

THE JRTC AND FORT POLK

# GUARDIAN

Monday, March 13, 2023 Vol. 50, No. 5



## Inside:

- Hospital wins award .... page 1
- Highlighting Traumatic Brain Injury Month .... page 2
- Army Emergency Relief campaign kick off .... page 5
- R2 Performance Center augments capabilities .... page 7



## QUALITY OF LIFE LINES OF EFFORT



HEALTH CARE



CHILD CARE



HOUSING



SPOUSE  
EMPLOYMENT

## BJACH awarded The Joint Commission's Gold Seal of Approval

By JEAN CLAVETTE GRAVES  
BJACH PAO

FORT POLK, La. — Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital has earned The Joint Commission's Gold Seal of Approval for hospital accreditation and primary care certification by demonstrating continuous compliance with its performance standards. The Gold Seal is a symbol of quality that reflects a health care organization's commitment to providing safe and quality patient care.

The Joint Commission's standards are developed in consultation with health care experts and providers, measurement experts and patients. They are informed by scientific literature and expert consensus to help health care organizations measure, assess and improve performance. The surveyors also conducted onsite observations and interviews.

"As a health care accreditor, The Joint Commission works with health care organizations to help improve patient safety and quality of care through our expert resources and tools, innovative solutions and rigorous standards," said Deborah Ryan, registered nurse, interim executive vice president, Accreditation and Certification Operations, The Joint Commission. "We commend BJACH for its commitment to advance safety and quality for all patients."

Ria Moore, The Joint Commis-  
Please see **Gold**, page 2



### JRTC and Fort Polk

Brig. Gen. David W.  
Gardner

JRTC and Fort Polk

Commanding General

**Col. Sam Smith**

Garrison Commander

**Timothy M. Andersen**

Deputy Garrison Commander

**Deven B. King**

Director of Public Affairs

**Keith Houin**

Deputy Director of Public Affairs

### Public Affairs Staff

**Angie Thorne**

eGuardian Editor

**Jeff England**

Broadcast

**Chuck Cannon**

Community Relations Officer

**Karen Sampson**

Social Media

**Sp. Kelly Acevedo**

Writer

**Editorial Offices**

Building 4919, Magnolia Street

Fort Polk, LA 71459-5060

Voice (337) 531-4033

Fax (337) 531-1401

Email: [usarmy.polk.id-readiness.list.fort-polk-pao-office@army.mil](mailto:usarmy.polk.id-readiness.list.fort-polk-pao-office@army.mil)

Fort Polk Homepage

[home.army.mil/polk/](http://home.army.mil/polk/)

The Guardian is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. Army. Contents of the Guardian are not necessarily official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, Department of Defense, Department of the Army or Fort Polk.

The Guardian can be found on the JRTC and Fort Polk web site at [home.army.mil/polk/](http://home.army.mil/polk/) and the JRTC and Fort Polk Facebook page at [@JRTCandFortPolk/](https://www.facebook.com/JRTCandFortPolk/). Guardian archives can also be found on the JRTC and Fort Polk website.

Links to the Guardian are also included in all-users emails to government email users and by request to non-military units. To be included on all-users messages email [usarmy.polk.id-readiness.list.fort-polk-pao-office@army.mil](mailto:usarmy.polk.id-readiness.list.fort-polk-pao-office@army.mil)

All editorial content of the Guardian is prepared, edited, provided and approved by the Public Affairs Office, Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk.

For more information on Fort Polk units and happenings visit the [@JRTCandFortPolk](https://www.facebook.com/JRTCandFortPolk/) Facebook page.



**Cover photo:** Members of the Fort Polk wrestling team practice their skills Feb. 14 at Fort Polk's Youth Gym. (Photo by ANGIE THORNE)



# BJACH providers, patients meet **TBI** Awareness Month head on

By **JEAN CLAVETTE GRAVES**  
BJACH PAO

FORT POLK, La. — March is Brain Injury Awareness Month and Bayne-Jones Army Community hospital is committed to protecting the health and well-being of the Soldiers assigned to the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk.

Brain health is critical to overall mission readiness. Even a mild traumatic brain injury can have long-lasting effects, according to Elise Leisinger, family medicine doctor for the TBI Clinic at BJACH. This month, the TBI Clinic is educating the community about the signs and symptoms of a brain injury.

“I take care of all active-duty personnel on the installation who have suffered a TBI,” Leisinger said. “If you hit your head and are on active duty, please come see us.”

Dizziness, nausea, feeling off balance, irritability, depression, sleep problems and headaches are all associated with a TBI.

Capt. Amanda Thornton, simulations officer for JRTC operations group is a patient at the BJACH TBI Clinic.

Since she returned from her last deployment, Thornton has been experiencing significant memory loss and behavioral issues.

“My husband, fed up with my irritability and mood swings, asked me to go to behavioral health to get some help,” Thornton said. “During my intake at behavioral health, and based on my deployment history, they referred me for a sleep study and to the TBI Clinic.”

Thornton has been deployed several times and was in a vehicle rollover accident in 2017.

“I was really impressed with the healthcare community here. They didn’t jump straight to prescribing medication. They took the time to assess my symptoms and get to the root of the problem,” Thornton said. “During my assessment for TBI, they sent me to occupational therapy because I was having balance issues. I was also having trouble walking, which was



*Capt. Amanda Thornton, simulations officer for Joint Readiness Training Center operations group takes the automated neuropsychological assessment metric March 6 at the Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital Traumatic Brain Injury Clinic.*

observed by others who often questioned my sobriety.”

The accident affected her inner ear, which was causing balance issues and overcompensation with her eyes. She was also diagnosed with sleep apnea.

“I wasn’t convinced when they sent me for a sleep study. After I received the diagnosis, I was hooked up to the machine and once I started going through cycles of sleep I felt amazing,” Thornton said. “If that is what sleep feels like, I knew I definitely hadn’t been getting it.”

Thornton’s increased awareness of her TBI and learning coping mechanisms and memory tools was reassuring.

Please see **TBI**, page 3



*Capt. Amanda Thornton*

## Gold

Continued from page 1

sion coordinator for BJACH, said this accreditation illustrates compliance with Defense Health Agency, as well as state and federal regulations regarding patient safety.

“The TJC is an independent, not-for-profit organization and is the nation’s oldest, most respected and largest accrediting body in healthcare,” Moore said. “Earning accreditation shows we are doing the right thing at the right time, even when no is looking, to ensure ‘We Provide the Best’ and safest care to our patients.”

The hospital is inspected every three years

for regular accreditation.

“Obtaining accreditation from The Joint Commission demonstrates a commitment and affirmation to our patients and community and that our organization can be trusted to provide safe, high quality healthcare services,” Stacy Hall, chief of quality management for BJACH, said. “The Gold Seal of Approval signifies Joint Commission accreditation and is the highest award an organization can receive. It symbolizes that organization’s commitment to patient compliance, safety and standards. Organizations that bear TJC’s Gold Seal are fully

certified and are the most reliable and quality healthcare providers and staffing partners.”

Col. Aristotle Vaseliades, BJACH commander, said TJC accreditation demonstrates BJACH’s dedication to safe, quality patient care.

“Being awarded our accreditation by this external organization speaks to the high quality of care our team endeavors to provide,” Vaseliades said. “The BJACH team got through this survey with a very few low-risk findings. This accomplishment demonstrates the daily hard work and dedication of our team.”



Continued from page 2

“Because of my pride, I struggled with accepting it for a while,” Thornton said. “Knowing that I’m not crazy and that it’s OK to ask for help has alleviated a lot of the stress I was dealing with.”

Capt. Christopher Julian, occupational therapist at BJACH, provides Soldiers with vestibular and ocular evaluation post-concussion.

According to [Health.mil](https://www.health.mil), a concussion, also known as a mild traumatic brain injury, is a head injury resulting from a hit, blast, blow or jolt to the head that may make you feel dazed or confused, affect your ability to remember what happened and briefly cause you to lose consciousness.

All concussions are different, both in the type and the severity of symptoms each person experiences. Symptoms can start immediately after the injury but may also slowly happen within the first 24-48 hours.

“Soldiers can have symptoms that linger post-concussion that will affect their ability to run, drive or affect other Soldier-related tasks,” Julian said. “I evaluate that and prescribe vestibular exercises to help their brain recompute and help them return to those activities.”

Julian said it’s important to discuss TBI and raise awareness about it.

“I view it as an invisible injury,” Julian said. “Having providers attuned to the signs and symptoms of a traumatic brain injury and how it can impact their daily activities is very important. A TBI can impact a Soldier’s ability to do their jobs, as well as affect their personal lives.”

Safety is the most important way to prevent a head injury.

“But accidents happen. If you hit your head and have immediate symptoms, the best thing to do is get evaluated,” Julian said. “TBIs are best addressed acutely and not chronically. So don’t ignore the injury. Get it evaluated by a professional.”

There are many resources available at the TBI Clinic.

“We want anyone who has been diagnosed with a concussion to come see us within 72 hours,” Leisinger said. “If you are experiencing any concussion-related symptoms, we will send you to optometry and audiology for neuropsychological testing, neurocognitive rehabilitation, speech therapy or medication management. We can take care of anything you are experiencing concussion-related.”

Mary Delrie, registered nurse consultant at the BJACH TBI Clinic, encourages people to should stop by the clinic for an evaluation if they are experiencing symptoms.

“It’s better to get an evaluation and find out what is going on,” Delrie said. “We get referrals from primary care and behavioral health,



*Elise Leisinger, family medicine doctor for the Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital Traumatic Brain Injury Clinic discusses brain health as critical to overall mission readiness during an interview educating the community about signs and symptoms of a brain injury at the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk.*

but also accept walk-ins.”

Janet Baily, a psychometrist for BJACH’s TBI Clinic, administers a variety of neuropsychological, psychological, personality and academic tests for patients with mild to severe TBI.

“I am also the automated neuropsychological assessment metric proctor for the clinic,” Baily said. “This is an important part of the TBI program because it is a cognitive baseline test required annually. So, if a patient gets a concussion, we can retest them to see if they have a cognitive issue. I also do neuropsychological testing to see if they have any cognitive issues or disabilities.”

According to Army Medicine, ANAM is a proven computer-based tool designed to detect speed and accuracy of attention, memory and thinking ability.

It records a service member’s performance through responses provided on a computer. It is conducted prior to deployment and can be used to identify and monitor changes in function.

It does not diagnose any medical condition. The results may help healthcare staff compare a service member’s speed and accuracy of attention, memory and thinking ability before and after an injury.

Baily said it’s important to discuss brain injuries during the month of March and throughout the year.

“When you have a head injury, it’s important to come to our clinic so we can evaluate

you and get you the treatment you need to get back to 100%,” she said.

Post-concussion syndrome is a very vague term.

“At our clinic, we look at the patient from a holistic perspective and determine if the symptoms are concussion-related or from other medical problems that overlap,” Leisinger said. “PTSD, obstructive sleep apnea, primary headache and chronic pain can all be affected by TBI or could be signs of some other issue. I spend an hour intake with each patient. We’ll go over your medical history and everything you are experiencing that may be related to a concussion.”

Leisinger will order labs, send patients to neurology, audiology and optometry depending on the patient to help them get to the root of their issues.

According to [Health.mil](https://www.health.mil), TBI is a significant health issue which affects service members and veterans during times of both peace and war.

The high rate of TBI and blast-related concussion events, resulting from current combat operations, directly impacts the health and safety of individual service members, and subsequently the level of unit readiness and troop retention.

The impacts of TBI are felt within each branch of the service.

For more information about TBI visit <https://www.health.mil/Military-Health-Topics/Centers-of-Excellence/Traumatic-Brain-Injury-Center-of-Excellence>.



# Command honors Women's History Month

Team Polk:

During the month of March, we celebrate Women's History Month, and we honor and celebrate the struggles and achievements of American women as important parts of the history of the United States.

The national 2023 Women's History theme is "Celebrating Women Who Tell Our Stories." Through this theme, we can revisit the stories and the women who have made our Army stronger serving as Soldiers, Army civilians, veterans and Family members who are critical members of our Army team.

For example, Julia Moore was an Army wife. She was the daughter of an Army colonel and mother of two Army career officers. You may not realize it, but a lot of the services we now take for granted in the Army were initiated by her.

Child care, compassionate communication of bad news and caring for the widows of fallen Soldiers began with a woman who knew the Army could do better and ensured that we did.

In the wake of Vietnam, Julia worked with the American Red Cross and advocated for continued support for military Families. She was involved in all aspects of Army community service, including officer and noncommissioned officer wives' clubs, advisory councils, post thrift shops, daycare centers and Boy and Girl Scouts.

She was passionate about improving the quality of life of those who served their country, and to this day, Families rely on the programs she started.

Women have served in the United States Army since 1775 and remain an invaluable and

essential part of the Army today. Women make up 19% of the total Army and 35% of the Army's civilian workforce. Women serve in every career field in the Army and are critical members of the Army team.

We are extremely proud to serve alongside the incredible women who are serving, working and living right here at the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk.

We know from history and experience that the contributions and achievements of women make JRTC and Fort Polk and our Army stronger.

Forging the Warrior Spirit! People First!

Brig. Gen. David W. Gardner  
JRTC and Fort Polk commanding general

Command Sgt. Maj. David P Hanson

## Message from Army senior leaders — Be All You Can Be!

WASHINGTON — We are excited to announce the official premiere of our new Army brand. On March 8 a new generation was introduced to one of the most timeless phrases in our Army's history: "Be All You Can Be!"

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the all-volunteer force, and it has never been more important to recruit and retain the talented men and women who make our Army the world's greatest fighting force.

People are the United States Army's greatest strength and our number one priority. They enable us to fulfill our very purpose: protecting our nation by being ready to fight and win the nation's wars.

We need all Americans to know the Army is

a pathway to success, both in and out of uniform. We are an organization of endless possibilities.

You can do anything you want in the United States Army. You can be anything you want to be. You can "Be All You Can Be," because no other organization comes close to America's Army when it comes to empowering and equipping our people to challenge themselves and achieve excellence.

The message is clear: If you want to find purpose in belonging to something greater than yourself, if you want to find your calling in life and pursue your passions, if you want to "Be All You Can Be," then join us. There is a place for you in America's Army.

To anyone who has called the Army their home and reached new heights through service, we ask that you share your stories and inspire others to serve.

We invite you to watch and learn more by visiting <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L-wx-2R9swDg>.

It remains our honor and privilege to serve as we reintroduce the Army to America.

Be All You Can Be!

Gen. James C. McConville  
Chief of Staff of the Army  
Sgt. Maj. Michael A. Grinston  
Sergeant Major of the Army  
Christine E. Wormuth  
Secretary of the Army



**INFLATABLE NINJA WARRIOR**

**MARCH 18**  
ANVIL FIELD | 10 AM

Get ready and come out see who has what it takes to be the **Ultimate Inflatable Ninja Warrior** for this year's Inflatable Obstacle Course Spring Fun Run!

**COST**  
Adults: \$10 | Children (7-11): \$5

Payment can be made in person at Wheelock Fitness Center

Every person for themselves!  
Competitive attitudes needed, athleticism optional.

**Disclaimer: You may get wet!**

Scan the QR Code to register!

337-531-6795



**MARCH IS NATIONAL LADDER SAFETY MONTH**

**Don't fall for these ladder mistakes!**

- Leaning too far
- Reaching too high
- Trying to reposition ladder while on it

Free ladder Safety Training  
<https://www.laddersafetytraining.org/>



# Army Community Service kicks off Army Emergency Relief 2023 campaign

By **ANGIE THORNE**  
Public Affairs Office

FORT POLK, La. — The Army Emergency Relief Leadership Breakfast, held March 3 at the Warrior Center, kicked off the campaign for 2023.

Brig. Gen. David W. Gardner, Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk commanding general, began the event with a few opening remarks about the importance of AER to Soldiers.

Military Families don't want financial problems, but when they happen, it can be hard to know where to turn until the next payday.

"What AER does is fill a gap when our Soldiers and Families are in a tough place," Gardner said.

AER provided \$65 million in loans, grants and scholarships to help almost 31,000 Soldiers and Families in 2022.

"This incredible amount of assistance is made possible due to donors that have been supporting this program since its inception in 1942," Gardner said. "The program relies on our camaraderie and sense of Family in connection with our community and Soldiers. The more Soldiers support AER, the more Soldiers can be helped."

Gardner encouraged his leaders to talk to their Soldiers about the program.

"What we focus on is 100% notification and awareness of what AER does. So, what I would ask leaders to do is to look at what AER provides and tell Soldiers what they need to know so they can make a more informed decision," Gardner said.

When the unexpected happens, Soldiers don't have to face those challenges alone. Army Emergency Relief is in their corner.

AER is the Army's official nonprofit. For 80 years they have helped the Army take care of its number one priority — its people. It's mission is to provide grants, interest-free loans and scholarships to promote readiness and relieve the financial distress of Soldiers and their Families.

There are more than 30 AER assistance categories. They include permanent change of station travel, spouse relicensing and recertification fees, tutoring assistance, rent, mortgage, food and utility assistance, emergency travel, disaster assistance and more.

Other AER programs include the Quick Fix Program (an interest-free \$2,000 loan), scholarships (financial aid for spouses and children of active duty and retired Soldiers), Career Skills Program Assistance (a grant program for retiring and separating Soldiers to participate in apprenticeships and on the job training) and more.

There are three different levels of approval authority for aid.

- Level I approval authority — Army Emergency Relief officer — up to \$4,000



*Brig. Gen. David W. Gardner, Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk commanding general provided opening remarks at the Army Community Service Army Emergency Relief 2023 campaign kickoff breakfast held at the Warrior Center March 3.*



*Those in attendance at the AER kickoff enjoy breakfast before the event continues.*



*Pfc. Byron Walkins was the guest speaker at the AER breakfast. He told those in attendance how AER helped him.*

- Level II approval authority — garrison commander — \$4,001 up to \$5,000

- Level III approval authority — AER headquarters — \$5,001 and above

In addition, there is a special program for company commanders and first sergeants called the Quick Assist Program with an approval limit up to \$2,000 (loan only).

To find out about these and other AER programs visit <https://www.armyemergencyrelief.org>.

Pfc. Byron Walkins was a guest speaker at the breakfast. When he experienced financial difficulties during a permanent change of station move, he went to AER.

"I want to thank AER for helping me in my time of need. I went to Army Community Service and Ms. Katie at AER asked me what I needed and helped guide me through the paperwork. They gave me a loan to help me with my apartment," Walkins said. "I hope this program continues to be supported so it can keep helping Soldiers."

Tawan Parsons, ACS Financial Readiness Program manager, asked the leaders in attendance to communicate to their Soldiers what AER can do.

"When life happens, that's what AER is for. Make sure that those that are following you are informed, so that they can make the best decisions for themselves, their Families and, ultimately, for the Army because when your Soldiers are taken care of, they can focus on the mission at hand," Parsons said.

Katie R. Davis, ACS AER specialist, said the Fort Polk AER program provides its military community with a compassionate and dedicated organization that assists Soldiers with needs to relieve financial distress without causing a hardship.

"At Fort Polk, the top five categories of assistance that we provide are privately owned vehicle expenses, emergency travel, utilities, housing and food," Davis said.

The Fort Polk AER office and entire ACS staff actively work to get information about AER programs to the community every week.

"AER is here to assist this military community in times of financial distress. We will find a way to say yes to verifiable and valid financial needs," Davis said.

For more information about AER call (337) 531-1957.





JEFF ENGLAND/GUARDIAN

## Signing an intergovernmental service agreement

Fort Polk and the City of Leesville sign an intergovernmental service agreement March 1 at Woodfill Hall on Fort Polk. The vegetation control IGSA between Leesville and Fort Polk provides a cost-effective partnership to keep the vegetation on post up to standards. Leesville and Fort Polk entered into the partnership in March 2018 and the city has continued to provide excellent services to the installation. On March 1, option five was awarded to extend the services through March 2024.



ANGIE THORNE/GUARDIAN

## Maple Housing Town Hall

Installation leadership and housing officials hosted a Housing Town Hall Feb. 27 in the Maple Terrace community. Residents were able to share their housing questions and concerns, maintaining the open dialogue between the Fort Polk community and JRTC and Fort Polk leadership.





**"I believe when we take care of our people and treat each other with dignity and respect we will have a much stronger and more committed Army."**

**- Army Chief of Staff  
Gen. James C. McConville**



## Ready and Resilient R2 Performance Center augments capabilities

By **KAREN SAMPSON**  
Public Affairs Office

FORT POLK, La. — A crew of expert performance trainers at the Ready and Resilient R2 Performance Center, 8148 Alabama Ave., building 2380, offers Soldiers and leaders strategic and healthy ways forward in the complex and dynamic environments they inhabit.

The crew at R2 expresses the Army's vision where Soldiers and leaders possess the capabilities, resolve and character to demonstrate resiliency and perseverance.

Soldiers learn to employ proactive strategies enabling self-awareness and team-building skills, enhancing individual readiness and unit cohesion rather than focusing on reactive responses.

"The majority of our work is creating resiliency coping skills and custom performance psychology for Soldiers," Cole Sanford, lead performance expert, explained.

Sanford added this includes learning how one's physiology interacts with the brain, how to appropriately shift attention in a combat situation, marksmanship test or Army Combat Fitness Test.

"There are classes offering communication skills, leadership development, energy and stress management and confidence," Sanford said. "There are also several goal-setting processes for Soldiers to learn."

Primarily, R2's work is with the Soldiers, Sanford said, but they also offer effective training for the Army Family such as spouses, Department of Defense employees and Installation school faculty.

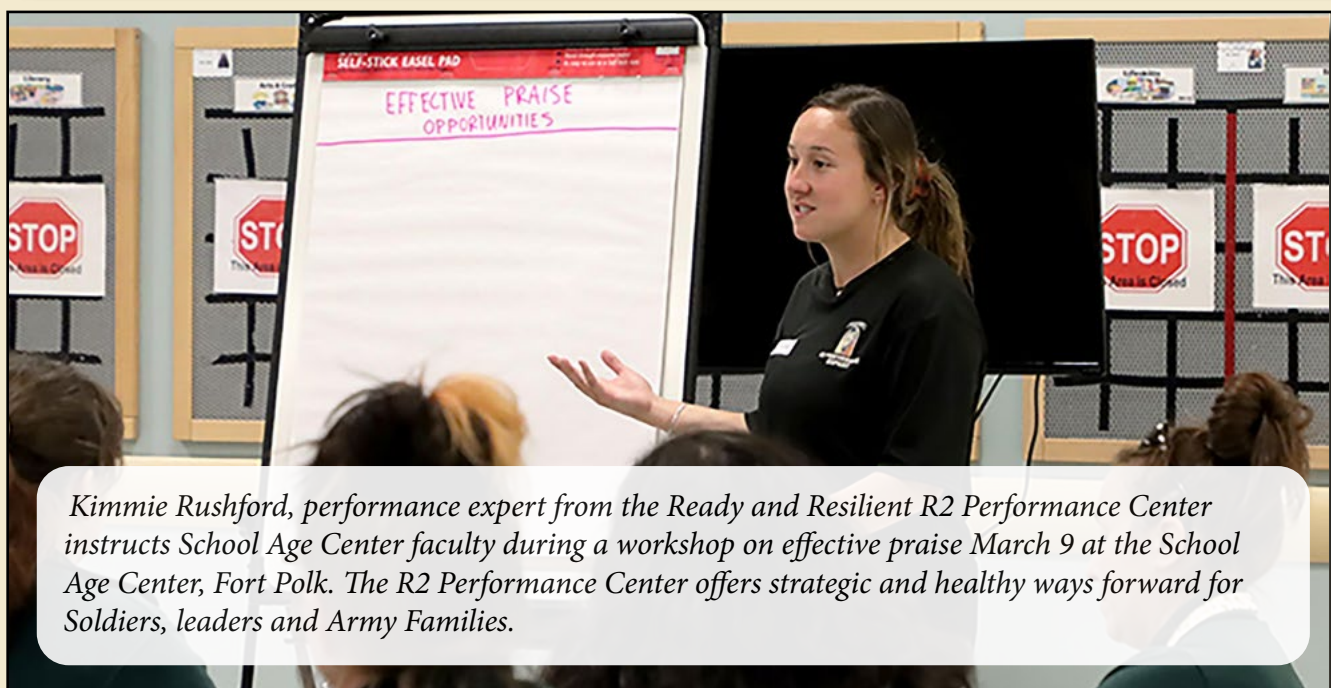
"R2 also offers academic performance training for Soldiers in collegiate level coursework and higher education," Sanford said.

The R2 Performance Center philosophy supports Army values and promotes the Army's strategy of strengthening individual and unit readiness while fostering a culture of trust, said Jerome Simmons, manager at the R2 Performance Center.

Simmons states the R2 crew's motivation is



*The crew at the Ready & Resilient R2 Performance Center stands ready to assist offering strategic and healthy ways forward for Soldiers, leaders and Army families at Fort Polk.*



*Kimmie Rushford, performance expert from the Ready and Resilient R2 Performance Center instructs School Age Center faculty during a workshop on effective praise March 9 at the School Age Center, Fort Polk. The R2 Performance Center offers strategic and healthy ways forward for Soldiers, leaders and Army Families.*

getting Soldiers, from platoon-size elements to the individual, into the right headspace and performing their best.

Reach out to the Fort Polk R2 Performance Center at the Installation Program Office for

Building Resiliency and Enhancing Performance at (337) 531-2427.

More information about the program is available at <https://www.armyresilience.army.mil/ard/R2/index.html>.



# Celebrate Women's achievements, contributions

By Spc. KELLY ACEVEDO  
Public Affairs Office

FORT POLK, La. — March is Women's History Month and the Army is doing its part to recognize the historic achievements of women who have supported and defended the nation. This month's theme is "Celebrating Women Who Tell Our Stories." This reminds all who serve that the capabilities and hard work women have brought to the table have made the Army stronger.

As the nation progresses, so do opportunities for women. Looking back, you can see the progress that has been made. It is crucial to recognize the hard work of the women throughout history who changed the world.

## Elizabeth Cady Stanton



Stanton was an abolitionist, human rights activist and author. She was the founder of the National Women's Suffrage Association from the 1840s to early 1900s and worked with other activists such as Lucretia Mott and Susan B. Anthony to help organize movements for women's rights that led to women's suffrage. She advocated for women to own property, have voting rights and for fairer divorce laws.



## Lt. Col. Charity Adams

Adams was the highest-ranking Black woman officer to serve during World War II. She influenced Black women to succeed in the military. Adams applied for entry into the Women's Auxiliary Corps in 1942. The

WAC marked the beginning of a new era for the Army. It was the gateway that led women to continue to serve today, and now in combat roles.

Adams deployed to Europe and led the first Black WAC unit, the 6888th Central Postal Battalion. Expected to sort out millions of letters in six months, the unit did it in three. Her troops worked seven days a week to ensure mail would be received. Without news of what was going on back home, morale was low for Soldiers on the frontlines. Adams and her troops helped facilitate a better environment for the Soldiers who were in the battle.

## Col. Anita Kimbrough, Fort Polk's Dental Activity Command

Kimbrough finished dental school in 1995 and continued to work as a dentist before enlisting.



In 2008 her family, like many others were affected by the recession. She enlisted in 2010 to progress in her career and support her family.

She received a letter in the mail that read, "Be All You Can Be," a motto that is being reintroduced today.

Dentists were needed and she took it upon herself to join. "Going to war didn't strike any fear in me. I prepared myself mentally to meet those challenges," Kimbrough said.

Her mentors are Col. Tawana McGee, the first Black woman oral surgeon in the Army and Lt. Gen. Nadja West, the first Black woman surgeon general in the Army.

"Had I not seen someone who looks like me, a dentist, a surgeon, then it would have been more difficult for me to see that I can overcome obstacles to make it to where they are," Kimbrough said.

Kimbrough believes it's important for women to serve because they bring different perspectives and backgrounds to share and approach situations differently.

"How are we supposed to serve a diverse nation if we're not diverse ourselves," Kimbrough said.

She is happy to be part of the fighting force and continues to contribute to the nation and her family.

"Women are part of every fabric of life. To have women serve in roles that they originally could not serve in matters. We are here to pave the way for the young ladies that see the call to arms. We bring value to everything that exists in the world including the military," Kimbrough said.



## Julia Moore

Though not in the military, Moore was a great leader in the installations she and her husband Lt. Gen. Hal Moore, were stationed at. She experienced firsthand the hardships spouses and children faced while Soldiers

served. When her husband returned from deployments, she felt guilt that others didn't get the chance to welcome theirs home. At the time, there was not a system set in place to notify Families of fallen Soldiers, only a telegram. Moore took it upon herself to begin riding with cab drivers to assist with delivering the heart-breaking news. She grieved with the Families and attended funerals of her husband's fallen men. The Department of Defense recognized her selfless service and adopted a better notification system.

Today an officer accompanied by a chaplain formally delivers the news to Families. She advocated for Army Community Services that are now offered on all Army installations.

Her efforts improved quality of life for families.



Eevee Gardner, spouse of Brig. Gen. David W. Gardner, Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk commanding general

Gardner serves the Soldiers and Families of Fort Polk. She graduated in 1994 from Barnard College and earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in American history.

"When the nation was being founded, it was Abigail Adams who said to her husband, please don't forget the ladies," Gardner said.

Gardner has made it her goal to help Families at all installations. When she first arrived to her first duty station, Fort Bragg, North Carolina, a spouse reached out to her to welcome her. This set the tone for how she wanted to impact other spouses and Families.

Gardner recalls a quote she kept from a mentor who was also a military spouse. "Look to your left and look to your right. Everyone in the room is here because they love a Soldier. What a powerful connection to share," Gardner said. "At the heart of everything is love. We're all here for that reason. Whatever issues or problems arise, you come back to that core value of I'm here because I love and support a Soldier and we going to make this community better for everyone," Gardner said.

Gardner attends the newcomers welcome brief each month to greet and connect with everyone the Fort Polk community. She does outreach for Families and spouses and has been working to improve the way news is put out to Families.

She believes supporting women's choices this month is a way to celebrate. "It's important that women support each other's choices rather than tear each other down," Gardner said.

She believes women can do it all, but it's important to stay unified. Another way to commemorate the month is through education.

"I share with my daughter that it's important to be grateful for the rights she has because my mother was restricted. I tell her look at the freedom she has. The things you do now you couldn't do 40-50 years ago," Gardner said.

Gardner has made an Army forever family in the 28 years she's served as a spouse. She continues to advocate for Families and create a better environment for everyone.

When looking into America's history, be sure to not discount the women who shaped the nation.

WOMEN'S  
HISTORY  
MONTH



# We Care about what you think.

## Take the Community Strength & Challenges Assessment Survey

We want to develop a deeper understanding of the community members needs.



### Some of the benefits of sharing your feedback:

- Community Events
- Programs
- Policy Changes
- Healthy Community
- Improve Quality of Life

This is an opportunity for Fort Polk community members to voice what they believe are strengths and weakness at the installation.



Survey Open  
through

31 March 2023



Community Strength & Challenges Assessment Survey Link:

<https://usaphcapps.amedd.army.mil/Survey/se/25113745648F0C25>



## CYS tour

Fort Polk garrison Command Sgt. Maj. Stephen Nielson tours Child and Youth Services School Age Center and Middle School and Teen centers during a tour to make sure everything is safe and in working order.



Fort Polk garrison Command Sgt. Maj. Stephen Nielson (right), talks with Monica Richardson, child and youth program assistant, at Child and Youth Services School Age Center during the tour.



Fort Polk garrison Command Sgt. Maj. Stephen Nielson (left), checks paperwork at Child and Youth Services Middle School and Teen Center.

CYS Youth Sports

# SPRING BREAK ADVENTURE CAMP

**Ages 8+**  
**\$50**

**Dates and Times**  
**April 10-13**  
11am-2:30pm  
**April 14**  
9am-4pm

**at Perez Field**

KAYAKING • CANOEING • .22 RIFLES •  
SKEET SHOOTING • ARCHERY • PAINTBALL

Pick up and drop off is at Perez Field every day

Call **337-531-6004** for more info

Must be registered with CYS and have a current health assessment

MWR PRESENTS

# Paintball Sundays

**MWR SHOOTING RANGE**

Open Play Paintball Every Sunday From 1 PM to 4 PM

For more info call (337) 531-7552

# music TOGETHER

Music Together® is for infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and their parents/caregiver. Classes include songs, rhythmic rhymes and movement, and instrument play activities that are developmentally appropriate for the children and easy for parents and caregivers, regardless of their own musical ability.

**Every Tuesday from 9:30am-10:15am**  
(12 Week Program)

ENROLL AT BLDG 924  
PLEASE CALL 337-531-6004 FOR MORE INFO

\*MUST BE REGISTERED WITH CYS AND HAVE A CURRENT HEALTH ASSESSMENT\*

**1st Month - \$70** (\$40 monthly fee + \$30 one time material fee per family)  
**2nd Month - \$40**  
**3rd Month - \$40**

armymwrlibrary PRESENTS

A VIRTUAL EVENT WITH

# CHRISTOPHER C. GORHAM

AUTHOR OF **THE CONFIDANTE**

**MARCH 27, 2023**  
**1 PM EST • FREE**

Christopher C. Gorham discusses *The Confidante: The Untold Story of the Woman Who Helped Win WWII and Shape Modern America* in a virtual event led by the staff of Barr Memorial Library. Anna ("The Confidante") Rosenberg was a trusted advisor to both Presidents Roosevelt and Truman during World War II. She played important roles in both administrations and guided the direction of the G.I. Bill.

Christopher C. Gorham is a lawyer and teacher of modern American History at Westford Academy, outside Boston. His writings have appeared in *The Washington Post* and in online journals.

ASK THE LIBRARY FOR DETAILS

SCAN THE QR CODE WHICH WILL TAKE YOU TO THE EVENT

# Bubbly YOGA & Brunch

**March 25**

Warrior Hills \* 9:00—10:30 AM  
(located next to Warrior Hills Golf Course and The Forge)

We invite you to join us at Warrior Center for a session of yoga taught by Instructor Jules, followed by brunch and mimosas!

Cost: \$20 | Registration and payment can be done at the Warrior Hills Pro Shop

Scan for more info

ALL PARTICIPANTS ARE ADVISED TO BRING THEIR OWN YOGA MATS

337-531-6795  
polk.armymwr.com

BOSS BETTER OPPORTUNITIES FOR SINGLE SOLDIERS

# FAMILY FEUD

**March 23 @ 6 PM**  
**Home of Heroes Rec Center**

BOSS invites all Single Soldiers to come play in the ultimate Family Feud Game Night!

**SINGLE SOLDIERS ONLY**

For more information please call (337) 531-5540



**Celebrating Dr. Seuss**

*Dr. Seuss's birthday is celebrated on March 2 and it celebrates both the birthday of Theodor Seuss Geisel and the National Education Association to endorse the importance of reading. Fort Polk's North Polk Elementary and Child Development Center 702 took part in the day by dressing up, reading books and having fun.*



COURTESY NORTH POLK ELEMENTARY



COURTESY NORTH POLK ELEMENTARY



KAREN SAMPSON/ eGUARDIAN



KAREN SAMPSON/ eGUARDIAN



COURTESY NORTH POLK ELEMENTARY



KAREN SAMPSON/ eGUARDIAN

KAREN SAMPSON/ eGUARDIAN



# Fort Polk wrestling team takes season by storm

By **ANGIE THORNE**  
Public Affairs Office

FORT POLK, La. — Two opponents participate in a match filled with gritty one-on-one wrestling skills and competitive spirit. Intense grappling prowess is seen in one move after another and a victor is chosen. But that competition on the mat is just a small snapshot of what Fort Polk's Child and Youth Services Youth Sports Wrestling program is about.

Sgt. 1st Class David Giganti, Special Operations Training Detachment, operations sergeant, is the head coach for the team. Giganti, with the help of two coaches and two volunteers, are able to train up to 30 wrestlers during 90-minute sessions twice a week at Fort Polk's Youth Gym. The season lasts from October through March. By the end of the season the team will have competed in 10 tournaments from Dallas and Houston to Shreveport and Baton Rouge.

Demonstrating the proper foundation of grappling skills is important, but Giganti is also teaching his team so much more than wrestling.

"I'm teaching them lifelong lessons," Giganti said.

Those lessons include guiding them through intense emotions, some of which they are experiencing for the first time as individual competitors.

"They have to deal with defeat, success and everything in between," Giganti said. "I tell parents they have to help them learn how to deal with that rollercoaster of emotion because the entire experience as an individual athlete is on that child's shoulders. When done right, their maturity levels skyrocket. I always tell them (the wrestlers) to lose like a champion and win like a professional. Teaching them sportsmanship is key."

In addition to the physical demands, the wrestlers need to maintain personal accountability and structure.

"They have to be on time and watch their nutrition and weight, which means they can't eat junk food and drink sodas. These are just a couple of life lessons that teach them how to improve their health and the benefits of being on time," Giganti said.

Giganti said wrestling isn't an easy sport.

"After wrestling, everything else in life is easy," Giganti said. "Any challenge they face in life after this, they will know they can overcome the adversity because they had the grit and determination to make it through wrestling."

Derrick Laster Jr., 11, is a member of the wrestling team. He got into wrestling because he wanted to try out a new sport.

Laster enjoys traveling to different places for tournaments, but said competing against the older, heavier wrestlers can be tough.



*The Fort Polk wrestling team shows off a few of the medals they have won.*



*Sgt. 1st Class David Giganti, head coach of the Fort Polk wrestling team (right), demonstrates a move with his assistant coach Ethan White during a practice held at the Youth Gym Feb. 14.*

He likes using the different skills he has learned on and off the mat.

"It's nice to know how to defend myself. That is something that I have learned through wrestling," Laster said.

Clover Rutland, 15, Leesville High School, joined the wrestling program for the scholarship opportunities, but stayed because she enjoyed winning and putting to use all the skills she has learned in practice.

"The hardest part of wrestling is probably when I go to tournaments and compete against guys. It can be tough because I don't have the same amount of upper body strength, but I just listen to my coaches and follow their directions," Rutland said. "I made the decision to do this (compete against males) because it's a challenge and puts my skills to the test,

Please see **Wrestling**, page 13



*Sgt. 1st Class David Giganti, head coach checks the form of some of his wrestlers.*



# Wrestling

Continued from page 12

but sometimes there's no other choice because there aren't enough female competitors."

Rutland said wrestling is a great opportunity to participate in an individual sport that takes intelligence and grit and improves your physical strength and abilities.

Griffin Giganti, 11, is homeschooled and likes the effort involved in wrestling.

"I only have myself to rely on when I'm out on the mat competing. If I make a mistake, it's just on me and the hard work and effort I put into the training," Griffin said.

By the end of last year he was winning awards.

"I came in third place at the state championship last year and I hope I do even better this year," Griffin said.

Concentration is one way Griffin continues to win.

"You have to keep your mind focused on wrestling and not become distracted by your emotions or things like the noise from the audience," Griffin said. "If you let it happen, you could be the one taken down on the mat."

Lucas White, 9, Parkway Elementary School, enjoys going to tournaments and competing.

"I like learning and using the wrestling moves and skills," White said. "But I think the most important thing I've learned is sportsmanship. I respect my opponent's skills — win or lose."

Emma Giganti, 9, is homeschooled and likes wrestling because as soon as she steps on that mat, she feels incredible.

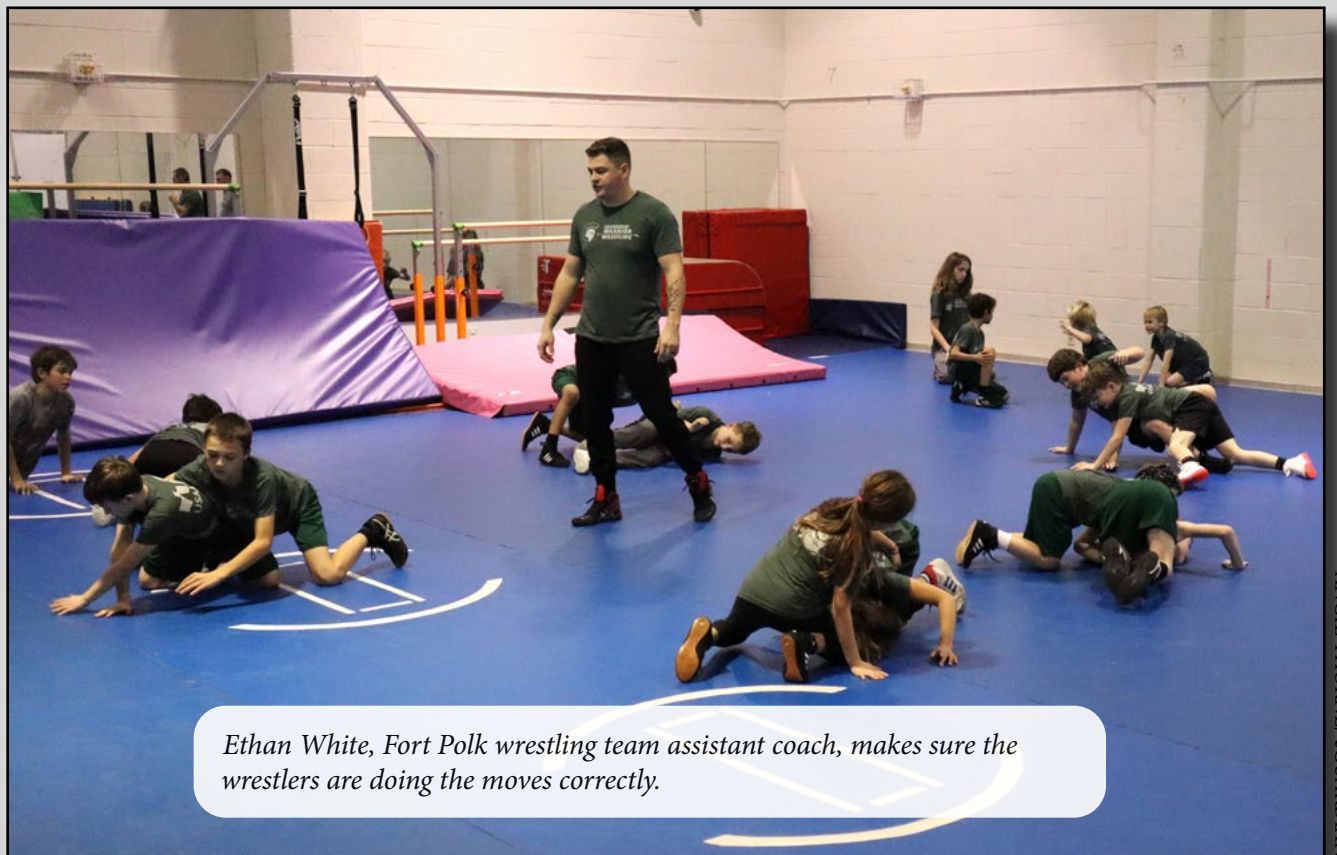
"I like the feeling of taking that shot. It's a force of energy like a bolt of lighting going through your body when everything goes just right and I put my competitor on the ground. It's a powerful feeling," Emma said. "I love people cheering for me. It feels great to win."

The last two seasons, the Fort Polk Wrestling team has had 10 Louisiana State Champions and 15 placers, including several back-to-back state champions. Currently, Emma is a two time Louisiana State Champion at 55 pounds and is going for her third straight State title this year. Rutland is a current Louisiana State Champion at 130 pounds and is looking to repeat her title as well.

This year the team has consistently finished in the top 10% of tournaments when the team competes as a whole and in the top 25% when they compete as a partial team. The majority of Fort Polk wrestlers medal in every tournament they attend, even double medaling when double-bracketed.

Giganti said they are becoming known as fierce competitors.

The last tournament of the season takes place March 18 in Shreveport and the Louisiana State Championship is held March 25 in Baton Rouge.



*Ethan White, Fort Polk wrestling team assistant coach, makes sure the wrestlers are doing the moves correctly.*



*Sgt. 1st Class David Giganti, head coach of the Fort Polk wrestling team gets down on the mat to demonstrate the correct way to perform a move.*



*Members of the Fort Polk wrestling team practice their skills as the coaches look on.*

ANGIE THORNE/GUARDIAN



# What to know about **mixing** alcohol, medication

## DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON — Do you ever ask yourself, “Is it safe to have a few drinks while I’m taking medication?” It’s important to know mixing alcohol and medication can be dangerous. Learn what to watch for if you’re taking prescription or over-the-counter medications (even when drinking responsibly) to protect your health and career.

### **Remind me, what do I need to know about medications?**

On their own, common prescription and OTC medications (think: ibuprofen, acetaminophen, cholesterol meds others) can be helpful when taken properly. But keep in mind adding alcohol into the mix can be risky without first reading the label, asking a pharmacist or talking to your health care provider. Also know that using prescription drugs without following your health care provider’s directions (such as taking more at a time or more frequently than prescribed), taking someone else’s prescription drug or using medication for any reason other than what it was prescribed for is considered prescription drug misuse.

Always let your primary care manager know about any medications you are taking. Also, remember to check your service branch policy before taking any OTC drugs or supplements.

### **How will mixing alcohol and medications affect me?**

If you choose to drink, make sure you are drinking responsibly and know it can come with risks when medications are involved. Mixing alcohol with certain medications is dangerous and can change how the medica-



tion works, how effective the medication is and how your body processes it. Even drinking in small amounts while taking medication can change how you feel the effects of alcohol and cause a bad reaction. An adverse reaction isn’t exactly a good look on a first date or at a promotion celebration.

Mixing the two together can also cause negative side effects, including:

- Drowsiness
- Dizziness
- Fainting
- Upset stomach or vomiting
- Rapid heartbeat
- Sudden changes in blood pressure
- Impaired motor control
- Slowed or difficulty breathing
- Memory problems
- Stomach bleeding or ulcers

- Liver damage
- Increased risk for overdose and seizures
- Increased feelings of depression or hopelessness or other changes in psychological health

### **So what’s the bottom line?**

If you choose to drink, make sure to always read the label and package insert of any medication you’re taking, whether prescribed by your doctor or purchased OTC. Keep in mind: Unlike prescription opioids, which typically include a warning label about the dangers of mixing alcohol and opioids, the directions may not be as clear for other common prescription and OTC medications. Also, when you receive a new medication from your provider, ask about taking it with alcohol. If you’re not sure about something you’re already taking, talk to your doctor to make sure you’re using it safely.

# Kick off National Nutrition Month with savings at commissary

## DEFENSE COMMISSARY AGENCY

FORT LEE, Va. — March is National Nutrition Month and the Defense Commissary Agency offers service members and their Families extra savings to help them build healthier habits by cooking more meals at home and making simple substitutions of healthier ingredients.

The commissary agency also offers activities through social media to help customers start their healthy goals, find a routine and create a path to wellness.

DeCA’s current “Thinking Outside the Box” recipe is five minute pasta.

These recipes are dietitian-approved, offering quick and economical solutions for home-cooked meals. Customers can save on the items listed in these recipes.

Customers can also further their commissary savings through the new and improved Your Everyday Savings (YES!) Program. YES!

offers extra savings and value on the products customers buy most. Look for the orange YES! label in the current flyer or on store shelves.

To reach a higher level of savings beyond everyday low commissary prices, look for the Savvy Shopper best deals, also featured in the latest sales flyer.

More opportunities to save are available through the Pathway to Savings — “Instant Savings and Buy One, Get One Free” deals and Commissary Rewards Card digital coupons.

Customers can save more than \$95 through these deals.

Many more digital coupons are available at <https://shop.commissaries.com/digital-coupons>.

In addition to great savings, DeCA has made shopping easier with the convenience of its Commissary CLICK2GO mobile app.

Customers can access DeCA’s Commissary CLICK2GO online payment, curbside pickup,

digital coupons, the sales flyer, dietitian-approved recipes and more. The mobile app is free for download through the Google Play and IOS app stores.

Other savings opportunities include the following promotions:

•“Kerrygold St. Patrick’s Day Giveaway” — Customers can visit DeCA’s Facebook, Instagram and Twitter pages, look for the post on the Kerrygold St. Patrick’s Day Giveaway and comment on why they like Kerrygold butter. Tag a friend and selected winners will receive a \$25 Commissary Gift Card. Please submit comment before March 17.

•“Box Tops for Education” — General Mills offers customers an opportunity to save money while supporting their local schools through the “Box Tops for Education” promotion.

See store displays and high-value coupons for participating General Mills brands. This campaign is ongoing throughout the year.





# Employee Assistance Program

5 Sessions - Confidential - No Cost



## Short-term

Provides solution-focused counseling to individuals and organizations



## Family Members

Army Civilians, Retirees, their family members, as well as Active Duty family members are eligible



## Rolling Year

Use up to 5 EAP sessions per rolling year; Year begins on intake date

## Reasons to Consider Counseling



### Workplace Stressors

Conflict, difficult people, burnout or overwhelmed with workload

### Phase of Life

Starting a family, divorce, marriage, retirement, etc.



### Relationship Concerns

Personal or workplace interactions



### Stress & Anxiety

Feeling down, hopeless, and/or overwhelmed



### Substance Abuse or Other Concerns

Alcohol, marijuana, opioids, pornography, gambling, etc.



### Grief, Loss, Other Concerns

Death of loved one, death of coworker, loss of relationship, financial stress, referrals, etc.

Made with PosterMyWall.com

For questions or appointments, call 337-531-2031/1964.

# Check VIN numbers

The Directorate of Emergency Services Traffic Division will release the following vehicles to Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation for disposal if they remain unclaimed. Vehicles are listed with the last four of their VIN. If one of these vehicles belongs to you, please contact the Fort Polk Police Traffic Division at (337) 531-1806, 6675 or 2677.

2004	Ford	Mustang	4127
2008	BMW	328i	9559
2013	Audi	A6	7319
2007	BMW	650i	2192
2000	Honda	Accord	0717
2005	Kawasaki	M/C	0133
2010	Jeep	Patriot	0760
2005	Ford	Focus	4767
2006	Ford	Escape	3900
2009	Ford	Mustang	0250
2010	Dodge	Challenger	9430
2018	Chevrolet	Camaro	2576
2014	Kia	Optima	0324
2014	Dodge	Dart	5863
2011	Infiniti	2D	3365
2000	Chevrolet	Impala	8125
2011	Nissan	Altima	9341



Allen Memorial Library Presents



# STEAM

EDUCATION



SCIENCE



TECHNOLOGY



ENGINEERING



ART



MATH

Learn more about STEAM while encouraging inquiry, dialogue and critical thinking!

*Every 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month*



## Story time

Fort Polk's Allen Memorial Library hosts Story Time each Tuesday at 11:30 a.m. Library staff, or a special guest, read a story to children from the Fort Polk community.

After listening, kids participate in a craft. The next Story Time is March 14. Call (337) 531-2665 to sign up today.

## Scavenger hunt

Join Fort Polk's Middle School and Teen Center for the annual St. Patrick's Day scavenger hunt. Can you find the pot of gold? The event takes place March 14 from 4:30-5:30 p.m. at the temporary location in building 744. For more information call 531-1992.

## Board game fun

Select from Allen Memorial Library's extensive collection of board games or bring your own and get your game on. Board game night takes

place every third Thursday of the month. Board games are available anytime during open hours at the library. For more information call (337) 531-2665.

## Parenting hacks

Being a parent can take a toll on energy, the body and overall health. Does it have to? Dr. Darria Gillespie states that it doesn't have to be that way. Stop by Army Community Service, 1591 Bell Richard Ave, building 920, March 21 from 11 a.m. to noon. For more information call (337) 531-1941.

## Sunday brunch

It's not a lazy Sunday if brunch isn't involved. Stop by the Warrior Center March 26 from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. to indulge yourself. Whether you pick an egg white frittata or chicken and waffles, make sure to pair your meal with a classic brunch beverage. For more information call (337)

531-7668 or visit <https://polk.armymwr.com/calendar/event/sunday-brunch/5796892/71855>.

## Life skills

Adulting getting you down? Check out Life Skills 101 March 27 from 9-10 a.m. at Army Community Service, 1591 Bell Richard Ave, building 920. For more information call (337) 531-1938/0636.

## Bass tournament

The Toledo Bend Army Recreation Park's monthly Bass Tournament. The park is located at 1310 Army Recreation Road, Florien. The tournament takes place the first Saturday of each month.

The next tournament takes place April 1 and is open to the public. Check in is at first light. Weigh in is at 3 p.m. The entry fee is \$40 per boat and \$5 per person for big bass. For more information call (318) 565-4235/4484.

# #FortPolkThingsToDo

**March 17-19:** Crawfest, Shreveport.

Crawfest is a celebration of food, art, music, and community, held in Shreveport's historic Betty Virginia Park, March 17-19 from 3-9 p.m. <https://shreveportevent.com/events/crawfest/>

**March 18:** Wearin' of the Green, St. Patrick's Day Parade, Baton Rouge.

Learn the definition of fun. Join the largest St. Patrick's Day Parade in the region. The parade starts at the corner of Hundred Oaks at South Acadian Thruway and winds through the beautiful Hundred Oaks neighborhood, ending at the intersection of South Acadian Thruway and Perkins Road.

See more than 70 floats, 10 bands, bagpipers, military bands, dignitaries and more. Visit the website for more parade details.

<http://www.wearinofthegreen.com/>

**March 25-26:** The Pioneer and Heritage Festival, Merryville.

This year's festivities include entertainment, live Pioneer demonstrations, silent and live auctions and a wide variety of food and craft vendors. Each year members of the Merryville Historical Society and Museum, along with the help of volunteers, host the annual event.

It's an opportunity to not only entertain visitors, but also spread education about the rich heritage of not only Merryville but also Beauregard Parish, No Man's Land, Sabine River, Southwest Louisiana and Southeast Texas!

<http://merryvillemuseum.org/index.php/the-2020-pioneer-and-heritage-festival/>

**March 25:** Common Threads Quilt Guild Show, DeRidder.

If you love hand made quilts, you won't want to miss the Common Threads Quilt Guild Show March 25 at the Beauregard Parish Fair

Grounds, exhibit hall 506 West Dr. Admission for ages 12 and up is \$5. Admission for ages 4 to 12 is \$3 and kids 4 and under enter for free.

**March 25:** Barksdale Defenders Air Show, Barksdale Air Force Base.

Bring your family and friends and spend a great day packed with spectacular displays at the nation's premier strategic bomber base. Gates open 9 a.m. and the show begins at 11 a.m. Admission and parking are free.

The Barksdale Defender of Liberty Air & Space Show serves to enhance public awareness of U.S. Air Force capabilities and the Barksdale AFB mission through static displays and aerobatic performances. Likewise, it allows Shreveport-Bossier City to showcase Louisiana as the home of the B-52, pay tribute to service members and support the recruiting arm of the United States Armed Forces.

<https://defendersoflibertyairshow.com/>

**March 25-26:** Spring Garden Festival, Destrehan Plantation.

The festival showcases vendors that focus on the porch, patio, yard and garden and includes arts and crafts vendors, plant nurseries and small business owners, seminars and exhibits, a country store, live entertainment and food vendors.

Children's activities include a discovery/activity tent, a make and take home arts and craft, a demonstration from a bee keeper and a garden demonstration with Louisiana State University Agriculture Center. Children can also visit and take a picture with the Easter Bunny from 2- 4 p.m. both days, as well as an Easter egg hunt at 4 p.m. both days.

General admission is \$5 per person. Children 5 and under get in free.

<https://www.destrehanplantation.org/events/spring-garden-festival-2023>

**March 31-April 2:** Books Along The Teche Literary Festival, New Iberia.

Various venues will celebrate literature and its impact on the area's culture with storytelling, workshops, readers theatre, music, bourée lessons and tournament, bus and boat tours, 5K run and food of all kinds.

Anyone who is familiar with James Lee Burke and his fictional character, detective Dave Robicheaux, knows of New Iberia and the city's fascinating blend of heritage, hospitality and history.

<https://booksalongthetecheliteraryfestival.com/>

**March 31-April 2:** Cyphacon, Lake Charles.

This comic con is sure to appeal to almost every anime, sci-fi/fantasy and gaming fan in the region. As with past events, the convention will be hosting some impressive television video and anime voice celebrities, including two time Oscar nominee Mary McDonnell, President Laura Roslin in the hit Syfy Series "Battlestar Galactica"; Terry Farrell, Lt. Cmdr. Jadzia Dax of "Star Trek: Deep Space Nine" and many more.

<https://www.cyphacon.org/>

**April 15:** Melrose Arts and Crafts Festival, Melrose.

This is the 49th year for the Melrose Arts and Crafts Festival. Vendors from the Arkansas, Louisiana, Texas and beyond come to Melrose to sell their handcrafted items. Visitors from all over attend the festival to enjoy shopping, food, music and fun.

<http://www.melroseplantation.org/festivals>



# Fort Polk community excels at competing in Amazing Race

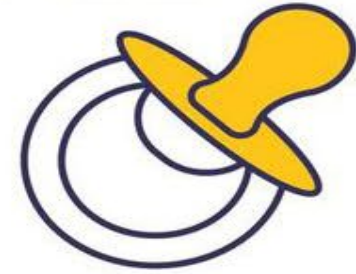


COURTESY MWR





# BABYSITTING COURSE



CYS Teen Babysitters are trained to be caring, trustworthy, responsible, and competent babysitters using the 4-H Babysitters Curriculum. CYS Teen Babysitters will graduate with an American Red Cross First Aid/CPR certification.

CYS registration is required. Teens must attend all classes to receive certification

Space is limited.  
Deadline to register:  
March 15, 2023.

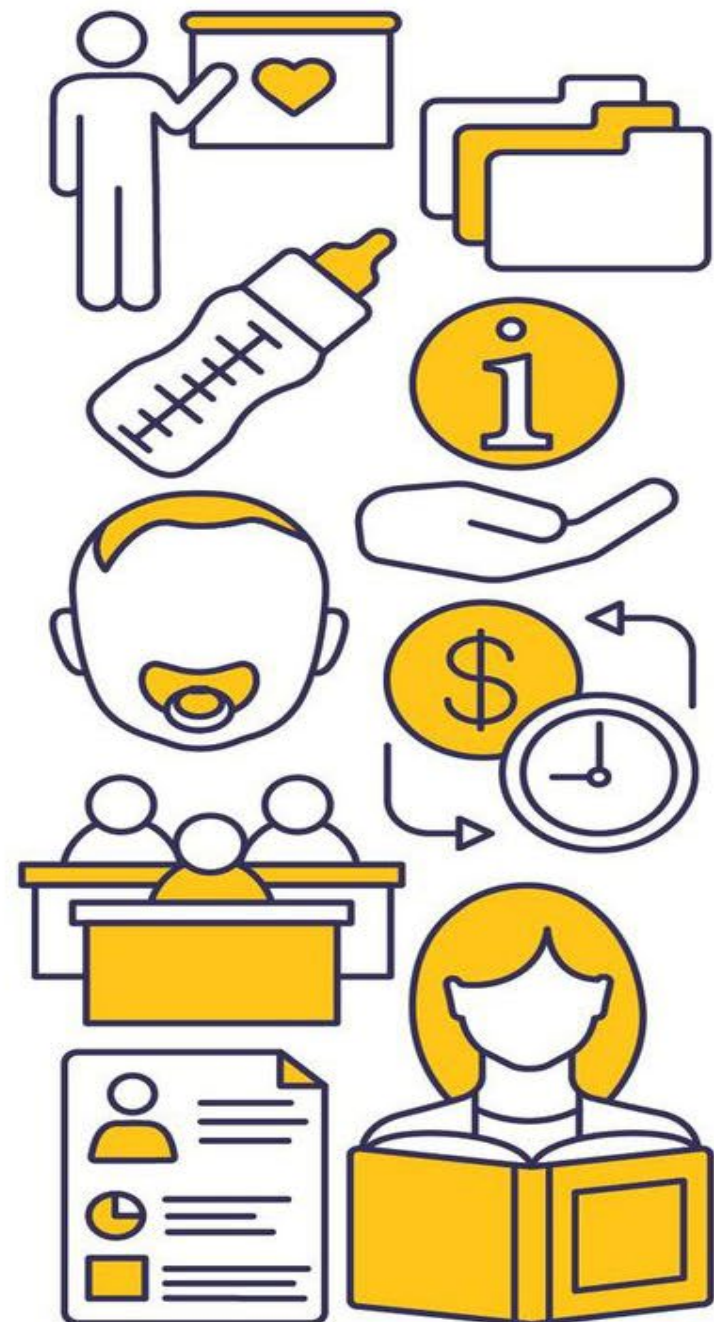
**\$20** PER PERSON

Middle School and Teen Center

Ages 13-18 years old

April 03-06 | 1615-1800

April 07 | 1615-2030



FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL MST: 337-531-1992  
TO REGISTER, CONTACT PARENT CENTRAL SERVICES: 337-531-1955

