



1st MSC Gazette

Recruiting, Promoting and Growing Citizen Soldiers

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Fall 2012

Target acquired!

22 Army Reserve-Puerto Rico
troops practice their marksmanship skills

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1st MSC Gazette

*Promoting, Recruiting
and
Growing*

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ARE YOU UP TO

Best Warrior Competition



Staff Sgt. Xabriel Ortiz-Cordero, a mortuary affairs specialist assigned to the 311th QM Company, Aguadilla, PR, eagerly waits to shoot the M249 machine gun, during the Best Warrior Competition, July 16, 2012. (US Army photo by Staff Sgt Peter Ford/Released)

By Command Sgt Maj. René Rivera

1st Mission Support Command, Command Sgt. Maj.

The 1st Mission Support Command, US Army Reserve-Puerto Rico had the honor of being represented by Staff Sgt. Xabriel Ortiz-Cordero, assigned to the 311th Quartermaster Company, and Spec. Xavier Sanchez

assigned to the 266th Ordnance Company, during the United States Reserve Command Best Warrior Competition, July 17-20 at Fort McCoy Wis.

I am extremely proud of the role played by these two young troops from our command, in representation of the over 5,000 US Army Reserve soldiers

“Ortiz-Cordero and Sanchez proudly carried in their shoulders the legacy of selfless service of many generations of Puerto Rican troops.”

Command Sgt. Maj. René Rivera

in the Caribbean. Ortiz-Cordero and Sanchez proudly carried in their shoulders the legacy of selfless service of many generations of Puerto Rican troops.

The Army Best Warrior Competition is one of the best ways to motivate Enlisted and Non-commissioned soldiers to strive for excellence, not just by performing in their individual specialties, but competing and achieving a series of benchmarks throughout the year to qualify for the Army-wide, Best Warrior Competition.

THE CHALLENGE?

A Command Sgt Maj Rivera reflection

During the competition, these elite soldier competitors test their Army aptitude, conquering urban warfare simulations, board interviews, physical fitness tests, written exams, Warrior tasks and battle drills, relevant to today's operating environment, and their extent and depth of knowledge on areas such as military leadership and counseling, current events, U.S. Army history, tactical communications, survival and many others.

Unfortunately, our soldiers were not selected as winners this year. However, we are very proud of their effort and of the great representation they conducted. With just participating in this extremely difficult competition, Ortiz-Cordero and Sanchez demonstrated the great soldiers they are.

Next year, the 166th Regional Support Group will host the Best Warrior Competition for the 1st Mission Support Command, and

I want to extend the challenge to all our enlisted soldiers in the command.

I firmly believe that we have the best soldiers in the world, here in Puerto Rico, and by participating in these competitions, we bring credit to the unit, the 1st Mission Support Command, and the Army Reserve-Puerto Rico.

Are you up to the challenge?



Private 1st Class. Xavier Sanchez (left), a wheeled vehicle mechanic with the 266th Ordinance Company and Staff Sgt. Xabriel Ortiz (right), a mortuary affairs noncommissioned officer with the 311th Quartermaster Company, mingle at a no-host social July 15 at the 2012 U.S. Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition at Fort McCoy, Wis. The two represented the US Army Reserve-Puerto Rico in the competition. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Jacob Boyer, USARC PAO)

GOT RETIREMENT?



Over 200 service members participated in the Pre-Retirement Seminar at the 1st Mission Support Command headquarters, Fort Buchanan, PR, July 15, 2012. (US Army Photo by Maj Carlos Cuebas, 1st MSC PAO/Released)

By: Maj Carlos M. Cuebas
Public Affairs Officer

FORT BUCHANAN, Puerto Rico - Assuming its role as the largest US Army Reserve command in the Caribbean, the 1st Mission Support Command, Human Resources Office, hosted the first Pre-Retirement Seminar at the command's headquarters, July 14.

"Up to this point, the troops assigned to the US Army Reserve-Puerto Rico retired without receiving any formal guidance in the process", said Mercedes Torres from the 1st MSC Retirement section.

Torres was referring to the soldiers in the "gray area".

According to Torres, soldiers are in the gray area, if they have retired from the service, but have not reached the age 60.

"The United States Army Reserve conducted a study several years ago and found out that there was a large population of gray retirees, who were not following a process to retire from the military," said Vernon L. Harris, Director of Human Resources, 81st Regional Support Command (RSC).

According to officials at the 81st RSC, changing from military to civilian lifestyle is not always an easy task, but planning can be a big help.

Not planning the retirement could

potentially result in serious problems that could have been avoided.

"If you want to retire, you must start the process at least a year in advance. It is not something that just happens," said Capt. Maya Troupe, 81st RSC, Retirement Services Officer.

During the seminar, the 1st Mission Support Command, Commanding General, Brig. Gen Fernando Fernández, welcomed the over 200 participants.

"We are conducting this initiative to make sure you understand all the

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procedures and actions that you must take to make sure your hard earned retirement benefits are properly processed,” said Fernández.

This is the first time this seminar is conducted in Puerto Rico, as part of a pilot program established by the United States Army Reserve Command. (USARC)

Lt. Col. Kathleen Couillard, USARC pilot action officer at the Retirement Services Program, was also present during the seminar.

“This is our very first bilingual briefing on non-regular retirements. We are focused on the traditional Troop Program Unit soldier getting ready for retirement, because their benefits are different from the Active Duty compo-

ment soldiers,” said Couillard.

“It is very important that the spouses and family members are here, because this information directly impacts them. I am glad to see that we have a good mix here today, not just soldiers but family members as well,” added Couillard.

Staff Sgt José A. Valerio, assigned to the 5th Brigade, 94th Training Division, US Army Reserve, was accompanied by his wife, Ilsha Valerio.

“We should have had this briefing before. A lot of soldiers are afraid of retirement because we do not know. Finally, I am seeing the light at the end of the tunnel. Every soldier should be required to do this”, said Valerio.

“Before coming here I had many ques-

tions concerning so many things, for example Tricare. I think every spouse should attend. It is very important to know what you are eligible to, as you make a conscious decision about retirement,” said Ilsha Valerio.

The daylong seminar consisted of several key informative and interactive sessions about family readiness, survivor benefits, Tricare and retired pay, among others.

Ms. Torres from the 1st MSC Retirement Office expressed great hope for future Pre-Retirement seminars in the island.

“We would like to have this briefing conducted more often here in Puerto Rico. We also plan on conducting it in small groups and also having it fully in Spanish,” said Torres.

Retirees in the gray area are those who have retired from the service, but have not reached the age of 60.



The 1st MSC's Retirement section coordinated the Seminar in direct collaboration with the 81st Regional Support Command. (Army photo by Maj Carlos Cuebas, 1st MSC PAO /Released)

1st MSC has a new Inspector General



Lt. Col. Humberto Pasarell (left) is sworn in as the 1st Mission Support Command Inspector General, by Brig. Gen. Fernando Fernández, 1st MSC Commanding General, July 23, 2012 at the command's headquarters. (US Army Photo by Sgt Jose Babilonia, 1st MSC PAO/Released)

By: SGT Jose F. Babilonia
1st MSC Public Affairs Office

FT Buchanan, PR-Lt. Col. Humberto Pasarell became the newest 1st Mission Support Command Inspector General (IG), July 23, when he was sworn in by Brig. Gen. Fernando Fernández, Commanding General of the 1st MSC, at the command's headquarters.

Pasarell, who is a member of the Active Guard Reserve (AGR) Program, was deployed in 2007 to Afghanistan. Most recently, Pasarell comes from serving for approximately four years in the Logistical Section (G4) at the US Army Reserve Command (USARC).

"I'm happy to be back in the 1st MSC, this was my home for my first AGR tour and I came back after six years," said the new IG.

The IG officer holds a position of public trust, broad experience, strong communication skills, and impeccable ethics.

The IG officer holds a position of public trust.

"The challenge is great. It is a position of much own risk associated with having all the confidence of the General. I am the eyes of the General in all matters relating to inspections, investigations and

assessments," added Pasarell.

IGs serve their commanders and their commands by performing four IG functions: inspections, assistance, investigations, and teaching.

The IGs use these functions to seek out systemic issues that adversely affect the command and the Army and then inspect those systemic issues to identify problem areas, making recommendations that directly address the causes of these problem areas.

The two main concepts that bear directly upon, and often characterize the execution of these four functions, are the IG tenet of confidentiality and the restrictions placed on the distribution and use of IG records.

SERVING GOD AND COUNTRY

Fort Buchanan, PR- Sgt. 1st Class Monserrate Vergara-Soto, became the newest 1st Mission Support Command US Army Reserve-Puerto Rico chaplain candidate, in a small but significant ceremony conducted at the command's headquarters, July 9.

"Today, I accomplish one of my goals and I am glad that you are part of it. Believe me, you are part of my family," said an emotional Vergara-Soto, while addressing the personnel who gathered to witness the ceremony.

Established by the Second Continental Congress in 1775, the Army Chaplaincy predates the Declaration of Independence and is both

the largest and oldest military chaplaincy in the world.

Service members willing to become chaplains do not have to wait until ordination to join the Army Chaplaincy.

Those interested, can train to become an Army Chaplain, while still training for the ministry.

The training and experience they receive as a chaplain candidate will be a rich one, along with the ministerial education and training.

All chaplain candidates are commissioned officers assigned to the Army Reserve in the Staff Specialists Branch.

To be eligible to participate in the Chaplain Candidate Program, individuals must obtain an ecclesiastical approval from a denomination or faith group, must possess a baccalaureate degree of not less than 120 semester hours, be a full-time graduate student at an accredited seminary or theological school and be at least 18 years of age and not older than 39 years of age at time of commissioning, among other requirements.

For more information visit <http://www.goarmy.com/chaplain/candidate-program.html>.

"Today I accomplish one of my goals and I am glad that you are part of it."

**2nd Lt. Vergara-Soto
Chaplain candidate**



Col. Miguel A. Isaac, (right) 1st MSC Deputy Commander, places the 2nd Lt. rank on Vergara-Soto (left) at the command's headquarters July 9, 2012. (US Army photo by Maj Carlos Cuebas, 1st MSC PAO/Released)

TARGET ACQUIRED!



RIGHT, CHIEF WARRANT CARLOS ZAYAS, SHOOTS THE M4 RIFLE AT CAMP SANTIAGO JOINT MANEUVER TRAINING CENTER, MAY 19. ACCORDING TO FIELD MANUAL 3-22.9, MARKSMANSHIP PROFICIENCY IS CRITICAL AND BASIC TO SOLDIERING.

By: SGT Jose F. Babilonia
1st MSC Public Affairs Office

Salinas, PR- Soldiers from the 1st Mission Support Command (1st MSC), US Army Reserve- Puerto Rico, conducted a weapons qualification exercise at the Camp Santiago Joint Maneuver Training Center, May 19.

Despite having technical difficulties with some of the facilities, the soldiers assigned to the 448th Engineer Battalion, unit in charge of managing the operation of the ranges, adapted and overcame, being able to successfully conduct the qualification event.

“Everything is going well. Even though we have had some minor situations with the facilities, we have been able to continue operating the range,” said Sgt. 1st Class Desiderio Robledo, acting First Sgt. at the 448th Forward Support Company.

To qualify with the basic M16/M4 rifle, the shooter must first get five of six rounds in a four-centimeter circle at 25 yards on the zero range, which during this event was managed by Staff Sgt Diane Clark, from the 756th Engineer Company.

“The zero range is running pretty fast. We have a lot of soldiers to get zeroed, but the weather is great,

which is of benefit to the troops,” said Clark.

Once the shooter is able to zero, he or she moves to the qualification range, where the troops must score 23 or more rounds, out of 40 fired, engaging targets from 50 to 300 meters, in prone and kneeling positions.

Even though this weapons qualification event included only the M16 and the M4 weapons systems, usually soldiers could also qualify with different weapons, such as the M9 pistol, or the M203 grenade launcher, among others.

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TARGET ACQUIRED!

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The qualification standards vary significantly with different weapons systems.

A major aspect of the weapons qualification task is the pre-marksman instruction, or PMI, class.

PMI normally is conducted in a classroom environment, before the soldiers go to the live-fire ranges.

It includes the disassembly of a weapon into its major basic parts, inspection of the parts to ensure they are serviceable, reassembly

and a functions check, to make sure it operates properly.

To qualify, the shooter must score 23 or more rounds out of 40 rounds fired.

According to Field Manual 3-22.9, marksmanship proficiency is critical and basic to soldiering and is required for any unit deployed to a wartime theater.

“We are making it happen. Everything is at 100 percent,” said Staff Sgt. Santiago Otero, Noncommissioned Officer in charge of the M16/M4 qualification range.



Staff Sgt. Diane Clark, assigned to the 756th Engineer Company, supervises and controls the operations of the zero range from the tower, at Camp Santiago Joint Maneuver Training Center, May 19. To qualify with the basic M16/M4 rifle, the shooter must first get five of six rounds in a four-centimeter circle at 25 yards on the zero range. (US Army photo by Maj Carlos Cuebas, 1st MSC PAO/Released)

ASK, CARE & ESCORT

Fort Buchanan, PR- With the intent of making an immediate impact and to set the stage for long term progress to reduce suicides, reduce high risk behavior, and improve the health, discipline, and resilience of the force, soldiers and civilians assigned to the US Army Reserve-Puerto Rico, participated in a suicide prevention class, at the 1st Mission Support Command headquarters, July 14.

The training was conducted by Col. Norma Rivera, Suicide Prevention Trainer. A separate session was also conducted by Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Curtis L. Muldrow, Deputy Command Chaplain .

“We all can prevent suicides, if we learn how to read the signs,” said Rivera during the training.

Rivera conducted a role playing exercise during the training, with the intent of getting the message through.

Lt. Col. Emmerine D. Walker, from the command’s Surgeon’s Office, assisted Rivera during the training and also took part in the role playing exercise.

“We must emphasize in the word prevention. The only way we can do that is by keeping our eyes and ears open and being able to identify those who are struggling, those who are going through some challenges,” said Muldrow during his class.

Muldrow also highlighted the



Chaplain, (Lt. Col.) Curtis L. Muldrow, 1st Mission Support Command, US Army Reserve-Puerto Rico Deputy Command Chaplain, explains suicides statistics to soldiers of the 1st MSC, during the recent Suicide Prevention Training conducted in the largest US Army Reserve command in the Caribbean. (US Army photo by Sgt Jose Babilonia, 1st MSC PAO, Released)

fact that one third of those who commit suicide in the Army have never been deployed.

“Everybody is at risk”, he said.

The Army’s suicide prevention efforts are constantly evolving to provide the Army family with the resources they need.

In March 2009, the Army established the Suicide Prevention Task Force, which reviewed more than 300 existing Army-wide programs, strengthening the most effective programs and streamlining efforts where it made sense.

The Army has directed enhanced health promotion and risk reduction support for geographically-

disbursed soldiers and families who serve in the National Guard, Reserve and at locations away from installations and garrisons.

Soldiers and families in need of crisis assistance can contact the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline.

Trained consultants are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year and can be contacted by dialing 1-800-273-TALK (8255) and pressing “1” for Military members and Veterans or by visiting their website at www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org.

The Army’s comprehensive list of Suicide Prevention Program information is located at <http://www.preventsuicide.army.mil>

Food Service professionals tested

By: SGT Jose F. Babilonia
1st MSC Public Affairs Office

Aguadilla, PR- Food Service Specialists assigned to the 266th Ordnance Company (ODCO), US Army Reserve—Puerto Rico, competed for the Philip A. Connelly Award, United States Army Reserve Command (USARC) level, July 21-22, while performing field kitchen operations at the Ramey Airfield.

Established in 1968, the Army Philip A. Connelly Awards are named for the late Philip A. Connelly, a former International Food Services Executives Association (IFSEA) President.

The award categories include Battalion and Brigade, Dining Facilities Small and Large, Field Kitchens, National Guard and Army Reserves.

The Connelly Awards program recognizes the Army's finest food service professionals and is managed by the Quartermaster Center and School's Army Center of Excellence, Subsistence, and cosponsored by the IFSEA and the Department of the Army.

"They did a very good job, they did great (referring to the 266th OD CO). I got some fierce competition this year. I think it was the best competition that I have seen since I've been doing the Connelly," said Chief Warrant Officer 4 Danny L. Tindle, USARC Food Service Technician, who inspected the

performance of the 266th OD CO.

This year, 17 units are competing at USARC level but only 4 units will be selected to compete at Department of the Army (DA) level.

The winners at the DA level will participate at the IFSEA annual convention and will have the opportunity to go to a prestigious culinary school for two weeks.

The objective of the Connelly Awards Program is to improve professionalism of food service personnel, thus providing the best quality food service to supported soldiers dinners.

The Connelly Awards Program provides recognition for excellence in the preparation and serving of food in Army troop dining facilities and during field kitchen operations.

The contest also provides added incentive to competitive programs of installation management command and Army commands, by adding higher level of competition and appropriate recognition.

"I am very proud of my soldiers, I'm very proud of the section; this year has been a very productive one," said 1st Sgt. Rafael Natal, 266th OD CO Senior Noncommissioned Officer.



Chief Warrant Officer 4 Danny L. Tindle, USARC Food Service Technician, stands in the serving line of the 266th Ordnance Company field kitchen, during the unit's inspection, as part of the Connelly Awards competition, July 22, at Ramey Airfield, Aguadilla, Puerto Rico. (US Army photo by Sgt Jesus M. Cruz, UPAR 266th OD Co)

346th TC Battalion units excel during AT

Hawthorne, N.D. - Members assigned to the 512th Movement Control Team (MCT), US Army Reserve Virgin Islands, a subordinate element of the 1st Mission Support Command, participated in the Operation Golden Cargo 2012, during the month of July.

Golden Cargo 2012 is an annual training operation that incorporates service members, working along with civilians, handling the potentially dangerous job of loading and strategically shipping munitions across the western United States.



Above and left: SGT Luis Mendez, assigned to the 346th TC Bn, verifies documentation previous to the departure of a convoy, during Operation Golden Cargo (US Army photo by Sgt. Danery Garcia, 273rd UPAR/Released)



As part of their mission, the troops from the 512th MCT conducted 24 hour operations, tracking convoys moving from one location to the next, until they got to their destination and the mission was complete for the day.

“Overall, I must say that the mission was a great learning experience. I can’t wait until next year to do it again. I felt that our team did a very good job seeing that it was only three personnel running a whole MCT,” said Spec. Edwards-Magras a Transportation Management Coordinator.

Other 1st MSC Transportation units that successfully conducted annual trainings were the 432nd, the 273rd, and the 973rd .

Wilson becomes the newest USARC CCWO

Fort Belvoir, VA- Chief Warrant Officer 5 (CW5) Phyllis J. Wilson became the 5th Command Chief Warrant Officer (CCWO) for the United States Army Reserve, July 2.

A Change of Responsibility ceremony was conducted on July 9, day of the official Army Warrant Officer Corps' birthday.

Chief Warrant Officer 5 Karen Grays, 1st Mission Support Command CCWO, was present during the ceremony.

"It was great to be part of this special moment in the history of the Warrant Officer Corps," said Grays.

As the CCWO, Wilson represents and advises the Chief of the Army Reserve/Commanding General, U.S. Army Reserve Command on matters pertaining to training and education, career management, leader development and warrior transition issues for warrant officers within the Army Reserve.

She is also responsible for coordinating policy and statutory changes to support the advancement of initiatives for the Warrant Officer Corps.

Wilson holds a Master's Degree in Management from Webster University, two Bachelor of Science degrees: nursing (registered nurse) and liberal arts (sociology/German) and three Associate of Science degrees.

She has attended the Defense Language Institute for German and Spanish, as well as the Defense Strategic Debriefing Course. She is a 2008 graduate of the Warrant Officer Senior Staff Course and has studied at

the George C. Marshall Center in Garmisch, Germany, completing the Program for Advanced Security Studies in 2009.

"Together we celebrate the Army Reserve Warrant Officers for the contributions made ..."

CW 5 Phyllis J. Wilson

"As the 5th Command Chief Warrant Officer (CCWO) for the United States Army Reserve, I want to personally thank all Warrant Officers who have ever served for their dedication to duty and selfless service. Together we celebrate the Army Reserve Warrant Officers for the contributions made to the Army as an indispensable part of the Total Force." said Wilson in her official blog.



Lt. Gen. Jeffrey W. Talley (left) presents the Army Reserve flag to CW5 Phyllis J. Wilson (right), during the Change of Responsibility ceremony on July 9, at Fort Belvoir, Virginia.(US Army photo)

1st MSC's Internal Review office is recognized

By: SGT Jose F. Babilonia
1st MSC Public Affairs Office

St. Louis, Mo.- The 1st Mission Support Command (1st MSC) ,US Army Reserve-Puerto Rico's Internal Review (IR) office was recognized during the Army Reserve IR Conference, July 20.

Ms. Karen M. Gonzalez, Accountant (Evaluator) for the 1st MSC, Internal Review Office, was recognized for exceptionally dedicated service to the Army Reserve Internal Review (ARIR), and the US Army Reserve Command (USARC).

"The fact that we are a one-man shop (referring that she is the only full time personnel), makes our mission challenging, but it was great to know that our effort was recognized by the USARC IR Office," said Gonzalez.

The 1st MSC IR office team includes Lt. Col. Edwin N. Gomez, Maj. Carlos J. Ramirez, Capt. Eric A. Garcia and Ms. Karen M. Gonzalez.

Another award received by the 1st MSC IR office was the 2012 Award of Merit.

This award is presented for meritorious performance as Office of the Year (small office) for the period of 1 April 2011 through 31 March 2012.

In order to receive the award, the IR offices must demonstrate efficiency in program

management, meeting current or emerging needs of decision-makers and quality control, among other criteria.

The IR office provides independent, objective, assurance, and consulting activities within the command, designed and governed by Army Regulation 11-7 and 11-2, adding value and improving the command's operations.

The objective of the Army's IR Program is to provide commanders and their staffs with a full range of professional internal review services that are timely, support local decision-makers

and ensure effective stewardship.

The IR is a primary tool of the commander's system of command and control, designed to mitigate risk and increase assurance of the effectiveness and efficiency of command operations.

The awards were presented by Mr. Wally Wallace, Director US Army Reserve Internal Review Office and Mrs. Sandra Pack, Director, US Army Corps of Engineer Internal Review Office.



(From left to Right) Mrs. Sandra Pack, Director, US Army Corps of Engineer Internal Review Office, Ms. Karen M. Gonzalez, Lt. Col. Edwin N. Gomez, Capt. Eric A. Garcia, Maj. Carlos J. Ramirez, (1st Mission Support Command Internal Review office personnel) and Mr. Wally Wallace, Director of the US Army Reserve Internal Review Office, display the award received at the Army Reserve Internal Review Conference on July 20.

Army Reserve-PR troops conduct demining training in Ecuador



Staff Sgt Gustavo Burgos (left) observes Ecuadorian Private Franco Lalangui uncover a simulated mine, 1 Aug 2012. (US Army photo by Miguel Negron)

Quito, Ecuador - A detachment of soldiers assigned to the 471st Engineer Co., 1st Mission Support Command, US Army Reserve Puerto Rico, trained 30 soldiers from the Ecuadorian Army on humanitarian demining operations, in coordination with the US Army South, July 15 to Aug 3.

The troops assigned to the largest federal US Army Command in the region, whose ability to speak Spanish proved to be crucial during this mission, trained their Ecuadorian counterparts in landmine clearance, mine risk education, and victim assistance.

According to the US Department of Defense, Ecuador has anti-personnel landmines along its 79 kilometer border with Peru, a result of a long-standing border dispute that escalated into a brief war in 1995.

By participating in this initiative the US Army Reserve Puerto Rico helps implement the US Government humanitarian mine action.

As of 31 December 2008, 6,113 mines over an area of 517,312 square meters, remain to be cleared.

The area affected by mines is sparsely populated. However the mines significantly affect indigenous tribes' access to their traditional farming and hunting land. The challenges to mine clearance operations are the steep terrain, lack of road access, and frequent flooding.

By participating in this mission, the soldiers from the largest US Army Reserve Command in the Caribbean, help implement the US Government humanitarian mine action program, which provides increased humanitarian mine action assistance to countries suffering from the presence of persistent landmines, which kill innocents, obstruct emergency assistance activities, hamper economic development, and impede free movement of citizens.



Ecuadorian army Private 1st Class Darwin Valverde, learns how to use a mine detector while US Army Sgt. Miguel Rolon, US Army Reserve PR, oversees the practical exercise. (US Army photo by Miguel Negron)

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