Press Release

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Fort Drum’s BOSS facility reopens for single Soldiers

Fort Drum, NY - Multiple screens across the computer kiosk lit up, the large-screen television came to life with a classic Mel Brooks space comedy, and a slight hint of disinfectant was in the air.

The Fort Drum Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers facility opened for business July 21, after a four-month hiatus due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

Spc. Kevin Campbell, BOSS president, said they have introduced the same safety measures and cleaning protocols people have become accustomed to seeing at indoor facilities.

Seating is spaced at least six feet apart to maintain physical distancing. Surfaces are regularly cleaned, and commonly touched items – such as video game controllers, remotes and keyboards are sanitized after use. Additionally, people have to wear masks the entire time they are inside the facility.

“We had to take a lot of precautions, just like other facilities on post, before we opened,” Campbell said. “We wanted to make sure everything is sanitary, keep our social distancing while inside and just make sure everyone can have a good time here while staying safe.”

Campbell said that the BOSS facility was one of the first buildings to close early in the pandemic and one of the last to reopen.

“That gave us a lot of time to clean, double-check everything and make sure we were good to go,” he said.

The BOSS program serves the single Soldier population on the installation, of which there are more than 7,000 at Fort Drum. Campbell said that means BOSS is quite active in the community and their facility is a haven where Soldiers can unwind.

“As it always has been, the BOSS center is a great place to relax, have some fun with your battle buddies, watch some movies or play a few games,” he said. “Or maybe, you need to get a little work done with our free computers, printers and wifi access.”

Soldiers will not be able to use the ping pong or pool tables because of the difficulty of keeping that equipment clean. Also, the film and video game cases are off-limits to prevent constant handling of those items. Instead, people can make a selection from a list and request it at the front desk.

While the facility was closed, BOSS members were still involved with event-planning and other activities. They hosted a virtual fun run in May, as well as several online gaming tournaments.

“We’re still looking at social distance-friendly outdoor activities, such as horseback riding, trap shooting and community service events,” Campbell said. “The COVID virus has really been a unique situation that has given us some new obstacles we’ve had to quickly adjust to, but we’re going to do what we can with what we have.”

Still on the calendar for 2020 is the Mountain Mudder, scheduled for Sept. 18. The BOSS team works closely with the Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation staff on this annual obstacle course run.

“Everyone is determined to keep this event going, but at the same time we’re going to take every precaution to keep it safe for everyone,” Campbell said.

He said that they are also recruiting new members to join BOSS and become involved in one of their committees.

“There’s something for everyone – we have quality of life, community service, social media and marketing committees,” Campbell said. “We also create committees for individual events. For example, if we are hosting a Call of Duty tournament or there’s a Feed the Vets volunteer opportunity, then we’ll open up committees to organize those. This gives Soldiers an opportunity to provide input and suggestions and to help out before, during and after the event.”

Campbell said that the team is happy to be back in business at the BOSS center and once again present opportunities for single Soldiers.

“If you’re a single Soldier, then this is your program,” he said. “We’re willing to help any single Soldier in any way we possibly can. If you have a quality of life issue, we will try and help you. If you have a community service event you want to do, we can help organize it. If you want to be more involved, we ask that you stop by, because we have a lot of opportunities to offer.”

The BOSS facility is located in Building 10650 on 5th Armored Division Drive. It is open from 1 to 7 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday. To learn more about the BOSS program, visit www.facebook.com/bossfortdrum or call (315) 772-7807.

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