**NEWS RELEASE**

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MEDIA RELEASE Release Number: 1910-05

 October 24, 2019

Agencies come together in search efforts for missing cadet

By Staff Sgt. Seth Barham

27th Public Affairs Detachment

West Point mobilized its Directorate of Emergency Services and quickly integrated both state and local police Saturday in response to a missing cadet.

As the search grew, Soldiers with the 23rd Military Police Company, 91st Military Police Battalion from Fort Drum, New York, joined West Point Military Police, staff, faculty and the Corps of Cadets from the U.S. Military Academy in the effort.

“I would like to thank the New York State Police and the 23rd MP Company along with partners,” said Lt. Gen. Darryl A. Williams, superintendent of the U.S. Military Academy. “They exhibited exceptional professionalism as demonstrated by their tremendous efforts in searching for Cadet Kade Kurita.”

Class of 2021 Cadet Kade Kurita, 20, went missing Friday on the grounds of West Point. The cadet was scheduled to participate in the academy’s military skills competition this past weekend.

The MPs from Fort Drum have partnered with USMA during numerous events, including high-profile ones such as West Point football games and Family Weekend. The Soldiers provide an additional layer of law enforcement activities and measures for the installation as well as fill in any potential security gaps caused by additional visitors to the base.

“It’s a seamless transition to come down here and partner with academy elements,” said Capt. Joshua Free, commander of the 23rd MP Co. “We don’t see the distance as a limiting factor, it’s just one team, whatever the mission set is.”

Partnerships like the one between the Fort Drum MPs and West Point become increasingly important during instances like this past weekend’s emergency response.

“Every time our team comes down here, it’s a different type of mission we’re supporting and I know the Soldiers value that,” said 1st Sgt. Michael Goodfallow, the senior enlisted advisor for the 23rd MP Co.

The MPs were alerted late Sunday evening and were on the road by early Monday morning to aid search elements already in progress.

In a widespread search for the cadet, Soldiers, New York State Police and other state and federal agencies, including the Coast Guard, covered more than 6,000 acres on the West Point reservation. CSX railroad police sent working dogs to help search along railroad tracks and property surrounding West Point.

“The rapport we have built with the agencies at West Point during prior missions allowed us to jump right into the search,” Free said. “Without that prior relationship, there might have been a little hesitation, potentially affecting the timeliness of the search.”

Kurita was found dead Tuesday at 9:47 p.m. at West Point after a four-day search. Although the search has concluded, elements of the MP company will remain to assist in securing the multiple events over the weekend.

(Editor’s note: Lt. Col. Chris Ophardt contributed to the article. For updates on Kurita, visit https://westpoint.edu/news or go to the U.S. Military Academy social media platforms.)

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