



# FORT DETRICK THE STANDARD

A SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY OF EXCELLENCE



## When Fern Hit Fort Detrick, DPW Hit Back Harder

By Erickson Barnes, USAG Public Affairs

When Winter Storm Fern descended on the Mid-Atlantic region in late January, bringing a mix of heavy snow and damaging ice to Frederick County, the response at Fort Detrick was immediate and relentless.

For 70 continuous hours, crews from the Directorate of Public Works (DPW) waged a battle against the elements, ultimately clearing more than 61,600 tons of snow and ice to restore critical operations to the installation, ensuring our warfighters and federal agencies are fully supported and always ready.

The storm, which triggered snow emergencies across the city of Frederick and closed local schools and offices, presented a significant challenge to the post's infrastructure. However, a coordinated, multi-layered response plan allowed the installation to mitigate long-term impacts and quickly resume its mission.

Leading the charge was a team of 26 DPW personnel – 22 stationed at Fort Detrick and four at the Forest Glen Annex. The crews reported for duty at 6 p.m. on Jan. 24 and worked tirelessly through the weekend until 3:30 p.m. on Jan. 27.

"Our team's dedication was evident in every hour of that marathon shift," said Paul O'Brien, chief of operations and maintenance for DPW. "To move that amount of material while battling freezing conditions isn't just a job; it's a commitment to the safety of everyone who lives and works here."

The scale of the removal effort was massive. DPW crews are responsible for plowing 188.64 acres of paved area across the installation, including 142.64 acres of roads and parking lots and 46 acres of sidewalks. This coverage extends to Areas A, B, C, and the Forest Glen

Annex.

While the storm left a mark on the region, the proactive efforts of the DPW ensured that Fort Detrick returned to full operational status as soon as safely possible, turning a potential crisis into a testament to readiness and resilience



*For 70 continuous hours, crews from the Directorate of Public Works (DPW) waged a battle against the elements, ultimately clearing more than 61,600 tons of snow and ice to restore critical operations to the installation, ensuring our warfighters and federal agencies are fully supported and always ready. Photo by DPW*

# Adopt-a-School Program Strengthens Community Bonds, Supports Army Priorities

By Jenni Benson, USAG Public Affairs

Fort Detrick is preparing to launch an initiative that will significantly enhance the wrap-around care provided by local schools throughout the academic year.

The Adopt-a-School Program aims to build meaningful relationships between the Army and the local community, benefiting students, teachers, and families while aligning with Army priorities such as "People First," readiness, and community engagement.

The program, spearheaded by Fort Detrick's School Liaison Officer, Andrea Bridgewater-McCarthy, with command support, is designed to connect Fort Detrick with local schools to provide mentorship, resources, and support.

According to Bridgewater-McCarthy, the vision for the Adopt-a-School Program is to "perpetuate supportive relationships between our garrison and the school community." The program's goals include extending support to military families and addressing the unique needs of local schools.

"It's all about bringing the community together and building stronger bonds for future generations," she explained.

## How the Program Works

Through the Adopt-a-School Program, Fort Detrick units and organizations will "adopt" local schools, creating opportunities for soldiers to engage with students in meaningful ways. Activities will range from mentorship and STEM education to leadership development and community service projects.

Bridgewater-McCarthy emphasized the importance of meeting with schools to determine their unique needs, executing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and then catering to those needs as mission allows.

"Students will benefit from having additional role models in the building to assist with academic and social-emotional needs," she said. "And, our Soldiers will have the pleasure of boosting students' confidence and self-worth while modeling the core Army values."

## Planning and Progress

Launching the program involves a detailed planning process. Bridgewater-McCarthy outlined several key steps, including marketing the program, managing volunteers through the Volunteer Management Information System (VMIS), conducting volunteer orientation, maintaining records, and coordinating volunteer recognition events.

"There is a significant amount of work to be done during the planning phase," noted Bridgewater-McCarthy.

So far, marketing materials have been created, and Bridgewater-McCarthy has completed her training for managing VMIS. The program is set to partner with Whittier Elementary School and West Frederick Middle School, both of which serve many military-connected students and have earned Purple Star Designation for their dedication to military families.

## Soldier and Civilian Involvement

Soldiers and civilian employees will play a vital role in the program, participating as guest speakers, mentors, and classroom supporters.

"The roles will truly be determined based on the needs of the school," explained Bridgewater-McCarthy. "We are excited for this partnership and look forward to learning about the needs and how we can provide meaningful contributions."

## Alignment with Army Priorities

The Adopt-a-School Program aligns closely with Army priorities, including "People First," readiness, and community engagement. Bridgewater-McCarthy highlighted the importance of supporting military-connected students, who serve alongside their parents.

"It would mean so much to our students to have our Service Members present in the school buildings, looking out for their best interest," she said. "It teaches them resilience and the importance of community."

By investing in the well-being and development of local youth, the program reinforces the Army's commitment to building strong, resilient communities. It also provides parents and Service Members with peace of mind, knowing their children are supported even in their absence.

students need our love—the kind of love that is tangible and endearing, making a lasting impact for generations to come."

## Looking Ahead

The Fort Detrick team is excited to watch the program grow, invest in local youth through education and relationships, and remain a trusted partner in shaping the next generation of leaders.

For more information about the Adopt-a-School Program or to get involved, please contact Andrea Bridgewater-McCarthy at: [andrea.o.bridgewater-mccarthy.naf@army.mil](mailto:andrea.o.bridgewater-mccarthy.naf@army.mil).

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### Next Steps and Call to Action

The next steps for officially launching the program include meeting with Unit Commanders and school officials to draft the MOU, marketing the program, registering volunteers on VMIS, and conducting volunteer orientation. Once the MOU is approved, a meet-and-greet event will be held at the schools to kick off the program.

Bridgewater-McCarthy encouraged the community to get involved.

"The more volunteers we have, the greater impact we can make within our community," she said. "Our schools need our support, and our students need our love—the kind of love that is tangible and endearing, making a lasting impact for generations to come."

## Army Medical Maintenance Facilities Modernize With AI, Telemaintenance To Support Future Fight

By CJ Lovelace, AMLC Public Affairs

U.S. Army Medical Logistics Command is embracing the use of artificial intelligence and advanced telemaintenance to ensure life-saving medical devices are ready for the next generation of warfare, where troops may be more isolated and support less accessible than ever before.

AMLC operates three Medical Maintenance Operations Divisions, or MMODs, where small teams of expert technicians are transforming sustainment-level maintenance operations to provide critical remote support to the warfighter.

The shift addresses the challenges of potential future conflicts in geographically vast areas, for example, such as in the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command area of operation.

"If we have a new one spring up, like in the Pacific, [we're] talking about lots of small island chains and isolated areas that are not easily accessible," said Ian McNesby, chief of operations at AMLC's MMOD in Tracy, California, or MMOD-CA. "A lot of these guys are going to be on their own or cut off from major resources ... unless we can provide remote support."

In that scenario, a unit-level medic with a broken diagnostic machine can't wait days for a replacement part or a fly-in technician to address the issue. To bridge that distance, the MMODs are moving beyond traditional support methods.

"We've always done some form of telemaintenance, but in the past we didn't have visual capability," McNesby said.

Now, using platforms like Microsoft Teams, technicians can visually diagnose equipment issues and assist Soldiers downrange with repairs, a major leap from simply talking over the phone.

Leading this change is AMLC's Medical Maintenance Management Directorate, or M3D, which oversees the three MMODs in California, Pennsylvania and Utah. The directorate is carefully charting its course to align with the AMLC's higher headquarters, U.S. Army Communications-Electronics Command.



**U.S. Army Medical Logistics Command is embracing new technology, including artificial intelligence and advanced telemaintenance capabilities, to bring sustainment-level medical maintenance expertise directly to operational forces in the field. (U.S. Army graphic by C.J. Lovelace)**

MMOD-CA Director Isaac Newman emphasized a strategic, forward-looking approach when it comes to AI.

"Modernizing sustainment is a key part of the Army's mission, and we are watching the development of CECOM's Artificial Intelligence-Assisted Maintenance (AIAM) platform with great interest," Newman said. "While it's not part of our daily workflow yet, we are actively exploring how we can best leverage it in the future."

The integration of AI is already showing promise. MMOD personnel are using it for administrative tasks but also considering ways to directly assist technicians.

"As the program matures, we see tremendous opportunity to contribute our specialized medical equipment data into the learning model," Newman added. "This will ensure the platform is finely tuned for the unique needs of Army Medicine, ultimately benefiting the Soldiers who rely on this equipment."

This technological leap is being driven by the teams at each MMOD, comprised of military, civilian and contract technicians, many of whom are prior military as well. Their deep, hands-on knowledge is M3D's greatest asset, McNesby said, but also its greatest challenge as some seasoned experts near retirement.

"It takes time to grow a subject-matter expert ... you can't just grow that overnight," McNesby warned, highlighting the need to capture their institutional knowledge.

AMLC is supporting modernization efforts at all three MMODs, which also includes facilities at Tobyhanna Army Depot, Pennsylvania, and Hill Air Force Base, Utah.

Each facility supports a different geographical region, serving as a center of technical excellence for different types of equipment. The MMODs are staffed by expert technicians who can service unit-level equipment shipped to their shops, as well as deploy to provide direct support to operational units or National Guard units in their respective regions.

MMOD-CA primarily supports medical imaging systems and specialized calibration equipment, while MMOD-UT specializes in pulmonary and oxygen-generation systems, and MMOD-PA focuses on clinical lab equipment.

In addition to technological advances, MMOD-PA recently completed a

major renovation that doubled its warehouse space to 60,000 square feet and added a new training room dedicated to telemaintenance support.

"Our modernization efforts are in lockstep with CECOM's strategic vision," M3D Director Jorge Magana said. "This innovation isn't happening in a silo; it's a deliberate, directorate-wide effort across our MMODs. By empowering our teams to embrace technologies like AI and remote support, we are building a more resilient sustainment enterprise that directly contributes to CECOM's goals and delivers readiness for the entire Army."

A key part of this digital transformation is M3D's effort to digitize its equipment manuals and build out a searchable dashboard that will give maintainers instant access to everything from parts lists to data on average repair times.

As the Army prepares for an uncertain future, the work being done to modernize medical maintenance operations is a critical part of ensuring overall medical readiness. By embracing new technology, AMLC's MMODs are working to guarantee that no matter how remote the battlefield, the American warfighter will have the support they need.

"We're all in and fully on board to make that leap," McNesby affirmed. "It's our main mission. We're here to support the warfighter above all else."

## The Best of the Best, SSG Munoz and SSG Nace's Fight for Excellence in Army Medicine

**By Danae Johnson, MRDC Public Affairs**

The Army Best Medic Competition is a grueling test of physical endurance, mental fortitude, and technical expertise, designed to identify the best of the best among Army medics. For U.S. Army Research Institute of Environmental Medicine Staff Sgt. Rigoberto Munoz and Staff Sgt. Tyler Nace, competing at the Army level was not just a testament to their skills but also a reflection of their commitment to excellence and their ability to overcome challenges.

Some would say earning the title of best medic is just another badge of honor; in reality, it represents the culmination of relentless dedication, experience, and unwavering commitment to saving lives under the most challenging conditions.

"We are incredibly proud of SSG Nace and SSG Munoz. Their intense mental and physical preparation was evident from the moment they signed onto the competition. You could see in their eyes that they were ready to face any challenge,"



**Best Medic, Cont. on Page 8**

# Fort Detrick's Family Advocacy Program Launches Book Nook Initiative to Support Servicemembers and Families

By Lanessa Hill , USAG Public Affairs

During the furlough, the Family Advocacy Program at Fort Detrick identified an opportunity to better serve our servicemembers and civilian staff by making valuable educational resources more accessible.

According to Natalie Saunders of our Family Advocacy Program, the idea for the Book Nook was born when they realized that many of the books containing important information on topics like family advocacy, financial readiness, and relocation were underutilized because they were only available in their office.

“To address this, we decided to bring the books directly to the community, creating convenient access points across the installation”, said Saunders.

The Book Nook initiative is designed to support our servicemembers and their families by providing easy access to resources that promote education, awareness, and readiness. These books cover a wide range of topics, including family advocacy, financial planning, relocation assistance, and wellness, helping individuals and families navigate challenges and build resilience.

“By making these materials readily available, the Book Nooks empowers our community with the tools and knowledge they need to thrive both personally and professionally”, said Saunders.

The books are sourced from Army Community Service programs, including the Family Advocacy Program, Exceptional Family Member Program, Relocation Readiness Program, and Financial Readiness Program. Designed for all ages, the Book Nooks are stocked with materials tailored to the audiences most likely to frequent each location. For example, the Odom Fitness Center features resources on wellness and family support, while the Army Community Services office offers a broader range of educational materials.

The response to the Book Nook has been overwhelmingly positive. Since its launch, ACS has received great feedback from the community and has had to restock the shelves multiple times due to high demand. This enthusiasm underscores the importance of making educational resources readily available to our servicemembers, civilian staff, and their families.

FAP is excited to continue expanding the Book Nook initiative and welcomes book donations to help grow our collection. Donations can be dropped off at the Family Advocacy Program Office, located at 1520 Freedman Drive, Suite 125

Whether you're looking for information on family readiness,

financial planning, or simply a good read, the Book Nook is here to serve you.

Currently, the Book Nooks are available at the Odom Fitness Center and the Army Community Services office, with plans to extend their availability in the future. By providing these resources, the Book Nook initiative reinforces Fort Detrick's commitment to supporting our servicemembers and their families, ensuring they have the tools and knowledge to succeed in all aspects of their lives.



**Book Nooks are now available at Army Community Services and Odom Fitness Center, providing easy access to resources that promote education, awareness and reading. (U.S. Army photos by ACS)**

# Fort Detrick EOC Gets An Upgrade, Provides Better Support To Warfighters

By Erickson Barnes, USAG Public Affairs

The installation's Emergency Operations Center has completed a significant reconfiguration and technological overhaul designed to improve collaboration, expand capacity, and modernize how the post responds to crises in order to better support our warfighters and critical federal agencies.

The project, which evolved over a two-year period, moved beyond simple aesthetic updates to address functional limitations identified during previous exercises.

Tony Hockensmith, who led the effort for the Directorate of Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security (DPTMS), noted that the facility had not seen significant modifications since 2018. That previous effort was primarily a renewal of audio-visual contracts rather than a structural change. According to Hockensmith, after-action reports from various exercises highlighted the need for a new layout.

Previously, the room featured 24 workstations arranged at long tables. This setup often separated Emergency Support Functions, or ESFs, from the partners they needed to collaborate with most frequently.

"This led to an increase of volume in the room as individuals were found needing to talk over one another," Hockensmith said.

To solve this, the team reorganized the floor plan into work groups, later solidifying this arrangement with the procurement of new furniture to create "pods." The new tables feature cable management, electronic charging stations, and whiteboard surfaces to assist with note-taking during fluid situations. They are also on wheels, allowing for rapid reconfiguration.

Taiszcha Castro, the installation emergency manager, emphasized that the physical environment is vital to the center's core mission: protecting life, property, and the environment.

"It is critical to provide a functional space in which all supporting functions can effectively ensure a coordinated and efficient response to emergencies," Castro said. "The outstanding teamwork efforts throughout this project have helped in enhancing multi-level coordination with successful adaptability and problem-solving expertise."

The reconfiguration required significant infrastructure changes. With support from the Fort Detrick telephone shop, data and phone ports were relocated, and the team re-ran wiring to support an expansion from 24 to 32 workstations.

The expansion includes an analog station, two dedicated stations for emergency managers, and four workstations for the Threat Working Group, which previously operated from a distant location.

The new layout also shifted the command structure within the room. Video and knowledge wall controllers are now co-located with emer-

gency managers in the center of the floor, while the Command Team was moved to the rear of the room. Hockensmith said this provides leadership with "better command and control as well as a better oversight of the facility."

Technological upgrades ran parallel to the physical moves. The facility now features large wall monitors and desk-side screens to display the Common Operating Picture at both the front and back of the room. The team also installed a Microsoft Teams-compatible camera and microphone system and integrated the center with platforms used by local authorities in Frederick and Montgomery counties to ensure seamless operations across jurisdictional boundaries.

Tom Yocklin, Director, DPTMS, applauded his team's effort, dedication and innovation on this project.

"We had to achieve this within the fiscal constraints of our existing budget while employing in-house talent," Yocklin said. "We didn't have outside IT specialist or contractors for any part of the project. Just hard work and dedication by Tony and the DPTMS team, and great support from DPW when we needed it.

"This was a total team effort and a truly impressive accomplishment," Yocklin said.

Looking ahead, the EOC is preparing for the Army's Voice Modernization plan. The facility has already converted phones to VoIP systems and is looking to replace the legacy Crestron Video Wall system, which utilizes parts that are nearly 20 years old.

"As the hardware technology improves, the team will work to identify the equipment that is most sustainable and affordable," Hockensmith said.



*Tony Hockensmith works inside the newly modernized Emergency Operations Center, after leading a significant reconfiguration and technological overhaul designed to improve collaboration, expand capacity, and modernize how the post responds to crises in order to better support our warfighters and critical federal agencies. (Photo by Erickson Barnes, USAG Fort Detrick Public Affairs)*

# Army leaders discuss MEDLOG transformation

By C.J. Lovelace, AMLC Public Affairs

Leadership through change was a key theme during Army Medical Logistics Command's operational update to senior leaders at the U.S. Army Communications-Electronics Command on Jan. 29.

AMLC Commander Col. Deon Maxwell and Command Sgt. Major Gabriel Wright hosted Maj. Gen. James D. Turinetti IV, commanding general of CECOM, and Command Sgt. Major Jay High at Fort Detrick, where the teams discussed AMLC's workforce optimization efforts and key transformation initiatives, including Medical Logistics in Campaigning, or MiC, and Medical Maintenance Optimization, or MMO.

"Leaders lead through change and I appreciate everybody's attitude as we work through this," Turinetti said. "As you look where we're going ... if you approach it from the mindset of doing what's best for the Army, you're in the right place.

"The Army is changing and we have to support that effort."

AMLC, a major subordinate command to CECOM, serves as the Army's Class VIII medical materiel command, delivering integrated medical logistics that enables Army and Joint Force readiness from the strategic support area to the tactical edge.

Undergoing its most significant transformation in decades, the Army is modernizing and preparing for future large-scale combat operations, or LSCO, a shift that involves a comprehensive overhaul of the force to be more agile and lethal.

This transformation includes the MiC initiative, which aims to integrate medical logistics into the larger Army sustainment enterprise, capable of supporting the force at the speed of war in a multi-domain operational environment.

Through its initial "waves," or phases, MiC has successfully integrated medical materiel into the Army's system of record, Global Combat Support System-Army, and launched a new Forward Repair Activity-Medical, or FRA-M, program at strategic locations to provide medical maintenance support to units at their home stations, improving overall medical readiness and reducing costs.

Future waves will see additional FRA-M sites come online, continue streamlining unit-level medical materiel ordering processes, incorporate supply chain improvements that anticipate needs and mitigate risks in real time.

"Our success is all about the people we have in this organization," Maxwell said. "The drivers of the MEDLOG in Campaigning effort truly are subject-matter experts in the field, tuned into the challenges we face as an enterprise and working to affect positive change in support of the warfighter."



*Col. Deon Maxwell, left, commander of U.S. Army Medical Logistics Command, briefs leadership from U.S. Army Communications-Electronics Command at Fort Detrick, Md. During the Jan. 29 workforce optimization brief, AMLC leaders provided Maj. Gen. James D. Turinetti IV, center, commanding general of CECOM, and CECOM Command Sgt. Maj. Jay High with a deep dive into key transformation initiatives. (U.S. Army photos by Ellen Crown/Released)*

The MMO initiative aims to optimize AMLC's global medical maintenance footprint. Currently, this operation includes regional medical maintenance divisions stateside, a growing number of FRA-M sites, medical materiel centers in Germany and Korea, and specialized teams supporting Army Prepositioned Stocks, or APS, sites worldwide.

Under this new concept, AMLC's Medical Maintenance Management Directorate, or M3D, will coordinate all maintenance capabilities across the enterprise, ensuring that support, such as that provided by expert "fly-away teams," can be sent wherever it is needed most to meet readiness objectives.

"Our priority is realigning and optimizing our medical maintenance workforce and our capabilities throughout the AMLC enterprise," M3D Director Jorge Magana said.

Putting these strategic plans into action requires dedicated leaders, and Turinetti and High also took the opportunity to recognize several individuals for their outstanding performance in support of the mission in recent months.

CECOM command coins were presented to three AMLC Soldiers, including Lt. Col. Raquel Giunta, Master Sgt. Kary LeBlanc and Staff Sgt. Tereso Hernandez.

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Giunta received her coin in recognition of her role as acting chief of staff at the U.S. Army Medical Materiel Agency, where she also serves as the command's pharmacy consultant and director of its Distribution Operations Center.

Giunta led a comprehensive overhaul of USAMMA's controlled medications accountability and compliance program, as well as developed and implemented robust new reporting mechanisms, produced a high-impact instructional training video, and provided direct, hands-on oversight to the management of all controlled items.

Leblanc, who was unable to attend the event, was honored for his role as AMLC's operations noncommissioned officer in charge, syn-

chronizing staff across three subordinate commands and 900 personnel in 20 locations while driving major elements of the AMLC transformation.

Hernandez was recognized for his service as detachment sergeant and acting APS-5 medical forward site manager in Kuwait. During a critical 30-day rotation, Hernandez volunteered to assume operational control of the U.S. Central Command APS-5 medical mission, seamlessly integrating into a complex joint and combined sustainment enterprise. He expertly managed more than \$50 million in Class VIII medical materiel with zero losses.

## BEST MEDIC, continued from Page 4

said Master Sgt. Dominic Marconi, senior enlisted leader at USARIEM. "Their journey to the Army BMC was supported by exceptional training from the U.S. Army Medical Research and Development Command, beginning with an outstanding train-up organized by Master Sgt. Alice Lewis. The realistic Tactical Combat Casualty Care and prolonged care scenarios provided by Sgt. First Class Andrew Procter and Sgt. First Class Justin Warren prepared them for success."

The dedication and preparation described by Marconi were echoed in the training philosophy embraced by Nace and Munoz. For them, readiness meant more than physical fitness, it was about immersing themselves in the realities of the Army BMC.

"We spent days training how we fight and compete. Our physical training wasn't done in physical training uniform it was done in the Operational Camouflage Pattern uniform, boots, plate carrier, and helmet. We spent a lot of time doing physically demanding training in the gear we'd actually be using at the Army BMC, not just doing PT in our regular clothes," said Nace.

Nace and Munoz who earned the 2025 Best Medic title during USAMRDC's BMC at Fort Campbell, Kentucky proved to be a defining moment in Nace and Munoz's journey. The challenges they faced - ruck marches, obstacle courses, and other physically demanding events, were not just tests of endurance but valuable training experiences that mirrored the intensity of the Army-level competition.

Building on the lessons learned at Fort Campbell, USAMRDC continued to prepare them for the next challenge, ensuring they were ready to compete among the Army's

best medics. Through specialized training opportunities, they worked alongside some of the most skilled medics on Fort Detrick, honing their technical expertise while building the mental resilience they would need to perform under extreme stress and limited sleep.

"They had us constantly running through medical scenario after scenario while keeping us overnight to work on multiple patients to provide care and keep them alive throughout the night. The next day we were running through more scenarios with minimal sleep, and it really tested our mental fortitude and ability to think under extreme stress with little sleep and different stressors," said Nace. "It's something you're going to see at the Army level competition. There are so many events and challenges at that level that the goal is to push you through each event to truly identify the best of the best."

One of the most grueling obstacles Nace and Munoz faced was the unknown-distance ruck march, which demanded relentless effort.

"We had an hour's sleep before we were tasked with doing an unknown-distance ruck march, probably around 16 or 17 miles," Nace shared. The combination of exhaustion, physical strain, and the uncertainty of the distance ahead pushed them to dig deep, relying on sheer determination and teamwork to keep moving forward. Despite these challenges, Munoz and Nace demonstrated resilience and adaptability. Even when an unexpected illness and exhaustion threatened their performance, they pushed forward, embodying the spirit of perseverance that defines the Army Best Medic

Competition.

For both Munoz and Nace, the opportunity to compete at the Army level was deeply meaningful, blending personal gratitude with professional growth. Munoz viewed the experience as both an honor and a responsibility, recognizing the pressure of stepping outside his comfort zone as a medical lab technician to compete alongside some of the Army's best medics. Despite the high demands of the Army competition arena, he found motivation in the challenge, embracing it as an opportunity to push his limits and grow.

"I am grateful that my leadership trusted me enough to represent not only our unit but our division at the Army level," said Munoz. "Competing at that level was not about proving something to others, it was about giving it my best effort and honoring the trust my leaders and battle buddy placed in me. I personally walked away much stronger, knowledgeable, and confident in my ability to treat and support Soldiers."

While both Munoz and Nace remain open to competing again if the opportunity arises, their focus has shifted toward mentoring and preparing the next generation. Nace is committed to giving back by training motivated Soldiers to take on the challenges of future competitions, ensuring they are equipped to succeed. Similarly, Munoz is prioritizing the growth and career progression of his Soldiers, emphasizing his dedication to their development. However, both remain ready to step forward and represent their unit if needed, embodying the spirit of leadership and service.

Nace and Munoz's journey serves as an inspiration to their teammates who aspire to compete in future competitions, reminding them of the importance of mastering fundamentals, embracing challenges, and staying humble. As they transition into mentoring roles, Munoz and Nace continue to embody the values of leadership and excellence, ensuring that future Soldiers are prepared to rise to the challenge.

"My biggest advice is to focus on the fundamentals early and master your Army warrior tasks to include land navigation and take every opportunity to train seriously. You can quickly tell who has put in the work and who has not," said Munoz. "The Army BMC is not just about Army medicine; it's about pushing yourself and practicing those basic Army skills. If you give 100% at everything you do as a Soldier physically and mentally, you will do fine at the Army level or anything you do in life."

## **The Power of Practice, Preparation, and Collaboration in Emergency Response**

**By Lanessa Hill, USAG Public Affairs**

On February 26, representatives from Frederick County Fire and Emergency Services, City of Frederick first responders, the National Cancer Institute (NCI) Frederick, US Army Garrison Fort Detrick and other federal agencies came together for an active assailant workshop hosted by the Garrison Directorate of Emergency Services Protection Division. This workshop highlighted the importance of community relationships, collaboration, and emergency preparedness in ensuring the safety and security of employees, service members, and the surrounding community.

Fort Detrick is unique in that the National Cancer Institute Frederick operates within Army fencelines but is independently responsible for its 68-acre portion. This shared space presents distinct challenges in terms of coordination and support between the Army and NCI-Frederick during emergencies. The workshop provided a critical opportunity for stakeholders to address these challenges and strengthen their collective response capabilities.

"Collaboration through workshops such as these are a critical component of emergency response efforts because they transform the response from a series of independent actions, into a unified and resilient system. Building and sustaining inter-organizational trust, enhancing collective decision-making, bridging communication gaps, optimizing resource allocations, and integrating diverse perspectives in a safe/ controlled environment strengthens preparation during training and real-world events," says Ms. Taiszcha Castro, Installation Emergency Manager.

The primary focus of the workshop was to discuss how the various agencies would work together to contain an incident, minimize its duration, and ensure a swift recovery. Using an active assailant scenario as the basis for discussion, participants explored key topics such as initial emergency notifications between Frederick County, NIH-Frederick, and Fort Detrick, and identified ways to streamline communication and coordination efforts. Another critical topic was determining how the Garrison would provide support and when the handoff to NCI-Frederick would occur as the incident evolves.

Throughout the workshop, each participant shared their roles and responsibilities during an emergency, collaborated with counterparts from other agencies, and worked to identify gaps, challenges, and areas for improvement. This open dialogue created a deeper understanding of how each organization contributes to response and recovery efforts and emphasized the importance of seamless operational coordination.

As with any emergency response, success depends on thorough planning, regular practice, effective communication, and strong operational coordination. Workshops like this are vital in ensuring that all stakeholders are prepared to respond quickly and



*Community partners including other federal agencies and Frederick County attend a emergency preparedness workshop on Feb. 26 at Fort Detrick. The workshop is intended to further identify ways to collaborate and identify any gaps that would impact response. Photo by Lanessa Hill, USAG Public Affairs*

effectively to protect lives and restore normal operations.

The active assailant workshop underscored the value of community relationships and collaboration in emergency preparedness. By working together, Fort Detrick, NCI-Frederick, and local emergency services are better equipped to address complex challenges and ensure the safety of everyone on and around the installation.

# Fort Detrick Garrison Employee of the Quarter



U.S. ARMY

*Highlighting Our Outstanding Employees!*



## Christopher LeVan U.S. Army Garrison Support Services Supervisor , DHR

Mr. LeVan's consistently exceeds expectations through his enthusiastic support of broader DHR missions. Notably, Mr. LeVan's volunteer support has been instrumental to the continued success of the Army Substance Abuse Program (ASAP), providing critical administrative assistance during a period of personnel shortages and actively participating in ASAP event preparation and attendance. Furthermore, recognizing a need for improved financial tracking, Mr. LeVan developed a functional spreadsheet for all DHR MDEP managers. This innovative tool, now recognized as a best practice by the DHR Director, supports accurate budget management and informed purchasing oversight. Mr. LeVan demonstrated exceptional foresight and proactive security measures in response to an increase of suspicious mail through the Official Mail Distribution Center. Following concerning reports, he implemented enhanced training for his team, resulting in the interception of 10 pieces of suspicious mail in the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter – a significant contribution to installation security. Finally, Mr. LeVan's proactive and engaging leadership consistently drives his team to exceed performance standards, routinely completing tasks ahead of schedule and maintaining a leading position within the DHR for critical milestones.

# News - Events - Training

**Lane Closures at Nallin Farm Gate** In the beginning phase, both lanes of the inbound side will be closed and redirected to a single lane normally designated as an outbound lane. Once inbound lane barriers are replaced, both outbound lanes will close, and vehicles will be redirected to a single lane normally designated as an inbound lane. These improvements are essential to ensure the long-term safety and reliability of Nallin Farm Gate for the traveling

public. This project is estimated to take several months to complete. We understand that lane closures can cause inconvenience, and we apologize for any disruption this may cause.

## **While Running on Post Remember:**

AR 385-10 Para 13-19, The Army Safety and Occupational Health Program, Joggers/Runners will observe the following:

- Wear fluorescent or reflective PPE during hours of limited visibility when personnel is exposed to traffic hazards. I.E. Marching, running and jogging troops (not in formation), road guards.
- Stay in single file while running on sidewalks or roads
- When using roads, run facing oncoming traffic and yield to vehicles prior to crossing.
- Wearing headsets of any type while on roads is PROHIBITED.
- When approaching an intersection, yield the right of way to all vehicles, then continue once the vehicle has safely passed.

## **Fort Detrick Shamrock 5k Run/Walk**

March 14 beginning at 8 am. Same Day Registration is available until 7:30 am.

A 1 mile family route will be available and trophies awarded to the 1st and 2nd place male and female winners.

To register call the Odom Fitness Center at 301-619-2498

## **Army Emergency Relief Campaign Kick Off Event**

March 2, 2026 at 1 pm in the Community Activities Center located at building 1529 Freedman Drive.

This year's Army Emergency Relief (AER) campaign will run from 1 March to 14 June, culminating on the Army's 251st birthday. For over 84 years, AER has been a cornerstone of support for our Soldiers and their Families, providing essential financial assistance when it is needed most.

## **Upcoming SHARP Events**

### **SHARP Challenge**

April 22, 2026

11 am-1pm

Blue and Gray Field.

Teams up to 5 people can compete. Wear running shoes and appropriate exercise attire. To register please call 301-619-2857.

### **Wear Denim Day**

April 29, 2026

Wear denim to show support for survivors and challenge victim blaming myths.

### **SAAPM Stem Challenge**

April 28, 2026

11 am– 1 pm

Blue and Gray Field

Walk For Awareness. Step for Prevention.