



The
DOUBLE
"Twice the Citizen! Army Strong!"

EAGLE

MAY 2015, Vol. 4 No. 2



A PASSION FOR FITNESS

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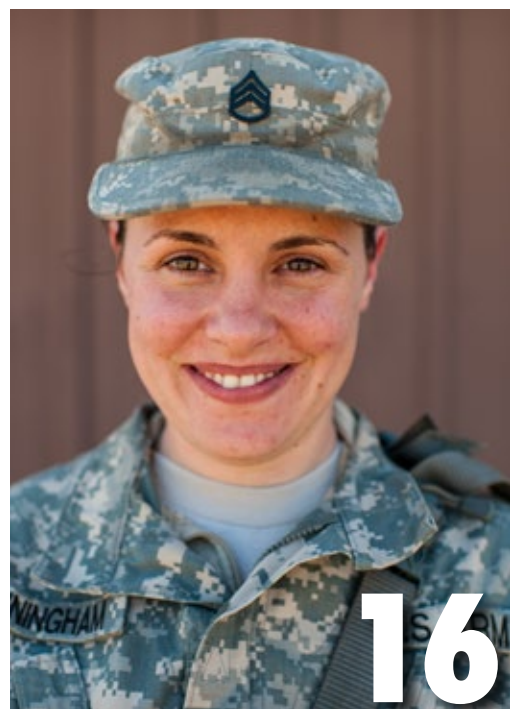
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COVER STORY:

Patreceia Mathis, a program analyst with the G-1 at U.S. Army Reserve Command at Fort Bragg, N.C., proudly displays several of her trophies and medals from her afterwork passion, April 9, the command headquarters. Mathis has been competing in fitness and physique competitions for five years, recently winning first place in the East Coastal Region fitness competition in Atlanta, Ga. (Photo by Brian Godette/U.S. Army Reserve Command)



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DOUBLE EAGLE





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Shaking Down a New Home

One would think that building a new house would be the perfect way to make sure that you get everything you want AND everything would work perfectly upon moving in.

Oh, how naive I was.

Don't get me wrong. The house my wife and I built is perfect for us. The builder was more than willing to work with us on changes to the existing plan.

We got the screened-in porch, with an adjoining patio, that my wife wanted. I got an upstairs office that I've always wanted - which meant my wife gets to use all three bedrooms for us and any visiting guests.

But as we are both learning, there is a shake down period with a new home.

When building a new home, you don't have to worry about any problems a previous owner had.

You just have a whole new set of problems to deal with.

For starters, when the sun is shining the morning from about 7 a.m. to 11 a.m., the garage door will not close because the sun shines directly into the light beam emitter at the bottom of the door. I actually have to stand in front of the door and cast a shadow over the beam to get the door to close.

Then there was trying to figure out how to work the in-ground sprinkler system. Thank goodness the lawn care technician was more than helpful to teach me how that contraption.

The fancy new dishwasher, with the controls on the edge of the door and the high-end washer and dryer required a Ph.D. to decipher the instructions.

Throw in the dual-zone heating and heat pump unit with a control downstairs and upstairs also required a call to a service technician.

I'm a pretty smart guy, but this darn house is way smarter than I could ever hope to be. Can't builders just build a house these days that doesn't require a doctoral degree in mechanical engineering?

I'm sure as time goes by and the shake down period is over, we will come to enjoy the house more than we already do.

In the end, we look forward to spending many years in our new home, sipping an occasional cold beverage on the screened-in porch, watching the sun set.

I just hope I don't have to get another college degree to enjoy it. 🐼



Timothy L. Hale
Editor



Timothy L. Hale, a U.S. Air Force veteran, is an award-winning photojournalist and editor of the USARC Double Eagle. He is member of a number of professional organizations to include: Nikon Professional Services, National Press Photographer's Association, and the North Carolina Press Photographer's Association. The views expressed in this column are expressly his own and do not necessarily reflect those of the U.S. Army Reserve Command, the Department of the Army, and/or the Department of Defense.





A PASSION FOR FITNESS

Story & photos by BRIAN GODETTE
U.S. Army Reserve Command

PATRECEIA TENIKA MATHIS, a U.S. Army Reserve Command program analyst, may be small in stature, but her goal to become the best in the fitness competition world is larger than life.

See **MATHIS**, Pg. 6

MATHIS

from Pg. 5

FORT BRAGG, N.C. - Passion is an intense emotion - a compelling enthusiasm or desire for something. Finding one's passion can take some time to develop, but the gratification of seeking it can result in a road to personal bliss.

Patreceia Tenika Mathis, a program analyst with U.S. Army Reserve Command, here, has found her passion. Hopefully for her, that road will lead her to becoming the first African-American woman crowned Ms. Bikini Olympia in the competitive world of fitness and physique modeling.

A far contrast from the business attire environment and cubicle farm structure of her day job, Patreceia competes as an amateur with the National Physique Committee, having graced the stage in over a dozen competitions, with set goals of going professional.

"Growing up, my mom always dabbled in fitness, doing the Jane Fonda workout tapes back in the day, and I always saw her doing it so I'd join her," the Atlanta native said. "That was all of her knowledge of fitness however."

There was also a family medical diagnosis that influenced her path to better fitness.

"My dad was diagnosed with colon cancer my senior year of high school, and later passed away from it during my sophomore year of college," she said. "That's what really sparked my interest, in health and nutrition at the time."

Her mother, Patricia Mathis, wanted to focus on her health after the passing of her husband.

"After my husband passed away, I started going to the gym more and more, and I asked Nika (Patreceia) to come with me," said Mrs. Mathis.

Seeing a loved one battle such a terrible disease, and eventually succumb to it, fostered an inherent resolve for the pair to take their health into their own hands.

A chance encounter while working out in a local gym with her mother, sparked dialogue between Patreceia and a personal trainer whom she thought was hitting on her mother.

"He just kept looking at us and finally asked if

I'd ever thought about competing," Patreceia said. "He planted that seed for a year, and at the time I never really worked out, so when I got more into it and noticed the differences I got more interested in what he was saying."

Mrs. Mathis said that trainer noticed her daughter's motivation.

That 2009 conversation led Patreceia to strive for a 2010 New Year's resolution to obtain a trainer and prepare for competition, which at the time had two fields for women, figure and bodybuilding.

She is now under the guidance of Rashid and Gina Shabazz of Fitness Wellness Center in Alpharetta, Georgia.

"I'm a small-framed person, so I knew I would have to put on a lot of muscle to do figure, but I liked their physique, especially during the off season, so started to gear my training towards that," she explained.

The 5-foot-2-inch Patreceia tipped the scales at approximately 115 pounds then, and began her rigorous training.

"By that time, the competitions created a new category for bikini, and my trainer gave me the option to go right into bikini, or wait another year, add muscle, and try to compete for figure. Key word was try!" she said.

Patreceia immediately prepared herself for the new competition category, with the intent to go back into figure sooner than later.

"I thought it (bikini) was going to be more of a glorified beauty contest, so my goal remained figure, but after my first year I wanted to stay in the bikini competition because it allowed you to display your personality more on stage."

The chance encounter where she garnered the glance of one individual at the gym unknowingly put her on a road to the stage where hundreds would have all eyes on her.

The competition lifestyle is very stringent she said. It involves balancing a very strict diet and workout regiment, to ensure maximum physical results. During an "on-season" such as now when competing,

Patreceia works out twice a day in the gym, doing a combination of cardio and weight training. The workouts are coupled with a vegetarian diet and supplements.

"It can get hard, because you really have to have time management down to a science," Patreceia said.

Similar to the military environment in which Patreceia works, a plan of action to get to her goals were set and executed. A primary marker on the road to Ms. Bikini Olympia was winning first place at the regional Atlantic Coastal competition in Atlanta, March 21, which is a national qualifier competition, setting her up for a spot in the national competition, which could ultimately lead to competing as a professional.

"In a perfect world I would go first overall at regionals, first at a national competition, compete in my first pro-show, win first there, and qualify to compete for Ms. Olympia," Patreceia said. "Olympians are the elite of any category, winning first place in their respective professional divisions."

When that Saturday morning for the Atlantic Coastal came, Patreceia was ready to compete. Her day started before dawn, with a full morning of preparation, competitors meeting, day time pre-judging, and a night show which commenced just before sunset.

At the night show, the contestants took the stage a final time, and once the bikini competitors were announced, almost 15 hours after Patreceia started her day, she was soon declared as the first place winner in

her division.

"I had my family there, and although I wasn't expecting it (a win), it didn't come as a surprise. I worked my butt off," Patreceia said.

"I have been to all of her local shows," said Mrs. Mathis. "She is a very dedicated person and I'm proud of her."

The win set her up for a chance to compete in a national competition, the start of the second marker on her road to Ms. Bikini Olympia, for those keeping track. But, she has another competition May 9 in Atlanta.

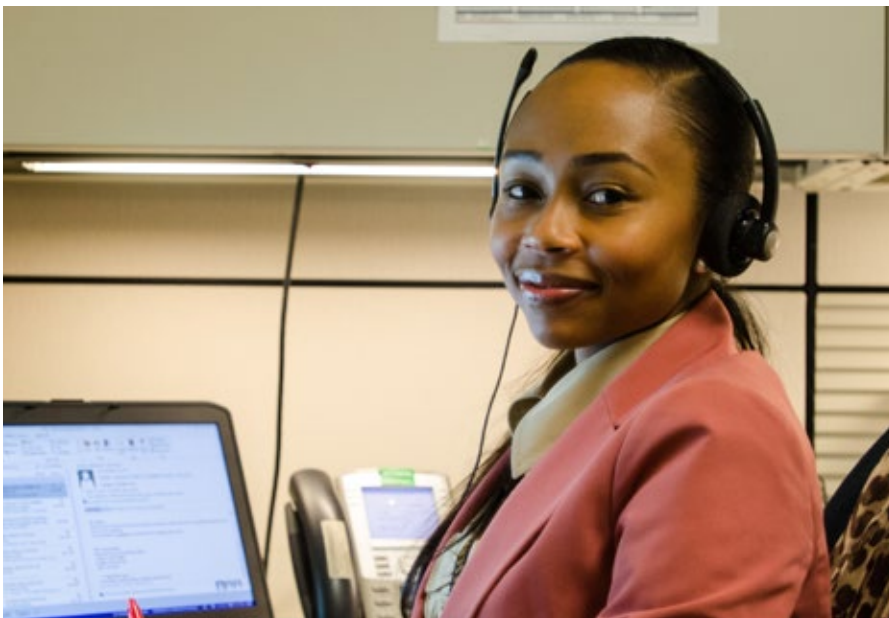
While continuing to compete is part of her fitness goals, Patreceia has her sights on evolving within the fitness world.

"Once I go pro this year, I'll probably compete for another two or three years and evolve into another aspect of fitness," Patreceia said. "I really want to educate women on how to balance being healthy physically, mentally, and spiritually - that's my end goal."

Patreceia continues to learn and educate herself on fitness and nutrition, so that she may not only live a healthy life herself, but share that knowledge with others.

With the support of family, friends, and her colleagues at USARC, Patreceia says she is excited about what the future has in store and the possibilities which fuel her passion.

"If my dad were still alive, I know he would be proud of me," Patreceia said. 🇺🇸



When she is not competing and winning trophies, Mathis works as a U.S. Army Reserve Command program analyst at the USARC headquarters at Fort Bragg, N.C.



**312TH EN
KEEP IT IN T**



ENGINEERS THE FAMILY



(This page) A Soldier with the U.S. Army Reserve 312th Engineer Company, based in Duluth, Minn., fires his M4 rifle paintball gun while an opposing force member hides behind a table during urban operations training and building clearing procedures, April 18, 2015, at Camp Ripley, Minnesota. (Previous page) Members of the 312th wait their turn to attack the objective.

Interactive, innovative training and active FRG keeps 312th Soldiers coming back

Story & photos by TIMOTHY L. HALE
U.S. Army Reserve Command

CAMP RIPLEY, Minn. – “Filling spots on a roster might work for some units, but it doesn’t for me,” said Capt. Jeremy Lake, commander of the 312th Engineer Company (Horizontal Construction) based in Duluth, Minnesota.

“I want Soldiers who want to come to the unit and stay in the unit,” he said.

Lake, and his first sergeant, Kirk Liljestrom, freely admitted there were problems in the unit before they assumed their leadership roles in 2013 and 2014, respectively.

They said the previous command climate hampered retention and recruiting.

But Lake and Liljestrom set out to change the course and chart a new path – not only for the Soldiers in the unit but for Family members as well.

Their efforts have paid off.

In the last two years, the 312th have totaled 41 re-enlistments – 21 in Fiscal Year 2013 (233.33 percent of mission quota) and 20 in Fiscal Year 2014 (125 percent of mission quota).

Soldiers and Family members in the 312th say that change is due to interactive and innovative training and showing a genuine caring attitude about every member of the unit from the commander down to the last man and woman.

It Starts at the Top

Lake, originally from Colorado

Springs, said he enjoys interacting with the Soldiers.

“We have a very strong unit, a very integrated and close-knit group,” said Lake, who, when he isn’t wearing the uniform, is a human resource specialist military technician with the 367th Engineer Battalion, the 312th’s next higher headquarters.

“We believe in trying to stay very in-tune with our Soldiers,” Lake said. “We push our team leaders and squad leaders to stay in contact with our Soldiers outside of drill. Which then enables them to be better prepared when they come to the different activities.”

Lake said his unit cohesion is so strong that Soldiers in his unit actively volunteer for different duties and events.

This cohesion, Lake said, leads to a sense of ownership in the unit.

Lake and Liljestrom make a concerted effort to truly get to know their Soldiers. He said, too many times, in other units, leaders are only seen in large formation gatherings. That leadership style

doesn’t work for the current command team.

“You find that group of four Soldiers and ask them, ‘How are things going? Are you having any issues?’ That way you don’t become this higher-level entity,” Lake said.

First lieutenant Andrew Hoffman, a platoon leader from Hastings, Minnesota, also takes an active role in getting to know his Soldiers.

“I like to take a part in mentoring my Soldiers,” Hoffman said. “Because that just gets into holding on to those Soldiers, making sure you’re a part of their lives and making sure you’re relevant to them.”

Hoffman said leaders have to take an active part in getting to know their Soldiers – learning their strengths and weaknesses in order to complete the mission.

“That’s how it should be. In the end, they are going to follow who they know and who they trust,” Hoffman said.

Training Beyond the Norm

Leaders in the 312th pride

See **312th**, Pg. 14



Capt. Jeremy Lake, left, commander of the 312th, gives a briefing to two of his opposing forces team before the start of urban operations training and building clearing procedures, April 18, 2015, at Camp Ripley, Minnesota.

from Pg. 13

themselves in some of their recent interactive and innovative training events that are not in the normal realm of battle assemblies.

In April 2014, Lake added Reflexive Fire and Advanced Rifle Marksmanship during a weapon qualification weekend.

"I'm still seeing dividends from that. The Soldiers still talk about it," Lake said.

From November 2014 through January 2015, the unit sent three rotations of engineers to the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, California where they built a Forward Landing Strip.

"The Soldiers were happy about being selected, despite the short notice," Lake said.

During the battle assembly at Camp Ripley, last month, Lake incorporated urban operations training, using M4 rifles modified for paintballs from the Camp Ripley Training and Support Center. Lake said many of his Soldiers had never practiced urban operations nor had they ever used paintball guns.

Part of their recent training successes is due in part to having full-time support in the operations and training section, Lake said.

Sgt. 1st Class Timothy Stanton, the full-time operations NCO for the 312th from Post Falls, Idaho, stays in constant contact with the command group to ensure no time is wasted during battle assemblies.

"It's extremely important for

the success of this company," Stanton said. "Without the constant communication, the machine breaks. If my commander or my first sergeant and I are not on the same sheet, as far as training objectives go, the mission is just going to flop."

Stanton fulfills not only operations and training duties but he is also a platoon sergeant and acting supply NCO.

"I get yanked in several different directions so it's important to me that I plan accordingly so that we have successful training. Not just a bunch of sitting around doing nothing," Stanton said.

Empowering Soldiers

Liljestrom, originally from Ironwood, Michigan, said the unit's success is also due in part by allowing the NCOs to do their job.

"You have to empower them," Liljestrom said. He added there was a time when higher-level NCOs micromanaged the lower enlisted ranks but that leadership style is no longer present.

"I make sure they manage their platoons effectively and independently," Liljestrom said.

Hoffman said the command team has a good philosophy of letting the leaders lead. Devising training plans and having back-up plans so Soldiers don't show up for battle assemblies waiting for something to happen.

"I push down to my squad leaders to have them conduct the training," Hoffman said. "We

only have two days, sometimes, to conduct training and in this environment, you have to use every minute."

Hoffman echoed the command team's empowerment philosophy.

"It's about empowering the squad leaders to empower their team leaders to empower their Soldiers," Hoffman said. "Because it all goes down and then it all comes back up once those Soldiers gain more experience and rank."

Hoffman said this empowerment philosophy allows the Soldiers to take on the training as their own and does involve a little bit of risk.

"We're still there to supervise and evaluate. There's a little bit of risk but it's a risk worth taking," Hoffman said.

Feeling Appreciated

Members of the unit are made to feel appreciated and welcomed and that starts with the people in the unit.

"The best part is the people," said Sgt. Joshua Synnott, a unit mechanic from Duluth. "You make a strong friendships. There's been a lot of leadership change since I got here in '07. But, I kind of like the way the direction the unit is going. It makes it nice."

Synnott, who is training to be an acting platoon sergeant, said being a good leader is all about looking out for the Soldiers and doing the right things. He said it starts with getting to know the

See **312th**, Pg. 16



Sgt. 1st Class Tim Stanton, the operations noncommissioned officer and training NCO with the 312th, fills out paperwork before the start of urban operations training and building clearing procedures. As a full-time Active Guard and Reserve Soldier, Stanton stays in communicates regularly with unit leaders to ensure that time is not wasted during battle assemblies.



Soldiers from the 312th used M4 rifles modified for paintballs during the urban operations training at Camp Ripley. For many, it was the first time they had ever used a paintball gun.



Sgt. Joshua Synnott, enters a room during urban operations training and building clearing procedures.



(Top and bottom) Members of the 312th practice room clearing procedures during their recent battle assembly at Camp Ripley, Minn.

Soldiers and that could lead to reenlistments and recruiting new Soldiers.

“The better you know your people, the more likely they are to stick around,” he said. “We have a solid NCO Corps here in the unit and I like being a part of that.”

For Bagley, Minnesota native, Spc. Harley Higgins, the decision to reenlist was an easy decision, thanks in part to the Family Readiness Group.

A new father to a 5-month-old daughter, Higgins, who has been in the unit six years, said the active FRG was a key factor in his decision to reenlist.

“With me having a brand new family, it’s huge to me,” Higgins said. “With the unit involving the FRG and the Family, it just creates closer bonds.”

Families First

Lake said the 312th’s very active and strong FRG works to ensure everyone benefits.

Some of their recent accomplishments include hosting cookouts during long battle assemble weekends, supporting the Duluth Air Show, and hosting the first-ever company level military ball with a World War II and Korean War veteran as the guest speaker.

Lake said they were only expecting about 30 people to attend but they filled the room with approximately 100 Soldiers and spouses.

“The FRG started with four people but it has grown very, very large,” said Staff Sgt. Angela Cunningham, the FRG unit liaison.

Cunningham, who spent time growing up near Fort Bragg, N.C. as a child of military parents, now lives in Duluth.

She said there is coffee and donuts every morning at battle assembly. Sometimes, some of the Soldiers

will donate anywhere from \$20 to \$40 to support the FRG.

“They put in whatever they can give,” Cunningham said. “It speaks volumes about how the troops see the FRG.”

Jennillee Anderson, the 312th Family Readiness Group leader from Duluth, said the Soldiers know the FRG has a valuable purpose to unit morale, retention, and recruiting.

“They know we are here for them, their Families, and we’re drama-free,” Anderson said. “We’re all here together and we’re all here for one purpose. If a Family is having trouble, we help them.”

She said the FRG adds to the unit’s cohesive nature.

“If we help each other out, they (Soldiers) are going to want to stay,” she said.

“Thank You” Goes a Long Way

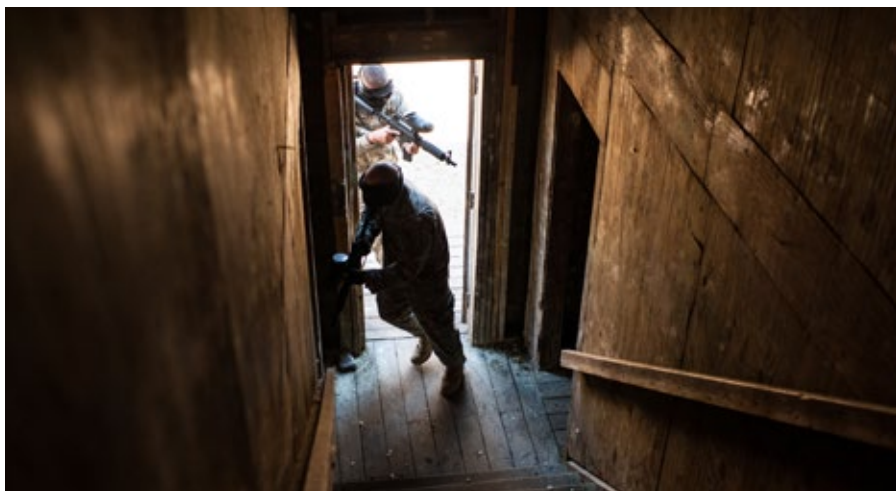
Lake, Liljestrom, Hoffman, and others in the unit take the time to say “thank you” to their Soldiers on a regular basis. But not in a way that pays lip service to the jobs their Soldiers do.

Lake said it’s not always done in a formal formation setting. He said the “thank you” could be for work on a particular project, assisting the leadership team, or for volunteering for a specific project or task.

Liljestrom even goes as far as thanking them for their military service.

But the kudos and accolades don’t stop there. Even platoon leaders, like Hoffman, have picked up the trend.

“The Soldiers are the heart and soul of the unit,” Hoffman said. “If our platoon does a good job, it’s on them. It’s their motivation and their skills that have completed the mission.” 🇺🇸



Members of the 312th breach a door during urban operations training at Camp Ripley, Minnesota.

Single mom lives to serve others

Story & photos by **TIMOTHY L. HALE**
U.S. Army Reserve Command

CAMP RIPLEY, Minn. - There are not many days that Staff Sgt. Angela Cunningham doesn't smile.

She said that people always assume that she never has a bad day because she smiles so much. But Cunningham said, even she has bad days. But even the bad times can be overcome with the help of friends and family.

"People always think I'm happy," Cunningham said. "People think that I never have a bad day because I'm always smiling. People should know that I have bad days too. But nothing is so bad that you can't work through them."

Born into a military family with an Air Force mother and an Army father, Cunningham was born in Inkster, Michigan.

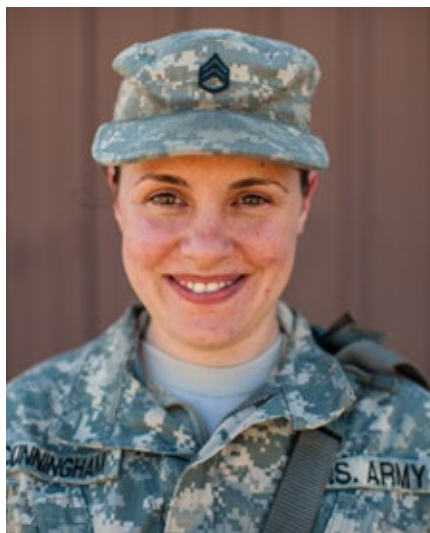
When she was 2-years-old, the family moved to Fort Bragg, N.C. Subsequent moves to Mannheim, Germany and Fort Chaffee, Arkansas, eventually led them back to Fort Bragg in 1995.

While at Bragg, she attended Southview High School, until the 10th grade before moving back to Michigan.

Cunningham joined the Army as a split-op Army Reserve Soldier at the age of 17.

After graduating from basic training and advanced individualized training at Fort Jackson, S.C., in 2000 Cunningham became an administrative specialist.

Four years later, Cunningham



Staff Sgt. Angela Cunningham

married her high school sweetheart.

But the marriage didn't last. As she said, it was one of those "deployment-marriage horror stories." In 2010, she and her husband divorced.

She and her son, Joshua, now live in Duluth, Minnesota where she serves with the 312th Engineer Company as a Soldier and a unit administrator military technician.

In between getting married and divorce, Cunningham mobilized at Fort McCoy in 2003 with the 6015th Garrison Support Unit, in Hurley, Wisconsin.

"We were part of the last Lumberjack unit," she said. "Our sawmill is at the museum in Fort Snelling, Minnesota. I actually saw it in operation for one year," she said with pride.

She later deployed to Camp Liberty, Iraq in 2009 with the 312th.

Through it all, Cunningham earned a Licensed Practical Nurse degree from Gogebic Community College in Ironwood, Michigan and worked for five years at a nursing home as a Certified Nursing Assistant.

Despite some of the personal difficulties she has experienced, serving in the Army Reserve and being a single mother keeps her grounded.

At the 312th, she is a horizontal construction engineer and also serves as the retention noncommissioned officer and is the unit liaison for the Family Readiness Group.

"My child keeps me grounded," Cunningham said. "Everything I do, I do for him. I like to show him that when you apply yourself to something you should stick it out."

She said being a military technician and a Soldier gives her the ability to care of him, better than she could have in a job outside of the military.

Cunningham said being a single mother and the FRG liaison gives her a better understanding of the role the FRG plays especially in her unit.

"The FRG started with four people but it has grown very, very large," she said.

She said there is coffee and donuts every morning at battle assembly. Sometimes, some of the Soldiers will donate anywhere



Cunningham practices urban operations training and building clearing procedures using a modified M4 rifle equipped for paintballs, April 18, at Camp Ripley, Minnesota. Cunningham, a horizontal construction engineer, serves as a retention noncommissioned officer and the unit liaison for the 312th Family Readiness Group.

from \$20 to \$40 to support the FRG.

"They put in whatever they can give," Cunningham said. "It speaks volumes about how the troops see the FRG."

Coming from a military Family and being a single mother gives her an opportunity to share with other Soldiers ways to cope with military life. A task that she gladly takes to heart.

"I share my experiences with them - through the divorce and the messy details - so they know that I know how hard it can be. We had a single mother (in the unit) and we would help each other out. She would need to go on orders so I would watch her children so she could re-class."

Cunningham said even the FRG leader has watched her son for her when she was on orders.

"We all help each other," she said. "I let the Soldiers and Families know they are not alone. Reen-

listing is not something impossible to do as a Family, even if you are single. A lot of our Soldiers are single (without children) but they still that support and I make sure they know it's available.

Ultimately, Cunningham said she gets satisfaction from helping others.

"I like to help. I'm too much of a helper, sometimes. I can't say no," she said with a laugh. "I just like to help people. I volunteer at the VFW. I like to make sure my troops are taken care of."

Cunningham said it is the sense of Family that drives her to help others and keeps her in uniform.

"I see the Army as a Family. I have friends from basic training and I'm still friends with them. It's a big Family," Cunningham said.

It is that sense of Family that keeps Cunningham smiling, no matter what life throws at her and her fellow Soldiers that she cares for as if they were her own. 🇺🇸

Army Res End Afghani



Story & photos by **BRIAN GODETTE**
U.S. Army Reserve Command

FORT BRAGG, N.C. -
“We’re back!” said Sgt. Esther Cordoba, flight operations noncommissioned officer with Charlie Company, 2nd Battalion, 228th Aviation Regiment.

It really was a “Good Friday” for U.S. Army Reserve 228th aviation Soldiers and their Families.

The final four crew members returned from an eight-month deployment at Pope Army Airfield, here, April 3.

Over the past decade and a half, many of the units Soldiers have returned home from deployments welcomed by Family and friends. Some flew in on a jet, but even fewer have flown back on a jet while airfield fire engines sprayed water arches across the North Carolina sky while taxiing

to waiting loved ones.

The aviation Soldiers experienced just that, after returning from Afghanistan where they were attached to a distinguished visitor operations detachment in support of a fixed wing theatre aviation unit at Bagram Airfield.

“This was a very unique mission, with very unique individuals,” said Maj. Francis Machill, 228 commander. “These are very experienced, well trained individuals and the best pilots you’ll find in Army aviation.”

Flying UC-35 jets, the core of the Army Reserve jet fleet, pilots and crew transported dignitaries, senior leaders, and commanders in and out of theater.

The significance of the returning Soldiers in these aircraft

marks the last time they will be used in theatre.

“Someone from U.S. Army Reserve Command, within the 11th Theater Aviation Command, has been deployed with two UC-35s in Afghanistan since 2002, minus a two-year period, although our aircraft stayed in theatre,” said Lt. Col. Tracy Kennepp, USARC aviation deputy director.

The final mission with the Army Reserve jet fleet in Afghanistan proved to be successful, with the aviation Soldiers completing every assigned flight mission and returning home safely.

With the wind catching the water arches sending spray across the tarmac, friends and Family waited eagerly for their loved ones to park the aircraft and disembark

Reserve Jets Afghanistan Mission



for one final time.

The windy conditions couldn't stop Tiffany Boren and her sons, Cody and Grant, from holding their "Welcome Home" daddy poster sign in the air as they awaited husband and father, Chief Warrant Officer 4 Jason Boren, to touch ground.

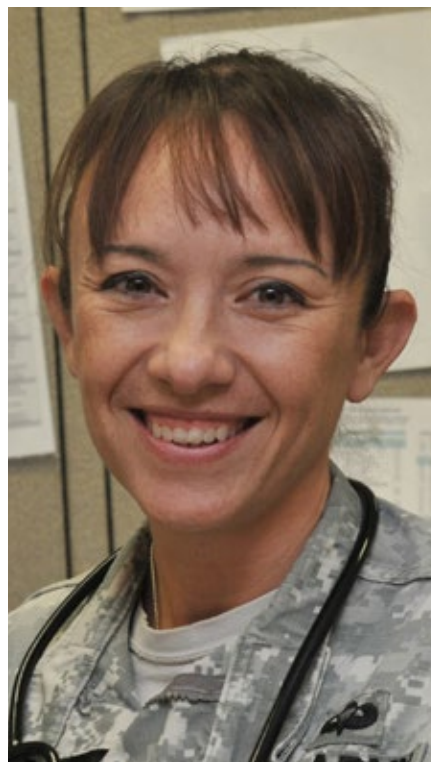
"It feels so good to have them all back home, safe and sound," said Tiffany.

The Soldiers arrived in time to spend the Easter holiday with their loved ones before heading to Fort Bliss, Texas to demobilize. Then, a much-needed vacation will be in order.

After the decade-long Army Reserve mission, the Army National Guard assumes the continuing mission in the newer C-26 jet, Kennepp said. 🇺🇸



Chief Warrant Officer 4 Philip Houston embraces his six-year old son, Max, and wife Larisa, after seeing them for the first time in over eight months. U.S. Army Reserve Soldiers assigned to Charlie Company, 2nd Battalion, 228th Aviation Regiment, returned from deployment to Afghanistan at Pope Army Airfield in Fort Bragg, N.C. April 3. The aviation Soldiers supported the movement of distinguished visitors throughout theatre in C-12 and UC-35 jets while deployed. The mission served as the last time those particular jets will be used in support of Army Reserve combat operations.



Vietnamese-American Army Reserve Soldiers reflect on Vietnam and serving America

Story by STAFF SGT. NEIL W. McCABE
Army Reserve Medical Command

Forty years

after the end of the Vietnam War, three Vietnamese-Americans serving in the Army Reserve Medical Command, reflected on their heritage, the journey they and their families made to America and their decision to become Citizen-Soldiers here.

Lt. Col. Tam Nguyen, a head and neck surgeon, or otolaryngologist, assigned to the 4005th U.S. Army Hospital, Lubbock, Texas; Capt. Phan K. “Kim” Helgemoe, an Army nurse and former commander of the command’s Pinellas Park, Florida, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, and Sgt.

Diane N. Nguyen, a pharmacy technician, assigned to the command’s headquarters company staff, each bring a different perspective.

No war has brought more trauma to the American psyche than our military operations in Vietnam, a chapter that closed April 30, 1975 with the fall of Saigon, South Vietnam’s capital to North Vietnamese forces. The reunification of Vietnam under the North’s Communist regime drove hundreds of thousands of South Vietnamese refugees out of the country - many of them eventually coming to the United States.

Joseph Galloway, the co-au-

thor of “We Were Soldiers Once... and Young,” the chronicle of the 1st Cavalry Division’s introduction of helicopters to move infantry - Air Cav warfare - in the Ia Drang Valley, said he is happy to see how the Vietnamese have contributed to America and have been welcomed by Americans.

“The Vietnamese who came to our country as refugees after 1975 were truly some of the finest additions in over a century,” he said.

“I have many friends in the Vietnamese-American community and I am truly proud of their many achievements and successes,” said the author and war correspondent. “Their children

have made their mark in America's colleges and universities and in our military academies as well."

Sgt. Diane N. Nguyen

Nguyen said because she was born in America and has been raised as an American, she feels distant to the Vietnam and the war that took place.

"I don't have much feeling over the Vietnam War, and there aren't very many stories about it," she said. "There's not much that I know about my history, but what I do know has been repeated to me throughout my entire life!"

She said she joined the Army Reserve in 2010. "I wanted to serve my country and this was the best way to do it."

The sergeant said her father and his family fought for South Vietnam and they consider Saigon, the former capital of the South, now called Ho Chi Minh City, their home. "My father came here after the war with his friends, with whom he is still close. My father met my mother in China, and brought her back to America." Her grandfather was a manager at a bug spray factory.

"We don't talk about the past too much," she said. "I don't blame them; they came to America to make a better life for themselves."

Capt. Phan K. "Kim" Helgemoe Helgemoe said she was born in Saigon in 1972.

"I am very proud to wear the

Army uniform. I do feel despite all the bad press, Americans in Vietnam did have a positive impact - plus the fact I wouldn't have been born if the conflict had not occurred," she said. "I am especially proud to be an American Nurse."

"I left Vietnam as a child. I was a little over one year old," said the captain, who was assigned to the Army Reserve Medical Command's Surgeon Section before her transfer to the 108th Training Command, Charlotte, North Carolina. "The experience was not harrowing or stressful to me in any way."

Helgemoe, who was the HHC commander before her transfer,

See **VIETNAM**, Pg. 22



Americans and selected South Vietnamese civilians board a helicopter on the roof of the American embassy in Saigon in this iconic photo. Helicopters ferried those fleeing the North Vietnamese Army in the closing days leading up to the fall of Saigon. (United Press International photo from the book "Vietnam-A History by Stanley Karnow)

VIETNAM

from Pg. 21

said although she has no memories of the war, it was devastating to her mother's family

"My parents met during the Vietnam war," the captain said. "My mother worked as a secretary in the JAG office where my dad worked. My dad left the Army and then went back to Vietnam to marry my mother." JAG is the common Army shorthand for its legal offices, or Judge Advocate General.

"My grandfather was assassinated by the North Vietnamese while my mother was a child. As a result, my mother and aunt spent time in an orphanage while my grandmother tried to earn enough to bring them back home," she said.

"My family lost a lot of the Vietnamese culture. My mother was acclimating to the U.S. culture and we were never around many other Vietnamese families. I wish I could have learned more."

Lt. Col. Tam Nguyen

Born in 1962 Saigon, Lt. Col. Tam Nguyen said he has vivid memories of two critical events in the Vietnam War, the 1968 Tet Offensive and the 1975 fall of his city and country.

The Tet Offensive was a surprise campaign by North Vietnamese conventional and guerrilla forces during the traditional truce practiced by both sides of the war for the Chinese New Year. As the South Vietnamese relaxed for the two-week season, the Viet Cong kicked off hundreds of simultane-



(Top) This undated photograph shows Lt. Col. Tam Nguyen as a young boy in Vietnam. (Bottom) Newspaper photo of Nguyen's father, who was a South Vietnamese Army doctor and a lieutenant colonel. Nguyen's father was arrested after the fall of South Vietnam and died in a labor camp. (Photos courtesy of Lt. Col. Tam Nguyen)

ous attacks throughout the South.

Even after South Vietnamese and American forces inflicted massive casualties on the North Vietnamese and drove them back to their pre-Tet lines, they never shook off the shock of Tet, making it the war's emotional pivot.

The most significant attacks were in Saigon, specifically the attack on the American Embassy, which was near the colonel's house, as was an American combat support hospital. His father was an South Vietnamese Army doctor.

"I remember that the fighting is fierce. I've seen injured American soldiers, because they're right next to where I live," he said. "We see a lot of traffic, a lot of ambulances," he said. "The fighting is pretty intense; I heard guns going off constantly for a couple days."

The colonel was 13-years-old when North Vietnamese tanks rolled into his neighborhood the day South Vietnam fell. As military resistance to the North Vietnamese Army collapsed, the boy went to his father's hospital to see what was going on.

"On the day before the fall of Saigon, which is, I remember vividly, is April the 29th," he said. "I saw a company-size group of the paratroopers - Republic of Vietnam paratroopers. They came into the hospital to get some weapons, to set up before they go out - these were young men, very brave."

Before the soldiers left the hospital, the surgeon said he listened to their captain's speech to his men.

"I say that you have two choices. Right now, we don't have a leader. We don't have a commander. I am the commander by rank, because I'm the highest rank that's still not running yet."

The paratrooper captain

offered to these troops the choice, the doctor said.

"We're surrounded by three divisions of NVA. The fact is, pretty much, at this point, futile. You have the option, you can change to - get rid of your uniform and your weapons and returning to your family or you're with me. I cannot guarantee of your safety or anything. I cannot guarantee that we can survive this."

None of the paratroopers took off their uniforms.

Nguyen said at around one or two o'clock in the morning all the paratroopers left into the dark night. "They went out to the intersection and then turned west—that's where the column of NVA tanks was coming into the city."

The next day, after it was announced that South Vietnam surrendered, the colonel said he watched the evacuation of the American embassy on television. Because the airport was shut down

April 28, 1975, Nguyen said the helicopters ferrying Americans and South Vietnamese to the Navy ships standing off the coast were the only way out.

For five years, his mother tried to get her son out of the country, he said. Because his father was an officer in the South Vietnamese Army, he was arrested and died in a labor camp.

Finally, Nguyen escaped Vietnam with a group of 10 others with forged documents wearing the uniform of a North Vietnamese Army lieutenant. Once in Cambodia, he found a refugee camp and eventually made it to the United States and went to college and medical school on scholarships.

Already a medical school graduate, the colonel joined the Michigan National Guard in 1997, and then two years later transferred to the Army Reserve because he felt it offered a better opportunity to

work with active-duty doctors and participate in mobilizations.

Last month, he left for a humanitarian mission in Chad with other Army Reserve Medical Command Soldiers.

Helgemoe said she is optimistic because the new generations have distance from the war.

"I think the future of Vietnamese, American relationship is hopeful. The country is beginning to open its doors to tourism. It is a young country since many of the elders were killed in the war," she said. "The young population is more accepting of Americans and seems more amenable to starting a good relationship between the two countries."

In the years after the Vietnam War, millions of Vietnam-Americans have become woven into the fabric of America.

For many, that fabric is the digitized pattern of the Army Combat Uniform. 🇺🇸



The first North Vietnamese soldiers and tanks arrive at the presidential palace in Saigon. General Duong Van Minh, the temporary president, surrendered to Col. Bui Tin, the ranking North Vietnamese officer - actually a correspondent for a Hanoi military newspaper. (Buffon-Darquenne, Sygma photo from the book "Vietnam-A History by Stanley Karnow)

BRING IT HOME:



(FILE Photo by Timothy L. Hale/U.S. Army Reserve)

Got PCI? You'd Should!

Story By Chief Warrant Officer 5 THOMAS BAKER
USARC Safety Office

Pre Combat Inspections, or PCI's, are a part of our military life.

Before a mission, leaders use a PCI to ensure their people have all the right gear, are ready for the mission and any emergency that may happen.

Many of us have seen and experienced the rapid fire chaos that ensues for Soldiers lacking proper gear when they desperately need it. A comprehensive PCI is a key component in risk management (it identifies risk and applies countermeasures in real time) and it will work just as effectively when you "Bring It Home".

Sailing is my new hobby and the learning curve has been fun though steep. Despite some hard lessons, I've become comfortable sailing alone on a small lake near my house.

On one particularly nice day, I was preparing to put my little sailboat into the lake when I realized that I forgot to bring my slip on water shoes. No big deal, my sneakers are good enough so I walked the boat from the trailer to the tie up cleat on the dock.

After parking the truck, I am back in my boat, pushing off the dock and....I didn't bring the little bungee cord to hold down the paddle. No worries, it's a sail boat and there is nobody here to knock the paddle off the mount anyway.

Out in the middle, a healthy gust takes me by surprise so I lean out to level the boat. This is when I realize that my fat toed sneakers don't fit under the

toe rail and I start to fall overboard. Staying in the slewing boat now takes both hands, so, I let go of the tiller. No steering and barely hanging on, the boat spins 180 about and I just glimpse the boom whizzing over my head like an aluminum baseball bat! Fortunately I was just out of the line of fire because I couldn't have moved out of the way if I tried. As a final joke, the spin threw the unsecured paddle overboard and the wind (I swear I heard it chuckling) totally died. I was literally stuck "without a paddle".

Like a lot of us do, I relaxed too much for my "Safe" civilian activity.

I skipped the PCI and was overconfident as the little warning indicators popped up. In fact, when risk management thinking started to kick in, I justified it away, actually dismissing hazards likely to occur!

Though I was wearing a personal flotation device eliminating the first step in preparedness, a PCI, cleared the way for a potentially deadly accident. There is a lot of energy in a swinging boom, enough to kill. And even if I received no more than a glancing blow, enough to potentially render me both unconscious and in the water with no help.

"Bring It Home!"

Attend to the details, control your risk and start every day of the "28 Days For Life" just like an important mission, with a Pre-Combat Inspection.

MANAGE THE OTHER 28 DAYS FOR LIFE! 🇺🇸

ARMY RESERVE FACT:

Records show us that most Citizen-Soldiers who die while Not In A Duty Status will do so on a Motorcycle, in a Car or in and on the Water. For water sports, this is especially true during the 101 Days of Summer, Memorial Day through Labor Day every year. Almost every water related accidental fatality suffered by the Army Reserve and its Citizen-Soldiers will occur during the 101 Days of Summer.

DON'T LEAVE YOUR PROFESSIONAL DISCIPLINE BEHIND

Remember the fallen on Memorial Day

By CHAPLAIN (LT. COL.) RICHARD SAVAGE
USARC Chaplain's Office

Memorial Day is a time for family gatherings, barbecues and summer vacations, but how many know the history behind Memorial Day.

On May 5, 1868, three years after the American Civil War, the head of the Grand Army of the Republic established Decoration Day as a time for the nation to remember the war dead by decorating their gravestones with flowers.

Maj. Gen. John A. Logan declared that Decoration Day should be observed on May 30, a date believed was chosen because flowers would be in bloom all over the country.

The history of remembering our nation's war dead predates the American Civil War.

The Athenian leader, Pericles, offered a tribute to the fallen heroes of the Peloponnesian War over 24 centuries ago.

"Not only are they commemorated by columns

and inscriptions, but there dwells also an unwritten memorial of them, graven not on stone but in the hearts of men," Pericles wrote.

In December 2000, the president signed into law "The National Moment of Remembrance Act", to encourage all Americans, on Memorial Day, to pause for a moment of silence at 3 p.m., in order to remember and honor those who have died in service for our nation.

As Moment of Remembrance founder, Carmella LaSpada said, "It's a way we can all help put the memorial back in Memorial Day."

This coming Memorial Day, take time to remember those that have gone before us.

Remember those who have paid the ultimate price for our nation's freedom.

Remember those who have touched our lives.

Remember... 🇺🇸

FORSCOM/USARC Christian Bible Study

**U.S. Army Forces Command and U.S. Army Reserve Command
hosts a weekly Christian Bible study.**

**Studies are held each Tuesday,
starting at 11:30 a.m., Room 1901 near the USARC G-4.**

**Please come and share a time of
fellowship and worship with us.**

**"All Scripture is breathed out by God and
profitable for teaching,
for reproof, for correction, and for training
in righteousness, that
the man of God may be competent,
equipped for every good work."**

Second Timothy 3:16-17

Tillis visits USARC headquarters

Photos by BRIAN GODETTE
U.S. Army Reserve Command



United States Senator from North Carolina, Thom Tillis, above, visits with U.S. Army Reserve senior command staff to discuss benefits, capabilities, and needs of the Army Reserve at the U.S. Army Reserve Command headquarters, Fort Bragg, N.C., April 8. Maj. Gen. David Conboy, left, USARC deputy commanding general for operations, listens as Tillis asks a question. Tillis, a first-term republican senator returns home to N.C. and to Fort Bragg after a week in the Middle East, where he met with key leaders and service members.

ARMY RESERVE CELEBR



RATES 107TH BIRTHDAY



Hundreds of U.S. Army Reserve Command Soldiers and civilians turned out to celebrate the 107th birthday of the Army Reserve, April 23 at the USARC headquarters at Fort Bragg, N.C.

After a morning birthday run across parts of Fort Bragg, Soldiers and civilians cut the ceremonial birthday cake and then formed up outside the USARC headquarters and formed 107 to mark the birthday.

Pictured above for the cake cutting with Maj. Gen. Peter Lennon, center, USARC deputy commanding general for support were the senior and junior military and civilian representatives: John Wagar, G4 Supply and Services Division, Lt. Col. Missy Delk, deputy CPIO, 1st Lt. Miranda Notestine, USARC Surgeon's Office, and Daniel Carroll, G4 Systems Integrator, Equipment Division. (Photos by Calvin Reimold, left, and Sgt. Maj. Anthony J. Martinez/U.S. Army Reserve Command)

Chaplains are the Faces of USARC

NAME: Sgt. 1st Class Mary Munyua

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN ASSIGNED TO USARC? Just under three years.

WHY DO YOU CONTINUE TO SERVE IN THE ARMY RESERVE? Because I love our Soldiers and taking care of them. Providing religious support is important and I see how that builds the Army Family as a whole. It produces resiliency especially through multiple deployments.

TELL US ONE THING THAT MOST PEOPLE DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU THAT YOU WANT THEM TO KNOW. I have an interest in languages. I speak English, Spanish and have learned a little Arabic, French, German, Italian, Swahili, and Kikuyu, her husband's tribal language.



NAME: Chaplain (Col.) Alan Pomaville

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN ASSIGNED TO USARC? Arrived in June 2014.

WHY DO YOU CONTINUE TO SERVE IN THE ARMY RESERVE? I believe that God has called me to be an Army chaplain. I have a deep love for our Soldiers and military Families. I have a passion for providing religious support and advisement for the command.

TELL US ONE THING THAT MOST PEOPLE DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU THAT YOU WANT THEM TO KNOW. I come from a big Family - five brothers and five brothers. I was the ninth-born. My father is from Michigan and mother is from Louisiana and they met when he was stationed at Lake Charles, Louisiana.



Day with the Chief of Staff

Story & photo by **BRIAN GODETTE**
U.S. Army Reserve Command

FORT BRAGG, N.C. - This time around, a view from the top, from a civilians perspective. U. S. Army Reserve Command G-8 Deputy Chief of Funds Control, Marvin Perez-Salva, became the third person and first civilian to participate in “A Day with the Chief of Staff,” here, April 29.

Like most mornings for Maj. Gen. Luis R. Visot, U.S. Army Reserve chief of staff, the day started off early, and Perez was by his side. Both men stood inside the lobby entrance of the command headquarters greeting every employee and visitor as they came into the building. A keen leadership practice that Visot conducts frequently.

“Greeting the employees in the morning with a smile and a handshake from the Chief of Staff is just a way I show my appreciation to our work force,” Visot said.

“It’s an honor to be the first civilian to participate in this,” Perez said. “You would normally think of this as being typically all military.”

Perez, a retired Army Reserve sergeant major and Georgia native, by way of Puerto Rico, has been a civilian employee with USARC for two and a half years. While engaged and attentive throughout several back-to-back meetings during the course of the day with Visot, Perez showed special interest in the

civilian workforce discussions.

“My biggest learning objective is to view the decision making process from the top as well as how we recruit civilian personnel, and how we integrate them into the military,” Perez said.

Perez, who was a G-8 sergeant major with US-ARC when the headquarters was in Fort McPherson, Georgia, knows the Army Reserve world from the Soldier aspect as well as the civilian.

“I want to ensure the civilian employees know how the Army Reserve works and also provide the leadership, and chief of staff with a chance to hear the voice of the civilians,” Perez said.

The day with the chief of staff provided a great mentorship opportunity for Perez who took full advantage - absorbing as much knowledge as he could.

“My purpose in learning all of this is to see his (Visot) point of view on the future of our military, and the decisions he makes to improve the Army Reserve culture, so that I may pass that on to my peers,” Perez said.

Visot and past participants believe the “A Day with the Chief of Staff” program is proving to be a valuable asset.

“The more we invest in our workforce, the more we grow our human capital,” Visot said.



Marvin Perez-Salva, U.S. Army Reserve Command G-8 deputy chief of funds control, sits in on a strategic planning meeting with U.S. Army Reserve Chief of Staff, Maj. Gen. Luis R. Visot, at USARC headquarters, April 29. Perez is the first civilian employee with USARC to shadow Visot as part of the mentorship program, “A Day with the Chief of Staff.”



Lt. Gen. Jeffrey W. Talley, chief of Army Reserve and commanding general U.S. Army Reserve Command, addresses the audience during the United States Army Reserve Corridor Dedication and Ribbon Cutting Ceremony held at the Pentagon, April 21. Consisting of 80 panels and six sections, the corridor documents the evolution of the Army Reserve from a small corps of medical professionals into today's global command while highlighting the capabilities and value the Army Reserve contributes to the Total Force.

Army Reserve history on permanent display at the Pentagon

Story by STAFF SGT. SHEJAL PULIVARTI
Office of the Chief, Army Reserve

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Lt. Gen. Jeffrey Talley, chief of Army Reserve and commanding general of the Army Reserve Command, recognized the service and sacrifice of America's Citizen Soldiers during the United States Army Reserve Corridor Dedication and Ribbon Cutting Ceremony held at the Pentagon, April 21.

"There was no space documenting the service of the Army Reserve - until today. This is a place where Pentagon occupants and visitors can learn more

about the Army Reserve's 107 years of history," said Talley.

Consisting of 80 panels and six sections, the corridor documents the evolution of the Army Reserve from a small corps of medical professionals into today's global command. "The corridor, designed like a museum, will be a visual narrative that illustrates the value of the Army Reserve to the nation by displaying the component's history and the actions of its Soldiers in various wars," said Jennifer Friend, museum

specialist, U.S. Army Reserve Command.

The collection of the necessary material and design was a collective effort involving the Center of Military History, Army Reserve History, and the Office of the Chief of Army Reserve. They worked jointly to develop and create the field museum providing the Army Reserve a platform to share its history.

“The fact that it will be there forever, there is a true sense of pride to have been a part of it. This will have a lasting impression in a pivotal location and it provides the Army Reserve a venue to relay its message,” said Lt. Col. Antoinette Rainey, secretary general staff, Office of the Chief of Army Reserve.

The corridor is adjacent to the U.S. Army exhibits and it displays uniforms, equipment, and other artifacts.

“The Pentagon is connected to the rest of America and the Army Reserve Corridor will be a visual and visceral connection to all of the Citizen-Soldiers, past and present, whose valor and sacrifice, service and fidelity, exemplify our past, guide our present, and light our way into the future,” said Talley.

The lasting exhibit highlights the capabilities

and value of the Army Reserve, and pays homage to Reserve Soldiers who paid the ultimate sacrifice.

Throughout the corridor, notable Army Reserve Soldiers are highlighted. Two Silver Star recipients: retired Spc. Jeremy Church and former Sgt. David Hutchinson attended the ceremony.

Also present was Keith Maupin, father of Staff Sgt. Keith M. Maupin who was captured during Operation Iraqi Freedom and whose remains were later recovered.

“I always equate it back to an airborne Soldier – your reserve is what you are always going to use in your time of need. We needed that voice. This (Army Reserve Corridor) gives us that voice and a true audience to share that we are not only your reserve but look at how much we have done,” said Rainey.

The content displayed boldly states all the Army Reserve has to bring to the fight today just as it has throughout its history.

“It’s important to connect Soldiers to the history they are a part of on a deeper level,” said Talley. “This corridor illustrates the value of the Army Reserve in the past, today, and how our force will continue to contribute to the Total Force of the future.”



Keith Maupin (left) father of Staff Sgt. Keith M. Maupin who was captured during Operation Iraqi Freedom and whose remains were later recovered, poses with his son's uniform on display in the Army Reserve Corridor in the Pentagon.

Command Sgt. Maj. Vincent Mannion (above) poses with his family in front of a picture of himself as a first sergeant, taken during Operation Iraqi Freedom, now displayed on a panel in the Army Reserve Corridor.

MOTORCYCLE PMV-2

You've checked your ride, but are your battle buddies ready for the road?



STANDARDS



TRAINING



DISCIPLINE

Training, Discipline and Standards

Training, discipline and standards are the bedrock of our Army, and as Soldiers, you've been taught what right looks like. As leaders, you have a duty and a responsibility to maintain standards in your formations. You also have an obligation to your Soldiers and their Families to manage risk and take action to correct problems. In our fight against accidental injuries and fatalities, knowledge is the weapon of choice. Visit <https://safety.army.mil/mmp> for more information on safe riding.



ARMY STRONG:



<https://safety.army.mil>

