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Commander
Command Sgt. Major
Deputy Commander

Col. Lawrence Brown
Command Sgt. Maj. Roberto Marshall
Hugh Hardin

Public Affairs Officer
Deputy Public Affairs Officer
Photographer & Webmaster
Command Information
Public Affairs Specialist
Public Affairs Assistant

James Laughlin
Brian Lepley
Steven L. Shepard
Jospeh Kumzak
Alvin Macks
Angel Mendoza

Contributors

Patrick Bray, *DLIFLC Public Affairs*
Amber Whittington, *DLIFLC Public Affairs*
Martin Odom, *Presidio of Monterey FMWR*

The PoM InBrief is a command-authorized publication for the Monterey military community, published monthly by the Presidio of Monterey Public Affairs Office.

We publish information of interest to all members of our community — including all service members, military families, civilian personnel, & veterans who access services at our installation.

Story ideas and submissions of original material are always welcome - articles, photos and calendar items should be submitted by the 15th of the month prior to the intended month of publication.

USAG PRESIDIO OF MONTEREY

Public Affairs Office

1759 Lewis Rd.

Monterey, CA 93944

www.monterey.army.mil

Phone: (831) 242-5555

Email: presidiopao@gmail.com

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On the cover: *The Presidio of Monterey hosted its own Army vs. Navy football game Wednesday, Dec. 6, at the Price Fitness Center Field, with the 229th Military Intelligence Battalion winning 17-7 over Information Warfare Training Command-Monterey in front of commanders and over 500 Soldiers and Sailors. Two days later, the US Military Academy won THE Army-Navy game in Philadelphia, 14-13, clinching the Commander's Cup.*

See more: www.flickr.com/photos/presidioofmonterey/albums/72157661363159627

Photo by Joseph Kumzak, Presidio of Monterey PAO

Cannabis can't be carried, used on federal property

*PRESIDIO OF MONTEREY PAO STAFF
REPORT*

California may allow free and legal use of marijuana starting Jan. 1 but Uncle Sam will not.

Possession and distribution of marijuana is illegal on federal property in accordance with U.S. Code. Under the Uniform Code of Military Justice, possession or use of marijuana by service members is prohibited.

"There are no exemptions from these laws and no one may possess or distribute marijuana in any form on the Presidio of Monterey, Ord Military Community, La Mesa Village

or the Naval Postgraduate School," said Shawn Marshall, director of emergency services for the Presidio. "This applies to everyone: employees, family members, contractors, anyone who comes onto our property."

Anyone in possession of marijuana while on federal property can be subject to criminal prosecution and/or adverse administrative action, to include a bar from the installation.

Possession of a medical marijuana card or a specific doctor's prescription for medicinal marijuana does not exempt anyone on the Presidio



of Monterey, Ord Military Community, La Mesa Village or the Naval Postgraduate

School from facing potential prosecution or negative administrative action.



Thanks for the BOSS meal

Six BOSS members shopped, cooked, served and cleaned up after a Thanksgiving evening meal for more than 100 service members at the Weckerling Center on Nov. 22. Capt. Daniel Jimenez, Co. D, 229th Military Intelligence Battalion, proposed the event and led the effort, helped by StaffSgt. Erin Hanna of Co. D and four Airmen 1st Class from the 314th Training Squadron: Jessica Welch, Edward Dobransky, Shelby Heasley and Zon Wang.

Presidio of Monterey PAO photo by Brian Lepley

Native Return

Tribe buries remains, objects in Presidio of Monterey cemetery

STORY AND PHOTOS BY BRIAN LEPLEY,
PRESIDIO OF MONTEREY PAO

The Wounded Knee and Sand Creek massacres. The Great Sioux War. The battle of Washita River. The Dakota War.

In the 19th century west, relations between the U.S. Army and Native Americans were grim.

The Presidio of Monterey and six sovereign tribal nations began creating a better relationship Oct. 22, burying the remains of 17 Native Americans and more than 300 funerary objects at the Presidio cemetery.

Louise Miranda Ramirez, chairwoman of the **Ohlone Costanoan Esselen Nation**, and Laura Prishmont-Quimby, the Presidio of Monterey's cultural resources manager, coordinated the burial of Native American remains in the cemetery. Ramirez presided over the private ceremony.

"I want everyone here to know this is a dream come true," she said near the end of the ceremony. "Some of those boxes (of remains) reminded me of the Jewish holocaust because these were all numbered. They had numbers carved into the bones and we could not take them off without damaging the bones.

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Four boxes containing the remains of 17 Native Americans and more than 300 funerary objects are interred at the Presidio of Monterey cemetery Oct. 22.



Chairwoman of the Ohlone Costanoan Esselen Nation Louise Miranda Ramirez presides over the burial ceremony at the Presidio of Monterey cemetery Oct. 22.



Joseph Garfield, Tule River Indian Tribe spiritual leader, leads a procession to the Presidio of Monterey cemetery.



native land of Monterey County. She recalled a meeting in Washington D.C. on the issue and urged reburial at the Presidio's cemetery, stating then "To us, it's not an Army cemetery. It's our village, and we're just returning our ancestors."

Nearly five dozen attendees from local tribes attended and participated in the ceremony. Ramirez invited Army dignitaries attending to take part in the burial preparations. Those included Ms. Karen Durham-Aguilera, Executive Director Army National Military Cemeteries, and Presidio Commander, Col. Lawrence Brown.

"These remains have found their final resting place in hallowed ground and now take their rightful place among the honored to be protected throughout history," Brown said.

It is a history that tribal nations and the Army continue to improve.

Delphina Penrod of the Ohlone Costanoan Esselen Nation burns sage during the burial ceremony. Photo by Jim Laughlin, Presidio of Monterey PAO

Native

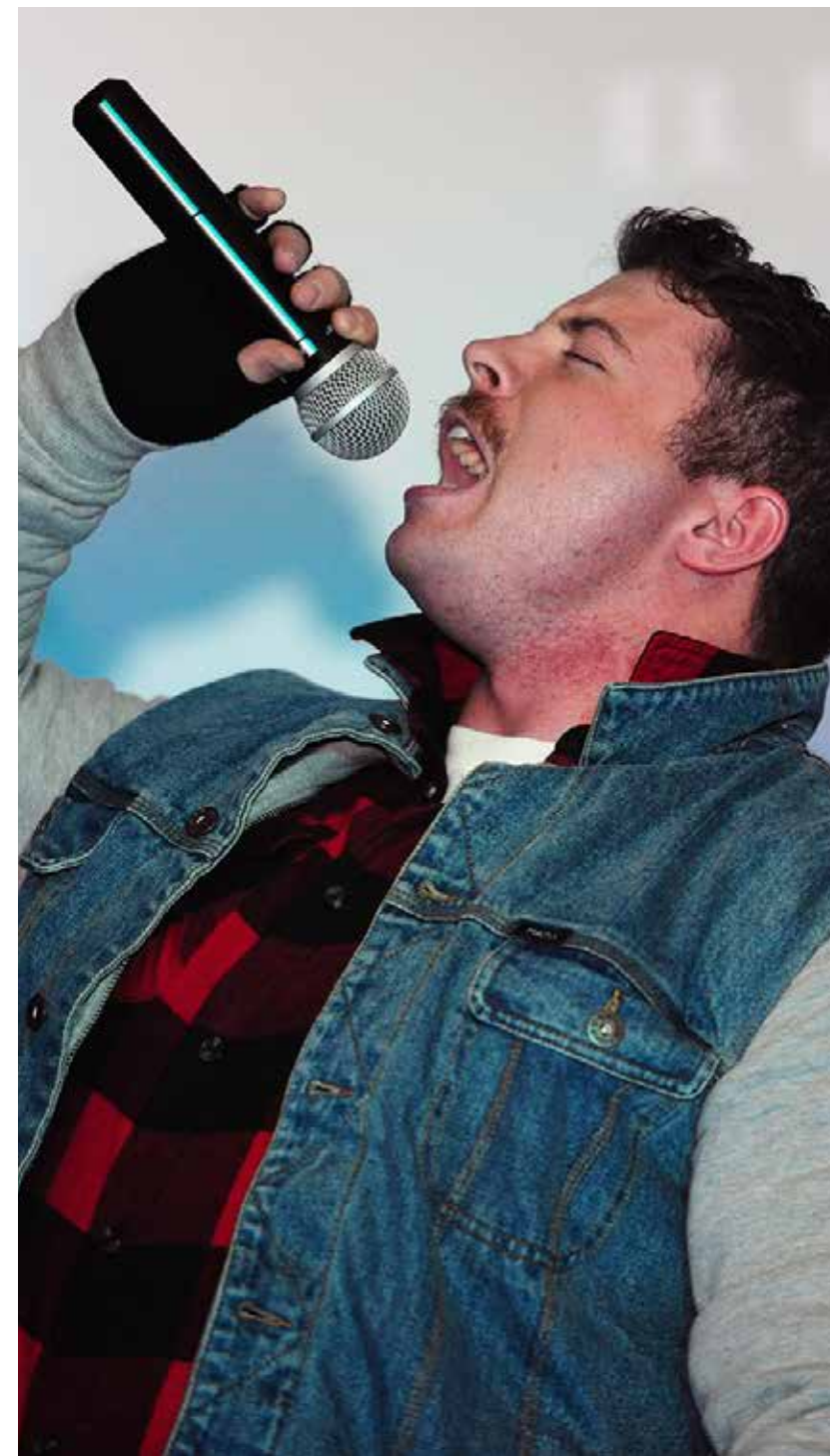
I know all native people are this way about bringing home ancestors and making sure that they're home."

The remains and objects were discovered on the Presidio of Monterey grounds and surrounding neighborhoods between 1910-1985 and were catalogued and stored in museums across California.

One of Ramirez's goals as tribal chairwoman was to return ancestors' remains to their

Ladies night

Eight contestants battled it out during the final night of the 'Presidio Has Mad Talent' singing competition held at Hobson Student Activities Center, Sept. 29. Lance Cpl. Destiny Creecy (center), Marine Corps Detachment Monterey, was the winner (and \$300 richer) for her renditions of Fugees' "Killing Me Softly" and Whitney Houston's "I Wanna Dance with Somebody."



Pvt. Inaya Bugg (far left), 229th Military Intelligence Battalion, and Seaman Joseph Ogle (above), Information Warfare Training Command Monterey, finished second and third, respectively.

*Photos by Steven L. Shepard, Presidio of Monterey
PAO*

CPR for suicide: ASIST teaches intervention

STORY AND PHOTO BY BRIAN LEPLEY, PRESIDIO OF MONTEREY PAO

Despair and failure are not strangers to Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center students. Mastering a foreign language and culture in months creates an anxiety unfamiliar to people not long out of their teen years.

"DLI is a very stressful environment. I've always been up front with the students about me seeking counseling when I was a junior Marine," said Staff Sgt. Joshua McGraw, Marine Corps Detachment. "I'm very open about saying, get help, and get it sorted out."

He was one of eight USMC cadre attending Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) Nov. 16-17. Chaplains Maj. Chan-young Ham and Capt. Al Rivera led a total of 20 service members and DLIFLC staff in an interactive workshop setting described as "suicide first aid."

"This program works," Rivera said. "I read an article this morning from Fort Bragg about a Soldier who went to this training and used this training to intervene and help someone."

From a dissimilar group – eight Marines, two Soldiers, two employees of the garrison and eight DLIFLC academic staff – there was common ground.

"This training made me aware how real this is for all of us," said Dr. Kara McDonald, academic specialist, Middle East III School. "There were 20 people in this class; 19 of them had multiple personal encounters with suicide. This training covers something that is very real, that we



Chaplain (Maj.) Chan-young Ham directs an ASIST lesson for 20 students at the Chapel Annex Nov. 17.

need to take seriously."

McGraw and Spc. Erika Grosskopf, Company F, 229th Military Intelligence Battalion, are where the rubber meets the road, working daily with DLIFLC students. They know these young people were

academic stars in their not-too-distant past, many of whom now find themselves struggling in school.

"You see it here with people who have

Continued on next page

DLIFLC grad shaken by suicide shares son's story

STORY AND PHOTO BY BRIAN LEPLEY, PRESIDIO OF MONTEREY PAO

The saddest task for a parent, it is said, is burying one of their children.

But sadder still, Rob Miltersen found out, is burying your 21-year old Airman First Class son after his suicide.

Christian Miltersen took his own life in 2014 while assigned to the National Security Agency at Fort Meade, Maryland. He was a 2012 Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center graduate in Chinese Mandarin.

Rob was also an Air Force DLIFLC grad, in 1990, at the start of his 20-year career.

Staggering grief alters lives. Rob's tragedy focused him to a mission of shouting from the rooftops about suicide prevention.

"The loss of one individual to suicide impacts many, up to more than a hundred family, friends and colleagues of that person," he said. "They mourn the loss and are impacted with sadness and grief that is hard to understand. In turn, those individuals then find themselves in a higher risk category."

On Sept. 14, Miltersen brought his suicide prevention presentation to DLIFLC, addressing a few hundred students and faculty.

"I think this generation of students are more in touch with their vulnerabilities than previous



Rob Miltersen shares the story of his son's suicide with Presidio of Monterey military and civilians at the Physical Fitness Center Sept. 14.

generations," he said. "However, there is a general idea that we are all impervious to this kind of tragedy.

"Unfortunately, the statistics tell a horribly different story. Suicide impacts all of us in some way. To some of us it is incredibly personal."

DLIFLC Chaplain (Maj.) Chan-young Ham was impressed by how personal and relatable Miltersen's story was for the audience.

"I think it was a fitting message for DLI students, anyone who can be exposed to those ideations," Ham said.

Among the groups Miltersen has addressed on the issue are the Air Force War College faculty and students, the Georgia State Legislature and three times this year at the Presidio of Monterey to service members and employees.

"I wanted to bring this message here because I believe it was a story they could understand, that this (Christian) wasn't just another sad person that we lost, but a DLI student, just like themselves," Miltersen said.

ASIST

always been the really smart kid; they didn't have to do their homework to get an 'A,'" Grosskopf said. "They were the smartest person in the school, and now they feel dumber than a box of rocks."

ASIST provided these two service members with formal steps, an intervention path, which replaces the ad hoc "looking out for a battle buddy" concern.

"I've got a lot of exposure to people who are at risk," McGraw said. "Having a specific model to work with, to learn how to directly ask someone with a path of action, gives one more confidence to have the conversation."

While McGraw is cadre, a Military Language Instructor, Grosskopf was a student with that perspective. She is no stranger to gloom descending on a fellow service member.

"I've seen it happen a lot in the school house," the Farsi graduate said. "Once things start to heat up at the end of semester one and semester two, little things would turn into tipping points. Classmates would get together and talk about noticing classmates getting withdrawn, they'd gotten in a funk."

DLIFLC presents high-achieving young people with challenges they've never faced, Grosskopf said.

"It took me a long time to figure out how to ask for help," she said. "I never had to do that before I got here."

For anyone interested in the training, call Ham at 831 242-7004.

Essex welcomes DLIFLC Navy students to Fleet Week

PRESIDIO OF MONTEREY PAO STAFF
REPORT

SAN FRANCISCO – For the second straight year, dozens of Sailors with Information Warfare Training Command-Monterey traded the classroom for a ship.

More than 60 Navy students of Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center met with the crew of the amphibious assault ship **USS Essex** (LHD 2) and received a tour of the ship's operations spaces Oct. 7 during

Fleet Week here in the city.

Along with the public spaces, the young Sailors visited the Ships Signal Exploitation Space, where they could potentially be assigned.

"It was a great experience getting to see what we do in the fleet," said Seaman Paul Greathouse. "Most people don't know what goes into our job, so it was nice to get answers to some of the questions I've had since I chose this rating."

Cmdr. Andy Newsome, IWTC

-Monterey commander, requested the visit to provide operational context for his student-Sailors.

"Many of our newest Sailors are excited to deploy and utilize their new skills, but are unsure where they fit in the world of information warfare," he said. "We feel strongly that by giving our Sailors a glimpse of what their shipmates are doing, we can help increase their motivation to excel in language learning."

During 2016's Fleet Week, DLIFLC Sailors visited a Navy EP-3E Aries II aircraft and met with a crew from Fleet Air Reconnaissance Squadron One at the Monterey Jet Center.

"Last year's visit was such a huge success that we did not want to pass up this opportunity," said Newsome. "We were thrilled that USS Essex agreed to show our students parts of the ship that are not typically open to the general public."

The Tax Man Cometh: PoM tax center opens Jan. 22

PRESIDIO OF MONTEREY PAO STAFF
REPORT

Can I deduct student loan interest from my taxes? What is the deduction for a spouse that doesn't work? Does my home state exempt military income? How do I file if my spouse lives and works in another state?

The Presidio of Monterey Tax Center opens Jan. 22 to provide free tax preparation services to active duty, Reserve and National Guard military, military retirees, and the dependents of those groups.

Drop off services are available to those filing the 1040EZ form at Building 358, Monday through Friday, from 8:30 a.m. until 3:40 p.m. Appointments are required for those filing with deductions and can be made by calling 831 242-7365.

Tax center personnel will prepare tax returns and electronic file federal and state returns. The preparer works directly with the service member, ensuring all tax questions and concerns are addressed and returns are filed accurately and timely. Returns will be electronically filed every business day.

Free tax form preparation is a benefit for all service members and their families. Given the complexity of federal and state requirements, a taxpayer's entitlement to every deduction and credit coming to them, and complicating circumstances like multiple state returns or a divorce or marriage during 2017, the tax center makes sense to service members.

Here are some changes to 2017 individual's federal taxes:

- The filing deadline is Tuesday, April 17, 2018, due to April 15 on the weekend and April 16 being a District of Columbia holiday.

- Many employers now include a code in Box 9 of W2 that will help the IRS quickly validate the W2 data for e-filed returns.
- Small increases do the standard deduction for Married Filing Jointly or Qualifying Widow (\$100) and Head of Household, Single, and Married Filing Separate (\$50).
- Small increases to the Retirement Savings Contribution Credit income limits, and the Earned Income Credit.

To take advantage, call 831 242-7365 or visit the Tax Center at Building 358.



'A' leads the way at 229th Challenge

Company A captured the latest Warrior Challenge for the 229th Military Intelligence Battalion, besting the other companies in leg lifts, pull ups, sit ups, push ups, a relay race and the tug of war finale at Price Fitness Center Field Sept. 13. Spc. Rachael Scruggs (above) of Co. A runs the relay race. On the pull up bar (far left) is Co. D's Spc. David Barr. Competing in the leg lifts (left) for Co. C are Pfc. Derek Bell and Spc. Andrew Newby.

Photos by Amber Whittington, Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center PAO

City aims for success with Army ammo plant land

STORY AND PHOTO BRIAN LEPLEY,
PRESIDIO OF MONTEREY PAO

RIVERBANK, California -- The U.S. Army turned over 28 undeveloped, environmentally-safe acres of Riverbank Army Ammunition Plant property to the city at an Oct. 17 ceremony.

The RAAP closed in 2010 under the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure Act.



RIVERBANK, California -- Paul Cramer, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army for Installations, speaks at the property transfer ceremony that transferred 28 acres of U.S. Army land to the city Oct. 17.

Paul Cramer, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army for Installations, presided over the event and joined Congressman Jeff Denham in speaking at the ceremony.

"Today is a great opportunity to celebrate a new start for the city of Riverbank and for the **former Army depot** here in Riverbank," Cramer said. "Since its closing in 2010 the Army has enjoyed a great partnership with the city of Riverbank in preparing for future productive use of the property."

Riverbank Mayor Richard O'Brien and Brenda Johnson-Turner, Director of Real Estate for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, signed the memorandum of agreement that transferred the land to the city. The agreement formally removes the 28 acres from the Presidio of Monterey property records.

"We have worked tirelessly to reach an agreement with the Army that lets the city continue the productive reuse of the former military site," said Sean Scully, Riverbank city manager.

The plant's developed area of 74 acres is home to numerous industrial buildings that house 40 small businesses employing 300



RIVERBANK, California -- Mayor Richard O'Brien (second from left) and Brenda Johnson-Turner (right), Director of Real Estate for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, sign the memorandum of agreement that transfers 28 acres of U.S. Army land to the city Oct. 17. Behind them are Congressman Jeff Denham (left) and Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army for Installations Paul Cramer.

Photo by Jim Laughlin, Presidio of Monterey PAO

workers. After federal regulatory agencies and the state of California agree on an environmental cleanup plan, the Army will turn that land over to Riverbank.

"The city has leased the RAAP property from the Army since 2010 and this has enabled the city

to sustain the property and build momentum towards ownership and redevelopment," Cramer said.

"The next step for the city is a search for a master developer and strategic economic development," O'Brien said, "that moves business forward and grows jobs and prosperity in our community."

U.S. is superpower come lately on Dark Continent

STORY AND PHOTO BY PATRICK BRAY,
DEFENSE LANGUAGE INSTITUTE FOREIGN
LANGUAGE CENTER PAO

The Dark Continent doesn't register for many Americans, a situation that people like Nicholas Tomb tries to remedy.

"People often ask me 'why does Africa matter?'" said Tomb, program manager of the Center for Civil-Military Relations Africa Program at the Naval Postgraduate School. "I turn around and ask 'why does China think Africa matters?'"

Tomb delivered a presentation "Beyond Democracy in Africa" to U.S. Army Foreign Area Officers in language training at the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center, Sept. 20. He began by asking FAOs for the definition of democracy.

They suggested ideas of government ruled by the people, equality and freedom. Tomb dwelled on the concept of representative governance – the manner of governing in which the people determine their political, economic, social and cultural systems. He followed with an anecdote to show the low quality of representative gover-

nance in African countries.

"Mo Ibrahim, Sudanese telecom businessman, offers the Mo Ibrahim Award to any African president that steps down from power at the end of his term," Tomb said.

Since 2006, only four African leaders earned the \$5 million award.

"The fact that so few African leaders have accepted the award and stood down demonstrates how much money is to be made by staying

in power," Tomb said. "There's this perception that Africa is a very poor place and there are certainly a lot of poor people. But in reality, it is an extremely wealthy continent."

Therefore, democracy in Africa falls victim to corruption by many African leaders, something that unfortunately runs deep into the culture, according to Tomb. Quoting statistics from the Mo Ibrahim Foundation, nine of the top 10 governance performers are civilian regimes that have come to power

through elections. The top 10 worst governance performers are military regimes that came to power through coups or authoritarian transitions.

"The governors who are elected have to meet the needs of the people or the people will vote them out and bring in somebody who will do a better job representing their interest," said Tomb, explaining why civilian regimes perform better as opposed to "rule through the barrel of a gun."

African nations face many problems on the road to democracy such as economic, security and demographic challenges along with corruption, natural resource concerns, climate change, desertification, and food scarcity.

"I lumped them into these big broad categories; I'm sure there are a lot more," said Tomb. "In problems facing the continent there is certainly no shortage of them."

In economic challenges, he continued, Africa is a very poor place for the vast majority of people, "but there are also massive economic opportunities."



Nicholas Tomb delivers "Beyond Democracy in Africa" to the U.S. Army Foreign Area Officers course Sept. 20 in the Weckerling Center.

Soldier can't mask pride at final DoD tourney

By TIM HIPPS, U.S. ARMY INSTALLATION MANAGEMENT
COMMAND PAO

SAN ANTONIO – Presidio of Monterey's 1st Lt. Michelle Ambuul tough-nosed hoops skills helped the All-Army women secure silver at the **2017 Armed Forces Basketball Championships**. Literally.

As if getting her nose broken during training camp Oct. 10 at Fort Indiantown Gap, Pennsylvania, was not enough to overcome, Ambuul got whacked again the following week during an intra-squad scrimmage at Fort Hood, Texas.

A nose broken twice in as many weeks would make many athletes retreat from competition, but Ambuul donned a protective mask and played All-Army's last four games of the seven-day tournament at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland.

All-Navy (6-1) defeated All-Army (4-3), 79-63, in the women's gold-medal game Nov. 7 at Chaparral Fitness Center here.

The tournament was perhaps the last hurrah as a competitive basketball player for Ambuul, 30, who serves as Associate Dean of the Persian Farsi School at the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center.

"I think this is the last time I'll play competitive basketball at a high level," she said. "I have other priorities that I want to focus on. And the older you get, the harder it is on your body. I'm definitely learning that the hard way. I just want to go out strong."



SAN ANTONIO – Presidio of Monterey's 1st Lt. Michelle Ambuul (left) grabs one of her 10 rebounds against the Marines during Army's 95-37 win Nov. 4 in the Armed Forces Basketball tournament.

Photo by Robert Dozier, U.S. Army Installation Management Command PAO

Despite a delivery delay of her mask, Ambuul managed to play in Army's last four games. She collected 10 rebounds during Army's 95-37 win over the Marines Nov. 4.

Broken noses were growing old for the Ambuul, who was an All-Armed Forces basketball selection in 2012.

"Once in Germany, when I was 22 or 23," she recalled of her previous facial injuries. "All the rest were in college between 2005 and 2009."

Both of the most recent fractures happened after Ambuul secured a rebound, only to catch an elbow to the face in the process.

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DLIFLC makes saint choice

PRESIDIO OF MONTEREY PAO STAFF REPORT

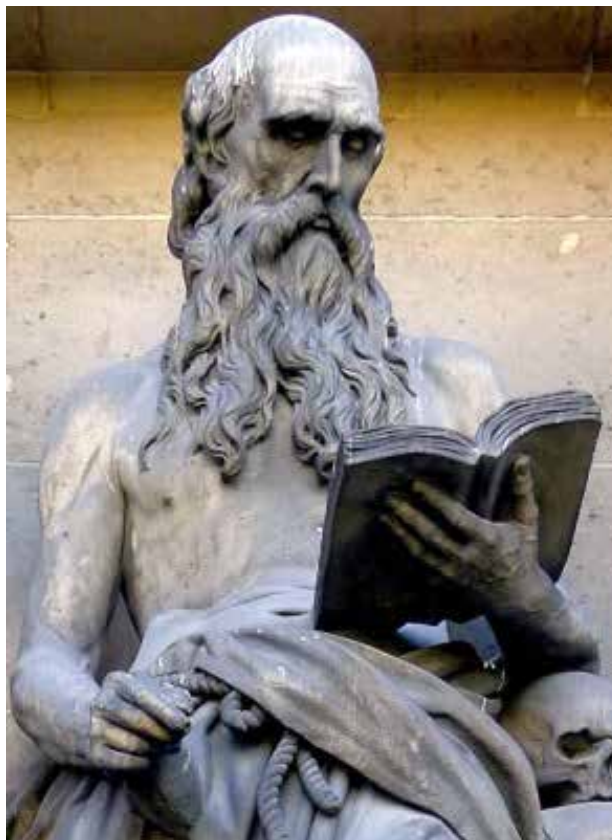
When Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center students and military linguists look to the heavens, they have a new face to find.

DLIFLC selected Saint Jerome, regarded as the most learned of the **Latin Fathers**, as the patron saint of the school and career field.

"St. Jerome was disciplined and he believed in what he was doing, pushing himself to be an expert in languages," said Chaplain (Maj.) Chan-young Ham, DLIFLC command chaplain.

"He was internationally influenced," Ham continued. "He traveled the world and respected other cultures, while dialoging with many to discuss scholarship and the truth."

The tradition of patron saints as guardians over areas of life, to include occupations, dates back to as early as the fourth century. St. Michael for paratroopers and St. Barbara, field artillery, are examples of military patron saints.



The idea of a patron saint for linguists was brought up to DLIFLC Commandant Col. Phil Deppert when Ham arrived in December 2016. Patron saints within each branch have long been a military tradition.

"Since I got here, I thought we should have a pendant with a patron to set our commitment and professionalism," said Ham. "Since we did not have one we embarked on making a pendant and ended up inducting a patron saint."

In the process, Ham offered Deppert a choice between St. Nicholas, the patron saint of the Military Intelligence branch, and St. Jerome. In the end, the Commandant decided to go with St. Jerome.

The next step was to ensure that the Institute did not appear to be promoting a religious affiliation. Although it has a Christian historical background, there are no hidden motives of endorsing the Christian faith.

"Instead, we are creating a tradition like other branches where we hold our standards to the highest values and commitment as linguists," said Ham.

Basketball

This time, Ambuul predicted she had "at least a deviated septum" because she couldn't breathe very well.

In college, Ambuul was one of the leading three-point shooters in the Rocky Mountain Conference for Colorado State University-Pueblo and with 20.6 points per game as a high school senior, was the Colorado Springs' Player of the Year.

"Everyone who plays a sport always has that passion and that drive to do it," she said. "I said I was going to stop playing a while ago, and look where I'm at today."

Ambuul appreciated the encouragement of Capt. Brandon Peer, her company commander at the 229th Military Intelligence Battalion.

"He told me to go out there and do well and make them proud," she said. "I really love the job that I'm in right now and I'm thankful to be a part of the community."

"She was very concerned about leaving the school and her dogs for such an extended period of time," Peer said of Ambuul's concerns. "This was a once in a lifetime opportunity for her and if we have Soldiers pass up these amazing moments because of a sense of duty and selflessly not wanting others to need to fill in we really do a disservice to those special talents that are out there."

American dream speaks to Afghan-born NCO

STORY AND PHOTOS BY PATRICK BRAY,
DEFENSE LANGUAGE INSTITUTE FOREIGN
LANGUAGE CENTER PAO

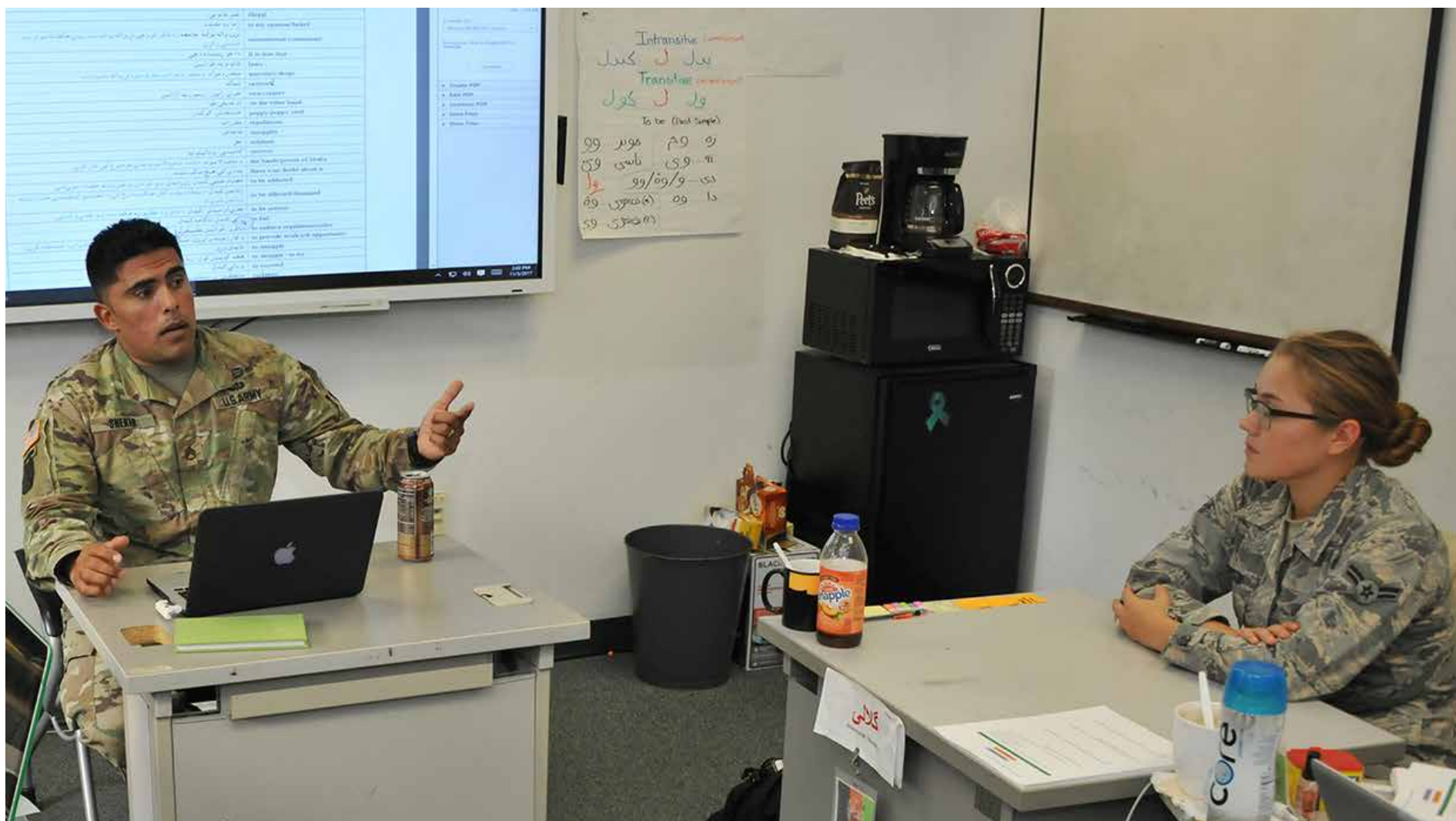
Every Tuesday at 7:30 a.m. the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center command team meets and greets all the new personnel during Joint Services Inprocessing Briefing.

Most are basic training graduates about to tackle the military's toughest training, learning a new language. Others are returning to serve as Military Language Instructors (MLI), within DLIFLC's schools.

During the briefing, Col. Phil Deppert, DLIFLC commandant, has the new MLIs introduce themselves. On this Tuesday, one stood and said, "I'm Staff Sgt. Shekib. I'm coming from Fort Gordon."

Before moving on, with but a moment's hesitation, Deppert said, "Wait. Stand up again. You're a native speaker."

Correct sir. Staff Sgt. Mashal Shekib is from Kabul, Afghanistan, and a native Pashto and Dari speaker. After completing MLI certification in September, he now shares his language and culture with his students, who rely on him as a subject matter expert.



Afghanistan native Staff Sgt. Mashal Shekib teaches a Pashto class at the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center. Originally from Kabul, he immigrated to the U.S. in 2008 and enlisted in the U.S. Army in 2009.

MLIs are NCOs who teach students in their language and serve as an example to them. They bridge the gap between the military units and DLIFLC civilian instructors.

"Staff Sgt. Shekib does a great job of bridging any cultural and knowledge gaps between the students and teachers since he understands both

perspectives as a native Afghan and as a Soldier," said Air Force Capt. Alexandra Fabros-Davis, assistant dean, Undergraduate Multi-Language School. "It helps both sides resolve any miscommunication in and out of the classroom."

Watching students study and struggle with Pashto reminds Shekib of his own experience

learning English in his home country. He believes it is more difficult to be an English speaker learning Pashto than vice versa.

"It's a struggle to learn another language and seeing my students struggle kind of echoes that experience for me," Shekib

Continued on next page

American

said. "But I can empathize more when my students need help."

His road to DLIFLC began in his homeland, a non-stop war zone for as long as he can remember. In Kabul in the 1990s, Shekib attended public school, learning English at schools set up by non-governmental and charitable organizations.

War began in 1978 followed by the Soviet invasion, the Afghan Civil War, years of tribal fighting, the establishment of the Taliban Islamic Emirate, the NATO invasion, and insurgencies that have lasted to this day.

But the worst of times, Shekib said, was during the 1996-2001 Taliban rule. He grew up in a "very non-religious, very educated family," he said, but both of Shekib's parents were without work during those years.

His father was unemployed solely because he worked for the government prior to the Taliban takeover. His mother could not continue teaching because women were forbidden to work under the Taliban. Shekib's sister could not go to school for the same reason.

As secular Afghanis struggled for normalcy under Taliban control, another shockwave would strike while Shekib was in high school on Sept. 11, 2001.

"I remember watching the news showing the collapse of the World Trade Center, but I could tell the goal behind the newscast wasn't to tell people how bad this was," said Shekib. "Basically, it blamed the Western world instead of sympathizing with the situation."

Taliban-sponsored news of the twin towers falling was followed by footage of scorched earth tactics and massacres by the Russian military during the Soviet-Afghan War. Designed to rally the Afghans against the potential war to come, Shekib did not buy this propaganda.

"My take was that they (Al-Qaeda) just killed innocent people," Shekib said. "I knew, in the bottom of my heart, that wasn't right."

The U.S. overthrew the Taliban government in October 2001, launching Operation Enduring Freedom, though Taliban insurgents continued to fight the U.S. and Afghan forces.

Continued on next page

Staff Sgt. Mashal Shekib works with the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center's mascot, Pfc. Lingo. When he's not teaching Pashto, Shekib likes to train dogs and operates his own canine training academy.



American

"I hate the word invasion. I never saw the U.S. as invaders," Shekib said. "I saw them as liberators because they liberated me and my family."

While attending Kabul Polytechnic University, he

taught English to Afghans. Classrooms were divided by curtains in a building that was a large hallway.

"Three or four military police walked down that hallway one day, watching all of us," Shekib said. "They waved at me and I waved back."

Soldiers approached Shekib, greeting him with "Salaam alaikum" and asked, "If we were to tell you that we're going to hire you right now as our interpreter would you leave this job and work for us?"

For Shekib this was a dream

come true. "I said yes and they said 'Okay, let's go now.'"

"But hold on a second," Shekib continued as the MPs paused, "Let me get my bike."

Telling Shekib not to worry, the Soldiers loaded his bike into a Humvee and it was waiting for him when he arrived at Camp Phoenix, the NATO military installation near the Kabul airport.

"I'd never leave my class like that today," Shekib adds to reassure his DLIFLC students. "But the next day I did go back and formally resign."

Eventually his parents returned to work and his sister went back to school. Shekib spent two years with the MPs whose mission was the security of Camp Phoenix and training Afghan National Army Military Police.

"The senior NCOs in the company mentored the Afghan MP Company commander," said Shekib. As Soldiers taught and trained Afghans, he translated.

In June 2008, he received a visa under the Afghan Special Immigrant Visa Program, designed for those employed by the U.S. government. A distant cousin of Shekib's in the U.S. helped Shekib to settle in Dumfries, Virginia.



Staff Sgt. Mashal Shekib (right) was a specialist serving as a linguist with the 10th Mountain Division in Afghanistan in 2010, two years after emigrating to the United States and one year after enlisting through the Army's o9L program.

Photo by Sgt. Blair Neelands, 10th Mountain Division PAO

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American

One of his first memories of arriving in the U.S. was at the airport where he noticed an abundance of electricity unlike anything he had seen before in Afghanistan.

"The lights, the brightness and the loudness of everything – the first question I asked my cousin was, 'Do you all have this every day? Like 24 hours? What time do they shut it off?'" Shekib said, followed with a laugh. In Afghanistan, electricity was sporadic, only supplied for a few hours a day and definitely none at night.

After a brief job teaching Pashto and Dari to Air Force defense attaches, Shekib enlisted in the U.S. Army under the O9L translator program. Pashto and Dari linguists were in high demand and the program began in 2003 to hasten enlistment and citizenship of native speakers. U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services was on hand at Fort Jackson, South Carolina, to expedite citizenship for Shekib, which he received upon AIT graduation.

"Staff Sgt. Shekib's family success is an American dream story, from Kabul to California with many twists and turns," said DLIFLC Command Sgt. Major Ryan Ramsey. "He embodies courage, hard work

and sacrifice with all his combat operations in Afghanistan."

He returned to Afghanistan in 2010, deploying as a military linguist with the 3rd Battalion, 6th Field Artillery Regiment of the 10th Mountain Division. He reenlisted into military intelligence and served at Forts Bragg and Gordon, bypassing DLIFLC.

"I was very surprised to learn that I would be coming here," Shekib said.

Teaching puts a smile on his face, especially when he hears students start to pronounce letters and sounds that don't even exist in English, and then master them.

Fabros-Davis says Shekib's skills are invaluable in the classroom because he understands the military demands on students and has the insight of a native speaker.

"It's easy to get bogged down with the amount of administrative work, but Staff Sgt. Shekib does make it a priority to have as many contact hours with students as possible," she said. "I think the students were more genuinely surprised that he's a native Afghan and is serving in the Army. Many of them assumed he was Hispanic."



Afghanistan native Staff Sgt. Mashal Shekib teaches a Pashto class at the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center.

Even in Shekib's spare time, he is an instructor. While at Fort Gordon, he volunteered with the Fulton County, Georgia, Sheriff's Department in their K9 operation. He has started a business training dogs and has become fast friends with the DLIFLC mascot, Pfc. Lingo.

Teaching humans a language or animals how to behave aren't much different, Shekib said.

"In both my roles I cannot teach one way: just tell the student or dog what to do," he said. "It's a two-way interaction, to get past distractions, and have a give and take. A dog will tune you out as fast as a student.

"When you're succeeding at instruction, when a student converses for minutes in Pashto, it's because we were both invested in the learning."

Lifetime of competing preps NCO for Army honor



Staff Sgt. Bryan Ivery displays the web belt buckle he earned as the 2017 AIT Platoon Sergeant of the Year.

Photo by Amber K. Whittington, Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center PAO

By BRIAN LEPLEY, PRESIDIO OF MONTEREY PAO

The eight other candidates for the Army's 2017 AIT Platoon Sergeant of the Year can blame Lisa Brotherton.

Staff Sgt. Bryan Ivery, the PSOY winner named at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, Sept. 15, credits his hyper-competitiveness to his aunt Lisa.

"We grew up together and she was 10 years older than me. We played all kinds of games and she showed me no mercy," remembers Ivery. "I learned. Since I was young I have to bring my best to any competi-

tion I'm in."

"Iron sharpens iron" is Ivery's motto, an ethos born from those losses to Brotherton as a child. His duty at Company B, 229th Military Intelligence Battalion, is preparing new arrivals for the academic rigor of the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center.

"Motivation is definitely a driving factor in my day-to-day activities with these new Soldiers," said Ivery, one of five platoon sergeants leading the battalion's Phase Four training.

Continued on next page



FORT LEONARD WOOD, Missouri -- Staff Sgt. Bryan Ivery readies for push-ups as Staff Sgt. Chad Hickey assists during the physical fitness test event Sept. 12 at the 2017 Army AIT Platoon Sergeant of the Year competition.

Photo by Mike Curtis, U.S. Army

Ivery

Co. B 1st Sgt. Clint Rowe and Ivery are products of DLIFLC, a joint service school where students can spend more than 18 months learning languages, dialects and cultures like Farsi, Arabic, Korean, Urdu and many others.

"Staff Sgt. Ivery gets Soldiers right out of basic and brings them up to the level DLI and the Army needs them to be in order to succeed," Rowe said. "His dedication and grit are paramount."

The Army AIT PSOY event, run by Training and Doctrine Command, was modeled on a hectic combat mission and tested that motivation, Ivery said. It was five days of strenuous tasks on a punishing schedule.

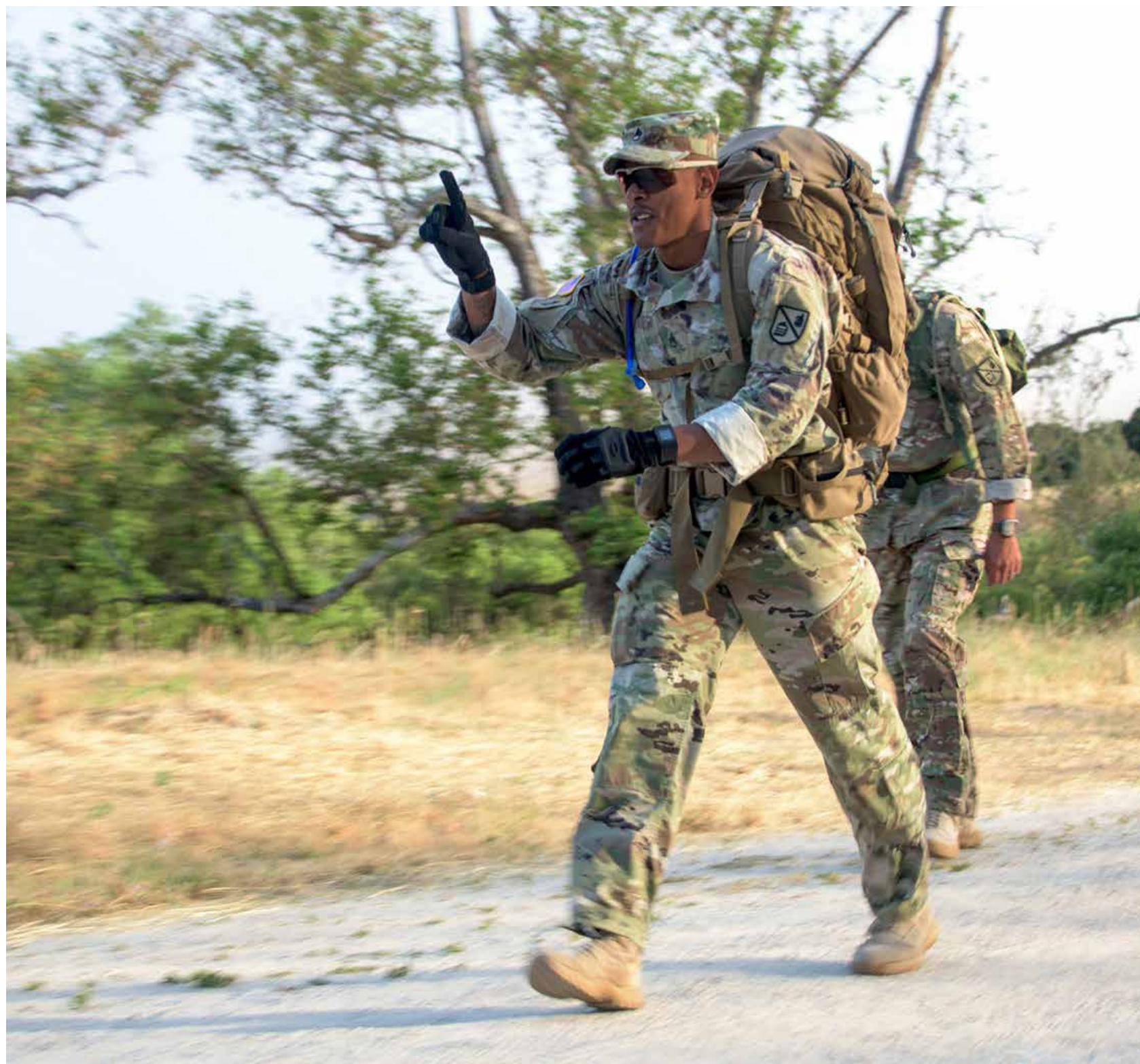
"Starting Monday (Sept. 11), we didn't know what was coming next until they told us. PT, taking tests, range, the board... it was non-stop," he said. "We didn't get much sleep. There was zero down time. That was by design."

Ivery's coach at the Army Drill Sergeant and AIT Platoon Sergeant of the Year competition was Rowe. By the end of day two, the first sergeant knew his NCO was finishing high.

"In every event Ivery was first or second and if he was second, it was always a different NCO in first," Rowe said. "He and another contestant were the best I saw there in military bearing and PT."

Ivery's feats weren't only recognized by his first sergeant. "By Thursday morning, the other competitors were calling him champ," remembers Rowe.

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FORT ORD NATIONAL MONUMENT, California -- Staff Sgt. Bryan Ivery gestures to a passing hiker during the road march portion of the 229th Military Intelligence Battalion AIT Platoon Sergeant of the Year competition June 1.

Photo by Amber K. Whittington, Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center PAO



FORT LEONARD WOOD, Missouri – StaffSgts. Bryan Ivery (left) and Miguel Garcia check each other's awards before entering the board Sept. 14 at the 2017 Army Drill Sergeant and AIT Platoon Sergeant of the Year competition.
U.S. Army photo

Ivery

Seven drill sergeants were after their award alongside the nine platoon sergeants. Ivery regarded everybody as competition.

"It was me against 15, that's how I saw it. There was an award that everybody competed for, the Tobias C. Meister physical fitness award," said the South Carolina native. "After the PT test a drill sergeant and I were tied with a 299 score."

Event administrators decided the tiebreaker would be the score from the Army Combat Readiness Test. The Meister award went to Ivery.

"Sheer persistence and determination was the difference for me in platoon sergeant of the year," he said. "At that level, when you have that type of competition, the best that the Army has to offer, I thought 'I would love to be on top.'"

Ivery's achievement has earned him a new set of duties, an assignment to the Center for Initial Military Training at Fort Eustis, Virginia, reporting in December.

"I will be on a team that will visit basic combat training and advanced individual training sites to see that things are being done according to reg and to learn about new methods and ideas that are being used," he said.

On losing his NCO, Rowe says "It's bittersweet and I'm not happy about it," but he believes that Ivery will be sitting at Rowe's desk one day.

But first, Ivery's next iron to sharpen is improving the Army's initial training process, the latest step of the journey aunt Lisa began.



The Presidio of Monterey's annual Holiday Tree Lighting Ceremony was at POM Chapel, Dec. 1. The ceremony included musical performances by Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center Joint Service Choir and a visit from Santa Claus who arrived via POM Fire Department engine and heard the gift wishes of Pvt. Kourtlyn Leicht of the 229th Military Intelligence Battalion. See more photos at

www.flickr.com/photos/presidioofmonterey/albums/72157667090600909

Photo by Joseph Kumzak, Presidio of Monterey PAO

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