



MISSISSIPPI MILITARY DEPARTMENT  
**2020 ANNUAL REPORT**



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JULY 2019 | JUNE 2020



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Message from the Adjutant General	6
Key Leadership	8
State and Federal Funding	10
A Year in Review	13
Major Units & Activities	14
Home & Abroad	16
Camp McCain	18
Camp Shelby JFTC	21
CRTC - Gulfport	22
66th Troop Command	24
185th Aviation Brigade	25
47th Civil Support Team	26
154th Regional Training Institute	27
155th Armored Brigade Combat Team	28
184th Support Command (Expeditionary)	30
Air Guard Overview	32
172d Airlift Wing	35
186th Air Refueling Wing	36
Det. 2, Cyber Protection Team 178	38
Facilities Maintenance Office	39
Youth Challenge Academy	40
Family Programs	41
Defense Support of Civil Authorities	42
Recruiting and Retention	45
Regional Counterdrug Training Academy	46
State Partnership Program	47
State Aviation	48
Contributor Page	50





## To the Governor of the Great State of Mississippi

On behalf of the over 12,500 men and women serving in the Mississippi National Guard, I present to you the annual report of the Mississippi Military Department for the State Fiscal Year 2020. Mississippi distinguishes itself as one of the premier Guard states in our nation.

Over the past year, MSNG aviators assisted our nation during the Southwest Border mission, the state of Florida during rescue and recovery operations during Hurricane Dorian, and our own state during the historic Pearl River flooding response as the river crested at its third-highest level in history.

Our service members continue to engage in deployment missions across the globe. The 114th Military Police Company set the standard of excellence by being the first Army element integrating non-lethal military police training for female police officers in Kuwait.

The 204th Air Defense Artillery Regiment provided essential air defense security to the National Capital Region and served in overseas contingency operations in Europe. They have executed their mission with extraordinary perseverance against all challenges, maintaining security for the heart of America.

Most importantly, the Mississippi National Guard is supporting the Mississippi State Department of Health and the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency, by manning community-based COVID-19 testing sites and various Long Term Care Facilities across the state and supporting MEMA in the timely distribution of personal protective equipment to our state's healthcare workers.

The MSNG, represented by service members living in every county of our great state, continued to perform with professionalism and patriotism in every mission by learning to train and prepare for contingencies in a COVID-19 environment; . Our Soldiers, Airmen, Civilian employees and Families are resilient and stand steadfast to answer the call to serve.

MSNG is proud to announce the continued coordination with institutions of higher learning. This year, we have added the University of Southern Mississippi, Mississippi College and the University of Mississippi to the elite group of Colleges and Universities working with the MSNG to implement Tuition Programs in coordination with State and Federal Education Assistance Programs. These programs enable serving Guardsmen the opportunity to achieve their civilian education goals and have been successful in improving and maintaining MSNG readiness while keeping our talented Mississippians in our state.

Our Mississippi National Guard continues to excel at home and around the world. We stand ready to serve the great citizens of Mississippi and answer our nation's call to service.

Maj. Gen. Janson D. Boyles  
The Adjutant General of Mississippi



## To the Governor of the Great State of Mississippi

The Mississippi National Guard continues to stand ready for any mission in support of our state and nation. Our strength is a reflection of the talented men and women serving in the MSNG representing every county within our state. On behalf of the brave Soldiers and Airmen serving in the MSNG, it is an honor to highlight our accomplishments and contributions to the citizens of Mississippi and our great nation.

This year has presented many challenges and new mission opportunities. Our newest and most pressing mission was supporting the statewide COVID-19 Task Force led by Mississippi State Department of Health and the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency. We have served diligently during the COVID-19 response employing MSNG professionals skilled in logistics, transportation, security, and medicine to support community-based testing sites, and distribute personal protective equipment to the front lines.

Our Soldiers served with distinction during Operation Arctic Anvil, a no-notice deployment, force-on-force training exercise that included live, virtual, and constructive elements to prepare the Spartans of the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, for validation prior to deployment.

The MSNG Soldiers and Airmen are a trained and ready force. We have shared our strength and expertise as the 114th Military Police Company set a standard of excellence during their deployment to Kuwait. They established the first Army military police hand-to-hand combatives training for the all-female Kuwaiti Police Special Forces Unit. The Air Guard celebrated excellence and professionalism as ten Tactical Air Control Party Airmen, from the 238th Air Support Operations Squadron, received Bronze Stars for actions during their deployment to Central Command, with an additional 13 Airmen receiving the Army Commendation Medal with the combat "C" device.

The 154th Regiment Regional Training Institute trained approximately 5,000 service members from Mississippi and throughout the southeast United States. The training programs offered at the 154th RTI service all components of the armed forces and continue to develop and advance today's warfighter for tomorrow's missions.

The 1st Battalion, 204th Air Defense Artillery Regiment continues to shine as a dependable and exceptional unit serving two separate missions, thousands of miles apart. The battalion left Newton in March to embark on a deployment sending a contingent to the National Capital Region, while the remaining Soldiers deployed to support operations in Europe.

We have not wavered in our integrity and dedication to serve our communities, state and nation in response to natural disasters, civil unrest, and continuing the fight against COVID-19, simultaneously excelling in exercises, such as Southern Strike and Patriot South. It is through these diverse opportunities that our courageous men and women surpass all expectations and serve with honor in support of our state and nation.

Command Sgt. Maj. John Raines  
Senior Enlisted Leader

## ARMY



**Brig. Gen.  
Amos P. Parker Jr.**

Assistant Adjutant General - Army  
Jan. 11, 2019 - Oct. 31, 2020

Brig. Gen. Amos P. Parker, Jr. has served as the Assistant Adjutant General for the Mississippi Army National Guard since Jan. 11, 2019. As the Assistant Adjutant General - Army, Parker directs the operations of more than 10,000 Citizen Soldiers. He guides the formulation, development and implementation of all programs and policies affecting the Mississippi Army National Guard.



**Maj. Gen. John T. Kelly**

Director of Joint Staff  
Dec. 15, 2017 - Oct. 31, 2020  
Assistant Adjutant General - Army  
Nov. 1, 2020

Brig. Gen. John T. Kelly has served as the Director, Joint Staff – Joint Force Headquarters and Land Component Commander since Dec. 15, 2017. As the Director, Joint Staff and Land Component Commander, Kelly directs the operations of Citizen Soldiers and Airmen within the Mississippi National Guard. He guides the formulation, development and implementation of joint programs and policies affecting the Mississippi National Guard.



**Chief Warrant Officer 5  
Thomas W. Smith**

State Command  
Chief Warrant Officer

Chief Warrant Officer 5 Thomas W. Smith has served as the State Command Chief Warrant Officer since April 6, 2018. As the Command Chief Warrant Officer, Smith serves as the senior advisor to the Adjutant General on all matters relating to Warrant Officers. He informs the Adjutant General and makes recommendations in matters of recruiting, retention, morale, welfare, schooling, promotions, and assignments of the Warrant Officers.



**Command Sgt. Maj.  
Christopher L. Young**

State Command Sgt. Maj.

Command Sgt. Maj. Christopher L. Young has served as the State Command Sergeant Major of the Mississippi Army National Guard since Aug. 1, 2019. As the State Command Sergeant Major, Young is responsible for the welfare of all enlisted Citizen Soldiers. He advises the Adjutant General of Mississippi and the Assistant Adjutant General - Army on all enlisted-related matters, particularly in areas affecting Soldier training, readiness and quality of life.



**Maj. Gen. Billy M. Nabors**

Assistant Adjutant General - Air

Maj. Gen. Billy M. Nabors has served as the Assistant Adjutant General - Air and Commander of the Mississippi Air National Guard since Aug. 4, 2018. As the Assistant Adjutant General - Air, Nabors directs the operations of more than 2,500 Citizen Airmen. He establishes policy to ensure the combat readiness and mission capability of the Mississippi Air National Guard.



**Command Chief Master Sgt.  
Lynn R. Cole**

State Command Chief Master Sgt.

Command Chief Master Sgt. Lynn R. Cole has served as the State Command Chief Master Sergeant for the Mississippi Air National Guard, since Dec. 2, 2017. As the State Command Chief Master Sergeant, Cole is responsible for the welfare of all enlisted Citizen Airmen. She advises the Adjutant General of Mississippi and the Assistant Adjutant General – Air on all enlisted-related matters of mission effectiveness, professional development, military readiness, and training.

## AIR

## JOINT



**Brig. Gen. Clint E. Walker**

Director of Joint Staff  
Nov. 1, 2020

Brig. Gen. Clint E. Walker has served as the Commanding General, 184th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), Mississippi Army National Guard, since Oct. 17, 2017. He is responsible for more than 2,300 Citizen Soldiers serving in subordinate units stationed throughout Mississippi. He oversees all of the 184th Sustainment Command's internal and external sustainment missions in support of United States Forces, Multinational Forces and Interagency organizations worldwide through command and control of supply, maintenance, and field service units and directs the synchronization of transportation, medical, personnel, finance, and engineer unit activities.



**Col. Joe D. Hargett**

Chief of Joint Staff

Col. Joe D. Hargett serves as the Chief of the Joint Staff for the Mississippi National Guard. He is responsible for supervising and directing the MSNG's staff and managing budgets and resources for all major programs. Hargett oversees the development and coordination of all policies, plans, and programs and serves as the state-level Army National Guard liaison to the National Guard Bureau and State and Federal leadership.



**Command Sgt. Maj.  
Darrell L. Masterson**

Land Component Command  
Sergeant Major

Command Sgt. Maj. Darrell L. Masterson has served as the Land Component Command Sergeant Major since Aug. 1, 2019. As the Land Component Command Sergeant Major, Masterson is responsible for the welfare of enlisted Citizen Soldiers and Airmen within the Mississippi National Guard. He advises the Director, Joint Staff and Land Component Commander on all enlisted related matters, particularly in areas affecting Soldier and Airmen training and quality of life.



**Brig. Gen.  
Barry A. Blanchard**

Chief of Staff - Air

Brig. Gen. Barry A. Blanchard serves as the Chief of Staff for the Mississippi Air National Guard at the Joint Force Headquarters in Jackson. He assists the commander and the Adjutant General in formulating, developing, and coordinating all programs, policies, and plans ensuring the mission readiness of the 172d Airlift Wing, 186th Air Refueling Wing, and the Gulfport Combat Readiness Training Center.



**Lt. Col. (P) Laura L. Odom**

Director of Staff - Air

Lt. Col. Laura L. Odom is the Director of Staff for the Mississippi Air National Guard. She serves as the primary advisor to the Air National Guard commander regarding the oversight and support of the 2,500 Airmen assigned to the state's two flying wings and combat readiness training center. Odom directs and implements higher-headquarter policies and guidance and serves as the state-level Air National Guard liaison to the Mississippi Army National Guard, National Guard Bureau, and State and Federal leadership.

## STATE & FEDERAL FUNDING

The Mississippi National Guard maintains a strong presence throughout the Magnolia State. Our entire force consists of approximately 12,500 Soldiers and Airmen – 923 of which are Active Guard and Reserve. We have 1,091 federal technician employees and 948 state employees, both of which are comprised of Soldiers, Airmen, and Civilians. The MSNG has 64 Army National Guard Readiness Centers in various communities across Mississippi, and three major Air National Guard facilities. The fourth quarter of state fiscal year 2020 saw many cancelations of contracts and training events due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and a shift to fighting a new invisible enemy. Our dedicated employees serve with a proactive attitude to search for more effective and efficient ways to conduct business. The MSNG will continue to be good stewards of government funding while always protecting the interests of the state of Mississippi, our Soldiers and Airmen, and the taxpayers.



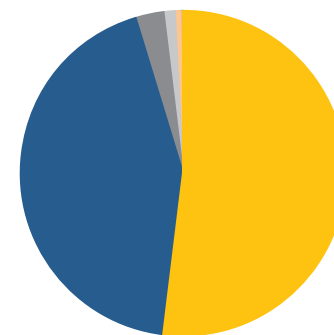
## CONTINUED PROJECTS THROUGH FY 2020

Ongoing Improvement Projects at 10 Army National Guard armories and two Air National Guard facilities.

\* Completed, continued, and planned improvements include:

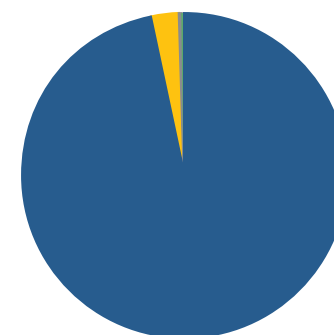
- Improving HVAC, lighting, and mechanical systems; installing new energy-efficient lighting, energy efficient HVAC systems, and replacing ductwork to improve overall energy efficiency.
- Adding smart metering, fire suppression systems, fire alarms, and mass communication systems at many locations; including vent hood fire-suppression systems, sprinkler systems, and energy efficient alarms and communication systems.
- Constructing, repairing, or resurfacing parking areas at multiple armories and repairing drainage and embankment issues at armories and Air Guard facilities.
- Adding fencing, striping, and lighting to parking areas to meet Unified Facility Criteria and MDOT standards.
- Adding classrooms, locker rooms, or storage rooms to many locations while upgrading bathrooms, water heaters, and plumbing systems to meet ADA standards and energy-efficiency standards.
- Repairing or replacing ceiling tiles, plumbing fixtures in kitchens and bathrooms, flooring and tiling in various locations, and adding fresh paint or sealant to vertical concrete surfaces to maintain structural integrity.

### Mississippi Army National Guard FY 2020 Federal Appropriations: \$446,761,607



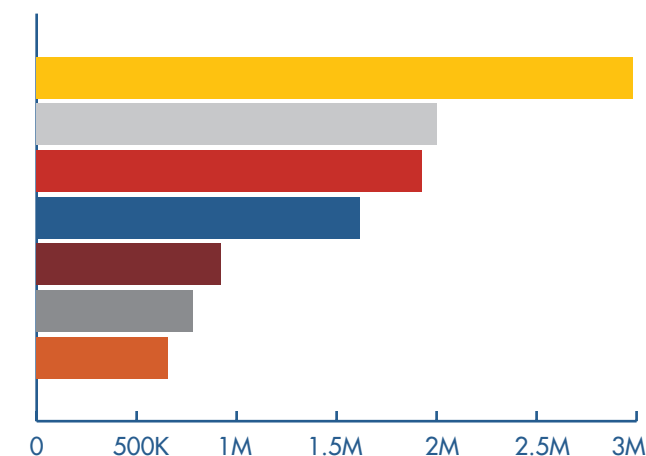
- Operations and Maintenance: \$232,830,760
- Military Pay and Allowances: \$193,201,280
- COVID Response: \$12,689,928
- Youth Challenge: \$4,350,000
- Special Forces: \$2,576,000
- Military Construction: \$1,079,889
- Employer Support of the Guard/Reserve: \$33,750

### Mississippi Air National Guard FY 2020 Federal Appropriations: \$190,511,255



- Operations and Maintenance: \$38,964,721
- Military/Civilian Pay and Allowances: \$144,690,021
- COVID Response: \$6,121,961
- MILCON: \$734,552

### Mississippi Military Department State Fiscal Year 2020 Appropriations & Bond: \$10,893,894



- Operations and Maintenance: \$2,981,753
- Repairs & Maintenance Bond: \$2,000,000
- Youth Challenge: \$1,928,075
- Pay & Allowances: \$1,615,041
- State Education Assistance: \$925,000
- COVID Response: \$785,220
- Armed Forces Museum: \$658,805



**“The past year has been challenging for the Airmen of the Mississippi Air National Guard as they have balanced federal operations in defense of the nation with unique domestic operations. COVID-19 support to our communities has been vital to the health and welfare of our citizens but has placed our own members and their families at risk of infection. Our Airmen have performed in a truly exceptional manner in the face of that risk. They continue to set the standard.”**

**-Billy M. Nabors, Maj. Gen., MS ANG  
Assistant Adjutant General**

## A YEAR IN REVIEW

State fiscal year 2020 was a challenging year for the military and yielded a large amount of new missions for the Mississippi National Guard. The service members in our formation faced a new enemy known as COVID-19 with approximately 450 Guardsmen serving on the front lines as of June 30, 2020. The Guardsmen served on active duty around our state in support of the governor’s COVID-19 State Task Force led by Mississippi State Department of Health and the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency.

The MSNG’s continued support of our state and nation included – the 1-204th Air Defense Artillery Regiment deployment to the National Capital Region; MSNG Aviators’ support of the Southwest Border mission; and domestic support to civil authorities operations after deadly tornadoes, flooding and other severe weather threats. The 114th Military Police Company became the first Army element to train the Kuwaiti Female Police Special Forces Unit on essential tasks and operations during their deployment to the Middle East. The Air Guard completed vital missions bringing home US citizens stranded in South America due to travel restrictions imposed due to the outbreak of COVID-19.

**“The Mississippi National Guard’s Soldiers and Airmen continue to execute our Federal and State mission with precision and expertise. This fiscal year presented a new challenge to our force by means of enabling our State’s response to the coronavirus pandemic while maintaining our operational readiness and participation in national level training exercises. We continue to perform flawlessly and credit our Soldiers and Airmen with our continued success. Readiness of our Soldiers, Airmen, and their families remains our #1 priority.”**

**- Col. Joe Hargett, Chief of Staff**



**Camp Shelby Tornado**

An EF4 tornado ripped through five south Mississippi counties with a total on-ground track of more than 54 miles. The April 19 tornado was the third EF4 to hit the area within a week after two large tornadoes tore through the Hattiesburg area, April 12.



**Washington D.C. Response**

Nearly 370 Soldiers of the 155th Armored Brigade Combat Team mobilized to the District of Columbia, within 24 hours of notice, to assist civil authorities in the defense of the National Capital Region in early June.



**Kuwaiti Female MPs**

Female Soldiers of the Mississippi Army National Guard’s 114th Military Police Company, based in Clinton, were selected to be the first Army trainers of Kuwaiti female police officers while deployed in support of Operation Inherent Resolve.

# MAJOR UNITS & ACTIVITIES

Approximately 12,500 Soldiers and Airmen

The Mississippi National Guard possesses an impressive force structure which offers a variety of strong options for state emergency and federal mobilization support. Our units and facilities cover the entire Magnolia State - from Corinth to the Coast and Vicksburg to Meridian.



**168TH ENGINEER  
BRIGADE  
VICKSBURG, MISS.**



**186TH AIR  
REFUELING WING  
MERIDIAN, MISS.**



**CAMP MCCAIN  
TRAINING CENTER  
ELLIOT, MISS.**



**154TH REGIONAL  
TRAINING INSTITUTE  
CAMP SHELBY, MISS.**



**JOINT FORCE  
HEADQUARTERS, MSNG  
JACKSON, MISS.**



**66TH TROOP COMMAND  
JACKSON, MISS.**



**185TH  
AVIATION BRIGADE  
JACKSON, MISS.**



**47TH CIVIL  
SUPPORT TEAM  
FLOWOOD, MISS.**



**155TH ARMORED  
BRIGADE COMBAT TEAM  
TUPELO, MISS.**



**184TH  
SUSTAINMENT COMMAND  
(EXPEDITIONARY)  
MONTICELLO, MISS.**



**CAMP SHELBY  
JOINT FORCES  
TRAINING CENTER  
CAMP SHELBY, MISS.**



**GULFPORT  
COMBAT READINESS  
TRAINING CENTER  
GULFPORT, MISS.**



**172D  
AIRLIFT WING  
FLOWOOD, MISS.**



**178TH CYBER  
PROTECTION TEAM  
STARKVILLE, MISS.**



**20TH SPECIAL  
FORCES GROUP  
JACKSON, MISS.**



# HOME & ABROAD



## Unit Awards

Three Mississippi Army National Guard units were recognized with Department of the Army unit-level awards during the 2020 state fiscal year. The 155th Armored Brigade Combat Team was presented two Meritorious Unit Commendations (MUC) for service in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, from June 2009 to March 2010, and Operations Spartan Shield and Inherent Resolve from June 2018 to March 2019 – where they supported missions throughout the entire Central Command theater of operations. The 1108th Theater Aviation Support Maintenance Group also received a MUC for their support of Operations Spartan Shield, Inherent Resolve, Freedom's Sentinel and the Multi-National Force and Observers during the period of Nov. 11, 2017, to Aug. 21, 2018. Additionally, the 102d Public Affairs Detachment was recognized with the Army Superior Unit Award for its exceptional service throughout the two-year period of July 2015 to June 2017.



## Best Warrior 2020

Staff Sgt. Mitchell Scofield, 154th Regiment Regional Training Institute, and Senior Airman Bo Wilcher, 186th Security Forces Squadron, were named the NCO of the Year and Soldier of the Year, respectively, after winning the 2020 Mississippi National Guard Best Warrior Competition held at Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center and Camp McCain Training Center in December 2019. This was the first year the Mississippi Guardsmen were joined by our state partners from Uzbekistan, vying for the title of International Best Warrior NCO and International Best Warrior Soldier.



## Education Opportunities for Soldiers & Airmen

Many of Mississippi's major public universities and some of the major private colleges have signed a memorandum of understanding with the Mississippi National Guard, providing reduced or free tuition to MSNG service members. In order to be eligible, a service member must be a full-time undergraduate student; in good standing with their unit; must not be within one year of their end of term of service; and must maintain at least a 2.0 GPA. Each institute of higher learning's program varies slightly, but all use the State Educational Assistance Program (SEAP) to cover a solid portion of the tuition, while the school combines all other benefits the student has and qualifies for in order to satisfy tuition costs.



## 172d AW COVID-19 Flight

Approximately 90 U.S. citizens, who were previously unable to return home from South America, were transported to Eglin Air Force Base, Florida, April 1 and 2 by the Mississippi Air National Guard's 172d Airlift Wing. The mission was part of an interagency effort led by the U.S. State Department to assist American citizens around the world during the COVID-19 pandemic. The aircrew of six only had a few days to plan the mission, and over the course of two days, 48 American citizens were transported from Bogota, Columbia, and 42 were transported from Panama.



## Arctic Anvil

Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center (CSJFTC) conducted its largest exercise ever in conjunction with an active duty brigade combat team during Arctic Anvil 2019. CSJFTC hosted the Spartans of the 4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division, based in Alaska, after more than 1,500 pieces of the brigade's equipment passed through the ports of Gulfport and Pascagoula in September. The equipment was reunited with the approximately 4,000 Soldiers of the brigade in the largest mobilization ever through the strategic ports of Mississippi. The Mississippi Army National Guard's 155th Armored Brigade Combat Team served as the opposition forces for the force-on-force training exercise.



## Africa Deployment

Soldiers of the 2nd Battalion, 20th Special Forces Group, recently deployed to the Africa Command area of operations for foreign internal defense missions, working with the host nation and other western partners against violent extremist organizations. The Soldiers worked by, with and through partner forces in an advise and assist role.

# CAMP MCCAIN

The War Department established the Grenada Triangular Division Camp on December 15, 1942. Shortly after being established, the Camp was renamed "Camp McCain" in honor of Maj. Gen. Henry P. McCain.

The headquarters for Camp McCain was located in Elliott, Mississippi, 10 miles South of Grenada. Camp McCain's facilities included numerous buildings and training areas on 42,073 acres and located in Grenada and Montgomery Counties. During World War II, the 87th and 94th Divisions trained more than 50,000 service members at Camp McCain for deployment to the European Theater. Camp McCain also housed over 7,700 German prisoners of war. Grenada Army Airfield was constructed to support Camp McCain in late 1943. The War Department deactivated Camp McCain in October 1944 and declared its property excess. The War Department transferred 3,006 acres of Camp McCain's lands to the Mississippi National Guard for use as a weekend training site.

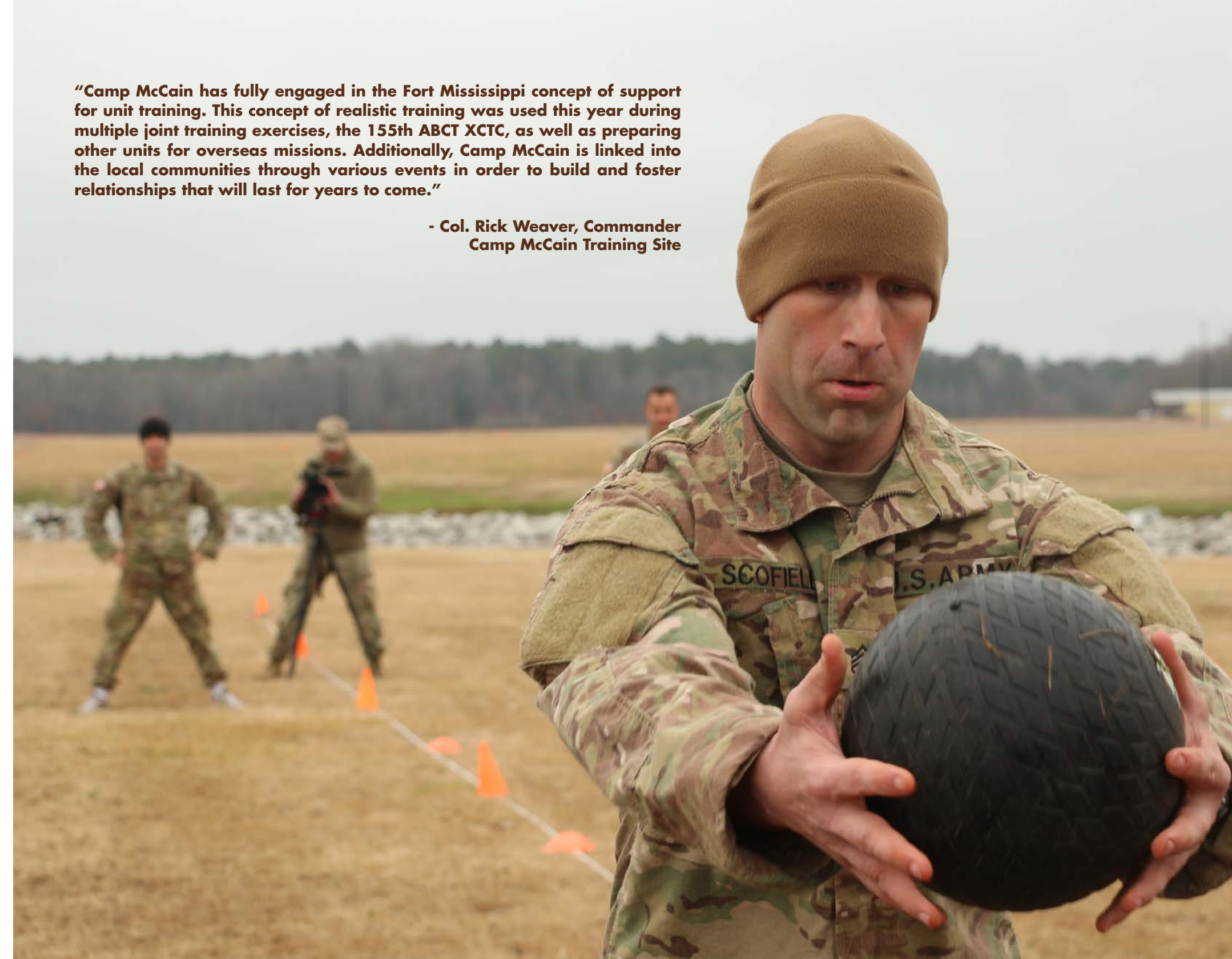
The Mississippi National Guard acquired additional land and constructed additional facilities over the following 76 years, culminating in the current 12,919 acre, multicomponent, year-round training site. Camp McCain Training Center trains members of U.S. military and civilian services, as well as members of numerous international partners. Camp McCain is home to Companies C and E, 2nd Battalion, 20th Special Forces Group, Unit Training Equipment Site and Consolidated Support Maintenance Site #2.

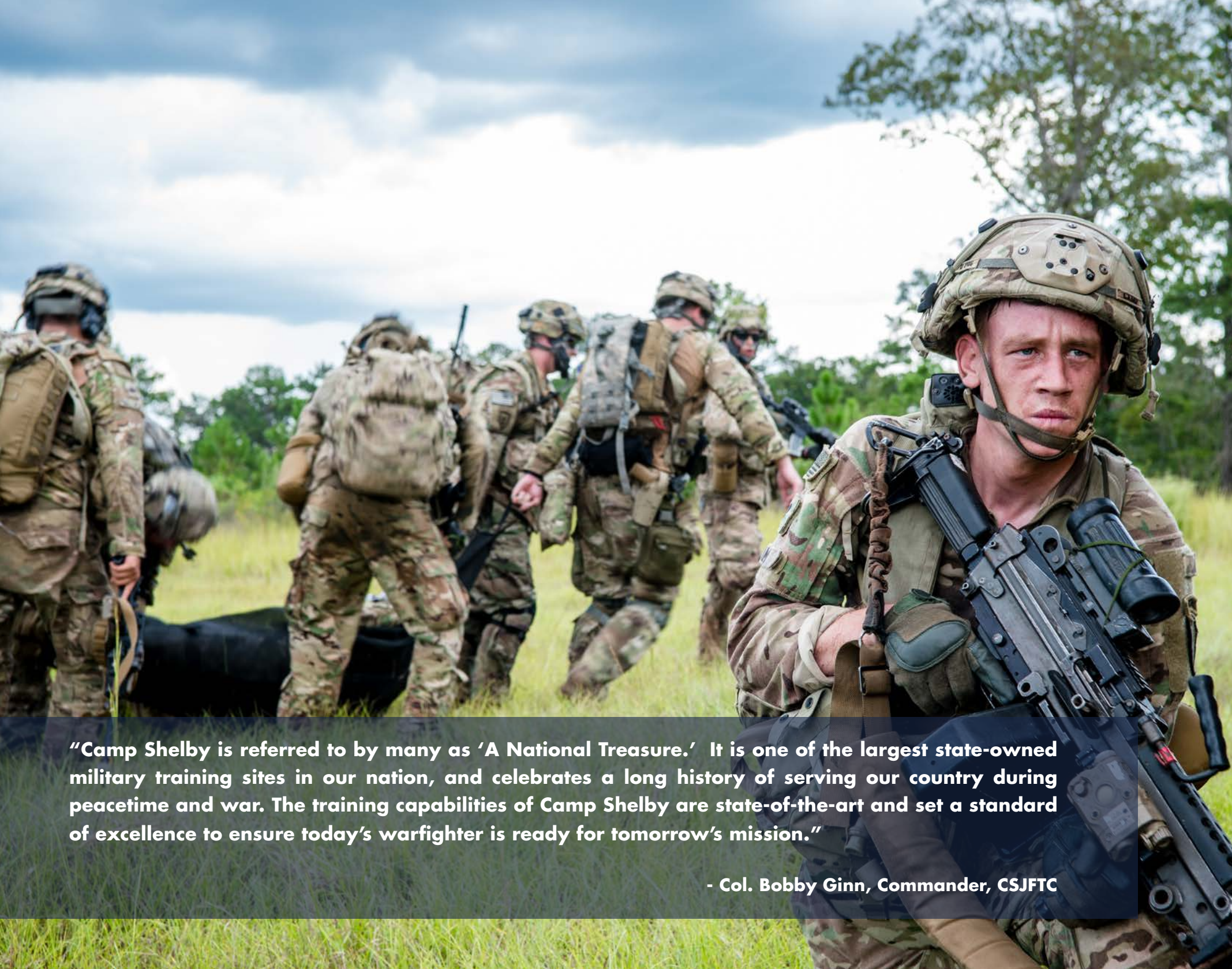
In state fiscal year 2020, Camp McCain Training Center facilitated training events for more than 50,000 Active Duty, Reserve, and National Guard Service Members. Camp McCain's state-of-the-art training areas include eight live fire ranges, multiple simulation training aids, three land navigation courses, an 18-station confidence course, a repel tower, and computer labs. This past fiscal year, Camp McCain supported Southern Strike and Patriot South missions, both of which are Joint National Training Capability (JNTC) accredited exercises. Camp McCain provided support to military and civilian personnel participating in Helicopter Aquatic Rescue Team and search and rescue training. Camp McCain hosted its first Special Olympics, the Mississippi Cheer and Football competition, Youth Resilience Camp, and Best Warrior Competition events. Camp McCain recorded a record number of attendees during BSA Chickasaw Council's Operation Delta Annual Camporee. Camp McCain expanded, upgraded, and enhanced its facilities and training areas to further support training a ready, relevant force, acquiring equipment for recovery training, upgraded all live fire ranges with new targets, and modified its ranges and simulators to accommodate revised individual weapons qualification requirements. Camp McCain increased its presence within the aviation training realm by entering into a partnership with the Grenada Airport to support military Air Traffic Control Units. Camp McCain is extensively involved in the local community and has a partnership with the City and County Government, Leadership Grenada, Boy Scouts of America, Rotary Clubs, Exchange Clubs, Chambers of Commerce, and Economic Development Districts.



**"Camp McCain has fully engaged in the Fort Mississippi concept of support for unit training. This concept of realistic training was used this year during multiple joint training exercises, the 155th ABCT XCTC, as well as preparing other units for overseas missions. Additionally, Camp McCain is linked into the local communities through various events in order to build and foster relationships that will last for years to come."**

**- Col. Rick Weaver, Commander  
Camp McCain Training Site**





**“Camp Shelby is referred to by many as ‘A National Treasure.’ It is one of the largest state-owned military training sites in our nation, and celebrates a long history of serving our country during peacetime and war. The training capabilities of Camp Shelby are state-of-the-art and set a standard of excellence to ensure today’s warfighter is ready for tomorrow’s mission.”**

**- Col. Bobby Ginn, Commander, CSJFTC**

## CAMP SHELBY JOINT FORCES TRAINING CENTER

Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center is approximately 136,000 acres, making it the largest state-owned National Guard training site in the nation. It supports a wide variety of training and logistical support activities, including heavy maneuver, collective gunnery, multiple battalion field artillery fire ranges, realistic environmental training and air-to-ground combat training for all branches and components of the military. Camp Shelby began training troops for World War I in 1917 and continues to train service members for current overseas contingency operations in locations all around the world. Our mission is to prepare today’s service members for future missions.

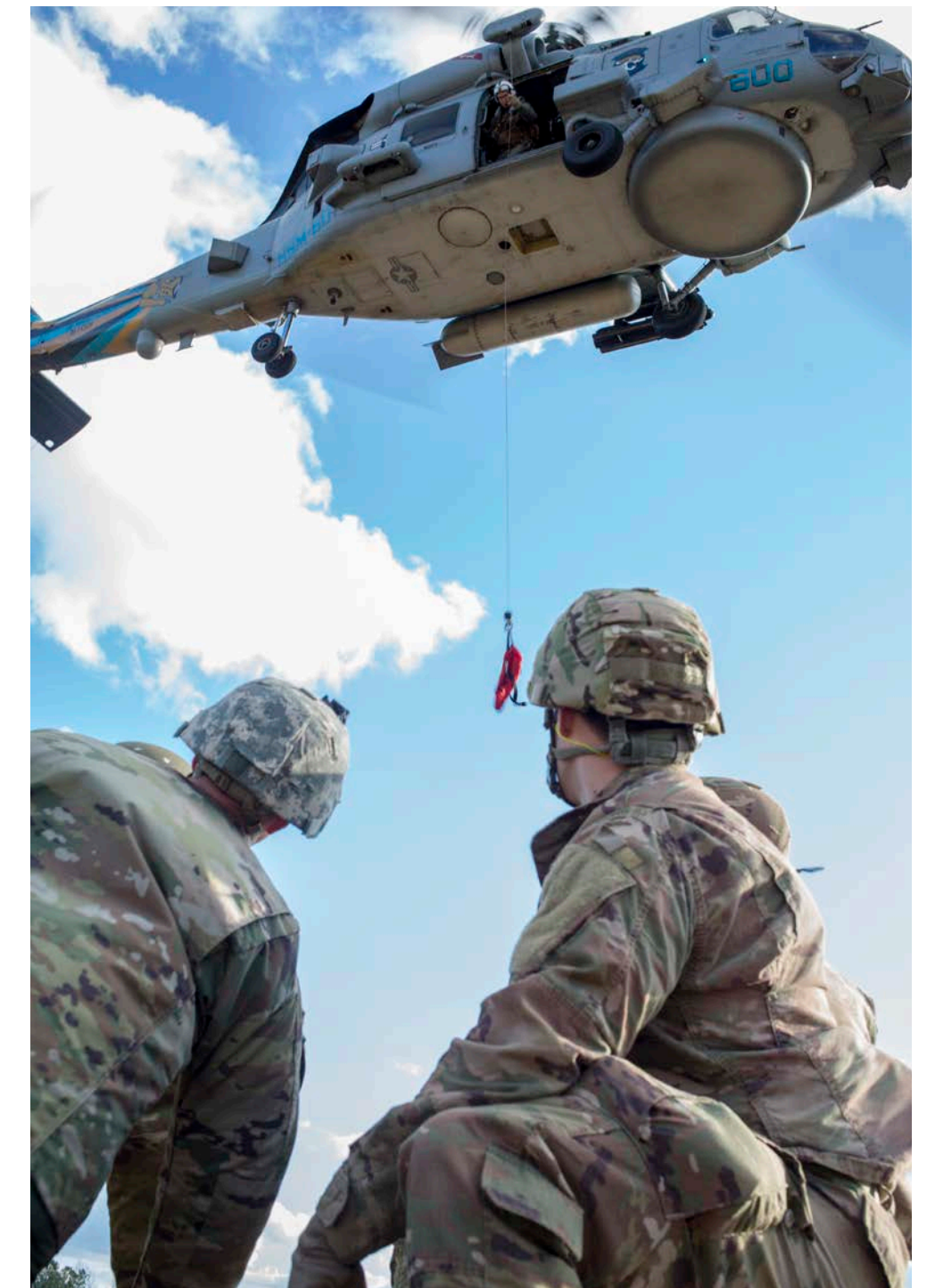
### **2020 At a Glance**

The state fiscal year 2020 was packed with joint training events including Arctic Anvil, Southern Strike, Patriot South and Air Force Basic Training.

Mississippi Gov. Tate Reeves designated Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center as a contingency site to house COVID-19 patients in March 2020. “We’re trying to plan for the worst – in the event one of our hospitals or multiple hospitals in this region or state or anywhere else were to find themselves in a position in which they were struggling to keep up with the demand caused by COVID-19,” said Reeves.

### **Natural Disasters Impact Camp Shelby**

An EF4 tornado ripped through Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center April 19, 2020, causing damage to more than 200 buildings, two of which sustained major damage. None of the buildings that were damaged by the tornado were completely lost or irreparable. Col. Bobby M. Ginn, Camp Shelby post commander, said, “Not having as many people on base due to the coronavirus and social distancing was a blessing in disguise. We’re very fortunate that we didn’t have anyone hurt.”



# COMBAT READINESS TRAINING CENTER - GULFPORT

Opening as Gulfport Field on Sept 2, 1942, the Gulfport Combat Readiness Training Center (CRTC) has trained the nation's Armed Forces for over 78 years. One of only four Air National Guard CRTCs in the nation, Gulfport encompasses 277 acres on the Mississippi Gulf Coast providing an integrated and realistic year-round training environment.

Facilities include ramp space for up to 100 fighter jets, 11,000 square miles of airspace over the Gulf of Mexico, an air-to-ground bombing range adjacent to Camp Shelby, and accommodations for up to 1,000 Airmen. The installation's location makes it uniquely situated to provide military organizations with access to a wide variety of air, land, and sea training venues.

From July 2019 through June 2020, Gulfport CRTC hosted more than 11,000 service members from around the globe participating in military training exercises. The installation facilitated multiple Joint National Training Capability (JNTC) exercises designed and executed to sharpen readiness and enhance local, state, and national crisis response capabilities.

Prior to the COVID-19 outbreak, Gulfport CRTC was on track to establish new records for numbers of visiting organizations and training events. Organizations such as the 403d Wing (USAF Reserve) and the 123d Airlift Wing of the Kentucky Air National Guard, continue to flow to Gulfport CRTC to conduct Operational Readiness Assessments. Despite the logistical challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, Gulfport CRTC continued to prepare forces to meet mission requirements. Although health concerns resulted in the cancellation of many training events, the installation accommodated the crew of the USS Tripoli for more than 90 days, enabling them to minimize the spread of illness and allowing the USS Tripoli to meet deployment timelines.

Gulfport CRTC is an important link in the economic welfare of the local community. The installation employs over 500 Active Guard/Reserve members, traditional Guardsmen, federal employees, and state employees with an annual payroll exceeding \$21 million. Gulfport CRTC adds an additional \$9 million to the local economy through the procurement of construction, services, materials, supplies and equipment. Visiting organizations conducting training at the installation bring in an additional \$8 million to the local economy through hotel stays, meals at local restaurants, and other logistical support functions. Activities during training events at Gulfport CRTC is estimated to create nearly 200 additional support jobs, generating another \$7 million in revenue.



## JOINT NATIONAL TRAINING EXERCISES

### SOUTHERN STRIKE 2020

Southern Strike 2020 gathered 1,800 warriors from 53 organizations representing all branches of US armed service and three international partners conducting counter-insurgency, close-air support, noncombatant evacuation, and maritime special operations. This year's iteration included a major first, with MQ-9 Reaper flight operations conducted from Gulfport CRTC with pilots from five different states.

### PATRIOT SOUTH

Patriot South, the National Guard Bureau's premier Domestic Operations exercise, afforded 1,200 Armed Forces members and local, state and federal civilian entities with the opportunity to test and strengthen their integrated response capabilities during a simulated natural disaster.

### MAGNOLIA STRIKE

Magnolia Strike exercises provided Special Warfare Airmen with both academic and hands-on opportunities to hone skills including advanced combat medical treatment, close quarters combat, fast rope insertion and extraction, mechanical and explosive breaching, light and heavy weapon familiarization, and close air support.

### ARCTIC ANVIL

Arctic Anvil exercise included the debarkation, redeployment, and regeneration of the 4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division, from their home location in Alaska to Gulfport CRTC and sites throughout Mississippi. Supported air operations at Gulfport CRTC included boarding 900 paratroopers onto C-130Js for nighttime airborne operations at Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center.

### MARSOC RAVEN

This exercise provided USMC special operations companies and subordinate teams an opportunity to integrate intelligence, communication, and logistics enablers to execute a variety of special operations missions; including sensitive activities, tactical collections, special reconnaissance and direct-action raids.

## 66TH TROOP COMMAND

The 66th Troop Command (TC) is comprised of Aviation, Aviation Maintenance, Special Forces, Military Police, Air Defense Artillery, Finance, Public Affairs, Band and Civil Support Team (CST) units. 66th TC units are ready and prepared to meet emerging requirements supporting national defense and civil support. Troop Command units participated in three national exercises, six deployments supporting two Combatant Commands, the governor's inauguration, civil disturbance support and multiple training events. Troop Command has a diverse set of units capable of supporting and responding to any directed mission inside or outside the US.

The 185th Expeditionary Combat Aviation Brigade (ECAB) is a force multiplier capable of providing quick and effective delivery of equipment, troops and supplies during civil support, humanitarian and combat operations. Currently, the 185th ECAB has elements deployed to multiple areas of the Central Command region and along the southwest border of the United States. The brigade participated in two national-level training exercises – Arctic Anvil and Southern Strike – enhancing unit readiness and showcasing their joint-service capabilities.

The 47th Civil Support Team (CST) are technical first responders to civil authorities for weapons of mass destruction. The CST works and trains in the Joint, Interagency and Intergovernmental environment. They conducted exercises with multiple Civil Support Teams and government agencies in Alaska. The CST has been a key component to various federal, state and local agencies during multiple key events, such as the VPOTUS visit to Mississippi, assisting Louisiana Emergency Management Agency during Family and Mardi Gras events, and most recently supporting the Mississippi State Department of Health (MSDH) with advising and overseeing the proper use of personal protective equipment at community-based COVID-19 testing sites. The 47th CST has the highest readiness rating and operational tempo of MSNG units with a 24-hours-a-day, 365 days-a-year deployment cycle.



## 185TH AVIATION BRIGADE

The 185th Expeditionary Combat Aviation Brigade (ECAB) provides the State of Mississippi and the United States of America with a highly capable and lethal means to quickly and effectively deliver troops, equipment, and supplies during times of peace and war.

The 185th ECAB and subordinate units have a proven record of excellence in training and readiness. During major training events in state fiscal year 2020, including Arctic Anvil and Southern Strike, the 185th ECAB and its subordinate units showcased its capabilities in support of both Army and joint multi-composition operations.

The 185th ECAB's commitment to national interest and security means sustaining readiness to fight and win our nation's wars. Currently deployed to the Middle East and along the southwestern border of the United States, the 185th ECAB and subordinate units consistently focus their efforts on building and maintaining lethality and readiness.

The 185th ECAB is a force multiplier who stands ready to add value to any operation or effort. It is fully committed and ready to conduct missions in support of the State of Mississippi, the Mississippi National Guard and the United States of America, whenever and wherever they are needed.



## 47TH CIVIL SUPPORT TEAM

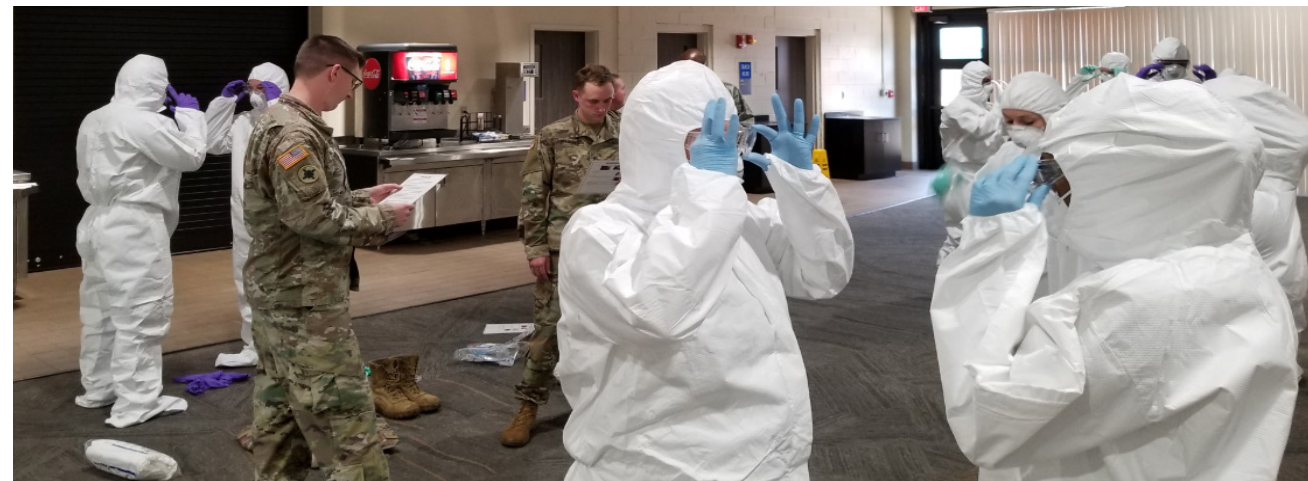
The 47th Civil Support Team's mission is to assist civil authorities by identifying unknown hazardous substances including chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and explosive material at any state or national incident site. Additionally, their support provides assistance and advice on consequence management and immediate response operations for events that could potentially result in catastrophic life or property loss.

The 47th CST is a joint group of 22 full-time Soldiers and Airmen representing 14 occupational specialties and operates on a 24-hour-a-day deployment cycle. Members of the 47th CST have more than 25,000 combined hours of specialized training and have deployed and assisted in every state disaster since its establishment in 2005.

Between July 2019 and June 2020, the 47th CST responded to 5 real world scenarios, including natural disasters such as Tornadoes in Tishomingo and Jones Counties and Flooding in Central Mississippi.

The 47th CST also supported the governor's inauguration and was present at every aspect of the State's COVID-19 Response Task Force, including more than 140 Community Based Testing sites and more than 240 Outreach Response Teams.

The 47th CST has also taken part in 12 training exercises specifically tailored for emergency management and assistance.



## 154TH REGIMENT REGIONAL TRAINING INSTITUTE

The 154th Regiment Regional Training Institute (RTI) provides the highest quality institutional training, producing flexible and agile leaders who are able to adapt and achieve success in a complex and uncertain operating environment. The Regiment cadre facilitate the most relevant, rigorous and realistic professional military education available in support of the Army's operational force.

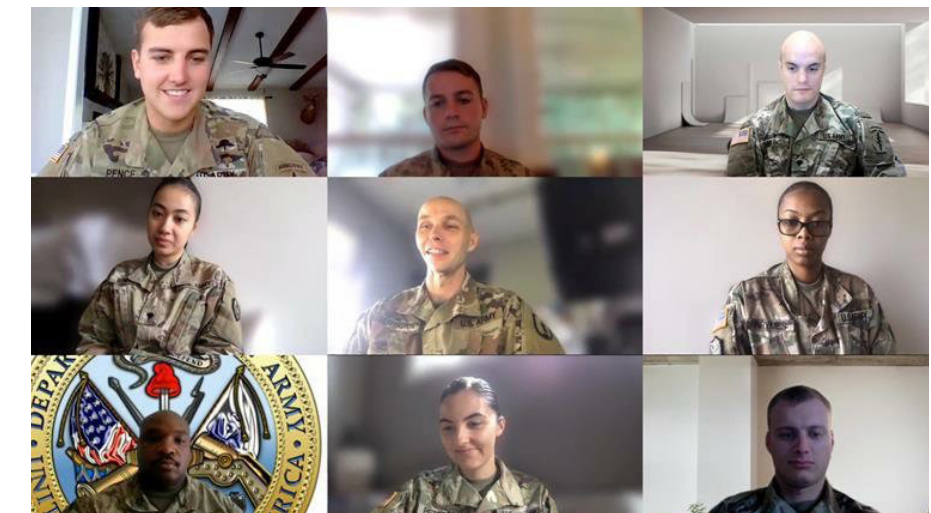
The 154th Regiment is recognized as the premier National Guard Training Institution in the nation due to outstanding instruction, excellent facilities, cutting-edge technology and employment of instructors of the highest caliber. The Regiment remains an asset to all three Army Components and continues to enhance strategic relationships with stakeholders.

The 154th's Vision is to maintain a professional, value-based organization that uses the principles of Mission Command - stewardship of the seven Army Values, the Army Learning Concept for Training and Education, and the Army Enterprise Accreditation Standards - to develop leaders and provide the Army a force that is "Ready Now" and able to deploy, fight and win our nation's wars.

The 154th Regiment Regional Training Institute was recognized as an Institute of Excellence during the 2020 Training and Doctrine Command Accreditation. More than 5,000 Soldiers completed courses at the institute during training year 2020. The RTI was instrumental in decreasing the backlog of professional military education by using virtual capabilities during the coronavirus pandemic.



**5,000**  
Students Trained During FY 2020



# 155TH ARMORED BRIGADE COMBAT TEAM

The Mississippi National Guard's largest unit, the Tupelo-based 155th Armored Brigade Combat Team, continued its mission as a ready and relevant brigade, capable of conducting combat operations overseas, defense support of civil authorities across the country and disaster relief missions throughout Mississippi and neighboring states.

The brigade continued to build readiness through helping Soldiers and family members successfully transition from the unit's deployment overseas. The unit welcomed new senior leadership in positions throughout the brigade and continues to move forward in preparation for an Exportable Combat Training Capability exercise at Camp Shelby with a rotation to the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, California next year.

The 155th ABCT conducted seven Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program events throughout the state as well as one in Kansas for the 2nd Battalion, 137th Infantry Regiment, the only component of the brigade located outside of Mississippi. More than 3,100 Soldiers and their families received information and resources to ease the transition after returning home from a deployment to the Middle East in support of Operation Spartan Shield.

The unit welcomed our new brigade commander, Col. Jason Nelson, and bid farewell to Col. Robert D. Ferguson during a change of command ceremony at a Yellow Ribbon event in Gulfport, August 25, 2019. Nelson is a Kansas native and former battalion commander of the Kansas National Guard's 2-137th Infantry Battalion. Brigade Command Sgt. Maj. John Bea-

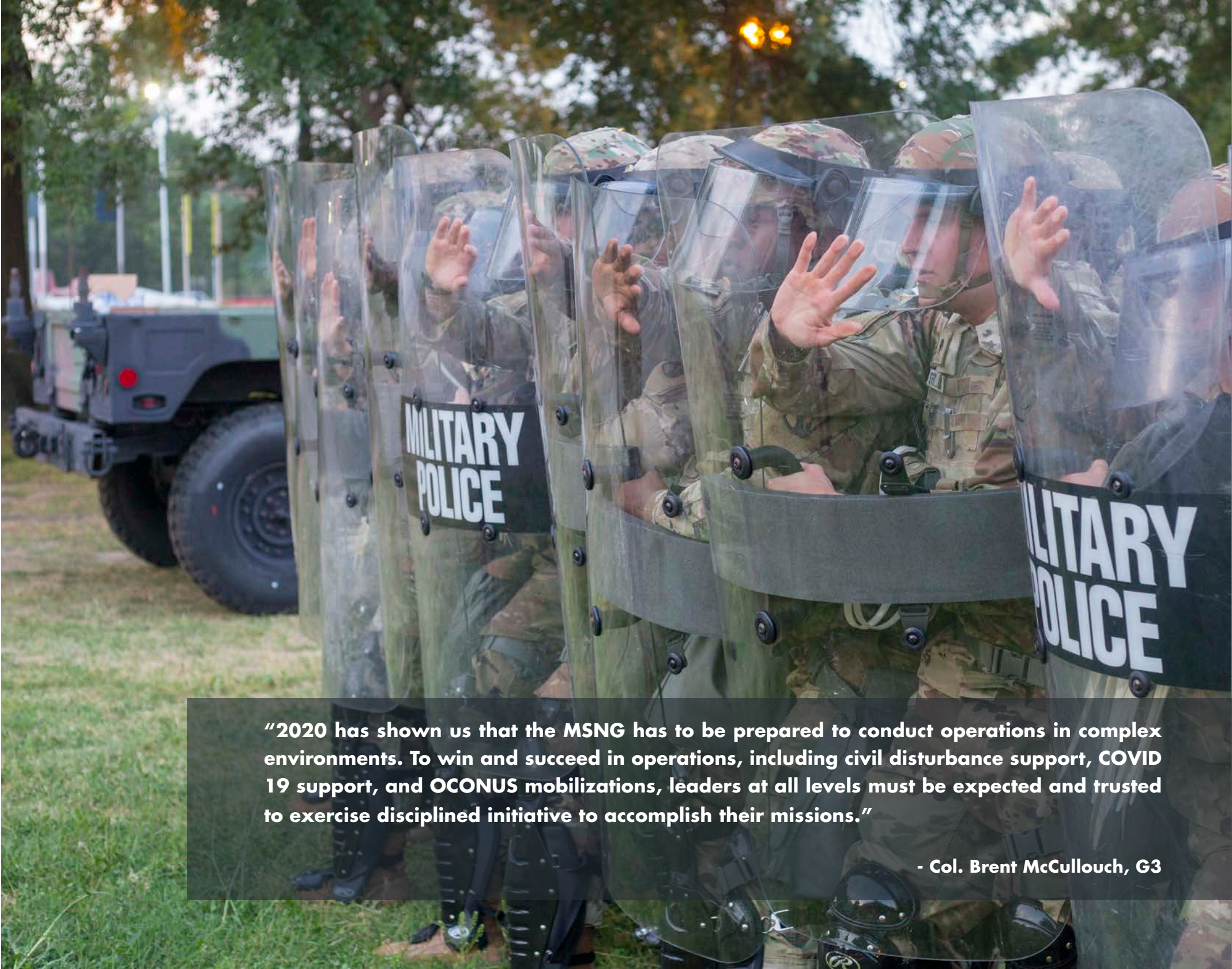
sley handed over responsibility as the brigade's senior noncommissioned officer to Command Sgt. Maj. Dwight D. Brown Feb. 9 at Camp McCain Training Center.

The brigade provided tough, realistic training as the "opposition force" for the active duty 4th Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, at Camp Shelby in October during Exercise Arctic Anvil. The exercise involved the largest airborne operation to ever take place at Camp Shelby.

155th ABCT Soldiers across Mississippi and Kansas continue to embody the National Guard motto "Always Ready, Always There" as they support local communities and civil authorities on the frontlines in the fight against COVID-19. Hundreds of Soldiers have provided medical, religious, operational and administrative support since the beginning of the pandemic response and those efforts continue today.

The brigade continues to be an asset beyond Mississippi's borders with more than 40 Soldiers assisting in the southwest border mission. More than 400 Soldiers were activated and traveled to Washington, D.C., within 24 hours to provide military and strategic support to law enforcement and ensure a safe and secure environment amid civil unrest in the nation's capital.

The 155th Armored Brigade Combat Team remains a fully modernized, lethal and effective unit capable of answering the call and accomplishing the mission, whether it's across Mississippi, the United States, or the world.



**"2020 has shown us that the MSNG has to be prepared to conduct operations in complex environments. To win and succeed in operations, including civil disturbance support, COVID 19 support, and OCONUS mobilizations, leaders at all levels must be expected and trusted to exercise disciplined initiative to accomplish their missions."**

**- Col. Brent McCullough, G3**

# 184TH SUSTAINMENT COMMAND (EXPEDITIONARY)

The 184th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) serves as a peacetime major subordinate command to the Mississippi Army National Guard, providing command and control, training, and administrative oversight to assigned units.

Led by Brig. Gen. Clint Walker and Command Sgt. Maj. Jason Little, the 184th is authorized 2,360 Soldiers who serve primarily in several component commands: the 114th Support Detachment, a digital liaison detachment led by Col. Murray B. McCullough and Command Sgt. Maj. Cornelius Williams; the 1984th Support Detachment, a contracting team led by Lt. Col. Robert L. McElhaney and Sgt. 1st Class Brian Fortune; the 298th Support Battalion led by Lt. Col. Christopher P. Clark and Command Sgt. Maj. James A. Carter; the 168th Engineer Brigade led by Col. Kendrick L. Cager and Command Sgt. Maj. Richard E. Davis; the 223d Engineer Battalion led by Col. Lowell T. Howell and Command Sgt. Maj. Joseph S. Cook; and the 890th Engineer Battalion led by Lt. Col. Jason D. Holmes and Command Sgt. Maj. Gerald L. Greenwood.

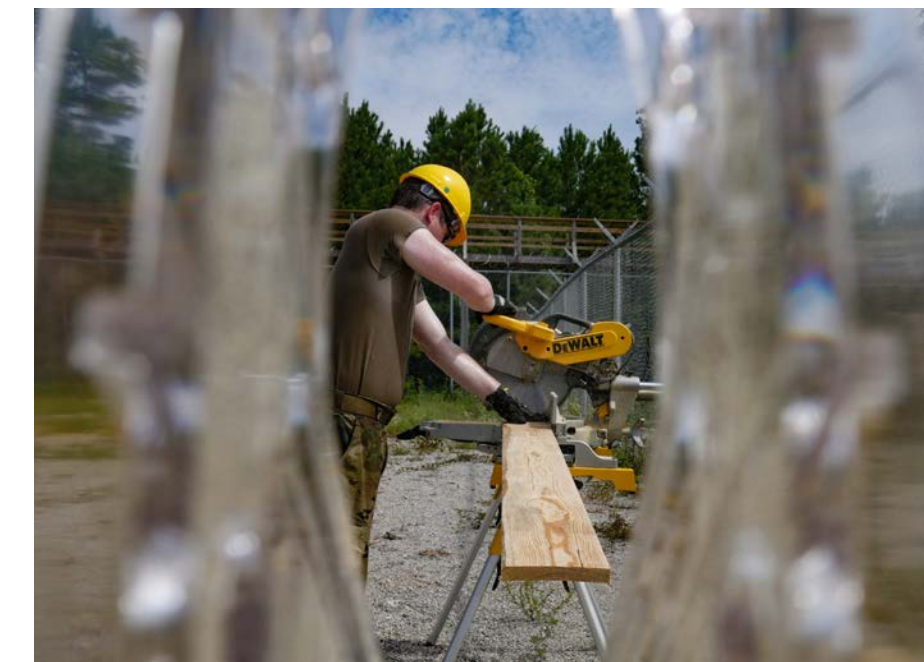
## State Emergency Service

Soldiers from every unit within the command volunteered to support the Mississippi National Guard's response to the COVID-19 pandemic during the state fiscal year, peaking at nearly 200 Soldiers on June 30, 2020. Soldiers of the 184th ESC formed and led the Logistics Team at the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency, coordinating logistics deliveries to long-term care facilities and hospitals statewide through the nine Outbreak Response Teams; supported the MSNG Joint Operations Center and Tactical Operations Center; and conducted COVID testing on the Community-Based Response Teams. 184th Soldiers worked directly with MEMA and the Mississippi State Department of Health Laboratory. They served both in a State Active Duty status, funded by the State of Mississippi, as well as title 32 U.S.C. §502(f) status funded by the Department of Defense.

## Federal Service

The 184th Sustainment Command returned from active federal service in state fiscal year 2020, serving as the 1st Theater Sustainment Command's Operational Command Post at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, from Dec. 29, 2018 – September 3, 2019, executing day-to-day mission command of more than 23,000 Soldiers, civilians, and contractors while sustaining Operations Spartan Shield, Inherent Resolve (Iraq), Resolute Support (Afghanistan), and Task Force Sinai throughout a combat theater that spans 20 nations, 18 languages, 22 ethnic groups, and 550 million people. Soldiers of the 184th served in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, leading the 1TSC's Syrian Logistics Cell in Erbil, Iraq, and providing direct support to Task Force Sinai, the U.S. Army contingent for the Multinational Force & Observers in Egypt.

The 1984th Support Detachment also returned from active federal service, serving in the Combined Joint Task Force - Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) Contingency Contracting Office, Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti, from May 30, 2019 through February 22, 2020. They executed contracts for supplies, services and construction in support of over 3,000 Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine forces operating in 12 countries throughout East Africa in support of Operation Enduring Freedom - Horn of Africa. The five members of the 1984th contributed significantly to the regional security and stability in the HoA, and greatly enhanced partners' capabilities in the Combined Joint Operating Area with crucial contingency contracting administration services.





# MISSISSIPPI AIR NATIONAL GUARD

The Mississippi Air National Guard, comprised of approximately 2,500 active and traditional Guardsmen, has three active bases in Mississippi.

At Allen C. Thompson Field in Flowood, the 172d Airlift Wing operates nine C-17 Globemaster III aircraft providing strategic airlift for federal and state missions as well as aeromedical evacuation capability and crews. The 172d Airlift Wing also oversees two geographically separated units located in Gulfport – the 255th Air Control Squadron that provides theater aircraft surveillance and the 209th Special Operations Civil Engineer Squadron. The 209th SOCES is the only Air National Guard unit to operate the self-sustaining Collective Protective Small Shelter System-3, which provides a safe environment from chemical, biological and radiological contamination.

The 186th Air Refueling Wing at Key Field in Meridian, operates eight KC-135R Stratotanker aircraft providing the core aerial refueling capability for the U.S. Air Force. The aircraft are also capable of transporting cargo and both litter and ambulatory patients. Additionally, the 186th Air Refueling Wing operates the RC-26 Condor aircraft, providing incident awareness assessment for several mission areas, along with RC-26 aircrew training for the entire Air National Guard. The 186th Air Refueling Wing also manages three specialized units providing support to warfighters and civilian partners – the 186th Air Operations Group provides staff augmentation to 1st Air Force in support of homeland defense and defense support of civil authorities; the 238th Air Support Operations Squadron provides the interface between supported Army units and air combat support Air Force units; and the 248th Air Traffic Control Squadron, which is responsible for all air traffic control operations at Key Field and provides deployed tower and radar capability.

The Combat Readiness Training Center, located on 277 acres in Gulfport, provides an integrated, year-round, realistic training environment for units up to wing size. The CRTC facilities include ramp space for up to 100 fighter aircraft, 11,000 square miles of airspace over the Gulf of Mexico, an air-to-ground bombing range located in Hattiesburg, Miss., and accommodations for up to 1,000 Airmen.





## 172D AIRLIFT WING

The 172d Airlift Wing conducted numerous exercises and real-world missions during state fiscal year 2020. The Civil Engineer, Security Forces and Logistics Readiness squadrons, as well as the Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron deployed in support of Operation Inherent Resolve, Operation Freedom Sentinel and Operation Resolute Support. Additionally, the Wing flew missions in support of the Southern Strike and Patriot South training exercises and provided contingency mission support to Air Mobility Command and mission-ready airlift to the National Guard Bureau, reaching worldwide and transporting nearly 800 patients this year.

Noteworthy missions include - the repatriation of U.S. citizens stranded in South and Central America due to the coronavirus; transporting COVID test kits; operating COVID-19 testing sites; and providing logistical support to the Department of Homeland Security. Additionally, the Wing reached a major milestone in flying hours. Through the efforts of maintainers, ground support and flying personnel, the 172d Airlift Wing is the first Air National Guard unit to reach 100,000 C-17 flying hours without a major aircraft incident while also reaching a total of 300,000 flying hours across all airframes without a major accident. As part of an annual community service project, the Wing partnered with the Salvation Army and Radio People in Jackson to host its annual Flight to the North Pole. Approximately 100 Wing personnel contributed more than 250 hours of volunteer work for 60 children to have some holiday cheer!



# 186TH AIR REFUELING WING

With a vision of being “The best air mobility unit, the standard by which others are measured,” the 186th Air Refueling Wing (ARW) at Key Field Air National Guard Base, Meridian, Mississippi, is leading the pack.

Our eight KC-135R Stratotanker aircraft completed over 2,300 flying hours in support of worldwide contingency operations. In addition, 8 million pounds of jet fuel were offloaded to receiver aircraft directly involved in Department of Defense operations, all while safely deploying more than 350 Airmen. During the final quarter of CY19, the 186th garnered the second spot out of 16 ANG air refueling wings for aircraft mission capability rates and hourly use/sortie use rates, which assured mission ready aircraft through the efforts of our highly qualified maintainers and cohesive operations with Logistics Readiness Squadron and Operations Group personnel.

While providing rapid global mobility and agile combat support to our nation and allied forces, the Wing’s Airmen and aircraft participated in multiple Indo-Pacific Command, Central Command, Air Mobility Command and National Guard Bureau missions. Notably, Airmen were awarded 10 Bronze Stars and 14 Army Commendation Medals with “combat” device for their efforts in the Global War on Terror. Another enormous feat is the wing participated in an Air Mobility Command inspection related to mission readiness. To quote the lead Air Force inspector, “The 186th set the standard for all Air National Guard Units!” The 186th ARW provided hurricane and homeland defense support to nationally declared emergencies with command intelligence, logistics and operations functions. Most recently, the Wing has provided COVID-19 testing support for the state of Mississippi

The 186th is a major contributor to the local economy, providing 100 percent airport fire protection, all tower air traffic control services and nearly 300 secondary jobs.



## Additional Contributions to the Local Community

- Fed 1,000+ senior citizens at the annual Council on Aging Fish Fry
- Donated over \$1,200 to the Muscular Dystrophy Association
- Supported the Special Olympics and Wreaths Across America
- Hosted the annual Dancing with the Greatest Generation Valentines Day senior citizens’ social
- Escorted WWII Flyers
- Provided 20+ media/orientation flights and base tours to joint senior leaders, spouses, employers, and civic leaders
- Hosted the annual Fall Festival and Family Day, reaching thousands by providing free resources to the community
- Participated in the Annual Buds & Burgers, raising funds to benefit a non-profit charitable organization

**“The Mississippi Air National Guard, being over 2,500 strong, remains at a ready state to provide support to all federal and state missions. The 172d Airlift Wing, 186th Air Refueling Wing and Combat Readiness Training Center lead the nation in readiness and support including joint exercises such as Southern Strike, Patriot South, Ardent Sentry, and real world deployments of over 330 Airmen this year.”**

**- Chief Master Sgt. Lynn R. Cole, State Command Chief Master Sergeant**



## MSNG CYBER UNIT

Cyber Protection Team 178 is a tri-state cyber unit from Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas. Detachment 2, Cyber Protection Team 178, was organized on April 7, 2017, and awarded unit federal recognition on Dec. 12, 2017. The unit is located on the Mississippi State University campus in Starkville. The CPT provides professional highly-skilled Soldiers responsive to the needs of the nation while boosting the state and federal cyber defense capabilities. The mission statement for the team: Conduct defensive cyberspace operations on military networks to support mission requirements as identified by DoD or state leadership. In compliance with federal and state laws, defensive cyberspace operations may be expanded to include - cyber command readiness inspections; vulnerability assessments; cyber opposing forces support; critical infrastructure assessments; theater security cooperation; Federal Emergency Management Agency support; training support; and advisory and assistance support.

The Cyber Protection Team mobilized with Task Force Echo in 2018 and is currently planning training in support of future mobilizations. Over the past year, the unit has provided cyber training and advising services to multiple state agencies, school districts, and local municipalities to assist in improving the overall cybersecurity footprint of the state. The team has helped to foster relationships with state and federal agencies by participating in virtual cybersecurity training events during the COVID-19 pandemic in support of elections and state cybersecurity and incident response. Additionally, the Cyber Protection Team has been working with the National Governor's Association and multiple state response agencies to update the state's strategic cybersecurity incident response policy.



## FACILITIES MAINTENANCE OFFICE

The Mississippi Army National Guard Facilities Maintenance and Operations Division continued to move forward with specifying, designing, constructing and commissioning; along with renovating buildings and facilities to a higher standard of sustainability, resilience and energy efficiency requirements. In addition, these activities helped MSARNG's professional services contractors, design architects and engineers to better partner and support the Guard to achieve these goals and objectives toward a more efficient future.

The MSARNG Energy Program expanded to incorporate resilience as a significant component of the overall energy management program for the state. Professional service activities supporting an expanded role of engineering firms and companies, enhances new energy management and resilience requirements for the MSARNG.

We completed the second year of a BUILDER program designed to assess building systems

and components. We also built a government database for future management of facilities and the third-year contract of the five-year program conducting energy audits of the overall square footage to be assessed in state FY2021.

Project development this fiscal year included a proposal for a new HVAC maintenance program at Camp Shelby and utility distribution level rates for more accurate billing of military tenants at Camp Shelby and Camp McCain.

During state fiscal year 2021, Energy Management will focus on developing and executing projects resulting from needs shown in the Installation Status Report - Mission Capacity Reports for energy and water security. MSARNG reports Mission Capacity within the Installation Status Reports for Camp Shelby and Camp McCain. The evaluations for energy and water security at both posts show mostly good ratings for FY2020. There are some average to poor ratings that will

be given priority attention as potential projects during FY2021.

Camp Shelby is a Mobilization Force Generation Installation training platform. State FY2020 saw an extensive project development effort at Camp Shelby to develop a micro-grid and electrical distribution system underground. The underground hardening project resolves issues with the supply of power in an island scenario when off-host utility power grids fail during times of emergency power standby and peak saving needs.

In FY 2020, the Columbia Readiness Center was completed as a military construction project. In addition to being resilient and energy efficient, the new readiness center is designed and constructed to withstand higher wind speeds during storms. The new center replaces the one destroyed by a tornado in 2014, which had replaced the center that was destroyed by Hurricane Katrina in 2005.



# YOUTH CHALLENGE ACADEMY

## “Accept the Challenge”

The mission of the Mississippi National Guard Youth Challenge Academy is to intervene in and reclaim the lives of 16- to 18-year-old youths who may have – experienced academic difficulties in traditional high school settings; dropped out of high school; exhibited problem behaviors; or in some cases, have had minor legal issues. Challenge Academy aims to produce graduates with values, life skills, education, and self-discipline necessary to succeed as productive citizens. Since its inception in 1994, Mississippi Challenge Academy has graduated 52 classes for a total of 10,168 graduates.

The Challenge Academy creates an environment for young men and women to take control of their lives and to accept responsibility for their present and future. In the five-month residential phase of the program, The Challenge Academy staff is an active part of encouraging the student to plan for and envision a future by setting realistic and achievable life goals. Challenge Academy places emphasis on eight core components: leadership and followership, responsible citizenship, service to the community, life coping skills, physical fitness, health and hygiene, job skills, and academic excellence. Many graduates leave the program and continue their education through institutions of higher learning, join military service, or enter the civilian workforce. According to National Guard Youth Challenge: Progress in 2019-2020, Mississippi Challenge Academy is among the top three programs nationally in awarding high-school diplomas.



# FAMILY PROGRAMS

Family Programs has worked diligently over the last year to support all Mississippi National Guard service members and their families. Our office transitioned from Family Readiness Support Assistants and Family Assistance Specialists to 14 Military and Family Readiness Specialists.

These specialists are responsible for family assistance through information, resource, referral, administrative/non-clinical case management, and family and community outreach; family readiness through training, analysis, and support to commanders; financial readiness; and spouse employment. We have supported and attended a variety of events this year, including 11 Yellow Ribbons, six Soldier Readiness Programs, a Military Resource Summit, New Volunteer Training, and Back to School Bashes in three locations across the state.

Child and Youth Programs (CYP) specialists provided support to the Mississippi National Guard’s dependents across the state. While attending Yellow Ribbon events, they provided families with program resource materials educating their children’s schools and teachers in reference to family transitions and obstacles during deployment.



The CYP specialists held several in-person events, two youth council meetings, an ACT preparatory workshop and a Family Adventure Day. The COVID-19 pandemic has greatly affected the ability to facilitate youth programs’ events since March 2020. Our team has adapted to and continues to overcome the ongoing challenges to present opportunities for Family Programs to offer three different virtual camps in our Camp Quarantine Series - Zooming into Resiliency, Spy Adventures and All Mixed Up.



# DEFENSE SUPPORT OF CIVIL AUTHORITIES

The Directorate of Military Support serves as a vital link to merge Mississippi National Guard capabilities to support civil authorities' response to natural disasters, criminal enterprises, terrorist threats, and new threats such as COVID-19. DSCA operations are at the direction of the governor in order to preserve the lives and property of the people of Mississippi and ensure continuity of state and local government.

The events in state fiscal year 2020 have highlighted the diverse talents and skills of the MSNG. We have served in vital roles supporting civil authorities throughout our state, confronting the COVID-19 pandemic and providing essential assistance to first responders in the wake of natural disasters like the deadly Easter tornadoes.

This year, during the COVID-19 pandemic, our personnel demonstrated their efficiency and adaptability in support of civil authorities. The MSNG is a versatile force – first responders; medical and business professionals; maintenance personnel; and pilots, both fixed and rotary wing - are capable of coming together at a moment's notice to answer the call of their governor, state and nation.

We've tested for COVID-19 all over the state, delivered personal protective equipment to hospitals, front line responders, long term care facilities and converted a military training center into an alternate care facility for recovering COVID patients. Our service members deployed, within a moment's notice, to support civil authorities in the National Capital Region. The MSNG has served with honor and integrity in every mission ensuring safety for the communities in which we serve.



**“The Mississippi National Guard is uniquely designed and a perfect fit for any domestic response. There are few organizations able to quickly muster, organize, and mobilize for such a myriad of responses ranging from Hurricanes to a Pandemic. It is for these and many other reasons that Mississippi’s National Guard stands ready “Shoulder to Shoulder” to better serve their fellow Mississippians.”**

**- Col. Jody Mike Smith,  
Director of Military Support**



## RECRUITING & RETENTION

The Recruiting and Retention Battalion strives to maintain the balance of forces in the Mississippi National Guard by retaining strong service members and starting new recruits on a path to success.

Sgt. Shannon K. Smith (Top Right), from the Mississippi Army National Guard's Recruiting and Retention Battalion, became the first female in the Mississippi Army National Guard to graduate from the United States Army Drill Sergeant Academy on August 21, 2019. Being a Drill Sergeant in the Mississippi Army National Guard gives Smith the opportunity to coach, counsel, and mentor hundreds of recruits as they pass through the State's Recruit Sustainment Program (RSP) on their way to Basic Training and Advanced Individual Training.

On November 19, 2019, Sgt. First Class Ashley B. Gilbert (Middle Left), became the first African American female in the Mississippi Army National Guard to graduate from the United States Army Drill Sergeant Academy.

Alpha and Bravo Companies of the Recruiting and Retention Battalion host separate events and exercises with trainees throughout the year, preparing them for the rigors of basic training. On November 16, 2019, Bravo Company hosted "Spartan Forge" at Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center. The event was led by the company's five Recruit Sustainment Detachments and a host of trainees from those detachments. Highlights of the event were Squad Training Exercises, Improvised Explosive Device (IED) training, Civilians on the Battlefield scenarios, and Personnel Recovery training.

Alpha Company hosted "Guard X" at the Kosciusko Armory on February 19, 2020. High School students and faculty from the local vocational school were split up into small groups and rotated through stations consisting of various military equipment. The participants received a hands-on block of instruction from a subject matter expert concerning the equipment's purpose and operation. The stations consisted of individual weapons, a call for fire station, and a

M109A6 Paladin hands-on station.

Spartan Forge, "Guard X", and other events hosted by the battalion give trainees a basic understanding of the types of missions Soldiers might face in real world operations.

Recruiting efforts are uplifted when the community sees Soldiers and Airmen working with them in times of need. Staff Sgt. Shelbi A. Constancio, Alpha Company Detachment 4, teamed up with fellow Mississippi Army National Guard Soldiers at Kroger in Clinton, April 29 to volunteer their services during the COVID-19 pandemic. Constancio and her team stocked retail shelves with products, ensured that items were front facing and orderly, and interacted



# REGIONAL COUNTERDRUG TRAINING ACADEMY

The Regional Counterdrug Training Academy (RCTA) was established in 1992 under the Gulf States Counterdrug Initiative for the purpose of identifying resources, services, and support that could be legitimately provided by Department of Defense components to support counterdrug activities along the U.S. southern coastal region. Since establishing, the Mississippi National Guard's RCTA has trained over 172,000 law enforcement officers from all 54 states and territories.

The Mississippi National Guard Counterdrug Task Force is managed through the RCTA. The Counterdrug Task Force provides air and ground reconnaissance, case analysis, and linguist support to local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies.

In FY20, the task force provided support that resulted in immediate, large-scale and international effects in the deterrence of illicit narcotics production, trafficking and distribution while maintaining strong relationships with law enforcement agency partners at all levels.

Over 100 armed and unarmed (air and ground) Counterdrug operational missions were conducted in support of Mississippi Law Enforcement, resulting in drug seizures with an estimated street value of over \$2,100,000. The missions also seized 18 firearms and \$869,393 in cash during these operations. Additionally, the Mississippi National Guard Counterdrug Task Force assisted the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration with the "National Drug Prescription Take Back Day" resulting in the collection and destruction of over 3,800 pounds of unused prescription drugs collected across the state.



## STATE FY 2020 STATS

**2,285**  
Students trained  
at RCTA

**580**  
Law Enforcement  
Agencies trained  
with the RCTA

**48**  
Total Counterdrug

**47**  
States & territories

# STATE PARTNERSHIP

The State Partnership Program is a key U.S. security cooperation tool, facilitating local government, academic and economic contacts, as well as National Guard and civilian community involvement with partner countries.

SPP enhances cohesion across all aspects of international civil-military affairs and encourages people-to-people ties at the state level. Administered by the National Guard Bureau, SPP engagements are conducted both in the U.S. and the partner nation, to nurture bilateral relationships via mutual understanding and trust. NGB allocates approximately \$400,000 to the MSNG SPP annually.

The Mississippi National Guard currently maintains State Partnership Program relationships with Uzbekistan (2012) and Bolivia (1999). The MSNG and partner delegations have exchanged ideas on items of mutual interest, including Special Forces Operations; aviation employment (fixed and rotary); military medical; NCO Development; Counterdrug; and Raven Employment. Uzbekistan has participated in Exercise Southern Strike for the past two years and observed Exercise Patriot South in state fiscal year 2020.

Additionally, Uzbekistan had two Soldiers participate in the MSNG Best Warrior Competition this year, which was the first time international competitors have participated in the event. Upon his inauguration, Governor Tate Reeves hosted an SPP delegation at the Governor's mansion including the Uzbek Ambassador to the US, the US Ambassador to Uzbekistan, and senior military personnel.





# STATE AVIATION

The Mississippi Army National Guard full-time aviation community includes three Army Aviation Support Facilities (AASFs) and an Unmanned Aircraft Flight System Center (UAFSC). The MSARNG Aviation fleet of 35 rotary wing, 12 unmanned aircraft, and full-time support personnel, continues to be a significant readiness multiplier for the state of Mississippi and supported units.

Army Aviation Support Facility 1 (AASF 1), located in Jackson, provides training and maintenance support for the UH-60 A/L Blackhawk helicopters and crewmembers. The facility currently supports 14 aircraft with Company A, 1st Battalion, 185th Aviation Regiment (Assault) and Company G, 3rd Battalion, 238th Aviation Regiment (MEDEVAC). The primary supported organization is 1-185th Aviation Regiment. Significant efforts this year include:

- Mississippi Helicopter Search and Rescue Team hoist qualifications/currencies
- VIP support flights
- Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center (CSJFTC) fire suppression
- Special Warfare/Seal Boat Team training support at Stennis training site
- Special Forces Paratroop and Fast Rope Insertion support for MSARNG and Active Duty components
- Disaster relief response for multiple tornado events and the COVID-19 Pandemic

Army Aviation Support Facility 2 (AASF 2), located in Tupelo, provides training and maintenance support for AH-64D Apache and UH-72 Lakota helicopters and crewmembers. The facility supports Company A, 1st Battalion, 149th Attack Reconnaissance Regiment; Company G, 1st Battalion, 168th Aviation Regiment (MEDEVAC); Company C, 1st Battalion, 114th Security and Support Battalion; and Company D, 2nd Battalion, 151st Security and Support (S&S) Battalions, and maintenance for six AH-64D Apache Longbow attack helicopters, four UH-72A Lakota S&S helicopters, and four UH-72A Lakota MEDEVAC helicopters, respectively. Significant efforts this year include:

- Collaborative and live-hoist training with Mississippi Task Force 1
- Southwest Border support: personnel, aircraft, and equipment in support of U.S. Customs and Border Protection's international border enforcement
- Counterdrug aviation: 150 flight hours, touching all 82 counties, assisted Alabama CD Task Force (July 2019)
- AH-64D Apache training close-air support and live-fire support to 7th Special Forces Group, U.S. Marine Special Operations Command and U.S. Air Force 26th Special Tactics Squadron

Army Aviation Support Facility 3 (AASF 3), located in Meridian, provides training and maintenance support for the CH-47F Chinook helicopters and crewmembers. The facility currently supports seven aircraft with Company B, 1st Battalion, 111th General Support Aviation Battalion. Additionally, AASF 3 operates and supports a CH-47 Flight Simulator. Significant efforts this year include:

- Cargo and passenger airlifts supporting the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division during Exercise Arctic Anvil
- Multi-service Southern Strike training event that involved traditional and special forces with MSNG, Army, Air Force, Navy, Marines and coalition partners
- Cargo helicopter support for COVID 19 response

Unmanned Aircraft System Flight Center (UASFC), located at Camp Shelby, provides training and maintenance support for the RQ-7B Shadow aircraft and operators. The UAS flight center supports three full sets of Shadow systems (12 aircraft total). Significant efforts this year include:

- Aerial reconnaissance support as an opposing force asset during Exercise Arctic Anvil
- Provided assistance and training to 13 Army National Guard and Active Army units, flying over 570 UAS hours
- Fostered relationship with Directorate of Evaluation and Standards (DES) Ft. Rucker, Alabama, providing an alternative training site for the Active Army instructor operator evaluations



**“The Mississippi Army National Guard continues to lead the way on the national stage, from guarding the skies above our nation’s capital to our influence on the operational and institutional fronts. We will continue to provide the state and nation [with] the finest fighting force possible.”**

**- Command Sgt. Maj. Chris Young, State Command Sergeant Major**

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MISSISSIPPI MILITARY DEPARTMENT  
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