

THURSDAY APRIL 30, 2026

THE FORT JACKSON LEADER

"VICTORY ... STARTS HERE."



HERE ARE THE ... TOP DRILLS OF 2026



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Wildcats celebrate Army Reserve's 118th birthday

By MASTER SGT. JESSICA LITTLEJOHN
81st Readiness Division

Soldiers and civilians of the 81st Readiness Division filled the auditorium Thursday to celebrate the United States Army Reserve's 118th birthday, marking more than a century of service to the nation.

Maj. Gen. Patricia Wallace, Commanding General of the 81st Readiness Division, delivered opening remarks, welcoming Soldiers and guests before introducing the event's guest speaker, South Carolina Gov. Henry McMaster.

"Gov. McMaster's commitment to public service is matched by his dedication to the Army and the Armed Forces," Wallace said. "Throughout his career, he has shown unwavering support for our veterans, our first responders, and all service members and their families."

McMaster reflected on his early memories of the Army and the discipline he learned on "Tank Hill," thanking Soldiers and Army Reserve members for choosing to serve despite the risks.

He highlighted the courage, commitment and shared sacrifice that define military service, citing the Declaration of Independence and President Abraham Lincoln's

Gettysburg Address. McMaster praised service members and first responders as the backbone of the nation and noted South Carolina's long, proud military heritage before thanking Soldiers for including him in the observance.

"What I've learned as governor, and in other offices I've had the privilege of holding and serving, is that it's the men and women in uniform — whether Soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines, police, first responders or farmers — who have their feet firmly on the ground and constitute the backbone and strength of our country," McMaster said.

Additionally, Dr. Allen Skinner, command historian for the Soldier Support Institute, delivered a brief historical overview highlighting the Army Reserve's 118 years of service and evolution as part of the total force, followed by remarks from retired Brig. Gen. Peggy McManus.

The Army Reserve remains a critical component of the total force in a complex global environment.

The Army provides the bulk of sustainment to the joint force, much of it within the Army Reserve, enabling the joint force to deploy, fight and win. Army Reserve Soldiers balance civilian careers with military service, demonstrating resilience, adapt-



Photo by SGT. 1ST CLASS TOM WADE

Staff Sgt. Shawn Buegel, a construction engineering supervisor with the 81st Readiness Division, sets the table of honor ceremony at Fort Jackson April 23, during a celebration of the Army Reserve's 118th birthday.

ability and readiness while serving their communities and the nation.

The ceremony included a solemn recognition of the missing and fallen service members table, underscoring the Army's commitment to honoring those who have not returned. It also paid tribute to six Army Reserve Soldiers from the 103rd Expeditionary Sustain-

ment Command who were killed March 1, 2026, in an enemy drone strike while deployed in support of operations in the Middle East.

"Today is not simply about marking another year; it's about honoring a legacy. And before we celebrate where we are today, we must first remember how we got here," McManus said. "I ask you to take a moment to reflect on those

who came before us, those who wore this uniform, those who stood watch and those who never came home. We do not honor this birthday without first honoring their sacrifice."

The event concluded with the traditional cake-cutting ceremony, symbolizing the Army Reserve's enduring legacy and continued commitment to service.

ON THE COVER

A candidate marches in the early morning light during the final phase of the Fort Jackson Drill Sergeant of the Year competition, April 23. The top drill sergeants will move on to see who is the Army's best. See Pages 6-7

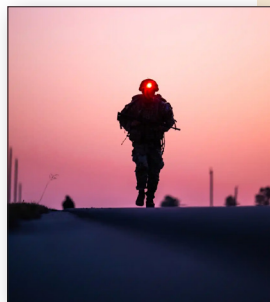


Photo by SGT. 1ST CLASS DANA CLARKE

THE FORT JACKSON LEADER

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CYS fun festival honors military children

By **ROBERT TIMMONS** and **NATHAN CLINEBELLE**
Fort Jackson Public Affairs

Every year Fort Jackson holds a fun-filled festival aimed at bringing the community together to honor its youngest members.

Children were encouraged to write down their stories at various booths around Patriots Park during the Family Fun Fest held April 24.

It was all part of an annual event held to honor and recognize the sacrifices of military children. This year's theme was "Tell us your stories."

"We are honoring our military kids," said Gwendolyn Jefferson, Child and Youth Services' Parent Central Services and Outreach director. "Every April we put on this event to honor the resilience of our military kids. Here we have lots of games and giveaways just to show them we appreciate them."

"This is to honor them, and we are very happy about it."

The Family Fun Fest is one of many community events held throughout the year on Fort Jackson designed to connect the complete Army Family.

Staff Sgt. Alexander Caudillo, with Headquarters, Headquarters Battalion, said "We are dual military and this is important to us because it gives our kids the opportunity to socialize and do fun stuff."

For him making time for his children is paramount since he and his wife are dual military so much they would drive to post for events like this.

"We actually live 35 minutes from here," he said. "... It means a lot to us especially interacting with other families and whatnot."

Community in the military is "everything" he added. "It's why we do our jobs. It's why we deploy. When we say to 'support and defend the Constitution,' community is a big part of that. It's the whole reason we do everything."

"I think it's great for them to see other Families," Jefferson said. "They don't have to go out they can feel safe here in their own environment. It's really great to be able to do this here."

Some upcoming community events include the Weston Lake Opening and the beginning of the Palmetto Falls Water Park season, May 23.

Caudillo added he was especially looking forward the water park opening.

"It's the only installation I've seen with a water park and I'm super excited about it," he said.

THE FAMILY FUN FEST
IS ONE OF MANY
COMMUNITY EVENTS
HELD THROUGHOUT
THE YEAR.



Photo by NATHAN CLINEBELLE

A child tosses rings during the 2026 Child, Youth Services Family Fun Fest held April 24 at Patriots Park. 'We are honoring our military kids,' said Gwendolyn Jefferson, CYS Parent Central Services and Outreach director. The annual event is part of the Month of the Military Child.

Community Updates

ANNOUNCEMENTS

New Gate Hours Reminder

Fort Jackson community Gate 5 is now open in the afternoon until 6 p.m. The new hours for Gate 5 are Monday through Friday 5-8 a.m. and 3-6 p.m. Gate 5 will still close on Saturday, Sunday, and federal holidays.

CIF Thursday Closures

Central Issue Facility Fort Jackson, at 2450 Marion Ave., will be closed to all personnel except IET and chapters every Thursday beginning May 7 for training and internal missions. For urgent matters during closures, email Helena A. Thorpe at helena.a.thorpe.civ@army.mil and/or Mary E. Mitchum at mary.e.mitchum2.civ@army.mil, as phone lines will not be monitored during this period. All personnel and units (except IET & Chapters) are advised to plan accordingly and schedule their CIF visits and appointments on other business days. Note: All CIF transactions require a military uniform and Common Access Card. Walk-ins are available from 8-10 a.m. Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays for in-processing, additional issue or turn in for up to three items, and inquiries. Appointments are required for permanent change of station, expiration term of service, chapter, retirements and issue or turn in of four or more items must be scheduled via Soldier Equipping Asset and Management. Scheduling for Initial Entry Training, Basic Officers Leader Course and drill sergeant hats remain the same.

Storm Drain Repairs

The Department of Public Works began repairing storm drain culverts on parts of roads across Fort Jackson, April 6.

The roads and dates of repairs are:

- Liberty Division Road (Through May 1)

- 5th Division Rd (May 20 to June 7)
- Marion Avenue & Cherbourg Street (June 8 - 30)

Detour signs will be placed near the repair areas and motorists should expect longer travel time due to road closure and plan accordingly. The schedule is subject to change based on weather, but updates will be provided throughout the repair. For questions, call (520) 671-8550.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

TODAY

Cornhole Challenge

5-7 p.m., Perez Gym. Show your cornhole skills in this gym monthly challenge. For more information, call (803) 751-6272.

TOMORROW

Mother's Day Paint and Sip

Army Community Service brings you this event where moms and kids can bond while creating masterpieces together. Space is limited. For more information or to register, call (803) 751-5256.

SATURDAY

Magic Show

3 and 7 p.m., Down Range Bar. Magician and comedian Michael Kent is coming to the Down Range Bar for free shows.

TUESDAY

Shred Day

9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Recycle Center. 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.

WEDNESDAY

EFMP - Wellness Wednesday

9-10 a.m., MS Teams. The Exceptional Family Member Program invites the entire Fort Jackson community to attend the Maintaining Your Well-Being: Personally and Professionally workshop. For more information, call (803) 751-5256.

MAY 8

Fort Jackson Prayer Breakfast

7:30-8:30 a.m., 1917 Club. The Fort Jackson community is invited to join the Religious Support Office to celebrate the National Day of Prayer as a community of faith. The dress code is military duty uniform, or civilian business casual. For more information, call (803) 751-6326.

Yoga in the Park

9-10 a.m., Twin Lakes Park. The Exceptional Family Member Program invites you to a free relaxing hour of yoga. For more information, or to register, call (803) 751-5256.

MAY 9

Privately-owned Weapons Day

10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Aachen Range. Come out and bring your privately-owned weapon and shoot your rifle or pistol at paper targets between 25 and 200 meters. No automatic weapons or .50 cal allowed. For more information, or to sign up, call (803) 751-3484.

MAY 10

Mother's Day Brunch

1917 Club. Celebrate a Magnificent Mothers' Day, featuring a delicious array of breakfast and lunch food with omelet and waffle station, carving station, delightful fresh fruits, salads and much more... Limited seating, reservations required. Now accepting reservations and payment in advance. Make your prepaid reservations early. Last day to purchase is 6 May. (803) 751-3933.

MAY 12

Creative Journey

Fort Jackson

Movie Schedule

3319 Jackson Blvd.

Phone: 751-7488

MAY 2

- The Devil Wears Prada 2 (PG-13)

MAY 6

- The Devil Wears Prada 2 (PG-13)

MAY 9

- The Devil Wears Prada 2 (PG-13)

- All shows start at 2 p.m.
- Ticket sales open 30 minutes before each movie.
- Movie times and schedule are subject to change without notice.

5-6:30 p.m., Art Center Parks and Recreations, 1227 Taylor Street, Columbia, S.C. The Exceptional Family Member Program invites families to explore the world of art through an interactive hands-on experience that helps individuals with exceptional needs find calming and creative ways to express themselves through designing and creating artwork. For more information, call (803) 751-5256.

MAY 13

Amnesty Day

8 a.m. to 2 p.m., Warehouse Row. Fort Jackson is holding an Ammunition Amnesty Day. Come turn in any ammunition

See **EVENTS:** Page 10

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 (803) 751-3615.

Program to improve TBI field assessment

By **T.T. PARRISH**
Army News Service

Team members with the Defense Health Agency's Operational Medical Systems Program Management Office engages with military medical providers, industry partners and stakeholders from across the War Department to refine their product development strategies.

For their warfighter readiness, performance and brain health team, end-user touchpoints are designed to collect feedback from clinical and frontline medical providers. They help to mature the development of traumatic brain injury detection capabilities and accelerate the successful completion of the Traumatic Brain Injury Field Assessment Program.

The assessment is unique in the brain health treatment arena, according to Damien Hoffman, a warfighter readiness, performance and brain health product manager whose team is charged with developing and delivering novel traumatic brain injury medical capabilities to the warfighter. The program, which includes a hemorrhage detection device and an assessment software application, is designed to simplify what has traditionally been a logistically burdensome and overtly subjective process: assessing brain injuries at or near the point of injury.

Over 505,000 traumatic brain injuries have been reported within the War Department since 2000, ranging from mild to severe, according to Defense Health Agency data. Many of these injuries are not accompanied by outwardly presenting symptoms yet can have both short- and long-term health effects. In these cases, identifying internal injuries, like intracranial hemorrhage, subdural hematomas or other non-visible brain damage, is a vital step to ensuring proper triage and treatment across the continuum of care.

"Ultimately, (this program) is uniquely positioned to ensure proper care to casualties, keep warfighters in the fight, and expeditiously return those who have recovered back to duty," Hoffman said, "And (it)

See **TBI:** Page 8



U.S. Army photo

A Soldier helps another onto a rooftop during operations in Afghanistan. Peer support has been shown to have a positive affect on mental resilience.

Peer support: Front line to mental resilience

By **CAPT. LEANNE BASHARA**
Special to the Leader

Across the Army, evidence demonstrates the positive impact of peer support on mental resilience. Programs like the battle buddy system, "IGY6," and Ask Care Escort have shown profound benefits to the overall mental readiness of the organization.

Units with strong social bonds, characterized by positive relationships, experience better psychological outcomes and consequently, improved mission effectiveness. These outcomes underscore the importance of caring leaders and engaged peers in mitigating suicide risk, fostering supportive environments, enhancing resilience, and achieving operational success. Therefore, we must leverage the influence

of leaders and peers to serve as champions of mental resilience.

On the front lines or in garrison, Soldiers experiencing stress reactions may not have immediate access to mental health providers. In such instances, peers and leaders become the first line of support. For example, a Soldier notices her peer crying outside the barracks and decides to sit next to her and offer comfort. An NCO mentors his Soldier then discovers he needs a higher level of care, and escorts him to the clinic, "He wasn't comfortable coming to mental health alone, so I'm here with him." Similarly, a Commander supports his Soldier after treatment by stating, "I'm proud of you, welcome back to the team." These acts of care have monumental impact to Soldiers' lives and extend the work accomplished in our clinics. As

a psychologist, I believe these interactions can often exceed the impact that I, or any other provider, can have on a Soldier. The bottom line is that these relationships and care actions matter—they are crucial to a Soldier's health and can yield significant returns on investment for the organization's mental readiness. To harness this potential, we must value the care actions and recognize the positive contributions of these Soldiers, whom we identify as Mental Health Champions. These are Soldiers who actively support peers, recognize warning signs, reduce the stigma of mental health, and help connect teammates to the appropriate resources.

Challenge coins have long been used in the military to recognize individual

See **RESILIENCE:** Page 9

Here are the top drills of 2026

By **NATHAN CLINEBELLE**
Fort Jackson Public Affairs

After four grueling days of competition, three individuals now claim the title of Drill Sergeant of the Year and donned the special pistol belt that signifies their new role.

Staff Sgt. Jesus Tapia, from 3rd Battalion, 34th Infantry Regiment was named as the 2026 Army Training Center and Fort Jackson DSOY in a ceremony held April 23. The following day, the U.S. Army Drill Sergeant Academy announced Staff Sgt. Noel Berges as its active component DSOY and Sgt. 1st Class Michael Harrington as reserve component DSOY.

Each year, Fort Jackson and the Drill Sergeant Academy hold a competition to select DSOYs to represent the drill sergeants and drill sergeant leaders in their organizations, serving as liaisons to leadership on behalf of those that train future Soldiers and drill sergeants.

The competition is unique in the Army as it's the only competition that is also a job application. The winners are not just awarded a special pistol belt, but they also change roles and for the next year will serve in a leadership capacity.

The competition is not about simply identifying who is the most physically fit or best marksman, but competitors are also judged on how well they can teach and instruct others.

“The best drill sergeants from across the entire installation, from each battalion, compete,” said Sgt. 1st Class Edgar Aguayo, the 2025 Fort Jackson Drill Sergeant of the Year and organizer of this year's competition. “They are evaluated on

how proficient they can be as an instructor, as a warfighter ... they're going to be evaluated to the standard on how they teach the trainees, how they conduct each exercise.”

The competition began with the Army Fitness Test and formal board, testing the competitors on their physical abilities and also their knowledge and ability to communicate.

The next day their warfighting skills were tested as they executed night-into-day land navigation, the Fit-to-Win obstacle course, and proved their proficiency with their weapon at the qualification range.

Day three consisted of a grueling battery of round robin testing, in which the competitors not only demonstrated mastery of warrior tasks and battle drills, but also had to instruct groups of trainees, conduct media interviews, and write essays, testing their mental resiliency. The competition concluded with a 12-mile ruck into a battle march and shoot event.

“Going back-to-back-to-back is probably the hardest thing, mentally draining,” Harrington said. “The easiest is the actually getting out there and doing the physical (tasks).”

During the award ceremony, the competitors were reminded that the competition is about more than identifying a winner. The competitors have had the opportunity to test themselves against the best of the best.

“When you compete ... you're not trying to break them, you're trying to strike against them and grind away their weaknesses just as they grind away yours,” said Sgt. Maj. Melissa Solomon, this year's keynote speaker. “While there can only be one winner, I speak from experience that you grew from this more than you can realize in this moment. The

connections you made with the competitors are something you will depend on in the future and you should definitely leverage.”

For Tapia, the challenge of the competition was made even better by his fellow competitors.

“A lot of great competitors,” Tapia said, “Everybody came and worked ... it's always a good feeling when the people you're competing with want it just as bad as you do.”

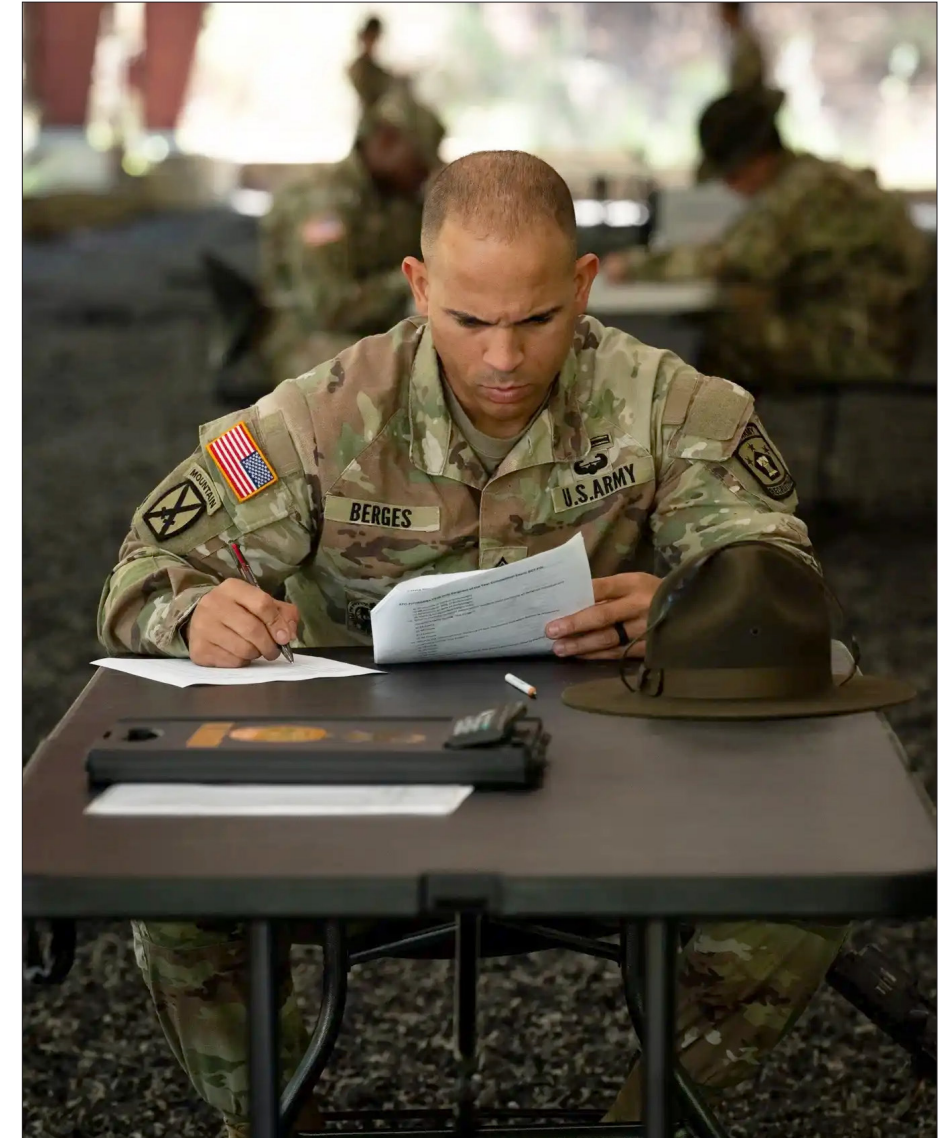
“I work hard, I drill hard, they know I'm passionate about it,” he said. “It's a good moment, a good feeling, that shows that the hard work, the struggles, the patience, it pays off. (I'm) thankful for all the people that helped me out.”

The competition is not simply a once-a-year event - it is a daily process of striving to be the best you can be.

Solomon, senior enlisted leader for the Army Combined Arms Center, challenged the competitors, “As you return to your units, carry the spirit of competition with you. Iron does not sharpen iron in comfort. It requires heat, heavy strikes, and most importantly the grinding friction of another piece of hardened steel.”

“In the profession of arms, friction is not our enemy, it is an asset,” she said. “We do not have the luxury of dull blades in this era of warfare.” Our enemies are actively grinding their own steel. They are preparing for the day our forces will meet. We must ensure that when that day comes, our edge, it cuts deeper, it cuts faster and with absolute finality. Stay sharp, stay hungry and hold each other to the fire.”

The winners will begin preparing to represent the respective organizations in the Army's Drill Sergeant of the Year competition held at Fort Jackson this September.



Above left: Sgt. 1st Class Michael Harrington, the U.S. Army Drill Sergeant Academy's reserve component Drill Sergeant of the Year, performs a functions check on a M249 Squad Automatic Weapon during weapons testing during the 2026 DSOY competition. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Dana Clarke)

Above right: Staff Sgt. Noel Berges, the U.S. Army Drill Sergeant Academy's active component DSOY takes a written test during the weeklong competition. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Dana Clarke)

Left: Staff Sgt. Jesus Tapia, Army Training Center and Fort Jackson's 2026 Drill Sergeant of the Year, goes through round robin testing. Tapia is a drill sergeant with 3rd Battalion, 34th Infantry Regiment. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Dana Clarke)

Middle left: Berges takes careful aim during rifle marksmanship. Competitors went through rigorous testing that included rifle marksmanship, Army Fitness Test and a 12 mile ruckmarch. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Dana Clarke)

Far left: Tapia takes down targets with his M4 during the competition. The competition is unique in the Army as it is the only one that is also a job application. The winner of will also serve in a leadership capacity. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Dana Clarke)

Army updates retention program to reward performance

By **SGT. ZACK STINE**
Army News Service

The Army is implementing significant updates to its retention program in fiscal year 2026, reinforcing a performance-based approach that directly benefits Soldiers who maintain high standards, develop critical skills and commit to long-term service.

The updated program shifts reenlistment incentives toward a quality-centric model that prioritizes readiness, critical military occupational specialties and individual performance. While all eligible Soldiers may reenlist, incentive levels will now vary based on performance and Army needs.

“The primary mission of the revamped program is to maximize precision and quality in retention to meet end strength goals and drive readiness,” said Col. Angela Chipman, chief of the U.S. Army military personnel accessions and retention division. “This approach allows the Army to better recognize and retain Soldiers who consistently perform at a high level.”

For Soldiers who train hard, seek growth and take pride in their work, the updated system offers clearer returns on effort.

Under the FY26 framework, the Army will reduce reliance on short-term extensions and place greater emphasis on longer reenlistment contracts, reflecting the Army’s increased investment in advanced skills and long-term readiness.

At the center of the updated retention program is the Quality Tiered Incentives Program, or QTIP. The system evaluates Soldiers within cohorts of the same rank and MOS using a standardized, data-driven approach.

QTIP measures performance across three weighted categories: physical fitness, technical expertise and command assessment. Army Fitness Test scores, documented qualifications and leader evaluations of performance and potential all factor into a Soldier’s tier placement.

Soldiers who maintain strong fitness, pursue professional development and demonstrate consistent reliability will rank higher within their peer groups and qualify for enhanced incentives.

The Army will also place greater emphasis on reclassifi-



Army News Service photo

The Army has begun implementing updates to its retention program to reward higher performing Soldiers. Those who seek growth and train hard will see clear returns on their investment.

cation into priority and shortage MOSs. Soldiers willing to transition into critical roles while maintaining strong performance metrics will be among the most competitive for bonuses and reenlistment incentives.

Beginning in December, the Army will train career counselors, command teams and personnel sections on the updated retention framework. Soldiers approaching their

reenlistment window are encouraged to engage early with leadership and career counselors, ensure records are accurate and pursue opportunities that enhance readiness and competitiveness.

The message is simple: Soldiers who invest in themselves will see the difference at reenlistment, while strengthening the Army’s ability to meet future

TBI

Continued from Page 5

directly aligns with strategic objectives of the Defense Health Agency and the Department of War.”

Field environments demand durable and cost-effective systems, while operation-

al tempo drives the need for those systems to be rapidly deployable, objective and user-friendly in the hands of frontline medical providers. The field assessment capability is designed to give users the data they need to quickly and confidently make treatment decisions at the speed required by large-scale combat operations.

Current options for assessment rely on checklist-based cognitive assessments or ro-

bust medical facilities with advanced capabilities like MRI and CT scans, according to Hoffman. However, while medical imaging is the gold standard for accurate identification of brain traumas, patients typically must be moved from the point of injury to access medical imaging — losing precious hours, manpower and resources without objective information to determine if a medevac to a higher level of care is entirely necessary.

The delivered brain hemorrhage detection capability will be portable, lightweight and field-suitable, and will use noninvasive technologies — such as radiofrequency or near infrared — to assess casualties for intracranial hemorrhage.

Accompanying the hemorrhage detection device will be tablet or phone-based applications that offer a suite of digital cognitive assessments.

Resilience

Continued from Page 5

achievements, foster unit pride, and boost morale. They serve as a tangible token of appreciation for Soldiers who go above and beyond. Awarded Soldiers become role models within the formation, reflecting the Commander's priorities and values. If we want to prioritize mental resilience as an organizational goal, we must establish it as worthy of recognition. In the Army, there is no better way to achieve this than through a challenge coin.

Creating a dedicated mental health challenge coin and publicly rewarding our Soldiers as MH Champions is significant for several reasons:

Positive Reinforcement: Recognizing these actions serves as positive reinforcement within

the organization. With command support, it demonstrates to Soldiers that their contributions are valued by leadership.

Empowerment: It empowers Soldiers to act. Through suicide prevention and resiliency training, Soldiers learn to identify warning signs, risk factors, and how to respond during crises. This education equips them to intervene effectively in critical moments.

Leadership Development: Training Soldiers to intervene promotes essential leadership skills, such as active listening, empathy and conflict resolution. These skills are necessary for leaders to be effective.

Stigma Reduction: Encouraging care actions help reduce the stigma associated with mental health, fostering a culture of support where Soldier health is prioritized. Soldiers may hesitate to seek help due to the attitudes and actions of those around them;

promoting care actions mitigates this barrier.

This initiative began as a risk reduction strategy while deployed with the 160th Theater Signal Brigade and is now being applied in a garrison environment at the Leader Training Brigade and The U.S. Army Drill Sergeant Academy. As a brigade psychologist, I have observed the direct positive impact of this proactive approach. While deployed, the MH Champion initiative helped to facilitate rapid responses during suicidal crises. Our Soldiers were geographically dispersed in austere and isolated locations, with limited mental health resources. Consequently, we relied on the vigilance of peers and leaders to identify and support vulnerable Soldiers. This initiative empowered Soldiers to rapidly intervene during suicidal crises and appropriately contact our team. Their courageous actions resulted in

Soldiers receiving immediate access to care. Notably, there were no completed suicides during my 13-month tour. For the unit, this initiative led to enhanced leader support and peer involvement, improved team cohesion and morale, reduced psychological distress, fewer mental health clinic visits, and overall better unit functioning.

Ultimately, we can all make an impact on the organization by becoming MH Champions.

To the leaders reading this, I encourage you to recognize the Soldiers in your formation who have gone above and beyond to provide peer support – their actions have overwhelming impact to your unit's mental readiness.

To the Soldiers reading this, I urge you to develop the courage to take action and help your peers; you have more influence than you may realize, and you can save a life!

SALUTING THIS CYCLE'S HONOREES 2nd Battalion, 60th Infantry Regiment

**DRILL SERGEANT
OF THE CYCLE**
Sgt. 1st Class
Jannae Jasinowski

**ALPHA COMPANY
SOLDIER LEADER
OF THE CYCLE**
Pvt. Jeremiah Tillery

**SOLDIER
OF THE CYCLE**
Spc. Jesse Bierer

**BRAVO COMPANY
SOLDIER LEADER
OF THE CYCLE**
Pvt. Jack Bowyer

**SOLDIER
OF THE CYCLE**
Pvt. Alex Weiser

**CHARLIE COMPANY
SOLDIER LEADER
OF THE CYCLE**
Pvt. Travar Bailey

**SOLDIER
OF THE CYCLE**
Pvt. Adrian Garcia

**DELTA COMPANY
SOLDIER LEADER
OF THE CYCLE**
Pvt. Justin Jones

**SOLDIER
OF THE CYCLE**
Pvt. Cairan Zumar

**ECHO COMPANY
SOLDIER LEADER
OF THE CYCLE**
Pvt. Garren Swickard

**SOLDIER
OF THE CYCLE**
Pfc. Brian Hoover



Photo by ROBERT TIMMONS

School picnic

Dontavious Miller and his mother Staff Sgt. Tichina Johnson eat lunch on the lawn behind C.C. Pinckney Elementary School during a Month of the Military Child event held April 22.




DOWNLOAD NOW

MY ARMY POST



Events

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tion up to .50 cal with no questions asked. Any Soldier or civilian can freely turn in or report location of amnesty ammunition without having to provide personal information. Individuals will not be prosecuted or punished for turning in the munitions. For larger items make prior coordination by calling (520) 671-8504. For more information, call (803) 751-2541.

MAY 14
Retiree Appreciation Day
7:30 a.m., Col. David G. Gaugush, garrison commander, kicks off the post's Retiree Appreciation Days with a recorded message played on the Garrison Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/USArmyGarrisonFortJackson>. This is followed by a continental breakfast at the 1917 Club and a salute to retirees during the Basic Combat Training Graduation.

MAY 15
Retiree Appreciation Days Golf Tournament
9 a.m., Fort Jackson Golf Club. This year's event will kick off with a welcome

from a Fort Jackson Retiree Council member. The tournament will be played on the Wildcat Course. Entry fee includes all golf fees, prizes, and a post tournament meal. Register your team today, or sign up as a single, and the FJGC PGA Professional will pair you with a group. Register your team by signing up at the Golf Club, calling the FJGC golf shop at (803) 562-4437 or by email at fortjacksongolfclub@gmail.com.

MAY 16
Retiree Health and Benefits Expo
9 a.m. to noon, MWR Central at the Solomon Center. This year, Fort Jackson Garrison Commander, Col. David Gaugush, will open the EXPO with welcoming remarks. Moncrief Army Health Clinic will provide health screenings and counseling booths. A host of other agencies will be represented. ID Card services will be open from 9 a.m. to noon in the Strom Thurmond Building, while the Exchange and Commissary hold special sales.

MAY 23
Weston Lake Beach Opening
The Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation partners with the Directorate of Public Works to host the Recycle Regatta during the opening. For more information, call (803) 751-5253.

Palmetto Falls Water Park Opening
The wait is finally over. Join us for opening day at Fort Jackson Palmetto Falls Water Park. For details on season passes, call (803) 751-4796.

MAY 28
Run to Remember
6 a.m., Darby Field. A Memorial Day event honoring the men and women who died while serving in the U.S. military, reflecting on their sacrifices and the freedom they secured for the nation. For more information, call (803) 751-3700.

MAY 29
Skills Challenge
5-7 p.m., Coleman Fitness Center. For more information, call (803) 751-6272.

Stronger Together Community Fair
4-6 p.m., MWR Central at the Solomon Center. Army Community Service's New Parent Support Program is holding a day of wellness in support of Mental Health Awareness Month. For more information, call (803) 751-5256.

Family/Volunteer of the Year
3:30 p.m., Down Range Bar. Fort Jackson will recognize outstandings volunteers during the Leaders Call May 29. Nominations will be accepted until May

15. Nominations for Volunteer of the Year can be submitted for four categories (youth, retiree, active-duty military, and family member/civilian). All nomination must be endorsed by the 06-level commander of the unit/organization for processing. Nominations forms are located at <https://jackson.armymwr.com/programs/army-volunteer-corps>, and click the "Make a Difference in Our Community"-Volunteer tab. For more information, call (803) 751-5444

JUNE 2
Community Information Exchange
2 p.m., 1917 Club. Fort Jackson wants to hear from you. The Fort Jackson community is invited to come and find out about post happenings. For more information, call (803) 751-1711.

JUNE 18
Juneteenth 5K run
Save the date for Fort Jackson's Juneteenth 5K.

JUNE 27
Charleston Fishing Trip
4:45 a.m., MWR Central at the Solomon Center. Travel to Charleston with our Outdoor Recreation team and join one of three charter fishing boats for a four-hour fishing trip.

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
JEWISH SHABBOS SERVICE	FRIDAY	6-7 P.M.	CENTURY DIVISION 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
ANGLICAN	SUNDAY	9:30-10 A.M.	LIGHTNING CHAPEL
ISLAMIC SERVICE	SUNDAY	8-9 A.M.	LIGHTNING CHAPEL
JEWISH SERVICE	SUNDAY	10:30-11:30 A.M.	120TH AG BN (for trainees in 120th only)
THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER DAY SAINTS	SUNDAY	10:30 A.M. to NOON	CENTURY DIVISION CHAPEL



Photo by LIA CARTER

Nurses from Medical Activity - Fort Jackson pose for a picture as part of a celebration for Nurses Week.

The power of nurses: The force behind every patient's story

By **MAJ. ANTIONETTE DINGLE**
Army Public Health Nurse

If healthcare were a movie, nurses would be the lead actors, directors, and on most days, the entire production team. They manage the action, adapt to constant plot twists, and somehow keep everything running, even when the script changes mid-scene. The theme for this year, "The Power of Nurses," shines a spotlight on nurses as expert caregivers, dedicated advocates, and influential leaders who make a difference in patient outcomes every day.

A nurse's shift is a masterclass in precision and adaptability. From interpreting clinical data and administering medications to monitoring subtle patient changes, nurses operate with a level of expertise that demands both speed and accuracy. They prioritize, anticipate, and intervene, often before issues escalate. Still, in the midst of complex care, they still remember the small details that matter most to patients. This isn't just multitasking—it's clinical mastery in real time.

Nurses ensure that every patient is heard, respected, and informed. They translate medical complexity into clarity, safeguard patient dignity, and speak up when something isn't right. Advocacy is embedded in every inter-

action, whether it's clarifying a treatment plan or simply ensuring a patient feels seen. Their persistence and professionalism make them an essential pillar in healthcare delivery.

Nurses lead without needing recognition. They coordinate teams, mentor others, and make critical decisions under pressure, all while maintaining calm and focus. Whether at the bedside or beyond, their leadership drives patient safety, improves outcomes, and strengthens healthcare systems, often while quietly sacrificing things like a timely lunch break.

The true power of nurses lies in their ability to combine clinical expertise with genuine compassion. They are present for life's most important moments; offering care, comfort, and stability when it matters most. They show up consistently, adapt continuously, and persevere through demanding conditions, occasionally fueled by coffee that never quite stays hot.

Nursing is more than a profession! It is a calling, a commitment to excellence, advocacy, and humanity. This Nurses Week, we honor the impact nurses make every single day through their skills, leadership, and unwavering dedication.

Thank you for being the force behind every patient story.

Happy Nurses Week.



U.S. ARMY

TENANT

SATISFACTION SURVEY

2 MAR 2026 - 1 MAY 2026

Your Army Wants to
Hear from You!

*Completely confidential

Your Opinion
Matters!



The completely confidential survey will be emailed from
ArmyHousingSurvey@celassociates.com.
For additional questions, please contact your local **Army Housing Office.**

OMB Control Number: 0704-0553. OMB Expiration date: 08/31/2028

VICTORY... STARTS HERE



Col. David G. Gaugush, Fort Jackson garrison commander, reads a book to children at the Thomas Lee Hall 'Post' Library during a Month of the Military Child event held April 23.

Photo by NATHAN CLINEBELLE