Press Release

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Fort Drum Public Affairs

Fort Drum welcomes “Soldier for Life” community to annual Retiree Appreciation Day

FORT DRUM, N.Y. (Aug. 27, 2022) -- The annual Retiree Appreciation Day event, held Saturday at Fort Drum, celebrates retired service members for their contributions to the armed forces and the nation, but it also reminds them of their responsibility as “Soldiers for Life.”

“Your mission has changed, but your duty has not,” said Maria Bentinck, U.S. Army Retirement Program deputy director. “We want you to inspire our youths to serve.”

Bentinck said that if anyone thinks they are too old to communicate with the younger generation, there are other approaches they can take.

“You have the ears of their influencers,” she said. “You can talk to their parents and grandparents, you can talk to their schools regarding your story. Because our youths get an idea about the Army and the military in general from TV and movies. But you have the best stories, and the best part about that is your stories are real. Your stories are true.”

Retired service members can also support the military’s recruiting efforts, through the U.S. Army Recruiting Command’s partnership outreach program.

“The recruiting station in your area will contact you to help them with some of their local recruiting events,” Bentinck said. “What a great opportunity to talk with youths and wear your Army hats, your Army lapel buttons. These are conversation starters -- these are ways you can inspire our youths to serve and inspire the community to support our Army.”

For more information, visit https://recruiting.army.mil/News/Category/16418/partnership-outreach-program.

Bentinck also asked attendees to support fellow veterans by hiring them or providing guidance on employment opportunities. Additionally, she said recently retired service members can serve as Junior Reserve Officers’ Training Corps instructors.

“My overwhelming message to you today is the Army still needs you,” Bentinck said. “We are a force multiplier, there are over 1 million of us, and we need to maintain that connection with the Army and continue to serve in some of these capacities I have talked about today.”

Bentinck said the Army supports its retiree community, and every installation has a Retiree Council to work for them on issues such as health care, retirement pay and benefits. The Retirement Services Office at Fort Drum also assists retirees and their families, as well as active-duty service members preparing for retirement.

For more information on the Fort Drum RSO, visit https://home.army.mil/drum/index.php/about/Garrison/directorate-human-resources/MPD/retirement-services-office-rso.

Before administering the oath of enlistment to a group of future Soldiers, Maj. Gen. (P) Milford H. Beagle Jr., 10th Mountain Division (LI) and Fort Drum commander, thanked the retired service members for being a positive influence in their communities.

“You represent the shoulders that we stand on today,” he said. “You represent everything that is right about our great nation that we serve.”

Following the ceremony, attendees were invited to take advantage to various retiree services at Clark Hall, to include the ID Card Section and Legal Assistance Office. Shuttles were available for guests to visit the Army Wellness Center, 10th Mountain Division and Fort Drum Museum and LeRay Mansion.

Photos to accompany this article can be found at:

https://www.dvidshub.net/news/428216/fort-drum-welcomes-soldier-life-community-annual-retiree-appreciation-day

Media with inquiries regarding this press release should contact Fort Drum Public Affairs, Julie Halpin, julie.a.halpin2.civ@mail.mil <mailto:julie.a.halpin2.civ@mail.mil> or 315-772-8286.