

GRIZZLY

Official Newsmagazine of the California National Guard

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Major General William H. Wade II



With this, my last column as the adjutant general, I thought I would revisit the accomplishments, milestones and benchmarks of the California National Guard — America's premier community-based militia — during the past four years.

It has been said that the best way to start any job is to jump right in and "just do it," and that is exactly what I did (or was forced to do). My first day on the job was Sept. 1, 2005 — the day Hurricane Katrina made landfall along the Gulf Coast states of Alabama, Louisiana, Florida and Mississippi as a Category 3 storm. The devastation left in its wake included 1,836 people dead and \$81.2 billion in damage — the costliest natural disaster in U.S. history. This was followed by Hurricane Rita less than a month later wreaking additional havoc from Texas to Louisiana. No stranger to natural disasters, California responded immediately by dispatching its National Guard to provide assistance. The California National Guard performed 43 Emergency Management Assistance Compact missions, utilizing 1,835 personnel for a total of 42,143 workdays. California's great Guardsmen rescued 92 civilians, cleared 11,026 structures, located 62 deceased personnel, flew 209 support sorties and airlifted nearly 700,000 pounds of relief cargo.

Nine months later, America once again called upon the California National Guard to step forward and man the ramparts of freedom. On June 15, 2006, in response to the president's call to arms, the Soldiers and Airmen of the California National Guard deployed to the California-Mexico border to provide immediate support to the United States Customs and Border Protection Service in order to enhance border enforcement operations along the Mexican border from the Pacific Ocean to the southeastern tip of Texas. The National Guard Bureau's intent was to rotate personnel from the remaining 50 states and territories on an annual training/additional annual training basis in order to staff entry identifications teams; support surveillance and reconnaissance; perform camera and scope operations; conduct intelligence analysis; provide aviation airlift and insertion support; perform vehicle maintenance on Border Patrol vehicles; provide logistical support; construct fencing, roads, lighting and vehicle barriers to enhance and ensure interior lines of communication; and conduct ICAD monitoring for law enforcement communications. However, in order to ensure continuity of operations, I insisted on ordering California personnel to duty for a minimum of six months or for the duration. Contrary to the non-believers who said it couldn't be done, California was monumentally successful in activating more than 1,600 personnel for the long haul, organized into five subordinate task forces within a joint task force, for the next two years. During this operation, California's Guard was credited with assisting in the apprehension of 95,086 illegal aliens and/or criminals and the seizure of 725 vehicles and more than 40,000 pounds of marijuana and cocaine. It also expanded border surveillance for the full 156 miles of California-Mexico border, constructed 952 anti-vehicle barriers, installed 58,600 feet of electrical cable that supported 27 light sets, and flew 1,275 air missions totaling more than 5,000 flight hours in support of border security operations.

Demonstrating the California Guard's outstanding operational reach and superior ability to multi-task, the governor called upon his state defense force a mere two months later, in August 2006, to provide additional support to homeland security in California's airports for a second time after a terrorist attacked London's Heathrow Airport. Responding to the Department of Home-



Maj. Gen. William H. Wade II, left, and Command Sgt. Maj. William Clark Jr., the top enlisted leader in the Cal Guard, case Wade's flag on Feb. 2, signifying the end of his tenure as adjutant general. Wade had served in that position since September 2005.

land Security's increased threat level, the governor ordered 552 Cal Guard members to provide support at seven international California airports in order to implement heightened security requirements, including security augmentation of external secondary access points, armed roving patrols and secondary baggage screening. Without missing a beat, California's finest citizen-Soldiers and Airmen mobilized and deployed to answer the state's call, providing a total of nearly 23,000 workdays to the effort.

While still performing the taxing mission along the Mexico border, the state's Guard was further tasked to provide support to California firefighters during the fall of 2007. Driven by the infamous Santa Ana winds, catastrophic wildfires destroyed homes and threatened numerous communities in Los Angeles, Orange and San Diego counties. The California National Guard was mobilized and instrumental in ensuring the consequence-management of the then-largest fire in California history, which burned 517,535 acres, destroyed 3,204 structures, caused \$1.7 billion of damage and forced the evacuation of an estimated 515,000 people. For nearly two months, the Guard mobilized more than 2,700 personnel to assist local, state and federal authorities with fire suppression efforts, evacuation-site management and support, traffic control, security patrols of evacuated areas, billeting of law enforcement personnel, sandbag-filling for erosion control and emergency communications for some of the affected communities. Throughout this arduous period, Army Guard aircraft flew nearly 330 hours and dropped more than 416,000 gallons of water, while Air Guard craft with Modular Airborne Fire Fight-

ing Systems flew 103 hours and dispensed nearly 208,000 gallons of fire retardant. Lt. Gen. H. Steven Blum, then-chief of the National Guard Bureau, said of the California Guard's response efforts, "This has been probably the most proactive response to a domestic event that I have seen in my 40 years in uniform" — a true testament to the professionalism and dedication of the men and women of the California National Guard.

Still reeling from the devastating effects of the fall blaze of 2007, California again called upon its Guard in response to more than 2,000 wildfires ignited by a series of lightning storms that occurred during a 48-hour period on June 20-21, 2008. Complicated by heavy fuel sources and steep, inaccessible terrain, the scope of the emergency quickly exhausted all local and state resources while straining available federal resources, necessitating the activation of not only Cal Guard aviation assets, but also personnel and equipment to act as firefighting hand crews — the first call-up of its kind in more than 30 years. True to form and reputation, the Cal Guard set

new benchmarks for response to civil authorities by activating nearly 3,700 personnel (for a total of more than 76,000 workdays) and mobilizing 67 military aircraft from 20 different states and five service components. With this unprecedented response, rotary aircraft flew 1,338 hours and dropped 5.5 million gallons of water, while fixed wing aircraft flew 680 hours and dropped 1.1 million gallons of water and more than 12 million pounds of fire retardant. When every available civilian ground fire crew asset had been exhausted, the Guard trained and deployed 2,400 Soldiers and Airmen as Type II firefighters, who cut nearly 469 miles of

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for more on the
Change of Command

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PHOTO BY TECH. SGT. DAVID J. LOEFFLER

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Photographs:

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Cover Shot



Photo by Tech. Sgt. David J. Loeffler

Brig. Gen. Mary J. Kight speaks to a crowd of more than 500 after receiving command of the California National Guard on Feb. 2. Kight succeeded Maj. Gen. William H. Wade II as adjutant general. She is the first woman to serve as adjutant general of the Cal Guard and first African-American woman to serve as adjutant general in the United States.



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Japanese forces train on air refueling with 129th

By Airman 1st Class Jessica Green
129th Rescue Wing

Japanese Air Self-Defense Force (JASDF) pilots teamed up with 129th Rescue Wing air crews Dec. 7-18 for refueling training at Moffett Federal Airfield, Calif.

UH-60J helicopter pilots Maj. Eiji Sekine and Capt. Takeshi Tokuda of the Air Rescue Wing at Komaki Air Base, Japan, and C-130H Hercules aircraft pilots Maj. Masahiko Miyazaki and Capt. Takemas Tsuchimiochi of the 1st Tactical Airlift Wing at Komaki Air Base received hands-on training for daytime and nighttime air refueling on the HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopter and MC-130P Combat Shadow aircraft.

"They have done some refueling training with the 33rd Rescue Squadron at Kadena Air Base, Japan," said Maj. Mathew Wenthe, 129th Rescue Squadron tactical officer. "However, the 33rd RQS is on a deployment rotation, leaving them unable to provide any more training or academic service to the JASDF pilots."

The collaboration with the 129th was prompted by the JASDF's plan to buy refueling pods for the C-130H. The JASDF is currently flying KC-767 Jet Tankers and UH-60J helicopters, but the force has no refueling systems, Tsuchimiochi said.

"When we got word from Kadena, we thought it would be a great experience to support [the mission]," Wenthe said. "There's a big push for building partnership from the [U.S. Pacific Air Forces], and we see this as a key element to that partnership."

JASDF's plan is to buy refueling probe



PHOTO BY TECH. SGT. RAY AQUINO

Capt. Takeshi Tokuda, a Japan Air Self-Defense Force helicopter pilot with the Air Rescue Wing at Komaki Air Base, Japan, prepares for air refueling training with the 129th Rescue Squadron at Moffett Federal Airfield, Calif., in December.

packages for UH-60 helicopters so they can be refueled in the air on rescue missions. The pilots who visited Moffett will return to Japan and pass on to their fellow pilots the training they received

from the 129th Rescue Wing, thereby improving range and efficiency on rescue missions.

"Our rescue squadron saves include

retrieving sick fishermen at sea and shipwrecks," Sekine said. "With this training we will return to Japan to train our pilots and become operational in the near future."

French officers tour Predator facilities at March ARB

By Staff Sgt. Paul Duquette
163rd Reconnaissance Wing

The 163rd Reconnaissance Wing opened its doors to the French military Dec. 10, as distinguished visitors from the French Air Force toured the California Air National Guard's remotely piloted aircraft (RPA) unit at March Air Reserve Base in Moreno Valley, Calif.

Among the distinguished visitors were Lt. Gen. Joel Martel, vice chief of staff of the French Air Force, and Maj. Gen. Kip L. Self, who serves as director of operational planning, policy and strategy as well as deputy chief of staff for operations, plans and requirements at U.S. Air Force Headquarters in Washington, D.C.

"The French Air Force flies an unmanned aerial vehicle called the Harfang. It's very similar to the MQ-1 Predator," said Col. Robert Dooly, U.S. Air Force Attaché in Paris. "We are more experienced in RPAs, so they look to our units and programs for guidance."

Col. Randall Ball, commander of the 163rd, kicked off the tour by giving the French visitors an overview of the unit. Lt. Col. Kirby Colas, commander of the 196th Reconnaissance Squadron, then led the French officers on a tour of the Predator Operations Center facilities.



Vice Chief of Staff of the French Air Force Lt. Gen. Joel Martel pilots an MQ-1 Predator simulator while Maj. Gen. Kip L. Self, director of operational planning, policy and strategy at U.S. Air Force Headquarters in Washington, D.C., controls the sensor ball at March Air Reserve Base on Dec. 10.

PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. PAUL DUQUETTE

sance Squadron, then led the French officers on a tour of the Predator Operations Center facilities.

Lt. Col. Tom Pritchard, flying training unit (FTU) commander, met the tour at its next stop, where the visitors received

a presentation about the FTU, toured the unit and watched instructors teaching FTU students.

"The generals really enjoyed flying the simulator and watching a real training mission being flown from our ground control station," Pritchard said.

The tour's final stop took the visitors to the field training detachment, where 163rd Maintenance Group Commander Col. Charles Manley gave the French officers an in-depth look at the MQ-1 Predator.

Maj. Alex Cortes, who works at the Pentagon and was one of the action officers who arranged the tour, said such meetings are a good way to share information and strengthen relationships between foreign countries.

At the conclusion of the tour, Ball presented Martel a plaque of appreciation, and the general in turn expressed his gratitude and appreciation to the wing.

"This was a very fruitful visit," Martel said. "The personnel here, both on the training and operational sides, are very happy to participate in this mission. And it's always wonderful to see that kind of dedication."

Copter co-pilot takes shrapnel

By Airman 1st Class Jessica Green | 129th Rescue Wing

Capt. Mary Jennings, an HH-60G Pave Hawk co-pilot for the 129th Rescue Squadron, received the Badge of Military Merit, also known as the Purple Heart, from Maj. Gen. Dennis J. Lucas, commander of the California Air National Guard, during a Dec. 6 ceremony in Santa Clara, Calif.

Jennings had recently returned from deployment to Afghanistan, where she was wounded by enemy forces during the rescue of three injured American Soldiers. Her rescue helicopter had launched July 29 from Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan, en route to a convoy that had fallen under attack after striking an improvised explosive device.

"We couldn't see any enemy fire as we arrived on scene," said Maj. George Dona, pilot of the Pave Hawk that Jennings co-piloted. "We were in voice contact with the Soldiers on the ground and we could hear over their radios that they were under distress."

The Soldiers were taking cover from hidden enemy positions on the western side of the convoy. Dona and Jennings' helicopter took immediate fire upon first landing. They dropped off two pararescuemen, or PJs, then took off right away.

"One shot actually came directly into the cockpit and pretty much destroyed the entire co-pilot windshield," Dona said. "Captain Jennings took shrapnel, and there was blood instantly all over her side."

The pararescue-team lead from the 71st Rescue Squadron, assigned to the 23rd Wing at Moody Air Force Base, Ga.,

stayed on the aircraft after the first landing to ensure Jennings was alright, while the rest of his team deplaned to collect the patients. The Pave Hawk flew about a mile south to escape enemy fire and guarantee that both the helicopter and crew were in good enough condition to continue the save, Jennings said.

"The helicopter was determined fully functional," she said. "We couldn't bring ourselves to return home without the patients."

Despite the danger it faced, the crew returned to the scene after getting a call from the PJs, who said they were ready to haul out the three patients.

"Again, as soon as we landed, we took immediate fire. We landed next to the patients, and the PJs were already moving them in," Dona said. "We took constant fire, and [after] about 20 rounds to the backside of the helicopter, the systems started to deteriorate slowly."

Jennings told Dona, who was on the controls, to hold the helicopter on the ground through the fire as she watched the PJs load the patients onto the helicopter.

"There were people yelling, lights flashing and people screaming through the radios, all while dodging bullets," Jennings said. "Major Dona had a lot of patience and confidence in his team to stay on the ground through all the chaos. His amazing pilotage skills saved all our lives."

About 30 seconds after takeoff, the back cabin was full of



PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. KIM RAMIREZ

fuel, hydraulics were leaking and systems were not working correctly. Jennings flipped the fuel-selector to cross-feed between the two fuel tanks and keep the engine from flaming out. This was a huge factor in keeping the helicopter airborne, Dona said.

"As I enabled the second tank, I saw it was ticking down to zero as well," Jennings said. "We needed to land. It was a decision to either crash three miles away or land two miles away."

The crew made the right decision. After landing the helicopter about two miles south of the convoy attack, the crew shut down and quickly secured a perimeter to protect the patients. A nearby helicopter landed next to them and loaded all patients and as many crew members as possible before departing.

"Army OH-58D Kiowa helicopters came to retrieve the rest of the crew," Jennings said. "Being small, single-engine, single-rotor, two-seater helicopters, there was no room for us inside. We had to stand on the skids and hold onto rocket pods."

As if the heroic actions of Jennings and Dona weren't enough, Master Sgt. Steven Burt also showed extreme valor. While PJs were loading patients onto the OH-58D Kiowa and the crew was being exfiltrated onto the skids of their cover ships, one of the pararescuemen called for help. Burt ran through a rain of fire to help, Jennings said.

"He totally put his life on the line," she said. "I'm extremely proud of my crew's heroism."

Looking back on the incident, Jennings said she is thankful for her crew and their bravery.

"In a country where rocket-propelled grenades are used everywhere, it was amazing that no one had an RPG. Everything was covered in fuel, including ourselves," she said. "It was nothing short of a miracle that we survived."



PHOTO BY TECH. SGT. RAY AQUINO

TOP: Capt. Mary Jennings, an HH-60G Pave Hawk co-pilot for the 129th Rescue Squadron, receives a Purple Heart from Maj. Gen. Dennis J. Lucas, commander of the California Air National Guard, during a ceremony Dec. 6 in Santa Clara. **LEFT:** Jennings is greeted by her mother, Grace Jennings, at Moffett Federal Airfield, Calif., after returning home in September from a three-month deployment to Afghanistan.

40th BSB trains with private firms, public agencies

By 1st Lt. Hannah Pitt
40th Brigade Support Battalion

The 40th Brigade Support Battalion, during a recent drill, conducted full-spectrum military occupational specialty (MOS) qualification and sustainment training with industry. The primary mission of the 40th BSB is to provide combat service support to the 79th Infantry Brigade Combat Team.

Each company in the BSB coordinated and executed training within its MOS. The 40th BSB Soldiers have more than 70 specialties and officer branches or functional areas.

Among the training events, the Company A "Distro" petroleum supply specialists participated in fueling operations at Joint Forces Training Base- Los Alamitos, including refueling Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's aircraft. The unit's water-purification personnel trained at the Orange County Water District facility, while the

Headquarters and Headquarters Company "Superchargers" cooks participated in culinary arts training with chefs at Le Cordon Bleu College of Culinary Arts in Los Angeles.

"I didn't know that the training that I received in the military was worth so much in the civilian job market," said Spc. David Posadas of Company A, referring to his water-purification qualifications.

The Company B "Bandits" mechanics conducted an aggressive, non-stop, 48-hour sustainment operation in conjunction with civilian and military surface maintenance technicians. And the Company C "Providers" mental health specialists assisted with Soldier readiness processing mental health screenings at Camp Roberts.

"All events were tied into specific MOS-qualification skill sets," said Roy Wise, command sergeant major for the 40th BSB. "Additionally, officers and [noncommissioned officers] utilized troop-leading procedures during each training event."



PHOTO BY SGT. 1ST CLASS JONATHAN BURNETT

Soldiers of the 40th Brigade Support Battalion receive water purification training with Orange County Water District personnel.

California Guard is first with new Predators

By Staff Sgt. Paul Duquette
163rd Reconnaissance Wing

The 163rd Reconnaissance Wing recently received three Block 15 MQ-1 Predator unmanned aerial vehicles, making the 163rd the first Air National Guard unit to receive the brand new aircraft.

The unit took possession of the first aircraft Sept. 29 from an operational testing facility in Grey Butte, Calif. A few months later, the unit received two more Block 15 aircraft. The wing is slated to take possession of at least four more new Predators.

The Block 15 is the latest reconnaissance unmanned aerial system from General Atomics.

"This new block has an infrared camera in the nose," said Jordan Manns, a General Atomics airframe and power plant mechanic. "Another nice feature it has over the Block 10: The under-engine cowling, or cover, can be taken off without the removal of the prop, which is especially nice for maintainers."

The 163rd uses the high-tech system to train active-duty, Guard and Reserve personnel at the Flying Training Unit to repair the aircraft, pilot the aircraft and operate the sensor ball, which houses optics, lasers and video cameras.

Currently two of the three aircraft are stationed and maintained at Southern California Logistics Airport in Victorville, Calif., while the third is at the field training detachment on March Air Reserve Base in Moreno Valley, Calif.



Sgt. Austin Archey, a crew chief with the 163rd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, inspects battery wires on a new Block 15 MQ-1 Predator during training at March Air Reserve Base on Dec. 16.

PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. PAUL DUQUETTE

I-143rd Field Artillery mobilizes firepower

By Staff Sgt. Ryan Sturm
I-143rd Field Artillery Battalion

The tandem rotors of the CH-47 Chinook helicopter died down, and the rear loading ramp fell, unveiling dry, flat ground and chilly, early morning air. Soldiers swiftly unloaded an M119A2 towed Howitzer from the helicopter's cargo area and began preparing to send rounds down-range. Section chiefs shouted instructions over the Chinook's engine as Soldiers diligently worked to emplace the gun.

Gunnery sergeants in the distance gave commands over the radio, which the chiefs relayed to their men. Ammunition was distributed among the sections, and within minutes the sections were emplaced safely and ready to fire the 105 mm rounds. Voices calmed and movements slowed as Soldiers waited for the command "Fire Mission!"

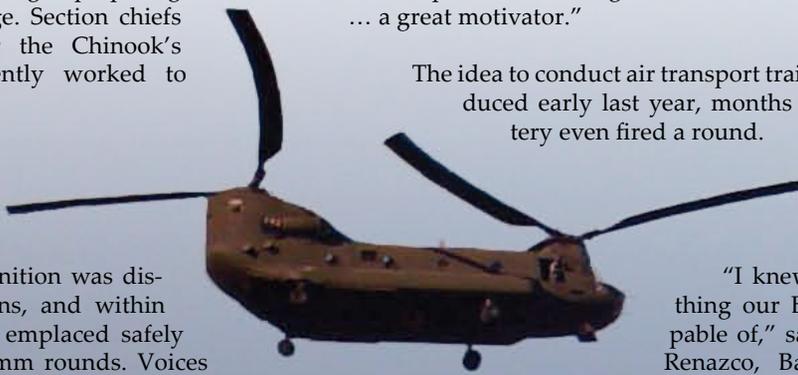
Although this sounds like the beginning of an epic battle scene, it is actually drill weekend for Battery A, 1st Battalion, 143rd Field Artillery Regiment. Since returning in May 2008 after nine months in Iraq, the 1-143rd has been transforming from a mechanized battalion to a light artillery battalion.

After trading tracks for towed howitzers, the battalion made giant strides to regain its ability to deliver fire. In June the 1-143rd successfully completed its first live-fire training in more than four years. Five months later, Battery A, also known as "Warlords," conducted the battalion's first-ever airmobile operation, transporting four

Howitzers and their sections to Camp Roberts, Calif., in Chinooks.

"By far the coolest thing we've done in a long time," said Staff Sgt. Joseph Rodriguez, Howitzer section chief for Battery A. "It's taken a lot of effort over the past year to just come to the point of firing the Howitzers, so to be able to incorporate something new and fun to the equation is ... a great motivator."

The idea to conduct air transport training was introduced early last year, months before the battery even fired a round.



"I knew it was something our Battery was capable of," said Capt. Allan Renazco, Battery A commander. "The amount of training time we put our Soldiers through, I knew we'd successfully fire in June during annual training. I felt it was important that we continued to throw new challenges at them, and this was a great opportunity to do that."

Renazco and his staff coordinated the exercise with Capt. John Allen, operations officer for Company A, 3-140th Aviation; 1st Lt. Benjamin Bowman, instructor pilot for flight operations at the Stockton Army Aviation Support Facility; and representatives at the Lodi Skydiving Airport and the Sacramento Executive Airport.

Once coordination was complete, it was time to execute. On the morning of Nov. 6, the four Howitzer sections of

Battery A arrived at their respective airports. Once the Chinooks arrived, the Howitzers were loaded inside and the crews packed tightly around them.

"Just seeing the Chinooks fly in and land, even loading the Howitzers, it was fun," said Spc. Jessie Hillman, fire direction specialist. "It gave me a different outlook on what we're capable of as a light artillery unit."

During the flight, which took a little over an hour, the Soldiers remained focused on the tasks ahead.

"We knew once we got to Camp Roberts and got to our firing point, we'd have to hit the ground running," Rodriguez said. "As soon as that door opened and they gave us the go-ahead, we were pulling that gun off the Chinook. Our focus went directly to laying the Howitzer safely and preparing to shoot."

"For our first time doing anything like this, it was executed almost flawlessly, from the pilots on down to the privates."

The 1-143rd was introduced to M119A2 Howitzers in November 2008, transitioning from M109A5 155mm self-propelled Howitzers.

"It only took these Soldiers eight months, from the time we were introduced to the M119A2 in November 2008, to live fire in June 2009. That is a huge feat," Renazco said. "We'll continue to provide challenging training and make this battery better. The sky's the limit."

The battery's sister unit, Battery B, 1-143rd, is planning an air mobile operation for the coming months, with the plan to load Howitzers externally.

PHOTO BY LT. COL. ROB WOOLDRIDGE

A CH-47 Chinook helicopter loaded with an M119A2 towed Howitzer and Soldiers from Battery A, 1st Battalion, 143rd Field Artillery Regiment, approaches a training ground at Camp Roberts, Calif., where the Soldiers would emplace their gun and send rounds down-range. The four Howitzer sections of Battery A, which were introduced to M119A2 Howitzers only a year before the exercise, started the day at separate airports around northern California.

New state program to aid vets

Governor's initiative helps veterans get jobs, housing, education, health care

By Capt. Peter Lewis,
JFHQ Government Affairs; and
Donna Miles, American Forces Press Service

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, upon returning from visiting troops in Iraq in November, launched Operation Welcome Home to help veterans secure jobs and benefits for items such as housing, health care and education.

The mission of Operation Welcome Home is to connect the 30,000 recently discharged veterans and re-deployed Reservists with employment benefits and other veterans' services in 2010. It is a proactive, mobile program that will reach out to the veteran, rather than waiting for the veteran to call or walk into an office. Schwarzenegger unveiled the Operation Welcome Home outreach campaign during his State of the State address in Sacramento on Jan. 6, citing "a fundamental obligation to anyone who has shed or risked blood for this country."

Sparked by his pre-Thanksgiving visit to Camp Victory in Baghdad, Schwarzenegger said he felt compelled — despite the state's financial crisis — to find better ways to help troops transition to civilian life after returning from the combat theater.

"They have seen and experienced some hard things. Many have served tour after tour after tour. As a result, some have lost homes, spouses, limbs and lives ... [and brought] back the enemy with them in their heads," Schwarzenegger said, referring to cases of post-traumatic stress and suicide. "California has more returning veterans than any other state. So our state, as well as the federal government, has a special responsibility."

The state's Employment Development Department (EDD) will hire 325 employment program representatives (EPR) to assist veterans with processes such as completing forms and filing initial and continued claims for Unemployment Insurance Program bene-

fits. The EPRs will also be trained by the EDD and the California Department of Veterans Affairs (CDVA) to assist with:

- Finding employment, job training assistance and employment benefits;
- Education opportunities;
- Housing;
- Health care;
- Benefits provided by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and
- Support for families.

Operation Welcome Home consolidates into one cohesive program the efforts of a multitude of government agencies, nongovernmental organizations and volunteer organizations dedicated to assisting veterans with benefits. The goal is to streamline services for veterans and bypass government bureaucracy to allow veterans straightforward and rapid access to benefits. EPRs will serve as the first point of contact for veterans to ensure they are evaluated for unemployment insurance and re-employment services as well as to assist them with other services they may need or be eligible to receive.

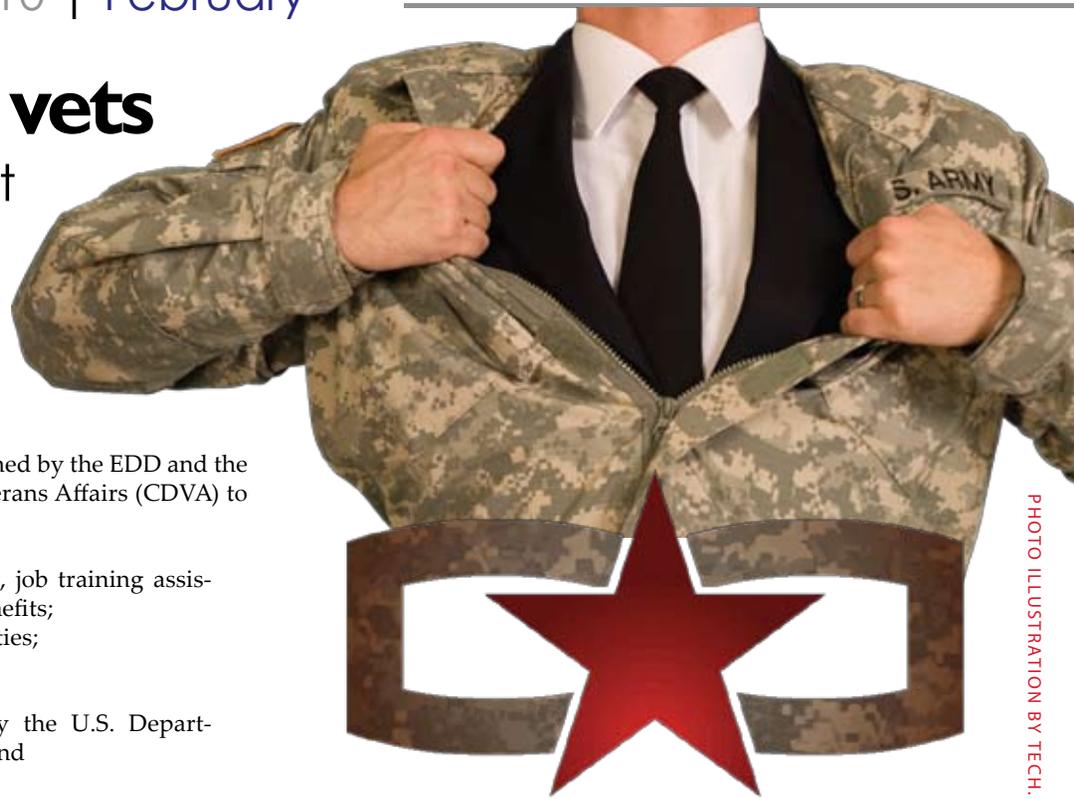
Cal Guard officers and noncommissioned officers who have completed 60 semester units or 90 quarter units and are interested in applying for an EPR position should contact Capt. Peter Lewis at 916-806-1660 or peter.lewis@us.army.mil.

The second component of Operation Welcome Home is the CalVet Corps Volunteer Team. The CDVA has applied to CaliforniaVolunteers and requested funding for 52 AmeriCorps members who would assist in outreach efforts for veterans statewide. CaliforniaVolunteers is the state office that manages programs aimed at increasing the number

of Californians who volunteer.

The CalVet Corps Volunteer Team will reach out to veterans at the community level in order to guide them to the EPRs. The CalVet Corps Volunteer Team will attempt to enlist 1,000 community volunteers to assist in accomplishing the Operation Welcome Home mission.

To volunteer, contact vetservice@cdva.ca.gov. For additional information: www.calvetcorps.ca.gov.



CALVET CORPS



OPERATION WELCOME HOME

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY TECH: SGT. JOSEPH PROUSE

Dozens of California employers partner with Guard

By Laura Herzog
JFTB-Los Alamitos Public Affairs

The National Guard and the Army Reserve signed Employer Partnership Agreements with dozens of California employers represented by the International Brotherhood of Teamsters Joint Council 42 and the Helmets to Hardhats organization Dec. 11. The agreements will facilitate access to employment opportunities for California Soldiers and veterans.

The Army Reserve Employer Partnership Initiative is a vision of Lt. Gen. Jack Stultz, chief of the Army Reserve. It establishes a process through which employers and the Army Reserve components secure and share the talents of trained professionals. Employers benefit by receiving greater access to men and women with military values, knowledge and proven leadership skills.

"This gathering is important and meaningful because it is another valuable community partnership that is an integral part for us to sustain our Soldiers' and families' well-being, allowing Soldiers to focus, knowing their families are cared for," Maj. Gen. John S. Harrel, commander of

the California Army National Guard, said Dec. 11 at Joint Forces Training Base-Los Alamitos, where the agreements were signed. "At any given time here in California, we have close to 2,000 National Guard Soldiers that are unemployed or underemployed."

More than 800 employers across the nation, and nearly 60 based in California, have signed Employer Partnership Agreements since the program's inception in April 2008. Employer partnerships build on the talent, skills and real-world experience that citizen-Soldiers bring to the civilian workforce.

In partnership with the Army Reserve and the National Guard, businesses and government agencies can look to hundreds of thousands of talented Soldiers to fill their staffing needs. These potential employees have been pre-screened and fully trained in the technical, specialized and professional capabilities employers need, which may reduce employers' recruiting and training costs.



Randy Cammack, president of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters Joint Council 42, signs an employer partnership agreement with the National Guard and the Army Reserve on Dec. 11 at Joint Forces Training Base-Los Alamitos, while Lt. Gen. Jack Stultz, chief of the Army Reserve; Maj. Gen. John S. Harrel, commander of the California Army National Guard; and Darrell Roberts, executive director of Helmets to Hardhats, look on. Helmets to Hardhats also signed agreement that day.

PHOTO BY TANVA PHAM

Brig. Gen. Mary J. Kight leads Cal Guard

First woman to head CNG is nation's first African-American, female adjutant general

By Brandon Honig
Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs

Brig. Gen. Mary J. Kight assumed command of the California National Guard this month, breaking barriers for minorities and stepping into the shoes of a revered general.

Maj. Gen. William H. Wade II relinquished command Feb. 2 during a ceremony at Mather Air Field, Calif. Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger named Kight the new adjutant general of the Cal Guard, calling her a proven, courageous, loyal and honorable leader.

"General Kight has been described as a strong leader, a hard worker, a pioneer," Schwarzenegger said. "Everybody who's served with her says, 'You're doing such an unbelievable job.' She says, 'I'm just doing my job.'"

"Like General Wade, she will be a wartime leader and will face tough challenges," he continued, "but General Kight, I have confidence in your ability and leadership."

Kight is the first woman to serve as adjutant general of the Cal Guard; she formerly served as its first female assistant adjutant general. She is the first African-American woman to serve as adjutant general in the United States.

"Mary, it has been my distinct honor and pleasure to serve with you during some of the most troubling yet most rewarding times in our Guard's history," Wade said. "You have been an outstanding assistant adjutant general, and I know you will make a great adjutant general. ... Our guard, our state and our nation win with a true top performer like Brigadier General Mary Kight."

Wade oversaw a period of great change after taking command in September 2005. During his tenure the Cal Guard transformed from a strategic reserve to a globally deployable operational force. He also spearheaded a wide range of improvements in benefits and family care. Wade stepped down as adjutant general to become deputy chief of staff for operations, Joint Forces Command-Naples, North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

"General Wade, because of your passion for the Guard and [your] absolute belief in leaders at every level – both in the officer ranks and enlisted ranks – we have proven that we are always ready and we are always there," Kight said, referencing the National Guard's motto. "Members serving Joint Forces Command-Naples will learn in a short period of time that Major General Wade is a visionary leader, results-oriented, compassionate and sincere."

Schwarzenegger presented Wade the California Legion of Merit medal during the change of command ceremony. The governor thanked Wade for his friendship and extraordi-



Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger administers the oath of office to Brig. Gen. Mary J. Kight, the 45th adjutant general of the California National Guard, during a change of command ceremony at Mather Air Field, Calif., on Feb. 2

nary service, saying he had taken the finest National Guard in the country and made it better. Among other contributions, Schwarzenegger noted Cal Guard achievements in Kosovo, Iraq and Afghanistan; on the U.S.-Mexico border; in the Gulf Coast region following Hurricane Katrina; and throughout California in support of firefighting agencies. He also said Wade created one of the most comprehensive mental health programs in the U.S. and fought to secure education benefits for Cal Guard members.

The day, however, belonged to Kight, who received numerous standing ovations from the crowd of more than 500 in attendance. Kight, who began her military career in the active duty Air Force in 1974, deflected praise of her unique achievements for minority service members.

"I heard some words before this ceremony about changes and some of the 'firsts.' But this is about us," she said. "This is about acknowledgement of the California National Guard."

"My mother always taught me, 'Do your job, mind your own business.' And I've always done that," she said. "I focus on service."

Kight added that her background includes Filipino, Native American and Spanish heritage as well. "So it's not so much, from my perspective, more opportunities for African-Americans, more opportunities for women – it's just that there are more opportunities [in the Cal Guard] for people overall."

Kight joined the Cal Guard in 1984 after serving in the active duty Air Force and the Nebraska Air National Guard. Among other duties, she has served as commander of the 144th Aircraft Generation Squadron, the 144th Mission Support Group and the 201st Mission Support Squadron's detachment for members on Title 10 status. In November 2004, Kight became the assistant adjutant general for the Cal Guard's Air Division. Then in February 2006, she became the assistant adjutant general for the California National Guard, serving as Wade's top adviser.

"General Wade, thank you for your trust and your faith in me and mentoring me," Kight said. "The team that's here is a team that has already proven that we can respond to the call but also take care of our people and plan for the future. So we're set."

Free financial counseling, services for Guard members

The National Guard Bureau late last year established the Joint Consumer Education and Financial Services Program (JCEFS) to ensure all National Guard members and their families have access to services and tools to help them obtain and maintain financial health.

Through coordination with several offices in the Department of Defense (DOD), the program arranges for personal finance counselors, military family life consultants, representatives from the DOD Office of Personal Finance and Transition, and other experts to appear at a variety of events for Guard members nationwide.

Service members can also immediately take advantage of benefits such as free financial counseling, training and calcula-

On the Web:

<http://jfsap.mhf.dod.mil>

militaryonesource.com

myarmyonesource.com

tors through the Web sites for Military OneSource and Army OneSource.

"The current economic climate underscores how important sound financial management practices are to our service members and their families," Gen. Craig R. McKinley, chief of the National Guard Bureau, said in a memo announcing the program. "Their financial health is essential to the National Guard's military preparedness."

Each service member can schedule 12 free financial counseling sessions through

militaryonesource.com. The site also provides an array of financial calculators applicable to all financial matters and offers train-the-trainer courses over the Web or teleconference.

At myarmyonesource.com members of all military branches can use the Web site's e-learning center, which offers financial training in blocks ranging from five to eight hours.

With the assistance of these Web sites and the JCEFS' schedule of counseling, training and Road Show events to increase awareness of available financial resources, the National Guard Bureau aims to improve financial stability among its service members, thereby allowing them to focus on their missions.



"It is important to ensure our military members and their families are able to mitigate their stressors and maintain their quality of life as they perform difficult missions throughout the world," McKinley wrote in the September memo.

1-144th teaches English to youths in Kosovo

Story and photo by Spc. Drew Balstad
116th Public Affairs Detachment

Members of the 1-144th Maneuver Task Force have been doing more than keeping the peace on their current NATO mission in Kosovo. They've been doing a little teaching on the side, and recently they celebrated the graduation of their English club at a primary school.

Staff Sgt. Patrick Torres, Staff Sgt. Michael Rider and Chief Warrant Officer Fernando Trevino, all with the headquarters for the Los Angeles area-based 1st Battalion, 144th Field Artillery Regiment, taught the class, which they started to help local elementary school children learn English. The class was taught every Tuesday and Thursday for five weeks at a school in Pozheran, Kosovo.

"The kids are very interested in learning the English language. Besides the school they go to every day, some pay for private lessons in English," said Valbona Halimi, principal of the Pozheran school. "So we have some of the kids that cannot afford that because of money enroll in this club."

The 1-144th has been in Kosovo since October as part of a NATO peacekeeping mission. The 1-144th Soldiers are stationed at Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo, headquarters for the U.S.-led Multi-National Task Force-East.

Twenty students were enrolled in the class taught by the 1-144th. Torres said it was a challenge to get the kids to open up in the beginning.

"Like with any elementary school kids, when they see new faces, they tend to be shy," Torres said. "But as the weeks progressed, they became more open and friendly with us. We tried to make the class fun for them."

Lt. Col. David Brady, commander of the 1-144th, attended the club's graduation and shook hands with each of the children while handing them their diplomas.

"It was a good opportunity for me to be there for the com-



Lt. Col. David Brady, commander of the 1-144th Maneuver Task Force, presents a student their diploma during a graduation ceremony for an English club taught by California National Guard Soldiers last year in Pozheran, Kosovo.

pletion of their five weeks of English and to show that we think it's important," Brady said.

The children's graduation marked a milestone in many of their young lives.

"The graduation, I think, really had an impact in their lives, showing that they completed a step in their life," Rider said.

For years, U.S. Soldiers have held regular English classes throughout the U.S. area of responsibility in southeastern Kosovo. Because of vast improvements in the educational opportunities for Kosovar students and because of

the increased ability of Kosovo's schools to provide these classes, U.S. forces soon will begin to step back and let the schools take the lead role.

"We are seeing the abundant fruits of seeds planted years ago, when English classes were first taught by American Soldiers to the children of Kosovo," said Brig. Gen. Al Dohrmann, commander of Multi-National Task Force-East. "That first generation of students, with their teachers, now is able to step forward and lead these highly popular classes without our help. The graduation ceremony in Pozheran truly is a milestone event for the students involved, and also it is symbolic of the successes I see in schools throughout my sector of responsibility."

1-18th Cav Soldiers join ages-old brotherhood

Story and photo by Spc. Nevada J. Smith
69th Public Affairs Detachment

The cavalry Soldier is the second-oldest type of warrior in the world. The first mounted warriors were cunning men who raised themselves above the common fighter to create a deadly combination of warrior and steed. Since man tamed the first wild horse, the mounted Soldier has been one of the most dangerous, feared and glorified warriors on the battlefield, and the U.S. Army cavalry maintains the pride, prowess, fierceness and élan of those first mounted warriors.

For the Soldiers of 1st Squadron, 18th Cavalry Regiment, Oct. 21 was a day to prove to the rest of the Soldiers deployed to Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo, that cavalry Soldiers are among the best. They did this during the rigorous trial known as the Spur Ride.

Any cavalry Soldier who deploys and goes to combat is awarded gold spurs — an honor in itself — but silver spurs must be earned, said Walter Claude-Murray, Task Force Sabre's command sergeant major.

"To have your [silver] spurs is to say you are the best cavalry Soldier that the cavalry can offer, and a Spur Ride is the test of tests for all cavalrymen," Claude-Murray said.

Historically, new cavalry troopers, or

"shaved tails," were often inexperienced and lacked the skills necessary to swing a saber from horseback. Wearing spurs would have made the rider's job more difficult as they tried to master the art of fighting from horseback. So being allowed to wear spurs was a sign that the trooper was finally experienced enough.

To prove their mettle, the 1-18th Soldiers went through an arduous two-day process of sleep deprivation, marches and training. The first day started with an Army Physical Fitness Test at 2:30 a.m. Of the 27 candidates, only seven met the required 75 percent for each component. Although only seven qualified to continue, two additional Soldiers, Spc. Schuyler Labar and Spc. Danny Martinez, showed their dedication by requesting to continue with the ride, though they could not earn their spurs.

After completing a test of knowledge on cavalry history and traditions, the candidates navigated through nine training stations, which tested their ability to make a call-for-fire, place an IV and call for a medical evacuation, among other tasks.

That night, the shaved tails slept out in the cold instead of in their nice warm rooms. The next morning was another early one as



Soldiers of 1st Squadron, 18th Cavalry Regiment, march toward the honor of earning their spurs. Seven Guardsmen completed the arduous two-day test on Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo, in October.

the candidates started the final test, a 12-mile trek with all of their gear. As the Soldiers neared the finish, they showed real cavalry spirit as they charged the last 200 meters in a dead sprint.

Once the ride was over, the seven Soldiers knelt and were presented their spurs.

"These cavalry troops have been the best,"

Claude-Murray said. "They've worked hard to prove themselves; they are true professionals."

Sgt. 1st Class Andrew McKindley said the event was exhausting, but he was elated the Soldiers finished as a team.

"It was tough; it tested your limits," he said. "But it makes you a better person after."



Behavioral health specialist Micah Altman speaks with Lt. Col. Gabriel Frumkin, commander of the 749th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, at the Benicia Armory in Benicia, Calif., on Jan. 9. Altman aids Soldiers with many issues, such as depression, combat-related stress and readjustment to civilian life.

Embed program provides mental health support

TriWest, CNG pioneer program to place specialists at armories

By Jeanne Kouhestani | The Officer Magazine

Sergeant X, a member of the California National Guard, dove under a bench at work one day when the door to his federal agency's firing range opened suddenly and the sound of gunfire took him by surprise. His colleagues stared at him like he was crazy. Having recently returned from convoy duty in Baghdad, where diving for cover might save your life, Sergeant X was not crazy, but his stress levels were sky-high, and he was having difficulty making the transition back to his civilian job. This incident led to his eventual dismissal — a personal disaster in his economically depressed hometown — and a downward spiral that left him feeling abandoned and alone.

Challenges like this are faced all too often by National Guard and Reserve troops who lack the mental health support found on active-duty military bases. Operation Desert Storm veteran Marge Crowl, now the director of behavioral health at TriWest Health Alliance, masterminded a program to tackle this problem by embedding behavioral health providers with units of the California National Guard, beginning in December 2005.

In an interview with *The Officer*, a magazine published by the Reserve Officers Association, Crowl said it was clear the National Guard was underserved when it came to mental health resources. The stigma attached to post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and other behavioral problems made the need for easily available and confidential help even more critical.

"Behavioral health has reached a pinnacle of interest in every sense since we've been in Iraq and Afghanistan," she said. "We came up with this brainchild to see if this was something that would make a difference, and mainly it has."

Indeed, it has made a difference to Sergeant X. It was a long road back to stability, but with the support of Catherine Butler, the embedded psychologist in his

unit, Sergeant X got the help he needed to get back on his feet. He is now employed in the private sector and continues to drill with his unit.

The embedded provider program assigns licensed clinicians to National Guard units under contracts with TriWest. The providers, who continue to maintain their private practices, attend monthly drill weekends and field exercises, and become a part of the unit. They are available to talk with anyone dealing with a family, job or health issue or any other concern, and they provide local referrals for more in-depth therapy if needed. They are a resource for information about available programs and services Guard members may not be aware of, and they offer classes on behavioral health topics. The goal is to make Soldiers feel comfortable with providers — to help them feel willing to open up and trust providers for guidance and support. Providers are also available to help family members with problems while the unit is deployed.

"What we consider to be the meat of this program is the idea of trust," Crowl said. "You just don't seek behavioral health service without some level of trust. There is a fear that seeking services is going to hurt your career or point you out for undue

attention.”

Embedded providers are able to help a service member know what’s normal and what’s not.

“When you come back from a war zone and you have nightmares and wake up in a cold sweat for a period of time, that’s probably pretty normal,” Crowl said. “When you go to bed with a gun under your pillow, that’s not normal.”

Confidentiality is critical to the program’s success. It is key to getting Soldiers to talk to counselors and continue with services that are necessary to their health. Providers do not keep clinical records of their interactions with Soldiers — nothing goes into personnel files. Instead, drill reports are sent to TriWest, indicating the issues addressed without naming names. This enables the company to measure the program’s results while maintaining the privacy of those who seek help.

Drill reports show marriage and family issues account for 36.8 percent of provider interactions, while previous and ongoing issues (31 percent), PTSD (25.5 percent) and job and financial issues (17 percent) also account for large numbers. Issues such as retention, grief, peer relations and substance abuse are also addressed. The rate of self-referral, versus referral by a unit commander, has risen from 20 percent initially to 56 percent today.

In some units, commanders require each new person entering the unit to see the provider for a short one-time visit, said Yael Eshman, TriWest’s clinical project manager for behavioral health. She added that the initial visit can speed up the process of providers gaining troops’ trust.

“It provide[s] an opportunity for a personal introduction of both the program and provider, and it enable[s] a very early assessment,” Eshman said. “It also pave[s] the way for people to [seek help] later on because the initial ice was already broken.”

“People need to get to know [the health providers] and realize [they] don’t have X-ray eyes and don’t tell the command everything they hear. That takes a little time and trust-building.”

Getting the open support of unit leaders is extremely helpful, said Butler, who has been embedded with El Centro, Calif.-based Company A, 79th Special Troops Battalion, since the program’s inception. When Butler assisted a sergeant with a problem, for example, he told the whole unit that Butler had gotten him out of a jam, and he encouraged the members to take advantage of talking to Butler while they had the chance.

“I was completely relieved that had happened, and I knew at that point they would feel okay about walking by and asking me for help,” Butler said.

Until the unit deployed to Kosovo last year, Butler spent every drill weekend with her Soldiers. She also helped prepare the unit for deployment by giving lessons in a classroom setting, which would prompt later discussions.

“Soldiers would be very sneaky. They’d walk by and say, ‘Can I talk to you?’ I’d say ‘Sure,’ and we would go find some little casual place to be, and they would tell me what’s going on,” Butler said. “I

would offer referrals or insights or do a little counseling session depending on what the issue was.”

Lt. Col. Gabriel Frumkin, commander of the 749th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, has behavioral health providers embedded in each of the five units under his command in northern and central California. He said the program has been a positive tool that the chain of command uses to help Soldiers, particularly in light of the stresses Soldiers face since the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, and the downturn of the nation’s economy.

“There are multiple stresses that we all face, and these [embedded providers] have truly been an outlet valve for that,” he said. “I can’t say enough good about the program. Having been in units when we didn’t have that, it’s been a definite plus to have the embedded therapist with us.”

One of Frumkin’s embedded providers, Kim Evans, developed a strong rapport with her unit before it deployed in 2007. She even left her private practice and traveled to the mobilization station at Fort Hood, Texas, to provide support.

“She fit in as almost one of the Soldiers, and they were able to talk to her about particular stresses or concerns that they had about mobilization,” Frumkin said. “She not only allayed their concerns but also worked with the company chain of command to help them.”

When the unit returned in 2008, Evans was there to talk with Soldiers as they went through post-mobilization activities.

“She’s still there. Even though the unit leaders may have changed, she has stayed. She is that one piece of continuity,” Frumkin said.

Butler noted that the practice of suspending drill requirements for 90 days after a unit returns from active duty overseas presents a challenge. Because Soldiers are happy to be back, symptoms of PTSD or other severe behavioral issues don’t always surface during the post-mobilization processing, she said. Problems that can be mitigated if a Soldier speaks with a provider early on may boil over and cause real damage during that 90-day period if the individual doesn’t seek help on their own. Such was the case with Sergeant X.

TriWest’s embedded provider initiative was launched as a two-year pilot program in partnership with the Cal Guard. The company placed two counselors with a unit that was preparing to deploy, and followed with 38 more around the state. Providers had experience in marriage therapy, PTSD, grief counseling and substance abuse, and were placed only where unit commanders requested them.

If successful, the program was to be turned over to the state for funding after two years, while TriWest continued to administer it. Although the intended two-year time frame has long passed, the embed program has been so well received that TriWest has continued to fund it until the state can pick up the expense. Montana has also launched a version of the program with its own funding, and TriWest administers it for the state. Several other states have also shown interest in launching embed programs.



PHOTO BY PFC CRYSTAL KIRK

Embedded provider and marriage and family therapist Kim Evans speaks with a Soldier during a monthly drill at the Benicia Armory in Benicia, Calif., on Jan. 9.

Additional Resources

TriWest Healthcare Alliance provides clinical behavioral health services to Soldiers and family members insured under TriWest:
www.triwest.com/beneficiary/BehavioralHealth

Military OneSource maintains a 24-hour lifeline at 800-342-9647. Short-term individual or family/dependent counseling is available at no cost:
www.militaryonesource.com

Cal Guard Mental Health Office assists Airmen and Soldiers in obtaining professional care and provides guidance 24 hours a day: 916-854-4492 or www.calguard.ca.gov/mh

Cal Guard State Chaplain’s Office provides spiritual leadership, ministry and grief counseling : 916-854-3398 or 888-939-1754 or www.calguard.ca.gov/Chaplain

Cal Guard Peer-to-Peer Training Program educates Soldiers on posttraumatic emotions and factors leading to suicidal behavior: www.calguard.ca.gov/jl

Give an Hour provides free mental health services for military personnel:
www.giveanhour.org

Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors provides grief support services:
800-959-TAPS or www.taps.org

The Soldier’s Project provides free psychotherapy for any service member who has served in Iraq or Afghanistan and for their loved ones at offices in Sacramento and the Los Angeles area: www.thesoldiersproject.org

The California National Guard Mental Health Office lists additional resources at www.calguard.ca.gov/mh

Holiday cheer: CNG lends a helping hand



Brig. Gen. Mary J. Kight, adjutant general of the California National Guard, and Command Sgt. Maj. William Clark Jr., command sergeant major (CSM) of the Cal Guard, share a laugh while sorting donated food with Command Sgt. Maj. Jose J. Gomez, CSM of the Joint Staff, at the Sacramento Food Bank. The Cal Guard command staff and other service members at Joint Force Headquarters in Sacramento donate time each year to the nonprofit, which provides free emergency goods and services to individuals and families in need.

Photo by Tech. Sgt. David J. Loeffler

Maj. Gen. William H. Wade II, who was then the adjutant general of the Cal Guard, and his wife, Leslie, pose with Sgt. Maj. Lawrence Ellsworth — AKA Santa — and Sgt. (CA) Jessica Cooper while volunteering at the Sacramento Children's Receiving Home. For more than two decades the California Military Department and its Employees Council have sponsored Santa Claus at the home and assisted with toy donations each year. The receiving home cares for children who have been displaced from their homes and are awaiting placement in foster care or return to their primary guardian.

Photo by Pat Sproul



Volunteers with Sacramento Food Bank & Family Services hand boxes of turkeys to Sgt. 1st Class James D. Hubbard and Sgt. 1st Class Michael G. Long to load onto a Cal Guard vehicle as part of the Thanksgiving component of Operation Holiday, which delivered more than 400 turkeys to Guard families throughout California. Each year, charitable organizations collect donations for military members and their families during the holiday season. In 2009 the Sacramento Food Bank and the Rancho Cordova Elks Lodge both focused their efforts on donating to California National Guard families. The Cal Guard facilitated delivery by providing ground and air transportation throughout the state.

Photo by Sgt. (CA) Jessica Cooper



A C-130J aircraft from the 146th Airlift Wing, based at Channel Island Air National Guard Station, Calif., waits at Mather Flight Facility near Sacramento in December to be loaded with 17 pallets of food and toys donated by the Sacramento Food Bank and the Rancho Cordova Elks Lodge through its "Catch the Spirit" campaign. The aircraft stopped in Fresno and at Channel Islands to drop off the items for local units. Another 30 pallets were provided for northern California units.

Photo by Sgt. (CA) Jessica Cooper

At a Glance



◀ LEFT: Spc. Christopher A. Carney of 1st Battalion, 185th Armor Regiment, snaps a photo of his five children as they hold aloft presents received Dec. 18th from Boy Scout Troop 1134 on Joint Forces Training Base-Los Alamitos. The Carneys were one of 77 Guard families whose holidays were made brighter by local organizations, groups and families that donated to the California National Guard's Family Readiness 2009 Benevolence Program. Carney recently returned home from serving in Iraq, only to find his job had vanished. Troop 1134 gathered gifts and donations to support the family through their hardship. "Thanks to them our holidays went really well," Carney said. "Our oldest son was in tears when he realized the entire pickup load of gifts was just for us."

Photo by Gracelyn Hapenny



In this 2001 painting by Rick Reeves, the Cal Guard's 40th Infantry Division, or "Sunshine Division," is depicted fighting in Kumwha Valley, Republic of Korea, in spring 1952. The Cal Guard troops deployed to Japan in spring 1951 and trained there while Army commanders debated whether to employ the division in Korea. Eventually, in January 1952, the Soldiers arrived in Korea. Among its many battles, the Sunshine Division fought at Heartbreak Ridge and was defending the northern edge of the "Punchbowl" when the armistice was announced in July 1953.

"The Sunshine Division in Korea" by Rick Reeves, 2001

A young girl in Kabas, Kosovo, receives a gift during a celebration of the Feast of St. Nicolas on Dec. 6 at the Church of St. Nicolas. Chaplain Timothy Meier of 1st Battalion, 144th Field Artillery Regiment, helped organize the event, and other Cal Guard members joined the celebration.

Photo by Sgt. Jesica Geffre



Chief Master Sgt. Rich Nowaski, an HH-60G Pave Hawk flight engineer for the 129th Rescue Wing, and Zach Coffman of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service prepare to attach a cargo sling to pieces of a boat crane at Farallon National Wildlife Refuge on Dec 21. The 129th supported the Fish and Wildlife Service by transporting crane pieces to nearby Stinson Beach.

Photo by Airman 1st Class Jessica Green

Staff Sgt. Andy Vu of 1st Battalion, 144th Field Artillery Regiment, won first prize in a photography contest for all members of Kosovo Force 12 (KFOR) in December. Vu's photo of Mt. Luboten, known as "Big Duke" to KFOR members, was selected as the best from more than 200 photo entries judged by the staff of KFOR Chronicle, the official magazine of KFOR.

Vu won a new camera for his efforts.

Photo by Staff Sgt. Andy Vu



251st honored for service in Pacific Theater

By 1st Lt. Michael Anthony Rodriguez
Command Historian, California National Guard

Just like many of the units that represented the California National Guard during World War II, the 251st Coast Artillery Regiment (Anti-Aircraft) served with great distinction.

Before the United States' entry into World War II, the 1st Battalion of the 251st trained and had their home armory in San Diego. The 2nd Battalion had two batteries, which called San Pedro and Long Beach, Calif., home. With the firepower of 75mm and 37mm anti-aircraft artillery, the 251st well deserved its motto, "We Aim to Hit."

An executive order on Sept. 16, 1940, instructed 1,200 Guardsmen to begin preparations to travel to Hawaii to conduct training and maneuvers in case the U.S. entered the war. The regiment's federal service was extended in 1941, and the 251st ended up serving until 1946. An article in the Honolulu Advertiser chronicled the regiment's first months in Hawaii.

"The Day-of-Days dawned on September 16th, on a life that the citizen-soldiers never thought would come to them," the Advertiser wrote Jan. 21, 1941. "Uncomplainingly and cheerfully, they answered the call of their President and Country."

"They left their homes, their loved ones, their jobs, their classrooms, to obey the order that was to add to their already impressive total. ... They entered Army life eager to learn and do their part to keep the American flag the symbol of peace on earth. ... When duty calls and America needs defense from enemy aircraft, this Regiment will gallantly defend with hammers, saws and squares to the last nail and stick of lumber for 'We Aim to Hit.'"

After Japan attacked Pearl Harbor, the 251st moved into high battle mode. Its Soldiers traveled to the Fiji Islands and set up



PHOTOS SPECIAL TO GRIZZLY MAGAZINE

BY THE NUMBERS

5 The number of campaign credits the 251st Coast Artillery Regiment (Anti-Aircraft) received for its service during World War II. The campaigns were the Central Pacific, Northern Solomons, Leyte, Luzon (with arrowhead signifying an assault landing) and Southern Philippines.

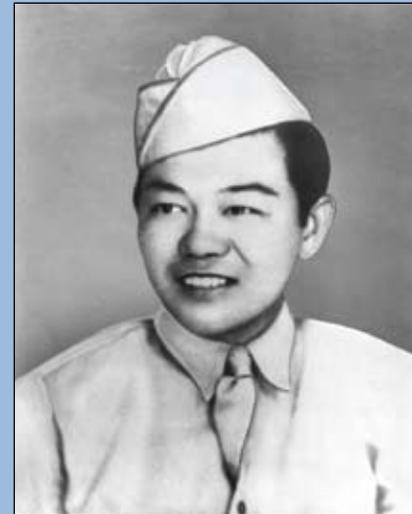


anti-air defense for the Islands' lone airfield. This was followed by "island-hopping" to defeat the Japanese forces. The Cal Guard Soldiers moved throughout the Solomon Islands on their way to the Battle of the Philippines, and ultimately received the Philippine Presidential Unit Citation.

Although 1944 included some reconstitution of the enlarged 251st Regiment,

the original California battalions stayed together and served until the end of the war. They were inactivated in December 1945 and January 1946 at Camp Stoneman in Pittsburg, Calif.

These citizen-Soldiers provided a valuable asset during the Allied struggle in the Pacific Theatre and they are remembered for their extraordinary service to the state and nation.



Pfc. Sadao S. Munemori

In 1945, Pfc. Sadao S. Munemori, a California native and a member of the U.S. Army, posthumously received the Medal of Honor for his selfless action during a battle in Italy. While his unit was withdrawing from enemy machine gun fire, Munemori smothered an enemy grenade, saving the life of his comrades. Shortly after he volunteered for the Army in 1942, his family was interned by authorities because of their Japanese heritage. In spite of this, Munemori served with distinction for his country. A freeway interchange in his hometown of Los Angeles is named in his honor.

California Military Ball

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ADT vaccinates Afghan animals, teaches proper care

Story and photos by Tech. Sgt. Brian Boisvert
Combined Joint Task Force-82

Within eyesight of the Pakistani border, the 40th Infantry Division's Agribusiness Development Team (ADT) partnered with local Afghan leaders to administer vaccinations and vitamin treatment to 462 animals outside a small U.S. forward operating base in northern Kunar province in December.

More than 100 local farmers brought their livestock to the event to get treatment and information. Sgt. Scott Flynn provided each animal a health assessment using an approved number-conditioning system to document and check the animal's overall health before moving it to a holding pen for vaccination.

"We are here to vaccinate the villagers' animals against anthrax, rabies and eight-way clostridials," Flynn said, adding that the event helped develop relationships between U.S. forces, government leaders and local residents. "We are here to help, and they see that."

The ADT teamed with Afghan elders and villagers to set up the holding pens, administer the vaccinations and clean up the site when done. The mobile clinic also allowed the ADT to train eight local farmers on how to properly administer future vaccinations.

Lt. Col. Max Velte, ADT deputy commander, said the exercise was a collaboration with local leaders and elders from the very beginning.

"We had a good mix of locals from the Afghan National Army, Afghan National Police, local [veterinary] techs and government leadership from Naray, and we were further supported by the Afghan Vet Association from Jalalabad," Velte said.

The vaccination process started early in the morning, and cow-by-cow and goat-by-goat, it continued well into the evening. Hajji Shadifullah, Nary District line director for agriculture, said he likes working with the ADT because it benefits the people. In an area where there are no cell phones or radios, and few homes have electricity, farm animals are the only currency, and healthy animals mean increased wealth.

"We do not have any other companies that are working [here], and we have no money, so livestock is very important to the people," Shadifullah said.

In addition to building relationships with local farmers and leaders, the ADT's goal for the event was to help local farmers improve the health of their herds and ultimately increase the longevity and resale value of their animals.

In addition to the vaccinations and training, villagers who attended the event received a small radio, extra medication for their animals and information about proper animal care written in Pashto. Similar events are being planned to further benefit the agricultural community.



TOP: Spc. Kathryn Tanson, left, California National Guard's 40th Infantry Division Agribusiness Development Team large animal specialist from Corning, Calif., receives assistance from a local Afghan with administering vaccines to a goat during a free veterinary clinic Dec. 17 in Naray, Afghanistan. **LEFT:** Spc. Jose Lopez, right, irrigation specialist from Porterville, Calif., holds a calf tight while a local Afghan administers vaccines and vitamins.



The Adjutant General's Symposium on Family Readiness

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10-11 April 2010
San Diego, Calif.

Med professionals earn large incentives for joining Guard

By Capt. Bob Couture
CNG Army Medical Department

The California National Guard Army Medical Department (AMEDD) is in dire need of the very best medical professionals to join the force. The AMEDD team is composed of only eight physicians, two dentists and 16 physician assistants (PA), who serve all of California. There are many other medical professionals and paraprofessionals in AMEDD who bring their critical skills to the fight — nurses, psychologists, physical therapists, medics and many others — but the critical shortages are for physicians, dentists and PAs. Any service member can help bring these combat lifesavers into the Guard if armed with the right information.

The AMEDD mission is to conserve the fighting strength by ensuring the health and deployment readiness of every Soldier. This has always been the mission, but it has taken on greater relevance since Sept. 11, 2001, because of the state's deployment tempo and high number of Soldiers who have been unable to pass a medical screening.

To keep the Cal Guard ready, AMEDD's drills and annual training are geared toward the Periodic Health Assessment (PHA) and immunizations. Doctors and PAs also train the force by teaching their paraprofessionals the lifesaving skills necessary in a combat zone. Additionally, educational opportunities such as military medicine classes and civilian continuing medical education courses keep AMEDD personnel current on recent research.

"Educational and professional diversity brings richness to life" said Lt. Col. Salvador Renteria, assistant state surgeon, California Army National Guard, explaining

just one of the benefits of serving in the AMEDD.

Part-time service in the Guard also enhances the care that medical providers give patients in their full-time practices. AMEDD professionals become skilled in techniques and treatments that most civilians never have the opportunity to use.

"Guard medicine lets us apply skills learned in residency firsthand," said 1st Lt. Mikhail Karton, a PA with the 297th Area Support Medical Company. "From setting up field aid stations to teaching Combat Lifesaver or first aid classes, to supporting units from various states and countries, [AMEDD service] provides a greater sense of responsibility and enriches our medical skills."

The responsibilities of these primary care providers in the combat theater run the gamut. Physicians handle routine sick



Lt. Col. Salvador Renteria, center, of the CNG Army Medical Department operates on a patient at Ibn Sina Hospital in Baghdad, Iraq, on Aug. 25, 2008.

calls, training, mass casualty drills and any trauma in their area of operations. Deployments for doctors and dentists last 90 days, but the limited timeframe doesn't keep them from maximizing their time there.

"It is an experience of a lifetime" said Renteria, who conducted 64 operations

in 81 days during his tour in Iraq at the Main Trauma Center of Ibn Sina Hospital in Baghdad.

Dentists are often co-located at combat support hospitals, where they perform routine sick calls or emergency procedures such as fillings or extractions. PAs and nurse practitioners have responsibility for the health of Soldiers at the unit level, and they are often assigned as the senior medical officer. They can run sick calls at forward operating base aid stations, be assigned to an emergency room in a combat support hospital, work an outpatient clinic for both civilian and military personnel, or take health care to a village.

AMEDD referrals are eligible for the Guard Recruiting Assistance Program (G-RAP). Guard members can earn up to \$7,500 for each referral. Visit <https://guardrap.com> to learn more. Your contribution to the readiness of the Cal Guard and its medical department is needed and will save lives ... maybe even your own.

Guard medical professionals are recognized for their valuable skills and contributions with exceptional incentives:

- \$75,000 bonus
- \$50,000-\$120,000 loan repayment
- \$1,992 monthly stipend for any physician in residency
- \$1,992 monthly stipend for a medical or dental student
- Qualified medical, dental and physician assistant students are placed on full-time duty status/orders (approximately \$5,000 per month) for up to three years while completing their degree

Medics face simulated chaos

Story and photo by Spc. Chris Erickson
116th Public Affairs Detachment

Blood pools on the floor, smoke hangs in the air and the sound of gunfire fills the ears of medics who are administering aid to casualties. It's not a war zone; it's advanced medical training at the South Camp Medical Simulation Training Center (MSTC) in Vilseck, Germany, where about three dozen medics recently went through the final phase of their training for the Kosovo Force 12 mission.

While the blood, gunfire and casualties are all fake, the focus is real: to learn in a chaotic setting to be better prepared if a Soldier needs lifesaving help. The MSTC's multisensory training was designed to recreate every aspect of the battlefield in a controlled environment.

Richard Harper, the contract site manager and senior facilitator for the MSTC, said all the trainers have prior military experience and work to make the training as realistic as possible.

"We try to simulate a battlefield scenario with the smells, blood, sounds and lights going off in a limited visibility environ-

ment to stress the Soldier out as much as possible so it's not the first time they see it when they're down-range," Harper said.

During the training, medics were divided into two- or three-person teams and sent into rooms with no knowledge of what type of atmosphere to expect inside — only that there were simulated casualties in need of immediate aid.

"It was a perfect example of a mass casualty situation that I could find myself in," said Spc. Dennis Yi, a medic with the 1-144th Maneuver Task Force (MTF) "Mustangs." "This is very good training; it's very important for all medics to go through."

Pfc. Ricardo Roncancio, also a medic with the 1-144th MTF, agreed that the training was a very valuable experience.

"I think we should do it even when we're not going on a deployment," Roncancio said. "If you don't do it as a career, training like this really helps refresh your memory."

Harper said the center's main focus is to present a standardized medical training platform for advanced skills training for combat lifesavers, non-medical personnel and medics. More than 1,400 medical and non-medical personnel are trained each year at the MSTC.

"We try to get them to think on their feet and reinforce their critical-thinking skills," he said. "That's the biggest part."

The training teaches medics to adapt to challenges, introduces them to different techniques and demonstrates the importance of good communication with team members.

"It gives us more of a sense of reality and urgency in our jobs," Yi said.

Roncancio said the training was necessary and he felt his skills had been refreshed.

"I feel like I just got out of Advanced Individual Training, because it just brought back all that knowledge," he said, adding that hands-on training is essential in the medical field. "When you do it, it helps you remember the training better."



A Kosovo Force medic patches a mannequin during medical training in a multisensory environment at the South Camp Medical Simulation Training Center in Vilseck, Germany.

Missed the EAAP deadline?

You can still apply for the Spring 2010 term through mid-April

It Takes Three

1. Fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)
2. Complete the CNG EAAP Application
3. Download and print the Statement of Understanding and have it signed by your commander

Get details and forms at:

www.calguard.ca.gov/education

Most four-year colleges require completion of the SAT or ACT

SAT

Test date: May 1
Register by March 25

Test date: June 5
Register by April 29

More information and free study guides:
www.collegeboard.com

Qualified service members can take the SAT or ACT free!
Info: www.dantes.doded.mil

For assistance, contact Christine Waite, California Army National Guard Education Services Officer, at 916-854-3225

ACT

Test date: April 10
Register by March 5

Test date: June 12
Register by May 7

More information and free study guides:
www.actstudent.org



Plan ahead for your future

By Bevin Stokesberry | HHD, Joint Force Headquarters

The first cycle of the California National Guard Education Assistance Award Program (EAAP) is well underway, as applications continue to be accepted for the Spring 2010 term. Although many applicants are already well into their college programs, there are still plenty of incoming freshmen and students who are returning to school after long periods of absence.

Whether you're a freshman or a grad student, an academic plan is very important to successful completion of your declared major for a certificate, degree or diploma. Most colleges have guidance counselors available to assist in educational career planning. In addition, Army National Guard members can take advantage of the Education Support Center (ESC) based in North Little Rock, Ark.

The ESC was put in place to assist Army National Guard members with information on getting a degree and on education benefits. Some services available through the ESC include, but are not limited to, evaluation of your military and civilian training, college degree planning services and Army National Guard education counseling.

To begin the process of completing your college degree, you can apply to the ESC at <https://education.ng.mil>. The ESC has the capability to download information from the

Army American Council on Education Registry Transcript System, which recommends college credits toward a degree based on your military occupational specialty and your training at military service schools. Additionally the ESC can provide you with a degree plan that will show you how your previous educational training (both military and civilian) can fit into the requirements you need for degree completion.

Your initial evaluation from the ESC will include three degree plans to choose from. Upon receiving these plans, you will need to verify that the recommended institutions are among those eligible for the California National Guard Education Assistance Award Program. A list of all eligible institutions is included on the application form (drop-down menu on Question 16), which can be found at www.calguard.ca.gov/education.

Developing an academic plan is one form of early preparation that can be a key to success when enrolled in college courses. Having a well-defined path for your educational career progression will help keep you on target for achieving your goals.

For more information visit the ESC Web site or call toll-free 1-866-628-5999.

Application period will open in late April for the upcoming 2010-11 academic year
www.calguard.ca.gov/education



More than 350 CNG members apply for EAAP

During the initial application period for the California National Guard Education Assistance Award Program (EAAP), which lasted less than three weeks, the Guard received more than 350 applications from students looking for their piece of the \$1.8 million available to service members attending California colleges and universities.

This year the program will help up to 1,000 California National Guard members pursue a degree. The benefit, which Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger signed into law July 28, is available to current service members who have served at least two years in the Cal Guard, California State Military Reserve or Naval militia.

The priority deadline for students seeking financial aid for the spring semester of 2010 passed Jan. 22. Nonetheless students can still apply for spring semester aid up through mid-April. The Guard will then begin accepting applications for students who are seeking assistance with bills for the fall semester of 2010 and the spring semester of 2011.

"We are very pleased with the Education Assistance Award Program applications received for this spring semester," said Katrina Beck, coordinator of the EAAP. "We know that starting the process mid-school-year did not allow for everyone who was interested to apply. We look forward to greater participation [in the application process] for the next academic year, which opens up mid-April."

Beck recommended that prospective students continue to develop their educational plans and research the schools they wish to attend.

"If you are looking to start your college education, you should speak with a counselor at the intended institution about the timeline for being accepted and what information needs to be gathered," she said. "This is especially true for the Cal State University and University of California institutions, where applications can be required over a year in advance for freshman and transfer students, depending on the campus' policy."

A Fact Sheet and answers to Frequently Asked Questions can be found on the EAAP Web site, www.calguard.ca.gov/education. The EAAP application on the site includes a list of all qualifying schools.

For further information, contact Katrina Beck at 916-854-4255 or katrina.beck2@us.army.mil.

Guard offers second chance for members hooked on drugs

By Sgt. Angel Stephen, CNG Substance Abuse Program; and Staff Sgt. J'neen Rice, Joint Substance Abuse Prevention Program

The Joint Substance Abuse Prevention Program (JSAPP) offers a second chance for service members who have a problem with drugs or alcohol. All the service member needs to do is ask for help.

The JSAPP is not just about catching and punishing service members with drug or alcohol problems; it also provides treatment options and protection for self-referrals.

Self-referrals fall under the Limited Use policy covered by Army Regulation 600-85 and Air Force Instruction 44-121. Under Limited Use, a service member who is concerned about substance abuse should inform his or her chain of command before testing positive on a urinalysis. The service member's unit will put him in contact with Staff Sgt. J'neen Rice, the JSAPP coordinator.

Limited Use is like a get-out-of-jail-free card. It saves the service member from the threat of discharge. Provided the service member has not already tested positive for drug use, seeking help and getting in a treatment or counseling program gives the Guard member a new start. The programs are often free or low-cost, depending on which program the Guard member selects.

The JSAPP is also completely confidential: Nothing goes on record and

no adverse actions can be taken. Only the service member's chain of command will know, as they provided the referral.

The service member's participation in Limited Use cannot follow him or her to another unit or another branch of service. Upon completion of a state-certified rehabilitation program, their record will be completely clean.

A variety of treatment options are available to a service member who needs help. The service member will fill out a questionnaire that helps define his or her specific needs before being put in touch with a provider.

The JSAPP benefits the service member as well as the California National Guard. The Guard member gets a fresh start free from substance abuse, and the Guard retains a valuable, trained service member.

One Soldier who benefited from the Limited Use policy, and wishes to remain anonymous, told his commander he needed help on the first day of drill.

"[My commander] told me to go to the JSAPP, and they pointed me in the right direction," said the Soldier, who has been drug-free for a year. "Staff Sgt. Rice called and checked up on me to make sure I was OK."

Rice contacts each service member within 48 hours after submission of a request for help.

"Talking with other people helped a lot," said the Soldier, who became involved with a group of other veterans with histories of substance abuse. "I didn't know the steps to recover, but they offered me the tools."

Service members can participate in many treatment programs for free through the California Access to Recovery Effort (CARE). Those programs are usually only available to people aged 12 to 20, but service members are eligible up to the age of 25 in Butte, Los Angeles, Sacramento, Shasta and Tehama counties.

Help is not only available to service members who qualify for Limited Use, but also for service members who have already tested positive. If a unit decides to retain a service member who has tested positive, the Guard member will be put on a one-year suspended discharge. The service member must complete rehabilitation, be in good standing with the unit and be tested for drugs at least four times during their year-long suspension in order to qualify for suspended-discharge status.

The anonymous Soldier in recovery said he thinks most commanders will want to help their service members who have substance abuse problems, as long as the Guard member appears committed to recovery.

"My command was really fair," he said. "I could have lost my rank, but they understood what I was going through."

The Cal Guard needs to retain and support all of its highly trained Guard members. The JSAPP is more than just a program of testing for drug use — it is a program that offers Soldiers and Airmen a chance to change their lives for the better with the support of their family and their chain of command.

If you or someone you know is abusing drugs or alcohol, you can contact Rice at 916-366-4736 (office), 916-206-0549 (cell) or jneen.rice@us.army.mil.



Guard support for families who lose a Soldier

The California Army National Guard in August initiated its new Survivor Outreach Services (SOS) program — part of an Army-wide initiative to provide dedicated and comprehensive support to survivors of deceased Soldiers. The SOS program demonstrates the National Guard's commitment to families of the fallen through a holistic and multi-agency approach for delivering services to survivors in their local communities.

Losing a loved one is one of the most difficult times anyone can experience. The SOS program connects survivors with people and resources that can help them find the strength they need to move forward. Many times after losing a loved one, there are unresolved issues or questions that may surface months or years after the loss, long



after the casualty assistance officer has concluded his or her services. The SOS program identifies the needs of those touched by the loss of a loved one.

SOS coordinators provide expertise on state and federal survivor benefits and work closely with the casualty assistance officer to provide guidance and assistance on benefits, entitlements and local resources. Coordinators also arrange for estate and financial advice when requested, connect survivors with appropriate mental

health support or counseling, and form peer-support groups and networks for survivors.

In addition they supply survivors with referrals and information on peer support bereavement counseling, emergency financial services, military legal assistance, TRICARE health benefits, education benefits, Dependency and Indemnity Compensation,

Social Security, death gratuity, Survivor Benefit Plan, Servicemembers Group Life Insurance and Family Group Life Insurance. They also educate the military command and local agencies about the needs of military survivors.

For SOS support

Northern California
Richard L. McDuff Jr.
916-854-3472 (work)
916-730-5093 (cell)
richard.l.mcduff@us.army.mil

Southern California
Blanca M. Trevino
323-262-8444, opt. 6 (w)
323-273-6083 (c)
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News & Benefits

224th STB, 144th FW win for excellence in family readiness

Maj. Gen. William H. Wade II, who was then the adjutant general of the California National Guard, recognized the 224th Special Troops Battalion and the 144th Fighter Wing with The Adjutant General's Award for Excellence in Family Readiness late last year. Each year, one awardee is selected from the California Army National Guard and one from the California Air National Guard.

"The 224th Special Troops Battalion and the 144th Fighter Wing have established systems of Family Readiness that are an example to all," Wade wrote in a memo announcing the awards. "Their leadership teams are fully supportive and involved with the Family Readiness Group, and their volunteer leaders ensure the success of the Group and its mission. During a peacetime steady state or when involved in state or federal missions, both units demonstrated that they are able to gather their Community of Concern to support Families and loved ones and allow their Guardmembers to concentrate on mission accomplishment."

For more on Family Readiness Programs statewide, contact Lt. Col. Kim Lalley, Cal Guard family programs director, at 916-361-4955 or kimberly.lalley@us.army.mil.

Free theme park admission

"Here's to the Heroes," a program sponsored by Anheuser-Busch, provides free one-day admission to SeaWorld and four other theme park brands in 2010 for any National Guard member plus three of their dependents.

Register online at www.herosalute.com or in the entrance plaza of a participating park. Participants will need to show a Department of Defense photo identification. Dependents may take advantage of the offer without a service member present, but dependents age 10 and older must present a valid dependent ID.

In addition to SeaWorld, the passes can be used at Busch Gardens, Sesame Place, Water Country USA and Adventure Island.

New TRICARE health benefits

TRICARE has introduced several new programs.

The TRICARE Assistance Program provides short-term counseling assistance; for information, visit www.tricare.mil/MentalHealth. TRICARE's new Extended Care Health Option benefits family members who are diagnosed with extraordinary physical or psychological conditions: www.tricare.mil/Echo. For TRICARE's new dental program, see www.addp-ucci.com, and for new pharmacy benefits, see www.tricare.mil/pharmacy.

Marriage enrichment, Family Readiness courses in Petaluma, San Diego

The Cal Guard's Operation Ready Families Program will host a Marriage Enrichment Seminar on May 22-23 in San Diego and a Family Readiness Course on March 20-21 in Petaluma, Calif.

The Marriage Enrichment Seminar coaches couples on how to communicate effectively, work as a team to solve problems, manage conflicts without damaging closeness, and preserve and enhance love, commitment and friendship. Registration is open to married couples that have not attended in the past. Cut off for registration is April 10.

The Family Readiness Course provides the essentials for establishing and maintaining a viable Family Readiness system in a California National Guard unit, including how to handle fundraising and deployments. Unit volunteers, military Family Readiness points of contact, commanders and other leaders are encouraged to attend.

For more information on either event, contact June Sato at 916-361-4957. For registration information, visit www.calguard.ca.gov/ReadyFamilies.

DID YOU KNOW...

... your Internet browsing activity is being monitored?

Your government use of the Internet is limited based on your service regulation/instruction, your supervisor's guidance and the Acceptable Use Policy you signed to gain access to the California National Guard system.

Information technology administrators analyze Internet use each month for not only content but also frequency. The top 10 users are identified and their names are sometimes passed to supervisory personnel, depending on the situation.

Excessive and wasteful browsing (especially watching streaming video and listening to streaming audio) slows down the entire network and hurts productivity.

Make sure you know the "Dos and Don'ts" of Web surfing. Check with your supervisor for more information.

Changing of the Guard, continued from page 2

fire line by hand. In addition, the Guard deployed eight combat bulldozers to cut fire lines while Guard vehicles transported nearly 7,600 firefighters to and from the fire lines. Nearly twice the size of the 2007 fall blaze — burning almost 1.3 million acres — the 2008 fire only claimed 88 structures (compared to more than 3,200 in 2007), a clear demonstration of the California National Guard's professionalism, abilities and dedication to serving its state during times of catastrophic events.

Although the hurricanes, fires, border mission and airport security requirement would have brought most state's National Guards to their knees, the California Guard accomplished these monumental feats in addition to multiple day-to-day operational requirements. First, the Army and Air components of the California Guard continued to contribute forces to the war fight and to overseas contingency operations around the globe in every theater of operation. By the end of 2009, with cumulative deployment numbers

exceeding 32,000, the California National Guard had contributed more Soldiers and Airmen to worldwide operations than any other state or territory. Second, the California Guard's counterdrug program continued to set new benchmarks, making it a model program to be emulated by other states: Drug demand reduction efforts reached a total of 60,159 citizens, a 730 percent increase from 2006 to 2009; marijuana seizures increased 355 percent, with a four-year total of 15.7 million plants and more than 148,000 pounds of processed marijuana destroyed (totaling more than \$72 million in street value); and seizure of other drugs exceeded \$73 billion — an 827 percent increase from 2005 to 2009.

Third, the Army and Air components continued to work through the myriad issues of Base Realignment and Closure, Alternative Dispute Resolution and Total Force Integration, rebuilding from the Cold War construct of a strategic reserve to a ready and relevant, forward-deployed operational force, while rebalancing force structure and achieving 100 percent-plus of assigned strength — without degrading (and actually improving) duty quali-

fication, retention and turnover.

Fourth, Soldiers and Airmen continued to contribute forces to the acclaimed State Partnership Program with Ukraine. Continuing to engage in training and knowledge exchanges on both the military and civil level, Guardsmen from every corner and unit of California also participated in yearly military readiness exercises such as Rapid Trident and emergency response exercises like Rough and Ready. As an indication of the professionalism and expertise demonstrated by these Soldiers and Airmen, some of them were given decorations by the ministers of emergency, internal troops and defense. Two Soldiers were personally recognized with state awards by the president of Ukraine.

Additionally, the California Guard participated in numerous annual local, state and national exercises to test and improve systems for domestic response to acts of terrorism as well as natural and man-made disasters.

While doing all this, your Guard also found the time to restructure itself internally in

response to changing requirements at the state and federal levels. The result was a strategic plan that implemented a joint headquarters, created an effective family program (involving Soldiers, Airmen, families and the community) and launched the California Military Department into the 21st century as a vibrant, relevant and ready force. All of this was accomplished on the backs of every Soldier, Airman, family member, civilian employee and contractor of the California National Guard. To each of you, I give my thanks for four of the most exciting years of my career and my life. To use an oft-quoted phrase, "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times" — but — *this was our time, and we made the best of it.*

Thanks to everyone for making our National Guard the best it could be. Because of you, the National Guard remains *THE MOST IMPORTANT PART-TIME JOB IN AMERICA*. My greatest reward of the last four years was to have each of you as my battle buddy and wingman.

God Bless all of you for your professionalism, dedication and sacrifice.



Public Affairs Directorate, California National Guard

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PHOTO BY SGT. 1ST CLASS JON SOUCY

Members of the California Army National Guard Honor Guard perform military funeral honors during the 2009 Army National Guard Honor Guard Competition at Fort Myer, Va. The competition, which included eight finalists, tested knowledge of drill and ceremony, performance of military funeral honors and attention to detail in wearing the Army uniform.

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