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Connecticut National Guard Soldiers Aids Injured Motorist

Tim Koster
Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs

After a day of cleaning an unused wing of the Stamford Hospital to help prepare it for an expected influx of patients due to the COVID-19 outbreak, Pvt. 1st Class Erik Cravo was ready to get home. He hopped in his truck and starting driving northbound on the Merritt Parkway toward his West Hartford home. What he expected to be a routine drive turned out to be an ordeal that would put his military and first aid training to the test.

Cravo is one of several Soldiers assigned to Company B, 1st Battalion, 102nd Infantry Regiment, Connecticut National Guard, who have been activated to assist local and state health agencies combat the Coronavirus pandemic. These Soldiers have been busy around the state delivering personal protective equipment and converting gymnasiums into overflow bed space for area hospitals.

After making a quick stop at Southern Connecticut State University, where his unit has been lodged while working in the southern area of the state, Cravo continued his journey northward. Shortly after getting back on the Merritt Parkway at exit 63, he witnessed the conclusion of a vehicular accident, where the car veered onto the shoulder and struck multiple trees before coming to halt, in the southbound lane.

"Just after I passed exit 63, I saw this car off in the ditch on the side of the highway," said Cravo. "I actually watched it come to a rest after it finished its last roll and teeter back onto four wheels."

Knowing he needed to do something, Cravo drove to the next exit to turn around and returned to the scene. When he arrived, a few cars had already stopped to assess what was going on. He approached the passenger side of the car and saw someone attempting to reach the driver. Without hesitation, he pulled open the rear passenger-side door and found the driver of the car face down in the backseat.

"I saw that there was blood coming out of his mouth," said Cravo. "I rolled him back onto the seat, on his back, to see how bad his injuries were and I saw a lot of blood coming from his left shoulder."

After cutting away the driver's shirt to get a better look at the severity of his injury,

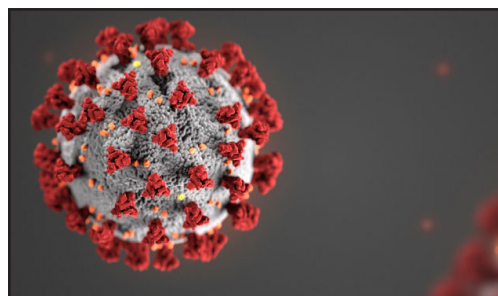


Cravo knew he needed to act quickly in order to stop the bleeding. He turned to the woman who'd been trying to help the driver when he arrived and asked for help moving him, but when she started speaking in Spanish, he needed to find a way to overcome the language barrier in order to act quickly.

Having grown up in a bilingual family that spoke English and Portuguese, he was able

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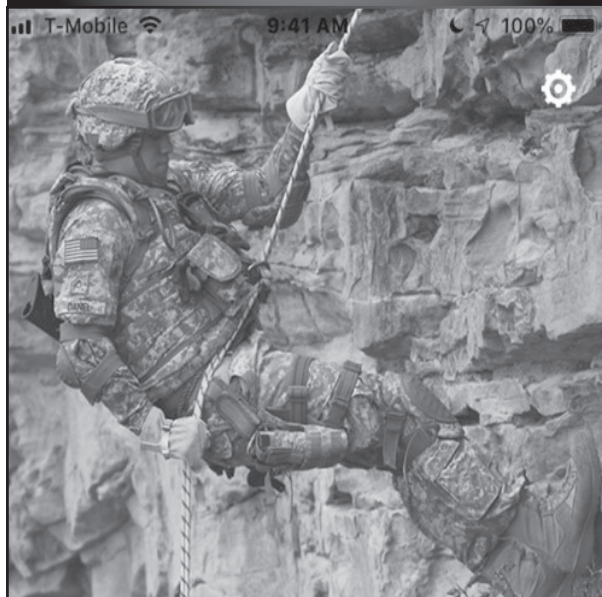


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Second Company Governors Horse Guard

First Company Governors Foot Guard

Second Company Governors Foot Guard

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Brigadier Gen. Ralph Hedenberg (right), dual-status commander of forces in Connecticut, talks with Karina Rando, head of the COVID-19 task force for the Uruguayan Ministry of Public Health and Uruguayan Colonel Antonio Nunes, the military liaison to SINAE - the Uruguayan equivalent to FEMA, video video conference to discuss how each of the partners is handling the coronavirus pandemic. This virtual exchange of COVID-19 information is the first of its kind for the Southern Command area of responsibility.

Connecticut National Guard and Uruguay State Partners Share COVID-19 Best Practices

Tim Koster
Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs

The Connecticut National Guard hosted a virtual video conference with representatives from Uruguay, its State Partnership Program counterpart, to discuss best practices and lessons learned thus far from the COVID-19 pandemic, April 9, 2020, a first of its kind for the Southern Command area of responsibility.

According to Maj. Pedro Concolino, director of the Connecticut National Guard's State Partnership program, Uruguay is approximately sixteen days behind Connecticut in regards to the virus progression and this virtual meeting allowed both parties to look at the problem in a new way and continue to build upon their twenty-year partnership.

"We don't stop being partners just because we're wrapped up in our own stuff," said Concolino. "I think this exchange shows the extent to which both countries take it seriously. We both took time out of our schedule during a pandemic to talk to each other and share notes to try and potentially save some lives."

This call came to fruition thanks to the hard work of U.S. Army Capt. Rebecca Rojas, the bilateral affairs officer stationed at the U.S. embassy in Montevideo, Uruguay. Rojas is a Connecticut National Guard Soldier who, on top of working as a liaison between Connecticut and Uruguay, also serves as the liaison for the U.S. Southern

Command Traditional Commander Activities Program and U.S. Army South.

Also in attendance was Karina Rando, the head of the COVID-19 task force for the Uruguayan Ministry of Public Health, Uruguayan Colonel Antonio Nunes, the military liaison to SINAE – the Uruguayan equivalent to FEMA – as well as Connecticut National Guard Brig. Gen. Ralph Hedenberg, dual status commander for Connecticut's COVID-19 response.

Many of the strategies Uruguay has adopted to prevent the spread of this deadly virus have mimicked much of what the U.S. and other countries around the world have done: from closing schools and non-essential businesses to suggesting the use of masks when social distancing cannot be implemented and canceling public social activities, according to Rando, who is both a captain in the Uruguayan army and a medical doctor.

Because COVID-19 cases began to appear in Uruguay later than much of the world, their task force for combating the virus has had the benefit of monitoring what other countries have been doing and using that data to form their own response before the viral infection became widespread. But, as a small country with limited exposure to the virus, they've been limited in their data gathering and acquisition of essential supplies such as ventilators and test kits.

Because of this shortage, the Uruguayans have adapt-

ed their procedures to make do with what they have until more supplies become available. Through this call, and the mutual willingness to share data and informational resources, both parties were able to reflect on their own best practices. One important topic was the management of testing kits.

"We both have very restrictive access to COVID-19 test kits," said Concolino. "Something I thought was very interesting that the Uruguayans were doing is: they're isolating presumed positives before they test them."

Concolino went on to explain that rather than having someone who has shown symptoms of COVID-19 go to the hospital or a drive-thru testing site immediately, the government will have them shelter in place for seven days before administering the test. What this has done is nearly eliminated the possibility of false-negative tests and the need to retest someone.

Likewise, the representatives from the Connecticut National Guard had much to offer in the way of best practices, particularly with logistics and deployment of ventilators.

In the U.S., the state of Connecticut has been able to acquire ventilators from a number of locally-sourced vendors, including the strategic national stockpile and manufacturers. As a smaller country, Uruguay has been more restricted in the options for procuring this equipment. In



Cyber Nutmeg participants share their strategies for combatting cyber attacks following a breakout session of tabletop exercise at the Governor William A. O'Neill armory, March 9, 2020. Cyber Nutmeg is a cyber security and response training event hosted by the Connecticut National Guard and in collaboration with the Connecticut Intelligence Center, Connecticut Interlocal Risk Management Agency, and Connecticut's State Cyber Trainer

Cyber Nutmeg aims to equip agencies with digital protection

Tim Koster
Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs

When thinking about the military's obligation to protecting the American people, thoughts of battlefields in far off countries may come to mind. However, as our infrastructure becomes more dependent on technology, today's adversaries may not be equipped with rifles and rocket propelled grenades, but keyboards and Wi-Fi connections.

To help combat this growing cyber threat, the Connecticut National Guard hosted Cyber Nutmeg, a cyber security and response training event in collaboration with the Connecticut Intelligence Center, Connecticut Interlocal Risk Management Agency, and Connecticut's State Cyber Trainer on March 9, 2020 at the Governor William A. O'Neill Armory.

"This was the first cyber exercise we've ever done in Connecticut," said Air Force Lt. Col. Cameron Sprague, adding that the Adjutant General has placed an emphasis on cyber security readiness, so the idea behind this event was to do something, as the National Guard, to improve our cyber readiness in the state.

The goal of the exercise was for participants to gain a better understanding of how a cyber incident progresses, identifying appropriate questions to assess an incident, determine roles and responsibilities within their own organizations during an attack, and to better understand what capabilities exist within the state and how they can be used when a cyber threat is present.

Thirty-five state agencies, municipalities, fire and police departments, school districts, and other organizations participated in the event which included a morning full of training and intelligence briefings and an afternoon of tabletop exercises.

At the end of the day, the response from the participants was very positive, said Sprague. "I think the towns are looking for guidance and collaboration and in this venue, where they're able to do that and talk about the problems they face was something unique that they haven't been able to do before."

According to Sprague, the number one cyber-attack local municipalities and organizations are likely to encounter is what's called a ransomware attack. During these attacks, a malignant actor installs software on a computer that encrypts all the system's files and can only be unencrypted after the victim pays a ransom.

The second most likely problem these groups face is what's called business email compromise. During this kind of cyber-attack, an email – which masquerades as a legitimate email from someone in the organization – is sent with the intent of stealing money or information.

Although training is a great way to help prepare the participants to identify and mitigate the risk of these attacks, the Connecticut National Guard is hopeful it can use its expertise in the field to do more than just offer periodical events like Cyber Nutmeg.

"The intent of the Adjutant General is to pursue something called Innovative Readiness Training ... which means you can take a National Guard unit and put them in a Title 32 status and they can do training and, within that training, perform a function for a town or a state," said Sprague. "In cyber, we can do Innovative Readiness Training and take our cyber organizations and audit towns and municipalities to help improve their cyber posture."

Cyber is a new and evolving battlefield and the Connecticut National Guard aims to remain at the forefront of this war to fulfill its obligation to protect the state and nation from those who would wish it harm, especially those most susceptible to attack.

CTARNG R3SP PROGRAMS

Alcohol Awareness Month

Did You Know?

88,000 deaths are caused by alcohol abuse in the United States every year

What is a Standard Drink?



A standard drink is 12oz of beer, 5oz of wine, or 1.5oz of hard alcohol

Military Drinking



47% of active duty service members report binge drinking

Drunk Driving



1 out of 3 drunk drivers are repeat offenders

Deadly Interactions



Alcohol and medication interaction are a factor in about 25% of ER visits

Seek help if you cannot drink responsibly!
You can self-refer for treatment to anyone in your Chain of Command or by contacting ASAP



CT Army Substance Abuse Program
JFHQ Hartford Room 303
860-548-3291





1st Lt Lee Hartell



Capt. Robert Nett

Connecticut National Guard Remembers Medal of Honor Recipients

Tim Koster
Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs

On November 15, 1990, then-President George H. W. Bush signed Public Law 101-564, creating an official national holiday to commemorate the heroism of service members who received the nation's highest honor: the Medal of Honor.

National Medal of Honor Day is celebrated annually on March 25th, a nod to several of the Andrews Raiders who received the country's first-ever Medals of Honor on March 25, 1863 for their participation in the Civil War's Great Locomotive Chase, eleven months prior.

To date, there have been 3,508 recipients of the Medal of Honor. Of those, eighty-two have ties to Connecticut and only two served in the Connecticut National Guard: Captain Robert Nett and 1st Lt. Lee Hartell.

Captain Nett

During World War II, Captain Nett, commanded E Co., 305th Infantry, 77th Infantry Division against an enemy battalion near Cognon, Leyte in the Philippine Islands. This enemy element was well reinforced and successfully held off American forces for two days using heavy machine gun and other automatic weapons fire.

Despite the barrage of enemy fire, Nett and Company E spearheaded the American assault. During the fight, Nett was injured twice during the engagement but refused to give up command. As the American forces advanced, Nett was responsible for killing seven deeply entrenched enemy fighters with his rifle and bayonet.

It was after he sustained injuries for a third time, during the final assault, that Nett eventually relinquished command of his forces to a fellow officer, then walked unaided to the rear to receive medical attention.

Although he couldn't remain to see his forces through to victory, Nett's display of

courage and unwavering determination, despite being wounded, that inspired his men to capture this vital enemy strongpoint.

1st Lt. Hartell

First Lt. Hartell served with Battery A, 15th Field Artillery Battalion, 2nd Infantry Division during the Korean War.

While attached to B Co., 9th Infantry Regiment, as a forward observer, nearby friendly forces came under attack in the early morning of August 27, 1951. In response, Hartell hastily moved his radio to an exposed vantage point to adjust defensive fires.

Using artillery flares to illuminate the battlefield and the enemy's area of approach, Hartell called in a barrage of indirect fire into the assailing enemy forces. It was during this defensive push that a large force of hostile troops charged up the slope and made it within 10 yards of Hartell's position.

During this attack, Hartell sustained severe wounds to one of his hands but continued to call in friendly artillery until the friendly forces' front and left flanks were protected, causing the enemy to disperse and fall back. However, the enemy, which had vastly superior numbers, overran a nearby outpost and began closing in on Hartell's position, forcing him to urge that both friendly batteries fire continuously on the advancing enemy.

Although the artillery from this defensive measure was close enough to Hartell to mortally wound him, his actions were vital to pushing back the enemy and allowed his company to maintain their strategic strongpoint.

Their Legacy

In 2018, then-Governor Dannel Malloy signed Public Act No. 18-21 into law, officially naming two of its training facilities after Nett and Hartell, which went into effect on March 25, 2019. Rededication ceremonies for both Camp Nett at Niantic and Camp Hartell in Windsor Locks were hosted on that date.

Powder House Day

Brig. Gen. Bob Cody (ret.)
U.S. History Teacher

Each year on the closest Saturday to April 22nd, a very special reenactment takes place on New Haven Green. Powder House Day commemorates the 1775 confrontation between Captain Benedict Arnold and the First Selectman of New Haven over a set of keys.

Benedict Arnold was born in Norwich in 1741 and was a New Haven merchant before the American Revolution. He began his military career at the age of fifteen with a New York Militia company. In 1758, he ran away from home and lied about his age to fight in the French and Indian War. He deserted the unit because of the tedium of army life. In 1762, after the death of their parents, Benedict Arnold and his sister Hannah moved from Norwich to New Haven, where he ran an apothecary and general store. He soon joined the local Militia company, the Second Company Governor's Foot Guard. In December of 1774, he was elected to the position of commanding offi-

cer with the rank of Captain.

When "the shot heard round the world" echoed across Lexington Green and reached New Haven, Captain Arnold assembled the Foot Guard. Just three days later, on April 22nd he demanded the keys to the municipal powder house. The New Haven Board of Selectmen who were meeting that day at Beers Tavern on Chapel Street at first refused to turn over the keys. General David Wooster, commander of the militia regiment in New Haven County, speaking for the council, told Arnold that he did not have the proper authority to take up arms against the King's troops. Captain Arnold threatened to use force, stating that "None but Almighty God shall prevent my marching!" With that, the council relented and Arnold marched his militia unit to Cambridge.

At the Battle of Bunker Hill, Captain Arnold led the only uniformed unit on the American side. In their scarlet, white and black uniforms, they were "the best drilled and the only perfectly uniformed and equipped company in the camp." As a result of being the only uniformed Patriot

unit on the field, the Second Company was the unit that the British negotiated with for the exchange of wounded after the battle. This historic unit still exists today as part of the State Militia along with the First Company Governor's Foot Guard in Hartford and two companies of Horse Guards, in Avon and Newtown. Each spring the Second Company reenacts "Powder House Day" on the New Haven Green. This historic reenactment has been celebrated annually since 1904. This year marks the 245th anniversary of the event and the reenactment will take place on Saturday, May 2nd at 11:00 AM.

Brig Gen Cody retired from the CTARNG in 2014 and currently teaches 7th Grade US History in Stamford. He may be reached at rmcody81@gmail.com for comments or article recommendations. In April, 2015 he played the role of Colonel Wooster in that year's Powder House Day reenactment.

Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program

Spc. Danielle Faipier
524th Trial Defense Services

Soldiers returning home from a deployment received a warm welcome the morning of Saturday, March 7th during the Post Deployment Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program at the Sheraton Hartford Hotel in Windsor Locks.

During the event, Connecticut Army National Guard Soldiers from the 643rd Military Police Company and 146th Cyber Detachment were connected to over 20 service providers. Those service providers included Military One Source, the Connecticut Department of Labor, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, TRI-CARE, US Family Health, the American Red Cross, and the Connecticut Office of the Staff Judge Advocate (JAG Office). The 643rd Military Police Company returned from a 10-month deployment to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba and 146th Cyber Detachment returned from a deployment to the greater National Capitol Region.

Paralegals from the JAG office informed Soldiers on the legal services they are entitled to, such as preparation of legal documents like wills, trusts, and powers of attorney, and legal counsel on financial, employment, and other civil and criminal matters.

Connecticut Army National Guard Judge Advocates are attorneys and experts in military law. They generally serve as legal assistance or trial defense attorneys to individual Soldiers, or serve as advisors to commanders. Judge Advocates have a broad educational background in order to advise Soldiers and commanders on the full-spectrum of matters they may face in the course of their duties.

Soldiers who may need legal assistance should contact SSG Christopher Clark, the Connecticut Army National Guard's chief paralegal NCO at christopher.f.clark.mil@mail.mil.

Judge Advocates assigned to Trial Defense Services provide free legal defense lawyers to Soldiers accused of misconduct and facing adverse action. The Army National Guard's Trial Defense Services has a separate chain of command in the Judge Advocate General Corps dedicated to providing due process for Soldiers. However, Trail Defense Services does not represent Soldiers pending civilian criminal proceedings including proceedings at a federal magistrate court on active duty military bases.

Soldiers who are charged with military misconduct or inefficiency and face grade reduction, officer elimination, and involuntary enlisted separation boards or are facing AGR removal process can seek representation from a Trial Defense Services attorney. All communications between a Trial Defense Services attorney and Soldier-client are confidential. Soldiers in need of Trial Defense Services should contact SPC Kawsera Saboor



at kawsera.b.saboor.mil@mail.mil.

Soldiers also learned about the many pro bono programs and organizations in Connecticut that may also assist them with their legal questions or challenges.

These programs included the Yale Law School Veterans Legal Services Clinic, which provides Connecticut veterans with student assistance on matters such as benefits, discharge upgrade, immigration and pardon matters. The Connecticut Veterans Legal Center in West Haven was also present which helps veterans who may be experiencing challenges to stable housing, health care and employment. The Connecticut Department of Veterans Affairs Office of Advocacy and Assistance also explained how they provide Soldiers and their families with obtaining veterans benefits, medical care, rehabilitation and educational services.

The Yellow Ribbon program was established in 2008 to provide National Guard and Reserve members the necessary tools to successfully transition from their military role back to their civilian careers, communities, and families. According to the program's web site, www.yellowribbon.mil, over 1.7 million service members have benefited from the program since the program's inception.



U.S. Army Sgt. Luk Silk, 1-102nd Infantry Regiment, poses for a picture in front of field hospital beds at the O'Neill Center at Western Connecticut State University in Danbury, Connecticut, April 2, 2020. Silk, 23, from Glastonbury, is one of many Connecticut Army and Air National Guardsmen that set up field hospital equipment at the gymnasium for potential patient use by local healthcare providers in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Steven Tucker)

Connecticut Guardsman hopes to help community during COVID-19 response

Staff Sgt. Steven Tucker
103rd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

Tractor-trailers arrived at Western Connecticut State University on April 1, 2020, and within hours over 200 beds had been set up by Soldiers and Airmen from the Connecticut National Guard, transforming the O'Neill Center, home of WCSU's basketball and volleyball teams, into a field hospital for potential patient use in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sgt. Luk Silk, 23, a reconnaissance Soldier with 1-102nd Infantry Regiment and Glastonbury native, takes pride in the opportunity to help Connecticut in its time of need.

"I think it's pretty meaningful that we were able to set all this up and that it may be used to help the local healthcare infrastructure," said Silk. "I have friends all over the state, so I identify strongly with Connecticut. Anything to help anyone out is worthwhile."

Life has drastically changed for people throughout the state during the pandemic; social distancing has grown and daily routines have shifted. Connecticut's Guardsmen, including Silk, empathize with these changes.

"I was originally supposed to have the week off—I was going to take care of some projects around the house and spend time with my girlfriend," said Silk. "I had just bought a mountain bike, and I got one ride in before we got the call."

The task of setting up a field hospital after a quick call-up to state active duty isn't a typical one for Silk, who works full-time as an auto body technician at Camp Hartell in Windsor Locks. However, being flexible is important, said Silk.

"Accomplishing simple tasks regardless of career field is part of being a Soldier—listening to leadership and being adaptable to accomplish the mission, and right now this is our mission," said Silk.

Companies within the 1-102nd have been split up and combined with others in an effort to assign Soldiers close to where they live. Working with unfamiliar faces can be a challenging but rewarding adjustment, said Silk.

"It just comes down to noncommissioned officers doing their job leading soldiers and us coming together to get this done and get it done right," said Silk. "This is a chance for our guys to build camaraderie and see the broader perspective of what we're capable of."

Silk said that whatever Connecticut needs to help its response to COVID-19, the National Guard is here to lend a hand.

"Most of us are Connecticut residents just like everyone else," said Silk. "We want to be able to take care of our families, especially right now. At the end of the day, we're here to help our fellow Connecticut residents, and we want our families to be safe just like they want their families to be safe."

CTNG Conducts Virtual Inactive Duty Training

Cpl. Adrienne Foret
Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs

The Connecticut Army National Guard is taking preventative measures to protect the force and their families during this complex time.

CTARNG unit commanders have been offered the flexibility to conduct virtual inactive duty training (VIDT) as an additional drilling option through April 30, 2020. This would offer an alternative to in-person drill periods in light of the increased risk of exposure to COVID-19.

The decision on whether to extend this policy is slated for review no later than April 20, 2020, based on the situation at that time.

VIDT provides a framework for commanders to sustain readiness, provide distance learning, conduct administrative tasks, and create a virtual point of contact to identify issues and problems being faced within their units. Commanders may also use video tele-conferencing to support unit training.

At their commander's discretion, Soldiers may complete specified online training in order to receive credit for the drill period; four hours of online training is equal to one unit training assembly (UTA) period.

Several online training classes are available for Soldiers drilling remotely, such as FEMA's Decision Making and Problem Solving, Army Equal Employment Opportunity classes located on the Army Learning Management Systems (ALMS) website, Emergency Preparedness Response on the Joint Knowledge Online (JKO) website, as well as standard courses and tasks in which Soldiers may already be enrolled (e.g., Distance Learning Courses (DLC), ArmyFIT, etc.).

Soldiers must provide digital copies of completed online training to their respective training non-commissioned officers in order to receive credit for UTA performance. Additional processes, including a Virtual Drill Pay Validation Worksheet, have been im-

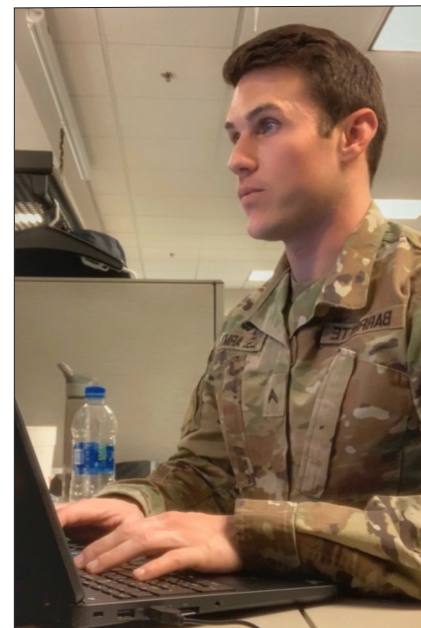
plemented to ensure that Soldiers and units account for all virtual training and are appropriately compensated.

In order to ensure the continued health of the force, units are directed to conduct telephonic COVID-19 screenings to determine the status of units as well as the status of individual Soldiers and their families.

Commanders are not, however, required to conduct virtual IDTs. A commander may decide to have some or all Soldiers report to the unit's location for traditional IDT training. If this is the case, commanders must follow the latest guidance on the number of Soldiers permitted to gather in one location based on current force health protection guidance and the emergency orders given by Governor Lamont.

The CTARNG recognizes the added stressors faced by Soldiers during these turbulent times. Housing or unemployment concerns can be supported through a variety of support mechanisms, including State Active Duty, Connecticut National Guard Foundation (<https://ctngfi.prg>), Military Relief Fund (<https://portal.ct.gov/MIL/MAPO/Military-Relief-Fund>), the Soldiers, Sailors, and Marines Fund (SSMF) (860-296-0719), and other systems.

The CTARNG remains focused on the ability to protect the health of the Soldiers and families while maintaining its ability to support potential state missions.



SPP

Continued from Page 1

addition, they don't have the manufacturing capabilities to build new ones or the necessary replacement parts for the equipment they already have.

Despite the more abundant sources of medical equipment, the U.S. has still faced a shortage of ventilators around the country and medical facilities have had to develop alternative methods for providing this potentially life-saving equipment to those in need. In contrast, Uruguay has yet to become overwhelmed with the virus, but they're struggling to acquire the equipment to meet their projected need.

"We're waiting for the crisis," said Rando, who elaborated by saying thirty-percent of their intensive care unit

beds are empty and they've already increased their bed space by another thirty-percent, but the most difficult thing they face remains the inability to get replacement parts to fix their current stockpile of ventilators.

"This call provided an opportunity for Uruguay to discuss their problems and for us to provide a few solutions the U.S. has been using to overcome those same problems," said Concolino.

Another area of discussion was modeling the spread of the virus.

"The Uruguayans put together their own model for the spread of COVID-19," said Concolino. "But after some discussion, we offered to input their data into a model put out by Cornell University."

With this data, the Uruguayan government will have a better idea of how the virus spreads and which areas of

their country will be more affected.

Above all else, this teleconference provided both the U.S. and Uruguay the option to share data and ideas among partners and to help spur innovation to stem the spread of a pandemic.

Above all else, what this teleconference call has shown is that it will take a global effort to effectively combat the COVID-19 pandemic; when data and ideas are shared, regardless of how many cases a country is housing, new innovations and policies can arise to help prevent the continued spread of this deadly virus.

The Connecticut National Guard intends to maintain close contact with Uruguay throughout this response to continue to build upon their strategic relationship through, and well beyond, the end of the pandemic.

CRAVO

Continued from Page 1

to find a baseline understanding of enough words to communicate his intention. Together, the two of them pulled the driver from the wreckage and began packing his wound with paper towels another driver had on hand to try and stop the bleeding.

From that point forward, he applied pressure and did his best to keep the driver awake until the state police and paramedics arrived and transported the victim to a nearby hospital. Unfortunately, he succumbed to his wounds and passed away after arriving at the hospital.

Although the situation didn't conclude the way anyone had hoped, Cravo's initiative to step up in the victim's time of need heralded praise from the first responders who arrived on the scene.

"Without your Soldier's actions, the driver would've been dead by the time we ar-

rived," said New Haven Fire Captain Brian Marino. "He gave him a fighting chance."

Following the incident, Cravo returned home and informed his chain of command about what had happened. Although he was examined by a medical professional on the scene, he was advised to be seen by a doctor in the event he may have been exposed to COVID-19 or possibly a blood borne illness.

He was already scheduled to have the following day off but credits his command for giving him the time to take care of himself. He was given a clean bill of health by the provider he saw and was told he was at low risk for having been exposed to COVID-19 but was swabbed for testing as a precaution.

Private Cravo has since returned to work but takes extra precautions, wearing all required personal protective equipment, to ensure he can continue to help his community as safely as possible.

R3SP

Helping Kids Build Resilience

Meagan MacGregor, ADCO
CT Army National Guard

Military children are often more accustomed to change and transitions than their peers are. Building resilience skills in children from a young age increases their ability to handle transitions with positive outcomes and less stress. Stress and negative stimuli are a part of life that most adults have learned to cope with and respond to in an appropriate and positive way. For kids, however, they are still learning how to respond to stressful situations and become independent thinkers with self-sufficiency. In order to help support kids through positive youth develop the American Academy of Pediatrics developed a framework known as The Seven C's.

- **Confidence:** reframing failures as an opportunity to learn and grow. Notice and support your child's effort and support their skill and effort to build their confidence.
- **Competence:** learning a skill set that allows them to make good decisions. Support your child through problem solving instead of doing things for them.
- **Connection:** building relationships with people who support well-being and personal success. Increase your connectedness with your child and encourage them to replicate the traits they appreciate most in others.
- **Character:** developing core values to guide their decision-making. Nurture your child's inherent character strengths and reward them for doing the right thing- especially when life does not reward them for it.
- **Contribution:** Finding a sense of purpose through service. Helping your child find a way to make an impact on their community or in the lives of others can increase their resilience through the feeling of gratitude their experience. This positive feeling encourages repeat efforts which continue to build that resilience.
- **Coping:** making choices that minimize discomfort while accounting for long-term effects. Kids and teens often make choices for immediate gratification. To help build their resilience it is important to support them in exploring healthy strategies that benefit them in the long term.
- **Control:** determining the behavior of, or taking responsibility for something. Kids what to have control of aspects of their life, regardless of if they have earned it. By instilling in your child that their actions matter and providing them privilege when they demonstrate responsibility you are helping to show them they can



Lily, daughter of Army Sgt. James Newby, grins as she poses for portraits with her father's uniform items, March 18, 2015, at Fort Meade, Md. (Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Vernon Young Jr.)

remain in control during challenging times.

Building resilient kids will lead to resilient adults capable of handling the challenges life has in store. If you have questions or concerns about the reducing risk in your military family the Connecticut National Guard has resources available!

- Service Member and Family Support Center: 800-858-2677
- Risk Reduction/R3SP Office: 860-524-4962
- Behavioral Health Careline 855-800-0120

R3SP Welcomes Back SGT Victor Martinez

Meagan MacGregor, ADCO
CT Army National Guard

After a long 366 days, and yes there was a tracker in the office, SGT Victor Martinez has returned to the R3SP Office. SGT Martinez deployed with the 643rd Military Police Company leaving his position of Drug Testing

Coordinator having brought the program to a ranking of number one nationally. While deployed SGT Martinez accepted a promotion to the rank of SSG and will complete his Advanced Leader Course this summer. SGT Martinez's adept teaching style has developed exceptional Unit Prevention Leaders (UPLs) and created a harmonious working relationship between Drug Testing and ASAP that

has continued to this day. SGT Martinez's commanding knowledge of regulation and policy applicable to Drug Testing and ASAP has made him an irreplaceable asset to the R3SP Office. R3SP is very excited to have him back in the office and looking forward to the meaningful contributions he makes to the field.

R3SP Welcomes New Prevention Coordinator

Meagan MacGregor, ADCO
CT Army National Guard

The Resilience, Risk Reduction, and Suicide Prevention (R3SP) Office is proud to announce the addition of Thomas Linevitch to the Army Substance Abuse Prevention (ASAP) Program as Prevention Coordinator. Mr. Linevitch will be replacing Greg Moulding who is deploying with his Army Reserve Unit in support of Operation Spartan Shield. R3SP thanks Mr. Moulding for his contributions to the CTARNG ASAP Program and wishes him safe travels and the best of luck on his deployment.

Thomas Linevitch is a welcome addition to the R3SP Office. As a 42R with the 102D

Army Band SGT Linevitch successfully completed the Unit Prevention Leader course, ACE-SI training, ASIST course, and because his units secondary suicide intervention officer. SGT Linevitch also spend two weeks during the summer of 2019 as ADOS support for the R3SP office learning more about risk reduction, peer support, and the operations of ASAP and SPP. As a contract staff member in the Prevention Coordinator role, Mr. Linevitch will be the primary point of contact for Soldiers going through treatment for substance abuse issues. He will be an integral part of the R3SP training team and us his military experience to increase comprehensive Soldier fitness.

Please join R3SP in extending a warm welcome to Thomas!

SEXUAL ASSAULT.
SEXUAL HARASSMENT.
NOT IN
OUR ARMY.

Sexual Assault Response Coordinators

CTARNG SARC 860.883.4798

103rd AW SARC (24hr) 860.895.3526

Chaplain and Legal

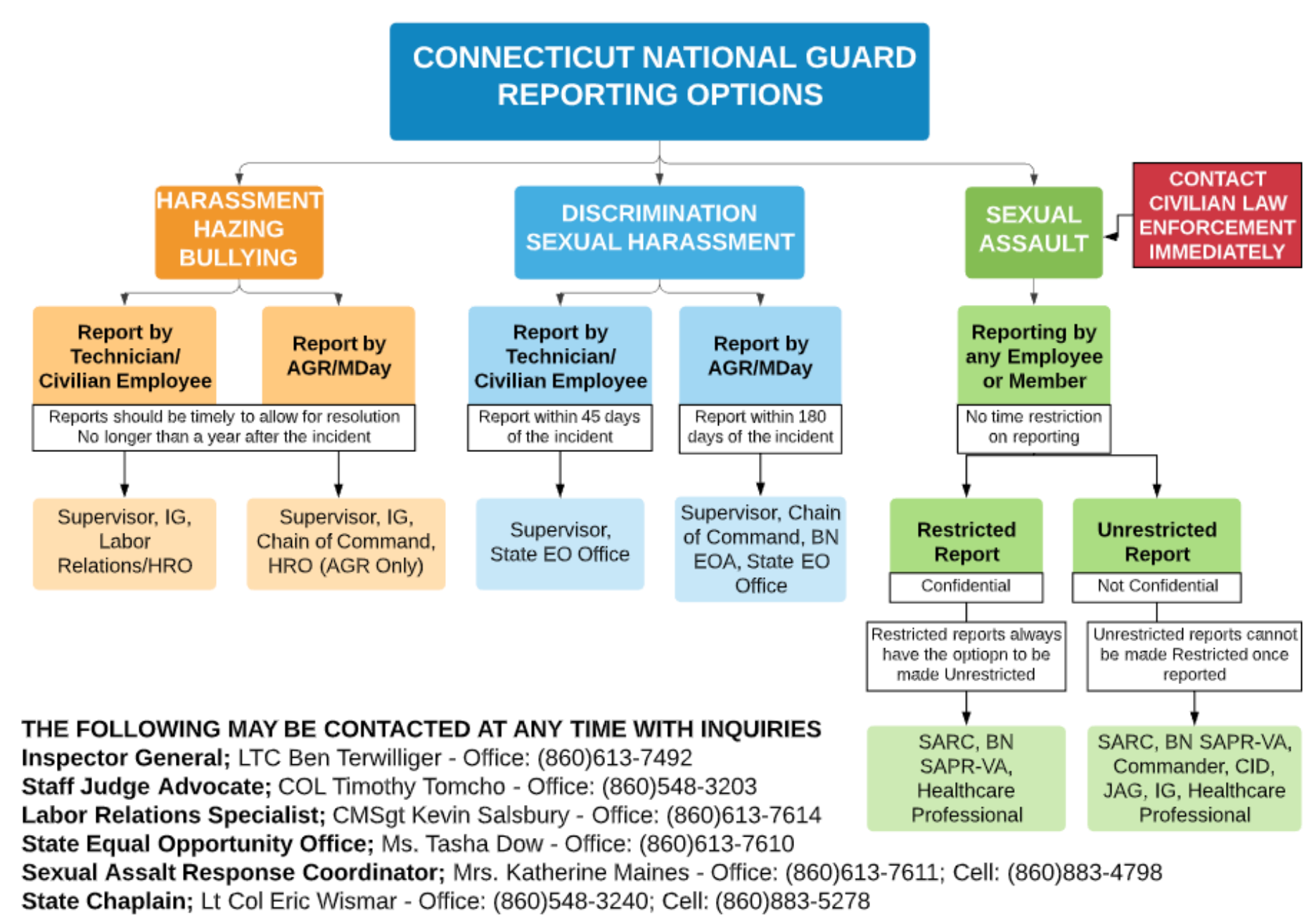
CT Chaplain 860.548.3240

CT Special Victims's Council 703.607.2263

Medical

Military Treatment Facility (Westover) 413.557.2623

Navy Health Clinic New London 860.694.4123





Members of the Connecticut Organized State Militia set up a mobile field hospital at Saint Francis Hospital in Hartford, Conn. March 24, 2020.

Connecticut State Militia: the unsung heroes of the COVID-19 pandemic

Tim Koster
Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs

While the Connecticut National Guard is receiving a significant amount of attention for their hard work and dedication to helping local and state agencies combat the COVID-19 outbreak, there is another group of unsung heroes from the Connecticut Military Department who are going above and beyond during these difficult times: the State Organized Militia.

The Militia is a melting pot of Connecticut citizens who come from diverse backgrounds with a common goal in mind: to help their community. While their typical mission is ceremonial in nature, they are trained for specialized missions and remain prepared to be called to active duty in order to assist the state in a time of crisis, such as the coronavirus pandemic.

And while many companies around the country are temporarily closing their doors to do their part in preventing the spread of this deadly virus, the Militia is actively recruiting personnel with specialized skills to help in the fight. Alecia Haythe, a registered nurse, is the latest person to join the ranks of the militia, signing her contract and reciting the oath of office on April 21, 2020.

"I was looking for a volunteer opportunity," said Haythe. "I wanted something meaningful, to be able to actually help more with the pandemic that's going on."

Haythe will serve on a part-time status, working weekends alongside Soldiers and Airmen of the Connecticut National Guard and the Army Reserve's Urban Augmentation Medical Task Force at Stamford Hospital providing direct patient care.

Since the very beginning of the pandemic, the militia has been hands-on in preparing the state's stockpile of personal protective gear and deploying its mobile field hospitals to hospitals around the state.

According to Nathan Kyder, a member of the 2nd Company Governor's Foot Guard, the last time his company was called up to assist the state in this capacity was in the late 1960s. "It's been awhile since we've been utilized for this purpose but we're glad to be here and we're glad to help."

Kyder, who works in security, and the rest of his company, along with the 1st Company Governor's Foot Guard, and the 1st Company Governor's Horse Guard, were responsible for traveling around the state to set up the mobile field hospitals in Sharon, Middletown, Hartford, and Danbury which are intended to be used as recovery centers for COVID-19 patients, should the need for extra bed space become available.

The Militia's mission is a critical component of the state's preparedness plan, but it includes more than just building bed space. As with any wide-broadcast event in today's digital age, the spread of misinformation is a serious issue and the Connecticut National Guard, state government, and local agencies have been working to provide timely and accurate updates to the public; and the Militia has played a role, too.

On April 11, 2020, Olga Samusik, a professional videographer, commissioned into the militia as a 2nd Lieutenant to help provide quality video products, telling the story of the Connecticut Military Department around the state converting gymnasiums into recovery centers and distributing personal protective equipment. Her work has had an immediate effect as her videos have been picked up and amplified by national military social media pages as well as national media outlets.

As we near the end of April, the immediate future remains uncertain. However, one constant throughout this crisis remains: the Connecticut Military Department's commitment to serving its community to the best of its ability. If you're interested in learning more about the Connecticut State Militia, visit: <https://portal.ct.gov/mil>



Olga Samusik, a professional videographer, commissioned into the Connecticut State Militia on April, 11, 2020. She has used her skills to create compelling video footage of the Connecticut Military Department's mission to help the state combat COVID-19 that has been shared by national military social media pages as well as national media outlets.

Retiree Voice

Military Retiree Survivor Checklist

John Godburn

While in uniform, all of us understood the importance of maintaining our personnel, financial and medical records. In fact, it was an annual requirement to review these files to ensure that the information was current and accurate. The same can be said about the importance of having this same information available to our loved ones when we retire, and especially when we die.

There is no reason for a lack of information being an added burden to our survivors. There is an abundance of information and “checklists” available by a number of different sources. Two that I looked at are published by Navy Mutual Aid Association and Military.com. Department of Defense also offers information, as does numerous commercial products.

The focus of this article is to highlight some of the key information that you as a military retiree should have in place to best care for your spouse and/or family when you are gone. No one checklist fits everyone’s needs – every situation is different. But it is my intent that with the information provided here, that it gives you a starting point to edit or tailor your own checklist to best fit your personal needs.

Create your Military Retiree Pay File: This file should include information for the Defense Finance and Accounting Services (DFAS), as well as Department of Veterans Affairs (VA):

- Mailing address, phone numbers and email address to DFAS Retirement Pay Division.
- If you’ve established an on-line account with DFAS through MyPay, be sure your survivors know your log-in user name and password.
- List of any deductions being taken from your retired pay.
- Name and relationship of the person you have identified as the beneficiary of any unpaid retired pay at the time of your death.
- Mailing address, phone numbers and email address to the VA office you use and for any claims you may have pending.

Create a Military Records File: The old “I Love Me Book”. If you have one, it probably contains your awards, diplomas, evaluations, etc. But as a retiree, you should also have:

- Retirement Orders
- DD Form 214 and/or NGB 22
- Medical Records – both military and VA (if applicable)
- Phone numbers and/or address to the nearest Retirement Services Office, and military installation.

Personal Documents File: This file should contain such things as:

- Marriage certificates
- Divorce decrees
- Birth certificates and Social Security cards/numbers
- Adoption and/or naturalization papers (if applicable)



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Annuities File: At a minimum, this file should include the following that may apply to your surviving spouse:

- Survivor Benefits Plan (SBP) information
- Reserve Component Survivor Benefit Plan (RCSBP) information
- Retired Serviceman’s Family Protection Plan (RSFPP)
- Civil Service annuity along with contact information
- Any civilian annuity policies you have established along with contact information

Insurance Policy File: This file should include copies of any and all insurance policies you have, along with points of contact, addresses and phone numbers:

- Life (VGLI and/or civilian)
- Property (home and auto)
- Accident, liability and hospitalization
- Long Term Care insurance

Tax File: Include copies of:

- Federal and State income tax returns
- Property tax information such as copies of local tax bills, deeds, veterans tax deferments from your town and other related information

Important Documents File: include such items as:

- Home mortgages, deeds or rental agreements
- Will
- Living Will (before you die)
- Power of Attorney

List of all Financial Accounts: This is critical since your surviving spouse may need access to some (or all) of these accounts soon after you die. Include account names, as well as account numbers, POC’s and contact information for accounts such as:

- Checking and savings accounts (both individual and joint)
- Savings bonds, IRA’s, stocks, bonds, safety deposit boxes

- All credit card accounts, personal loans, mortgages, home equity loans, etc.

Points of Contact: Don’t leave your spouse or family feeling all alone after you are gone. Be sure they have a list of people or organizations who may be helpful to them in their time of need. Be sure to include names, addresses and phone numbers. These might include:

- Military and Veterans Service Organizations, you belong to such as: VFW, American Legion, Military Officers Association of America, National Guard Associations, Enlisted Organizations, of any other fraternal groups you may belong to.
- Office of Personnel and Management (OPM) for former federal employees
- Any previous employers that may have provided a pension or benefits.
- Business associates and friends.
- Attorney, bankers, financial advisors/planners

Funeral Services: Discuss with your spouse what your wishes are regarding your funeral service. As a Veteran, you are entitled to certain funeral benefits; do you want to use them? Do you want to be buried with military honors, a ground burial or cremation? You may want to pre-arrange your funeral services with a local funeral home and cemetery, saving your spouse having to make these decisions. And once you have made these decisions, make sure all this information is contained in your will, and that it is maintained in a secure location, known to you and your spouse.

As I stated at the beginning of this article, it was my intention to highlight some of the critical topics one should think about when planning for one’s family, after they are gone. But this article should not be interpreted as an all-inclusive, definitive document. Every person’s situation is different, and I encourage all readers to first consult with an attorney or other estate planning professional, when designing their retirement and planning goals.

ESGR



Military Outreach Program: Keeping Service Members Informed and Promoting Good Employer Relationships

Thad Martin
Chair, Connecticut Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve

Although “employer” is the first word in our organization’s name, it’s far from being our only customer. In fact, interacting with Reserve Component service members keeps our team of volunteers pretty busy.

One of the ESGR Military Outreach program’s main responsibilities is to ensure all service members understand their rights and responsibilities under the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA). In FY 2019, ESGR volunteers briefed more than 300,000 service members, most often during drill weekends or mobilization/demobilization activities.

Connecticut ESGR’s Military Outreach Director, Dave Nutt, is a retired Army National Guard chaplain who’s sat through many ESGR briefings over his military career. Now, he leads our efforts to brief all Reserve Component leadership and their units on USERRA as well as raise awareness of ESGR services and its awards program.

ESGR Military Outreach volunteers undertake training mandated by ESGR’s Volunteer Management Instruction and by field committee requirements. Because it’s possible service members might have employment conflicts due to their military service, Military Outreach volunteers must have a working knowledge of USERRA to refer basic inquiries to the ESGR Customer Service Center.

Military Outreach volunteers also facilitate a partnership between service members and their employers, encouraging open communication with supervisors and human resources personnel regarding military obligations.

For service members, simple things like providing their unit commander’s information for contact and emergency purposes or keeping in touch with an employer to let them

know when they are returning from deployment can go a long way. Our goal is to create service member ambassadors who can promote best practices within their units.

Finally, another important role of Military Outreach is to promote recognition for employers who strive to go above and beyond basic USERRA requirements. The ESGR awards program starts with the Patriot Award, which any service member or spouse can nominate an employer for, and ends with the Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award, which honors 15 top employers annually for their support.

These actions regarding one aspect of the ESGR mission reinforce every unit’s retention efforts and are critical to maintaining readiness. They promote strong relationships and enhance employer support for military service, which is what we want to accomplish as ESGR volunteers.

To learn more about ESGR’s Military Outreach program, please contact Volunteer Support Technician Ben Beaudry at (860) 524-4970 or Benjamin.A.Beaudry.ctr@mail.mil.



Thad Martin, Chair, Connecticut Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve

STOP THE SPREAD OF GERMS

If you have a cold or flu:

Avoid close contact when possible

- Germs are transmitted by sneezing, coughing, and even while speaking

Cover your cough or sneeze

- Use a tissue or your sleeve to cover your mouth and nose while coughing or sneezing
- Throw used tissue in the trash



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distribution unlimited.
TA-046-OCT19



Wash your hands often

- Always wash your hands before eating and after using the latrine
- Wash and scrub hands for at least 20 seconds with warm, soapy water or use an alcohol-based hand cleaner

Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth

- Germs are spread when people touch something contaminated with germs (for example, other people's hands or smooth surfaces) and then touch their own eyes, nose, or mouth

For more information, contact your installation's
Department of Public Health.

Are you ready for the Army Combat Fitness Test?



3 Repetition Maximum Deadlift



Standing Power Throw



Hand Release Push Up - Arm Extension



Sprint - Drag - Carry



Leg Tuck



Two-Mile Run

Learn tips and techniques to help pass your ACFT at <https://www.army.mil/acft/>

Connecticut National Guard deploys medical equipment, personnel across state in response to COVID-19

Maj. Dawn Surprenant
103rd Airlift Wing

On March 10, 2020, the Connecticut National Guard mobilized forces to provide support to the Connecticut Department of Public Health and local hospitals. Connecticut National Guard Soldiers and Airmen, New England Disaster Training Center personnel, and members of the 1st and 2nd Governor's Foot Guard, and 1st Governor's Horse Guard have been working around the clock since March 10th, to assist the state during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In a scene that might appear in a Hollywood movie, mobile field hospitals were built and staged to be used as recovery centers, Soldiers inventoried and configured Department of Public Health regional support trailers around the state, and portable beds and linen were sent to the erected mobile field hospitals. A 175,000 square foot warehouse was turned into a primary distribution center to house supplies in order to respond to the growing needs from the state as well. Ventilators were sent to area hospitals, medical masks delivered to ambulance and Emergency Medical Technician companies, and protective masks, gowns, and face shields continue to be distributed to healthcare workers and first responders throughout the state. Soldiers then went above and beyond to assist the Connecticut State Police by donating blood at the Red Cross blood drive staged at the State Police Academy.

The pandemic is real and its effects can be felt across the state, the nation, and the world. As COVID-19 took hold, Connecticut's leadership sprang into action. The Connecticut National Guard once again answered the call of duty in order to provide resources and personnel to the state in this time of need. As healthcare systems across the state maintain their day-to-day operations, they have become overwhelmed with the need to also meet the demands of COVID-19.

While States are doing their best to diminish the force of this pandemic, citizens will continue to suffer from real world medical issues. Traumas, cardiac events, cancer, and other serious medical conditions do not take a break during a pandemic. These scenarios alone are enough to stress the healthcare systems already in place, and in order to decrease the level of stress on those healthcare systems, the Connecticut National Guard will continue to provide assets and personnel as needed.

One of these assets is the Connecticut National Guard Medical Planning Team, which continues to work with state partners and healthcare providers to address the inevitable influx of patients that the local hospitals across the state have been starting to experience and will continue to experience as this pandemic takes hold. The medical surge capability that the National Guard has provided to date has increased the number of hospital beds across the state by approximately 650 mobile field hospital beds in order for local hospitals to meet the needs of the influx. Each day the National Guard continues to work to meet the increasing demands of the pandemic in support of the state and the health of its citizens.

"We have a task force comprised of Connecticut Army National Guard Medical Planners and personnel from the



A Connecticut National Guard Soldier loads a tractor trailer with a pallet of portable beds and linen to be distributed to mobile field hospitals, March 25, 2020. The beds were supplied by the state's Department of Public Health and are intended to assist with the state's effort to combat the COVID19 outbreak. (Photo by Tim Koster, Joint Force Headquarters, Connecticut National Guard)

Department of Public Health to identify surge facility locations, order supplies to outfit them for use, and support our local and state partnerships in staffing them. We are leaning forward to have these facilities ready to go before Connecticut hits its peak, potentially with COVID-19 infections, with some models projected from mid to late April." said Major Elizabeth Turner, Executive Officer for the 118th Medical Battalion in Middletown, CT.

Experts have predicted that the number of COVID-19 infections will potentially double every 3 to 5 days, with the peak of the pandemic in Connecticut still to come. Governor Ned Lamont has activated members of the Connecticut Guard in order to provide the state with support in its COVID-19 emergency response under state activation and will continue to do so as more support is needed. Lamont will continue to utilize the guard in coordination with Connecticut's Adjutant General, Major General Fran Evon. The guard has deployed its resources to find ways to surge the medical capability of the state, based on continuous predictive analysis on how many of the states' citizens could be impacted by the virus, with support from the Connecticut Department of Public Health.

Follow the Connecticut National Guard on Facebook to stay up-to-date with its COVID-19 response activities.

www.facebook.com/ConnecticutNationalGuard



A Connecticut National Guard Soldier inventories packages of linen to be distributed to mobile field hospitals, March 25, 2020. The linen, along with portable beds, were supplied by the state's Department of Public Health and are intended to assist with the state's effort to combat the COVID19 outbreak. (Photo by Tim Koster, Joint Force Headquarters, Connecticut National Guard)



Army Staff Sgt. Stanley Lafortune, a Soldier from C Co. 102nd Infantry, assists members of Connecticut's Department of Public Health count and organize protective equipment to be distributed to medical facility personnel at the New Britain armory, March 24, 2020. (Photo by Tim Koster, Joint Force Headquarters, Connecticut National Guard)



A member of the 1st Governor's Foot Guard watches as an air bladder inflates to help raise the outer frame of a mobile field hospital in the parking lot of Saint Francis Hospital in Hartford, Connecticut, March 24, 2020. (Photo by Tim Koster, Joint Force Headquarters, Connecticut National Guard)



Soldiers from C Co., 102nd Infantry Regiment, assisted members of the Connecticut Department of Public Health distribute protective gear to personnel from medical facilities at the New Britain, Connecticut armory March 24, 2020. Photo by Tim Koster, Joint Force Headquarters, Connecticut National Guard)



Feeding First Responders During COVID-19 Crisis

Cpl. Adrienne Foret
Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs

Many people are being called to take action during this unprecedented time. One Soldier is an example of how the members of the Connecticut National Guard are making efforts to serve their communities both in and out of uniform.

Sergeant 1st Class Sara Landon is a member of the Medical Detachment for the Connecticut Army National Guard (CTARNG). Her unit has conducted various missions throughout the state during the COVID-19 crisis, including the recent antibody study in conjunction with Yale University Occupational Health at Western Connecticut State University on April 22, 2020.

Landon, a combat medic for the CTARNG, usually volunteers with EMTs on ambulances in her hometown of Ellington, CT. With the increased workload surrounding coronavirus, Landon had to focus her attention to her military profession. The decision was not an easy one.

"The military is number one. If they call me, I need to be able to answer," Landon said.

Despite her continued work with the CTARNG, Landon has continued to seek out additional opportunities to give back to her community. With the help of a few close friends, Landon organized, supplied, and delivered 60

breakfast sandwiches to first responders in Ellington.

"I saw that there wasn't a lot of support for first responders," Landon said, "They're the first ones in the homes. They're bringing people to the hospital... I wanted to help those people."

Landon reached out to another Soldier who works in food service, Warrant Officer Nick Berube, to receive guidance on the best way to help the town's first responders.

"He was actually the one who suggested we do breakfast sandwiches," Landon said, "He knows how to prepare food for so many people. He let me know where to get the supplies for it and how to make it more economic, since it would be coming out of my own pocket."

Landon also contacted a few of her friends from the Ellington Women's Club. Jessica Pierson-Reagan, vice president for the Women's Club, also owns Hometown Pizza in Ellington. She offered her home as a central location for making sandwiches. With the larger kitchen space, the three were able to adjust their assembly line to accommodate social distancing guidelines. Liz Walsh, auditor of the club, also helped to assemble and deliver sandwiches.

On Saturday, April 18, 2020, the three were able to deliver a total of 60 sandwiches to 20 volunteer firefighters, about eight EMTs, as well as two policemen who were in

the area.

"As soon as we showed up with sandwiches, they were very grateful," Landon said, "We were able to encompass all the first responders in town. It was nice to see how happy everyone was."

Landon is passionate about service. Longer hours with the CTARNG and the need to maintain physical readiness have prevented Landon from continuing her work with the Ellington volunteer EMTs. She wanted to ensure that she could continue to help the people of Ellington, even if she was unable to volunteer as normal.

"Just do what you can – sometimes it's very easy to just text ten dollars to a foundation. Or if you don't have the money, you can donate your time and volunteer or make masks. Know your limits, and what your capable of, know what you can actually provide to help," said Landon, "This was something I could do, and so why not do it?"

For Landon, serving is not about receiving recognition. Instead, she feels an attachment to the town of Ellington and the people she has worked so closely with in her time as a volunteer.

"This is my community. I love it here," Landon said, "This is something I've always done. There's commonality when it comes to food. It just makes people feel good all around. That was my goal – to make people feel happy."

COVID19

CORONAVIRUS
DISEASE

STOP THE SPREAD OF GERMS

Help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases like COVID-19.

Avoid close contact with people who are sick.



Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.



Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.



Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.



Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care.



Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.





For more information: www.cdc.gov/COVID19

CS314915-A

Connecticut Guardsmen Help With Yale Antibody Study

Cpt. David Pytlík
Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs

HARTFORD, Conn-- 150 volunteers from the Connecticut National Guard gave blood samples April 20-23, 2020 at locations around the state for a COVID-19 antibody study conducted with Yale University Occupational Health. This testing, called a “seroprevalence study” is expected to give valuable insight on two levels: First, it will inform Soldiers and Airmen if they have likely been exposed to COVID-19. Second, it may illustrate what proportion of society has some level of immunity to the virus.

This study is expected to paint a picture of how much of the force has some level of immunity to the disease and where the areas of risk are across the state. For instance, it is expected that Soldiers providing direct patient care in a hospital will have higher exposure to the pathogen than those working in a warehouse, but it could reveal other areas of spread that were previously undetected.

Further testing, both for COVID-19 and for the antibodies associated with recovery will help inform the conversation on how to re-open the economy. This study and the many like it to come will be essential to understanding the road forward and determining risk levels across the nation.

The Connecticut National Guard has a team of medical and public health experts with vast experience in both the military and private sector. They hope that this testing can expand in the future.

“We’re trying to scale up and theoretically define a possible ‘Immune Group,’” said Sgt. Maj. Jonathan Trouern-Trend, a career-long Preventative Medicine Specialist. “This study and others like it, if scaled up, could be valuable to informing the conversation [about how & when to re-open parts of society]. The hope is that people have neutralizing antibodies.”

Scaling up antibody testing to all 5,000 Connecticut Guardsmen is the goal.

After medics collected and labeled the blood samples they were sent to Yale for processing. Once there, more Guardsmen assist laboratory personnel with preparation of samples prior to testing. The test indicates the concentration of antibodies. Concentrations of Immunoglobulin G may indicate that the Guardsman has already been exposed to, and likely recovered from COVID-19.

Doctors from the lab are expected to call anyone who tested positive; all others will receive emails with their results.



A Connecticut National Guardsman has his blood drawn during the Yale antibody study April 20, 2020.

Yale University Occupational Health also designed an accompanying online survey that volunteers completed prior to sample collection. The survey covered a number of topics that may grant insight into other risk factors in the volunteers’ lives such as the number of people in their household and stress levels. Additionally, the study looked at potential risk factors for infection to determine how these may affect people’s response.

Follow-up matters. Another part of the study is follow-up testing with all volunteers in two weeks to see how the concentrations of both types of antibodies change. This will provide valuable insight into how the body reacts over time to exposure to SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that causes COVID-19) and persistence of those antibodies. Many people have questioned whether re-infection is possible, studies like this on a broader scale and over longer periods of time should help answer that question.

Behind the Scenes: JOC provides support to COVID-19 fight

Cpl. Adrienne Foret
Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs

While Soldiers, Airmen, and Militia of the Connecticut National Guard have been on the front line of the COVID-19 pandemic helping local and state medical agencies combat this deadly virus, a group of dedicated service members have been working behind the scene to ensure the quick and accurate flow of information vital to the success of this mission.

These are the service members of the Connecticut National Guard Joint Operations Center (CTNG JOC).

The main focus of the CTNG JOC lies in information flow. When information is received, the JOC is tasked with pushing the information through to the appropriate location. The Soldiers in the JOC are the main informants for CTNG leadership, ensuring up-to-date information on the situations occurring throughout the state.

The JOC is not limited to internal operations, however. Continuous communication with the Civil Support Team (CST), the state’s Emergency Operations Center (EOC), the Department of Homeland Security, and other departments throughout the state ensure that the Connecticut National Guard is able to operate at maximum efficiency.

During statewide emergencies, as the current situation with the COVID-19 pandemic, the JOC works directly with the State Emergency Operation Center who may pass on requests for assistance directly from various towns/regions across Connecticut.

A typical day in the JOC varies depending on a Soldier’s position. “We create a snapshot for leadership to quickly review products and to get an idea of what’s going on with their forces,” 1st Sgt. Daniel Grenier said of his position as a Common Operating Picture. This could include monitoring different information systems, creating daily Situation Reports (SitReps) for leadership, and tracking internal missions and requests for assistance.

Sergeant 1st Class Brian Vassak, however, acts as a Staff Duty Officer. His focus is on ensuring the staff is informed with respect to the “need-to-know” policies. Emails and other forms of media are reviewed and sent to the appropriate party. Vassak also handles the internal questions that may appear and gathers the information necessary to answer them.

The CTNG JOC is one of only two 24/7 operations in the state. Soldiers receive briefings before their incoming shift from the previous shift’s staff, ensuring consistency

in the information needed for a successful transition. The JOC’s Operation Non-Commissioned Officer, Master Sgt. James Dempsey comes in for an in-briefing two hours before his shift begins in order to ensure that he is able to appropriately facilitate the rest of his staff.

Despite the added stressors of the COVID-19 crisis, it’s business as usual for the Soldiers working in the JOC. Although the inflow of information is higher, their duties remain the same; to organize and communicate information as needed.

The full schedule does not discourage Soldiers working in the JOC.

“This is what I joined to do,” said Vassak, “I feel comfortable doing this job and helping Soldiers.”

Grenier shared a similar sentiment:

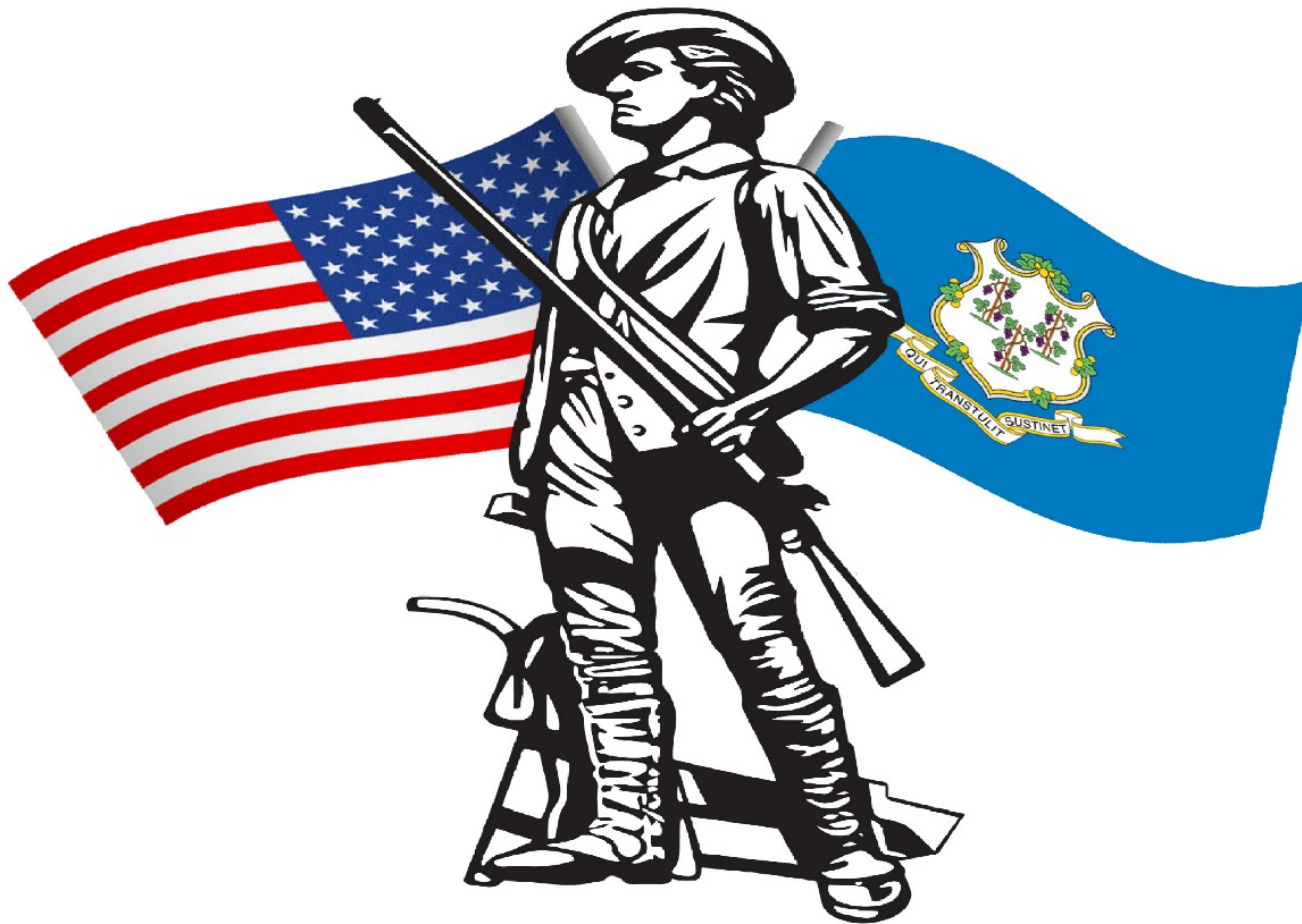
“It’s what we do here – support Guard Soldiers and citizens of the state. It does offer a good feeling of purpose and accomplishment, doing this job.”

During times of crisis, the JOC continues its original mission; to support those working internally with the Connecticut National Guard as well as serve the citizens of the state.

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The YANKEE COURIER



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Spc. Zorina Molina (left), 143rd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion culinary specialist, and Spc. Rakeem Lewis, 1048th Medium Truck Company transportation specialist, organize boxes containing personal protective equipment at a warehouse in New Britain, Connecticut, March 30, 2020. The Connecticut National Guard's role at this location is to provide logistical support for the state's healthcare system by assisting in distribution of personal protective equipment, medical supplies, and medical equipment in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

CTNG assists with COVID-19 medical supply distribution

Staff Sgt. Steven Tucker
103rd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

Connecticut National Guard soldiers have helped turn a 175,000 square foot warehouse into a primary distribution center in the state's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Trucks arrive filled with personal protective equipment, medical supplies, and medical equipment, and Guardsmen organize deliveries for distribution throughout the state. These Soldiers have organized equipment by type and size to expedite the delivery process.

"Right now we're a command and control element that's overseeing inbound and outbound deliveries of medical supplies," said Master Sgt. Nicole Mackay, 143rd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion. "Supplies come in from FEMA and various equipment orders and we help organize those supplies to get them where they need to go."

The first Soldiers arrived at the location Saturday, March 28, and operations were up and running by Monday morning. In total, 22 Soldiers are supporting three shifts at the warehouse for 24-hour operations.

This distribution center is one of many locations where the Connecticut National Guard has provided assistance during the COVID-19 pandemic response in support of the Governor's office and the Connecticut Department of Public Health. Guardsmen have also supported donation centers and constructed mobile shelters at local hospitals for potential patient use.

The Guardsmen in New Britain, like the many around the state, have applied their training and prior experience to adapt to the evolving situation the state and nation faces. Guardsmen are unique because they come from many different backgrounds and bring a wealth of experience

from their civilian careers and education. Some of the team leadership here have backgrounds working for major logistics companies such as Amazon.

"This is something so unique and different from other things we've seen," said Mackay. "I'm happy to be here and I'm happy to have such a great group of Soldiers who have stepped up and are willing to be here."

The Guardsmen here are building interoperability with other organizations involved to effectively support the state's response mission, said Mackay.

"Everybody is stepping up as team players right now," said Mackay. "We're in collaboration with the civilian workers here, and every day we're working and improving our operation, and hopefully making a positive impact every day we come to work."



Connecticut National Guard soldiers organize medical supplies for distribution at a warehouse in New Britain, Connecticut, March 30, 2020. The Connecticut National Guard's role at this location is to provide logistical support for the state's healthcare system by assisting in distribution of personal protective equipment, medical supplies, and medical equipment in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.



Sgt. Cameta Rubie, 143rd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion ammunition specialist, and Staff Sgt. Rich Flodquist, 1048th Medium Truck Company transportation specialists, organize medical supplies for distribution at a warehouse in New Britain, Connecticut, March 30, 2020. The Connecticut National Guard's role at this location is to provide logistical support for the state's healthcare system by assisting in distribution of personal protective equipment, medical supplies, and medical equipment in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.



Sgt. Evan Dupree, 1048th Medium Truck Company transportation specialist, organizes boxes containing personal protective equipment at a warehouse in New Britain, Connecticut, March 30, 2020. The Connecticut National Guard's role at this location is to provide logistical support for the state's healthcare system by assisting in distribution of personal protective equipment, medical supplies, and medical equipment in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Engagement and Retention – Ensuring Your DSGs Have Meaning

Capt. Jennifer Artiaco
Commander, 103rd Maintenance Operations Flight

A topic of significant importance that has gotten much of my attention since I took my first command a little over a year ago is the varying levels of engagement, fulfillment and meaning our Drill Status Guardsmen (DSG) experience within the Air National Guard (ANG). Understanding the aforementioned is crucial to retaining future generations of Guard Airmen and leaders. The culture and dynamics of the part-time force is ever changing, and our newest generation of Airmen are contending with unprecedented challenges in their lives outside the military.

Compounding the issue, DSGs are bombarded with a myriad of military readiness requirements that compete with the time allowed for them to seamlessly integrate into the operational mission of our Wing. This has the potential to result in diminished feelings of job satisfaction and minimizes what our DSGs are able to contribute to the actual mission of the 103rd Airlift Wing. In the coming year, four members of the 103rd Maintenance Operations Flight will meet the end of their current enlistment. When I spoke with each of them about their plans to remain in the military, it became evident that having a sense of purpose and fulfillment were key factors in retaining them. These members are smart, hardworking, tech-savvy individuals that we as leaders must do our very best to retain.

Today's ANG is a fully operational force that is engaged in delivering air power 365 days a year. This ops-tempo creates an environment where our full-time and part-time force can easily become detached from one another. Full-time members struggle with how to adequately prepare meaningful training while continuing to support the incredibly demanding day-to-day workload. Similar to merging onto a busy highway, our traditional guardsmen actively seek to successfully blend into the ops-tempo as well as achieve their required upgrade and ancillary training all in a manner which brings them a sense of purpose and fulfillment.

As leaders our role is to chart the path that clearly blends the needs of basic Airmen readiness with the desires of the Airmen to attain the technical skills necessary to allow them to fully assimilate into the operational mission. In my discussions with Airmen, it is the execution of our primary mission that is the reason they joined the Air National Guard and the overarching ideal that delivers meaning and purpose to their service. As such, I've come to realize DSGs struggle with the following question: "why am I here if the job and work is already done when I arrive?"

So how do we as leaders ensure our traditional military members are highly engaged and able to find meaning in their Air National Guard careers? I believe paving the path to purpose for our Airmen is primarily a product of explaining the why behind their assigned taskings, then enabling them to find and develop their individual sense of purpose within that construct. Every Airman's why behind their decision to serve is unique to them. Understanding their sense of meaning and purpose is essential to helping



Captain Jennifer Artiaco, commander of the 103rd Maintenance Operations Flight, poses for a photo with a group of fellow female airmen during the annual Women Take Flight event at the New England Air Museum March 7, 2020. The event was targeted toward girls who are interested in avionics and other STEM related fields. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Tamara Dabney)

them pave their own path to fulfillment in their ANG careers and is truly our primary role as leaders in our organization. It is only when we as leaders know those things that bring meaning and purpose to an individual's service that we can successfully assist in executing a comprehensive and unique plan that will provide each Airmen the career satisfaction they hoped to achieve when they took the oath to serve this great nation. If we are successful in helping our Airmen pave their individual path toward purpose and meaning retaining the part-time members of our force, who are vital to the future success of our organization, will become a much easier undertaking.

Beyond the basic foundation of knowing your personnel and the reasons why they serve, we as leaders have to make or adapt policies that align with the best practices of competing industries and the benefits they provide. If we do not do this, retaining our most valuable Airmen becomes more difficult as we force them to weigh the value proposition of continued part-time service against a perceived better quality of life beyond the military. Chief among these best practices is enhancing work/life balance to the maximum extent possible to meet both the needs of the mission and the member.

As a fully operational reserve of the U.S. Air Force, we operate every day of the week. Bridging the gap between the needs of the mission and the needs of our Airmen has the potential to be found in the understanding that our operational mission is occurring on a daily basis. As

technology advances and higher demands are placed on individuals, many employees rejoice in the ability to flex their work environment and hours. If we are going to attract and retain the best talent available, giving Airmen the power to flex their part-time contributions to the in-garrison mission to naturally fit into their personal and professional lives will ultimately provide a better framework for Airmen to find the level of engagement and fulfillment they seek. This is indeed essential to the future success of our organization.

As leaders, we are charged with recruiting, training, equipping, and retaining the finest of our citizenry. I believe the cornerstone principle of successfully completing this challenge is engaging with our part-time force to ensure they are attaining fulfillment and meaning in their careers. Success towards engagement and retention for our service members is twofold. First it is hinged on helping Airmen pave their own path to meaning and purpose in the context of their individual service aligned with the organization's foundational mission. Second, it requires that leaders take an active approach to ensuring mission-specific tasks and work schedule flexibility are available and incorporated into our operations. Combined, these key ideas and strategies will provide our Airmen with the desired level of meaningful contribution to increase retention and successfully achieve the mission of the Connecticut Air National Guard, now and in the future.



Air Force Capt. Jennifer Artiaco speaks with a girl about the Air National Guard at the annual "Women Take Flight" event held at the New England Air Museum, Windsor Locks, Connecticut, March 7, 2020. "Women Take Flight" is targeted toward girls who are interested in avionics and other STEM related fields. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Tech. Sgt. Tamara R. Dabney)

103rd Airmen aim to inspire girls

Airman 1st Class Chanhda Ly
103rd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

Children lined up inside the New England Air Museum to participate in the "Women Take Flight" event held Saturday, March 7, 2020 in Windsor Locks, Conn. The event, which is a celebration of Women's History Month and women in aerospace, brought women from different military branches and aerospace industries together to introduce young girls to aviation and STEM careers.

The one-day event allowed for visitors to meet female pilots, engineers, and maintainers to show that there is no limit on the possibilities of military careers for either gender. The 103rd Airlift Wing exhibited a booth where visitors witnessed the diverse career fields in aerospace, specifically careers that women currently hold and are offered in the Connecticut Air National Guard.

Maj. Cheryl Mead, 103rd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron commander, spearheaded the efforts and explained the importance of participating in the event.

"Sometimes people grow up in certain environments where maybe they're not exposed to certain things," said Mead. "Sometimes it's just exposure that women perform maintenance, they fly planes, they work in Security Forces; they do these jobs that maybe they had not have had an exposure to outside of these events."

With every visitor, 103rd Airlift Wing volunteers explained the details of their jobs and encouraged youths to try on flight suits, helmets, and headsets, all in an effort to showcase the importance of women in aviation. There were hands in the air as visitors pointed at displays and were very eager to ask questions.

"As members of the 103rd or as just women in general, it's important to show what women can do and to show our youth, as they come through here, what we're capable of doing," said Capt. Jennifer Artiaco, Maintenance Operations Flight commander.

The event also showcased the 377th Airlift Squadron, 439th Airlift Wing, Air Force ROTC, and Air Force Recruiting Service, providing a diverse array of opportunities to meet many women of the industry.

Mead, who has three daughters of her own, feels that representation is important. "When a little girl sees other women in these roles, she'll say: well, there's no barriers

there and that it's being done; I can do this!"

The event not only demonstrates how women can have many different types of careers, it also highlights how women can excel in careers. Two prime examples were both Mead and Artiaco, who both began their career as enlisted members of the Connecticut Air National Guard prior to becoming officers.

Mead began her career as an Airman 1st Class in the Force Support Squadron before commissioning into the Logistics Readiness Squadron after earning her Bachelor's degree. She now oversees crew chiefs who work on the flight line and is responsible for the direct management of at least 25-60 people at any given time. Her career spans over 20 years of service.

Artiaco began her career in 2000 as a crew chief servicing A-10s before becoming a First Sergeant for the Maintenance Group and eventually becoming an officer for the same group. She currently oversees maintenance operations, aggregating data from across the maintenance group.

Whether it's communication among members or taking care of the budget within the group, maintenance operations takes care of all the manning, training and all the analytics that go along with the group. Artiaco helps ensure that the 103rd is maintaining its mission and keeping the aircraft flying.

"We are so proud of what we do that that we've actually incorporated our new tagline and our new mission statement, which is called 'Data Done Right,'" said Artiaco. "Because we take so much pride in ensuring that our data is complete and that's really what we are: the data center of the maintenance group."

Pride in service and accomplishments as well as forging a path for future women in military service was the goal for the annual event. For the more than 600 visitors who attended the New England Air Museum on Saturday, this goal was met with hopes the face-to-face interactions inspire a new generation of young women in STEM and aviation.

"Ask questions, get the information, and don't think that there's anything that you can't do," said Mead. "If you have a love for something whether it be in the military, whether it be aviation, whether it be anything."

Connecticut Guardsmen go on State Active Duty, respond to COVID-19

Tech. Sgt. Tamara Dabney
103rd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

The National Guard has a dual mission: to serve the nation during federal activations anywhere in the world and to serve the state during state-side emergencies. So, when the COVID-19 virus pandemic began to spread throughout the state of Connecticut, members of the Connecticut National Guard expected to be called to duty in response to the crisis. Capt. Nathan Ferrance, Bravo Company Commander, assigned to the 1st Battalion, 102nd Infantry Regiment, Connecticut Army National Guard, received the call to duty on March 30. In less than 24 hours, he mustered soldiers under his command and led them on their first COVID-19 relief mission.

"It's really what the Guard is here for," said Ferrance. "We do our mission for the federal government, which is our deployments, and for the national and state emergencies that the Guard can be mobilized or activated for."

In March, Governor Ned Lamont called for members of the National Guard to be placed on State Active Duty, a status designation applied to Guardsmen in response to statewide emergencies. During such emergencies, Guardsmen are charged with protecting lives and the property of federal, state and civilian agencies. The ways in which they accomplish this can vary. For example, the last time Ferrance was called to State Active Duty in 2013, it was to assist with clean-up efforts after a snow storm. Comparatively, in response to COVID-19, 43 members of his company will construct a 250-bed military field hospital at Southern Connecticut State University.

"We're going to be supporting the COVID-19 relief directly by setting up a field hospital for people impacted by that outbreak in New Haven County," said Ferrance. "It's something that we have trained for and that we rehearse and maintain proficiency on."

The hospital will serve as a temporary emergency facility to test and treat people for COVID-19 before they can be transported to permanent medical facilities. Ferrance expects the field hospital to be set-up and operational by April 1.

Guardsmen who are placed on State Active Duty have the ability to act in a law enforcement capacity within their home state or adjacent state, if granted by the Governor. However, members of the Connecticut National Guard are primarily assisting the Connecticut Department of Public Health and are not currently conducting law enforcement duties in direct response to COVID-19.

Members of the 103rd Air Control Squadron (ACS), an Air National Guard unit located in Orange, Connecticut, are accustomed to being called for relief during emergencies, particularly natural disasters.

"In state emergencies? Yeah, we get tasked quite often," said Senior Master Sgt. John Allen, radar and radio superintendent who has been with the 103rd ACS since 1988. "We do high water rescue for storms and snow rescue when there's high snow. We have generators, so whenever there's a power outage, they call us."

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the generators will not be used due to a loss of power, but instead, to provide



Soldiers assigned to the Connecticut National Guard, Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 102nd Infantry Regiment prepare for a mission at the Middletown Armed Forces Reserve Center, March 31, 2020, Middletown, Connecticut. The soldiers were placed on State Active Duty orders in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

power in tents that have been constructed by 103rd ACS members. The tents will serve as medical testing facilities.

"The order we got was [to build tents, supply power] so that they could start doing drive-through testing, so people can get tested for COVID-19," said Allen. "They will be able to drive up to the tents and get their tests, then drive out."

In the month of March, the Connecticut National Guard collaborated with DPH to:

- convert a 175,000 square foot warehouse into a primary distribution center for medical supplies
- inventory medical equipment sets and deliver ventilators to Connecticut hospitals and
- posture and stage mobile field hospitals and COVID-19 testing facilities

Additionally, the Guard is working with the Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security donation management team and the Connecticut Department of Correction to manage medical supply donations during the pandemic.

Public Health officials estimate that COVID-19 infections in Connecticut will double every three to five days and that the peak of the pandemic will occur in mid-April. As the National Guard motto states "Always Ready, Always There", Connecticut Guardsmen are prepared to respond to the crisis. According to Ferrance, members of his unit will continue to serve, as needed, on State Active Duty for the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We're prepared," said Ferrance. "We're ready for follow-on missions with minimal loss to readiness."



U.S. Army Capt. Nathan Ferrance, Bravo Company Commander, assigned to the 1st Battalion, 102nd Infantry Regiment delivers a mission briefing to soldiers at the Middletown Armed Forces Reserve Center, March 31, 2020, Middletown, Connecticut. The soldiers were placed on State Active Duty orders in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.



Tech. Sgt. Thomas Buckley, 118th Airlift Squadron loadmaster, is checked for contamination on his aircrew eye and respiratory protection system (AERPS) equipment during a large-scale readiness exercise at Bradley Air National Guard Base, East Granby, Conn. March 5, 2020. The exercise tested the 103rd Airlift Wing's ability to deploy to and sustain in a contested environment. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Steven Tucker)

103rd AW showcases capabilities in large-scale readiness exercise

Staff Sgt. Steven Tucker
103rd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

EAST GRANBY, Conn. – The 103rd Airlift Wing displayed its ability to quickly deploy in the event of a short-notice wartime tasking and sustain the mission in a contested environment during a large-scale readiness exercise March 2-5, 2020.

The scenario involved Airmen from around the base and tasked members from the 103rd Maintenance Group to generate a C-130H Hercules aircraft while wearing mission oriented protective posture (MOPP) gear, and an aircrew from the 118th Airlift Squadron to fly a mission while wearing aircrew eye and respiratory protective system (AERPS) equipment.

The exercise marked the midpoint of a five-year strategic plan initiated in 2018 by the U.S. Air Force's introduction of full spectrum readiness.

"This tests our ability to get out the door fast and sustain in more challenging environments," said Lt. Col. Wendy Farnsworth, 103rd Airlift Wing Inspector General. "After two years of training and building exercises, we're at our first real milestone to be measured by Air Mobility Command on how ready our unit is to deploy and sustain in possible chemical environments."

In building the exercise, Farnsworth and the wing inspection team, comprised of functional experts in various career fields, design an objective that tests mission essential tasks in these areas. If a career field's readiness standards include operating in a degraded environment, the exercise scenario gives them a way to test that capability. The inspection team from Air Mobility Command then evaluates how Farnsworth's team builds and grades the exercise against these readiness requirements.

"Our office based the simulated location, amount of personnel and equipment tasked to

match a realistic situation, but still stress that we're testing something," said Farnsworth.

The strategic plan is locally driven, giving the wing flexibility in testing its capabilities.

"We actually build a lot of the desired evaluation objectives based on our commander's intent for what he considers to be ready while using our actual reporting information as a foundation," said Farnsworth.

The generation phase of the exercise implements the installation deployment plan and tests both the personnel and cargo deployment functions' capability to efficiently deploy Airmen and necessary cargo. The employment and sustainment phase shows the unit's ability to perform their tasks in MOPP gear in the degraded environment.

"We just got back from a deployment, so we know we can perform our tactical airlift mission all day," said Col. Roy Walton, 103rd Airlift Wing vice wing commander. "This adds the contested environment to the scenario and the exercise gives us the opportunity to show we can do that."

This exercise also gives the wing an opportunity to build on its capabilities, said Walton.

"To me there is nothing wrong with finding things wrong—there are a lot of people that have never done this sort of exercise before," said Walton. "So our wing inspection team will document everything, we'll get better, and we'll get to a point where this will be just normal operations."

Farnsworth expressed her appreciation for the people around the wing that have contributed to improving the wing's capabilities.

"We have about 50 subject matter experts that I get to work with to pull everything together," said Farnsworth. "I couldn't be happier to be in this position going through this inspection with the team that I have."

There's something that is bigger than you think in your future.

Catherine Galasso-Vigorito
Contributor

For thousands of years, wild blueberries have grown naturally in rocky hills, tough terrains and fields. Wild blueberries are much smaller in size than cultivated berries and vary in color from different shades of dark blue to almost black. Often found in Maine and Canada, the berries grow in extremely rugged conditions. Adapting to fridge cold temperatures and harsh climates, wild blueberries have the ability to thrive in such trying, difficult surroundings. The hardiness it takes to survive these climates makes them naturally richer in anthocyanin than cultivated berries. Amazingly, wild blueberries grow on their own. There is no one there to plant them. And, as they grow in the rocky landscape, low and wide, randomly covering the fields, harvesters have to kneel down on the ground to reach them.

It was purported that the Native Americans observed, "When wildfire occurred, the only thing that would grow in its path afterward were wild blueberry plants." Wild blueberry plants can be damaged, broken or burned to the ground, and they would come back stronger and healthier than ever before.

Do you sometimes think that you don't have the strength to prevail over the challenges by which you are confronted? Maybe you've enduring bitter disappointments, emotional wounds, an unfair situation, or perhaps, nobody seems to understand what you've been through. And now you feel like quitting and surrendering to defeat.

Yet, I want to encourage you to never give up. God created you to be resilient and brave, and you can overcome anything that you come up against. For you will not only survive what you face, but similar to the wild blueberries, you will thrive and come back stronger than ever before. Keep going, there's something that is bigger than you think in your future.

I'm reminded about a great motivational teacher and writer, Napoleon Hill, who made a careful study of successful individuals. This was his conclusion: "Most people

have achieved their greatest success just one step beyond their greatest failure."

Most often, setbacks are chances to come back even stronger. You can rise above whatever is trying to push you down and claim the highest goals that you set for yourself. Dream on the largest scale possible, because anything is within your reach if you are willing to work for it and strive for it with constant effort. God has given you everything you need to fulfill your calling. Nothing can hold you back from making your dreams a blessed reality. Where you start doesn't matter. It's where you finish that counts. Trust God. Go to Him in prayer; because right now, God is guiding your steps. For, "God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind." (2 Timothy 1:7)

So, if life has knocked you down, stand up on your feet and try again. Do not dwell on the obstacles before you. See beyond where you are now, to where you desire to be. There is greatness in you. Hence, you must not allow words of defeat or negativity to come out of your mouth. Quiet the inner discouraging voices. Just keep speaking words of faith. Take care of your emotional and physical health, and move forward, expecting the best possible outcome. Your time for success is coming.

Sometimes after dinner, my girls will make Edible Cookie Dough for dessert. I am one of those people who would prefer to eat the cookie dough rather than the actual cookie. My girls happen to be the same way.

My daughters start by mixing in a large bowl softened butter, brown sugar, salt and vanilla together until well combined. Next, they mix in one tablespoon of milk. Slowly, the girls add in flour, one tablespoon at a time until they have a nice cookie-dough texture. Finally, my daughters add in delicious, dark chocolate chips. Then, they mix it until it's well combined, and soon, we have scrumptious edible cookie dough ready to enjoy.

Now, here's the key, if my daughters didn't add even one ingredient, the dough may have turned out poorly. They needed all of the ingredients to make the perfect,

mouthwatering edible cookie dough.

By the same token, God is using all of your past experiences, as my daughters used their perfectly measured ingredients, to create something special in your life and in the lives of others.

Accordingly, do not stop short of success. One of the most important things you can do if you get pushed down, is to get up again. This is how you build your resiliency for whatever life may bring your way. And, as you persevere onward, you may discover the hidden gift that the setback can bring to you. Michelangelo once brought home a piece of marble. People teased him and said the marble was unattractive. But Michelangelo persisted and chipped away at the stone, replying, "There is a masterpiece trapped inside, and I must set it free." Little by little, with tenacity of purpose, patience and care, that marble became the most famous statue of Moses.

Michelangelo proved what God did when He put each of us on this Earth. With the right attitude, each blow we receive from the difficulties and disappointments of life will reveal the masterpiece of God within. God does things in such a remarkable way. Before long, you will look back and see how beautifully He orchestrated confusing situations, and you'll say with wonder, "That's only something God could have done!"

Dear readers, stand strong. And believe in God's better, bigger and brighter plans for you. This is a new day. There are new joys, new friendships, and new blessings ahead. Gaze out into the days and weeks ahead and go confidently forth. You're going to fulfill the best plan that God has for you. So, don't give up. Keep trying. It is only a matter of time before God changes circumstances in your behalf. And you will live the extraordinary life you were created to live.

There's something that is bigger than you think in your future. Like the wild blueberry, you will come back stronger and healthier than before!

CONNECTICUT NATIONAL GUARD HELPLINE



In an effort to support the needs of our service members and their families, the Connecticut National Guard has a 24-hour HELPLINE.

Your call will be answered by a behavioral health professional. You will receive information and referrals to community resources to support you and your family.

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Senior Airman Matt Wysocki, 103rd Air Control Squadron, writes down patient information at a COVID-19 drive-through testing site operated by the State of Connecticut and CVS Health in New Haven, April 17, 2020. The Connecticut National Guard is providing power generation and access control support to maximize site efficiency (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Steven Tucker)

Connecticut National Guard powers COVID-19 testing site

Staff Sgt. Steven Tucker
103rd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

A once-empty parking lot on Sargent Drive has quickly transformed into a drive-through COVID-19 testing site as Connecticut expands its testing capacity in response to the pandemic. Starting April 17, CVS Health, working in coordination with the state, will have the ability to provide a 15-minute test to about 700 people per day at the mobile site.

An integral part of its operation is power generation from 103rd Air Control Squadron equipment, in addition to site access control and administrative support provided by Soldiers and Airmen from the Connecticut National Guard.

The 103rd Air Control Squadron's expertise and location in nearby Orange makes it the ideal unit for this site support mission.

"We're a radar unit, so whenever we get out in the field and set up it's always fast," said Master Sgt. Brian Shove, 103rd Air Control Squadron HVAC shop noncommissioned officer in charge. "We get tents out and supply power with our generators. So when they said they were going to do this, it was easy for us because we knew what we needed to get them off the ground right away."

State officials expressed their appreciation for the Guard's support at this site and the many other support functions they have in the state's pandemic response.

"The National Guard has been vital since the inception of this for mission support and logistical assistance," said Jake Manke, Connecticut Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security Region 2 coordinator. "We can use them all the way from electrical capabilities to warehouse operations. Anything that's involved in running this facility, they have been integral with it. From command staff to the enlisted, everybody has been phenomenal."

The Guard's response has been efficient from its experience in handling emergency situations.

"Being in the Guard, I feel like that's ingrained in us," said Shove. "A lot of us vol-



U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Gary Onofrio, 103rd Air Control Squadron electrical power production specialist, operates a generator at a COVID-19 drive-through testing site operated by the State of Connecticut and CVS Health in New Haven, April 16, 2020. The Connecticut National Guard is providing power generation and access control to maximize site efficiency.

unteer and come in when they need us and we do our job. This is a great opportunity for our younger Airmen to see how we're essential to state emergency responses like this."

Soldiers and Airmen will provide enduring support to the site, providing electrical power, access control, and checking in patients in a coordinated effort with partner agencies on the ground.

"There's no question that the integration has been phenomenal," said Manke. "We've worked really well together and we're really appreciative of all the support we've been given by the Guard."



Members of the Connecticut Army and Air National Guard work with members of the Connecticut State Guard to construct a rapidly deployable tent at Middlesex Hospital, April 1, 2020, Middletown, Connecticut. The tent was to be used as a mobile field hospital to test and treat patients for COVID-19. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Tech. Sgt. Tamara R. Dabney)

Tech. Sgt. Tamara Dabney
103rd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented never-before-seen challenges to the State of Connecticut that require an equally unprecedented response from the state's Military Department.

For the first time, every component of the Connecticut Military Department—the Army National Guard, Air National Guard and Connecticut State Militia—has come together in a combined effort to provide emergency relief during a statewide emergency.

Emergency relief has always been a part of domestic operations for both the Army and Air National Guard. However, the Militia, comprised of the Governor's Foot and Horse Guards, has normally only been tasked with ceremonial duties in recent years. According to Army Col. (Ret.) Daniel Murphy, this changed in 2019 at the behest of Maj. Gen. Fran Evon, The Adjutant General of the Connecticut National Guard.

"The Adjutant General, Maj. Gen. Evon, wanted the Foot Guard and Horse Guard to have tasks other than ceremonial duties—a support role," said Murphy, Militia Brig. Gen. and Director of the New England Disaster Training Center. "One of the tasks was to be able to deploy the mobile hospital."

The Militia began training to deploy mobile field hospitals in early 2019 and tested their deployment capabilities later that year. By the time COVID-19 was declared a global pandemic in March 2020, the Militia was ready to respond.

In April, members of the Militia constructed a 25-bed mobile field hospital outside of Middlesex Hospital to be used as a COVID-19 treatment facility. The Militia-led

project, augmented by Army and Air National Guardsmen, was the third mobile field hospital set up by the Militia.

Army 2nd Lt Cameron Caporusso of the 192nd Engineer Battalion, thinks the collaborative efforts could be beneficial during state-wide emergencies.

"I think it's great," said Caporusso. "Honestly, I haven't worked much with the other units in Connecticut. I think the more exposure people get to these different units, it builds a nice cohesive team throughout the state, especially while responding to this emergency."

The project served as a training opportunity for members of the Air Guard, who had never set up a tent structure using an inflatable bladder like the one they worked on that day.

"We normally set-up Alaskan tents with metal purlins and arches, then we pull the canopy over the structure," said Air Force Master Sgt. John Stevens, member of the 103rd Civil Engineer Squadron. "We've never done something like this before, so I think it's a great opportunity for us."

Stevens expects that the Connecticut Military Department may one day conduct joint training with all of its components to prepare for future emergencies.

"I foresee us working hand-in-hand with these guys to get something like this going, so that we have training on how to put up a structure like this," said Stevens. "A week long training with them to train the rest of us, I think, would be a great thing."

Murphy agreed.

"They're here to learn the process, so in the future, should this [mobile field hospital] have to go out again, you can do a mix of Militia, Army and Air Guard to do simultaneous missions," said Murphy.



Members of the Connecticut Army and Air National Guard work with members of the Connecticut State Guard to construct a rapidly deployable tent at Middlesex Hospital, April 1, 2020, Middletown, Connecticut. The tent was to be used as a mobile field hospital to test and treat patients for COVID-19. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Tech. Sgt. Tamara R. Dabney)



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