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EAGLE

APRIL 2015, Vol. 4 No. 1



CHANGING THE CULTURE

OF REPORTING
SEXUAL HARASSMENT
& SEXUAL ASSAULT

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COVER STORY:

It doesn't matter whether you are a Soldier, Army civilian, female, or male, you could be a victim of sexual harassment or assault. In the event you are a victim of harassment or assault, do you know what steps you need to take to report an incident? The answer depends on whether you are a Soldier or an Army civilian. (Photo by Timothy L. Hale/U.S. Army Reserve Command)



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DOUBLE EAGLE





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Changing the Culture

Despite all the training we receive in the Army, sexual harassment and sexual assault can still happen in and away from the workplace.

According to the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network, or RAINN, every 107 seconds, an American is sexually assaulted.

In Fiscal Year 2014, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, or EEOC, said there were 6,862 reported cases of sexual harassment in the workplace. Males accounted for 17.5 percent of those filing complaints.

While these incidents still occur, there is a changing culture of reporting sexual harassment and sexual assault.

After hearing several personal stories of harassment and assault, I felt a calling to pursue an in-depth look at the process of reporting in this month's cover story.

Even after years of training, I assumed, wrongly I might add, that all sexual harassment cases should be reported to SHARP. After all, SHARP does stand for Sexual Harassment and Assault Response Program. But that only applies to our men and women in uniform.

Civilian victims have a different reporting process.


If a civilian is a victim of harassment, they should report the incident to Equal Employment Opportunity at Fort McCoy, Wisconsin. If a civilian is sexually assaulted, then the incident should be reported to local law enforcement.

Sexual harassment and sexual assault not only takes an emotional and physical toll on the victim, it can also affect an organization. Job turnover, employee absenteeism, lack of desire to work, and a lack of trust that the organization will take care of the victim are just some of the second, third, and fourth order of effects that sexual harassment and sexual assault can cause.

Within the Army Reserve, military and civilian leaders are being held accountable.

"A leader has an inherent responsibility, when they learn that something wrong has happened inside their organization, to take corrective action to fix it," said James B. Balocki, U.S. Army Reserve command executive officer. "While work remains, I have greater confidence that leaders today are taking action to stop sexual harassment and sexual assault."

Regardless of whether you are a Soldier or civilian, you need to report an incident.

In the end, if we don't report sexual harassment or sexual assault, we all become potential victims. 



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.



FORT BRAGG, N.C. - According to the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network, or RAINN, every 107 seconds, an American is sexually assaulted.

In Fiscal Year 2014, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, or EEOC, said there were 6,862 reported cases of sexual harassment in the workplace. Males accounted for 17.5 percent of those filing complaints.

Despite these numbers, there appears to be a new trend developing – more victims are willing to come forward and report an incident.

Changing the Culture of **REPORTING**

SEXUAL HARASSMENT **and SEXUAL ASSAULT**

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

It doesn't matter whether you are a Soldier, Army civilian, female, or male, you could be a victim of sexual harassment or assault. In the event you are a victim of harassment or assault, do you know what steps you need to take to report an incident?

The answer depends on whether you are a Soldier or civilian, and whether it is sexual harassment or sexual assault.

A Changing Culture

According to recent active Army and Army Reserve reports, reported cases of sexual assault are on the rise. Army figures show a 51 percent increase in reported sexual assault cases since Fiscal Year 2012 – 2,149 in Fiscal Year 2013, and 1,423 in Fiscal Year 2012.

In the Army Reserve, there were 152 reported sexual assaults in Fiscal Year 2014, up from 87 in Fiscal Year 2013, and significantly more than the 22 cases reported in Fiscal Year 2012.

Army Reserve Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention officials and Staff Judge Advocate lawyers at the U.S. Army Reserve Command headquarters, here, say this increase in reported cases is encouraging.

"From our perspective, there doesn't seem to be an increase in the number of sexual assaults occurring," said Lt. Col. William Stephens, U.S. Army Reserve Command deputy staff judge advocate.

"Instead, it seems to be an increase in reporting and comfort in reporting."

Stephens said the many sexual assault cases that are reported are not recent cases. He said the assault could have occurred from anywhere to three to 15 years ago.

Which begged the question, why wait so long to report an assault?

"The victim controls the time they feel comfortable in reporting the actual assault," Stephens said. "We are seeing reporting along with other aspects. For example, a Line of Duty being done in conjunction with an injury, or a psychological issue associated with an actual assault, or as part of out-processing or separation. The question is typically asked, 'Have you been a victim of sexual assault?'"

Stephens attributes this willingness to come forward due to higher command attention as well as the emphasis through SHARP and other awareness programs and campaigns.

SHARP or EEO?

By their definitions, SHARP (Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention) and EEO (Equal Employment Opportunity) are often confused with each other.

According to the SHARP Guidebook (October 2013), "Sexual harassment and sexual assault have often been found to be interrelated and to exist along

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SHARP/EEO

from Pg. 5

a continuum of sexual violence in which acts of sexual harassment, if unchecked, may lead to acts of sexual assault.”

Lt. Col. Lynn F. Wood, the U.S. Army Reserve Command SHARP program director, said a Soldier who is either sexually harassed or assaulted would report the incident to a Sexual Assault Response Coordinator, or SARC, or Victim Advocate, or VA, in their unit.

“Everything in SHARP has to be tailored to what the victim wants and what they are comfortable with,” Wood said. “Ultimately, it’s the victim that starts the reporting process, but it’s the leadership, SARC and VA that must drive the complaint progress to be handled ethically, timely, and efficiently.”

Wood did say there are still some instances of reprisal against those who come forward but many unit leaders are doing a better job in stopping such practices.

“If you have a chain of command that is absolutely making sure that offenders are held accountable, and everybody in the unit sees this climate happening, it is going to drive an accurate and healthy reporting process,” Wood said.

By contrast, Army civilians who are sexually assaulted should report the incident to local law enforcement. Civilians who are victims of sexual harassment should report the incident to EEO, said Sue Bickford, U.S. Army Reserve



EEO director at Fort McCoy, Wisconsin.

Bickford said discrimination cases that her office handles fall into one of nine protected bases: race, color, sex, age (over 40), religion, national origin, disability, genetic information, and reprisal.

“Civilians are entitled to work in an environment that is free from discrimination of any kind,” Bickford said. “Sexual harassment would be a type of discrimination that a person could come to our office for and we could process a complaint.”

As opposed to units that may have a SARC or VA, there is only one EEO office in the Army Reserve and it is located at Fort McCoy. However, Bickford said that doesn't hamper the reporting process. She said victims could notify her staff via phone or email. In addition, there are collateral duty counselors across the Army Reserve.

“We currently have 211 collateral duty EEO counselors,” she said. “They work at their normal job at the various units, they are trained by us to become certified EEO counselors, and they work as a bridge between the commands and our office.”

SHARP Summit 2015

Army Chief of Staff Gen. Raymond T. Odierno hosted a SHARP Summit in February where a number of topics were discussed to raise awareness and prevention of sexual assault and harassment.

One topic of discussion during the summit was ensuring that bystanders protect victims.

During a panel discussion in front of general officers, victims shared their experiences. They said they often faced “disbelief and retaliation from others” after reporting an incident.

According to an Army.mil article by David Vergun, Odierno said that there is more confidence in reporting sexual harassment and assault, “... challenges still remain, and the predators need to become the pariah, not the victim.”

Odierno added there are noncommissioned and commissioned officers “who still don't know what behavior is acceptable and what is not. The changing culture needs to begin with them and there needs to be conversations about it all the way down to the lowest levels.”

One female victim summed up her rape by a fellow Soldier. Her leaders' lack of action led to the

Soldier raping three other women before he was arrested and sentenced to 35-years in prison.

The takeaway from all this is that “as leaders you have to protect the victims and follow through with an investigation, even when it's your buddy,” she said, adding that it's especially hard because there is “a human tendency to want to side with those who you respect and serve with -- sweep it under the rug.”

Leader Involvement

James B. Balocki, U.S. Army Reserve command executive officer, said that sexual harassment and sexual assault is “... a fundamental breakdown in trust. Trust between the two employees and, depending on how the organization reacts, the potential for loss of trust in the organization and its leaders in taking care of it and remedying the situation.”

From a legal standpoint, leaders who fail to act on a complaint could be held accountable.

“Every supervisor (military or civilian) on their support form and their appraisal there is a ‘support for EEO’ on the rating,” said Tim Johnson, a US-ARC Staff Judge Advocate labor counselor. “I know that I have recommended that supervisors should be checked as ‘Failed’ in that area because of circumstances like this.”

He cited a case where a general officer did not receive their second star because they failed to uphold SHARP/EEO policies within the organization.

“They were not effective in stopping harassment,” Johnson said.

If left unchecked by supervisors, instances of sexual harassment and sexual assault can be disruptive in the workplace – and not just for the victim.

According to the article “A Review of Organizational Strategies for Reducing Sexual Harassment: Insights from the U.S. Military,” published in the “Journal of Social Issues,” Vol. 70, No.4, studies have shown that sexual harassment in the workplace causes the victims to have decreased work performance and commitment to their organization, withdrawal, turnover, and conflicts within their team.

These can also lead to monetary losses for the organization.

The National Sexual Violence Resource Center cited a 1994 U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board study that showed, “...the cost of sexual harassment

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in the federal government was an estimated \$327 million; this includes the cost of job turnover (\$247 million), sick leave taken because of the harassment (\$14.9 million), and productivity losses (\$287.5 million).

Balocki said the human toll is far more important and far more devastating to the organization.

“It goes back to how the employee believes that the organization is going to respond when faced with an accusation or the reality that another member has potentially violated that particular individual,” Balocki said. “It bears a human toll to the individual involved, their psyche, to their willingness to work, to their willingness to even come to work, to their willingness to be a part of the team that they trust to take care of them. It’s just devastating on every level.”

Reporting Sexual Harassment

If you are sexually harassed, there are time frames for reporting the incident. The reporting window for Soldiers is 60 days and 45 days for civilians.

SHARP and EEO officials said if the harassment continues, whether it is sexual or non-sexual, the clock can potentially reset itself after each incident.

“The idea of the timeline is to keep things fresh, not to have something that happened months ago,” Johnson said. “If something is affecting you and this harassment has bothered you, you certainly should get to EEO within 45 days.”

However, if a victim opts to not report an incident within 45 days and the harassment continues, the victim can still file a continuing harassment complaint.

“If something started out as sexual harassment and then they (the perpetrator) just become a nasty and difficult person and it’s all tied back to that original sexual harassment, that is continuing harassment,” he said. “So, every time something happens, it can be considered a new 45-day window. When you file your complaint, you can add all those incidents to provide substance for your claims.”

Bickford said that victims don’t need to classify their case before going to EEO.

“So they don’t have to worry legally about, ‘is

this sexual harassment, is this non-sexual harassment, is this reprisal?’ They just basically come to us and during the process of counseling them, we’ll help them through that,” Bickford said. “Our specialists here will draft the acceptance or dismissal and it’s usually an acceptance.”


But Bickford did caution those who choose to file a claim. She said if an aggrieved civilian has exhausted all resources and chooses the formal complaint process, reaching a conclusion could be lengthy.

“The EEO process is a very good process and people should be encouraged, not discouraged, from using it,” Bickford said. “But getting into the EEO process can also be very time-consuming and it doesn’t always offer a quick resolution. So, we always try to tell people to use alternative dispute resolution at any step in the process before it goes all the way through to a formal adjudication. Try to work things out. If you can’t, then can and should certainly go full-scale through this process.”

An Inherent Responsibility

Ultimately, Balocki said that leaders must be involved in stopping sexual harassment and sexual assault no matter the size of the organization – from smaller directorates and company level to general officer commands.

He said the size of an organization does not give leaders a free pass to look the other way.

“A leader has an inherent responsibility, when they learn that something wrong has happened inside their organization, to take corrective action to fix it,” Balocki said. “While work remains, I have greater confidence that leaders today are taking action to stop sexual harassment and sexual assault.” 

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

www.PreventSexualAssault.army.mil

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U.S. Army Reserve hosts first Sexual Assault Response Coordinators working group

Story & photos by Capt. MALISA HAMPER
335th Signal Command (Theater)



Lt. Col. Lynn Wood, left, the Sexual Harassment/Assault Response Prevention Program Manager for the U.S. Army Reserve Command, Fort Bragg, N.C., addresses the audience of sexual assault response coordinators and victim advocates during a forum in Atlanta, March 17. This was the first time the group came together to discuss SHARP and look for ways to improve the reporting process.

ATLANTA – Preventing and responding to sexual harassment and sexual assault remains one of the top five priorities of the U.S. Army Reserve.

Over 50 military technicians and service members from different commands across the country attended the first ever working group for sexual assault response coordinators (SARC) and victim advocates (VA) in Atlanta March 17 in the effort to support this priority.

The working group was hosted by Lt. Col. Lynn Wood, the Sexual Harassment/Assault Response

Prevention (SHARP) Program manager for the U.S. Army Reserve Command.

“This is the first time we have all come together to network with each other and ask questions. We can only do so much during teleconferences,” said Wood.

In the past, the chief of the Army Reserve held an annual SHARP forum where all of the command teams from each command headquarters came together.

“We decided to do a SARC and VA forum to

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SARC

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get to know everyone. These are the subject matter experts; the ones out there doing the job on a day to day basis,” she said. “I wanted their input when it comes to helping us develop the standard operating procedures, helping us put together the CAR’s next SHARP Summit, and getting to know what really happens at their level.”

SARCs and VAs have the difficult task of getting re-credentialed every two years with a total of 32 credentialing hours. Individuals have to find seminars or training events on their own, and take online classes to complete their 32 hours of credits.

“Attending this working group will give participants over 22 hours of continuing education credits,” explained Wood.

The working group compiled of 14 classes, which included Bystander Intervention training for Advo-

cates, Ethics in Victim Services, and Line of Duty Investigations for Sexual Assault Victims in the Reserve, and Purchasing Policies for SHARP Program Operations.

Kristen Cox, a Mobile Training Team lead for the Coast Guard, facilitated the class on Bystander Intervention training for Advocates.

She asked, “What does it take to make a particularly efficient and effective training environment?”

“Hands on.”

“Realistic.”

“Group participation.”

The working group focused on discussion led training and participatory questions were encouraged. Attendees were given opportunities to talk with each other after each class.

Charity Albritton, the SARC at the 143rd Expeditionary Sustainment Command, remarked on the importance of interacting with her peers saying, “Networking is very important in this line of work. We cannot get enough networking opportunities.”

“Our units are geographically scattered in the Army Reserve, which presents challenges we need to overcome,” said Albritton. “I’m hoping this working group will start bringing us together and bridging all of our gaps.”

Brig. Gen. Tammy Smith, the deputy chief of staff of the Army Reserve, also recognized the importance of holding this forum.

“What I ask is that you come together and you form these procedures and you help improve our reporting procedures,” said Smith to the group.

The working group ended with the planning of the CAR’s upcoming SHARP Summit.

“I am confident that you will be able to achieve the goals we have set in place for you at this forum and that you will walk away with a network of people you can be open with and can share best practices with,” said Smith. 🌐

Brig. Gen. Tammy Smith, the deputy chief of staff of the U.S. Army Reserve, addresses the first ever working group for sexual assault response coordinators and victim advocates in Atlanta, March 17. Smith challenged the group to improve SHARP reporting procedures.





U.S. ARMY

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As a Soldier in the U.S. Army, I am committed to stopping and reporting all forms of Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault. By living the Army Values and holding myself and others accountable, I am a force in the fight to Protect My Team.



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Caring Leadership & Meaningful Training *Engineer Company Paves Way to Success*

Story & photos by Sgt. 1st Class MICHEL SAURET
416th Theater Engineer Command



DARIEN, III. – Very little conveys the health of an Army unit better than its Soldiers re-enlisting.

In the last two years, more than a fifth of the troops at the 277th Engineer Company (Horizontal) have raised their right hands. Some platoon and squad leaders have been with the 277th for more than 10 years.

The company, headquartered in Camp Bullis, Texas, specializes in pavement construction.

Already the unit is over strength with 171 men and women in uniform.

“I would say it starts with the leadership. I really would,” said. Capt. Vince Frausto, commander of the 277th.

“It starts with those first line leaders and mid level leaders. It also has to do with training as well. Is it interesting? Is it fun? In a budget constraining environment, are we being innovative and creative in how we approach our training objectives.

It’s that type of training that keeps them coming back over and over again,” Frausto said, from Laredo, Texas.

There’s a special emphasis in the Army Reserve right now to identify units like his: units that promote positive practices and encourage Soldiers to stay.

This effort is known as Operation Full Court Press, with a focus on recruiting, retaining and promoting quality Soldiers.

On average, Army Reserve units reach about 53 percent of their retention quotas.

The U.S. Army Reserve Command sets these quotas based on each unit’s size and the number

of Soldiers eligible to re-enlist. The 277th nearly doubled its retention goal in 2013 (181 percent) and surpassed the national average in 2014 (84 percent).

There are companies out there with even more impressive numbers.

Many of them have deployed in recent years, which tends to boost their re-enlistments.

The 277th has accomplished these stats through a few simple factors: caring leadership, meaningful training and personal sacrifice.

Caring Leadership

When it comes to leadership, there aren’t any new secrets. The Dirt

See **CARING**, Pg. 14



Staff Sgt. Raul Martinez, facing page, a squad leader with the 277th Engineer Company (Horizontal), calls out to fellow Soldiers while staging vehicles at Camp Bullis, Texas, March 22. Sgt. 1st Class Lucia Estrada, above, a platoon sergeant for the 277th, laughs with her Soldiers. The 277th is one of several Army Reserve units that boasts strong retention numbers due to an emphasis on quality training and strong rapport between its leaders and Soldiers.

CARING

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Sgt. Robert Gonzales, maintenance squad leader for the 277th Engineer Company (Horizontal), helps guide a recovery vehicle to free up an M984 Wrecker truck stuck in the mud at Camp Bullis, March 22.

Devils reinforce principles already known throughout the Army: care and communicate with Soldiers.

After morning formation, groups of platoon and squad leaders huddled with note pads, addressing their plans for the weekend.

“He’s a superstar,” one Soldier said during that huddle, pointing at Sgt. Robert Gonzales.

Gonzales humbly shook his head.

“No, no, no,” he said, bowing away, face turning red with embarrassment.

The others insisted.

Gonzales is a maintenance squad leader. He invests in his Soldiers both on and off duty. On the civilian side, he’s a lube technician for Holt Caterpillar, a heavy construction equipment company. He helped one Soldier apply for a job with the same company. He also pursued another Soldier who was getting sucked into a life of troubled friends. Gonzales helped pull him away from a drug environment.

“We’re pretty much family. I mean, that’s all we are,” he said.

If he could give advice to other leaders, it would be:

“Take that road and make (Soldiers) want to be here. Get to know them a little more. Throw a little more advice on what you would do. Just talk to them. Not



just, how’s everything going? Okay, cool, bye,” he said.

Gonzales was not always this admired leader, however.

He remembers being younger, slacking off, not taking the Army life seriously.

He was evicted from his apartment, lived from place to place for a while, and lost his car in a wreck.

Then he deployed with the unit in 2009, serving as a gunner and a maintenance Soldier for a mission aimed to rebuild roads, barriers and helipads.

“After deployment ... I knew they got my back. I wanted to be here more and more.”

He re-enlisted in 2011 and has been applying himself toward Soldiers who used to be just like him.

Another squad leader has a mantra when it comes to helping others.

“He’s not my Soldier, but he’s a Soldier, so I help him even

though he’s not mine,” said Staff Sgt. Raul Martinez, who has spent 19 years with the unit, and a total of 25 in service.

He remembers mentoring one Soldier who might have been considered a “lost cause” because he wouldn’t apply himself. The light came on when he watched his peers advance, leaving him behind.

“He looked for help, so I told him, ‘Hey that’s what I was trying to teach you back then. I’m glad you understand now.’ I didn’t give up on him ... Now he’s with his peers,” said Martinez.

That “lost cause” has now been with the unit 12 years.

“It’s five minutes (of my time), and that five minutes translates into ten years of a guy’s career. A Soldier’s career. Then he turns that and gives it to the next Soldier,” he said.

Meaningful Training

When asked about their favorite training exercise, most Soldiers

mentioned Canada without hesitation. They traveled to Happy Valley-Goose Bay in July 2014 for Operation Northern Frontier, where they worked with the Royal Canadian Air Force 5th Wing to pave roadways.

“The innovative readiness training we get are big, especially the one in Canada. I mean that bought us ten good months of interest (from our) Soldiers ... It was one of the reasons why they signed up: to travel, to see the world, and do something different in uniform,” said Frausto.

Even though it was a cold summer in Canada, and mosquitos surrounded the place, Soldiers said they loved it.

“It was miserable, but at the same time, it was fun. We got to go out there and do our job. We weren’t just sitting around in a drill hall. It was a test of my leadership and everyone else’s perseverance,” said Sgt. Reuben Aleman, who re-enlisted last year.

Aleman was in charge of a small team building a roadway for a bridge. His team did some cross training with another bridging construction team.

The rest of the company worked on a pioneer trail through dense vegetation, spanning more than 1 kilometer in length. They hauled more than 1,200 tons of aggregate, which they graded and compacted, making it ready for asphalt.

“The Canadian 5th Wing sent us some pictures of that road, finished, completed, and it snowed for seven months up there, and just to see how well that road was holding up, I think, that leaves an everlasting impression ... We were

part of that road. It’s something that we did,” said Frausto.

In addition to the Goose Bay mission, the Dirt Devils also worked on a 64-acre project, featuring a 32-acre sports complex for a local community project at Fort Chaffee, Arkansas.

Then in 2013, they improved roads at Fort McCoy, Wisconsin, and they trained 50 Soldiers in combat patrols.

Their March training weekend had a mild start.

But on Sunday, the company’s maintenance team helped recover a wrecker vehicle weighing more than 40,000 pounds stuck in the mud.

The vehicle belonged to another Army Reserve unit from Houston.

The Soldiers and vehicles got filthy and muddy, but they were all smiles once the truck was free.

Personal Sacrifice

Sacrifice and commitment in the Army can take many forms. Soldiers sacrifice time away from family, but sometimes that sacrifice involves money.

“Everything I’ve done in the Army has been for this unit,” said Sgt. Anthony Pearson, of San Antonio, Texas, who works for an auto insurance company on the civilian side.

At one point, the unit lost its supply sergeant due to a change of station move, and Pearson made the decision to step in.

He volunteered and was put on orders for several months to manage the unit’s \$30-million’s worth of equipment.

“It was a pay cut to do the work here, but it was something I needed to be done for the unit. It

did put a financial strain on my family, but my wife understands my passion for the military,” said Pearson.

If he had to, he would do it all over again, he said.

Before taking on the supply position, he was the unit’s communications specialist. He took that job, too, because the unit needed him.

“Every role I’ve taken, I’ve taken to better the unit ... Anything I can do to help this unit function,” he said.

When asked why, he said he does it for his fellow Soldiers.

“The people. The leadership. I’ve known these guys, the majority of them, since 2003. Some of them are like my father. Some of them are like my brothers and sisters. It’s hard to keep the unit together for that long without being on active duty. A bunch of us has been here and basically we’d do anything for each other,” said Pearson.

That commitment runs vibrant throughout the unit, regardless of the finances the Army has to offer.

“To me it was never about money. I wanted to do it because I loved the experience of it. I guess I’m an old patriot. I’m old school,” said Martinez.

Martinez has lived through four uniform changes, signed more than six enlistment contracts and has been through the military processing station four times to stay in the Army.

“It’s not about money because I stopped getting bonuses years ago. It’s all about coming to battle assembly, and try to see if I can teach someone something. And I get taught every day.” 🇺🇸

LEADING BY EXAMPLE

277th NCO shares knowledge, experience



Staff Sgt. Raul Martinez, 2nd platoon squad leader with the 277th Engineer Company, oversees the movement of construction vehicles by his platoon during their battle assembly training at Camp Bullis, Texas, March 22. Martinez, who has been with the unit for over 19 years, has become a key contributor to the U.S. Army Reserve unit's retention success and cohesiveness.

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

CAMP BULLIS, Texas - There isn't some simple recipe when it comes to good leadership, or retention in the military ranks. To find the answer to why "A Soldier" is good, one only has to look at their immediate influences.

In the case of the 277th Engineer Company, an Army Reserve unit based in San Antonio, Texas, that influence is the same for many Soldiers on their lines. The 277th has one of the highest retention rates of any Reserve unit in the area and one Soldier, who has been with the unit for over 19 years, is attributed with some of that success.

Staff Sgt. Raul David Martinez, 2nd platoon

squad leader with the 277th is 51-years-old, and has been in the military for over 25 years, serving the last 19 with the 277th.

"I guess I'm an old patriot, I'm old school," said Martinez. "I've been through four uniform changes, seven contracts and gone through MEPS four times."

The 277th have been highlighted as part of Operation Full Court Press, an Army Reserve initiative to engage leaders and retain Soldiers, because of their retention rate. Martinez is a spotlight amongst such a highlight.

"I've been asked several times when will I retire and my response is, when I die," Martinez said with

a grin. "It's not about money, because I stopped getting bonuses years ago. It's about coming to battle assembly and trying to see if I could teach someone something."

"I've had a lot of people ask me, why this unit? And I tell them that in this unit there was always someone willing to help the Soldiers, and they took the time to help me."

The atmosphere during the 277th's monthly Battle Assembly was more like friends reuniting after a break.

Every Soldier seemed to be interacting with at least one other Soldier, but usually in a squad size element. Martinez seemed to be the favorite patriarch in the group, holding his coffee cup and sharing his wisdom with some of the other Soldiers.

"He's (Martinez) a cornerstone to what the 277th was, and is today," said 277th Engineer Company Commander, Capt. Vince Frausto.

Martinez, who comes off as an easy to talk to guy even outside the military, was influenced as a young Soldier himself.

"I had a Sgt. 1st Class who took it upon himself one day to help me with a promotion packet, and explain the process," said Martinez. "He wasn't even with our unit at the time."

"He made a comment 'you're A Soldier, not my Soldier, but you're always A Soldier, so I'm willing to help you', and I've always remembered that saying," said Martinez.

That encounter was different for the young Soldier, Martinez. It inspired him to set the example and pay the deed forward.

"I said, you know what, I'm going to do the same thing he did," said Martinez. "If I saw a Soldier in the hallway and he had a question, I would stop and say if you need an answer let me show you how to find it."

The mentorship of junior leaders became second nature to Martinez, doing only what he felt was the right thing to do.

That desire to do the right thing spread to other Soldiers in the unit.

"Staff Sgt. Martinez helped me put my packet together for my E-5, and he does that a lot with other prospective NCO's, which is great," said Sgt. Reuben Aleman, squad leader, 277 Engineer Company.

"He actually spent time with me, helped me

get the packet together, so now I try to do that with other Soldiers trying to make their E-5," said Aleman.

The time that Soldiers like Aleman and Martinez put in, not only contributes to the positive growth of other future leaders, but creates an atmosphere of professional friendship.

Communication is another key factor that both junior and senior leaders in the 277th say works extremely well within their ranks. According to Aleman the 277th is more of a family, many of the Soldiers having been in the unit for over 10 years, so even outside of Battle Assembly, the lines of communication are open.

"We have a cohesion between platoons," said Martinez. "It's not 1st platoon vs. 2nd platoon vs. 3rd platoon, it's the company."

"If an NCO from 1st platoon asks a 2nd platoon Soldier for help they understand to go ahead and do it if they aren't tied up with something and there are no arguments between the Soldiers about that," Martinez added. "That makes things work here."

It works so well in fact, that Martinez has experienced several re-enlistments of young Soldiers who he has personally affected.

"I don't count them, I just help them," said Martinez. "I would never say hey, I've helped 15 people this month, how many have you helped?"

"If I could just give them five minutes, ask them what do they need, what can we do for you, let me help you get logged in, it's five minutes and that five minutes can translate to 10 years of a Soldier's career," said Martinez.

Factors such as communication, cohesiveness, and engagement ranked high with the answers many of the Soldiers say they stay in the unit, but what it always came back to was leadership.

"We have great leadership here, and if it wasn't for them leading the way, being a good example to everyone in the unit, I probably wouldn't have re-enlisted," Aleman said.

"Seeing that we do have good NCO's like Staff Sgt. Martinez, that really pushed me," Aleman said.

The 277th Engineer Company is doing well. Soldiers are learning and progressing, and for Martinez, a husband, father, and former five-time NBA championship San Antonio Spurs season ticket holder, that is all that matters. 🇺🇸

TOTAL FORCE ELEMENT

U.S. ARMY RESERVE CSTX



FORT HUNTER-LIGGETT, CALIF.

“This sets up our Army Reserve units to know what to expect when they work with active component units, Army National Guard units, and with joint partners.”

— **Maj. Alex Kerkow**
90th Training Division
Deputy Chief of Operations

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

FORT HUNTER-LIGGETT, CALIF.

- U.S. Army Reserve Soldiers awoke March 8, in the Golden State and kicked off the final week of the 84th Training Command's Combat Support Training Exercise 91-15-01 with the same intensity as day one, two weeks prior.

“We're not talking about coming out and doing your annual marksmanship or medical readiness,” said Maj. Alex Kerkow, 90th Training Division deputy chief of operations. “We're talking about simulating an operational deployment.”

CSTX is designed to train Army reserve units to prepare for mobilization, and the 90th Training Division, who hosted and supporting the event, have added a real life slant to that training by integrating active Army, National Guard, and other joint partners to participate in the training.

“CSTX in its infancy was a simple concept of an enhanced annual training that has grown by leaps and bounds,” said Kerkow. “Over the last six years we took out the annual training mindset and put in the operational deployment mindset, leaving the training audience with the closest thing to operational deployment we can get in a training environment.”

For this particular exercise there are over 800 active Army Soldiers from the 81st Cavalry Squadron, over 200 California National Guard Soldiers, and over 200 Navy personnel assisting with the medical facilities.

“This sets up our Army Reserve units to know what to expect when they work with active component units, Army National Guard units, and with joint partners,” said Kerkow.

The CSTX training works in phases, to fully incorporate the Soldiers into a well-rounded training environment that mimics real world pre-mobilization and operational deployment scenarios. The first phase is the reception staging phase where they go from their home of record to their unit and “deploy” to the initial staging base, California National Guard training base, Camp Roberts.

From there they move to mission rehearsal phase where the tactical operation centers establish their battle rhythms, allowing the Soldiers to do some battle drill rehearsals in preparation for the operation phase.

“The operations phase is free play, 24/7, missions come down anytime during the day and can be executed,” said Kerkow.

The focus of the exercise is to train sustainment units, and this year's participants belong to medical, logistics, quartermasters, engineers, military police, and signal, who make up the bulk of the Army Reserve units. Every unit runs missions according to their designated military task during the operational phase.

“We're operating in a stability operations environment, however we do come in as if we're on the front line and setting up, so you see that whole transition from establishing an area of operation, establishing life support, establishing your command and communications, and performing your operations then retrograding those operations, getting that whole deployment cycle from start to finish,” said Master Sgt. Gary Ford with the 804th Medical Brigade.

See **CSTX**, Pg. 20

CSTX

from Pg. 19



Soldiers with the U.S. Army Reserve 912th Forward Surgical Team, top, simulate injured Soldiers after an improvised explosive device attack while Soldiers with the U.S. Army Reserve 354th Military Police Company react to an ambush attack by opposition forces played by active duty Soldiers at Fort Hunter-Liggett, Calif., March 8, 2015. The real-world training scenario is part of the 84th Training Command's yearly Combat Support Training Exercise which prepares Reserve Soldiers for operational deployments.

The CSTX training audience is split into different forward operating bases across Fort Hunter-Liggett and Camp Roberts, simulating the many locales and services forces would have, when deployed.

“A lot of the junior Soldiers haven’t been deployed, and we perform on drill weekends but a lot of the time the focus of our actual jobs are lost in other metrics, so it’s nice to get out here and deploy our element and really get in the shops,” said Ford. “It kind of gives Soldiers their true purpose down range.”

The hands-on experience was a factor most participants appreciated. Walking through the FOBs and seeing more than one type of uniform working in the same command to achieve a common goal provided another positive element for the training audience.

“I think this is more on line with real world operations and a great place to get all the kinks out and recognize your deficiencies,” said petty officer 2nd class Brevard Smith III, a Naval augmenter out of Colorado Springs. “It’s always been rewarding working with joint forces. You learn a lot more and overall it makes you a well-rounded individual.”

CSTX also provides those military units that are behind the scenes, a chance to get hands on as well and fulfill a real-world training opportunity. Soldiers of the 200th Preventative Medicine Detachment have been setting traps for rodents, capturing mosquitoes, testing air, and water, all in an effort to ensure the health and safety their forward deployed brothers and sisters.

“We’re behind the scenes with what we do, and not everyone realizes the impact we have on a mission,” said Cadet Hannah Nilsen, attached to the 200th Preventative Medicine Detachment.

“Our main mission is to keep Soldiers healthy and that’s what preventative medicine does,” said Sgt. Marquelle Dreiss, attached to the 200th Preventative Medicine Detachment. “I just love the Army, and this is why I joined, to be out here doing this stuff.

While units were able to get hands on training with their specific military occupational specialty, the training command did not falter on adding the combat skills training needed in real-world deployment situations. Throughout the exercise, opposition forces, generally played by the active duty Soldiers, assaulted the base camps of several units. This forced the units to retaliate to the indirect fire improvised

explosive detonation attacks on convoys as they should if deployed.

“The Soldiers are very motivated and know their MOS very well but may need some Soldiering skills tweaking, knowledge and experience, and that is what we provide,” said Staff Sgt. Matthew Coonts, training sergeant with 2nd Battalion, 378th Regiment. “As the war evolves, we need to change our tactics to get them prepared for what they will see at the battlefield.”

The end goal of the 84th Training Command, 91st Training Division, and senior leaders for all the participating units is to train their participants to standards ready for operational deployment.

This year’s CSTX participants would probably agree the event went to great lengths to achieve that end. 🇺🇸



Sgt. Marquelle Dreiss, with the 200th Preventative Medicine Detachment, carefully sets up a mosquito light used to catch and test mosquitoes for harmful diseases at Fort Hunter-Liggett, Calif., March 8, 2015. The real-world training scenario is part of the 84th Training Command’s yearly Combat Support Training Exercise which prepares Reserve Soldiers for operational deployments.

Medical Soldiers, Sailors, & Aviators Train Together at Army Reserve CSTX



U.S. Army Reserve Soldiers with the 456th Area Support Medical Company out of Somersworth, N.H., and the 912th Forward Surgical Team out of Cranston, R.I., team up with Naval corpsmen from the Expeditionary Medical Facility out of Dallas/Forth Worth at the USAR Combat Support Training Exercise in Fort Hunter-Liggett, Calif., March 7. The Soldiers and Sailors collaborated with medical aviation Soldiers in a real-world scenario exercise to booster their skills for deployment operations.

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

FORT HUNTER-LIGGETT, Calif. - This year's U.S. Army Combat Support Training Exercise, organized by the 84th Training Command and supported by the 91st Training Division, saw the involvement of the largest joint patient movement and medical field training exercise within the Department of Defense.

The scenario based, pre-operational deployment training environment of CSTX welcomed U.S. Army Reserve units from across the country to train with active duty Army components, California National Guard Soldiers, and Naval expeditionary medical

facility Sailors, in joint exercise Global Medic.

The Army Reserve Medical Command, and the Army Reserve's Medical Readiness and Training Command, organized the Global Medic event which trains more than 15,000 service members. Global Medic is designed as a casualty evacuation, treatment, patient regulating, and aeromedical evacuation exercise that incorporates real world scenarios and support elements as you would see in theater.

"It's a dynamic situation," said Sgt. T.J. Hayer, aviation combat medic with F Company 7th Battal-

ion, 158th Aviation Regiment. “For a lot of people that haven’t been involved in anything like this, it’s a good way to start warming up to the concept of combat operations and medical evacuations during combat scenarios.”

Soldiers and Sailors are placed at different locations throughout Fort Hunter Liggett and nearby Camp Roberts, a California National Guard training post, where they man forward operating bases for CSTX as they would if forward deployed.

Throughout the training exercise, the Soldiers and Sailors are introduced to different surprise elements that lead them to react to, and rely on their military occupational specific training to respond.

“What happens is we get attacked, and then all of sudden there will be casualty collection points throughout the FOBs, which prompts the Army Support Medical Company to call out and let us know when to expect the casualties,” said Lt. Col. Michelle LaFleur, commander of the 912th Forward Surgical Team out of Cranston, Rhode Island. “We treat the Soldier and either bring them forward or send them back into the battle.”

This particular scenario saw 40 casualties over a four-hour period, where triage was done outside of the four tents set up by the 912th FST. The casualties came in by level of injury and were designated to the trauma tent, operating/surgical tents, or holding tent, which was supervised by the 456th Area Support Medical Company from Somersworth, New Hampshire.

Soldiers from the 912th FST and 456th ASMC, who are organized under the 804th Medical Brigade, provided care to designated casualties, who were played by active duty Soldiers. A total of 17 Navy corpsmen from the Expeditionary Medical Facility out of Dallas/Fort Worth, also participated, augmenting the medical Soldiers and assisting in casualty care and transport on litters.

“This is my first time working with the Army, and it’s giving me a chance to see how they do things and for them to see how we do things, so it’s a really good educational opportunity,” said Petty Officer 2nd Class Christopher Voiri, with EMF Dallas.

The joint operation helped develop the working relationship between forces, as is similar to that in deployment scenarios.

“It definitely looks like a coalition force when

people come to the aircraft to extract patients,” said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Adrian Gabriel Wilbert, medical evacuation pilot with F Company 7th Battalion, 158 Aviation Regiment. “It’s been a good experience, having a crawl, walk, run phase at this training, getting everyone familiar with the operations.”

“It’s a good thing to get all the services together, since we all have the same training and know the same stuff,” said Hayer. “Every time I’ve gone out to one of the FOBs and unloaded I’ve seen that everyone works hand in hand, with good communication and integration, and it’s a really good way to prepare the force for the future.”

The medical element on ground and in air highlighted a total force partnership, displaying the effectiveness of several units like the 912th FST, 456th ASMC, 10th Combat Support Hospital, 399th Command Support Hospital and others, collaborating with the Naval Expeditionary Medical Facility to complete the mission. 🇺🇸



U.S. Army Reserve Soldiers with the 456th Area Support Medical Company out of Somersworth, N.H., and the 912th Forward Surgical Team out of Cranston, R.I., team up with Naval corpsmen from the Expeditionary Medical Facility out of Dallas/Forth Worth at the USAR Combat Support Training Exercise in Fort Hunter-Liggett, Calif, March 7. The Soldiers and Sailors collaborated with medical aviation Soldiers in a real-world scenario exercise to booster their skills for deployment operations.

Harford honored with memorial plaque



Maj. Gen. Luis R. Visot, U.S. Army Reserve Command chief of staff, left, and 1st Lt. Markus Harford, unveil a memorial plaque honoring Lee S. Harford Jr., Ph.D. during a dedication ceremony at the USARC headquarters at Fort Bragg, N.C., March 12, 2015. Harford, 62, passed away after a sudden and brief illness, March 14, 2014 in Fayetteville, N.C. He was the first and only director of Army Reserve history holding the position since 1992.

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

FORT BRAGG, N.C. – Almost a year after his passing, Lee S. Harford Jr., Ph.D., was honored with a memorial plaque at the headquarters where he served with distinction.

The unveiling was held March 12, 2015 at the U.S. Army Reserve Command headquarters, here.

Harford, who served 22 years as the first Army Reserve command historian, died March 14, 2014 after a brief and sudden illness in Fayetteville, N.C.

His son, 1st Lt. Markus

Harford, commander of the Army Reserve 801st Engineer Company in Vallejo, California, attended the dedication ceremony on behalf the Harford family.

The oldest of three sons, Markus Harford said coming back to the USARC headquarters reminded him of where his father, also an Army engineer, “was in his life just before he passed. It brings a sense of comfort to me to come back and be where he was.”

He described his father as “passionate about his work.” So

much so, he shared a story with the audience of asking his father when he planned to retire.

“Two weeks later, he responded by saying ‘he thought about it and that he had no wish to retire,’” he said. “He cited the importance of history and his department’s mission. He cited the importance of the United States Army Reserve. He loved to serve.”

He said sharing history with others was a “true passion and calling for his father.”

At the time of his passing last

year, four fellow historians, Dr. Richard Stewart, U.S. Army chief historian; Chris Kowlakowski, director of the MacArthur Memorial in Norfolk, Va. and previous chief curator of the National Museum of the Army Reserve; Stephen Harlan, 99th Regional Support Command historian; and retired combat historian Chad Rogers, all described Harford as a dedicated champion of history.

“He devoted himself for 20 years to the history program,” Stewart said. “Win, lose, or draw, he was a forceful advocate for the Army Reserve history program.”

Throughout his career, Harford taught U.S. History, world civilizations history and military history courses at the United States Military Academy, the Virginia Military Institute, the Georgia Military College, and the Georgia Institute of Technology, educating more than 3,000 college students in history. He also served as the Command Historian of the

U.S. Army ROTC Cadet Command at Fort Monroe.

He graduated from Bordentown Military Institute in New Jersey, before enrolling at Norwich University in Vermont, where he successfully completed ROTC. He was awarded a Bachelor of Arts in history and commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Army Corps of Engineers in 1974.

Harford served eight years on active duty in Virginia, Germany, and Kansas, before leaving the service to complete his Master of Arts in military history at Kansas State University and his doctor of philosophy from Florida State University.

Harford continued to serve the Army as a Reserve officer with special skill identifier 5X (Historian) in mobilization designee positions. In 1996, he deployed to Bosnia-Herzegovina as the Army Component Command Historian.

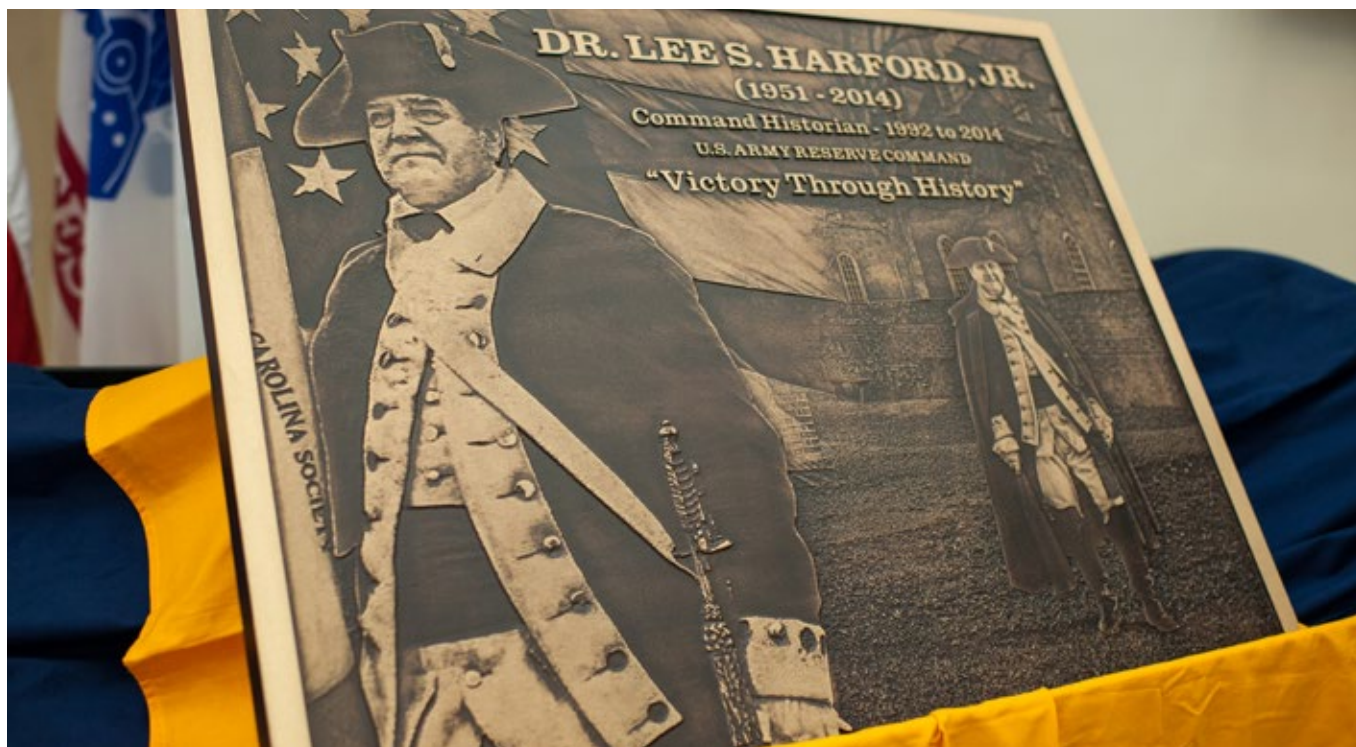
His passion for history led him to join several prestigious

societies to include the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, the Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States, the Confederation of Union Generals, the North Carolina Society, Sons of the American Revolution, the North Carolina Society, Sons of the Revolution, the Veteran Corps of Artillery of the State of New York, and the Fayetteville Independent Light Infantry.

Harford retired in 2002 as a lieutenant colonel in the Army Reserve.

He is survived by his wife, Annette of Fayetteville; father, Lee, of Palmyra, N.J.; son, Markus and his wife, Alex, and their children, Grant and Sofia, of Suisun City, Calif.; sons, Christian and Andrew of Biberach, Germany; brother, Robin of Grand Rapids, Mich.; and sister, Anne Graeff of Palmyra, N.J.

Harford was interred with full military honors at Arlington National Cemetery, July 8, 2014. 🇺🇸





Kate Campbell Stevenson performs as Eleanor Roosevelt during her one-woman show, “Women: Back to the Future” at the U.S. Army Forces Command and U.S. Army Reserve Command headquarters at Fort Bragg, N.C., March 17. Portraying Bessie Coleman, Louis Arner Boyd, and Roosevelt, Stevenson dressed in period clothing and shared the women’s stories in song and monologues to show how they overcame gender-based and societal obstacles to achieve personal and historical success. “Women’s stories have been there all along, we just have to be willing to dig to find them,” said Stevenson. “I present these women to plant a seed in each and every one of you to show that you can overcome any obstacle, just like they did!”

One Woman’s Walk Through History

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

FORT BRAGG, N.C. – What do Bessie Coleman, Louis Arner Boyd, and Eleanor Roosevelt have in common?

They all overcame many gender-based and societal obstacles to achieve great personal and historical success.

They are also portrayed by Kate Campbell Stevenson in her one-woman show “Women: Back to the Future.”

A 25-year music, theater and

education professional, Stevenson brought her lively and educated show to the U.S. Army Forces Command and U.S. Army Reserve Command headquarters, here, March 17, as part of Women’s History Month, sponsored by the Office of Army Reserve History.

“Women’s stories have been there all along, we just have to be willing to dig to find them,” said Stevenson. “I present these women

to plant a seed in each and every one of you to show that you can overcome any obstacle, just like they did.”

Her portrayal of Coleman, the first African-American female pilot; Boyd, who explored and mapped the fjords of Norway and Greenland and used sonar to map many underwater geographical features of the North Atlantic; and Roosevelt, who overcame her fear of public speaking to campaign for

her husband, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and later serve on the United Nations Human Rights Commission, were presented in period clothing and song.

Stevenson, from Silver Spring, Maryland, said her inspiration for developing the program was inspired by her children.

While they were in school, she realized the portrayal of women throughout history was lacking in many of their textbooks.

"I became concerned that there were not very many strong women role models that were really being emphasized in the curriculum," she said. "So that is when I put together my program for my daughter and my son to show that women have been there and active participants in history and leadership."

For her, Stevenson said deciding which women to portray is an easy choice.

"There are millions of women to choose from but their story has to speak to me," she said. "As an artist, I have to be able to really connect with them so I can share that passion with the audience."

Her engaging performances are interspersed with period clothing changes, interacting with prerecorded dialogue, songs, and personal monologues from each of the women portrayed. She said that she spends hundreds of hours researching each woman in order to provide an educational and entertaining program.

Stevenson's dedication was not lost on the

FORSCOM/USARC audience.

Capt. Candice Piraino and Maj. Shedonta Gordon, both with the USARC G-33, attended the performance.

"I didn't know anything about these women. It was great! She was perfect!" Piraino said.

"I like how she tied women's history into today's military," Gordon said.

Stevenson said that what audiences see when she performs is truly her.

"What you see is me," she said. "I'm passionate about what I do. When I perform, not only am I performing for the audience but I'm also performing for myself."

It is her passion for history, which brought Stevenson to USARC for the Women's History Month program.

Jennifer Friend, a museum specialist with the Office of Army Reserve History, saw Stevenson perform at Fort Bragg in 2009.

"I was trying to come up with an idea to celebrate Women's History Month. Then I remembered her performance," Friend said.

"The women she portrays are so inspiring. She really shows how far women have come and the achievements and contributions they have made. If you didn't come and see her, you really missed out," Friend said. 🇺🇸



Stevenson performs as Louis Arner Boyd, left, and Bessie Coleman, during her "Women: Back to the Future" presentation.

BRING IT HOME 2015: 28 DAYS FOR LIFE



Over 60 Army Reserve Not In A Duty Status fatal vehicle accidents occurred since Fiscal Year 2012. In eight (13 percent) of those accidents, investigation confirmed failure to wear a seatbelt as a causal factor for loss of life. This means, even where the accident was survivable our brothers and sisters died by such mechanisms as blunt trauma and crushing (Soldier Eject) simply for lack of a fastened seatbelt.

ARMY RESERVE FACT:

DON'T LEAVE YOUR PROFESSIONAL DISCIPLINE BEHIND

A SEAT BELT SAVED MY LIFE!

Story & photos by Master Sgt. DAVID MINTA
USARC Safety Office

In July 2011 I experienced, first hand, the value of a properly fastened seat belt.

A typical long day at the office and I was home-bound on a familiar road.

Like many Army Reserve Soldiers, I was well acquainted with long commutes, mine being an 88-mile round trip, every day of the week. And, every day of my five months with the unit, a quiet and uneventful ride. Not today.

Radio humming, I am buckled (my best decision ever) and approaching the interstate on ramp while the skies shed a steady Southern rain. It occurred to me the roads would be slick and vehicles could hydroplane.

But, that was it...I dismiss the thought, merge and set the cruise control to 75 miles an hour. (My first three mistakes; ignoring the hazard likely to occur, using cruise control on a wet road, and driving too fast for conditions.)

Closing in on my home, the highway entered a little valley and the back end of the car shifted left.

Releasing the cruise control had no effect and as the shift worsened I made the fourth and most significant mistake in my accident. I applied the brake, hard, all the way to the floor board hard!

Years of driver training and experience, un-

counted times I taught Soldiers Risk Management, to eliminate hydroplaning risk and how to manage it if it happens anyway and here I am traveling backwards at 70 mph. I am afraid.

My car catches grooves along the shoulder, it 180's again, and I'm going forward again. Got control? Nope. My foot remained firmly planted on the brake and I'm skidding towards the embankment.

The end comes quick, but not as quick as my mind shifting from fear to terror.

Over the embankment, 100 feet down the slope and the last thing I see is water. The car is upside down in a creek and I find myself seated on the headliner between front and back seats. (To this day I do not know how I got out of the seat, I don't remember.)

Kicking out a window, I crawl and swim out of the car. Had I not worn my seatbelt I would have been seriously injured or killed. The only injury was a small scratch on my right wrist.

I am a firm believer. The seatbelt, properly used, is one of the most effective safety devices ever invented. Despite my mistakes up front and panicked actions during, a seatbelt saved my life that day.

Buckle up, it can save your life too.

MANAGE THE OTHER 28 DAYS FOR LIFE! 🚗



This 2009 Honda Civic, driven by Master Sgt. David Minta, shows the effects of a crash on wet interstate which led to a slide down an embankment and upside down into a creek. Minta, who was wearing his seatbelt at the time of the crash, survived with only a scratch on his wrist.

Navigating the Montgomery GI Bill – Selected Reserve

Part 2 of 2

Story by **TEDDI EMBREY**
Team Lead, Army HRC GI Bill

Part one of this article appeared in the March issue of the “Double Eagle.”

For technical assistance, submit an inquiry to the RCMS Help Desk via email at Help@tibercreek.com or by calling 1-800-339-0472.

To submit a question about MGIB-SR, Chapter 1606 eligibility or to request additional training on the RCMS MGIB Eligibility Application, contact a member of the HRC Army Reserve GI Bill Team at 1-800-872-8272 or send an email inquiry to usarmy.knox.hrc.mbx.tagd-mgib@mail.mil.

The U.S. Army Human Resources Command Army Reserve GI Bill Team receives and resolves more than 400 Department of Veteran Affairs inquiries each month. The team also responds to hundreds of emails from Army Reserve Soldiers, unit administrators, and G1 staff members. Following is a compilation of frequently asked questions and answers regarding the MGIB-Selected Reserve (MGIB-SR) program, which is also known as the title 10 U.S.C., Chapter 1606 program.

Q: I am currently receiving my MGIB-SR, Chapter 1606 Basic Benefit, but not my Kicker. What’s the problem?

Your Unit Administrator may not have submitted an RCMS MGIB Kicker eligibility transaction on your behalf. Check with your Unit Administrator for proper submission of the Kicker transaction. If necessary, your UA can call the HRC Army Reserve GI Bill Team for assistance.

Q: I’m a TPU Unit Administrator with access to RCMS MGIB Eligibility application. Is there any official formal RCMS training available?

Yes, you have several options for training: (1) attend the UA Basic Course (UABC) at the ARRTC, Fort Knox, Kentucky, (2) arrange for RCMS MGIB training via telecom with a member of the HRC Army Reserve GI Bill team, or (3) check the RCMS MGIB Eligibility Application website.



The RCMS website has several helpful GI Bill Program training materials including the GI Bill Program Quick Reference Handout, Information Papers, an RCMS “How To” Transaction Guide, and several “self-help” RCMS MGIB training videos.

Q: How does a Soldier’s MGIB-SR, Chapter 1606 eligibility record get “suspended?”

When a Soldier is reported in RLAS as an “Unexcused Absence” from Battle Training Assembly, a suspension code is transmitted to RCMS to suspend the Soldier’s MGIB-SR, Chapter 1606 benefits, both basic and kicker. It is the Commander’s responsibility to counsel their Soldiers whose MGIB-SR, Chapter 1606 benefits have been suspended regardless of the reason.

Soldiers may also have their MGIB-SR, Chapter 1606 benefits suspended upon transfer to the Individual Ready Reserve (IRR). However, if the Soldier returns to the SELRES within 12 months of the transfer to the IRR, MGIB-SR, Chapter 1606 benefits may be reinstated and recoument avoided.

Q: How do I “fix” a Soldier’s suspended record?

With approval from the Commander, you need to access the RCMS MGIB Eligibility application and update the Soldier’s MGIB-SR, Chapter 1606 eligibility by changing the appropriate codes and dates in order to reinstate the Soldier’s eligibility for benefits.

Q: I lost my MGIB-SR, Chapter 1606 benefits previously when I was a member of another Reserve Component. Can I regain my MGIB-SR, Chapter 1606 eligibility if I sign another six-year Selected Reserve (SELRES) contract?

No. Unfortunately, MGIB-SR, Chapter 1606 is a “once-in-a-career” benefit.

Once terminated, a Soldier cannot regain the benefit. 🇺🇸



The Other Side of Lonely

By CHAPLAIN (LT. COL.) KEN HUBBS
USARC Chaplain's Office

In her article, "[The Other Side of Loneliness](#)," Anokina Shahbaz states that "being alone is a prelude to the realization that you are part of something greater."

Loneliness is sometimes by choice, but more often it's something that chooses you.

When you choose solitude, it can be a powerful time of reflection and personal growth; you simply turn it off when you're done and reconnect with others.

When it chooses you, there may not be an obvious off-switch, making it difficult to disengage.

Regardless of how you got there, being lonely, even in a crowd, could be either an opportunity for discovering deeper meaning, or a horrible surrender to meaninglessness.

That's the bad news.

The good news is—regardless of how you got there—you can choose which opportunity to take

advantage of.

Embracing the opportunity for discovery is "transformative," Shahbaz writes. It means refusing to be a victim of circumstances beyond your control. It's an exercise in resilience—not a condition you're stuck with, but a process you're blessed with.

Psalm 46:10, "Be still, and know that I am God," reminds us that no one is truly alone—ever. That is, if you know God, then you are by default known by God, and therefore not alone.

Deuteronomy 31:8 says, "The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you." The rest of the verse is striking: "Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged." (See also, Hebrews 13:5)

As Easter approaches we have an opportunity to reflect on greater things.

I think of Jesus on the

cross in agony crying out, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46 and Mark 15:34, ref: Psalm 22:1) In that moment, he was more alone than all of us combined could ever experience.

The other side of lonely is the realization that the grave couldn't hold him.

He is risen.

Because he lives, I am never alone. I am part of something greater.

I encourage you to reflect on deeper things. Be transformed. Embrace the lonely knowing that God is with you.

Shahbaz asks, "What's on the other side of loneliness?" She responds: "Everything."

I must agree. If you have God, you aren't simply NOT alone. You are in possession of something greater: everything you'll ever need. Forever. 🌍

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

A Day In the Life with the Chief of Staff



U.S. Army Reserve Chief of Staff, Maj. Gen. Luis R. Visot, right, and Col. Edward Armstrong, USARC G6, welcomed the first Army Reserve employee to take part in “A Day with the CoS,” Lt. Col. Teresa Feliciano, as she sat in on a morning Army Reserve Engagement Team meeting at USARC HQ, March 18. “A day with the CoS” is a program that supports the professional development of civilians and Soldiers in the headquarters. (Photo by Brian Godette/U.S. Army Reserve Command)

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

FORT BRAGG, N.C. - U.S. Army Reserve Chief of Staff, Maj. Gen. Luis R. Visot found himself with an extra shadow by his side as he went through his busy day at the U.S. Army Reserve Command headquarters, here, March 18.

An early morning personnel meeting at USARC, followed by a jammed-packed itinerary is nothing new for the Visot, however it was experienced through fresh eyes as Lt. Col. Teresa Feliciano, assigned to the Legislative Affairs Department with the Office of the Chief of the Army Reserve, became the first individual to take part in “A day with the CoS.”

“A day with the CoS” is a program initiated by Visot, designed to support the professional development of civilians and Soldiers in the headquarters, with a focus on enhancing personal and professional skills and providing exposure to executive level decisions, engagement and actions.

“The motivation behind it is to get leaders an op-

portunity to be exposed to what goes on at the highest levels within the command,” said Visot. “They have an opportunity to meet with me as the Chief of Staff in a meeting here and there, but now they can experience the whole value of what it is I do.”

The program was unveiled by Visot to Army Reserve employees in early 2015. In order to be considered for the quarterly submission process, interested individuals in the rank of sergeant first class and master sergeant, major and lieutenant colonel, and civilians in pay grades GS-12 through GS-14 must submit a 500 word essay explaining why participating in the program would be a benefit to their career.

“I thought it was a great idea,” said Feliciano. “Mentorship has always been something I’ve been very passionate about, and I knew this program was something I wanted to be a part of.”

Feliciano sat side-by-side with Visot in most of his scheduled meetings, which varied in topics to in-

clude a meeting on personnel, Army Reserve Engagement Teams, USARC history division planning, and contracting.

“It comes with my responsibility as Chief of Staff to understand everything that is going on so that I may influence decisions,” said Visot. “That’s what I’m trying to teach, coach, and mentor Lt. Col. Feliciano, as the first person to participate in ‘A Day with the Chief of Staff,’ what it requires for me to understand, and for her to see how command decisions are made in our headquarters.”

Feliciano became an apt pupil, focusing on the discussions Visot and other leaders engaged in during the meetings as well as sharing ideas and thoughts with him during the small breaks in the schedule.

“As leaders it’s really important to integrate all the different entities in the headquarters so they aren’t acting as different silos,” said Visot. “My role as Chief of Staff is to prioritize all the functions we have going on, synchronize, coordinate, integrate, and optimize.”

Feliciano, who is a legislative liaison, gets to represent the Chief of the Army Reserve and Army Reserve Command before Congress. Her job is to take the Army Reserve message to Capitol Hill and remind them of the importance of the Army Reserve

and what the Army Reserve does. Her experiences with the legislative liaison brings about sharp similarities to her experiences with the Chief of Staff.

“In legislative affairs, we pay attention to big issues that the CAR and chief’s focus on, for example end strength, equipment challenges and manning, all the things we’ve talked about today,” said Feliciano. “A day with the CoS is a perfect alignment of what I’m doing everyday at legislative affairs.”

The day with the Chief of Staff proved so busy in fact that Feliciano barely had time to take a bite out of her lunch. A detail she did not mind, due to the excitement of the day.

Those sentiments were shared six days later at the Office of the Chief of the Army Reserve, in Fort Belvoir, Virginia by Sgt. 1st Class Sheila Thomas. Thomas, who is a chaplain assistant with USARC and supports the USARC Augmentation Unit at USARC headquarters, became the second individual to shadow Visot as a part of the program.

“In one word, I can describe it as an amazing experience,” said Thomas. “I was amazed at his (Visot) ability to seamlessly transition from one task or mission with little effort.”

Thomas, who has been in the military for over 15 years, serving the last two and a half at USARC, seized the opportunity to participate in the mentorship program just as Feliciano did.

“The why was easy, to gain insight about leadership and professional growth and the opportunity to learn, observe, and interact with a leader who achieved success,” said Thomas. “It is important not to become stagnant but to continue to grow, learn, and nurture ones leadership and professional skills.

From the perspective of the first two participants in the program, it proved to be a great success, leaving a lasting impression.

“It is an experience I would never forget,” said Thomas.

“This is such a positive experience for me and I think this can serve as the foundation to expand the program, and ultimately I would like to see us do this across the Army Reserve,” said Feliciano. 🌟

Sgt. 1st Class Sheila F. Thomas, left, a chaplain assistant at the U.S. Army Reserve Command headquarters at Fort Bragg, N.C., spends a day with Maj. Gen. Luis R. Visot, U.S. Army Reserve chief of staff, at Fort Belvoir, March 24. (Photo by Capt. Xeriqua Garfinkel/U.S. Army Reserve)



March Double Eagle Effect Recipients



Roberto Delgado, left, was honored by Maj. Gen. Luis R. Visot, U.S. Army Reserve chief of staff with the Double Eagle Effect award, March 5, at the USARC headquarters, Fort Bragg, N.C. Delgado, who works in the FORSCOM/USARC Maintenance division, is a certified locksmith and helped establish the Safe Haven rooms throughout the headquarters. He has been with USARC since 2008.

"I appreciate this," said Delgado. "All of us (in maintenance) deserve recognition because we do our jobs from the heart. We've got a great boss and we enjoy what we do."



Chaplain (Maj.) Randal Johnson, left, was honored by Maj. Gen. Luis R. Visot, U.S. Army Reserve chief of staff with the Double Eagle Effect award, March 6, at the USARC headquarters, Fort Bragg, N.C. Johnson, who is the Director of Soldier and Family Ministry, USARC Chaplain's Office, was honored for service to Family members. He has been with USARC since July 2014.

"I'm not big on recognition," Johnson said. "The reward is serving what God has called us to do. I'd rather let others receive the credit."



U.S. Army Reserve Chief of Staff, Maj. Gen. Luis R. Visot, right, presents Billy Wells, Operation Specialist with the G-34, a two-star coin and letter as part of the Double Eagle Effect recognition program.

"What a distinct honor it was for me to be recognized by Maj. Gen. Visot," Wells said. "As a former Soldier myself, providing a bit of comfort to the Soldiers performing a vital mission to protect us gives me a feeling that I am still taking care of Soldiers."



U.S. Army Reserve Chief of Staff, Maj. Gen. Luis R. Visot, left, presents Brian Godette, Staff Writer with the Public Affairs Office, a two-star coin and letter as part of the Double Eagle Effect recognition program.

"The DEE program is an amazing initiative," Godette said. "Recognizing those for doing what they think is right serves as a great encouragement to continue to always do the right thing."

Thomas, Baker are the Faces of USARC

NAME: Paulette Thomas, USARC Safety

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN ASSIGNED TO USARC? I've been with USARC for a total of 5 years.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE TO WORK AT USARC? I enjoy serving those that serve. My husband was active duty for 27 years and has been retired for 4 years, so I've dealt with the military for a little over 30 years.

Tell us one thing that most people don't know about you that you want them to know. On top of bringing in baked goods for the office staff daily, I am a grandmother that enjoys motorcycles. I ride a Suzuki M109 Boulevard, 1783cc, and it's one of my favorite things to do.



NAME: Chief Warrant Officer 5 Tom Baker, USARC Safety

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN ASSIGNED TO USARC? Three and half years. I came to USARC in September of 2012.

WHY DO YOU CONTINUE TO SERVE IN THE ARMY RESERVE? I joined the Army at 18 years old. I was active duty then joined the Reserve system, so I was a reservist for 14 years. I had civilian jobs as police officer and helicopter pilot, but getting back into the Army just seemed like the right fit for me.

Tell us one thing that most people don't know about you that you want them to know. I've picked up a couple of new hobbies. I've gotten into recreational running, so I run 10k's and 10 milers kind of regularly now. I've also picked up the hobby of sailing, with the family.



If you can't stand the heat ...



The Army Reserve team in the Military Culinary Arts Competitive Training Event poses in front of the MKT after completing the MKT cooking event. (left to right) Chief Warrant Officer 2 Trent Skinner, 311th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), Sgt. Aqueelah James, 3rd Medical Command, Warrant Officer Colby Beard, 807th Medical Command, Spc. Nathaniel Dewey, 103rd ESC, Staff Sgt Markos Mendoza, 311th ESC, Spc. Susan Molnar, 335th Signal Command and Chief Warrant Officer 2 Danny Wolf, 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary).

Story & photo by **MAJ. WILLIAM GEDDES**
103rd Expeditionary Sustainment Command

FORT LEE, Va. — No one was “chopped” during the 40th Annual Military Culinary Arts Competitive Training Event, March 1-13 at the Post Field House, here and there was no sign of crazed cooks throwing pans at contestants.

But what the event featured were ice sculpture competition entries that defied the laws of physics, mouth-watering static food displays, and live cooking events filled with all the focus and energy that comes with the pursuit of perfection and that put cooking reality shows to shame.

Seven Army Reserve Soldiers from across the country teamed up to compete with more than 25 teams and more than 270 competitors from Army installations, other services and countries in the competition.

This year the Army Reserve team consisted of:

Chief Warrant Officer 2 Danny Wolf, 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary); and Chief Warrant Officer 2 Trent Skinner, 311th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) as team coaches; Warrant Officer Colby Beard, 807th Medical Command as MKT Competition team lead along with Staff Sgt Markos Mendoza, 311th ESC; Sgt. Aqueelah James, 3rd Medical Command; Spc. Nathaniel Dewey, 103rd ESC; and Spc. Susan Molnar, 335th Signal Command.

The team did not leave the competition empty-handed. James earned a silver medal in the nutrition event, and bronze in hot food cooking; Dewey earned a silver in sculpture centerpiece, Molnar earned a silver in nutrition, Mendoza earned a bronze in table set up, and the team earned a bronze medal in the MKT competition.

This year's Army Reserve team MKT menu included prosciutto rolls with drunken cherry tomatoes and grilled halloumi, orange burden glazed Cornish game hen stuffed with chorizo cornbread dressing, a cauliflower and potato mash, and lemon pepper brussel sprouts, with a dessert of lemon custard sitting on a toffee brownie crust with a raspberry glee creme anglaise — all for \$5.55, the cost of the basic daily food allowance.

The culinary competition is far from a 9-to-5 event. Competitors spend hours in their respective prep kitchens sharpening their culinary techniques to prepare for each phase of the competition.

"Seventy-two hours straight with no sleep for me," said James, an enlisted aide for the 3rd Medical Command, and an Atlanta Police Department officer. She took part in three different parts of the competition — her dedication to helping the team succeed led her to medal in three events. A five-time competitor in the MCACTE, James said she's been able to bring many of the skills and techniques she has learned at the competition back to her command.

"Just showing them how to take our basic menu from our meal plan and make it something elaborate, something the Soldiers in our command will enjoy, makes it worth it," she said. "I do a rendition of bread pudding using cranberries and white chocolate, so just adding a few things to it makes it something special for my Soldiers."

Using this competitive training event to learn something new is a common theme.

"For me, it's all about mentoring and teaching," said Beard, food service warrant officer for the 807th Medical Command, and the team lead for the MKT competition. "I want to teach them how to produce a quality meal on a drill weekend, so that when Soldiers show up for drill, they get excited and say, 'wow, I wonder what the cooks are doing this drill?' When I was a younger enlisted Soldier in the field, I did that sort of thing. I'd manage my food budget, and plan it into my year so that I could serve prime rib in the field. The Soldiers loved it. It's great for morale. When I was serving in Afghanistan managing a dining facility, I saw how much food affects morale. You think about it, most of the joyous moments in life revolve around food."

The MCACTE provides benefits directly to the competitors too.

"It gives an opportunity for our cooks to, during the competitive training, to get American Culinary Federation certification to get credentials they can use in the civilian world," said Wolf.

"There's testing that is going on, and there are classes that are going on — they can get awarded certificates that you need to, for instance, be certified as an executive chef," Wolf said. "It's a very strict, very high standard, and the certification here is the same as you would get no matter where you went in the United States. It opens up so many opportunities for these young people coming in, and it's great for recruiting."

He added that serving in Army food service could lead to other opportunities in the civilian industry.

"I use my career as an example — and I got it all from the military," he said. "I got to cook in the White House for both President Reagan and President Bush, for heads of state like Anwar Sadat [the former president of Egypt]. As a civilian, I've worked with Wolfgang Puck and the Cajun Chef Paul Prudhomme. I've done catering for Tom Cruise and Steven Segal. I've competed in different competitions (Wolf has won three world championships in pizza, including being the first American to win one in Italy). I wouldn't have gotten there without the military. It's endless. You can make it what you want."

Wolf added that to be successful in the food service industry, you have to have passion.

"A lot of people see it on TV and it looks easy, and they don't think about it," he said. "What they don't realize is these cooks here are up more than 24 hours straight making sure everything is perfect. They get cut, they get burnt, they spend all day on their feet — but they love their craft."

At the end of the day, that is what it comes down to for many competitors — love of the craft.

"It's very different, but I enjoy what I do," James said. "I came in 12 years ago, and I wanted to be a cook. This is my passion, it is what I love to do."

She loves the contrast between working her civilian job as a police officer, and working in food services in the Army Reserve.

"Food is very different, food is a lot better. People smile with food. People don't smile at police. It's always great to give someone a plate and watch them smile when they're eating," James said. 🍴



REMEMBER & HONOR

GOLD STAR WIVES' DAY · APRIL 5, 2015

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