



Connecticut GUARDIAN

The Yankee Courier on page 13

VOL. 21 NO. 1

HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT

January 2021



An Unprecedented Year: 2020 in Review

Maj. Mike Petersen
Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs

This was truly a year unlike any other. A global pandemic changed life as we all knew it. Here are some of the stories that unfolded over the past 12 months that none of us will soon forget:

Before the pandemic, it was business as usual for the Connecticut National Guard: In

January, The Air National Guard base in East Granby played host to the welcome home ceremony for the 103rd Airlift Wing's Operations and Maintenance Groups from their deployment to Kuwait and the Governor William A. O'Neill Armory in Hartford once again played host to amateur boxing as the Western New England Golden Gloves tournament.

In March, things began to change. The threat of COVID-19 beyond our shores was evident weeks earlier, but it wasn't until cases (and deaths) were reported within Con-

See 2020, page 4

In This Issue:



Interview with Sgt. Christopher
Page 10



CTNG delivers more than 102,000 test kits
Page 13



An Airman's Commitment
Page 14

DOWNLOAD THE NEW CTNG APP



CONNECTICUT NATIONAL GUARD



**Download today to
learn about everything
the Guard can offer YOU!
Available on Apple and
Android devices.**

Get social with the CONNECTICUT NATIONAL GUARD

Official Pages - Managed by the CTNG PAO



FACEBOOK

@ConnecticutNationalGuard
<http://facebook.com/ConnecticutNationalGuard>



TWITTER

@CTNationalGuard
<http://twitter.com/CTNationalGuard>



INSTAGRAM

@CTNationalGuard
<https://www.instagram.com/CTNationalGuard>



FLICKR

<http://www.flickr.com/Photos/CTNationalGuard>

Official Unit/ Leadership Pages

Maj. Gen. Fran Evon

Facebook - @CTNGTAG

Twitter - @CTNGTAG

State Command Sgt. Maj. John Carragher

Facebook - @CTCommandSgtMaj

CTARNG Recruiting Battalion

Facebook - @CTArmyGuard

Instagram - @CTArmyGuard

CTANG Recruiting Team

Facebook - @CTAirGuard

103rd Airlift Wing

Facebook - @103AW

102nd Army Band

Facebook - @102dArmyband

Facebook (Rock Band) - @RipChord102D

Instagram - @102d_army_band

Twitter - @102dArmyband

HHC, 169th Aviation Battalion

Facebook - @HHC169AVN

1-169th Regiment (RTI)

Facebook - @169REG

1109th TASMG

Facebook - @1109thTASMG

Joint Force Headquarters

Facebook - @CTJFHQ

CTATNG Recruit Sustainment Program

Facebook - @ConnecticutGuardRSP

CTNG Service Member and Family Support

Facebook - @CTNGFamilies

CT Employee Support of Guard and Reserve

Facebook - @CTESGR

Twitter - @CT_ESGR

**Don't see your unit's page here? Make sure it is
registered with the CTNG PAO.
Want to start a public page for your unit? Call the
CTNG PAO for information.
860-524-4857**

Change Your Address

**To change your home of record, please do
one of the following:**

Retirees: Contact

Sgt. 1st Class Ericka Thurman at
ericka.g.thurman.mil@mail.mil or
860-524-4813.

Guardsmen and Militia Members: Contact
your chain of command or unit admin.

*Any further questions or concerns about the
Connecticut Guardian, contact the editor
directly.*

Connecticut Guardian

360 Broad Street, Hartford, CT 06105-3795

Phone: (860) 524-4858, DSN: 636-7857

E-Mail: timothy.r.koster.civ@mail.mil

Captain-General

Gov. Ned Lamont

The Adjutant General

Commanding General, CTNG

Maj. Gen. Francis J. Evon

Assistant Adjutant General - Air

Brig. Gen. Gerald McDonald

Assistant Adjutant General - Army

Brig. Gen. Karen A. Berry

State Command Chief Warrant Officer

Chief Warrant Officer 5 Brian Erkson

State Command Sergeant Major

Command Sgt. Maj. John S. Carragher

State Command Chief Master Sergeant

Chief Master Sgt. John M. Gasiorek

State Public Affairs Officer

Connecticut Guardian Managing Editor

Capt. David Pytlik

Connecticut Guardian Editor

Timothy Koster

Contributors

103rd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

130th Public Affairs Det., CTARNG

First Company Governors Horse Guard

Second Company Governors Horse Guard

First Company Governors Foot Guard

Second Company Governors Foot Guard

The *Connecticut Guardian* is an authorized publication for and in the interest of, the personnel of the Connecticut National Guard, State Military Department, State Militia and their families. The editorial content of this publication is the responsibility of the CTNG Hartford Public Affairs Office and is not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense, and the Department of the Army or the Department of the Air Force. *Connecticut Guardian* is published monthly in accordance with AR 360-1 and is printed through the Government Printing Office. **Deadline for the February issue is January 20th.**

Connecticut WWII Veteran Receives Promotion, medals

Tim Koster
Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs

WINDSOR LOCKS, Conn. — More than 75 years after the conclusion of World War II, one Connecticut veteran officially received a promotion and medals he earned while serving in the Pacific Theater during a ceremony at Bradley Air National Guard Base, Jan. 4, 2021.

At the age of 18, on Oct. 7, 1940, Dan Crowley enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Corps out of Hartford, Connecticut. During his tour of duty, Crowley would participate in the defense of the Philippines, including the Battle of Corregidor, the United States' last stand against Japanese forces after the infamous Battle of Bataan, and survive nearly four years as a prisoner of war.

After a review of Crowley's records, the U.S. Army's Human Resources Command learned that he earned a promotion to sergeant and earned the Prisoner of War Medal and Combat Infantry Badge but the orders never made it Crowley before he was honorably discharged from service in 1946.

"The event that is happening here today is nearly 76 years late," said the Honorable Gregory J. Slavonic, currently performing the duties of Under Secretary of the Navy. "When the Army began digging into Dan's history and service, they uncovered that Dan was promoted to the rank of sergeant, so today we will promote Dan to the rank of sergeant. In addition, I have the pleasure of presenting him with both the Combat Infantry Badge and the Prisoner of War Medal."

In March 1941, Crowley was assigned to Nichols Field in Manila. Nine months later, shortly after the attack on Pearl Harbor, the Japanese attacked the field. Crowley and the other Soldiers and Airmen in his unit constructed improvised air defense weapons, welding World War I-era British Lewis light machine guns together in order to create a more powerful weapon against the Japanese planes.

Despite their efforts, Japanese forces destroyed most the planes at the air field and ground forces were evacuated to the Bataan peninsula, abandoning the field and effectively eliminating all allied air support for the islands.

With their defenses reduced to rely only on its ground forces, which had no effective means of resupply or escape, the surviving ground crew and airmen were consolidated into what would become known as the United States Army's Provisional Air Corps Infantry Regiment and worked hand-in-hand with Filipino scouts to thwart three Japanese



U.S. Army Sgt. Dan Crowley (ret.) fist bumps the Honorable Gregory J. Slavonic, currently performing the duties of Under Secretary of the Navy, prior to a ceremony for Crowley where he was officially presented with the rank of sergeant, Prisoner of War Medal, and the Combat Infantry Badge at Bradley Air National Guard Base in Windsor Locks, Conn. Jan. 4, 2021.



U.S. Army Sgt. Dan Crowley (ret.) receives the rank of sergeant and the Combat Infantry Badge from the Honorable Gregory J. Slavonic, currently performing the duties of Under Secretary of the Navy, (left) and U.S. Sen. Richard Blumenthal (right) during a ceremony at the Bradley Air National Guard Base in Windsor Locks, Conn. Jan. 4, 2021. Crowley served in the Pacific theatre of World War II as a member of the Army Air Corps in 1941, holding Nichols Field in Manila and advanced through the Bataan Peninsula and Corregidor Island before being captured and held as a prisoner of war until 1945.

amphibious landings.

Without proper support, the Philippines eventually fell after the Battle of Bataan. Crowley's unit traveled to the town of Mariveles to surrender, but he and several of his fellow Soldiers and Sailors were not prepared to give up so easily. They hid among the rocks in the breakwater near the shore and, after nightfall, they swam their way across three miles of open, shark-infested water to the island of Corregidor.

On the island, Crowley and the other survivors got rolled up into the 4th Marine Regiment Reserve and made one last defensive stand before the island fell on May 6, 1942. He and 1,200 other U.S. and Filipino warriors were taken captive and transported to a prisoner camp near Manila.

"Grace under fire; calm under pressure; easy words to use in the quietness of this auditorium," said Slavonic. "It is yet another thing entirely to demonstrate these qualities in the face of a determined enemy. It takes a very special person to continue to persevere through the most haunting of circumstances. It takes certain depth of character to put yourself in harm's way for your fellow warriors and your country."

To escape the harsh conditions of the prisoner camp, Crowley volunteered for hard labor, building a Japanese air strip on Palawan Island. He worked, using only hand tools to carve the land, until March when he was loaded onto a Japanese ship and spent the next several weeks in transit to the island of Japan.

Crowley would spend three-and-a-half years as a prisoner of war before being liberated on Sept. 4, 1945 and returning to Connecticut.

"Please let me start by saying words cannot express the sincere gratitude our nation and our Army have for your dedicated service and sacrifice during World War II," said James E. McPherson, Under Secretary of the Army, via letter read by U.S. Navy Capt. Gregory Leland, executive assistant for the Under Secretary of the Navy. "I cannot fathom what you endured during your four years as a prisoner of war in the Pacific. What I do know is that you're a true American hero, part of the Greatest Generation, and you represent the epitome of courageous and honorable service."

"As every generation learns, freedom is not free," said Slavonic. "This is Dan's story and many others like it remind other service members of the dedication and service displayed by The Greatest Generation. We have an obligation to remember these brave men and women who fought so hard and expected so little from their nation."



Members of the Connecticut National Guard helped the Salvation Army, on behalf of the state's department of agriculture, deliver pallets of food to community health centers around the state to be further distributed to families in need, Nov. 23, 2020.

2020

Cont. from page 1

necticut's borders that life as we knew it was going to change.

Many businesses shut down, or required employees to work from home. The Connecticut Military Department was no different - beginning a monumental, unprecedented effort to continue operations with many state/federal employees and full-time Guardsmen working remotely.

The organization also conducted the first Virtual Inactive Duty Training period on record - permitting drilling members of the Connecticut National Guard to conduct training over video conference or by completing annual classes, distance learning or other administrative requirements online in order to sustain readiness.

The availability of VIDT didn't mean that the Guard would sit on the sidelines as the state did its part to support first responders and medical professionals. 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.

Over 150 Guardsmen went above and beyond in April, volunteering to take part in a blood draw as part of Yale University Occupational Health's antibody study. 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.

Availability of COVID-19 testing kits became a hot topic as the pandemic raged on, and the CTNG did its part to support testing efforts statewide. Along with the 14th Civil Support Team's testing and sample delivery to labs around the state, Guardsmen assembled thousands of testing kits to help refresh state stockpiles.

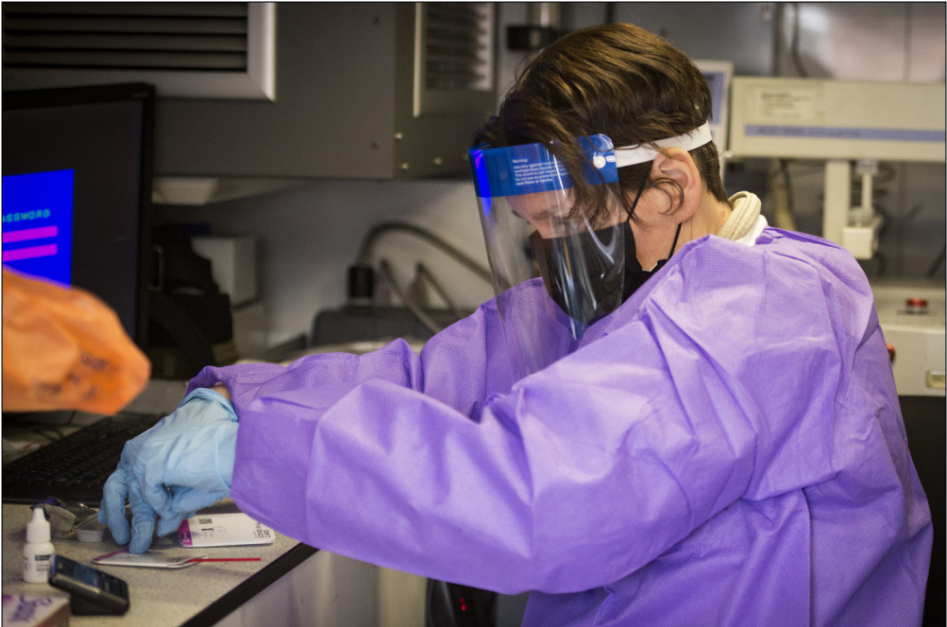
"Connecticut is our home," said Sgt. Robert Blakeslee, assigned to the 1-102nd Infantry Regiment and project manager for the kit assembly. "To make an impact on the bigger picture and help make sure people are safe is a pretty good feeling."

Through it all, the Connecticut National Guard still had a federal mission to conduct - readiness requirements and deployments were not delayed in the wake of COVID. In 2020, 5 units and 248 Guardsmen deployed to locations around the world, and we also welcomed home over Soldiers and Airmen from 2nd Battalion, 104th Aviation Regiment, 103rd Security Forces Squadron, 143rd Cyber Detachment, and the 643rd Military Police Company.

Although we know the world will not magically change overnight when we shift the calendars from December 2020 to January 2021, but we do know that the Connecticut National Guard will stand ready to support operations here in state or anywhere around the world.



U.S. Army Sgt. Amos Muiga, a recruiter from the Connecticut National Guard's Bridgeport Recruiting and Retention office, and 1st Lt. Edwin Escobar, assigned to the Connecticut National Guard's 643rd Military Police Company, load a car with groceries during the Bridgeport Rescue Mission's Great Thanksgiving Project Nov. 20, 2020 in Bridgeport, Connecticut. The project gave away an estimated 4,000 Thanksgiving meals to families in need over the duration of the event. (U.S. Army photo by Timothy Koster)



U.S. Army Capt. Joyce Avedisian, 14th Civil Support Team nuclear medical science officer, prepares COVID-19 antigen card test control samples in an analytical laboratory system vehicle parked at Lebanon Pines in Lebanon, Connecticut, Dec. 8, 2020. The Connecticut National Guard's 14th CST is working with the Connecticut Department of Public Health as a COVID-19 Analysis Rapid Response Team to help residential care facilities quickly identify positive cases. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Steven Tucker)



U.S. Army Col. Raymond Chicowski, Connecticut National Guard state Army aviation officer, receives the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine from his son, Senior Airman Connor Chicowski, 103rd Medical Group immunizations noncommissioned officer in charge at Bradley Air National Guard Base in East Granby, Connecticut, Jan. 8, 2021. The Connecticut National Guard is voluntarily administering the vaccine to Soldiers and Airmen on the front lines of the pandemic response in accordance with the DOD COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Plan. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Steven Tucker)

The CT National Guard Supports the State's response to COVID-19

Maj. Nate Dougall
Joint Force Headquarters

While the Connecticut National Guard enjoys a storied history, tracing its origins back to 1672, the current COVID-19 fight includes a number of historical firsts for the CT Guard. This domestic deployment is the longest in the State's history, currently over 300 days. Additionally, this is the first time the State has utilized a Dual Status Commander – where a CT general officer had command of both State and Federal personnel within the state. During the peak of the first wave, the State utilized over 800 Soldiers and Airmen on active duty - delivering PPE (Personal Protective Equipment); setting up auxiliary beds and tents; conducting COVID-19 tests; providing security for Rapid Testing facilities; transporting ventilators; delivering food boxes and conducting nursing home inspections. Despite being the third smallest state in the United States, the numbers are impressive: The Guard supported nearly all 169 towns in some capacity; delivering over 12 Million KN95/N95 masks; responding to over 278 resource requests; assembling over 348,000 test kits; conducting over 2,100 nursing home inspections; and constructing over 2,400 auxiliary beds for Active Medical Surge Facilities

which helped expand the State's available medical beds. 600 of these auxiliary beds were assembled twice, once in April 2020 and again in December 2020 as the wave of cases ebbed and flowed.

Moreover, the Connecticut Guard had units deployed before the State announced a state of emergency as well as units in the process of deploying overseas; this added complexity and stretched available resources. The Guard's annual training mission requirements were also extant. Despite these normal and pandemic-related missions, the Guard was also able to respond to the extraordinary – hurricanes, micro-bursts and tornados – by assisting municipalities to clear roads and remove debris so the local power companies could restore power.

Initial Response – The CT National Guard activated soldiers under Title 32 in early April as the State grappled with dramatically increasing COVID-19 related fatalities, an alarming increase in hospitalizations and a lack of available beds and ventilators. The auxiliary beds were added quickly and effectively at area universities (Western CT State University, Central CT State University and Southern CT State University) as well as over 600 beds at the Connecticut Convention Center in Hartford. PPE was critically short throughout the state and the Guard was

asked to help distribute masks, gloves, gowns, face shields and Tyvek coveralls directly to facilities and to DEMHS regional distribution sites throughout the state. The CT Guard also has many combat medics who were sent to help augment screening and testing capabilities. For example, Soldiers conducted daily screening of all the residents at the Veteran's Home in Rocky Hill. Additionally, Soldiers and Airmen were tasked with providing security for a rapid test facility in New Haven and augmenting the support personnel at a warehouse storing medical supplies.

New Traditions – Early on in the pandemic, Soldiers and Airmen in the Joint Operation Center in Hartford considered other ways to help support the local community in a socially distant way. They started Wing Night every Thursday during the night shift. Since April, the night shift has ordered from ten different establishments in the greater Hartford area. Also, on the first Monday of every month, Elks Lodge 957 on Washington Street in New Britain delivered steak dinners for the evening shift Soldiers and Airmen.

Next Steps – While the pandemic is ongoing and it is unclear what the future holds, one thing is clear: the Soldiers and Airmen of the Connecticut National Guard will be ready.

DOD details National Guard response to Capitol attack

Jim Garamone
DoD News

WASHINGTON – Once the reality of the assault on the U.S. Capitol became apparent, National Guard troops responded appropriately and with alacrity, Department of Defense officials said in a phone briefing on Jan. 7.

"Yesterday was a horrible and shameful day here in the capital, and the nation at large," Army Secretary Ryan McCarthy said on the call. "The District of Columbia asked the Army for help, and our National Guard responded."

McCarthy, Pentagon spokesman Jonathan Rath Hoffman and Kenneth P. Rapuano, the assistant secretary of defense for homeland defense, put the timeline of the National Guard response in perspective during the call.

District of Columbia officials knew of the planned protests and had requested some assistance when the "First Amendment demonstrations" were planned for Jan. 5 and 6, McCarthy said. Based on this request, officials called up 340 National Guardsmen to help. The Guardsmen were assigned mainly to traffic control, Metro crowd control, some logistics support and a 40-member quick reaction force to be based at Joint Base Andrews in Maryland.

"No other requests were made," the Army secretary said.

But the protests turned into a mob rioting through the halls, chambers and offices of the U.S. Capitol. At around 2 p.m., D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser requested more assistance. Acting Defense Secretary Chris Miller immediately called up 1,100 members of the D.C. National Guard.

At the same time, officials were collecting Guardsmen at traffic points and Metro stations and returning them to the D.C. Armory to refit for a crowd control mission, the secretary said. Their mission was to support D.C. Metropolitan Police and Capitol Hill Police.

Guardsmen started flowing into the area of the Capitol soon after and reinforced Metro Police on the perimeter of the Capitol. This allowed the police and FBI to clear the chambers and offices of the U.S. Capitol, McCarthy said. "By 7:15, both chambers and leadership offices were cleared, and members were able to return to business, and we began the planning for the following day," he said.

At 6 p.m., Miller authorized the mobilization of up to 6,200 National Guard members from Maryland, Virginia, New York, New Jersey, Delaware and Pennsylvania. These service members will flow into the city over the next few days and will help secure the peaceful transfer of power to President-elect Joseph Biden on Jan. 20.

"Yesterday's violence at the Capitol was reprehensible and contrary to the tenets of the United States Constitution," Miller said in a written release from the Pentagon. "In the midst of this tragedy, I was proud of the professionalism of our Department of Defense personnel. I want to specifically recognize the service of the District of Columbia National Guard. They performed with honor, integrity and alacrity to protect people and property from unlawful acts."

The DOD is supporting the Justice Department, which is the lead federal agency in this situation. They relied on estimates of the Metropolitan Police and Capitol Hill Police. Those organizations, which had experience with pro-Trump groups in November and December, believed the request they made for personnel was adequate.

"We don't do domestic [intelligence] collection," Hoffman said. "We rely on Capitol Police and federal law enforcement to provide an assessment of the situation. And based on that assessment that they had, they believed they had sufficient personnel and did not make a request."

Estimates of the crowd size were all over the map, Rapuano said.

Thursday, there were 741 National Guardsmen on the Capitol grounds. Guardsmen are also staffing traffic checkpoints and put up a non-scalable fence around the Capitol grounds. More Guardsmen will arrive in the days ahead.

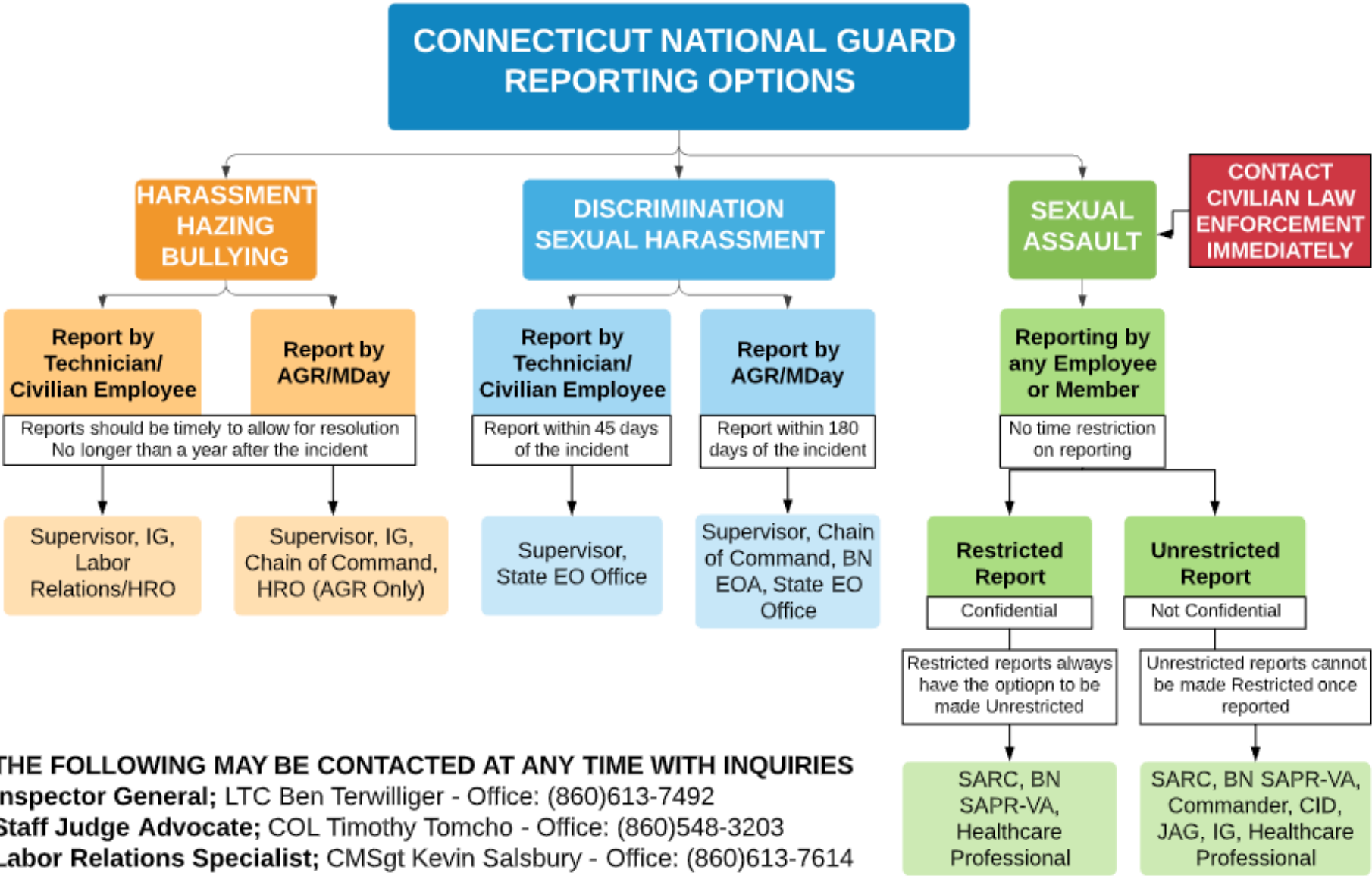
"Our republic may have been disrupted yesterday, but the resolve of our legislators to conduct the people's business did not waver," Miller wrote. "Due to their efforts, supported by local and federal law enforcement and the National Guard, the attempts of those who tried to stop our government from functioning failed. I strongly condemn these acts of violence against our democracy. I, and the people I lead in the Department of Defense, continue to perform our duties in accordance with our oath of office, and will execute the time-honored peaceful transition of power to President-elect Biden on January 20."

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 Victim’s Council 703.607.2263

Medical
Military Treatment Facility (Westover) 413.557.2623
Navy Health Clinic New London 860.694.4123



ESGR Continues its Mission in a Virtual Environment

Thad Martin

Chair, CT Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve

For ESGR committees, the end of the year usually meant unit briefings and Military Outreach volunteers busier than Santa's elves. But as the pandemic continues into 2021, our Connecticut committee is still operating under a ban on in-person operations, not just for Military Outreach, but for all activities.

At least for the near term, we continue to rely on technology like Zoom and Microsoft Teams to conduct events. In spite of a few "technological" challenges, we've still had success in executing a variety of programs. Even during this time of crisis, Connecticut ESGR is working hard to engage volunteers, employers and service members as safely and effectively as possible. Over the last eight months, even without being able to be physically present, we're continuing to serve and support.

Patriot Award presentations

Recently, Connecticut ESGR arranged a virtual Patriot Award ceremony with a senior non-commissioned officer serving with the Connecticut National Guard's 1-102d Infantry to present awards to several of his supervisors. Patriot Awards are awarded to individual supervisors and reflect the efforts they've made to support their Reserve Component colleague and the event included all four recipients and his battalion and company commanders, who talked about the importance of employer support for military service.

Volunteer engagement and training

Our state committee has been holding its meetings over Microsoft Teams and several of our Connecticut volunteers have participated in or will soon attend virtual training to increase their knowledge and enhance their skills. This includes Ombudsman sustainment training and ESGR's four-day Volunteer Leadership Training Program (VLTP). VLTP sessions covered topics such as funding and annual spend plans, subcommittee overviews, mentorship and best practices. Training is a vital component of volunteer readiness and we're continuing to provide these opportunities.

ESGR unit briefings

While Military Outreach volunteers can't visit units for annual briefings, thanks to the dedication and innovation of ESGR volunteers, staff and others, we've developed a va-



riety of resources. To give just one example, Tennessee ESGR Chair Jim Mungenast and the Air National Guard Training and Education Center, in collaboration with HQ ESGR, developed a service member-focused Uniform Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act briefing. This briefing is now available for all committees to use in virtual unit engagement. It's available on the ESGR YouTube Channel and through the Defense Video and Imagery Distribution Service(DVIDS).

Even in these challenging times, I'm encouraged by the resilience and resourcefulness our volunteers display. Our outreach, recognition and educational programs may be delivered in a different format, but this pandemic has shown how ESGR volunteers will always find a way to support employers and our Reserve Component service members.

For more information on scheduling a virtual ESGR event, contact Connecticut ESGR Volunteer Support Technician Ben Beaudry at (860) 524-4970 or Benjamin.A.Beaudry.ctr@mail.mil. Follow Connecticut ESGR on Twitter (@CT_ESGR) or Facebook (Connecticut Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve).

DFAS News and Information for 2021

Sgt. 1st Class (ret.) Stephanie Cyr
Contributor

DFAS (Defense Finance and Accounting Service) December 2020 Newsletter is published and was emailed mid-December. It included a summary of three important topics including taxes, cost of living, and the phased elimination of the SBC-DIC Offset beginning in January 2021.

The COLA (Cost of Living Adjustment), based on the Consumer Price Index, will rise 1.3 percent. It became effective December 1, 2020 for those receiving retired pay, Survivor Benefit Plan annuities, and the Special Survivor Indemnity Allowance (SSIA). The maximum SSIA amount will be \$327 with the COLA applied. Retirees will see the changes December 31, 2020, and annuitants January 4, 2021 in payments.

Tax time is here and DFAS has offered helpful tax information for getting your military tax documents. If a retiree doesn't already have a myPay account, it is advantageous to have. With myPay, an individual's pay information can be accessed from one source, including 2020 1099r form available December 15, 2020. myPay is convenient to access and manage from a computer as well as any connected device such as a tablet or smartphone. Self-service options make it easy to manage your retirement or annuity. You also have access to personalized information about



your account which can be easily updated.

To get started with myPay, go to the myPay Homepage, and request an initial password using the "Forget or Need a Password" link. DFAS will mail a password to the address on record. It should be received in about ten business days. After receiving the password, return to myPay Homepage and log in with your social security number and received password. If you have myPay and your password has expired, you will have to go to mypay.dfas.mil to reactivate the account.

The SBP (Survivor Benefit Plan) /DIC (Dependency and Indemnity Compensation Offset) is being eliminated. Called the "widow's tax", offset, or took away the money, dollar for dollar, a survivor could receive from SBP, if they received DIC, and thus were penalized. In 2020, Congress eliminated the offset. It will be phased out over a three-

year period beginning in January 2021.

Changes affect surviving spouses who are or who will be become in the future, eligible for both Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) and Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) and were previously subject to full or partial SBP/DIC Offset. Changes do not affect DIC payments from the Department of Veterans Affairs. Eligible survivors will continue to receive their full amount of DIC.

SBP annuitants need to take the time to make sure account annuity information is correct, up to date, and includes the annuitant's correct mailing address. If myPay is not being used, now is the time to set up a profiler and add an email address. BY adding an email, DFAS will be able to update an individual using SmartDoc emails as the phase-out happens. SmartDoc's emails will be sent out more frequently than the annual paper mailing planned.

All are encouraged to read the DFAS newsletter in full. If the newsletter is not in your emails, it can be accessed at <https://www.dfas.mil/retiredmilitary/newsevents/newsletter>.

In closing, COVID-19 is going to be around for a while. Keep safe by wearing masks, keeping physical distance, washing hands, and getting vaccinated when it becomes available.



Connecticut National Guard Foundation, Inc

The Connecticut National Guard Foundation, Inc announces its 2021 scholarship program. This year the Foundation will award a total of seven scholarships.

1. **Two \$4,000.00 scholarships honoring SGT Felix Del Greco Jr.** will be awarded to a son or daughter of a member of the Connecticut ARMY National Guard. *** Please note that a special application is required for the Del Greco scholarship which may be obtained from: <http://www.conncf.org>. No other application will be accepted.**
2. **Five \$2,000.00 scholarships** will be awarded to Connecticut National Guard and Organized Militia members or their sons, daughters, or spouses and children of Connecticut National Guard Retirees. **Application forms may be found at the Foundations website at <http://www.ctngfi.org>.**

Additional Information:

1. Complete application packets for the CTNGFI scholarships must be postmarked no later than 15 April 2021
2. The selection committee will choose students based on achievement and citizenship
3. You must be enrolled in, or planning to enroll in a regionally or nationally accredited degree or technical program
4. Mail application form (CTNGFI Scholarship Only) and completed package to:

CTNG Foundation Inc.
Attn: Scholarship Committee
360 Broad Street, Hartford Armory
Hartford, CT 06105

5. Please contact the foundation at (860) 241-1550 or e-mail ctngfi@sbcglobal.net for further details.

BENEFITS

Connecticut National Guard Soldiers receive full-time benefits for their part-time service, these include:

- Free tuition to Connecticut State Colleges
- Monthly paycheck
- Student loan repayment (up to \$50K)
- Affordable insurance - health, dental, life
- Montgomery G.I. Bill
- Federal Tuition Assistance
- Enlistment bonuses available if qualified
- Retirement benefits and Thrift Savings Plan
- Paid training and job experience



www.NATIONALGUARD.com/CT

860.817.1389

An Interview with Sgt. Christopher, new FIP coordinator

Sgt. 1st Class Silas Holden
Readiness NCO and Master Fitness Trainer

SFC Holden: Briefly tell us about yourself and your military career along with accomplishments.

SGT Christopher: Happiness is of the utmost importance to me. For that to happen I need to ensure that I do what I love, be on the path of fulfilling my purpose, and surround myself with likeminded and supportive individuals. Nothing else matters. I'm very simple and my needs are easily met. I love to consistently remain physically active, gradually improve, and keep busy; I guess I like to live life like an RPG (role playing video game) and build upon every stat. I also love to sit down and think of new ways to fulfill my purpose because I know I am the only engineer of me ever evolving self. From the third person perspective I seem hyperactive, carefree, happy, clueless, and socially awkward. In all actuality, I am happy because my needs and purpose are easily met. I like to stay serious and focused while I continue to fulfill my purpose and teach others health and happiness. That's who I am and that's always been a part of me. I joined the Army because I needed money to further my education and build my knowledge and experience base. Honestly though, the Army slogan "Be All That You Can Be" had me sold on what the military could do for me. Between the extra food and voluntary physical smoking sessions I gained roughly 20lbs, had more endurance, and greater strength from Basic Combat Training and AIT. When I wasn't in a TRADOC environment my primary focus was school and the military was supportive and definitely helped me get through it. Because of the military, I have a personal training certification, Bachelor of Science degree in nutrition, a Master of Science degree in health promotion and research, and I will soon be certified as a registered dietician; wish me luck! I have deployed twice as a 15U (chinook mechanic). The Army has been so supportive that I actually completed my associate's degree during my first tour and was able to continue my master's degree thesis during my second tour. Now it's time for me to give back, and help the Army improve physical and nutritional readiness by helping each soldier be all that they can be.

SFC Holden: You are now running the Fitness Improvement Program for the state, can you explain the program and its intent? And what are your goals with the future of the program to improve upon the success it has already had?

SGT Christopher: The purpose is to provide CTNG personnel the ability to develop a holistic wellness program that promotes positive lifestyle changes for individual Soldiers and Airmen that include fitness, nutrition, and resilience, while improving the CTNG's mission readiness. As we train individual Soldiers and Airmen in holistic wellness; they are passing what they learn on to their families and helping highlight the need for healthy lifestyle changes. Our goals are in line with the America's Healthy People 2020 initiative which aims for all American citizens and not just Soldiers to improve their health. Obesity continues to be on the rise globally, and finding ways for citizens to engage in primary prevention efforts to reduce the risk of disease has been an ongoing quest for decades. My method to improve both the local fitness program, and the larger scale global issue is to take what most people would call the problem and utilize it as a benefit. I accomplish this by treating exercise and nutrition as not a task, but as fun and a way of life. Most people when asked would convey that modern technology, social media, screen time, and conventional methods to food are the problem. These tools and methods are actually the biggest influencers and architectures of choice that the world has ever seen; and with the world's ability to feed growing populations in record time, shows that the technology for food provision is there. With that being said, my goal for the future of the Fitness Improvement Program is to utilize these methods and tools in support of primary prevention and disease. This in turn will help extend and expand the program to make fitness and nutrition a lifestyle and not a task.

SFC Holden: You have a very extensive nutrition and fitness background, what tips do you have for Soldiers who are struggling to stay fit and keep their nutrition and weight on point?

SGT Christopher: When it comes to fitness and nutrition it is best to keep it as simple as possible. Energy balance; put the energy you input to good use to witness the results of your energy output. Consuming more energy than you expend leads to weight gain. Depending how you expended the energy can lead to greater fat mass or greater muscle mass. Consuming less energy than you expend leads to weight loss. Depending how you expended the energy can lead to less fat mass or less muscle mass. With that being said



Conducting an Army Physical Fitness Test at Camp Buehring, Kuwait, 2019.

apply focus and direction with your energy input and output to let it align with your goals.

"Eat Food. Not Too Much. Mostly Plants." – Michael Pollan. Our physical makeup has rarely evolved since about 2 million years ago. For 90% of our human existence we have been hunters and gatherers taking long walks and runs looking for our next meal to pick, kill and store. During these times we ate food, not too much because we had to store it, we ate mostly plants because it was the most accessible, and the goal was survival. Flour and grain production didn't occur until roughly ten thousand years ago. Milling flour and rice ourselves, it would take a considerable amount of time and energy without the advanced tools that we have today. Furthermore, removing husk and bran takes more energy and time, takes it further from its natural state, and it also decreases its nutrient content. Don't get rid of the fiber, its key! However, a majority of us do not produce flour or rice we just consume the energy of it without taking part in the energy of producing it. To elaborate on Michael Pollan's quote I would add; Eat edible food closest to its natural state. Not Too Much. Mostly Plants. "If Nature didn't make it, don't take it" – Dr. Sebi.

Water is the medium of life, that includes all cells and enzymes needed for our metabolic processes. In order for the human body to have optimum function, drink it! Most adults need to drink 2-3 liters per day.

Consistency is the key, just move, it doesn't matter how, and it doesn't matter when. The easiest and simplest way to move is walking. It takes about 10,000 steps on average to expend about 500 calories. It also takes a calorie deficit of about 3,500 calories to burn one pound of fat. So get to walking, and find any excuse to do it!

When staying disciplined and practicing these concepts, or any nutritional concepts, stay mindful and aware of how you feel. Take your time and pay attention to what it feels like when you're full, when you're hungry, when you're tired, when you're full of energy, or when you're feeling pain. Stay in a state of full awareness of yourself in relation to nutrition, exercise, and everyday life.

SFC Holden: Do you include fasting cycles in your nutrition regimen?

SGT Christopher: The way my mind is set up, fasting doesn't work for me unless I am sleeping. I like to eat when I am hungry and I do not want to slow down my metabolism at all. I'm not saying fasting is wrong, it's just not for me. The point of many dietary patterns for weight reduction is to consume less calories than you expend throughout the day, there are just different ways to do it.

SFC Holden: A big sticking point thus far is the leg tuck. What training tips can you offer so that Soldiers become able to meet the minimum for this event?

SGT Christopher: When I was first fully immersed into fitness, I studied gymnastics and the moves are difficult to perform without being aware of each muscle that is being used. For the leg tuck we are using grip strength to hang on the bar, abdominals, hip flexors, and lats. There isn't a specific degree of flex in the arms required for the leg tuck, but



Camp Buehring, Kuwait 5K run.

a flex must be performed. Someone with a good core, lats, and grip strength can successfully touch their knees to their elbows. So, the training tips I suggest to strengthen these muscle groups would be:

Abdominals and Hip Flexors: Gracie Crunches; Gracie Holds; Boat Holds; Knee Tucks; V ups; Bent leg raise.

Grip Strength, Lats, and Hip Flexors: Straight Arm Pull; Hanging Leg Tuck; Pull ups; Front lever progression; Hanging scissor kicks; Skin the Cat.

All the above exercises can be found online by searching the name of the exercise on YouTube.

SFC Holden: There is a lot of worry of higher injury rates due to the ACFT implementation, what is your view on this, and if done “properly” will this test limit injury?

SGT Christopher: There is an increased chance of injury performing the ACFT over the APFT. Form is critical in exercises like the Maximum Dead Lift and the Standing Power Throw to reduce injury of the back, knees, and hamstrings. The Sprint, Drag, Carry event requires a lot of quick changes in direction and a sprint with maximum effort. Sudden change in direction is the leading cause of injury to lower extremities in athletes. The ACFT layout reduced the risk by making the preparation drill mandatory, along with requiring proper form. But with my speculation there is greater risk for injury with the ACFT more than the APFT even if done properly because things happen.

SFC Holden: We all know that everyone fuels their body differently due to personal preference and advertising. What are some staple energy and performance foods and drinks that you prefer to consume to maintain your high level of fitness?

SGT Christopher: My nutritional and exercise regimen may seem strange to most. I like to work out for five days a week for three weeks and rest the fourth week. For the three weeks that I am training I eat as much as I can of a clean diet containing every food group while using the MyPlate method for optimal recovery. When I am using the MyPlate method half my plate is vegetables, a quarter grains, and a quarter protein. On the fourth week I eat mostly fruits and vegetables frequently with no restriction to keep the metabolism sped up, consume less calories, and continue to be greedy.

Thank you SGT Christopher, I know I took some great bits of information from this article interview. Keep up your motivation and the willingness to pass on the information and knowledge to help others, you can have a huge impact upon forging change. Many Soldiers can benefit from what you bring to the program and the entire health and wellness community. As a Master Fitness Trainer I look forward to working with you in the future when available to stay involved in the health promotion side of the National Guard. I truly agree with your “keep it simple” approach. As individuals we often over complicate things for ourselves and we don’t even realize the detrimental effects we have on our own wellbeing. Next month I will talk with the new CTARNG ACFT Coordinator, SGT Jeremy Slen. Until then.....stay motivated, stay hydrated, and stay fit!

Congratulations to the following Guardsmen who retired in 2020

Army

Sgt. Dawn Fiasconaro | Sgt. Arkeshia Dizaar
 Sgt. Brooke Peters | Staff Sgt. Garrick Yanosky
 Staff Sgt. Gerald Fountaine | Staff Sgt. Cristo Torres
 Staff Sgt. Samuel Dybdahl | Staff Sgt. Duane Colombaro
 Staff Sgt. Daniel Nolan | Staff Sgt. Otis Fulton
 Staff Sgt. Cornel Sampson | Staff Sgt. Eric Sanders
 Sgt. 1st Class Richard Schadtler | Sgt. 1st Class Joseph Shepard
 Sgt. 1st Class Bruce Stowell | Sgt. 1st Class Charmayne Harris
 Sgt. 1st Class Benjamin Rogers | Sgt. 1st Class Daniel Eichner
 Sgt. 1st Class Reisha Moffat | Sgt. 1st Class Franz Mena
 Sgt. 1st Class Andrew Laibrandt | Master Sgt. Charles Joseph
 1st Sgt. Damon Matus | 1st Sgt. Ricky Washington
 Command Sgt. Maj. Frederick Finnigan
 Command Sgt. Maj. Boyd Dunbar
 Chief Warrant Officer 4 Ronald Sadownick
 Chief Warrant Officer 4 Christopher Mackenzie
 Chief Warrant Officer 4 Eric Luke | Lt. Col. Dawn Worksdennis
 Lt. Col. Matthew Boski | Col. Gerald Lukowski
 Col. Charles Anderson | Col. Anthony Beatman

Air Force

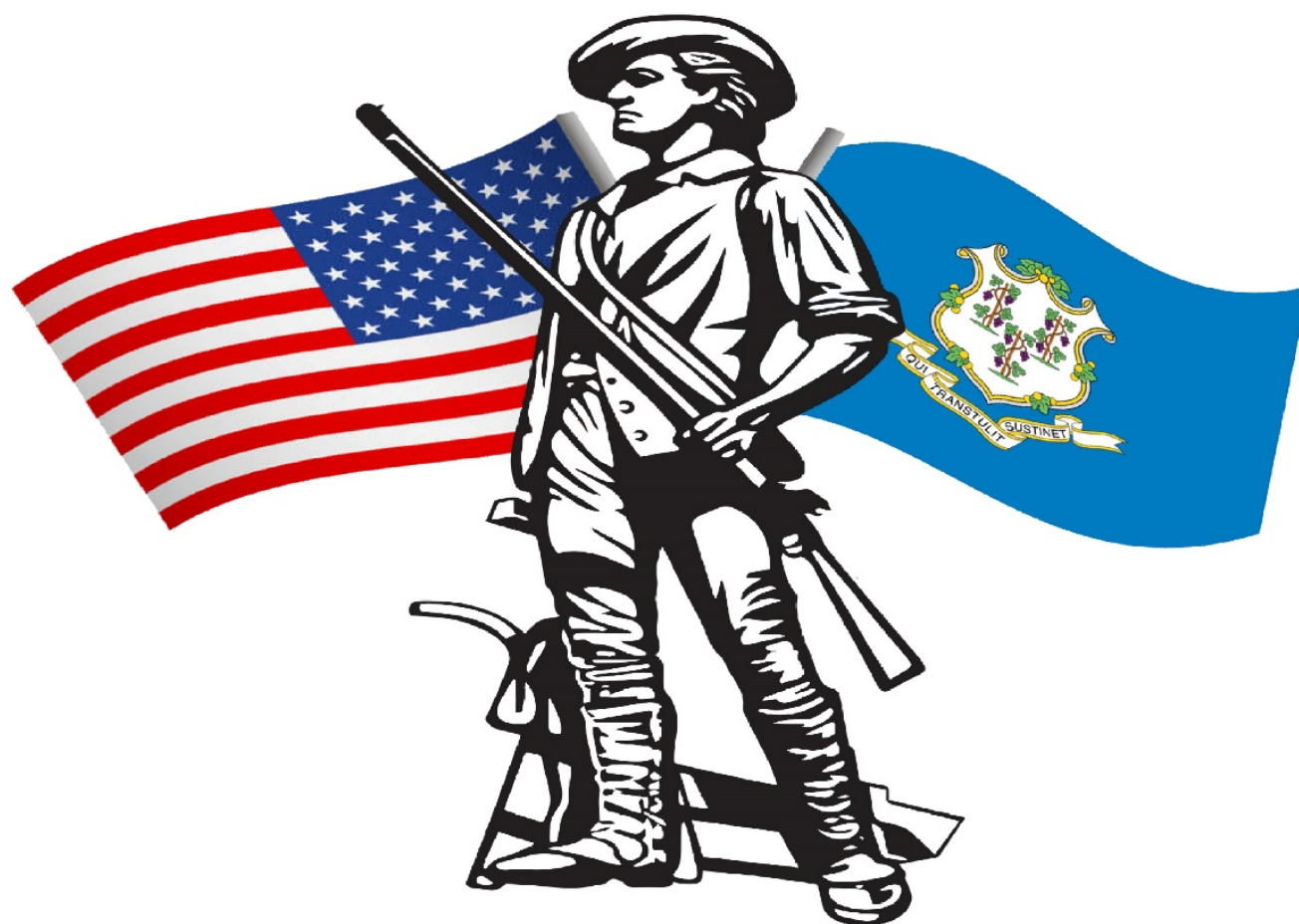
Staff Sgt. John White | Tech Sgt. Joseph Breier
 Tech Sgt. Kevin Doherty | Tech Sgt. Jonathan Varnet
 Tech Sgt. James White | Master Sgt. Michael Brandford
 Master Sgt. Richard Canino | Master Sgt. Carey Gaul
 Master Sgt. Joshua Mead | Master Sgt. Douglas Moffat
 Master Sgt. Manuel Montanez | Master Sgt. Bruce Przygocki
 Master Sgt. Raymond Rosadolopez
 Senior Master Sgt. Tony Dultz
 Senior Master Sgt. Michael Gagnon
 Chief Master Sgt. Bryan Demars
 Chief Master Sgt. Shawn Robert
 Chief Master Sgt. John Saresky
 Lt. Col. Douglas Scheirey | Lt. Col. Kyle Siegel

**Thank you for your dedication to
 our Guard and best of luck in all
 your future endeavors**

CALL TO ACTION

MAKE EVERY DAY A MILITARY DAY

COME JOIN OUR WORKFORCE TODAY!



APPLY FOR CAREER OPPORTUNITIES BELOW

<https://ct.ng.mil/Careers/Pages/default.aspx/>

The YANKEE COURIER



VOL. 22 NO. 1

EAST GRANBY, CONNECTICUT

January 2021



Spc. Devin Turchetta, 1048th Medium Truck Company, unloads a box of COVID-19 antigen test kits at Loomis Chaffee School in Windsor, Connecticut, Dec. 11, 2020. The Connecticut National Guard delivered 102,280 kits to 212 nursing homes in one week in support of a Connecticut Department of Public Health effort to maximize testing availability and efficiency for people living in congregate settings. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Steven Tucker)

Connecticut Guard delivers more than 102,000 test kits in one week

Staff Sgt. Steven Tucker
103rd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

HARTFORD, Conn. – The Connecticut National Guard completed delivery of 102,280 COVID-19 antigen tests to 212 locations throughout the state over the course of a week on Friday, Dec. 11.

The deliveries added to an ongoing effort to maximize testing availability and efficiency for people living in congregate settings.

“Due to the increased surge in cases in nursing homes across the state, the Department of Public Health wanted to get the antigen tests out to these locations to provide a second source of testing,” said U.S. Army Maj. Brian

Oswiecki, Connecticut National Guard Medical Planning and Response Cell officer in charge.

The antigen tests supplement the regular PCR testing the locations conduct with their care partners, said Oswiecki.

“With this rapid test, it only takes about 30 minutes to get the results versus swabbing and sending the samples to a lab and getting results a day or two later,” said Oswiecki.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency ordered the tests from the manufacturer and delivered them to the Guard’s commodities warehouse, where they were organized for distribution throughout the state.

The Guard’s efforts helped cut expected delivery time for these tests in half, said Oswiecki.

“The Department of Public Health expected deliveries to take two weeks, but we got it done in one,” said Oswiecki.

A team of just eight drivers from the 1048th Medium Truck Company ensured efficient delivery to the 212 locations.

“It goes to show we’re continuing to refine and improve our warehouse operations and distribution plans,” said Oswiecki. “We’ve built efficiency and lessons learned over the last several months that we’ve been doing this mission.”

An Airman's commitment

Tech Sgt. Tamara Dabney
103rd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

On December 5, a few Connecticut National Guard leaders gathered in a small conference room at the Governor William A. O'Neill State Armory to present Airman 1st Class Sikander Rahman with the USO Service Member of the Year Award. What would typically be a more formal event, held in Washington, D.C. with a larger audience, was a much more modest occasion due to COVID-19 guidelines. However, the circumstances did not diminish the significance of the moment or what the award meant to Rahman.

The United Service Organizations, Inc., a nonprofit corporation that supports members of the armed forces, honors six service members each year with the USO Service Member of the Year award. The award specifically recognizes service members who have gone beyond the call of duty in the performance of heroic acts. Rahman, a 20-year-old Airman, who had not even served a full year as an operational member of the Air National Guard, beamed as Maj. Gen. Francis Evon, the Adjutant General of the Connecticut National Guard, presented him with the award. For those who know Rahman personally, the honor could not have been bestowed upon a better person.

"He has a very big heart," said Master Sgt. Jonathan Shepard, fuel system shop chief who supervises Rahman at the 103rd Maintenance Squadron. "He's very caring. When he walks in a room, you wait to hear what he has to say. He's very energetic. If you're having a rough day, he's somebody you want to be around to pick you up. He's a very kind, very thoughtful, smart, charismatic, dedicated individual."

Rahman's caring nature led him to spring into action during a crisis on July 3, 2019. He recalled enjoying a normal day on the job at Jim's Pizza in Windsor, Connecticut before, suddenly, looking out of a window and seeing a car flip and land on its roof on the street outside the restaurant. Rahman didn't think twice before racing out of the restaurant toward the wrecked vehicle. The driver of the vehicle, trapped beneath a deployed airbag, yelled for help. According to eye-witness reports, Rahman ran and dove toward the car, then worked quickly to free the man before the vehicle could catch fire. Despite the tension, Rahman remained calm and relied on his experience as a former lifeguard to guide him in removing the man from the vehicle without causing additional injuries.

"There was some sort of rope that was caught on his arm, so I yanked the rope with my left arm, and I took him out with the right," said Rahman. "There was just so much adrenaline that I could just pull him right out. I tried to be careful after that, because I had some knowledge from being a lifeguard, and I wasn't sure if he had a spinal injury or not. I tried to support his head, pull him up slowly, and take him away from the car, because all you see in the movies is cars blowing up. I just didn't want him, or both of us, to get caught up in that."

Retired Hartford police detective Pamela Stevens, who was in the restaurant at the time of the incident, stated in an affidavit that Rahman may have saved the driver's life. Months later, Shepard obtained a copy of the affidavit. After reviewing the details of the incident, he felt compelled to nominate Rahman for the 2020 USO Service Member of the Year Award.

"I thought, okay, I should do something with this to reward this individual, to highlight the heroism, to highlight the valor, and to highlight core values," said Shepard.

Shepard's high opinion of Rahman is not only based on his act of heroism, but also on the positive attitude and strong work ethic Rahman has displayed as an aircraft fuel system apprentice with the 103rd Maintenance Squadron. As a traditional Guardsman (a member of the Guard who serves part-time), Rahman often volunteers to work additional days, enduring a heavy workload.

"He does everything that we all share the workload to do," said Shepard. "He goes in the fuel tanks. He'll scrape sealant. He does leak evaluations. He's been doing training



Airman 1st Class Sikander Rahman, a fuel system specialist assigned to the 103rd Maintenance Squadron, accepts the 2020 USO Service Member of the Year Award, Dec. 5, 2020 at the Governor William A. O'Neill State Armory in Hartford, Connecticut. Rahman received the award for rescuing a driver from an overturned vehicle. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Steven Tucker)

on electrical components and fuel pumps. He's removed and installed fuel lines. He has done a lot of things required of him at a training level and never once complained about it. When I call him to say 'hey, can you come in on orders next week?' he always does the best he can to come in here and get it done, and that's admired."

Shepard recognized that Rahman's actions on the day of the incident and his overall performance exemplify what it means to live by the Air Force core values.

"Bottom line, he represents the Air Force core values- integrity first, service before self, excellence in all we do," said Shepard. "I see that. He's upfront with everything he does. If he makes a mistake, he owns it. If I ask him to do something, or he has a task to do, he does it, 100 percent, every time, and he does it the best that he can."

While Rahman appreciates being recognized for his actions, the recognition is not all about him; it is about his commitment to something greater than himself, said Rahman. As a young child, Rahman saw his mother, Safia, become the first female, Pakistani Muslim to serve in the Hartford Police Department. He knew then that he, too, wanted to be part of something bigger. Later, as a cadet in the Windsor High School Air Force Junior ROTC, he decided that he would pursue his goal after graduation by joining the Connecticut Air National Guard.

As Rahman accepted the USO Service Member of the Year Award before an audience of leaders and mentors, he thought about his commitment to others. When the Adjutant General gave him the floor to speak, Rahman began by thanking everyone for their support. He then informed everyone that he would soon be donating bone marrow to his younger cousin, who suffers from a rare bone marrow disease. Rahman ended his speech by, once again, thanking everyone for their support. It was the type of acceptance speech that one may expect from an Airman who didn't think twice before rushing to rescue a man from a potential death trap. For Rahman, commitment to others, a condition of living by the Air Force core values, is a way of life.

"There's something about being a part of something bigger than myself," said Rahman. "I just love being part of the Air Force. Everybody takes care of each other, you know. I want to be in a position where I can be able to take care of people. If I can make an impact on someone's life once, even if it's just making their day better, that is enough."

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.

1-855-800-0120



Air Force Basic Military Training trainee Chris-Ann Wilmoth, 37th Training Wing Det. 5, Flight 564, participates in a physical training session at Keesler Air Force Base, Mississippi July 1. To continue minimizing close contact among personnel during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and ensure units and personnel are fully ready to resume, physical fitness testing has been delayed from October to January 2021. Testing in January will proceed without obtaining waist, height and weight measurements. (U.S. Air Force photo by Kemberly Groue)

Air Force moves physical fitness assessments to April 2021, removes waist measurement from composite score permanently

Secretary of the Air Force Public Affairs Contributor

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Department of the Air Force announced physical fitness assessments will now resume April 2021 and will no longer include the waist measurement component.

To ensure social distancing practices remain in place during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, and to give Airmen and Space Professionals time to prepare, testing was delayed from October to January and is now further delayed to April.

While the waist measurement is permanently removed from the assessment, height and weight measurements will resume October 2021.

“We trust that our Airmen understand the standard of good physical health practices and we are all finding innovative ways to stay fit,” said Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Charles Q. Brown, Jr. “We also trust that leaders will take the appropriate steps to keep their Airmen safe while making every effort to provide fitness options during the pandemic.”

Fitness assessment cells, fitness center staff, physical training leaders and members performing fitness assessments will adhere to physical distancing protocols and other local precautions as determined by installation commanders once assessments resume.

Commanders may delay official fitness assessments beyond April 2021 if necessary, based on the recommendation of local public health officials, the continuation of closed fitness centers and extended state-wide restriction of movement and gatherings.

Space Professionals will adhere to the physical fitness policy of the Department of the Air Force.

Airmen and Space Professionals may determine their next fitness assessment due date by visiting the Official Physical Assessment Due Date Matrix on myPers which will be updated and available Dec. 8. Fitness assessment due dates will primarily depend on the date and score of the last official test.

“Originally, we hoped to resume testing by January 2021,” said Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force JoAnne S. Bass. “However, based on the number of cases nationwide, the right thing to do is focus on keeping our Airmen and their families safe. Delaying and reevaluating the PT test is the best option for our people.”

The test will still consist of a 1.5 mile run, 1 minute of pushups and 1 minute of situps. However, the composite score will be calculated with full points for the waist measurement portion until system changes can be made.

Department leaders are also looking to reevaluate certain testing criteria moving forward.

“Along with removing the waist measurement, we are also exploring alternative strength and cardio components to our current Air Force fitness assessment,” Brown said. “We believe these potential test structure changes will impact Airmen in a positive way and help with a holistic approach to health and fitness standards.”

For more information, Airmen and Space Professionals should contact their fitness assessment cells and visit the COVID-19 Fitness Guidance page on myPers.



Developing the Airmen We Need in a Contested Environment focus of FD Summit

Force Development Summit focuses on developing Airmen in contested environment

Air Education and Training Command Public Affairs
Air Education and Training Command

JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO-RANDOLPH, Texas -- Air Education and Training Command officials virtually hosted Total Force Airmen from across the service Dec. 15-16 to discuss initiatives and collaboration for accelerating Force Development across the Air Force.

The active duty, guard, reserve, and civilian Airmen — representing every major command, joined stakeholders from Headquarters Air Force, the U.S. Air Force Academy, Air Force Warfighting Integration Capability and the Air National Guard, to highlight initiatives emphasizing how the service has and can develop the Airmen we need in a contested environment.

“AETC’s partnership with all the major commands is essential to successful force development,” said Maj. Gen. William Spangenthal, AETC deputy commander. “Our desired end state is Airmen who can win in the age of great power competition. These Airmen must have agility of thought, understand mission-type orders and be able to execute the mission. We believe the means to achieving these great power competition Airmen is through mission-focused, Airmen-centric and competency based learning that supports our Airmen, innovation, and their lifelong training and education.”

When it comes to developing Airmen, using data-informed talent management programs is a top priority.

“We have to find, access and manage individuals to provide the right person, the right job, at the right time using data to help us determine what that looks like,” said Col. Raymond Platt, HQ AETC A3/6 deputy director for force development. “This includes early accession programs, attracting and developing the right Airmen, and assessments and data-informed understanding of our Airmen.”

Education and training design depends on the strategic foundation of learning being Airman-centric, mission-focused and competency-based.

“We have to ensure our education and training programs are seeded in the joint, all-do-

main command and control context,” Platt said.

When it comes to innovation, learning platforms that can integrate thinking, creativity and technology is a must in today’s learning environment.

“Our goal is a learning enterprise that can leverage and integrate training and education capabilities anywhere, at any time, on any device,” Platt said. “This talks to learning management systems that connect learners, instructors and content, as well as data analytics and advanced technology like artificial intelligence.”

Representatives from the Air Force Warfighting Integration Capability and the Air Force’s Expeditionary Center set the stage, identifying the future operations environment in multiple domains, resulting in the need to develop the multi-capable Airman of the future to deal with the ever-evolving threats in air, space and cyberspace. Updates on information technology, delivering a dynamic 21st Century Learning Services operating environment, foundational competencies availability on MyVector, digital credentialing and transformation of civilian training in the contested environment rounded out the first day’s agenda.

On day two, presentations included presentations from several major commands, as well as a presentation on educating the Total Force by the Air Force Institute of Technology, the U.S. Air Force Academy’s “Leaders of Character” program update, technical training transformation, optimizing the virtual environment, and force development training.

MAJCOM representatives also discussed their efforts to meet the challenges faced, while adapting to a disrupted environment. Themes included: pandemic restrictions forcing adaptation of learning delivery changes, information technology changes and adaptations, face-to-face versus virtual learning effectiveness.

“The future will pose more challenging scenarios that we have faced in many years,” Spangenthal said. “We must enable our people to reach their full potential, quickly adapt to changes in the strategic environment, and succeed in a complex, all-domain multi-national conflict with one or more major powers.”

NOT FEELING LIKE **YOURSELF?**

REACH OUT. STAY MISSION READY.

Military Life is Hard On Your Mind And Body

Even pain or trouble sleeping can hurt mission readiness. Talk to your health care provider if you feel unusually:

- Tired
- Stressed
- Angry
- Sad
- Forgetful
- Worried
- Pained
- Hopeless

Psychological Health Resource Center

Call/Chat with a health resource consultant 24/7 at 866-966-1020 or realwarriors.net/livechat

Military Crisis Line

Call 800-273-8255 and press 1, text 838255 or visit militarycrisisline.net/chat

REAL WARRIORS ★ REAL BATTLES
REAL STRENGTH

realwarriors.net

MHS

Military Health System
health.mil



Service Member and Family Support Center Staff Directory



At this time, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, offices are being staffed on a part-time basis.
We apologize for any inconvenience.

William A. O'Neill Armory: 360 Broad Street, Hartford, CT 06105

Open Monday-Friday

Director, Service Member and Family Support Center	Kimberly Hoffman	kimberly.j.hoffman.civ@mail.mil	(800) 858-2677
Military and Family Readiness Coordinator	Melody Baber	melodycheyenne.c.baber.civ@mail.mil	(860) 548-3276 (desk) (860) 883-2515 (cell)
Military and Family Readiness Specialist	Kelly Strba	kelly.a.strba.civ@mail.mil	(860) 548-3283 (desk) (860) 500-3813 (cell)
Military and Family Readiness Specialist	Linda Rolstone	linda.b.rolstone.civ@mail.mil	(860) 524-4963 (desk) (860) 680-2209 (cell)
Military and Family Readiness Specialist	Rich Timberlake	richard.k.timberlake.civ@mail.mil	(860) 493-2797 (desk)
Military and Family Readiness Specialist	Jason Perry	jason.t.perry.civ@mail.mil	(860) 524-4897 (desk) (860) 655-9288 (cell)
Military and Family Readiness Specialist	Denton Gladden	denton.r.gladden.civ@mail.mil	(800) 524-4920
ARNG Yellow Ribbon Program	SGT Jeovanny Ulloa	jeovanny.j.ulloa.mil@mail.mil	(860) 493-2796 (desk)
Lead Child & Youth Program Coordinator	Michelle McCarty	michelle.m.mccarty4.ctr@mail.mil	(860) 548-3254 (desk) (860) 883-6953 (cell)
Survivor Outreach Services Coordinator	Reisha Moffat	reisha.a.moffat.ctr@mail.mil	(860) 524-4894
Military OneSource Consultant	Scott McLaughlin	scott.mclaughlin@militaryonesource.com	(860) 493-2722 (desk) (860) 502-5416 (cell)
Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, Volunteer Support Technician	Ben Beaudry	benjamin.a.beaudry.ctr@mail.mil	(860) 524-4970 (desk)
Personal Financial Counselor	Brian Deal	pfc.ct.ng@zeiders.com	(203) 233-8790 (cell)
State Support Chaplain	Lt Col Eric Wismar	eric.a.wismar.mil@mail.mil	(860) 548-3240 (desk) (860) 883-5278 (cell)
Transition Assistance Advisor	Fausto Parra	fausto.g.parra.ctr@mail.mil	(860) 524-4908 (desk)
Connecticut Military Relief Fund	Russell Bonaccorso	russell.bonaccorso@ct.gov	(860) 524-4968 (desk)

Middletown Armed Forces Reserve Center: 375 Smith Street, Middletown, CT 06457

Military and Family Readiness Specialist	Jason Perry	jason.t.perry.civ@mail.mil	(860) 524-4897 (desk) (860) 655-9288 (cell)
--	--------------------	----------------------------	--

Windsor Locks Readiness Center: 85-300 Light Lane, Windsor Locks, CT 06096

Military and Family Readiness Specialist	Rich Timberlake	richard.k.timberlake.civ@mail.mil	(860) 292-4601 (desk)
--	------------------------	-----------------------------------	-----------------------

103rd Airlift Wing: 100 Nicholson Road, East Granby, CT 06026

Airman and Family Readiness Program Manager	Kasey Timberlake	kasey.timberlake@us.af.mil	(860) 292-2730 (desk) (860) 462-0379 (cell)
Yellow Ribbon Support Specialist	Laura Cohen	laura.cohen.2.ctr@us.af.mil	(860) 292-2772 (desk) (860) 819-4636 (cell)

Niantic Readiness Center: 38 Smith Street, Niantic, CT 06357

Military and Family Readiness Specialist	Linda Rolstone	linda.b.rolstone.civ@mail.mil	(860) 739-1637 (desk) (860) 680-2209 (cell)
--	-----------------------	-------------------------------	--

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

PRSRT STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
Hartford, CT
Permit No. 603

