

ARMY COMMUNICATOR

December 2023



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December Snapshot:



- 1: Civil Air Patrol Birthday
- 7: Pearl Harbor Day
- 7: Hanukkah begins
- 13: National Guard Birthday
- 20: Space Force Birthday
- 21: First Day of Winter
- 25: Christmas Day
- 26: Kwanzaa begins
- 31: New Year's Eve

The Army Communicator is published as a command information e-publication for the men and women of the United States Army Signal Corps under the provisions of AR 360-1. Opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the views of Office, Chief of Signal, the U.S. Army or the Department of Defense.

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REGIMENTAL LEADERSHIP

Col. Paul D. Howard, 42nd Chief of Signal

Command Sgt. Maj. Linwood E. Barrett, Regimental Command Sergeant Major

Chief Warrant Officer 5 Chris R. Westbrook, Regimental Chief Warrant Officer



On the Cover:

The U.S. Army Signal School and Signal Corps Regimental leadership would like to wish the entire Signal Corps community a safe holiday season and prosperous New Year!

(Cover photo illustration by Tàì Doick, U.S. Army Signal School)

Preparing to run 'full steam ahead' into 2024!

Team Signal,

Happy Holidays! I hope everyone had an amazing Thanksgiving last month. It has been an extremely busy and productive year for the Signal Regiment. The Chief of Signal and I truly appreciate all of you.

For Fiscal Year 23 to present, over 5,311 students have been successfully trained at Fort Eisenhower.

Most recently, we have completed the Data Education Strategy and finally got the 25Z (senior signal sergeant) action across the goal line. Our Signaleers from the Corps and brigades have continued to excel and accomplish complex critical mission daily. A few examples are the 160th Signal Brigade who is currently providing support for 28 sites dispersed across nine countries; America's First Corps G6 who recently completed Talisman Sabre in Australia this past summer and are currently in Yama Sakura in Japan; our NETCOM Signaleers who are charging hard on the Unified Network while our XVIII Airborne Corps team stands steadfast and ready to support Global Response Force.

On the immediate horizon for the Regiment, we have the implementation of Data Literacy into all professional military education (PME) courses and the consolidation of the Senior Leaders Course. There is still an ongoing effort to reassess governance and priorities at our Regional Signal Training Sites, and we have not forgotten about communications security or signal maintenance concerns. Additionally, we are also still providing high caliber NCOs to perform duties, and recruiters, drill sergeants, and instructors. The Signal Corps is everywhere!

As we continue modernization efforts in support of Army 2030, let's continue to over-communicate and share lessons learned across the signal formations. We are 60,000-strong and prepared to take 2024 by storm!

Please take this holiday season as an opportunity to face outward, take a knee, drink orange Kool-Aid, and pull security. Just as important, let us not forget our teammates serving in harm's way around the globe. Have a safe Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! I am looking forward to seeing all the great things the Signal Corps does in 2024. Let's get after it!

No Comms, No Bombs!
Signal Proud! Signal Strong!



Command Sgt. Maj. Linwood Barrett

Regimental Command Sergeant Major



U.S. ARMY



Changing the Signal Corps: Looking ‘back to the future’ in 1983

Maj. Gen. Thurman D. Rodgers

Steven J. Rauch

Signal Corps Branch Historian

Preparing for a future war is the mission of the Army. Though the “who, what, where, why, and when” are unknown, the Army must have a concept – an idea – to drive a course of action to prepare for that next conflict.

Throughout Signal Corps history, key leaders have provided their thoughts about how to support the Army concept for the next war. Today, the Signal Corps thinks about and prepares for the Army of 2030 and 2040 based on the Army Campaign Plan. While doing so, it is sometimes useful to look back and study how others approached similar challenges during a time when they too thought the world was moving faster and at a speed no one had ever experienced before.

One leader who confronted the challenges facing the Signal Corps to adapt to a faster, more technologically advanced, and dangerous world was Maj. Gen. Thurman D. Rodgers, commander of the U.S. Army Signal Center and School in 1983. The Army had just issued a radically new doctrine called Airland Battle for fighting wars in the 1980s to 2000s. Rodgers made some interesting and shocking comments about the challenges and solutions to prepare the Signal Corps to execute its role to provide communications within the framework of Airland Battle. Briefly, Field Manual 100-5 (1982), Airland Battle, envisioned a future conflict that was intense, expensive, and very lethal. It would be fought over a non-linear battlefield ranging from deep in enemy territory all the way to the United States. The Army had to survive highly lethal weapons systems and fight outnumbered while under the persistent threat of nuclear and chemical warfare.

Airland Battle doctrine required high demands of Army leaders, and unit cohesion was vital to fight when surrounded or outnumbered. The commanders had to display skill, imagination, and flexibility. Perhaps most importantly, commanders, Soldiers and their units had to be ready to go to war that day with no warning. Training was key for the doctrine to succeed. If Soldiers were not professionally and mentally prepared, then the battle could be lost. So how did this apply to the Signal Corps? In editorial comments for the fall 1983 issue of the Army Communicator,

Rodgers said: *“I intend to expedite the ongoing initiatives that will allow the Signal Corps to provide the services and systems that are more responsive to user requirements that will carry us into the next century. This translates into organizations that are small, modular, mobile, and configured within relatively few TOE/MTOE types. This translates into equipment that is small, transportable, light, affordable, user-operated, digital, secure, and available. This translates into signal Soldiers who are versatile, highly trained, fewer in number, and consolidated within a smaller MOS structure.”*

Later that year, the Signal Corps leadership of the Army gathered at the 11th annual Army Tactical Communicators (CONTACT) Conference held at the Signal Center in December 1983. During the proceedings, Rodgers commented about the pace of change facing the Signal Corps in the 1980s, stating: *“We are in a changing Army. The Army is changing so rapidly in ways that it is hard to keep up with sometimes, but there is no alternative to that. There is going to be no more time to rest and relax, as there is going to be constant change. They are introducing new weapon systems into the field so quickly, and our personnel capabilities are changing so quickly that there is going to be no letup of the changes that are taking place.”*

Signal Corps training was of course the responsibility of Rodgers as the commandant of the Signal School. He was particularly concerned with officer training, and he was determined to fix that considering the new doctrine.

A recent inspection by U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) did not go well; in fact, it was ugly. Rodgers explained the problems and fixes: *“We are going to make it tough to get through the Advanced Course. We got blasted by the [Department of Army Inspector General] and TRADOC about the nonprofessional product that we are putting out in the Signal School. We weren’t teaching the right thing. We weren’t teaching them to be Soldiers for one thing. The Signal School is now on everybody’s hit list. I think that we are doing a decent job on the basic officer, but we are even going to toughen that up. We are going to start them out on some road marches; they are going to learn how to do that. Give them land navigation so they can find a site in Germany ... We are going to tighten up the Advanced Course. What we have been doing*

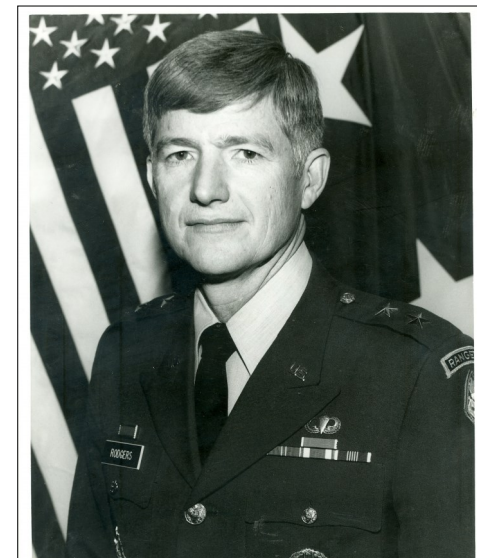
all along is teaching to the lowest member of the class, and the other guys and gals sit there and scratch at themselves because they are not challenged. They don't think and don't have to. We are going to change that, and we are going to work their butts off... Everybody should be able to read and write – everybody who is an officer. That should be a prerequisite. We are throwing people out of the Advanced Course because they read and write fifth and sixth grade level. That is very unfortunate.”

A big issue for Rodgers was how the Signal Corps viewed itself and how it was perceived by the rest of the Army. Some of the perceptions were self-inflicted, but according to Rodgers, they could be fixed by communication within the Signal Corps and the rest of the Army: *“We are perceived by combat arms as being a bunch of wimps. That is not true. We are damn good Soldiers. We haven't turned out from our officer's department the kind of officer that I like to see going into the field. We will change that real quick, and my objective is that every basic student should have his paperwork in for Ranger School. We are going to stop letting people think that we are not Soldiers, because we really are. We have to get more confidence in ourselves. It is something we need to get back; it is something that we lost, and I don't know who lost it for us.”*

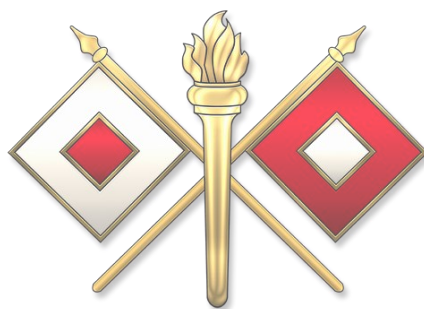
Rodgers summed up how he viewed the members of the Signal Corps

stating: *“Soldiers first, technicians second. I really honestly believe that, and I think that we have not pushed that enough in the signal business. For some time now, we have been missing that, and I think we lost a little bit of the edge with combat arms now by not insisting that our Soldiers be Soldiers first, and technicians second.”*

What Rodgers and his contemporaries wrestled with (and the solutions they developed) resulted in a Signal Corps that was better-trained, led, and equipped than at the beginning of the decade. Airland Battle happened in Panama in 1989, and during Desert Shield/Desert Storm in 1990-1991, and the Signal Corps was ready for it because of leaders like Rodgers.



Maj. Gen. Thurman D. Rodgers became the commanding officer of the U.S. Army Signal Center and Fort Gordon in September 1983. (Photo from Signal Historical Collection)



America's Pacific communicators use UAS to deploy, fight, win

Aerial power

Maj. Justin James
25th Infantry Division G6

The tropical rainforests of Hawaii, the Philippines, and Indonesia, with their triple canopy jungles, volcanoes, and gulches, will test the skills of the Signal Regiment's finest radio operators fighting to get the message through. Enter robots flying above to speed the message, day or night.

The Kraus Hamdini K1000 Ultra Long Endurance unmanned aircraft system (UAS) is a solar-powered, zero-emissions drone that flies longer than any other electric aircraft in its size and weight category. The K1000 has demonstrated more than 75 hours airborne over target and can operate up to 20,000 feet mean sea level (MSL), carry a payload of 7 pounds, and provide enough power to operate multiple simultaneous payloads.

For Joint Pacific Multinational Readiness Center (JPMRC) rotation 24-01, the K1000 carried one amplified Silvus radio to establish a Silvus long haul backbone and two amplified TSM[®] radios and advanced computing systems enabling full network management at the edge to relay a brigade combat team's (BCT) worth of TSM[®] radio NETs. The K1000 is further capable of operating within anti-access/area denial and GPS denied environments.

The concept of aerial retransmission (RETRANS) has been introduced previously. However, the 25th Infantry Division (ID), an Integrated Tactical Network (ITN) fielded division, is equipped with Textron Systems Shadow UAS that is not ITN interoperable.

Additionally, informed by the war in Ukraine, a large-scale combat operation in which Soldiers are under constant observation, an aerial relay keeps RETRANS Soldiers, who historically have had to establish static positions in dangerous locations, out of harm's way.

The 25th ID achieved great results with the K1000, and the UAS contributed immensely to a BCT air assault in dense jungle terrain. By flying between 6,000-11,000 feet MSL, the K1000 was able to relay over 135 TSM[®] radios, from squad leader to division echelons, over the steep Waianae Mountains, allowing the Division Main Command Post to visualize the execution of the BCT air assault on the division's WINTAK

common operating picture (COP). For a light infantry division, this is the first time Soldiers can untether from cumbersome vehicles and share their position, location, and information (PLI).

The 25th ID G6 strongly recommends the Army approve the K1000 as an official program of record and field to ITN-enabled divisions. Furthermore, the G6 suggests the K1000 be placed within the division signal battalion, or division G6, to facilitate the prioritization of TSM[®] networks and close coordination with the division aviation officer. The G6 hesitates to field the K1000 to military intelligence companies out of fear they may get re-purposed into intelligence, reconnaissance, and surveillance platforms.

Joint Pacific Multinational Readiness Center 24-01 is the region's premier combat training center that strengthens defense relationships, fosters multinational interoperability, increases U.S. readiness, and reinforces the unified regional land power network that supports a free and open Indo-Pacific.

Joint Pacific Multinational Readiness Center 24-01 generates readiness through challenging, realistic training in the archipelagic and jungle conditions that our forces are most likely to operate in.



A 25th ID Soldier uses WINTAK for the first time as its division COP allowing the division to see PLI at every echelon from brigade to squad. (Photo by Kathryn Bailey, U.S. Army PEO C3T)

Historical training enhances military tactical communications

Delaware Army National Guard

1st Lt. Shy Garden

198th Expeditionary Signal Battalion-Enhanced

Soldiers serving in the 198th Expeditionary Signal Battalion-Enhanced (ESB-E), Delaware Army National Guard (ARNG), traveled to Fort McCoy, Wisconsin, Aug. 12-26, for a combat support training exercise (CSTX) 86-23-01. Their historic training focused on the new Modified Table of Organization (MTO) comprising of the ESB-E, an enhanced version of the ESB. It provides more agile tactical network equipment and uninterrupted mission command to deploy and maneuver through the battlefield rapidly. The enhancement version gives the units lesser equipment with advanced information technology, making them multifunctional.

The Delaware ARNG is the first ARNG unit to convert to the ESB-E and the second of the U.S. Army forces. The 50th ESB-E was the first active-duty battalion to experiment with the equipment.

“The 198th ESB-E started preparing for this training in January of 2022,” shared Capt. Robin Yoshikami, assistant S3, 198th ESB-E.

The Army collaborated with program managers and civilian vendors over the period of nine months, providing Soldiers with additional training to support the mission. Soldiers switched military occupational specialties and were placed on full-time military orders before receiving specialty

training on tactical network equipment.

Staff Sgt. James Boyer, communication security account manager, praised the training, saying, “The specialization training sets Soldiers up for success in the civilian world.”

Soldiers with specialization training earn IT certifications, which are transferable in the workforce for intermediate and junior positions.



Soldiers from the 198th ESB-E conduct inventory and set up new signal assemblage during a training exercise. (Photo by Sgt. Christal Alexandre, Delaware ARNG)

The Army, as a whole, is training to enhance its modernization line to be more expeditious, agile, and mobile. The CSTX focused on engineering, installing, operating and maintaining the new equipment and evaluating the Army’s tactical network modernization line to determine the best configuration that meets the needs of future ESB-Es and force-structure recommendations. The effort of the ESB-E is to enable a more lethal, efficient, mobile, and expeditious forces to stay ahead of potential future threats.

The 198th ESB-E and its four companies – Headquarters and Headquarters Company, A Company, B Company, and C Company, make up the signal battalion. Each company is challenged by receiving different equipment to operate and maintain. The training supported commanders in responding to “real world” missions and scenarios.

When asked about an ESB-E’s benefits over its predecessor, Yoshikami said, “[The ESB-E] is smaller and more module in its conversions, and it allows companies to be agile, moving in smaller teams.”

Soldiers’ training enhanced the performance of the equipment.

“We are gaining and have gained the capabilities of the equipment through a combination of practical field training and classroom, which helped Soldiers to learn the capabilities of the equipment,” said Boyer.

In 2022, the British army praised CSTX 86-22-02. In 2023, five British army soldiers from 71st Signal Regiment participated in the ESB-E training to strengthen their servicemembers’ readiness as part of the Military Reserve Exchange Program. The successes of the training proved the new equipment is more self-sufficient and thoroughly robust, strengthening soldiers’ readiness.

Warrant Officer Brandon Wrinkler, an automotive maintenance warrant officer, said, “The equipment is more adaptable to missions and is easier to service and less time consuming.”

The successful performance of the equipment extends to size being more durable and compact. In the past, tactical network equipment would need a four-person team, and now with the compact equipment, it can be carried by one Soldier, depending on strength capabilities.

“The equipment puts us in a position to better plan and improve our response time to problems compared to the past,” Boyer said of the equipment’s efficiency.

Operationalizing the 11th Airborne Division

Arctic Aloha '23

Maj. Joey Rodriguez

2nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 11th Airborne Division

Power Projection and Joint Interoperability were training objectives for both the United States Army Pacific (USARPAC) and the Pacific Air Forces (PACAF) during Exercise Arctic Aloha 2023.

Participants included the 2nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team (Airborne) of the 11th Airborne Division (2/11 IBCT (A)), and five subordinate PACAF Wings. Two joint forcible entry operations (JFEO) were conducted during this exercise, the first being a tropic JFEO, executed onto Transfiguracion Drop Zone, in Pohakuloa Training Area, Hawaii. The second arctic JFEO was executed 36 hours later onto Malamute Drop Zone, Alaska. Following completion of the first JFEO into Hawaii, the USARPAC commanding general, Gen. Charles A. Flynn was quoted saying, "Arctic Aloha has now operationalized the 11th Airborne Division."



Sgt. Cody Harris, 2/11 IBCT (A), calls out on radio the status of a MEDEVAC during the tropic JFEO onto Transfiguracion Drop Zone. (Courtesy photo)

Arctic Aloha 2023 decisively demonstrated the Army and Air Forces power projection capabilities within the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command geographical combatant command. Strategic airlift capabilities offered by PACAF, and the 11th Airborne Division's ability to rapidly deploy an Airborne Infantry Task Force critically displayed the military instrument of national power.

Joint partnerships established between 11th Airborne Division and the 452nd Air Mobility Wing headquartered in March Air Reserve Base, California, also enabled for the establishment of a suitable initial staging base that could support the 10-ship C17 formation providing airlift capabilities for the exercise. For the command and control (C2) warfighting function, 11th Airborne Division successfully tested a proof of concept push-to-talk Enroute Mission Command capability by using the Integrated Tactical Network fielded AN/PRC-158 Radio, establishing communications using the C17 comms patch panel and affixed SATCOM antenna.

Signaleers enabled the airborne commander to receive guidance from the division G3 and the "go" for drop from the division commander while in flight. To further enhance the airborne command posts on the ground, 1st Squadron, Joint Communications Support Element (JCSE) provided two airborne initial entry teams to establish secure tactical internet and voice capabilities.

Partnerships forged in the operational environment with joint services will be critical as the U.S. Army continues training in a Decisive Action Training Environment, centered on large-scale combat operations against near-peer adversaries. Power projection will deter opposition, and although the next battlefield is uncertain, the 11th Airborne Division and its joint partners will be ready to deploy anywhere in the world on a moment's notice.



Maj. Joey Rodriguez, 2/11 IBCT (A) S6, calls in executive checks during Arctic Aloha '23. (Courtesy photo)

Army publishes first doctrinal manual dedicated to information

ADP 3-13

Randi Stenson

Mission Command Center of Excellence Public Affairs

The Army has released its first doctrinal publication dedicated to the topic of information and its role in multidomain operations on the Army Publishing Directorate website, Nov. 27,

[Army Doctrine Publication 3-13, Information](#), codifies the Army's approach to the military uses of data and information, and recognizes all activities generate informational effects that can contribute to, or hamper, achieving objectives.

"Information is central to everything we do. It is the basis of intelligence, a fundamental component of command and control, and the foundation for communicating thoughts, opinions and ideas," said Lt. Gen. Milford Beagle, Jr., commanding general, Combined Arms Center (CAC) and Fort Leavenworth. "As a dynamic of combat power, Army forces fight for, defend, and fight with information to create and exploit information advantages — the use, protection, and exploitation of

information to achieve objectives more effectively than enemies and adversaries."

Authors from CAC's Combined Arms Doctrine Directorate (CADD), the organization charged with writing the new manual, acknowledge that changes in the security environment necessitated an update to doctrine. Adversaries are already using informational power to try to gain regional influence and control well ahead of potential armed conflict. These actions make the competition for information and ideas persistent and continuous.

Key to achieving objectives in a contested environment like this means gaining an information advantage, a new term now defined

in doctrine. An information advantage is "a condition when a force holds the initiative in terms of situational understanding, decision making, and relevant actor behavior."

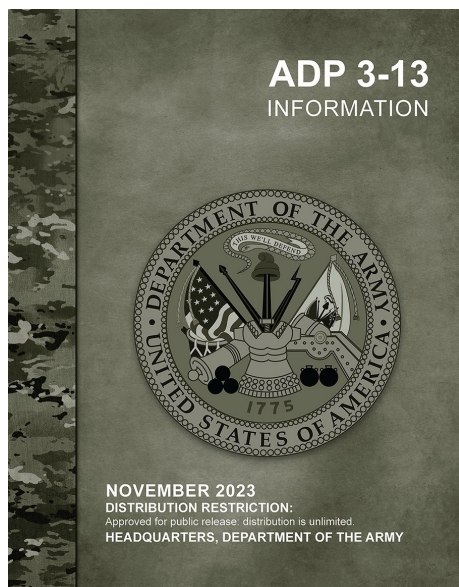
"Our new doctrine makes it clear that everyone plays some role in achieving information advantage," said retired Army colonel and CADD Director Richard Creed. "And similarly, commanders need to consider information from a combined arms perspective, because all Army capabilities create effects in the information dimension of our operational environment. We can't make it the sole purview of a single staff section or certain specialties and expect success during operations. Operations now require leaders to consider how information enables operations, how to protect friendly information, how to employ information against an enemy or adversary, and how to attack the enemy's ability to use information effectively."

To facilitate that process, ADP 3-13 gives leaders a framework for developing information advantages during operations and at home station. It also spells out how commanders can leverage aspects of information that enable command and control; protect data, information, and networks; inform audiences; influence threats and foreign relevant actors; and attack the threat's ability to use information.

The publication of ADP 3-13 is just the start of a sustained education campaign from CAC. As with the release of [FM 3-0](#), CADD is developing a series of products to help Soldiers understand the new doctrine. Articles, videos and podcasts devoted to ADP 3-13 are in the works and will be announced via CADD's social media channels. The team will also work closely with the centers of excellence, Army University, and the combat training centers to ensure this information is incorporated into professional military education and training. In addition, mobile training teams will visit select installations and organizations to further integrate the ideas outlined in the manual.

"ADP 3-13 provides the intellectual underpinnings that describe how Army forces will gain, protect, and exploit information advantages; however, doctrine is only the beginning. The hard work starts when we begin to internalize these ideas into leader development, education, and training," said Beagle.

To learn more about ADP 3-13 and other doctrine, visit the [Combined Arms Doctrine Directorate website](#).



Cover of Army Doctrine Publication 3-13, Information

Army Reserve leader sets goal for junior enlisted Soldiers

‘E-5 in 5’

Sgt. Natalie Pantalos
U.S. Army Reserve Command

Lt. Gen. Jody J. Daniels, chief of Army Reserve and commanding general, U.S. Army Reserve Command, has a challenge for Army Reserve leaders and junior enlisted Soldiers called “E-5 in 5.” The goal is for Soldiers to promote to the rank of sergeant within five years of joining the Army Reserve.

Leaders can put the challenge into action through efficient management by enrolling Soldiers into the Distributed Leader Course, scheduling Basic Leader Course (BLC) rapidly, hosting flexible promotion boards, and using temporary promotions when possible. They must be committed to developing junior enlisted Soldiers to sustain the Army Reserve’s readiness by retaining and growing our future leaders for today, tomorrow, and the Army of 2030.

“We have a lot of potential out there, and I need my sergeants and above helping my specialists become sergeants,” said Daniels. “I need my specialists to have confidence that they can become sergeants and



Promotion into the Corps of Noncommissioned Officers is one of the biggest honors bestowed upon Soldiers. (Photo by Spc. David Campos-Contreras, U.S. Army Central Forward Public Affairs)

work on their distance learning, getting their packets ready, and getting to BLC.”

Daniels emphasized that many teams are focused on “are they ready?” instead of “do they have potential?” This perspective shift is a key component of this initiative.

Sgt. Asuerus Thompson, of the 200th Military Police Command, was promoted to E-5 in under five years.

“My leadership felt that I was more than ready for the NCO ranks,” reflected Thompson. “They were very



The U.S. Army Reserve Command has a challenge for Army Reserve leaders and junior enlisted Soldiers called “E-5 in 5.” The goal is for Soldiers to promote to the rank of sergeant within five years of joining the Army Reserve. (Photo illustration by Joe Butters, U.S. Army Reserve Command)

supportive in assisting with my packet and updating my records to ensure a quality presentation of myself.”

At the latest Association of the United States Army’s annual meeting in Washington, D.C., Daniels encouraged leaders to look at how they are taking care of their junior enlisted Soldiers and preparing them to become noncommissioned officers, while setting realistic timelines for such promotions. She will be reviewing promotion metrics this year to evaluate the effectiveness of the E-5 in 5 initiative.

The Army Reserve has an opportunity to outpace both the active component and the Army National Guard in E-5 promotions through a dedicated program that supports timely and predictable rank progression.

Pacific warrant officer is an ‘exemplary silent professional’

Stewarding the profession

Article, photo by Staff Sgt. Rebecca Petrie
516th Theater Signal Brigade

Chief Warrant Officer 2 Stephen Wallace, a network management technician assigned to 516th Theater Signal Brigade (TSB) and originally from Ballston Spa, New York, has significantly impacted the signal community and set the path for future warrant officers to follow.

“Wallace is one of the most technically gifted and motivated warrant officers within the theater,” said Maj. Joseph Ramaglia, 516th TSB S3 engineering officer in charge. “He truly exemplifies what it means to be a ‘silent professional’ while at the same time guaranteeing mission success inside and outside of the organization by spearheading solutions and mentoring junior technicians.”

Wallace grew up as the second youngest of 10 children. He initially joined the military to pay for school, earning a degree in computer information systems with a concentration in networking. He then went on to complete a graduate-level advanced degree certificate in cyber operations. Although Wallace’s initial motivation was self-improvement, his experiences as an enlisted Soldier gave him a unique perspective among his graduate peers.

“I wanted to be able to make significant changes,” Wallace said of his decision to become a warrant officer.

Two of Wallace’s most impactful mentors were Lt. Col. Sean McNichol and Department of the Army Civilian Todd Redenbaugh.

“He sent me, as the most junior NCO, to lead a deployment to Afghanistan,” Wallace said of McNichol, 2nd NATO Signal Battalion, Deployable Communication Module-Charlie commander, who played a significant role in Wallace’s career development.

McNichol gave Wallace opportunities early on to test his mettle. The risk he took sending Wallace to lead the mission helped build Wallace’s confidence and left an indelible impression.

“He showed a lot of faith and trust... a lot.”

At the United States Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School (SWCS), Redenbaugh provided the foundation that would set Wallace up for his career as a warrant officer.

“He afforded a lot of opportunities for personal and professional development,” said Wallace. “He gave me time for tests and to obtain certifications.”

Each one of Wallace’s duty assignments expanded his knowledge and skills and helped him develop and succeed as a Soldier. As a warfighter in a U.S. Army Forces Command unit at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, he learned the importance of completing the mission.

“You gotta get it done,” Wallace said. “Whatever it takes.”

As an installer at his next assignment at Fort Belvoir, Virginia, he learned the signal standards and became proficient at knowing what right looks like. As a recruiter, Wallace learned planning and time management – skills that have proved invaluable throughout his career.

At NATO, he learned cultural diversity and the advantage of being able to work with people with so many different backgrounds, ideas, and beliefs. And at SWCS, Wallace learned enterprise operations – building on skills developed previously and emerging as one of the most highly specialized experts in his field.

All of these lessons have groomed Wallace for his current assignment as a network engineer with 516th TSB.

“Over the past 16 months working with Wallace, he has served as the officer in charge for the battalion regional network operations security center and brigade S3 network technician,” said Ramaglia. “He has played a critical role in assisting our subordinate battalions during circuit and service outages while directly leading communication support initiatives for U.S. Army Pacific and I CORPS during theater exercises. During exercise Talisman Saber '23, he worked diligently with U.S. Army and foreign technicians on Mission Partner Environment transport, data, and voice engineering to ensure command and control (C2) was established between forward deployed, home station, and coalition entities.”

Wallace sums up everything he’s learned into one lesson: Make your time matter. We have a finite amount of time to leave our mark – to make a difference.

“There’s a problem that needs to get solved, so you just help everybody,” Wallace said.

He exemplifies this by living according to his leadership philosophy

of helping everybody, regardless of rank or status.

With the time he has left with 516th TSB, Wallace hopes to stand up an ICAN core in Guam, modernize licensing systems and business practices at the network enterprise center battalions, and finish building out a dynamic dashboard for 307th Expeditionary Signal Battalion-Enhanced to articulate readiness and work flow.

“Chief Wallace embodies the best of what makes our Warrant Officer Corps great,” said Lt. Col. Donald Pratt, 516th deputy brigade commander. “He is a technical expert and superb leader who invests heavily in mentoring and developing others. His work ethic and capability are unmatched. Put simply, he makes the units he is in and those around him better.”

“You gotta get it done, whatever it takes.”

- Chief Warrant Officer 2 Stephen Wallace



Chief Warrant Officer 2 Stephen Wallace, 516th TSB, poses for a photo at the brigade headquarters in Fort Shafter, Hawaii, on Oct. 4.

The doorway to the Army National Guard

Recruit Sustainment Program

Article, photo by Hunter Rhoades
U.S. Army for Initial Military Training

National Guard leaders from across all 50 states and four territories gathered at Fort Eustis, Virginia, from Oct. 24-25, to share best practices and lessons learned from their individual Recruit Sustainment Programs (RSP).

An RSP is a state-operated program that allows new recruits to be exposed to drill sergeants, military customs and courtesies, and begin physical training to meet the rigors of basic training.

“We are here to listen, learn and collaborate on ways the National Guard is seeing success preparing trainees to overcome the rigors of Initial Military Training,” said Maj. Ryan Short, deputy chief of staff, Army National Guard, U.S. Army Center for Initial Military Training. “We are going to take these best practices and better understand how we can continue to improve our processes on transforming civilians into Soldiers.”

Historically, the National Guard has the lowest attrition rates within Initial Military Training, and the credit has been given to RSP.

“The skills that trainees, coming from RSP, already have made the jobs of drill sergeants easier,” said Army National Guard Sgt. Maj. Allen Watts. “Trainees showing up with background knowledge of Army structure, physical training and rank structure allows drill sergeants on the trail to spend more time honing their Skill Level 1 tasks like rifle marksmanship”.

Trainees participating in their state RSP are also streamlined through the reception process once they arrive at basic training. While RSP doesn’t remove reception operations, their home unit can ensure that the trainee’s paperwork is correctly filled out before arrival.

“A common issue for new trainees is making sure that they are in-processing with the correct administrative documents and receiving the correct benefits,” said Watts. “Going through RSP allows their unit to input their administrative information prior to shipping to basic, and if



Maj. Gen. John Kline, commander of U.S. Army Center for Initial Military Training briefs CIMT initiatives to National Guard leaders from across all 50 states and four territories at the RSP Symposium held Oct. 24-25 at Fort Eustis, Virginia.

issues still come up, the National Guard liaison non-commissioned officers are there to facilitate.”

Gathering all parties in one place has been nearly a two-year-long effort for Maj. Ryan Short. “We see great things throughout our 54 states and territories, but until now haven’t been able to bring all of these key players together,” said Short. “RSP is a trainees first exposure to the Army, and when we get it right, it not only allows for the trainees to get the best first experience possible, but we also see stronger Soldiers on the backside because of it.”

The Reserve's 4JCS takes on new challenges

Post-GWOT mobilization

Capt. Scott Adkins and 1st Sgt. Obie Young
4th Joint Communications Squadron

As you walk through Veterans Hall on the Joint Communications Support Element (JCSE) compound, you might come across a team of airborne communicators preparing to jump their Manpack Transportable Node (MTN) communications kit to provide services on a drop zone. It would be quickly apparent that the 4th Joint Communications Squadron (4JCS) is not your typical Army Reserve unit.

Established in 2006, 4JCS immediately became an integral component of JCSE. Throughout the Global War on Terror (GWOT), JCSE's three joint active-duty squadrons, augmented by two Air National Guard squadrons, were perpetually deployed in support of operations in the Middle East. The Army Reserve and the 335th Signal Command offered something unique that JCSE did not have in its active-duty counterparts, a breadth of communications knowledge and experience from working in industry. 4JCS answered the call and augmented its active-duty counterparts in the GWOT.

4JCS Soldiers deployed throughout the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility on an annual basis supporting multiple organizations all the way through the final draw down of Afghanistan in 2021. The heavy burden of deployment rotations 4JCS carried resulted in an organization with an incredible depth of knowledge and enormous scope of experience. Through this experience, 4JCS has developed professional teams of Army Reserve communicators ready to solve the toughest communications challenges anywhere in the world in support of JCSE.

A Busy 2023

4JCS continues to execute a unique mission set by supporting numerous global operational exercises. Within the last year, 4JCS Soldiers have supported 10-plus global operations in Germany, Thailand, Japan, Australia, Ghana, along with several locations within the continental United States. 4JCS is truly a global force willing and ready to support joint operations. The following paragraphs provide just a few examples of various missions the squadron supported within the last year.

Most recently, they hosted Cobb Ring, a joint exercise between the Joint Enabling Capabilities Command, JCSE, 30th Royal Signal Regiment, and the Royal Canadian Corps of Signal. Collectively, Signaleers from 4JCS, the United Kingdom, and Canada tackled the difficult challenge of coalition interoperability in order to support a joint planning support element with Non-secure Internet Protocol Router (NIPR), Secure Internet Protocol Router (SIPR), and Battlefield Information Collection and Exploitation System (BICES) connections to plan operations.

4JCS had Soldiers at sea supporting maritime communications requirements for partners within the SOF community. Specifically, 4JCS had two Soldiers deployed on a ship for six-plus months supporting C2 integration between Navy communications, Special Operations Forces, and Marines.

Additionally, 4JCS has been collaborating with the Air Force's 422nd Test and Evaluation Squadron (TES), supporting the Black Flag series of experiments to develop capabilities and tactics advancing the Air Force's Agile Combat Employment concept. 4JCS communicators had to think outside the box, adapting JCSE kit into commercial ground vehicles and C-17 aircraft while leveraging the global network to integrate multiple tactical data feeds, providing mobile C2 capabilities to Air Force combat controllers.

"The expertise that their members bring to the table from both their civilian experience and military training have been the main catalyst in advancing our support to the USAF Operational Test mission," said Maj. Paden Allen, 422nd TES C2 division commander. "Thanks to their unwavering support, we've accomplished numerous firsts together and far exceeded our objectives in accelerating change to meet the pacing threat as defined by USAF, INDOPACOM, and DoD leadership."

Last summer, Air Mobility Command (AMC) conducted Mobility Guardian – its largest, most challenging exercise in years, exercising its readiness to conduct logistics operations in the Pacific theater. Within hours after hitting the ground in Australia, one of many sites involved in the exercise, a 4JCS communications team, had services up and running supporting aerial refueling, aeromedical evacuation, and intelligence operations. In addition to providing operational communications support to customers, 4JCS also provides technical subject matter expertise to

JCSE through 4JCS personnel working in their engineering cell, having the ability to quickly develop, prototype, and field the latest, cutting-edge technology. This allows 4JCS and JCSE to adapt to rapidly changing customer requirements and provide critical network and communication functionality in various environments.

Maj. Mike Yamamoto, JCSE J3, emphasized the impact their engineers have had on the mission.

“4JCS is a true force multiplier for not only the Army Reserves and JCSE, but to the entire joint force,” Yamamoto said. “Its members of the engineering team represent the epitome of Soldier innovation and technical aptitude as they have directly enabled several DoD priorities, enabling key tenants within [Combined Joint All Domain Command and Control] – especially zero trust principals and data-centric mission partner environments.”

As a part of JCSE, 4JCS has the benefit of being on the forefront of technology as well as the unique ability to diversify transport and connect back to a JCSE global network to provide services. As technology evolves, communication packages get smaller and more modular along with the infrastructure. 4JCS Soldiers were critical to the development of the next generation communications package. This new fly away communications kit virtualizes core components (routing, switching, and firewall functions) of the network layer thus reducing size, weight, and power of the kit. This allows fewer personnel to mobilize with more capability and support more end users, increasing the effectiveness of 4JCS and JCSE.

The future of 4JCS depends on how well the GWOT era veterans can pass along their knowledge to the next generation of communicators. It is imperative that seasoned communicators find a way to impart their knowledge to younger Troop Program Unit (TPU) communicators who have less operational experience. Being part of JCSE comes with high expectations. 4JCS communication teams are expected to have the same level of proficiency as their active-duty counterparts but have a fraction of the training time to achieve that standard. It is critical that 4JCS takes advantage of every battle training assembly, annual training day, and operational exercise to gain new skills and reinforce old ones. One way that 4JCS accomplishes this is through their annual Mustang Challenge assessment event.

Each Troop within 4JCS provides one to two teams of four members to compete in this grueling two-day event, challenging both Soldiers’ physical fitness and basic Soldier skills while also testing their proficiency on their assigned equipment. For example, teams had to complete a land navigation course but first had to configure their 117G MUOS radios and call to headquarters when they found a point. This is just one example of how leaders are getting creative to maintain and build technical skills but while also creating a sense of esprit de corps and competition among the squadron.

For now, in lieu of deployments, 4JCS will continue to build Soldiers who are ready to deploy and who are physically, mentally, and technically sound in support of JCSE and the Joint Task Force through challenging training and critical assessments.



The Signaleer behind the challenge coin that went viral

More than metal

Laura Levering

U.S. Army Signal School

The military has countless respected traditions, but few are as unique as the military challenge coin. And as one Signaleer recently pointed out, it's not the coins that hold value as much as it's the memory associated with them.

A former first sergeant with 13 years of service, 2nd Lt. Michael Moser has given and accumulated more than his fair share of military coins – all of which are special to him. But none have garnered anywhere near the attention as the one he created for the Signal Basic Officer Leader Course (SBOLC) he graduated from earlier in the fall.

While attending SBOLC (Class 006-23), Moser, of the Cyber Protection Brigade, created a challenge coin unique to his SBOLC class. Moser said he originally created two designs using photo software, then he

presented the ideas to his class, who then voted on which one they liked best. The basis for inspiration came from a coin Moser had seen that was created by the 3rd Infantry Division G6. And although similar in that both are modeled after a Common Access Card (CAC), they are also vastly different.

Initially, Moser ordered just enough of the coins for everyone in his class, but after sharing a photo of it on his social media account, the coin went viral across numerous platforms, and he soon inundated with requests for the coin from all over the world.

"My phone, throughout the [field training exercise] I was in, continued to go off," Moser said in disbelief. "Everybody loves it ... it's one for the ages," Moser said.

So he placed an order for an additional

300 coins to have on hand for Signaleers who wanted one. Signal Corps Regimental Command Sgt. Maj. Linwood Barrett was one of them.

Barrett said that he was "pleasantly surprised" by the coin, adding that he received multiple texts and phone calls asking if he had seen it.

"Seeing how [Moser] was in school here at Fort Eisenhower, I had to check it out," Barrett said. "The CAC spin was amazing and well-received by all. The saying 'No Comms, No Bombs' was the icing on the cake."

To date, close to 1,400 of the coins Moser created have gone out spanning 32 states and eight other countries. And requests for more continue to

come in. Moser wasn't sure what to make of all the craze at first, but after hearing that some people thought it was merely a publicity stunt, more came forward describing it as a "good morale boost" for the Army – the kind that Moser said brought people together.

"In no way did I ever think that a challenge coin would've reached this magnitude," Moser said. "I've had people who have been retired out of the Army 15, 20 years hit me up saying, 'Hey, I want that coin.'"

Behind every coin is a story

Moser estimates he has more than 100 coins on display that were given to him, reiterating that each comes with its own story. As for what the SBOLC coin means to him, "Due to the viral response, it stands up there" in terms of being one of his favorites, he said.

"I've had some coins from people that I've mentored, and some of



2nd Lt. Michael Moser holds the challenge coin he created. (Courtesy photo)



Front view of the challenge coin created by 3rd Infantry Division's G6 that served as inspiration for 2nd Lt. Michael Moser's coin. (Courtesy photo)



Front and back view of the challenge coin created by 2nd Lt. Michael Moser. The number of requests for the coin has exceeded Moser's expectations, but he is doing what he can to order more as they come in. (Courtesy photo)



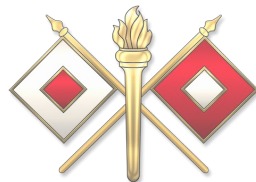
2nd Lt. Michael Moser, center, speaks with fellow signal colleagues following his graduation from SBOLC on Oct. 4. Moser earned the Charles Kilbourne Leadership Award for outstanding leadership. (Photo by Laura Levering, U.S. Army Signal School)

those coins that were given to me for mentoring someone have meant a little bit more, because it means I've changed their life in some aspect ... and I think that's ultimately what I want to do."

Just as Barrett remembers the details surrounding the first military coin he received (27 years ago, upon completion of Air Assault School), it's likely the second lieutenants from Moser's SBOLC class will look back on their coin and be able to tell stories associated with it — something

that is key to keeping military traditions sacred and alive.

"Traditions are vital, and they help us stay connected to the Army's history and heritage," Barrett said. "Challenge coins are not just a piece of metal; they are a small token and a quick reminder of how great an organization it is ... often engraved with the unit motto, a slight glance and seeing words such as 'Pride Is Forever' or 'This We'll Defend' is just what's needed to charge the hill."



Recognizing the importance of developing strong leaders

Desert Forge

Command Sgt. Maj. Randall M. Plante
25th Strategic Signal Battalion

Institutional training provides leaders a baseline Soldier. It's up to the organizational leaders of today's Army to ensure that they continue to develop and sharpen knowledge, skills, and attributes to support mission requirements.

The Middle East is known as the cradle of civilization and home to the world's oldest cultures and civilizations. As societies continued to expand and develop, the region became the birthplace of three major religions. The Middle East is no stranger to conflict. As the operational environment changes, the 25th Strategic Signal Battalion (SSB) is ensuring leaders are provided the mental and physical tools to make the right decision at the right time while identifying and inserting themselves into the friction points where effective decision making is critical to meet the commander's objectives.

The 25th SSB implemented a five-day leadership course designed by the NCOs at Al Udeid Air Force Base (AUAB), Qatar, to ensure all leaders across the formation are competent and capable to meet the warfighter needs in the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility.

The Desert Forge course was established while remembering the exceptional leaders who paved the way from the somber field at Valley Forge where the Continental Army initiated the NCO Corps. The establishment of the leadership ranks was one to meet emerging operational environment needs just as today where NCOs must continue adjusting to meet demands of the battlefield. Lines of communication are now at the speed of light, and the job of today's Signaleers is more vital than ever in our history.

The five-day course was created to challenge the mental and physical capacity of each leader to minimize the stimulation of the amygdala (fight-or-flight) reaction and enable controlled emotions and cognitive thinking. Eliminating human error is impossible. However, developing self-awareness sensors to enhance critical and creative thinking will enhance leaders to make the best decision based on the current information. Leaders from the 160th Theater Signal Brigade are currently dispersed in nine countries directly supporting 28 sites across the Middle

East. They must make the best decision based on the commanders' priorities and execute mission command through discipline initiative.

Communicators, logisticians, transporters, and air defenders from all three Army components volunteered and provided exceptional feedback and support to enhance the organic course development to meet the demands of today's environment.

Spc. Dominic Wilson, 31st Air Defense Artillery Brigade, stated, "This course has taught me how to trust in others but to also hold them accountable to their actions. A team can only move as fast as their weakest link."

The course was designed to illustrate to students the effects that mental and physical exhaustion have on decision-making and how to overcome, limit, or maximize operational safety, opportunities, or threats.

Twenty students from Task Force Spartan Shield, 25th SSB, and 101st Expeditionary Signal Battalion (New York National Guard) participated in multiple fitness events daily to reach physical exhaustion. Soldiers were shown how to calculate their VO2 max or maximal oxygen consumption, conducted combat focused physical training, executed an unknown distance tactical foot march, along with navigating a meta-cognitive obstacle course as they were continuously shuffled and evaluated by the cadre and peer reviewed. This significantly enhanced the classroom training conducted to illuminate their ability to digest knowledge and formulate responses.

The 25th SSB solidified a program of instruction that will produce repeatable results and leaders to support emerging requirements in the Middle East. The implementation of ethical decision making, counter-productive leadership, officer/NCO relations, behavior health, and other hard topics enabled the leaders to have a full understanding of their biases, strengths, and potential blind spots.

The course culminated with identifying Cpl. Ziyana De Los Reyes Guerrero from the 974th Transportation Detachment (Arizona Army Reserve) as the leadership awardee.

Leaders in the 25th SSB in the current operational environment are in no position to remain stagnant. They must thrive and embrace the knowledge learned and distribute it across the formation to ensure those who follow behind them only enhance the lethality of the warfighter.

5G wireless technology: Coming to a PACE plan near you

Understanding the hype

Maj. Philip Dowd

U.S. Army Signal School

5G hype is everywhere. You have probably noticed the 5G network icon occasionally appear in the upper right-hand corner of your cell phone screen, and it is hard to watch TV without seeing at least one commercial from a major service provider touting their 5G network.

You may have asked yourself, “What is 5G, and what does it mean for your day-to-day life?” A more important question for signal Soldiers is, “How will this emerging technology be integrated into Army networks and how can it support today’s combat connectivity demands?”

5G is the latest in wireless mobile cellular technology. It shows the potential to provide the network required on modern battlefields and offers the capacity to connect the ever-growing Internet of Things (IoT) devices that current and future Soldiers require to compete in large-scale combat.

What is 5G?

Wireless mobile cellular networks operate on the radio frequency (RF) portion of the electromagnetic spectrum. Cell phones and other mobile devices connect to terrestrial antennas and baseband equipment at cell sites. These sites are connected by microwave antennas, fiber lines, or satellite backhaul to a service provider’s core network.

5G is the fifth generation (G) in mobile cellular technology. Every generation is marked by a significant improvement in technology and the introduction of new capabilities not available in the preceding generation. 1G brought us the first mobile voice network powered by analog technology (think large “car phones”). 2G brought in voiceover digital signal and Short Message Service (SMS) text messaging. 3G paved the way for early smartphones by introducing a mobile network capable of email checking and web browsing. 4G Long-Term Evolution (LTE) advancements increased mobile speeds to allow for high bandwidth activities on-the-go such as the use of smartphone applications and streaming. 5G promises a network with lower latency, high-speed data rates, and the capacity to handle the demands placed on cellular networks by the exponential increase in IoT devices that power the “smart” eco-system (smart - cars, buildings, houses, cities).

The technological advancements behind 5G largely center on new use of resources within, and a more efficient use of, the RF spectrum. Where 4G operates roughly in the 600MHz-2.5GHz range, 5G increases the available spectrum up to 100GHz and operates in three categories, low-band < 1GHz, mid-band 2GHz-10GHz, and high-band >24GHz.

Coverage distance decreases and speed increases higher up the RF spectrum. For example, millimeter wave (mmWave) found in 5G high-band is low range and has limited ability to penetrate obstructions but can unlock network speeds 10 times faster than 4G. mmWave has made 5G a viable option for home internet and is commonly used to provide high cellular performance to large crowds in open venues such as sporting arenas. Principles like network slicing enable tailoring of resources to meet specific requirements since not every mobile device has high speed and/or large data demands. The ability to customize and segment “slices” of the network through virtualization techniques leads to a reduction in bottlenecks created by dissimilar devices and separate entities competing for the same network resources.

Beamforming is another advancement critical for 5G. Past RF cellular networks emitted antenna energy in all directions, but beamforming and the use of massive multiple input multiple output (MIMO) antennas allow for concentrated RF beams to and from cell sites reducing interference and decreasing energy demands.

5G is central to the marketing strategy of major cellular providers. Most people have heard the 5G buzz, but the average person still may not notice a considerable change compared to 4G. Even though 5G has been available in some capacity for the last few years, it is still a developing technology. Historically, the previous generation of cellular technology coexists until the current version reaches maturity. This is also the case with 4G and 5G. Many of the 5G networks in use today are known as non-standalone (NSA) 5G, which means they still use portions of the pre-existing 4G network. Standalone (SA) 5G networks are made up of completely updated technology and provide all the benefits of 5G. They exist in some places but are not yet the predominant version. Additionally, many consumer devices are not fully 5G capable. For example, some older smartphones are not compatible with mid and high-band 5G and only operate on low-band with similar performance

to 4G. 5G employment is well on its way, but there is still a lot of work to be done across multiple industries before it reaches full potential.

5G and Military Application

Beamforming technology and high-speed/low-range waveforms like mmWave make 5G an attractive option for a military community that wants to use low latency links while reducing electromagnetic footprints. Infrastructure sharing through network slicing is also appealing given the diverse networks that the Army and other services operate.

5G's capacity to streamline sensor to shooter links by connecting RF devices on the tactical edge to the cloud and enterprise environment is another advantage. The Department of Defense (DoD) recognized the potential of 5G, and like industry counterparts, is investing in the emerging technology. The DoD published a 5G strategy in 2020, and in March 2022, established a 5G and Future-G Cross-Functional Team (CFT) to oversee research and implementation programs ranging from smart bases, autonomous vehicles, telemedicine, automating supply chains, and tactical command post communications.

The "Operate Through" concept is critical to the DoD's approach to 5G implementation and involves leveraging pre-existing industry infrastructure for network transport. Large cellular networks require significant infrastructure and are not built overnight. However, due to modern-day reliance on smartphones and mobile devices, functional cellular networks already cover a significant part of the globe. Global Agile Integrated Transport (GAIT) and VPN technology have made it possible for Army units to use commercial cellular networks, so "operate through" is already a common practice for units conducting training and missions in the United States and coalition countries.

The DoD acknowledges security challenges but has not ruled out "operate through" for missions in contested areas. In their 5G strategy, they likened it to the use of roads and note that "A typical DoD mission does not begin by first building a new road infrastructure in the theater of operations... a first choice (and often the only choice) is to 'operate through' the existing road infrastructure" (Evans, 2020).

Although "operate through" poses some security challenges, it presents opportunities for units to camouflage their electromagnetic foot-

print with the RF spectrum being used by the rest of the population.

Capabilities also exist for Army units to self-deploy 5G assets to locations where "operate through" is not possible due to damaged or lack of cellular infrastructure. Major commercial cellular providers regularly deploy mobile cell sites known as Cell on Light Trailer (CoLT) and Service Node on Wheels (SNOW) for limited-time purposes like large

U.S. Army North successfully employed CoLT systems to provide 5G service during Operation Allies Welcome in 2022, and there are programs working towards ruggedizing mobile 5G assets for military use in austere environments.

Conclusion

The technology industry continues to develop and improve 5G capabilities around the world by deploying newly acquired spectrum and operating it in innovative ways. Simultaneously, the DoD is testing and implementing 5G solutions to improve networks. The military has unique challenges like security and operating in remote areas, but developing a knowledge base and systems that interoperate with 5G will help the Army leverage this emerging cellular technology moving forward. The preceding cellular generation is often the anchor for the next, so as 5G turns into 6G (and onward), having the capacity to integrate cellular networks into Army PACE plans will provide long-term benefits for the full complement of networks that will power the Army into the future.

Dowd is currently in the Training with Industry (TWI) program and has been working at Verizon as part of a yearlong fellowship that will end in July 2024. He is working on a System Performance team based out of Annapolis Junction, Maryland. For more information about TWI, contact your career counselor or learn more [here](#).

Source:

Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (R and E), & Evans, J. B., Department of Defense 5G Strategy Implementation Plan. Department of Defense 5G Strategy Implementation Plan (dtic.mil)



Christmas House tradition continues at Fort Eisenhower

‘A huge scoop of love’

Article, photo by Laura Levering
U.S. Army Signal School

The holidays are upon us and are already looking brighter for hundreds of Fort Eisenhower families thanks to the compassion and generosity of the community.

Fort Eisenhower’s Christmas House, a program aimed at assisting service members with providing some joy and relief at Christmastime, will be serving “a huge scoop of love” to 426 families (865 children) said Nomi Stanton, Christmas House advisor and spouse of Maj. Gen. Paul Stanton, U.S. Army Cyber Center of Excellence and Fort Eisenhower commanding general.

The program is open to active-duty service members E-1 through E-6, from all branches of service, who have children ages birth through 11. To be considered, service members must submit a Christmas House application indicating a financial need. If approved, the service member will be contacted with a specific day and time to “shop” at the Christmas House between Dec. 11-14. In an effort to keep the “magic of Christmas alive,” children are not permitted. Instead, a volunteer elf greets and guides the service member through shopping.

Inside the Christmas House, multiple trees, wreaths, and other festive décor fill the warehouse-like building. Shelves are lined with toys and sorted by age groups, and service members are able to use a cart to shop with ease. Each family who goes through Christmas House will be able to select one high-dollar and one low-dollar (\$20 price mark average) toy per child. Each family also receives a boardgame, stocking stuffers, books, and pet items for those who have furry family members. Upon leaving the building, they also receive a holiday meal’s worth of food – the option of a ham or turkey, plus a box of food.

Lori Pfeleger, Christmas House president, began volunteering with the program in 2011 as a spouse and has remained involved ever since. Her husband, Command Sgt. Maj. Ronald Pflieger, was the 21st Signal Regimental and Fort Gordon command sergeant major at the time. Lori said the need for this program is greater than ever, especially given the present economy – which is one of the reasons they opened it up to E-6 service members, whereas in the past the cutoff was E-5.

“We want to take care of the Soldiers, and we want to take care of as many families as we can,” Lori said.

Christmas House operates solely on volunteers and donations from the community. At its core, the organization has about 12 volunteers who work year-round, with the exception of about three months following Christmas. Many of them have full-time careers outside of Christmas House (Lori included), but they dedicate their time and energy because they want to make sure no military family goes without, especially during the holidays.

“One of the most incredible things about joining the military is how military folks take care of military folks – it is an extended family,” Nomi said. “Duty, honor, country are not just three words that we say. For my family, it is everything.”

Now in her third year of volunteering, Nomi became emotional sharing that this would be her final season with Christmas House due to an upcoming move. When asked what she hopes to leave behind as she reflects on her volunteer work with Christmas House, she said “gratitude.”

“This experience, for me, added a new layer of how beautiful it is to be a military family, and how we take care of each other. I am full of gratitude, and I am leaving behind gratitude.”

Did you know?

What began in 1966 as a group of nurses hosting teddy bear drives for children of deployed Soldiers has evolved into a 501(c)(3) non-profit that through the generosity of community donors is able to provide gifts to local military families. For more information about Christmas House, click [here](#).



Bicycles are among the premium gifts available for shoppers going through the Fort Eisenhower Christmas House.