



# Inside SWCS

The official newsletter of the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy  
Special Warfare Center and School

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## “Humans are more important than hardware”

Part 1 in a 5-part series about the SOF Truths: how they're applied in daily life at the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School and in the nation's special-operations community



An Afghan boy receives medicine from a U.S. Army Soldier at Kalach in the Uruzgan province of Afghanistan, July 14. The boy came to the clinic with his parents after complaining of stomach pain. (Photo by Pfc. Simon Lee, Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force — Afghanistan Media Operations Center)

*The SOF Truths: a list of five statements describing the realities of operating with, and on, special-operations units. Through this series, Inside SWCS will take an in-depth look at these words' meaning, applying context from throughout SWCS' units and directorates in order to provide a broad overview of the ways the SOF Truths are at work in daily life throughout the command.*

**By Dave Chace**  
SWCS Public Affairs Office

Applied and recited across the U.S. Special Operations Command, the five SOF Truths are said to provide time-tested guidance to the special-operations community for everything from daily activities to long-range planning.

For the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School, these truths are evident in every lesson Soldiers learn while training to join or rise through the Army's Special Forces, Civil Affairs and Military Information Support Operations career fields.

The SOF Truths not only summarize the realities of conducting missions with special-operations units, but also the ways in which SWCS cadre and staff select, educate and manage the Soldiers who do so.

The first statement, “humans are more important than

hardware,” corresponds with SWCS' emphasis on the importance of values and education within the special-operations community.

A Soldier's equipment isn't assessed and selected because it displays courage and perseverance; nor can a Soldier's weapon be educated to consider the second- and third-order effects of its actions. A Soldier is, and can.

When new special-operations combat medic students sign in to the Joint Special Operations Medical Training Center at Fort Bragg, their briefings highlight the lives saved by SOF medics on various battlefields. Key words: “SOF medics” — not “SOF medics' equipment.”

“Humans are an adaptive entity,” said Sgt. 1st Class Mitchell Elwood, a medical instructor at the JSOMTC.

“When given the appropriate guidance, and instilled with the correct values, humans can adjust correctly to any given situation or condition,” he said.

Special-operations combat medics will often find themselves in situations requiring all aspects of patient care and management, with limited resources and little or no other medical support personnel, Elwood said.

When they're on their own, they've got to make do with what they've got.

“SOF medics are taught principles and fundamentals that are sound in any medical situation,” Elwood said. At the JSOMTC, students learn to be proficient in many aspects of medical treatment, but they also learn to use those skills correctly in stressful situations.

The first SOF Truth extends beyond special-operations combat medics, said Command Sgt. Maj. Robin Duane, the senior NCO at the JSOMTC. Duane recently returned from an assignment in Afghanistan as the command sergeant major at Special Operations Task Force—East.

“Humans' does not just mean SOF operators, it means all humans,” Duane said. “SOF operators, especially medics, interact with indigenous people on a more 'grass roots' level than any other group. Winning over the local populace will win a war quicker and more thoroughly than winning a fire-fight.”

“Hardware is replaceable with either an exact item, or a better one as technology emerges,” Duane said. “Humans are not replaceable, and unlike hardware, they can think, reason and show compassion.”

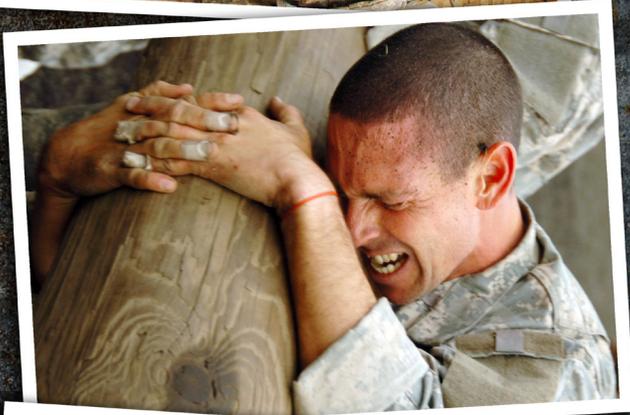
**“When given the appropriate guidance, and instilled with the correct values, humans can adjust correctly to any given situation or condition.”**

**Sgt. 1st Class Mitchell Elwood**

*Instructor, Joint Special Operations Medical Training Center*



# SOFT TRUTHS



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MORE IMPORTANT  
THAN  
HARDWARE**

**QUALITY  
IS BETTER  
THAN  
QUANTITY**

**SOF  
CANNOT BE  
MASS  
PRODUCED**

**COMPETENT SOF  
CANNOT BE CREATED  
AFTER EMERGENCIES  
OCCUR**

**MOST SPECIAL  
OPERATIONS  
REQUIRE NON-SOF  
SUPPORT**



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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	1	2	Robin Sage ends	4	5	6
7	1st SWTC(A) Support Battalion Truck Rodeo (Through Thursday)	SWCS Newcomer Orientation	10	11	SWCS Summer Picnic	13