

SPRING 2018

# GUARD DETAIL

A CHRONICLE OF THE MISSISSIPPI ARMY AND AIR NATIONAL GUARD



## AIR GUARD MAKES HISTORY

Airman claims title of  
of Noncommissioned  
Officer of the Year 20

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The Guard Detail is the official magazine of the Mississippi National Guard. It is published three times a year with a circulation of 12,300 copies and is distributed online via the Mississippi National Guard web and Facebook pages. Opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the Army, Air Force, Army National Guard, Air National Guard or the Department of Defense.

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**COVER PHOTO:** Mississippi Air National Guard Tech Sgt. Joshua Parker, a member of the security forces team of Gulfport's Combat Readiness Training Center – Battlefield Airmen Center, conducts an eight mile ruck march during the Best Warrior Competition at the Camp McCain Training Center near Elliott, Miss., Feb. 28, 2017. (U.S. National Guard photo by Chelsy Ables)

# Letter From THE EDITOR

"ONLY POSITIVE MISSISSIPPI SPOKEN HERE"



One of the best things about taking a long drive is that it allows you to clear your mind, plot your next move and place issues into perspective. They almost seem to serve as an operational pause and, in some cases, a reset. As much of a challenge as life is for us all, occasional journeys up Highway 49 to the Delta or down the Natchez Trace often serve as good ideas.

During a recent trip to Vicksburg with my family, we crossed the Mississippi River Bridge into Louisiana and quickly returned to the Magnolia State. It's always a great feeling to come home and see "Welcome to Mississippi: Birthplace of America's Music." But on this occasion, it meant much more.

It reminded me of when I joined the Mississippi National Guard in 1994 and when the late Governor Kirk Fordice was our force's commander-in-chief. In the early 1990s, he ordered that each welcome sign coming into Mississippi have an additional sign that said "Only Positive Mississippi Spoken Here." I reflected on it immediately as we passed the welcome sign coming into Vicksburg. Fordice's intent was mostly to put outsiders on notice, but his plea also took aim to native Mississippians. It is still relevant and must be practiced by

all, especially by the MSNG in 2018.

For the first time since 2010, our force will have thousands of Soldiers and Airmen serving forward across the globe. Great focus will be applied to guarantee mission accomplishment, but our team must also use these opportunities to showcase our organizational accolades and our state.

As we continued on down Interstate 20, I asked "What would I tell an outsider about the Mississippi National Guard and how special we are?"

It didn't take long for me to remember that our 155th Armored Brigade Combat Team is about to be the first National Guard ABCT to replace an active component brigade during Operation Spartan Shield in Kuwait; our Brigadier General John "Trent" Kelly is one of three guard general officers currently serving in the U.S. Congress; our 172d Airlift Wing was the first Air National Guard unit to receive the C-17 Globemaster III aircraft; the birthplace of aerial refueling is in Meridian with our 186th Air Refueling Wing; Camp Shelby is the largest state-owned National Guard training site in the nation; and, one of our former Soldiers, Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Roy Robinson, is now the president of the National Guard Association of the United States. By the time we reached our home in Clinton, I realized that our list of "positives" is endless.

Whether you're preparing to serve forward or here at home, be an ambassador. Reveal our guard success and the best of Mississippi. We continue to face challenges, but we have a lot to be proud of that others must know about. Our future depends on it!

We hope that you enjoy this issue!

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Editor-in Chief



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Medics assigned to the 155th Armored Brigade Combat Team transport a patient as part of a casualty evacuation exercise near Fort Bliss, Texas, March 28, 2018. The 155th ABCT is preparing for an upcoming deployment to the Middle East in support of Operation Spartan Shield. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Spc. Jovi Prevot)



Use the QR code here to check out a Medics Conduct CASEVAC Training - 155th ABCT video.

# Guard Families Recount Loss

## of Family Members to Suicide

### Father Reflects on Loss of Son



I have written this article to share my personal thoughts and feelings about how the loss of my son has affected me. His name is Sgt. Justin D. Johnson and was formerly a member of the Mississippi Army National Guard's 288th Sapper Company, headquartered in Houston, Mississippi. Justin was a graduate of

Mississippi State University and deployed twice with the 288th - Iraq in 2007 and Afghanistan in 2011. During these missions, he conducted over 150 route clearance patrols.

It has been over four years since my son died and with each passing day I think of him on multiple occasions. On August 20, 2013, my life completely changed. Things I once considered important are no longer that important. Time does help to heal wounds, but does not erase or remove emotional pain. It will always be there.

I found out about Justin's death during a float trip down the Colorado River through the majestic Grand Canyon. After passing successfully through the 83-mile rapid one day, my group approached a place called Phantom Ranch, 88 miles down river from Lee's Ferry. Being in a trail raft, I noticed the lead raft pulling in to the bank instead of passing through the rapids. Plans were to eat lunch after we had passed through these rapids. After docking on the side of the bank, the lead guide, Irv, came to my raft and said a park ranger directed us to dock and wanted to specifically speak with me. At that moment, a dark cloud of concern and worried curiosity shattered my inner peace.

While walking down the path along the river, thoughts about my son raced through my anxious mind. I noticed

the somber and solemn facial expression on the face of the ranger as I approached her. Upon her request, I confirmed to her that my name was Dan Johnson and also that my son's name was Justin Johnson. After a sorrowful pause, she told me my son had died, Tuesday, August 20, 2013.

The clouded events at Phantom Ranch that day became clearer as I got closer to home. The exact moment when I set foot in my house, I realized Justin was gone forever and I would never see him again. The survivors of a loved one . . .

1. Endure intense and prolonged grief.
2. Experience intense emotional pain, strong longings for the person.
3. Blame themselves for the problem(s) that preceded the suicide.

I "could have" done this....

I "should have" done this....

If I "would have" done this....

4. Feel rejected by the loved one they lost.
5. Feel a sense of helplessness in preventing this act.
6. Feel extreme isolation, emptiness and are lost.

Military suicide is a very problematic issue. It knows no common race, age, gender or rank. My hope is that no other military family will ever encounter the loss of a loved one to suicide, which is prevalent in our culture. Soldiers and Airmen, help is available for you regarding this issue. Please ask for it. Also, pay close attention to your battle buddies. You could be the one who notices a problem and saves a life.

My mission in life is to increase the awareness of the problem of military suicide and encourage all Service members to seek help and choose life. If this article saves at least one person, then I will have done my job on this earth.

DAN K. JOHNSON  
Lieutenant Colonel, USA Retired



### Spouse Urges Service Members to Seek Help

On February 17, 2007, my life and the lives of our three kids were forever changed. On that day, I lost my husband, Sgt. 1st Class William Spillers, to suicide. He was serving in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom with Jackson's 230th Finance Detachment.

William had been out of the country for almost six months. We were celebrating that milestone and looking forward to his return in May for our oldest son's high school graduation. There were no signs that he was in crisis. Nothing about his demeanor was any different. He seemed as normal as could be expected while on a deployment.

It wasn't until I got a phone call that I realized that it wasn't business as usual. At that moment, I could hear the hopelessness in William's voice as he uttered those words, "Baby I'm tired, baby I'm tired. I'm sorry for letting you down." Those were the last words my husband spoke, and they forever replay in my mind. His death was extremely hard on me. At the time, I was also serving in the Mississippi Army National Guard as a recruiter. It became unbearable to continue to serve, and I eventually lost my career.

In an indirect way, I blame my inability to be there for him and notice the signs of his mental health deterioration on my career. I carry guilt, anger and sadness daily. Our kids were so young, only nine and six years old at the time of his death. Losing him left a void in their lives like no other. His death was their first major loss to ever deal with, and it was even harder on the adults in our family. We had never lost someone to suicide. Despite the hole in our hearts, we have gradually made progress



day-by-day to live a happy life, embracing our new normal. Although my husband will never walk our daughter down the aisle, or spend days grilling with our son and grandson, we cherish the memories we had with him and look forward to continued healing as a family despite our tragic loss.

You are loved and hold a special place in their hearts – an area that can only be filled by you. So if you're at rock bottom, the only way to go now is up.

Suicide is a permanent solution to a temporary problem. Help is available. Please ask for it!

**"For Mississippi National Guard Service members who may be contemplating suicide - DON'T. Think about the many people who love and care for you and the pain it will cause them"**

- Sgt. 1st Class (Ret.) Kim Spillers

KIM SPILLERS  
Sergeant First Class, MSARNG Retired

## OPERATION RESILIENCY

you promise to defend, we promise to support



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[WWW.AF.MIL/SUICIDEPREVENTION](http://WWW.AF.MIL/SUICIDEPREVENTION)

Suicide is the

## 10th

Leading Cause of Death in the US

Each Year

## 42,773

Americans Die by Suicide

For every Suicide there are

## 25

Attempts

Suicide Costs the US

## \$44B

Annually

NATIONAL

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# WOMEN'S *History Month*

Story by Staff Sgt. Scott Tynes  
JFH-MS Public Affairs Office

The nation recently celebrated March as Women's History Month. The Mississippi Air National Guard has a distinguished record of assigning capable people to meet operational needs.

From the highest offices in the state's military to those currently serving, the Mississippi National Guard has embodied the ideal that capable people can achieve remarkable goals regardless of gender.

"When I enlisted, it seemed as if women were limited to jobs along the lines of medical, administration or support roles. Outside of career fields such as those, there were very few open to women," said Lt. Col. Teri Dawn Neely, director of operations for the 183d Air Evacuation Squadron of the 172d Airlift Wing at Thompson Field, Jackson, Mississippi.

Neely enlisted in the MSANG as a medical technician in the 183rd AES August 5, 1989. She deployed in support of Operation Desert Shield/Storm during her first tour of duty. Six years later, in 1996, she received her commission as a flight nurse. She has deployed five times, including tours at Andrews Air Force Base,

Afghanistan, and twice at Qatar. She has also provided domestic support in relief efforts for Hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Gustav.

"Today, this is not the case," Neely said. "I have seen women not only rise to varying ranks and positions, but also set a high standard for others to pursue. We now have an evolution of female mentors that have broken those previous barriers and paved the way for us to follow. Limitations fall within what we strive to achieve and not with the system."

Lt. Col. Teri Dawn Neely is currently the director of operations for the 183d Air Evacuation Squadron, the same unit she enlisted into nearly 29 years ago.



Catherine Lutz receives her second general officer star during a ceremony in Jackson, Miss., in December 2011. Lutz became the Mississippi Air National Guard's first female officer when she was promoted to brigadier general.



Lt. Col. Cynthia Smith has flown missions supporting operations Noble Eagle, Enduring Freedom, Inherent Resolve, Freedom Sentinel, and Project Liberty during her flying career.



Chief Master Sgt. Lynn Cole was appointed the Mississippi Air National Guard state command chief, Dec. 2, 2017. She is the first female in the role, which is the highest enlisted position in the MSANG.

One of those women was Catherine S. Lutz, who became the first female general officer in the history of the MSNG when she was promoted in January 2009. She was promoted to major general in December 2011. She served in the MSANG for 32 years, commissioning as a second lieutenant flight nurse in 1982. She ended her career as a major general and assistant adjutant general, air and commander of the MSANG.

In that time, she commanded the Air Expeditionary Medical Unit in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, an Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron and Medical Group of the MSANG, among other assignments. She was a graduate of Air Force Flight Nurse School, Squadron Officer School, Air Command and Staff College and the Air War College. She received many honors for her service to the country, including the Legion of Merit for exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding services and achievements.

She passed away January 16, 2014, in Flora at age 58.

"I believe women's roles in the military will only continue to expand and evolve," Neely said. "There is an obvious momentum towards change in regards to opportunities that are becoming available to women. An appraisal of the change I have witnessed in my career both astounds and amazes me. I am excited to see women competing on every level and look forward to the day that we are viewed and labeled not just as women, but as equals."

That evolution is further exemplified by Chief Master Sgt. Lynn Cole, who was appointed in December 2017 as the first female to assume the position of state command chief. As the senior enlisted advisor, Cole works with the MSANG's commander to ensure the enlisted force maintains the required flexibility, balance, and strength to meet its mission.

She also served as the first sergeant of 186th Air Refueling Wing's Security Forces Squadron and was later the state human resource advisor of Joint Force

Headquarters in Jackson.

"They have me on record as being the first female in the state to join security," said Cole. "At that time, which was in 1985, they had just opened that career field up to females."

Lt. Col. Cynthia Smith, commander of the 153rd Air Refueling Squadron at Key Field Air National Guard Base in Meridian, Mississippi, agreed that barriers have fallen throughout her career. She joined the 186th Air Refueling Wing in May 1998 after receiving her commission. During her flying career, she has flown missions supporting operations Noble Eagle, Enduring Freedom, Inherent Resolve, Freedom Sentinel and Project Liberty. She is a command pilot with more than 3,000 hours in the C-12, C-27J and KC-135R/T aircrafts. She has also commanded the 186th Operations Support Squadron.

"It's not easy," she said. "But there are fewer barriers in our path. More opportunities are available to women in military service than ever before. The key is to decide what work/life balance works for you."

The camaraderie of military service together changes gender perceptions, said Lt. Col. Teresa Plotts, a KC-135R pilot.

"I am so proud to serve with the men and women of Key Field," she said. "The brotherhood and sisterhood we share makes all the difference."

The future of the National Guard is much stronger with the integration of more females in fields traditionally reserved for males, Neely said.

"There has been a definite culture change and I am inspired when I think of how far we have come and where we are headed," she said. "Women hold positions in almost every military career field with varying ranks. We are now valued for what we can contribute to the mission. I believe our successes and performances have been recognized and have therefore forged a future that is limitless."

# BALANCING ACT

## 184th Sustainment Command Soldier Makes Time for Family, Service, and the Silver Screen

Story by Lt. Col. Christian Patterson, APR+M  
JFH-MS Public Affairs Office

For many Mississippi National Guardsmen, adding more activities to their already busy schedules is too much to handle. Family life, work commitments and service during swift operational tempo periods leave little time and energy for other major endeavors.

But the 184th Sustainment Command's Warrant Officer One Juan Corrigan makes civilian and military life look easy, both literally and figuratively. He's a successful actor, appearing in several projects since 2013, loving husband and father, and seasoned intelligence officer.

Corrigan's interest in acting arose from seeing modeling photos and an acting advertisement in the "Reflector" newspaper during undergraduate Kinesiology studies at Mississippi State University. He was fresh out of officer candidate school and responded to the paper's announcement calling for aspiring actors and models.

"I said 'hey, I can do that' and I called the number and they sent me a brochure," said Corrigan. From there, he went on to apply for modeling jobs nationwide. "Barbizon School of Modeling in Memphis [Barbizon Modeling of Memphis] responded. They really wanted to see me. Basically, they just wanted me to go to school, but I tried it out."

During his time in modeling school, a friend was appearing in an Elvis Presley television series in Memphis. Corrigan immediately expressed his interest in the project and was connected to the project's director. It resulted in his first role as a drug dealer in the independent film entitled "Son of Shaft." He would then go on to study at Memphis' John Casablancas Acting School, and things became real as he landed as an extra in "The Firm," inspired by Mississippi author, John Grisham.

"The 'extra' turned out to be the moment because I got to meet Tom Cruise and be in the film several times. That's when I said 'I like this!'" said Corrigan proudly. "From then on, I got an agency and received my first speaking part [in the movie] '21 Grams.' Once you get an agency, they begin to look at you a lot different."

And, his agency was successful at creating more exposure for Corrigan. He's appeared in front of the camera in approximately 10 projects, ranging from films such as "Mail Call" to commercials for Blue Cross, Blue Shield and Renasant Bank. Corrigan's experiences have allowed him to also cross paths with stars such as George Clooney, Sean Penn, Naomi Watts and others. His signature role was as a barber shop owner in the 2015 Marvel Comics movie "Fantastic Four," starring Miles Teller, Kate Mara and Michael B. Jordan.

Corrigan and his wife Patricia have been married for 15 years and are the parents of two boys, Juan Diego, 12, and Gabriel, seven. His family has been very supportive of his acting, military and massage therapist careers.

"We were really shocked to see him on the screen during 'Fantastic Four,'" said his wife Patricia from their Starkville home.

"And, of course, the boys loved it!"

Audition sessions and fulfilling guard commitments alone often require travel beyond state lines, sometimes for extended time periods. He says flexibility has been the key to maintaining a healthy equilibrium between his family and work life.

"They know I'm an actor and they were there when we saw 'Fantastic Four,' my latest movie. They couldn't believe it!" said Corrigan. "My wife is very special and sees the results. She knows I've done well, but the kids don't know it involves a lot of work, a lot of sacrifice."

Patricia feels that when an opportunity presents itself, it must be seized.

"He'll call and ask me if I should go to an audition and I tell him 'If you don't go, you won't get the part,'" said Patricia. "It's all a family effort and we support him."



When he's not acting or completing duty with Laurel's 184th SC, the 30-year guard veteran works as a certified massage therapist. His civilian work allows him to also pursue acting opportunities at a moment's notice.

"It gives me the flexibility to do just massages and acting jobs and go. It's very flexible," said Corrigan. "You can make from \$800 to \$5,000 a day acting and sometimes even more. Who's going to say no to that? You don't know which moment is going to put you on the map. Boom! And all of a sudden from then on, you're booked all the time."

One of the keys to having a successful acting career is to have strong agency support to help attract work opportunities. Angie Moncrief has served in that role for Corrigan for the past seven years and describes him as a consummate professional.

"He's very dependable, trustworthy and refreshing to work with," said Moncrief from her Action Talent Agency office in Flowood, Mississippi. "His military background is a huge benefit, also speaks Spanish and is skilled in the martial arts. In the service, you have to follow rules and directions and that transfers very well into the acting field. Not everyone is willing to do that."



Corrigan is also being assisted by another agent, Brenda Parrino-Netzberger of Open Range Management in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. She helped him to appear in a Mercedes Benz commercial during the 2013 Super Bowl and in several Popeyes Chicken commercials in Louisiana.

The Iraq and Afghanistan war veteran recently received his warrant officer commission after reaching his mandatory removal date as a field grade officer. There are many who would decide to hang the uniform up for good at their MRD, but he wanted to remain "Always Out Front" and "Ever There" for his state and his country.

"There's so much more that I can contribute and would like to learn, especially within the intel community," said Corrigan.

Over the past 20 years, "Hollywood has moved to the South," said Corrigan. Recent movies such as "The Help" and "The Free State of Jones" have prompted Mississippi to provide more incentives for filmmakers to draw more projects to the state. Success in this area will translate into more opportunities for Mississippians, including its citizen Soldiers and Airmen. He says these prospects will require patience and sacrifice in the

midst of balancing family and work responsibilities, but it can be done.

**"I'm always going to put the military first. The Military is what helped me do everything. It gives you discipline. It gives you focus. It gives you the 'don't quit attitude.' That's what I think America needs, more patriotism."**

**- Warrant Officer One Juan Corrigan**

"There have been people who to say to me 'Well, that's not going to happen.' I've been told that all of my life," said Corrigan. "You can't be in movies, you've got to go to Hollywood.' Well, I've been in several. Whatever you decide to be, you can. The only limitation is you. There are always 'ways.'"



U.S. Army medics assigned to the 155th Armored Brigade Combat Team transport a simulated patient to a UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter at a training area in New Mexico as part of a casualty evacuation exercise near Fort Bliss, Texas, March 28, 2018. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Spc. Jovi Prevot)

# 155TH ABCT

## Brigade Readies at Fort Bliss

Story by Sgt. Brittany Johnson  
155th ABCT Public Affairs

Four years of determination and training has led Soldiers of the 155th Armored Brigade Combat Team to their most recent challenge – pre-mobilization at Fort Bliss, Texas.

Beginning in 2014, Mississippi Guardsmen have participated in training at the Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center near Hattiesburg, Mississippi, Fort Hood, Texas, and Fort Irwin, California. Now, they have more than two months of pre-mobilization training before heading overseas to their next mission.

The warriors have already completed many different exercises and missions, despite most having only arrived at the end March. These events include unit ministry team training, indirect and direct fire missions, convoy operations, casualty evacuation exercises, and tactical operation center procedures. While the Soldiers have been through these drills before, conducting them at Fort Bliss provides a new environment with new challenges.

“Fort Bliss makes them have to work logistically; they have to be able to plan ahead for any needs that may arise,” said Maj. Timothy A. Morales, assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 410th Regiment, 177th Armored Brigade (Training).

The training that they’re going through is extremely beneficial to their mission set, said Morales. The conditions and terrain at Fort Bliss takes them out of their comfort zone and brings them into a setting that is closer

to what they will experience overseas.

“This environment was chosen because it best suits the environment of Kuwait,” said Staff Sgt. Clarence Ball with the 106th Support Battalion. “This training is helping us to get acclimated to the weather and terrain of the places we will be going.”

The Guard men and women are pushing themselves and each other to accomplish the mission and stay motivated.

“These Soldiers have been doing an excellent job,” said Ball. “Everyone’s still motivated and still ready to get the job done.”

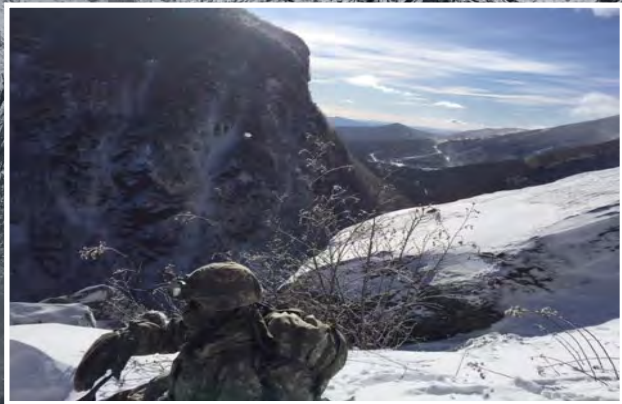


Pfc. Denzel Mallett, an infantryman with 2d Battalion, 198th Armored Regiment, pulls perimeter guard during the unit’s stick lane training at Fort Bliss, Texas, April 2, 2018. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Brittany Johnson)



From left, Spc. Jackson Tidwell and Spc. Benjamin Hardy, both combat medic specialists assigned to Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 198th Armored Regiment, assess a patient during a casualty evacuation exercise at a training area in New Mexico near Fort Bliss, Texas, March 28, 2018. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Spc. Jovi Prevot)

# MOUNTAIN WARFARE



Story by Sgt. Brittany Johnson  
155th ABCT Public Affairs

Freezing weather and steep mountains are just two of the many elements Soldiers have to battle at the U.S. Army's Mountain Warfare Course in Jericho, Vermont. Few get accepted into the rigorous 14-day class, and even less graduate.

Five 155th Armored Brigade Combat Team infantrymen assigned to Company A, 1st Battalion, 155th Infantry Regiment, successfully completed the course in late January.

"We started the class with 60 people and graduated with 51," said Sgt. Ryan Rouchon of the 1-155 IN, headquartered in McComb, Mississippi.

During the Mountain Warfare course, Soldiers learn how to overcome the physical and mental challenges of maneuvering in a moun-

tainous environment, navigating land by day and night, as well as casualty care and evacuation.

The Soldiers participated in a mandatory mountain walk, which is approximately a 7-kilometer icy hike through the mountains, during which they were required to use the basic fundamentals acquired in the classroom.

"It taught me a lot about mountaineering, something that I had no experience with," said Spc. Aaron Vasquez of the 1-155 IN. "It helped to build my confidence in that kind of environment."

Students learn a lot of valuable information that will help make them an asset to their units, said Vasquez. They bring back the material they learned and help train fellow Soldiers.

The class was presented with many trials throughout the two weeks, but one of the major obstacles they faced was the weather. Going from the hot and humid Mississippi climate to the frigid mountains of Vermont proved to be quite a challenge for the infantrymen.

"Being out in the extreme cold like that will wear you down," said Staff Sgt. Dominic Williams of the 1-155 IN. "We just pushed through

it and kept moving."

In addition to the weather, the terrain also proved to be an advanced obstacle while conducting land navigation.

"The land navigation class was difficult for me because the territory isn't what I'm used to," said Williams.

Mississippi is relatively flat, especially compared to the mountainous landscape in Vermont. In a course like this, not only are distance and direction important factors, one also has to take into account the elevation.

"Here (in Mississippi) you can go in a certain direction and count your distance, but when you're in the mountains you have to use your altitude and count your contour lines," said Vasquez.

Though mountaineering skills may not be a necessity in Mississippi, the Soldiers are now prepared to operate in multiple types of environmental climates and terrain.

"We never know where we will be needed," said Vasquez. "If we end up in mountainous terrain we will have the knowledge to help our fellow Soldiers."

The 155th ABCT is currently mobilized at Fort Bliss, Texas, preparing for a deployment in support of Operation Spartan Shield in the Middle East. They will continue to push themselves, mentally and physically, to overcome any challenge they may face.

It's that drive that helps them exemplify the motto of the National Guard, "Always Ready, Always There."



"I didn't think I was qualified to be a MSARNG recruiter, but I wanted to give people the opportunity to have an education, potential career, and support their family. It's great working with a team of recruiters that are fun, professional and committed to the future of the MSARNG."

- Sgt. Jordan Morgan

Started Dec. 19, 2017.  
Has 4 recruits committed since January.

## ARE YOU QUALIFIED TO BECOME A RECRUITER?

The Mississippi Army National Guard is currently seeking highly qualified NCO's to apply for upcoming AGR Recruiting and Retention positions throughout the state of Mississippi. If you have questions about recruiting opportunities or expectations, contact your local Recruiting NCOICs.

- Must be or become a member of the MSARNG.
- Must meet the medical standards outlined in Chapter 3 or 4, and for special purposes, Chapter 5 in AR 40-501, as applicable.
- Must have a current Physical Health Assessment.
- Must not have any permanent medical profiles which prevent taking the Standard APFT.
- Must not be under a current suspension of favorable personnel actions or required to be under suspension under AR 600-8-2, even if no suspension has been imposed.
- Must be a high school graduate with diploma; or have one year college with high school GED with no waiver.
- All applicants must have a minimum ASVAB GT score of 110.

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# 859th Engineer Company

## assists with JMRC facelift

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. David Overson  
JMRC Public Affairs

The 859th Engineer Company, headquartered in Pascagoula, Mississippi, participated in the Joint Multinational Readiness Center's annual troop construction work project in Hohenfels, Germany, March 11 - 31.

The guardsmen were among approximately 165 Army National Guard engineer Soldiers, and eight Army Reserve Soldiers in the first of five upcoming rotations for Troop Construction 2018. Joining them were troops from the 922nd Engineer Company (Horizontal), Louisiana Army National Guard, and Soldiers with the Army Reserve's 377th Forward Engineer Support Team - Advanced. The units fulfilled their required annual training by deploying to JMRC's Hohenfels Training Area to construct several projects high on U.S. Army Europe's premier combat training center's priority list.

Most of the Soldiers from the southern states were not accustomed to the German winter weather, but they completed several much needed construction projects despite snow and frigid temperatures.

"It's pretty cold here," said Spc. Alexis Caster, a carpentry and masonry specialist with the 859th Engineer Company. "However, once we started working we adapted pretty quick."

Twenty-year-old Caster is one of many younger Soldiers who conducted her National Guard annual training in Germany. In fact, this is the first opportunity she has had to hone her craft building something since her initial military occupational skill training.



"This is a great training opportunity for us," added Caster. "This allows us to work in different climates and prepares us in case we ever deploy and find ourselves somewhere we're not used to."

The 859th Engineer Company (Vertical) is a typical construction company, much akin to a general contractor who

would build a house, or school. Generally anything the Army requires with the full gamut of specialists from plumbers to electricians.

The annual troop construction work project was a win-win for both National Guard units and the JMRC as the units were allowed the opportunity to train in a real-world situation similar to a deployment, and JMRC reaped the rewards of their labor at little extra expense.

"You're never on the battlefield alone," said Capt. Sean Smith, commander of the 859th Engineer Company. "The relationships you build today may benefit you tomorrow. We very well could see the Louisiana engineers again during future flood relief missions."

Maj. Hector Mojica, chief of troop construction for JMRC's Army Reserve Engagement Cell, said the program is a successful one that provides a unique readiness-enhancing opportunity for reserve component units deploying to JMRC.

"We provide a training platform and the tools and equipment necessary for engineer construction units to train on their mission essential task list and on real-world construction missions," said Mojica.

"At the same time, the engineer projects enhance JMRC's training capabilities through infrastructure development in a cost-efficient manner. It really is a win-win situation."

JMRC's executive officer, Lt. Col. Mathew Price, also weighed in on the importance of the troop construction program.

"Troop construction units are vital to the survival of our infrastructure as they extend the lifespan of facilities in the training area, which supports the rotations," said Price. "These units provide a vertical, horizontal, and design capability that does not exist at Hohenfels as the Garrison Directorate of Public Works does not have equipment or manning to keep pace with projects in the training area."

"JMRC is committed to assisting these units on increasing readiness while in theater, and not have JMRC be a readiness consumer. U.S. Army Reserve and National Guard training time is precious, and we want them to build proficiency at mission essential task list tasks, while in turn we increase our readiness to support unit exercises."

Sgt. 1st Class James Trotter, superintendent of one of the construction projects assigned to the 859th Engineer Company, also appreciated the unique opportunity.

"We're always in a training mode," said Trotter. "But this gives some of our Soldiers an opportunity to hone some of their skills and experience what it's like to work in a different environment."

"Our unit may be deploying next year, so we are capitalizing on this opportunity. Hopefully this will broaden some of the younger Soldiers' horizons, but at the same time remind them that the actual work performed is basically the same whether at home, or overseas."



**"You're never on the battlefield alone. The relationships you build today may benefit you tomorrow. We very well could see the Louisiana engineers again during future flood relief missions."**

- Capt. Sean Smith





# Patriot South

## Working Together

Jennifer Williams, a rescue technician with the South Carolina Helicopter Aquatic Rescue Team, guides a litter being air-lifted from a building roof by a South Carolina Army National Guard UH-60 Black Hawk during exercise PATRIOT South 18 at Camp Shelby, Miss., Feb. 15, 2018. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Tech. Sgt. Nic Kuetemeyer)

**Story by Staff Sgt. Wendy Kuhn  
Ohio National Guard Public Affairs**

According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association, the U.S. experienced a historic year in terms of natural disasters in 2017. A natural disaster can strike any time and in any area within the nation. To prepare for this reality, about 1,000 personnel from federal, state and local entities assembled Feb. 12-15, 2018, for a Domestic Operations training exercise sponsored by the National Guard Bureau at the Combined Arms Combat Training Facility at Camp Shelby, Mississippi, with some operations taking place at the Gulfport Combat Readiness Training Center - Battlefield Airmen Center, Mississippi.

The exercise, referred to as PATRIOT South 2018, focused on increasing the

ability of local, state and federal organizations to coordinate and work together in response to a natural or man-made emergency. PATRIOT South 2018 tested the combined entities' abilities to respond during natural disasters using simulated emergency scenarios.

"It's a critical integration of our civilian and military entities to help save lives on the home front in response to a domestic, natural disaster or a man-made disaster," said Lt. Col. Ashley Nickloes, deputy director for PATRIOT South 2018.

The exercise allowed National Guard members who normally work on wartime tasks to receive critical training working on domestic operations tasks. Additionally, Guard members gained experience working side-by-side with various civilian and state entities.

"We work with the civilians on a disaster response at all levels, so it's imperative we work together with them instead of trying to be two entities," Nickloes said. "Otherwise we won't become a synergistic force and really help people in the United States in an emergency response."

The simulated disaster for this year's exercise was an earthquake scenario, since Mississippi is within close proximity to the New Madrid Seismic Zone.

"We set up venues at Camp Shelby that simulated collapsed structures and victims within those collapsed structures," said Lt. Col. Roger Brooks, director for PATRIOT South 2018.

Representation for this year's PATRIOT South exercise came from over a dozen states, which included around 50 units from both the Air and Army National Guard, the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency, the Mississippi Office of Homeland Security and the South Carolina Helicopter Aquatic Rescue Team.

Senior Airman Angelica Midgley, of the 154th Wing Security Forces Squadron from Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii, was a participant in the exercise.

"I think being in an environment outside Hawaii and on a different training ground provided more of a realistic scenario because it's not an environment our noncommissioned officers or Airmen are used to," Midgley said. "In Mississippi, we are able to challenge ourselves in different conditions. I was really excited for it."



Firefighters from the Mississippi Task Force Urban Search and Rescue team check their knots and angles at which their ropes are stressed, before descending on pulleys and harnesses from the roof of a simulated collapsed building during training exercise PATRIOT South 18, at Camp Shelby, Miss., Feb. 14, 2018. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Tech. Sgt. Nic Kuetemeyer)

*"It's a critical integration of our civilian and military entities to help save lives on the home front in response to a domestic, natural disaster, or a man-made disaster."  
- Lt. Col. Ashley Nickloes*



Air National Guard aeromedical evacuation teams from across multiple states simulated disaster response operations during PATRIOT South in Gulfport, Miss., Feb. 13, 2018. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Michelle Y. Alvarez-Rea)



Tech Sgt. Joshua Parker, a security forces Airman of Gulfport's Combat Readiness Training Center – Battlefield Airmen Center, struggles across the rope bridge during the confidence course event, Feb. 27, 2018. Parker is the first Airman to win the state's Best Warrior Competition. (U.S. National Guard photo by Chelsy Ables)

# Gulf Coast Airman

## Captures NCO of the Year Honors

Story by Staff Sgt. Michael Needham  
Camp Shelby Public Affairs

In only the second time the Mississippi Air National Guard has competed in the Mississippi National Guard's Best Warrior Competition, they fielded a winner.

Tech Sgt. Joshua Parker, a security forces Airman representing Gulfport's Combat Readiness Training Center – Battlefield Airmen Center, earned the Noncommissioned Officer of the Year title during the event at the Camp McCain Training Center near Elliott, Mississippi, February 26 to March 1.

Four Airmen and nine Soldiers dug deep to push their bodies and minds past exhaustion in order to complete the grueling competition. But in the end, an Airman took home the trophy among the NCOs.

"It was definitely a great feeling, knowing I accomplished something that had never been done," said Parker. "I am definitely proud of my accomplishment. Of course there is a little bit of pressure. You want to be perfect so future Airmen competitors can look forward to this competition."

He admitted that his military experience and time with the Mississippi Highway Patrol helped him, but a lot of the events were still new to him.

"It takes a lot of courage to come out here and compete

with these guys who train differently than we do," he said. "Our standards, of course, are different than the Army's. So it takes a lot of courage and self-motivation to push yourself to meet and exceed that standard."

The motivation, dedication, and persistence of the competitors did not go unnoticed by the leadership.

"It's three days of getting scuffed up," said Sgt. Maj. Craig Payne. "These soldiers will realize they can go beyond much more than what they think they can do."

First time competitor Airman Staff Sgt. Nicholas Barrett, of Meridian's 186th Air Refueling Wing, didn't know what to expect, but said he learned something about himself.

"It's about pushing yourself beyond your limits of what you think you can do," he said. "You learn a whole lot about yourself when you're pushed to a limit or a standard that you've never had to meet."

Day one was designed to test each competitor's comprehension and written skills with an exam and essay. The Army Physical Fitness Test, land navigation course, and a confidence course awaited the competitors on day two.

Sgt. 1st Class Timothy Lewis, the noncommissioned officer supervising the land navigation course, said even though technology is a great asset to our military, it's not always reliable. This type of training gives Service members the foundation needed to accomplish their mission in the absence of technology.

"You've got to be able to go back to the bare bones of essential training," said Lewis of the Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center's 154th Regional Training Institute. "You have to be able to grab a map and a compass to determine where you are and get where you need to go."

Soldiers and Airmen woke before dawn to mentally and physically prepare to take on the challenges awaiting them on day three of the competition. Every competitor geared up for the range to complete weapons qualification and the stress shoot, a timed event which includes several advanced warrior tasks as well as marksmanship skills.

With severe thunderstorms approaching, the next event, a 12-mile ruck march, was shortened to eight miles. However, at the end of those eight miles, the warriors were put to a test no one could have prepared for. A firefight with simulation rounds and a pugil stick battle against instructors from the 154th RTI forced each competitor to dig deeper.

"If your vehicle is disabled while in combat you will ruck. Along the way to where you are going, you may end up in a firefight and you have to be ready to defend yourself," said 1st Sgt. David Brooks, the senior NCO of the competition.

After their last sleepless night, the participants took on the final challenge of the competition - the sergeant majors' review board. The competitors' pressed dress uniforms and shined shoes weren't going to get them past the scrutiny of the senior NCOs. It was their knowledge of regulations and leadership skills that would advance them ahead of the competition.

Ultimately, Parker's persistence paid off. He finished victoriously as NCO of the Year, and Spc. Darrell Washington, of the 298th Support Battalion's 3656th Maintenance Company, won Soldier of the Year.

**"It was definitely a great feeling, knowing I accomplished something that had never been done. I am definitely proud of my accomplishment."**

**- Tech Sgt. Joshua Parker**

Command Sgt. Maj. John Raines III, the MSNG senior enlisted advisor, said that of his 15 years of involvement with this event, this was the closest the competition has ever been.

"The 2018 Best Warrior Competition was probably one of the better group of noncommissioned officers, Soldiers, and Airmen that we've ever had," said Raines. "To a lot of people's surprise, but not mine, an Air noncommissioned officer won the event this year. He performed to such a high level, physical fitness-wise, that he blew everyone out of the water."

Parker is unable to advance to the Army's regional competition due to his membership in the Air National Guard. Washington will compete in the regional competition April 24-29 in Tennessee.



Staff Sgt. Nicholas Barrett, of the 186th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, negotiates an obstacle in the confidence course event. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Scott Tynes)



Two Soldiers and an Airman partner for support during the ruck march. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Scott Tynes)



Spc. Newman Kazery, with the Joint Force Headquarters, fires at a target during individual weapon qualifications. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Scott Tynes)



# Washington Wins Soldier of the Year

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Scott Tynes  
JFH-MS Public Affairs Office

He did his best, but he wasn't sure his best was good enough.

When it was over, however, Spc. Darrell Washington emerged as the Soldier of the Year in the Mississippi National Guard's 2018 Best Warrior Competition.

He said he felt excited and relieved when his name was announced during a banquet March 3 at the National Guard Association of Mississippi's Noncommissioned Officer annual convention.

"It felt great," Washington said. "My first thought was that all the hard work paid off."

The training continues at the 154th Regional Training Institute at the Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center as he prepares for the regional competition in Tennessee, April 24-29. While there, his training regimen has expanded to include events that may appear in the regionals that are not traditionally featured in the Mississippi competition, such as a combat swim.

"That's something I have to work at," Washington said. "While training here, I did it for the first time."

The mechanic from the Hattiesburg-based 3656th Maintenance Company had been working toward this goal for two years. He feels like he fell a little short in last year's competi-

tion.

Shortly before the 2017 Best Warrior Competition, Washington hurt his ankle, which affected his scores in the physical events.

**"I believe things happen for a reason. The first time was exactly like I expected, but it didn't turn out the way I wanted. I know which events cost me."**

- Spc. Darrell Washington

He put that experience and knowledge to work between the competi-

tions by training even harder. Competition was also stiff in 2018, he said, and in the few days after the competition leading to the banquet he wasn't certain if it had been enough.

"I think I could have done better in some places, but I think I have a chance," Washington said.

The physical fitness test was probably his best event, he said.

"I don't think I've ever dropped below 290 (of a possible 300 points)," Washington said.

His marksmanship score on the individual weapons qualification, however, concerned him.

"My shooting went rough," he admitted. "My sight was crooked. It was fixed before I zeroed, but by that time

it had my morale down and that affected my score."

The Best Warrior Competition is not won or lost on a single event, however. It is the cumulative score of all events that truly matters, said 1st Sgt. David Brooks, the senior non-commissioned officer over the competition.

Washington said he is looking forward to the regional competition in Tennessee and would like to do well there before deploying with the 184th Sustainment Command later this year.

"I think Mississippi has a chance of bringing it home. That's the goal," he said.

Left: Spc. Darrell Washington leaps a wall in the confidence course during the 2018 Mississippi National Guard's Best Warrior Competition.

Middle: Washington drops a target during individual weapon qualifications.

Right: First Sgt. David Brooks and Washington trade pugil stick strikes.

# WWI Maxim Machinegun Recovered

Story by Staff Sgt. Scott Tynes  
JFH-MS Public Affairs Office

The Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center trained thousands of Soldiers to face the Germans across the desolate landscape of No Man's Land between the trenches during World War I. That barren area of shell-pocked mud was often dominated by the German MG08 Maxim machine gun.

In February, the Mississippi Armed Forces Museum recovered a Maxim machinegun on display in Meadville, Mississippi. The weapon was the last of five known WWI heavy weapons left in the state.

Glenn Husted, the collections manager for the museum, said the German Maxim machinegun and two sled mounts were reclaimed February 20, 2018, from the front of the Franklin County School District's high school Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps center.

"It took about two hours to break up the concrete slab and safely remove it with the



This Maxim machine gun, one of five known World War I-era weapons in the state, was on display in front of the Franklin County district's Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps Center, formerly the Meadville National Guard Armory. (Courtesy photo)



assistance from the Reserve Officers Training Corps cadets," said Husted, a retired MSNG Master Sgt.

The Maxim was one of two flanking the entrance to the former Meadville National Guard Armory, he said. The armory, listed on the state's registry of historic buildings, was built in 1938 by the Works Progress Administration. It is believed the guns were cemented in place at that time. However, the other Maxim was stolen several years ago from its mount and has never been recovered.

The state received 136 machineguns in 1921 as part of a larger issue of Imperial German War Trophies, Husted said. The trophies were given to towns and cities within the state, and a small portion was issued to the National Guard. The number of trophies was determined in direct proportion to the number of Service men from Mississippi as compared to the other 47 states at the time.

Most of the trophy weapons given to the state in 1921 were removed from public display and melted down in the scrap drives of WWII, when metal was at a premium and desperately needed in the war effort.

The Meadville Maxim was surrendered to the U.S. Army November

11, 1918. This year will celebrate the centennial anniversary of the weapon's capture.

"Our objective is to restore this by November for its 100th anniversary of being given to the state," said Husted.

Sourcing replacement parts, however, could cause delays. Sometimes replacement parts have to be manufactured, which can be difficult if blueprints also have to be researched.

In appreciation for their care of the antique, Husted said the machinegun will be returned to Meadville after the restoration for a one-day exhibit before it's moved to its permanent home, which has yet to be determined.

The museum has one other MG08 Maxim machinegun currently on display. However, it is a handheld MG 08/15 Light Machine gun instead of the heavier sled mount version. The other three WWI weapons, a 77mm Field Gun and two 150mm Krupp Guns, are on display at the State Capitol.

Once restored, the machine gun may join other World War I artifacts on display at the Mississippi Armed Forces Museum. (U.S. Army National Guard photos by Staff Sgt. Scott Tynes)



Stephen Magee, museum assistant, works to remove a MG08 Maxim Machinegun from the concrete slab housing the weapon since it was emplaced in 1938. (Courtesy photo)

# IN YOUR DARKEST HOUR WE ARE THERE



In the darkest moments of despair, people often don't think about the far reaching affects of suicide. Instead of choosing a permanent solution to a temporary problem, choose support.

**NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE: 1-800-273-8255**

WWW.AF.MIL/SUICIDEPREVENTION  
WWW.ARMY.MIL/READYANDRESILIENT  
WWW.MS.NG.MIL

**MISSISSIPPI  
NATIONAL GUARD**



Story by Tech. Sgt. Joshua M. Remy  
186th Security Forces Squadron

## Hard Way or the SMART WAY

If this article claimed to contain the “ultimate secret” or the “magic pill” to fitness, it would go viral instantly. Instead, all that is found here is hard work and motivation.

No matter if fitness is a hobby or simply a tool to ensure proper physical conditioning to execute your military duties, goal setting is a key to success. When setting a fitness goal, the acronym SMART should be the first stop for anyone looking for success. SMART is used to set a goal that is specific, measurable, attain-

Joshua Remy is a Tech Sgt. with the 186th Security Forces Squadron at Key Field Air National Guard Base in Meridian, Miss. Over a 14-year career, he has deployed twice and has served as a Combat Arms Weapons Instructor for 11 years. With over 10 years of fitness training experience, he has scored 90 or above on the Air Force Physical Training test since 2010. This has not only assisted him in maintaining readiness in his career, but also with graduating as a distinguished graduate from the physically demanding Air Force Security Forces Combat Leadership Course. He has served periodically as a certified personal trainer and completed a half marathon over the last 10 years. His current SMART goal is to complete a full marathon by the end of 2018.

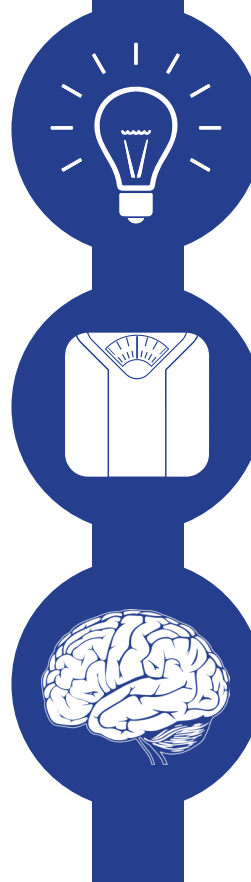
inable, relevant and time-bound. Without using this model, a goal can be in jeopardy of being too general - for example “get fit.” These types of goals can be a motivation-killer and lack consistent results.

On the other a hand a SMART goal is specific in that it is simple to understand and clear enough to identify what will be accomplished, such as “lose weight.” Next, the goal must be measurable. There should always be a way to track progress such as measurements, weight, distance, repetitions or even load used. The goal should also be attainable. Simply put, know your limits to push your limits. Relevancy is also important in setting goals. Ask yourself, “Does this goal fit who you are,” and “how is it important to you?” Lastly, set a timeline to accomplish the goal. This will provide some added motivation.

Coming up with, setting, and accomplishing goals is just one way to see results and stay motivated. While the secret to fitness may continue to be an elusive creature, hard work and motivation can continue to provide results. Results will inevitably lead to continued success and motivation in fitness, leading to a lifestyle change rather than simply a daily grind to get or stay fit. Before motivation can come from results, goals must be completed. The first step is setting SMART goals.

- S** • Specific
- M** • Measurable
- A** • Attainable
- R** • Realistic
- T** • Timely

#SMARTFITNESS  
SET SMART GOALS





### Dixie Thunder Sendoffs

Private Joshua McGowan pauses for a photo with family members following a sendoff ceremony for the 1st Battalion, 155th Infantry Regiment at the McComb High School football stadium, March 26, 2018.

Spec. Mason Gregory of the 1st Squadron, 98th Cavalry Regiment and family members talk with Xavier Harris from WTVA News following the regiment's sendoff at the Amory Army National Guard Readiness Center, March 23, 2018. McGowan, Gregory and their units are now at Fort Bliss, Texas with the 155 Armored Brigade Combat Team in preparation an upcoming deployment in support of Operation Spartan Shield.

The operation is a combined forces contingency operation within Central Command's area of responsibility. One of the most dynamic regions of the world, this AO has tremendous impact on U.S. vital interests—specifically the free flow of resources through key shipping lanes, the defense of our homeland against the pervasive and persistent threat of terrorism and extremism, and the prevention of the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction. Operation Spartan Shield plays a role both in deterring regional aggression and reacting to possible threats within the Middle East. (U.S. Army National Guard photos by Lt. Col. Christian Patterson, APR+M)

### #155ABCT



### Citizen Airman

Col. Eric Bratu, vice commander of the 186th Air Refueling Wing, and Lt. Col. Dewayne Hamrick, commander of the 186th Logistics Readiness Squadron, presented Tech. Sgt. Shelby Alphin, a material management craftsman with the 186th LRS, with the Wing Safety



### Key Field Safety Award

Award at Key Field Air National Guard Base, Meridian, Miss., April 4, 2018. Alphin received the award for performing self-aid and buddy care on a civilian contractor who fell from a ladder. (Courtesy photo)

### #ChangeofCommand



The Mississippi Army National Guard's Lt. Col. Robert Enochs receives the United States Balkan National Support Element colors from Rear Admiral John W. Smith during a change of command ceremony at Kosovo's Camp Film City, March 26, 2018. He is now in control of the group charged to provide administrative and logistical support to approximately 100 U.S. joint service personnel present to fulfill NATO Crisis Establishment requirements and Theater Enabler positions in Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Spc. Andres Guzman)

### CRTC-BAC Firefighters'

### Prom Promise



Photos by Public Affairs Specialist A. Danielle Thomas

Firefighters from the Combat Readiness Training Center - Battlefield Airmen Center helped show teenagers the deadly consequences of drinking and driving by participating in a mock accident response.

Prom Promise is a program that teaches young people about the dangers of drunk driving and distracted driving. West Harrison High School students began with a mock memorial service for

classmates they pretended had died in a car wreck. The students then went outside to watch emergency responders conduct a mock accident response. Local law enforcement, firefighters, ambulance workers, and others portrayed what happens when they arrive at a fatal accident scene.

Students expect this experience will have a longer lasting impact on young people than simply having them listen to a speaker.



### R&R BN Guest Speaker

### Graham Allen



Mississippi National Guard Soldiers and guests enjoyed an evening of fellowship and award presentations during the Recruiting and Retention Battalion's dining out and awards banquet, Jan. 27, 2018, in Flowood, Miss. The event included special guest speaker Graham Allen, a successful entrepreneur. Allen, a 12-year Army veteran who spent three

years as a noncommissioned officer in the MSNG R&R battalion, is best known for his daily rants on social media. His social media popularity evolved into "Rant Nation with Graham Allen" on CRTV. During the banquet, Det. 1, Company A was recognized for being the top recruiting team for the year's first quarter. (Courtesy photo)

# EVER THERE

## 184th Sustainment Command, Laurel, Mississippi

Brick red is the color used for transportation, the original unit designation.



The white quatrefoil and the green leaves simulate a magnolia and refer to Mississippi, "The Magnolia State," the headquarters of the organization.

The yellow outer band symbolizes a wheel and refers to transportation, the former mission of the unit.

**"Whenever you come from your hometown and you come into a place that's been destroyed, it really puts it in perspective. Being able to help these people is incredible."**

**- Sgt. Brittany McDonald, 184th Sustainment Command  
While deployed to Operation Island Restore**



The 184th Sustainment Command provides command-level logistical combat support, such as transportation and supply, to other units in a theater of operations. The unit is one of 13 U.S. Army sustainment commands and only one of two in the National Guard.

# BURNING QUESTIONS

## "Chaos" Says

### be Deployable or Get Out

**Lt. Col. Michael M. Majors  
Joint Staff Judge Advocate**

Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis told reporters at a press conference February 17, 2018, "You're either deployable, or you need to find something else to do." Secretary Mattis' motivation is to ensure fairness in the deployment process. If a Service member cannot deploy because of medical reasons, then another Service member is forced to deploy more often to fill the gap. What does this mean for Service members of the Mississippi National Guard?

#### When does this policy go in to affect and does it apply to the National Guard?

In a memo published February 14, 2018, the Under Secretary of Defense provided temporary guidance on the Department of Defense's retention policy for non-deployable Service members. It stated that Service members who have been non-deployable for more than 12 consecutive months, for any reason, will be processed for administrative or disability separation. Mandatory separation will begin October 1, 2018. However, all military services, including the National Guard, may begin processing separations as of the date of the policy memo. Military services may also initiate separations upon determination that a Service member will be non-deployable for 12 consecutive months. It is not required to wait until the 12 months have passed. The only listed exceptions are pregnant and post-partum Service members. Waivers may be granted for retention. Additional policy guidance is expected to follow in several months.

#### What does this mean for Service members with medical issues?

Service members who have been medically non-deployable for more than 12 consecutive months will be referred into the Disability Evaluation System. For the Army National Guard, the Disability Evaluation System requires Soldiers be processed out under applicable medical regulations if the reason for separation is related to an underlying medical condition. For Soldiers, this process takes precedence over an administrative separation and will dictate whether a medical separation and/or retirement are an option for the Service member. For the Air National Guard, the Secretary of the Air Force Personnel Council makes the final disposition of which process takes precedence.

#### Will this effect all Service members, including traditional, Active Guard Reserve, and technician?

The new policy applies to all Service members, but does not appear to effect federal technician or civilian positions directly. However, those positions would certainly be indirectly affected if dual status is required and the Service member's corresponding military position is terminated. While there are some remaining questions regarding implementation, it is clear that the military as a whole is moving toward being as close to a 100 percent deployable force as possible.



**If you fall into the non-deployable category, contact your chain of command to find out what you need to accomplish to become medically cleared. Below are some regulations to reference regarding this separation process.**

#### Army Regulations

- AR 135-178, Enlisted Administrative Separations
- AR 135-175, Separation of Officers
- AR 635-40, Disability Evaluation for Retention, Retirement, or Separation

#### Air Force Instructions

- AFI 36-3208, Administrative Separation of Airmen
- AFI 36-3212, Physical Evaluation for Retention, Retirement, or Separation

#### Department of Defense Instructions

- DoDI 1332.14, Enlisted Administrative Separation
- DoDI 1332.30, Separation of Regular & Reserve Commissioned Officers
- DoDI 1332.18, Disability Evaluation System



Joint Force Headquarters  
Mississippi National Guard  
P.O. Box 5027  
Jackson, MS 39296-5027

Sgt. Joshua Reno, of Headquarters Company, 106th Support Battalion, points out a flag to his son, Hollis, 2, following a sendoff march through their hometown of Monticello, Miss., March 7, 2018. The unit was honored before its upcoming deployment with the 155th Armored Brigade Combat Team. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Scott Tynes)

