
Kayla Kerstetter  
Randy Reese  
Travis Olsen  
Michael Church  
Gustavus Smith  
Inga Wuerges  
Tyler Scheff  
James Turpin  
Rosetta Hixon  
Ernesto Torres  
Mendez  
Vincent Bowers Jr.  
Lydia Bragg  
Trevor Correa.  
Andrew Lepkowski  
Trevor Walters  
Jacob Case  
Steven Rhodes  
Ashley Harris  
David Dunning  
Forrest Crawford  
James Williamson  
Michael P.  
Zwiselsberger  
Amy D. Flynn  
Lucas A. Denham  
Keith Quichocho  
Kay Medina  
Alicia Ross  
Charles Hays  
Justin Sawyer

## 213th Space Warning Squadron

Anthony Deppe  
Travis Oaks  
Baron Blige

## WARRIORS Training Schedule

Here are the inactive training dates for most Alaska Army and Air National Guard units. All dates are subject to change.

Alaska National Guard	August	September	October
Joint Forces Headquarters – Alaska (Air)	23-24	20-21	4-5
Joint Forces Headquarters – Alaska (Army)	23-24	20-21	18-19
Alaska Army National Guard			
297th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade	23-24	No drill	25-26
38th Troop Command	23-24	20-21	17-19
Alaska Air National Guard			
168th Air Refueling Wing	21-24	20-21	4-5
176th Wing	23-24	20-21	4-5
Alaska State Defense Force			
Headquarters	9-10	12-13	11-12



The mission of the National Guard Alaska Military Youth Academy ChalleNGe Program is to intervene in and reclaim the lives of at-risk youth. We produce program Graduates with the values, skills, education and self-discipline necessary to succeed as adults. Over 80% of the Program's graduates go on to become successful citizens by joining the work force, the military or by continuing their education.



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# Alaska Military Youth Academy

The Alaska Military Youth Academy's ChalleNGe Program is designed to provide life coping skills and meet the educational needs of 16 to 18 year old Alaskans. The Youth ChalleNGe Program is a 22 week residential school with a 12 month post-residential aftercare follow-up phase.



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