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THE

ISPOTCH
FEB 2015

THE MAGAZINE OF THE TEXAS MILITARY FORCES

A man in a dark suit and red tie is speaking at a podium. He is gesturing with his right hand. Behind him, several other people are seated, including a woman in a black top and a man in a suit. The podium is covered with a blue and red cloth. The background shows a large, classical building with columns.

TXMF welcomes
new
commander
in chief

Patrolling
the skies in
South Texas

454th Eng. Co.
accomplishes
mission





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The Cover



Texas Governor, Greg Abbott, addresses attendees at the 2015 Texas gubernatorial inauguration. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Tech. Sgt. Eric L. Wilson)



Texas National Guardsmen from the 36th Infantry Division Band led the 2015 Texas Gubernatorial Inauguration parade held in Austin, Texas, Jan. 20, 2015. Service members from the Texas Army, Air and State Guards participated in various roles throughout the event. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Maj. Randall Stillinger).



Governor
Gov. Greg Abbott



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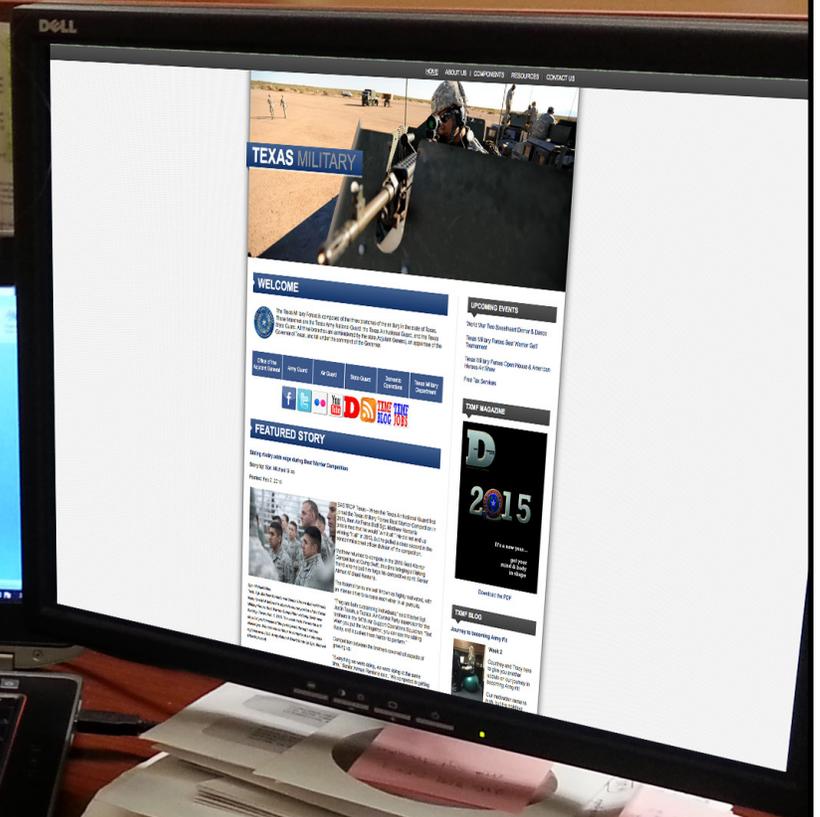
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The Noncommissioned Officer

Commentary by CSM Mark A. Weedon
Senior Enlisted Advisor, Texas Military Forces

Many articles have been written about the impact of the noncommissioned officer. You have likely read that “Generals win wars; but it’s the NCOs who win the battles that ultimately win the wars.” One progression from the Vietnam War was that NCOs came to be known as the backbone of the service, heavily relied upon to do more, know more and take on more responsibility. Throughout military campaigns, the mission and focus of the NCO corps have transformed significantly. Changes came about due to the necessity for the NCO to become more involved as small unit leaders, significant in training and operating more intricately to accomplish the mission. It is important to remember that while these changes have been positive and strengthened our force, unless we are good stewards of these responsibilities, they will change again. Why make such a statement, you may ask? I want to make sure the NCO corps continues to embrace the role we’ve been given and live up to the expectations inherent with that charter.

There are three attributes a leader must have in order to become effective at the core competencies of a military leader. Taken from Army Doctrine Publication, ADP 6-22, a leader must develop character, presence, and intellect in order to lead, develop, and achieve the “whole concept of a leader.” The Air Force’s core values of integrity first,

service before self, and excellence in all we do are right in line with these core competencies. Across the great state of Texas, I have witnessed some individuals that excel in all these traits. They are few and far between.



There are a good number of junior and senior leaders who display great potential to master them all, but fall short in one or two areas. To effectively lead, one must maintain these behaviors across the full spectrum of duties and responsibilities, consistently. Many NCOs are good at presence and achieving being ‘in charge’ and ‘making things happen,’ while simultaneously disregarding character, intellectual capacity and developing. Conversely, one may

harbor pure character and admirable integrity, but lack the ability to take charge of a situation and make the right things happen at the right time.

The challenge we have as a NCO corps is to ensure all leaders strive to master core leader competencies. This is met by each of us maintaining the desire and striving to become outstanding in all six characteristics. Once we’ve accomplished this, then and only then, we will truly become known as the Profession of Arms.

As the Texas Military senior enlisted leader, it is my desire that our NCO corps in the Army Guard, Air Guard and the State Guard be dominant at all six attributes and competencies. This will take a deliberate effort by all leaders to assess our individual and unit NCO strengths and weaknesses and develop a deliberate plan to improve.

Do your part; take action now. Your efforts have a direct impact on our corps- the Texas NCO corps. Our Soldiers and Airmen deserve the best we have to give, their families expect it and our nation depends on it. - **FROM THE TOP**

I’m proud to serve with you,

Mark A. Weedon
CSM, USA
Senior Enlisted Advisor
Texas Military Forces





TXMF welcomes new Commander in Chief

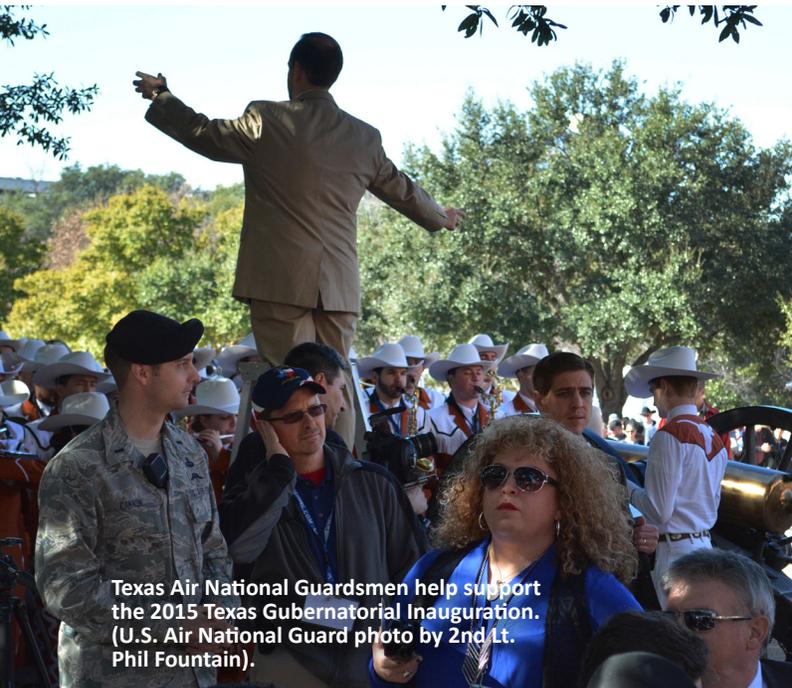
Texas Military Forces plays role in the 2015 Texas Gubernatorial Inauguration

Story by 2nd Lt. Phil Fountain, Texas Military Forces Public Affairs

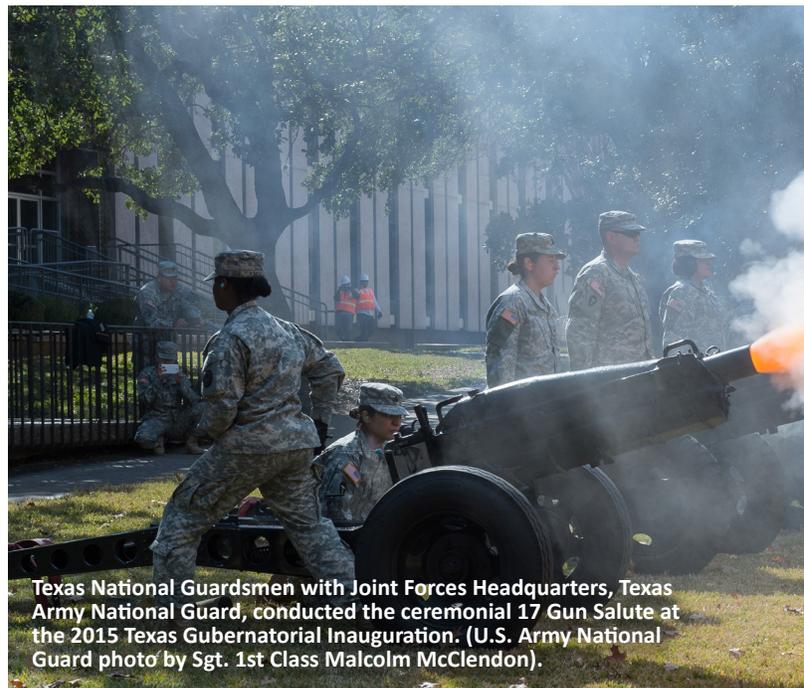
Texas National Guardsmen with Joint Forces Headquarters, Texas Army National Guard, conducted the ceremonial 17 Gun Salute at the 2015 Texas Gubernatorial Inauguration held at the Texas State Capitol in Austin, Jan. 20, 2015. Service members from the Texas Army, Air and State Guards participated in various roles throughout the event. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. 1st Class Malcolm McClendon).



Members from each component of the Texas Military Forces helped honor the state's new commander in chief during an inauguration ceremony and parade at the Texas State Capitol, Jan. 20, 2015.



Texas Air National Guardsmen help support the 2015 Texas Gubernatorial Inauguration. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by 2nd Lt. Phil Fountain).



Texas National Guardsmen with Joint Forces Headquarters, Texas Army National Guard, conducted the ceremonial 17 Gun Salute at the 2015 Texas Gubernatorial Inauguration. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. 1st Class Malcolm McClendon).

AUSTIN, TEXAS - Gov. Greg Abbott became the 48th governor of Texas, succeeding former Gov. Rick Perry, who served a record 14 years in office. Additionally, the inauguration installed Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick, who will also serve as president of the Texas Senate.

The Texas Military Forces support to the 2015 Texas Inaugural Committee included: a joint color guard, which presented the American and Texas flags during the inaugural ceremony and parade; a four-ship, state active duty flyover of F-16 Fighting Falcons assigned to the 149th Fighter Wing, Texas Air National Guard, based at Joint Base San Antonio – Lackland, Texas, a 17-gun salute from a Howitzer cannon battery assigned to the Texas Army National Guard, at Camp Mabry, in Austin and the 36th Infantry Division Band, Texas Army National Guard, which marched in the parade.

Additionally, members from the 6th Civil Support Team and Texas





Sgt. 1st Class Abegail Hernandez with Joint Forces Headquarters, Texas Army National Guard motions for the ceremonial 17-Gun Salute at the 2015 Texas Gubernatorial Inauguration. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. 1st Class Malcolm McClendon).



Texas Governor, Greg Abbott, addresses attendees at the 2015 Texas gubernatorial inauguration. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. 1st Class Malcolm McClendon).

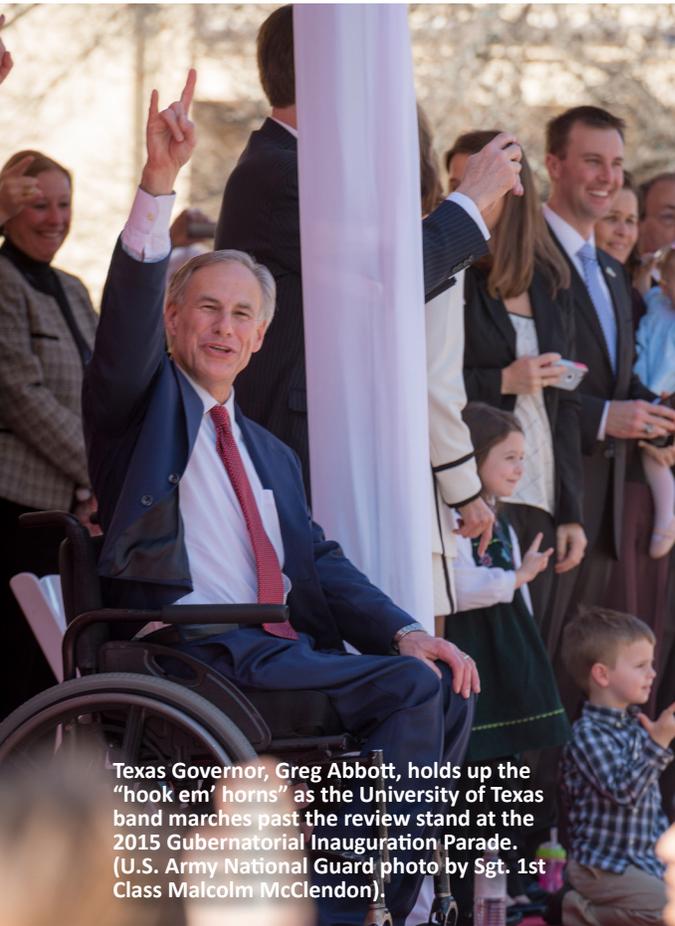
State Guard assisted state and local authorities with numerous activities surrounding the ceremony and parade.

“We’re honored to be a part of this historic event,” said Maj. Gen. John F. Nichols, the 51st Adjutant General of Texas. “We’re proud to be able to help welcome Gov. Abbott, our new commander in chief. It’s been a great opportunity to introduce him to some of our Soldiers and Airmen.”

Texas Soldiers and Airmen stand ready to answer the governor’s call.

Throughout the past decade, the Texas Military Forces responded to a myriad of state missions, including: hurricane and wildfire relief, as well as operations along the Texas-Mexico border. Additionally, the organization supported the deployment of nearly 30,000 Soldiers and Airmen in support of federal missions abroad.

Whenever called, the Texas Military Forces has stood up to support the



Texas Governor, Greg Abbott, holds up the “hook em’ horns” as the University of Texas band marches past the review stand at the 2015 Gubernatorial Inauguration Parade. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. 1st Class Malcolm McClendon)

state of Texas.

During his inaugural speech, Abbott spoke of overcoming adversity, and the drive of Texans to make the possible out of the improbable.

“Many thought that it was improbable that Texans would overcome total devastation at the Alamo,” Abbott said. “And yet the unyielding drive for independence that has always filled the hearts of Texans led to victory at the battle of San Jacinto. And thus began the legend that Texas has become.”

Abbott also laid out a broad vision for the state, which was in-line with the inauguration’s theme – “Even the future is bigger in Texas.”

“Because as goes Texas, so goes America,” Abbott said, “and as goes America, so goes the world.”

- DISPATCH



Sgt. Ray Bradshaw, Department of Public Safety, left, Senior Airman Laban Johnson, Texas State Guard, center, and Chief Master Sergeant Larry Carroll, Texas State Guard, right, discuss parade requirements for the Texas gubernatorial inauguration. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Tech. Sgt. Eric L. Wilson)



Texas National Guardsmen from the 36th Infantry Division Band lead the 2015 Texas Texas Gubernatorial Inauguration parade held in Austin, Texas, Jan. 20, 2015. Service members from the Texas Army, Air and State Guards participated in various roles throughout the event. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. 1st Class Malcolm McClendon).



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STATE

JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO Fort Sam Houston, Texas - The State Partnership Program has been successfully building relationships between the U.S. and countries all over the world for more than 20 years through humanitarian operations, disaster relief efforts, emergency response exercises and multi-echelon command and control exercises executed at the operational and tactical level.

The SPP is a military-to-military engagement administered by the National Guard Bureau, and executed by the state adjutants general in support of security cooperation objectives and foreign policy goals.

U.S. Army South hosted a summit Jan. 21 at its headquarters for the adjutants general (TAGs) of select U.S. Army National Guard forces participating in the SPP to facilitate a direct interaction between participants focused on meaningful and participatory dialogue regarding theater engagement and security cooperation strategies within U.S. Southern Command area of operation.

“The purpose was to bring together select adjutants general from the National Guard SPP to sit down with the commander of Army South to discuss mutual support in security cooperation with in the SOUTHCOM area of responsibility,” said Col. Larry Dotson, senior National Guard adviser with Army South.

The SOUTHCOM/Army South area of responsibility encompasses 31 countries and 15 areas of special sovereignty in Central and South



Army South hosts National Guard State Partnership Program summit

PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

Story and photos by Sgt. Mahlet Tesfaye U.S. Army South Public Affairs Office



U.S. Army South hosts an Adjutants General Summit Jan. 21 at its headquarters here. The summit was intended to bring together State Partnership Program participants in U.S. Southern Command area of operation to discuss theater engagement and security cooperation strategies.

America, and the Caribbean.

During the summit, Maj. Gen. Joseph P. DiSalvo, Army South's commanding general, stressed the importance of constant communi-

cation between the state TAGs and Army South on the different SPP activities with partner nations for better visibility and coordination.

"There are a lot of well intended

activities going on down range in our respective AORs. I think we all are in agreement; the best way we can be effective is by being better coordinated on what's happening," said DiSalvo.

"I like this because we are meeting with Army South and combining our efforts to make sure all we are doing in SPP supports the needs of America and our partner countries."



Maj. Gen. John F. Nichols (left), Texas Adjutant General, speaks with Chilean Maj. Gen. Edmundo Villarroel Geissbuhler, a U.S. Army South partner nation liaison counterpart, during an Adjutants General summit.

Army National Guard TAGs from Arkansas (Guatemala), Louisiana (Haiti), Missouri (Panama), New Hampshire (El Salvador), Puerto Rico (Dominican Republic), South Carolina (Colombia), Texas (Chile),



West Virginia (Peru), and Wisconsin (Nicaragua); and representatives from National Guard Bureau (NGB), SOUTHCOM, Special Operation Command South, Marine Corps Forces South, and Army South senior staff attended the summit.

One of the participants, Maj. Gen. John F. Nichols, Texas National Guard adjutant general, believes in the importance and benefits of the SPP and works with Chile in support of SOUTHCOM’s mission.

“I like this because we are meeting with Army South and combining our efforts to make sure all we are doing in SPP supports the needs of America and our partner countries,” said Nichols.

One of U.S. Army South’s missions is counteracting transnational threats and strengthening regional security in defense of America. In order to sustain its mission, Army South and its supporting units conduct and support multinational operations and security cooperation in the SOUTHCOM area of responsibility through enduring relationship with partner nations.

Operation Unified Response in Haiti; Beyond the Horizon, a humanitarian and civic assistance operations provided to the people of Central and South America; Fuerzas Aliadas Humanitarias, a regionally oriented emergency response exercise; and PANAMAX, an operational exercise focused on the defense of the Panama Canal by a Multi-National Task Force, are some of the operations Army South has been involved with

partner nations through the SPP.

The summit was focused on how to better share information to inform mutually supporting activities and in the spirit of sharing, representatives from each state discussed past, present and future projects with partner nations.

“The most important take away that I captured was the SPP offers enduring access and valuable informative insights to the Army and Air Force and being able to collaborate on shared security objectives helps everybody involved in security cooperation,” said Dotson.

DiSalvo commended the SPP participants for their great work on fostering and maintaining relationships with their partner countries in support of security cooperation.

“You all in your respective states do a good job with your partner countries,” DiSalvo said to the TAGs. “For us at the Army South and SOUTHCOM levels to have visibility into that is very important.” - **DISPATCH**

Remembering Martin Luther King Jr

36th ID commanding general speaks at US Army South MLK Observance

Story and photo by Maj Randall Stillinger 36th Infantry Division Public Affairs Office

“ I would not be standing here
today if not for his efforts ”

Maj. Gen. Les Simpson, commanding general of the 36th Infantry Division, Texas Army National Guard, watches a video that pays tribute to the life and work of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Simpson was the guest speaker at the observance ceremony hosted by U.S. Army South at Joint Base San Antonio.

Click to follow the
36th ID on Facebook





SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS - Maj. Gen. Les Simpson was the guest speaker at a Martin Luther King Jr. Day Observance Ceremony at the headquarters of U.S. Army South at Joint Base San Antonio, Jan. 22 2015.

Maj. Gen. Joseph P. DiSalvo, commanding general of U.S. Army South, hosted the event, which included senior Liaison Officers from the countries of Chile, Colombia and Brazil.

Dr. Isaac Hampton II, command historian for U.S. Army South, began the ceremony with a historical background on Dr. King and the significance of his role in the Civil Rights movement. Through stories of Dr. King's childhood, his background and the people that influenced him, Hampton set the stage for the day.

Dr. Hampton summed up his presentation by suggesting what Dr. King might say if he were around today.

"Dr. King might say that we should become a dedicated fighter for civil rights. Make it a central part of your life. You will make a greater person of yourself, a greater nation of your country and a finer world that we live in," Hampton said.

Simpson, from Rowlett, is the Commanding General of the 36th Infantry Division, Texas Army National Guard, which is headquartered at Camp Mabry in Austin. He's

the first African-American commander of the division and serves as a member of the National Guard's Joint Diversity Executive Council.

During his keynote address, Simpson spoke about Dr. King, his influence and role in the Civil Rights movement, and the progress towards equality made within the U.S. military over the years.

Simpson said, "I would not be standing here today if not for his efforts."

"Our military has progressed from a segregated institution to a multi-racial force," Simpson said. "Where once African American soldiers were relegated to the rank of a mess man, steward or barber, we now see people of color in every strata of the four branches of service and at the highest levels of government."

"We, the members of the U.S. military, are servants of the people. We represent their hopes and the answer to their fears. We are citizens and soldiers for this great Republic," Simpson said. "Perhaps more than anyone else, we are called to action every day, at home and abroad, not for personal gain or because of the hubris of a false national pride, but because the core values of our nation and our service demand that we be leaders in the endless struggle for freedom and democracy."

- 36th ID PAO

EYES IN THE SKY

Story by: Capt. Amanda Homes

Photos by: Sgt. 1st Class Malcolm McClendon

Texas Military Forces Public Affairs



A National Guard UH-72 Lakota helicopter prepares to fly in support of Customs and Border Protection (CBP)-led Operation Phalanx. National Guardsmen from across the country assist CBP in disrupting Transnational Criminal Organizations and Drug Trafficking Organizations by conducting aerial detection and monitoring along the U.S.-Mexico border in support of Operation Phalanx and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security



Army National Guard members have served along the U.S.-Mexico border in south Texas since 2012 providing aviation support to U.S. Customs and Border Protection, with plans to continue serving for the foreseeable future.



A National Guardsman, points out possible illegal activity to a U.S. Border Patrol Agent along the Texas-Mexico border.

LAREDO, TEXAS - Soldiers, from numerous states across the country, collaborate in this unique mission known as Operation Phalanx, to provide aviation assets in support of CBP alongside Office of Air and Marine, Texas Department of Public Safety, U.S. Department of Homeland Security and other local, state and federal agencies with operations along the international border. They are prepared to fly their UH-72 Lakota helicopters regardless of day or time, ready to deploy as requested by CBP.

“These UH-72 helicopters, which are bought and paid for by our taxpayers, are the perfect platform to perform this mission,” said Brig. Gen. Patrick Hamilton, Domestic Operations Commander, Texas National Guard. “They provide a tremendous operational flying experience for future state and federal missions.”

The standard crew consists of three Guardsmen, two pilots and a sensor operator, and one Border Patrol Agent Observer per aircraft. The ability to combine the agent with the advanced UH-72 helicopter helps

“ We are proud to work with National Guardsmen across the nation to support Customs and Border Protection. We have a great relationship with all of our partner agencies on the border. ”

provide effortless support to border patrol agents working on the ground. “This aircraft’s capabilities make it a unique asset in the Army aviation inventory and perfect for this mis-

sion,” said a pilot with the Texas National Guard who has been on the mission for six months. “It has a communications package that none of the other Army aircraft have that allows us to communicate on secure Border Patrol and other law enforcement channels. This communication capability, along with a high-powered searchlight and cameras with infrared capabilities make it the total package.”

On any given flight these aircrews can support CBP and other agencies with the identification and observation of undocumented immigrants, the seizure of illegal narcotics, and in emergency situations conduct search and rescue operations and casualty evacuation. They also assist law enforcement in vehicle pursuits in order to prevent dangerous high-speed pursuits in populated areas.

“The amount of assistance is invaluable.”

able,” said assistant chief patrol agent Dan Ramos. “They have provided us an extra level of safety.”

The partnership helps strengthen the relationship between both agencies.

“We are proud to work with National Guardsmen across the nation to support Customs and Border Protection,” said Hamilton. “We have a great relationship with all of our partner agencies on the border, making Operation Phalanx the perfect mission for National Guard soldiers.”

While providing an invaluable asset to CBP, the soldiers in Operation Phalanx also benefit in their military and professional careers while on mission. Pilots, sensor operators, maintenance personnel and operations support personnel gain valuable experience in the demanding and constantly changing environment on the international border,

making them invaluable assets at their home units when they return to their respective states.

“Pilots gain unprecedented flight hours flying relevant missions every day, sensor operators rapidly adapt and learn how to maximize the capabilities of our cameras to assist CBP, maintenance personnel become experienced at inspections most states wouldn’t see for years to come, and flight operations personnel successfully manage relationships with numerous agencies and accountability for flight crews,” said a Nebraska National Guard soldier who has been on this mission for more than a year. “It’s a fantastic opportunity for soldiers to serve on a domestic mission with important implications, working alongside their counterparts from other states.”

Additionally, the soldiers are also proud to serve in positions that allow

them to support the integrity of their country and its borders on a daily basis.

“This mission is incredibly rewarding because we know we’re making an important difference specifically to the Border Patrol agents on the ground, but also to our country as a whole,” said the guardsman. “When we signed up to join the National Guard we wanted to make a positive impact on our country and in our communities, and this mission allows us to do that every day.”

The National Guard has provided support along the U.S.-Mexico border in various ways and on numerous occasions since 1917, most recently providing constant support to CBP since 2010. From 2010 to 2012, the National Guard provided CBP ground support, switching to an aviation based mission in 2012. - **DISPATCH**



A Border Patrol Agent points out an area of possible illegal activity to a National Guard aviator along the Texas-Mexico border.

IED HUNTERS RETURN HOME

454th Engineers return from Afghanistan



Story photos by Amabilia Payen
Mobilization and Deployment,
DPTMS Fort Bliss

FORT BLISS, TEXAS – Soldiers of the 454th Engineer Company Route Clearance, Texas Army National Guard, returned state-side Jan. 12 at the Silas L. Copeland Arrival/Departure Air Control Group airfield after completing their mission in Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Greeting them as they deplaned was Brig. Gen. Patrick Hamilton, commanding general of the Texas Domestic Operations Task Force, Texas Army National Guard.

“Everybody came home safely,” said Hamilton. “They have been there for almost a year and it’s great to have them home. They did a great job and we are glad to have them back in Texas.”

According to Capt. Eric L. Leatherman, company commander, 454th Eng. Company, the unit was the tip of the spear when it came to route clearance. The 454th Eng. Company cleared the way for all coalition forces by re-

moving improvised explosive devices off the main routes in Afghanistan.

“We were IED hunters,” said Leatherman. “We had the highest (operational tempo) and the most kilometers for any other unit out there right now. We were extremely busy, however about three quarters of the duration there, we had our forces split for a consulate mission. We sent a platoon to be a protection element for the consulate.”

For Spc. Danielle Jost, supply technician, 454th Eng. Company, the deployment was one she will never forget because it was her first time in a hostile environment.

“It was good to go with a group of people I really liked,” said Jost. “We went through a lot of stuff and I’m just glad everybody made it back home. I was very nervous but it was a once in a lifetime experience. I’m glad to be home.” Leatherman expected his Soldiers to do a good job and he became very proud of them when the 454th Eng. Compa-



ny became the unit that coalition forces would go to for help.

“Where it was tiring, or painful, everyone out there would come to us, and they would thank us,” said Leatherman.

The 454th Eng. Co. will now go through the demobilization process with the Mobilization and Deployment office of the Directorate of Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security. Hamilton’s advice to the unit as they were debriefed was “be patient.”

“I know everybody wants to go home, but be patient because in the long run, this all for you,” said Hamilton during his speech to the Soldiers of 454th Eng. Company. The importance of why the demobilization process is done to standard, not to time, was emphasized by Hamilton in his speech, stating it is a good thing to make sure everything in their documentation and medical issues are done right when National Guardsmen come off active

duty. This is so they could go back to their civilian jobs and families without worry.

The 454th Eng. Company families were well taken care of by the Family Readiness Group leader, Mary Lou Porter. Leatherman expressed his gratitude towards her hard work and support of the unit.

“We couldn’t ask for a better FRG leader,” said Leatherman. “She was on point the entire time, taking care of our families. Whenever I take their husbands, wives, sisters, and brothers from their families, it’s extremely tough for the people back home and they pay a high price for freedom just like we do, so Mary was always on top of it.”

Once the demobilization process is complete, the 454th Eng. Company will return to San Angelo, Texas, where their unit is based. - **DISPATCH**

OVERCOMING CHALLENGES

Amputee completes basic training to become Texas State Guardsman

“ My success was a combination of internal fortitude and fellow soldier’s encouragement providing me the needed motivation. ”



Pfc. Lonnie Roy conducting a Physical Fitness Test.



Story and photo by Capt. Esperanza Meza, TXSG Public Affairs

REALIZING DREAMS

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GREENVILLE, TEXAS - Despite growing up as an amputee with a prosthetic leg, Pfc. Lonnie Roy, Texas State Guard, always wanted to serve.

Roy grew up watching his father, a retired chief petty officer in the U.S. Navy, serve and spent much of his childhood on military bases. Roy always had a desire to serve, but never could due to his disability.

Roy realized his dream when he graduated Regional Basic Orientation Training and became a Texas State Guardsman Nov. 16, 2014, at the Greenville Armory.

Roy, a Dallas-area resident and director of health systems research at Parkland Health & Hospital Systems in Dallas, was born with a bone disease that led to a leg amputation. After a chance meeting with Sgt. Brian Nail, 19th Regiment, Texas State Guard, Roy learned that his dream of serving might become a reality.

Nail told Roy to look into the State Guard, informing Roy that his disability may be an obstacle but might not be a disqualifier. Roy's wife was excited and wholeheartedly supported him as she knew he wanted to be in the military his whole life, Roy said.

"Being an amputee, some unique challenges required a little more effort to overcome aside from everyday inconveniences," said Roy.

During the training, troops received extensive training in land navigation, communications, customs and courtesies, rank structure and chain of command, wear and maintenance of the uniform, a basic leadership course, drill and ceremony and a physical fitness test.

During his training, Roy had to get creative. He learned putting on trousers with a prosthetic leg was difficult due to its three inter-locking pieces. To minimize the time devoted to

dressing in the morning, Roy decided it would be easier to pre-dress the leg and lace up the boot and leave it up against his bed roll before going to sleep.

"RBOT was more difficult for me than my fellow trainees," said Roy, about the training. "Marching presented some unique obstacles for me."

Marching on uneven surfaces makes it difficult for an amputee to maintain balance. That coupled with keeping in step with his prosthetic leg that seemed to take too long to follow through on the forward step, resulted in Roy falling to the rear.

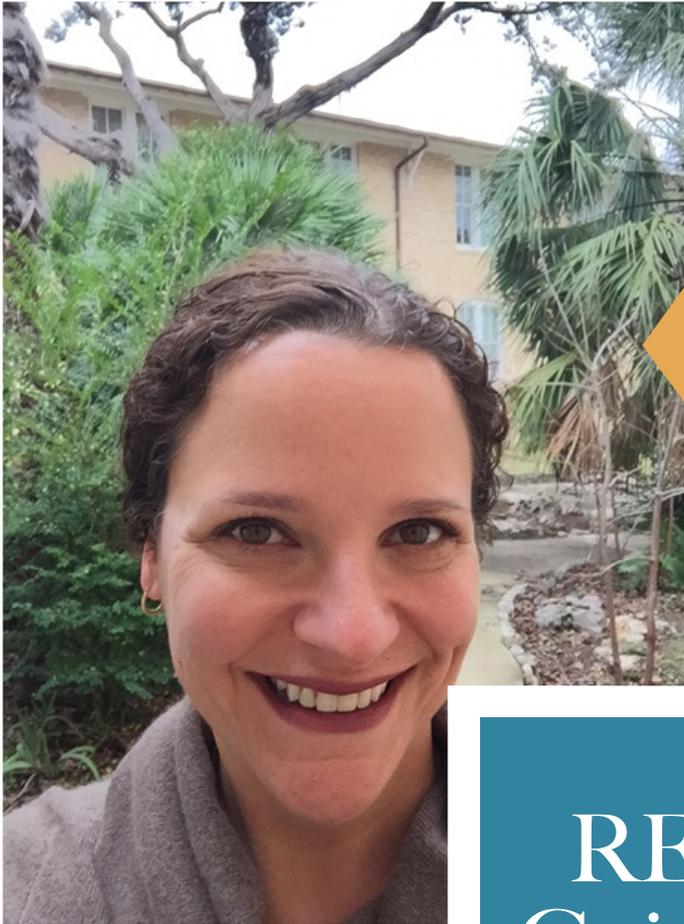
To fix this marching problem, Roy adjusted his gait, taking 30-inch steps with his leg and 15-inch steps with the prosthetic leg, a suggestion given to him based on how wounded warrior amputees adjusted to marching.

In addition to adjusting to marching with a prosthetic, Roy experienced difficulty in completing the one-mile event on the fitness test, but with some encouragement from fellow service members, he was able to complete it.

"My success was a combination of internal fortitude and fellow soldier's encouragement providing me the needed motivation," said Roy. "I am very excited to be part of the Texas State Guard and the Texas Military Forces. I never thought it would be possible to serve in any military force. I hope to continue to serve the State of Texas."

For those considering the Texas State Guard, but hesitant that a disability may inhibit them, Roy's message is: "If you are interested in joining, apply and go for it."

Roy is assigned to 1st Battalion, 19th Regiment of the Texas State Guard. - **TXSG PAO**

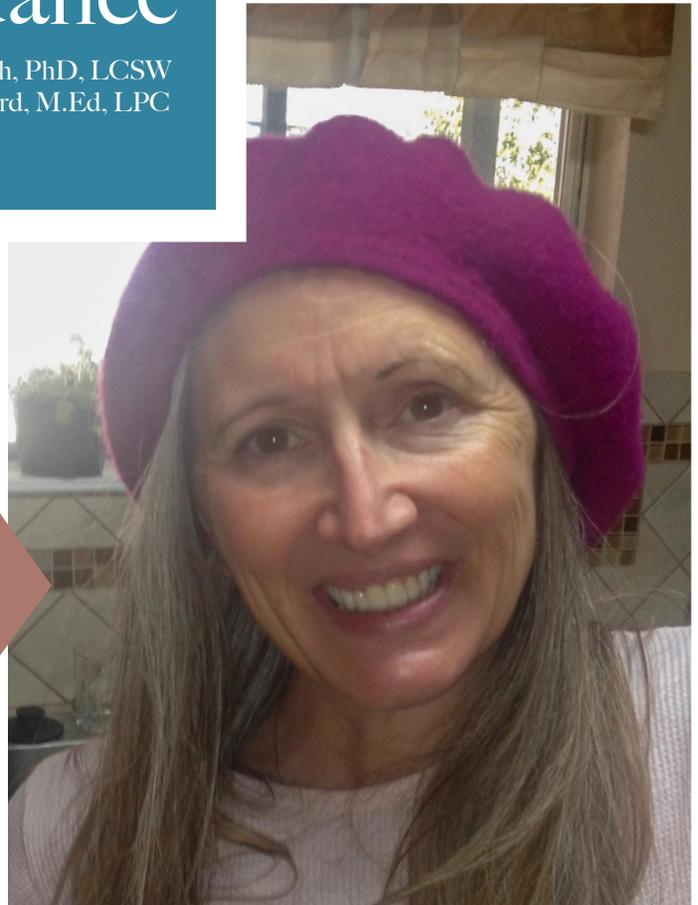


I am Courtney Lynch, one of two Psychological Health Coordinators (PHC) located at Camp Mabry in Austin, Texas. I am a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and proudly attended the University of Texas at Austin where I received my bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees. My past work and studies were in the area of child welfare; special needs adoption and foster care specifically. I lived in North Carolina and worked as an Assistant Professor for a short time, but soon realized how much I missed working with clients, and Texas. So I returned to Texas and discovered military social work. I worked for five years at Fort Hood, first in Family Advocacy and then in Child and Family Behavioral Health. I am happy to serve as a PHC for Texas military members and their family. In my 'real' life, I love cycling on country roads, I love local live music, and I bleed Orange — Hook 'Em!

REAL Guidance

Courtney J. Lynch, PhD, LCSW
and Tracy K. Ward, M.Ed, LPC

My name is Tracy Keating Ward. I am also a PHC, and I am a Licensed Professional Counselor. I earned a bachelor's degree from Concordia Lutheran College and my master's degree from Southwest Texas State University, while working for the Texas Legislative Council. I have been a therapist for the past 17 years working in the fields of criminal justice and pain management. I have been blessed to be placed at Camp Mabry in beautiful West Austin. Camp Mabry is spread over many acres and includes hiking trails, a park, a 1-mile running track and two fishing ponds. In my office I have three fishing poles, a tackle box, and a fishing permit from the Colonel for me and any service member who wants to fish at Camp Mabry's pond. In my "real" life I am married to a patient man, Tom Ward, and we have two sons, Thomas and Paden. We also have a poorly trained Lab-mix named Duke. I love fishing, walking, hiking or running in nature and using my new juicer to juice every type of fruit and vegetable available.



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elcome to 'REAL Guidance'. We developed this recurring column as a way to give you a glimpse into what we offer to service members and their families on a day-to-day basis. In our work, we aim to Respond, Educate, Advise, and Listen. We invite you here to get REAL guidance about real-life situations, events, and topics. We will also bring you subject experts who will share the latest and greatest information from their fields.

What is a PHC

We are contractors under the broader Psychological Health Program, which has PHC's in every state. In simple terms, PHC's listen, support, educate, and provide short-term, solution-focused consultations, among other things. Services are free, confidential and voluntary. We can provide up to three or more sessions of individual consultations by phone or in person, and provide referrals for longer term counseling or specialty treatment.

We can also provide trainings and education on various topics at drill weekends, such as maintaining good sleep hygiene, reducing stress and promoting wellness. We attend and provide support at pre and post-deployment and yellow-ribbon events. We will be attending an upcoming conference on sleep problems, and look forward to sharing what we learn in the REAL Guidance column.

If you should need or want something other than the aforementioned services, such as financial advisement, employment information, resume development or anything else, we can point you in the direction of some great resources and help, whether you are nearby to Camp Mabry or somewhere else in the state. Although we can provide many services directly, there are a few things for which a referral to another provider is most appropriate, but we will assist you in determining what is needed and the best way to achieve it.

What is Upcoming

Service members are physically fit. Counselors and therapists tend to be mentally fit. Because we often ask service members to consider their mental fitness, we have committed to becoming 'Army fit'. We have set our sights on passing a PT test on the first day of spring 2015. Follow our progress in becoming Army fit in our forthcoming blog series on the Texas Military Forces (TXMF) web site. www.txmf.us



Texas National Guardsmen from the 36th Infantry Division Band led the 2015 Texas Texas Gubernatorial Inauguration parade held in Austin, Texas, Jan. 20, 2015. Service members from the Texas Army, Air and State Guards participated in various roles throughout the event. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. 1st Class Malcolm McClendon).

