

THE JRTC AND FORT POLK

# GUARDIAN

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# Emergency resources: Holiday season preparedness

DPTMS

FORT POLK, La. — Preparing for the holiday season requires understanding each of the unique risks that you may face. The winter months also bring inclement weather that might add additional hazards while on the road. With so many people traveling for the holidays, the potential for vehicle accidents and traffic jams increases.

A recent study concluded that accidents increase by 34% on Black Friday, and a poll from the National Safety Council found that 66% of drivers say they allow themselves to be distracted while driving in parking lots during the holidays. In addition to distracted driving, accidents tend to occur due to road rage and fatigued and impaired driving. It's imperative to be aware of all possible situations that could result in safety issues over the holidays.

**Personal holiday preparedness:** A variety of factors can merge at shopping centers during the holiday season to cause surprising effects. It's important to think about these elements ahead of time and make plans to avoid them. Consider the following holiday conditions and situations that you should make part of your personal holiday preparedness efforts.

•**More people in shopping centers and malls** — crowds mean everything is different and it's harder to get from one destination to another. More people are looking for stores and children are much more easily separated from parents.

•**Busy roads** — travel time to your shopping locations will be longer during the holidays due to more vehicles and road conditions. Be sure to leave early enough to



allow time for possibly congested travel conditions.

•**Busy parking lots with no parking spots** — be prepared to spend additional time looking for a parking spot. Drive cautiously because pedestrians are at extra risk in the parking lots. Know when you are approaching a risk point (like a crosswalk) and stay alert.

•**Shoppers' emotions and stress** — the holiday season is a joyful time that can also bring out the worst in anyone. Shoppers are scrambling to prepare, scrambling to find sold out toys and trying to make their way through heavy crowds. They can be stressed and act out. Be prepared to keep calm.

•**Personal holiday activities** — the holiday season can be demanding thanks to family gatherings, holiday shopping and friends inviting you to social events. These situations can cause tiredness and impair how well you function. Make being alert a priority.

•**Winter illness and medication** — colds are more prevalent

during the holiday season due to weather and tiredness (immune system is weakened). Try eating right, get enough sleep and practice healthy habits like frequent hand washing to avoid illness.

•**Dark earlier** — with daylight saving time, it gets dark earlier. People become less attentive and sleepy more easily. This is especially important to consider when driving.

•**Weather related procedures** — winter weather watch and notification procedures are vital. The weather can be unpredictable and have an enormous impact on your routine and shopping venues.

•**Slip and fall hazards** — more people mean more spills. Also, precipitation means slippery entrances. Cold temperatures can mean icy patches. Treat all walking and driving surfaces as a constant focus of safety to watch.

For more information on how to plan and prepare for all disasters or hazards, contact Tommy J. Morris, Emergency Manager at 337.531.4875 or [tommy.j.morris2.civ@mail.mil](mailto:tommy.j.morris2.civ@mail.mil).



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For more information on Fort Polk units and happenings visit the following Facebook pages: [@JRTCOperationsGrp](https://www.facebook.com/JRTCOperationsGrp/), [@BayneJonesACH](https://www.facebook.com/BayneJonesACH/) or [@fortpolkmwr](https://www.facebook.com/fortpolkmwr).



**Cover photo:** 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division Soldiers disembark an aircraft and are welcomed home at the Alexandria International Airport. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Kelsey Miller).



# Fort Polk celebrates as Patriot Brigade returns home

By Maj. ANDREA KELLY  
3rd BCT Public Affairs Officer

FORT POLK, La. — When called upon, the Patriot Brigade answered the country’s call. Over the last two weeks, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division held several ceremonies to welcome home more than 1,300 Soldiers.

These Soldiers deployed at a moment’s notice to aid in the withdrawal of U.S. Forces from Afghanistan. Their mission also supported the State Department effort to withdraw American citizens and vulnerable Afghans.

“In the most 10th Mountain fashion, this brigade deployed with no fanfare on short notice,” Col. Matthew J. Hardman, 3rd BCT Commander said. “We accomplished numerous missions in Afghanistan, Qatar and Kuwait.”

The Soldiers’ mission involved treating wounded Americans and Afghan civilians, directly caring for and supporting Afghan refugees and, in some cases, they saw combat.

“Each of these Patriots acted with tremendous empathy and professionalism, easing the plight of thousands of refugees,” Hardman said. “They represented the American people in the best way possible, as a generous and kind people aiding others in their time of need.”

After approximately four months, the brigade reunited these Soldiers with their Family and friends — just in time to highlight Military Family Month, which is celebrated across the Department of Defense in the month of November.

The Village of Anacoco honored the returning Soldiers with a mayoral escort from Alexandria to Fort Polk. Mayor Keith Lewing was joined by Anacoco Fire Department and Combat Veterans Motorcycle Association personnel.



*Soldiers disembark an aircraft and are welcomed home at the Alexandria International Airport.*

“The reason we escort these men and women home after a deployment is because of the sacrifice they make for us,” Lewing said. “We know freedom isn’t free and these men and women are true heroes.”

Though reuniting is a joyous occasion, during each welcome home ceremony, Hardman reminded the Soldiers and families to support and be patient with one another.

“Reuniting is joyous but often not without friction,” Hardman. “Separation, hardship, and stress have had their effects both forward and here at home. Be patient with yourselves and one another. Support one another, and never forget that you make this team. And together this team can conquer mountains.”



*Mayor Keith Lewing and fellow Anacoco residents greet Soldiers as they arrive home from deployment.*



*Col. Matthew Hardman, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division commander, speaks at each welcome home ceremony.*



*Pfc. Daltorio admires a poster that his daughter and wife created for his return.*



# Fort Polk Education Summit encourages communication, cooperation

By ANGIE THORNE

Public Affairs and Communications

FORT POLK, La. — The Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk's second annual Education Summit was held at Fort Polk's Warrior Center Nov. 3. The event included participants from the Vernon Parish School Board, Fort Polk Garrison Command, Child and Youth Services, Fort Polk Progress, Vernon Parish teachers and more. The summit provides a venue for education stakeholders such as teachers, students and parents an opportunity to communicate and get feedback that can benefit everyone. The summit focused on the importance of education to the quality of life for Soldiers and their Families.

Fort Polk Garrison Commander, Col. Samuel P. Smith Jr., welcomed those in attendance.

"We are here to talk about our continued partnerships and how to address our education concerns with teachers, parents, the school board and the installation as we move forward," he said. "Our main purpose is to improve communication between our stakeholders. We look forward to getting your feedback on how we can continue to improve."

The summit was recorded and then posted to Facebook to reach as many people as possible. The link to the video is <https://www.facebook.com/JRTCandFortPolk/videos/5114908395192527>.

Viewers were encouraged to leave comments and feedback as they watched. They were also told they could leave ICE comments about their education concerns by visiting the Fort Polk School Support Service Interactive Customer Evaluation at [https://ice.disa.mil/index.cfm?fa=card&sp=82434&s=257&dep=\\*DoD&sc=6](https://ice.disa.mil/index.cfm?fa=card&sp=82434&s=257&dep=*DoD&sc=6).

Tiffany Koch, Fort Polk School Liaison Officer, said ICE is a great tool to tell Fort Polk how to become better.

"It can tell us where we are succeeding, as well as give us new ideas and suggestions," she said.

Smith said the summit addresses initiatives that have already been put into motion.

"It's about how far we have come, where we are and where we are going," he said.

Smith said the school systems at Fort Polk are ranked number three and five in math and reading and number three in preparing high school seniors for college based on test scores.

"That's phenomenal. Could we be number one or two? Yes, and we are striving to get there, but these numbers constitute a quality education that we want Families to take advantage of during their tenure at Fort Polk," he said.

Smith said there are only two Department of Defense school systems that rank higher than Fort Polk — Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington and Fort Belvoir, Virginia.



*Lisa Lohman, Vernon Parish School Board Curriculum supervisor, (left) speaks at the Education Summit Nov. 3 as, from left to right, Leslie Ortiz, VPSB Curriculum supervisor, special ed, Fort Polk Garrison Commander, Col. Samuel P. Smith Jr., Fort Polk School Liaison Officer, Tiffany Koch, VPSB Superintendent, James Williams and VPSB Assistant Superintendent, Mike Kay, listen to what she has to say.*

"We rank third across all Army installations when it comes to our quality of education," he said.

Initiatives discussed during the summit included funding, the STARBASE (Science and Technology Academies Reinforcing Basic Aviation and Space Exploration) program, expanded STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts and Mathematics) opportunities in Vernon Parish schools, expanded course offerings, special education, gifted and talented classes and more.

Koch said the Vernon Parish School Board is Fort Polk's number one partner in education.

"Every day our service members living on Fort Polk entrust the Vernon Parish School Board to educate their children," she said. "The summit provides a transparent forum for stakeholders to work together as we share the challenges and successes that are essential to continue enhancing the quality of education that the Vernon Parish School Board offers, not only our military children, but all students who are vital assets to our nation's future."

Vernon Parish School Board Superintendent, James Williams, reiterated that communication is the key to working together and making education the best it can be.

"It's a challenge, not just in Louisiana or Fort Polk, but nationwide. The summit allows us to get the word out about the opportunities we have available for children in our school system," he said.

The Vernon Parish School District has 28 schools and more than 8,000 students, 20% of which are military dependents.

Williams said he was proud of the quality education Vernon Parish schools offer military Families moving to Fort Polk.

"We have high standards and take pride in the work we do as we communicate and cooperate with our military community. We all have a bright future as we continue to work toward our educational goals," he said.

Koch said thanks to quality of life initiatives at Fort Polk, there has been an opportunity to enhance the quality of education offered here.

"Today we celebrate that by signing a memorandum of understanding for partnership that includes school-based behavioral health. This was a quality of life initiative that started more than two years ago and we are excited to see it come to fruition," she said.

Koch discussed big wins for enhanced education on the installation and local school system:

- School based behavioral health — provided by Fort Polk
- STARBASE
- Expanded STEAM opportunities in Vernon Parish Schools
- Department of Defense Education Activity expanded virtual high school access
- Special education working group and expanded partnership workshops
- Louisiana Department of Education Regional STEM Center participation
- Early HeadStart program established at North Polk Elementary
- Use of education technology platform with 1-to-1 technology devices
- Out-of-state teacher certification legislation
- Purple Star legislation (This approved Senate Concurrent Resolution requests the Louisiana State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to create a Purple Star School Award Program, administered through the state Department of Education using designated criteria in the SCR to recognize schools that evidence a major commitment to serving students and families connected to the United States Armed Forces).
- Fort Polk youth college tour series
- Central Louisiana Golden Apple of the Year teacher at Leesville High School
- Louisiana Elementary Principal of the Year

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# Education

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at West Leesville Elementary

Lisa Lohman, curriculum supervisor for the Vernon Parish School Board, said there are three things she thinks about when promoting, not only Vernon Parish schools, but their strong partnership with Fort Polk.

"I think about communication, consistency and commitment. Those must be evident in everything we do. We want to effectively communicate the successes of our school district. We are proud of the achievements our system has accomplished and what we can offer to military Families," she said.

Lohman said they want to consistently show that VPSB is dedicated to providing the best educational experience for all students — civilian or military.

"When we think commitment, it's about being a true team. It has to be a partnership between the school district and the military installation (Fort Polk). We are committed to making that happen so we have more Families that want to bring their children here so that we can have the opportunity to give them the quality education they deserve," she said.

Marie Shultz, Fort Polk Exceptional Family Member Program manager, has a daughter in second grade at Parkway Elementary School. She said she would like to see her child's education opportunities continue to grow and expand.

"The Education Summit is a collaboration between the Fort Polk garrison team and the state and parish education system working together to make things better. That gives me hope that things will only continue to improve for my child, as well as other military Families," she said.

Representative Charles Owen, Louisiana District 30, said as a Vernon Parish native, the relationship with Fort Polk is a continuation of efforts that have been ongoing for decades.

"We are all in this together. This is a good place to live and there are a lot of educational opportunities here," he said.

Owen said the transition for older students from high school to college or technical school is fairly seamless and inexpensive on a national scale.

"The scholarship opportunities for graduating seniors is exceptional. There are many good reasons to make Louisiana your home and consider coming here for three years," he said.

Owen said the state legislature and governor are interested in keeping this partnership with Fort Polk strong.

"We have introduced important pieces of legislation on licensure and school enrollment and want you to let us know how we can continue to be of help in any way," he said.



*Education Summit stakeholders listen to speakers as the summit progresses Nov. 3.*

ANGIE THORNE/GUARDIAN



*After the Education Summit concluded, participants took a group photo in front of the Warrior Center.*

Smith said Fort Polk is a quality of life installation and what was talked about in the Education Summit was quality of life initiatives.

"We focused on those 13 areas you heard today. They were used based on last year's feedback that we received from parents, teachers, administrators and community members. We wanted to address each one and we look forward to your feedback so we can take this to the next level and address even more," he said.

Smith said there is no doubt that everybody taking part in the summit is committed to pro-

viding quality educational opportunities for children. "I heard the words 'you can't be what you can't see,' today. So we are going to show you what we are and what we want to continue to be," he said.

If you haven't done so already, visit the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk Facebook page to watch the Education summit in its entirety.

For any questions or concerns about education or local schools, contact Tiffany Koch at 337.531.6673.



# Beinkemper earns 2020 IMCOM Stalwart Award

By CHUCK CANNON  
Public Affairs and Communications

FORT POLK, La. — Subject matter expert. Outstanding work ethic. Advocate. Leadership. Champion. Innovator. Diligent. Selfless service. Commitment to excellence. Respect for others. Integrity.

These are just a few of the words used by those who know her to describe Betty Beinkemper, winner of the Installation Management Command's 2020 Stalwart Award for Readiness. Beinkemper received her award virtually during the annual Garrison Commanders Conference, Nov. 17.

Beinkemper serves as the Chief of the Army Housing Office, supporting the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk, the Army's premier training center for light infantry forces. Fort Polk is home to more than 8,000 Soldiers, 12,500 Family members and 16,000 retirees and contractors, all of whom deserve superior service.

Beinkemper is the subject matter expert for installation housing, overseeing 3,661 housing units and 2,178 barracks rooms valued at \$842 million. She is trusted with maintaining accountability of \$6.2 million of barracks inventory housed in three large warehouses on the installation. She is also charged with overseeing the operations and maintenance of more than 964 washers and dryers valued at \$479,000. In addition, she manages a \$186,000 per year annual repair contract to keep washers and dryers operational throughout the installation.

Fort Polk Garrison Commander Col. Sam Smith said the award, presented to just 15 employees across 73 Army installations worldwide, is prestigious.

"Only a select few are chosen," he said. "Betty, based on her dedication, commitment, loyalty and passion for our Soldiers, Families and installation, is a worthy recipient. Having someone such as Betty to advocate for our Soldiers is phenomenal."

Smith said Beinkemper has been an integral part of the Fort Polk Family throughout her government career.

"It's not just one thing; she's been involved in several different areas at Fort Polk," he said. "Her attitude, how she carries herself and leads her team, is something everyone should aspire to achieve. It's a huge accomplishment and I'm glad Betty was able to bring it to Fort Polk."

Deputy Garrison commander Johnny Bevers agreed.

"The entire garrison came together and agreed that Betty Beinkemper should be our nominee for the Stalwart Award," he said. "I was proud to nominate her and happy she won it."

Smith said when Beinkemper was placed in charge of Army Housing on Fort Polk she began

by re-branding the housing office from the "Residential Community Initiative" to the Fort Polk "Army Housing Office." She also relocated her team outside of the housing partner's footprint, so customers could easily recognize her office as the housing "advocate" whose sole job is to support the housing needs of Soldiers and their Families. Beinkemper advocated for (and earned) four additional quality assurance inspectors to inspect the housing conditions throughout the Fort Polk housing portfolio. She developed processes, created checklists and thoroughly trained her new group of QAs to conduct detailed assessments of the installation's housing assets and ensured all work orders were completed timely and to a very high standard.

Bevers said Beinkemper forged a strong and professional relationship with the installation's privatized housing partner — Corvias — creating tremendous value for the installation's housing residents and the Army. She also led installation leaders through a complex maze of legal documents to invest in the Fort Polk housing portfolio. She championed three initiatives to inject a \$155 million capital investment to demolish, improve and build new homes on the installation.

"The award is not just for me; it's for the Army Housing Office team," Beinkemper said as she was reminded of the work accomplished under her leadership. "I'm humbled. I don't do my job for an award, I do it for our Soldiers and their Families."

Beinkemper, having been a Soldier's wife who understands Army Family needs, said that motivates her to give her best every day.

"I've been around the military my whole life," she said, adding that her father was also a Soldier. "If we can do one small thing to make our Soldiers and Families happy, we should do it. Although Fort Polk housing is privatized, our office ensures every home is ready for a Family to move in."

Beinkemper developed the Fort Polk Walking Town Hall program where the installation's senior leaders walk through Fort Polk's neighborhoods to speak directly with residents about their living conditions and concerns and discuss good news stories surrounding Fort Polk's ever-improving quality of life. This innovative program occurs quarterly and is lauded by all who participate, making it a "best practice" for the installation. The program is recognized by Headquarters, Installation Management Command as an event that promotes strong communication ties between housing occupants and installation leadership. Other installations are now catching on to Beinkemper's concept, adopting similar strategies.

Beinkemper has also championed the effort to increase Fort Polk's Basic Allowance for Housing and has worked diligently with Di-



rectorate of Public Works engineers to forge a strategy to improve water quality for Fort Polk's residents. She worked with the local water company to begin flushing the lines and laid the foundation for a solid strategy to install "green sand filter" technology to remove the iron and manganese from the water supply.

Not one to run and hide when things got tough, Beinkemper stood at the front lines when Hurricane Laura struck the installation. She provided 24-hour assistance to Soldiers and Families before, during and after the storm, and coordinated with military and contractor crews to remove trees and make emergency repairs for Fort Polk Families. She identified the most severely damaged homes and immediately placed Families in hospitality suites until a new home could be leased.

Bevers said Beinkemper possesses high standards that exemplify Army and civilian values and that she embodies the Chief of Staff of the Army's No. 1 priority — People.

"She truly lives the values of selfless service, commitment to excellence, respect for others, and integrity every day as she works to make Fort Polk a 'Station of Choice' and the Army's premier training center for light infantry forces," he said.

Beinkemper said the bottom line is she and her staff are there for Soldiers and their Families.

"That's our job, to better their daily lives," she said. "They go to the field; they deploy; we're here to make their lives better. That's my goal and the team's goal every day. When you have a young Soldier come in and thank you for helping them, it's rewarding, and it helps you sleep well at night."

First awarded in 2002, the Stalwart Award is the highest honor available for civilians working in IMCOM and is presented annually. In total, 15 awards are given out to IMCOM professionals throughout the United States and representing installations around the world.



# Fort Polk's Employment Readiness Program propels spouse employment

By ANGIE THORNE

Public Affairs and Communications

FORT POLK, La. — If you are a Fort Polk military spouse and trying to find employment, look no further than Fort Polk's Employment Readiness Program.

Stacey Delgado, Fort Polk's ERP manager, said that military spouses have a plethora of resources available to them when it comes to finding employment.

The following ERP programs and opportunities are central to assisting spouses in their job search, according to Delgado:

- Military One Source Spouse Employment and Career Opportunity Program — the Department of Defense established the program to provide education and career guidance to military spouses worldwide and offers comprehensive resources and tools for all stages of a spouse's career progression including career exploration, education, training and licensing, employment readiness and career connections. For more information visit <https://myseco.militaryonesource.mil/portal/>.

- Military spouse employment partnership — The DoD Military Spouse Employment Partnership connects military spouses with hundreds of partner employers who have committed to recruit, hire, promote and retain military spouses. For more information visit <https://msejobs.militaryonesource.mil/msep/>.

Delgado said the partnership includes business such as AT&T, Lowes, Walmart and Navy Federal Credit Union.

"These employers have agreed to hire spouses in their companies and help them. The positions are usually portable so that spouses can move with them when they have a permanent change of station from installation to installation," she said.

Delgado said she works with these companies locally, as well as other businesses in the surrounding area to get ERP clients connected to jobs.

"I work with the Vernon Chamber of Commerce to get information out to the public about hiring military spouses. We had a parish wide hiring event hosted by Fort Polk's Employment Readiness Program, the City of Leesville and the Greater Chamber of Commerce July 22 at the Vernon Parish Fairgrounds. Fifteen employers participated in the event and provided 21 on-the-spot hires and 32 conditional hires to 57 job seekers," she said.

Living in a smaller community, Delgado said she is able to personally talk to employers about positions.

"I can pick up the phone and ask if they have any open positions because there is a spouse that has the right experience or credentials that would fit in their organization," she said.

The City of Leesville loves to hire spouses, said Delgado.



"When positions come available, they let me know and I post them on the spouses Facebook page and the Fort Polk Employment Readiness Program Facebook page," she said.

- Licensure certification reimbursement program — the program helps military spouses with certifications or licensure in other states to get their state licensure in Louisiana or whatever state they are in. It covers up to \$1,000 and that includes testing.

Delgado said the burden of spouses having to do it themselves is no longer there.

"Last year in April, the state of Louisiana passed a law that went into effect in January of 2021 to help military spouses get through the state's licensing boards easier. If you search on some of the(licensing and certification) websites, you will see that there is actually a military form, which makes the process a lot easier for spouses in Louisiana," she said.

- Military Spouse Relief Act for state income tax — if a sponsor is from a state that doesn't pay state income tax, such as Texas, you don't have to pay state income tax in the state of Louisiana.

Delgado said this can be financially beneficial to military Families.

"When you are looking at those just above minimum wage jobs it's hard to think about losing more money to state taxes. It's one thing when they take out federal taxes, but to also take out state income taxes can hurt financially, especially when you are trying to pay for day-care. But if you don't have to pay those state income taxes, that money could go toward child care," she said.

- Red Cross Pharmacy Technician Program

— this free program is offered to military spouses if they would like to become pharmacy techs.

Delgado said they are taking applications through Nov. 26.

"Classes begin in January and run through July. They will do both classroom work and clinicals at Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital pharmacy. There is a commitment to volunteering after you graduate," she said.

For more information contact [lorie.warchol@redcross.org](mailto:lorie.warchol@redcross.org) or call 337.375.5644.

- Red Cross Dental Assistant Program — dates aren't available yet for this course, but Delgado said it's a wonderful program for military spouses to learn the skills necessary to become dental assistants.

- Jackson-Hewitt and H&R Block scholarship — available for spouses interested in becoming tax professionals.

"They (spouses) take the course and go to work for either company. It's another portable career where spouses can set their own hours. The more they work, the more money they will make, she said.

Delgado said when she first started with the Employment Readiness program, she asked her boss if she could take the course.

"I wanted to take it so that I could better assist our clients by giving them an idea of what to expect when they took the course. I ended up being a tax professional for H&R Block for two years and the knowledge I gained helped me when it came to filing my family's taxes," she said.

Please see **Employment**, page 8



# Employment

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•Family Child Care providers — these are in-home child care providers on Fort Polk.

“There is a need for FCC providers. It’s a great way to earn an income without leaving your home,” she said.

•Home Based Businesses — military spouses interested in operating a small Home Based Business must apply for a command-approved solicitation permit or home based business permit.

“The Army sees this as a positive way for spouses to earn an income and bring that into the home. They can set their own hours, work from home and bring their children to their jobs, which means they don’t have to pay for child care. This is a program that has grown quickly and continues to expand,” she said.

At Fort Polk, Delgado said she can pinpoint jobs available right now.

“The last time I talked to the Main Post Exchange (Army and Air Force Exchange Service) I think they had 55 positions open. A majority of them are in the Food Court, but they have sign-on bonuses from \$700-\$1,000,” she said. “There is upward mobility and it is a federal job that falls under non-appropriated funds. They can take that job from station to station and continue to grow with AAFES.”

Delgado said there are also NAF positions with the Directorate of Family Morale, Welfare and Recreation.

NAF jobs can range from bartenders, security guards and maintenance workers to social workers, mechanical engineers and nurses.

There are also many federal jobs out there that spouses can apply for, said Delgado, anything from administrative positions to a medical support assistant and more.

“Understanding how the federal system works is key to getting those jobs. It can be a challenge for spouses. That’s why we need them to seek subject matter experts and get the training they need. I teach the federal application process and they can make an appointment with me.

“I will sit down with them one-on-one and go through the online process from start to finish to help them learn how to look for jobs, understand what they are looking at by learning how to read the information, help them gather the important information they need to include when applying for a job and double check their profile to make sure they have all the correct blocks marked. It only takes one little thing to disqualify an applicant,” she said. “I can also help spouses build their resumes. I have had success with spouses I’ve personally helped through the process of applying for federal positions.”

Sherina Blett, a Family Readiness Center volunteer, said she is in the process of looking



*The Pumpkin Spice Market was held Nov. 13. This was a chance for spouses who own home based businesses to connect with the Fort Polk community and sell their wares.*

ANGIE THORNE/GUARDIAN



for a government position and took a course with Delgado called 10 Steps to a Federal Job.

“I learned so much from that class including how to write a federal resume, the difference between contract, NAF and General Schedule positions and the ins and outs of the government system,” she said.

Blett said Delgado is a vital resource for spouses when it comes to jobs on and off post.

“If there is a job out there, Stacy knows about it,” she said. “If you need information about employment or don’t understand something, she is the person to talk to,” she said.

Delgado urges spouses to contact her when

they need help finding employment.

“All they need to do is come see me. I am here for them five days a week, Monday through Friday from 8-4:30 to help however I can,” she said. The Employment Readiness Program is located in the Family Readiness Center, 7960 Mississippi Ave.

For more information visit Facebook: Fort Polk Employment Readiness or call 337.531.6922 / 7268.

**Editor’s note:** Watch for the Dec. 3 Guardian e-magazine for part two of this spouse employment series. The next installment focuses on Home Based Businesses.



# Check VIN numbers

The Directorate of Emergency Services Traffic Division will release the following vehicles to the Directorate of Family Morale, Welfare and Recreation if they remain unclaimed. Vehicles are listed with the last four numbers of their VIN number.

If one of these vehicles belongs to you, please contact the Fort Polk Police Traffic Section at 531.1806 / 6675 / 2677.

2006	Ford	Mustang	2407
2011	Toyota	Prius	9170
2011	Chevrolet	Cruz	7126
2011	BMW	4DSD	3071
2002	Chevrolet	Tahoe	0440
1977	GMC	K2500	1813
1998	Toyota	Avalon	1668
2001	Buick	Park Ave	7941
2004	Cadillac	CTS	2634
1998	Ford	Taurus	8440
2017	Nissan	Versa	1496
2004	Infinity	G35	4539
UNK	Sportrailer	trailer	UNK
1991	Tidecraft	V15	F191
2011	Chevrolet	Impala	0135
2002	Ford	Escape	5409
1999	Chevrolet	Suburban	3573
1996	Ford	F150	6750
1996	Acura	4dr	3406
1984	Chevrolet	Corvette	9704
2000	Chevrolet	2500	0222
2005	Honda	Civic	2048
2000	Toyota	Tacoma	0294
2005	Toyota	4dr	8911
1993	Honda	2dr	0478
2017	Ford	Fiesta	9660
2009	Chevrolet	Equinox	7783
2002	Honda	CR-V	7722
2014	Nissan	Maxima	0131
1988	Chevrolet	3500	4195
2005	Mercury	Sable	9544
2011	Chevrolet	Equinox	3730
2014	Chevrolet	Malibu	9771
2009	Chevrolet	Cobalt	8756
2006	Hyundai	Elantra	4769
2019	KIA	Forte	0634
2011	Dodge	Avenger	1373
1999	Ford	F150	6684
2003	Lincoln	Navigator	8394
2008	Chevrolet	Equinox	5638
2004	Lincoln	Town Car	1307
2014	Nissan	Altima	6092
2001	Toyota	Corolla	6348
2005	Ford	F150	9044
2008	Chrysler	PT Cruiser	6573
2005	Nissan	Altima	9465
2017	Nissan	Sentra	3505
2006	Dodge	Charger	5068
2019	Volkswagen	Jetta	7161
1998	Honda	CRV	6564
1995	Ford	Crown Vic.	4288
1995	BMW	530 I	4287
2006	Jeep	Commander	5558



## Fort Polk Soldiers charged with UCMJ violations

### OSJA

FORT POLK, La. — The preamble to the Manual for Courts-Martial states, “The purpose of military law is to promote justice, to assist in maintaining good order and discipline in the armed forces, to promote efficiency and effectiveness in the military establishment, and thereby strengthen the national security of the United States.”

At the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk, the commanding general and subordinate commanders take good order and discipline seriously.

Across Fort Polk, the following disciplinary issues continue to be prevalent: Driving under the influence of alcohol, wrongful use/possession of controlled substances, fraternization, sexual assault and underage drinking.

Below are the most recent examples of adverse legal actions for units within the Fort Polk jurisdiction.

- A specialist assigned to 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, plead guilty at a General Court-Martial to committing abusive sexual contact against his fellow Soldier. He was sentenced to confinement and a bad-conduct discharge. The service member will be required to register as a sex offender

once his confinement is complete. A bad-conduct discharge generally results in the loss of all veteran’s benefits.

- 14 Soldiers were issued a General Officer Memorandum of Reprimand for disobeying a lawful order by refusing to be vaccinated against COVID-19.

- A private first class assigned to 519th Military Police Battalion received a Field Grade Article 15 for wrongful use of tetrahydrocannabinol. They received a punishment of reduction to the grade of E-2, 45 days of extra duty and 45 days of restriction.

- A specialist assigned to 710th Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division received a Field Grade Article 15 for wrongful use of tetrahydrocannabinol. They received a punishment of reduction to the grade of E-2, 30 days extra duty and an oral reprimand.

- A private first class assigned to 2nd Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment, was separated under Chapter 14-12c (Commission of a Serious Offense) for aggravated assault with a firearm. The Soldier was issued a General (under honorable conditions) characterization of service. Generally, this characterization of service results in the loss of a service member’s educational benefits.

### BLACKOUT WEDNESDAY

THANKSGIVING EVE IS THE START OF THE HOLIDAY DRINKING PERIOD

- A **BIGGER** drinking day than **New Year's Eve** or **St. Patrick's Day** in some places
- Especially prevalent in **larger urban areas** and among **college students**
- One of the **top drunk-driving nights** of the year in some areas

If you are in need of a ride call your unit's Staff Duty. On post, you can also call BOSS at 531-1948 or...

**T&T Taxi (0500-2000)**  
(337)239-2525

**Yellow Top Cab (24 hrs)**  
(337)239-6006

## BUZZED DRIVING IS DRUNK DRIVING



# Briefs

## No Guardian

There will be no Guardian published the week of Nov. 29 due to the Thanksgiving holiday. Any required information will be posted to social media.

## BOSS events

If you are far from home, Fort Polk's Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers hosts a Friendsgiving Wednesday at the Home of Heroes Functional Fitness Center at 5 p.m.

The event is free for single Soldiers only. For more information call 337.531.1948.

## COVID-19 vaccine

Schedule your COVID-19 vaccine (Pfizer and Moderna) appointments every Tuesday-Thursday through the Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital call center at 337.531.3011. If this is your second dose please bring your vaccination record with you.

## Parent, youth fun

Sign up for Christmas Cookies and a painting activity at the Siegfried Youth Activity Center, 5538 University Parkway, Dec. 10 from 6-8 p.m.

You and your youth have the opportunity to paint a canvas while engaging in conversation and enjoying Christmas cookies cooked by middle school and teen chefs at MST.

Youth must be registered with MST. To register call 337.531.1992.

**DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE**  
**MHS GENESIS**  
MILITARY HEALTH SYSTEM

COMING TO BJACH  
MARCH 2022

Want to learn more about  
**EHRs and MHS GENESIS?**

Check out the Genesis of GENESIS timeline.

To learn more visit [health.mil/mhsgenesis](https://health.mil/mhsgenesis).

Timeline highlights:  
1979: Basic health services  
1988: Integrated health services  
1996: Comprehensive health services

## Booster dose

Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital has COVID-19 booster shots available for anyone 18 years and older who meet certain criteria. Retirees and beneficiaries can schedule an appointment with the immunizations clinic at 337.531.3011 or online at

[tricareonline.com](https://tricareonline.com). Department of the Army civilian employees and contractors can visit the Occupational Health Clinic, during walk-in hours from 8 a.m.-4 p.m., Monday-Friday, 8099 Georgia Ave., bldg 3515.



## JRTC & FORT POLK PRESENTS

# PLYWOOD CHRISTMAS CARD CONTEST

NOV 8 TO DEC 2

Open to any unit, organization or group affiliated with JRTC and Fort Polk

WINNERS WILL RECEIVE **\$500**

UNIT FUNDS OR MWR FACILITY FEE/RENTAL OF EQUAL VALUE FOR NON-MILITARY ORGANIZATIONS

PLYWOOD CAN BE PICKED UP AT BLDG 3218 STARTING **NOV 8**

CARD WILL NEED TO BE SET UP AT MAIN POST EXCHANGE BY **DEC 2**

CARDS WILL BE DISPLAYED ALONG ENTRANCE RD AFTER THE SNOWFLAKE FESTIVAL

TEXT 337-353-3404 TO COORDINATE PICKUP TIMES



# BJACH's latest OR Tech is Army's newest citizen

By JEAN CLAVETTE GRAVES  
BJACH PAO

FORT POLK, La. — Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital welcomes the Army's newest American citizen to its operating room. Pfc. Savana Neves, operating room specialist, arrived at the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk Oct. 25. On Oct. 29, she was interviewed and sworn in as a United States citizen in New Orleans.

A native of Brazil, Neves came to America six years ago when she was only 14.

"I arrived in the United States my sophomore year in high school and I didn't speak any English," she said. "It was a big transition. I lived in Alabama with my parents who moved here when I was a baby. I learned the language with an app on my phone, by watching television and listening to music."

Neves said she decided to join the Army after high school for the educational opportunities.

"I wanted to go to college and eventually medical school," she said. "I am currently working on my bachelor's degree with the tuition assistance program and I plan to apply for the Army's health professions scholarship program."

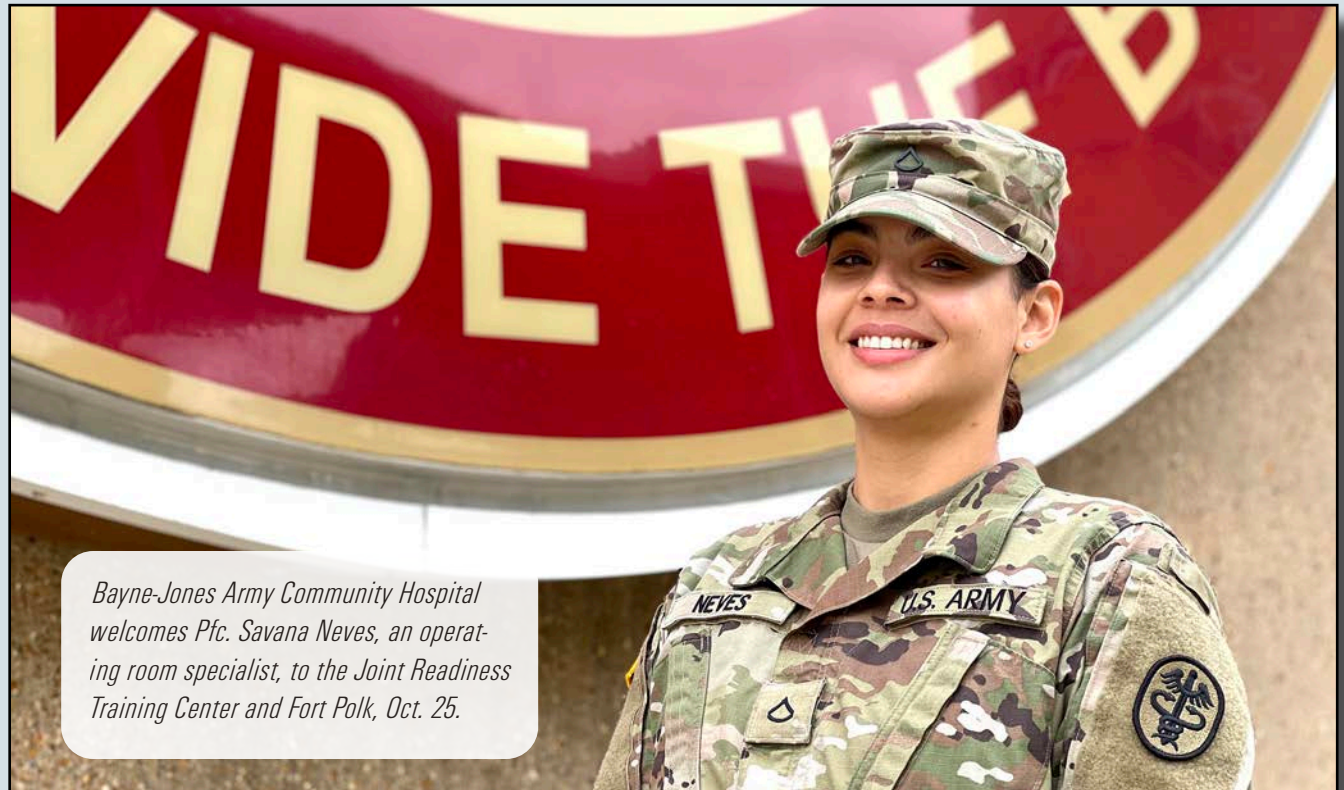
Neves began the application process for her citizenship during her advanced individual training six months ago.

"I have accomplished many things since arriving in the United States," she said. "Getting my citizenship and joining the Army put me on the right track to accomplish my goals."

Neves recommends any Soldiers interested in getting their citizenship to apply.

"The process is not that hard, especially when you are in the military," she said. "Go for it, you won't regret it."

Staff Sgt. Johnathan Fisher, station commander, New Orleans Recruiting Station, said the Army will expedite the citizenship of Soldiers.



*Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital welcomes Pfc. Savana Neves, an operating room specialist, to the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk, Oct. 25.*

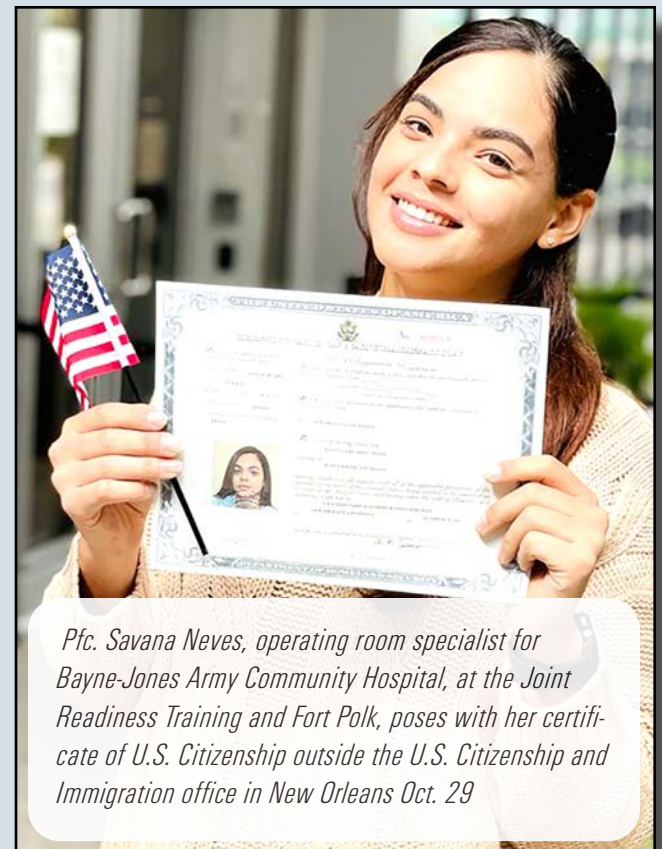
"We will accept 1551 card holders, otherwise known as a 'green card,' or permanent residents into the Army," he said. "Usually, upon completion of advanced individual training and followed by an interview with the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, the Soldiers will be granted citizenship. They will receive a U.S. Citizen certificate and before COVID-19 they had the opportunity to participate in a small ceremony."

Neves said everyone should consider joining the Army.

"If you want to join the military, you should do it," she said. "It is a great opportunity. You get to see a lot of things, go to many places and meet great people."

Neves said Fort Polk is her first duty station, but she likes it so far.

"Being assigned at BJACH affords me the time to pursue my education," she said. "At Fort Polk we are close to Houston, Lake Charles and Alexandria. It is also great for me because I am so close to home."



*Pfc. Savana Neves, operating room specialist for Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital, at the Joint Readiness Training and Fort Polk, poses with her certificate of U.S. Citizenship outside the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration office in New Orleans Oct. 29*

# BJACH hosts after school COVID-19 vaccine clinic for kids

By JEAN CLAVETTE GRAVES  
BJACH PAO

FORT POLK, La. — Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital administered the Pfizer-BioNTech pediatric vaccine to children 5-11 years old Nov. 9 at the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk. BJACH coordinated the clinic after school hours to avoid interference with student academics and filled every available appointment.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention endorsed the immunization of children Nov. 2, following the Oct. 29 U.S. Food and Drug Administration emergency use au-

Please see **Kids**, page 12



*Janelle Kersey, licensed practical nurse, administers the Pfizer-BioNTech pediatric COVID-19 vaccine to Sianna Gautier, 8, at Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital during an after hours vaccination clinic offered at the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk Nov. 9.*



# BJACH highlights nurse practitioners, going the extra mile for you

By JEAN CLAVETTE GRAVES  
BJACH PAO

FORT POLK, La. — Nurse practitioners are a vital part of the health care team at Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital, providing diagnostic, preventive and collaborative health care to the Soldiers and Families stationed at the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk.

Nurse practitioner week is held annually the first week in November and this year's theme was "going the extra mile," according to the American Association of Nurse Practitioners.

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of nurse practitioners and the important role they play in patient-centered care in rural communities like Fort Polk and the surrounding area.

April Draper Davis, chief of occupational medicine for BJACH's Department of Public Health holds a doctorate in nursing practice from the Louisiana State University — Health Science Center in New Orleans.

Davis said fully licensed nurse practitioners who work on federal installations are not required to have a collaborating physician according to federal law, but in Louisiana her

counterparts in the civilian sector are.

"What we learned during the COVID-19 pandemic is that having collaborative practice agreements caused delayed access to care for patients in our communities," she said. "In Louisiana, the governor has waived the requirement for the CPA, but nurse practitioner advocacy groups are fighting to make it a law in order for it to be permanent."

Jeanette Tilley, family nurse practitioner for BJACH's patient-centered medical home, became a registered nurse in 1988.

Please see **Practitioners**, page 13

## Kids

Continued from page 11

thorization of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine. According to the CDC, vaccinating children will help protect them from getting COVID-19, reducing their risk of severe disease, hospitalizations or developing long-term COVID-19 complications.

Capt. Lizamara Bedolla, chief of hospital education and staff development at BJACH, was at the immunization clinic with her children Eliana (11) and Marcos (13).

"It's important for children 5 years old and older to get vaccinated," she said. "Evidence suggests that children are more susceptible than previously thought and are being admitted to hospitals more frequently."

Bedolla said early on in the pandemic, the focus was on the elderly, frontline workers and individuals with underlying health conditions.

"It's important to get kids up to the same level of immunity as we have," she said. "My mother, a breast cancer survivor got her shot, my 84 year old grandmother got her shot, my whole family is about to be vaccinated. I can't emphasize enough how important it is."

Bedolla said as soon as she saw the announcement that kids could be vaccinated, she made an appointment for her daughter.

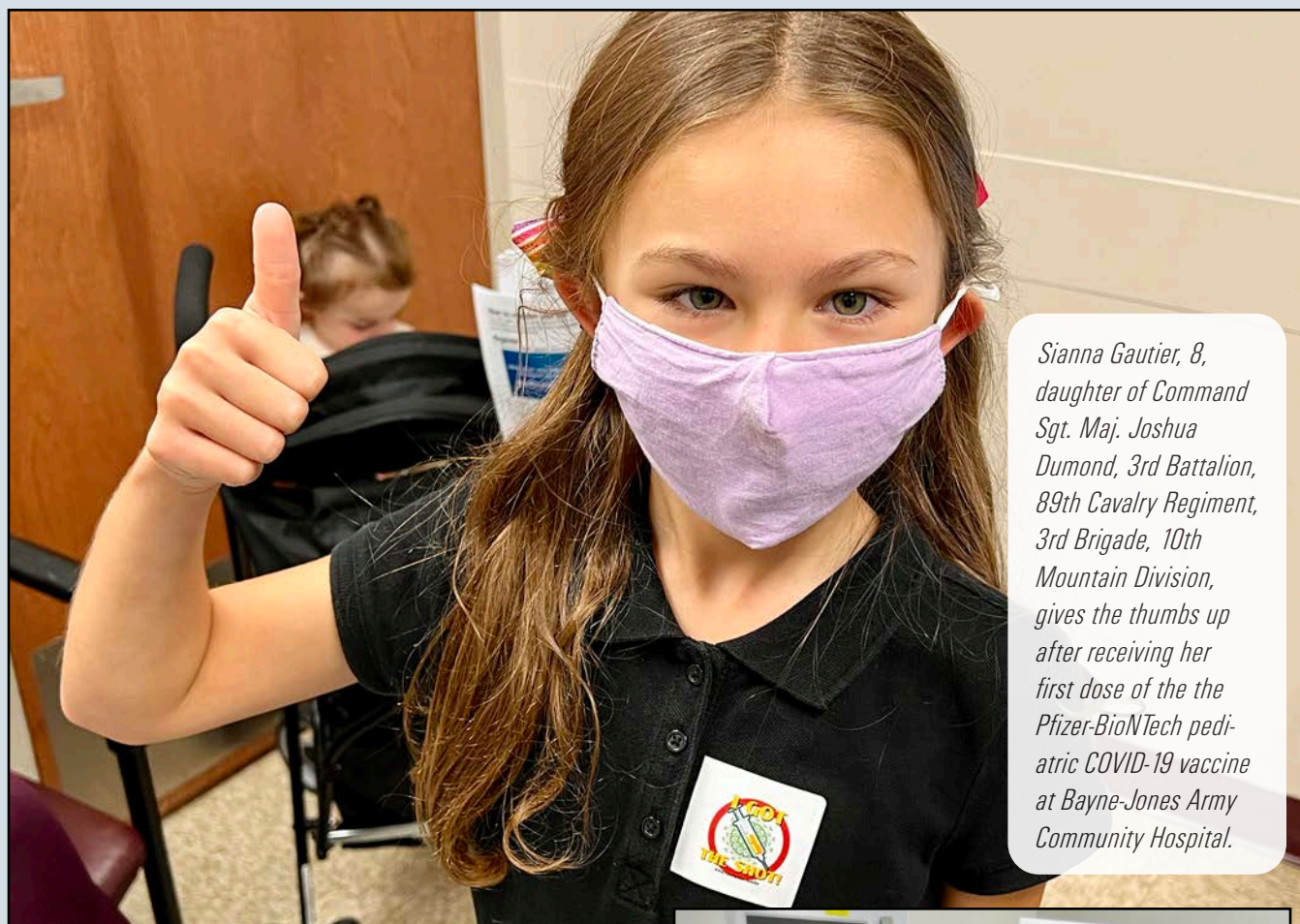
Eliana Bedolla, a student at First Assembly Christian Academy, said her mom encouraged her get the vaccine.

"My mom is a nurse and knows getting vaccinated is important," she said. "I'm not worried about getting a shot, I've gotten a lot of them."

Marcos Bedolla said he got vaccinated as soon as it was available to him.

"I got my shot six months ago," he said. "I heard my mom and dad talking about it and volunteered immediately. I am over COVID! It needs to end as soon as possible."

Sianna Gautier 8, a third grade student at Parkway Elementary School, was getting her COVID-19 vaccine because she is going on vacation soon.



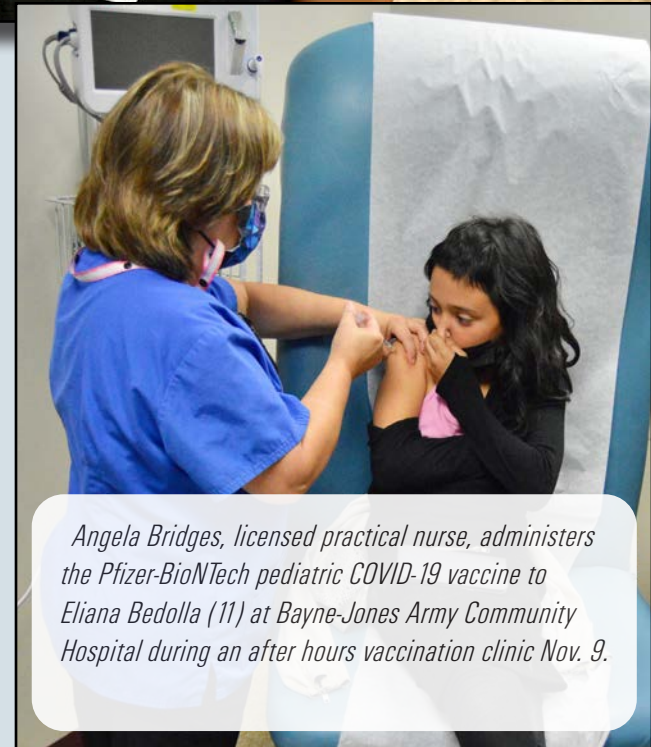
Sianna Gautier, 8, daughter of Command Sgt. Maj. Joshua Dumond, 3rd Battalion, 89th Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Brigade, 10th Mountain Division, gives the thumbs up after receiving her first dose of the the Pfizer-BioNTech pediatric COVID-19 vaccine at Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital.

"We are going on a trip and need to be vaccinated," she said. "I think all kids should get their shot. It's not scary and it will help us stay healthy."

Gautier, daughter of Command Sgt. Maj. Joshua Dumond, 3rd Battalion, 89th Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Brigade, 10th Mountain Division, said she has gotten all the other vaccines. She was excited to have her photo taken while getting her shot to be a positive example for other kids.

BJACH has COVID-19 vaccines available for beneficiaries 5 years old and up by appointment in the immunization clinic.

To schedule an appointment for your initial, second or booster dose contact the call center at 337.531.3011 or through the patient portal at [tricareonline.com](https://www.tricareonline.com).



Angela Bridges, licensed practical nurse, administers the Pfizer-BioNTech pediatric COVID-19 vaccine to Eliana Bedolla (11) at Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital during an after hours vaccination clinic Nov. 9.



# BJACH, Fort Polk, American Red Cross renew partnerships

By JEAN CLAVETTE GRAVES  
BJACH PAO

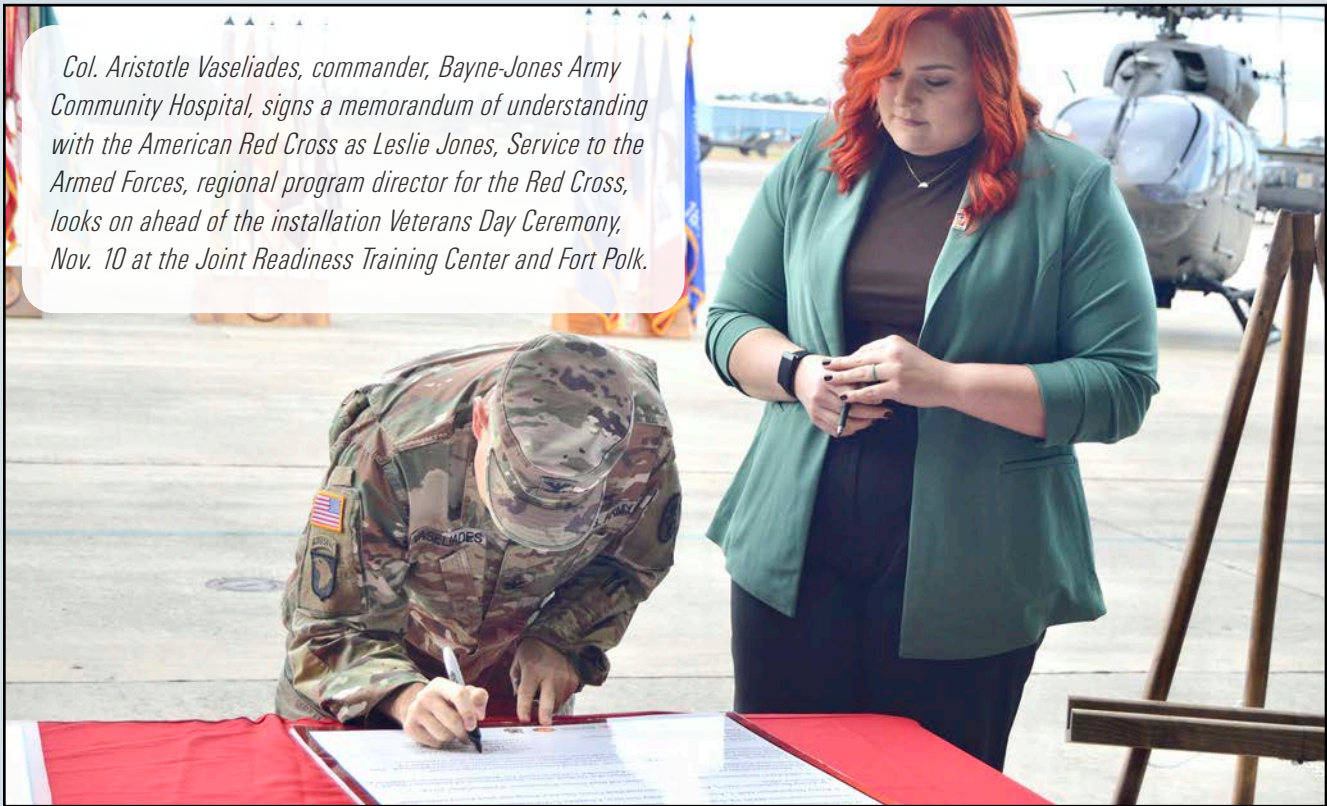
FORT POLK, La. — The American Red Cross, the United States Army Garrison and Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital signed memorandums of understanding at 8:30 a.m. ahead of the installation Veterans Day Ceremony, Nov. 10, at the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk.

Col. Sam Smith Jr., Garrison Commander said Fort Polk and the American Red Cross have a decade's long relationship of mutual support.

"The Red Cross is a great organization," he said, "This agreement will allow us to leverage their expertise and training. The Red Cross is an important asset to the installation. This is a valuable partnership and we are glad to be a part of it."

Smith said the MOU outlines that the Red Cross will provide emergency services, build Family resiliency through training opportunities, engage volunteers, conduct educational outreach briefings, provide information and referral services and develop programs as needed.

"Renewing our agreement with the Red Cross during our Veterans Day Ceremony is significant," he said. "I've learned that there



are a lot of veterans serving in their organization. It's not just about being a veteran, but about giving back to our society and community. Being a Red Cross volunteer is another way you can serve your country."

Col. Aristotle Vaseliades, BJACH commander, said he looks forward to getting Red Cross volunteers back into the hospital and the MOU

outlines what that will look like.

"The COVID-19 pandemic impacted our ability to have volunteers in our facilities," he said. "Renewing our partnership will enable us to reinvigorate our volunteer and training programs at the hospital."

Please see **Red Cross**, page 14

## Practitioners

Continued from page 12

"I wanted to become a nurse practitioner because I am a compassionate person and saw there was a need in rural America," she said. "Nurse practitioners are mid-level providers who can provide care for chronic or acute illnesses, collaborate with physicians and promote preventive medicine."

Tilley said she was motivated to become a nurse practitioner in an effort to do more for her community.

"It's important to highlight nurse practitioners as a profession because of the lack of access to care in some rural areas," she said. "It is important for people to know that we are clinicians, we work in collaboration with other health care providers and we can fill that void."

Danielle Craft, family nurse practitioner at BJACH said she became a nurse practitioner because she saw a shortage of family doctors.

"I want to ensure patients get the care they need when they need it," she said. "I am proud to serve at BJACH. I am able to support our Soldiers and their Families with the care I can provide."

Craft said nurse practitioners have the bedside experience necessary to give patients the



compassionate and empathetic care they deserve.

Lt. Col. Marcia Brimm, a family nurse practitioner is the chief of the patient-centered medical home, Soldier-centered medical home and the traumatic brain injury clinics at BJACH.

"As Army Nurse Corps officers, we play a critical role in providing primary health care

support to our Soldiers and beneficiaries," she said. "We are also called upon as physician multipliers providing primary and emergency quality care during contingency operations."

Brimm said this allows providers to focus on trauma and more serious and complex medical issues at home and during deployment operations.



# Red Cross

Continued from page 13

Vaseliades said BJACH and the Red Cross are currently collaborating on a pharmacy technician program.

"The Red Cross is currently taking applications for the pharmacy tech program, a 26-week classroom and clinical training opportunity for military Family members 18-years and older," he said. "This certification program will give military Family members a transportable career that they can take with them from duty station to duty station. Our partnership with the Red Cross is vital not only for the military treatment facility but our installation."

Leslie Jones, service to the armed forces, regional program director for the Red Cross said the MOU is crucial because it solidifies the relationship the American Red Cross has with the military.

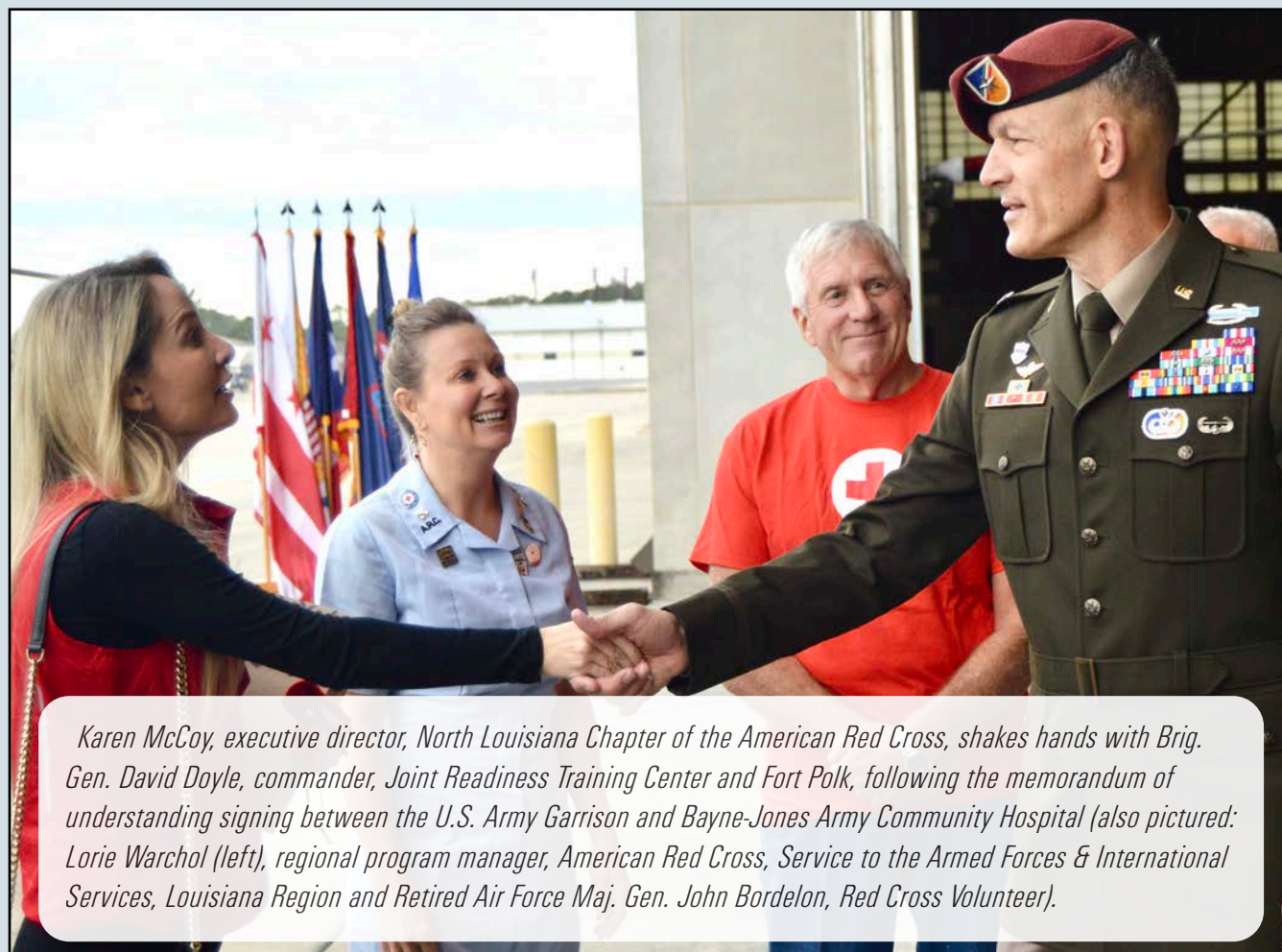
"Fort Polk is considered one of the big 20 installations in the country, which is why we have a fulltime staff person stationed here," she said. "We want to make sure the support is outlined formally. There is so much that the Red Cross does that Soldiers, Families and veterans don't even realize."

Jones said having the support of the Garrison and BJACH commanders enables the Red Cross to bring their services to the community.

"With COVID-19 there was a big shift in how many volunteers were allowed in the hospital," she said. "We are really excited to get the word out that BJACH is ready for volunteers. The Red Cross is the only organization that facilitates volunteerism at the hospital and its facilities."

Chuck Lopushansky is currently one of three Red Cross volunteers on staff at BJACH. As an Army veteran, Lopushansky began his military career as a telephone line installer which evolved into information technology.

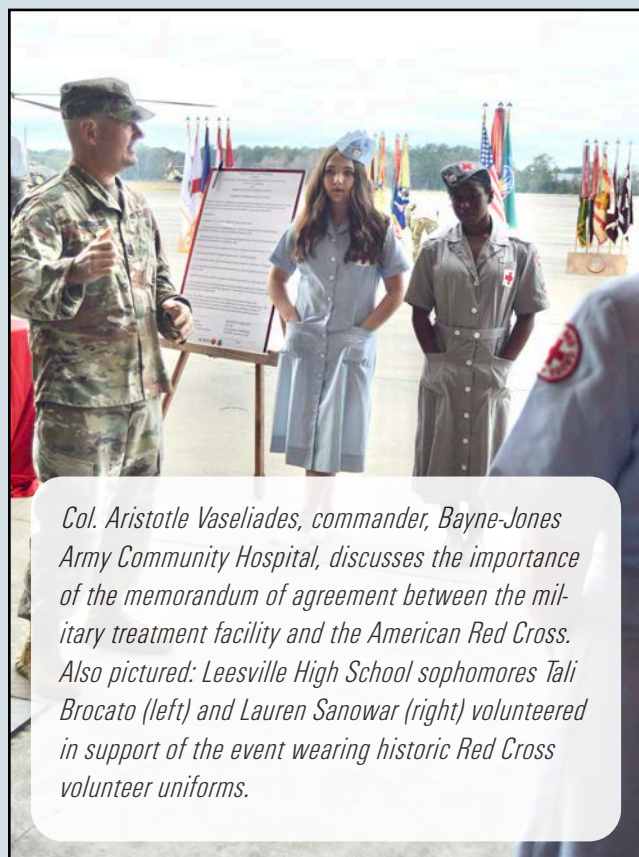
"I began volunteering at BJACH in 2018. I



*Karen McCoy, executive director, North Louisiana Chapter of the American Red Cross, shakes hands with Brig. Gen. David Doyle, commander, Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk, following the memorandum of understanding signing between the U.S. Army Garrison and Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital (also pictured: Lorie Warchol (left), regional program manager, American Red Cross, Service to the Armed Forces & International Services, Louisiana Region and Retired Air Force Maj. Gen. John Bordelon, Red Cross Volunteer).*


work two days per week at the information management division's help desk. I have a background in IT and a bachelor's degree in computer science so it's a great fit for me," he said. "It is rewarding, knowing you are making a difference. I love showing up and helping people out. This MOU is important to me so I can continue to volunteer at the hospital."

**Editor's Note:** For more information on becoming a volunteer at BJACH contact Lorie Warchol, regional program manager, American Red Cross, Service to the Armed Forces & International Services, Louisiana Region at 337.375.5644 or [lorie.warchol@redcross.org](mailto:lorie.warchol@redcross.org).



*Col. Aristotle Vaseliades, commander, Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital, discusses the importance of the memorandum of agreement between the military treatment facility and the American Red Cross. Also pictured: Leesville High School sophomores Tali Brocato (left) and Lauren Sanowar (right) volunteered in support of the event wearing historic Red Cross volunteer uniforms.*





## American Red Cross

# Pharmacy Technician Program

**STARTING 12/13/2021**

**Fort Polk American Red Cross and Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital**

**29 Week Program**  
(Classroom & Clinical Training)

**Applications:**  
25 October 2021 - 26 November 2021  
**Interviews**  
06-09 December 2021

**Orientation:**  
16 December 2021

**Program:**  
03 January 2022 - 15 July 2022

**Program Requirements:**

- ✓ At least 18 Years Of Age
- ✓ Military ID Holder
- ✓ High School Diploma Or GED
- ✓ U.S Citizenship
- ✓ 8 Month Commitment/26 hrs. Per Week



**Contact Information:**  
Email [lorie.warchol@redcross.org](mailto:lorie.warchol@redcross.org)  
Phone 337-375-5644

**Left:** Leslie Jones, service to the armed forces, regional program director for the American Red Cross signs a memorandum of understanding with Col. Sam Smith, commander, U.S. Army Garrison.