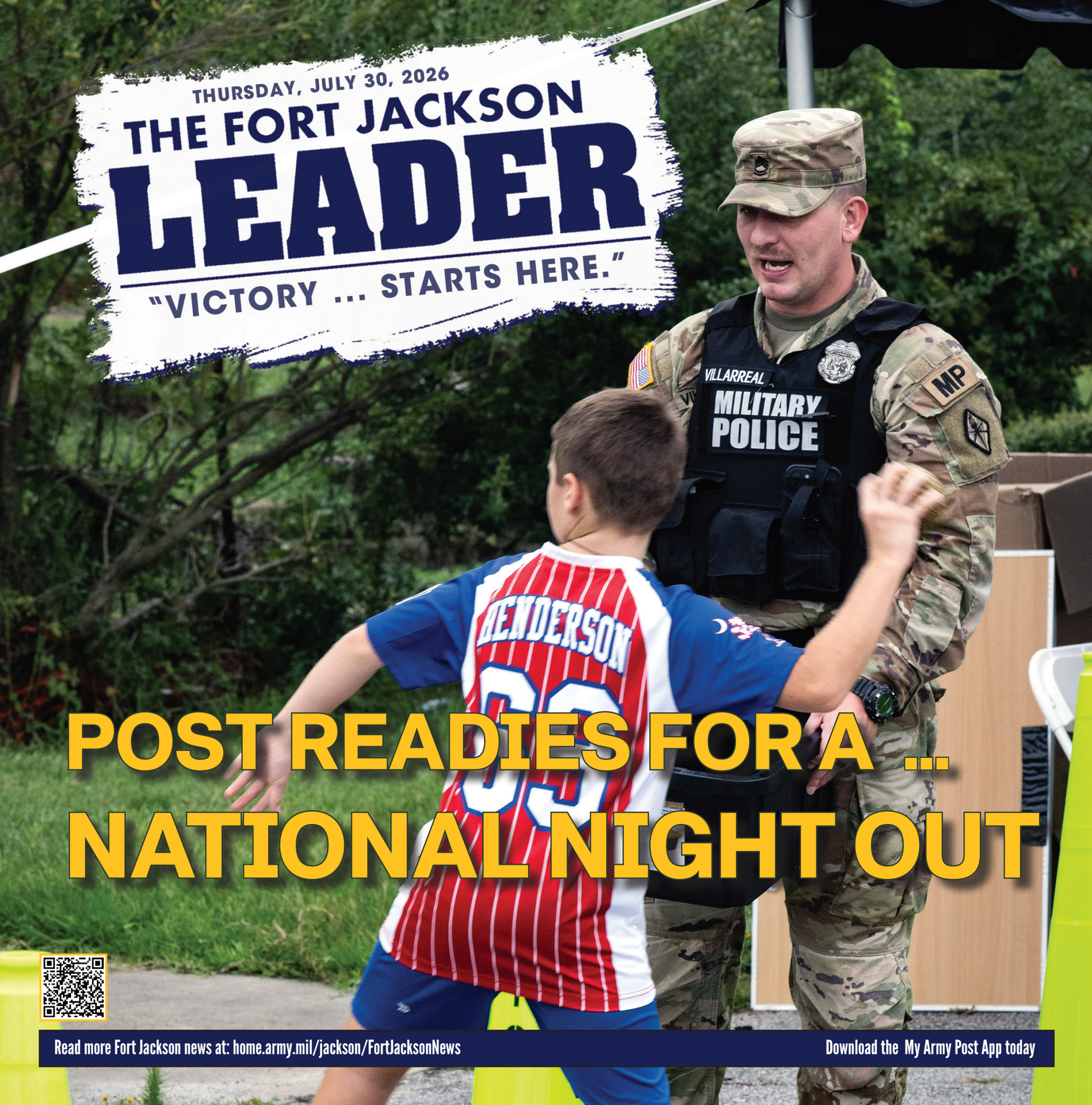
THURSDAY, JULY 30, 2026

THE FORT JACKSON

LEADER

"VICTORY ... STARTS HERE."



POST READIES FOR A ... NATIONAL NIGHT OUT

Harding Fellowship Program application window open until Aug. 15.

By JESSICA H. BRUSHWOOD
Army News Service

The Army is accepting applications for a highly competitive, three-year broadening opportunity aimed at connecting tactical leaders with strategic military communication. Active-duty captains, master sergeants, and chief warrant officers 4 have until Aug. 15 to apply.

"From foundational skills like copy editing and visual creation, to the nuances of strategic communications, the Fellows can expect to learn a challenging array of practical knowledge," said Maj. Rose Horswill, director of the Harding Project. "They will be prepared to serve as military editors in chief of their respective branch journals, and to directly influence the professional dialogue."

While civilian staff provide vital continuity, rotating military editors keep the Army's professional journals aligned with the tactical force.

These commissioned and noncommissioned officers bring fresh, operational experience to the publications before returning to their units, ensuring the journals reflect modern realities while spreading institutional knowledge back into the ranks.

"As the Army continues to transition its force and warfighting tactics, techniques, and procedures, the Fellowship has allowed me to digest important feedback from units and Soldiers, with the hope that I can effectively convey their messages to other units in a timely manner, further sparking healthy professional discourse and change," said Capt. Tommy Souimaniphanh, editor in chief of the Military Intelligence Professional Bulletin.

By working directly for their branch commandant, fellows are positioned to positively impact the trajectory of their respective branch journal and strengthen the Army profession while also benefiting professionally.

"The Fellowship offered me a unique opportunity to communicate directly with decision-makers and soldiers seeking to introduce new ideas for current and future changes in this profession," Souimaniphanh said. "Not only has this opportunity allowed me to meet people within my branch, but it has also connected me with scholars, veterans, and industry leaders who share the same goal of improving the profession."

About the Fellowship

Selected fellows begin with a fully funded year of in-residence graduate study at KU's William Allen White School of Journalism and Mass Communications, where they will earn a Master of Science degree. Following graduation, fellows serve a 24-month utilization tour at their respective Center of Excellence as the full-time editor-in-chief of their branch's professional journal.

The program carries forward the legacy of Maj. Gen. Edwin "Forrest" Harding, who revitalized the Infantry Journal during the interwar years. Today's fellows are tasked with ensuring Army publications remain relevant, accessible and grounded in the needs of the force before returning to the field.

Eligibility

To be eligible, applicants must hold a bachelor's degree with a preferred 3.0 GPA, have completed their respective level of professional military educa-

See **PCS,** Page 9



Courtesy graphic

Applications are due through the Army's Broadening Opportunities Program by Aug. 15, 2026. Selectees will report to the University of Kansas in May 2027 and assume their editorial roles in the summer of 2028.

ON THE COVER

A military policeman interacts with a youth during the 2025 National Night Out - an event aimed at bringing together law enforcement personnel and the community they serve.



Leader file photo

See Pages 6-7

THE FORT JACKSON LEADER

Fort Jackson, South Carolina 29207

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Commentary: The 120th - Army's first handshake

By LT. COL. CHINYERE STURGHILL
120th Adjutant General Battalaion



Courtesy photo

Drill sergeants with the 120th Adjutant General Battalion (Reception) greet recruits at the Columbia Metropolitan Airport. They are the first Soldiers civilians meet before they begin transitioning into Soldiers.

At Columbia Metropolitan Airport, a defining moment unfolds thousands of times each year.

Civilians — carrying little more than determination, personal baggage, and a desire to serve — take their initial steps toward a completely new way of life. Waiting to receive them with absolute precision and unwavering professionalism are the drill sergeants of the 120th Adjutant General Battalion (Reception).

Operating as the Army's largest reception battalion located at Fort Jackson, South Carolina, we proudly serve as the Army's premier "first handshake."

Serving as the gateway to Initial Entry Training, the 120th sets the standard for the Army in both word and deed. The transition from civilian to Soldier requires a profound psychological and physical shift. To facilitate this, we embody a disciplined, resilient, and professional culture that treats every trainee with absolute dignity. Supported by vital community partners, including the USO, we actively mitigate the initial shock of this transition. From the very first interaction at the terminal, we build trust by recognizing each arrival not merely as a recruit, but as a future warfighter. This marks the beginning of their transformation—a process that is firm, structured, entirely respectful.

Legacy and Strategic Impact

Forged in 1945 in the wake of the World War II and reactivated at Fort Jackson in 1987, the 120th carries a rich legacy of operational excellence. Today, we operate continuously as the primary conduit for active duty, National Guard, and Reserve accessions.

Our scale of operations is massive. We successfully process more than 45,000 trainees annually, and during the critical summer surge months, our throughput accelerates to an astounding 4,000 to 5,000 trainees per month.

This sustained volume elevates the 120th beyond a mere processing center; it renders us a critical strategic component of the Army's accession enterprise. We are an indispensable contributor to global force readiness. Through seamless coordination and dedicated precision, the 120th secures the critical first link in the Army's force generation pipeline, ensuring our collective mission never stalls.

Our Core Mission: The Engine of Readiness

Achieving strategic impact requires flawlessly managing the complex logistics of human capital.

Our mission is vital to ensure the lethality and readiness of the operational force through the precise execution of Reception, Staging, and Onward Movement — the critical phases that set the stage for a Soldier's ultimate integration into the force.

From the moment recruits step off the bus at Fort Jackson, drill sergeants lead this complex transition. The Initial Receiving Branch organizes movement, establishes immediate baseline expectations, and ensures every trainee is fed, accounted for, and mentally focused.

The drill sergeants introduce the bedrock of our profession — the Army Values, the Soldier's Creed, the Warrior Ethos, and the absolute fundamentals of military discipline — setting the standard for Reception and Staging from hour one.

To successfully execute this mandate, we focus on our primary doctrinal lines of effort:

- Deliver Seamless In-Processing (Reception and Staging): We systematically guide recruits through medical and comprehensive administrative onboarding, while utilizing structured staging areas to organize incoming trainees into disciplined training cohorts. This ensures they are properly entered into critical military human resource databases, fully outfitted with their initial uniforms and individual equipment, and physically organized for the training path ahead.
- Eliminate Administrative Friction (Onward Movement to Integration): Our goal is to guarantee that the Future Soldier Preparatory Course and Basic Combat Training units receive trainees who are fully cleared, prepared, and administratively sound. By streamlining this onward movement, we empower drill sergeants in the BCTs to focus exclusively on training, transforming, and preparing trainees for their final Integration into the Army. This seamless transition ensures the force generation pipeline remains lethal, agile, and continuous.

Our Command Philosophy

The sustained, high-tempo success of the battalion is built entirely on three interdependent pillars:

- Humanizing the Process: We operate under the core belief that treating trainees with dignity yields better Soldiers. We demonstrate what "right" looks like through consistent, unwavering professionalism. Because reception is inherently chaotic for a trainee, our structured briefings, responsive support services, and steady leadership rapidly replace uncertainty with confidence.

We communicate expectations clearly, ensuring recruits understand not just what they must do, but the purpose behind the standards.

See **HANDSHAKE:** Page 9

Community Updates

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Central Issue Facility Update
The Central Issue Faculty is currently operating with reduced staffing, this reduction combined with peak permanent change of station season, and the summer surge is resulting in extended wait times for all services. Customers are encouraged to plan accordingly to avoid delays in relocation timelines. For more information, call (803) 751-7213.

Photo Studio Update
The Fort Jackson Photo Studio permanently closes Aug. 1.

DEERS/ID Card Section Update
The DEERS/ID Card Section will be closed Aug. 7, for migration and updates. For more information, call (803) 751-7115.

Training Support Center Closure
The Training Support Center, 1565 Hall Street will be closed Sept. 18. For more information, call (803) 751-4619.

Gate 5 Hours
Fort Jackson's Gate 5 off Leesburg Road is now open in the evening until 6 p.m. The new hours for Gate 5 are Monday through Friday 5-8 a.m. and 3-6 p.m.

Visitor Control Centers Update
The Visitor Control Centers are closed on weekends and federal holidays. The hours of operation for each are 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday for VCC 2, and 6 a.m. to 2 p.m. for VCC 4. All visitors are strongly encouraged to preregister at: *https://pass.aie.army.mil/steps/branch_selection.*

ID Card Office Update
To protect the privacy and Personally Identifiable Information of our Soldiers and Families, no recording devices are allowed past the front desk at the Fort Jackson ID Card Office. This strictly prohibits the use of cell phone cameras, video recorders, and smart glasses (including Meta glasses) in the processing area. For the security of everyone's information, anyone caught recording will be asked to leave the facility immediately.

Virtual ArmyIgnitED 101
IMCOM Army Continuing Education System has launched a virtual ArmyIgnitED 101 to meet regulatory requirements for Soldiers new to Tuition Assistance. The updated ArmyIgnitED 101 video can be accessed at: *https://homeadmin.army.mil/imcom/index.php/customers/ACES*. The ArmyIgnitED 101 video is mandatory for all Soldiers new to Tuition Assistance and Credentialing Assistance.

Basic Skills Education Program
If your General Technical score is under 110, the Education Center's BSEP classes will help you improve your score. The instructor-led classes focus on basic math and reading skills, which make up your GT score. The classes are conducted during duty hours. Students must attend all scheduled classes for consideration. Spouses may enroll in the class at no cost on a space available basis. For a BSEP enrollment packet, stop by the Education Center, Bldg. 4600 or send an email to *usarmy.jackson.93-sig-bde.mbx.dhr-jacksonedcenter@army.mil*.Seats are limited so register early.

Save the Date Sports and Fitness events:
- Aug. 25: Fort Jackson Intramural golf at the Golf Club
- Sept. 2: Intramural Flag Football-Hilton Field Softball Complex
- Sept.10: 1,000 lbs Club Competition-Coleman Gym
- Oct. 10: Intramural Bowling-Century Lanes
- Oct. 31: Zombie Run 5k-Weston Lake.

For more information and to register call (803) 751-3700.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

SATURDAY
Back to School Color Run
9-11 a.m., Youth Sports Complex. Fort Jackson celebrates the beginning of a new school year with a color run and field day. The event is free. For more information, call (803) 751-6990.

TUESDAY
National Night Out
6-8 p.m., Patriots Park. Fort Jackson Police Department, along with members along with law enforcement partners from Greater Columbia area, will spend a night out with the Fort Jackson community Aug. 4 at Patriot Park.

AUG. 8
Private Weapons Day
10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Aachen Range off Golden Arrow Road. Shooters can shoot at targets between 25m and 200m. Paper targets, spotting scopes, tables and chairs are provided. Patrons can shoot rifle or pistol at a day rate or an hourly rate. Pre-register at MWR Central: $25 per person for all day (4 hours), $10 per person per hour (pre-register), $15 per person per hour (day onsite/cash only). Ensure all weapons are registered on post. No automatic weapons or .50 cal. allowed. Age 12 and up. 17 and younger must be accompanied by an adult. Open to all authorized ID card holders. For more information, call (803) 751-3484.

AUG. 11
Shred Day
9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Recycle Center. Come shred documents with sensitive information. All types of paper with sensitive information will be accepted, but no classified documents. Shredding papers with your personal information provides a level of insurance against identity theft and misuse. For more information, call (803) 751-4208.

AUG. 13
Applied Behavior Analysis Services
10-11 a.m., MS Teams. Fort Jackson 's Exceptional Family Member Program is holding an overview of services and resources to improve specific behaviors in individuals with autism. For more information, call (803) 751-5256.

AUG. 22
Charleston Fishing Trip
All day Aug. 22. Join Outdoor Recreation in a fishing trip to Charleston, S.C., and take a charter fishing boats for a four-hour fishing trip. Outdoor recreation

See **EVENTS:** Page 10

Fort Jackson Movie Schedule

3319 Jackson Blvd.
Phone: 751-7488

SATURDAY
- No Showing

WEDNESDAY
- Spider-Man: Brand New Day (PG-13)

AUG. 8
- Spider-Man: Brand New Day (PG-13)

- All shows start at 2 p.m.
- *Ticket sales open 30 minutes before each movie.*
- *Movie times and schedule are sub-*

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 we 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 (803) 751-3615.

DOW: Compensation is more competitive than most realize

By C. TODD LOPEZ
Pentagon News

The War Department kicked off the yearlong Military Compensation Educational Campaign this summer to help service members and their families learn about the total value of their compensation, so they can better achieve and maintain financial readiness.

While the department continues to work with Congress, federal agencies, and military and veterans service organizations to strengthen financial security and improve the quality of life for service members and their families, there is still a perception that many service members are unaware of the full scope of benefits provided to them, explained Tim Dill, the assistant secretary of war for manpower and reserve affairs.

Every four years, DOW reviews service member compensation to see how the benefits provided to uniformed personnel compare with those of their private sector peers. Items reviewed include pay, housing, subsistence and other allowances, incentives, healthcare, education and retirement benefits.

The most recent Quadrennial Review of Military Compensation, or QRMC, released in January 2025, revealed that service members' compensation is not only competitive with but often better than that of their counterparts in the private sector.

Base Pay and Allowances

One big takeaway was that military compensation compares well against that of civilians with similar education and work experiences.

"When we looked across the officer ranks, we found that, overall, officers are in the 76th percentile when compared against the civilian workforce equivalents for experience and education," Dill said.

He explained that this means military officers are doing better than 76% of individuals in the private sector who have comparable education and work experi-

See COMPETITIVE: Page 10

MWR CENTRAL PRESENTS

UPCOMING EVENTS

FIRST FRIDAY GOLF
TEE TIME 8AM
3652 INCHON RD.
TO REGISTER CALL 803-562-4437
AUG 07

COLOR RUN & FIELD DAY
AUG 01
YOUTH SPORTS COMPLEX
*FREE SCHOOL SUPPLIES (WHILE SUPPLIES LAST)
TO SIGN UP 803-751-7451

PRIVATELY OWNED WEAPONS DAY
AACHEN RANGE | GOLDEN ARROW RD.
$25 PER PATRON (ALL DAY) $10 PER PATRON PER HOUR (PRE-REGISTERED)
$15 PER PATRON PER HOUR (DAY OF ONSITE/CASH ONLY)
SIGN UP CALL 803-751-3484
AUG 08

SHRED DAY
AUG 11
RECYCLE CENTER
5671 LIBERTY DIV. AVE
FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL 803-751-4208/4201

CHARLESTON FISHING TRIP
$200 PER PATRON | PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED
TRANSPORATION PROVIDED & COOLERS
TO SIGN UP CALL 803-751-3484
AUG 22

SCAN FOR DETAILS ON EACH EVENT

Post readies for National Night Out

By ROBERT TIMMONS
Fort Jackson Public Affairs

An opportunity to build bonds between law enforcement and the community will take place Tuesday at Patriots Park.

The annual National Night Out is an annual event and part of "a national-level community building campaign to improve the relationship between law enforcement and the communities they serve," said John Hughes, director of Fort Jackson's Directorate of Emergency Services.

National Night Out is celebrated the first Tuesday in August and is free for the Fort Jackson community.

The event kicks off at 5:30 p.m. with an emergency vehicle parade through on-post housing. The main event will launch when the parade reaches Patriots Park around 6 p.m. The event is scheduled to end at 8 p.m.

There will be bounce houses, dunk tank, a K-9 demonstration and a "Race a Cop" activity. Local and regional law enforcement groups including military police, Criminal Investigation Division, South Carolina Highway Patrol and Richland Country Sheriff's Department will attend.

This year the event will be joined by Defending Wellness as part of National Wellness Month.

The wellness month is an opportunity to showcase and highlight the importance of good health and prevention of harmful behaviors and habits that threaten the wellness of service members, their families, Department of the Army Civilians, veterans and retirees in the greater Columbia community.

"This presented a very unique opportunity to merge our holistic wellness focus with the social focus of National Night Out," said Aljournal Franklin, director of Fort Jackson's Integrated – Prevention Advisory Group, or I-PAG.

According to Franklin, 20 prevention-based community partners and programs will be at the event utilizing interactive and static displays to draw attention to wellness issues and programs that may not otherwise be publicized.

(Editor's note: There will be a virtual symposium as part of National Wellness Month from 9-11 a.m. at the 1917 Club and streamed on Fort Jackson social media sites.)



Leader file photos

A Fort Jackson police officer fingerprints a child at the National Night Out Aug. 7, 2018. The annual event is aimed at bringing law enforcement closer to the communities they protect.



Children chase after McGruff the Crime Dog, who was leading a parade of first responders through Fort Jackson's housing areas during National Night Out in 2024. The parade is the first event of the night.





Photo by PETTY OFFICER 2ND CLASS AIKO BONGOLAN

Secretary of War Pete Hegseth and other military leaders place Mexican Border Defense Medals around the necks of Sgt. Maj. Bobbie Cox, 1st Lt. Cole Doster and Spc. Corey Dupree during a ceremony at the Pentagon, July 27.

Service members presented Mexican Border Defense Medals

C. TODD LOPEZ
Pentagon News

Secretary of War Pete Hegseth recognized 50 U.S. service members — including for the first time, Marine Corps personnel — with the Mexican Border Defense Medal during a ceremony held July 27.

"From Day 1, operationally, this department, this building, these services rushed, surged down to the border to stop the invasion of our southern border, which is truly what it was," Hegseth said.

The secretary noted that since January 2025, American troops from all services, and with a variety of skills, have been working first to gain and then maintain 100% operational control of America's southern border and to stop both drug traffickers and the flow of illegal immigration.

"You have been dynamic, you have been creative, you have been aggressive, you have used the authorities you've been given (and) you work with your law enforcement partners," Hegseth said, highlighting DOW's partnerships with U.S. Customs and Border Patrol and the Department of Homeland Security.

"That's why, for over a year, there's been effectively zero illegals crossing our border ... especially on the national defense areas," Hegseth said. "We decided our soil, our homeland, will be defended, and we will utilize our troops in those places to do it and give them maximum authorities to ensure that we stop the invasion of our southwest border."

The Mexican Border Defense Medal was established in August 2025. It is not new; it is instead a replica of the Mexican Border Service Medal from 1918.

The secretary said those receiving the medal represent the true 1%, and they represent others like them who also contributed.

Medal recipients included 14 Marines, one sailor and 35 Soldiers.

Handshake

Continued from Page 3

■ Eliminating Friction: Leaders across the battalion aggressively identify and remove bottlenecks within all medical, financial, and supply workflows.

A trainee worried about their initial paycheck or administrative concerns cannot fully concentrate on training requirements. By resolving these complex issues at reception, we ruthlessly protect the training pipeline. Continuous process improvement is our standard, enabling us to adapt to massive surges without ever compromising administrative accuracy.

■ Empowering Noncommissioned Officers: We rely heavily on decentralized execution and disciplined leadership. Our drill sergeants and NCOs operate in a uniquely demanding environment requiring immense patience, administrative acumen, and tactical discipline.

We empower them to enforce standards, make on-the-spot corrections, and solve complex human terrain challenges at the lowest possible level. In turn, command teams aggressively safeguard cadre resilience through engaged leadership and predictable scheduling, ensuring our NCOs maintain the physical and mental energy required to lead effectively 24/7.

Building the Future Force

The reception process is physically demanding and mentally exhausting. Yet, under the steady leadership of our cadre, apprehension consistently transforms into confidence. Accountability quickly becomes routine.

Camaraderie takes root in the dining facilities and the processing lines, and the fundamental transition of identity from civilian to trainee takes hold.

Although the critical work of reception is often unseen by the broader Army, the drill sergeants of the 120th build the foundational bedrock upon which every single BCT company relies.

Their exactness in administrative accuracy, vigilance in medical readiness, and uncompromising enforcement of initial military standards strengthen the entire force generation pipeline.

The 120th stands as a premier model of mission execution. We are the ultimate gateway where every trainee is cleared, equipped, and mentally prepared to excel in the greatest fighting force in the world.



Department of War photo

Army recruits receive their initial haircuts at the 120th Adjutant General Battalion (Reception). The battalion is the first stop for nearly 50% of all Soldiers entering the Army.

Harding

Continued from Page 2

tion and be key-developmental qualified. Applicants cannot be in a promotable status, possess an Army-funded graduate degree or have 17 or more years of active federal service without a waiver.

Participating Branches (FY27 Cycle)

Participating branches for the fiscal year 2027 cycle include Air Defense, Infantry, Military Intelligence, Cyber, Signal, Adjutant General, Finance, Ordnance, Quartermaster, Transportation, Civil Affairs, Psychological Operations and Special Forces.

Service Obligation

The fellowship carries a service obligation. Officers and warrant officers incur an active-duty service obligation of three days for each day spent in the academic program. Noncommissioned officers incur a service remaining requirement in accordance with standard regulations.

Applications are due through the Army's Broadening Opportunities Program by Aug. 15, 2026. Selectees will report to the University of Kansas in May 2027 and assume their editorial roles in the summer of 2028.

Applicants must also separately apply to the university's graduate program by Feb. 1, 2027.

More information, the application, and relevant forms can be found on the Line of Departure website.

Army Branch Journals have existed since 1888 and are central to professional development and technical discourse across the force.

They allow lessons to be shared across the force quickly, enabling a more adaptable Army in a period of rapid change.

The Harding Project was created to bring them into the digital age based on data indicating inconsistent investment over time (boom/bust cycles) and evidence digital presence significantly increases readership across the force.

SALUTING THIS CYCLE'S HONOREES

2nd Battalion, 60th Infantry Regiment

DRILL SERGEANT OF THE CYCLE
Staff Sgt. Draven Heider

ALPHA COMPANY
SOLDIER LEADER OF THE CYCLE
Spc. Grant Neri

SOLDIER OF THE CYCLE
Pvt. Sean Vuiyasawa

BRAVO COMPANY
SOLDIER LEADER OF THE CYCLE
Spc. Kelley Lucero

SOLDIER OF THE CYCLE
Pvt. Alicia Asbun

CHARLIE COMPANY
SOLDIER LEADER OF THE CYCLE
Spc. Steven Theisen

SOLDIER OF THE CYCLE
Pfc. Richard Taliaferro

DELTA COMPANY
SOLDIER LEADER OF THE CYCLE
Pfc. Christian Nieves

SOLDIER OF THE CYCLE
Spc. Isabel Josendale

ECHO COMPANY
SOLDIER LEADER OF THE CYCLE
Pfc. Lemly Zoey

SOLDIER OF THE CYCLE
Pfc. Annabeth Moore

Events

Continued from Page 4

will provide transportation and coolers for you to transport your catch back home. Pre-registration is required at MWR Central or by calingl (803) 751-3484.

AUG. 27
Wellness Wednesday
10-11:30 a.m., 9810 Liberty Division Road. Fort Jackson's Exceptional Family Member Program is holding a Wellness Wednesday event. The event will help attendees to understand individual education plans. For more information, call (803) 751-5256.

SEPT. 19
Horseback Riding at Fort Gordon
Join Fort Jackson Outdoor Recreation for a horseback trail ride. Novice or Pro, this guided ride will be great for those looking for an outdoor adventure. $75 per person. Must be 7 years and older. For more information, call (803) 751-3484.

SEPT. 26
MWR Flea Market
8 a.m. to noon. MWR Central Parking Lot. Come join the Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation for a Flea Market. Stalls are on sale now. There will be household goods, tools, clothes, furniture, art, jewelry, music, books, and crafts for sale.. Food and beverage sales are prohibited. For more information, call (803) 751-3484.

Competitive

Continued from Page 5

experience and education," Dill said.

He explained that this means military officers are doing better than 76% of individuals in the private sector who have comparable education and work experience, adding that the numbers are even better for enlisted service members, who are in the 83rd to 90th percentiles.

Pay for a recent high school graduate earning hourly pay in the private sector and pay for a military E-4 may appear similar, Dill said, if you look only at base pay — but that's not the whole story.

For instance, an Army specialist who lives in the barracks does not pay rent, and married soldiers receive a housing allowance each month — in addition to base pay.

That same Soldier also receives healthcare, with no co-pays; medical benefits extend to spouses and children as well.

Beyond regular military compensation, the department also uses specialized incentive pays for critical skills and provides nonmonetary benefits — like tax-free shopping at commissaries and comprehensive family support programs — that stretch a military family's purchasing power far beyond its base salary.

Dill said it's important that service members and their families understand military compensation, but so too should those who are considering joining the military.

"This Military Compensation Educational Campaign is focused on the fact that we offer far stronger benefits than most people realize — and we just want young American men and women to make a decision on whether to serve, only after being fully informed," he said.

Retirement and Savings

Military compensation also includes retirement benefits.

Dill explained that the blended retirement system for service members is built on two primary elements. The first is the traditional 20-year retirement plan. Under that plan, Dill said active-duty service members will receive 40% of their base pay after serving 20 years, starting immediately after retirement, regardless of age.

The second element of the blended retirement system is the Thrift Savings Plan, a voluntary retirement account in which service members can contribute and the department matches their contribution. Service members covered by this system can receive up to 5% total government matching on their base pay. This consists of an automatic 1% service contribution and up to an additional 4% in matching funds based on their voluntary contributions.

"Because of blended retirement, service members can elect to know that no matter how much time they serve, they will take a retirement account with them," Dill said. "They can start contributing to the Thrift Savings Plan immediately — and as they progress throughout their careers — and the department will begin contributing in year one also."

The money service members put into the TSP grows with compound interest and investments for as long as they leave money in the account.

Education and Experience

To help service members prepare for life after the military, the department offers education benefits, credentialing assistance and tuition assistance. It also offers the SkillBridge program, which provides transitioning service members with work experience through internships and apprenticeships during their final months of service.

All of these benefits and programs are now also part of the War Department's Project Patriot Pipeline initiative, which helps to align currently serving service members with mission-critical careers in the department and enable transitioning service members to fill critical vacancies in the defense industrial base.

Dill emphasized that the defense industrial base — the companies that make military hardware and materiel for the War Department — must always be ready to provide the right equipment and munitions in a timely manner.

"One way to support that is by guiding transitioning service members, military spouses and civilians towards defense industrial base jobs," he said.

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

FAITH GROUP	DAY	TIME	PLACE
CATHOLIC MASS	SUNDAY	9:30-10:30 A.M.	MAIN POST CHAPEL
CATHOLIC MASS	MONDAY-FRIDAY	NOON	MAIN POST CHAPEL
GOSPEL SERVICE	SUNDAY	10:30 A.M.	KINGS MOUNTAIN CHAPEL
GENERAL PROTESTANT	SUNDAY	11 A.M. TO NOON	MAIN POST CHAPEL

INITIAL ENTRY TRAINING	DAY	TIME	PLACE
CATHOLIC MASS	SUNDAY	8-9 A.M.	SOLOMON CENTER
193RD BRIGADE PROTESTANT SERVICE	SUNDAY	9:30-10:30 A.M.	SOLOMON CENTER
165TH BRIGADE PROTESTANT SERVICE	SUNDAY	11 A.M. to NOON	SOLOMON CENTER
CHURCH OF CHRIST	SUNDAY	9-10 A.M.	CENTURY DIVISION CHAPEL
JEWISH SERVICE	FRIDAY	6-7 P.M.	CENTURY DIVISION CHAPEL
ANGLICAN	SUNDAY	9:30-10 A.M.	LIGHTNING CHAPEL
ISLAMIC SERVICE	SUNDAY	8-9 A.M.	LIGHTNING CHAPEL
JEWISH SERVICE	FRIDAY	11-11:30 A.M.	120TH AG BN CHAPLAIN OFFICE (for trainees in 120th only)
THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER DAY SAINTS	SUNDAY	10:30 A.M. to NOON	CENTURY DIVISION CHAPEL

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Try to avoid verbosity, carefully watch verbal use

By CHAPLAIN (LT. COL.) ANGEL BERRIOS
Deputy Garrison Chaplain

"Even a fool, when he keeps silent, is considered wise; when he closes his lips, he is considered prudent." (Proverbs 17:28)

"He who guards his lips guards his life, but he who speaks rashly will come to ruin." (Proverbs 13:3)

Calvin Coolidge was the 30th president of the United States. He was an introvert in personality and socially he was quite reserved. Because of these traits, he inherited the nickname, "Silent Cal."

He is quoted as saying, "Never miss the opportunity to remain silent," and "I have never been hurt by what I have not said."

An old aphorism which has been contributed to Abraham Lincoln states, "It's better to remain silent and be thought a fool, than to speak up and remove all doubt." Wow, I think many of us can vouch to this candid advice.

I'm always attempting to expand my vocabulary.

A word I recently learned is "verbosity."

It means to be characterized using many or too many words; wordy or talkative.

Verbiage is the word we might be more familiar with. Surprisingly enough the Bible, in the Book of Proverbs, warns against such verbal danger as noted in the above Scriptures.

Verbosity is talking too much while saying too little.

People who are verbose usually feel compelled to comment on anything and everything, either because they fear silence or sincerely believe that pointless talk is better than none.

So, these people fill blessed silence with senseless chatter. They interrupt without hesitation. They speak first and think later … if at all. And for all their babbling, they remain hard of hearing.

Have you ever noticed that it is impossible to learn anything while talking?

So, rather than fill a conversational void with needless verbiage, we should use the time in conversing with others to listen to them to understand them better.

Ask open-ended questions until you find a topic that excites them.

Most likely, the conversation will take a meaningful turn as they describe their field of interest explaining why they find it exciting. When they open up, we learn and gain insight into an area of that person's expertise. This is called, "connecting."

Finally, the Book of James is known as the "Proverbs of the New Testament" and it reads, "Everyone should be quick to listen, (and) slow to speak …" (James 1:19).

Thought for the day: Carefully watch our verbal use for it can potentially cause much ruin.

"When there are many words, transgression is unavoidable, but he who restrains his lips is wise." (Proverbs 10:19)

"He who restrains his words has knowledge, and he who has a cool spirit is a man of understanding." (Proverbs 17:27)

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A trainee, with 3rd Battalion, 13th Infantry Regiment, looks over the edge of Victory Tower as he waits in line to rappel down. Trainees go through Victory Tower during their second week of training. It is intended to help them build confidence in their abliities.

Photo by ROBERT TIMMONS