



# The DOUBLE EAGLE

"Twice the Citizen! Army Strong!"

APRIL 2016, Vol. 5 No. 1



# U.S. ARMY RESERVE CULINARY ARTS TEAM

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U.S. Army Reserve Culinary Arts Team member, Staff Sgt. Joseph Parker, with the 451st Quartermaster Company, 143rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), cooks mushrooms during the Nutritional Hot Food Challenge category at the 41st Annual Military Culinary Arts Competitive Training Event, March 8, 2016, at Fort Lee, Va. Parker and Barnhill earned a silver in the category with their Roasted Beet Salad, Pan Seared Trout, and Eggless, Milkless Spice Cake, all coming in at under 850 calories. (Photo by Timothy L. Hale/U.S. Army Reserve Command)



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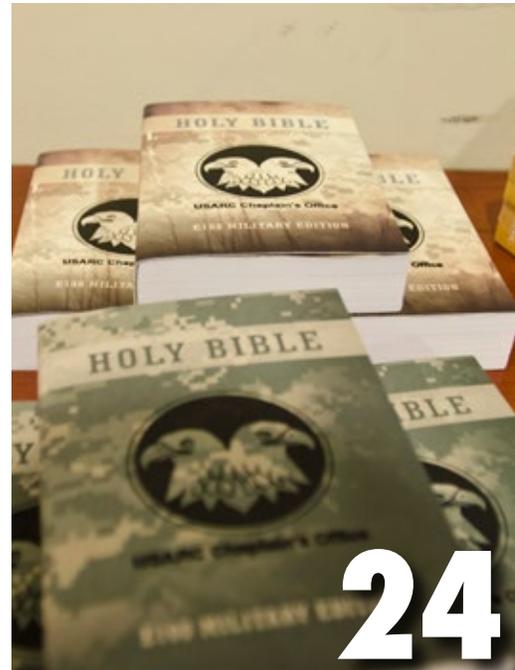
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# DOUBLE EAGLE





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THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF  
HEADQUARTERS,  
U.S. ARMY RESERVE COMMAND  
PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE,  
FORT BRAGG, N.C.

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Double Eagle back issues.**

# Kitchens, Chickens, and Clergy

If the headline above doesn't grab your attention, nothing will.

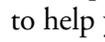
We start our fifth year of the "[Double Eagle](#)" with a variety of topics highlighting Warrior-Citizens and how their military and civilian skills cross-over to form life skills in the communities in which they live.

The [U.S. Army Reserve Culinary Arts Team](#) traveled to Fort Lee, Va. for the [41st Annual Military Culinary Arts Competitive Training Event](#). The team consisted of Soldiers from broad range of careers outside of the military - a police officer, a college student, and a former menu research and development chef with a major national restaurant chain. After a week of competition, the team brought home three silver and four bronze American Culinary Federation medals. The team is looking to expand next year so if you're interested visit their new page on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/USARCulinary>.

Speaking of food, Sgt. Joe Villines, is an aspiring chicken farmer in Iowa. He is also a U.S. Army Reserve Public Affairs Soldier with the [203rd Public Affairs Detachment](#) and a Department of Veterans Affairs civilian employee. He balances these jobs along with being a single parent - a further testament to being a Citizen-Soldier.

While we are talking about testifying, can I get an Amen? The [U.S. Army Reserve](#) Chaplain's Office held their first-ever Rural Clergy Training Program at Pope Army Airfield, Fort Bragg, N.C. in March. The goal of the program is to increase the tools available for military chaplains to help reach clergy and congregations in remote geographical areas, helping them learn more about the military culture, the wounds of war, the challenges veterans face following deployments, provide pastoral care to veterans and their Families, and building community partnerships to support them. This is great program given the geographically-dispersed nature of our U.S. Army Reserve Soldiers and their Families. Amen, indeed.

You may also notice a change in the look of this issue with the inclusion of hyperlinks throughout the featured stories. To make the "Double Eagle" more interactive, we will start including hyperlinks to units, programs, and websites related to each story. This will give you, the reader, an opportunity to find out more about our Soldiers and the stories behind why they continue to serve.

You will also notice a new navigation feature at the bottom of each right-hand page. These navigation links feature a table of contents icon  plus a last page and next page arrows  to help you navigate through each issue.

As always thanks for reading the "Double Eagle" and keep those story ideas coming.



Timothy L. Hale  
Editor



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Timothy L. Hale, a U.S. Air Force veteran, is an award-winning photojournalist and editor of the USARC Double Eagle. He is member of a number of professional organizations to include: Nikon Professional Services, National Press Photographer's Association, and the North Carolina Press Photographer's Association. The views expressed in this column are expressly his own and do not necessarily reflect those of the U.S. Army Reserve Command, the Department of the Army, and/or the Department of Defense.

# U.S. Army Reserve Culinary Team way to silver, bronze medals



The [U.S. Army Reserve Culinary Arts Team](#) cooked up three silver and four bronze medals at the [41st Military Culinary Training Event](#), held at Fort Lee, Virginia.

There were 244 teams representing the Marine Corps, Navy, the Army Reserve, and the United Kingdom judged entries, totaling 167 silver, and 166 awarded. The following highlights from their competitive

[Their stories begin](#)

# Culinary Arts Team cooks their meals at military competition

[Reserve Culinary](#)  
and their way to  
four bronze  
[Best Annual](#)  
[Competitive](#)  
March 7-11, at

military chefs  
active Army,  
Navy, and Air Force,  
France, and  
dom. Of the 503  
there were 49 gold,  
67 bronze medals  
Following pages are  
the USAR CAT in  
the events.

[in on Page 6.](#)



# Three is the magic number for Dennis

Story & photos by **TIMOTHY L. HALE**  
U.S. Army Reserve Command

FORT LEE, Va. – Three was the magic number for Pfc. Tyquanda Dennis, a culinary specialist with the 275th Quartermaster Company, based at Fort Pickett, Virginia.

Dennis, who lives in nearby Henrico County, Virginia, has only been a member of the [U.S. Army Reserve Culinary Arts Team](#) for three days.

Competing in the Armed Forces Junior Chef of the Year category at the [41st Annual Military Culinary Arts Competitive Training Event](#), March 6, Dennis scored a bronze medal with a chocolate lava cake, mixed berries in red wine, and a butterfly tuile (baked wafer) delicately placed in orange mascarpone.

She practiced by making the dessert three times.

Three days on the team, three practice rounds, and a third place finish - three really was a magic number for Dennis.

“I got a phone call report to Fort Lee for training. So I reported on Thursday,” Dennis said. “It makes me feel good to have placed with a medal.”

Dennis, who is a student East Coast Polytechnic Institute and cooks in the cafeteria at a corporate complex in Glen Allen, Virginia, said competing on short notice didn’t come without challenges.

“My mind would just go blank. And at the end, I was trying to get my coulis (strained berries) on the plate and it was just



going everywhere,” she said with a laugh.

But competing at this level has given her newfound confidence and she said she encourages other young Soldiers like her to compete.

“Go into it with a focused-mind but not so much that you’re stressing yourself out,” Dennis said. “Have fun while you’re doing it and get as much practice as you can before going in so that you’ll already have it in your head on what you have to do.”

But Dennis was not alone in her preparation for the competition. Staff Sgt. Aqueelah James, who has been on the U.S. Army Reserve Culinary team since 2011, was there to coach and guide Dennis in her short three days with the team.

“She helped me a lot. I went in knowing nothing,” Dennis said. “She did my first run-through with me and showed me exactly what to do. It was a big help.”

Dennis said practicing three times was an advantage when it actually came time to compete.

“When I went in I didn’t even need my recipe, I knew my steps,” Dennis said.

James, who is with the 3rd Medical Command (Deployment Support), Fort Gillem, Georgia, said that Dennis had a good attitude and work ethic.

“As long as you have hard work, integrity, and passion, you will succeed,” James said. “If you learn to love the art and learn to understand it’s not just cooking but it is also about personal and professional growth, you will do very well in our field.” 🇺🇸



**DESSERT CHEF.** Pfc. Tyquanda Dennis, with the 275th Quartermaster Company, Fort Pickett, Va., plates here dessert, opposite page, applies tuile (baked wafer) to a baking sheet, top of this page, for her entry during the Armed Forces Junior Chef of the Year competition at the 41st Annual Military Culinary Arts Competitive Training Event at the Joint Culinary Center of Excellence, March 6, at Fort Lee, Va. Dennis smiles, bottom, after chef judge Gunther Heiland presents her with a third place ribbon. Dennis, who has been on the U.S. Army Reserve Culinary Arts Team for only three days, received an American Culinary Federation bronze medal at the awards ceremony.



**A TASTE OF THE ISLANDS.** Sgt. Aqueelah James, a U.S. Army Reserve Culinary Team member with the 3rd Medical Command (Deployment Support), Fort Gillem, Ga., pipes chocolate onto a plate for her Island Dream Dessert during the Practical and Contemporary Hot Food Cooking/Patisserie category at the 41st Annual Military Culinary Arts Competitive Training Event, March 7, at Fort Lee, Va. James, who earned a silver medal in the category, used the influences of her family heritage from the islands of Saint Kitts and Nevis and the Dominican Republic as inspiration for the dessert.

# James uses family heritage, traditions to score culinary silver

Story & photos by **TIMOTHY L. HALE**  
U.S. Army Reserve Command

FORT LEE, Va. – Family and Caribbean heritage means everything to Sgt. Aqueelah James. A member of the U.S. Army Reserve Culinary Arts Team and assigned to the [3rd Medical Command \(Deployment Support\)](#) at Fort Gillem, Georgia, the flavors of the

tropics frequently find their way into her cooking.

Those influences led her to a silver medal in the Practical and Contemporary Hot Food Cooking/Patisserie, Composed Cold Dessert category at the [41st Annual Military Culinary Arts](#)

[Competitive Training Event](#), March 7.

Her Island Dream Dessert featured a Mango Rum ice cream coupled with a Walnut spice cake, Goat Cheese Bavarian, and Hibiscus Coulis.

“Yes (hibiscus flowers) that’s

what made the sorelle,” James said. “The leaves make up the dye. It’s something that we use in the Caribbean to make a drink.”

James, who is also a full time Atlanta police officer, had never made this dessert before but she wanted to honor her family’s heritage. Her mother is from Saint Kitts and Nevis and her father is from the Dominican Republic.

“I wanted to make a dish that is combined with the flavor of my culture. I just wanted to give a Caribbean flavor with a French

twist,” James said.

James, who is a first-generation American, said her father worked for the railroad in England before becoming a chef in the U.S. Her mother, grandmother, and aunts are all chefs who specialize in baking.

“Most of the baking skills come from them,” James said. “I’m just carrying on the family tradition.”

James, who has been with the [U.S. Army Reserve Culinary Arts Team](#) since 2011, is not new

to competition. She previously won a gold as a student chef, but today’s silver medal was her first as a professional chef.

“I have been a professional for three years, previously winning a bronze medal,” she said.

James said that working hard, and having passion for the culinary craft is the key to success.

“If you learn to love the art and learn to understand it’s not just cooking but it is also about personal and professional growth, you will do very well in our field.” 🇺🇸



**PLATING UP.** James puts the finishing touches on her Island Dream Dessert during the Practical and Contemporary Hot Food Cooking/Patisserie category.

# Parker, Barnhill peel their way to silver in Nutritional Hot Food Challenge

Story & photos by **TIMOTHY L. HALE**  
U.S. Army Reserve Command

FORT LEE, Va. – Why would anyone peel grapes? If you're Staff Sgt. Joseph Parker and Sgt. Joshua Barnhill, with the [U.S. Army Reserve Culinary Arts Team](#), it makes perfect sense.

Parker and Barnhill peeled grapes, seared trout, and made a spice cake without eggs and milk to earn a silver medal in the Nutritional Hot Food Challenge at the [41st Annual Military Culinary Arts Competitive Training Event](#), March 8.

“Peeling the grapes helps to alleviate the texture of the grape skin,” said Barnhill, the team's grape peeler. “We seared them, poached them, and then peeled them.”

Barnhill, who serves in the [377th Theater Sustainment Command](#) from Belle Chasse, Louisiana, has only been on the U.S. Army Reserve Culinary Arts Team for five days and this event was his first taste of culinary competition.

He said he wasn't nervous because he knew that Parker had competition experience.

“His experience definitely helped,” Barnhill said. “I really wasn't that nervous because I knew if you rush, you make a lot of mistakes. It's been a complete learning experience all the way around.”

Parker, with the 451st Quartermaster Company, [143rd Sustainment Command \(Expeditionary\)](#), had been away from





the team for six years, only recently rejoining. In 2010, he earned a coveted spot as a team member on the [U.S. Army Culinary Arts Team \(USACAT\)](#) competing in the [Culinary World Cup](#) that year in Erfurt, Germany.

“I apprenticed with (Staff Sgt.) Joshua Spiess on the USACAT team and I learned a lot,” Parker said.

“I was over there for 40 days. It was a great, and humbling experience. So now, I know more and I want to pass it on. My expectation, when I walk into a competition kitchen, is gold or nothing. So, if I score silver – I still like silver – but I’d rather win gold.”

Barnhill said that even though he’s been an Army culinary specialist for nine years, he said he

had never experienced anything like he has seen over the past few days.

“We don’t do anything quite like this, in regards to presentation, at my unit,” Barnhill said. “The skill level that you see here is amazing. I’ll take back the knowledge that I gained here and pass it on to everybody in my unit. Additionally, I’m going to try to hold the unit to a different standard – a better standard.”

Barnhill encourages any U.S. Army Reserve culinary specialist to try out for a place on the team.

“It’s a great opportunity. Learning is everything,” Barnhill said. “Calm down, take it all in. It’s a good experience to make something better of yourself.” 🇺🇸

**PEELING GRAPES.** U.S. Army Reserve Culinary Arts Team member, Sgt. Joshua Barnhill, opposite page, with the 377th Theater Sustainment Command, peels a grape during the Nutritional Hot Food Challenge category at the 41st Annual Military Culinary Arts Competitive Training Event, March 8, at Fort Lee, Va.

Barnhill and Staff Sgt. Joseph Parker, with the 451st Quartermaster Company, 143rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), plate up their first course, above, during the Nutritional Hot Food Challenge

Parker and Barnhill earned a silver in the category with their Roasted Beet Salad, Pan Seared Trout, and Eggless, Milkless Spice Cake, all coming in at under 850 calories.

# Chef Robert Irvine: Food is very personal, especially for the military

Story by TIMOTHY L. HALE  
U.S. Army Reserve Command

*FORT LEE, Va. – Editor’s Note: Chef Robert Irvine is no stranger to military food. As a former British Royal Navy chef and host of Food Network’s “Restaurant Impossible,” Irvine uses his talents and culinary skills to not only help struggling restaurants but the U.S. military as well.*

*Appearing as a guest chef at the [41st Annual Military Culinary Arts Competitive Training Event](#), March 7, 2016, Irvine shared his thoughts in an exclusive interview with the U.S. Army Reserve Command-Fort Bragg “Double Eagle” on the importance of military culinary programs.*

**DOUBLE EAGLE:** The U.S. Army Reserve Culinary Arts Program had its most successful year in 2010, placing fifth in the Installation of the Year category, and having three of its team members selected for the U.S. Army Culinary Arts Team (USACAT) who competed in the Culinary World Cup that year. Since that time, participation in our program has been down and we are now in a rebuilding phase. Why is a unit culinary program important for our U.S. Army Reserve commanders?

**CHEF IRVINE:** As a military guy myself, food is foremost on our thoughts. Whether we’re deployed or we’re at home with



Chef Robert Irvine is no stranger to military food. As a former British Royal Navy chef and host of Food Network’s “Restaurant Impossible,” Irvine uses his talents and culinary skills to not only help struggling restaurants, but the U.S. military as well. Irvin appeared as a guest chef at the 41st Annual Military Culinary Arts Competitive Training Event, March 7, at Fort Lee, Va. (Courtesy photo)

our families, food is always a frontrunner.

Think of food in every facet of our lives – births, funerals, weddings, even divorces. Not only food to keep us fit but food to actually keep us alive.

Food as a morale booster in the military is huge, and unless we focus on that, our military doesn’t perform to the best of their ability. We see that time and time again, not only in the reserve components, but also in the active Army. The Army is changing

dramatically: the needs and the stretching of the resources we have and we have to put the best fighting force in the world out and it’s done through food. There’s the old saying, ‘The Army marches on its stomach.’ It’s actually true. If we don’t feed them and give them good food and nutritious food they don’t march. They can’t do their job. That’s why for field commanders it’s a huge morale-boosting part of the military.

The culinary part is huge in not only are we feeding the troops great food but it’s like stuff our mothers used to make. It reminds us, it warms us, and it comforts us into where we are. A home-cooked meal is better than any meal that you can get from anywhere.

**DOUBLE EAGLE:** What would you tell young U.S. Army Reserve Soldiers about getting into the U.S. Army Reserve Culinary Arts Program?

**CHEF IRVINE:** Food is very personal. But getting into a program that teaches you timing, excellence, components, how to make a dish work, how to season it, how to cook a dish correctly – they’re all paralleled in life lessons.

What we learn in the kitchen is the same as what you learn in the real world. You know, how to work as a team, how to rely on somebody else, how to time things

that happen together for a reason. So, for those that are thinking about getting into the program, it's an amazing program to do because it literally mirrors what you do in life. In the culinary world, I look at it as the general in an army. There's the head of the kitchen who puts out food – that is the same as a general commanding an army. Except we have more to lose because we have the morale of those folks to lose. A general is not going to make morale – a general is going to tell them what to do. The food makes the morale and the cooks run that.

**DOUBLE EAGLE:** If you had the opportunity to stand before U.S. Army Reserve commanders, what is the one thing you would tell them about the military culinary program?

**CHEF IRVINE:** I would want them to come and see the faces of the cooks that participate in this competition. Because that's the faces, when you look

in the mirror, of every man and woman that wears the cloth of our nation that has to go into any war, any establishment, or any post or base, or submarine, or where ever, because that's what food does.

The culinary program in our military is huge. It's not just the cooking part but it's the Performance Triad.

When we think about health and future health, the way the military is changing our food needs to change and the only ones to pioneer that are our cooks. Not generals, not admirals. They (cooks) are making the changes on the front lines to keep our men and women healthy.

It begins in grassroots and that's what all these folks are doing. Teaching these kids, and they are kids, how to cook and cook well, to make sure our Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force, and Coast Guard service members can do their jobs and do them well. 🇺🇸



Chef Robert Irvine, back center, a former British Royal Navy chef and host of Food Network's "Restaurant Impossible," took the time to visit the U.S. Army Reserve Culinary Arts Team. Pictured with Irvine are: (L-R) Pfc. Tyquanda Dennis, Staff Sgt. Jeffery Vaughn, Sgt. Aqueelah James, Sgt. Joshua Barnhill, Chief Warrant Officer 2 Colby Beard, team manager; and Staff Sgt. Joseph Parker, team captain. (Courtesy photo)

# U.S. Army Culinary Team in action

Images by TIMOTHY L. HALE  
U.S. Army Reserve Command



U.S. Army Reserve Culinary Arts Team member Staff Sgt. Orkie Bradley, with the 531st Transportation Detachment, 451st Expeditionary Sustainment Command, plates up his service during the Practical and Contemporary Hot-Food Cooking, Individual, category at the 41st Annual Military Culinary Arts Competitive Training Event, March 8, at Fort Lee, Va.. Bradley earned a commendable in the category with his Touch of Greece stuffed lamb chop dish.

Chef judge Roland Schaeffer tastes the Island Dream Dessert entry of Sgt. Aqueelah James, a U.S. Army Reserve Culinary Team member with the 3rd Medical Command (Deployment Support), Fort Gillem, Ga., in the Practical and Contemporary Hot Food Cooking/Patisserie category, March 7, 2016, at Fort Lee, Va.. James, who earned a silver medal in the category, used the influences of her family heritage from the islands of Saint Kitts and Nevis and the Dominican Republic, as inspiration for the dessert.





U.S. Army Reserve Culinary Arts Team members have specific jobs and responsibilities during the Military Hot Food Kitchen event March 10. The team prepared Roasted Golden and Burgundy Beet Salad, Coq au Vin Nuevo (Chicken braised in red wine), and Molten Lava Cake working on a Mobile Kitchen Trailer for 45 dining guests. The team earned a commendable in the category.



U.S. Army Reserve Culinary Arts Team member, Sgt. Joshua Barnhill, with the 377th Theater Sustainment Command, pours spice cake batter into a mold during the Nutritional Hot Food Challenge event, March 8. Parker and Barnhill earned a silver in the category with their Roasted Beet Salad, Pan Seared Trout, and Eggless, Milkless Spice Cake, all coming in at under 850 calories.



**Do you want to join the  
U.S. Army Reserve  
Culinary Arts Team?**

**Please visit the team's  
website on Facebook**

[https://www.facebook.com/  
USARCulinary](https://www.facebook.com/USARCulinary)

# BALANCE

## **DES MOINES, IOWA**

**Soldiers in the U.S. Army Reserve, by nature of the title Citizen-Soldier, wear at least two hats. For many, the double life of warrior and civilian must be balanced.**

**Then there is Joe.**

**Father, Soldier, civilian, and farmer, U.S. Army Reserve Sgt. Joe Villines is performing a juggling act in life, balancing four worlds, much of it with a beautiful view from a farm in Iowa.**

# ING ACT



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Story & photos by BRIAN GODETTE | U.S. Army Reserve Command

**Story begins on Page 18**







A young, organically raised chicken makes a dashing leap on the back of a pick-up truck prior to being relocated into a newly built chicken pen on the "HalfAcre Farm," tended by Joe Villines, a U.S. Army Reserve sergeant, in Cummings, Iowa, March 18. Villines manages to find the balance between his military obligations, his civilian career with the Department of Veterans Affairs, fatherhood, and a growing passion in rural farming. Joe is increasing his knowledge on traditional farming and becoming a man of the soil, and in the process giving back to his local community.

**I have a small farm** that I operate in [Cummings, Iowa](#) and it's the third iteration of my farming enterprise. I started very small, and gradually increased the size of the operation as things have grown" said Villines, a broadcast noncommissioned officer with the [203rd Public Affairs Detachment](#).

"I'm on five acres of just absolutely beautiful rented property," Villines said. "The owner, Sharon Rosenberg had purchased this property a couple of years ago and wanted activity and life out here, and because the VA had been so good to her husband in his final years, she really felt strongly that she wanted to give a veteran the opportunity to come out here and do some work."

Villines, who works full-time for the [Department of Veterans Affairs](#) at the [VA Central Iowa Healthcare System](#) as a program support assistant, has begun a journey towards the past — a past where man is closer to nature and develops a synergy with the soil, animals, and environment around him.

"I want to have an entire web of things out here, different streams of income to diversify, and ensure I have steady income from it," Villines said. "Right now I have 400 birds on pasture, and eventually I will get the vegetable gardens in, and then a high-tunnel greenhouse which will feed into other things."

"Eventually I would like to farm full-time," Villines said. "I currently have a small flock of broiler chickens, the cornish cross, the standard breed you will find in a grocery store. They typically grow into five or six pounds and it's a great break in to the entire farming industry really."

The farming industry, a staple of the Midwest, is not an easy industry to break into according to Villines. It takes a focused level of planning, preparation, and hard work, something Villines feels he's been prepped for throughout his military career.

"Those times in the military when the mission has to get done, it has to happen, you're cold, tired, hungry - I think those situations that I've been put in have really prepared me for this kind of work," Villines said.

"I've been holding my regular job through the week, coming out here at night, working past dark, and building, and building, and building, getting up at 5:30 in the morning," he added.

Those closest to Villines in his reserve unit concur on the amount

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# VILLINES

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of difficulty he has taken on in pursuit of his desire.

“Joe is juggling massive amounts of responsibility, and he handles that responsibility extremely well,” said Sgt. 1st Class Jennifer Rothfus, NCOIC with the 203rd Public Affairs Detachment.

The support received from his military unit, and civilian counterparts at the VA, aid in his resolve to make things work. The added kicker are his own abilities, the traits many Soldiers have.

“The mental toughness that

we bring to the table as Army Reservists, as service members in general, really suits us well to physical task like this,” Villines said.

“It is a real challenge, just being a reserve Soldier, having a civilian career, and a family, without the added stress of the farm,” Villines said. “Meeting those obligations is something I don’t think a lot of the general public understands. We do walk in two different worlds.”

Like many things in life, the passion Villines has was

introduced piece by piece, and a few chance encounters led to the opportunity he has now. One of those encounters introduced Villines to Raymond Meylor, owner of a local urban farm, the Cherry Glen Learning Farm.

“A few years ago Ray Meylor and I crossed paths, and he was doing a lot of work for church and school gardens at the time,” Villines said.

“Through him I met several other people and just started networking, showing up to their board meetings, giving my



Villines speaks with his mentor, Raymond Meylor, owner of Cherry Glen Learning Farm in Polk, Iowa.



A book on chicken farming by his favorite author and a picture of his son, Joseph, Jr., on the desk of Villines, as he performs his civilian duties with the Department of Veterans Affairs. Both the book and the photo serve as daily inspiration for his new passion, farming.

U.S. Army Reserve Sgt. Joe Villines, with the 203rd Public Affairs Detachment, provides training on camera equipment to a new Soldier at Camp Dodge, Iowa, March 18.

input, and started getting on my soapbox, which I can do pretty easily because I'm passionate about this," Villines said.

Villines took baby steps, taking his time to understand the world he was entering into.

"I moved from my community service time, working in the community with school gardens, and on what you would call an incubator plot (low risk, easy to enter) I'm working on getting systems down, and frankly not failing," Villines said.

The success of the farm means a lot to Villines, but what means even more is the person looking up to him throughout his journey.

"I have four jobs," Villines said. "First and foremost, I'm a father. I have a four year old son, Joseph Jr., and he is super interested in what I have going on out here."

"He understands the connection between what we do today to grow these chickens and how that relates to the food on his table, and he knows the difference between what we grow and what we can get in the store," Villines said. "He understands the connection and the hard work."

The hard work has created a shining example for his son, and a chance to give back in another way to others.

"This affords me the opportunity not only to do something that is good for me ... but it allows me to give back to my community too," Villines said. "Part of my farm's charter is

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# VILLINES

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giving ten percent back to the local food pantry.”

As of right now, Villines has already sold all of his stock of organically raised pasteurized chickens, mainly by word of mouth, to locals in the community.

“Quite frankly, I got into it to see if I could do it and I am overwhelmed at how welcoming people are to the idea of food basically grown in their backyard, so close to them,” Villines said.

“It was difficult for me to grasp at first that people would pay three dollars and fifty cents a pound for an organically raised chicken, but they’re happy to do it,” Villines said.

Taking pride in his craft and in his products maybe key to his success. Villines is continuing to grow like a seed in a garden, and learn more about something he is so passionate about.

“I’m continually learning because I find it fascinating,” Villines said.

“One of my major influences is Joel Salatin,” Villines said. “He has a farm in Virginia, and has been featured in the movie Food Inc., and there’s a movie that came out about him and how he raises his birds, and that’s exactly how I do it.”

It all goes back to planning, preparation, and hard work, although a love of the soil and for the culture helps tremendously.

“I’ve learned that farm folk are absolutely fantastic people,” Villines said.

“We come from all walks of life, and all over the political spectrum, but we’re all here for the same purpose and that’s to grow and provide clean food, and if we can make a living at it in the process, all the better,” Villines said.

A major part of the farming culture is being an activist, and promoting the benefits of supporting other farmers, according to Villines. His message to those who may have never been to a farm is to just ask a farmer.

“Support your local farmers, and when you’re at the farmers market ask the farmer, ‘where are you located? Can I come out and see your farm?’” Villines said.

“Even though organic gets labeled as being expensive, when you’re eating nutrient dense food, there’s more food in my food, and there’s your savings,” Villines said.

Sgt. Joe Villines has managed to find a way to have a foot in different worlds, enjoying every part of it, and he is proud in his accomplishments thus far, and others see the father, Soldier, Civilian, farmer, and are equally as proud.

“I’m really proud of Joe, because when I met him he was a little young and a little crazy but he has turned into an extremely responsible NCO, person, man, he’s a father who does an amazing job with his son, and all I can say is I’m proud of him,” Rothfus said. 🇺🇸

Villines tightens up the wiring on a newly constructed chicken pen on his farm in Cummings, Iowa.







U.S. Army Reserve Command Chaplain (Maj.) Randal Johnson, Soldier and Family Ministry Chief, provides opening remarks at the Rural Clergy Training Program, a train-the-trainer seminar sponsored by the USARC Chaplain's Office, in collaboration with the National Veteran Affairs Chaplain Center, at the Family Readiness Group Convention Center, Pope Army Airfield, N.C., March 2. The RCTP training seminar brought together representatives from all three Army components from across the country into a learning environment designed to help facilitate the education of community clergy about how they can support Veterans and their family members through the readjustment process.

# USAR hosts Rural Clergy Training Program

Story & photos by **BRIAN GODETTE**  
U.S. Army Reserve Command

POPE ARMY AIRFIELD, N.C. – The call was sounded. If you create it, they will come. The chaplains were assembled.

Co-sponsored by the [National VA Chaplain Center](#) in Hampton, Virginia, and the [U.S. Army Reserve](#), chaplains from across the country met for the Rural Clergy Training Program, a train-the-trainer seminar held March 2-3.

“We wanted to open this up to all ranks, all chaplains,” said Maj. Randal Johnson, RCTP facilitator and USARC Chaplain.

The ultimate goal sought to increase the tools

available for military chaplains to help reach clergy and congregations in remote geographical areas, helping them learn more about the military culture, the wounds of war, the challenges veterans face following deployment, and provide pastoral care to veterans and their Families, while building community partnerships to support them.

“The statistic that is most striking to me is out of the 2.2 million service members who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan, research shows, that 7-24 percent of those people will suffer symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder or traumatic brain inju-

ry,” said Chaplain Keith Ethridge, associate director at the National VA Chaplain Center. “Those are in many ways invisible wounds of war.

“To understand that a Soldier might literally be walking the streets of Afghanistan, trying to avoid explosive devices, trying to take care of themselves, and then the next week or so come back home and be back in their civilian camouflage, disappear in the community, and you meet them on the street and don’t even know what this Soldier has experienced,” Ethridge said. “That is the reality of what it’s like in America, and what it’s like for our folks who carry the wounds of war and live it every day.”

The Rural Clergy Training Program originally began in 2010 as a partnership between the National VA Chaplain Center and the [VA Office of Rural Health](#), with over 200 civilian clergy training at workshops held at rural VA medical centers. The shift now, expanded that effort to include current military personnel.

“The RCTP is a partnership with the VA and with the U.S. Army Reserve chaplains. We are hoping and praying this will go beyond the Army Reserve — the National Guard, active duty — all of us partner with the VA so we can partner with the local clergy and get the community involved,” said Col. Alan Pomaville, command chaplain, [U.S. Army Reserve Command](#).

“By doing that, our ultimate goal is providing the support, the resources, the spiritual encouragement and training that they need to help stay strong,” Pomaville said.

Research indicates that one out of four veterans turn to a chaplain or clergy person first when confronting problems, according to Ethridge.

“For us, as chaplains, we know that moral injury, where conflict between what a person feels is right, and either what they are required to do, experienced, or witnessed, is an even greater contributor to emotional or moral distress, and we need to prepare for that,” said Ethridge.

“Initial data indicated that this training raised awareness, which resulted in the trained clergy increasing the referrals of veterans in their communities to the VA administration healthcare system by 64 percent and to community behavioral health providers by 41 percent,” Johnson, said.

“It’s already provided the proof of principles from

its origination between 2010 and 2013,” Johnson said. “We want to enhance that and better equip the mission in such a way that it reaches more veterans.”

A highly talked about issue in the military has been veteran suicide. Chaplains and coordinators see the RCTP as another avenue to help reduce the risk of veteran suicides.

“We want to get ahead of this thing called suicide,” Johnson said. “This is also a part of suicide awareness, intervention, and prevention, primarily prevention, in such a way that we educate our civilian clergy so that they are capable of doing a better job providing the needs of our veterans.”

“The idea is to tell the story, as much as we can, to as many people as we can, to prevent suicide in the veteran ranks,” Johnson said.

The train-the-trainer RCTP repeated that message and others, seeing wide participation by the chaplains and chaplain assistants in attendance, who represented all three components of the U.S. Army.

“I think it was a complete success,” Johnson said.

“We are all one,” said Master Sgt. Sheila Thomas, master chaplain assistant. “This is a Total Force, not just reserve, active or guard.”

The value of the RCTP seminar was just what many in the field needed.

“Once the training commenced, a lot of chaplains in attendance walked away saying ‘this is what we need to be able to reach our community, to help our Veterans, our current Soldiers, and Family members walk through difficult situations,’” said Sgt. 1st Class Mary Munyua, strong bonds non commissioned officer.

The success of the event, touted by the participants, lends to more opportunities for more clergy to get involved, according to Johnson.

“We have another conference planned in August,” said Johnson. “Training begins on the 10th and ends on the 11th, and we plan to have it here at Fort Bragg.”

The mission was created and from the chaplain’s standpoint, the cause can’t be greater.

“Chaplain Pomaville says ‘What better mission is there than to be reaching out trying to save the lives of our veterans, or anyone connected to what we do, in suicide prevention?’” Johnson quoted. “We need to get ahead of this thing called suicide and I believe with God’s help, we can make it happen.” 🙏



# Motorcycle Accidents

- **CONTROL:** Even where speed is not a factor, loss of control is most often the cause.
- **CONDITIONS:** Loss of control rarely involves road conditions, obstructions, gravel, wet roads, etc.
- **SKILL:** Typically, riders lose control due to lack of skills or failure to apply available skills correctly.

## REQUIRED TRAINING FOR SOLDIERS: [AR 385-10](#)

- **BEFORE RIDING:** Motorcycle Safety Foundation (MSF) Basic Rider Course (BRC)
- After BRC: One of MSF Experienced Riders Course (ERC), BRC-II, Military Sportbike Riders Course (MSRC) or MSF Advanced Rider Course (ARC)
- **AFTER 180 DAY DEPLOYMENT:** Motorcycle Refresher Training (MRT) (Unit Level Training)
- Five Years After ERC/BRC-II: Sustainment Training, one of ERC/BRC-II or MSRC/ARC
- Additional: Sustainment training after 5 years inactivity, upon acquisition of a new or change in motorcycles, and encouraged after a geographical change. Commanders are NOT authorized to waive or defer Sustainment Training.

## MANDATORY PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT: [AR 385-10](#)

- Helmet: DOT or Snell approved
- Eye Protection: Goggles, wrap around glasses or full face shield meeting ANSI Z87.1 standards (A windshield **DOES NOT** count as Eye Protection)
- Feet: Sturdy, over the ankle footwear
- Clothing: Long-sleeved shirt or jacket, long trousers, full fingered gloves/mittens of leather or abrasion-resistant material (Fluorescent colors/retro-reflective materials are encouraged)
- All Army Motorcycle PPE requirements apply to three-wheeled variants

## ARMY RESERVE FREE TRAINING: **(TRAIN FIRST, THEN RIDE, NO EXCEPTIONS!)**

- Contact your Safety Officer and schedule suitable training close to your home (Not all Army Reserve Soldiers live near Military Installations offering free training)
- Contact your RSC Safety Office for instructions and arrange for payment of Training Course cost
- Ensure your Unit places you in a Duty Status/On Orders for the duration of the training (The training is mandatory and the RSC Safety Office only pays the course costs)
- Complete the training and provide training certificates to your Unit Safety Officer or as directed

**“READY IN 2016”** For more information contact your Unit Safety Officer and Motorcycle Mentor and successfully complete initial and recurring motorcycle rider training. 🇺🇸

# Belonging to something bigger than yourself

By CHAPLAIN (MAJ.) RANDAL JOHNSON  
USARC Chaplain's Office

On 27 April, our nation will recognize [Administrative Professionals Day](#). This day has come a long way since its inception during World War II, when there was an increased demand for skilled administrative personnel.

Dictionary.com gives a few definitions for an administrator. Here are just a couple: "The manager of any office, business, or organization." "The one who exercises the executive functions."

This nationally recognized day represents those who execute and function as professionals in their particular field. They are subject matter experts.

Isn't that true of you? As a Soldier, are you not expected to exercise and function as a professional in everything you "Be, Know, and Do?"

Let's reflect briefly on the first few words of [The Soldier's Creed](#): "I am an American Soldier. I am a warrior and a member of a team. I serve the people of the United States, and live the [Army Values](#). I will always place the mission first. I will never accept defeat. I will never quit. I will never leave a fallen comrade. I am disciplined, physically and mentally tough, trained and proficient in my warrior tasks and drills."

I don't know about you, but when I read those words about you and me, it makes me feel that I belong to something much bigger than myself. I feel I am worth something. I feel valued as a member of the greatest organization in the world. When I read those words, I know my Battle Buddies are Team Members of the same organization as I. My Battle Buddies (comrades) are always going to march along-

side me, living-out the Seven Army Values, making mission, overcoming insurmountable odds with resiliency and helping me to do the same, never leaving me nor forsaking me, always treating with respect, taking good care of me. Even when I fall or fail, my Battle Buddies will always be there to pick me up and brush me off. My Battle Buddies are disciplined in every way to Be-Know-Do what professionals do.

I have peace in my heart and mind as I realize I can be transparent with my team members, trusting them with who I am as a Soldier, spouse, and Family member.

Even when I feel weak, I can feel strong, knowing I can depend on my Battle Buddies who never quit and never leave a fallen comrade. Isn't that true about you? As an obedient and faithful American Soldier, don't you reach out to your fellow Battle Buddies when you see they need help? It's who we are. It's what we do. It's the Army Strong way. It's the life-saving, life-sustaining molding and shaping of the force from whence we are made.

The BLUF? We are professionals, subject matter experts.

Chaplains help bring God to Soldiers and bring Soldiers to God. You can too, by living-out the godly character I just described. It's who and what we are all about, serving God and Country.

I am an American Army Reserve Soldier and I am ready to be there for my fellow Soldiers, Civilians and their precious Families, no matter what the struggle or stress.

Twice the Citizen! Army Strong! 🇺🇸

## FORSCOM/USARC Christian Bible Study

U.S. Army Forces Command and U.S. Army Reserve Command  
hosts a weekly Christian Bible study.

Studies are held each Tuesday,  
starting at 11:30 a.m., Room 1901 near the USARC G-4.  
Please come and share a time of fellowship and worship with us.



# “Shoulder to Shoulder” to prevent suicides



Command Sgt. Maj. Jim Wills, U.S. Army Reserve Command Sergeant Major, and Col. Alan Pomaville, USARC Command Chaplain, sign the “Shoulder-to-Shoulder” pledge and suicide prevention initiative, at USARC headquarters, Fort Bragg, N.C., March 2. “Shoulder-to-Shoulder” is an initiative where each USAR Command Team can help protect the life of every Soldier in their unit, creating and continually reinforcing a blueprint of personal connections whereby Soldiers and their Family members can easily reach out for help. (Photo by Brian Godette/U.S. Army Reserve Command)

# Volunteering Impacts Lives

Story & photo by Contributing Writer

FORT BRAGG, N.C. - This April [Army Reserve Family Programs](#) recognizes its selfless and fantastic volunteers during [National Volunteer Appreciation Week](#) April 10-16, 2016. The Army Reserve has hundreds of volunteers helping at every level of command, dedicating thousands of hours to support [U.S. Army Reserve](#) Soldiers, veterans, and other Families. This year's theme is "Lifting Spirits, Touching Lives."

Our volunteers, made up of spouses, veterans, civilians and U.S. Army Reserve youth, help with Family Readiness Groups, unit functions, as well as deployment and redeployment ceremonies. For some, it's a chance to learn new skills, for others it's a way to give back to those who daily sacrifice in many ways for their country.

"Getting involved by volunteering with Army Reserve Family Programs," said Karen Conboy, Senior Volunteer Advisor, "is a great way for Reserve Family members to feel like they are an integral part of the military experience and a valued asset with respect to the support and readiness of their Soldier."

Regardless of where they serve, each volunteer is critical to building the ready and resilient Army Reserve community. Throughout the year, the U.S. Army Reserve Command helps recruit and train members at all levels of command.

One such training event was the first Family Programs University at Fort Bragg, N.C. The three-day event that took place in late February emphasized the importance of unit volunteers as well as the many resources available through Fort Family, the Army Reserve Family Programs' 24x7x365 outreach and service center. Arline Kirkus, who attended the February Family Programs University, said the program gave her new tools to help more Soldiers and their Families.

"Volunteering for the Army Reserve gives me a chance to support my husband," said Kirkus, who has volunteered for 10 years with Family Readiness Groups. "It's a way to show I love my husband, Staff Sgt. Paul Kirkus."

Throughout April, commands will recognize and highlight exceptional volunteers for their invaluable

contributions to the Soldiers, Families, and units. Their continued support significantly enhances the readiness and resilience of the U.S. Army Reserve.

"Family Readiness is the responsibility of the commander, but it is the passion of volunteers," said Charlotte Douglas, chief of the Army Reserve Family Readiness Division. "A strong volunteer team can empower Families while communicating the Command's care and concern for their Soldiers and Families. Volunteers bring the human connection to Family Readiness."

For more information about Volunteer Appreciation Week, visit Army Reserve Family Programs at [www.arfp.org](http://www.arfp.org), contact Fort Family at 1-866-345-8248 or your command's Family Programs Director or Coordinator. We Inspire and Empower. Anytime. Anywhere. 24x7x365. 🌐



Karen Conboy, a senior volunteer advisor, addresses the audience at the Family Programs University in February at Fort Bragg, N.C. "Getting involved by volunteering with Army Reserve Family Programs is a great way for reserve Family members to feel like they are an integral part of the military experience and a valued asset with respect to the support and readiness of their Soldier," Conboy said.

# Celebrating 30 years of Military Children

Story & photo by Contributing Writer

FORT BRAGG, N.C. – All children represent the future for their respective nations, in the U.S., the children of military parents exemplify this.

To recognize the special contributions of military children in the U.S. Army Reserve, Army Reserve Family Programs is celebrating the [Month of the Military Child](#) this April. From their parents' deployments to experiencing the first day in so many new schools, Army Reserve children are faced with unique challenges that ordinary youth the same age never experience. This Month of the Military Child marks the 30th year since the [15th U.S. Secretary of Defense, Caspar Weinberger](#), first established the commemorative month.

The theme of this year's Month of the Military Child is "Their Journeys and Adventures." In support of this theme and to endorse the commemorative month, [Lt. Gen. Jeffrey Talley, Chief of Army Reserve and commanding general of U.S. Army Reserve Command](#), and Linda Talley, senior volunteer advisor, issued an informal letter to Army Reserve children at [http://arfp.org/cyss\\_month\\_military\\_child.php](http://arfp.org/cyss_month_military_child.php).

"It's important to shine the light on how children and youth have been affected both positively and negatively being in a military family," said Renee Podolec, Child, Youth and School Services (CYSS) division chief. "The reason

we want to highlight the negative is to bring awareness so through CYSS programming we can connect those facing challenges with those who have successfully made it through.

"When you find someone who has that connection, it really helps."

Sgt. Maj. Denise Underwood, U.S. Army Reserve Command staff judge advocate, intimately knows the challenges her children have faced.

"CYSS is an excellent program with excellent staff. My children, as all military children, serve. They didn't volunteer to join the military, they were born into it," Underwood said. "Every time we have had to relocate, it has affected them.

"But it has made them more resilient because no matter what they're going through, they have the Army Reserve support system to help get them through it."

Special military and community-based events will be

held throughout the month to demonstrate the commitment to the readiness and resilience of our Soldiers' children, and the U.S. Army Reserve's responsibility to ensure excellence in providing a strong, supportive environment where children can thrive.

Typically on the 15th day of the Month of the Military Child, partner organizations celebrate a 'Purple Up Day,' purple representing all military branches, demonstrating participants' support for all military children. Podolec is encouraging the Army Reserve to also celebrate their own by establishing a separate 'Blue and Gold Day.'

For more information about Child, Youth and School Services or the Month of the Military Child visit [http://arfp.org/cyss\\_month\\_military\\_child.php](http://arfp.org/cyss_month_military_child.php), contact Fort Family at 1-866-345-8248 or your command's Family Programs Director or Coordinator. We Inspire and Empower. Anytime. Anywhere. 24x7x365. 





Lt. Col. Dianna Echard-Danis, detail inspector general with the U.S. Army Reserve Command, who credits much of her success in the military to inspirational women who have come before her, poses for a photo at USARC headquarters, Fort Bragg, N.C., March 8, 2016. Danis spoke about her personal journey in the Army and how both men and women can use certain characteristics to join the inspector general directorate as she did.

# Living Her Dream

Story & photo by **BRIAN GODETTE**  
U.S. Army Reserve Command

FORT BRAGG, N.C. – “Every great dream begins with a dreamer. Always remember, you have within you the strength, the patience, and the passion to reach for the stars to change the world,” -[Harriet Tubman](#).

For one dreamer, that dream was to serve her country, and to do so without doubt that despite who she is, she would never stop reaching.

“I’ve always been intrigued

with some strong women in history, and one in particular,” said Lt. Col. Dianna Echard-Echard-Danis, Detail Inspector General, [U.S. Army Reserve Command](#).

“I remember being a child, I was involved at a play in church and she sounded like a Soldier, the description of her emulated a Soldier. She was very brave, she was great at land navigational skills, she was a leader, a motivator, and she actually was so great

in her navigational skills, tracking skills, she served as a scout for the Army during the Civil War,” Echard-Danis said. “That person is Harriet Tubman.”

Strength through courage is a force, and for many women in positions normally dominated by men, a motivator.

“I came in during an era where there were still a lot of the old views and sentiments, where some male Soldiers felt that females

should not be in the Army, or they felt that they (women) should have certain roles in the Army,” Echard-Danis said. “We did not have some of the opportunities that exist today, that females now have.”

“I’ve heard comments like ‘I’m not used to women serving along with us, or I’m having a hard time trying to adjust,’” Echard-Danis said. “But I continued to be resilient against some of those comments, and for me I think success is the biggest revenge.”

Today, in the military, there are women serving as leaders in various roles. The U.S. Army

Reserve welcomed its first female Ranger, Maj. Lisa Jaster, and Secretary of Defense Ash Carter has announced women are eligible for all combat roles in the military.

“It makes me proud because I know women have had their struggles in the past, so that means that we are finally overcoming, rising up, and it makes me proud to be a woman,” Echard-Danis said.

Pride and success were factors learned at home for Echard-Danis, who not only had female inspiration to be encouraged by, but also family inspiration.

“My dad was a deputy, he was actually the first African-Amer-

ican deputy in my hometown,” Echard-Danis said. “He went from that to working for the department of corrections where he worked all the way up to the rank of captain.”

“My dad was pretty encouraging for most of the things I did, always telling me that I could do anything that I wanted to do, and be anything I wanted to be. He inspired me,” Echard-Danis said.

Being the daughter of an Army veteran, Echard-Danis idolized her father and took keen interest in the military, seeing it as something brave and cool someone could do despite their gender.

See **DREAM** Pg. 34



Echard-Danis, who credits much of her success in the military to inspirational women who have come before her as well as her father, updates a tasker board next to a photo of her father, in her office at USARC headquarters, Fort Bragg, N.C.

# DREAM

from Pg. 33

“I can recall as far back as I can remember looking at my dad’s photo album, he had an Army photo album,” Echard-Danis said. “I remember sitting on the couch with the book spread across my legs and I would ask my dad what is it like to be in the Army?”

“I was intrigued with his airborne pictures, asking what does it feel like to jump out of an airplane? Describe what you did,” Echard-Danis said.

Her curiosity grew as she did, and at the age of 17, Echard-Danis decided she wanted to join the ranks.

“When I joined the military my dad told me I could do it, he gave me positive feedback, he told me ‘I’m pretty sure you’re going to be successful because your mother is like a drill sergeant and if you can handle her, you can handle any drill sergeant,’” Echard-Danis said.

“I think I’m a combination of both my parents. My dad was the strong silent type, and my mom was the loud silent type, she was the firm one and I think I had both of that,” Echard-Danis said.

Inspiration takes many forms, and when it came from her mother, it was different from the typical pat on the back.

“My mom told me I’d never make it. She said ‘I’ll give you one year, actually, you’ll never make it past basic training because you don’t like being told what to do, and you would argue with a stop sign,’” Echard-Danis said. “She

said she told me that to make sure I didn’t quit, because she knew whatever she told me I could or could not do, it would make me want to do it even more, and succeed at it.”

Echard-Danis enlisted in the Army and soon found herself at her first duty station in Germany. Fulfilling her age old desire to join the ranks wasn’t the end of her growth.

While in Germany, Echard-Danis was notified she had been accepted to Greensboro College, back home in North Carolina. She took the opportunity to further her education but did so in a way to maintain her military status. Echard-Danis joined the U.S. Army Reserve and later became an ROTC student at North Carolina State University.

“I always had a good support team, either my father, my mom, a friend, or another female officer where we formed a bond and help support one another,” Echard-Danis said. “Also in the back of my mind I heard my mother say ‘you’ll never make it’, so I said I can make it.”

She did make it, and fast forward in time to the present and now Echard-Danis is a lieutenant colonel with the Inspector General Directorate of USARC, a position she never truly considered.

“They tried to recruit me (Inspector General) and at that time I wasn’t ready, and I really didn’t know much about the IG and IG program,” Echard-Danis said.

“I had it all wrong. I was thinking IG’s are these people that come in, inspect the units just to look for something wrong,” Echard-Danis admitted. “They’re going around, making enemies, spreading discord, and I really didn’t think I wanted to do that.”

Echard-Danis judged a book by its cover, a mistake many people made with her and other women, solely because of their gender.

To not fall into that category of pre-judgement, she decided to educate herself on IG.

IG’s should be good communicators, both oral and written, they should possess characteristics such as trust, expertise, honorable service, competence, and should uphold the standards and demonstrate good military appearance and bearing, according to Echard-Danis.

“After I found out the truth about the IG, and I learned all the positive attributes it takes to be an IG I developed an appreciation for what they do. I thought I can do that, I want to be a part of that,” Echard-Danis said.

“I found out IG’s are impartial fact finders, they aren’t just out there looking for the bad things, they are looking to correct things,” Echard-Danis said. “The time was right and I decided what a great way to culminate all the years of my military experience and become an IG.”

The opportunity to be a problem solver and to help Soldiers has been one of the most rewarding



aspects of serving as an inspector general, adding true value to the command she works for.

The IG has four specific functions- inspections, assistance, investigations, and teaching and training. These functions are all to enhance a commands readiness and warfighting capabilities.

Ensuring she always remained an asset was an integral part of her character and a tool she could use to help others, especially women who might face the same decision she once did, whether or not to join the military.

“I would encourage them to

talk to someone who has been in the military and have served successfully, and listen to those individuals, do not listen to the one who have never served or served a short time and washed out,” Echard-Danis said.

Once you have joined, and are empowered by the sense of success as Echard-Danis was, the road to that success does not end there, according to Echard-Danis.

“Get a mentor, no matter what your rank, no matter what job you’re in, someone who is at the next rank above you and ask that person to be your mentor, or

watch and emulate that person, and if they are successful and you pattern yourself after that person, you will be successful too,” Echard-Danis said.

As a member of the [Reserve Officer Association](#), and affiliated with the [Veterans Empowering Veterans](#) organization, Echard-Danis is able to offer herself up as that mentor. Having successfully fulfilled one of her dreams, she can now help other dreamers reach for theirs.

“In order to get respect, you have to give respect and earn that respect,” Echard-Danis said. 🇺🇸



Echard-Danis, Detail Inspector General with the U.S. Army Reserve Command, works on cases in her office at USARC headquarters, Fort Bragg, N.C.

# Become a U.S. Army Reserve Inspector General

Story by RONALD D. JOHNSON

U.S. Army Reserve Command Deputy Inspector General

FORT BRAGG, N.C. – [Inspector Generals](#), or IGs, are often considered the last resort by Soldiers, their Family members, Department of the Army civilians, and military retirees who believe the system has failed them. IGs fill a critical role for internal and external customers who feel they have nowhere else to turn for answers to their issues or concerns.

The [U.S. Army Reserve](#) has more than 60 Troop Program Unit IG vacancies in the ranks of captain-lieutenant colonel and staff sergeant-promotable through master sergeant. The [U.S. Army Reserve Command](#) Inspector General's office needs your help in filling these vacancies.

Col. Brunilda E. Garcia, U.S. Army Reserve Command Inspector stated "Remember, the USARC IG office is here to support Commanders, Soldiers, Family members, DA Civilians and retirees. The USARC Inspector General's office goal is to educate Commanders and Soldiers on the outstanding services that Inspector Generals provide every day."

The mission of the IG is to assess the readiness, discipline, efficiency, economy, morale, and training of units. They serve as impartial fact-finders and problem solvers, but are not problem finders.

IGs work for the commanding general as a member of his or her personal staff. Most commanders recognize the role of the IG and the value and sage advice they provide to the overall effective this of the command.

IGs teach and train Soldiers to published standards and policies while conducting inspections to improve unit readiness. The IG inspection results provide feedback to commanders, confirm compliance, identify systemic issues, and spotlight trends and their inherent root causes.

IGs also investigate fraud, waste, and abuse.

"Inspector Generals business is standards based and process oriented."

Those who serve as IGs have an obligation to thoroughly review every customer's issue and serve as a fair and impartial fact-finder while working directly with the chain of command to resolve issues in a

timely manner. They do this by assisting customers and their leaders in working through issues by explaining standards, overcoming bureaucratic inefficiency, and cutting through red tape. IGs have a responsibility to identify instances in which Soldiers have not received due process and to assist in correcting any resulting injustice.

The experience and knowledge gained while performing inspector general duties will have a major impact on future leaders in the Army Reserve. For example, when IGs work assistance cases, they develop a good understanding of how the Army's administrative systems operate and the resources available for solving difficulty problems.

During inspections, IGs get the opportunity to see the best and worst of units while gaining valuable insight into how the top commanders and their senior noncommissioned officers lead their organizations.

The process of investigating regulatory violations teaches IGs how to analyze problems, how to thoroughly research regulations, and how to make a logical written presentation of this information so they can be easily understood. Because of these opportunities, IGs gain a much broader Total Army perspective and more Army leadership experience than many of their peers.

IGs must possess five essential characteristics of the Army Profession. trust, military expertise, honorable service, esprit de corps, and stewardship of the profession. IGs are exemplars of the Army Profession by displaying character, competence, and commitment, while possessing the knowledge, skills, and attributes expected of an outstanding leader.

IGs meet Army fitness standards and demonstrate outstanding appearance and bearing.

If you meet these characteristics, you are ready for IG duty.

If you meet the high standards of an IG and wish to pursue a career broadening assignment, contact your local IG or contact the USARC Office of Inspector General at [usarmy.usarc.usarc-hq.list.ig-ops@mail.mil](mailto:usarmy.usarc.usarc-hq.list.ig-ops@mail.mil). Documents required for an Inspector General's nomination packet will be sent to interested personnel. Droit et Avant! 🇺🇸





## OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL

An IG assignment is a developmental assignment and a great career move. Those who have been an IG have an improved reputation, increased credibility, and are more trusted. Some benefits of being an IG include:

- Having a direct impact on improving the command (getting inside the decision-making loop).
- Gaining a more thorough understanding of how an organization works (proper application of doctrine, processes, procedures, etc.).
- Enhanced critical thinking, conflict management, and problem-solving skills.
- Improved experience navigating, interacting, and operating on a Senior Official's staff (communication skills, future mentoring, etc.).
- Career enhancement (statistics show a higher probability of selection for promotion, command, resident schools).
- Insight into seeing the Army as it really is; no other job in the Army offers an officer, NCO, or Civilian this type of insight.
- IG experience makes you very marketable for employment as a civilian IG in DOD, Federal Government, or for other local governments.

# Soldiers return to their roots in Ghana



Sgt. 1st Class Solomon Mensah, left, an Active Guard Reserve Soldier and a member of Medical Readiness Training Exercise 16-2 command and control team and pay agent from the 3rd Medical Command (Deployment Support) unit at Fort Gillem, Ga., is shown with 1st Lt. Frank Goka, a mobilized Army Reserve Soldier assigned to Fort Hood, Texas. They participated in MEDRETE 16-2, from Feb. 3-26, at the 37 Military Hospital, Accra, Ghana. Both Mensah and Goka are originally from Ghana. Mensah and Goka were essential to MEDRETE 16-2 with helping the U.S. medical team establish relationships amongst the Ghanaian Defense Force and medical professionals at the 37 Military Hospital. (U.S. Army Africa photo by Maj. Satomi Mack-Martin)

Story by Staff Sgt. LANCE POUNDS  
U.S. Army Africa

ACCRA, Ghana - A mobilized [U.S. Army Reserve](#) Soldier along with an [Active Guard Reserve](#) Soldier returned to their Ghanaian roots during the Medical Training Exercise 16-2 held at the 37 Military Hospital over the course of three weeks from Feb. 3-26.

First Lt. Frank Goka, a mobilized U.S. Army Reserve Soldier with the 7238th Medical Support Unit assigned to the [Carl R. Darnall Army Medical Center](#) at Fort Hood, Texas, as a nurse case manager, participated in [MEDRETE 16-2](#) where he worked as a critical care nurse for the intensive care burn unit.

Sgt. 1st Class Solomon Mensah, an Active Guard Reserve Soldier from the [3rd Medical Command](#)

[\(Deployment Support\)](#) unit at Fort Gillem, Georgia, participated in MEDRETE 16-2 as part of the command and control team and served as a paying agent.

“I’m proud of being apart of this mission,” said Goka. Prior to moving to the U.S. from [Ghana](#) in 2004, Goka was trained as a nurse and worked at the 37th Military Hospital for eight years.

“Coming back to my old fold is a real pleasure,” he said. “The pleasure was reciprocated by the Ghanaian folks here. They were so happy seeing me back home, and coming to partner with them.”

During MEDRETE 16-2, Goka was instrumen-

tal in working alongside Ghanaian nurses, treating a 27-year-old patient who suffered third degree burns covering 60 percent body surface.

“We shared a whole lot of ideas with Ghanaian medical professionals,” said Goka. “The main objective of this exercise was to build capacity and strengthen the already-existing relationship between the U.S. and Ghanaian Forces, and Ghana as a whole,” he said.

When asked about his background, with pride Goka stated his family was apart of the Ewe tribe.

“I’m in the U.S. Army now, but it’s worth tracing my roots in knowing where I come from,” said Goka. “We have a lot of cultural values that we’re proud of.”

The **Ewe tribe**, known for their cultural prowess, are also known for their version of the kente cloth, a colorful cloth woven with intricate designs and patterns.

According to Goka, families from the Ewe tribe take pride in their drumming, dancing, fishing, and farming techniques as well.

Mensah, who came to the 3rd MC(DS) in Sept. 2003, said he was originally from Keta, located in the **Volta Region** of Ghana.

Mensah, along with the rest of the command and control team for the exercise, Capt. Jatara Young and

1st Lt. Brian Elliott, Army Reserve Soldiers with the 3rd MCDS, presented a shipment of medical supplies to the 37th Military Hospital.

The replenishment of medical supplies provided by the U.S. Army consisted of syringes, gloves, gauzes, and several other boxes of supplies used by U.S. and Ghanaian doctors during the exercise.

**U.S. Army Africa** in coordination with 3rd MCDS, the **7th Mission Support Command** and the U.S. Embassy Ghana, partnered with the Ghanaian Defense Force to bring MEDRETE 16-2 to Ghana in an exercise allowing both militaries to strengthen their medical treatment capabilities and capacities while conducting routine, trauma and surgical procedures.

MEDRETE 16-2 directly supports Ghanaian counterparts in building partner capacity and enhances the effectiveness of the Ghanaian military by improving the health of the force and mission readiness.

MEDRETEs enable valuable medical training and experience to U.S. active and reserve component medical personnel. MEDRETE 16-2 allowed U.S. doctors and nurses to train in an austere environment, share medical procedures and build lasting relationships with Ghanaian medical professionals. 🌍

# Long, lonely road to Best Warrior



Soldiers competing in the 108th Training Command’s 2016 combined Best Warrior and Drill Sergeant of the Year competition started off the second day of competition with a 12-mile ruck march at Fort Jackson, S.C., March 22. The noncommissioned officer and junior enlisted winners of the 108th Best Warrior Competition will represent the command at the U.S. Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition, May 1-7 at Fort Bragg, N.C. The drill sergeant of the year winner will represent the U.S. Army Reserve at the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command Drill Sergeant of the Year competition later this year. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Brian Hamilton/108th Training Command (IET))

# MOTORCYCLE PMV-2

You've checked your ride, but are your battle buddies ready for the road?



STANDARDS



TRAINING



DISCIPLINE

## Training, Discipline and Standards

Training, discipline and standards are the bedrock of our Army, and as Soldiers, you've been taught what right looks like. As leaders, you have a duty and a responsibility to maintain standards in your formations. You also have an obligation to your Soldiers and their Families to manage risk and take action to correct problems. In our fight against accidental injuries and fatalities, knowledge is the weapon of choice. Visit <https://safety.army.mil/mmp> for more information on safe riding.

