



PRESS RELEASE

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By Sgt. Marisa Lindsay

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New enlisted leadership for the Alaska Army National Guard's 38th Troop Command

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON— Col. Jeffrey Roach, 38th Troop Command commander, Alaska Army National Guard, hosted a change of responsibility ceremony at the National Guard armory, Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, where Command Sgt. Maj. Marc Petersen, who is now the state command sergeant major, ceremoniously relinquished responsibility of 38th Troop Command to Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Grunst, Nov. 15.

“Command Sgt. Maj. Petersen put in a tremendous amount of effort to make 38th Troop Command the unit that it is today,” said Roach prior to the start of the ceremony. “I look forward to seeing Command Sgt. Maj. Grunst building upon that hard work and taking our unit into the future.”

Grunst, who moved to Alaska as a young teenager, has been a member of the Alaska Army National Guard since 1989. He joined as an infantry Soldier prior to graduation from high school under the split training option. A self-described ‘rudderless youth’, Guard affiliation kept him in line, gave him something to look forward to every month, and gave him a familial connection to others.

Since his initial enlistment, he has also completed Airborne School, Jumpmaster, Air Assault School, Pathfinder Course, and countless others. Prior to being named command sergeant major for 38th Troop Command, he’s led Soldiers, at all levels, culminating as first sergeant, with Charlie Company (Long-Range Surveillance), 1st Squadron, 297th Cavalry.

He credits his volunteer attitude and open-minded willingness to try new things for his Guard successes.

“My advice for Soldiers who are looking to move upward in the ranks is to try everything – everything I have done, or failed to do, is a result of me volunteering for additional duties,” said Grunst. “You will not get anywhere sitting on your duff waiting for something to happen.”

Established in 2008, the 38th Troop Command houses approximately nine units. They include the 1st Battalion-207th Aviation Regiment and 761st Military Police Battalion, among others. The unit was created to provide O-6 level command and control for unaligned subordinate units within the Alaska Army National Guard.

“I’m excited for this new position,” Grunst explained. “I’m definitely excited about where 38th Troop Command is going.

Grunst had his family in attendance at the change of responsibility ceremony. His wife of 13 years, Charity, and their children Caden, 5-years old, and Chloe, 2 ½-years old.

“Charity is one of the most focused people I have ever met,” Grunst exclaimed. “She makes me a better person.”

During the ceremony, Grunst and Petersen both gifted their wives with a bottle of wine in appreciation for their support during their careers. The ceremony concluded with a speech by Grunst, followed by the singing of the Army Song, sung by the Anchorage Concert Chorus and Soldiers, as the official party departed.

“Colonel Roach asked me when I first started about my vision for troop command,” said Grunts. “I’m still trying to figure that out, but I do know that one of my goals is for Soldiers to leave drill weekend tired, wet, dirty, and longing for their next drill weekend.”

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Col. Jeffrey Roach (center), 38th Troop Command commander, Alaska Army National Guard, sing The Army Song alongside Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Grunst (left) and Command Sgt. Maj. Marc Petersen (right) during a change of responsibility ceremony at the National Guard armory, Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Nov. 15. Service members, family and friends were present to witness Petersen, the Alaska National Guard’s new state sergeant major, ceremoniously relinquish responsibility of 38th Troop Command to Grunst. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Marisa Lindsay)



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Col. Jeffrey Roach, 38th Troop Command commander, passes command authority in the form of the noncommissioned officers sword to Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Grunst during a change of responsibility ceremony at the National Guard armory, Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Nov. 15. The ceremony marks the change of the top enlisted Soldier for 38th Troop Command from Command Sgt. Maj. Marc Petersen, who is the new state command sergeant major, to Grunst. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Marisa Lindsay)



1. **Flickr link** includes an event album from the Veterans Day ceremony with the complete selection of full-resolution, free downloadable images. (Flickr is not generally accessible from .mil computers.)
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/alaskanationalguard/albums/72157658955570004>

2. **DVIDS link** includes story and full-resolution photo. (Primarily for media, DVIDS is accessible from .mil computers.)

<https://www.dvidshub.net/news/181839/2015-governors-veterans-advocacy-award-goes-world-war-ii-veteran#.VkUr-03luUk>