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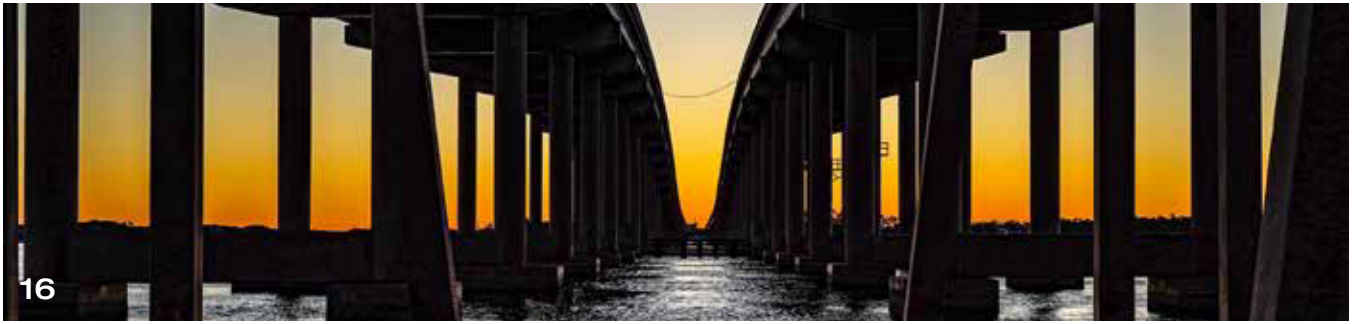
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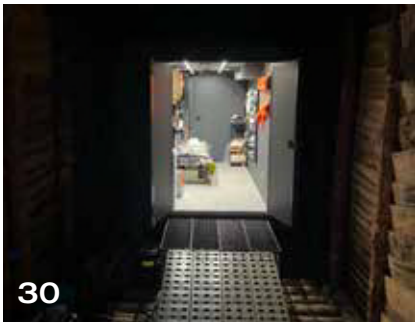
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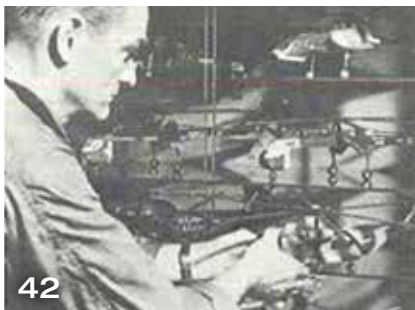


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On The Cover

PAID ADVERTISEMENT: Peace through strength means protecting American interests around the world. To remain the strongest and most lethal force in the world, our aviators must train on the best and safest aircraft, leveraging innovation, and emerging technology to help them outpace the threat. *Caption provided by the advertiser.*

Briefings ▶

Driscoll Sworn In as SECARMY



U.S. ARMY PHOTO



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Dan P. Driscoll, 38, was sworn in as the 26th Secretary of the Army by Vice President JD Vance on February 25, 2025 while his wife, Cassie, held the bible. Driscoll spent four years in the Army, completed U.S. Army Ranger school, and deployed to Iraq in 2009. He left the Army in 2011 and ultimately became a senior adviser to his friend and former classmate Vance prior to being nominated.



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE PHOTO

Caine Nominated as CJCS

President Donald J. Trump announced the nomination of Dan "Razin" Caine to be the 22nd chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff on Feb. 21, 2025. Caine, a retired Air Force lieutenant general, was a career F-16 pilot who patrolled the skies above Washington, D.C., during the 9/11 attacks, and flew a career total 2,800 hours, including 100 combat hours. He was deputy commanding general of both U.S. CENTCOM's Special Operations Component and Special Operations Joint Task Force in Iraq between May 2018 and September 2019 and served as the associate director for military affairs at the CIA from 2021 until his retirement in 2024. If confirmed by the Senate, he will replace the acting chairman, Navy Admiral Christopher W. Grady who replaced Air Force Gen. Charles Q. Brown Jr.



Fort Liberty Renamed Fort Bragg



U.S. ARMY PHOTO

On Feb. 15, 2025, Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth signed a memorandum approving the renaming of Fort Liberty, North Carolina to Fort Roland L. Bragg. PFC Bragg, after whom the base is now named, served during World War II in the 17th Airborne Division and was involved in the Battle of the Bulge, receiving both the Silver Star and Purple Heart. The change is effective immediately.

Military Spouses Exempt from Return to Work



ODD PHOTO

While the president has ordered federal employees who have been working remotely and teleworking back to their offices, the Office of Personnel Management released a memorandum on Feb. 12, 2025 explaining how federal civilian employees who are also military spouses are exempt from the return-to-work mandate. This includes both military spouses appointed under the Military Spouse Employment Act authorities and those appointed under other hiring authorities. The memo also said agencies may continue hiring military spouses in remote work positions. The policy covers spouses of members of the armed forces on active duty, spouses of service members who retired with 100% disability, spouses of service members who died while on active duty, and spouses of National Guard members on full-time guard duty. The memo also covers spouses of U.S. foreign service members.

CORRECTION:

The AFMD article on page 28, print edition of February 2025, was erroneously reprinted from an earlier article. The correct AFMD article can be found on the online version of that issue. We apologize for the error.



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Advancing Into Prime Season



AP PHOTO BY BELL HARRIS

CW5 Adam Jarvis during his retirement ceremony at Fort Campbell, KY on Feb. 13, 2025.

We are certainly entering our prime season with the recently executed Luther Jones Depot Maintenance Forum in Corpus Christi, TX, now in the rear-view mirror, and on the horizon... our AAAA Annual Summit in Nashville, 14-16 May.

You can see the full Luther Jones wrap up on page 36. We very much appreciated the tremendous coordination and integration with the Corpus Christi Army Depot Commander COL Kevin Considine and his team to plan, develop, and support the Forum. We had a solid two days of dynamic and impactful presentations and discussions on topics ranging from Supply Chain challenges in Large-Scale Combat Operations to Contested Logistics.

Especially effective were the panels that included our key Industry partners; there was a lot of spirited engagement with the audience in the Q&A sessions that were imbedded in those panel discussions. MG Lori Robinson, Aviation and Missile Command Commanding General, as always, did a terrific job of highlighting vital issues like Artificial Intelligence, block-chain potential, and the overall “data strategy”. Bottom line, if you missed our Luther Jones Depot Maintenance

Forum this year, you missed a LOT!

At the completion of Luther Jones, we (Janis, Bill, Art, and I) diverted to Fort Campbell, KY to attend CW5 Adam Jarvis’ retirement ceremony conducted at the GEN Brian “Doug” Brown compound. Adam was the ‘Air Boss’ for years at the AAAA Annual Summit, is a bonified legend in the Special Operations MH-60 Direct Action Penetrator community, and an associate editor of Army Aviation Magazine.

It was a singular honor for me to represent our Association and induct Adam into the Gold Order of St. Michael in recognition of his incredible 35½ years of selfless and committed service to our Nation, the Army and Army Aviation, and the Night Stalkers.

The latest Army Aviation Caucus news is that we will be holding a kickoff Reception on the evening of April 9, 2025 on Capitol Hill. This is the first event of the re-organized Army Aviation Caucus for the 119th Congress that AAAA

supports through sponsorship of their events throughout the year.

We look forward to sponsoring the subsequent ‘formal’ meetings between the Caucus and our Army Aviation leadership that enable visibility and understanding of Army Aviation priorities, challenges, and opportunities.

Finally, please make sure you are all registered for the events and housing at the 2025 AAAA Annual Summit, May 14-16, at the Gaylord Opryland. We have strong support setting new ‘bests’ again this year for registered attendance to date and Industry exhibit commitment, as we embrace the event’s theme, “Army Aviation: Ready to Meet Tomorrow’s Challenges Today!”

We look forward to what will be a fantastic Summit....see you there!

MG Walt Davis, U.S. Army Retired
36th President, AAAA
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▶ This Is Your Army!

Army National Guard Aviation

By BG David R. Doran



U.S. NATIONAL GUARD PHOTO BY SGT JAM TRACY

Last September LTG Jonathan Stubbs was appointed as the Director of the Army National Guard. In this capacity, it's his responsibility, along with the Adjutant Generals from the 54 States, Territories, and District, to ensure that the ARNG stands ready to provide highly-capable forces to the Joint Force and Combatant Commanders.

The Utah Army National Guard's 1st Battalion, 211th Aviation Regiment welcomed the newest AH-64E Apache Guardian into its ranks in West Jordan, Utah, Nov. 23, 2024. These are the most advanced attack helicopters to date, enhancing the Utah Army National Guard's air lethality.

The National Guard is the Nation's Risk Mitigation in a time of Strategic Competition, providing kinetic capacity that deters our foes and assures our friends. Especially useful in operations below the level of armed conflict, the Guard will serve as the Army's Operational Reserve in Large Scale Combat Operations.

In this article I'll do three things. First, I'll lay out the Director's enduring imperatives for the Army National Guard at large. Second, I'll relay his impressions and vision for Army National Guard Aviation. And finally, I'll challenge the broader Army Aviation Enterprise with some tough questions on his behalf as a former Ground Commander.

Your Army National Guard Imperatives

Imperative #1: Grow Combat-Ready Soldiers and Leaders

The strategic advantage of the US Army is our individual-level initiative and small unit leadership. Competent, confident, and empowered Soldiers of all ranks are what ensures American victory on the battlefield. It wasn't colonels or generals who broke through on Omaha Beach – it was corporals, sergeants, lieutenants, and captains from the 1st ID and 29th ID (ARNG) who aggressively defeated battlefield chaos with only a commander's intent. We must, and will, continue this focus on foundational leadership and training.

U.S. Army Task Force Aviation Soldiers assigned to Regional Command East of the NATO-led Kosovo Force (KFOR) mission perform repairs on a UH-60M Black Hawk helicopter at Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo, Jan. 15, 2025.



U.S. NATIONAL GUARD PHOTO BY SGT CHERYL MADOLEY

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Imperative #2: Build Lethal Units

When proficient soldiers and leaders are aggregated, we can conduct high-quality collective training. We do almost nothing in the Army as individuals and must train in teams at every opportunity. While combat training centers (CTCs) are our priority, they can't be the sole collective training event. We must train to block and tackle at home station.

But the best way to ensure readiness is to stay in the fight. As the "Operational Reserve", we must be "routinely utilized", and we will fight to keep the Guard employed with Combatant Commanders as much as possible. Resource, train, deploy, and employ.

Imperative #3: Transform for the Future

The transition from counter insurgency (COIN) back to large scale combat operations (LSCO) continues, as there is a generation of Soldiers who lean on their Iraq and Afghanistan experiences. We will attack this shift in all DOTLM-PF swim-lanes; we must transform to stay both ready and relevant.

Division as the Unit of Action. We will fight as Divisions, and the Guard will provide capable Divisions to the Joint Force Commanders. We must therefore organize, modernize, equip, and train as Divisions. This means exercising our Division CPs and rationing or massing our enablers appropriately.

Imperative #4: Strengthen Enterprise Partnerships

Our State Partnership Program keeps us connected to our international partners and the Combatant Commanders. Through this program, the ARNG becomes the uniformed arm of the Embassy. We must continue to enhance this combat-multiplier with proactive engagements and training.

Cross-Compo Integration in training. We must train with

our Active Component teammates whenever possible. Not only for proficiency, interoperability, and standardization purposes, but also to leverage their training resources.

Your Army National Guard Aviation Imperatives

The Army National Guard has been contributing to Army Aviation since 1948. Today, almost half of our Army Aviation capacity (aircraft) resides in Compo 2. We are indispensable for both the Warfight and for Homeland Defense. As such, we must answer difficult questions, make tough choices, and be aggressive in our approach.

Imperative #1: Grow Combat-Ready Soldiers and Leaders

Acting as Fort Novosel's satellite campuses, our ARNG Aviation Training Sites (AATS) must be tightly integrated with the Aviation Center of Excellence vision, then resourced and stabilized for the long-term. We continue to produce the best combat helicopter aircrews in the world, and our AATS are a key ingredient to that success.

You can't train aircrews without aircraft, so funding our four-legged aircraft readiness stool is essential (parts, labor, unit, sustainment). We must protect our aviation maintenance enterprise against all budget thieves, or we will incur unacceptable risk to mission and force.

Imperative #2: Build Lethal Units

Our aviation units can't be lethal if they can't survive. From assembly areas to battle positions and landing zones, we must protect the force, learning the right lessons from the conflict in Ukraine. Drones have put FARPs, Command Posts, and maintenance sites at increased risk—we must be innovative and experimental in updating our tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs).



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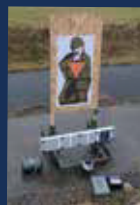
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We will fight as a joint force and must train that way. Our budding partnership with the Marine Air Weapons Training School program is a step in the right direction. Moving to pure aviation units at our combat training centers (vice task forces) also moves us closer to how we'll fight.

Imperative #3: Transform for the Future

FLRAA vs. Black Hawk. FLRAA is an amazing piece of technology. But we can't afford to put the enduring utility fleet at unacceptable risk, while we develop and acquire the next generation of aircraft. And do we really expect FLRAA to do what a Black Hawk can in the Brigade and Division areas? Where is the balance point, and how should we best distribute these capabilities?

Manned vs. Unmanned vs. Optionally-manned: What technology should be matched with each mission: reconnaissance, contested logistics, light utility, MEDEVAC, battlefield circulation, deep attack, air assault? Perhaps we need more than our current three types of combat aircraft (UH-60, AH-64, CH-47).

Compo 2/3 Force Design Update (FDU) Next: Division vs. Corps vs. Theater Aviation – what's the right mix of capabilities and structure? Can we really afford to have a Division without attack helicopters? If drones are the way of the future, shouldn't we build some additional UAS into the Aviation Force Structure?

Army Fixed Wing and Intra-theater airlift. In Vietnam, we had Caribou. In Iraq, we had Sherpa. Now? We can't afford to put Chinooks against this mission, and the USAF TTPs are inadequate for our ground commanders. We need a Future Utility Aircraft that can haul cargo. Or maybe this is FLRAA's true calling. Maybe we need capability-based units, rather than

mission-based units. A FLRAA company could do operational-level raids, intra-theater airlift, long-leg MEDEVAC, and attacks out of contact (if we give it launched effects).

Imperative #4: Strengthen Enterprise Partnerships

Unit alignments. The Reserve Component FDU formally aligns our combat aviation brigades (CABs) and theater aviation brigades (TABs) to Divisions, Corps, and Theaters. These relationships must be developed and continually strengthened in peacetime, to ensure wartime success.

There are some excellent training events that allow us to integrate with active component units and our international partners – the DEFENDER exercise series in Europe is one example. In 2019, 1-107 AOB sent a Task Force to Romania and integrated with the 12th CAB to provide air traffic services. And while not every combined maneuver training event needs live helicopters, they do need live aviation professionals.

Conclusion

There's an English phrase that says "May you live in interesting times." The rise of China, the aggressiveness of Russia, the simmering friction of Europe, and the rapid expansion of robotics make these times interesting indeed. Your Army National Guard Aviation is up to any challenge presented, and will stay ready and relevant, as the indispensable Combat Reserve of the Army.

Ready for Combat; This We'll Defend!



BG David R. Doran is the Assistant Director of the Army National Guard for Aviation, Intelligence and Information.

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Challenges and Opportunities for Army National Guard Aviation as the Army Executes Transformation in Contact (TiC)

By BG Matthew J. Strub and COL Christopher W. Logsdon

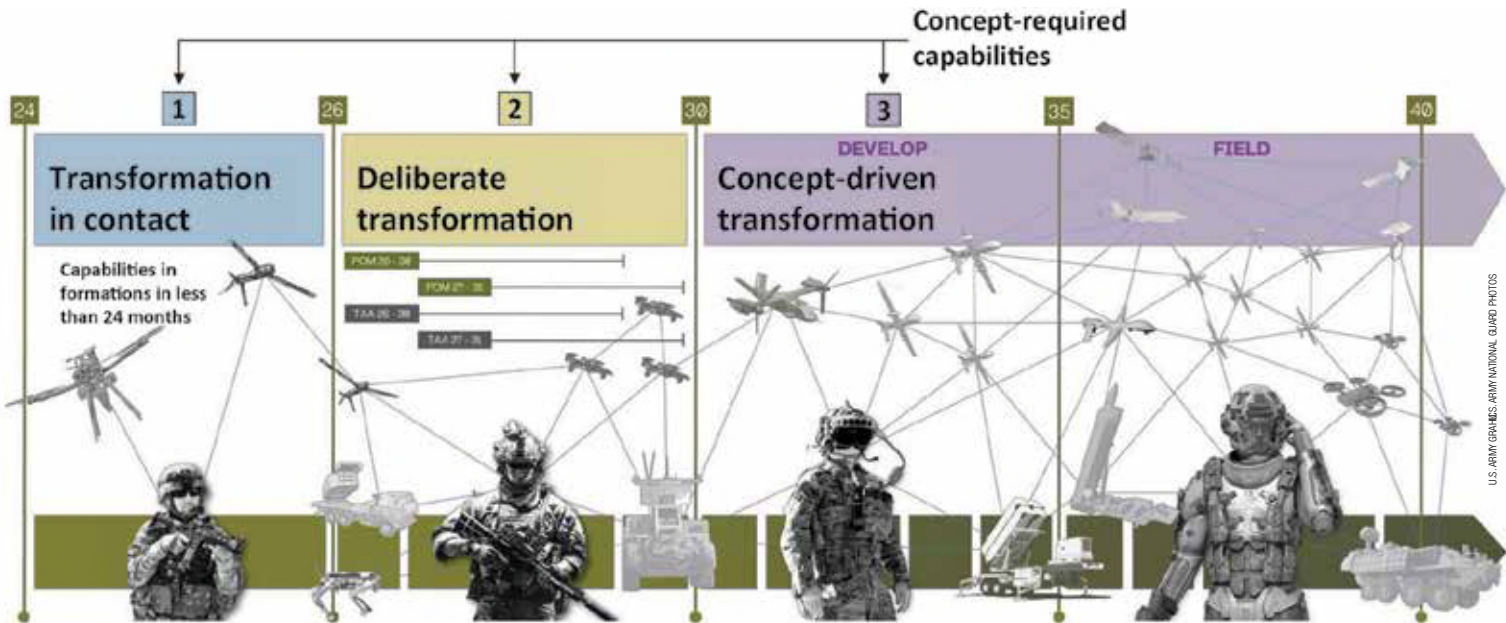


Figure 1. Transformation in Contact

The US Army's Transformation in Contact (TiC) initiative, a comprehensive effort to modernize and enhance capabilities while actively engaging with and responding to emerging threats, is significant to Army National Guard (ARNG) Aviation.

As the Army's operational reserve, the ARNG plays a unique dual role in supporting national defense and domestic operations (DOMOPS). The ARNG must adapt accordingly to remain relevant and effective in meeting national defense and security objectives. The ARNG faces several challenges as it seeks to transform in contact.

Resource Allocation: A Delicate Balance

The Army is undergoing significant transformations and moderniza-

tion to enhance its aviation capability and readiness to respond to a rapidly changing operational environment. Army modernization efforts require holistic resource allocation, including ARNG capabilities, to prepare Army Aviation for emerging threats. The ARNG must contend with the complexities of operating in an environment with scarce aviation resources. Some of the specific resource challenges facing the Guard include:

■ **Competing priorities** – The Guard's continued Global Force Management

Allocation Plan (GFMAP) requirements and real-world DOMOPS missions. The recent hurricanes in North Carolina and Florida and the wildfires in California require careful resource balancing.

■ **Equipment modernization** – In a constrained financial environment, priorities must be made in speed and mass when upgrading equipment to meet new operational requirements. As sustainment costs increase on our enduring equipment, a concerted effort must be made to modernize COMPO 1/2/3 as concurrently as possible.

■ **Manpower allocation** – The full-time dual-status military technician maintenance authorizations in the National Guard have been limited to approximately 53% of the requirement to maintain Department of the Army (DA) Operational Readiness (OR) rates. An increase in authorization is

needed to keep up with the high maintenance demands, especially if legacy equipment is not replaced.

■ **Retention of experienced personnel** – While recruiting, training, and developing aviation professionals has kept up with current demand, the challenge is a decrease in the overall experience level of all our flight crew members. In recent years, we have had a more significant than-average number of Soldiers decide not to re-enlist, along with increased retirements as aviators and mechanics transition to the enticing civilian airline industry. Competitive

to advanced simulators, training ranges, and necessary equipment. The number of rotations to combat training center (CTC) rotations is limited.

■ **Time constraints** – National Guard soldiers have statutorily limited training time due to their part-time status. Balancing civilian careers with military training can reduce the time available for critical skill development. Additionally, the training planning horizon for National Guard units is at least a year out for a major training event. This planning timeline does not sync well with active-duty unit timelines. Deliberate

National Guard and active-duty units is essential to ensure effective communication and functional command and control. Additionally, operational procedures must be aligned to ensure cohesive action and mitigate risk to an acceptable level. Some of the challenges and concerns regarding integration with active duty include:

■ **Different training cycles** – The National Guard operates on a part-time training schedule, making synchronization with active-duty training cycles difficult.

■ **Interoperability** – Equipment, technology, and communication systems between the National Guard and active-duty forces must be compatible. Although the same system is not required, a deliberate enterprise solution is essential to ensure interoperability between legacy and modern systems.

■ **Command structures** – Navigating command-and-control structures can be complex. Clarifying roles and responsibilities when integrating units from different components is critical for operational success.

Conclusion

Identifying and actively addressing the unique challenges Army National Guard Aviation has with resources, training, readiness, and interoperability while exploiting the opportunities presented with increased partnerships and collaboration is essential for the ARNG to implement transformation in contact successfully. The result will be enhanced operational effectiveness and improved readiness. The Army National Guard must balance its resources, prioritize training and readiness, and integrate seamlessly with active-duty forces to ensure it can respond effectively to the challenges of modern warfare. By doing so, we will be able to fulfill our critical role as the primary combat reserve for the Nation and keep pace with the US Army's Transformation in Contact initiative. We will support the ground combat Soldier through trusted partnerships and contribute to the Nation's defense and security.

Above the Best!

BG Matthew Strub is the Deputy Commanding General-Army National Guard and COL Chris Logsdon, the Senior Guard Advisor and Deputy Commandant, Army National Guard, United States Army Aviation Center of Excellence at Fort Novosel, AL.



U.S. ARMY NATIONAL GUARD PHOTO BY SSG1 LAMAR M. HIRANO

U.S. Army SFC Bryan T. Hinkle, a flight paramedic, and SGT Curtis Wright, a HH-60 Black Hawk helicopter repairer and crew chief assigned to Detachment 1, Golf Company, 3rd Battalion, 126th Aviation Regiment, Hawaii Army National Guard, prepare a simulated patient for litter transport from a HH-60 Black Hawk helicopter by medical technicians from the 908th and 911th Aeromedical Staging Squadrons during Exercise NEXUS FORGE at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, Feb. 6, 2025.

incentives, pay parity, and targeted bonuses are necessary to improve retention across ARNG aviation.

Training and Readiness: A Continuous Challenge

Ensuring that soldiers in the National Guard are trained to operate in dynamic environments, which often include hybrid and asymmetric threats, requires extensive training programs. However, the Guard faces several unique training and readiness challenges:

■ **Resource limitations** – Budgetary restrictions limit the frequency and scope of training exercises. Additionally, insufficient funding hinders access

coordination is required as far out as possible to ensure clear and achievable training goals and objectives.

■ **Maintaining readiness levels** – The requirement for rapid mobilization in an LSCO environment means that National Guard units must maintain a high level of readiness. With resourcing levels established to create platoon-level readiness, we rely on incredible leaders to find creative ways to exceed that expectation. If the Nation requires a higher level of readiness, the resources need to align.

Integration with Active Duty Forces: A Complex Challenge

Achieving interoperability between



AWWOPME – The Bridge Between Legacy and New

By CW5 Edward (Ed) Carman

Professional Military Education for Aviation Warrant Officers (AWWOPME) is changing. This change has been years in the making.

There was a need to refocus aviation Warrant Officers as technical and tactical experts after many years of counterinsurgency operations. Therefore, a bridging strategy was needed to get from the legacy courses to the new courses. Many questions exist about the new education including why it changed, who will be affected by the course, and what is the desired outcome of the changes. This article intends to answer some of those concerns.

During the recently held Aviation Senior Leader Forum at Fort Novosel, AL, there were many U.S. Army senior leaders that spoke of our need to transform the military. Many current military processes are being reviewed and the time to transition is short. One of the necessary changes is to ensure that Warrant Officers receive the right education at the right time in their career.

The Army has said that its Warrant Officers should be sharp and not broad. The sharpening can be seen in new courses soon to be taught at and by Fort Novosel. The only courses Aviation Warrant Officers will attend at the Warrant Officer Career College is Warrant Officer Candidate School and the future Warrant Officer Master Course. All other AWWOPME education will be taught by the Aviation Branch.

The first level of education (after Warrant Officer Basic Course) is the Aviation Warrant Officer Intermediate Course (AWOIC). AWOIC is focused on CW2s that are pilots in command. The aviation technical warrant will attend their specific AWOIC as a CW2. The four-week course teaches officers how to plan, execute, and



evaluate aviation operations in light of current doctrine. The audience is intended for warrants serving at the company level and below.

Next is the Aviation Warrant Officer Advanced Course (AWOAC), and for aviators this is track specific. Aviator tracks are now part of PME, not in addition to PME. Each of the five tracks: Instructor Pilot, Maintenance Test Pilot, Aviation Mission Survivability Officer, Aviation Safety Officer and Special Operations, sharpen the technical and tactical knowledge of the aviator at the right time in their respective careers. Aviation technical warrants will have their specific courses.

The Aviation Warrant Officer Senior Course (AWOSC) will focus on skills needed at the battalion level and above. All Aviation Warrant Officers will attend this course to learn basic functions of various organizations across the Branch and learn to provide solutions to organizational challenges. The intent is for the senior Warrant Officer student to develop into a sound advisor for commanders through expertise and advanced studies in Aviation Combat Operations, Warfighting Functions, and the Military Decision Making Process. It is important to realize this will continue to evolve based upon officer tracking.

Eventually each aviation track and aviation technical warrant officer will have an AWOSC follow-on course to further sharpen their skills once the courses have been established.

As warrant officers, we must embrace this change and ensure the education is valued and certain to improve over time. We receive the least amount of professional military education of all ranks. When showing up to the course, you must have completed any prerequisites and be ready to learn. While in the course, understand how the material could be applied within the unit and seek areas to improve. Use the education to make yourself, your crew, and your unit better prepared for the LSCO environment. The critiques and reviews that course instructors request must be constructive and aid in course improvement. We can make this education system better for future courses and for the future of Aviation Warrant Officers.

Above the Best. Fly Army.

CW5 Edward (Ed) Carman is the Army National Guard Senior Warrant Officer Advisor to the Deputy Commanding General, U.S. Army Aviation Center of Excellence, Ft. Novosel, AL.

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▶ Senior Enlisted Advisor to the USAACE DCG-ARNG

Army National Guard Aviation Enlisted Soldiers – Strengthening Teams for 2030 and Beyond

By SGM Marla D. Darby



FLORIDA ARMY NATIONAL GUARD PHOTO BY SGT JUSTIN MARTIN

After attending the 2025 Aviation Senior Leaders Forum, I was deeply reminded of the important role and impact we, as aviation Soldiers, provide to the Soldiers on the ground.

Florida Army National Guard (FLARNG) Soldiers with Alpha Battery, 2-116th Field Artillery Regiment, and Bravo Company, 1-185th Assault Helicopter Battalion, work together at a sling load exercise to transport an M119 105 mm howitzer during Exportable Combat Training Capability (XCTC) exercise at Camp Shelby, Mississippi, July 22, 2024.

It is the sacred trust we have built with Soldiers on the ground that allows them to do their job without hesitation – we are a team. The team element serves as the cornerstone of the Army and represents one of the basic building blocks from which all other structures derive. A team, as described in Army Techniques Publications (ATP 6-22.6), organizes to accomplish a mission and the members as a collective, share responsibility and accountability for achieving

the desired end state. As Army Aviation undertakes what is considered an extensive transformation towards modernization for the future fight of 2030 and beyond, it is crucial we keep close to the fundamental elements underpinning aviation Soldiers. The Total Army comprised of all components (COMPOs) – the Regular Army (RA), Army National Guard (ARNG), and United States Army Reserve (USAR), functions as an integrated team and avia-

tion Soldiers of all cohorts, continuously build upon the ethical foundation to drive Army Aviation forward and strengthen the Army Profession.

Likewise, as we uphold the duty and commitment to strengthen the profession, how do we, as leaders, prepare ARNG Aviation enlisted Soldiers for this responsibility? For more than 13,000 ARNG Aviation enlisted Soldiers, their competency and technical acumen will be reinforced to meet

the incumbering challenges of aviation modernization. Further, ARNG Aviation enlisted Soldiers serve throughout all levels of leadership while performing their duties at the highest efficiency. These Soldiers serve in a magnitude of positions, fortifying the bonds and technical capabilities that ARNG aviators expect and rely on when accomplishing their flying duties. This interdependency existing between the ARNG aviator and ARNG Aviation enlisted Soldier, contributes to the overall reputation and success of ARNG Aviation. Hence, forging this mutual dependence leads to building stronger teams, and developing leaders for a greater impact to the aviation enterprise.

Leadership in Aviation

In understanding teams shape squads, squads shape platoons, and platoons build on the formations in which our ARNG Aviation enlisted Soldiers stand, it is their direct leadership that will enforce the deliberate actions to strengthen their formations and ensure tasks are accomplished per Field Manual (FM 3-94). Those serving in direct leadership roles will have the greatest influence for ensuring their Soldiers exhibit the requisite skills to accomplish their wartime mission in a large-scale combat environment. Direct leaders will reinforce those foundational elements to include upholding Army standards, enforcing strict adherence to aviation and safety procedures, maintaining readiness, and demonstrating professionalism in their duties and holding themselves and others accountable. Also, direct leaders will evoke and maintain discipline throughout their formations, which inherently promotes Soldiers of character to further support their organizational mission. In clear terms, it really means that we as leaders must focus on basic Soldiering and ensure we are getting the basics right to strengthen our team of aviation professionals, in which we will build upon as we embark on the path of modernization and transformation.

Introducing Something New

Moreover, as the Total Army and Army Aviation continue to transform and modernize how we as aviation Soldiers will be trained and equipped for the future fight, ARNG Aviation enlisted Soldiers will at some point be introduced to emerging capabilities that will expand their reach on and off the battlefield. For there to be a seamless transi-

▶ Enlisted Aviation Soldier Spotlight

Each issue we will feature a past AAAA National or Functional Enlisted or NCO Award winner as part of our ongoing recognition of the Best of the Best in our Aviation Branch. The CY 2023 National winners were featured in the April/May AAAA Annual Summit issue.



Army Aviation DUSTOFF Flight Medic of The Year, 2022

Sponsored by Air Methods Corporation

SSG Ryan P. Hunter Detachment 1, Company C, 2nd Battalion, 238th Aviation Regiment Frankfort, Kentucky

SSG Hunter serves as a Critical Care Flight Paramedic (CCFP) for DET 1, C/2-238th. He seamlessly balanced his military role as a Critical Care Flight Paramedic and Flight Instructor with his work as a civilian flight paramedic, firefighter, and search and rescue team member. He has participated in multiple real-world rescues, including the Kentucky Army National Guard's first NVG-aided hoist rescue of an injured hiker in Kentucky's Clifty Wilderness Area. He was one of the first to respond to historic tornado damage in Hopkinsville, KY. He participated in 7 days of life-saving rescues in response to historically unprecedented flooding in Eastern Kentucky. During one rescue of 5 individuals trapped inside a flooded house surrounded by approximately 30ft of swiftly moving flood water, civilian rescuers on the ground with a combined 40 years of technical rescue experience described SSG Hunter's actions as "simply an amazing act of heroism and placed the well-being of those they are rescuing above their own personal safety." He facilitated the hoist rescue of numerous patients during 23 hoist missions over the first 48 hours of operations. SSG Hunter's commitment to service and personal drive exemplify the qualities of a dedicated Aviation Professional, a steadfast caregiver and amazing soldier. He is the AAAA Dustoff Flight Medic of the year.

tion between new and enduring capabilities arriving to their organizations, leaders at all levels will need to promote the new equipment to foster trust during its employment. When possible, it would be a great advantage for aviation Soldiers of all cohorts, to receive some experimental training prior to full-scale implementation. While the opportunity for hands-on or experimental training may not always be feasible, it does create a forum for aviation enlisted and junior Soldiers to provide feedback on new systems and processes. Furthermore, we must continue to foster a culture of continuous learning and adaptability to empower leaders and strengthen our profession and teams.

Lastly, as we commence to transform and modernize Army National Guard Aviation with emerging capabilities for large-scale combat operations, we must reinforce the mindset that modernization is not only about leveraging equipment but preparing our Soldiers to be adaptive and agile in an evolving battlefield.

Always Ready, Always There!

SGM Marla D. Darby serves as the senior enlisted advisor to the United States Army Aviation Center of Excellence Deputy Commanding General, Army National Guard, Fort Novosel, AL.



Aviation Maintainers to Combat-Ready Warfighters

By CPT Kyle Litteral

In today's complex battlefield, the role of an Aviation Soldier has evolved dramatically.

The modern Aviation Soldier is a versatile warfighter capable of excelling in both their specialty and the rigors of large-scale combat. This transformation begins early in their Army careers, particularly during Advanced Individual Training (AIT).

A Foundation in Soldiering

AIT is traditionally seen as a technical training phase, where Soldiers gain the skills needed for their Military Occupational Specialty (MOS). For Aviation Soldiers, this includes learning the intricacies of maintaining and repairing aircraft. However, today's AIT goes far beyond the technical manual. Leaders recognize that Soldiers—regardless of their MOS—must also be combat-ready.

As part of this holistic approach, AIT Soldiers reinforce Army Warrior Skills alongside their technical training. These include essential Soldiering tasks such as marksmanship, land navigation, radio communication, and tactical movement. Soldiers in Aviation AIT are learning the functional mechanics of complex aircraft while also practicing battle drills, establishing defensive positions, and responding to indirect fire. By focusing on these foundational tasks, AIT ensures that every Aviation Soldier is prepared to operate effectively in any combat environment.

Rigorous Field Training

One of the most impactful elements of AIT for Aviation Soldiers is the introduction of rigorous field training exercises (FTXs). These scenarios replicate real-world conditions, pushing Soldiers to apply both their technical and tactical skills under stress. During FTXs, Soldiers face challenges such as simulated enemy attacks, equipment malfunctions, and complex logistical problems, all while operat-



128th Aviation Brigade Soldiers conduct a field training exercise at Joint Base Langley-Eustis, VA.

ing in environments designed to mimic large-scale combat operations.

These exercises also emphasize the importance of teamwork and leadership. Soldiers often operate in small groups, where effective communication and trust are critical to mission success. For many, it's their first taste of interdependence that defines Army Aviation units, where mechanics, pilots, and support personnel must work seamlessly together.

Preparing for Multi-Domain Operations

The Army's focus on large-scale combat operations in multi-domain environments drives much of the training philosophy at AIT. Future Aviation Soldiers must be prepared to operate in contested airspace, integrate with ground forces, and adapt to rapidly changing battlefield conditions. This requires a level of readiness that goes beyond traditional technical skills.

Building Resilience

Beyond technical and tactical skills, AIT also focuses on building the resilience and adaptability that Soldiers will need throughout their careers. Central to this effort is the incorporation of the Holistic Health and Fitness (H2F) program, which emphasizes a comprehensive approach to Soldier wellness. H2F integrates physical fitness, mental health, nutritional guidance, and spiri-

tual well-being to ensure Soldiers are prepared for the demands of modern combat. Soldiers participate in grueling physical challenges, resilience-building workshops, and discussions on the Army Values, all while receiving education on injury prevention and recovery. Physical fitness, mental toughness, and ethical decision-making are emphasized alongside technical and tactical training. The goal is to produce well-rounded individuals who are not only skilled, but also capable of thriving under pressure.

Looking Ahead

As the Army continues to modernize and adapt to evolving threats, the role of the Aviation Soldier will only grow in complexity and importance. By integrating basic Soldiering tasks, rigorous field training, and preparation for multi-domain operations, AIT is ensuring that the next generation of Aviation Soldiers is ready to meet the challenge.

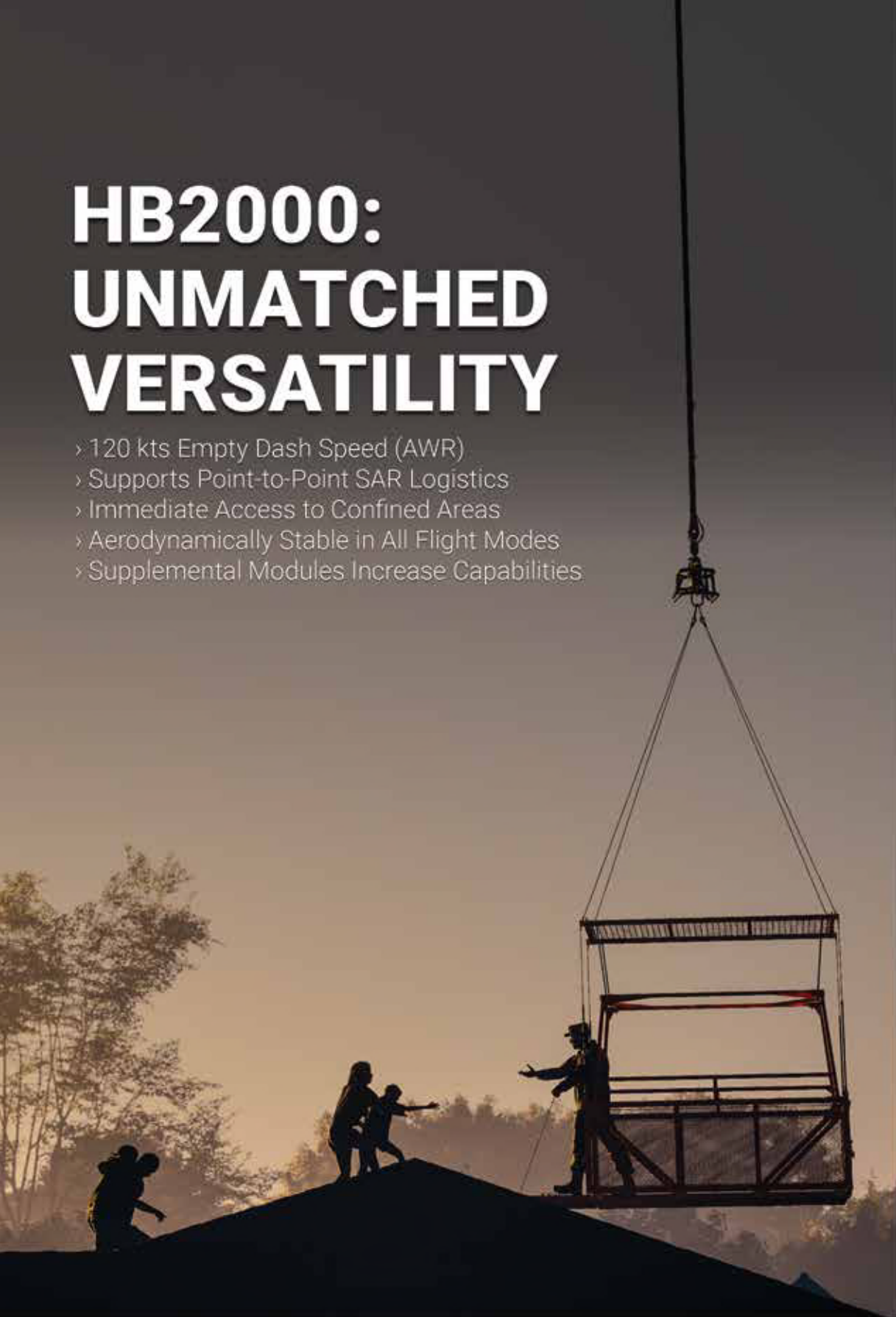
Army Aviation remains a decisive force on the modern battlefield. Through a comprehensive training approach, Aviation Soldiers are equipped to support the mission with unparalleled expertise and unwavering resolve.

Born Under Fire!


CPT Kyle Litteral is the commander of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 128th Aviation Brigade, Joint Base Langley-Eustis, VA.

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Accredited Flight Performance Models

By John R. Sims

In a prior article, Dr. Sam Crews' Legacy: Part 3 – Make 'Em Safer to Fly, Dr. Tom Thompson recounted the historical development of flight performance models and the role that a former Aeromechanics Division Chief, Dr. Sam Crews, played in their development and fielding.

The Systems Readiness Directorate's Aeromechanics Division utilizes flight performance models routinely in core parts of its airworthiness mission. The models are developed as references, sources of truth, for Airworthiness Releases (AWRs) affecting flight performance, modification impact analyses, technical manual chart reviews, fielded mission planning model approvals, and aircraft specification compliance evaluations. As the models are used in airworthiness determinations affecting flight safety, Aeromechanics follows AR 5-11, *Management of Army Modeling and Simulation*, in establishing a tailored Verification, Validation, and Accreditation (VV&A) process appropriate for its mission. Accredited Flight Performance Models have completed a rigorous VV&A process, illustrated in Figure 1. The code is organized in a modular fashion for ease of understanding, maintenance, and modification. The datasets and calculations within the model are traceable to flight test data and represent demonstrated aircraft performance.

In the **Planning** stage, the Accreditation Plan establishes a high-level agreement between the cross-functional development team, software and flight performance engineers, and the Accreditation Authority identifying the scope of the effort, roles of the team members, planned activities, available resources, intended schedule, and potential risks.

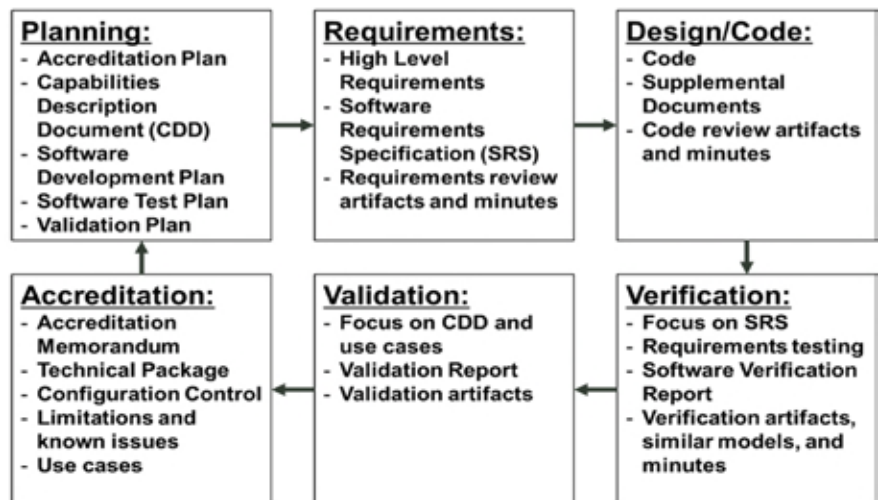


Figure 1. Systems Readiness Directorate, Aeromechanics Division, VV&A Process.

The Capabilities Description Document (CDD) and Validation Plan, authored by the user group, establishes the desired functionality and the validation testing methods. The Software Development Plan and Software Test Plan define the construction and verification methods for the model.

In the **Requirements** stage, the High-Level Requirements allocate the narrative description in the CDD to functions in the model. The Software Requirements Specification (SRS) then breaks the High-Level Requirements into low-level requirement statements. These statements are very detailed so that the functionality intended by the flight performance Subject Matter Expert (SME) is clearly communicated to the software development team. Multiple requirement reviews are conducted until the requirements are complete and well understood.

In the **Design/Code** stage, the software code itself is written, clearly tracing to the SRS. Multiple code reviews are conducted to identify and drive out errors prior to testing. Well-written requirements allow this stage to pass relatively quickly.

In the **Verification** stage, the code is tested against the SRS requirements. Logical units of the code are tested to facilitate efficiency and requirements coverage rather than system level testing. In most cases, a simplified, independent implementation of the requirements is generated by the tester to produce the ex-

pected results for the code under test. Test reviews are conducted until the desired level of code coverage and assurance are obtained. The results are clearly documented in a Software Verification Report.

In the **Validation** stage, the flight performance model software is provided to the flight performance SME user group to conduct validation testing against the CDD. This often entails chart overlays against technical manuals and flight test reports and numerical comparisons against other approved models when available. The details of the analysis and the endorsement of the evaluating SME are captured in the Validation Report.

Finally, in the **Accreditation** stage, the development team provides an Accreditation Memorandum to the Accreditation Authority for approval: documenting the complete technical package, the configuration controls, any limitations or known issues, and the intended use cases. Endorsement by the Accreditation Authority establishes the Accredited Flight Performance Model as an Aeromechanics Division asset supporting the Warfighter, continuing Dr. Sam Crews' legacy, "Make 'Em Safer to Fly."

John R. Sims is an aerospace engineer in the Aeromechanics division of the Systems Readiness Directorate, U.S. Army Combat Capabilities Development Command Aviation & Missile Center, Redstone Arsenal, AL.



How Much Is Too Much? Alcohol Consumption and Dependence

By CPT Brian Jiménez Alicea, M.D. and CPT Antwana Drayton, Psy.D.

Q. I enjoy a drink now and then, but I'm concerned about how much is too much, especially given the demands of Army Aviation. What should I watch for, and what can I do if I suspect myself or a coworker to be developing an alcohol problem?

FS: Alcohol consumption is deeply embedded in many cultures, including the military, where stress and camaraderie often mix with social drinking. However, it's critical to understand the risks associated with alcohol use, particularly in high-stakes professions like Aviation. Let's break it down.

How Much Is Too Much?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) defines moderate drinking as routinely consuming up to two drinks daily for men and one drink daily for women. Binge drinking is defined as consuming four or more drinks for women or five or more drinks for men in one sitting. While moderate drinking may be less dangerous for some, even small amounts can impair cognitive and motor functions crucial for Aviation duties.

In Army Aviation, the stakes are higher. Research shows that even a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) as low as 0.02% can degrade performance, affecting reaction time, decision-making, and coordination. Acute effects, such as disorientation, inattentiveness, and hangovers, can linger for up to 48 hours after drinking, significantly impairing operational readiness. Likewise, chronic alcohol use is unquestionably detrimental to safely completing Aviation tasks.

Recognizing the Warning Signs

Alcohol Use Disorder (AUD) is a medical condition characterized by an inability to control alcohol use despite negative consequences. Health care providers use the DSM-5-TR to assess

the severity of this condition. AUD can be categorized as mild (two or to three criteria), moderate (four to five criteria), or severe (six or more criteria). Assessment of symptoms include but are not limited to excess of use, unsuccessful attempts to cutdown on use, cravings, recurrent use despite social, occupational or recreational hindrances, tolerance, or withdrawal (DSM-5-TR). For additional information regarding symptoms and treatment options, consult your flight surgeon or behavioral health provider.

What to Do if You're Concerned

If you suspect that you or a coworker are developing a dependence on alcohol, take these steps:

Self-Reflection: Ask yourself if you've tried to cut back without success or if drinking has impacted your performance or relationships.

Encourage Open Dialogue: If you're concerned about a coworker, approach them privately and express your concerns nonjudgmentally. Focus on specific observations rather than accusations.

Seek Professional Help: Reach out to your unit flight surgeon or a Substance Use Disorder Clinical Care (SUDCC) program. Early intervention can prevent further complications and help preserve flight status.

Understand Waiver Processes: According to Aeromedical Policy Letters (APLs), a single alcohol-related incident may not require grounding if criteria for AUD are not met. However, a confirmed AUD diagnosis requires a minimum of 90 days of abstinence, treatment, and

ongoing recovery program participation before waiver consideration dependent on severity of AUD.

Prevention Is Key

Army Aviation demands peak physical and mental performance. To mitigate risks associated with alcohol, consider the following:

Set Limits: Know your personal limits and adhere to the "12 hours bottle-to-throttle" rule to ensure you're clear-headed before duty.

Use Support Systems: Engage with peers and leadership to create a culture where seeking help is encouraged and normalized.

Stay Educated: Familiarize yourself with resources like Alcoholics Anonymous, Rational Recovery, or similar programs tailored for military personnel.

If you have concerns about your alcohol use or that of a colleague, consult your flight surgeon immediately. Remember, seeking help early is a sign of strength, not weakness. Ensuring your health and readiness isn't just about meeting standards – it's about safeguarding your life and the lives of those who depend on you.

Fly Safe!

Questions for the Flight Surgeon?

If you have a question that you would like addressed, email it to AskFS@quad-a.org. We will try to address it in the future. See your unit flight surgeon for your personal health issues. The views and opinions offered are those of the authors and should not be construed as an official Department of the Army position unless otherwise stated.

CPT (Dr.) Brian Jiménez Alicea is a flight surgeon and resident of Aerospace Medicine and CPT (Dr.) Antwana Drayton is an aeromedical psychologist at Lyster Army Health Clinic, Fort Novosel, AL.



Adapting to the Gen Z Mindset— Shaping the Future of Army Aviation Soldiers

By BG Roger F. Deon



Soldiers from 5-159th Aviation Battalion collaborate at a Tactical Operations Center to gather information needed for a 9-line MEDEVAC in order to send helicopters to a casualty pickup location during a mass casualty medical evacuation exercise conducted Jan. 11, 2025, at MacDill Air Force, Florida.

The landscape of military service has continuously evolved, with each generation bringing a unique set of challenges and opportunities. Today, the Army Reserve Aviation Command (ARAC) finds itself at a pivotal point in history, tasked with integrating and leading a new cohort of soldiers – Generation Z. Born between 1997 and 2012, these young men and women are entering the military with a distinct mindset, shaped by the society, culture, technology, and events that have defined their lives. Understanding this generation is crucial for current military leaders, particularly in the context of Army Aviation, where adaptability, precision, and innovation are paramount.

The Gen Z Mindset: A Cultural Shift

Generation Z has grown up in a world dramatically different from their Millennial or Generation X predecessors. For many, the most defining moment of their lives was not the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, but the resulting cultural and technological shifts that shaped their upbringing. Born into a post-9/11 world, these soldiers have no direct memory of the event itself. Instead, their perception of national

security and military service is filtered through images and stories from older generations. This worldview can sometimes make the impact of military actions and strategy less visceral for them.

This generation, having grown up with constant access to technology and social media, has a global, interconnected perspective that is far removed from the Cold War-era thinking that many of their senior leaders experienced. They have witnessed the rise of mobile technology, social media platforms, and a near-constant flow of global information, which has shaped their perspective on the world. Unlike their predecessors, who adapted to the technology over time, Gen Z has developed the ability to integrate significant technological changes instantly.

Additionally, the experience of mass school shootings, economic recessions, followed by inflation – mixed with rapid technological advancements have made them adaptable. But it has also made them more skeptical and cautious. These experiences influence how they view authority, structure, and stability, which can pose unique interactions between Gen Z and current military leaders, who are used to managing soldiers coming from more traditional, stable environments.

The Technology-Driven Soldier

One of the most prominent features of the Gen Z soldier is their relationship with technology. From smartphones to artificial intelligence, this generation has been surrounded by cutting-edge technology their entire lives. As the Army Reserve Aviation Command strives to integrate these soldiers into a high-tech, mission-critical environment, the military must ensure that it adapts to these expectations.

Gen Z soldiers are accustomed to using cloud-based tools, wearable technology, and real-time data sharing, making them highly proficient in digital environments. They expect their workspace, both physical and virtual, to be efficient and user-friendly. Outdated systems or processes that require manual input may be seen as inefficient or even frustrating. The Army must be proactive in adopting modern technologies that streamline operations and integrate soldiers into a more interconnected, high-tech workforce.

In Army Aviation, where precision and real-time communication are vital, the use of cutting-edge tools like augmented reality for training simulations or the incorporation of artificial intelligence (AI) for maintenance and logistics

could make a significant impact. Gen Z soldiers will expect these tools to be part of their daily experience, not only because they are familiar with them, but because they enable more efficient and effective work.

The Evolving Nature of Leadership

Effective leadership within the Army Reserve Aviation Command requires a nuanced understanding of how Gen Z soldiers respond to authority, guidance, and mentorship. Gen Z has grown up in an environment where authority is constantly questioned, and they have been encouraged to think critically and independently. This is not a generation that simply accepts orders without understanding the rationale behind them. Leaders who wish to engage Gen Z soldiers effectively must be transparent, communicate openly, and foster an environment of mutual respect.

At the same time, Gen Z soldiers are known for their adaptability and willingness to learn. They are more likely to seek out information on their own, using resources like online tutorials, forums, and even artificial intelligence to enhance their understanding. This inclination toward self-directed learning aligns well with the Army's emphasis on professional development, but it also means that leaders must be ready to guide soldiers through the complexities of military culture, structure, and discipline.

Mentorship plays a critical role in shaping the Gen Z soldier's mindset. They value authenticity and expect leaders to be approachable and supportive, not just authoritative. Army leaders must strike a balance between providing clear guidance and empowering soldiers to take initiative and innovate within the boundaries of military structure. By fostering a culture of mentorship, leaders can tap into the innate strengths of Gen Z soldiers while ensuring they stay aligned with Army values and mission objectives.

The Importance of Understanding Gen-Z Mindset in Aviation

Within the Army Reserve Aviation Command, the stakes are even higher, as the lives of soldiers and the success of missions depend on precision, teamwork, and split-second decision-making. Aviation units require soldiers to be not only highly skilled in their roles but also resilient, adaptable, and able to think on their feet. Gen Z soldiers, with their natural aptitude for technology



USPAC GRAPHIC

Society & Culture

Events & Cultural Touchstones

Older Generations: Strong memory of 9/11, physical media (DVDs, newspapers), comic books

Gen Z: No direct memory 9/11, streaming culture (Netflix, Disney+), visual media (Spider-Man of movies)

Events & Cultural Touchstones

Older Gen: Experienced life before social media, use of cash, traditional mail

Gen Z: Always connected via social media, digital payments (Bitcoin, Venmo), e-commerce

Cultural Shifts

Older Gen: Witnessed first female leaders in gov't

Gen Z: Raised with female Secretaries of State, VPs and diverse leadership

Politics & Government

Leadership Representation

Older Gen: Recall presidencies of George H.W. Bush, Bill Clinton

Gen Z: Barack Obama was their first major presidential memory

Political Divisions

Older Gen: Experienced long-term dominance of single parties

Gen Z: Saw equal party shifts (12 years each) and increased polarization

Shifting National Focus

Older Gen: Knowledgeable about Nixon, Reagan-era policies

Gen Z: More focused on social media-driven political activism and diversity in leadership

Technology & Economy

Technological Advances

Older Gen: Familiar with paper maps, landlines and physical stores

Gen Z: Grew up with GPS, smartphones and online shopping

Financial Changes

Older Gen: Traditional banking, reliance on cash, cheques

Gen Z: Prefers digital wallets, and online transactions.

Entertainment & Communication

Older Gen: Watched cable TV, relied on face-to-face interaction or landlines

Gen Z: Lives in a digital world, streaming service, texting, AI-driven problem-solving (ChatGPT)

and problem-solving, bring a fresh perspective to this challenge.

However, as with any generation, Gen Z soldiers may face difficulties in adjusting to the nature of military aviation. While they may be comfortable in fast-paced environments, they might initially struggle with the rigid protocols and hierarchy. Here, leadership's ability to understand and manage these generational differences is key.

Training and readiness are the cornerstones of Army Aviation, and leaders must ensure that Gen Z soldiers understand the importance of discipline and teamwork. While they may excel in individual tasks and technology-driven environments, the collaborative nature of aviation missions demands that they work cohesively with their peers, across rank structures, and under pressure. Army Aviation leaders must focus on building strong team dynamics while encouraging individual growth and technological innovation.

A Call to Action for Army Aviation Leaders

In the coming years, the Army Reserve Aviation Command will rely on its ability to understand and integrate Gen Z soldiers. This generation's unique mindset, influenced by technology, cul-

ture, and societal shifts, presents both challenges and opportunities. Leaders who can adapt their management style to meet the needs of Gen Z will be best positioned to ensure success.

As Army Aviation continues to evolve, the integration of Gen Z soldiers into the force will be critical to maintaining a competitive edge. It will require leadership that is not only aware of the generational divide but actively works to bridge it – by fostering a culture of respect, mentorship, and adaptability. By doing so, the ARAC can ensure that it remains a highly effective, future-ready force capable of meeting the demands of an ever-changing global security environment.

In summary, understanding and adapting to the Gen Z mindset within Army Aviation is essential for leaders looking to build a resilient, innovative, and effective force. Emphasizing mentorship, technological integration, and flexible leadership will be key to unlocking the full potential of this next generation of soldiers.



BG Roger F. Deon is the commanding general, U.S. Army Reserve Aviation Command, headquartered at Fort Knox, KY.



NEW HAMPSHIRE ARNG PHOTO BY SFC CLASS ARND DEANGELS



Army National Guard Aviation Update

By COL Aaron Schilleci

As leaders, we spend a good part of our time solving problems. So, it's especially enjoyable when we discover good news stories, and get to pass them on to others. Such is the case with this article. Good things are happening inside Army National Guard Aviation – all the way from the Enterprise down to the individual Soldier.

Operations

In addition to our warfighting mission, Army National Guard helicopters have long been the go-to source for short-notice domestic operations and homeland defense. That trend continues. Hurricanes Helene and Milton, the 2024 Presidential Campaign, California Wildfires, and Southwest Border operations have all drawn support from ARNG Aviation units across the 54 States, Territories, and District of Columbia.

Overseas, Guard Aviation remains well-represented. One recent example of Guard Aviation's contribution to the on-going Balkans mission occurred

on January 22, 2024. Callsign Vital 36 Samaritan conducted a high-risk aero-medical evacuation mission in the Albanian Alps. Despite extreme weather conditions, limited communication capabilities, and a non-standard landing zone, the crew successfully extracted two injured personnel from a remote, snow-covered mountain ridge at an altitude of over 7,000 feet. The mission, led by CW3 Joshua Mason and CPT Mark Dente, showcased the crew's meticulous planning, technical expertise, and adaptability in the face of adversity. The primary flight medic, SSG Matthew Medeiros, and additional flight medic, SSG Ryan Farley, provided critical medical care, while SGT Brandon Besette expertly managed the hoist system and maintained communication with Camp Bondsteel. Their heroic actions have been recognized by the Albanian Defense Force.

ARNG Aviation continues to operate in support of the Department of Homeland Security in the execution of

Flight Medic, SSG Ethan Major performs in-flight trauma care for a skier injured in an avalanche in the New Hampshire White Mountain Range. December 9th, 2023.

the Southwest Border (SWB) OPERATION VIGILANT SENTRY (OVS), an interagency mission the Army National Guard has performed since 2019. A Battalion-sized Task Force formation comprised of UH-72 aircraft operates in five geographic zones along the 1700-mile border between the US and Mexico. With the integration of the updated Office of Secretary of Defense (OSD) priorities by the new administration, we expect an increase in the demand for ARNG Aviation capabilities supporting OVS and possibly additional requirements to support our ground forces along the SWB.

UAS

Along with the Active Component, the ARNG continues to adapt to the evolving Unmanned Aircraft Systems

(UAS) landscape, playing a pivotal role in all development, experimentation, acquisition, fielding, and training activities. For example, the Oklahoma National Guard is at the forefront of UAS development, working on the requirements annex for Swarm UAS technology. OKARNG Aviation is also building a Multi-Domain Operations Range at Camp Gruber, designed to support UAS and Counter-UAS warfare training. Additionally, Oklahoma is exploring the use of Open AI models for real-time battlefield recognition of enemy vehicles.

UAS platforms, such as the MQ-1C Gray Eagle and the smaller RQ-28 Short Range Reconnaissance (SRR) UAS, will enable ARNG units to bridge the capability gap created by the divestiture of Shadow and Raven. The RQ-28 specifically offers a lightweight, portable solution ideal for short-range operations. Additionally, some units are equipped with the Black Hornet 4, a Soldier Borne Sensor UAS that fits in the palm of a hand.

Domestically, the ARNG will be able to leverage UAS for disaster response and border security. During natural disasters, UAS can efficiently support search-and-rescue operations, assess damage, and aid in logistics coordination. Along the U.S. southern border, ARNG units will be able to use UAS to monitor activity and support law enforcement agencies.

Maintenance & Funding

One enduring good news story is the Guard's use of National Guard and Reserves Equipment Appropriations (NGREA) – Congressional funding that allows the Reserve Force to purchase and fill critical domestic mission equipment gaps. The fruits of this funding were apparent in the recent life-saving rescue performed by the New Hampshire ARNG, where they first used their Air Rescue Vest and a 2-up hoisting device – both recent NGREA purchases.

Safety

As you may know, we have a new Director of the ARNG, LTG Jon Stubbs. One of his first actions was to publish his personal Safety Philosophy and Campaign Plan. This will be instrumental as we conduct our FY25 Aviation Stand-up later this year. LTG Stubbs' safety bumper sticker is "Preserve Our Force," with focus areas of Leadership Commitment, Proactive Risk Management, and Open Communication and Reporting.

OSA-A

The multicomponent Operational Support Airlift – Activity Flight Detachment (OFD), located at Davison Army Airfield in Fort Belvoir continues to fill a vital role for the Department of Defense (DOD). It provides 24/7, year-round, on-demand fixed-wing transport for critical DOD agencies, and transports non-executive VIPs and high-priority cargo, both domestically and internationally. Its fleet consists of the C-12 (King Air 200) and the UC-35 (Citation Ultra).

ARNG Fixed Wing maintains three continuous deployments (3 x C-12 in Kuwait, 2 x C-26 Horn of Africa (HOA), and 1 x C-12 in Bogota, Colombia). Two State Flight Detachments rotate out of Kuwait and HOA respectively, and one Flight Detachment out of Bogota every 9 months.

In FY23-24, 15 OSA State Flight Detachment aircraft and personnel executed 1,686 missions, carrying almost 10,000 people and 675,000 pounds of cargo, flying over 7,400 flight hours safely across the world. These aircraft continue to make a dramatic impact on their respective COCOMs and demonstrate the Army's fixed-wing wartime readiness.

Summary

In conclusion, 2024 has been a monumental year for Army National Guard Aviation. We realize that we must continue to innovate and evolve to meet our threats and challenges here and over the horizon. With the leadership at the state level from our State ARNG Aviation Officers (SAAOs) and the Brigade Command teams, supported by the leadership from the Aviation Division at the National level, the necessity of creativity and initiative are required to maintain our lethality and flexibility. Through the multiple deployments in support of contingency operations around the world, to supporting and securing the homeland on the Southwest Border, to protecting our citizens and infrastructure through hundreds of hours flown in support of real-world domestic operations missions, we continue to exemplify our motto – Ready for Combat, This We'll Defend!



COL Aaron Schilleci is the Aviation & Safety Division Chief for the Army National Guard located in Arlington, VA.



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U.S. ARMY COMBAT READINESS CENTER GRAPHIC

USACRC Year In Review By BG Jonathan C. Byrom

At the end of every fiscal year, the U.S. Army Combat Readiness Center (USACRC) looks back at the year's mishaps and analyzes them in comparison with previous years. We also review and report on mishap prevention measures, including safety training and Safety Assistance Visits (SAVs).

In FY24, the Army lost 102 Soldiers and two contract employees due to mishaps. Soldier fatalities were down 15.7% from FY23. Total Soldier fatalities were also below the five-year average. This total shows a reversal of the uptick of fatalities in FY23 and, hopefully, a return to the continued downward trend since FY05.

The Army had 34 on-duty Class A mishaps in FY24, compared to 30 in FY23. This 13% increase can be wholly attributed to an increase in Class A Aviation flight mishaps, predominantly involving the AH-64E and the UH-72 aircraft. All other categories of on-duty mishaps decreased in FY24. For the first time on record, there were more Aviation Class A mishaps (17) than on-duty ground Class A mishaps (15). The FY24 Class A mishap total was slightly below the five-year average.

Aviation

In FY24, manned Aviation suffered a significant increase in Class A mishaps compared to FY23 and the five- and 10-year averages. FY24 had the most Class A flight mishaps since FY14 and the highest Class A flight mishap rate per 100,000 hours since FY07. There were 15 Class A flight mishaps and two Class A aircraft ground mishaps in FY24, compared to nine flight and one aircraft ground in FY23. The FY24 mishap rate per 100,000 flying hours was 1.90, compared to 1.08 in FY23. The five-year average from FY19-23 was 0.84 per 100,000 hours. Nine Soldiers, one contractor, and one U.S. Customs and Border Protection agent died in flight mishaps, and another contractor died in an aircraft ground mishap.

The most apparent trend in the FY24 mishaps was the AH-64 being overrepresented, with nine of the 15 flight mishaps. Eight of the AH-64 mishaps were attributed to human error, with two of those being attributed to maintenance errors. The final AH-64 mishap was a bird strike. Additionally, the LUH-72 had

three Class A mishaps, more than in any year since its fielding. Variants of UH-60 aircraft, the CH-47F, and the C-12V, each had one Class A flight mishap. Furthermore, there was a Class A environmental event that damaged over 40 aircraft and a C-12 Class A aircraft ground mishap during maintenance operations. Unmanned Aviation Systems (UAS) mishaps were insignificant in FY24, with one MQ-1C Class A mishap and one aerostat Class A mishap.

The Army responded to the rise in Aviation mishaps by executing a "Safety Stand-Up" in April 2024. This action required training across the force emphasizing power management, directional control at low airspeeds, and risk management while facing a reduction in Aviation warrant officer experience. The USACRC undertook an additional effort to inform the force of lessons learned from Class A mishaps in the quickest time possible. This effort was made through a series of secure video teleconferences (SVTCs), with invitations going out across the force. As many as 30 stations participated in the individual SVTCs;

each presented at least twice to allow all time zones to be available.

It must be noted that in the time after the Safety Stand-Up and the first presentations of the SVTCs, the Class A flight mishap rate dropped to 0.86 per 100,000 flying hours for the remainder of the year. This rate was very near the FY19-23 average. Additionally, the Army suffered no Class A flight mishaps in the first quarter of FY25. This was the first fiscal quarter without a Class A flight mishap since FY22.

Ground

The 15 Class A mishaps in FY24 were the fewest ever recorded for a fiscal year. Class A mishaps decreased from 20 in FY23 to 15 in FY24, a 25% reduction. Fatalities were down from 11 to nine, an 18.2% reduction. This trend is significant progress, as the Army had 54 on-duty ground Class A mishaps as recently as FY10. The 15 Class A mishaps included seven tactical vehicle mishaps, two on-duty private motor vehicle mishaps, one industrial motor vehicle mishap, one parachute mishap, a fall at a Military Operations on Urban Terrain (MOUT) site, one physical training mishap, and two in other categories.

A better comparison than the volatility of a year-to-year comparison is a comparison to the five-year averages. FY24 was better in every statistical category than the five-year averages in on-duty ground mishaps and fatalities. The five-year average (FY19-23) for on-duty ground fatalities is 15 versus nine for FY24. The five-year average for Class A mishaps is 24 versus 15 for FY24. This result is even more remarkable given that the five-year averages include all the years impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and the safest year in Army operations history, FY22.

Off-Duty

The Army continues to lose more Soldiers to off-duty mishaps than all on-duty mishaps combined, but there is some good news in the FY24 statistics. The number of Soldier fatalities in off-duty mishaps was down 12.5% from FY23 totals. There were 84 total fatalities, compared to 96 in FY23. That total for FY24 is the fourth lowest off-duty fatality total ever recorded. Motor vehicle mishaps continue to dominate off-duty fatalities, with 70 deaths associated with vehicles. Four-wheeled motor vehicle operations accounted for 36 fatalities, motorcycles contributed

to 34 fatalities, and two deaths were Soldiers who were pedestrians at the time of the mishap. When you consider that less than 20% of Soldiers operate motorcycles, motorcycle fatalities almost equaling four-wheeled-vehicle-related deaths are very concerning. Other off-duty deaths occurred during sports and recreation activities such as hiking and swimming, privately owned weapons, or mishaps that fall into "other ground," such as vehicle or home maintenance.

Focus Areas and How the USACRC Can Help

While FY24 demonstrated a reduction in mishaps in almost all categories from FY23, much remains to be done, the Army still lost 102 Soldiers to on- and off-duty mishaps. Throughout the remainder of the year, the USACRC will reinforce Army Aviation's focus on accident prevention as well as crewmember and mechanic proficiency's positive impact on risk reduction. The USACRC offers many programs and tools for leaders in their risk management efforts. One of the most effective tools available to units is the SAV offered by the USACRC. These visits bring USACRC investigators to units to discuss mishap trends and risk mitigation policies. There is no cost to the unit.

The USACRC has visited every Combat Aviation Brigade through this effort over the last 26 months. Overall, 184 visits have been conducted, and almost 60,000 Soldiers and Civilians have been trained. To schedule a SAV, contact USACRC Operations at 334-255-1373.

The USACRC also launched an Aviation Safety Officer (ASO) dashboard that provides mishap data and analysis to the desktop of ASOs across the force. This tool requires specific permission but is available to all ASOs. Many other tools are available on our website, such as ready-to-go safety briefs and presentations, and I invite you to visit them at <https://safety.army.mil/>. We stand prepared to assist the Army in managing risk and keeping the force safe.



BG Jonathan C. Byrom is the commanding general of the Combat Readiness center at Fort Novosel, AL.

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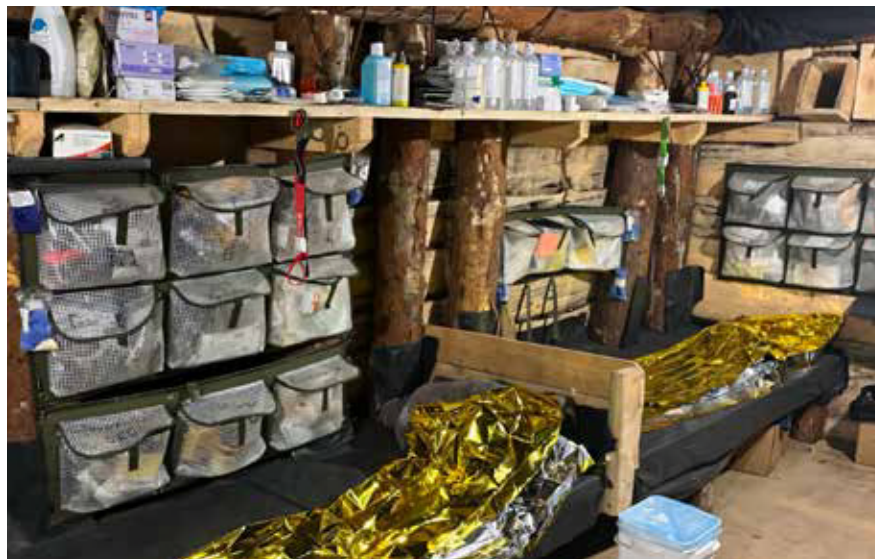
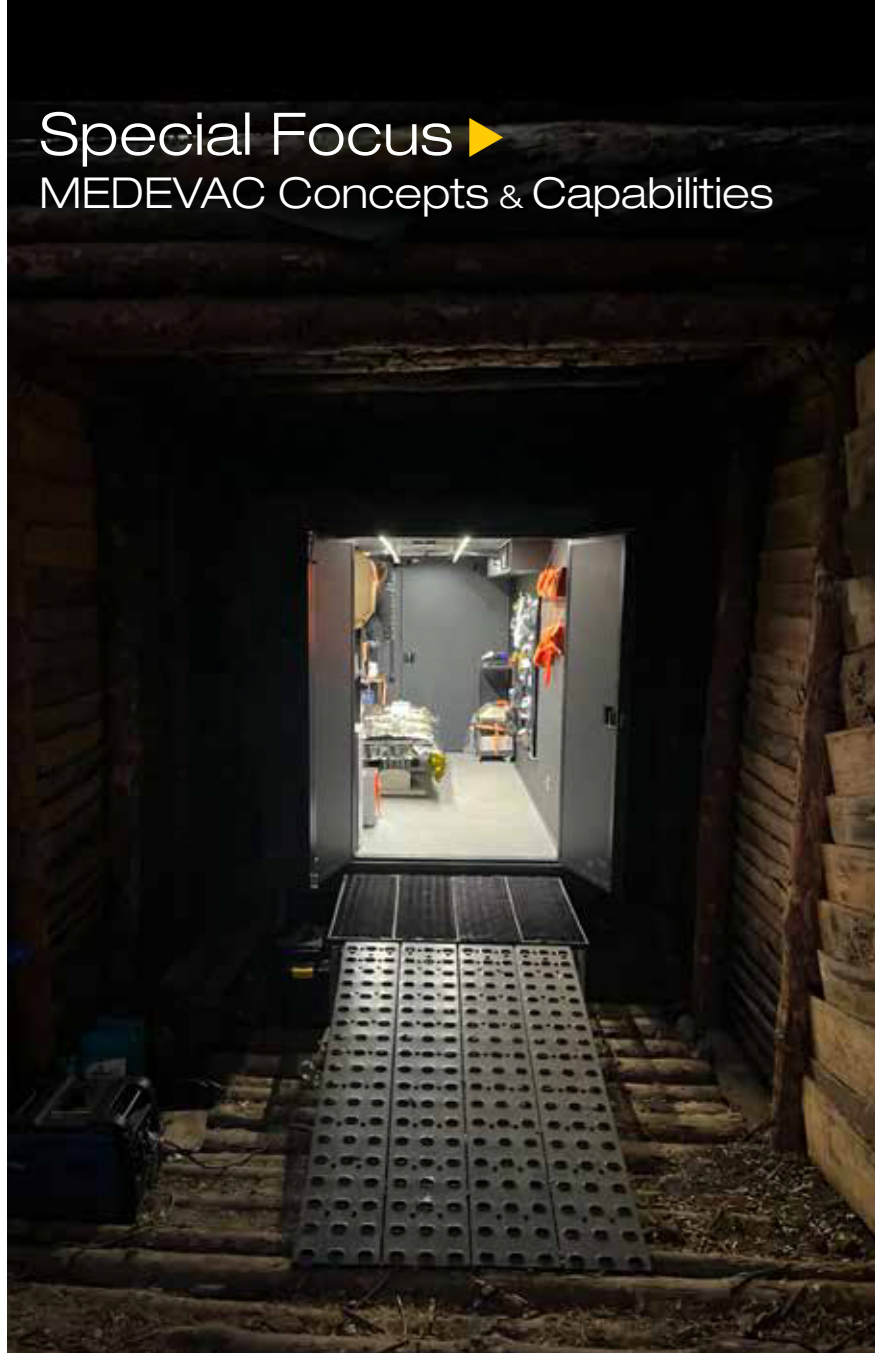
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Observations from Ukraine and the Implications for Medical Evacuation

By COL Sam Fricks



As the Chief of the Medical Evacuation Concepts and Capabilities Division (MECCD), a division within the Medical Capability Development Integration Directorate (MED CDID), I have had the unique privilege of being a member of three separate Ukraine Observations trips to Europe. On the most recent trip in December 2024, I was a Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL) Ukraine Observations Sprint Team member. The Sprint, TRADOC general officer led, lasted 90 days with a total of four weeks on the ground in Europe with engagement with Ukrainian Land Force leaders in Poland, resulting in a total of over 340 observations, with representation from all Centers of Excellence (CoEs), Army Futures Command (AFC), and others, generated a report briefed to the CSA and Army Senior Leaders. As expected, many things had changed from my previous two trips in early and late 2023, but many themes were still present, if not more amplified. Medical Evacuation, or the lack thereof, falls into this category.

Buried shipping container used for damage control resuscitation. The aid station is fortified with four layers of logs and soil to withstand 155mm artillery strikes. It is equipped with 200L of clean water, power generation, and heating elements for prolonged casualty care.

Observations

A few years ago, before Russia's latest invasion into Ukraine, this office provided an article for AAAA, stating evacuation in Large Scale Combat Operations (LSCO) would be difficult but not impossible. I still stand by this affirmation, but it has some caveats. The war in Ukraine has highlighted the changing character of warfare while reinforcing other enduring principles. I will be the first to admit that 20+ years of counterinsurgency (COIN) operations had the unexpected (and unrealized) side effect of causing atrophy to our ground evacuation and Casualty Evacuation (CASEVAC) capabilities. So much so that most organizations will struggle to evacuate the wounded if the Air Ambulance is unavailable.

This is the most glaring and important observation from my multiple collection trips: Air Ambulances (or any manned rotary or fixed-wing asset) are not present within 100 miles of the Front Line of Troops (FLOT). Given that the Air Ambulance has flown directly to the Point of Injury (POI) in most previous wars, starting with the most contemporary use in Vietnam, removing this asset from the front-line calculus creates a problem that is not easily solved, especially with our current kit.

To further complicate the issue, Russia openly and deliberately targets anything that provides any advantage, including medical capability. Medical personnel are considered noncombatants and are protected by Article 24 of the Geneva Conventions. Russia is a signatory party to the Geneva Convention. However, their actions in the Ukraine conflict highlight the challenges the international community faces when a signatory elects to violate during the conflict openly.

This open violation combined with the lethality seen on the front lines of Ukraine, specifically from the proliferation of first person view (FPV) drones, electronic warfare (EW), and the ability to be seen and ranged at all times (transparent battlefield), makes the medical mission exceedingly difficult.

Our successes in COIN were not tied only to timely evacuation; the proximity of world-class medical treatment was the other key factor. In the case of Ukraine, both are denied, contributing to casualty rates not seen for generations. The Ukrainians have learned to adapt and have incorporated robotics



Example of ground robotics Ukrainian Defense forces are using for Casualty Extraction.

into casualty extraction. They are also using drones teamed with ground evacuation vehicles in the form of manned/unmanned teaming to enable evacuation while being under constant threat from enemy drones and artillery.

Treatment has been forced underground to allow a survivable foothold for providing damage control resuscitation near the front. Evacuation to this Role 1 takes 4-8 hours on average. This is a gross deviation from the 1-hour evacuation standard Army MEDEVAC was graded against in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The concept of our enemy disregarding the protection of the red cross is not new. This constant threat has generalized over the last few decades of fighting nonstate actors and terrorists. However, I'd argue the disregard by a near-peer and signatory party to the Geneva Conventions is uncharted territory. It presents tactical and strategic problems we must be prepared to overcome while adhering to the Law of Armed Conflict ourselves.

The realization that the Air Ambulance, which has transformed battlefield medicine since the Korean War, may not be available on the front lines of future battlefields is both sobering and concerning. Don't get me wrong, the current and future Air Ambulance have a role on the future battlefield, and it will be necessary to move large numbers of patients over vast distances through the echelons of care. The question is, how do we bridge the gap from the front to as far forward as the rotary wing can operate? In Ukraine, that distance is quite large.

Need to Experiment

Observations from Ukraine suggest an urgent need to experiment with and invest in those same CASEVAC and ground evacuation capabilities we have allowed to atrophy for the last 50+ years. Ground evacuation platforms must be survivable on the future battlefield. Given our current COCOM requirements are for Air Ambulances, we currently have no demand signal for protected ground ambulances other than observations from Ukraine, which complicates modernization prioritization for precious resources. Additionally, we must experiment with robotics and unmanned and autonomous ground and air systems dedicated to evacuation. Ukraine has pioneered this new normal out of sheer necessity.

Since the establishment of a dedicated ambulance corps through an act of Congress in 1864, Army MEDEVAC has instilled the will to fight and strengthened the sacred trust we have with Soldiers on the ground. We must learn from conflicts like the one in Ukraine and move out now by adding additional "golden arrows" to our quiver of capability, accompanying the success of the air ambulance. Evacuation will be possible on the future battlefield, but only if we anticipate the challenges now and prepare.

COL Sam Fricks is the division chief, Medical Evacuation Concepts and Capabilities Division and deputy consultant to the Army Surgeon General on Medical Evacuation. He is located at Fort Novosel, AL.

Special Focus ▶

AAAA Functional Awards and U.S. Army LTG Parker Awards

Presented at the 2025 Army Aviation Senior Leaders Forum



ALL U.S. ARMY PHOTOS BY KELLY MORRIS, USAACE PAO

Aviation leaders across all Army components gathered during the U.S. Army Aviation Center of Excellence's Aviation Senior Leader Forum at Fort Novosel, AL, Jan. 28-30, 2025.

Aviation leaders across all Army components gathered at the home of Army Aviation at Fort Novosel, AL, to focus on current and future operations, training and leader development Jan. 28-30.

With a theme of "Army Aviation – Ready to Meet Tomorrow's Challenges Today," the event included a three-day lineup of guest speakers and breakout working group sessions.

On the evening of Jan. 29, the AAAA National Functional Awards, and the LTG Ellis D. Parker Awards were presented during an awards dinner. MG (Ret.) Walt Davis, AAAA National President presented the AAAA awards, and USAACE commanding general, MG Clair A. Gill, presented the LTG Ellis D. Parker Awards with chief warrant officer of the branch, CW5 Mike Corsaro, and branch CSM Kirk Coley assisting.

The Parker Award annually recognizes the top Army Aviation battalions (or equivalent) in four categories based on unit mission, and is named for LTG Don Parker, an Army Aviation pioneer.



MG Clair A. Gill, Army Aviation branch chief, speaks during the U.S. Army Aviation Center of Excellence's Aviation Senior Leader Forum at Fort Novosel, AL, Jan. 30, 2025.



2LT Claire E. Hellman, in Flight School XXI at Fort Novosel, AL, is named the AAAA 2024 ROTC Cadet of the Year.



SPC(P) Thomas S. Cyrus, 3rd Battalion, 58th Aviation Regiment, Fort Liberty (Bragg), NC, receives the AAAA 2024 Air Traffic Control Maintenance Technician of the Year Award. Mr. Justin Hackworth represented Raytheon, who sponsors all AAAA ATC awards.



SFC Christopher M. Miller, Company F, 3rd Battalion, 82nd Aviation Regiment, Fort Liberty (Bragg), NC, receives the AAAA 2024 Air Traffic Controller of the Year Award.



CW2 Brandon C. Delk, Company F, 2nd Battalion, 1st Aviation Regiment, Fort Riley, KS, receives the AAAA 2024 Air Traffic Control Manager of the Year Award.



Holmes Airspace Information Center, Fort Novosel, AL, is named the AAAA 2024 Air Traffic Control Facility of the Year. Accepting the award is the company commander, CPT Shelby Swain and Sergeant First Class Tre Adams.



3rd Battalion, 58th Aviation Regiment, Fort Liberty (Bragg), NC is named the AAAA 2024 Air Traffic Control Unit of the Year. Accepting the award on behalf of the unit Soldiers is LTC Douglas Lindsay, commander, and 1SG Daniel Benson.



CW3 Jerid R. Hitchens, 3rd Battlefield Coordination Detachment-Korea, 8th U.S. Army, Republic of Korea, receives the AAAA 2024 Airspace Manager of the Year Award.



SFC Alexander I. Hall, Company B, Special Operations Training Battalion, Fort Campbell, KY, is named the AAAA 2024 Army Aviation Trainer of the Year. Mr. Bunky Litaker represented award sponsor CAE, Inc.



LTC Vincent J. Reed, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 224th Aviation Regiment, Task Force Freedom, receives the AAAA 2024 Army Aviation Medicine Award. Mr. Mark Jones represented award sponsor Gentex Corporation.



SSG Alex J. Henson, 2nd Battalion, 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment (Airborne), Fort Campbell, KY, receives the AAAA 2024 Army Aviation DUSTOFF Flight Medic of the Year Award. Mr. Kurt Mueller represented award sponsor Air Methods Corporation.



Company C, 1st Battalion, 126th Aviation Regiment, North Kingstown, RI, receives the AAAA 2024 Army Aviation Air/Sea Rescue Award of the Year. Accepting the award is the Vital 36 Samaritan crew (l to r): CPT Mark A. Dente, pilot and unit commander; CW3 Joshua A. Mason, pilot in command; SSG Matthew A. Medeiros, flight paramedic; and SSG Ryan P. Farley, flight paramedic, and SGT Brandon R. Bessette, crew chief. Mr. Jason Stokes represented award sponsor Onboard Systems Hoist and Winch.



1st Battalion, 214th Aviation Regiment (GSAB), 12th Combat Aviation Brigade, V Corps, United States Army Europe (USAREUR) is awarded the 2024 LTG Ellis D. Parker Award, Combat Support category, as well as being named the overall Parker Award winner. Accepting the award on behalf of the Soldiers are LTC Joshua Meyer, commander, CW4 Amanda Rast, senior warrant officer advisor, and CSM Will Peden.



The Special Operations Aviation Training Battalion, Special Operations Aviation Command (Airborne), Fort Campbell, Kentucky, is awarded the 2024 Lt. Gen. Ellis D. Parker Award, Table of Distribution and Allowances category. Receiving the award is LTC Sean Karrels, commander, and CSM Anthony Mintz.



The 404th Support Battalion, 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, Fort Carson, CO, is awarded the 2024 LTG Ellis D. Parker Award, Combat Service Support category. Receiving the award on behalf of the unit Soldiers is LTC Douglas Gray, commander, and CSM Christopher Stewart.



3rd Battalion, 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment, Fort Campbell, KY is awarded the 2024 LTG Ellis D. Parker Award, Combat category. Receiving the award on behalf of the unit Soldiers are LTC Sean Merritt, commander, CW5 John Holmes, senior warrant officer advisor, and CSM Shane McLaughlin.

Army Aviation Association of America



Award Nominations Are Open

AAAA Hall of Fame Inductions

Suspense: June 1

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AAAA Functional Awards

Suspense: July 1

AMSO Award
ASE Award

Avionics Award
Donald F. Luce Depot
Maintenance Artisan Award

Suspense: August 1

Logistics Unit of the Year Award
Materiel Readiness Award for a Contribution by a Small Business or Organization
Materiel Readiness Award for a Contribution by an Individual
Member of Industry
Materiel Readiness Award for a Contribution by a Major Contractor
Materiel Readiness Award for a

Contribution by an Industry Team, Group, or Special Unit
UAS Soldier of the Year
UAS Unit of the Year
Fixed Wing Unit of the Year

Suspense: September 1

Air/Sea Rescue
ATC Facility of the Year
ATC Unit of the Year
ATC Technician of the Year
ATC Controller of the Year
ATC Manager of the Year
DUSTOFF Medic of the Year
Medicine Award

Special Focus ▶

Luther G. Jones Army Aviation Depot Forum



AAAA 19th Luther G. Jones Army Aviation Depot Forum Held in Corpus Christi

By Ms. Kathleen (Kat) Pettaway-Clarke



ALL PHOTOS—U.S. ARMY PHOTO BY ERIK AMERINEZ

The Army Aviation Association of America convened the 19th Luther G. Jones Army Aviation Depot Forum at the American Bank Center February 11-12, 2025. The two-day event centered on Army Aviation Maintenance and sustainment, including insights into government capabilities, the Corpus Christi Army Depot (CCAD), and the benefits for global industry clients and partnerships. The subject for this year was CCAD-Enabling Aviation in Contact.

The forum is dedicated in honor of COL Luther Griffin Jones, Jr., a former commander of CCAD and mayor of Corpus Christi, who served in the U.S. Army during World War II from 1939 to 1945 and the Vietnam War from 1958 to 1973.



MG Lori Robinson, U.S. Army Aviation and Missile Command Commanding General, delivers the keynote for the forum.

This event served as a platform to connect with Warfighters, enterprise, and industry, facilitating the exchange of feedback and an understanding of the requirements of Combat Aviation Brigades to achieve victory in the surge. Furthermore, it was an opportunity for the depot to share innovations in the organic industrial base related to the manufacturing, maintenance, and resetting of Army equipment. To include the modernization of facilities, processes, and sustaining of a skilled workforce.

Retired MG Walt Davis, AAAA National President, hosted the event and Army Chaplain (CPT) Dennis Ohiku, CCAD Chaplain, provided the invocation.

In his introductory remarks, CCAD Commander COL Kevin J. Considine introduced the newly updated “I Am CCAD” command video, which showcased CCAD’s modernization initiatives in enhanced diagnostics, 3D printing, robotic advancements, and the exploration of novel calibration methods. “We are embracing transformation to meet the challenges of a complex world, and our evolution is taking flight,” said Considine. He also affirmed the organizations’ continuing commitment to readiness in supporting the warfighter, while highlighting the depots’ specific connection to the Army’s plan. “While the character

Attendees from across the OIB gathered at the American Bank Center in Corpus Christi, TX for the 19th Luther G. Jones Army Aviation Forum.

of war is changing, the nature of CCAD will continue to support warfighters by building combat-ready innovations.”

Considine emphasized the importance of symbiotic linkages between the organic industrial base and the commercial sector, as well as the necessity for collaboration to achieve sustainability. CCAD will seek appropriate support partnership agreements and public-private partnerships.

The Hon. Michael Cloud, U.S. Representative for the Texas 27th Congressional District, conveyed video greetings highlighting the significance of the mil-



CCAD Commander COL Kevin J. Considine answers a question during the AAAA Luther G. Jones Army Aviation Forum held at the American Bank Center, Corpus Christi, TX.

itary in South Texas and their endeavors to get support from the highest echelons of government. Cloud stated, “I want to take a moment to recognize the incredible artisans at CCAD. Each of you play an essential role in keeping our military strong and our nation is safer because of your work for over 60 years, CCAD has answered the nation’s call, ensuring that when our soldiers need aircraft, they’re ready for the fight,”

MG Lori Robinson, commanding general of the U.S. Army Aviation and Missile Command and the Army’s Air Worthiness Authority, delivered the keynote presentation. She spoke about supply management, process transformation, data analytics, advanced techniques, and robotics, “We seek methods to utilize data effectively for sound decision-making. We are employing a machine learning model to analyze the documentation on aircraft to determine the frequency of the reset process or an overhaul.” A machine learning model is a computer program that has been trained on a data set to identify patterns and make predictions about new data by learning from the patterns found in the training data. Robinson also recognized the artisans for their contributions.

Mr. Michael Abrego was the 2025 recipient of the AAAA Donald F. Luce Depot Maintenance Artisan of the Year award. Abrego was instrumental in reducing the process cycle time to less than five days resulting in an increase of 150 stabilators, a process documented while attaining his yellow belt certificate. In addition, he is authoring a tech sheet for the center stabilators that will be used as a training guide and a more in-depth manual for other mechanics.

His advice to those who are just starting out in a career is “Be authentic and don’t change who you are for anyone. Maintain a high standard, never compromise or forget your purpose.”

He emphasized the importance of networking as a key factor when looking into any career field. “Don’t tell yourself you cannot accomplish a task or goal. Apply yourself to the fullest and never be afraid to stand out and out work everyone!”

Tom Ray, deputy director of Supply Chain Management, delivered an Army Materiel Command update and spoke about the organic industrial base modernization which currently has high visibility and continuous transformation. “CCAD is the benefactor of several great projects looking at the future for being able to sustain and maintain



Mr. Michael Abrego received the 2025 AAAA Donald F. Luce Depot Maintenance Artisan of the Year award. (L-R) MG (Ret) Davis, Mr. Michael Abrego, MG Robinson; COL Consedine and COL (Ret.) Garner Pogue representing the award sponsor, GE Aerospace.

America’s Army Aviation,” said Ray. “We must transform the way we think, the way we do just about everything, to become agile enough to react, be more proactive, so we can react faster.”

There were several panel discussions in which the recurring themes were supply management and data repositories. The Industry Support panel topic centered around asserting that collaborative investment is essential for future preparedness. Specifically, identifying alternative materials due to a scarcity of raw materials.

The Combat Capability Development Command, Aviation spoke of continuous transformation in air worthiness and commended their 40-year relationship with CCAD.

During the Supply Chain Management panel, the collected consensus was

to maintain clean data and uphold data integrity and the responsible application of artificial intelligence to enhance risk mitigation and prioritize sustainability.

Another panel discussion addressed Army policy, Army regulation, and the Five Pillars of Readiness – personnel, equipment, training, sustainment, and leadership – pertaining to transformation overhaul.

The concluding panel discussion centered on the need for additional parts to sustain the enduring fleet, alongside the aspiration for open-source software to combine data from sources such as the logistics modernization program.

Ms. Kathleen (Kat) Pettarway-Clarke is assigned to the public affairs office of Corpus Christi Army Depot.



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3rd Littoral Combat Team on Mavulis.

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Fighting a CAB in the Pacific – Part Two, Operation Pathways



By MAJ Shane T. Hinton

The United States' relationship with the Philippines dates back to American annexation following the Spanish-American War in 1899 and continued through World War II to independence in 1946. In 1951, the US-Philippine Mutual Defense Treaty was signed, making the Philippines our oldest treaty ally in the Indo-Pacific theater. Today, the United States and the Philippines' defense cooperation is demonstrated through several military exercises. Balikatan, meaning "shoulder-to-shoulder" in Tagalog, is an annual multinational joint military exercise held in Luzon and Palawan. Over 16,000 soldiers, sailors, marines, and airmen from both nations participated in Balikatan 2024, which was aimed at enhancing interoperability and strengthening partnerships. Task Force (TF) Diamond Head from the 25th Combat Aviation Brigade (CAB) received the task to air assault U.S., Filipino, and Australian soldiers, marines, and special operations forces from northern Luzon into the Luzon Strait to secure the key terrain; the islands of Calayan, Batan, Itbayat, and Mavulis.

The Luzon Strait is a maritime line of communication connecting the archipelagic nation of the Philippines to Taiwan. It is home to over 10 islands that extend north from the Philippines' largest island, Luzon, to Taiwan. The northernmost, Mavulis, lies only 80 miles south of Taiwan. Due to its strategic position within the first island chain the strait is a focal point in the ongoing tensions between the People's Republic of China and the Philippines. Access to the strait is necessary for Chinese interests in the event of a Taiwan Strait conflict. The strait's importance as a maritime chokepoint makes it a potential target for military action. Its control has significant implications for regional and global stability, potentially leading to a shift in power dynamics and increased tensions in the region.

As TF Diamond Head staged at Fort Magsaysay the first challenge presented itself, battlefield geometry, specifically the distances between command posts and the dispersed nature of the islands. The four supported units were positioned at Laoag, Paredes, Naval Base Camilio Osias (NBCO), and Camp Melchor Dela Cruz. With nearly 100 nautical miles



US ARMY PHOTO BY SGT BLAKE JONES

Final approach into Mavulis.



US ARMY GRAPHIC

between command posts, the Combined Joint Task Force (CJTF) Luzon required a solution to plan, brief, and rehearse the air assaults without compromising the operational tempo of 7 air assaults in 13 days. The doctrinal 96-hour air assault planning process was not suitable for the operational design.

96-Hour Air Assault Timeline

Despite the challenge of distance and time, two key points enabled TF Diamond Head to plan adequately and rehearse. First, the TF brought key leaders together for several days of deliberate face-to-face planning and rehearsals. Second, the TF modified the 96-hour air assault planning timeline to plan each air assault. With the base plan in place, Diamond Head could react to changes in the operational environment during execution.

TF Diamond Head conducted an Initial Planning Conference and Air Mission Coordination Meeting for each individual air assault and then conducted a single combined Air Mission Briefing and Combined Arms Rehearsal with the ground force. Within 24 hours of executing each air assault, the TF Diamond Head would then conduct an Aviation Operations Order briefing and Rehearsal of Concept. The detailed face-to-face planning generated shared understanding of the operation and of the commander's intent. In-person, detailed planning made it easier to adjust the plan during execution, which proved critical to mission success when the team encountered friction with the scheduled Air-Delivered Ground Refueling (ADGR) via KC-130 to the USMC Joint Forward Arming and Refuel Point (JFARP) at Basco Airport on the island of Batan.

Branch Plans

TF Diamond Head's most significant challenge was sustainment on the island of Batan. The JFARP was critical for incorporating the CH-47Fs into the air movement plan and

providing contingency refuel for medical evacuation operations. Aviation planners developed detailed day-by-day fuel requirements to enable the CJTF to sustain the JFARP through ADGR.

Three days into mission execution, the KC-130 scheduled to refuel the JFARP on Batan diverted to Guam for maintenance. This delay exposed a debilitating flaw in our planning process. We did not fully develop a branch plan in the event of a delay in the resupply of the JFARP on the island of Batan. The sustainment delay was compounded by the CJTF operating in a maritime environment. *The only sustainment options are by sea or air.* For 10 hours, planners from TF Diamond Head, 3/25 IBCT, USMC's 3rd Littoral Combat Team, and the JFARP owner, Marine Wing Support Squadron-174 scrambled to restructure the plan for the coming days.

Without alternative refuel options, the CJTF created an operational branch plan that changed the order of the air assaults prioritizing the closer islands, which did not require the use of the JFARP. The commander prioritized short-range air assaults to quickly project and demonstrate combat power. Long-range air assaults were delayed allowing additional fuel to arrive at the JFARP. TF Diamond Head employed CH-47Fs with Extended Range Fuel System (ERFS) tanks and conducted four fuel ferries transporting 3,600 gallons to the JFARP while the CJTF scheduled a barge to deliver barrels of fuel to the JFARP. The multi-modal solutions sufficiently sustained the JFARP until a KC-130 could arrive five days later. The team unintentionally found themselves in a volatile logistics scenario but were able to adapt due to detailed pre-mission planning and constant cross-communication. This scenario illustrates the sustainment challenges that are common throughout the Pacific and demonstrate the level of in-depth planning that is required to be successful when sustainment is contested during large scale combat operations.



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Exploit Training Opportunities

The Balikatan exercise is a rehearsal and highlights the unique challenges of operating in a joint and maritime environment. The 25th CAB has the luxury of operating in a similar environment at home station, along an island chain, in a tropical climate with jungles and mountains. This allows the 25th CAB team to experiment with and implement unique maintenance strategies to address corrosion, establish and refine an overwater training program, and maintain at least a platoon's worth of deck landing qualified crews per airframe. As we continue to increase the complexity of exercises in the Indo-Pacific theater similar challenges faced by TF Diamond Head will confront other Aviation TFs. These insights underscore the importance of continued cooperation and collaboration between the United States and the Philippines and will help to improve the joint force's ability to operate effectively in the region. As tensions persist, the ability to rapidly deploy, sustain, and command and control an Aviation TF across the vast distances of the Indo-Pacific remain paramount.

MAJ Shane T. Hinton is the executive officer of 2nd Battalion, 25th Aviation Regiment, stationed at Wheeler Army Airfield, HI.

ARMY AVIATION ► Editor's Mailbox

We encourage you to send your comments and suggestions to editor@quad-a.org. Submissions should be exclusive to ARMY AVIATION – we do not publish open letters or third-party letters. Submissions should be 150 to 175 words, should refer to an article that has appeared in the current or most previous issue, and must include the writer's name, address, email address, and phone numbers. No attachments, please. We regret that because of the volume of submissions, we cannot acknowledge unpublished letters other than by an automated e-mail reply. Writers of letters selected for publication will be notified within a week. Letters may be edited and shortened for space.

Joe Pisano, Editor

1/9/25

West Bend, Wisconsin

Information on me is correct. I am coming up on 99 years old and enjoy keeping up with the Aviation Community thru the outstanding magazine provided.

Darold M. Hoelz

12/16/24

Sherwood, Arkansas

Dear Quad-A:

I am a new member of the organization and read with great interest the article on MG Wright. We shared quite a few similar experiences - although she went on to do wonderful things (and is still doing wonderful things) as an officer while I stayed in the enlisted ranks.

I joined the USAR under the CAS program as a clerk typist in November 1974. I transferred to a training unit and graduated in July 1976 as the first female Drill Sergeant for Arkansas' 95th Division. Two years later, I transferred to the Arkansas Army National Guard and became a Huey crewchief, the first female aviation crewmember in the Arkansas Army NG. I loved crewing and have the best memories and stories from my time in aviation. And just as MG Wright first flew with pilots that had flown in Vietnam that was my experience also. I did, and still do, have immense respect for those guys.

I stayed in aviation until 1988 when I transferred to a non-aviation unit at Camp Robinson and retired in 2005 as a master sergeant after 31 years. The USAR and NG are the best part-time jobs in the world. I was able to do things there that I couldn't do on the civilian side.

The Arkansas aviation folks meet for lunch once a month and we are able to keep up with the dwindling members of our old-timers. We were encouraged to join Quad-A which many of us did. Thanks to all the hard-working staff and volunteers.

Suzanne Stair



Building better futures, one grant at a time!

“You have to Have a Nickel to Make a Dime:” How TLC Invests in Industry’s Workforce

By BG (Ret.) Steve Mundt

They say that “money makes the world go round,” and that holds true for our defense industry partners, our workforce development efforts, and our entire Aviation community.

AAAA’s Trade School, Licensing and Certification Foundation (TLC) is a 501(c)(3) that provides grants to qualified members of AAAA, spouses, children, and grandchildren of members, and deceased members to attend accredited Trade Schools, Licensing Programs, or Certification Programs that are not college degree-producing courses.

TLC: A significant cost in today’s workforce is finding, training, and retaining qualified and quality people. This is true for both the government and private sectors. Training, benefits, salaries, and the costs associated with replacing people are getting higher and more competitive. TLC is focused on helping industry find and hire both quality and qualified candidates with the skills and certifications required for their workforce. TLC can greatly assist due to our grant screening process of the applicants based on merit and demonstrated potential. Therefore, providing a qualified talent pipeline to industry.

Talent acquisition professionals are met with an influx of candidates for roles that are often not a fit or lacking specific qualifications for a job. TLC steps in as a partner for sourcing your needs. We provide a free jobs board for our partners to post their job openings, and for our members and industry partners to look for their next career step.

Our technical trade personnel are retiring. This rapid decline in qualified tradespersons is being met with a secondary challenge: the requirements for the technical trades are increasing.

One of TLC’s core goals is to build partnerships with industry while assisting AAAA members and their families to find lucrative careers. We are bridging the gap between the need and the source by serving as a conduit connecting our two communities together. While TLC does not solely focus on Aviation seeking career fields, it does provide insight into individuals who are actively seeking career fields related to and/or supporting the Aviation enterprise and industry partners.

Our partnership with industry is open to start-ups, mid-size contractors, and Primes alike. We need the whole of industry to overcome this looming shortage of technical personnel, attracting more qualified candidates into the trades by guaran-

teeing placement after their training is complete.

With your help, we can ensure more applicants apply for your jobs and possibly be hired as an apprentice. At the same time, they earn their certifications, offering you talent to develop alongside their certification process.

Industry: Are you ready to fill your critical vacancies? Are you committed to supporting the careers of our military family and community? Please reach out to us to learn more about the partnership, and we will tailor our approach to your needs through this program.

AAAA members and families: Now is the time to apply. These Grant dollars are here to help you achieve your goals, gain financial security, find fulfilling careers, and take advantage of a burgeoning sector in our economy. While college is an excellent option for many, many lucrative positions that do not require a college degree are waiting to be filled, whether for chefs, cosmetologists, mechanics, HVAC repair technicians, heavy equipment operators, or real estate agents.

Countless professions do not require a college degree that offers great professional and financial promise and security.

Take the time to apply today: <https://www.quad-a.org/tlc>.

BG (Ret.) Steve Mundt is the president of the AAAA TLC Foundation.



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► Historical Perspective

From page 16, Vol. 24, Nos. 3 & 4, Army Aviation Magazine, Westport, CT, March-April 1975.

Wow!

Edited by Mark Albertson



Display case of Colonel Slattery's model collection of helicopters.



Colonel Slattery showing Igor Sikorsky some of his helicopter models.

Lieutenant Colonel John M. Slattery [Ret.], pilot in the U.S. Air Force 1st Helicopter Squadron, Andrews Air Force Base, Maryland, owns what some authorities term as the largest collection of “pure” helicopter models in the United States. [“Pure” because only vertical takeoff and landing [VTOL] aircraft are included in it.]

Slattery, or “Slats” as he is called by his friends, values his collection of 130 models at nearly \$6,000. More than 50 helicopter types are represented, including a model of Igor I. Sikorsky’s first successful helicopter, the VS-300, and his research aircraft for the flying crane, the S-60.

In addition, the Air Force officer is an authority on helicopters, having compiled one of the best helicopter information files in the country. Two four-drawer file cabinets contain history, photos,

articles, brochures – anything that has to do with helicopters, both foreign and domestic. He also has displayed his collection in many parts of the world, from Sheppard Air Force Base in Texas to Wheelus Air Force Base in Libya.

How does Slattery pack his models prior to moving them about?

First of all, he cements only those parts of a craft necessary to hold it together, thus simplifying partial disassembly in preparation for transport. He has also constructed special packing cases in which his models are protected with foam rubber cushions and secured with elastic strips.

Slattery promotes helicopters whenever possible. For instance, he was instrumental in “borrowing” the Sikorsky XR-5 helicopter built in 1943, from the Smithsonian Institution, restoring



APR FILE PHOTO - PG 17, MAR, APR 75

Slattery with some of his models.

same and displaying it at the silver anniversary celebration of the USAF Helicopter School at Sheppard in 1969. The XR-5 was eventually returned to the Smithsonian for display.

He also assisted in arranging for the two H-13J helicopters which the late President Eisenhower and his staff used to be presented, when the Air Force was getting rid of them, to the Smithsonian and to the Air Force Museum in Dayton, Ohio, in 1967.

Two-Service Veteran

Slattery, who has accumulated more than 4,500 hours as a helicopter pilot, served as a member of the United States Marine Corps during the Korean War. After returning to the United States to be discharged, he applied to the Air Force aviation cadet program for the second time in nine years, and this time, was accepted. He went through several stages of the cadet program but was kept back two classes because of a throat operation.

This he felt to be a lucky occurrence, however, because he was then chosen for helicopter training with three other members of his class. During his convalescence, he began collecting helicopter models and building them. After graduation from helicopter training, he served in Libya, and at Brookley, Robins, Bolling and Andrews Air Force Bases.

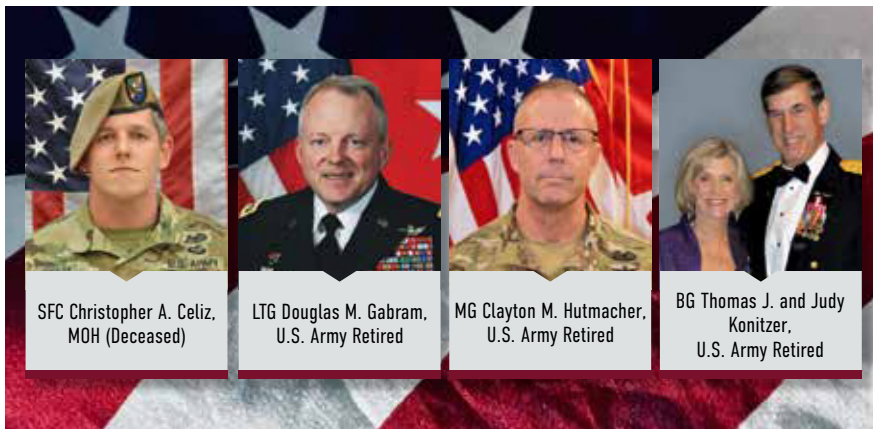
Slattery, in addition to Sikorsky helicopter models from the VS-300 through the HH-53B, has many other kinds. His largest is a 300-pound replica of the English-made Fairey Rotodyne, and his smallest, the Capital Hobbi-copter, which he can hold in the palm of his hand.

Mark Albertson is the award-winning Army Aviation Publications Historian and a contributing editor to ARMY AVIATION magazine.

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Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association Special Feature



Mid-Air Recovery of Drones in Vietnam

By J. David McClung



ALL PHOTOS: AUTHOR PERSONAL PHOTOS

*Editor's Note: This is the next in a series of articles throughout the year taken from the pages of *The VHPA AVLATOR*, the newsletter of the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association. Preserving the Legacy! Enjoy!*

CW4 (Ret.) Joe Pisano, RVN 1970-1971

When I graduated from USAF Helicopter Pilot Training at Sheppard AFB in 1967, I was assigned to the 100th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing (SRW) at Davis Monthan Air Force Base (AFB), AZ. I knew nothing about the unit's mission except that it had CH-3 helicopters active in Vietnam. In the first week after I reported for duty a seasoned Senior Master Sergeant briefed me on the unit's mission. He said, "You will be catching unmanned jet airplanes in the air." I laughed at him, saying "Just because I am a second lieutenant, doesn't

mean you can pull the wool over my eyes. A helicopter can't do that." He smiled and said, "I am not joking. You are scheduled to make your first catch tomorrow morning."

The CH-3s of the 100th SRW were modified specifically for the drone recovery mission. The ramp was taken off and a large hydraulic winch was added right above the center of gravity in the cargo area. A hole was cut through the keel so that a cable could be routed from the winch to the rear of the helicopter. Two aluminum poles extended from the rear opening with hooks attached to the ends. The hooks were connected to the cable with a nylon loop. In flight, the poles would extend below the helicopter.

The drones were jet airplanes that were computer controlled. They took very detailed pictures where it was too dangerous for manned aircraft to go. One that we caught many times is still on display at the Strategic Air Com-

Above left: A drone with its main and capture parachutes in position for retrieval.

Above right: A CH-3 returning a drone to Da Nang AFB, South Vietnam.

mand & Aerospace Museum near Omaha. The accompanying picture was taken a couple of years ago, when I visited the museum.

A drone returning to the recovery area in South Vietnam would deploy a large parachute which slowed its descent to about 1,000 feet a minute. A nylon rope attached to the top center of the drone and connected to a smaller parachute that deployed above the large parachute. To recover the drone, the CH-3 would swoop down at 60 knots and snag the small parachute. The energy absorbing winch in the helicopter would play out cable until the drone followed behind the helicopter. The large parachute would separate from the drone and fall



ALL PHOTOS AUTHOR PERSONAL PHOTOS

away so that the drone was suspended about 300 feet below the helicopter. The winch operator in the helicopter would reel in the drone until it was suspended just below the helicopter. With the drone in the tucked position, the helicopter would return to base.

In those days, the pictures taken by the drones were on film that had to be developed. Digital cameras had not yet been invented, so the drones did not have the ability to send the pictures back electronically. The drone had to be physically returned to base for any of the intelligence gathered to be useful.

I deployed to Vietnam for three different temporary duty tours in 1967, 1968 and 1969. I flew over 200 drone recovery missions out of Da Nang AFB. The drones would be launched from a C-130 aircraft to fly over the targets in North Vietnam and would return to a predesignated recovery area near Monkey Mountain in South Vietnam. Our unit had a success rate of over 95% in catching the drones in the air. The few that we didn't catch successfully were lost as a result of various mechanical failures. For example, on one of my missions the large parachute failed to disconnect from the drone. The large parachute caused so much drag that it pulled the winch cable completely out. The drone landed in the water. After the Vietnam War, the USAF added landing gear to its drones so the mid-air recovery system is no longer needed. Today's drones take off and land on their own and they send back their digital pictures in real time.

The CH-3 helicopters we flew have all been retired. One of them is on permanent display at Hill AFB, Utah. The others have retired back to Davis Monthan AFB to the "Bone Yard" where aircraft that are taken out of service are kept.

Now, 50 years later, when I tell people

what I did in the Vietnam war, I usually get the same response, "I didn't know we used drones in Vietnam." At the time, our mission was highly classified. I remember when the North Vietnamese would claim that they shot down five U.S. airplanes. The U.S. would reply, "No, you only got three." The North Vietnamese counted our drones and our own government didn't. Details of the drone operations in Vietnam have slowly

Above left: The author next to a CH-3.

Above right: The author with "Tom Cat" drone in the Strategic Air Command & Aerospace Museum near Omaha, NE.

leaked out over the years, but there are parts of the story that I still can't share.

J. David McClung is a VHPA life member living in Olathe, KS.

May 16, 2025

Vietnam/Korean Veterans and Family & Golden Eagles (50 Year and Above Members) Appreciation Reception



If you are a Vietnam or Korean War veteran, and/or a Golden Eagle, you and your family are invited to a special reception in your honor with members of the National Executive Group, just before the Soldier Appreciation Dinner Concert on the final day of the Army Aviation Mission Solutions Summit, Nashville TN.

Come and join other veterans of these two conflicts and experience the unique camaraderie once again as AAAA celebrates you and your family's service.

Thank you for your service! We hope to see you there!



AAAA

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AAAA Chapter Affairs By LTC (Ret.) Jan Drabczuk

I greatly appreciate the support from SGT Matthew Belfi, the First Troop Philadelphia Chapter President, for authoring and sharing this information to our membership.

The First Troop Philadelphia Chapter



One of the special treasures of our nation is the First Troop Philadelphia City Cavalry, also known as “First City Troop.” This unit was founded in 1774, and is a purely volunteer cavalry troop, first organized in defense of the colonies.

Today the Troop maintains its traditions of equestrian drill and ceremony, riding on horseback through the streets of Philadelphia several times per year. You may have seen First City Trooper Tim Rickey featured in February’s “Membership Corner” section. Together, these two articles serve to tell the story of the reconstitution of this AAAA Chapter.

The “First City Troop Chapter” was founded in 1999 by Aviators and cavalry troopers in Philadelphia. At the time, the Pennsylvania National Guard 1-104th Cavalry Squadron, headquartered in Philadelphia, was assigned AH-1 Cobra helicopters. In the early 2000s, due to Aviation restructuring, the Aviation assets were pulled out of this cavalry squadron. Because of these organizational changes, the Philadelphia Based “First City Troop Chapter” slowly faded out as members deployed, retired, and joined other units. Recently, several AAAA life members in First City Troop and A/1-104th Cavalry Squadron aspired to reconstitute the Chapter, especially with



Members of the newly reconstituted First Troop Philadelphia Chapter at their first meeting on January 29th, 2025, standing in front of a First City Troop group portrait from the year 1900.

the growing proliferation of UAS in the unit and the Cavalry mission.

Key Events and Initiatives

The “First Troop Philadelphia Chapter” had their first meeting on January 29th, 2025. The officers of the newly reconstituted “First Troop Philadelphia AAAA Chapter” are SGT Matt Belfi, UH-60 pilot; MAJ Tim Rickey, Apache pilot; MAJ Joe Lilly, Chinook and fixed-wing pilot; CPT Ryan Leonard, Apache pilot; and CPT Scott Dobson, UH-60 pilot. New AAAA members in this Chapter are experienced UAS operators such as SGT Mataio Nuualiitia (far left in the photo) and aspiring UAS operators, such as SPC Justus Croyle (second from right in picture, and currently slotted for UAS training). With UAS becoming integral to the Cavalry Mission, there is an opportunity to welcome a steadily growing corps of UAS operators into AAAA. It is important for this new cohort within Army Aviation to have a professional organization to learn, grow, and develop from within.

Officers of the new First Troop Philadelphia Chapter have been in contact with leadership of the Delaware Valley Chapter and the Keystone Chapter to ensure that they collectively meet the total needs of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. We believe that Pennsylvania can support three Chapters, one centered around Ridley Park and the Boeing Company, one centered around Philadel-

phia, and one centered around Fort Indiantown Gap and the 28th ECAB. These three Chapters will complement each other and work together going forward to increase membership and participation in AAAA, ultimately helping the Aviation Soldier and Families.

The first planned event for this newly reconstituted Chapter will be “Huey’s Breakfast” this summer which is a traditional meal, organized and served by former members of the unit, and served to members of the Troop returning from Annual Training. In addition, the First Troop Philadelphia Chapter plans to work in coordination with the Delaware Valley Chapter and the Keystone Chapter on golf outings, formal events, and fund raisers.

Conclusion and Invitation

The First Troop Philadelphia Chapter is dedicated to fostering a supportive environment for soldiers, Aviators, their families, and the wider community. The Chapter welcomes inquiries, support, and participation in their ongoing efforts to advance the future of Army Aviation.

Feel free to contact me for help with your Chapter, establishing a new Chapter, Executive Board support, would like your Chapter featured in the AAAA magazine or for clarification of National procedures.

LTC (Ret.) Jan S. Drabczuk
AAAA VP for Chapter Affairs
jan.drabczuk@quad-a.org

AAAA Chapter News

Air Assault Chapter Farewell to Deploying Screaming Eagles

CHAPTER PHOTO BY MAJ (RET) SCOTT HOLLINGSWORTH



Members from the Air Assault Chapter were on hand to send off the 101st Combat Aviation Brigade on their 9-month deployment from Campbell Army Airfield to Syria on February 5, 2025. Pictured are (l to r): CSM Marcus Pitts, 101 CAB; COL (Ret.) “Jimmy” Blackmon; COL (Ret.) Henry C. (Hawk) Ruth, chapter president; COL Tyler B. Partridge, 101 CAB commander; Captain (Ret.) Jack Smith and COL Michael Snowden, Commander 1-160th SOAR(A).

CHAPTER PHOTO BY MAJ (RET) SCOTT HOLLINGSWORTH



COL (Ret.) Hawk Ruth, chapter president and former 2nd Squadron, 17th Cavalry commander, addresses the soldiers.

ORDER OF ST. MICHAEL INDUCTEES

Aviation Center Chapter

CHAPTER PHOTO BY CW4 (RET) LASINDRA MCCRAY



CW4 Carlos Spruill is inducted into the Bronze Honorable Order of St. Michael by CW5 Edward Pregana (left), Safety Officer for the 164th Theater Airfield Operations Group and CSM Caleb Baugh, 164th TAOG CSM, at a retirement dinner on Dec. 18, 2024 at Torero’s Fine Mexican Restaurant in Enterprise, AL, near Fort Novosel, AL. Spruill was recognized for his career-long service to Army Aviation culminating with his

achievements while serving as the brigade air traffic services standardization officer for the 164th TAOG at Fort Novosel.



COL Steven M. Pierce is inducted into the Silver Honorable Order of St. Michael by CW5 Shawn Johnston, Senior Warrant Officer Advisor, Directorate Analysis and Preventions, U.S. Army Combat Readiness Center, on Jan. 31, 2025 at Ft. Novosel, AL. Pierce was recognized for 30 years of dedicated service to Army Aviation culminating as the deputy commanding officer of the United States Army Combat Readiness Center.

Colonial Virginia Chapter



SGM Troy D. Estell is inducted into the Silver Honorable Order of St. Michael by CW5 Mark Tucker, Standardization Pilot at Ft. Eustis, VA, on Feb. 21, 2025 at Ft. Eustis. Estell was recognized for 23 years of Army and Aviation Service culminating as a deputy operations officer in Army Futures Command.

Connecticut Chapter

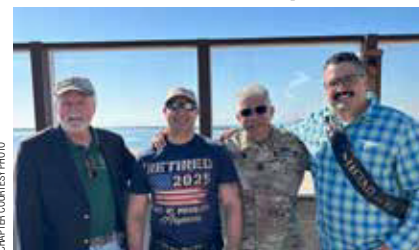


COL Stephan L. Nowakowski is inducted into the Silver Honorable Order of St. Michael by CSM Tony Savino, 1109th Theater Aviation Support Maintenance Group (TASMG) CSM

and chapter VP Enlisted Affairs, on Jan. 26, 2025 at the Windsor Locks Readiness Center, CT. Nowakowski was recognized for his accomplishments while serving as the 1109th TASMG Commander and State Army Aviation Officer, as he changes duty to become the senior Army Guard Advisor to the U.S. Army Aviation and Missile Command.

Southern California Chapter

CHAPTER COURTESY PHOTO



The Southern California Chapter inducted two retiring USAR (and former CAARNG) aviators in the Bronze Honorable Order of St. Michael during a multi-family retirement luncheon held in Seal Beach, CA on January 9, 2025. Both warrant officers, cited for their years of dedicated service to both the United States and the state of California including multiple deployments, were assigned to Company B, 52d Aviation Regiment, USAR, Joint Forces Training Base, Los Alamitos, CA. Pictured left to right are the presenter, chapter Sr VP LTC (Ret.) Tom Lasser, and recipient **CW3 Steve Lauridsen**, chapter VP Awards, SGM (Ret.) Ron Cabrera, and recipient **CW4 Rolando Carpio**.

Tennessee Valley Chapter

CHAPTER PHOTO BY JOSEPH R. ANDRZEJEWSKI



MAJ Nicholas K. Toney is inducted into the Bronze Honorable Order of St. Michael by CSM (Ret.) Randy Wise, chapter VP Awards, on Jan. 23, 2025 at Redstone Arsenal, AL. Toney was recognized for his accomplishments as the assistant product manager of the Utility Helicopter Project Office MEDEVAC and aeromedical evacuation operations officer and advisor to 4th ID CG & Division Surgeon staff. He manages the Future MEDEVAC Cabin Technical Demonstrator for enhanced Warfighter care.



AAAA Membership Update By CW4 (Ret.) Becki Chambers

The Membership Corner

While attending a recent event at the National Museum of the United States Army, I had the privilege of meeting CW2 Jennifer Smith.

CW2 Jennifer Smith was born and raised in Ohio, residing in the Cleveland area for most of her childhood. Her mother worked as a secretary at the Cleveland Justice Center and her father worked as an air traffic controller with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). Jennifer is the oldest of three girls, each three years apart. She enjoyed learning from parents who had both social sciences and technical backgrounds.

Jennifer comes from a long line of military service with relatives serving as far back as in the Civil War. Her father is an Army Veteran serving as an air traffic controller assigned to what was then known as Fort Rucker, Alabama. He later transitioned to civilian life and continued to work in the aviation field until his retirement from the FAA in 2015. Her father encouraged her during her high school years to pursue her career interests in the military.

After graduating high school in 2005, Jennifer attended the United States Military Preparatory School at Fort Monmouth, NJ and later the United States Military Academy. She graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Sociology in 2011 and was commissioned into the Chemical Corps as a 2nd Lieutenant. 2LT Smith spent her active-duty service at various posts throughout the U.S., completed one tour in Afghanistan, one 12-month tour in South Korea, and as CPT Smith, an 18-month command at Fort Jackson, SC.

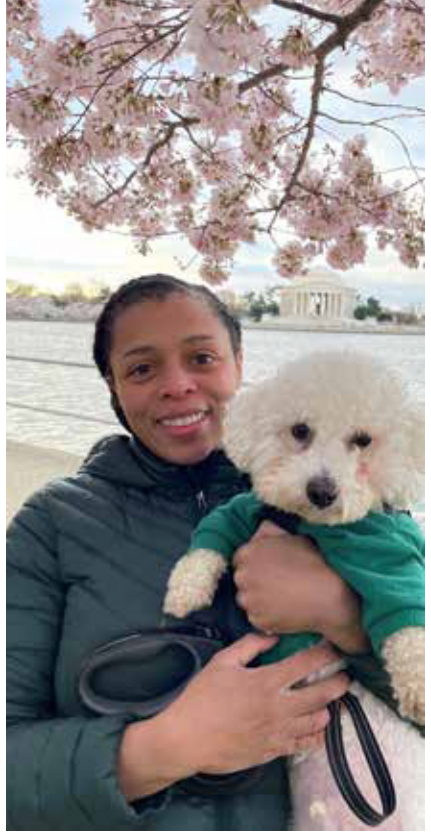
CW2 Smith decided to transition into the Ohio National Guard in 2018 to become a warrant officer-grade pilot. Shortly after the transition, she decided to enroll in Walden University's masters-level social work

program. Jennifer attended Initial Entry Rotary Wing (IERW) from Fall 2019 through Spring 2021. She completed coursework in both flight and social work, earning UH-72A Lakota and CH-47F Chinook ratings. After completing IERW, CW2 Smith transferred to the District of Columbia Army National Guard where she is flying the Lakota. Jennifer graduated from Walden University with a master's degree in social work in 2022. She is currently a licensed social worker under clinical supervision in the state of Virginia as a behavioral health therapist.

CW2 Smith believes emotional wellness and behavioral health is crucial to combat readiness and personnel sustainability within the Army Aviation branch. She leverages her social work expertise and experience to advocate for mental health and promote mental health resources. She works with military and local programs to bring awareness and education of available resources to soldiers, to include those in aviation. Jennifer's future goal is to obtain clinical social work licensure and render mental health services to aviation professionals.

Jennifer would like to take the time to thank those who supported her along the journey. She would like to thank God above all. Additionally, she expresses gratitude to her family, close friends throughout her life, the Gore Family for their guidance and support, and countless others who touched her life in meaningful ways.

CW2 Smith cites an African Proverb, stating "it takes a village to raise a child." She believes the concept applies to numerous industries, including aviation. It



Jennifer Smith

takes a community to cultivate great minds and invest in the possibilities of tomorrow. Jennifer believes this could not be truer for the future of Army Aviation. She said the Army Aviation Association of America is an exceptional professional organization that provides various programs and services to members. Soldiers will find publications, conferences, scholarships, and many more benefits that can directly impact their professional development. Furthermore, AAAA is unique as it encourages participation, to include article submissions from the field, entry into photography contests, and active membership. As a lifetime member, CW2 Jennifer Smith encourages others to explore what AAAA has to offer.

*CW4 (Ret.) Becki Chambers
AAAA Vice President for Membership
beckichambers@quad-a.org*

New AAAA Life Members

Air Assault Chapter
 CW4 Terry J. Pena, Ret.
Aviation Center Chapter
 Mr. Aaron L. Kearney
 CW5 Jerry Mosley, Ret.
Iron Mike Chapter
 Mr. Joshua D. Martin, Ret.
North Star Chapter
 CW4 Brent P. Freese
 CW4 David R. Kilber
Tennessee Valley Chapter
 Mr. Shawn T. Prickett
Washington-Potomac Chapter
 CW5 Patrick Curran

New AAAA Members

Air Assault Chapter
 SPC Caige Lenox Galloway
Arizona Chapter
 Mr. Matthew Banko
 Mr. Margarito Mejia
 Mr. Eric Rembelski
 PFC Cody Wayne Simpson
 PV2 Timothy Christian Wauro
Aviation Center Chapter
 SPC Brian Hosford
 Ms. Cassandra Layne
Badger Chapter
 PV2 Owen Steven Fischer
 Ms. Amanda Rahfaldt
Battle Born Chapter
 Michael Adolph
Central Florida Chapter
 Mrs. Ashelie Edmark
 PV2 Anthony Michael Regovic
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UPCOMING EVENTS

APRIL 2025

- 12 Aviation Branch 42nd Anniversary
- 23 U.S. Army Reserve 117th Anniversary

MAY 2025

- 5-8 GSOF Special Operations Forces Week (formerly SOFIC), Tampa, FL
- 14-16 AAAA Army Aviation Mission Solutions Summit, Nashville, TN



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AAA Family Forum By Judy Konitzer

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My thanks to Jamie Pisano, spouse of our editor CW4(Ret.) Joe Pisano, for her January 7 Facebook post recommending having Bob Mayer's Survival Bag for evacuations.

Are You Prepared for an Evacuation?

By Judy Konitzer

News and social media of late have allowed us to witness catastrophic effects either from Hurricane Helene causing floods especially in North Carolina, or the apocalyptic fires in California.

It is truly heartbreaking, and we should pause to consider what we would do if anything like this were about to happen to us.

Hurricane Helene last September was one of the deadliest storms of the 21st century causing untold damage throughout the south. Several days of rain preceding it in the mountainous and Piedmont areas of North Carolina helped precipitate the landslides and extreme flooding that followed, and as of December 2024, more than 59.6 billion in collateral damage to homes, acreage, roads, and bridges along with numerous deaths were reported there alone.

As a point of reference, flooding is the most common type of natural disaster and is the leading cause of weather-related deaths in the U.S. causing over 200 fatalities per year.

Also interesting to note is that 90% of wildfires are caused by humans with 30% being started intentionally and 70% started accidentally or through carelessness. Embers blown by the wind can also set fire to structures, and smoke can kill and cause health issues over a mile away. It can also affect the land for years after with lost vegetation and the subsequent greater threat of floods and landslides. In 2024 alone there were over 62,000 wildfires in the United States burning over 8,851,142 acres with the numbers rising when the statistics from the California fires become finalized. Globally, over 1500 people died from wildfires while costing billions of dollars. Unfortunately, current data indicates there will continue to be a worrisome increase in wildfire frequency over the next century which underscores the

urgency for preparedness and response strategies.

Accepting the inevitable puts you in a position to evacuate if you are in an area when your local authorities advise you to leave soon or immediately. People are more important than a house and its objects, and most of your possessions will have to stay behind. It is unfortunate that some people choose to remain maybe out of fear of looters or maybe not believing the threat is real. However, for folks who sadly simply lack transportation resources, or the time, or social support to evacuate, it is especially tragic because no one can defeat the ravages of wildfires or floods.

It is important to think through actions to prepare for an evacuation.

These include:

- A full tank of gas or even a container to top off. Gas station lines get longer and soon run out.
- A charger for your phone.
- A supply of food and water and blankets
- A "Survival Bag" with important information to take with you:
- Birth Certificates
- Passports/Visas
- Wills / Power of Attorney
- Titles / Deeds
- Marriage License
- Important Phone Numbers (Family, etc.)
- Financial - Bank, Credit Union, Brokerage etc. account numbers and phone numbers
- Credit Cards account numbers and phone numbers to call if need to cancel



- Military and VA records
- Summary of Medical History, Medical Records, Eyeglass Prescriptions
- Home Insurance Documents
- Car Insurance Documents / Registrations
- Health Insurance Documents
- Employment Records
- Tax Returns
- Concealed Carry License
- Thumb Drive with a video of everything in your home (all rooms including basement, attic, and garage) with all drawers open, all closet contents, and artwork. This can also be stored in the cloud for insurance purposes.
- Vet records for your pets, including rabies and other information that would be needed for boarding

Most of this information should already be routinely captured and available in a safe place as you may not have time to prepare it if you ever need to evacuate. Hopefully we will all be fortunate and not have to ever experience the need to evacuate, but being prepared is truly always a good idea.

Judy Konitzer is the family forum editor for ARMY AVIATION; questions and suggestions can be directed to her at judy@quad-a.org.

IM MEMORIAM



Terry Coakley

Mr. Terrence M. Coakley First Executive Director of AAAA

We are saddened to announce the peaceful passing of Mr. Terry Coakley in his beloved home state of Virginia on February 13, 2025. He was 79.

Married to AAAA Founders, Art and Dotty Kesten's daughter, Lynn, who bought Army Aviation Publications, Inc. from her parents in 1987, Terry joined the AAAA team and became the advertising and exhibit sales manager.

This full time effort on marketing and sales paid off and helped to grow the annual convention exhibits from a few table-top displays in the 1960s and 70s to a large industry-based exhibit hall covering hundreds of thousands of square feet and thereby providing a significant revenue stream for AAAA.

Terry became the first executive director in 1991 after Art Kesten retired as AAAA's long serving executive vice president since 1957. He served until 1998.

A celebration of life will be held later this year. In lieu of flowers or gifts, memorial donations in Terry's name may be made to one of these organizations advancing dementia research: UVA Brain Institute: <https://braininstitute.virginia.edu/giving>; Alzheimer's Association: <https://www.alz.org/>; Hilarity for Charity: <https://wearehfc.org/>.

May he rest in peace.

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Badger Chapter
BG Matthew J. Strub

Silver

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CW5 Robert B. Phillips
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The Role and Importance of AAAAA Scholarship Evaluators

Dr. Kelly Brown, U.S. Army Retired

The Army Aviation Association of America (AAAA) Scholarship Program remains a premier AAAAA membership benefit for Army Aviation Servicemembers and their families.

Each year, more than 600 students – from college freshman to graduates – apply for approximately 250 AAAAA Scholarships. To determine who will receive a AAAAA scholarship, a team of dedicated volunteers review and evaluate every application.

We Want You!

A total of 200 volunteers are required to fully support the evaluation process. Any AAAAA member, affiliated Aviation Heritage member, or spouse may volunteer to serve as an Evaluator, including Enlisted, Warrant Officer, Officer, civilian, and industry partner members. No specific skills, background, or experience are necessary—only a strong desire to support AAAAA members and their families.

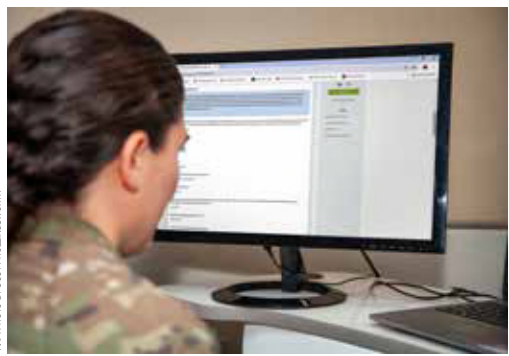
To those who have volunteered as Evaluators in the past – Thank You! Please volunteer again this year. To those who have yet to volunteer – Welcome! We need your participation to fully support the evaluator program.

What do Evaluators Do?

The primary role of AAAAA Scholarship Evaluators is to review and assess scholarship applications. Evaluators are responsible for ensuring each application is examined holistically, considering not only academic achievements but also the merit of the whole applicant. Much like a promotion or selection board, Evaluators:

- Review application files containing academic records, extracurricular activities, personal essays, recommendation letters, and additional supporting documentation.
- Score each file on a scale from 1 to 10.

Never sat on a promotion or selection board before? No worries! The AAAAA Scholarship Team provides comprehensive training and an evaluation grading tool to help guide Evaluators through the assessment process. Additionally, help from the AAAAA Scholarship Team is a phone call or email away.



APU PHOTO BY SCOTT HOLLINGSWORTH

How are Applications Evaluated?

Teams of 10-12 Evaluators assess 40-50 applications each, using a set of well-defined criteria. These criteria include academic excellence, leadership, community service, recommendations, and an essay.

Academic excellence is gauged through grades and standardized test scores, while leadership and community service are assessed via the applicants' involvement in various activities, organizations, or employment.

Evaluators also consider personal essays and recommendations, which provide insight into the applicants' aspirations, values, and motivations.

Although Evaluators are allotted 2 weeks to assess 40-50 applications, most Evaluators finish reviewing their assigned files in less than 8 hours.

Fostering Future Leaders

The impact of Evaluators extends beyond merely awarding scholarships. By selecting students who demonstrate academic excellence, leadership potential, and a commitment to service, Evaluators help cultivate the next generation of leaders within the broader Army Aviation community.

Every scholarship enhances opportunities for recipient growth, enabling them to pursue their educational and career goals with greater confidence and support.

COL (Ret.) Kelly Brown is a member of the AAAASFT board of governors serving on multiple committees.

Thank You to Our Scholarship Fund Donors



AAAA recognizes the generosity of the following individuals, chapters and organizations that have donated to the Scholarship Foundation, Inc. from February 2024 through February 2025. The list includes donations received for all scholarships, as well as the General Fund which provides funding to enable the chapter, corporate, heritage and individual matching fund programs as well as national grants. Every penny donated to the Scholarship Foundation goes directly towards scholarships as a result of the Army Aviation Association of America subsidizing all administrative costs (minus investment brokerage fees).

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For more information about the Foundation or to make a contribution, go online to www.quad-a.org; contributions can also be mailed to AAAA Scholarship Foundation, Inc., 593 Main Street, Monroe, CT 06468-2806.



AAAA Legislative Report

By LTC (Ret.) Patrick "Josh" Baker
AAAA Representative to the Military Coalition (TMC)
josh.baker@quad-a.org

FY25 Appropriations – More uncertainty

The term unified government means when one political party controls the executive and legislative branches and allows for the use of the reconciliation process to implement significant policy changes. This process requires two key steps: (1) both the House and Senate must pass identical Budget Resolutions, and (2) both chambers must pass, and the President must sign, identical reconciliation instructions. Following President Trump's election, the House and Senate have been at odds over the approach to budget negotiations.

The current Continuing Resolution, which maintains government funding at FY24 levels, is set to expire on March 14. However, the Chairs and Ranking Members of the House and Senate Appropriations Committees have yet to agree on an overall spending limit for FY25.

President Trump has endorsed the House's approach to passing a single comprehensive bill rather than the Senate's plan, which prioritizes separate bills for energy, border security, and defense, followed by a tax reform package.

Speaker Mike Johnson (R-LA) has stated that House Republicans aim to advance President Trump's full policy agenda, while Senate Majority Leader John Thune (R-SD) has raised concerns that the House's proposal does not allow sufficient deficit flexibility to accommodate Trump's tax policy objectives.

At the time of this writing, the Senate is continuing efforts to finalize its budget framework. Senate Appropriations Chair Susan Collins (R-ME) expressed concerns about the limited time available for negotiations before the March 14 deadline. Over the weekend, Republican appropriators submitted a unified proposal to their Democratic counterparts.

What this means for the Army and Army Aviation is that when this hits your mailbox in March, you can turn on the TV to see if we are approaching or in a government shut down or the likely scenario and another round of Continuing Resolution with hopes that they can sort it out with more time. This will not have a huge impact to operational flight crews and maintainers, but the acquisition community and defense industry partners will feel the pain with further uncertainty on the FY25 appropriation that includes funding for modernization programs.

Congressional hearings on the fiscal 2026

defense budget have begun, and the outcome will be critical for Army Aviation funding. However, before addressing long-term budget plans, lawmakers must first resolve fiscal 2025 funding by mid-March to avoid a government shutdown. The ongoing uncertainty poses challenges for long-term planning, fleet modernization, and ensuring Army Aviation remains mission-ready in an evolving security environment.

The outcome is uncertain for sure. All of us in the Army Aviation enterprise from the warfighter on the flight line to our industry partners welcome a FY25 defense appropriation and full funding, but as we move forward into the 2nd quarter of FY26, FY25 may just likely be something in front of us versus in our rearview mirror.

Perhaps Congress will get their act together and pass this budget, but if this were up to the Las Vegas odds makers, we might be staring at a full year FY25 CR that takes us through September at funding levels of FY24!

DoD Budget Reductions – What Does this mean for Army Aviation?

Total defense spending reached nearly \$850 billion in fiscal year 2024, but as we stated, uncertainty remains regarding the fiscal 2025 defense budget, which has yet to be finalized despite the FY26 fiscal year beginning last October. This budgetary uncertainty has significant implications for Army Aviation, affecting modernization efforts.

Reports have suggested the possibility of an 8% annual reduction in defense spending over the next five years, potentially amounting to nearly \$300 billion in cuts through fiscal 2030. A memo from Acting Deputy Secretary of Defense Robert Salesses indicated that the focus is on reallocating at least \$50 billion within the fiscal 2026 budget to align with President Trump's priorities rather than across-the-board reductions.

Salesses emphasized a shift in defense spending, stating that resources would be directed toward warfighting capabilities while reducing expenditures on initiatives deemed non-essential. If budget cuts are enacted, Army Aviation could face reductions in procurement funding, potentially delaying modernization programs and fleet upgrades.

We might see a negative impact to funding

allocations for Future Vertical Lift programs, UH-60 Black Hawk and CH-47 Chinook modernization and other Army Aviation programs because they do not directly tie to the administrations near term priorities.

On the flip side, funding for training and sustainment may see increases as they are directly associated with operational readiness which has been publicly stated as priority number one for the warfighter. This is good for the aircrews and maintainers because this means funding to fly, train, and sustain.

While budget reductions remain a possibility, historical trends show that Congress often approves increases in military spending at least equal to inflation, and in many cases, beyond that. Some lawmakers, such as Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman Roger Wicker (R-MS), have advocated for increased defense spending – potentially up to \$200 billion over the coming years. While we started this article explaining that a unified government offers a reconciliation option for the Republican party that controls the White House and Congress, it seems that the Republican party may not be able to reconcile with one another for an outcome that the Army Aviation enterprise wants – on time funding!

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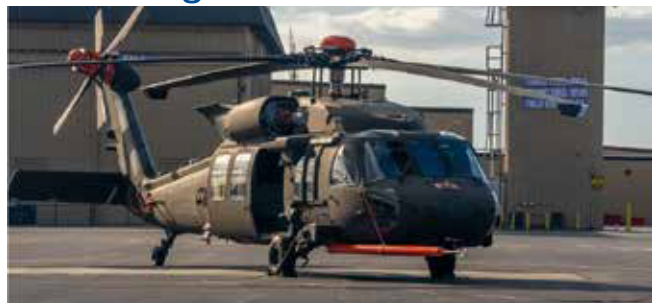
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ARMYAVIATIONmagazine.com



Industry News *Announcements Related to Army Aviation Matters*

Editor's note: Companies can send their Army Aviation related news releases and information to editor@quad-a.org.

Sikorsky Begins Black Hawk Ground Runs with US Army T901 Improved Turbine Engines



SIKORSKY COURTESY PHOTO

Sikorsky started its initial ground runs on a UH-60M Black Hawk helicopter equipped with two GE Aerospace T901 Improved Turbine Engines (ITE). The initial light off and ground runs were executed by a combined U.S. Army and industry test team and operated by Army and Sikorsky pilots. The test demonstrated the T901's start-to-fly progression, including idle and fly modes, with the rotor brake disengaged, marking a significant step toward the program's goal of delivering a more powerful and efficient engine for the next-generation Black Hawk. The first flight of the ITE-equipped Black Hawk is anticipated this year.

Army Releases RFI for Launched Effects on Aerial ISR Platform



U.S. ARMY CONCEPTUAL IMAGE

On Jan. 8, 2025 the Army released a Request for Information (RFI) looking at launched effects capabilities that will “potentially be integrated on medium/high-altitude aerial platforms that function as Aerial Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (A-ISR) aircraft.” A requirement specified by the Army's Special Electronic Mission Aircraft Product Directorate of the Fixed Wing Project Office (FWPO), calls for the launched effects to be “integrated onto the hardpoints of an all-weather, pressurized, large-sized-cabin Federal Aviation Administration FAR part 25 certified executive jet-category aircraft,” possibly the Army's High Accuracy Detection and Exploitation System (HADES) aircraft, based on the Global 6500, the first of which was delivered last November. The Army wants the launched effects to be compatible with the host aircraft operating above 41,000 feet and flying faster than 400 knots for a period longer than seven hours. When deploying the launched effects, the host aircraft should not have to perform any specific maneuvers but instead deploy them while in normal cruise configuration. The RFI calls for a Fiscal Year 26 demonstration.

DIU Expands Its List of Commercial Drones Certified for Military Use

The Defense Innovation Unit announced on Feb. 14, 2025 that it has selected 37 systems and components to add to its list of commercial drone capabilities certified for military use, pending final approvals to ensure they meet congressionally mandated cybersecurity and supply chain standards. Once completed, the approved drones will be added to DIU's Blue Unmanned Aircraft Systems, or UAS List, and the components to its Blue UAS Framework, making them available for the military services to buy. The complete list can be found at <https://www.diu.mil/blue-uas-cleared-list>.



DEFENSE INNOVATION UNIT PHOTO

Contracts – (From various sources. An “*” by a company name indicates a small business contract / “***” indicates a woman-owned small business)

Amentum Services Inc., Chantilly, VA, was awarded a \$12,840,184 modification to contract W58RGZ-25-C-0003 for global aviation maintenance services; work will be performed in Fort Campbell, Kentucky; Fort Drum, New York; and Kuwait, with an estimated completion date of Nov. 30, 2025.

Science Applications International Corp., Reston, VA, was awarded two contract modifications: an \$8,149,694 modification to contract W31P4Q-21-F-0095 for hardware in the loop and modeling and simulation development support; work locations and funding will be determined with each order, with an estimated completion date of June 30, 2026; and an \$8,319,635 modification to contract W31P4Q-21-F-0033 for engineering services for high fidelity aviation system simulators; work locations and funding will be determined with each order, with an estimated completion date of Jan. 5, 2026.

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People On The Move

Flight School Graduates

AAAA provides standard aviator wings to all graduates and sterling silver aviator wings to the distinguished graduates of each flight class ... another example of AAAA's **SUPPORT** for the U.S. Army Aviation Soldier and Family.



AAAA congratulates the following officers graduating from Flight School XXI at the U.S. Army Aviation Center of Excellence, Novosel, AL.

38 Officers February 6, 2025

Class 25-007

Commissioned Officers

- 1LT Tschirhart, Cole A. -DG
- 1LT Corten, Henry C. * -HG
- 2LT Bell, Jaycie A. *
- 1LT Hanes, Parker E. *
- 2LT Huynh, Eric *
- 2LT Johnson, Matthew M. *
- 1LT Keating, Kevin A. *
- 1LT Rodriguez, Angel J.
- 1LT Smith, Benjamin L. *
- 2LT Tsoi, Vincent N. *

Warrant Officers

- WO1 Pernerewski, Aaron P. -DG
- WO1 Cantine, Nicole L. * -HG
- WO1 Kearse, Christopher M. -HG
- WO1 Kelly, Rayman R. -HG
- WO1 Rugebregt, Benjamin M. -HG
- WO1 Crawford, Jeremy K. *
- WO1 Dalton, Jeremy O. *
- WO1 Downs, Weston R. *
- WO1 Farley, Brady L. *
- WO1 Gonzalez-Rosado, Daniel E.
- WO1 Goude-lock, Adam C. *
- WO1 Gray, Michael E. *
- WO1 Guillen, Edric G.
- WO1 Kirchner, Todd M.
- WO1 Kotchman, Makenzie E. *
- WO1 Major, Hunter J.
- WO1 Marlow, Colton R.
- WO1 Mayfield, Logan W. *
- WO1 Nikiema, Salif *
- WO1 Nunez, Samuel E.
- WO1 Ortiz, Alan E.
- WO1 Pernerewski, Aaron P. -DG
- WO1 Proctor, Brian P. *
- WO1 Ryken, Curtis T.
- WO1 Sakamoto, Jenna M.
- WO1 Salas, Antonio J.
- WO1 Short, Matthew P.
- WO1 Vasilauskas, Christopher T. *

47 Officers February 20, 2025

Class 25-008

Commissioned Officers

- 1LT Austin, Alyssa R. -HG
- CPT Dawson, Payden M. * -HG



FSXXI Class 25-007



FSXXI Class 25-008

- 1LT Hashimoto, Kawika J. -HG
- 2LT Ponzio, Calvin J. * -HG
- 1LT Altorfer, Luke M.
- 2LT Collins, Lane G. *
- CPT Douglas, Olaoluwa T.
- 1LT Enfield, Hanna M. *
- 2LT Frimel, Nathan J. *
- 1LT Harper, Anthony S.
- 1LT Jackson, Jonathan O. *
- 1LT Makela, Markus D. *
- 2LT O'Prey, Connor J. *
- 2LT Read, Benjamin E. *
- 2LT Rodriguez, Sarah J.
- 1LT Shea, Kyle J.
- 1LT Thompson, Tavus A.
- 2LT Voorhees, Marc K. *
- 1LT Werner, Anneliese F.

- 2LT Wilcox, Jordan D. *
- 1LT Woody, Hannah F.
- Warrant Officers**
- WO1 Stovall, Brookelyn A. -DG
- WO1 Elliott, Jakob A. -HG
- WO1 Emerson, Peter R. * -HG
- WO1 Garced, Samuel J., Jr. -HG
- WO1 Gentry, Jacob P. * -HG
- WO1 Bosworth, Joshua A.
- WO1 Buswell, Brooke R. *
- WO1 Canales, Emma J. *
- WO1 Cunningham, Seth M.
- WO1 Doggett, Andrew H.
- WO1 Green, Mason B. *
- WO1 Hasse, John L. *
- WO1 Helstien, Brendan R.
- WO1 Lopez, Ramon, V

- WO1 Merritt, Michael R. *
- WO1 Miller, Chancy S.
- WO1 Peppers, Athena J.
- WO1 Ryan, Seamus B.
- WO1 Sharma, Kanishka
- WO1 Stoll, Jonathan D.
- WO1 Sullins, Richard L., III
- WO1 Thibodeaux, Alexander A.
- WO1 Tortola, Billy
- WO1 Wambwa, Edward W.
- WO1 Warren, Jay R. *
- WO1 Watson, Kelcey M.

-DG: Distinguished Graduate
-HG: Honor Graduate
* = AAAA Member



People On The Move

ADVANCED INDIVIDUAL TRAINING (AIT) GRADUATIONS

AAAA congratulates the following Army graduates of the indicated Advanced Individual Training (AIT) courses at the 128th Aviation Brigade, Joint Base Langley-Eustis, VA and the U.S. Army Aviation Center of Excellence, Ft. Novosel, AL.

AH-64 Attack Helicopter Repairer (15R)

Class 044-24

- PFC Maxwell Lewis Girard * -DG
- 1LT Mateusz Botkowski
- PV1 Keane Vincent Burns
- PFC Kyle Elliott Keene
- PV2 Patrick Scott Keeton
- PV2 Kyle Scott Lowisz
- SPC Kalis Ramone Martin
- PV2 Darrian Marc Napolitano
- SGT Ibrahim Mohammed I. Sheeri
- SPC Torrence Prescott Simmons, II
- SFC Lucjan W. Trzebiatowski
- Class 045-24
- PFC Thomas Ali Garcia * -DG
- PFC Antonio Alejandro Escobar

- PFC Eric Jaden Evans
- PFC Victor M Guevara Vasquez
- PFC Larry J. Harrington, Jr.
- PFC Wyatt David Jones
- PFC Christopher Paul Lee, Jr.
- PFC Franek Kazimierz Lukaszuk
- PV1 Max Fletcher R. Oge
- PV2 Anna Mae Sands
- Class 046-24
- PFC Joseph Mihai De Vaul * -DG
- SPC Keven Hoonui Addington
- PV2 Nelson Lemuel A. Santiago
- PFC Gabriel Eric Paul Fincher
- PV2 Jaden Michael Foley
- PV2 Jacob Robert Hostetler
- PFC Darryl Anthony James
- PVT Rodrigo Lopez
- PVT Kyle Preston Shank
- CPL Adam Mikolaj Skorek
- PFC Adrian Todd Spiers, Jr.
- SPC Brody Heath Wilson
- Class 047-24
- PV2 Brent Owen Bass
- PV2 James Charles Davis, Jr.

Continued on next page



AAAA National Senior Vice President, MG (Ret.) Wally Golden and his wife, Jo Ann, in Lawrence of Arabia-mode during a well-deserved vacation after covering-down for MG (Ret.) Davis who was ill during last year's Summit! Thank you, and go get 'em, Wally!

ARMY AVIATION ▶ Advertiser Spotlight

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- General Law Enforcement
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- MEDEVAC

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AAA

People On The Move

ADVANCED INDIVIDUAL TRAINING (AIT) GRADUATIONS *continued*

PV2 Abdul Kennis
 PFC Bradley Euan McCorkindale
 PV2 Evan Ford Price
 PV1 Joshyan Rivera Rivera
 PFC Brandon Clayton Sass
 PV2 Isaac Todd Stout
 CPL Mateusz Streich
 SPC Jacob Joseph Tripp
 PV2 Andre Alistier Wellington

UH-60 Helicopter Repairer (15T)

Class 093-24
 PFC Dillon Ray Bobbitt -DG
 PFC Owen Thomas Bailey
 PFC Trelend Alexander Belsha
 PV2 Hayden Alex Bolton
 PV2 Aiden Michael Crossen
 PFC Zane Daniel Cox
 PV2 Owen David Crow
 PV2 Ethan Nile Filo
 PFC Alan Michael Geiss, Jr.
 PFC Joshua Waylon Grace
 PFC Morgan Dale Wise
Class 094-24
 PFC Ziming Tan * -DG
 PFC Jason Lee Gray

PFC Colby Bransen Hatton
 PV2 Jonathon Andrew Hensley
 PV2 Julian Micheal Kressin
 PFC Jovanni Rene Manzo
 SPC Matthew Hunter Marecic
 PV2 Andrew Macias Navarro
 SGT Ryan James Potopsky
 PFC Aiden Christopher Pursell
 SPC Leonardo Reyna
Class 095-24

PFC Kate Avery Pennoyer * -DG
 PFC Roman Campuzano
 PFC Zeke Gregory Colston
 PV2 Pedro De Medice Lima
 PV2 Gabriel Elijah Fougere
 PV2 Samuel Andrew Holmes
 PFC Hayden Isaac Jeffers
 PFC Bradley Thomas Ussery
 PV2 Roux Willem Visagie
 PV2 Aiden Richard Weyrick
 PFC Dalton James Williams
 PV2 Joshua Cinque Wilson, Jr.
Class 096-24
 PV2 Antawn L. F. Namuag * -DG
 PV2 Jeremiah Isaac Dale
 SPC Benjamin T. Fabok
 SPC Chandler Lamar Fowler

SPC Benjamin Patrick Hobbs
 SPC Alex Theodore Kosinski
 PFC Keegan Paul McCroskey
 PV2 Seth Martin Rainey
 PV2 Tony Phan Redfearn
 PFC Jahleel Amodj Shirley
 PFC Talan Caide Smith
 PFC Nathan Michael Steele

Cargo Helicopter Repairer (15U)

Class 041-24
 PFC Kristopher M. J. Nanna * -DG
 SPC Lucas Bailey Boan
 PV2 Damian Y. Chan
 PFC Gregory Allen Clauss
 PV2 Bryson Andrew Emery
 SPC Kihle Montgomery Hatcher
 PFC Mark Daniel Johnson
 PFC Kevin Scott Shipway
 PV2 Alexander Lee Walker
Class 042-24
 SPC Juan Carlos Bedoya * -DG
 PFC Kyle Lance Bishop
 PFC Jordan James Dyer
 PFC Aaron Sydney Go Fon
 PFC Jackson Donald Huber

PV2 David Thomas Kinkade
 PV2 Brady Dillon Landis
 PV2 Nicolas Manuel Rodriguez
 SPC Matthew Jon Schweikart
 SPC Michael Joseph Tan
 PFC Kade Mason Ward

Aircraft Powertrain Repairer (15D)

Class 009-24
 PFC Emmitt Randall Hershelman
 SPC Anthony Chase Meche
 SPC Jared Allen Lee Thumma

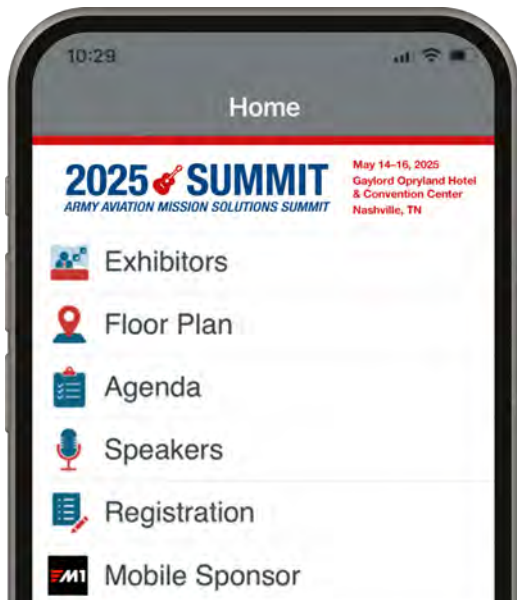
Aircraft Electrician (15F)

Class 017-24
 PFC William Mosiah Southwick * -DG
 PVT Payton Cole Brummett
 SGT John Wayne Dantzler, Jr.
 SPC Duncan Murithi Joshua

Aviation Operations Specialist (15P)

Class 24-025
 SPC Sides Caleb Brayden -DG
 PFC Grzybowski Presley Benson
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 PFC Collins Avery I.
 PV2 Griffith Isaiah Michael
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 SPC Parkinson Kyle Aaron
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 PVT Smith Gavin C.
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 SPC Zehner Avery Scott
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 SPC Gonzalez Aaron Salvador -DG
 SPC Carbajal Bryan Roberto
 PFC Gray Tamiya Tianna
 PFC Montgomery Makalia Kenzi Ru
 PFC Newling Christopher Michael
 PV2 Santos Michelle Minerva
 PVT Whitfield Kelvin Javon
 PVT Woodbury Luke P
Class 24-029
 PFC Reyes Antonio Thomas -DG
 PVT Farfan Angelina Lizbeth
 PFC Goad Kavyn Elias
 SPC Grissom Matthew Robert
 PFC Martin Randolph N
 PVT Proffitt Tristan Conner
 PV2 Sizemore Dylan Michael
 SPC Valletta Daniel Stefan
 PVT Velez Elizabeth Guadalupe
 PFC Wright Angelese Jenigh
Class 24-030
 PFC Gillis Antonio Joshua -DG
 PFC Arena Angelo Anthony
 PFC Baldwin Tyrique Ade
 PFC Barlow Mya Brinae
 SPC Blackburn Trew Blaze Von Ke
 PFC Blount Samuel Walker
 PV2 Chamberlain Camila Gomez
 PFC Davis Dane Harvey
 PV2 Harmon Xavion Lavon
 PV2 Trenkel Aubrey Jacqueline
 PFC Xiong Henry Qifeng

Class 24-031
 SPC Perez August -DG
 PFC Chavez Brandon Sonny
 PVT Chavez Johnny Joseph IV
 PVT Diazperalta Arlette
 PFC Ibarra Roberto
 PFC Jackson Casandra Alexandr
 PV2 Mayi Eddy Numfor Takwa
 PFC McKissick Rachel Evelyn L.
 PFC Perez Noe
 PFC Seltzer Cameron Xavier
Class 25-001
 PVT Castro Cauan -DG
 PFC Alexandre Schneider F.
 SPC Alt Oshun Kalani
 PVT Bustillo Andrea Nicole
 PV2 Huriartes Reyes Arcanjel M.
 PVT Long Caleb Renard
 PFC Miller Myca Janae
 PFC Rice India Lanet
 PFC Rubio Arlette
 PVT Ruizrodriguez Abraham
 PFC Shannon Zion William
Class 25-002
 SPC Hardee Jacob Alexander -DG
 PFC Aho Kenneth Robert
 PFC Alex Destiny Maria
 PFC Campbell Renae Adeneike
 PFC Chapman Kameron Isiah
 PFC Farmer Jacob Douglas
 PVT Gonzalez Victor
 PV2 Maxwell Benjamin Earl
 PVT Mondragon Joshua
 PFC Munoz Asher Blake Monte
 PV2 Munozgarcia Ashley
 PV2 Prater Tony Allen
 PFC Talton Terrancee Kevin
 PVT Tilford Nathaniel James
Class 25-003
 PFC Cook Rebecca Morgan -DG
 PFC Delgado James
 PVT Holtman Ashton James
 PFC Hutchinson Caden David
 PVT Jenkins Jace Gavin
 PFC Melgoza Serenity P.
 PVT Monroy Dylan Victor
 PFC Schluterman Draven Lee
 PVT Shaw Brynn A.
 PV2 Siguenciaguallpa Walter D.
Class 25-004
 PFC Mills Mekhi James B. -DG
 PFC Bush Kendrick Dewayne II
 PFC Calunga Jovanni Ricky
 PVT Carr Quinaze Bernard
 PVT Flores Matthew
 PV2 Hardemon Loui Jean Semaj
 PV2 Ledbetter Scott Alan

Continued on next page

AAAA AIR ASSAULT CHAPTER

2025

GOLF TOURNAMENT

WHERE: Gaylord Springs Golf Links .
 18 Springhouse Lane, Nashville, TN 37214
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WHEN: Tuesday, May 13th, 2025;
 Shotgun start 0730 (morning)
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FORMAT: 4 Person Scramble

COST: \$115 per player, total 120 golfers for morning
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 green fees, cart with GPS system, breakfast, lunch,
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 amenities including range balls, club cleaning and bag
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PV2 Parker Klemie Denise
 SPC Veravaldes Wilvelier
Class 25-005
 PVT Joseph Aniekan Ayomide -DG
 PVT Ackerson Andrew Patrick
 PV2 Beckmann Anna Grace
 PFC Kelly Joel Nathan
 PV2 Lopezmonroy Maria Jose
 PVT Oquendorodriguez Carielys
 PFC Rivera Cruz Alan Joshua
 PFC Shine Samarya Asia
 PV2 Torres Jonathan Ishmael
Class 25-006
 PFC Ren Shirley -DG
 PVT Deavila Felipe Alexis
 PVT Feroze Solomon Sunder
 PVT Lockhart Nathaniel Urijah
 PV2 Mbaroh Steven
 PV2 Tampton Draven Alexandre
 PFC Tuntakit Dylan Suriya
Class 25-007
 PV2 Ojebuoboh Oluwanifemi Lyd -DG
 PV2 Fannon Darion James
 SPC Herrera Nathan R.
 PVT Juca Amaris Roxana

PVT Marinbarillas Aylin Yudarkys
 PFC Mayfield Ricky Antwan Jr
 PFC Rosado Jackson Riley
 PVT Yeso Feliciano
Air Traffic Control Operator (150)
Class 24-018
 PFC Turk Addison Makayla -DG
 PFC Alvarado Ismael J.
 SPC Cullor Austin James
 PFC Guadalajara Isaiah R.
 PFC McNaughton Akeem Shemar
 PFC Orchard Izabell Jenson
 SPC Roberts Coby Garrett
 PVT Tobar Jonathan Alexander, Jr.
Class 24-019
 PVT Stevens Taylor Morgan -DG
 SPC Almeida Mauricio Esteban
 PVT Donis Diego Antonio
 PVT Gros Aaron Joseph
 SGT Sewell Courtney L.
 FM Zeinaldine Rami
Class 24-020
 PFC Nelson Ryleigh Makenna -DG
 SPC Alokoa John Ditson

SPC Hopper Maraea B.
 PV2 Krembs Francis Folta
 PVT Payton T. Jashon Tramar
 SPC Tillman Rashan Joseph
 PFC White Bryson McArthur
Class 24-021
 SPC Wade Tyler Harold -DG
 SPC Alvizo Ricardo
 PVT Karna John David
Class 24-023
 SPC Ali Hanan -DG
 SPC Belar Sepehr
 SPC Gathungu Samuel Kariuki
 SPC Gorman Connor Michael
 PVT Ramos Milton
Class 24-024
 SSG Kellar Aaron R. -DG
 PFC Cook William Judah
 PFC Lumpkin Jeremiah Stephen
 PV2 Ramos Edwin Alberto
 SPC Robinson Noah C.
Class 24-025
 SPC Barnett Kaileb A. -DG
 PV2 Cross Abbygail Grace
 PVT Hansen Chad Steven

PV2 Herrera Michael Geovanny
 PVT Mercer Jacob Andres
 PV2 Negronrodriguez Eddie A.
Class 24-026
 PVT Butacsagucio Kal El Justic -DG
 PV2 Muller Joshua Isaac
 SPC Tran Jimmy
 PFC Vazquez Kendel Jomar
 SPC Westbrook Tramel Travon
Class 25-027
 PFC Ramsey Amelia Deleighla -DG
 PV2 Banda Xzavier Stephen
 PVT Dunlap Dakota Teagan
 SPC Evans Jeffery S.
 SPC Orozco Elijah Johnathan
Class 24-028
 SPC Macrina Katherine M -DG
 PFC McCoy Genesis Amani
 PFC McGee Julius Christopher
 PV2 Qadir Wadood Daood
 PV2 Villalobos Xzavier Alexan
Class 24-029
 PFC Walker Jordyn Ameya -DG
 PFC Castillo Danny
 PFC Garcia Ricardo

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PVT Hernandezalicea Abdiel
PFC Lauinger Parker Morton
PV2 Smith Rebecca Anne

AH-64 Armament/ Electrical/Avionic Systems Repairer (15Y)

Class 016-24
SPC Osman Alvarenga Ayala
PV2 Jacob Hoffman
SPC Tyler Keeney
SPC David Klein
SPC Jonathan Stribling

Class 017-24

PFC Chantel Marie Mccoy * -DG
SGT Abdulla Rashed Slayem
Abdulla Alshkeili
SSG Aziz Bouchbikat
PFC Nathaniel Dasean Crisp
SGT Youness Es-Sabery
PV2 Cody James Eubanks
PV2 Chance Devon Parker
PV2 Ty James Stritikus
PV2 Carlos .V. Mussenden
-DG: Distinguished Graduate
-HG: Honor Graduate
* = AAAA Member

Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) Graduations

Tactical Unmanned Aerial Systems (TUAS) Operations Technician

AAAA congratulates the following
Army graduates of the Tactical
Unmanned Aerial Systems (TUAS)
Operations Technician, MOS
150U at Fort Huachuca, AZ.

UAS Repairer

AAAA congratulates the following
Army graduates of the Unmanned
Aircraft Systems Repairer Course,
MOS 15E at Fort Huachuca, AZ.

Shadow UAS Repairer

8 Graduates, 10 Feb 25
SPC Gomez Anthony -DG
PFC Ainsworth Christopher
SPC Espindola Marcos
PVT Mckenzie Devin Austin
SPC Montgomery Steven J.

SPC Sainburg Noah T.
PFC Scaleshartico Liberty Anne P.
PFC Sparks Jaqalyn Phoenix
6 Graduates, 21 Feb 25
SPC Castro Omar J.
PV2 Heimer Tristin Alexander
PV2 Michalos Tyler James
PFC Miller Brenton Ryan
SPC Murrietta Sean J.
SPC Whiteaker Victor C.

UAS Operator

AAAA congratulates the following
Army graduates of the Unmanned
Aircraft Systems Operator
Course, MOS 15W at Fort
Huachuca, AZ.

Shadow UAS Operator Course

6 Graduates, 03 Feb 25
PFC Wolfe Grant James -DG
PVT Durels Jordyn Lynn
PFC Kim Jason Yae Hoon
PV2 Mcmillan Elliott Michael
SPC Nelson Joshua Edward

PV2 Solomon Layne Andrew
10 Graduates, 24 Feb 25
PFC Hughes Jackson Mclellan -DG
PFC Chilapa Flor Itzel
PV2 Ferry Carter Lee
PVT Hughes Ethan S.
PVT Jaynes Ryan A.
PVT King Patrick Arthur
PFC Nazarian Maxwell Charles
PV2 Ramos Shayla Marie
PV2 Rhodes Gavin Michael
PFC Whittemore H.Hokukelew

Gray Eagle UAS Operator

8 Graduates, 13 Feb 25
PVT Rodriguez Yohana -DG
PV2 Garza Marco Antonio
PV2 Hanners Harley Quinn
PFC Holden Thomas Scott
PVT Jenkins Darnell Dion
PVT Roach Devlyn Earl
SGT Sam Anthony T.
PFC Silva Bryan
-DG: Distinguished Graduate
-HG: Honor Graduate
* = AAAA Member

▶ Book Review

ACE: The Story of Lt. Col. Ace Cozzalio

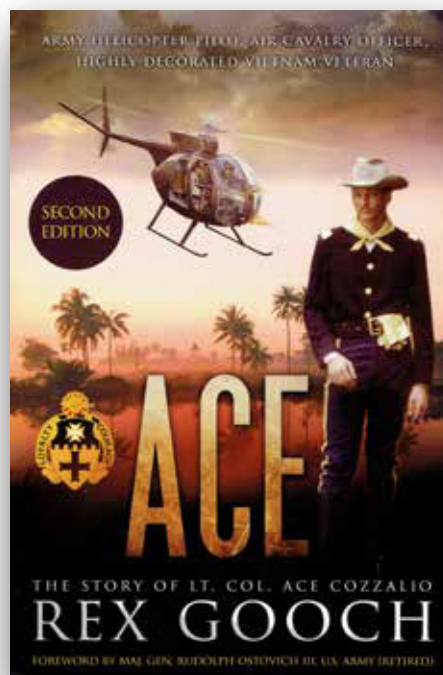
By Rex Gooch

Reviewed by CSM Tod Glidewell, U.S. Army, Retired

A great read, I read this book twice, covering both the first and second editions. The first time was shortly before LTC Ace Cozzalio's induction into the Army Aviation Hall of Fame. Although I never met Ace, I feel as though I know him after reading his exploits and then hearing first about him from the men he served alongside. The second edition builds upon the first, by including new information "The Battle of Phu My," that the author Rex Gooch discovered during his research for Ace's Medal of Honor submission. This is a fast-moving and captivating read.

Rex places you in the front seat to experience the journeys of these incredible cavalymen as they undertake the missions of the 3/5th Cavalry. This book offers a snapshot of history, highlighting the infancy of the aero-scout mission and those men who boldly operated helicopters – a relatively unproven technology at the time – into battle. Little did they realize their innovation would define vertical envelopment and helicopter warfare, thus shaping the future of Army Aviation for decades to come.

CSM Tod Glidewell is a retired former Army Aviation Branch Command Sergeant Major who is currently serving as the Chairman of the U.S. Army Aviation Hall of Fame Board of Trustees.



Art's Attic

By Mark Albertson



Art's Attic is a look back each issue at 25 and 50 years ago to see what was going on in ARMY AVIATION Magazine. Contributing editor Mark Albertson has selected a few key items from each decade's issues. Art Kesten is our founder and first publisher from 1953 to 1987. He is also the founder of the AAAA in 1957 and served as its Executive Vice President. The cartoon, right, was created back in 1953 by LT Joe Gayhart, a friend of Art's and an Army Aviator, showing the chaos of his apartment-office in New York City where it all began.



25 Years Ago, March 31, 2000

Marathon Trek

On November 11, after wearing out seven pairs of shoes with nearly 2,800,000 steps, CSM Ronald W. Bedford completed his marathon trek across six states. He began in Mobile, Alabama, then marched into Florida, then north through Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina and Virginia before arriving at his destination: the future site of the World War II Memorial in Washington, D.C. By Veterans Day, CSM Bedford had marched 1,500 miles in 71 days. The trek was sponsored by the Noncommissioned Officers Association. This enterprising effort was to raise awareness and funds for the construction of the memorial.

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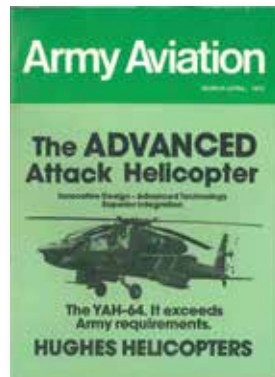
Aviation Soldier of the Year

SPC William C. Stiles, III, 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment, Fort Campbell, Kentucky, is named the AAAA Aviation Soldier of the Year, 1999. As a platoon sergeant and technical inspector, Stiles is recognized as one who never accepts the status quo, working tirelessly to find ways of improving his unit, soldiers and equipment. During 1999, SPC Stiles was able to save more than \$30,000 in Class IX monies by ensuring that component repairs were completed at the appropriate economic levels. In addition, he was an honor graduate of the Advanced Non-Commissioned Officer Course and also completed rigorous Airborne School training at Fort Benning, Georgia.



"The Army"

June 12, 1999, Chief of Staff, General Eric Shinseki stated: "Today, I declare that we are the Army, totally integrated with a unity of purpose. "No longer the 'Total Army,' no longer the One Army. We are 'The Army' and we will march into the 21st century as 'The Army.'"

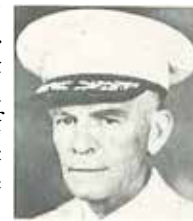


50 Years Ago, March 1975

HOF Candidate

On the ballot for the 1975 class inclusion into the Army Aviation Hall of Fame is Brigadier General Adna R. Chaffee. General Chaffee was a cavalryman who became a tankman; a man astute enough to grasp the advantages of light planes engaged in such tasks as route column control for armored spearheads. In February 1941, he contacted Piper Aircraft for Cubs to be delivered to Fort Knox to pursue the workings of light planes with armor. Chaffee impressed upon the War Department the necessity of light planes for the Ground Forces. In this, Chaffee was a solid supporter of the efforts of the Field Artillery and "organic aviation." General Chaffee is to represent the "Prior to 1942 Period."

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HOF Candidates

To represent the 1950-1959 period of Army Aviation history, Arthur and Dorothy Kesten. Art Kesten completed L-Pilot training in 1945 and went on to serve 14 years. Dorothy graduated Cornell in 1943 and went on to serve in the Manhattan Project during World War II. The two will pool their talents as editor and business manager and start a magazine in 1953 that will become Army Aviation; and this at a time when Army Aviation itself was hardly known, let alone even referred to. Then in 1957, they organized AAAA, which together with Army Aviation, helped to put Army Aviation on the map. It is hard to find two other people who devoted so much time and effort in the Army Aviation movement than Arthur and Dorothy Kesten.





The Army Aviation Hall of Fame, sponsored by the Army Aviation Association of America, Inc., recognizes those individuals who have made an outstanding contribution to Army Aviation.

The actual Hall of Fame is located in the Army Aviation Museum, Fort Novosel, Ala.

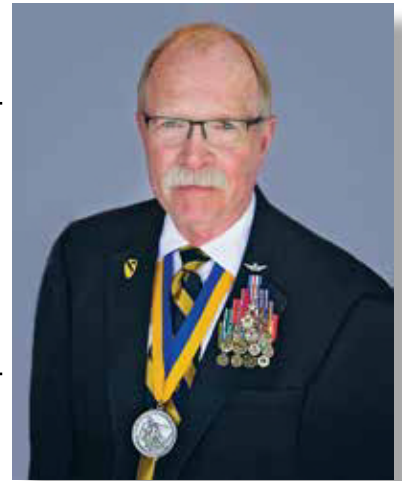
The deadline for nominations for the 2026 induction is June 1, 2025

Contact the AAAA National Office for details and nomination forms at (203) 268-2450 or visit www.quad-a.org

Army Aviation Hall of Fame

Chief Warrant
Officer Four
Robert J. Monette,
U.S. Army Retired

*Army Aviation Hall of Fame 2019 Induction –
Nashville, TN*



U.S. ARMY/ARPA/RE/PHOTO

CW4 (Ret.) Robert J. “Bob” Monette has made outstanding contributions to the U.S. Army and the Aviation community for nearly five decades. During two combat aviation tours in Vietnam, he flew numerous heroic missions in the UH-1 Huey & AH-1G Cobra. His decorations include the Silver Star, Distinguished Flying Cross, two Bronze Stars, 49 Air Medals, one for Valor, three Vietnamese Crosses of Gallantry for heroism plus decorations for individual and unit accomplishments.

With 6,000 accident-free and 1,600 combat hours, he always had a steady hand and a cool head. As an aircraft commander he braved a barrage of enemy fire to rescue a downed USAF C-130 crew and another found him supporting his own wingman, shot down by an SA-7, providing suppression until rescued. Engaged by 15 SA-7s, and hit by one, he still recovered safely.

He served as the 8th U.S. Army Standardization Instructor Pilot, the Korean Attack Night Vision Goggle Program Manager, one of the first AH-64 IPs, the first SIP/Test & Acceptance Pilot for the Surrogate Trainer, the first Apache Simulator SIP, and chief of the Aviation Systems Command Test/Acceptance Team. He received the Daedalian Award and was selected as the AAAA Army Aviation Trainer of the Year for 1988. This Master Army Aviator has left an indelible legacy in the attack warfighter community.

In 2015, he was asked by the Chief of Staff of the Army to lead the Holistic Army Aviation Task Force (HAATF) which will shape the future of Army Aviation for decades to come. He retired in 2017 after 35 years of service as a model warrior, quiet professional, and Army Aviator... just like his dad.



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