

# ARMY FLYER

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ARMY PHOTO

While at the special operations mountain warfare training course, 10th Special Forces Group students and cadre conducted hot loading, unloading and RAPIDS training with the 4th Combat Aviation Brigade.

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# Fort Rucker senior enlisted leaders host single Soldier town hall

By Jim Hughes

*Fort Rucker Public Affairs*

The Aviation Branch and garrison command sergeants major, along with CSMs from the 1st Aviation Brigade, the 110th Avn. Bde. and the 164th Theater Airfield Operations Group hosted a town hall in the post theater March 9 to discuss how to improve the quality of life for single Soldiers, primarily through the post's Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers program.

Command Sgts. Maj. James D. Wilson, Raymond P. Quitugua Jr., Terrence D. Reyes Jr., William E. Haddon and Michael W. Narvid listened to and spoke to single Soldiers from across the post who attended in person and via Microsoft Teams.

"I've been in the Army for 30 years and barracks life for a single Soldier was not always great, and it's probably not all that great right now," Wilson said. "I can't change the Army, but what I can do is change the way the people around me experience the Army -- by the way I treat them and by the way I talk to them every day. I believe that wholeheartedly -- I can change the way the people around me experience the Army. If we all do that, guess what happens? We change the Army, we make it a better place."

Quitugua spoke about the Army's People First strategy and its focus on the resiliency of the force.

"For a lot of us a little more senior in the Army, our resiliency is built on our support group -- our spouse, our children. But for the majority of you here, you may not have those same types of things," he said. "You left your family, you left your support group to join the Army and we recognize that."

"You made a great decision for your career and we feel we owe you that support group," Quitugua added. "We have a fantastic

BOSS program at Fort Rucker, and what we want to do is take a little time out of our day today and talk to you. We have an idea about what we think is important to you, but it's much better to hear it directly from you. We want to hear what is important to you and the areas we can make better. You may not get the answer you want, but I promise you will get an answer."

Cpl. Anastasha L. Capps, Fort Rucker BOSS president, kicked things off by talking about the program and what it does for single Soldiers.

"BOSS is founded on three main pillars: quality of life, recreation and leisure, and community service," she said. "We actually help to be the voice for the single Soldier -- we collect information from Soldiers at our BOSS meetings while holding conversations on morale. Are you being taken care of? How are your living quarters? Is everything on post up to standard? Is there anything you would like to see changed?"

For community service, BOSS Soldiers volunteer in surrounding communities to help out and get Soldiers some community service hours, she said. For recreation and leisure, "everyone's favorite for BOSS," Capps said, it includes going on trips. "Last year, as a rewards trip for everyone who volunteered for the year, we took the whole team to Orlando, Florida, and went to Universal Studios," for free with revenue generated by BOSS-sponsored activities.

BOSS meets the first and third Mondays of every month at 4 p.m. in the BOSS building, Bldg. 8350. To attend Soldiers need not have any association with the program, and it is also open to leadership, as well, Quitugua said, adding that the program is for perma-



PHOTO BY JIM HUGHES

**Command Sgts. Maj. Michael W. Narvid, 164th Theater Airfield Operations Group, Terrence D. Reyes Jr., 1st Aviation Brigade, Raymond P. Quitugua Jr., Fort Rucker garrison, and William E. Haddon, 110th Avn. Bde., at the single Soldier town hall at Fort Rucker March 9.**

nent party single Soldiers, including single parents, and not those in training status.

BOSS also helps with personal development, helping Soldiers gain life skills they need now and in the future, Capps said, adding that in the past they've helped Soldiers learn about doing their taxes, tips for PCSing and others. BOSS will be hosting a CPR certification class in April, as well.

"Life skills are an absolutely amazing tool for BOSS where we get IMCOM funding to actually host different events to teach people life skills at no cost to Soldiers," she said. "Last year, at Day at the Lake, we took Soldiers out and we gave them a boating class, got them boating licenses and they were able to take out motorized boats, canoes and paddle boards for the day. We also had a cooking class where everyone was taught grill safety and food sanitation, then we grilled, filled

our bellies and went out on the water for most of the day. It was free to the Soldiers and they learned quite a few things.

"We welcome everyone to attend our bi-weekly meetings -- just come out and listen, see what we're talking about, or let us know what your living conditions are, or just listen for people in your unit who can't attend and be the voice for your unit," Capps said. "A lot of times Command Sergeant Major Quitugua is present at these BOSS meetings -- it isn't just a lot of us complaining or anything like that -- we have an open ear directly to the garrison command team trying to make sure you guys are taken care of."

But to make BOSS work, Soldiers have to buy in and participate, Wilson said, adding that the program's offerings historically suffer from low participation rates.

"If you don't like your experience, you're



## TOWN HALL cont.

bored sitting in your room not having any fun, we're here today saying there's a way to get after it," he said. "But you have to get on it with us – show some interest.

"Believe it or not, all we (pointing to the other sergeants major) think about most of the time is you. Whether it is training you, taking care of you, or looking after you and your families," Wilson added. "Getting the mission done, and how do we do that and make sure all of you have everything you need to do it – all of the training you need to do it, and taking care of you mentally, physically, all of that. We want you to win. Everyone up here, myself included, all we want is for you to win – win in the Army and win in life. That is what this program is about."

Soldiers in the audience and online were given the chance to speak, as well, with many

offering ideas for BOSS offerings and asking questions about the program.

Many of the suggestions from the single Soldiers were things BOSS and other Directorate of Family, and Morale, Welfare and Recreation organizations, such as Army Community Service, already provide, according to Lynn Avila, MWR BOSS adviser. These included fishing and hunting opportunities, credit classes, home-buying classes, powerlifting competitions, resume writing, etc.

"A lot of things you're talking about are already being done -- we just need you," she said, adding that members of the communities surrounding Fort Rucker "love you. They'll do anything for you – they just have to know what you need. They'll give you money, not personally, but for your activities."

She then spoke about a Super Bowl

watch BOSS put on, and after approaching a sponsor for an event the program received great support. "We had so many gift cards, so many gifts, so much food -- it was a feast. We had probably 50 pounds of snacks, but we only had 10 BOSS Soldiers show up. We had pizzas, hot wings, dip, and we had a big screen outside, but no one was even there."

Quitugua added that all BOSS events are open to single parents, as well, but that parents should make the decision on what event is appropriate or not for their children.

The enlisted leaders offered up ideas for helping to spread the word on BOSS and what on-post organizations do for Soldiers, such as emails on BOSS activities and a rodeo where the organizations explain to Soldiers what they have to offer them.

Capps added that each unit has a BOSS representative, and that Soldiers can check

with them on what the program is doing.

Wilson and Quitugua also recommended that Soldiers download and use the Digital Garrison app, available on the App Store and Google Play. The app includes information about on-post happenings, explains what each organization offers and points of contact. Soldiers can also change the garrison they want information on if they PCS or go TDY there.

For more information on BOSS, call 255-9810.

For information on what MWR offers on post, visit <https://rucker.armymwr.com/> or <https://www.facebook.com/ftuckerarmwr>.

For information on ACS programs, visit <https://rucker.armymwr.com/programs/army-community-service> or <https://www.facebook.com/FtRuckerACS>.



The U.S. Army has partnered with the Army & Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES) to create the **Digital Garrison** mobile app. **Digital Garrison** is a one-stop information source for Army communities. The app puts real-time information into Soldiers', families', and civilians' hands and keeps military communities connected – a key part of readiness and resiliency.

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# 'THANK YOU!'

## Fort Rucker, AAFES honor Vietnam veterans at pinning ceremony

By Jim Hughes  
*Fort Rucker Public Affairs*

Fort Rucker honored Vietnam War veterans during a pinning ceremony at the Army and Air Force Exchange Service main store March 29.

About 20 veterans of the war attended the ceremony, which featured a cake cutting, and lapel pins and gift bags for those who gave so much for their country in the Vietnam War, according to Jessie Lynch, store manager of the AAFES Fort Rucker Main Store.

"I hope they feel appreciated," Lynch said of the attending veterans who continued to stop by for the event throughout the day. "I hope that they feel that this community is here to support them. That we are here to celebrate them and the sacrifices that they made. We're just truly blessed to be here to serve them."

Command Sgt. Maj. Terrence D. Reyes Jr., 1st Aviation Brigade command sergeant major, agreed as he opened the event by speaking in front of the attending veterans.

"This observance is personal for us here at Fort Rucker because we walk in the footsteps of the men and women who answered the call of service during the Vietnam War era," Reyes said, adding that many Soldiers and civilian employees are the grandchildren, sons and daughters of Vietnam veterans.

"As we thank you for your service, we also want to continue welcoming the millions of eligible disabled veterans and their caregivers who are now authorized to shop on base at commissaries and exchanges," he said. "As we observe National Vietnam War Veterans Day, we cannot say thank you enough for your service and for your sacrifice – thank you!"

After Reyes wrapped up, a member of the crowd yelled, "Welcome home, Vietnam veterans – welcome home!"

Bobby Emfinger, a Vietnam War veteran who served in country with the 1st Cavalry Division in 1969-70, appreciated the post's gesture to those who gave so much for their nation.

"It means a lot ... it does," he said. "We never received any ticker-tape parades – we never received those honors – but coming home was a big enough honor (at the time). Today, these types of events mean so much to Vietnam veterans. We lost so many who have passed away and gone on, but it's great to be honored and feel that the country that we fought for loves us still."

Allan Tusberg, a Vietnam veteran who served in 1966-67, echoed those sentiments.

"It's nice – it's great that people are doing these sorts of things for the veterans before too



PHOTOS BY JIM HUGHES

**Allan Tusberg, Vietnam veteran, helps Command Sgt. Maj. Terrence D. Reyes Jr., 1st Aviation Brigade command sergeant major, cut the cake while Barry Martin, also a Vietnam veteran, looks on at the Vietnam veteran pinning ceremony at the main post exchange on Fort Rucker as part of the Army and Air Force Exchange Service-sponsored event March 29. AAFES partnered with the United States of America Vietnam War Commemoration to honor Vietnam veterans, and give them lapel pins in honor of their service, valor and sacrifice. The Fort Rucker Commissary provided the cake.**

many people forget, because that's what seems to happen today, we forget too quickly," he said.

The event was personal for many non-veterans in the crowd, as well, including Lynch.

"The breadth of the Vietnam War is wide and long, and it does impact a lot of families," she said. "I had a grandfather who was in the Air Force doing communications and an uncle in Navy who didn't serve any time in the

country, but served during that timeframe. I had two uncles that both served in country. One came home, and one was MIA for about 30 years. In 1990, they (identified his remains at the crash site) of his helicopter that had crashed in country. We were able to bury him in 1991 in Arlington National Cemetery. It's important to my family, and important to our community, that we honor these veterans."



# CHILD ABUSE AWARENESS MONTH KICKOFF



PHOTOS BY JIM HUGHES

Fort Rucker Directorate of Family, and Morale, Welfare and Recreation employees, volunteers and military children put their prints on Sgt. Ted E. Bear during the Pinwheel Planting Ceremony to kick off Child Abuse Prevention Month on Fort Rucker April 1. DFMWR will host events throughout the month in honor of the observance. For more information, call the Fort Rucker New Parent Support Program at 255-9647 or visit <https://rucker.armymwr.com/>.



A family puts their prints on Sgt. Ted E. Bear



A mother shows her child how a pinwheel works at the event.

## Board Games & Rock Painting Kits

**\*Rock Painting Kits available at bldg. 8946 on Thurs, April 7, 1-4 pm**

**\*Board Games available on Tues, April 26, from 1-4 pm and Thursday, April 28, from 9-12 at bldg. 8946 while supplies last.**

For more information, call  
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Fort Rucker Army  
Community Service

For more information on "Blue Day"  
and Child Abuse Prevention Month  
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Community Service, (334)255-9647.



Child Abuse Prevention Month

# Pets & Pals Wagon Parade

Decorate your wagon (or child's mobile vehicle) and bring your pets and their pals to the New Parent Support Program building parking lot for a wagon parade! We will select a **winner for the most creative entry**, and it is open to any military patron. Bystanders are welcome to watch and cheer on the entries! Call **334-255-9647** with questions or to **register!**

**April 22nd, 2022**  
9:00am-10:00am  
At 8946 Seventh Avenue (NPSP Bldg.)



**NEW PARENT SUPPORT PROGRAM**  
8946 Seventh Avenue  
(334) 255-9647







# Sign Language Class

\*April 14

\*May 12

10 a.m. – 11 a.m.

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Workshop presented by the Enterprise Parent to Parent Educators

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## FOR MORE INFORMATION

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# ROTC cadets visit the home of Army Aviation

By Kelly Morris  
*USAACE Public Affairs*

ROTC cadets from Florida A&M University – one of the nation's Historically Black Colleges and Universities – and Florida State University visited the U.S. Army Aviation Center of Excellence to learn more about the Aviation Branch March 4.

The goal for the visit was to educate cadets about the capabilities and purpose of Army Aviation by providing an opportunity to hear from senior leaders, experience some of the simulators and aircraft, and tour the U.S. Army Aviation Museum.

Maj. Gen. David J. Francis, USAACE and Fort Rucker commander, kicked off the event by welcoming the cadets in a session held at the museum.

"The profession of arms is an exciting team, and very few people don the uniform of our service, and I commend you all for that because our nation needs you right now," Francis said. "If you want to do something that makes a difference, you're wearing the uniform that makes a difference."

Francis said the museum is a "special place" where the cadets could see on display the aircraft and legacy of aviation's past all the way back to World War I, including Army Aviation becoming a branch in 1983 and how the Army is transforming today.

"Not only do we have the most advanced aircraft in the world in the Apache, Black Hawk and Chinook, but we're developing things right now that will come to pass as you're getting ready to come into the Army, or very close to it, that are going to exceed anything that we've ever imagined in the past," Francis said.

Francis said he had one message for those interested in the Aviation Branch who might have a tendency to self-eliminate because of

their own doubts or misconceptions.

"Don't count yourself out," he said. "The secret people don't really understand is that if you make yourself competitive, you have a great shot at becoming an Army aviator."

Cadets interested in aviation should go ahead and get a flight physical, and take the Selection Instrument for Flight Training, he explained.

"We're looking for the whole person – people that want to lead, that are adaptive and agile, and can react to change," he said.

Francis also conducted a question-and-answer session with the cadets to help dispel myths about Army Aviation and respond to a broad range of questions about the branch.

Lt. Col. Linus D. Wilson, deputy director of the USAACE Office of Personnel and Force Development, said he appreciated Francis taking the time to speak directly with cadets during the event.

USAACE conducts multiple outreach opportunities throughout the year to provide cadets the exposure to the branch that they would otherwise not have, in hopes that they decide to branch aviation.

"A lot of them are not aware. Sometimes their military instructors are not aviation, so they tend to fall in the footsteps of their mentors," Wilson said.

"It also takes exposure to aviation from people that look and sound like you, as well, to see that, hey, there's a place for me to fit and I can have a successful career. That mentorship is really key," Wilson said.

After speaking with cadets throughout the day, Wilson said their reactions were "pure excitement and joy," and after the event more cadets showed interest in branching aviation.



PHOTO BY KELLY MORRIS

**Maj. Gen. David J. Francis, U.S. Army Aviation Center of Excellence and Fort Rucker commanding general, speaks to Reserve Officer Training Corps cadets from Florida A&M University and Florida State University who visited Fort Rucker to learn more about the Aviation Branch March 4 at the U.S. Army Aviation Museum.**

Capt. Bryce Greenwood, senior aviation proponent manager at OPFD, said their office has touchpoints planned with more than 2,000 cadets this year as part of their outreach efforts to educate cadets about the careers in the Aviation Branch.

The team from OPFD typically reaches out to colleges and universities within a two-hour driving distance from the post, including well-known HBCUs like Tuskegee University and Florida A&M University. Their target audience are sophomores and juniors who still have time to take the SIFT test and get their flight physical.

"We try to get out there early before they go out to their cadet training their junior summer. Their senior year is when they find out their branches and we go through the accessions process," Greenwood said.

In the past, area high school Junior ROTC programs have also visited Fort Rucker.

Greenwood explained the nature of accessions has changed.

"It is no longer just a snap of the chalk line from (grade-point average) and your cadet

summer training order of merit list. It is now a talent-based branch, we get a holistic look at each cadet so not only do they have the Talent Assessment Battery, where they get to test their cognitive and noncognitive skill sets, we also offer them a video recorded interview which is really a tool for them to get to tell us about the nuances of them," Greenwood said.

OPFD's outreach efforts are nested within the acquisition line of effort in the Army People Strategy, and also with the Army Talent Management Task Force's combat arms outreach including HBCU's as well as Hispanic Serving Institutes, as they look for a diverse talent pool, he explained.

The Army now has a Virtual Branch Outreach site where people can click on all the 17 branches of the Army to learn more. This site provides contact information, a message from the USAACE commanding general, aviator interviews from all three components about why they chose to serve in the Aviation Branch, as well as more information about the branch.

For more information, visit <https://vbo.army.mil>.



# SPRINGING TO LIFE

## Self care vital to people's mental, emotional health

By **Nancy B. Jankoski**

*Fort Rucker Employee Assistance Program Coordinator*

Spring is upon us, and many people will be looking for ways to get out and enjoy nature, with the warmer temperatures, longer daylight, and signs of fresh growth and newness all around us.

It is okay to think about fresh growth and newness of life for yourself, too!

Being able to recognize your need for self-care and your ability to provide self-care is vital to your mental and emotional health and wellbeing.

### WHAT IS SELF CARE?

Self-care describes you taking care of you. It is the practice of making choices on a daily basis that contribute to keeping yourself physically, emotionally, mentally, intellectually and spiritually healthy. It makes sense to invest in yourself.

Part of military culture is to have an “I love me!” wall with memorabilia covering highlights of a career.

There is nothing wrong with that. When it comes to coping with life, we all need at least a mental “I love me!” wall.

You are in the best position to know what is causing stress in your life, and your rapid

response to your own identified needs will help you stay grounded and able to cope with areas of stress in your life, whether your stress is short term in nature or whether your stress lasts over a long period of time.

Think for a moment of a tree. The tree is visible from the ground up, but in fact, the most important part of the tree is not visible – the root system that provides the nourishment that keeps the tree alive.

The tree needs sunlight, it needs moisture from rain or underground water sources, and it needs soil that is rich in nutrients in order for the tree to live and to do its job in nature. Some of the tree’s needs are visible, but others are below the surface.

You are like that, too. Some of your needs aren’t necessarily visible, even to those closest to you.

So be sure to take care of yourself when you have a need that others can’t see.

Thinking about the how the tree lives, grows and produces can help us to understand how important self-care is to our own wellbeing.

Your family, your friends and your employer see you functioning, but they may



only be seeing the visible parts of your tree.

Depending on how open you are with others, they may not see or know where you draw your mental, emotional or spiritual strength from, and therefore, they may not know if you are getting low on essential nutrients. No one knows you better than you do.

Practicing wellness is a process that starts with each of us as individuals. We make choices that contribute to or detract from our overall wellness.

The Army Substance Abuse Program office is providing a number of training opportunities this year that have a common focus – helping people recognize good choices and making the kinds of choices that contribute to their individual wellbeing.

Self-care is something you should think about and do for yourself on a consistent basis. The alternative to self-care is setting yourself up through inaction for potential burnout or worse. Stress can kill you.

Taking proper steps to reduce or eliminate unnecessary stress, and discovering ways to cope with necessary stressors, will help you gain or maintain the balance you need to thrive in your personal and professional life.

It will also help you to be a source of

caring and strength for others. We all need to lean on others from time to time, and we need to be the one others can lean on when necessary.

Self-care is your own personal metaphorical life jacket that can help you keep your head above water when you need it, and can position you to throw others a life jacket when they need it.

I like music, and many times in my life when I have needed to find relief from stress, grief, disillusionment, or other needs, I have turned to music as a source of comfort and a way to renew my spirit.

A song that has meant a lot to me over the years is called, “The Anchor Holds.” If you haven’t heard it, some of the words to that song include “the anchor holds, though the ship may be battered, the anchor holds, though the sails are torn, I have fallen on my knees when I face the raging seas, but the anchor holds in spite of the storm.”

Do you have one or more anchors to help you cope with the stressors in your life? Or, going back to our tree analogy, how is your root system?

Are you able to get the emotional, intellectual and spiritual sunshine you need?

Wellness doesn’t prevent people from experiencing severe stress or being temporarily

## SELF CARE cont.

overwhelmed by life when tragedy strikes. Wellness provides you with the tools you need to be resilient, able to survive and eventually thrive through the tough times.

### SELF CARE TIPS

- Make time for you! It could be as simple as making a healthy lunch and letting lunch become me time. This could mean closing your office door, sitting in your car, playing music, sitting at picnic table enjoying nature, or anything else that gives you the nourishment you need.
- Find someone you trust to talk to – whether it is a professional counselor, spiritual adviser, good friend, or an anonymous help line.
- Make time to set goals, and review and assess how you are doing. Like what is going on? Great! Need to make some changes? This is a good time to think through the details of what, when, where, how and why.
- Nourish yourself. Rest, read, take up a hobby, do something creative, exercise – whether it is your body, your mind, or your spirit that needs exercise or rest.
- Take life in small bites, even if it is only five minutes at a time. Give yourself time to breathe!

Being real with and about yourself is the best thing you can do for your own self-care. Some athletes try to play through their pain. There are times when you can do that, but there are also times when you are injured enough to need to sit on the sidelines and wait to heal, or go through a period of rehabilitation.

Whether it is physical, spiritual, emotional, intellectual, or some other need, you have to be aware of when you need care and be willing to get it.

Reach out for the care you need, and pay it forward when you can.

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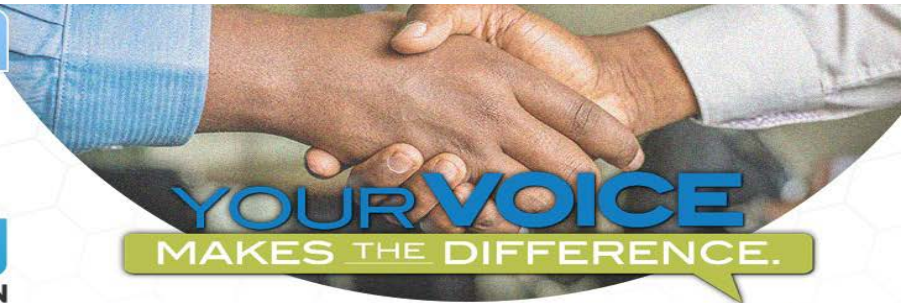
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# Aviation Center Logistics Command plays vital role in training Army Aviators

By Katherine Belcher

*U.S. Army Aviation and Missile Command Public Affairs*

It's often said that U.S. Army Aviation begins at Fort Rucker. To be more specific, it begins at Cairns Army Airfield at Fort Rucker and takes place in a pure fleet of UH-72 Lakota helicopters.

Prior to 2016, Army aviators trained on the TH-67 Creek helicopter, which was introduced in 1993. The last remaining Creek helicopter has been divested and the fleet is now exclusively composed of Lakotas.

The UH-72, a commercial-off-the-shelf helicopter manufactured by Airbus, was introduced to the Army fleet as the medevac unit at Fort Rucker and has since transitioned to the primary trainer for the Army, according to Bob Butler, who works for Aviation Center Logistics Command and manages Cairns Army Airfield.

"This is the foundation for all of Army aviation. Every aviator in the U.S. Army – to include foreign nationals and some Air Force personnel – goes through the Lakota training program," said Butler. "The School of the Americas is no longer here, so anyone flying helicopters in most places, who comes through our schools, all start in a Lakota aircraft."

The number of students cycling through the Army's traditional initial rotary wing flight training has been increasing over the past three years, leading to a dramatic rise in the number of flight hours.

"The Army identified there was a shortage of pilots and has been putting more pilots through flight school," said Butler. "Since FY20, our flight hours have increased from just over 87,000 to nearly 125,000 [forecasted this year]. It's a serious uptick."

The growing number of flight hours includes annual proficiency tests and training for instructor pilots, as well as other support staff that need flight time to keep current on

requirements.

U.S. Army Aviation and Missile Command's Aviation Center Logistics Command fills a vital role in Army Aviation by improving the training fleet's readiness through the completion of maintenance functions and reducing negative impacts to training.

The Army's traditional initial rotary wing flight training model is 32 weeks and consists of four phases. Upon graduation, students will have accumulated 179 hours of flight instruction that includes 149 in an aircraft and 30 in a simulator.

In phase three of initial training, taught by instructors with 1st Battalion, 212th Aviation Regiment, students move from the simulator to the aircraft. They progress from basic instrument procedures to navigation on federal airways and fly between Cairns and Shell Army Airfield, also located on Fort Rucker.

During phase four of training, students learn combat skills, extensive night vision goggles training and tactical night operations.

"All primary transitions happen at Cairns. We average 1,000 sorties per week between Cairns and Shell, and average roughly 70 aircraft per sortie," said Butler.

Advanced graduate flight training is the specialized training where students qualify in the AH-64D Apache, CH-47F Chinook, UH-60M Black Hawk, or learn to become a fixed-wing pilot.

All that flying highlights the need for a reliable maintenance program. Cairns has three maintenance hangars, which is where all the heavy maintenance – or scheduled maintenance – is performed.

Cairns' maintenance team comprises approximately 700 contractors working in three shifts to provide around the clock support. This



PHOTOS BY STAFF SGT. AUSTIN BERNER

**W01 Amy Berner, B Company, 1st Battalion, 145th Aviation Regiment, walks off of the flight line after flying a UH-72 Lakota at Fort Rucker in 2019.**

is in addition to the government civilians who provide oversight, and coordinate with U.S. Army Aviation Center of Excellence and the Lakota Product Office for parts coordination in the Program Executive Office - Aviation.

"On every airframe, we average 575 hours per year, which means we have to phase every aircraft at least once a year," said Butler. "A phase is a 400-hour cycle that the aircraft is in heavy maintenance. That's how we do our maintenance planning."

All 217 UH-72s currently in the fleet at Fort Rucker are covered by a contractor logistical support contract, which is atypical in Army Aviation, but saves money and resources.

"It's basically power by the hour. Airbus is the manufacturer of the airframe and they supply all the parts to the government on a Contract Logistics Support contract. If [maintenance] falls within the parameters of fair wear and tear, then it is covered under the CLS contract at no additional cost to the government for what we're already paying them per flight hour."

The years-long transition from the TH-67 to the UH-72 was not without growing pains.

It required ACLC staff and repairers to make significant changes to day-to-day business of maintaining the Army's training fleet.

"At one point we had TH-67s here, then we became a mixed fleet of TH-67s and UH-72s," said Butler. "Maintenance for the TH-67s was not a CLS contract, and [the manufacturer] Bell was forward deployed with a large warehouse and an abundance of parts sitting in place."

"Having contractors who do the maintenance change their practices to meet the CLS contract was a challenge," said Butler. "Additionally, the CLS contract doesn't necessarily align with the maintenance contract, so getting those two to mesh has been ongoing."

Regardless of the logistical issues, the transition to a UH-72 pure fleet is complete in every aspect and the benefits are more than financial.

"The footprint the Army has for our supply system is minimal," said Butler. "Where other programs have storage depots – and large stocks of items the government keeps for the Blackhawks, AH-64s, the Chinooks – the government does not have to do that for the Lakota program. Airbus is responsible for that as part of the contract."

# ACLC teams work together on Chinook reset; add 6 aircraft to training fleet

By Kerensa Houston

*U.S. Army Aviation and Missile Command Public Affairs*

Day or night, in sunshine or thunderstorms, Aviation Center Logistics Command teams out of Fort Rucker did what had to be done to unload aircraft arriving from combat zones for reset.

Reset is the Army's process of bringing equipment back up to operating standard following deployments and before being returned to their home units – or, in this case, to the home of Army Aviation.

The Army tasked the U.S. Army Aviation and Missile Command Aviation Field Maintenance Directorate to plan and execute Special Technical Inspection and Repair activities for induction, repair and return of helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft.

And with that, the reset program began.

"Our mission here at the ACLC was [that] all of the aircraft were going to be delivered to Fort Rucker initially until funding, manpower and slots became available, and then we would start sending the aircraft to the reset facilities," said Jack Martin, Knox Army Airfield manager and contracting officer representative.

"Previously, all aircraft returning from the [U.S. Central Command area of responsibility] were reset, but with current fiscal constraints, now aircraft are scored using the conditions-based decision support tool and prioritized accordingly," said Neil West, AMCOM AFMD associate director. "The CBDST scores aircraft based on six factors – utilization, environment, flight/operational, age, facilities and operations tempo – to determine which aircraft need maintenance the soonest."

"This maintenance action is a complete serviceability inspection and repair with a thorough cleaning of the airframe and dy-

namic components, and completion of all phase inspections," West said. "With the level of disassembly required, an airframe condition evaluation is completed and airframe faults are corrected. Application of all available technology upgrades occur simultaneously."

The Chinooks arrived one or two at a time between June and July 2020 at the Dothan Regional Airport via Air Force C-5 and C-17 aircraft.

The ultimate goal was to integrate the Chinooks into the training fleet at Fort Rucker.

Though the aircraft weren't deemed unsafe to fly, given the wear and tear Chinooks in the training fleet endure with student pilots, Martin said they wouldn't have been able to sustain the operational tempo of the mission at Fort Rucker.

"That's why it was determined [to] go ahead and reset all these aircraft before we put them into the fleet," he explained. "The initial idea had been [to] just put them together and fly them here but, as we started inspecting the aircraft, there was significant airframe damage or structural problems with the aircraft and it just didn't make sense to do that. So that's why they all got reset at Campbell or Bragg."

"You never knew when the aircraft was actually going to land," Martin said. "You can track it. There's a tracker that the airport uses, but it's not perfect, so sometimes they divert for customs or to get fuel somewhere – all the things that you don't know about."

Sometimes the crews of 15 or so had to wait four or five hours for the aircraft to arrive.

"The fun part here is our contract main-



COURTESY PHOTO

**A CH-47 Chinook helicopter is offloaded from a U.S. Air Force C-17 cargo plane at Dothan Regional Airport in 2020.**

tenance team are old school – they don't have a lot of brand-new mechanics that are retired from the Army, so they're not familiar with offloading off of strategic Air Force aircraft. We had our Soldiers and our recently retired Soldiers that have a lot of experience offloading," he explained. "So as much as we have separation between the government side and the contract side, this is the one time that all disappeared because the contractor didn't fully understand how to offload aircraft, and our guys and their guys just got together and they just did a big team effort. It was really kind of neat to watch.

"We had thunderstorms, we had sideways rain – it must have been 106 or 108 degrees [once]," Martin recounted. "Then there's the

normal south Alabama 100% humidity, and everybody is just soaking wet and everybody's just working, though – they were just getting it done."

And get it done they did. Because the Air Force had to adhere to schedules, inclement weather was not a reason to delay the offloading process. Once the cargo planes touched down, a stopwatch of sorts began, so the offload and refueling could take place and get the crew to the next leg of the mission.

Aircraft were removed from the cargo planes using cable, tow bars and momentum from the downward slope of the ramp and pulled to a special hangar until transportation can be arranged to reset facilities at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, or Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

Certain parts of the helicopters are removed during transport so they fit on the cargo planes. Once the Chinooks land and are offloaded, they are often left in a state of disassembly so they fit on the trailer beds that transport them to the reset facilities. The loads must be narrow enough to fit on roads, bridges and such. ACLC teams also had to be confident the trailers were sturdy enough to sustain the load for the duration of the road trip.

Two were able to be sent to Fort Campbell immediately, while others sat in a hangar at Fort Rucker until funding allowed them to be shipped for reset. In total, four went to Kentucky and the other two went to North Carolina.

By September 2020, all six helicopters had been sent for reset and were complete within 4 1/2 to five months. Instructor pilots or test pilots were then sent to reset sites to fly the Chinooks back to Fort Rucker where they were integrated into the training fleet of 44 aircraft.





## 1-13th Avn. Regt. welcomes new CSM

Soldiers, family and friends gather at Howze Field to welcome Command Sgt. Maj. Michael McAvoy, incoming command sergeant major, and bid farewell to Command Sgt. Maj. Martin Cortese, outgoing command sergeant major of the 1st Battalion, 13th Aviation Regiment, during a change of responsibility ceremony at Fort Rucker March 30.

# ARMY FLIER

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