



Fires

A Joint Publication for U.S. Artillery

September — October 2013 Edition

Building a Resilient Fires Force



“A Soldier from 4th Battalion, 3rd Air Defense Artillery checks the chains securing a vehicle during rail load operations. Soldiers from 4-3 ADA... had the highest SPEAR score within the AAMDC in the last seven years.”



“In less than 90 days, the *Mission Ready* Battalion transitioned from the M270 launcher to the M142 HIMARS.”



“The Marine Artillery Detachment will continue to focus on making artillerymen and providing timely support to the operating forces.”



**They told their story.
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2013 Red Book!
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Fires

September - October 2013

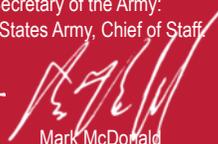
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On the cover: U.S. Marine Corps Cpl. Kionte Storey runs across the finish line in the men's 100-meter lower impairment dash race during the track and field portion of the 2012 Warrior Games at the United States Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colo., May 4, 2012. Storey took gold in the 100-meter and 200-meter races. (Photo by Cpl. Daniel Wetzel, U.S. Marine Corps)

Building a Resilient Fires Force

By MG Mark McDonald

Commanding General of the Fires Center of Excellence and Fort Sill, Okla.

“Resilience is not a commodity you are born with, waiting silently on tap. It is self-manufactured painstakingly over time by working through your problems and never giving up, even in the face of difficulty or failure.”

— Lorii Myers

Everyone who has been in the Army for more than a few months is aware of the importance the Army places on readiness. Even new privates know you can't just roll out of your bunk and expect to be ready for first formation in five minutes. Preparation is crucial for success in both the Army and in life. Attention to the smallest details can, and often does, make the difference between success and failure. More than most professions, Soldiers must prepare themselves and their Families for many different scenarios, whether those Family members are spouses or maybe mom and dad. From individual deployments, to temporary duty trips, to moves across continents with children and pets in tow, Soldiers are responsible for readiness in literally every aspect of both their professional and personal lives.

Through the past decade of war, we've learned that material readiness is not always enough for a Soldier. Yes, it's a critical component, but being prepared doesn't always sustain an individual for the long haul. We have learned the hard lesson that it takes much more than we can pack in our duffel bags to overcome adversity, severe trauma and personal loss. And while we've known this for many years, we have only recently begun to realize that resiliency can be fostered and nurtured to become a way of life, rather than a trait which an individual may or may not possess.

It's been almost a year since the *Fires Bulletin* staff recommended focusing this edition



of the magazine on building a resilient Fires Force, and the timing could not have been better planned. Both Fort Sill and the Army have invested a lot of time and energy into developing and improving programs that enhance all aspects of Soldier and Family readiness. From physical wellness programs to personal financial management, we are closing the gaps and ensuring information and assistance is readily available to those willing to invest in themselves and their future.

Fort Sill was recently selected as one of the pilot installations for the Healthy Base Initiative (HBI), a year-long program designed to identify programs and resources currently available that effectively create an environment that enables sustainable, healthy lifestyles. HBI includes improving the food choices available at the commissary, exchange sites, dining facilities, vending machines, and schools, as well as providing nutrition education to assist in making healthier food choices easier and desirable. The goal of HBI is to determine which programs make a difference in decreasing levels of obesity, promoting adoption of healthier lifestyles and increasing levels of fitness. Successful programs can then be shared across the Department of Defense (DoD) in support of Operation Live Well and the President's National Prevention Strategy. Operation Live Well is a DoD initiative designed to provide the knowledge and resources to help improve the health and well-being of service members, Family members and retirees.

This program goes hand-in-hand with our new Army Well-

ness Center (AWC). The center, located on the Graham Resiliency Training Campus (GRTC), Building 2868, is under the supervision of Reynolds Army Community Hospital (RACH) and offers immediate access to a variety of fitness initiatives. The programs, delivered by licensed nurses and health educators, consist of health assessment reviews, physical fitness testing and exercise prescription, nutrition education, stress management, general wellness education and tobacco education (to include tobacco cessation in partnership with public health nursing). Eligible beneficiaries (Soldiers, Family members, DoD civilians, and as space is available, DoD contracted employees) may self-refer (walk-in or call to schedule an appointment during business hours) or be referred to the AWC by their primary healthcare provider.

It takes ALL of these programs working in synch to meet the needs of teaching our community what is required of them to be resilient and survive the most difficult times. 1SG John Peterson's article, "A Story about Resilience," documents the creation of the Graham Resiliency Training Campus (GRTC) here at Fort Sill, Okla., and gives insight into the paths which lead him and many others to become so intimately invested in its mission. Celebrating four years of helping Soldiers, Families and DoD civilians, the GRTC is a 'mecca of resources' for many and a place of healing for some. With training provided by several great schools, including the University of Pennsyl-

vania and the University of Chicago, the staff at the GRTC understands what it takes to empathize with people in crises and direct them to the appropriate resources. The GRTC was founded on the same principles as the Comprehensive Soldier Fitness Training Facility at Fort Hood, Texas; however, we have shaped it to meet our needs and the staff is unconditionally dedicated to serving the Fort Sill community.

In March 2013, the Army launched its Ready and Resilient Campaign (R2C). R2C is a collaborative, coherent and inter-disciplinary approach to maintaining total Army readiness, tailoring prevention and response measures to promote physical, moral and mental fitness, emotional stability, personal growth, dignity and respect. The campaign is intended to bring about an enduring change to the Army culture. One of the most popular components of the campaign is the website, www.army.mil/readyandresilient. Designed as a 'one-stop shop,' it provides one site for numerous resources related to Soldier resilience and readiness, and includes sections for medical and personal readiness, as well as a section with information on Soldier transition issues. It is a site where Soldiers, leaders and Family members can find information, quick resources and emergency hotlines, while learning to improve and build their resiliency.

If you've not yet visited the R2C website, I encourage you to check out the wealth of resources available there. Growing resilience in the Fires Force begins with you. Each of us can make a difference in our own ability to rebound from adversity. Author Phyllis Bottome says it best. "There are two ways of meeting difficulties: you alter the difficulties or you alter the way you meet them." Our challenge, in most cases, is to alter the way in which we meet difficulties, and that can be a learned skill...one that many Soldiers must cultivate in order to meet the challenges which lie ahead. The Army is changing, and whether or not we like it, these changes may be stressful for some Soldiers and their Families. It is our goal to build a Fires Force that not only bounces back, but one that bounds forward when overcoming and conquering hardships.

One Soldier at Fort Sill's Warrior Transition Unit (WTU), SPC Terry Helms, provides a prime example of bounding forward. Ben Sherman, from the Fort Sill *Cannoneer* newspaper, captures Helms' personal story in his article, "Wounded Warrior Works with Animals, Old Cars to Recover." Helms was injured in Afghanistan and has created a new path for his life which embraces his disabilities to redefine opportunities to help others as he helps himself. This attitude of selfless service to others is inspiring and embodies the meaning of inner strength. Actor Christopher Reeves once said, "Anyone can give up; it's the easiest thing in the world to do. But to hold it together when everyone else would understand if you fell apart...that's true strength."

Humans are a resilient species. We are born with a will to survive; however, over time or through circumstances, some of us become discouraged or just plain overwhelmed by negative or traumatic events. A huge part of being resilient is being self-aware; knowing when you need help and accepting the help you need are crucial to resiliency. Take care of yourself and take care of your Soldiers and their Families. The tools are available for building a truly resilient Fires Force for 2020. Our challenge is to use them.

Fires Strong! ★ ★

Family members browse the newly delivered produce at their local commissary. (Photo by Tanya Im, U.S. Army)



Resiliency and the Army Family

By CSM Dwight L. Morrisey

Even in the worst of crises, military Families truly are a great means of support for each other.

It is 3:30 a.m. in the morning and the alarm goes off, signaling the time to rise for one Soldier, who just spent the last night with his wife and kids before heading into a 12-month deployment. It is Friday, March 10, and another Soldier has anxiously raised his hand and sworn the initial oath to support and defend the Constitution of the United States. It is also the first day at a new school for the 16-year-old son of a Sergeant First Class...his fourth school in six years. These scenarios represent not only the Soldiers in uniform but also the Families who are brought along for the military journey as well.

The 38th Chief of Staff of the Army, GEN Raymond T. Odierno, said, "The strength of our nation is our Army; the strength of our Army is our Soldiers; the strength of our Soldiers is our Families; and this is what makes us Army Strong." Army Families make up the backbone of what makes our Army great: people who believe in their Soldiers, and Soldiers who rely on the resiliency of their Families to 'hold down the home front' while they accomplish their mission to defend this great nation.

What makes some Families pull together while others fall apart during the most stressful of times? What gives these Families the strength to endure severe hardships while their loved ones are away? Who supports them while they are supporting their Soldiers? The answers to these questions are defined by the one word that can put it all together: resiliency. We teach and expect it of our Soldiers, but we can't forget

that our Army Families must also demonstrate their resiliency every day.

In order to succeed as an Army team, Families make huge sacrifices to support their loved ones...our Soldiers. From leaving extended Family support systems, to living in isolated locations around the world, to giving up friends, careers and favorite schools, being a member of the Army Family is not for the faint of heart.

The Family is arguably the most vital member of our Army team. It is, for most of us, our greatest source of strength and support and makes it possible for the military to be the most lethal fighting force in the world. From the moment a person first considers committing to military service, the Family's reactions and opinions are weighed. Moms and dads across the nation face this struggle every day, as do many spouses. "How do we 'let go' of this child or spouse, not knowing the future battles he or she may face?" Being on the other side of that question, I can tell you that the Soldier is faced with a much larger battle than most Family members know. "How can I leave my Family, not knowing if I will return?" It is 'Family' who represents the nucleus of 'home' that Soldiers most often identify with when it comes to sacrificing for the greater good. If we know our Families are provided for and taken care of, then we know we can make any required sacrifice.

All Family members share in the sacrifice that goes along with the various situations Soldiers face. Extreme hardship can lead to extreme behaviors and the military is well aware of these sacrifices of military spouses and children. Funding and research has improved Family support programs over the years to help our Families become even more resilient and dedicated to the Army mission. Programs, such as Strong Bonds, provide training in positive communication skills and improve the participants' ability to manage Family conflict.

Strong Bonds is a chaplain-based program for commanders which builds relationship resiliency and carries over into all relationships, not just marital. Their mission is to increase Soldier and Family readiness through relationship education and skills training. Although participation is voluntary, when applied to the Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN) cycle Strong Bonds helps single-Soldiers, couples and Families to thrive in the turbulence of the military environment.

In 1999, 90 couples from the 25th Infantry Division, Hawaii, participated in several planned retreats to focus on providing an emotionally safe and secure training environment in which to address the effects of military lifestyle stressors. The off-site locations were designed to maximize the training impact and have since spread throughout the Army. Healthy relationships contribute to the maintenance of a healthy Army and a secure future force. With increasing demands placed on Soldiers and Families, to include both frequent deployments and duty relocations, intimate relationships are fully tested.

In 2004, the U.S. Code was amended to allow command funding for "chaplain-led programs to assist members of the armed forces...in building and maintaining a strong Family



SGT Duane Johnson and his wife, Jessica, embrace after his unit's redeployment ceremony at Graham Resiliency Training Center, Fort Sill, Okla. (Photo by SPC Levi Spellman, U.S. Army)

structure," (Title 10, ~1789). By approving appropriated funding for these retreats, Congress recognizes the importance of strong Family bonds and the support and structure the Family brings to the Army and its Soldiers.

In FY10, the Army completed the third year of a five-year longitudinal study evaluating the outcomes of the Strong Bonds training program. Preliminary outcomes show a 50 percent lower rate in divorce with an increase in marital satisfaction for those married participants. The Army continues to provide relationship training tools and make them available to Soldiers and their Families. More than 5,000 Strong Bonds events were conducted in FY12, including units and Soldiers geographically dispersed from military installations.

When Soldiers are not co-located with their Families, stress significantly increases. While the Army cannot change the situation, we continue to assist both Soldiers and Families with their coping skills. Our mission is to fight and win our nation's wars. This almost always requires Soldiers to deploy, and Families are left behind to manage on their own. Many spouses have found support by bonding with those going through similar situations. Family readiness groups (FRG) are an oasis of strength and a source of near-instant information for the military community. I encourage all spouses, male and female, to find your FRG representative and get involved prior to your Soldier's deployment. A familiar face sometimes makes all of the difference in a crisis.

Even in the worst of crises, military Families truly are a great means of support for each other. Groups such as Gold Star Mothers, who have lost sons or daughters in war, are among the most elite of these support systems. With no military funding, they provide comfort and support to those who have lost loved ones, as well as to our Wounded Warriors. For almost 100 years, Gold Star Moms (as they are lovingly nicknamed) have provided countless volunteer hours to veterans' hospitals in their effort to ease these Soldiers' pain, as well as learn to cope with their own personal loss.

In 1936, the 74th Congress officially recognized the sacrifice these mothers have made with Public Resolution 123:

"That the President of the United States is hereby authorized and requested to issue a proclamation calling upon the Government officials to display the United States flag on all Government buildings, and the people of the United States to display the flag and to hold appropriate meetings in their homes, churches, or other suitable places, on the last Sunday in September, as public expression of the love, sorrow and reverence of the people of the United States for the American Gold Star Mothers."

"Sec. 2. That the last Sunday in September shall hereafter be designated and known as 'Gold Star Mother's Day,' and it shall be the duty of the president to request its observance as provided for in this resolution."

In addition to many other programs, every Army installation has established a Family Covenant that pledges the necessary community and installation support on which Families can depend. The resources provided by the covenant arm Families with the confidence that someone is always able and willing to lend a hand when needed. Our Families are not alone in their struggles and when a need is recognized and validated, we do whatever we can to meet that need.

Fort Sill, and many other installations across the Army, has energized this commitment to strong Families by establishing a single place for Families and Soldiers to find spiritual, physical and mental support. The Graham Resiliency Training Center (GRTC) has the mission of providing world-class support to the Soldiers and Families across Fort Sill and the local community, us-

ing a myriad of programs designed to harness the strength and perseverance of every individual. From the moment a Soldier or a Soldier's Family hits the ground during the inprocessing stage, through the deployment and redeployment ceremonies acknowledging the beginning and ending of some of the most critical missions, the GRTC has been a bedrock for Fort Sill's Families and Soldiers, helping with the multitude of transitions that occur in our daily lives.

The future of our Army will always depend on the strength of the Soldiers who serve. However, we must not forget that Soldiers do not make these sacrifices alone. From the most junior

private, to the chief of staff of the United States Army, there is a Family in the background that has been there to support, cheer on, suffer with, and sacrifice throughout countless careers. It is resiliency that enables our military Families and gives them the courage and resourcefulness to succeed, while Soldiers accomplish their mission: defending our nation and the Families we love. ★ ★

Command Sergeant Major Dwight L. Morrisey enlisted in the United States Army under the Delayed Entry Program in March, 1980. Morrisey currently serves as the command sergeant major of the

Fires Center of Excellence and Fort Sill. Morrisey is a graduate of every NCOES School from the Primary Noncommissioned Officer Development Course to the United States Army Sergeants Major Course (Class #52) and the Command Sergeants Majors Course. Additionally, he is a graduate of the First Sergeant's Course, Master Fitness Course, Recruiter School/Station Commander Course, Battle Staff, Airborne School and Air Assault School and the Jungle Warfare Training Course. His civilian education includes an Associates Degree in Applied Science, Administrative/Management Studies.

Emma Sharee Calica, left, greets her father, SSG Austen Calica, after a year-long deployment to the Republic of Korea to provide technical escort services to U.S. Forces Korea. (Photo by PFC Loren Cook, U.S. Army)





(From left to right) SPC Sean Hillman, from B Battery, 2nd Battalion, 5th Field Artillery, SPC Michael Riddle, from Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 214th Fires Brigade and PFC Mark Kirk, from B Battery, 2nd Battalion, 4th Field Artillery, conduct a role-playing exercise during a class at the Graham Resiliency Training Campus at Fort Sill, Okla. The topics discussed during the five-day class ranged from helping with grief, to thoughts of suicide, conflict resolution, emotional boundaries, and professional programs and services. (Photo by CPT Charlie Dietz, U.S. Army)

A Story About Resiliency

By 1SG John E. Peterson Sr.

Just about three years ago a visionary commander and his command sergeant major changed the lives of thousands of Soldiers and their Families from Fort Sill, Okla. MG David Halverson, now lieutenant general, visited Fort Hood, Texas, to see a new program: a Resilience Training Campus. Right then and there he decided it was a powerful gift that needed to become a reality on Fort Sill.

This would not be the last time I would hear from a person how they almost took their own life to save their Family from having to go without...

In May 2010, MAJ Brett A. Wiersma and I were summoned to see the installation commander, Halverson, and Command Sergeant Major Joseph Smith, who provided us an opportunity to make a lasting difference on Fort Sill. I was asked, not ordered, to consider a drastic change in my career path by establishing a resilience training campus on Fort Sill. With an education in cultural awareness and several courses in sociology and psychology, I was eager to get started and immediately began to gather available resources from as many developing locations as was available at the time. The Fort Hood Resilience Campus was more than willing to share everything they had to help stand up the Fort Sill campus, and soon contact was established with Mr. Sam Rhodes from Fort Benning, Ga. Within the installation I became well known for pioneering what was deemed a project long overdue by the persons I encountered.

One of those encounters happened at Knox Hall while collecting furniture and temporary walls that were being replaced during a complete renovation of the building. A stranger came over to me with tears in his eyes, shook my hand and told me his story of just how close to death he came, how he had to deal with a military career-ending medical condition and soon with tears streaming down his face, how he did not have a desire to die; quite the opposite, that he had a love of life and family but with the medical condition he did not know how he would take care of his Family. If he died, the kids would have \$500,000.00 to live on. This would not be the last time I would hear from a person how they almost took their own life to save their family from having to go without and how death would be acceptable if they only could do this last

‘good’ thing: make the ultimate sacrifice. Shaken from the encounters, I began to sense the magnitude of this new assignment and was proud to have been given another chance to create change. The 428th Brigade supplied the Resiliency Training Center (RTC) conference room tables and the Department of Public Works repaired the structures along Craig Road, from Building 2868 to the RTC Headquarters in building 2874; later also taking over building 2875, the Armed Services YMCA Soldier Lending Closet. As a former fire direction specialist, I was prepared for a service oriented position that would be the primary function of my position for the next four years; dealing with campus issues and taking care of Soldiers. It seemed to fit me well as one of my core beliefs has always been that the primary mission of a first sergeant should be taking care of their Soldiers and living the Profession of Arms. It felt really good to be helping to empower Soldiers with an understanding of what it should mean to be a Soldier and getting them empowered to stay on a path that supports the Profession of Arms. Although we are not a proponent of the Center for Army Profession and Ethics (CAPE), we do training on how our core values and beliefs affect performance.

I was not alone in this journey. A whole team of experts met weekly to measure the progress of this amazing new project offering their vision of the way ahead but allowing many of the early ideas to rest in the hands of the campus leadership. COL Frederick Erst, deputy garrison commander for transformation, U.S. Army Garrison – Fort Sill Stationing Management Office, along with Mr. Larry Lane, director of the Station Managing Office, was leading the installation transformation

effort and was deeply involved in taking sound ideas from the workgroup and making them reality. After the first month, the campus started to take shape with ‘mind and body’ center programs located along Craig Road and ‘mind, body and spirit’ programs in the main building on Marcy Road. Every bit of the campus was discussed in detail; ensuring program location would maximize interaction based on proximity and what each building offered. There was nothing about this program that was random.

The education provided by the University of Pennsylvania (UPENN) at Fort Jackson, S.C., to both MAJ Wiersma and me, was first rate, as should be expected of an education from one of the most distinguished universities in the country. We were taught a relatively new science about how positive psychology could make a person more productive and better able to deal with crisis when it happens. The movement in changing a paradigm was going to be done with Soldiers not doctors; the prevention was to be boots on the ground with Soldiers who demonstrated a willingness to be open-minded and tackle the concepts of mental toughness; those were the resilience skills of self awareness, self regulation, mental agility, optimism, strengths of character and connection. This was an education that was absolutely needed to create the Graham Resiliency Training Campus (GRTC), but it would not be the only training or the only university to offer education in what would become the Comprehensive Soldier and Family Fitness (CSF2) program at Fort Sill. The University of Chicago found a home for a longitudinal study on social resilience in the GRTC, educating two brigades on the power of community and how the group dynamic affects the science of positive psychology. Dr. John Cacioppo was the founder of the science of Social Resilience, now accepted as one of the fundamentals of CSF2. The Body Wellness Center capitalized on physical toughness and how educating Soldiers on healthy living would increase resilience. The GRTC could not be satisfied with just training the science, it was going to do the science. It was this idea of making the science work and collecting measureable results from preventive programs that propelled the GRTC to where it is today;



Pieces of red ribbon fall to the ground as Fort Sill, Okla., leaders and honorary guest, COL Greg Gadson, second from the left, complete a ribbon cutting ceremony for the opening of the new Fort Sill Resiliency Training Campus, Sept. 17, 2010. The campus encompasses the services offered on post by centrally locating services for easier access to Soldiers, Family members and retirees. To watch the video go to <http://youtu.be/66naPRSCbwc>. (Photo by Marie Berberea, U.S. Army)

innovative and always a step ahead of the new programs coming from enterprise level leadership. The GRTC was founded not only on the domains of CSF2 but also inclusive of the Defense Center of Excellence (DCOE) publication on Total Force Fitness. Soon after the training at Fort Jackson, I was sent to Washington, D.C., to learn from the most senior leadership in the country what was needed to fight the problems that were attacking the formation from within. The Chairman of the Joint Chief of Staff, GEN Martin Dempsey, spoke to the Warrior Resilience Conference attendees on the importance of finding the most effective resilience programs and creating a path to success and a way to measure the positive results. The Sergeant Major of the Army, Raymond F. Chandler, shared the affect of his com-

bat experiences to emphasize that there should be no stigma attached to asking for help; that the measure of a great Soldier was not how well a problem was hidden, but how fast it was fixed. I prepared a contrast and comparison paper for the Fort Sill chief of staff that took a close look at RTC programs, looking for a doctrine that supported what we were in the midst of preparing for initial operation, and emphasized to the RTC working group that this was the way to success for our campus; how well we could demonstrate effectiveness in all of the domains of Total Force Fitness. Eight important domains make up Total Force Fitness: physical, nutritional, medical and dental, environmental, behavioral, psychological, spiritual, and social. The medical and social domains

both would become foundations of programs within the GRTC.

At initial operating capacity, the GRTC had already established within its core programs, Family connection with the ACS lead, Lisa Jansen-Reese, who brought to the GRTC the Explorer Group and Play Group which reached maximum capacity every week for as long as there has been a GRTC. In addition we would soon become one of the most used locations on Fort Sill by all Family readiness groups (FRG). They were driven to the GRTC when the RECPLEX became focused on single Soldier initiatives. Received with a 'warm welcome, focused attention and sincere gratitude' the union of FRG and GRTC became a long and lasting relationship, bound with the exceptional staff that has been the backbone of the GRTC

Sponsorship

Monday Reception Welcome	Tuesday Reception Welcome	Wednesday Resiliency	Thursday Resiliency	Friday Resiliency
Inprocessing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sponsor link-up with Soldier Accountability Inprocessing stations: DD93, Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (SGLV), arrival trans., finance travel processing, transportation (household goods) 	Inprocessing, cont. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sponsor link-up with Soldier Accountability Inprocessing stations: DD93, Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (SGLV), arrival trans., Finance travel processing, transportation (household goods) Barracks issue for single Soldiers House hunting for married Soldiers Coordination for Family members to link up with spouse to attend "Start Right" after lunch 	Risk Reduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Garrison safety Disability Evaluation System (DES) Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention (SHARP) training Inspector general's office Substance abuse prevention Suicide awareness Risk reduction Employee assistance Graham Resiliency Training Center, Army Wellness Center Health promotion Social Work Services warrior resiliency 	Resiliency Training, cont. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hunt the good stuff: Soldiers tell their good stuff Building mental toughness Problem solving Risk factors - financial problems, domestic violence Mental games/real-time resilience builds optimism Risk factor - suicidal ideation Enhancement phase: Goal setting 	Finance Training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principals of finance Budget and spending plans Financial goals, spending plan, evaluate spending plan, bank registrars for racking money Banking and checking Federal and state laws Online checking Insurance, home, life and auto
Lunch				
Inprocessing, cont. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medical inprocessing: TRICARE enrollment Medical PDHRA check Medical records collection Dental inprocessing: Dental screening 	Community Outreach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reception and welcome Family involvement with free child care Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP) Emergency financial assistance Transportation Community services and activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Army Community Services (ACS) -Army Substance Abuse Program (ASAP) -Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers (BOSS) -Education services -Family, Morale, Welfare and Recreation (FMWR) 	Resiliency Training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resilience intro: hunt for the good stuff, optimism, fight the negative bias Risk factor - suicidal ideation Building mental toughness: Activating Events, Thoughts, Consequence (ATC) model, thinking traps, icebergs Risk factor - crimes against persons Putting it in perspective Risk factor - suicidal ideation 	Resiliency Training, cont. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strength of character, leadership and character, strengths (Profession of Arms) Risk factor - alcohol and drug abuse, suicidal ideation Building strong relationships Active constructive responding and effective praise Risk factor - domestic violence 	Finance Training, cont. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Debt and credit management Savings and investing Ice breaking, investment scenario/game Consumer awareness Army One Source Legal Servicemember's Civil Relief Act (SCRA) Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) Fitness Training Camp (FTC) Laws How to buy a car

Fort Sill Start Right programs and services.

support center. Command guidance for the support center is, "they are not here to just manage schedules; the operation section is here to make each patron feel welcome as the most important person in the GRTC." The effect can best be heard from the patrons themselves who have spoken often through the Interactive Customer Evaluation (ICE) report process. True success can be measured by the ownership of the GRTC by the patrons. It is their GRTC, whether specifically a Family program or one with emphasis on physical toughness. The campus' functional fitness center serves more than 1,000 Soldiers a week, with no less than 50 of those each day being the spouse of a service member. Now fully operational, the GRTC has expanded to serving functional fitness across a

wide variety of patrons from the installation police to the Marine pool of future Marines that must meet their initial strength test to proceed to boot camp.

For me, the campus was not just another project; it became my passion which would translate into a series of hard earned successes. The sergeant major of the Army described this center as a "standard for the Army."

The Graham Resiliency Training Campus Transformation. As a measure of true success a program must be able to maintain relevance and perform its mission without losing sight of the needs of the people it serves and the direction of those who make the policies governing its existence. As the GRTC enters its fourth year of operation, we make every effort to maintain programs

that are current and relevant under the command guidance of the current Commanding General, MG James M. McDonald, along with his wife, Mrs. Connie McDonald, and the Post Command Sergeant Major, CSM Dwight Morrissey. They offer leadership and guidance to all the Soldiers and Families as they arrive to Fort Sill during a program locally know as Start Right. Besides Start Right, the GRTC has now become engaged in concepts like the Ready and Resilient Campaign (R2C), the Healthy Base Initiatives (HBI) with an even greater emphasis on Family by Comprehensive Soldier and Family Fitness.

Start Right. The Start Right program focuses on installation resources for newcomers to Fort Sill, and is the capstone of sponsorship and transitional

resilience for Soldiers and their Family members. Start Right belongs to Garrison Command but has been executed by representation from all commands on Fort Sill, to include Medical Command (MEDCOM), Forces Command (FORSCOM) and Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) units. The purpose of Start Right was to build a comprehensive program designed to provide Soldiers, Families and civilians in transition with a thorough and positive integration into the Lawton-Fort Sill community. There are three pillars to Start Right: sponsorship, reception and welcome, and resiliency.

R2C. Ready and resilient refers to a collaborative, coherent, and inter-disciplinary approach to maintaining Army readiness for the Total Army, tailoring prevention and response measures to promote physical, moral and mental fitness, emotional stability, personal growth, dignity and respect. The R2C plan is intended to bring about an enduring change to the Army culture. The GRTC has, since its inception, lead the way to fulfilling the tenants of the R2C with a centralized, holistic, kinetic approach to providing resiliency services to Fort Sill Soldiers, Families, retirees and Department of Defense (DoD) civilians and contractors. The GRTC has routinely been challenged to identify which programs have measures of success, which ones need more attention and which ones failed to gain momentum. By holding the program accountable to the Fort Sill chief of staff, the campus continues to stay out in front of policy like R2C. With a level three master resilience trainer at the helm of the GRTC; the CSF2 policy has been firmly established and adhered to. A mature chartered Community Health Promotion Council, the product of the director of Army Substance Abuse Program (ASAP), transitioned to the GRTC commandant as the working group chair and has now been provisioned through preventive health command with its own health promotion officer as the working group chair. As MG Jimmie O. Keenan toured the new Army Wellness Center (AWC), she expressed pleasure with the knowledge base of the operation and the connection with all command structures on Fort Sill through its location within the footprint of the GRTC campus. This new AWC,

alongside the GRTC, has real potential to connect R2C with HBI.

HBI and the Army Wellness Center. The HBIs help the GRTC to evolve by creating increased momentum in the medical and social domains of Total Army Fitness. With a strong relationship between mission and garrison command, support for this new AWC has been extremely positive. The primary focus of both HBI and the AWC is living a healthier lifestyle through education in prevention. Where the AWC maintains its influence within standardized program requirements of Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education (ORISE), the GRTC creates a home for the center that has the capability to demonstrate the relationship between mental toughness and physiological wellbeing. The HBI will address a number of areas that can be adjusted to help Fort Sill Soldiers understand that certain legal consumables are not healthy and can lead to decreased productivity in the long term. Targeted areas of concern are tobacco usage and obesity. The new Fort Sill AWC will attack both HBI initiatives through nutritional education by measuring a client's metabolic rate at rest against their lifestyle and exercise. Once a health profile has been established the client has the ability to seek counsel within the AWC on what the best course of action would be for increased physical wellbeing. The program ties into the Functional Fitness programs in the main GRTC building.

Family Fitness Initiatives:

Connection. Connection has been seen as a basis for Family social health by CSF2, TFF and the University of Chicago's longitudinal studies on social resilience. They all delivered their messages on slightly differing platforms but all have the same message; connection has to be understood and nurtured to

have a resilient Army Family. Starting in the very beginning of the campus creation was the inclusion of a very special playground that was designed to be developmental for children from four months to 12 years old. What has been special about this playground is that the structure supported connection between Family and the Soldier that has endured some physically challenging experience whether from combat or as a result of some other physical trauma like a physical training injury. The beauty of this playground design is that it was designed for accessibility not only on to the grounds by an injured Family member or Soldier but also onto each piece of equipment exponentially increasing the amount of connection for the Family during a period of risk and uncertainty for the injured.

Infant massage was one more initiative by Army Community Service (ACS) to lead the charge towards Family resiliency on Fort Sill; there is no stronger connection with her baby than through a mother's touch. The Explorer Group was already one of the most successful programs on the campus, and is always attended at maximum capacity. The program brought Families together after periods of separation to help restore connection by allowing parents and children to perform activities together with the oversight of the highly trained ACS staff, who can offer suggestions to the parent on ways to increase the positive interaction with their child during a number of practical play experiences. Oceans Day was one of those opportunities to play, sing, craft, and read as a Family in a controlled but fun environment. ACS has been at the helm of several Family initiatives, including the Dad's on Duty campaign, that lasted the month of June and brought many Fort Sill Families together. The local Home

As the GRTC enters its fourth year of operation, we make every effort to maintain programs that are current and relevant under the command guidance.



MG Mark McDonald, second from left, Fires Center of Excellence and Fort Sill commanding general, answers questions from spouses of deployed Soldiers at a town hall meeting at the Graham Resiliency Training Center. Many of those attending the town hall have Soldiers currently deployed with the 31st Air Defense Artillery Brigade. Also on the panel were (from left) CSM Dwight Morrissey, FCoE and Fort Sill command sergeant major; COL Brian Dunn, FCoE and Fort Sill chief of staff; and COL Paul Hossenlopp, Fort Sill garrison commander. (Photo by Ben Sherman)

Depot sponsored a workshop for the children to build a project, which also allowed for Family interaction. Another Family initiative was Books and Badges with the Lawton Police Department, where police officers connected with children through the child's favorite story. Success by Six is a part of United Way where play is the work of children for optimal development; they were provided blocks to create with and at the end of the day, the kids kept the blocks. The last of the Dad's on Duty initiatives was provided by Oklahoma State University, who conducted an Iron

Chef class on nutrition that can be fun and teach proper hygiene. From Camp Cowabunga to the Family Resilience Academy that trains the resilience material directed to Families, developed by the Positive Psychology Department of UPENN, the GRTC and our centralized, holistic, kinetic collection of programs has become an integral part in harnessing the Family energy at Fort Sill.

Cub Scouts. The GRTC personnel volunteer within the Lawton-Fort Sill community to bring resilience to Families. With a soccer coach for an elementary U-10 team, Cub Master and

Youth of the Chapel representatives, I was recently able to merge that and the Marine pool into an exceptional fitness challenge for each of the participants as they explored different parts of the Wichita Wildlife Refuge. The future Marines worked right alongside Cub Scout leadership to keep the children safe on some very challenging terrain. The risk has to be met with very decisive risk mitigation and execution by scout leadership. Family members and the other participants safely navigated the challenge and could now bathe in their accomplishment.



farewell honoring Spencer, and he is one of the most interesting people I ever met and definitely the right person for Garrison Catholic Chaplain. In his own words, "I'm having a good time with these young Soldiers, and they get a kick out of these gray hairs that I have. I'm a big guy to begin with, so they look when I come in a room and then they see an old guy in uniform and they say 'What's this?' But it's a lot of fun and they get a lot of encouragement from seeing me." O'Neal has been a positive influence in channeling energy into programs that build spiritual resilience.

The Protestant Youth of the Chapel program has maintained a haven for Fort Sill teenagers. They have a social bond so strong that even Dr. Cacioppo could appreciate it. The Family Life Chaplain, MAJ Thomas D. Bruce, directs the program. He brought in ACS to teach Seven Habits of a Good Teen. The teens responded well to Bruce and the instructor. No small feat when your child is one of the teens. Most recently, I was able to sit down with the new Installation Chaplain, COL Matthew Pawlikowski. I went in to discuss our relationship as a campus and the great work of his two predecessors, CH (COL-R) Jerry Jones and CH (COL) Sherman Baker, in the development of an exceptionally strong relationship, but should not have been surprised as the discussion evolved into how best to increase my own spiritual fitness...and it ended in prayer.

What's Next for Fort Sill GRTC. Fort Sill has been blessed with exceptional command emphasis on all GRTC programs which has paved the way for our fully functional Mind, Body and Spirit Centers, that not only train the science of resilience but empowers Soldiers with the skills of resilience through our programs that are designed to make Soldiers, Family members, retirees and civilians better able to adapt and overcome adversity before it hits with a preemptive strike at the challenges facing our formations. With garrison command working in conjunction with installation command, Fort Sill has been recognized as the premier site for implementation of resilience programs by Washington, D.C., and the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research (WRAIR). Several other installations have contacted us requesting start-up information in

order to mirror the Fort Sill program. All of the various campuses regularly communicate with each other in our pursuit to have the best, most standardized programs possible. Our hope is to one day go beyond execution order implementation instructions to an authorized unit with a Modified Table of Organization and Equipment (MTOE) and Table of Distribution and Allowances (TDA). What we can expect in the near future is to transform into a CSF2 training center that locally produces the 8R additional skill identifier. The Army Wellness Center, which in their first month of activation was at 67 percent of their expected productivity, will continue to grow and Fort Sill will have this GRTC for as long as their remains a need for resiliency.

This month the GRTC received our fourth commandant to command the GRTC, CPT Sarah Savageau, who is already making her presence felt with compassion for Soldiers and a strong will to continue the great work of her predecessors. As much of the world struggles to see what right looks like, the GRTC will continue to paint the picture of a Profession of Arms; a code of conduct that supports engaged leaders and a love of Soldiers, committed to their readiness. MAJ Robert Ferryman once said, "I have the best job in the Army because every day I come to work to do something to help Soldiers." Our GRTC vision is to make our patrons better than before they came to us. In the words of the great, late Dr. Albert Ellis, the founder of Rational Emotive Behavioral Therapy, "We are not here to make you feel good, we are here to make you better and sometimes that is painful; what is your goal?" We will live up to that standard of tough love now and into the future. Transitions can be painful, as we all have experienced at some time in our lives, but they can make a person and institution stronger because of the experience. The idea of resilience is to fully understand what the mind thinks and know we have control of our thoughts that influence our emotions and our reactions. We work hard to empower the Soldiers and Families of Fort Sill with this knowledge in an effort to provide tools for dealing effectively with challenge and adversity...before it happens. ★★

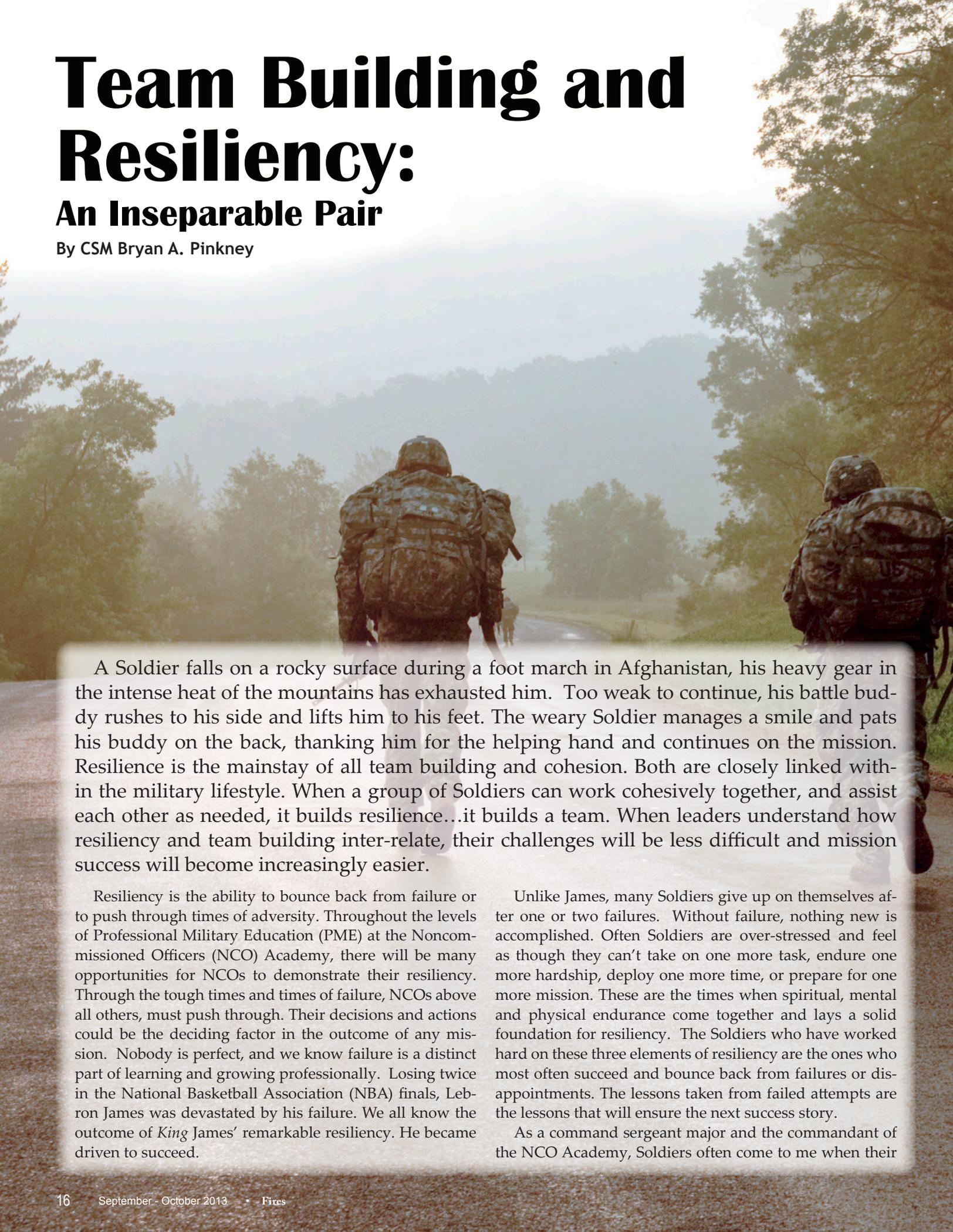
Spiritual Resilience: Chaplain Family Programs at the GRTC. Deborah Spencer, a long time secretary of the installation chaplain at the GRTC, had a phenomenal influence on bridging the GRTC as an asset to the chaplain's programs. When she started using the GRTC Functional Fitness Center (FFC), along with several of the chaplain assistants, the relationship and trust grew to what it is today. One chaplain assistant, SPC Kaylee Mason, had a measurable success at the FCC and recently won the Central Region Installation Management Command (IMCOM) Soldier of the Year. Part of her board was a fitness challenge, which she had no trouble conquering after extensive core strengthening through the GRTC fitness program.

I met Chaplain James O'Neal at the

Team Building and Resiliency:

An Inseparable Pair

By CSM Bryan A. Pinkney



A Soldier falls on a rocky surface during a foot march in Afghanistan, his heavy gear in the intense heat of the mountains has exhausted him. Too weak to continue, his battle buddy rushes to his side and lifts him to his feet. The weary Soldier manages a smile and pats his buddy on the back, thanking him for the helping hand and continues on the mission. Resilience is the mainstay of all team building and cohesion. Both are closely linked within the military lifestyle. When a group of Soldiers can work cohesively together, and assist each other as needed, it builds resilience...it builds a team. When leaders understand how resiliency and team building inter-relate, their challenges will be less difficult and mission success will become increasingly easier.

Resiliency is the ability to bounce back from failure or to push through times of adversity. Throughout the levels of Professional Military Education (PME) at the Noncommissioned Officers (NCO) Academy, there will be many opportunities for NCOs to demonstrate their resiliency. Through the tough times and times of failure, NCOs above all others, must push through. Their decisions and actions could be the deciding factor in the outcome of any mission. Nobody is perfect, and we know failure is a distinct part of learning and growing professionally. Losing twice in the National Basketball Association (NBA) finals, LeBron James was devastated by his failure. We all know the outcome of *King James'* remarkable resiliency. He became driven to succeed.

Unlike James, many Soldiers give up on themselves after one or two failures. Without failure, nothing new is accomplished. Often Soldiers are over-stressed and feel as though they can't take on one more task, endure one more hardship, deploy one more time, or prepare for one more mission. These are the times when spiritual, mental and physical endurance come together and lays a solid foundation for resiliency. The Soldiers who have worked hard on these three elements of resiliency are the ones who most often succeed and bounce back from failures or disappointments. The lessons taken from failed attempts are the lessons that will ensure the next success story.

As a command sergeant major and the commandant of the NCO Academy, Soldiers often come to me when their



Soldiers walk along at a quick pace during the 10 kilometer road march event at the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior competition, held at Fort McCoy, Wis., June 26, 2013. (SGT Carina Garcia, U.S. Army)

problems seem so big they can't wade through them to reach solutions. Many times, the problems truly are devastating, and I empathize with the good Soldiers who have had really bad things happen to them or their Families. Life isn't always what we expect or what we want. It is what it is. I tell these Soldiers to 'hunt for the good stuff.' Looking for the good in every situation enables Soldiers to see beyond their immediate problem. It forces them to find something good that has happened in the past minutes, hours or days. The 'good stuff' helps provide a positive attitude regardless of the current conditions.

Having Soldiers take an inward look at their character is another way to get them to look at disappointment or hardship through another lens. All Soldiers have varying levels of character strengths and weaknesses. These differences in character make a Soldier unique in a variety of ways. Soldiers are not perfect, and to understand the imperfections in our own character and to achieve balance in our lives can build a resilient nature to get through many future struggles.

To be resilient, Soldiers must understand what resiliency is and to understand that failure is not the end...it is the vehicle to achieve success and will carry them on through the battles of war and life in general. People with a resilient nature are those who know in their hearts and minds that even when a situation appears hopeless, the possibility to change the situation will motivate them to move forward. Finding the path to success and resolution to problems strengthens the individual Soldier, the team, and the unit. Building a strong, resilient nature is absolutely critical for a successful Fires Force; however, personal resilience is just one component of the greater picture.

The Army identifies two types of resiliency: institutional and operational. Institutional resiliency is developed as Soldiers initially enter the Army and throughout their careers. Each level of PME provides the Soldier with various tools to build their resiliency and gives them the skill-set they need at each level of leadership. Operational resiliency provides the skill-set and tools they will need to meet the stressors of a combat environment, and how to adapt and reintegrate themselves upon returning home.

Institutional resiliency teaches Soldiers to better understand and cope with individual problems, both on and off the battlefield. It also helps Soldiers better recognize problems in their comrades and how to offer help when needed. Soldiers cannot accomplish every mission alone. We all need help at some point in our careers, and many of us have extreme difficulty admitting this and accepting help. During the resiliency training at the academy, Soldiers are taught to be aware of their own weaknesses and to have the strength to reach out to their battle buddies. Noticing weaknesses and signs of distress in others and being able to encourage resiliency is a sign of leadership in both individuals and teams.

When a Soldier struggles or fails their initial Army Physical Fitness Test (APFT) or height and weight screening, is it acceptable to watch them fall or leave them behind? No! Soldiers are instilled with the tools to encourage each other to be resilient and to not give up. Soldiers will pick up that comrade and bring them along on the same path that made them successful. Soldiers do not take the easy trail and watch their comrades fall out in the difficult march to success. Instead, we

are taught to stop and take the time and effort to help other Soldiers pick up the broken pieces and put them back together, making them stronger and more resilient than ever.

It is not easy to practice resiliency as an individual, nor as a team. Soldiers have to deal with their own stressors that are brought on by rigorous training, demanding deployments, and the struggle to reintegrate with Family. During the initial entry training Soldiers are taught to be self-resilient, to be able to push through demanding and difficult tasks. As Soldiers progress in their careers and are taught, coached, and mentored to become successful leaders, they will go to their respective PME courses where they learn how to build teams through resiliency. They will learn it is about more than just pushing through their own personal situations, but it is also about ensuring that every individual in the unit can identify and assist other Soldiers who are experiencing difficult times. Observing and caring for our fellow Soldiers helps ensure our force is physically and mentally ready to defend our country against all enemies. Teaching our Soldiers the 'one team, one fight' mentality is how we will win future wars.

Soldiers thrive on team building and it is a factor in defeating combat stressors. Like resiliency, team building deals with the challenges of a combat environment, as well as those in garrison environment. There are three stages to team building: formation, enrichment and sustainment. Each stage has certain hurdles and actions that leaders have to fight through in order to successfully complete that particular stage. Some of the hurdles are: having a can-do attitude, having a buddy system, learning to trust leaders and others, face and survive the dangers on the battlefield, and being strong enough to endure without one's Family. When a team has attained the stage of sustainment, leaders will have Soldiers who feel as though they are part of a unit, confident and disciplined, trustworthy of others in the unit and able to physically and mentally adjust to situations. Mission success through adversity becomes easier when a unit has Soldiers with these traits that are developed through successful team building.

Resiliency and team building have a lot in common. The first thing that comes to my mind is trust. Trust is built through understanding that an individual will be by your side in difficult times. A true leader does not give up and will continue to work with and develop a Soldier, even after mistakes are made. Resiliency is demonstrated throughout all of the team building stages, whether Soldiers notice it or not. Soldiers will go through difficult times during this training and will become more resilient Soldiers for it. Whether it is picking up your battle buddy who has fallen, or helping a Soldier who is having difficulty with a written examination at their PME, team building and resiliency are perfect companions.

The formation stage of team building provides the base of a team's resiliency pillars. This stage sets the tone for the rest of the time the team is together. It is very important to establish a 'team-first' attitude, instead of having a group of individuals. This starts with leaders putting the needs of their Soldiers ahead of their own. Good leaders develop resilient Soldiers in their charge.

The enrichment stage is the most difficult stage to accomplish. It is the most rigorous of the stages and should present the most challenging training to ensure a Soldier is ready for the demands of the operational environment in combat. This

stage will also have many resiliency opportunities. There will be many times when a Soldier wants to give up. However, as leaders and future leaders, we cannot allow our battle buddies to falter or give up. The enrichment stage of team building creates the strongest bonds within the team, and creates a unit that will be mentally and physically ready to achieve mission success and continue on to the third stage of team building.

Sustaining the team will be a difficult task. As you prepare for the demanding operating environment during deployments, Soldiers pass through the team building phases relatively unaware of the bonds being formed between them and the unit. Retaining these strong bonds is also difficult during deployments. As the operating environment changes, so do the combat stressors. Each individual reacts differently to the variety of combat stressors. These Soldiers are now a team and they know each other's strengths and weaknesses, and have formed a very tight bond. Soldiers will better understand how to ensure resiliency for themselves and their comrades during the sustainment phase, although resiliency is important in every stage of team building.

Resiliency and team building are an inseparable pair throughout all three stages of the team building process. Without both of them, you will have a weak group that will not have the endurance to accomplish the more difficult tasks. When the team is truly resilient, the entire group will be much more suitable for the demanding operational environment of combat zones, as well as the difficult task of returning home and reintegrating with the community. ★ ★

Author's Note: I would like to thank SFC Charles L. Robinson and SSG Norman W. Holcomb, both assigned to the Noncommissioned Officers Academy, Fort Sill, Okla., for their assistance with this article.

Command Sergeant Major Brian Pinkney entered the Army in July 1985. He completed Basic Training and Advanced Individual training at Fort Bliss, Texas. Pinkney has served in every enlisted leadership position from team chief to command sergeant major. His prior assignments include: CSM for 6th Air Defense Artillery Brigade, CSM 3-2 ADA, brigade operations sergeant major 11th BDE Fort Bliss; battalion operations sergeant major 1-44 ADA Fort Bliss; first sergeant A 4-3 ADA Kitzingen, Germany; Avenger platoon sergeant D 4-3 ADA, Germany, platoon sergeant D 1-56 ADA Fort Bliss; senior instructor 2-6 ADA Fort Bliss; platoon sergeant/Avenger section leader 1-5 ADA Fort Stewart, Ga.; assistant operations sergeant 5-5 ADA, Korea. He is currently assigned as the commandant of the Fires Non-Commissioned Officers Academy, Fort Sill, Okla. Pinkney's military education includes the Air Assault Course, Master Fitness Trainer Course, Instructor Trainer Course, Total Army Instructor Training Course, Equal Opportunity Representative Course, Primary Leadership Development Course, Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course, First Sergeant Course, The United States Army Sergeant Major Academy, Class 55 and the Command Sergeant Major Course. He holds an Associate Degree in Applied Science in Management from Excelsior University and is currently pursuing a Bachelor of Applied Science in Resource Management from Troy State University.

Battle buddies assist the shooters on the range, making sure they follow correct procedures on breath control, trigger squeeze, aiming and target engagement. (Photo by Mike Strasser, West Point Public Affairs)





Soldiers of the 214th Fires Brigade line up to start their semi-annual Leaders Gauntlet. The event challenges the Soldiers by testing their basic Soldier tasks throughout an all-night ruck march around Fort Sill, Okla. Tasks chosen from the common task list are evaluated only by the hands-on mode, making for a challenging event for the enlisted Soldiers within the brigade. (Photo courtesy of COL Timothy J. Daugherty and CPT Charlie Dietz)

Reducing the Risk

By COL Timothy J. Daugherty and CPT Charlie Dietz

In the Army Health Promotion, Risk Reduction, Suicide Prevention Report 2010, Chapter 3, there is a discussion on “The Lost Art of Leadership in Garrison.” Garrison is a word that our brigade prefers to refer to as ‘home station training,’ as it is important to call it what it means to us, but regardless of the name, the discussion brings to light the problems that Soldiers are facing in many aspects of their personal lives during ‘home station training’ and how these situations have resulted in disciplinary issues. The affects of these issues and incidents require leadership with the proper skill set to delve into the issues and solve the problems. The Army that has grown accustomed to a cycle of deployment, redeployment, dwell, deployment prep must relearn how to properly train our Soldiers at home by focusing on various concepts that support a mentally and physically fit Soldier. As we move forward, we must attack the indirect issues that cause Soldier misconduct and increase our fighting force. Although most of these would work during a deployment as well, we are focusing solely on home station time, which in turn will result in a stronger deploying force as well.

Field Manual (FM) 6-22, *Army Leadership*, states that an enduring expression for Army leadership has been BE-KNOW-DO. It goes on to discuss how leadership begins with what the leader must BE—the values and attributes that shape character. At the 214th Fires Brigade (FiB), we have implemented programs to guide each of our leaders to be the best leader possible through caring for all their Soldiers. Soldier caring has three categories. The first is training for combat. We must ensure that they are trained on their jobs and can do their tasks above standard. The second aspect of Soldier caring is the most difficult one to describe, the building of unit cohesion, teamwork, and loyalty. These are where we need good leaders to conduct programs that let their Soldiers know they care about them, and thereby developing Soldiers with increased ‘care’ for their unit and mission. This is the focus of this article. Last is eliminating Soldiers who cannot stay in your unit because of substandard performance or medical issues. What this discussion brings to light is how we are improving category two, building team unity through numerous programs designed

to show that the leaders care about their Soldiers.

The Army defines an Army leader as anyone, who by virtue of assumed role or assigned responsibility, inspires and influences people to accomplish organizational goals. Army leaders motivate people both inside and outside the chain of command. We are trying to take away the ‘boss’ aspect from home station command and put in more of the ‘leader’ aspect.

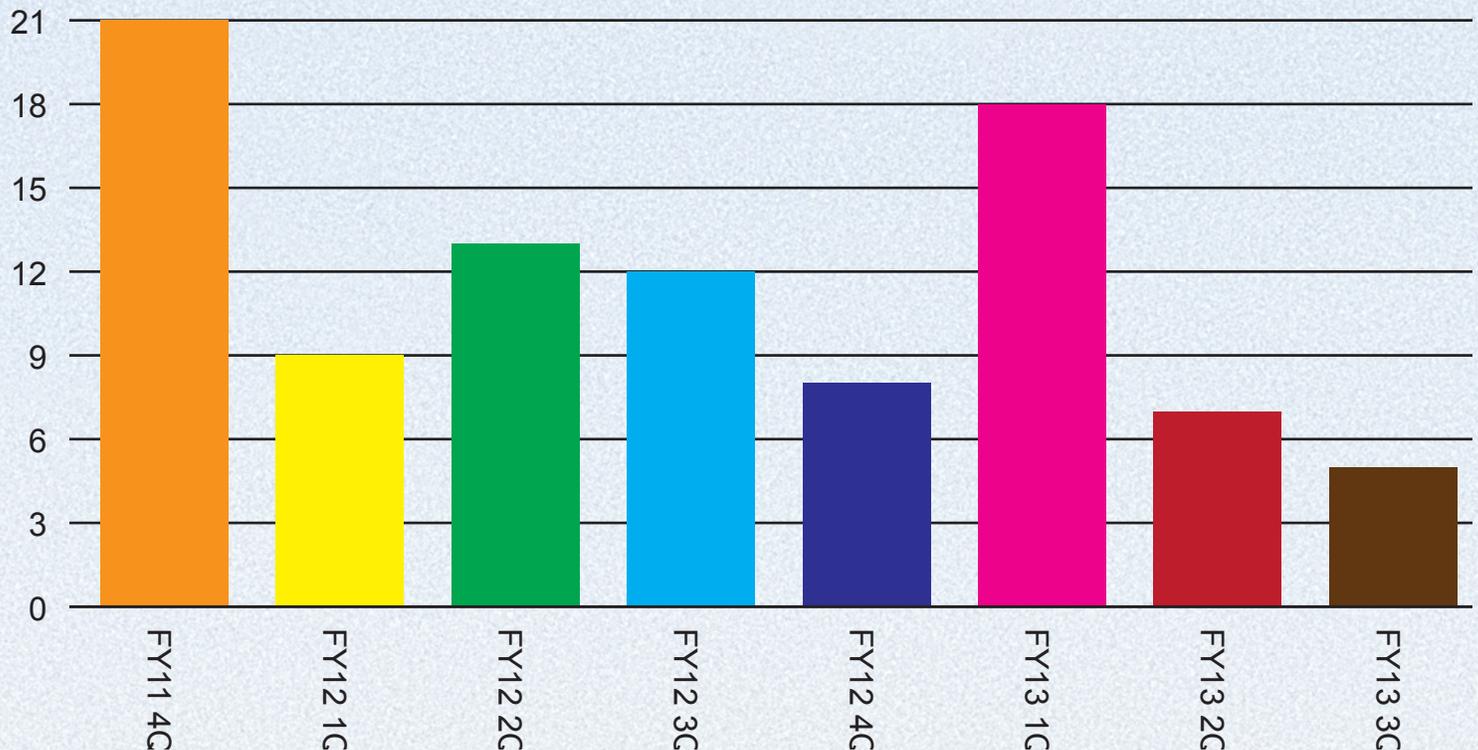
As leaders, we must know and understand that our Army has been strained by 10-plus years of war. With nine, 12- and 15-month deployments, and reintegration time a rarity, it is no shock that some basic leadership skills would fall to the wayside. As our time in Afghanistan moves towards a minimalist role, we need to start training the leadership with new methods to ensure not only their proper development, but also their subordinates’ development, while keeping them all a Profession of Arms, comprised of experts certified in the ethical application of land combat power, serving under civilian authority, entrusted to defend the Constitution and the rights and interests of the American people.

The figure titled Soldier Caring Program Results (below) shows the decline of Serious Incident Reports (SIRs) since starting our Soldier Caring Program. The spike in first quarter of FY13 was a result of the security force assistance teams (SFATs) from the brigade re-deploying, which lead to no ‘Soldier Caring Boards’ or ‘We Care Getaways’ during that quarter. This was the only time the boards did not convene and the only time there was a statistically significant spike in SIRs. The efforts that resulted in this decline will be discussed further later in this article as we try to answer the question: what can we do to show loyalty to our troops and further a positive relationship on duty? The following tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTP) referenced in this article will help show what has worked for us.

Leader Techniques, Tactics and Procedures. An effective plan for the development of Soldiers isn’t found on a piece of paper or briefed quarterly on a projector. It’s done with actions and programs that provide Soldiers with the best possible leadership, professionalism, and training that sets up each Soldier to be the best leader they can be. We reference our standards through ‘leader

Soldier Caring Program Results

Serious Incident Reports (SIRs) reported during the Soldier Caring Program declined. First Quarter FY13 saw an increase due to no program events in that quarter as the unit was re-deploying.





Oklahoma state trooper, Chance Slater, responds to questions from the Soldiers of the 214th Fires Brigade during a quarterly “We Care” getaway at Fort Sill, Okla. The getaway is an event focused on showing Soldiers all the resources that the post has to offer them in times of need, resulting in a decline of serious incident reports. (Photo courtesy of COL Timothy J. Daugherty and CPT Charlie Dietz)

notes,’ of which each officer and NCO maintains copies, outlining our brigade TTPs. We are constantly evolving the leader notes, making changes as we see fit to ensure our policies are most effective. Through our established areas of emphasis, we believe that we will continuously improve and develop leaders in the Army. As we know, a principle of logic is that we cannot prove a negative,

but what we can prove is the increase in leadership shown through our Soldiers.

Some techniques we use as the baseline for Soldier caring that have proven to be extremely effective include:

- Letters Home – Leaders send letters to immediate Family members of subordinate Soldiers. Letters will include personal thanks for the sacrifice of the Family member and for

their loved one’s service in the United States Army. Additionally, the letter should indicate that you are the Soldier’s leader and that you will do everything in your power to train and take care of the Soldier’s needs while under your leadership.

- Resources - First and foremost, units should work continuously to give Soldiers the tools they need to resolve



issues and progress towards a steady end state of mission readiness. Units must look at indicators such as SIRs that could hint at a deeper, more systemic issue in their own formation, and take action to get the formation the needed training.

- **Fitness** - A tough fitness plan and tough physical training (PT) helps Soldiers. PT is required for at least one hour, but could be longer. Use additional time for focused emphasis for your high-risk Soldiers. For example, do not conduct sporting activities during PT if an SIR occurred over the last seven days, but rather take the

formation on a good tough run and then allow the leaders 10 minutes after completion to do a quick azimuth check with their Soldiers. Leaders are encouraged to conduct PT challenges within their own formations. Soldiers need to know their leaders are physically tough. These tough, special PT challenges should promote unit cohesion, teamwork and morale.

- **Quarters Visits** - Often times as engaged leaders, we can identify issues before they occur simply by looking at the visual indicators that could signal trouble. One indicator might be how our Soldiers maintain their living quarters. If Soldiers', NCOs' or officers' living quarters are derogated from the outside, you can generally draw a conclusion about the inside of the house. On post, we are authorized to inspect quarters, but off post we must gain permission from the home owner first. A few ways to approach off-post visits are to bring a welcome gift (food, drinks, or flowers for the spouse) or to provide the Soldier a day off work for letting them inspect their quarters.
- **Special Events** - Leaders should conduct special events, such as single Soldier retreats, leader getaways, Family readiness group (FRG) events, bowling tournaments, holiday activities, and unit picnics to provide a team building atmosphere.
- **Soldier/Leader Contracts** - Make written contracts with Soldiers from the company/battery or battalion leadership that validates what the Soldier can expect from you and what you will require from them. This should be the bottom line on what type of unit you are attempting to build.
- **Education** - Help your Soldiers grow, learn, and become more educated. This builds their pride and promotion possibilities, as well as their ability to see themselves and develop problem solving skills in a more educated manner. In addition, education adds a sense of self-worth and growth as they achieve educational benchmarks.
- **Metaphors** - Have something in your unit that Soldiers can relate to. Examples are the 'Soldier of the Week Award' or the 'PT Stud of the Week' that is given out each Friday. As leaders at the company/battery level, we

must remember we have to work to gain and maintain the attention of our Soldiers. We are not all alike and do not need the same inputs to be motivated. We need our leaders to cast a large but focused 'Soldier caring net' in order to capture the largest number of Soldiers possible to buy-in to our goals as a unit.

As technology continues to make communicating easier for everyone, we must understand that effective and efficient leaders cannot lead from behind a desk or at home in bed with a Blackberry. We discuss with our leaders, "Use doors and floors to lead, not Windows®." They need to go out and observe and participate in training. Just the physical presence of the leader will boost the morale of Soldiers and allows them to know they care. When there is hard work to be done, we must be right there with them. If there is a task that no one really wants to do, such as digging make-shift latrines for the unit, we want our leaders to be the ones grabbing the shovels first and showing not only that they will do the hard work, but that they are mindful of their Soldiers and their needs.

Total Sponsorship Program. Something we must emphasize, which has taken the human resource world by storm lately, is assigning Soldiers' sponsors through the Army Total Sponsorship Program. Even if someone is transferring from a military school down the road, we need them to feel welcomed, and understand what we are all about. We've had numerous people tell us how helpful it was that as soon as their request for orders (RFO) arrived in their email, it was accompanied by a note from our S1 discussing details about their arrival. Too many times we hear of Soldiers going to their new duty stations, often in foreign countries, without any clue on where to go or who to talk to. As a team we need to look out for one another and that starts before the Soldier arrives.

The brigade believes that it is important for units to share the knowledge of their profession and the traditions associated with not only their branch, but with the post. By doing this, the seed has been planted that will instill in these leaders a sense of pride and tradition, while assisting them in knowing where

to go and get them doing their left seat-right seat training as soon as possible.

Contact With Soldiers. As touched on last year in the *Fires Bulletin*, the Leader Brigade conducts a Soldier Caring Program that assists in developing leadership skills. Since most of our battery/company commanders are accustomed to the high operations tempo, we strive to provide our Soldiers with a personal foundation that allows them to conduct the tough jobs we expect from them. This program has been extremely successful. We reduced our SIRs by 86 percent. This was something that many of us imagined would be possible, but we are still amazed that it has come to fruition—all because of the brigade's proactive approach to leadership.

Counseling is Key. The cornerstone of our Soldier Caring Program is consistent and interactive counseling. Our belief is that counseling is the most important way we can shape our Soldiers, mitigate risks and show we care. Our first line leaders must know how to counsel their Soldiers through dialogue and conversations, not just a 'sign this' type of approach that is far too common in today's military. Through these counseling sessions, we identify issues before they become problems—not after, when it's too late.

FM 6-22 states that direct leaders develop their subordinates one-on-one and influence the organization indirectly through their subordinates. We truly believe this and it is why we require quarterly counseling at every rank. For our initial counseling, we do it in two parts. The first is an interactive informational counseling conducted to get to know and understand the Soldier on a personal level. Knowing what a Soldier likes and wants to do allows leaders to better assign Soldiers to open positions. The goal is for leaders to know their Soldiers' basic information. Where are they from? How do they get to work? Do they have children? These are all serious questions that help in putting together the puzzle of a mentally and physically strong Soldier. The second part will establish and inform Soldiers about the standards within the unit. Also, a lost art is the positive counseling. It's surprising the difference that positive dialogue can have on morale and work output, especially when it comes from one's leader.

High-Risk School of Standards. Another approach we have is ensuring we properly manage a Soldier after being reported on an SIR. We take them on a 'We Care Getaway' that allows us to have their full attention for a couple of days in a location away from their stressors. This also acts as a school of standards for our sergeants who attend with the Soldier to ensure they know all the resources available to them and their Solders. We use this opportunity to educate them on problem solving strategies and programs that are available to help them cope and understand their personal challenges. The brigade leadership takes the time to sit and talk with them and their leadership one-on-one about how we can help them, along with agencies from around the post and local area, to include the chaplain, local police, Army Community Services and Army Substance Abuse Prevention, among others. This ensures they know where to go before they have trouble again. It also educates them about possible consequences if they continue not following the standards. We have never had anyone comment during the after action review (AAR) that they thought the trip was a waste of time. The Soldiers have stated that they feel more a part of the team and are appreciative for the newfound resources that they previously did not know were available to them and their Families.

Joos Helping Joos. SIRs are a necessary evil in our profession that no one enjoys. The brigade commander personally reviews every SIR with the involved leadership bright and early the next morning, something that has been easier with their steady decline. Too many times leadership identifies high-risk Soldiers but then fails to take a proactive approach to help them. There is no point in labeling them high-risk if you aren't going to help them prior to problems. We have set up a few approaches as parts of our Soldier Caring Program that help reduce risk before incidents happen. One of them is the 'Battle to Battle' program that the battalions conduct quarterly. This program has at least four junior enlisted Soldiers who help provide newer Soldiers with problem solving techniques before they become problems. Having younger Soldiers helping one another has had immeasurable positive effects. This has

played a large role in our reduction of incidents as the Soldiers themselves have discussed that they are generally more comfortable talking to a junior enlisted Soldier about their problems and being pointed in the right direction from their peers, rather than having to discuss it with a supervisor.

Positive Reinforcement Leads to Positive Output. The next part of Soldier caring is recognizing the hardworking Soldiers who go above and beyond. Hard work is looked at as status quo in today's military; however, we must remember the value of rewarding Soldiers for what they do for our country. It doesn't take long to write an award recommendation. The results that follow will last a very long time through the Soldier's motivation and sense of purpose. A Soldier may feel that if no one is watching then no one cares. We want to take advantage of the converse of this by letting them know we are noticing their efforts and we appreciate them, especially if all it takes is recommending an award or a positive paragraph on a counseling form.

We also try to show off our Soldiers' efforts through articles in the local newspaper and online. Using Facebook and social media as a medium to reach out to Families has proven to be extremely effective. The few minutes that it takes to take a picture and post it online for the brigade's fans to see is very much worth the opportunity for the Family and friends to be able to see what their Soldier is doing. Since we are able to show all the positive work our team is doing, it also works as a recruitment tool through 'shares' and 're-tweets' to people who normally would not look at an Army webpage.

What we have done at the 214th Fires Brigade is successfully implement programs that have proven to work. The reason that we are sharing our programs is not to brag about how our stats are superior, rather we want to show and discuss how through Soldier Caring we have been able to drive down Soldier issues, including 21 serious incidents from a quarter prior to implementing our Soldier Caring Program, to three in this past quarter.

Time Management. Part of Soldier caring is time management. It is our duty as leaders to properly manage the time of our Soldiers. While training

does sometimes go late, wasting time is something that we must not allow to occur. In the *Leader Brigade's* battle rhythm, we allow a 3 p.m. release time on Wednesdays so the troops can take care of things that must be done during the duty day, relax, and/or spend time with their Family. We believe this makes the week more bearable and lets the Families know they are also important to our mission.

Something that has improved vastly within the past year is the answer to 'When does Joe know?' We strive to ensure that even the lowest ranking

Soldiers know exactly what is going on so they do not feel their time is wasted and to allow them to manage their personal calendars accordingly. If they are kept in the dark, they do not feel involved, resulting in them actually becoming even less involved. The brigade standard is that each individual Soldier, down to private, has a leader every other week discuss with them the long term training schedule. This is something we don't do at the end of the day in a 100 degree motor pool, but rather in a more personal setting so leaders can answer

questions and make sure everyone understands.

Sensing Sessions. We must always listen to our Soldiers. They are there to guide us as leaders. We truly want them to bring new ideas to the table. If leadership approves it, we'll implement it. If they decide against it, then they know not to bring it up again or come up with a new plan. Sensing sessions at the lowest level let the Soldiers know that we care. Commanders need to personally engage with the Soldiers as much as possible and hear their ideas, so we take time to have leader lunches and farewell

COL Timothy Daugherty, commander of 214th Fires Brigade, takes time during a pause at the semi-annual Leaders Gauntlet to discuss important issues to all the officers within the brigade. The Gauntlet is a competition between the company grade officers throughout the brigade that also provides the opportunity for discussion during the breaks. This competition confirms their mental and physical toughness while building teamwork and enhancing esprit de corps. (Photo courtesy of COL Timothy J. Daugherty and CPT Charlie Dietz)



lunch programs, giving commanders the opportunity to talk to them on their way out and receive an honest response on how they think the unit is doing. We refuse to let someone complain or discuss issues within the unit without proper reasoning, and will often find ourselves defending whichever leader they are complaining about if the leader's reasoning was morally just. A brand new program we like is 'shade tree' sensing sessions, where the brigade command team can take a group of Soldiers away from the stress and tempo of work and sit down and discuss whatever issues they want to talk about.

Turning Policies into Practice. Soldier Caring programs, like the ones we have established, are no good written in policy memos when not acted upon, so we host Soldier Caring boards where company / battery leadership sit down each quarter with the commanders from each level and discuss what is going on in their units. Oftentimes we do these off site, mixing in a staff ride with all the brigade's commanders together, so they can learn what other commanders have done to show their units they care and are looking out for the Soldiers' well-being. The questions discussed at each focus on eight main topics include:

- SIRs within the last 90 days
- Composite Soldier programs that the unit has implemented
- Nondeployable Soldiers and their current status
- FRG status
- Highrisk Soldier review with the focus on risk reduction measures
- Impact awards given within the past quarter
- Sexual Harassment / Assault Response and Prevention (SHARP) program and equal opportunity issues (which serves as our sexual assault review board at the brigade level)
- Results from battalion Master Resilience Training (MRT) boards and any change to MRT training

Often the brigade command team will sit down with the commanders, first sergeants, executive officers and platoon leaders and ask questions about their Soldiers. It is easy to tell which officer or senior NCO knows and cares about their Soldiers. We ensure that the commanders are taking care of their FRG leaders each month by asking them what they've done to show their FRG

leader that they are appreciated. What kind of PT plan do they have for their formation? What team building event have they done in the last week? When was the last time they wrote an award for a Soldier and most importantly we will ask what are they doing that lets their Soldiers in their formations know they care? If they lack a solid answer for this then they need to do an azimuth check as a leader to see how they can better themselves.

Performance Under Stress Leads to Less Stress During Performance.

Our semi-annual Leader Gauntlet just wrapped up in the beginning of April and it provided an excellent opportunity to improve leader quality. We took the company grade officers and junior warrant officers on an all day event designed to foster team building, confirm their mental and physical toughness and readiness, and enhance esprit de corps, which has turned out to be extremely valuable. Officers, who would have never interacted with one another, are put on a team of 11 leaders and put through the ringer, with top leadership each step of the way there next to them. An early morning wake up with an Army Physical Fitness Test (APFT), immediately followed by a personal trainer led PT session, showed the teams new exercises they could use to enhance their physical fitness programs. They were led on a few ruck marches around Fort Sill and to the obstacle course, conducted a weapons familiarization challenge, followed by combatives training and a social at the end. A few more challenges throughout the day really revved up the competitiveness in the teams. Competition has shown to boost morale and enhance teamwork within the brigade.

Between each event, the brigade leadership took the opportunity to talk to all these junior leaders about issues officers face and will be facing in the near future. All teams held discussions on women joining combat arms, homosexuals in the ranks, the new officer evaluation system, and general conversations on overall leadership in a peer setting. This enabled them to hear not only the commander's beliefs and policies about these topics, but was a chance for them to interact with each other about such hot topics and come to an understanding where we as an officer corps stand. Following the event last April, I was

told these officers agreed that they were challenged both mentally and physically, but most of all appreciated being able to work with and meet other officers and warrant officers that they could assist in the future.

To build a well rounded Soldier who can overcome the stress of battle, we all must spend time in locations that we aren't used to. That is why we require each unit to spend at least four consecutive nights in the field per quarter and one night in the field per month. This is the opportunity for Soldiers to come together and work out the kinks in their performances. Perhaps there is something additional that the unit needs to focus on that can now be performed with full attention away from 'the flag pole' and the stressors of home.

Taking Time to Educate One Another. The last two programs we use to enhance the brigade's resiliency are bleacher sessions and Profession of Arms seminars. These forums set up a time to discuss leadership in garrison and how to improve on what we already know. Bleacher sessions serve as a venue for a sample population of Soldiers to voice their concerns and highlight any issues before they become problems. Some days we may take a group of new Soldiers, and some days we take all the field grade officers in the brigade. Whichever group it may be, it gives the avenue to discuss problems and solutions so we can continue our proactive approach to leadership.

The Profession of Arms seminars are designed as a monthly forum for subject matter experts to present topics of importance in their particular field to the brigade Soldiers. Examples are: doctors speaking on medical issues or the adjutant discussing administrative changes or procedures. These seminars can be on any subject the brigade chooses to use as a tool to enhance the Soldiers' knowledge of a variety of Army subjects using resources they may, or may not, know exist. All seminars are an open discussion and allow all attendees to bring new ideas or issues to the team. A commander may have a new idea from which others can learn. A first sergeant may present a plan on how we can improve within our ranks. No matter what the discussion, we continue to develop one another.

Utilizing New Resources. We believe that we must take full advantage of our resources, especially our new resources. Recently we had a new Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC) arrive in our unit. This May, we began a new SHARP program which allowed us to operate down to the battery level through an 'In the Trenches' program we developed. The SHARP 'In the Trenches' program is a two-week program based on 10 SHARP/Victim Advocate related tasks designed to help the command teams integrate brigade SHARP and victim advocate awareness and compliance into their formations. The intent for this program is to initiate and sustain a viable and predictable brigade level program that facilitates compliance with Forces Command (FORSCOM) SHARP directives, increases battery level SHARP awareness and participation and standardizes program milestones across the brigade. The brigade SARC works closely with command teams to ensure the training is integrated into their training schedules. Since it's so new, we cannot discuss its success; however, we are sure that this program will build upon the Army's program to reduce sexual harassment and assault.

Competition. Competition is a must in today's Army. We do not compete against other units. We compete with the established standard, seeing who can rise above it. We try to compete in everything that we can. Napoleon said in 1815, "A Soldier will fight long and hard for a bit of colored ribbon." This is extremely true, and we have observed this first hand in our brigade. In the majority of our programs, we compete against one another and the standard, whether it is fewest SIRs, sporting events, or something such as least amount of safety incidents. We promote competition and that competition promotes success.

Soldiers, who were satisfied with their 250 APFT scores before coming to the brigade, are now training harder to try to boost their battery's test average so they can receive one of the many streamers that we award for toppling the standard. We recently had a competition as to which battery could raise the most money for the AER campaign, resulting in one battery having an average of more than \$40 per Soldier. We were

surprised at these results, but as we said before, competition promotes success.

At our Leaders Gauntlet, referenced earlier, we test each officer by putting them against one another and seeing how well they perform under this stress. Rather than just having them go out and do an obstacle course, we want them to rush through against one another, earning points, and eventually awarding the best team with a ribbon, proving again that Napoleon was exactly right. Competition is a significant factor in improving the brigade as a whole, as evidenced by winning this year's Fort Sill's Commander's Cup. The Commander's Cup is awarded to the brigade who earns the most points in more than 20 different sporting events throughout the year.

Similar to the Leaders Gauntlet, we challenge our junior enlisted Soldiers with an all night race of sorts which includes numerous physical and mental challenges along a 12-mile route, at night, while carrying a 40-pound ruck sack. The 'Leaders Gut Check' is a semi-annual tradition for the brigade, taking teams of four Soldiers from 19 batteries and having them accomplish 19 tasks derived from the Common Task Tests (CTT). Each year, 18 critical common tasks are selected for CTT evaluation, based on direct input provided by numerous Army organizations. Tasks chosen for CTT testing are evaluated only by the hands-on mode, making for an excellent event for the brigade, especially in the dark of night.

The goal here is to challenge our Soldiers while having some fun through competition. We also have the opportunity to teach participants new skills they may not be completely proficient in by having them go through the various lanes and then being evaluated. Many of the lanes have quick classes followed by practical learning tests, so it tests the Soldier's ability to quickly learn and apply new skill sets in a high pace and challenging environment.

The night starts off with a bang as each team member does two minutes of push-ups, sit-ups and as many pull-ups as possible. The results of the physical challenge are tallied and the top teams are able to begin the course first. The remaining 18 tests are scattered through areas of Fort Sill with only red tactical lights marking the area, which continuously tests the Soldiers' map reading

skills as they maneuver. Some tasks, such as interacting with the news media, counsel a subordinate, and employ a hand grenade, seemed to be pretty basic for most; however, assembling and disassembling multiple weapons systems and searching a detainee proved to be quite difficult with no light and little rest. If a team received a "no-go" by the lane staff, they would re-do the task until they proved to be proficient.

One of the things we tell our officers is that we all have weaknesses on which we need to work. If someone doesn't think they have a weakness, then that's probably one of their weaknesses. As long as we keep trying to improve our weaknesses, our Soldiers will see and appreciate it. As leaders, we need to keep changing for the better, knowing there is always something that can be improved, and striving to achieve our goals. GEN George Patton said, "A leader is a man who can adapt principles to circumstances," and he could not be more correct. Through our programs we truly believe that our Soldiers are better off, regardless of what the statistics say. Oftentimes we ask one another if we are doing all we can for our Soldiers, and through these programs we believe are pretty close. ★ ★

Colonel Timothy J. Daugherty has commanded the 214th Fires Brigade, 4th Infantry Division at Fort Sill, Okla., since June 2011. He has also served in operations spanning the globe, to include Operation Desert Shield/Storm, commanding a battery in Operation Joint Endeavor, a battalion in Operation Iraqi Freedom, and recently returned as a brigade security force assistance team leader in Operation Enduring Freedom. He has also served as the interim commander of the 89th Military Police Brigade at Fort Hood, Texas. He is a 1988 graduate of Jacksonville State University, and holds a Master of Science Degree from Central Michigan University.

Captain Charlie Dietz has been a platoon leader during Operation Enduring Freedom 08-10 and spent time in command of a Warrior Transition Unit company at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, before transitioning to public affairs. He is a 2008 graduate of Saint Cloud State University, and holds a Master of Arts in Criminal Justice.

The Dark Place

By Professor Gene Kamena

I lost my friend last week; he was a Soldier. He was also a good person, father and husband. He took his own life. My friend has now joined ranks with other Soldiers who made a personal journey to a dark place. We, who remain behind, grapple with our own phantoms, attempting to find an answer to the inexplicable--why? Moreover, we scrutinize our past actions, and ask, did we do enough; did we miss something? What if...?

There is no science to support my notions, only experience. The experience of time, too much time, spent coping with suicide's aftermath and its devastating toll levied upon friends, family and the force. Here is what I believe:

Resident in the mind of all people is a dark place. Secured behind a closed door is a murky chamber, wherein, good people lose their way. In most of us, the door remains sealed, never to be opened. For standing watch, challenging all who venture too close, are two vigilant sentinels: reason and hope. When nourished, these stalwart sen-

tries preclude entry into the dark place of one's own mind. If, however, hope and reason are overpowered or become weak, the door barring entry opens allowing thoughts to enter.

Somewhere within the alcoves of this dark place, judgment becomes deranged. Reason is distorted, making the irrational appear rational. The atmosphere in the dark place is toxic, if one lingers, logic suffocates. Friends and family are not welcome here, the walls are thick and entry is challenged. The dark place is an important link in a deadly chain of events, a sequence played out time and again: despair, entry into the dark place, decision, deception, and deadly deed.

Despair is usually triggered by a crisis. More often than not, other dilemmas escalate, compounding the stress of the situation, taking a toll on one's optimism. When hope dims; entry into the dark place is probable. Time spent in the dark place is never good. Decisions made in solitude and darkness are consequential and destructive. For

reasons unknown, and all too frequently, the dark place tenders suicide as the best, or only, remedy for suffering. Once decided, our friends present a facade to the outside world in order to calm and deflect inquiry, but it is only deception. Yes, our friends and loved ones deceive us. They do so for two reasons; to protect us and because they see no possibility of us leading them out of the darkness to a better place. In fact, the dark place becomes comfortable, and maybe even reassuring, for now they have a solution--suicide. The amount of time from decision to deadly deed, varies. All time is precious, but this interval is most dear, it holds the last opportunity for intervention. Sadly, the deception is often effective. The pronouncement of the deed is met with shock and sadness, followed by the search for the inexplicable--why?

The dark place is a dangerous place, but we must learn its secrets. We must strengthen its sentries and reinforce its door. We must do more.

I lost my friend last week, he was a Soldier. ★★

Soldiers practice relaxation techniques during suicide prevention training at Fort Sill, Okla. The training was part of the 214th Fires Brigade 'We Care' getaway program, which emphasized coping strategies, counseling and corrective education for high-risk Soldiers. (Photo by Cannoneer staff)



Professor Gene C. Kamena, is a seventh year faculty member at the Air War College; he serves as the course director for the Joint Strategic Leadership Course in the Leadership and Warfighting Department. He retired from the Army as a colonel of infantry and holds a B.A. in history from Auburn University, Ala., and MMAS degree from Fort Leavenworth, Kan. Past assignments include: commander of the 2nd Brigade, 1st AD; chief of staff for the 1st Infantry Division; director of staff of U.S. Space Command; and the deputy chief of staff for U.S. Northern Command. In 2004, he served as director for all Iraqi security forces. In 2005, he recruited, trained, and led an Iraqi special commando border brigade in the Al Anbar province along the Iraq-Syrian border. His last active duty assignment was as the senior Army advisor to the Air University at Maxwell, AFB. He is a well-published author in the areas of leadership and ethics.

Building Resilient Fires Soldiers

By CPT Corey Robertson

In 2009, the United States Army was working with the University of Pennsylvania to develop a Master Resiliency Training (MRT) Program which was part of the comprehensive Soldier fitness that could be taught to Soldiers, their Family members and U.S. Army civilians. The MRT program has grown over the last four years, becoming much more developed, and now covers comprehensive Soldier fitness. Being resilient is defined as being able to recover from, or adjust easily to, misfortune or change. What the Army is trying to accomplish with MRT is developing Soldiers to meet resiliency head-on and be able to recover and adjust from the one constant in the Army: change.

In the Comprehensive Soldier Family Fitness (CSF2) 2nd Quarter Newsletter, the MRT primary instructor and lead developer of the MRT curriculum, Dr. Karen Reivich, said, "There are now more than 16,000 MRT level I's, 400 level II's (facilitators), 80 level III's (assistant primary instructors) and 25 level IV's (primary instructors) within the U.S. Army. With our numbers growing, I want to encourage everyone to continue to follow the live, train, and embed the philosophy of the MRT course, because each component is essential for our success in paying it forward to those you lead and those you love."

When asked about the importance of the training, 3rd Battalion, 2nd Air Defense Artillery (ADA) Regiment, master resiliency trainer, SFC Timothy Goodman said, "This training teaches Soldiers how to react better to stressful situations and to think through their actions before they act upon them."

31st ADA tailors their MRT program to meet the needs of their Soldiers and their Families at any given time. The MRT program consists of multiple blocks of instruction that cover a wide variety of situations and issues. Each battalion MRT is responsible for teaching the classes based on trends and training in their units, ensuring every Soldier in their ranks is ready and resilient.

Whether Soldiers are preparing to deploy, deployed, or redeploying, MRT offers training for the Soldier to meet the emotional and mental needs of these stressful events. Whether Soldiers are deploying for the first time or the fifth time, the training, preparation and decisions being made leading up to it can be daunting. Will my Family be okay? Where will I store my personal belongings? Will my children be taken care of? These are a few of many questions that come in to play before a deployment. MRT allows the Soldier insight to prepare them mentally and emotionally and be able to become more resilient and handle those issues with ease. "MRT offers the Soldiers classes and training before, during and after deployments to ensure they are being prepared for the stressors that may lie ahead," said Goodman.

During deployments, MRT plays a huge role in assisting Soldiers in dealing with the day-to-day stress that may come from their deployments. "MRT prepares the Soldier prior to deploying to be able to cope with the stress that may come from a deployment, so while deployed the Soldier will have the skills at their disposal and are able to act on them when needed," said Goodman.

During redeployment, Soldiers are faced with the reality of moving out of their theater of operations and back into their garrison environment. Over the course of their deployment Soldiers get into their battle rhythm and are working at a much higher operations tempo. When they return home, they find the fast-paced environment they left is replaced with the often slower and more training-focused environment. "This training really helps prepare the Soldiers for the changes that occur after they are redeployed and how to cope with those changes," said Goodman.

Too often Soldiers are asked to complete tasks that are physically demanding and can lie outside of their physical comfort zone. MRT focuses on preparing these Soldiers mentally and emotionally to meet the physical demands head on and train their minds and bodies to accept these fatigues and push through them. The 31st ADA Brigade Chaplain, MAJ R. Randall Thomas said, "When teaching MRT, I tell Soldiers that becoming mentally and spiritually fit is akin to going to the weight room of life. Soldiers deliberately go to a physical weight room for the sole purpose of lifting heavy weight. Those weights create resistance, and the more a Soldier pushes against that physical resistance (weights) in the weight room, the physically stronger he/she becomes. This makes them physically resilient. In a like manner, Soldiers deliberately endure the stresses of life, Army training, combat, deployments, etc. The aforementioned stressors cause resistance which provides the spiritual weight room of life. When Soldiers push against such resistance, they inevitably become stronger more resilient Soldiers, both mentally and spiritually."

A Soldier's emotional needs can often be overlooked and discounted to the mindset of, "If I can do it then anybody can do it." This is not always the case. Not every person is as physically or mentally attuned as another. Often you will



Dave Shearon, an instructor from the University of Pennsylvania, gives an overview of the Master Resiliency Training (MRT) course and answers questions from the Soldiers during the MRT course. (Photo by SPC Nathan Thome, U.S. Army)

see that even though a physical task is easy for one particular Soldier, the emotional strains that can come with it are sometimes too much to handle.

When Soldiers are dealing with current and future decisions in the military, there are many decisions to focus on. "MRT wants to ensure that Soldiers and their Families have the tools they need to make smart, informed decisions and are able to provide the best future possible for themselves and their Families," said Goodman. "Not every Soldier is going to re-enlist. We are here to prepare them for the emotional and mental stress that may come from this transition."

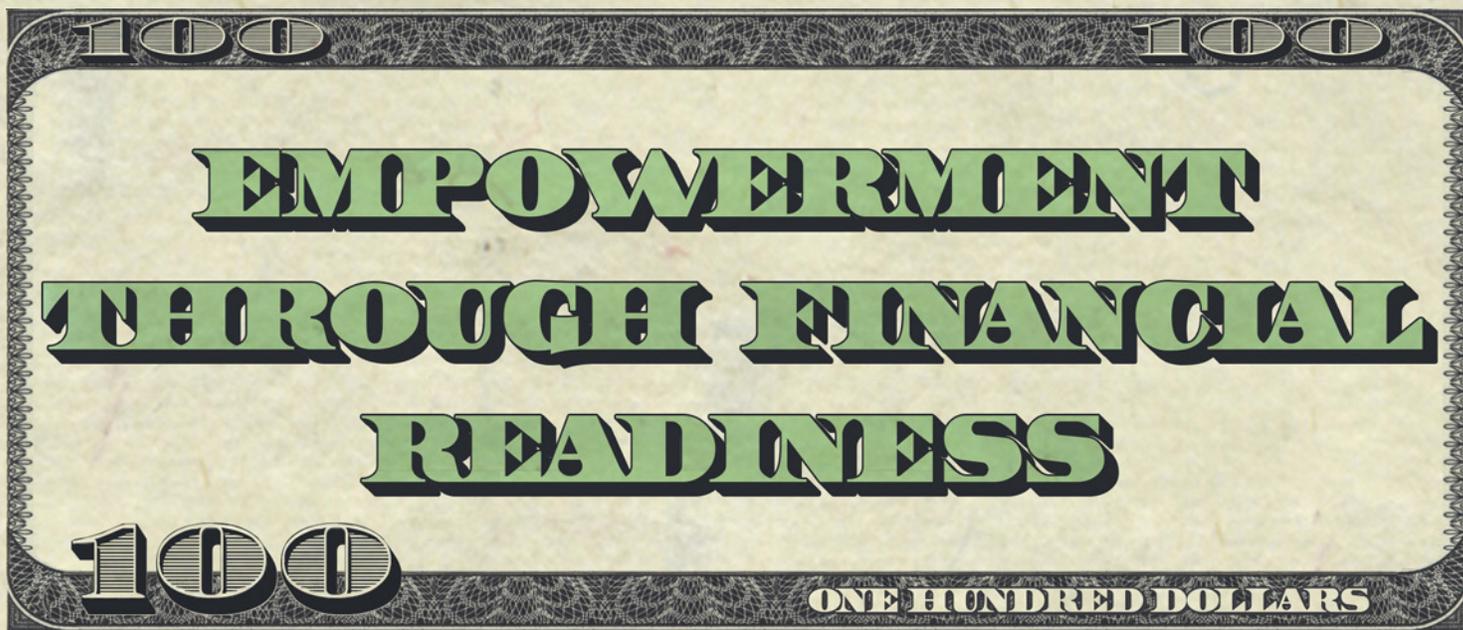
In the CSF2 second quarter newsletter, COL Kenneth H. Riddle, the director of CSF2 said, "I'm proud to announce two new training initiatives CSF2 is standing up this quarter: a Training Support Package and an Executive Course. Each will extend the reach of resilience and performance-enhancement training within the Army and make us a stronger, better force." Our Army senior leadership's intent is to make resilience and performance enhancement part of Army culture. This requires that commanders and CSMs at all levels, plus Army leadership, understand the concepts, know the resilience language and leverage their MRTs.

These two initiatives will provide our MRTs with powerful new capabilities and enable us to take resilience and performance-enhancement training to new audiences. Materials for the Training Support Package and Executive Course will be made available on the MRT resource center.

When matters of finance come into question, MRT strives to mitigate this stress in a Soldier's life. "Financial stress can be one of the biggest stressors in a Soldier's life. When the burden of financial stress is lifted, the overall quality of the Soldier's mental fitness is greatly improved," said Thomas.

When offering advice to Soldiers on where to turn and when to turn for resiliency, Goodman said, "Even though we are not the 'on-the-spot guys' when it comes to dealing with events, we do ensure leaders are trained to be resilient and are able to ensure the resiliency readiness of their Soldiers on a day-to-day basis," said Goodman. ★ ★

Captain Corey Robertson is the public affairs officer for 31st Air Defense Artillery Brigade, 32nd Army Air Mobility Defense Command, at Fort Sill, Okla. He commanded B Company, 168th Brigade Support Battalion, 214th Fires Brigade at Fort Sill. He is a graduate of the University of Central Oklahoma.



By Zilpa N. Oseguera, MBA, AFC

Service members and military Families face many financial challenges as they navigate through the demands and requirements of the military. The frequent permanent change of duty stations (PCS), military deployments, redeployments and final military transition to civilian life may impact the overall short- and long-term financial health of the military Family. Furthermore, as the Department of Defense ends the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, service members will be experiencing a reduction in income of almost 30 percent. Now, more than ever, service members need to be aware of their spending behavior and learn effective strategies to control impulses that may result in financial setbacks. To empower service members and military Families during these challenging times, the Financial Readiness Program (FRP) staff at Army Community Service (ACS) stands ready to assist with effective financial tools and services at no cost. In summary, the program's mission is to provide financial education, training and coaching to service members and Families to further enhance their quality of life and resiliency while they are in the military.

- Important reasons for service members and Families to use FRP resources at ACS:
- Get financially savvy through education, training and coaching at no cost.
- Begin to take control of finances by learning how to take advantage of banks' and vendors' credit.
- Meet with industry-level standard trained/certified financial counselors, coaches and planners at no cost.
- Learn shrewd spending and saving habits without sacrificing the needs and wants in life.
- Gain an insightful understanding of debt and credit management.
- Learn to use the Army's Thrift Sav-

ings Plan as a great retirement investment tool.

- Develop sound family money management strategies.
- Obtain a credit score and report free of charge and learn to use it advantageously.

In today's globally-based economy, economic uncertainty is the only certainty. To counter this challenge, the FRP program offers military members and their Families with educational opportunities through financial readiness workshops. These classes include: Basic Budget and Planning, Debt and Credit Management, Saving and Investing, Banking and Checking, Understanding Insurance Terms, and Consumer Awareness. The one hour themed classes are offered weekly. In addition to the on-site classes offered at ACS, ArmyOneSource.com offers free online financial courses available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Service members and their Families can count on receiving current information and practical exercises through these courses. They will also gain important financial tools that will help them feel empowered to make critical financial decisions.

To lay the foundation for wealth management and success, the FRP also offers the Soldier and the military Family a class on Principles of Finance and Basic Budget and Planning. This class helps service members and Families learn how to develop financial goals and implement an effective spending plan. Service members will learn that while it may be difficult to anticipate the inevitable, having a financial plan will always help them and their family stay focused on their financial goals and in control of their finances.

Another very important resource offered through the FRP is financial counseling. A confidential session with a certified financial counselor will provide service members and Families with the opportunity to discuss their financial situation. The counselor will guide them through the various strategies and action plans that will help address specific financial decisions such as purchasing a vehicle or a home, reducing debt, increasing savings, and/or planning a vacation, etc. The key aspect of this program is that each service member and Family, with the professional help of the counselor, will develop their own fi-

ancial plan, tailoring it to fit their own unique situation. In the private sector, these services can cost Families thousands of dollars.

Financial counselors also assist service members who are having issues with their security clearance due to unmanaged debt or credit report errors. These counseling sessions assist service members with identifying the appropriate approach to handling unmanaged debt and also assist with developing a financial plan that incorporates a 'power-pay' strategy that addresses debt and creditors. Time and commitment by the service member is imperative to experience successful results in debt management.

In other situations, financial counseling is also available to assist service members and Families with extreme financial hardships due to medical expenses, viral credit card dependency and unbudgeted emergency expenses, among other things. In all cases, if these situations are ignored, service members may find themselves forced to have their vehicle repossessed or potential foreclosure of their homes. Worst yet, they may not know that they can talk to their creditors to discuss the situation and work out a feasible payment plan. In these unique situations, financial counselors will discuss different plans of approach and also provide advice on how to proceed in accordance to the current consumer protection laws. Overall, the FRP provides the latest financial tools that will guide and advert many of the challenges experienced by military families.

The FRP works in partnership with community organizations such as Military One Source (MOS) to help expand its resources and services to military Families. Many service members and spouses may not be available during the day to visit with a staff member from the FRP office. If this is the case, they can contact MOS directly at 800-342-9647 for assistance after hours and to schedule an appointment to speak with a counselor. This resource is very valuable because it will provide timely information by professionals at the convenience of the Soldier or military Family member.

Service members and Families experiencing financial hardships may obtain financial assistance through Army Emergency Relief (AER). These services

are co-located with Financial Readiness and are available to help meet a financial emergency that resulted from an unexpected event. Assistance may be in form of a loan or a grant to help pay rent, utilities, food, emergency travel, funeral expenses, medical/dental expenses and other life essentials. This program is a financial source that helps alleviate the Service members and their Families' financial hardships and stressors.

The FRP team is ready to assist service members and military Families experiencing financial challenges as well as service members and Families who want to be proactive about their financial future. Studies show that military families that use these programs will experience a higher level of resiliency and financial stability that translates into higher productivity and mission success for the Department of Defense. All in all, FRP aims to help make service members and Families financially stronger through financial education, coaching and training in a friendly and confidential environment. ★ ★

Zilpa N. Oseguera is the Fort Sill financial readiness program manager at Army Community Service (ACS). She holds a Masters Degree in Business Administration from University of Phoenix and a Bachelors of Liberal Arts Degree from the University of Texas at Edinburg. She is also an accredited financial counselor and an Army Emergency Relief (AER) officer. Oseguera is a military spouse of 18 years and credits over 13 years of civil service experience enhancing the quality of life for military families through empowering ACS programs at different installations in Germany, New York City and Fort Sill. She enjoys developing and implementing financial educational programs that help clients with better financial management and successful future planning.

Editor's Note: *Although this article is written specifically from a Fort Sill perspective, many of the services the author mentions are available in Army Community Service Centers around the world. We encourage you to check with your local ACS if you are interested in any of the classes mentioned.*



MAJ George Corbari, force management officer, 94th Army Air and Missile Defense Command (94th AAMDC) prepares for a helicopter ride while deployed to Afghanistan. Corbari still believes, "The biggest thing I learned from my experiences from the challenges we had supporting our son and my own personal battles with suicidal thoughts was that people contemplating suicide lose the ability to rationally make decisions and that genuinely concerned people can make a difference." (Photo by SSG John H. Johnson III, U.S. Army)

Triumphs and Tribulations

By SSG John H. Johnson III

A senior Soldier opens up about his personal triumphs and tribulations and how he overcame them in order to help his fellow Soldiers to do the same at Fort Shafter Flats, Hawaii, Sept. 30, 2012, during suicide awareness stand-down day.



MAJ George Corbari, force management officer, 94th Army Air and Missile Defense Command (94th AAMDC), poses with his family. (Photo courtesy of U.S. Army)

MAJ George Corbari, force management officer, 94th Army Air and Missile Defense Command (94th AAMDC) faced unspeakable hardships from suicide attempts to war injuries within his family.

Corbari was suddenly chosen to attend the Command and General Staff College instead of going on an imminent deployment. He could have fought going to school, but he chose not to. It was a big decision for him because both his daughter and his son-in-law were in the same unit; he was looking forward to the deployment as all three expected to deploy together to Afghanistan.

While deployed with the brigade, his son-in-law lost both of his legs on a patrol. Corbari was still reeling from attempts by his son to take his own life only a couple of months earlier. This suicide attempt was his son's third; he tried to kill himself this time by cutting his neck with a broken bottle. Suicide attempts by family members were nothing new to Corbari - his mother had attempted suicide multiple times over the years. Another stressor he was struggling with at this same time was the ongoing difficult process of adopting a child from China.

Throughout all of these hardships and tribulations, Corbari has gained valuable insight from his experiences

and always tries to apply that wisdom to his life today.

Corbari said, "The biggest thing I learned from my experiences - by the challenges we had supporting our son and my own personal battles with suicidal thoughts - was that people contemplating suicide lose the ability to rationally make decisions and that genuinely concerned people can make a difference."

Just when his son seemed to be getting better and recovering from suicide attempts, his son got into a car accident when a woman ran a stop sign and broad-sided the car he was driving. His son was not seriously injured, but the car which had just been fixed up for him to take back to college was totaled. Emotionally, it was a setback for all.

Corbari later fell into his own suicidal depression, feeling that he was not able to even turn to his wife for help because of all the experiences that they had both been through in such a short amount of time. He didn't want to burden her with his own personal problems, feeling like he would only be adding to the turmoil they were already experiencing.

Corbari said, "What made a difference for my son and I was that we realized that we mattered to people enough [for them] to make an effort to reach out to us. The people who genuinely cared about us and truly knew us made the

effort to reach out to us, those same people understood that bad things happen to good people and they didn't judge us or think less of us because of our struggles."

Today, Corbari hopes to use his experiences in his life to help other Soldiers make it through any possible hardships they may have. More importantly, he wants to provide fellow Soldiers and leaders with the tools to be better prepared to help a comrade in need.

"My message is that as brothers and sisters in arms we need to take care of each other. To do that, I recommended three simple things: first, understand and believe that everyone matters and are worth your effort; secondly, genuinely care about your buddies, peers, subordinates and superiors by getting to really know them; and finally, understand that the enemy gets a vote. Bad things happen to good people and at some point, we all need help," said Corbari.

COL Gary Norris, Chaplain, 94th AAMDC, was present to hear Corbari tell his story to an audience. He was moved enough by Corbari to later remark, "A person sometimes ends up in their own long dark night of the soul. Other people can sometimes help this person. But to help, one cannot be afraid to reach into another's long dark night of the soul." ★★



SSG George Torres shares his physical fitness expertise with the Soldiers in the 94th Army Air and Missile Defense Command (AAMDC). (Photo courtesy of SGT Louis C. Lamar, U.S. Army)

94TH AAMDC NCO Motivates Soldiers to Stay Fit

By SGT Louis C. Lamar

Physical fitness has always been a top priority for the United States military. Ensuring that all Soldiers stay physically fit and meet all of the standards for height and weight in accordance with Army Regulation 600-9, *The Army Body Composition Program*, is not only a task for first line supervisors, but the responsibility also falls on each individual Soldier to uphold the standards.

The 94th Army Air and Missile Defense Command's Army physical fitness remedial training program helps Soldiers that fail to meet the standards for physical readiness and weight control.

"Soldiers are entered into the Army physical fitness remedial training program if they have been referred by the command due to failing their Army physical fitness tests, failing to maintain height and weight standards, failure to maintain body fat content standards, failing to maintain an acceptable appearance in uniform and when Soldiers self-refer themselves for improvement on physical fitness and weight," said SSG George Torres, the 94th AAMDC's training room noncommissioned officer in charge.

"If the Soldiers were command referred, the only way for them to come

off the Army physical fitness remedial training program is to pass a record physical fitness test or pass their height and weight and also meet body fat content standards set in Army Regulation 600-9," said Torres.

"I think that the Army physical fitness remedial training program is a good program for Soldiers that need the extra help," said PFC Patrick M. Ross, a 94th AAMDC mechanic. "The program is very challenging and helpful if you apply yourself and work hard."

"The Army physical fitness remedial training program is custom-fitted to the area of fitness that the enrolled Soldiers are lacking in or where they need improvement in," said Torres. "We also incorporate daily exercises that target the upper-body, lower-body and cardio fitness."

Torres also added, "Once command referred into the program, this is a mandatory place of duty and Soldiers have to go see a nutritionist and a doctor to get lab work done to make sure there are no underlying medical issues. If a Soldier comes off the program and has to be enrolled again within less than a year, the Soldier can possibly face a chapter separation from the military."

"Promotions, schools, reenlistments,

self appearance and other favorable actions are some of the tools used to motivate Soldiers to get off of the program and stay off," said Torres. "This program has motivated enrolled Soldiers to work out on weekends to improve themselves. It has also improved their self esteem."

"I love to work out, so that motivates me to push myself while training," said Ross.

Torres later added, "Once released from the program, Soldiers normally stay off of it if they don't quit on themselves and use the advice that was given to them by their nutritionist, their doctor and myself."

"Any Soldier within the 94th AAMDC can participate in the Army physical fitness remedial training program if they are not enrolled and just want to improve on their physical fitness," said Torres.

The program's primary objective is to ensure that all personnel are able to meet the physical demands of their duties under combat conditions and to uphold the high standards of professional military appearance expected of all personnel. ★ ★

None Left Behind

By Sgt. Lisa Tourtelot



Sgt. Jesse Conger, the ground training chief with 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing and Concord, Calif., native, mentors two of his Marines during an impromptu session aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., June 11. Conger oversaw the training of nearly 100 Never Leave a Marine Behind suicide prevention training instructors in less than a week. (Photo by Sgt. Lisa Tourtelot, U.S. Marine Corps)

"If engaged leadership was the norm and everyone was involved, how low would the number of suicides go?" asked Sgt. Jesse Conger, the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing ground training chief. Conger took two of his junior Marines outside his office aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., June 11, for a quick mentorship session. He knows they're sports fans and he uses the topic to ease them into more serious conversations.

"I just want to talk to them," said Conger. "I've done it enough that they know it's genuine. They talk to me." Earlier this year, Maj. Gen. Steven Busby, the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing (MAW) commanding general, set a goal: to have

all 18,000 aircraft wing Marines complete their suicide prevention training before the goal date set by the Marine Corps. As the ground training chief for the entire wing, the responsibility fell to Conger. "When we started on that Thursday, we didn't have any unit that was more than 30 percent complete," Conger explained.

By the next week, Conger had trained or arranged the training of more than 100 Never Leave a Marine Behind suicide prevention instructors for 3rd MAW. He explained that now the entire aircraft wing is almost 100 percent complete.

Completion of this annual training is not required until December. Meeting

and exceeding mission requirements is nothing new to Conger. In 2000, Conger was performing religious missionary work in Romania. "I grew up doing it," he explained. "The Marine Corps is the mission now."

Older than his peers, Conger was in Romania when the terrorist attacks of 9/11 happened. He explained that he was hit hard not only by the events, but by his inability to help his fellow Americans.

After completing his mission work, Conger eventually enlisted in 2004 as a rescue swimmer.

"The most important lesson I learned as a missionary is to open my mouth. It is difficult to tell someone else how to



Sgt. Jesse Conger, the ground training chief with 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing and Concord, Calif., native, gets a fresh air break with two of his Marines aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., June 11. Earlier this year, Conger set out to ensure that all 18,000 3rd MAW Marines completed their yearly Never Leave a Marine Behind suicide prevention training. (Photo by Sgt. Lisa Tourtelot, U.S. Marine Corps)

live or correct someone, to get rejected a lot. A lot...a lot," Conger laughed.

Conger takes little credit for his role in training so many Marines in such a short time, and instead focuses on the need for such training. "It's a huge issue to any human being who has ever lost a loved one to suicide. It's got to stop," said Conger. "Why? What's going on in your life that's not being taken care of by leadership that you feel like you need to end your life?"

After returning from his last tour to Afghanistan, Conger found out a close friend of his had ended her own life while on deployment. "I would have done anything to prevent it, and I would do anything with anyone else in the future to prevent that," he said.

Having spent years dealing with the challenges of missionary work, training rescue swimmers and four deployments, Conger believes that leadership is a critical issue in the Marine Corps. "Leadership isn't a born trait in people, it's something that is practiced and honed," said Conger. "It's a skill that's made. Being a good mentor is being an engaged leader."

Conger explained that committed and engaged leadership across the board could replace all suicide prevention, sexual assault prevention, equal opportunity and myriad training intended to engage Marines on specific topics. "When you're engaged, you're going to [do the right thing] every time," he said, gesturing emphatically.

"My first staff sergeant said to me that if you do the right thing every time you can't ever be wrong."

The two younger Marines Conger had been counseling remain relaxed and open, laughing about inside jokes. At the end of their session, he shuffled them back inside to finish the work day.

"Know their needs, their values," said Conger, whose rapport with his Marines speaks for itself. "Have a relationship with them professional enough that you can come to work and be engaged and outside of work you're still engaged with that Marine. It's 24/7."

Conger's question remains the same: if the Marine Corps had more committed and engaged leaders, how many tragedies could Marines prevent? ★★

1st Battalion, 94th Field Artillery, 17th Fires Brigade, Increases Resilience

By SPC Nathan Goodall

Soldiers are defined, by their creed, as professionals – they know their mission and how to accomplish it with honor because of training. Of course, at the end of the day, when they take off the uniform, they may find conflicts at home for which they have not trained.

Army leaders today recognize the importance of increasing resilience, not just on the battlefield, but in every aspect of a Soldier's life. Between deployments, field exercises and long hours, married Soldiers can have a difficult time maintaining strong relationships with their spouses.

Army installations offer a diverse range of resilience-increasing resources for Soldiers and Family members. A resilient marriage seminar, given by Dr. Tim Kimmel of Family Matters, a non-profit ministry, was hosted by 1st Battalion, 94th Field Artillery Regiment, 17th Fires Brigade, as a resource for Soldiers and their spouses interested in strengthening their bond through a

Christian, grace-based approach at the Four Chaplains Chapel, Jun. 5.

The faith-based seminar isn't an odd concept, considering marriage-applicable verses in the Bible, such as 1 Corinthians 13:4, which says, "Love is patient, love is kind," and the amount of military Families that rely on spirituality and religious guidance to shepherd them through life. For SPC Kevin Miller, a generator mechanic with 606th Forward Support Company, 1st Battalion, 377th Field Artillery Regiment, 17th Fires Brigade, and his wife, Marisa Bannister, attending the seminar was a rewarding experience.

Miller and Bannister, are a Catholic couple that were interested in the seminar because of a new addition to their

family. "We had a baby about a year ago, and we just want to get some pointers on how to work through things and resolve them in a way that's beneficial to our Family," Bannister said.

The benefit was the seminar applied to spirituality and Family fitness, two categories in the Comprehensive Soldier and Family Fitness Program that is part of the U.S. Army Ready and Resilient campaign. The focus on strengthening Soldiers in all aspects allowed Miller to attend the seminar during duty hours with his spouse.

As part of the Army Family, Bannister was able to attend as well. "I'm just glad that they have resources like this on [Joint Base Lewis-McChord] offered to Family members," Bannister said.



Above: CSM Dwalyn E. Dasher, with 1st Battalion, 94th Field Artillery, 17th Fires Brigade, takes notes during a resilient marriage seminar, given by Dr. Tim Kimmel with Family Matters, a non-profit ministry, and hosted by 1-94 FA, at the Four Chaplains Chapel, Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash. (Photo by SPC Nathan Goodall, U.S. Army) Right: MAJ Bryan Coleman, executive officer for the 1st Battalion, 94th Field Artillery, 17th Fires Brigade, observes a resilient marriage seminar, given by Dr. Tim Kimmel with Family Matters, a non-profit ministry, and hosted by 1-94 FA, at the Four Chaplains Chapel, Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash. (Photo by SPC Nathan Goodall, U.S. Army)



She also said the seminar helped apply scriptures, like Corinthians, to modern day relationships. While Bannister said the seminar is designed with a Christian mindset, Miller noted that, as with any resilience training and regardless of religion, “the message is still the same: identify what you need to work on to help make your relationship better.”

If you are interested in taking resilience training, or just want to see what programs are offered, talk to your first-line supervisor and Family Readiness Group leader about resilience-building opportunities for your unit. ★ ★



Soldiers, from the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, get together in front of a bonfire at the Austin Resiliency Center (ARC) on Forward Operation Base Shank, Afghanistan. The ARC, named after PFC Barret Austin who died after sustaining wounds in eastern Afghanistan in support Operation Enduring Freedom, is a place for service members to take a deep breath and get away from their daily frustrations. (Photo by SGT Julieanne Morse, U.S. Army)

US Soldiers Stand Resilient Through Test of Combat

By SGT Robert Yarbrough

U.S. service members have been in combat operations in Afghanistan since September 2001, and along the way they have faced many colossal obstacles and experiences, such as death, separation, and physical and mental weariness.

On Forward Operating Base (FOB) Shank in eastern Afghanistan, U.S. service members use many of the services, i.e., the Morale Welfare and Recreation (MWR) centers, chaplain services and the Austin Resiliency Center (ARC), to relax and unwind from the daily stresses of serving in a hostile combat zone.

U.S. Army chaplains, CPT Mickey Basham, the 3rd Battalion, 7th Infantry Regiment, and CPT Travis Hairston, the 4-3 Brigade Special Troops Battalion chaplain, both with 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, had a

vision to expand and remodel a coffee house into a resiliency area for Soldiers to unwind.

The ARC was completed and dedicated June 15, in memory of U.S. Army PFC Barrett Austin, an Easley, S.C., native assigned to 4th BSTB, who died April 21, in Landstuhl, Germany, of injuries sustained on April 17, by an improvised explosive device in Wardak province, Afghanistan, while in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

"It's a place to mentally check-out for a little bit and get away from what you are doing constantly," said U.S. Army Reserves MAJ Amy Alger, a trauma surgeon with the forward

surgical team supporting 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT), also known as the *Vanguard* Brigade.

Alger said there are many ways to cope and when things build up, “you don’t want to be at the place where you constantly deal with a bad situation.”

“Getting to the resiliency center makes it like you are getting away from that...kind of like a mental vacation,” she added. “Plus you are around people who can actually understand what you are dealing with.”

U.S. Army SPC Jameson Liner, the chaplain’s assistant for 4-3 BSTB, uses his high spirit and smile to invite people to the resiliency center, especially when people are having a bad day.

“If you can make someone laugh, you can change their day around,” Liner said.

The ARC features music, cigar smoking, bonfires, indoor and outdoor movie showings, refreshments, snacks, and a small room, known as the Free-X, where Soldiers can get free supplies they might not be able to find at the local exchange.

“It’s really grown to a wonderful place for Soldiers to take a deep breath,” said SSG Andre Gambrell, the 4th IBCT chaplain’s assistant.

Other services on FOB Shank include medical services like the Combat Stress Center and Concussion Care Center.

SGT Matthew Baskin, a fire support specialist, went on 50 missions and conducted patrols where he was engaged by enemy fire on multiple occasions in Wardak province, while assigned to B Company, 3rd Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment, 4th IBCT, but it wasn’t until he was inside the safety of his combat patrol base that he experienced his closest call.

After being within 10 meters of the impact area of enemy indirect fire on June 20, Baskin was evacuated to the 703rd

Brigade Support Battalion, 4th IBCT medical facility on FOB Shank and was diagnosed with having a mild concussion.

Being on his first deployment away from his wife and two boys, Baskin had also experienced the death of a fellow Soldier from his unit, SPC Ray Ramirez, of Sacramento, Calif., who died June 1, in Wardak province, from injuries sustained when his unit was attacked by an improvised explosive device.

Remembering the day Ramirez passed away, Baskin said, “I just remember my heart dropping when the medics on the ground said there were no vital signs.”

While on FOB Shank, Baskin said he couldn’t sleep and was having a hard time concentrating.

He was then seen by CPT Karl Umbrasas, the *Vanguard* Brigade psychologist, and CPT Donald Chase, an occupational therapist managing one of the three Concussive Care Centers in Afghanistan.

Baskin had a great experience with Umbrasas and Chase. He said they were very helpful, providing plenty of time to rest, conducting cognitive exercises, and talking about topics not focused on negative experiences. Baskin said he has bounced back and will continue to move forward to support his Family, who were also a great help in his recovery.

Soldiers serving across the globe endure similar challenges, and their ability to face such obstacles and continue to charge forward is a testament that these warriors are physically and mentally tough. Senior leaders at all levels strive to ensure service members stay physically and mentally tough to prevent serious incidents from occurring and help those to recover who have experienced traumatic events.

Umbrasas added, “Everyone is on board, from the lowest level.” ★ ★

Soldiers from the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, gather at the Austin Resiliency Center (ARC) on Forward Operation Base Shank, Afghanistan, to make a shout-out video for the 2013 Major League Baseball All-Star Game. The ARC, named after PFC Barret Austin who died after sustaining wounds in eastern Afghanistan, is a central place for service members to relax and hang out after a long day or week, while serving in combat operations. (Photo by SSG Elvis Umanzor, U.S. Army)



Military Children: Resilient, Thankful for Opportunities

By SSG Mary Katzenberger

Zoey Richardson is a typical 13-year-old kid. She loves to bake cupcakes and is a self-described gamer, not a nerd - there's a difference, she said. The teenager and her Family live in Cameron, N.C., just a half-hour away from Fort Bragg, N.C.

Zoey is also a military child. She, along with her 11-year-old sister, Emmy, and her 7-year-old brother, John, talked in April during the Month of the Military Child - a month that pays tribute to the sacrifices children make so their parents can serve - about the places they've been able to live and visit and the challenge of living apart from their Army parent.

The Richardson children have 'served' alongside their father, SSG John M. Richardson, most of their lives. Richardson, an air traffic controller with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, has been in the Army for 12 years.

Unlike most military Families, the Richardson's have only experienced two duty stations thus far - the Family was stationed in Germany for 10 years, and they have since been at Fort Bragg.

Zoey said Germany was an amazing country to have spent most of her life in.

"Probably my favorite thing was the food," she said. "They make the breads and the pastries, oh, they were so good."

The Richardson's went to the bakery every Saturday to indulge in their favorite baked treats, and they traveled throughout Europe, the teenager said.

"We went to a lot of countries. We went to Spain. We went to Italy twice," Zoey said. "We went to a whole bunch of little places I can't even name. It was pretty awesome."

Emmy said she enjoyed her life in Germany as well.

"We had a big house and we used to have a pool," she said. "We didn't have a very big backyard but we had a lot of forest and swamp behind it. I'd go back there and catch tadpoles. It was fun."

John said all he remembers about Germany was the snow. He said he has made good friends in his new neighborhood in Cameron. Zoey and Emma said they made friends pretty easy as well when they moved.

"They're very resilient," said the children's mother, Sarah. "They pack up and move easy. They've flown across the ocean I can't even tell you how many times. They've got some frequent flyer miles under their belts."

Besides relocating a few times, the Richardson children have faced another challenge common to the military child experience - their father has deployed twice. Zoey said she missed her dad when he was gone but always knew he'd come back home.

"They make it seem like it's going to be really hard, but he never went for

like two years, he went for six or nine months," Zoey said. "All my friends, their dads (have gone) like six times already."

Zoey said she and her siblings kept in touch with Richardson via Internet calls and letters that they sent in care packages. Emmy said she was comforted by a doll that had her father's picture attached. She said she slept with her 'daddy doll' beside her every night he was gone.

Zoey and Emmy agree that it's great being military children, despite having to relocate or be separated from their father during deployments and training exercises.

"It's not awesome but it's not bad, so it's like in the middle," Emmy said. "I like it...and I get to see him a lot." ★★

SSG John M. Richardson stands outside his home with his wife, Sarah, and children, Zoey, Emmy and John, at their home in Cameron, N.C. (Photo by SSG Mary Katzenberger, U.S. Army)





CPT Jon Strobel (left), flight surgeon for the 159th Combat Aviation Brigade, 101st Airborne Division, and his wife, Melissa, address topics discussed during a Strong Bonds retreat in Nashville, Tenn. (Photo by SPC Jennifer Andersson, U.S. Army)

Strong Bonds Retreats Build Healthy Families, Stronger Units

By Jennifer Anderson

Holly Coats and her husband, 1LT Josh Coats, a platoon leader with 563rd Aviation Support Battalion, 159th Combat Aviation Brigade, have used her parents who have been married for more than 50 years, as a marital role model. They said they realize their own 20-year marriage is a comparatively remarkable milestone these days but, like anything worthwhile, it takes work.

U.S. Army Chaplain LTC Rodie Lamb estimates 50 percent of first marriages end in divorce, with subsequent marriages having even higher odds of divorce. Lamb also said every married couple at some point encounters difficulties with something, whether it is communication, conflict resolution, stress and relaxation, managing anger, sex and intimacy, problem solving, compassion and forgiveness, managing money, commitment and fidelity, or trust and friendship. However, military life places certain pressures on a marriage many civilian couples do not experience, said Chaplain MAJ Ed Yurus, the 159th Combat Aviation Brigade chaplain.

“Consider the amount of time Families are separated for schools, training exercises and combat deployments,” he said. “These extended separations place tremendous strain on a marriage. When a spouse or a parent is away from home for an extended period of time, there is a significant void in the Family structure. It is imperative for the long-term success of the marriage that the void is filled in a healthy fashion.”

Interventions such as Strong Bonds, an Army program

designed to enhance resiliency, are beneficial to build security within relationships between Soldiers and their spouses. Single Soldiers are included, with their programs targeting characteristics of a healthy relationship and how to attain it.

“The Strong Bonds program is highly effective in helping Soldiers and Family members develop resilience and readiness by giving them the skills necessary to cope with stress within relationships,” Lamb said. “Strong Bonds training helps reduce relational stress as well as the subsequent outcomes of divorce and suicide.”

“In [fiscal year] 2011, the Army completed the third year of a five-year longitudinal study evaluating the outcomes of the Strong Bonds training program,” he said. “Preliminary outcomes show a 50 percent lower rate in divorce with an increase in marital satisfaction for participants.”

Strong Bonds helps Soldiers and Family members develop skills that enable them to build resilient relationships and healthy Families, and ensure that Army children grow up in healthy Army Families.

Soldiers and their spouses, from the 63rd Regional Support Command, participate in a couples' kissing exercise during a Strong Bond retreat held in Phoenix, Ariz. (Photo courtesy of the 63rd Regional Support Command)



The techniques presented at Strong Bonds are proactive and preventative, designed to recognize and correct any issues before relationships are in crisis mode.

CPT Jon Strobel, the 159th CAB flight surgeon, likened Strong Bonds retreats to periodic health assessments, a medical requirement for Soldiers. "When your body is healthy, you perform better," he said. "It's also true for your relationships."

"Soldiers and Family members need to spend quality time together in order to strengthen their relationship and build resilience," Lamb said. "The off-post experience gives them an opportunity to enjoy one another and connect with other couples facing similar challenges in a safe environment." Getting away from post and work enables the couples and Families to get away in an undistracted setting and work on relationship skills that will help in building a strong marriage. "You get to take yourself out of a mechanical life of military service and just concentrate on your marriage," Coats said.

Strong Bonds was designed to strengthen marriages, but

they have more impact on participants than just that. They also create a strong support group for Soldiers and Families, as there is some amount of interaction with other Soldiers and Families, in turn connecting Soldiers and Families to each other, the unit, and important resources such as chaplains and Military Family Life Consultants.

"It is also a time for our Army spouses to meet one another and develop friendships that may endure and flourish throughout the upcoming deployment," Yurus said.

Most importantly, because the Family relationship has a strong foundation, it enables Soldiers to stay focused on the mission, improving readiness and retention.

"A Strong Bonds Couples Weekend has a positive impact on our Soldiers and spouses for several reasons," Yurus said. "It is a weekend when a couple decides to stop their hectic weekend schedule and replace 'busyness' with time together, gathering great information to apply to their marriages and Families." ★ ★

A father and son get in touch with nature — and with each other — at the Strong Bonds family retreat in Garmisch, Germany. (Photo by Cynthia Davis, U.S. Army)





Soldiers assigned to the *Stallion* Battalion tour the Intrepid Center of Brooke Army Medical Center (BAMC), led by Kathy, a supervisor and tour guide at the BAMC facility. (Photo by SPC Bailey Kramer, U.S. Army)

Stallions Witness Resiliency in Wounded Warriors

By SPC Bailey Kramer

The ability to recover from or adjust easily to misfortune or change is the Merriam-Webster definition of resilience, which is very important to the American Soldier. The Wounded Warriors from the Brooke Army Medical Center (BAMC) in San Antonio displayed extreme resiliency to the visiting Soldiers of the 2nd *Stallion* Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division during their trip here on Nov. 27, 2012.

"We saw a lot of Soldiers with severe injuries, but all of them still wanted to contribute, to be a part of the organization," LTC Kelvin Brown, the *Stallion* commander, said explaining the resiliency he witnessed among the Soldiers.

While assigned to his previous unit, Brown was given the opportunity to talk with actor Gary Sinise, where he learned just how much he does for Soldiers and Wounded Warriors.

"He sacrifices his time to go around talking to Soldiers," Brown said. "Something I got out of that, we can never forget the sacrifices Soldiers have made. It really stuck with me and I wanted to reach out to our Wounded Warriors and let them know they are not forgotten, we appreciate all they have done for their country."

After coordinating with supervisors at BAMC, the *Stallions* were informed of the normal itinerary for visiting patrons and chose what interested them.

"We wanted to visit with (1st Cavalry Division) Soldiers, well Soldiers in general," Brown added.

During their visit, they learned many Soldiers feel forgotten by their units.

"We found out a lot of Soldiers sometimes don't receive visits from units. So we want to go down there to let these Soldiers know that no matter what patch you are wearing, you are a fellow Soldier," Brown said about the Soldiers residing at BAMC.

Brown went on to talk about one Soldier the *Stallions* met on their visit, SGT Perez, a noncommissioned officer from Fort Riley, Kan., who, even with two amputated legs, expressed a desire to advance in the Army.

"We met SGT Perez," Brown said. "He is a double amputee, had sustained serious injuries, but the one thing he said was, 'I still want to be a staff sergeant.'"

He found Perez's words to be inspiring.

"That was humbling to me, after seeing everything he has gone through, and in his mind he was still saying, 'I still want to be a staff sergeant. I know I am going to have to retire because of my injuries, but I still want to be a staff sergeant,'" Brown added.

Although this was the *Stallions* first trip, they don't plan on remaining strangers to the facility. The commander's goal is for not only Soldiers, but

also Families to visit the hospital two or three times a year.

"We don't want it to be just the Soldiers, we want to get their Family members down there as well to work at the Warrior Family Support Center as well," Brown said about future visits to the hospital. "I want to see if we can get some volunteers to go down there for a day, and possibly cook dinner for some of the Wounded Warriors and their Families."

Brown saw similar desire in the Soldiers that went with him.

"On our way back to post, the Sol-

diers wanted to know what they can do as an organization to help those Soldiers," Brown explained.

Knowing there is a growing desire to return and volunteer made Brown very happy.

"Some of the sacrifices the Soldiers made were one of the reasons we wanted to go," Brown concluded. "It is a way to remember our fellow Soldiers, let them know they are not forgotten and we are thinking about them. That they are still very much a part of the formation." ★★

SFC Kevin Tune, assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, tells his story to the *Stallions* during their visit. (Photo by SPC Bailey Kramer, U.S. Army).





Restoring a 1949 Ford pickup at Great Plains Technology Center, Lawton, Okla., gives Wounded Warrior, SPC Terry Helms, a lot of hands-on training. He plans to open a nonprofit auto body shop for troubled and disadvantaged youth in Claremore, Okla., so he can teach them how to restore cars while they learn a trade. (Photo by Ben Sherman, U.S. Army)

Wounded Warrior Works With Animals, Old Cars to Recover

By Ben Sherman

SPC Terry Helms remembers when his life began to change directions. He was deployed to Afghanistan in May 2010, as a 25B, computer administrator for Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1-279th Infantry Battalion, 45th Infantry Brigade Combat Team from Oklahoma.

“I took a fall in November 2010, while I was deployed to Afghanistan. That injured my back and I lost sensation in my legs. I ended up being evacuated to Landstuhl Medical Center in Germany. I was eventually transferred to the Fort Sill, Okla., Warrior Transition Unit (WTU) in February 2011,” said Helms.

“My recovery started out real slow, or at least it seemed slow to me. But the Army has certain steps that they follow

as they treat you. That made it even more stressful, because I wanted to be treated now,” Helms said. “I have also been diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder, in addition to my back injuries. I used to harass my wife about being forgetful, but after I came back from deployment I would forget stuff, so now she harasses me right back when I forget. I now have to make notes and put all my appointments in my phone.”



SPC Terry Helms gets some extra love and affection from Sophira, a pit bull/Labrador retriever mix he adopted from the City of Lawton Animal Shelter. (Photo by Ben Sherman, U.S. Army)

As Helms continued to recover, he took a light duty job at the Lawton Animal Shelter. He's been working with the animals there for the past six months.

"I help clean cages and feed the animals, as well as work to train dogs. They started a program for WTU Soldiers to come and pick a dog so they could train them. I adopted a part pit bull, part Labrador retriever named Sophira. They were going to euthanize her so I adopted her and have been training her. She's a sweet, loving dog and I'm taking her home with me soon," Helms stated.

"I find working with animals to be a great stress reliever. I come out here and see the dogs on a daily basis and get to play with them. It has helped take my mind off my injuries, personal issues and the medical evaluation board process," he added.

"I've now gotten my disability rating, and I start my transition leave July 1. My goal is to start a non-profit auto body shop for troubled youth, where I would teach them everything from changing tires to painting cars. I have taken four cycles of auto body classes at Great Plains Technology Center in Lawton, and I've learned a lot. I'm restoring a 1949 Ford pickup that I found in a junkyard as my class project. And because of my injuries I have had to change the way I do auto bodywork and other things so it doesn't hurt as bad.

"With the help of my instructor at Great Plains, and taking the class four times, I have learned to do things a certain way. For some tasks I sit down, while others I do them standing up. I have to keep changing my position so that I don't start hurting. Working in the auto body shop also relieves some of my stress as well," he said.

Don Lynch, night auto body instructor at Great Plains Technology Center, has become very close to Helms.

"Terry's a really great guy. I'm really going to miss him when he leaves, not only as a student but as a friend. He's a good Christian young man and I know he will do well with his plans to start a body shop of his own."

Helms plans to open up his nonprofit body shop in Claremore, Okla., near his hometown of Foyil, Okla. The shop will give troubled youth a place to come and learn how to work on cars.

"I want to take cars that are donated to the shop. Then the teens will all work on the same car. They will have to fill out time sheets to track the hours each of them puts into the project. And the one who has put in the most effort, 'sweat equity' if you will, gets the car," Helms said. "If three or four of them have the same amount of time invested and want the car, we will have a drawing to see who wins it. That way it will be fair. If some of them have their own car and want to work on it, I can work with them as well. The key thing is to teach them responsibility, accountability and how things work in an auto shop environment. Many of them have never had opportunities like that."

The other reason Helms wants his own shop is so he can have an environment that is tailored to his disabilities.

"I'll be able to sit when I need to and stand when I need to. A lot of employers are gung-ho about hiring veterans and wounded warriors, but at the same time, if you can't stand eight hours a day or you need to alternate your position, some employers are hesitant to hire you. So this situation will be great for me to have control over my work environment," Helms said.

"I've also considered doing old cars like my '49 Ford, for several reasons. They are easier to work on and you can get a lot of remanufactured replacement parts for them. They were

made of steel, so they are easier to do the bodywork, plus when they are restored there would be more classic cars on the roads. And, then we would give the car to the teens.”

Helms is excited about the transition to the next phase of his life. After 11 years in the National Guard and two years of recovery at Fort Sill, he reflected back on his time in the Army, and at the WTU.

“It has had its ups and downs, just like any other Army unit. I would tell other Soldiers in the WTU that if they keep

an open mind and try to stay informed about what is going on, they will do OK. I just focused on the healing process, and what I wanted to do when I got out and the time seemed to go by quickly,” he said. “I decided to do the best for myself and take advantage of the opportunities that were given to me. You have to learn to work with your injuries and make a plan for what you are going to do because of them. You have to make the best of the situation.” ★ ★

SPC Terry Helms poses with Sophira, a pit bull/Labrador retriever mix he adopted from the Lawton Animal Shelter. (Photo by Ben Sherman, U.S. Army)





Photo by SGT Amanda Tucker, U.S. Army

Providers Assist Soldiers in Resiliency

By SGT Amanda Tucker

It does not discriminate. It can show itself in any individual at any age. It does not care if you are rich or poor. Depression is deadly, silent and can hide from battle buddies, leaders and Family. The 82nd Sustainment Brigade has multiple resources for Soldiers considering suicide to persevere and enhance their resiliency during troubled times.

"The reality of the situation is that Soldiers are a lot more likely to talk to a friend than they are to see a chaplain or the military Family life consultant or other professional help," said CPT Jessie McCullough, 264th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion chaplain.

Soldiers are learning how to recognize signs of depression through Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST). This method gives strength to the Soldiers within the command to help their comrade when their battle buddy would not otherwise feel comfortable talking to medical personnel or a chaplain. They are trained to ask a question that before now has been uncomfortable to ask, "Are you thinking of committing suicide?"

"ASIST is not designed to make peo-

ple professional counselors," said McCullough. "When people know more warning signs and are more comfortable talking about suicide, they are more likely to ask the question when they do perceive suicidal gestures or ideations."

Battalion chaplains also provide pastoral care and counseling. Counseling types include crisis intervention, prevention and intervention of suicidal behavior, and counseling for spiritual direction stress management, fear, grief or trauma. "As chaplains, we are out with the Soldiers so they get a chance to see us," said McCullough. "That personal relationship is one of the big reasons a Soldier will come and talk to us. When people who are depressed come to me, I try to have them think about one or two things to look forward to. My favorite definition of hope is the knowledge that there are good things yet to come."

Another brigade resource for Soldiers experiencing depression is the Military Family Life Consultant (MFLC). MFLCs provide anonymous, confidential support to Soldiers and their Family mem-

bers. They provide individual or group coaching and training sessions. MFLCs also provide informal counseling outside their office to help meet a Soldier's location needs.

Soldiers can also visit the Behavioral Health Team across from the brigade headquarters on the second floor of the brigade annex building. The behavioral health team offers treatment for traumatic brain injuries and behavioral health concerns. The team is comprised of one psychiatrist, one psychologist and two social workers.

These are just a few of the resources available for the provider Family.

Veterans and their loved ones can also call the Veterans Crisis Line at 1-800-273-8255, chat online at <http://www.veteranscrisisline.net> or send a text message to 838255 to receive confidential support 24/7, 365-days-a-year.

If you know someone who is contemplating suicide, do not be afraid to take the step and ask them the question. It may save a life. ★★

Taking Care of Soldiers:

Understanding the Voice of the Customer and Defining the Requirement

By LTC Bryan Salyers, MAJ Kevin Cline and MAJ Jaime Santiago

The Army acquisition process is rooted in requirement development, material development and funding. The cooperation and parallel efforts by the requirement and material developers ultimately result in delivering the most capable products to the warfighter. The genesis of the development starts with identifying the capability gap and translating it into an approved requirement. Once the necessary approval authority has accepted the requirement, the material developers can begin work on developing the material solution. During this time, it is imperative to understand the Soldier's voice in order to correctly define the requirement resulting in the right end product.

A Soldier aims an XM-25 weapon system at Aberdeen Test Center, Md. It features an array of sights, sensors and lasers housed in a Target Acquisition Fire Control unit on top, an oversized magazine behind the trigger mechanism, and a short, ominous barrel wrapped by a recoil dampening sleeve. (Photo courtesy of PEO Soldier)









Left: Soldiers test the AN/PAS-13 Thermal Weapon Sight (TWS). The AN/PAS-13 enables Soldiers with individual and crew served weapons to see deep into the battlefield, increase surveillance and target acquisition range and penetrate obscurants, day or night. (Photo courtesy of PEO Soldier) Above: A Soldier tests the XM153 Common Remotely Operated Weapon Station (CROWS) during a testing exercise. (Photo courtesy of PEO Soldier)

The Defense Acquisition Guidebook defines the stakeholder requirements definition process as that process by which the material developer takes “requirements from relevant stakeholders and translates them into a set of technical requirements.” Further, “the process helps ensure each individual stakeholder’s requirements, expectations and perceived constraints are understood from the acquisition perspective.”

Who are the Stakeholders? In the acquisition process, the stakeholders are all parties involved in the overall process of developing a requirement to developing the material solution, but in the end, the Soldier is the ultimate stakeholder who eventually uses and relies on the finished product. Hence, it is critical that throughout the requirements definition process, the Soldier’s voice is heard. The Defense Acquisition Guidebook warns that “failing to perform an exhaustive stakeholder requirements definition process could result in significant requirements creep, rework due to misunderstanding of end-user needs, unexpected contract modifications, cost growth and schedule slip.” In short, if this process is not done correctly with in-depth consultation with the end user, then as the schedules slip and costs grow, the warfighter ultimately ends up not having the required capability when it is needed on the battlefield.

A key part of the stakeholder requirements definition process is the requirements analysis process. This process takes inputs from the stakeholders and, through analysis and refinement, begins to develop areas where capability tradeoffs may exist. The Defense Acquisition Guidebook defines this step as the process of defining, deriving and refining requirements. First the requirement is analyzed. Once the gaps between current capabilities and the requirement are understood, the “user needs can be translated into basic functions.”

Throughout this process, interaction between the requirement developer and material developer is essential. Not all requirements can be met at all times. Satisfying requirements is often a function of budget, levels of technological readiness and the time or schedule required to deliver the needed capability. In times of budgetary constraints, executable requirement trade-offs have been a key element to successful modernization efforts providing needed capabilities without compromising safety or system effectiveness. It is during this effort that the requirement and material developers determine where performance trades may be necessary and ensure that these trades are done in such a fashion that the end product still meets the

needs of the Soldier. The Defense Acquisition Guide is clear that in the end, “the program manager is responsible for supporting the stakeholder requirements definition process and should work with the end user to establish and refine operational needs, attributes, performance parameters and constraints documented in Joint Capabilities Integration Development System (JCIDS) documents.”

Within the Precision Fires Rocket and Missile Project Office, the product manager for Field Artillery Launchers (FAL) is chartered to manage the cost, schedule and performance of both the

M270A1 Multiple Launch Rocket System (MLRS) and the M142 High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS) platforms. Both systems are combat proven. Both systems utilize a three-man crew. The M270A1 can be deployed both by C5 and C17. The M142 HIMARS is deployable by both the C130 and the C17. Both systems have the capability to operate in all weather conditions and in all levels of visibility.

The FAL portfolio represents the world’s premier rocket and missile launch systems. Yet, as with any system, room always exists for improvements. In recent years, the warfighter has de-

termined a need for numerous modifications and improvements. When the Army’s Fires Center of Excellence, at Fort Sill, Okla., spoke, the FAL team listened. The FAL product office has been able to implement several major modifications to the existing launcher fleet by conducting the stakeholder requirements definition process.

The Platform. The MLRS provides an indirect, area and precision fire weapon system to strike high-payoff threat maneuver, fire support, forward area air defense and command, control and communications targets. An added system capability is the guided munitions



with low collateral damage risks that are currently available to the ground commander. The 200-pound payload Guided Multiple Launch Rocket System (GMLRS)-Unitary rocket adds responsiveness and all-weather precision-strike capabilities, while the Army Tactical Missile System (ATACMS)-Unitary rocket provides a 500-pound payload.

Integrating the Soldier into Platform Improvements. The Army seeks partnerships with industries that provide the best value and meet the needs of the warfighter, while examining cost, schedule, performance, risk and other

factors. The M270A1 improved cab is a great example of collaboration to provide greatly increased crew protection, 30 percent more crew space within the cab and standardized crew drills and crew seating between the HIMARS and the M270A1.

The original M270 launcher was designed for employment behind front-line Soldiers capitalizing on the extended reach and firepower of the rockets and missiles. The M270 cab, when originally fielded, had minimal armor to protect the launcher crew. Operations in Iraq and Afghanistan have demonstrated that the threat has evolved and

increased protection and capability are required. The improved armored cab will provide greater protection against mines, improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and fragmentation from enemy artillery and direct attack from small arms. The M270A1 continues to prove itself as a superior weapon system, and the improved armored cab effort will greatly increase survivability and functionality for the Soldier.

By integrating the Soldier and the Soldier's needs into the improved armored cab effort, a design was created to develop and deliver a capability that will allow the Field Artillery Soldier to dominate. Every aspect of the cab design has been accomplished in conjunction with representatives from the Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) Capabilities Manager Fires Brigade office at Fort Sill. The improved armored cab will incorporate other modifications such as the driver's vision enhancement (DVE), blue force tracker (BFT) and long range communications (LRC) to each launcher. The DVE includes a forward looking infrared (FLIR) system that provides the ability to conduct day/night operations. The DVE also provides the ability to maneuver in smoke, fog dust or other battlefield obscurants. BFT provides greater situational awareness for the crew by providing the locations of friendly units and other battlefield intelligence. Finally, LRC provides the ability to receive fire missions, both digital and analog, from thousands of miles away. Working with Fort Sill to determine how this equipment impacts the Soldier's work space and how Soldiers will actually use the equipment results in a vehicle that meets both Soldier and

Platoon leader, 1LT Chance Panter, from B Battery, 4th Battalion, 27th Field Artillery, moves to secure the landing zone during an air artillery raid, on White Sands Missile Range, N.M. Missions such as the air artillery raid, are common practice in the 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, where the training tempo is considerably higher than many Army units due to their involvement in the Network Integration Evaluations, which put Soldiers at the forefront of the Army's testing and acquisition process. (Photo by SGT Sean Harriman, U.S. Army)



mission requirements. The improved armored cab is currently in the technology development phase and will begin fielding to units in 2016.

The M142 HIMARS team's commitment to the users extends far beyond procurement, fielding and sustainment of the system; it is a continuous process in providing the Soldiers with solutions that meet their evolving requirements through the refinement of requirements and modernization efforts. The warfighters (i.e., stakeholders) are putting it all on the line, and it is the PM's obligation to keep them relevant, ready and prepared. Because obsolescence is almost always an inevitable phenomenon when it comes to a weapon system, mitigation efforts have to be strategically designed in order to meet mission user requirements. Obsolescence mitigation saves money, improves system capabilities and provides updated equipment that meets current and future needs. These efforts result in an improved system that will allow the Soldier to step onto the battlefield not with an obsolete system, but with the full strength and dedication of a proven team of acquisition professionals working together to keep the systems relevant.

The Soldier centric HIMARS mod-

ernization efforts continue to provide fleet-wide modification improvements in the form of communications, situational awareness systems, counter IED and safety. Other efforts alongside DVE, BFT and LRC are being performed in support of HIMARS. This multi-dimensional focus continues to support the Soldier in a constant changing environment. PM FAL has been working on the acquisition of additional safety oriented improvements that are scheduled to begin fielding in August 2013. These include the HIMARS improved crew protection (ICP) cab armor appliqué containers, developed to store the appliqué and extend its serviceability, durability and performance, the HIMARS commander's restraint system (HCRS) and sapphire-glass polycarbonate transparent armor (TA). These changes are not only intended to modernize the system's capability, but are also designed to increase Soldier safety and overall improvement in system survivability requirements.

The HCRS initiative began in response to a safety concern which called for better protection of the HIMARS crew chief (vehicle commander) while operating the vehicle. The HCRS is designed to restrain the crew chief from

being ejected during a rollover. The HCRS also helps stabilize the Soldier during vehicle movement while at nametag defilade (i.e., exposed through the open roof hatch) and while standing or sitting, especially in rough road conditions and during high-speed maneuvers. The HCRS incorporates a quick-release swing seat with mounting brackets and a retractor plate that is mounted beneath the existing crew chief seat and is designed to offer additional blast protection. This effort strives to mitigate safety risks associated with vehicle roll-overs after various incidents were reported in Afghanistan, Fort Bragg, N.C., and Camp Pendleton, Calif. While no serious injuries resulted from any of those events, an effort that was initiated by the program office through the Prototype and Integration Facility at Redstone Arsenal, Ala., will culminate with the fielding of the HCRS to units starting in August 2013.

The most challenging key performance parameter (KPP) for the HIMARS system is its C-130 transportability, where weight is a constraint to any and all modifications. These modification efforts are a testament of the balance being conducted throughout the acquisition process in order to de-



liver proven capabilities that continue to meet user requirements while maintaining an unyielding focus on safety, quality of materials and innovation. The ICP cab was developed to provide maximum protection to the Soldiers while maintaining strict weight requirements. This modification incorporated a new cab design, new materials and a modular concept (appliqué) to accomplish the desired effects. The sapphire-glass TA is another example of innovation that will give the user the opportunity to conduct their missions with industry-leading technology and materials that will not only improve user requirements in safety and crew protection but also adhere to system weight requirements, improved performance and long-term supportability. The current TA that is fielded has shown a tendency to delaminate during long-term sun and high temperature exposure, resulting in shorter life and increased sustainment costs. Saint-Gobain Crystals, a new industry partner for the M142 HIMARS, was able to develop sapphire-glass which is scheduled to begin fielding in

August 2013. Safire glass, the commercial product creatively named for its attributes to improved safety and infrared (IR) supported technology, is a 60 percent lighter replacement TA that is made with sapphire crystal bonded to layers of glass. This new development reduces internal heat build-up and delaminating concerns currently being experienced in the field. In addition, night vision goggle (NVG) operations were also enhanced as a result of sapphire-glass not requiring Mylar peel ply film to meet blowing sand abrasion requirements.

The PM FAL team has been continuously supporting user needs, and the team's focus will always be to keep the stakeholders, our Soldiers, relevant and safe. ★ ★

Lieutenant Colonel Bryan Salyers received a commission in 1995 from the United States Military Academy into the infantry branch. He holds a Masters degree in Business Administration from Webster University. He has served in a variety of program management positions within the

acquisition corps. He is currently serving as the product manager for Field Artillery launchers.

Major Kevin Cline received a commission in 1996 from The Citadel into the armor branch. He holds a Masters degree in Systems Management from the Naval Post-Graduate School. He has served in a variety of program management and contingency contracting positions within the acquisition corps. He is currently serving as the product director Improved Armor Cab.

Major Jaime Santiago was commissioned into the Field Artillery branch after completion of Officer Candidate School in 2001. He holds a Masters degree in Leadership and Management from Webster University. He has held numerous positions while serving in an M270A1 MLRS battalion and as a test officer within the acquisition corps. He is currently serving as the assistant product manager for the HIMARS system.

Soldiers test the AN/PAS-13 Thermal Weapon Sight (TWS). The AN/PAS-13 enables Soldiers with individual and crew served weapons to see deep into the battlefield, increase surveillance and target acquisition range and penetrate obscurants, day or night. (Photo courtesy of PEO Soldier)





COMPREHENSIVE SOLDIER & FAMILY FITNESS

BUILDING RESILIENCE ★ ENHANCING PERFORMANCE

What is Comprehensive Soldier and Family Fitness (CSF2)?

A strength-building tool...

The U.S. Army's program to provide all Army community members with the psychological resources and skills to cope with adversity and thrive in their lives.

Built on solid foundations...

The program is based on over 30 years of scientific evidence.

Dedicated to complete wellness...

It trains specific skills in five dimensions of strength (social, emotional, family, spiritual, and physical).

With measurable results...

The result is greater resilience – one's ability to return to a normal state of functioning following stress or tragedy and to apply the skills learned in everyday life, including on the job and with friends and family.

Desired Outcomes:

A Total Army team of physically healthy and psychologically strong Soldiers, Families and Civilians whose resilience and total fitness enables them to thrive in both the military and civilian sector and to meet a wide range of operational demands.

Giving Soldiers, Civilians, and Family members the tools for success:

CSF2 is intended to help healthy people stay healthy while facing the challenges common in Army life. It is designed to teach long-lasting skills that can help Soldiers succeed in all aspects of their lives, producing benefits in times of conflict and in times of peace. If incorporated holistically and supported by commands, CSF2 can prevent self-defeating behaviors and lead to stronger, more ready units and Families.

The CSF2 program consists of five pillars:

The Global Assessment Tool (GAT) - A survey tool through which individuals are able to confidentially assess their physical and psychological health based on four of the five dimensions of strength: emotional, social, spiritual, and family fitness.

Comprehensive Resilience Modules (CRM) - Web-based, self-development training intended to build resilience across the force (and the wider military community) and teach skills that support social, emotional, family, spiritual, and physical resilience.

Master Resilience Trainers (MRT) - MRTs serve as Commanders' advisors for resilience training. Graduates of a 10-day course, these Soldiers, Department of the Army Civilians and Army spouses (statutory volunteers) are the only personnel authorized to conduct formal resilience training to members of the Army Family.

Institutional Resilience Training (IRT) - Resilience training provided at every major level of the Army education system, from basic training to the War College.

Performance Enhancement - Provides Soldiers, Family members and Civilians with the mental and emotional skills to strengthen their minds and perform at their best when it matters most: in combat, healing after an injury or managing work and home life.

Comprehensive Soldier and Family Fitness is effective:

- An evaluation completed by Army and Civilian scientists showed that Soldiers who received MRT-led resilience training reported higher levels of resilience and psychological health over time than Soldiers who did not receive the training. Most importantly, good leadership matters- Soldiers improved more when their commanders endorsed the program, scheduled training, and selected confident NCOs to serve as CSF2 trainers.

Global Assessment Tool (GAT):

- Over 3 million completed surveys
- Over 2,500 surveys completed per day
- Shows Soldiers how their results compare to others in the same population bracket
- Confidential feedback presented to the Soldier upon survey completion
- Allows for analysis of changes in resilience over time
- Family members and DA Civilians are encouraged to take the GAT

Comprehensive Resilience Modules (CRM):

- Modules viewed over 1.6 million times
- Currently 54 modules in place and more in production
- All five dimensions of strength are covered
- Appropriate CRMs are recommended to address suggested improvements upon completion of the GAT

Master Resilience Trainers (MRT):

- Over 17,000 NCOs trained since inception of CSF2
- Uses "train-the-trainer" format
- Requirement for one MRT per company ensures resilience skills are integrated into the daily lives of the entire Army

Training Centers:

- CSF2 Training Centers are extensions of CSF2 at the installation level. Training Centers are staffed with Master Resilience Trainer-Performance Experts (MRT-PEs) who support local MRT Training and provide Performance Enhancement training to Soldiers, their Families, and Army Civilians.
- CSF2 Training Centers are located at Fort Benning, Fort Bliss, Fort Bragg, Fort Carson, Fort Gordon, Fort Hood, Fort Jackson, Fort Knox, Fort Sam Houston, Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Fort Campbell, Fort Drum, Fort Riley and the National Capital Region.

Survey Validation Technical Reports #1 and #2

- Soldiers who completed suicide, tested positive for illicit drug use, or committed violent crimes, tested as being less resilient than those who did not engage in these activities.
- Officers who were promoted ahead of peers or selected for command are more emotionally and socially fit than Officers not promoted early or selected for command.
- Together, Tech Reports #1 and #2 showed that resilience is linked to important behavioral outcomes.

Program Evaluation Technical Reports #3 and #4

- Soldiers who received resilience training taught by an MRT improved more than those Soldiers who did not receive the training, particularly in 18-24 year-olds.
- The training is more effective when commanders ensure that training is properly scheduled, confident leaders are selected as trainers, and then trainers feel that commands support them.
- Units with MRTs had significantly lower rates of substance abuse diagnoses (drug and alcohol abuse) and diagnoses for mental health problems (anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder) compared to units without MRTs.

Current and Future Directions

- Developing a resilience curriculum for adolescents.
- Analysis of Soldier drug and alcohol abuse, divorce rates, and attrition to GAT scores continue.
- Efficacy of spouse resilience training pilot program is being evaluated for expanded implementation.
- Implementation and evaluation of resilience training during in-processing at three major Army installations.



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COMPREHENSIVE SOLDIER & FAMILY FITNESS

BUILDING RESILIENCE ★ ENHANCING PERFORMANCE



What is Comprehensive Soldier and Family Fitness (CSF2)?

CSF2 is designed to **build resilience** and **enhance performance** of the Army Family -- **Soldiers**, their **Families**, and **Army Civilians**. CSF2 does this by providing **hands-on training** and **self-development tools** so that members of the Army Family are better able to **cope with adversity**, **perform better in stressful situations**, and **thrive in life**.

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SGT Michael Tyler is reunited with his wife, Carmen, after a year-long deployment to Afghanistan, during a redeployment ceremony at the Graham Resiliency Training Center, Fort Sill, Okla. (Photo by SPC Levi Spellman, U.S. Army)