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U.S. Soldiers in Poland share experiences with local scouts

ŚWIĘTOSZÓW, Poland – U.S. Army Soldiers from the Alaska National Guard’s 297th Regional Support Group and U.S. Army Reserve’s 266th Ordinance Company, out of Puerto Rico, and Bravo Company, 418th Civil Affairs Battalion, out of Missouri, spent the afternoon engaging with Polish scouts at Camp Watra near Osieczów, Poland, July 17, 2020.

The Soldiers learned about the history and values of the Polish scouting organization while sharing their units’ mission and high-mobility multipurpose wheeled and medium tactical vehicles that are assigned to nearby Forward Operating Site Świętoszów.

Sgt. 1st Class Dayton Will, deputy for the mayor cell at FOS Świętoszów and member of the 297th RSG, which manages base operations for hundreds of U.S. Soldiers stationed in Poland, said that despite the units having very different day-to-day missions the leaders from each recognize the value of building positive relationships.

“The U.S. Soldiers are excited to be able to be back in the local communities,” said Will. “The outdoor setting allowed for safe interaction – this is especially important as we continue to follow aggressive prevention and mitigation measures to reduce the transmission of the COVID-19 disease.”

Radosław Kalamarz, chief of the camp and 10-year veteran of the Polish Scouting and Guiding Association or ZHP, said that the scouts were delighted by the meeting and happy the U.S. Soldiers found time to visit their camp.

“The organization aims to prepare young people to be responsible and active citizens,” said Kalamarz. “From learning to make a fire and orienteering to history of the scouts, the activities build character and independence.”

“I personally felt very overwhelmed by the determination and commitment they had of teaching these young boys and girls the importance of serving their country as well as learning to respect, defend, and cherish where they’re from,” said Spc. Glissette Fox, an ammunition specialist with the 266th OD Co. “It’s admirable to see how these children are very earnest and excited to continue learning every survival skill there is.”

The ZHP is one of the largest scouting organizations in Poland with over 100,000 members. The scouts at Camp Watra train between one and three weeks in the summer and winter.

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“We were invited back to the camp during their winter training,” said Will, a graduate of the Army’s Cold Weather Leader’s Course at Black Rapids Training Site, Alaska. “I hope to see how the scouts do things in winter conditions and see if I can learn anything from them and also share my knowledge.”

Fox said that the event reminded her of the reasons she joined the Army, which were to fight for what is right, defend those in need, and make a huge impact not only on people, but the world.

“Having that enthusiasm, dedication, morals, and determination, will not only make them become more knowledgeable, but also stronger,” said Fox. “Observing how chuffed they were and having the privilege of being part of that happiness fills me with complete joy. The smile on those faces made my day – It was a genuinely pleasant experience that I would repeat again.”

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PHOTOS

1. **Attached pdf** includes story and a small selection of low-resolution photos for viewing on screen.
2. **DVIDS link** includes story and selected full-resolution photos. (Primarily for media, DVIDS is accessible from .mil computers.) <https://www.dvidshub.net/news/374809/soldiers-stationed-poland-share-experiences-with-local-scouts>



Radoslaw Kalamarz, chief of Camp Watra and 10-year veteran of the Polish Scouting and Guiding Association, speaks with U.S. Soldiers about the history and values of the scouting organization during an engagement near Osieczow, Poland, July 17, 2020. U.S. Army Soldiers from the Alaska National Guard’s 297th Regional Support Group and U.S. Army Reserve’s 266th Ordinance Company, out of Puerto Rico, and Bravo Company, 418th Civil Affairs Battalion, out of Missouri, spend the afternoon engaging with the scouts and sharing their units’ missions in support of Operation Atlantic Resolve. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by 2nd Lt. Balinda Dresel)



U.S. Army 1st Lt. Eduardo Santiago, detachment commander for the 266th Ordnance Company, a Reserve unit out of Puerto Rico, speaks with Polish scouts about his unit's mission in support of Atlantic Resolve at Camp Watra near Osieczow, Poland, July 17, 2020. U.S. Army Soldiers from the Alaska National Guard's 297th Regional Support Group and U.S. Army Reserve's Bravo Company, 418th Civil Affairs Battalion, out of Missouri, joined the 266th OD to learn about the history and values of the Polish scouting organization while sharing their units' missions and high-mobility multipurpose wheeled and medium tactical vehicles that are assigned to nearby FOS Świętoszów. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by 2nd Lt. Balinda Dresel)



U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class Dayton Will, left, Forward Operating Site Świętoszów deputy mayor and 2nd Lt. Balinda Dresel, FOS Świętoszów mayor, both with the Alaska National Guard's 297th Regional Support Group, pose for a picture with Polish scouts at Camp Watra near Osieczow, Poland, July 17, 2020. (Courtesy photo)