

THURSDAY JULY 20, 2023

THE FORT JACKSON LEADER

"VICTORY ... STARTS HERE."

AEGD

Class of 2023

Graduation
14 July 2023
PROUD GRADUATES

CAPTAINS BRACE FOR NEW ASSIGNMENTS



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Chaplain commandant prepares to say farewell

By MEL SLATER

Institute for Religious Leadership

The U.S. Army Institute for Religious Leadership's commandant, Chaplain (Col.) James Palmer bids farewell to the institute as it prepares to host the Chaplain Corps Regimental Week activities here at Fort Jackson from July 25-28.

"It has been a tremendous honor and privilege to serve as the commandant of the U.S. Army Institute for Religious Leadership. It has been perhaps the most significant assignment that I have had as an Army chaplain," Palmer said. "Every chaplain that enters the Army has to come through Fort Jackson. I hope that as commandant, I have been able to make a difference in the lives of Soldiers and Family members."

The Army's Deputy Chief of Chaplains, Chaplain (Brig. Gen.) Bill Green is set to officiate the change of commandant ceremony on July 28 on the campus grounds to formally recognize the transfer of command between Palmer and Chaplain (Col.) Louis A. Delfufo.

Palmer assumed the position in 2021 and is the 44th commandant since the school began in 1918.

"On Dec. 24, Christmas Eve



Photo by MEL SLATER

U.S. Army Institute for Religious Leadership Deputy Director and Commandant, Chaplain (Col.) James Palmer, Jr. receives a replica of the Institute for Religious Leadership crest from the Director of the Religious Leader Academy, Chaplain (Col.) Daniel Hardin at the Farewell Luncheon for Palmer held at the Fort Jackson NCO Club on July 18.

2019, Chaplain (Maj. Gen.) Solhjem notified me that he had selected me to serve as the 44th Commandant for the U.S. Army Chaplain Center and School," Palmer said. "I guess you could say it was an early Christmas present."

As commandant he was charged with overseeing the training and the many facets of

the transition from the Chaplain Center and School to the Army Institute for Religious Leadership. The newly formed institute continues to train chaplains and religious affairs specialists and noncommissioned officers to provide religious support to the Army and its Families, while advising commanders on religion, morals, morale and the right of

free exercise of religion for all Soldiers.

"One highlight of serving as commandant was being able to watch ordained civilian clergy and seminarians transform into Army chaplains in a matter of months," Palmer said. "These students graduate from the institute and are prepared to serve with Active Duty, Reserve and

National Guard units. It has been a delight to have had the opportunity to influence and shape the future generation of Army chaplains."

Part of the effort for Palmer during his dual responsibility as the institute's deputy director has been the transformation of the institute's campus that now includes elements assigned to the Office of the Chief of Chaplains.

The personnel numbers have risen on the campus as a result of the relocation of continued growth.

This growth includes the Religious Support Operations Center under the Office of the Chief of Chaplains; the establishment of a graduate school on the campus that will provide instruction in chaplaincy related disciplines; and the NCO Academy that brought advanced training for senior religious affairs specialists to one location.

"I will miss the people with whom I have had the opportunity to serve alongside. I have served with some of the finest chaplains, religious affairs specialists, and civilians here," Palmer said. "It is the men and women of this great institution that makes it a wonderful place to work. I will truly miss the people."

Palmer also reflected on the institute's challenges and successes

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ON THE COVER

Eight Army captains brace themselves for their futures as they graduated the Advanced Education in General Dentistry program at Fort Jackson, July 14.

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Photo by NATHAN CLINEBELLE

THE FORT JACKSON LEADER

"We Make American Soldiers"

Fort Jackson, South Carolina 29207

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All editorial content of the Fort Jackson Leader is prepared, edited, provided and approved by the Public Affairs Office of Fort Jackson.

The Fort Jackson Leader is distributed online. To submit articles, story ideas or announcements, write the Fort Jackson Leader, 5450 Strom Thurmond Blvd., Rm. 227, Fort Jackson, S.C. 29207, or call (803) 751-6739 or e-mail usarmy.jackson.93-sig-bde.mbx.atzj-pao@army.mil

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FJ schools ready to welcome students

by **EMILY HILEMAN**

Fort Jackson Public Affairs

In just 18 days, the halls of Pierce Terrace and C.C. Pinckney elementary schools will once again be filled with the sounds of students greeting their friends and teachers and getting back into the swing of learning.

"We know that families are excited, especially the younger students that we serve," said Robert

Batthey, principal of Pierce Terrace Elementary School. Pierce Terrace is one of two of the Department of Defense Education Activity schools located on Fort Jackson.

Fort Jackson students in kindergarten through sixth grade, head back to school is Aug. 7 where they will be greeted by a post officials and Bryan Perry, South Carolina/Fort Stewart community superintendent. it will be a full day of school filled with fun and learning.

Pierce Terrace is hosting a sneak-a-peak event from 3:30 – 5 p.m., Aug. 4 to give new students and families enrolled at the school a glimpse into what to expect.

Parents of new students enrolled at C.C. Pinckney are encouraged to contact the school for information about its programs.

"That's an opportunity for the families to come in, meet the teachers, see the classroom and drop off supplies before the actual first day of school," Batthey said. "The hope is that it helps the parents and students ease any concerns or worries they might have before the first day of school."

For students entering pre-kindergarten and pre-school child

development, the school year will begin on Aug. 21. Kaelyn Newton and Patricia Jolly, the two pre-kindergarten teachers, will be reaching out to pre-kindergarten families and Ebony Jones, the pre-school child development teacher, will be reaching out to pre-school child development families to give them more information about the upcoming school year and their own Sneak-a-Peak event.

According to the DODEA website, "eligibility to attend DODEA schools within the contiguous United States is outlined in Section 2164 of title 10, United States Code and Department of Defense Instruction 1342.26."

Title 10 of the U.S. Code governs the development and maintenance of domestic DOD elementary and secondary schools for military dependents.

Per the regulations, students can attend tuition free if they are dependents of active-duty military members and Department of Defense civilian employees who live in permanent housing on post. Deceased member of the Armed Forces who died in the line of duty in a combat-related operation and dependent students of foreign armed forces living on an installation served by a DODEA Americas school may also attend them without paying tuition.

Other dependent children are also allowed to attend Pierce Terrace and C.C. Pinckney Elementary Schools and other DODEA Americas schools, but they are required to pay tuition.

Dependent students of the Immigration and Customs En-

WE KNOW FAMILIES ARE EXCITED, ESPECIALLY THE YOUNGER STUDENTS THAT WE SERVE

- Robert Batthey
Principal, Pierce Terrace
Elementary School



Leader file photo

Fort Jackson schools will be welcoming students back to school for the 2023/2024 school year with a celebration, Aug. 7, 2023.

forcement and Customs and Border Protection residing in Puerto Rico are a few of the students eligible for tuition-based attendance at on post schools.

"If there's any question about registration or any needs from the school, families can call the

school and we'll help answer their questions or guide them to the correct resource," assured Batthey.

If you're overseas or unable to call during their office hours, he says the website is very comprehensive and there's even a registration link to simplify the regis-

tration process.

Parents can find C.C. Pinckney school supply lists at <https://www.dodea.edu/PinckneyES/supply-list.cfm> and Pierce Terrace supply lists at <https://www.dodea.edu/PierceTerraceES/supply-list.cfm>.

Community Updates

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Road Closure

Benning Street between Lee Road and the entrance to the U.S. Army Institute for Religious Leadership parking lot will be closed from 8-10 a.m. July 28 to conduct a change of command ceremony.

Equal Employment Opportunity

Looking for Equal Employment Opportunity information? Can't find the latest EEO newsletter? You can find the information you need at: home.army.mil/jackson/index.php/eeo.

Saving Your Marriage Before It Starts

Register with the Chaplain Family Life Center volunteer at 751-4966 to attend the "Saving Your Marriage Before It Starts" class given by Chaplain (Maj.) Daniel Claypoole, Aug. 18 to Dec. 15. (We will not meet on Training or Federal Holidays). Bring a brown bag lunch from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. and begin to build a solid foundation for lifelong love. Each couple will get a kit that includes workbooks, a hard cover book and a DVD ROM. There will be a get to know session followed by group and individual exercises, training and fun filled discussion provided in the workbooks and by our class. Seating is limited to the first 10 couples to sign up.

School Sports Physicals

Moncrief Army Health Clinic will hold school sports physicals every Monday and Wednesday from 4:30-6:30 p.m. until Aug. 9 in the Integrated Health Medical Home, Yellow Team, on MAHC's ground floor. The exams are held for MAHC-enrolled students ages 4 and above in grades PK-12. The walk-in exams are for non-acute issues. Please schedule exams for acute issues with your primary care manager. (Note: students may not be scheduled with the child's PCM). Immunization records and required sports and physical forms must be brought to the ex-

aminations.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

TODAY

Sportsman Club Meeting

6 p.m., Alpine Lodge. The Fort Jackson Sportsman Club holds its last meeting before the opening of deer season. Aug. 15 and will feature a presentation from the Fort Jackson game warden. Don't miss this chance to get the latest on hunting regulations and safety.

FRIDAY

Scams & Identity Theft Webinar

10-11 a.m., Army Community Service in partnership with South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs will share tips to help you protect your identity and finances in support of 2023 National Consumer Protection Week. Registration is required. For more information or to register, call 751-5256.

Stuffed Animal Sleepover

Thomas Lee Hall (Post) Library. Drop off your fluffy friend on Friday for a fun night at the library. Check the Library Facebook page (Fort Jackson Library) to see the antics your stuffed animal gets up to after hours, and then pick up your plushie Saturday.

SATURDAY

Army 10-Miler

5 a.m., Hilton Field. The Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation is hosting the 2023 Army 10-miler. The 10-mile run allows Soldiers and other authorized patrons an opportunity to compete in an event similar to the Army 10-Miler held each year in Washington, D.C.

TUESDAY

Coupon Craze Virtual Workshop

10:30-11:45 a.m., Army Community Service Financial Readiness Program will

host a coupon craze virtual workshop via Microsoft Teams. Learn the art of doubling and tripling coupons, stacking coupons, price matching and more. Get tips on how to prepare for grocery store trips. This is a great opportunity to learn new strategies, meet other coupon users, and share your own ideas. Registration is required. For more information or to register, call 751-5256.

Shutting Down Counterproductive Thinking

1:30-5 p.m. MS Teams. The USAG Civilian Workforce Development Program and the Master Resilience School are partnering to offer the Leader/Workforce Development Training "Shutting Down Counterproductive Thinking to Improve Your Focus" training class. The training will provide information on how to shut down counterproductive thinking to enable a greater concentration and focus on the task at hand by using evidence, optimism, or perspective.

JULY 26

Juicing Workshop

2 p.m., Thomas Lee Hall (Post) Library. Want to know the difference between juice and smoothies? Want to try some healthy, tasty ways to improve your meal planning? Stop by for a lesson on Juicing with MWR's Sports and Fitness Programmer, Pam Long.

JULY 28

Open House – Credit Report Review

8-11 a.m. and 1:30-3 p.m., Army Community Service, 9810 Lee Road. ACS financial counselors will be available during scheduled times on a first come, first served basis to download and review free credit reports for Army personnel. Active-duty Soldiers and their Department of Defense ID card holding Family members will receive their free credit scores. For more information, call 751-5256.



Fort Jackson Movie Schedule

3319 Jackson Blvd.

Phone: 751-7488

JULY 21

■ The Flash (PG-13) 6 p.m.

JULY 22

■ The Little Mermaid (PG-13) 2 p.m.

JULY 26

■ Transformers (PG-13) 11 a.m.

■ Transformers (PG-13) 3 p.m.

● Ticket sales open 30 minutes before each movie.

● Movie times and schedule are subject to change without notice.

THE FORT JACKSON LEADER

SEND ALL
SUBMISSIONS TO

usarmy.jackson.93-sig-bde.mbx.atzj-pao@army.mil

Deadline for events to be included in the Community Updates is one week before publication. Include the time, date and place the event will occur, as well as other necessary information.

If you submit an article on an event that already has taken place, please send it as soon as possible. Tuesday is the last day we will be able to accept an article for publication the following

Thursday. Include the date and place of the event, as well as a description of what took place. Please include quotations, if possible.

With any photo you submit, include IDs — rank, unit, and first and last names. All submissions will be edited and published using Associated Press Style

Questions? Call 751-6739.

Former Medical Service Corps chief's life of service brings joy, passion

by **CHRISTOPHER HURD**
Army News Service

Following her retirement from three decades of Army service, Sheila Baxter provided veterans with spiritual counseling as a staff chaplain at the Atlanta Veterans Affairs Medical Center.

One day, she received a call from a psychologist telling her there was a marine veteran that could use her help.

He was suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder and it was not only affecting him, but it also affected his family and his ability to maintain stable employment.

"I was grateful to God that we were able to connect," Baxter said. "Marines are tough. Sometimes they don't open up like that, especially to a woman."

They started meeting twice a month as they charted a path to improve his spiritual life. He slowly started making progress.

During their talks, Baxter learned the marine was struggling because he never mourned the loss of three fellow marines who were killed in a firefight when they were all deployed together.

She knew he needed closure and worked with him to hold a memorial in their honor. The memorial provided him with healing and a sense of peace he hadn't experienced before.

Seeing him find peace gave her joy, because helping others was her passion and she had been doing it all her life.

She learned teamwork and discipline early on by playing basketball with her siblings and cousins in her aunt's backyard.

She took the skills she learned there all the way to Virginia State University where she became the first female basketball player to score 1,000 career points.

During her junior year, she went with her cousin to visit her husband, an Army logistics officer. He was stationed at Fort Liberty, previously known as Fort Bragg, North Carolina. He took them around the base to show them different aspects of the Army. The experience was a beacon for Baxter.

"It was my light bulb moment," she explained. "This is what I want to do, I want to lead troops."

She signed up with the ROTC at her school and commissioned in 1978 as a Medical Service Corps officer after earning her bachelor's degree in health and physical education.

She chose the service corps because of the variety of jobs it presented and the chance it gave her to help people.

During her first assignment, her battalion commander, the first of many mentors, asked her to give him a 20-year plan, broken down into five-year increments, for her career. As a young officer still new to the Army, she wasn't even sure what she wanted to do next week, let alone in 20 years.

The next week, she told him she wanted to lead troops and be like him and he worked with her to develop an action plan to achieve her goals.

She took his advice, progressed in her career, and was even promoted to major a year earlier than her peers.

Things didn't always go to plan and her motivation waned when she experienced a verbally abusive boss that would often curse at his staff. This behavior made her consider other career options, but something told her she wasn't finished with the Army just yet.

With the help of her pastor, she prayed for her boss, changed her perspective, and leaned on the positive things in her life.

"I learned everything isn't going to be peaches and cream, but you've got to hang in there because it's making you who you should be," she explained. "Sometimes we have to have a little resistance in order to understand you can overcome the situation. You just have to change your perspective."

As she continued down her career path, she became the commander of the 226th Medical Battalion in Germany. Even after reaching this milestone, she knew she needed to continue to rely on those around her.

"If you don't listen to your mentors, you are doing yourself a disservice because



Courtesy photo

Newly promoted Brig. Gen. Sheila Baxter, stands next to her father John Baxter Sr. during her promotion ceremony June 21, 2003. Baxter was the first female general officer in the Medical Service Corps.

mentors can see in you what you cannot see in yourself," she said.

Listening to the advice of one mentor, Brig Gen. Richard Ursone, she invited the lieutenant general in her chain of command for a visit to the battalion.

During the visit, she allowed the non-commissioned officers and civilians in her battalion to lead the briefs, because "It's about highlighting the people that work with you and giving them a voice," she said.

The visit left a lasting impression on Ursone and a year later, Baxter received a call from the Army surgeon general telling her she was selected for brigadier general. This selection made Baxter the first female chief of the Medical Service Corps.

Her vision for the corps was competence, courage and compassion. She wanted them to be the best they could be and to help others along the way, just as she was helped.

"I am extremely proud to be a Medical Service Corps officer," she said. "When I

look back at our history, we just keep going to higher levels because of the quality of Soldiers and leaders that we have."

Throughout her time as chief, she traveled around the Army listening to the troops and hoping to inspire them. As she went through a dining facility on one of her visits, a young private first class ran up to her and told her she was going back to school so she could be like her.

After 30 years of service, she retired from the Army but not from helping others. She wanted to continue with her passion of service. So, she applied for the Clinical Pastoral Education Program through the Veterans Affairs in Atlanta. This opportunity eventually led her to a full-time chaplain position where she helped veterans with their spiritual care for another 10 years.

"When I think about why I continue to give back, I believe it's in my DNA," she said. "It's something that makes me proud in terms of giving my life meaning and purpose. Service gives me joy; gives me passion."



Photo by NATHAN CLINEBELLE
Graduates of the Advanced Education in General Dentistry Program following their graduation ceremony, July 14.

Graduates prepare for assignments as Army's newest dentists

by EMILY HILEMAN
Fort Jackson Public Affairs

Eight Army captains braced themselves for their futures as they graduated the Advanced Education in Gen-

eral Dentistry program at Fort Jackson, July 14. The one-year American Dental Association-accredited program provides professional education at the post-doctoral level and is under the supervision of the Office of the Surgeon General.

The Office of the Surgeon General approved the Army Dental Intern Program in 1946 and training began in July 1947. Over the course of 35 years, the Advanced Education in General Dentistry program was developed and the first AEGD program took place at Fort Carson, Colorado in May 1981.

Forty years later, there are six programs located at Fort Moore, Georgia; Fort Carson, Colorado; Fort Campbell, Kentucky; Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington; Fort Sill, Oklahoma; and Fort Jackson.

"This year has been very demanding in many ways," said Lt. Col. Brandon Gage, comprehensive dentist and AEGD program director. "These residents came straight from dental school and were thrown into a level of patient care that is beyond what they experienced there. They're also navigating the intricacies of being a brand new dental officer."

Gage was not just the program director, but he also mentored the young professionals along with Maj. Joshua Gonzalez, comprehensive dentist and AEGD program assistant director; Dr. Richard Nichols, periodontist and chairman of the education committee; Maj. April Bumpers, periodontist; Lt. Col. Zachary Highberger, oral and maxillofacial surgeon; Lt. Col. Drew Krena, prosthodontist; Lt. Col. Ryan Swiss, endodontist; Lt. Col. Dawnyetta Hixson, oral and maxillofacial pathology and Capt. Aaron Gringer, comprehensive dentist and brother to one of the graduates, Capt. Casey Gringer.

"As you graduate after a year's long and intense program that you put such hard work into this year, studying for exams, learning and honing your skills, learning new advanced clinical skills that are going to make you the best dentist that the Army needs," said Col. Susan M. Cebula, Dental Activity – Fort Jackson commander.

Col. Stephen Tanner, the 29th Chief of the Dental Corps was present and spoke as the guest speaker for the graduation. Tanner graduated from the University of Southern California School of Dentistry in 1993 and com-

pleted the same program at Fort Campbell, Kentucky in 1994. An accomplished and decorated Army dentist, he was still privileged and honored to speak to the new graduates about the importance of their positions for Army readiness.

"Our nation and Soldiers and their Family and friends require us to be the best, to be our best," he said. "Losing a teammate due to a dental issue affects not only the Soldier, but his team. It reduces combat power. Dental mission is a key component to the medical readiness that fights and wins our nation's wars."

Each graduate will proceed to their new duty station, poised and ready to tackle the unique dental challenges of their patients, thanks to the training, education and mentorship they received during the year-long AEGD program at Fort Jackson.

"As you've heard, the residents, throughout their academic year, have an extreme amount of pressure placed upon them," said Lt. Col. Ryan Swiss, endodontist and AEGD mentor. "They spend a lot of time worrying about procedures and materials and part of that is learning about the research that goes into those."

One of the culminating events of the program was the Table Clinic Presentation that required the residents to research and present information on a dental procedure or material. "What they may or many have not known is that their table clinic was being judged," Swiss said.

Capt. Andrew Jefferson was the recipient of The Best Table Clinic Presentation award.

Jefferson's research was based on the difference between two primary restorative techniques, Bioclear versus traditional Class II composite restorations.

"The easiest way to think about it is you have bricks and mortar versus two by fours and nails," said Jefferson. "They're different materials and so they need to be handled differently." Jefferson compared the different procedures and highlighted the best practice for dental restoration to prevent fractured teeth and decay.

"Coming out of dental school, we each have a rudimentary knowledge of General Dentistry," Jefferson said. "Depending on your program, you get a little more exposure to some of the more complex aspects of the industry."

However, during the course of the residency with the

AEGD program, they're able to get more exposure to in-depth procedures such as molar root canals and implants. "It's literally feeling like you're being fed by fire hose ad a lot of trial by fire, but it's been a great program and I've definitely learned a lot over the course of this past year," he said.

Jefferson is no stranger to Army training and Fort Jackson as he attended Basic Combat Training at Fort Jackson in 2010. As a reservist, Jefferson enlisted as a 68E – Dental Specialist. Although he joined on a whim, as he said, it was a life changing decision for the young enlistee, at the time.

"During my training, I learned about the various scholarship programs for dental school and I really found my love for the field of dentistry," he said. "so, that was the moment where I was like, 'This is something worth pursuing.'"

He went on to earn the rank of sergeant in the Army Reserve prior to beginning dental school. He completed his undergraduate degree in Nutritional Science at Brigham Young University and his Doctorate in Medicine of Dentistry at Roseman University of Health Services in South Jordan, Utah.

"As part of the scholarship program that the Army has for dental school, they have the requirement of applying for the one-year residency," he said. "When I saw Fort Jackson on the list, it seemed like a good opportunity to come full circle and return to where my Army career started."

Graduates were Capts. Cody Buhler (whose next as-



By NATHAN CLINEBELLE
Capt. Brandi Shoenthaler, with the 1st Infantry Division, at Fort Riley, Kan., smiles as she receives her certificate for graduating the Advanced Education in General Dentistry program at Fort Jackson, July 14.

signment is Dental Activity located at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri); Daniella DeLaCruz (257th Medical Company Dental Area Support – Fort Liberty, formerly Fort Bragg, North Carolina); Kyle Duffee (DENTAC – Fort Carson, Colorado); Casey Gringer (DENTAC – Pentagon); Andrew Jefferson (DENTAC – Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington); Blakely McCormick (DENTAC – Fort Novosel, formerly Fort Rucker, Alabama); Sara Oleson (673rd Medical Brigade – Fort Carson); and Brandi Schoenthaler (1st Infantry Division Brigade Support – Fort Riley, Kansas).



Photo by NATHAN CLINEBELLE
Graduates of the Advanced Education in General Dentistry program held at Fort Jackson during their graduation held at Magruder Chapel on post, July 14.

WHY I SERVE

ARMY MEDICAL COMMAND - FORT JACKSON

PVT. ANTHONY VINUEZA, 22

Simi Valley, California

"It was never actually my intention to join. I was going down a bad path in life and one thing after another kept falling apart. So, my mom and I looked at options. The Army was there and took me in."

"The most enjoyable part of my job is meeting new people, communicating and learning new things every single day. It's a cool and relaxed environment, which is different than a lot of other jobs in the military."

"I just started my career, so it's difficult to say what the highlight is, but I'm looking forward to what it can be."

"My MOS is 68E - Dental Specialist. I've always been fascinated by the medical field and I had braces when I was younger, so when I saw there was a Dental Specialist MOS, I signed up."

"I've been in the Army for nine months, so I'm not sure what I want to do with the Army yet."



CPL. VINCENT OGO, 23

Aurora, Illinois

"I grew up in a Family of military members and thought they were cool. So, since I was 5 years old, I've wanted to be cool like them."

"The most enjoyable part of my job are the Soldier tasks. Being out in the field - shooting, moving, and communicating is my favorite."

"The highlight of my Army career so far was my deployment to Afghanistan. It's what I always wanted to do and experience."

"My MOS is 68Q - Pharmacy Specialist. I chose this MOS because I was reaching the end of my first enlistment and wanted to try something new, so I chose the Medical Corps."

"I will be in the Army for six years in September. I plan on doing at least 20 years. I continue to serve because it's a career I wanted to do and I enjoy it."



PVT. BRAYAN IRAHETA, 21

Alexandria, Virginia

"I've wanted to be a Soldier since I was little, because a Soldier came to my elementary school and showed us night vision goggles and a bunch of other cool stuff."

"The most enjoyable part of my job is meeting all of the people and Soldiers that we take care of. The experience that comes with the job, learning new things every day, overcoming challenges and just working as a team."

"My MOS is 68E - Dental Specialist. I chose it because I was in this field before I enlisted and I wanted to continue my career."

"I've been in the Army for almost 10 months. My goal is to stay in, go to school and apply for the Health Professions Scholarship Program to pay for dental school, so I can commission in and continue serving the Army as a dentist."



SPC. HAZEL ANNE FELIPE, 25

Zamboanga City, Philippines

"The benefits and programs the Army offers influenced me to join."

"I work in the orderly room right now, so the most enjoyable part of my job is listening to great stories from noncommissioned officers and officers and learning from them. I am learning a lot too."

"I've always wanted to go to South Korea and I got it as my first duty station. I was able to explore the country, visit Family in Philippines, and I became an American citizen while there, so I consider that the highlight of my career."

"My MOS is 68M - Nutrition Specialist. I chose this MOS because I believe nutrition plays a big role in the overall performance of a Soldier and I want to be part of that journey."

"I've been in the Army for two years and six months and I continue to serve because I can still do better and give more to my fellow Soldiers."



SPC. ABDOULAYE DIARRA, 37

Mali, West Africa

"I saw the Army as a great opportunity because it provides education, citizenship, a career and health insurance for my Family."

"I have a great work environment and great co-workers that all work together to be the most enjoyable part of my career. I'm also continuing to learn while helping others be healthy and developing my skills."

"The highlight of my Army career has been having a great leadership team that had a huge impact on me and getting the opportunities I've had that I never thought I would experience."

"My MOS is 68K - Medical Laboratory Specialist. I chose this MOS because I was already in college for nursing, so this seemed like the best fit for me."



SGT. JAMI HARRIS, 30

York, South Carolina

"My little girl influenced me to join the Army. I wanted to give her the things she needed and deserved."

"I enjoy my job because every day is a surprise. From seeing trauma to meeting a war veteran."

"The highlight of my career has been making sergeant with all of my battle buddies at the same time."

"My MOS is 68P - Radiologist Specialist. Before I enlisted, I was pursuing an exercise and sports science degree and this MOS and the courses I had in college lined up really well with each other."

"I've been in the Army for six years. I continue to serve because I love my country and being a part of a solid organization."



To read more why Soldiers serve visit: home.army.mil/jackson



Army News Service photo

Fort Jackson officials recently offered tips on how to deal with any bears they may come across. The Midlands of South Carolina, and the southeastern part of the United States see a summer migration of bears from the mountains to the coastal region as the animals search for mates. They caution black bears rarely become aggressive, but if they are aggressive, don't run. Experts suggest you make yourself bigger by raising and waving your arms.

Be smarter than your average bear

By EMILY HILEMAN

Fort Jackson Public Affairs

If you're new to the Midlands or the southeastern part of the United States, you may have noticed trash strewn about your neighborhood or footprints in the mud that don't quite resemble the troublemaker next door. The southeastern United States is home to several species of critters and vermin and they tend to be more active from late spring through early fall.

According to the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, wildlife species such as beavers, black bears, opossums, raccoons, squirrels, and skunks are all too common in the Palmetto State.

If you're from a larger city or areas with little vegetation, you're likely panicking at the thought of black bears being anywhere near the vicinity of your home, but not to worry.

In the area near Fort Jackson, the only bear population is black bears. While they can still be large, they're transient and rarely become aggressive.

"We've had black bears in South Carolina for a long, long time," said Doug Morrow, Supervisory Wildlife Biologist with the Directorate of Public Works on Fort Jackson. "We don't have large populations of bears residing in this part of the state, but we do have some transient bears."

Morrow said two things are causing an influx of bears to pass through the area and both of them revolve around mating season. Sows, the term for female bears, are in heat during the summer months and are looking to find boars, the term for male bears, so they can mate.

During this time, female bears will also send any male offspring into the wild to find their own territory. These young boars will travel great distances to find new territory that's not occupied by other bears, specifically older and more established boars.

"There have been multiple sightings in this area this year," said Morrow, who confirmed his information with the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources. "Most of them are east of Fort Jackson in Sumter County or on the other side of the river, but this isn't an annual occurrence for us. Typically, we have one or two come through the area and you

never see them again."

Although bears and other wildlife in the area isn't new, there are a few things you can do to prevent bears and other wildlife from coming too close to your home, relying on your trash for their treasured finds, and to keep everyone (including the wildlife) safe.

Make sure to secure food, garbage, and recycling in clean and covered receptacles, remove bird feeders with seeds and nuts (bears are primarily herbivores), don't feed pets outside and clean and store your outdoor grills help keep bears at bay.

If you're hiking, there's also a few things you can do to keep you and your loved ones safe from bear encounters such as being aware of your surroundings, hike in groups and stay together, keep children within sight and keep dogs on a leash or leave them at home.

For the outdoor lovers that enjoy camping, keep a clean camp and don't burn food scraps or trash in your fire ring or grill, don't store food and trash in your tent and cook downwind as far away from your camp as possible.

If you're in the wilderness or in your own neighborhood and spot a bear, don't panic. If the bear doesn't notice you, remain still and quiet and let the bear calmly pass. Do not approach the bear or run. Also, don't feed the bear. Not only can it cause bears to become reliant on humans for food, but it's also illegal in the state of South Carolina.

Black bears rarely become aggressive, but in the off chance one approaches you, don't run. Stand your ground, make yourself look bigger by raising and waving your arms and make loud noises to scare the bear off.

Luckily, the local area isn't the most prime habitat for most bears because there's a lot of deep sands and it's dry, said Morrow.

"In fact, the sightings we've had are typically around the watersheds associated with our big creeks," he added.

At the end of the day, Morrow said to treat them like any other wild animal. Just like many other wild critters, they have the potential to cause you harm, but they're not typically aggressive.

"Keep your distance, watch them and enjoy them," Morrow said. "They're pretty cool."

ACS brings American Sign Language to Fort Jackson

By RAQUEL HUDGIES
EFMP Magellan Federal Contractor

American Sign Language was originated in the early 19th century and has helped to build the bridge to communication with individuals with disabilities. ASL is one of many ways to communicate through the

use of signs, symbols, and behaviors. ASL has even become popular to communicate with infants without disabilities that have yet to begin talking with their voice. Learning individual signs can be easy to learn with the use of hand movements and gestures.

Army Community Service Exceptional Family Member Program understands the

challenges that can come with a non-verbal Exceptional Family Member. It is important to know that even when things are challenging there are resources available to assist Families through these challenges. On July 26, ACS EFMP is hosting a "Signing with Children Birth-3 and Beyond" workshop. The 90 minutes workshop focuses on beginning signs that individuals can use to

communicate. This will be a fun, interactive workshop that teaches 30 American Sign Language signs and the manual alphabet to parents and professionals. The presenter will cover how to teach the signs and also practice reading and signing.

To register and for additional information, contact Army Community Service at 751-5256.

Chaplain

Continued from Page 2

along the road to transition.

When Palmer arrived COVID-19 continued to challenge the Army, the Chaplain Corps and the institute.

“Certainly, my first year as commandant was a challenge as we maneuvered through COVID-19,” Palmer said. “In order to keep all members of the team safe and healthy, to include students, as the commandant I provided steady leadership to the IRL team, while maneuvering through COVID-19. With the hard work of my staff, we were able to maintain training and return both military and civilian personnel back to work safely.”

Palmer is a native of Petersburg, Virginia. He is an ordained Baptist minister and endorsed by the Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc. He entered the Army in November 1992. His previous assignment was Director of Strategy, Plans, Policy & Resources for Office of the Chief of Chaplains.

Palmer is no stranger to Fort Jackson. He was assigned here as a small group instructor for the Chaplain Officer Basic

Leaders Course from June 2006 to Dec. 2007. And as Garrison Chaplain from Oct. 2013 to June 2015.

Palmer has been married to his wife Faith for 31 years. They have two sons and a daughter. Faith has been very supportive to the institute by contributing her time to help orient spouses of Chaplain Basic Officer Leader Course students with their transition to Army life with the CHBOLC Spouse Seminar and participating in other organization events and activities.

Palmer retires with 31 years of active-duty service.

“I am not certain what the future holds for me. Initially, I plan to take some time to rest and spend some quality time with my Family. Take a cruise,” Palmer said.

“I am a firm believer in Proverbs 3:5-6, which states trust in the Lord with all thine heart and lean not unto your own understanding, but in all of your ways acknowledge him and He will direct your path,” he added. “God will direct what is next for me.”

It’s going to be an exciting week for the Army Institute for Religious Leadership as it celebrates its history and sadly says farewell to the Palmers and transitions to new leadership with the continued goal to train chaplains and religious affairs specialists to care for the souls of America’s Army.

July 13 Retirees



Photo by NATHAN CLINEBELLE

The Army Training Center and Fort Jackson honored the service of Lt. Col. Nikia Tobin during the 3rd Battalion, 39th Infantry Regiment graduation July 13 on Hilton Field.

Did you know: You should always maintain three-points of contact and face the ladder when climbing or descending a ladder?

WORSHIP SCHEDULE	FAITH GROUP	DAY	TIME	PLACE
	CATHOLIC MASS	SUNDAY	9:30-10:30 A.M.	MAIN POST CHAPEL
	CATHOLIC MASS	MON-FRI	NOON	MAIN POST CHAPEL
	GOSPEL SERVICE	SUNDAY	10:30 A.M.	DANIEL CIRCLE CHAPEL
	GENERAL PROTESTANT	SUNDAY	11 A.M. TO NOON	MAIN POST CHAPEL
	INITIAL ENTRY TRAINING	DAY	TIME	PLACE
	ANGLICAN	SUNDAY	9-10 A.M.	LIGHTNING CHAPEL
	CATHOLIC MASS	SUNDAY	8-9 A.M.	SOLOMON CENTER
	PROTESTANT CONSOLIDATED SERVICE	SUNDAY	9:30-10:30 A.M.	SOLOMON CENTER
	THE BRIDGE (PROTESTANT)	SUNDAY	8:30-9:30 A.M.	ANDERSON CHAPEL
	CHURCH OF CHRIST	SUNDAY	10:30-11:30 A.M.	MAGRUDER CHAPEL
	HISPANIC PROTESTANT SERVICE	SUNDAY	8:30-10 A.M.	MAGRUDER CHAPEL
	ISLAMIC SERVICE	SUNDAY	8-9 A.M.	DANIEL CIRCLE CHAPEL
	JEWISH SERVICE	SUNDAY	10:15-11:30 A.M.	LIGHTNING CHAPEL
	THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER DAY SAINTS	SUNDAY	10:30 A.M. - NOON	ANDERSON CHAPEL

Army chief nominee cites warfighting, recruiting as top priorities

By **C. TODD LOPEZ**
DOD News Service

Preparing the Army for future war fights and meeting recruiting challenges are among the top priorities for Army Gen. Randy A. George, who was nominated to serve as the 41st chief of staff of the Army.

George, who now serves as the vice chief of staff of the Army, today testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee about what his priorities would be if he is confirmed.

George said, “my number one focus will be on warfighting so that our Army is always ready to respond when our nation calls. ... Second, I will work to ensure that we are continually improving to stay ahead of our potential adversaries. As the war in Ukraine has shown us, we are in a rapidly changing strategic environment. We can’t afford not to evolve.”

The general also said an area of focus, were he to be confirmed, will be to ensure the Army has the industrial and sustainment base — along with the soldier and family support infrastructure needed — to project forces across the globe.

“Finally, I’ll continue to strengthen the Army profession and build cohesive teams, which starts with fixing recruiting, so that we remain an army of the people and for the people — a formidable team of all-volunteer warriors,” he said.



DOD News Service photo

Vice Chief of Staff of the Army Gen. Randy A. George, left, speaks with Medal of Honor recipient Melvin Morris during the opening ceremony for the Vietnam Veterans “Welcome Home” celebration May 11, 2023.

George said he believes that recruiting may be one of the top challenges for the Army that awaits him as chief of staff.

“I think it’s the No. 1 challenge that we face and the one thing that we have to be focused on,” George said. “I will tell you that every leader in the Army, and I have

been as the vice, is completely focused on this.”

Part of the Army’s focus there, George told lawmakers, is on how the Army chooses recruiters; where it places recruiters; the command and control structure of the recruiting enterprise; and Army marketing.

“We’re reviewing every aspect of that,” George said.

The general also told senators that while the Army isn’t going to lower standards, it is helping soldiers meet standards. Part of that involves the Future Soldier Prep Course, a pilot program underway at Fort Jackson, South Carolina. As part of that program, the Army helps some soldiers meet weight standards so they can move on to basic training. The program has a 95% success rate, he said. For other soldiers, the Army helps them improve scores on the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery.

The Army is also facing a perception problem, George said, which means fewer young people want to enlist in the military.

“I think that the big perception is (they’re) putting their life on hold ...,” George said. But he also said he thinks that service in the Army does just the opposite.

“I remember that and was basically told ... (the Army is) going to accelerate your life,” he said. “I still use that ... because it has. And I think we need to get that word out. And we’re working very hard to do that.”

Lawmakers also asked George what lessons the Army has learned from Ukraine. He said one lesson is the importance of allies and partners. The general also mentioned the importance of long-range fires, logistics and counter-unmanned aerial systems.

Former senior leaders participate in TRADOC forum

By **NINA BORGENSON**
TRADOC

Former senior leaders of the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command gathered on recently to discuss modernization efforts across the Army.

“I feel extremely fortunate to be here with you all as we continue building the Army of 2030,” Gen. Gary M. Brito, commanding general, TRADOC, stated as he addressed the attendees. “All that TRADOC has started 50 years ago, we are still doing to this day as we continue to modernize the

foundation of the Army through training and doctrine.”

After welcoming the former leaders, Brito outlined the main points of discussion for this year’s forum, highlighting TRADOC’s plan to further expand Junior ROTC opportunities as the Army reconnects with local communities and schools in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

“We must bring in the best to train the best,” Brito stated.

Training the best requires, according to Brito, continuous reform as the Army adjusts to the operational environment and cur-

rent threats.

Brig. Gen. Jason E. Kelly, commanding general, U.S. Army Training Center, Fort Jackson, spoke on the success and way forward for the Future Soldier Preparatory Course, which was piloted at Fort Jackson.

“The essence of the program is that we are investing in those who want to be part of the Army team...instead of turning away potential recruits who would otherwise qualify, we are now sending them to Fort Jackson to invest in their future in the U.S. Army,” Kelly said.

Nearly 10,000 students have attended the FSPC since it was implemented in August 2022, showing promising results for the accessions mission.

“What we’re seeing is that these future Soldiers are rapidly readying themselves for basic combat training,” Kelly continued. “The standards aren’t being lowered, because you don’t move on (to basic training) until you’re deemed ready.”

Leaders at the forum also discussed potential plans of expanding the FSPC in the future and making it a permanent program.

Looking forward, attendees discussed recruiting initiatives, the ongoing effort to increase Soldier readiness, doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership and education, personnel, facilities, and policy integration in support of delivering the Army of 2030, and improvements to the Non-commissioned Officer Professional Military Education system.

The forum concluded with a visit to 128th Aviation Brigade to get a glimpse of Soldiers engaged in training and to give the former senior leaders the chance to share their knowledge with Soldiers.

VICTORY... STARTS HERE

