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PLAINS GUARDIAN

VOLUME 61 No. 4 *Serving the Kansas Army and Air National Guard, Kansas Emergency Management, Kansas Homeland Security and Civil Air Patrol* DECEMBER 2017

242nd Engineers put their skills to work in Puerto Rico

By Spc. Kaitlin Jessip
242nd Engineer Company UPAR
“This is why we joined.”

That was the sentiment expressed by Soldiers of the Kansas National Guard’s 242nd Engineer Company as they deployed Nov. 7 in support of humanitarian efforts in Puerto Rico, following Hurricane Maria.

As recovery operations began across the island, personnel mobilized from local agencies and National Guard units throughout the country. When the call for help reached Kansas, soldiers from the 891st Engineer Battalion volunteered to serve on short notice with few details about the challenges to follow.

Upon arrival in Puerto Rico, the unit set up its base of operations at Vega Baja, where it joined the local 130th Engineer Battalion and Task Force North in efforts to restore roadway accessibility in the north and west of the island.

The unit’s first mission tasked 16 Soldiers skilled in heavy hauling to support operations in the town of Aguadilla on the western coast. Heavy rains during the hurricane caused water to overflow Guajataca Lake Dam and washed out the bottom of the earthen structure. Their mission, coordinated by the United States Army Corps of Engineers, moved rock from a nearby quarry to repair the

As of Nov. 25, the Kansas soldiers contributed 3,861 hours of labor, hauling material to rebuild key infrastructure and clearing 990 tons of debris from Puerto Rican roadways.



Soldiers of the Kansas National Guard’s 242nd Engineer Company put their heavy equipment skills to good use clearing a roadway in Puerto Rico. The Soldiers deployed to the island in November to assist local authorities with recovery operations following Hurricane Maria. (Photo by Spc. Kaitlin Jessip, 242nd Engineer Company UPAR)

dam and return the reservoir to service.

The remaining personnel began clearing the roadways in the mountainous region near Utuado and Aricebo. Rainfall and high winds caused mudslides, downed trees and power

lines, and undermined roads. The 242nd engineers used heavy equipment to push debris off roadways, remove dangerous overhangs, and clear passage for locals and agencies

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Williams selected as the senior enlisted leader for the Kansas National Guard

Maj. Gen. Lee Tafanelli, the adjutant general, announced the selection of Command Chief Master Sgt. Maurice L. Williams as the state command senior enlisted leader for Joint Forces Headquarters, Kansas National Guard, Topeka. Williams

replaces Command Chief Master Sgt. James Brown, who is leaving the position to become the command senior enlisted leader for Joint Force Civil Support, Joint Base Langley-Eustis, Virginia.

Williams was sworn in during a brief ceremony at Joint Forces Headquarters Oct. 30.

In this role, Williams will be the primary advisor to the adjutant general on all matters pertaining to the enlisted force. Prior to accepting this position, Williams served as the state command chief master sergeant for Joint Forces Headquarters, North Car-

olina National Guard.

“This position carries great responsibility,” said Tafanelli, “and I am confident that he is the right person to join our team.”

“I am looking forward to serving the citizens, Airmen and Soldiers of the state of Kansas,” said Williams. “Chief Master Sgt. James Brown has laid a great foundation for the enlisted Soldiers and Airmen of the Kansas National Guard and I look forward to the opportunity of building upon his legacy.”

“It has been my absolute honor to serve the citizens of Kansas and the soldiers and

airmen as their command senior enlisted leader for the Kansas Guard,” said Brown. “It is comforting to know I am leaving our most valuable assets, our enlisted warriors, in the capable hands of this tremendous Airmen, Chief Master Sgt. Maurice Williams.”

Williams entered the North Carolina Air National Guard in 1987 and graduated from the Air Transportation Specialist course at Shepard Air Force Base, Texas, in 1988. During his career, he has served in a number of command positions in North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas, Germany, Iraq, Kuwait, and Qatar.

His military education includes the Non-commissioned Officer Prep Course, Non-commissioned Officer Leadership Course, Senior Noncommissioned Officer Academy Course, Air National Guard Chief Executive Course, Chief Leadership Course, Command Chief Orientation Course, Senior Enlisted Joint Professional Military Education Course, and numerous other professional courses.

Williams earned an associate’s degree in criminal justice, and bachelor’s and master’s degrees in businesses administration from Columbia Southern University, Orange Beach, Alabama.

Williams’ military awards and decorations include the Meritorious Service Medal, Air Force Commendation Medal with oak leaf cluster, Joint Service Achievement Medal, Air Force Achievement Medal, North Carolina National Guard Meritorious Unit Citation, North Carolina Adjutant General’s Meritorious Achievement Service Ribbon and North Carolina National Guard State Service Ribbon.



Command Chief Master Sgt. Maurice L. Williams addresses members of the Kansas National Guard following his swearing in as the new state senior enlisted leader Oct. 30. (Photo by Steve Larson, Public Affairs Office)

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Battery B honored during deployment ceremony in Lenexa

By Sgt. Dakota Helvie
105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

A large crowd of distinguished guests, families, and friends gathered Aug. 18 at a departure ceremony at St. James Academy, Lenexa, to honor Soldiers of Battery B, 2nd Battalion, 130th Field Artillery, Kansas Army National Guard, as they prepared to deploy overseas.

“Service in the military is one of the most important contributions an American can make to their country,” wrote Gov. Sam Brownback in a statement to the troops. “I want to extend my personal thank you here today. Your skills, strength of character and dedication are to be commended and I stand with my fellow Kansans and honor your bravery.”

The soldiers deployed to Afghanistan for Operation Freedom Sentinel to provide rocket and missile fire in support of the combatant commander in the Central Command area of responsibility.

Maj. Gen. Lee Tafanelli, the adjutant general of Kansas, thanked the Soldiers for their unwavering commitment to the state of Kansas and the nation, and their dedica-

tion of selfless service. “I, along with the rest of the Kansas Guard leadership, am very proud of the men and women of Bravo Battery and the 2-130th,” said Tafanelli. “I have every confidence that these Soldiers are trained and ready to perform the mission that they have been asked to carry out in the defense of our great nation.

“Over the past 10 months, these Soldiers have diligently been preparing for this mission, overcoming each and every challenge that has come their way, becoming better prepared to accomplish the demanding tasks required of them while mobilized,” continued Tafanelli. “This small, but lethal, unit has accomplished all premobilization tasks and are ready for the challenges ahead.”

During the ceremony, Tafanelli presented 1st Lt. Curtis Parkhurst, battery commander, with a Kansas flag that had flown above the Kansas Statehouse to fly over the unit’s headquarters during their deployment. The American Legion Riders also presented a “We Support Our troops” flag, signed by Lenexa area residents.

“Thank you for taking the time to be here



Soldiers of Battery B, 2nd Battalion, 130th Field Artillery, Kansas Army National Guard, stand in formation during their deployment ceremony held at St. James Academy in Lenexa Aug. 18. (Photo by Sgt. Dakota Helvie, 105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment)

today, your continued support for the Soldiers and our troops is what made our training a success,” said Parkhurst. “We have been training more frequently and for more hours than normal for preparation of this deployment. I would like to extend my appreciation for that support. Friends and family are the reason we are able to accomplish the mission set before us.

“The road to here has been a long one,” continued Parkhurst. “Thank you for your perseverance and ability to adjust to any new challenges that arose. I’ve never witnessed a group of Soldiers more eager to

get the job done than the Soldiers in Bravo Battery.”

The prospect of a long separation from their families and friends was a sacrifice the Soldiers were willing to make for the sake of their state and nation.

“Being adaptable for my family and battery is the best thing I can do,” said Sgt. Shawn Burns. “The support I receive from [my family] is something that will keep my morale up while I am away from them. Sacrifices are made when they need to be and my daughter will be proud of my service when she is older.”

35th Infantry Division conducts patching ceremony

By Staff Sgt. Jennifer Milnes
Soldiers with 35th Infantry Division Headquarters and Task Force Spartan currently serving in support of Operation Spartan Shield conducted their patching ceremony Aug. 5.

The day marked the 100th anniversary of the 35th Infantry Division’s activation for federal service during World War I.

Maj. Gen. Victor Braden, division commander, and Brig. Gen. John Rueger, deputy commander, presided over the ceremony, where the combat patch was placed on each Soldier’s right shoulder.

“Not since World War II has the entire division headquarters deployed as a two-star command and earned the right to wear the 35th combat patch,” said Rueger. “It is an honor to wear the 35th patch, which was worn by so many from the greatest generation. Many serving in the 35th from World War I made the ultimate sacrifice and we are deeply proud to wear this patch.”

Braden awarded Rueger his combat patch, followed by Command Sgt. Maj. Timothy Newton, the division command sergeant major, and Command Sgt. Maj. Terrence Hankerson.

Rueger and Hankerson worked their way through the formation, patching and

congratulating their Soldiers’ hard work and dedication.

“The team has performed beyond expectation,” said Rueger. “Our Soldiers have worked extremely hard leading up to this point with several training events.”

The 35th Infantry Division was activated for federal service Aug. 5, 1917, and organized at Camp Doniphan, Oklahoma, as a unit of the National Guard with Soldiers from Kansas and Missouri. The division fought in both World War I and World War II, as well as missions in Bosnia, Kosovo, and now the Arabian Gulf and the Levant.

The Santa Fe cross, a symbol used to identify the Santa Fe Trail, where the unit initially trained, was designated as an identifying device for the unit by Headquarters, 35th Division General Order 25, dated March 27, 1918.

“I, like anyone in the Division, am proud to be part of an organization that has stood the test of time and is still relevant 100 years later,” said Rueger. “When the Division was formed, it was the calling of the time for that generation that fought in World War I. Fast forward to 2017, and times have changed, but this is the calling of our generation. We are glad to be a part of it.”



Brig. Gen. John Rueger, 35th Infantry Division deputy commanding general, patches 35th ID Soldiers serving in Southwest Asia Aug. 5. Soldiers of the division received their combat patch (inset) on the 100th anniversary of the division being activated for federal service for World War I. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Jennifer Milnes, 35th Infantry Division)

Kansas warrant officer candidates graduate from Phase III

By Chief Warrant Officer 3 David Lockhart
1st Battalion, 235th Regiment

Warrant officer candidates from the Kansas Army National Guard and Oklahoma Army National Guard attending Warrant Officer Candidate School at the Kansas Regional Training Institute graduated from the two-week final phase of training at Camp Atterbury, Indiana, Sept. 23.

The two-week training, the final of three phases in the program, included classroom academics, the Army Physical Fitness Test, a staff ride and culminated in a seven-day field training exercise. The field exercise consisted of a Leadership Reaction Course, which evaluated skills at receiving an operational order and leading a squad through a mission; land navigation; situational training exercise lanes; forward operating base occupation, including entry control point

training; tactical operation center set-up and operation; quick reaction force, warrior task and battle drills; and military operations on urban terrain exercise. Training was also conducted in the improvised explosive device battle drill and reconfigurable vehicle tactical trainer.

In addition to the physical and mental challenges of the WOC curriculum, the candidates took on the responsibility of giving back to the community. They were charged with taking on planning and executing a project that benefited the local Salina community.

They chose to help out at the Rebecca A. Morrison House, a non-profit hospitality home for those living outside of Salina who have a loved one as a patient at Salina Regional Health Center, Salina Surgical Hospital or Tammy Walker Cancer Center.



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Give an Hour provides free mental health services to help heal the invisible wounds. To receive services or join our network of volunteer providers, visit www.giveanhour.org.

ATEAM operations keep Army’s Abrams up and running

By Sgt. Dakota Helvie
105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Walking into to the Advanced Turbine Engine Army Maintenance facility, you are reminded of working in a garage. The smells and sounds of tools against metal bring memories of working on a car in the summer. This reaction is only natural, since the ATEAM’s mission is to rebuild the turbine engines that run the U.S. Army’s main battle tank to manufacturer’s standards. “Overall, I am in charge of 57 technicians and contractors and oversee the rebuild of the AGT 1500 Engine, X1100 transmission and full-up power packs for both our customers in the National Guard Bureau and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia foreign military sales program,” said Capt. Dallas Nivens, ATEAM shop foreman. “Supporting all the tank states that have now been realigned into (Armored Brigade Combat Teams). The ABCTs have a fleet of tanks that we support with material, as well as supporting their annual training events.” Nivens said the ATEAM also has a working relationship with the active components. “We do lend a lot of expertise, experience and knowledge and help them trouble shoot

their issues, which is a huge impact on readiness,” said Nivens. “Everything relates to readiness. If we can assist the active components, getting their tank engines up and save them some days, that is what we are about. “That’s what we do when we go to annual trainings for the state’s tank, as well,” Nivens said. “We send technicians out in the field with the field-level mechanics and the crews, lending that knowledge and experience.” The level of camaraderie is high at the ATEAM with many employees talking about the importance of their job, not just for themselves, but for the Soldiers who work with those tanks. “Annual training is all about the gunneries,” said Staff Sgt. Timothy Gannon, a tanker crewman with Company A, 2nd Combined Arms Battalion, 137th Infantry Regiment, and a machinist and welder at the ATEAM, “preparing for gunneries, gunnery tasks. It’s a big part of the military, especially since we are getting ready to deploy.” Gannon said working on the very engines that run the tanks he will deploy with at a later date gives him a sense of accomplishment.



Retired Sgt. 1st Class Barry Munger, a field service representative and lead mechanic at the Advanced Turbine Engine Army Maintenance, Fort Riley, works on part of a turbine engine. (Photo by Sgt. Dakota Helvie, 105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment)

Another key part of quality offered at the ATEAM is the dynamometer. It takes a day to thoroughly test the engine after it has been put together. The engine is hooked up to the dynamometer and is run through a series of tests checking the fuel, oil flow, temp and vibrations of the engine to ensure

it is within standards. “You are making the standards so tight and perfect for the Soldier that you want the best for him or her,” said Lucas Herman, a quality inspector and dynamometer operator. “You want them to be as safe as you can so your quality here has to be fine-tuned.”

242nd Engineer Company

(Continued from Page 1)
providing service to remote areas. The hard work of the Soldiers from Kansas has helped the local populace regain access to previously underserved areas, and reinforced a key water source for the island. As of Nov. 25, the Kansas soldiers contributed 3,861 hours of labor, hauling material to rebuild key infrastruc-

ture and clearing 990 tons of debris from Puerto Rican roadways. “We helped remove debris and clean a local school playground in Vega Baja,” said Capt. Kevin Hubbard, commander, 242nd Engineer Company. “To see a child playing there again, that would make my day.” *Additional stories on hurricane relief efforts are on pages 7 and 12*



Soldiers of the 242nd Engineer Company, Coffeyville, clean up a local park in Vega Baja, Puerto Rico, that was devastated by Hurricane Maria. (Photo taken by Spc. Kaitlin Jessip, 242nd Engineer Company UPAR)

Soldiers conduct joint training with four-legged troops



Task Force Wraith Soldiers escort military working dogs and their U.S. Marine handlers away from an UH-60M aeromedical evacuation helicopter during joint training on Sept. 2 at Camp Buehring, Kuwait. (Photo Credit: U.S. Army photo)

**By Maj. Jeremy Duffy
Task Force Wraith**
Soldiers from the 29th Combat Aviation Brigade’s Task Force Wraith conducted joint tactical training with the U.S. Marines from Area Support Group - Kuwait’s Directorate of Emergency Services at Camp Buehring, Kuwait, in early September. This event afforded 29th Combat Aviation Brigade Soldiers an opportunity to work with U.S. Marines and their nine military working dogs, as well as Soldiers of a Kansas National Guard helicopter unit. “Any time you get to integrate other branches of service, in this case Marine K-9 handlers and U.S. Army aviators, it is a success,” said Sgt. Michael Reynolds, a flight medic with Task Force Wraith. The intent of the training was to get the dogs comfortable around aircraft. In the event their handlers become injured, the handlers could be medically evacuated with their military working dogs. “The medevac mission does not just entail American Soldiers,” said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Joshua Ward, an aeromedical evacuation pilot with the Kansas National Guard’s Company G, 1st Battalion, 111th

Aviation, on assignment with Task Force Wraith. “We also pick up coalition forces, wounded enemies and even working dogs.” The training not only allowed for the dogs to become comfortable around aircraft, but also gives medics from Task Force Wraith the opportunity to become familiar with the military working dogs and their possible medical needs in the event one may need medical evacuation. “The best part of the training was integrating on-site Army veterinarians to teach IV access and wound management,” said Reynolds. For many of the working dogs and their handlers, this isn’t their first flight. Most have at least three prior training experiences with other aircraft. The military working dogs are trained to perform various tasks to include individual attacks, building searches, and searching for explosives. “Operating with military working dogs in the aviation environment could help in real life situations and it helps knowing how to handle the dogs in a situation that might intimidate them,” said Spc. Alec Brewer, a crew chief assigned to Task Force Wraith.

Senior Kansas leadership visits deployed troops

On Nov. 30, Maj. Gen. Lee Tafaanelli, the adjutant general; Brig. Gen. Anthony Mohatt, commander of the Kansas Army National Guard; and Command Chief Master Sgt. Maurice Williams, state command senior enlisted leader for the Kansas National Guard, departed Kansas for the Middle East to visit deployed service members. The trip itinerary included stops in Jordan, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates.

In Jordan, the command team met with members of the 35th Infantry Division assigned to Combined Joint Operations Center-Jordan at King Abdullah II Special Operations Training Center. Brig. Gen. John Rueger, deputy commander of the 35th ID, met the leadership and facilitated a two-day tour of their headquarters and the new Joint Training Center in Az-Zarqa, Jordan. After Jordan, the team moved to Camp Arifjan, Kuwait. The leader-

ship flew from Arifjan to Camp Buehring to meet with Soldiers from Company A, 2nd Battalion, 130th Field Artillery; the 35th Infantry Division; and Company G, 1st Battalion, 111th General Service Aviation Battalion. At Camp Arifjan, the leadership met with Soldiers and leaders of the 35th Infantry Division, 635th Regional Support Group and the 1979th Contracting Team. At each location, the leadership received

briefings on accomplishments and current challenges facing them during this deployment. On the final day of the trip, the team flew from Camp Arifjan to Al Dhafra, United Arab Emirates, to visit with members of the Kansas Air National Guard. Upon arrival, the visit included a brief tour of the facilities, visits with Security Forces, fire fighters and the civil engineers.

In November, Maj. Gen. Lee Tafaanelli, Brig. Gen. Anthony Mohatt, and Command Chief Master Sgt. Maurice Williams visited deployed Soldiers from the 35th Infantry Division and Battery A, 2nd Battalion, 130th Field Artillery. The senior leaders answered questions and were briefed on the units' current operations.



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Donated school supplies brings communities together

By Capt. Margaret Ziffer
35th Infantry Division

When you think “back to school,” a lot of things may come to mind, like shopping for new clothes, packing school lunches and juggling extracurricular activities. However, getting an opportunity for community relationship-building is likely not one of them.

But that was exactly the focus for a group of U.S. service members and soldiers of the Jordan Armed Forces – Arab Army when they decided to get together for a community-service project with a school supplies theme near a military training center outside of Amman, Jordan, Aug. 18.

It all started when Brig. Gen. John Rueger, deputy commanding general of the 35th Infantry Division, and Brig. Gen. Ahmad Kaiber, commanding officer and general director of King Abdullah II Special Operations Training Centre, decided they wanted to get the troops involved in giving back to a local Jordanian community.

The community that resides just outside of the special operations training center seemed like a good place to start.

“We can be very noisy neighbors,” said Ayman Masri, law enforcement training manager at KASOTC. “KASOTC is a training facility and live fire is being used. So the local community is the recipient of all that noise. We wanted to show our appreciation to them for all their patience.”

“We knew we wanted to partner with a community outside of a Jordanian military facility,” agreed Maj. Dena Goble, Civil Liaison Detachment Team 59, one of the primary coordinators of the event. “Military communities often have to tolerate annoyances like increased noise from aircraft or ranges as soldiers train. Additionally, the local communities are the eyes and ears of the training center and can provide security feedback.

“Because they live there, they know when there is someone there who doesn’t belong, and they will report that information,” said Goble.

And so the U.S. and Jordanian forces put their live-fire training on hold to focus on a new target: providing school supplies to the children of the local community that lives outside the training center gates.

“We have a large community that lives on the eastern side of KASOTC, called the Khalileh Tribe, who have been very supportive of KASOTC since its creation,” said Masri “The tribe is very well-known in the area. We agreed that the kids would be a good beneficiary of such a project.”

To get the project off the ground, the event coordinators reached out to Spirit of America, a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting the safety and success of Americans serving abroad, and the local people and partners they seek to assist. They asked assistance to help fund donations of school supplies such as notebooks, pencils, rulers and backpacks for 200 children.

“The project hit on two key factors,” said Goble. “One is the relationship building and strengthening the partnership between the U.S. and Jordanian militaries.”



2nd Lt. Ty Roberts, 35th Infantry Division, helps hand out school supplies and candy to children of the Khalileh Tribe during a community engagement event near the King Abdullah II Special Operations Training Centre Aug. 18. The project, a cooperation between U.S. service members in Jordan and the Jordan Armed Forces – Arab Army, is aimed at building strong relationships between the armed forces and local community members. (Photo by U.S. Army Capt. Margaret Ziffer)

Masri agreed that cooperation between the two militaries was an important initiative.

“It is his majesty’s vision to build relationships with allied forces,” said Masri. “The U.S. forces in Jordan are here to support Jordan. Doing things like this helps us show that U.S. forces here are part of a coalition that works very closely with Jordan Armed Forces.”

After the school supplies were delivered to KASOTC, U.S. and JAF service members had a chance to interact as they spent an evening together stuffing the backpacks with supplies in preparation for handing them out to the children.

The second goal of the project was about strengthening relationships within the community.

“Doing things like this shows that we all have the same concerns for the welfare of children,” said Goble.

That concern for the welfare of children also helps explain why “back to school” was chosen as the theme of the project.

“There are great benefits to helping provide school supplies,” said Goble. “It is critical that kids have the opportunity to go to school anywhere in the world. School supplies alone may not give that to them, but any incentive helps.

“In this situation we have vulnerable children who are at risk for becoming part of a lost generation when it comes to education based on the population growth and the overwhelmed school system,” Goble said.

Goble emphasized facilitating access to education is essential to mitigating those risks.

“It is about developing critical thinking skills necessary to question right from wrong and giving them options and opportunities to thrive,” said Goble. “This all be-

gins with having the basic necessities to participate in the educational experience.” The day of the event, representatives

“It is critical that kids have the opportunity to go to school anywhere in the world. School supplies alone may not give that to them, but any incentive helps.”

**Maj. Dena Goble
Civil Liaison Detachment
Team 59**

from both the U.S. and the JAF turned out to meet with the community and deliver the school supplies to the neighboring community.

“I think, despite any cultural differences, everyone loves their kids,” said 2nd Lt. Ty Roberts, 35th Infantry Division. “So having the opportunity to hand those school supplies out allows us to show the parents that we care about their kids, too.

“It was hugely special just to see their faces light up when you handed them something,” said Roberts. “It was great to be able to do something nice that they appreciated and to have an opportunity to engage in dialogue with that community.

“It was great to interact with children. I think they enjoyed it, but I really enjoyed it, too. The look on their faces was thank you enough.”

Tech college, Guard career make a perfect match

By Steve Larson
Public Affairs Office

It’s a question that most people face at one time in their lives: Now that I’ve got an education, what do I do with it?

To answer that question, Washburn University Technical Institute in Topeka hosted a fall open house Oct. 26 to give local employers the chance to tell prospective employees about the opportunities they offer.

“Today, we have all of our programs doing different demos,” said Kerry Norbury, associate director of admissions for Washburn Tech. “We’re going to have about eleven hundred students on campus today and that doesn’t count the teachers, counselors, parents.”

Included in the many employers represented at the open house were personnel from one of the largest employers in the state, the Kansas National Guard.

“We are out here talking to high school students, prospective graduates about the opportunities we can afford them as they’re looking at schools like Washburn Tech,” said Tech. Sgt. Drew Egnoske, recruiter, 190th Air Refueling Wing. “If they’re looking for a technical career field, we can show them that, #1, we can pay for them to go to a technical school, but we’re also showing them that we will send them to the

training they’re looking for to get the certifications, to get the job knowledge that they can use for a civilian career or possibly looking at full-time employment at our base, as well.”

Norbury said that many of the courses taught at Washburn Tech mesh well with National Guard careers.

“The Guard has just about every career field you could want,” said Norbury. “Our diesel program is very connected with the National Guard; we work closely with them on that. Our welding works with them, our heavy equipment, CDL, so all of those programs work very closely with our National Guard partners.

“Things that you can learn in the National Guard, like being a mechanic, being a cook are things that can help you in tech school,” said Staff Sgt. Jesse Smith, heavy mobile mechanic equipment leader with the KSNG Advance Turbine Engine Army Maintenance program. “Washburn Tech also teaches culinary arts, light and heavy wheel mechanics, body work. All those things you can actually learn in the Guard you can apply to your college career.”

“So, there are some pretty good opportunities for them,” said Egnoske. “We’re actually teaching job-life skills that you can use on the outside that are very beneficial to you.”



Tech. Sgt. Drew Egnoske, recruiter, 190th Air Refueling Wing, talks with students attending the Washburn Tech open house Oct. 26 about the benefits of a career in the National Guard. (Photo by Steve Larson, Public Affairs Office)

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<https://g1arng.army.pentagon.mil>

Joint exercises build emergency response skills, trust and respect

By Steve Larson
Public Affairs Office

On a brisk, windy morning, a team of black-clad men stand in a grassy field at the Salina airport and hook themselves to a thick, 120-foot rope by means of metal clips that attach to a special harness. As each man is secured, he raises his thumb as a signal to the crew of a waiting Black Hawk helicopter.

Once all men have signaled “ready,” the Black Hawk begins to lift off. One by one, the black-clad men are lifted from the ground until all are suspended in the air. Then, the chopper climbs higher and begins to circle the field, its passengers flying like superheroes through the overcast September sky.

The men in black are members of the Special Operations Response Team from Ellsworth Correctional Facility; the Black Hawk is flown by Soldiers of the Kansas National Guard’s 1st Battalion, 108th Aviation from Salina. The purpose of the exercise was to practice getting the prison’s special security team wherever they need to be in the event of an emergency at the facility.

“Once we’re hooked up, we’re able to be dropped off into a landing area or into a facility whether it’s to deal with riots or disturbances within any facility,” explained Capt. Jerry Castro, commander of the Special Operations Response Team at Ellsworth. “There are actually two ways we can do it. The helicopter can actually land or it can hover while we dismount.”

As easy as the officers and air crews make it look, an exercise of this nature doesn’t happen on the spur of the moment.

“It takes a lot of planning and coordination,” said Chief Warrant Officer 5 Jason Garr, Black Hawk pilot. “It begins with very specific waivers for us to conduct this operation, coming from the National Guard Bureau. It takes approval from the state, both on the Kansas Department of Corrections and the National Guard side.”



“Thumbs up” is the signal that the Special Operations Response Team from Ellsworth Correctional Facility is ready for lift-off during a Sept. 26 training exercise with Soldiers of the Kansas National Guard’s 1st Battalion, 108th Aviation out of Salina. (Photo by Steve Larson, Public Affairs Office)

The exercise was the latest in a long-standing partnership between the Kansas National Guard and the Kansas Department of Corrections.

“Initially, the concept of the operation was that the special operations team needed to get to the prisons across the state of Kansas much more rapidly,” said Garr. “They came up with the idea of using helicopters to transport them.”

“Col. Robert Dalton (then KSARNG director of Plans, Operations and Military Support) and I started a discussion into emergency preparedness for the state of Kansas in 1993,” said Maj. Robert Murrell, chief of security, Ellsworth Correctional Facility. After much discussion and planning, the first joint exercise took place in 1994.

“There were five chalks totaling 39 re-

sponse team members,” said Murrell. “That was the start of something new that no one figured could or would exist.”

The two organizations have conducted several joint training exercises over the years to prepare for whatever comes their way.

“One of the things we do is train for different scenarios,” said Castro. “Once we’re in the air or we land, it doesn’t matter how well a plan is put out, there are always variables, so we always have to adjust. We try to train to that aspect.”

“We have some standard operating procedures we’ve coordinated where we would get the alert that there’s an issue,” said Garr. “Then we would coordinate and come up with which plan we were going to

execute to go to the prison and insert the team, which depends on each individual prison and the environment at the prison.”

The training exercises not only build procedural skills, they help each group see the issues the other side faces.

“We hope to be able to better understand what the air crews have to deal with,” said Castro. “That way when we have to deal with a real situation, we can actually work together a lot better.”

As the exercise progresses, it becomes apparent that the members of the SORT team and the Kansas Guardsmen have also developed a high level of trust and respect.

“We enjoy working with them,” said Castro. “We’ve actually landed into El Dorado Correctional Facility about a year ago and we’ve trained with them on various occasions. They’re very easy to work with and hopefully we’ll continue to work with them in the future.”

“We have great rapport with the Department of Corrections,” said Garr. “This team is located just 15 miles from our flight facility and that allows us to work together quite often. Over those years we’ve developed a good relationship out of mutual respect for each other’s challenges.”

It’s a mutual respect that harks back to the very beginning of the partnership. Murrell said he recalls the first meeting very clearly, especially an exchange with Chief Warrant Officer 3 Dennis Weems.

“I had one question for him,” said Murrell, “and I asked it. ‘If my staff were trapped in the prison under duress on a roof, could he get them out?’ Weems’ answer was clear and to the point. ‘Sir, I was a Vietnam medivac pilot and I would do whatever it takes to get your people out.’

“That,” said Murrell, “is how brotherhood and trust was earned to support this long-lasting relationship.”

Medical education lectures bring partner nations closer

By Staff Sgt. Jennifer Milnes
35th Infantry Division Public Affairs

Dr. (Col.) Nawaf Jandoul Al-Dousari, Kuwaiti Land Force director of Military Medical Complex (North), welcomed doctors and nurses from the 35th Infantry Division and the 86th Combat Support Hospital stationed at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, to his facilities Oct. 5.

“Consider us to be colleagues, friends and family,” said Dr. Nawaf.

This unique medical partnership started while the 29th Infantry Division was deployed to Camp Arifjan, prior to the arrival of the 35th Infantry Division.

Col. Thomas Koertge, 29th Infantry Di-

vision surgeon, was one of Nawaf’s professors when he attended school at Virginia Commonwealth University. Koertge brought this connection to the attention of the medical support staff at Area Support Group – Kuwait. The 29th and the ASG-KU began building a partnership between the medical staff of the U.S. military and the Kuwaiti Land Forces. After several constructive meetings, the two forces began hosting a lecture series where guest speakers from both U.S. and KLF militaries could share the knowledge in their respective fields of study.

During the most recent visit, Nawaf gave

(Continued on Page 10)



Dr. Nawaf Jandoul Al-Dousari, director at the Military Medical Complex (North) in Kuwait, explains his plans for future expansions of the complex Oct. 5. (Photo by U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Jennifer Milnes)



Members of the Special Operations Response Team from Ellsworth Correctional Facility take a ride beneath a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter flown by Soldiers of the 1st Battalion, 108th Aviation in Salina. (Photo by Steve Larson, Public Affairs Office)

184th Intelligence Wing supports Texas hurricane relief mission

By Master Sgt. Matt McCoy
184th Public Affairs

Airmen assigned to the 184th Intelligence Wing reported to McConnell Air Force Base Aug. 31 to assist in the ongoing relief efforts following Hurricane Harvey in southeast Texas.

The Category 4 hurricane reached its full intensity as it made landfall Aug. 25 near Rockport, Texas. Four days of concentrated rainfall caused catastrophic flooding in the region, engulfing thousands of homes and causing massive evacuations.

As a result, Texas Governor Greg Abbott activated the Texas National Guard for search and rescue, recovery, and clean-up operations. Other states, including Kansas, joined those efforts at the request of Texas.

“In response to their request, the Air National Guard stood up the 10 different unclassified Processing Analysis and Dissemination sites around the country to provide support here,” said Maj. Dave Olds, officer in charge of the 184th Intelligence Wing Processing Analysis and Dissemination cell.

The PAD sites receive video footage and imagery of the area and make products that are used by civilian and military personnel making decisions on the ground. Products include maps and images, aerial video clips, lists of blocked roadways, and more.

While other Air National Guard units were locating people, these Airmen were playing a different role.

“The search and rescue phase of the operation is going to last probably another 24 to 72 hours,” said Olds. “There are units much like ours here that are out doing that right now; looking for people that are stranded on rooftops or whatever the case

might be. We are more focused on getting the regional assets to those people.”

Airports were the main priority of the day. “We’re doing some flood analysis products for some of the regional airports in and around the Houston area,” said Olds.

As the National Guard and other agencies bring personnel, supplies and vehicles, finding a runway that isn’t flooded becomes significant.

Regional airports were also being used as evacuation hubs.

“That’s important because right now they’re taking a lot of evacuees to these airports and then taking them via [medical evacuation] or ground transport to hospitals if they need help,” said Olds. “They’re kind of a consolidation point for those people that have been rescued.”

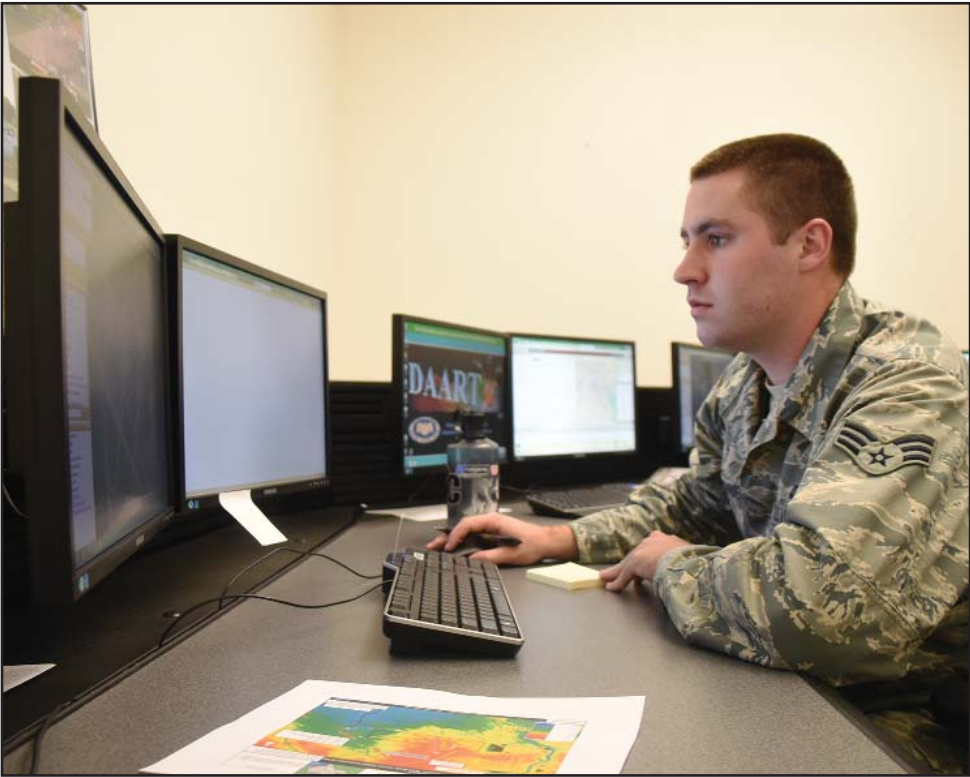
The PAD is a program that was developed over that last few years. Kansas is no stranger to devastating storms, and supporting emergency management agencies is one of the key focuses of the 184th Intelligence Wing.

“We’ve built this capability up over the past several years as an enterprise,” said Olds. “However, this is really the first massive-scale event that they’ve used incident awareness and assessment.”

The hard work seemed to pay off, though the real reward was the opportunity to serve.

“It’s an amazing opportunity for our analysts here to get this experience,” said Olds. “It’s really humbling to be part of this, but this is what we do as Guardsmen.”

“I don’t personally know anybody on the ground that’s been affected by this but, they might as well be my neighbors,” said Olds. “It means a lot to us to be able to provide good support to them.”



Staff Sgt. Luke Vanderpool, 161st Intelligence Squadron, Kansas Air National Guard, uses commercial satellite imagery to find routes that are clear for first responders to travel through. Vanderpool was activated in response to Hurricane Harvey, a Category 4 storm that flooded Houston and the surrounding area in late August. (Photo by Master Sgt. Matt McCoy, 184th Intelligence Wing Public Affairs)

Thanks for your support and keep up the good work

By Chief Warrant Officer 5 Michael Smith
Command Chief Warrant Officer

I hope every Soldier and their families are looking forward to Christmas and New Year. Please remember those men and women who are away from their loved ones this holiday season protecting this great nation of ours. The best of all gifts is the presence of family. As Soldiers, we inherently have at least two families, so let’s not forget either and make an effort to be thankful to both.



Chief Warrant Officer 5
Michael Smith

As 2017 comes to a close, I would like to thank everyone for your support and assistance improving the Kansas Warrant Officer Cohort. Currently, the Kansas Army National Guard’s warrant officer adjusted strength sits at 86 percent; ranking us among the top five states. We reduced our vacancies and continued to increase our strength and readiness. Hitting these landmarks, we must not relax and remember that we still have a lot of work to do. So please keep an eye out for Soldiers within your ranks that appear to be a good fit for the Warrant Officer Cohort and get them in contact with me at michael.w.smith293.mil@mail.mil or call 785-646-1903.

Please continue to keep fit during the winter months since it’s a well-known fact that the holiday season characteristically brings with it additional pounds. We all know that it’s a lot easier to maintain physical fitness than to start an exercises program all over again, so please ensure that you take some time to keep up your physical fitness. Remember, every pound you put on this winter, you’ll have to take off in the spring. And as you well know, the older we get the harder it is to lose those extra inches and pounds.

As the New Year approaches, this is always a good time to review and update your military bio and IPERMS. Every Soldier is inherently responsible for maintaining his or her own records, so if you don’t take care of your records, then no one else will either.

Since warrant officer promotion

We are a small, but powerful community, making up around two percent of today’s modern Army, so let’s continue to excel at being the leaders, mentors, and subject matter experts that our commanders rely on us to be.

boards no longer require Soldiers to appear, it is more important than ever to ensure that your records are correct and up to date. I have received several notifications of warrant officers who are delinquent in various categories such as APFT, height/weight, and security clearance renewal.

Although we, as warrant officers, have been relatively safe from retention boards for many years, it appears we may be at a point where we might not have time to correct deficiencies in our records before it’s too late. Therefore, please make every effort to keep yourself out of this category by thoroughly and routinely reviewing your records and making updates/corrections in a timely manner. With strength such a critical topic in the forecasting of future force structure, we simply cannot afford to lose warrant officers because they’re being lazy.

Finally, all of us who wear warrant officer rank are looked at as subject matter experts, so it is important to not only maintain, but to also grow within your respective career fields. I challenge all of you to continue to progress within your personal and professional education. The warrant officer rank is very difficult to achieve, and many good Soldiers fall short. We are a small, but powerful community, making up around two percent of today’s modern Army, so let’s continue to excel at being the leaders, mentors, and subject matter experts that our commanders rely on us to be. A warrant officer should not be the problem; we should be the solution to the problem.

Again, thank you all for the support and dedication that you give to not only the Warrant Officer Cohort, but the Kansas Army National Guard. I ask that each of you help us to grow our WO cohort by actively seeking Soldiers to join our team, and I look forward to working with all of you throughout this coming year.

127th Cyber Operations Squadron open for business

By Senior Master Sgt. Leland Weathers and Tech. Sgt. Ben Johnston
127th Cyber Operations Squadron

On April 1, 2016, the 127th Cyberspace Operations Squadron faced a challenge to find 71 qualified personnel to establish a new squadron, many of whom needed to cross train into new career fields. The squadron activation was only 12 months away and required 20 of those Airmen to operate a Cyber Protection Team, ready to defend key Air Force weapon systems and other cyber assets. During the stand-up process, the squadron was also tasked with establishing traditional programs required for new units.

Under the direction of the United States Cyber Command, the Air Force fielded 20 Cyber Protection Teams charged with surveying, securing and protecting national critical infrastructure, combatant command Area of Responsibilities and missions. U.S. Cyber Command is shifting focus from simply defending computer networks to defending missions, such as the refueling missions of the KC-135s and KC-46s at McConnell Air Force Base.

In preparation for the 127th COS activation, 16 members from various backgrounds, including intelligence, medical and communications maintainers, completed over eight months of training to become Defensive Cyberspace Operators. They would go on to complete additional specialized training to become mission qualified so they could operate the Cyberspace Vulnerability Assessment/Hunter weapon system. These operators are trained in network analysis, host forensics on a variety of operating systems, and malware analysis. Additional

members cross trained into cyber maintainer roles to provide mission support.

“The biggest challenge was transitioning from the training pipeline into a new squadron that was rapidly creating quality technical processes while executing onsite missions,” said Staff Sgt. Scott Trembly.

Once trained and stood-up, 127th Cyberspace Operations Squadron took up the 856th Cyber Protection Team mantle in April 2017. During the six-month activation, 20 mobilized operators from the 127th COS were tasked with five planning and assessment missions.

“We really had to come together to tactically plan and accomplish the missions,” said 2nd Lt. T.J. Tasker. “This mobilization wouldn’t have succeeded without everyone working together as a team.”

CPT missions include onsite visits for planning and coordination, interviews with operations and maintenance personnel, and technical data collection. Analysis of the data collected occurs at home station and results in reports on how the local cyber defenders can increase the cybersecurity posture of the network in the short term, and how to operate and manage security and ensure mission assurance over the long-term.

A team of five led by 2nd Lt. Katherine Cornwell spent two weeks on-site at the mission partner location gathering network traffic and analyzing vulnerabilities for the Executive Airlift Communications Network, a system that provides critical command and control services to senior leadership. Following the on-site data collection, the team spent another four weeks analyzing the collected data to produce a Risk Mitigation Plan and a Mission Defense Plan.

FYI: Cyber- comes from “cybernetic.” The Greek word is kubernetes, which means “governor” and is derived from the root word kubernan – “to govern.”



Emergency Management 101

Disaster response doesn't wait until calamity happens

By Steve Larson
Public Affairs Office

This article is the second in a series on the roles and responsibilities of the Kansas Division of Emergency Management.

When a disaster strikes – a tornado, a blizzard, a flood – the natural response for many people is to want someone to “do something.”

In such events, the Kansas Division of Emergency Management generally begins to “do something” well before anything has actually happened.

“Response actions can begin before an event occurs when something is imminent, such as the threat for severe weather, or immediately after an incident occurs,” said Jonathan York, Response and Recovery branch director of the Kansas Division of Emergency Management. “The response phase starts when a jurisdiction begins to take emergency protective actions that focus on life safety, life sustainment, incident stabilization, and protection of property and the environment.”

The Response and Recovery branch is responsible for monitoring significant events that have or may affect the state where lives and/or property have been or may be subject to an emergency or disaster beyond the capability of a local jurisdiction to respond. Kansas Division of Emergency Management begins pre-planning initiatives when an event is imminent, such as a forecast of severe thunderstorms that may be accompanied by a significant threat of tornadoes, or torrential rainfall that could result in widespread flooding, or a severe winter storm with the potential for blizzard-like conditions. These initiatives include:

- Outreach to the National Weather Service, county emergency managers, and state and federal emergency management stakeholders, as needed.
- The development of a state emergency operations

center preparation plan, which outlines the threat, potential impacts, and activation triggers.

York explained the state emergency operations center preparation plan, which is distributed to emergency management stakeholders at the local and state levels of government, provides an overview of impending events and makes state agencies involved in emergency support functions aware that the state emergency operations center may activate to coordinate state assistance in support of local response and recovery actions.

However, he said, the state does not take control from the local authorities.

“All incidents begin and end at the local level of government,” said York. “By statute, the senior elected official of a jurisdiction is responsible for ensuring the safety and well-being of their citizens, as well as providing initial response, within their capabilities during emergency and disaster events. In most situations, local governments will be the first and primary responders.”

York said there are five triggers for a county to receive resource assistance from the state:

1. Capability does not exist within the affected county or region;
2. The county has exhausted all local resources within its jurisdictional boundaries;
3. The county has exhausted all mutual aid resources across the state;
4. The county has exhausted all contractor support; and
5. The county has made verbal or written county disaster declaration.

“When the resources of local and county governments are exhausted, or when a needed capability does not exist, assistance may be requested from the state,” he said. “State assistance to local jurisdictions is coordinated through county emergency management agencies. Response at a



Jonathan York answers a call in the State Emergency Operations Center in Topeka. York is the director of the Response and Recovery branch for the Kansas Division of Emergency Management. (Archive photo)

state level means providing technical assistance, support, and augmentation of resources to support actions that are occurring at the local level of government.”

York said the state’s emergency response activities are coordinated from the State Emergency Operations Center in Topeka.

“The State Emergency Operations Center is the central locale where interagency coordination and executive decision-making occurs to support incident management at the local level of government,” said York. “The state emergency operations center is responsible for gathering, maintaining, and disseminating incident-related information; establish priorities; facilitating resource support and resource tracking; and coordinating interagency and intergovernmental issues regarding incident management policies, priorities, and strategies.”

York said that even though disaster response is the responsibility of local jurisdictions with support from the state, Kansans have a responsibility of their own.

“Personal preparedness is always vital,” said York. “Due to the nature of many disasters, there may be brief lag in time for resources to reach someone after an incident has occurred because of travel time, weather conditions, and other considerations. That’s why we always recommended everyone have a home emergency kit with a minimum of three days of food, water, and other essentials per person.”

York said the state’s response efforts continue as long as the disaster is in progress. In the event of a disaster such as a blizzard or flooding, this response could last several days, even weeks.

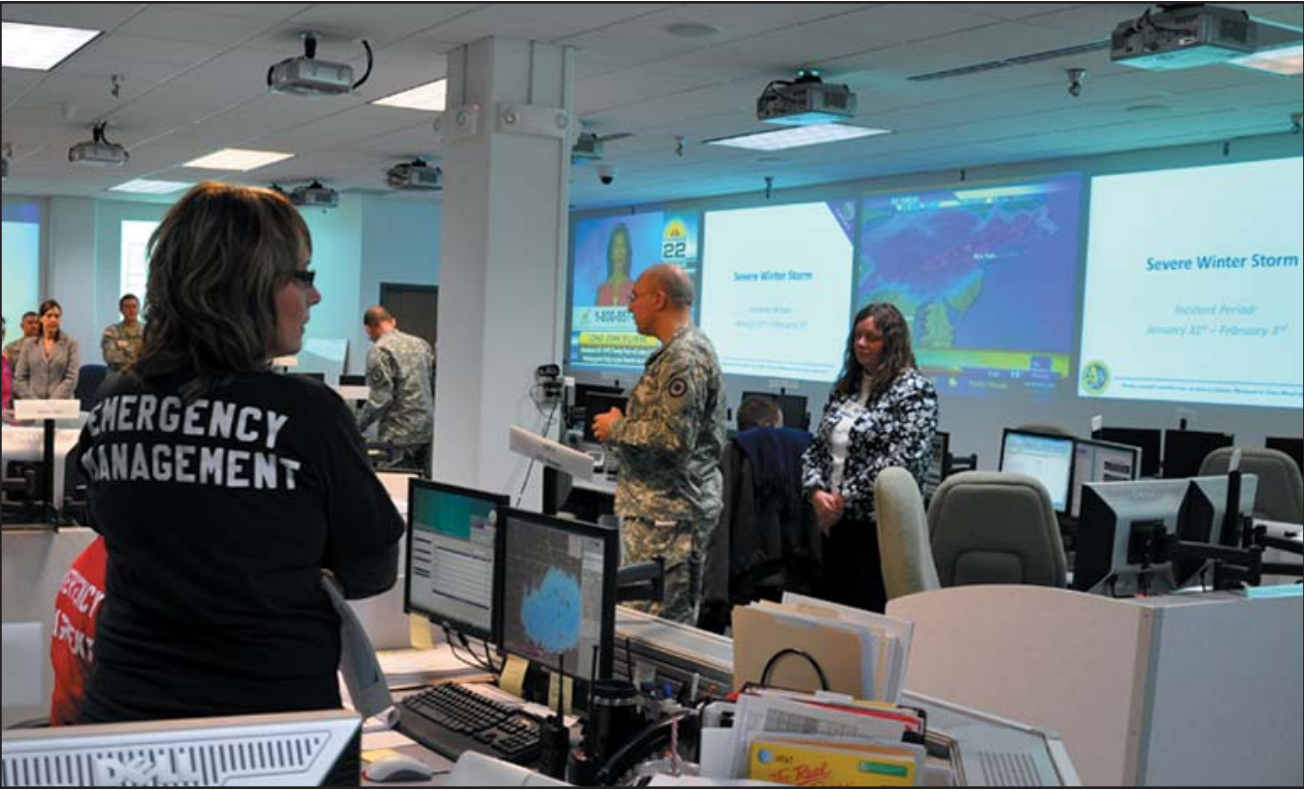
“There isn’t a defined timeline for how long the response phase lasts,” said York. “Impacted jurisdictions transition from response to recovery once life safety missions are completed and there is no longer an immediate threat to health and human safety.”

York said the recovery phase involves the actions that a jurisdiction takes to return a community back to normal or as close to normal as possible. During this phase, efforts are made to complete debris removal, repair and replace damaged infrastructure, housing, and businesses affected by the emergency or disaster.

“Recovery can last years,” said York, “and in some cases life never returns completely to what it was before the disaster. Although much of a community may rebuild, there may be components of a community that don’t return.

“For instance, residents that had homes damaged to the point that they were no longer habitable and had to relocate to a neighboring community may decide not to repair or rebuild. Business owners that sustained damages to the point that they had to close to restore their business or relocate components of their business operations temporarily may not reopen.

“During all recoveries, much effort is given to assist survivors and governmental entities to rebuild through disaster assistance programs and volunteer organizations,” said York. “Adapting to changes in the landscape of a community may be what residents have to deal with when creating a new normal in these instances.”



The state’s disaster response and recovery operations are coordinated from the State Emergency Operations Center at the State Defense Building in Topeka. (Archive photo)



Soldiers of a Stranded Motorist Assistance and Recovery Team assist a motorist stuck on a Kansas highway during a winter storm. The Kansas National Guard is one of many resources the state coordinates for disaster response within the state. (Archive photo)



Technical Rescue Conference hones skills and forges working relationships

By Steve Larson
Public Affairs Office

Emergency responders from across Kansas met Oct. 4-6 at Crisis City near Salina to test and hone the skills they hope they never have to use.

The annual Technical Rescue Conference gives first responders the chance to get their hands dirty as they train with people that may live in another city or even another county.

“With everybody here being from different departments, we all don’t know what level of experience they have,” said Capt. Bill Schneider, Olathe Fire Department, who was one of the instructors for the conference. “But by coming here, we level the playing field on the learning grounds, so they can go home and teach their people back home how to do the same thing or say ‘Hey, we did this out at Crisis City. Maybe we could try that back home before we have to go on a real deal.’ Because we never know what’s going to come our way in five minutes, five hours or five days.”

Schneider watched as rescue team members drawn from several different regions worked on saving a simulated victim trapped at the bottom of a vertical concrete tube.

“This is something we came up with a couple of weeks ago,” said Schneider. “We



A search and rescue team practices using hydraulic rescue tools to cut into a wrecked vehicle during the annual Technical Rescue Conference at Crisis City Oct. 5. Crisis City is a multivenue training area operated by the Kansas Division of Emergency Management (Photo by Steve Larson, Public Affairs Office)

had somebody fall into a tube – we don’t know why they got there, but we were asked to go get them out.”



Teamwork by members of a search and rescue task force lift an emergency responder from the bottom of a vertical shaft in the technical rescue tower at Crisis City. (Photo by Steve Larson, Public Affairs Office)

VanPatten receives 2017 William C. Brubaker Memorial Award

Scott VanPatten was named recipient of the 2017 William C. Brubaker Memorial Award. The award was presented at the 2017 Technical Rescue Conference at Crisis City Oct. 4.

VanPatten, an instructor in Emergency Rescue and Confined Space rescue at Butler County Community College, was nominated for the annual award by Dona Larimer of the school’s Fire Science Department. In her nomination letter, Larimer cited VanPatten’s extensive training he received over the past year, training he passed on to his students at the college and to community search and rescue professionals. Larimer also noted VanPatten’s work in forming partnerships with local businesses to make training scenarios more realistic and for his organization efforts for a rescue swimmer technician course for emergency responders.

The award is presented annually by the Kansas Search and Rescue Working Group and the Kansas Division of Emergency Management to recognize an individual, team or organization that promotes and supports search and rescue

efforts in Kansas.

This award provides recognition in a variety of areas related to search and rescue, including significant lifesaving efforts on a rescue scene or disaster response, training or program development, or any other significant effort that contributes to the furtherance of the search and rescue in Kansas.

The award was created in memory of long-time KDEM employee, Bill Brubaker, who passed away unexpectedly while deployed to Elwood, Kansas, during the 2011 Missouri River floods. Brubaker served the citizens of Kansas in the areas of public safety and emergency management for more than 40 years, most recently as a regional coordinator for the Kansas Division of Emergency Management. One of his responsibilities was the development of deployable resources in the state, which included search and rescue. Brubaker’s efforts and support for disaster preparedness, response and training were instrumental in the initial development of a statewide search and rescue capability in Kansas.

big deal. They respond to the scene, evaluate the scene, they problem solve this here at Crisis City, so they can effect a real live rescue back home.”

“It’s a blast!” said Jaso. “It’s fun. We get to practice what we love to do, get hands on, get our hands dirty, just be ready for anything that comes our way in the real world. We’ve got the tools and the scenarios and the things to do it here.”

“It’s a blast! It’s fun. We get to practice what we love to do...”
Capt. Guillermo Jaso
Sedgwick Co. Fire District #1

It’s also a chance to build relationships with first responders from other areas, relationships that have already paid off.

“The fact of it is, the guys that did respond down at Harvey,” said Shneider. “A lot of them already knew each other because of coming from the conferences in years past. So it wasn’t a ‘Hey, I don’t know who this guy is. I don’t know what his abilities are,’ they’d already made those contacts in prior training so they could work together as one big unit.”

Participants in the conference included personnel from K9 Task Force, Task Force 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 8; Almena Fire Department; Bonner Springs Fire Department; Branson Fire-Rescue; Butler County EMA; Caney Fire Department; Chanute Fire Department; Coffeyville, Fire Department; Consolidated Fire Department #2; Derby Fire Department; Dodge City Fire Department; Emporia Fire Department; Ford County Fire and EMS; Fort Riley Fire Department; Garden City Fire Department; Hays Fire Department; Hillsboro Fire Department; Hutchinson Fire Department; Independence Fire/EMS; Junction City Fire Department; Lawrence-Douglas County Fire Medical; Leavenworth County Fire Department #1; Manhattan Fire Department; Mission Township Fire Department; Mitchell County Rescue Squad; Newton Fire Department; Neodesha Fire Department; Neosho Memorial Regional Medical Center; Olathe Fire Department; Osage County Fire Department; Overland Park Fire Department; Pittsburg Fire Department; Salina Fire Department; Saline County Mounted Patrol; Sedgwick County Fire Department #1; Shawnee Fire Department; Shawnee County Fire Department #4; Soldier Township Fire Department; Topeka Fire Department; and Winfield Fire Department.

Before the actual rescue, the team first had to figure out who’s in charge and devise a way to carry out their mission.

“Usually, a leader arises out of the group and starts making some suggestions,” explained Capt. Guillermo Jaso, Sedgwick County Fire District #1. “We come up with a rough sketch of what we’re trying to do. We send guys to gather the supplies and just start building it.

“We built a bipod system with paratechs, raised me up with a raising system, tilted the bipod system over the concrete tube and lowered me in,” said Jaso. “I’m the smallest guy on the team, so that’s why I was chosen to go down in the tube. I have more room to work.”

“It’s very much problem solving,” said Schneider. “We have a ton of equipment out here from all the task forces and by having that ability to have those resources, we can use different tools to effect a rescue that they probably wouldn’t be able to do at home.”

Elsewhere in the Crisis City compound, other teams worked on rappelling down a vertical shaft to rescue victims, while other first responders used the jaws of life and cutting tools to break open jammed doors on wrecked vehicles.

“Crisis City is great for us,” said Schneider. “It’s a venue that’s not like anything we have in our home towns. So, by having these props and the ability to make different scenarios... What it comes down to is, when they come upon these rescues, it’s no



Emergency responders practice their shoring techniques inside a connex during the Technical Rescue Conference at Crisis City Oct. 6. (Photo by Steve Larson, Public Affairs Office)

Airman’s National Guard enlistment was a dance with destiny

**By Staff Sgt. Lauren Penney
184th Intelligence Wing Public Affairs**

Twenty years ago, Senior Airman Steven Bohling fell from a three-story building, breaking his back.

“I struggled receiving therapy or anything rehabilitative to get back to how I was before,” said Bohling, cyber systems operations, 184th Intelligence Squadron. “The best thing to help heal and mitigate the pain was a corset that helped stabilize me. At best, I was getting around with a cane.”

During those years, he gained weight, lost mobility and he was searching for a way to get back into shape. With weight-lifting and running off the table, he decided to try a ballroom dancing class.

“It was the first time I’d been asked to articulate my spine in new ways,” said Bohling. “I realized pretty quickly that rotational energy, where the muscles work against each other, rotated my spine and moved my spine in ways that I hadn’t been able to, and the pain was reduced, so I kept with it.”

Fast forward three years to 2001. Bohling started teaching dance at his first studio. He toured around the country, entering 32 national competitions, from Savannah, Georgia, to San Francisco, California.

“I think we’re all creative, that’s a part of who we are,” said Bohling. “We will all eventually find... an expression of creativity. For me it was dancing.”

Bohling trained with some of the top coaches in the U.S. and also competed with them, dancers from shows such as “So You Think You Can Dance” and “Dancing with the Stars.”

John Swick, a four-time national champion out of Oklahoma City, became his main mentor.

“He took me under his wing and intro-

duced me to the top judges in the country so I could continue my training,” Bohling said.

Swick found Bohling’s first professional partner and trained them together. Bohling drove to Oklahoma City about every week and worked four hours. He met with his partner other days at the YMCA in Ponca City, Oklahoma, and drove back to teach classes in the evenings.

In 2006, Bohling opened his solely-owned studio, and continued to teach and compete, working through the challenges that arise when running a small business.

“For me, the hardest thing about opening a small business was wearing too many hats. I was teaching, I was competing, I was paying the bills and I was cleaning the toilets,” said Bohling. “I’ve heard that an entrepreneur will work 16 hours a day for themselves, so they don’t have to work eight hours a day for someone else.”

Bohling’s studio, Care to Dance, is downtown in Wichita’s Delano district with students ranging from eight to 80.

“I’ve taught bus mechanics and a NASA rocket scientist. I taught a blind man and deaf woman and people who didn’t speak English,” said Bohling. “In a way, dancing is kind of another language.”

In 2014, Bohling reached a level of success in the dance studio where it could be run without as much hands-on work from himself, with 16 people on staff and 400 students a week.

“Two things were occurring in my life at that time,” said Bohling. “I wanted to focus one, more on my family, have more time with my wife and daughter. And two, I wondered if the studio was the only thing I was going to do for the rest of my life.”

His wife suggested enlisting in the Air Force, since he would come back and read about it all the time, getting his mind on something other than dance. He had his



Senior Airman Steven Bohling leads a dance class in his Wichita studio. Bohling used dancing as a way to rehabilitate himself after a back injury and turned dance into a hobby, then a career. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Lauren Penney, 184th Intelligence Wing Public Affairs)

doubts, however, thinking he wouldn’t be let in because he was too old and had suffered a broken back.

His wife then suggested the Air National Guard, since he would be able to remain in Wichita and could work in the intelligence division, and that the cut-off age to join without prior service is 39.

With medical clearing from an orthopedic surgeon and two months before his 40th birthday, Bohling enlisted.

He went on to be successful in basic training, finishing as an honor graduate. Dancing had kept him and his back in excellent shape over the years.

“I’ve found that with being in the Guard,

I’m just as passionate about it as I am about dancing,” Bohling said. “There’s the other side of me that’s analytical and logical and wants to do great things as a team member, and the Guard allows me to do that in a way that dancing never did.”

“I know we can all get really focused on one aspect of our lives, be it family or some other hobby, but if we truly want to be more well-rounded individuals, we need to pay attention to both parts of human, the analytical and the artistic,” said Bohling. “The Guard satisfies a completely different need in my life. It’s a family-based business that provides my family security and benefits, and that really matters.”

Three inducted into Kansas National Guard Hall of Fame

Retired Brig. Gen. (Kansas) Charles M. Baier Jr., Brig. Gen. Wilder S. Metcalf, and retired Brig. Gen. Deborah Rose were inducted into the Kansas National Guard Hall of Fame Nov. 5 during a ceremony at the Ramada Inn, Topeka.

Retired Brig. Gen. (Kansas)

Charles M. Baier Jr.

Retired Brig. Gen. (Kansas) Charles M. Baier was born in Larned, Kansas, in 1942 and grew up on a farm near Seward. After high school, Baier attended Fort Hays State College.

In early 1963 the Kansas Air National Guard was recruiting pilots for the 190th Tactical Reconnaissance Group at the Hutchinson Air National Guard base. He was commissioned as a second lieutenant in 1963. He trained in the Air Force Undergraduate Pilot training program at Moody Air Force Base, Georgia, and received his wings on March 28, 1966.

He returned to Kansas and qualified as a pilot flying the Martin RB-57A. In 1972, the 190th Tactical Reconnaissance Group received new aircraft and a new mission as the 190th Tactical Bombardment Group.

In 1977, the unit became the 190th Air Refueling Group. Baier was named commander of the 117th Air Refueling Squadron in 1980 and became the director of operations at Kansas State Headquarters in 1984.

The 190th was mobilized for Operation Desert Storm in January 1991 and returned home in March. During that time, Baier personally flew several refueling missions.

He was promoted to brigadier general in the Kansas National Guard on Aug. 2, 1992. Baier retired in 1993 after 30 years of service.

Brig. Gen. Wilder S. Metcalf

Brig. Gen. Wilder S. Metcalf was born at Milo, Maine, in 1855. He joined Company G, 5th Ohio National Guard Infantry on May 6, 1884, at the age of 29.

In 1887, he came to Kansas and became

a partner in a farm mortgage business in Lawrence. In 1888, he enlisted as a private in Company H, 1st Kansas Infantry at Lawrence, rising in rank to colonel over the next nine years.

He was colonel of the regiment in 1898 when the Spanish American War broke out. He was commissioned a major in the 20th Kansas Infantry under Col. Frederick Funston. The 20th Kansas was mustered for federal service on May 9, 1898, and was sent to Manila in the Philippines. The 20th Kansas was ordered to the front in early 1899 and was the first to enter Caloocan on Feb. 10. In March, the regiment swam the Tuliahan River, captured a blockhouse, and was involved in the engagements of Malinta and Maycuayan. Upon Funston’s promotion to brigadier general, Metcalf was elected colonel of the 20th Kansas. He was awarded the Order of Purple Heart in recognition of being wounded twice.

Upon his return to Lawrence in 1899, he again became the colonel of the 1st Kansas Infantry, where he served until 1915. Metcalf was appointed a brigadier general of the National Army on Aug. 22, 1917, and honorably discharged on May 24, 1918. He was promoted to brigadier general in the Kansas National Guard on Feb. 24, 1919.

In 1909 he was appointed by the Secretary of War as a member of the National Militia Board. In 1916, he was elected for a seat in the Kansas Senate.

Retired Brig. Gen. Deborah Rose

Retired Brig. Gen. Deborah Rose entered military service with a direct commission into the United States Air Force Nurse Corps in March 1983, and was assigned to the 184th Tactical Fighter Group. She transferred to the 190th Clinic in December 1985.

In October 1990, Rose deployed to Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, where she served in an Air Transportable Hospital during Desert Shield. She was activated in February 1991 and deployed to Offutt Air Force Base, Ne-

braska, assigned to the hospital.

In April 1994, the 190th leadership requested she fill a critical leadership position as the Services Flight Commander, leaving the professional corps for a line position. Rose transferred from her full-time position at the Colmery-O’Neil VA Medical Center in 1996 to become the Logistics Squadron commander.

In 2000, she became the Aircraft Maintenance Squadron commander. Rose was selected as the Mission Support Group commander in October 2001, and in April 2002, became the first female colonel in the Kansas National Guard.

Rose was activated in February 2003 to become the deployed Mission Support Group commander for the 171st Expedi-

tionary Wing, leading a team of active duty, National Guard, and civilians into Afyon, Turkey. She remained there until the beginning of the war.

In 2004, Rose became the vice wing commander of the 190th Air Refueling Wing, where she remained until her promotion to brigadier general in 2007, the first woman in the Kansas National Guard to attain that rank, and was named director of the Joint Staff, Joint Forces Headquarters-Kansas.

Rose was assigned in a dual-hat position in November 2010 as the Air National Guard assistant to the commander of the 17th Air Force, the Air Force component of the United States African Command. Rose retired in September 2011, having served more than 28 years.



Retired Brig. Gen. Deborah Rose (right) receives her induction certificate into the Kansas National Guard Hall of Fame from Maj. Gen. Lee Tafanelli (center), the adjutant general, and retired Col. Mike Erwin. (Photo provided by the 105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment)

PLAINS GUARDIAN

190th Air Refueling Wing supports emergency operations to Puerto Rico

By Steve Larson
Public Affairs Office

Airmen of the 190th Air Refueling Wing in Topeka took off Oct. 1 on a mission to bring help to the people of Puerto Rico as they try to recover from the devastation caused by Hurricane Maria.

“We’ve been watching the news and seeing the disaster from Hurricane Maria that took its toll on Puerto Rico,” said Col. Jarrod Frantz, wing commander, 190th ARW. “We’ve had crews and aircraft on call for the last week, ready to respond when that time comes. The situation on the ground there is pretty desperate. The ability to get resources in and get them distributed across the island has been very difficult.

“Now they have most of the airports opened up and they have most of the lighting, approach systems in there so they can actually get planes in. Air Mobility Command has been flying about 50 missions a day getting relief supplies in.

“That’s what our crews and our aircraft are doing today,” said Frantz. “They are flying down to New Orleans. They will depart with 40 Army National Guard personnel and they will take them down to Puerto Rico to provide relief.”

The mission pilot and ground crews take a final walk around the plane to make sure everything is set for takeoff.

Typically, the KC-135R air refueling tanker is tasked to refuel U.S. military and allied aircraft as they support U.S. missions. But not always.

“The KC 135 is a very versatile aircraft,” said Frantz. “We can haul roughly 50 personnel, we can configure it to haul cargo. We can put patient litters on there and do aeromedical evacuation missions. We currently have a mission going on over in the Pacific right now doing aeromedical evacuation. We have jets and crews over in the Middle East right now supporting operations against ISIS in Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria.”

Frantz said that his Airmen engage in a variety of missions on a regular basis and that being a Kansas National Guardsmen presents some great career opportunities.

“The fact that a senior in high school, can join this organization, get money for college, participate in these major operations around the world and actually earn a pretty good living doing it is an amazing experience,” said Frantz, “and we’re always looking for new members to join the team.



A KC-135 Stratotanker from the 190th Air Refueling Wing in Topeka prepares for takeoff at Forbes Field. The crew flew to Louisiana to transport Louisiana National Guardsmen to Puerto Rico to support hurricane relief efforts. (Photo by Steve Larson, Public Affairs Office)

35th ID, KLF conduct Desert Observer after action review



Members of the Kuwaiti Land Forces and 35th Infantry Division Soldiers participated in an after action review Oct. 19. The AAR was conducted to share information between the forces after completing the Desert Observer exercise at Camp Buehring, Kuwait. The KLF and 35th ID use the AAR results to increase interoperability to continue improving the planning processes for upcoming exercises. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Jennifer Milnes)

Campbell receives award from Kansas Council for Workforce Education

Chief Warrant Officer 3 Brent Campbell has received a Leadership Outside the Field award from the Kansas Council for Workforce Education.

Campbell was nominated for the award by Greg Nichols, president of Salina Area Technical College, for his work in developing a program that allows Soldiers to receive college credit from Salina Tech for training they receive from the Kansas National Guard. He received the award during the KCWE fall conference Oct. 27 at Butler Community College in El Dorado.

“It came as a surprise to me as I was not aware of the award,” said Campbell, “much less the nomination by President Greg Nichols.”

This award is designed to recognize an individual who has contributed to the field of career and technical education, but who is not an employee of a technical school/college or community college.

Campbell was cited for his excellence in leadership in that he:

- Envisioned a partnership to allow Sol-

diers to earn credit from Salina Tech for military training

- Was crucial in coordinating the Kansas National Guard and Salina Tech Synchronized Training for Academic Credit (STAC)
- Facilitated the formalization of the STAC partnership between Kansas National Guard and Salina Area Technical College.

“Our partnership started when a staff member of Salina Area Technical College reached out to us in 2016 asking for assistance to celebrate Veterans Day with them,” said Campbell. “Our staff and students provided a flag detail to honor all veterans and from that event our partnership has evolved over this past year.”

Maj. Gen. Lee Tafarielli, the adjutant general, signed a memorandum of Understanding with Nichols during a ceremony Sept. 15 in Salina.

“We anticipate that our first participant will be enrolled in our January Advanced Leadership Course,” said Campbell.

New shooting ranges opened



Maj. Gen. Lee Tafarielli, the adjutant general of Kansas, addresses the audience at the grand opening ceremony for two new shooting ranges at the Kansas National Guard Training Center Range near Salina Sept. 15. The new live-fire ranges will provide additional firearms training space for Kansas National Guardsmen and area law enforcement agencies (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Kevin Newell)

Olathe employer receives ESGR Patriot Award

Kelly English, associate vice president, KidsTLC, was presented with the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Patriot Award in recognition of her outstanding support of a member of the Kansas Army National Guard.

The award presentation was made Nov. 16, at KidsTLC in Olathe.

English was nominated for the award by 1st Lt. Callie Wheeler, company commander, Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 69th Troop Command, Topeka. Wheeler credits English with going above and beyond the duties of a supervisor by offering mentorship and support of Wheeler’s military, civilian, and educational goals.

“I nominated Kelly for the Patriot Award because of her willingness to recognize my potential, and provide unconditional support to help me reach the goals I’d set for myself,” said Wheeler. “I started working at KidsTLC’s psychiatric

residential treatment facility in January 2015 as a direct care staff. Kelly’s commitment to caring for her employees was immediately evident, as she took the time to observe my work and get to know me as a person. While working at KidsTLC, I began graduate school to pursue a master’s in counseling and became a company commander. Despite an always busy work schedule, Kelly remained flexible and supported my time being gone.”

Wheeler left KidsTLC in June 2017 to take a full-time position with the Kansas National Guard, but remains involved as an intern with their Intensive Outpatient Program with English as her supervisor.

The ESGR Patriot Award reflects the efforts made by an individual to support citizen warriors through a wide-range of measures including flexible schedules, time off prior to and after deployment, caring for families, and granting leaves of absence, if needed.