

The WOLVERINE GUARD

ISSUE 3 • 2024



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IMPROVING THE POSITION





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★ TAG TALK ★

MAJOR GENERAL PAUL D. ROGERS

WELCOME SOLDIERS, AIRMEN, FAMILY
AND FRIENDS TO THE WOLVERINE
GUARD.

This issue of the Wolverine Guard focuses on a task our Soldiers and Airmen are familiar with – improving the position. In training, our service members are challenged to always “improve their position,” placing themselves where they have the tactical advantage. We teach our service members to identify blind spots and dead space, to shore up defenses and make adjustments that enable mission success.

Improving the position is not a task just for our military members. The Department of Military and Veterans Affairs is a dynamic organization comprised of Soldiers, Airmen, civilians, veterans, and their families. The DMVA is unique, with a presence in communities from Calumet to Detroit, including veterans homes, military installations, readiness centers and other dedicated training venues. I encourage you to reflect on how you can improve your position, starting in your own backyard.

We kicked off summer with the Selfridge Air Show in June. This year featured aerial demonstrations from the Thunderbirds, U.S. Army Golden Knights, and the Misty Blues parachute team among others. In addition to the aerial demonstrations, the event showcased dozens of military vehicles and aircraft. The theme of this year’s air show was “Innovation Focused: STEAM Driven” and included exhibits dedicated to the Science, Technology, Engineering Art and Math (STEAM) fields. STEAM education is essential for preparing our youth for the challenges of the 21st century, and this year’s air show served as a prime event to showcase the available opportunities within STEAM. At the end of June, the Selfridge team completed a sendoff for personnel and equipment assigned to the 127th Operations and Maintenance Groups prior to their Middle East deployment where they will assume responsibility for regional and global missions.

The highlight of this summer was our consolidated annual training event. Units gathered at Camp Grayling to improve their individual skill sets and collective training readiness. This year, the 507th Engineer Battalion hosted a contingent of our Latvian Zemessardze partners who participated in a variety of training events throughout the two-week period. These Latvian partners travelled to Grayling following a successful engagement by Michigan National Guard Soldiers and Airmen in Latvia where they conducted joint training on airspace management and collaborated on the development of a new training area.

Additionally, the 1-182nd Field Artillery Regiment showcased their capabilities and expertise during a live fire validation event. At Hanson Hills, the 1-125th Infantry Regiment paid homage to the final resting place of two former members who were part of the organization in the early 20th century.

Across the state and nation, our other units were also hard at work. Within Michigan, the 107th Engineer Battalion continued to partner with the Department of Natural Resources, improving infrastructure and accessibility for patrons at multiple State Parks, while at Fort Johnson, Louisiana, the 3-126th Infantry Regiment tested their mettle during a Joint Readiness Training Center rotation.

Key to improving our position is investing in the improvement of ourselves as individuals. I ask you to consider joining us for Motor City 2024, a unique professional development experience we will host this month in Detroit. This is a professional development and networking event that will both expand your perspective and bring appreciation of the great things our organization has accomplished and its future potential. I challenge you to contemplate your role in the DMVA and how you can improve upon it, whether you are an active member, a family member, or an alumnus of the organization, you are key to our success and growth.

To every member and supporter of the DMVA, thank you for all that you do. As we head into our busiest months of the year, I have no doubt you will continue to accomplish great things.

Major General
MING Adjutant General
Director DMVA



Get Ready to Shape the Future at Motor City 2024.

MING will host four powerhouse conferences offering unparalleled networking and leadership opportunities to drive the Guard forward.

Story by MIARNG Staff Sgt. Drake Chandler, 126 TPASE

LANSING, Mich. - Since 1862, the Michigan National Guard has evolved to adapt to the ever-changing needs of our state and our nation. National Guard Association of the United States (NGAUS) is the Guard's primary advocate that educates Congress on the roles, capabilities and requirements necessary to remain ready as the nation's first military force. The only way to do that is via networking with this nation's enlisted and officers, and Michigan will be the host of a major upcoming event. Motor City 2024 is an event housing four conferences with NGAUS, Enlisted Association of the National Guard (EANGUS), MING Joint Enlisted Professional Event, and MING Leadership Conference at Huntington Palace in Detroit, Aug. 17 to Aug. 27.

EANGUS and NGAUS will have conferences oriented towards enlisted and officer development respectively.

This year, these two conferences are called the 53rd EANGUS Annual Conference and 146th General Conference & Exhibition. They typically are held in different cities and states; but for the first time, Michigan is the state trusted to host their conferences back-to-back in the same location.

Maj. Gen. Paul D. Rogers, the Adjutant General of the Michigan National Guard, puts heavy emphasis on wanting Michigan's young leaders to attend these conferences and have an influence on how the Michigan National Guard evolves in the coming years.

"I want future leaders to use this as an opportunity to step up and influence the direction of our professional development, also the direction of our department as a whole."

-Maj. Gen. Paul D. Rogers

There are estimated to be nearly 7,000 attendees across the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and three additional territories. All MING members, including retirees and spouses, are encouraged to attend and speak with senior leaders about how to develop the Guard and our servicemembers.

"It's a conversation," Rogers added, "Any profession has to be invested back into the people." Rogers explained that the EANGUS and NGAUS conferences will give all people associated with the National Guard Association of Michigan (NGAM) a chance to break the hierarchy of rank and be a part of the conversation. All of MING's servicemembers have the opportunity to be involved at the federal level and gain insights from one another. The connections service members make at Motor City 24 between mentors and mentees can last forever and develop them all further.

These conferences will have a mix of social and business-oriented events, ranging from a golf tournament and 5K race, to meetings discussing the Guard's finances and legislative priorities.

Schedules for all these events are listed on the EANGUS and NGAUS websites for a full breakdown of what each organization is doing every day. Additionally, at no cost to most attendees, the event is completely free for all enlisted servicemembers.

"All enlisted up to company grade officers are now able to go to the national level conferences for free. There's no financial barrier," Rogers said.

It will be just as important for junior servicemembers to engage with their senior leaders and learn from them as part of their development. Motivated professionals have a marquee event to join in and support NGAM. Being active in these conferences is a great way to benefit personally and professionally, but also to give back to the National Guard at large. Maj. Gen. Rogers looks toward the future and what kind of effect the Guard's current young leaders will have.

"I want our junior leaders, through our associations, to be able to influence, shape and guide this department into the future," Rogers said.

This will be the first time since 1989 that Detroit has hosted a NGAUS conference. Motor City 24 is a rare and unique opportunity for all MING members to network. At the event's various workshops, there will be professional development opportunities, as well as opportunities to step up and give back with a greater influence on the Michigan National Guard's future. Visit the EANGUS and NGAUS websites to sign up and attend these events.

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT:

COL. (RET.) MICHAEL PRICE

Meet the Senior Deputy Director of State Operations and Director of Strategic Planning for the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

By MIARNG 2nd Lt. Paige Bodine, DMVA PAO

LANSING, Mich.- As Senior Deputy Director of State Operations and Director of Strategic Planning, retired U.S. Army Col. Michael Price oversees a range of critical responsibilities within the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs. His duties include managing the department's finances, public affairs, and essential programs such as the Michigan Youth Challenge and Job Challenge.

After retiring from active-duty as an Army colonel in 2019, he was initially hired as the Director of Strategy. When the previous Director of State Operations retired, Price transitioned into the position, bringing a wealth of experience and dedication.

"My job is incredibly rewarding," Price said. "Each program we run has a significant impact. The Youth Challenge program, in particular, allows me to see how it takes kids off the streets and transforms them into productive members of society."

Price's distinguished military and civilian careers set him apart. He holds a Master's in Systems Engineering from the University of Southern California and construction management from the University of Michigan. His extensive experience includes commanding the St. Paul District and the Transatlantic Afghanistan District within the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, holding pivotal roles at the Pentagon, and contributing to major deployments, including Operation Desert Storm, Operation Enduring Freedom, and Operation Freedom Sentinel.





Courtesy Photo

“My job is incredibly rewarding,” Price said. “Each program we run has a significant impact. The Youth Challenge program, in particular, allows me to see how it takes kids off the streets and transforms them into productive members of society.”

Price’s leadership has greatly improved morale among state operations employees and enhanced the department’s value. With over 30 years of military service and a deep understanding of both state and federal processes, he brings invaluable expertise.

“Embrace every job as a learning opportunity. Success isn’t achieved alone; building relationships and connecting with your community is key,” he said when discussing the importance of personal and professional growth.

Outside of work, Price volunteers as a track and field coach at DeWitt High School, enjoys family time and loves exploring the outdoors. His sons’ roles as engineer officers in the Army keep him connected to the military in his daily life.

The Michigan National Guard is composed of soldiers and airmen who drill monthly, as well as full-time personnel, veterans, and youth participants. Price is dedicated to strengthening community ties and advancing the department’s mission.

“The Guard is a community-based organization, and it’s vital that our communities understand what we do,” Price emphasizes when reflecting on his commitment to public outreach and community engagement. ●

THE ROAD TO THE WINSTON P. WILSON

Story by MIARNG Staff Sgt. Daniel Garas, DMVA PAO &
MIARNG Sgt. Sierra Reuther, 1-119 FA
Courtesy photos

The Michigan National Guard's
sharpshooters hit their mark at the
2024 Winston P. Wilson
Championship, achieving their highest
finish ever.





LANSING, Mich. — The Army and Air National Guard seals are designed around the iconic "Minuteman" symbol. The figure stands aside a farmer's plow but also carries a musket to demonstrate his role as a citizen soldier. Given this lineage, it should come as no surprise that the National Guard places a premium on marksmanship—and the Michigan National Guard marksmanship team has the bragging rights to show it.

"We often hear a common theme - competition breeds excellence," said U.S. Army Capt. Marshall Halas, State Marksmanship Coordinator for the Michigan National Guard. "Competition establishes a baseline for assessing metrics and then stacks you against everyone else that shoots the same event."

From April 22 to May 4, 2024, competitors from all 54 states, territories, and allies from as far away as the Netherlands competed in the Winston P. Wilson (WPW) National Guard Championship. The WPW is an international and interservice competition at Camp Joseph T. Robinson, North Little Rock, Arkansas, to test the marksmanship

skills of service members in events that include small arms, sniper, and machine gun matches. It is the most significant weapons competition in the Army.

The National Guard Marksmanship Training Center funds one team from each state for the WPW yearly. With bragging rights on the line, many states send their best marksman.

"I remember thinking that I was a pretty good shooter back in 2011 or 2012 when I attended my first WPW, only to be humbled and finish in the bottom 25%," said U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class Jacob Schrot, a senior member of the Michigan National Guard Marksmanship Team. "Over the last 3 years I have finished in the top 25 overall competitors. It has really shown me how much I have learned and developed as a marksman."

In 2024, Michigan's team, consisting of Capt. Marshall Halas, U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class Jacob Schrot, U.S. Army Staff Sergeant Kendall Miller-Mather, and U.S. Army Staff Sergeant Hunter McDowell, showcased exceptional skill and teamwork. They achieved their highest placement in

program history, finishing third overall.

The chance to compete in the WPW isn't a given for Michigan National Guardsmen. To be eligible, members must be part of an elite club that most National Guardsmen aren't even aware of the state's marksmanship team.

Making the Cut

The MING Marksmanship Team is an amalgamation of soldiers and airmen from across the state and multiple units and occupations. The team's mission includes two components: initial training, like basic qualification, and sustainment training, in the form of competitive shooting and matches. Michigan's team, like others, are an effective way to implement the values of the Total Army Marksmanship Training Strategy.

The strategy aims to make soldiers and airmen into skilled marksmen. While Army in name, the joint nature of Army and Air Guard operations means the strategy applies to Airmen too. "A soldier or airman who can confidently, capably, and safely



handle and employ their weapon with precision is critical to defeating the enemy," said Halas. "Bottom line – soldiers and airmen should understand common firing principles and be confident in applying their firing skills in combat."

Governor's Twenty: The Starting Point

The road begins with the Governor's Twenty marksmanship competition. The annual, state-level event has been a hallmark of National Guard marksmanship since 1968 and identifies the top twenty percent of shooters within a state. The competition offers participants their first opportunity to earn Excellence in Competition (EIC) leg points for both pistol and rifle categories. Winning the Governor's Twenty Tab signifies a servicemember's skill and qualifies them for regional and national events.

Soldiers and airmen with the Michigan National Guard hosted their Governor's Twenty at the Camp Grayling Maneuver Training Center, September 18-22, 2023. Twenty-three shooters scored within the top twenty and became eligible to join the team.

MAC IV Regional: Building Skills and Experience

Following success at the state level, competitors often move on to the Marksmanship Advisory Council (MAC) IV Regional Match. Open to Army and Air Guard members from Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Ohio, the match focuses on enhancing combat skills and increasing battlefield survivability and is a classic example of a sustainment training event.

Each state can enter up to two teams of four members, requiring at least half of the team to be new shooters—those who have not competed at a previous MAC Regional or WPW Championship since January 2007.

In 2023, Michigan sent two teams. One team came in 1st place: another finished 5th overall.

U.S. Army Small Arms Championships (ALL-ARMY)

From there, Michigan participated in the U.S. Army Small Arms Championships (ALL-ARMY) at Fort Moore, Georgia, March 10-16, 2024. The ALL-ARMY competition is a comprehensive live-fire training event

that tests the ability of Soldiers and Airmen to employ both primary and secondary weapon systems, problem-solve, and think critically under the stresses created by competition.

Despite its namesake, the National Guard usually dominates the competition because of their state marksmanship teams. National Guard teams and individuals brought home 15 of 33 top awards, taking first place in six of 11 categories. The Michigan National Guard had two teams consisting of eight shooters and placed 3rd in the All-Army Champions Team.

The WPW Championship: A Test of Skill and Endurance

Following the All-Army, Michigan proceeded to compete in the WPW Championship. This year, the Small Arms Competition featured 48 teams from 44 states and territories, with 195 individual soldiers and airmen competing. Participants used issued M4A1 carbines, M17 pistols, and M500 shotguns, engaging targets at distances ranging from 10 yards to 600 yards.



Michigan snagged third place overall—the highest they've ever placed as a team.

Notable achievements included:

- 3rd Place Overall
- 4th Place Team Pistol Aggregate
- 8th Place Team Rifle Aggregate
- 1st Place Team Know Your Limits Match
- 4th Place Team Combat Rifleman Match
- 4th Place Team Pistol Barricade Match
- 2nd Place Team Rapid Pistol CQB Match

Individually, Staff Sgt. Kendall Miller-Mather placed 5th overall in the competition and 2nd in rifle, earning a spot in the Chief's 50. Sgt. 1st Class Jacob Schrot and Staff Sgt. Hunter McDowell also performed admirably, contributing to the team's success.

"I think the key to success is training on your own and participating in different disciplines of shooting," said Schrot. "Training on drill weekend alone does not necessarily provide enough time to train."

Schrot speaks from experience. His performance in earlier WPW

competitions discouraged him, so he took a break. After a few years, he tried again in 2020. Pleased by his performance, he decided to renew his efforts and put focus into it. By 2023, he achieved Distinguished Rifleman and Distinguished Pistol badges, which can only be awarded after earning enough points by participating in a national-level match.

Aside from personal accomplishment, Schrot echoed the team's desire to represent the state of Michigan at the competitive level while learning from others.

"I truly enjoy representing Michigan when I am on the range," Schrot said. "One of our main priorities is to learn something at these events and bring that back to Michigan to train the next generation of marksmen."

Looking Ahead

As the program continues to evolve, the Michigan National Guard is committed to maintaining high standards of marksmanship training. Michigan will host the MAC IV Regional match in September 2024, and efforts are underway to provide

in-depth training to units across the state.

The journey to the WPW finals is one of dedication, skill, and teamwork. From state-level competitions to the national stage, each step hones the abilities of National Guard members, preparing them for the challenges they may face in the field. The WPW Championship not only celebrates marksmanship excellence but also strengthens the National Guard's combat readiness.

For further information on marksmanship training or competitive opportunities, contact Capt. Marshall Halas, State Marksmanship Coordinator, or Sgt. 1st Class Jacob Schrot, Assistant MAC IV Regional Representative.

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FROM THE FRONTLINE:

Michigan Air National Guard Airman Fulfills Dream of Service Later in Life

Story by MIANG Maj. Cammy Alberts, DMVA PAO

Flowers' message is clear: it's never too late to make a change. "Young or old, you have something to contribute. Our great country is worth defending, and it's an honor to serve alongside such great people."



Courtesy photo.

LANSING, Mich. – Technical Sgt. Neal Flowers' journey to the Michigan Air National Guard is a testament to the power of determination and the belief that it's never too late to follow one's dreams. Flowers exemplifies how airmen are much more than their uniforms; balancing military duty, family, and a civilian career.

In his late twenties and early thirties, Flowers faced a harsh reality check with the deaths of two family members. These losses served as a stark reminder that life is fleeting. It was then that the idea of joining the military began to take root. Despite being in his thirties, an age many consider too late to start a military career, Flowers felt an undeniable calling.

"There was always a persistent feeling in me that I needed to serve my country," Flowers said. "It wasn't just about timing; it was about fulfilling a long-held aspiration to give back and a deep sense of patriotism that I couldn't ignore."

After discussing his aspiration with his wife, Flowers decided to take the plunge, initially enlisting in the U.S. Army Reserve in 2010. After serving in the Army Reserves for two years, and having a two-year break in service, Flowers chose to enlist in the MIANG, attending Air Force basic training in 2014 at the age of 40. Determined to get in shape, proving that age is no barrier to achieving his fitness goals, he enlisted the help of a sixty-something bodybuilder and personal trainer. Training alongside clients of all ages, Flowers discovered that real strength begins in the mind.

"Training with him was eye-opening," Flowers said. "He had clients of all ages, all determined to make positive changes. It was a constant reminder that age is just a number."

Prior to enlisting, Flowers was the owner of an Information Technology (IT) business in Ferndale for over a decade, and attributes his business prowess to his perseverance and "never quit" attitude. Balancing his business with military responsibilities posed new challenges, but his unwavering determination saw him through.

Currently, Flowers is a cyber operations specialist serving as a drill status Guardsman (DSG) at the Alpena Combat Readiness Training Center. The Alpena CRTIC is a key facility for the MIANG, providing advanced training and readiness resources to prepare units for deployment and operational missions. It plays a crucial role in ensuring the preparedness and effectiveness of U.S. military forces.

In his cyber role, Flowers utilizes his civilian IT skills to contribute to his team. Being a member of the

FROM THE FRONTLINE:

MIANG is demanding yet rewarding, with a strong sense of camaraderie. Flowers describes his colleagues as some of the best, down-to-earth people he's ever met.

"I'm grateful to be part of this team," Flowers said. "They are not just colleagues but friends, and we share a mutual respect and dedication to our mission."

Continuing his development, Flowers and his son both utilized benefits of being a Michigan Guardsman by using the Michigan National Guard State Tuition Assistance Program (MINGSTAP) to attend college simultaneously. In May 2024, Flowers earned his bachelor's in business administration degree, demonstrating that learning and growth are lifelong pursuits.

To those considering military service, Flowers offers words of encouragement. "Whether you're fresh out of high school or in your forties, our country needs good people of all kinds to join. Every job in the military is honorable, and it's a team effort to achieve mission success," he said. "The pride in wearing the uniform is priceless."

Flowers' message is clear: it's never too late to make a change. "Young or old, you have something to contribute," he said. "Our great country is worth defending, and it's an honor to serve alongside such great people."

Flowers' dual roles as a Guardsman and business owner have had a significant impact on his community. Through his business he provides essential services, helping local businesses and individuals protect their digital assets. His military service, meanwhile, contributes to the national security framework, ensuring that vital cyber operations are maintained and secure.

Technical Sgt. Neal Flowers stands as a reminder that dreams have no expiration date. His story is one of resilience, dedication, and the pursuit of a higher calling. As he continues to balance his military and civilian roles, Flowers aspires to inspire others to follow their dreams and serve a higher purpose. ●



Courtesy photo.



Courtesy photo.

19-YEAR-OLD SOLDIER BECOMES FIRST MICHIGAN NATIONAL GUARD MEMBER TO COMPLETE RIGOROUS RTLI PROGRAM

Story by MIARNG 2nd Lt. Paige Bodine, DMVA PAO



Courtesy photo.

LANSING, Mich.— Joining the Army is tough; you're immediately off to training, facing drill sergeants, and learning the basics of soldiering. Going straight to Ranger School after that? That's an entirely new level of challenge and excellence. No Michigan Army National Guard soldier accomplished all three schools through the Ranger Team Leader Initiative (RTLI) program—until now. On June 21st, 2024, 19-year-old Private 1st Class Chase Cammenga accomplished this remarkable milestone, graduating from all three rigorous training programs.

The RTLI is a specialized training program for enlisted soldiers in the Army National Guard who aspire to attend Ranger School. This program seamlessly transitions soldiers from their initial training to the Ranger Training Assessment Course (RTAC) and then directly to Ranger School. The program scouts for top National Guard Soldiers, selecting those with the highest potential to succeed in the challenging Ranger course.

When Cammenga enlisted in the National Guard two years ago in November, while still in high school, his ambition to pursue advanced military training was a driving force behind his decision.

"I wanted to challenge myself and be in the best fighting force on the planet," said Cammenga when reflecting on why he wanted to join.

Cammenga decided in high school that he wanted to serve his country and was initially set on the active-duty route until a friend introduced him to the National Guard. Upon learning more, he discovered that the Guard offered an excellent balance between military service and pursuing higher education, with valuable educational benefits such as tuition assistance and the GI Bill.

"One of my buddies joined, and I figured this was a good way for me to do both. I could be in the National Guard and still serve while I'm going to college," he shared.

With his decision made, Cammenga embarked on his initial training. The fear of the unknown was daunting; and his One Station Unit Training (OSUT) experience was no exception. OSUT consolidates Basic Combat Training (BCT) and Advanced Individual Training (AIT) into a single location. This approach enables recruits to remain with the same unit and instructors throughout both phases of training, culminating in a single graduation ceremony.

"It was hard because it was the first time I was away from my family for that long. The training was different from anything I'd ever done before," he recalled.

Choosing the Infantry Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) of 11B, Cammenga's determination to excel in demanding training programs is driven by a desire to be a member of a team.

"I've always wanted to be the best, but more than that, I want to be able to help those around me," he explained. This mindset was particularly evident during Ranger School.

As his time at OSUT ended, he was identified as a standout candidate based on factors such as his outstanding PT score of 584 out of a possible 600 points. He earned a spot in the RTLI program.

"I was pretty excited," he said. "Going to Ranger School wasn't always a dream, but once I heard more about it, I knew it was what I wanted to do."

Cammenga's journey to earning the Ranger tab was challenging and began with rigorous RTAC training. The 30-day course prepares enlisted Guard members for the Army National Guard "pre-Ranger" course, called the Ranger Training Assessment Course (RTAC). RTAC lasts 17 days, and all Army National Guard members must complete it before heading to Ranger School.

"In RTAC, the training was incredibly tough. It made us think, 'If this is hard, just imagine what ranger school will be like.' But we always supported each other and lifted each other up," said Cammenga.

Once RTAC was completed Cammenga was ready for Ranger School, which is one of the toughest training courses in the Army. Ranger students train to exhaustion for more than two months, pushing the limits of their minds and bodies.



Courtesy photo.

Reflecting on his journey, Cammenga emphasizes the importance of camaraderie and support. "You don't get your tab; your buddies get it for you. I learned that I had to lean on those around me."

Recycling during training is a common challenge; for Cammenga, it was no different. Darby, the first phase of Ranger School, was a hyper-structured environment where attention to detail was paramount.

"The instructors were different, with different criteria. It was all about doing everything by the book," said Cammenga, reflecting on when he was recycled.

Feeling that sinking sensation in his stomach when he realized he had to do Darby again was tough, but he kept telling himself he wasn't a quitter. One of the most important things Cammenga learned during his training was the value of resilience.

"I felt like I couldn't go on, but I learned to dig deep and find that inner strength," he said.

With dedication and hard work, Cammenga passed Darby and moved to the next phase. For Cammenga, the training presented significant challenges, especially the lack of sleep and food for more than 62 days.

"The lack of sleep was the most difficult part for me," said Cammenga. "There were times I found myself falling asleep while walking. On average, we got about an hour to an hour and a half of sleep a night." Despite these hardships, he stayed motivated by reminding himself, "At least I'm not in Darby. I can get this done."

During ranger school, one mentor, a fellow soldier in his platoon, had a profound impact on Cammenga.

"He told me that people here will do anything for you; you just have to ask," Cammenga recalled. "His words inspired me to be more patient and to help others wherever I could."

Cammenga's determination was clear in how he faced each challenge. He pushed through 12-mile rucks, completed water survival training, navigated difficult terrain, and led battle drills, tackling each day with persistence.

"Failure was not an option. I pushed myself harder than I ever thought possible," he said.



Courtesy photo.

His perseverance paid off when he completed Ranger School and earned the coveted Ranger tab. This accomplishment, after enduring intense training and numerous challenges, highlighted his dedication and skill.

"It was one of the proudest moments of my life. All the hard work and sacrifices had finally paid off," he reflected.

His journey didn't stop there. After ranger school, he attended airborne school, where he learned the skills necessary for airborne operations. The training further honed his skills and prepared him for future missions.

Cammenga's achievement is significant. It marks the first time a soldier in the Michigan Army National Guard has completed the RTLI program, which brings enlisted soldiers through OSUT, RTAC, and ranger training. His story is a testament to the values of hard work, perseverance, and support from those around him.

"My parents always encouraged me to follow my dreams and never give up," he recalled. "During training, they wrote me letters and offered incredible support. Their encouragement was a big part of what kept me going," he reflected.

Private 1st Class Cammenga's story is not only a personal triumph but also a powerful testament to the potential of dedication and resilience. His success illustrates that with determination and perseverance, any goal is achievable, and that success is within reach for those who strive for it.



MVAA: SERVING THOSE WHO SERVED

Updated on 2/20/2024 — Display until 1/31/2025



The **Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency (MVAA)** is the central coordinating agency for Michigan veterans and their families, providing advocacy and connecting veterans to earned benefits. As a state agency, the MVAA is not part of the federal VA, but we work closely with the VA and other entities to serve veterans.

No Wrong Door for Michigan Veterans

The Michigan Veteran Resource Service Center and **Michigan.gov/MVAA** support veterans, members of the National Guard and Reserve and their families as they transition through each chapter of their lives.

Callers to the Resource Service Center at **1-800-MICH-VET** (1-800-642-4838) can request their DD-214 discharge documents and get connected to U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) benefits, emergency aid, housing assistance, education and employment resources and other federal and state benefits.

Veteran Service Officers (VSOs)

The MVAA employs its own VSOs and accredits VSOs throughout the state to ensure veterans have free, expert assistance in getting their earned benefits. VSOs help with claims for disability compensation, pensions, education benefits, health care and other services and resources. Find a VSO near you at **Michigan.gov/VeteranBenefitsCounselor**

Targeted Outreach

Our Buddy to Buddy program pairs veterans with a veteran mentor to provide comradeship and support in all facets of life. Through our Veteran Connector program, organizations and businesses help us identify veterans and get them linked to benefits. Learn more at **Michigan.gov/MVAA**



SCAN ME

Scan the QR code with your camera app or visit **Michigan.gov/MVAA** to learn more.



Responding to Emergency Needs

The Michigan Veterans Trust Fund provides emergency financial aid to eligible veterans for temporary financial emergencies. Contact your local MVTF county committee to apply or submit an emergency assistance form available online at **Michigan.gov/MVAAEmergencyAssistance**

Education Opportunities

MVAA's Veteran-Friendly Schools (VFS) program supports higher education institutions committed to meeting the needs of student veterans. The VFS dashboard provides detailed information about all certified universities, colleges and trade schools. Learn more at **Michigan.gov/MVAA/Education**

Employment Opportunities

MVAA's Veteran-Friendly Employer (VFE) program supports Michigan employers in their efforts to recruit, train and retain veterans and their spouses. Learn more about the program at **Michigan.gov/VeteranFriendlyEmployers**

Health Care and Mental Health Support

MVAA connects veterans to VA health care and mental health resources as part of its mission to prevent veteran suicide. **Veterans in crisis should call 988 and press 1** to speak confidentially with a crisis counselor.

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BROTHERS IN ARMS

Michigan Cyber Officer Swears In
Twin Brother as Newest Cyber
Operations Specialist

Story by MIARNG Sgt. 1st class William MacDonald, 172 CPT
Photos by MIARNG Sgt. Brayden Stephan, DMVA PAO



LANSING, Mich. - U.S. Army Warrant Officer Trenton Darrow, a 170A cyber warfare technician in the Michigan Army National Guard, seized the opportunity to administer the oath of enlistment to his twin brother, Spc. Travis Darrow, swearing him into the Michigan Army National Guard at the Lansing Military Entrance Processing Station (MEPS). Travis will be a 17C Cyber Operations Specialist in the 172nd Cyber Protection Team.

In 2010, Trenton joined the Michigan Army National Guard as an 11B infantryman with the 1-125th Infantry Regiment. In 2015, he

volunteered for deployment to Jordan as a 13M Multiple Launch Rocket System (MLRS) crewmember. During this time, he enrolled at the Army Signal University in Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, earning several Network and Security certifications. Upon returning home, Trenton interned at the Veteran Affairs in Saginaw, Michigan. By 2018, he transitioned to the Defensive Cyber Operations Element unit at Joint Forces Headquarters. Then, in 2023, he completed Warrant Officer Candidate School, concurrently earning certifications such as Offensive Security Certified Professional and GIAC Certified Forensic Analyst.



“I had no reservation about sponsoring my brother to join the unit,” Trenton said. “Between the immeasurable opportunities that the 17-series cyber security career field provides to soldiers in the civilian job market and the way that the cyber protection team treats soldiers like family members, I knew that my brother would be treated as a professional, obtain critical job skills, and network with other like-minded cyber security professionals.”

The officer in charge of the 172nd cyber protection team, Lt. Col. Kathleen Prince-Sayward, was ecstatic when she learned about Spc. Darrow joining the team. “Our bonds of service often create a family feeling, and this takes that relationship to the next level,” she said. “When working with highly technically-minded soldiers daily, it further strengthens the bonds within the team. Soldiers work through hardships and find comfort in their military family, and having siblings on the team showcases the family values within our community.”

The Darrow brothers grew up in Indian River, near Gaylord, Michigan. “Travis and I grew up as best friends and have a close relationship. It was an honor for my family to continue an intimate moment together,” said Trenton. The Darrow family shares their military bond with

their older brother, Brandon, who served in the Army as a 31E corrections specialist. Trenton’s wife, Hillary, is a Captain serving in the Army as a family medicine obstetrics doctor at Ft. Eisenhower, GA. In this remarkable display of familial commitment and dedication to service,

Warrant Officer Trenton Darrow’s enlistment of his twin brother, Spc. Travis Darrow, in the Michigan Army National Guard, exemplifies the profound bonds and shared sense of duty that unite military families. This rare event not only highlights the deep-rooted loyalty within their family but also highlights the opportunities and camaraderie found within the military community. As they embark on their respective roles within the 172nd cyber protection team, their journey together symbolizes the enduring spirit of service and solidarity that defines their military legacy.

Michigan Youth ChalleNGe Academy Celebrates 25th Anniversary

Story and photos by
MIARNG Master Sgt. Helen Miller, DMVA PAO



LANSING, Mich. — The Michigan Youth ChalleNGe Academy (MYCA) held their 25th Anniversary Celebration on June 15, 2024. Immediately following the celebration 118 cadets of class #50 participated in their graduation ceremony.

“Including this graduating class, 4,988 Michigan youth have graduated from the MYCA, putting themselves on the right path for success,” said Michael Gillum, director of the MYCA. “We are really enjoyed celebrating the last 25 years with our past, present and future cadets, their families and friends, our staff and community partners who have been so instrumental in the program’s success.”

The official party included U.S. Rep. Tim Walberg, 5th Congressional District; retired Brig. Gen. Roger Allen, first and former director of the MYCA; retired Col. Michael Price, senior deputy director of state operations and director of strategic planning for the Michigan Department of Military and Veteran Affairs; Dr. Terrell Brown, 2005 graduate of the MYCA; Michael Gillum, director of the MYCA; Karen Gonser, deputy director of the MYCA; Josh Adams, principal of Marshall Public Schools; Capt. Nathan Boggerty, commandant of the MYCA; Kia Rosenberg, campus ministry director for Youth For Christ; and Cadet Lillian Troeger, cadet company commander for the MYCA.

The graduating class consisted of cadets from across the state, hailing from 38 different counties: Allegan, Alpena, Baraga, Barry, Bay, Benzie, Berrien, Calhoun, Cass, Cheboygan, Clare, Clinton, Eaton, Genesee, Grand Traverse, Hillsdale, Huron, Ingham, Ionia, Jackson, Kalamazoo, Kent, Lapeer, Mackinac, Macomb, Monroe, Montgomery, Muskegon, Newaygo, Oakland, Osceola, Otsego, Ottawa, Saginaw, Shiawassee, St. Clair, St. Joseph and Wayne.



The voluntary academy is a cost-free alternative education program which offers at-risk youth the opportunity to change their future. As part of the curriculum, cadets participate in drill and ceremony formations, meet physical fitness standards, perform community service and receive classroom instruction.

Of the 118 anticipated graduates in this cycle, 96 are earning their high school diploma while the remaining cadets will earn their General Education Development certificate or continue their academic pursuits towards earning their high school diploma. Over the past 22 weeks, cadets have performed more than 5,600 hours of community service to help individuals and organizations in the Battle Creek area.

The Michigan Youth ChalleNGe Academy educates, trains, and mentors at-risk youth in a quasi-military environment at no cost to participants, giving young people the skills to become productive and responsible citizens. Applying the military model to alternative education, the Academy promotes competency development through academic opportunities, life skills, and vocational preparation.

For more information on the MYCA, visit:
[The Michigan Youth ChalleNGe Academy website.](#) ●

[For more information on the Michigan Youth ChalleNGe Academy, click HERE](#)



[CLICK HERE](#) 

MICHIGAN NATIONAL GUARD ENGINEERS AID LATVIA IN DEVELOPMENT OF SELIJA RANGE

Story and photos by MIANG Staff Sgt. Bethany Rizor, 110th WG PA

In a bid to enhance military preparedness through international collaboration, the Michigan National Guard has joined forces with Latvian Zemessardze engineers to establish the new Selija training range in Selonja, Latvia.



SELONIA, LATVIA — Spanning 62,000 acres, the ambitious project, set for completion by 2030, aims to bolster training capabilities for NATO forces by providing a collective training complex for joint exercises.

The groundbreaking for the Selija Range occurred in early June and marks a significant step toward future warfare training. It will feature elements such as water crossing training, military staging areas, and munition impact zones designated for live ammunition maneuvers. The construction initiative not only facilitates practical training for Michigan National Guard engineers but also fosters their technical skills and experience through collaboration with Latvian counterparts.

"We've consistently worked closely with our Latvian counterparts throughout the planning stages to overcome challenges and ensure the project aligns with their objectives," stated Chief Warrant Officer 2 Ted Schroeder, project officer in charge of the 507th Engineer Battalion.

As the construction progresses, the initiative fulfills Latvia's strategic imperative to modernize military infrastructure with advanced training sites. The aim is to support joint exercises that incorporate live fire and dry fire maneuver capabilities, thereby enhancing both international and regional defense capacities while promoting cooperation among neighboring countries.

SELIJA TRAINING RANGE

Once completed, the Selija Range is poised to provide a realistic and challenging training environment where NATO forces can conduct complex combat maneuvers and enhance joint operational capabilities. This prepares troops for diverse combat scenarios, ensuring readiness to overcome natural and man-made obstacles.

Under the auspices of the State Partnership Program (SPP) established in 1993, the collaboration between the Latvian Armed Forces and the Michigan National Guard has strengthened. Joint training exercises, such as Exercise Northern Strike at the National All Domain Warfighting Center in Northern Michigan, disaster emergency response planning, and subject matter expert exchanges have enhanced operational readiness and interoperability for both militaries. The Selija Training Area project builds upon this foundation, offering opportunities for joint military training that enhances tactical proficiency and communication between Latvian and U.S. units.

"The Latvians have expressed optimism that the progress of phase two will meet both military and municipal needs," noted Maj. Kaspars Skudrovs of the Latvian Armed Forces. "With only one bridge over our main river, the additional location would be beneficial for training and serve as a backup for daily use."

This comprehensive development plan addresses a wide spectrum of military training needs, supports neighboring countries, fosters regional cooperation, and enhances individual and unit readiness. The project underscores the enduring partnership and shared commitment to global security between Latvia and the United States.

"The Selija Range will enhance Latvian and U.S. readiness through increased maneuverability and live fire training opportunities," affirmed Maj. Catalin Bugar, bilateral affairs officer to Latvia for the Michigan National Guard. "As units train together at Selija, they will boost interoperability and lethality."

Approximately \$750 million has been earmarked for the construction of the site. The Selija Range project not only advances military readiness through state-of-the-art training facilities but also emphasizes the ongoing value of training exercises during and beyond construction. This investment ensures that NATO forces are well-prepared for various combat scenarios, strengthens regional defense capabilities, and reinforces international cooperation in safeguarding global security.

"We are appreciative of the Michigan National Guard engineers whose collaboration with Zemessardze engineers will significantly advance progress at Selija, both in 2025 and in long-term military projects," concluded Skudrovs.



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RUNWAY REPAIRS, DEPLOYMENT RELOCATE SELFRIDGE JETS

Story by Penelope Carroll, 127th WG PA



Photo by MIANG Tech. Sgt. Drew Schumann, 127th WG PA

SELFRRIDGE AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, Mich. — Residents near Selfridge Air National Guard Base will notice less air traffic this summer after approximately 350 airmen assigned to the 127th Wing's A-10 Thunderbolt II aircraft mission deployed to an undisclosed location in late June. In addition, a runway repair project is scheduled to begin mid-July, further impacting local flight operations for approximately three months, dispersing the KC-135 Stratotanker aircraft mission to Detroit Metro Airport, Romulus, and Marquette Sawyer Regional Airport, Gwinn.

Coast Guard Air Station Detroit and Customs and Border Protection air missions will remain at Selfridge ANGB during the runway repair project.

The \$9.8 million construction contract, awarded to Cadillac Asphalt, LLC, based in Canton, will remove and replace a nearly 20 acre area of existing asphalt at a depth of 6.25 inches, and complete structural repairs in three separate locations. The project is estimated to employ more than 100 construction workers over the duration.

After runway repairs are complete, the KC-135 will return to normal operations at Selfridge ANGB.

Comprised of approximately 1,500 personnel and flying both the A-10 Thunderbolt II and the KC-135 Stratotanker, the 127th Wing supports both the Air Mobility Command and Air Combat Command by providing highly-skilled Airmen to missions domestically and overseas. The 127th Wing is the host unit at Selfridge Air National Guard Base, which marks its 107th year of continuous military air operations in 2024.



Michigan National Guard, Armed Forces of Liberia partner for mass casualty response exercise

Story and photos by MIANG
Capt. Andrew Layton, DMVA PAO

DAUZON, Liberia – From May 17-25, 2024, a joint team of medical professionals from the Michigan Army National Guard (MIARNG) and Michigan Air National Guard (MIANG) worked with staff from the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) to create, establish, and implement a preliminary mass casualty (MASCAL) response plan for the AFL’s 14 Military Hospital. The event culminated on May 24, 2024 with a trio of MASCAL exercise scenarios. Approximately 40 AFL soldiers took part in the drills.

The Michigan team brought with them a broad range of expertise. As is often the case for National Guard members, military proficiency is amplified by experience in the civilian sector. The U.S. soldiers and airmen represented the 177th Regional Training Institute (RTI), 156th Expeditionary Signal Battalion (ESB), 1-182d Field Artillery Regiment (FAR), and the Michigan ANG’s 127th Medical Group. U.S. Army and Air Force personnel from the U.S. Embassy – Monrovia Office of Security Cooperation and Team 3712, Southern European Task Force – Africa Civil Affairs Battalion, also took part in the exercise as augmentees.

“We ran through three different exercise scenarios simulating the arrival of a large number of patients from various emergency situations,” said team leader U.S. Army Capt. Chelsey Downer, who serves as the Headquarters & Headquarters Detachment (HHD) commander and instructor with the 177 RTI in Battle Creek, Michigan. In civilian life, Downer is a nurse practitioner with Mackinaw Trail Pediatrics in Cadillac, Mich. “Each time, we were very impressed with what we saw from the 14 Military Hospital staff.”

Sadly, memories of a real-world disaster are fresh for many Liberians. In December 2023, a fuel tanker crashed and exploded alongside a

highway in Bong County (about 80 miles north of capital city Monrovia), tragically killing more than 50 civilians and injuring nearly 100 others. Of those, staff at 14 Military Hospital received and treated 11 critically burned patients. The hospital team had only one hour notice before the injured arrived.

“When that first group came [to the hospital], there was an initial shock,” said AFL Maj. Albertha Clark-Kollie, chief medical officer at 14 Military Hospital. “This tragedy is why so many of our team at the hospital were motivated [to participate in the scenarios]. They really wanted to be here.”

The Michigan National Guard, linked with the AFL for 15 years through the National Guard Bureau’s State Partnership Program (SPP), has supported the 14 Military Hospital with multiple visiting teams since the facility opened.

“This team didn’t just give us the fish, they taught us to catch fish also,” said AFL 2nd Lt. Alfred Diggs, a physician assistant and administrative officer at 14 Military Hospital. “We appreciate our U.S. partners and really try to give our all when they come to work with us.”



The 14 Military Hospital opened in September 2021 and has since become one of Liberia’s most impactful health care facilities. The number “14” is a tribute to former Liberian President George Weah, who wore the number on his soccer jersey during his legendary athletic career before entering politics.

The Americans also donated many life-saving medical supplies to the neighboring Edward Binyah Kesselly Barracks (EBK) clinic, including alcohol swabs, allergy medications, gloves, IV fluids, N95 masks, oxygen masks, silver nitrate sticks, and syringes for vaccine and blood draws. Before construction of the 14 Military Hospital, the EBK clinic was used as the AFL’s major military medical facility.

In addition to the exercises, a review of emergency procedures for fire and evacuation of 14 Military Hospital were also conducted.

According to team members from the U.S., working alongside West African partners was a mutual learning opportunity.

“I’m usually an out-of-the-box thinker,” said U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Jonathan Coats, an emergency medical technician (EMT) and firefighter with the 156 ESB in Howell, Michigan. “but this week, I learned a lot about ingenuity – specifically, what you need and don’t need to offer a high standard of care in our profession.”

“We never want to see another tanker explosion, but we are confident our partners in the AFL would be able to handle another worst-case situation very well,” said U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Tracy Chapman, an instructor combat medic with the 177 RTI. “We could learn a thing or two from our partners.”

The U.S. team appreciated the wisdom offered by AFL Sgt. Jesse Mender, a chaplain at 14 Military Hospital. “More sweat in training means less blood on the battlefield,” he said.

“For us, that was perfect,” said Downer. “We are definitely going to put that on the wall of our classroom when we get back to Michigan.”



MICHIGAN AIR NATIONAL GUARD AND LATVIA COLLABORATE ON AIRFIELD CAPABILITIES

Story and photos by MIANG Staff Sgt. Bethany Rizor, 110th WG PA

Airmen from the Michigan Air National Guard (MIANG) undertook a critical mission in Latvia during the first two weeks of June, collaborating to bolster the capabilities of Lielvarde Airfield in managing military training airspace and defending against potential threats. This joint initiative aims to strengthen transatlantic defense alliances and foster unity among allied nations.

LIELVARDE, LATVIA — Amid evolving security challenges in the Baltic region, the mission holds particular significance, emphasizing the importance of airspace integrity and readiness. Through joint planning, technical consultations, and hands-on training, MIANG personnel are providing essential support to modernize Latvia's airfield infrastructure and enhance airspace management.

Leading efforts to develop air base flight operations and aerodrome procedures, Senior Master Sgt. Brett Trisko from the Alpena Combat Readiness Training Center (CRTC) collaborated with 1st Lt. Oskurrs Kuriss, chief of flight support with the Latvian Armed Forces, to establish procedures for Unmanned Aerial Systems operations, aimed at meeting the operational needs of the Latvian National Armed Forces.

The mission focuses on optimizing training and defensive capabilities through process refinement and airspace reconfiguration, aligning closely with Latvia's strategic defense objectives. "We have established procedures that allow us to incorporate necessary changes swiftly," noted Trisko.



Photo by MIANG Tech. Sgt. David Morris, 127th WG OSS

Photo by M1ANG Staff Sgt. Bethany Rizor, 110th WG PA



With expertise spanning nine different airspaces and supporting multiple aircraft concurrently, M1ANG experts bring valuable insights in air operations and airspace management to their Latvian counterparts.

Lt. Col. Andrew LaFountain, airspace manager at Alpena CRTC, facilitated connections with various levels of airspace and range management, enhancing operational effectiveness, management, and safety. "Our goal is to create a secure and efficient training environment for NATO forces," LaFountain emphasized, stressing the importance of integrated air and ground training.

In the pursuit of advancing control and reporting center capabilities, Master Sgt. Don Witt, Alpena CRTC weapons director liaison, coordinated with Latvian counterparts to gather and assess current capabilities. Both parties aim to design future training events to support initiatives including Defensive Counter Air and understanding typical fighter tactics. "Latvian controllers are extremely proficient at 'close' positive control techniques, and we aim to create opportunities for 'loose' positive control," Witt explained, highlighting the collaborative effort to enhance operational flexibility.

Additionally, Chief Master Sgt. Robert Sutton, 127th Mission Support Group security forces team lead from Selfridge Air National Guard Base, met with force protection counterparts to familiarize his team to Latvian security needs, evaluate security infrastructure and seek areas for improvement. "During our assessment we explored opportunities of alternate locations for training," said Sutton. "Establishing another site would set the stage for future Agile Combat Employment (ACE) and joint operations."

During joint inspections of potential airfields, airfield management and security forces personnel evaluated facilities and conducted security assessments, ensuring readiness for future operations. The team also observed and commended Latvia's precision in executing hot pit refueling, underscoring their capability for high-tempo operations.

"Exercises, like hot pit refueling, provide invaluable training opportunities, showcasing readiness in dynamic environments," said Staff Sgt. Keith Stanton, airfield manager with the 127th Operations Support Squadron, Selfridge Air National Guard Base.

Tech. Sgt. Jeffrey Myers, emergency manager from the 110th Civil Engineer Squadron, Battle Creek Air National Guard Base, collaborated closely with Latvian counterparts to discuss training equipment and review emergency response procedures, highlighting advancements in Latvia's Chemical Biological Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) program.

"This partnership underscores the enduring solidarity between Latvia and the United States," Myers noted, expressing optimism about future collaborative exercises and inspections.

The M1ANG's collaborative efforts in Latvia underscore the shared commitment of allied nations to collective defense and security. Through enhanced airspace and airfield capabilities, the partnership continues to strengthen transatlantic ties and readiness against evolving regional challenges.

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EDUCATION BENEFITS

- 50K Student Loan Repayment Program (SLRP)
- Montgomery GI Bill (MGIB) Kicker (\$350 a month for 36 months)
- Federal Tuition Assistance
- Michigan National Guard State Tuition Assistance Program (MINGSTAP) *
- Educational Benefits transferable to your dependents and children
- Tuition Grant Program

FINANCIAL BENEFITS

- Drill Pay *
- 10K Re-enlistment/Extension Bonus (REB)
- Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) up to 5% matching
- Federal Retirement at 60 *
- State Retirement at 55 (after 20 years of MING service)
- VA Home Loans (No down payment required)

MINGSTAP - Michigan National Guard State Tuition Assistance Program

Up to \$14,400 per academic year and \$86,400 lifetime limit for an Undergraduate/ Bachelors degree and up to \$6,000 per academic year and \$25,200 lifetime limit for an Graduate/ Masters degree) State Law expanded eligibility so your Spouse or Child may use this benefit while you are currently serving in the MIARNG.

DRILL PAY - Monthly/Annual Income

Example: An SGT/E5 with 8 years TIS makes \$114.13/ Unit Training Assembly (UTA), 4 UTAs= \$456.52/ Month. 48 UTAs + 15 days of Annual Training (AT) = Approximately \$7,190.19/ year.

This additional income could increase with Promotions, Time in Service, and additional active orders and unit training periods.

Federal Retirement Income

Example: An Mday E7 with 20 years of service in the MIARNG, earning a minimum of 78 points per year, and a one-year deployment (roughly 2000 points) would get about \$760 /month or \$9120/year at age 60, or earlier if eligible.

Or: An Mday E6 with 20 years of service in the MIARNG, earning a minimum of 78 points per year, and a one-year deployment (roughly 2000 points) would get about \$640 /month or \$7680/year at age 60, or earlier if eligible.

MEDICAL BENEFITS

- Low cost Medical and Dental Insurance (Tricare)
- "Wraparound" coverage for Medicare (Tricare For Life)
- Low cost Life Insurance (SGLI) up to 500K coverage
- State Sponsored Life Insurance (SSLI) up to 260K coverage
- Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) up to 55% of your retirement pay

ADDITIONAL OPTIONS

- Officer Candidate School (OCS)
- Warrant Officer Candidate School (WOCS)
- Employment Opportunities (AGR, ADOS, Title 10, Title 32, Mil Tech)
- Change of MOS/Unit

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The Michigan Army National Guard: A Historical Overview (1701-1833)

ADAM BETZ
MING HISTORIAN

LANSING, Mich. - The Michigan Army National Guard (MIARNG) holds a storied past integral to understanding both the state's and the nation's history. From its early days as a French colonial militia to its formal establishment in the early 19th century, the MIARNG has played a crucial role in defending and developing the region. By exploring this history, we gain insight into the sacrifices and resilience that have shaped Michigan's military heritage and continue to influence its present-day operations. The key events, strategic locations, and significant figures from 1701 to 1833 have defined the MIARNG, highlighting vital connections to our current security and community identity.

Colonial Militia (1701-1763)

The roots of Michigan's military history trace back to 1701, when French settlers established a militia in the region now known as Michigan. This period marked a struggle for control between the French and British empires. The militia, composed of local settlers, defended French settlements against Native American tribes and British incursions. Historian Charles H.



Kamb notes, "The French colonial militia was essential in maintaining the fur trade and protecting the strategic forts in the Great Lakes region."

Fort Detroit and the Cadillac Papers

Established by the French under Antoine Laumet de La Mothe, sieur de Cadillac, in 1701, Fort Detroit was a pivotal military and trading post, enhancing French influence in the region. The Cadillac Papers of 1708 document the early years of the fort and the militia's role in its defense. Cadillac emphasized Fort Detroit's strategic importance in securing fur trade routes and alliances with Native American tribes. "The strength of our position at Fort Detroit is paramount to our control over the Great Lakes and the fur trade," Cadillac wrote in a letter to his leadership. This early

militia would eventually evolve into units like the Detroit Light Guard and the 1225th Corps Support Battalion, which still operate in Detroit today.

These partnerships with Native American tribes were among the first security cooperation missions for the early militia, emphasizing the importance of collaboration—a practice that continues today as the MIARNG strengthens its partnerships with Latvia, Liberia, and Sierra Leone.

Fort Michilimackinac

Another significant military installation was Fort Michilimackinac, established in 1715 at the Straits of Mackinac. The fort was crucial for the French, connecting their eastern settlements with the fur-rich regions of the west. Historian Richard White describes the fort

A MOMENT IN HISTORY

as "a vital outpost that ensured the flow of goods, information, and military support across the vast distances of New France." During the French and Indian War (1754-1763), the militia defended these strategic locations. The fall of New France in 1763 ended French colonial rule and began British control, leading to the dissolution of the French militia.

British Rule and American Revolution (1763-1783)

Under British rule, the militia system underwent significant changes. The British restructured the colonial militias to better serve their strategic needs, emphasizing the protection of critical forts such as Fort Detroit. However, as tensions grew between the British and the American colonies, many militia members were drawn into the broader conflict of the American Revolution. In 1778, the Michigan militia played a crucial role in supporting British efforts to suppress the rebellion. Despite their loyalty to the Crown, some militia members sympathized with the revolutionary cause. Historian John F. Smith states, "The Michigan militia was deeply divided, reflecting the broader loyalties and conflicts of the American Revolution."

Transition to American Control (1783-1812)

The Treaty of Paris in 1783, which ended the American Revolution, transferred control of Michigan from Britain to the newly independent United States. This transition began a new era for the

militia in Michigan. The United States government sought to integrate the militia into the national defense framework, leading to the establishment of more formal structures and regulations. The Northwest Ordinance of 1787 played a pivotal role in shaping the future of the Michigan militia, providing for the organization of territorial militias and laying the groundwork for future statehood. Military historian Robert M. Dunkerly states, "The Northwest Ordinance was instrumental in formalizing the militia system in the Michigan Territory, ensuring its alignment with federal standards."

The War of 1812

The War of 1812 was a defining moment for the military establishment in Michigan Territory. The conflict between the United States and Britain saw significant military action in the Great Lakes region. The militia was called upon to defend Michigan against British and Native American forces. One of the most notable events was the surrender of Detroit in 1812, where Brigadier General William Hull, leading the Michigan militia, capitulated to British forces without a fight.

The Battle of River Raisin

In January 1813, American forces, including militia from Kentucky, suffered a devastating defeat at the Battle of River Raisin. The aftermath, known as the River Raisin Massacre, involved the killing of wounded American soldiers by Native American allies of the British. This event became a rallying cry for American forces with the slogan "Remember the Raisin," highlighting the brutality of the conflict and galvanizing support for the war effort. Military historian John Sugden observes, "The Battle of River Raisin and its tragic

aftermath had a profound impact on American military strategy and public sentiment during the War of 1812." Just as today, the flow of information greatly influenced the success or failure of military campaigns.

Effective communication and intelligence were as crucial then as they are now in modern military operations.

The Battle of Mackinac Island

The Battle of Mackinac Island in 1814 was a significant engagement in the War of 1812, highlighting the island's strategic importance in controlling the upper Great Lakes. British forces, reinforced by Native American allies, successfully repelled an American attempt to recapture the island. Historian Alan Taylor notes, "The failed American assault on Mackinac Island illustrated the difficulties of waging war in the remote and rugged terrain of the Great Lakes." This is why training in new terrain and austere environments is crucial to Army training readiness in the 21st century. Despite early setbacks, the militia played a crucial role in subsequent battles, including the recapture of Detroit in 1813. Taylor describes, "The resilience and adaptability of the Michigan militia during the War of 1812 demonstrated their importance to regional defense."

Post-War Reorganization (1815-1832)

Following the War of 1812, the Michigan militia underwent significant reorganization. The Territorial Militia Act of 1815 established more structured and disciplined units, reflecting lessons learned from the recent conflict. The militia became more integrated with the federal military system, receiving better training and equipment.

A MOMENT IN HISTORY

Michigan's Involvement in the Black Hawk War

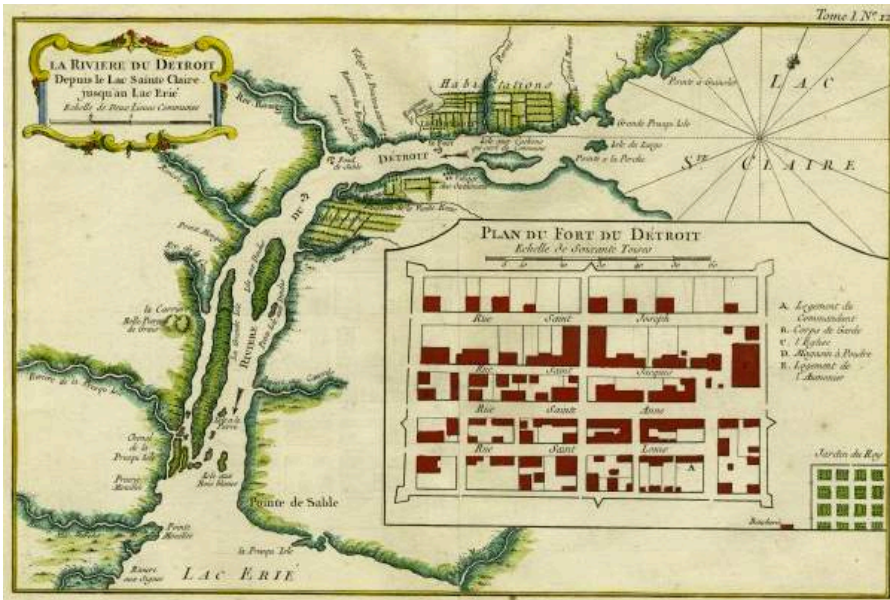
In 1832, the Black Hawk War broke out in the Midwest, involving conflicts between the United States and Native American tribes led by Black Hawk, a Sauk leader. The Michigan militia supported federal troops in quelling the uprising, providing troops and supplies to assist in the federal campaign. Historian Kerry A. Trask states, "The Black Hawk War was one of the last major conflicts involving Native American resistance in the Midwest, and the involvement of state militias like Michigan's was crucial in bringing about its conclusion."

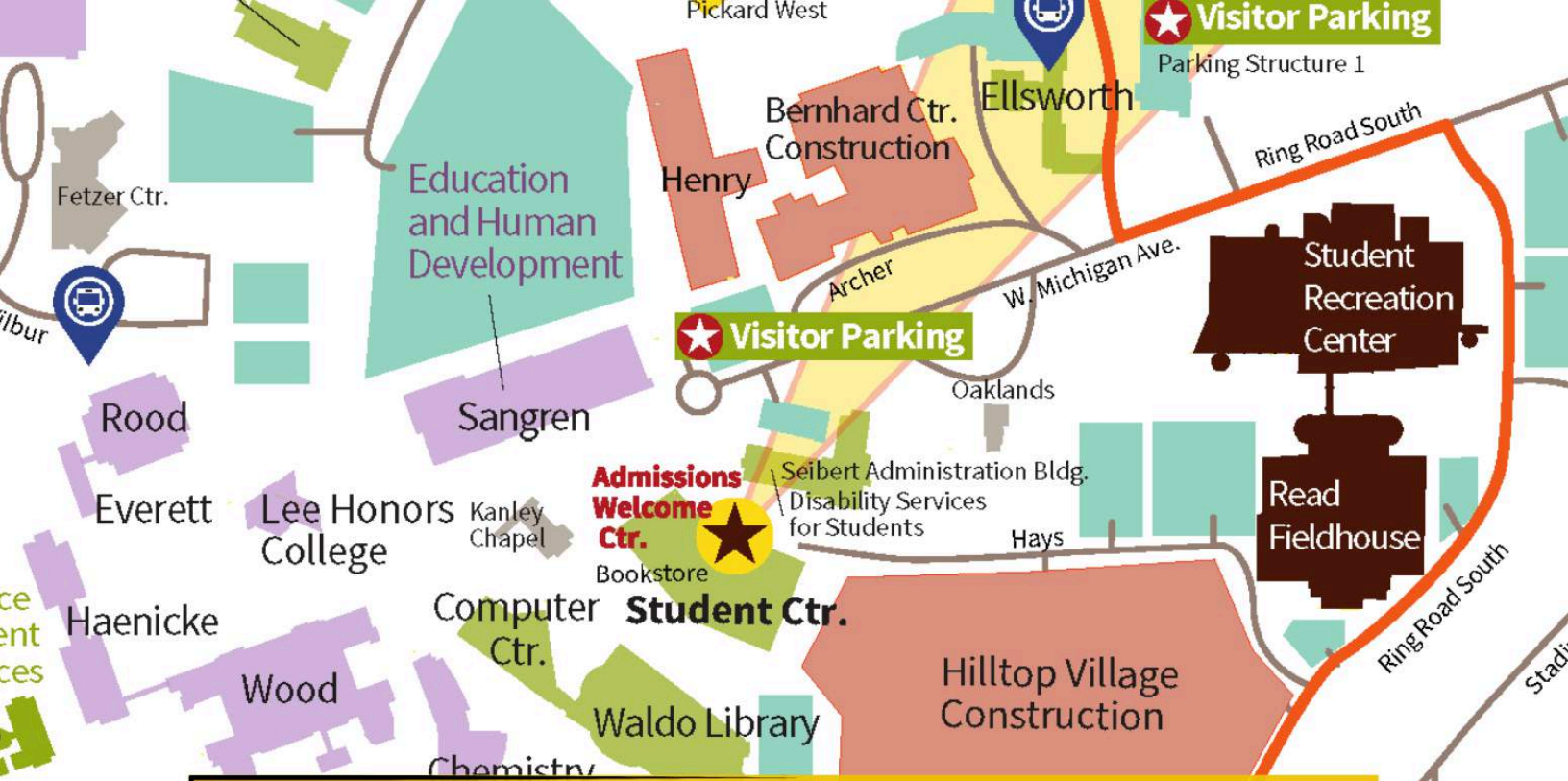
Establishment of the Michigan Guard (1833)

The Michigan Public Act of 1833, dated August 1, 1833, marked a significant milestone with the establishment of the Michigan Guard. This legislative action formalized the creation of a state militia, reflecting the broader national trend of organizing local defense forces in the early 19th century. The Act's passage can be seen as part of a broader effort to standardize and professionalize military forces at the state level, aligning with federal initiatives following the War of 1812. The establishment of the Michigan Guard provided security to its citizens and underscored the state's commitment to contributing to the nation's defense infrastructure. Historian Charles H. Kamb states, "The contest between the English and French for the possession of Michigan was part of the greater struggle between these two nations

for supremacy in North America. The outcome of this struggle determined the continent's future and established Michigan as a key strategic and military region."

Throughout these transitions, from French to British to American control, the militias remained deeply ingrained in the communities across Michigan, from Detroit to Mackinaw and beyond. Today is no different. The MIARNG is about men and women serving in their communities, continuing the legacy of local defense and cooperation that has been central to Michigan's history. Understanding this history not only honors the legacy of those who served but also strengthens our appreciation for the ongoing role of the MIARNG in safeguarding our communities today.





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MAINTAINERS, SPECIAL OPERATIONS TROOPS TEAM UP, INNOVATE TRAINING

Story by MIANG Master Sgt. Chelsea FitzPatrick, 127th WG PA

Air National Guardsmen Hone Skills Amid Simulated Warfare

SELFRIDGE AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, Mich. — Conversation abruptly stopped as ten Air National Guardsmen looked skyward while two A-10 Thunderbolt II aircraft dropped simulated bombs and fired Gatling guns with a familiar, “BRRT,” at the Grayling Air Gunnery Range on May 21, 2024. The airmen, members of the 127th Wing’s agile combat employment, or “ACE,” team, and representing a variety of aircraft maintenance career fields, were at the range practicing advanced fieldcraft skills with members of the 284th Air Support Operations Squadron, Kansas Air National Guard.

“A maintainer loading weapons or fixing hydraulics on an airplane, they’re not necessarily getting the full picture,” Master Sgt. Joshua Eby, weapons section chief with the 127th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron and an ACE team lead, said. “But when you’re actually out here on the range, you can see all of that work going into the aircraft to get them into the air, to get the pilot in contact with joint tactical air controllers; I think it’s extremely valuable.”

On October 1, 2022, the Air Force updated training requirements for all airmen to ensure they can survive and



Photo by MIANG Master Sgt. Chelsea FitzPatrick, 127th WG PA

operate anywhere required in today’s contingency environment. For members of the ACE team this “ready airman training” opened up new opportunities by offering, “advance ready training (ART)” in combat field skills. In 2023, the 421st Combat Training Squadron at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, New Jersey, announced new course offerings in several field skills proficiency levels, replacing the outdated, “just-in-time,” model.

“We’re required to have a certain percentage of airmen certified in both ART “Core” and ART “contingency location,” or CL coursework,” Eby said. “The training here in Alpena is covering topics we didn’t learn at Ft. Dix and also introducing core skills to airmen who haven’t yet been to the schoolhouse.”

The ART Core is a five-day class that trains airmen who will work outside established bases in skills such as weapons sustainment and caring for casualties under fire. The ARTCL course includes core skills, with more specialized field skills like emergency close air support and high-threat driving. ARTCL is designed for airmen who will travel further forward to austere contingency locations, many lacking infrastructures, in support of ACE operations.

“Our ACE team is leading the charge as far as I’m concerned, and from what I have heard from other units around the United States,” Eby said.

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Photo by MIANG Master Sgt. Chelsea FitzPatrick, 127th WG PA

The ACE team was in the right place at the right time when they were housed with tactical air control party (TACP) personnel assigned to the Kansas Air National Guard’s 284th Air Support Operations Squadron (ASOS) during a recent exercise.

“When we were in Avon Park, Florida for Agile Rage 2024, we met the 284th ASOS and asked them if we could send our personnel to the range with them,” Eby said.” When they saw how motivated we were, down to the lowest rank, they started to invite us on other training opportunities.”

TACPs operate in joint combat environments, embedding with troops on the ground to coordinate close-air support with pilots directly, leading them to enemy targets. Once 284th ASOS TACPs learned about the ACE team’s mission, they knew they wanted to help augment the ART requirements that ACE team members didn’t get at the schoolhouse.

Tech. Sgt. Jesse Drehos, a TACP with the 284th ASOS, said the relationship is highly beneficial for both groups.

“They are the personnel that work on the aircraft we use,” Drehos said. “They’re very motivated, and if that’s the mentality they have, you want to be around that because it motivates us too.”

Tech. Sgt. Ethan Van Dam, an ACE team member and repair and reclamation specialist assigned to the 127th Maintenance Squadron, said the training he’s received from the 284th ASOS is extremely valuable because it has helped create realistic scenarios that prepared him for what they may encounter downrange.

“It’s made us see the situations we may encounter and better prepared us,” Van Dam said. “This is, by far, the best training I’ve ever had in the Air Force.”

For the 127th Wing’s ACE team, the partnership with the 284th ASOS is yet another level of innovation they have integrated into their training program and ensures they have the necessary ART skills. Over the past three years, the team has made history receiving and launching A-10s on domestic highways in Wyoming and two Michigan locations. They also travelled to Germany and Latvia last year to train with key state partners in the eastern European area of responsibility.

At home, the ACE team integrated with the Michigan Army National Guard by getting Humvee driving certified and loaded their equipment into and then travelled in CH-47 Chinooks, simulating troop movements to contingency locations. Last month, they partnered with the 127th Security Forces Squadron to familiarize themselves in weapons they don’t generally train on.

For the ACE team, learning and growing together has made them a stronger unit and more prepared to execute their priority mission: maintaining and launching the A-10 aircraft.

“I absolutely love the guys I work with, we all want to be here,” Van Dam said. “That’s the most you could ask from a group of 20 guys coming together.” ●



Photo by Munnaf Joarder, 127th WG PA

MIARNG Enhances Readiness and Skills During Annual Training at Camp Grayling

Story by MIARNG 2nd Lt. Paige Bodine, DMVA PAO

GRAYLING, Mich. —The Michigan Army National Guard’s annual training at Camp Grayling, held from June 1-15, 2024, is a pivotal component of their readiness and strategic preparation. This vital 15-day event each year provides soldiers with an opportunity to sharpen their skills and enhance their operational capabilities, ensuring they are fully prepared for state and national defense responsibilities. This year’s training spotlighted several critical areas: modernizing infrastructure, preserving military heritage, mastering precision weaponry, fostering international partnerships, and celebrating the reopening of the USO patio.

Building Infrastructure and Skills

The soldiers of the 507th Engineer Battalion undertook a mission focused on repairing and modernizing infrastructure. Camp Grayling serves as a crucial home base for soldiers, and to keep it in top condition, regular updates are required. Through hands-on tasks such as replacing roofs, these engineers honed their Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) skills and improved the facilities they trained in. This dual-purpose approach underscores the importance of skill development and mission readiness. As the engineers worked together, the sight of soldiers, tools in hand, emphasized the practical benefits of annual training: fostering teamwork and ensuring operational effectiveness.

Honing Combat Skills

On the training grounds, the air was filled with the thunderous sounds of machine gun fire as soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 125th Infantry Regiment, took to the range with the M240L machine gun. This rigorous training emphasized the importance of precision and discipline for maintaining combat readiness and effectiveness. The meticulous drills on the range are crucial for soldiers to stay sharp and prepared for any potential combat scenarios. The focus on such high-caliber training ensures that the Michigan Army National Guard remains a force to be reckoned with, ready to respond to any threats.

The 82nd Field Artillery Regiment demonstrated their skills with a HIMARS live fire exercise. During the exercise, the High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS) launched precision rockets, showcasing its advanced capabilities. The HIMARS, known for its accuracy and mobility, fired rockets that traveled across the horizon, highlighting its effectiveness in modern artillery operations. This exercise underscored the regiment’s ability to perform complex fire missions precisely and showcased their proficiency in using this advanced artillery system.

Strengthening International Bonds

This year's training was marked by significant international cooperation, showcasing the importance of global partnerships. Latvian Zemessardze (Latvian National Guard) soldiers joined the Michigan National Guard for joint exercises. These exercises, which included construction operations, demolition, and command post operations, aimed to strengthen the bonds forged through the State Partnership Program. The collaborative efforts between Latvian and Michigan soldiers were a powerful display of international unity and shared military objectives. Additionally, soldiers from Angola participated in diverse training exercises with the Michigan National Guard, further enhancing mutual readiness and cooperation. These partnerships are crucial for fostering international military cooperation and ensuring collective security.

The joint exercises with international partners like Latvia and Angola enhance interoperability, ensuring that allied forces can work seamlessly in response to global threats. This collaboration addresses specific security challenges, such as regional instability and the need for a coordinated defense strategy against potential adversaries. The Michigan National Guard is better prepared to operate in diverse environments and support broader national security objectives by training with international partners.





Morale Mission: Boosting Spirits at the USO

The reopening of the USO-covered patio was another significant event during the training period. After nearly a year of construction, the USO reopened on June 12, 2024, with a ribbon-cutting ceremony and community celebration. Volunteers from Camp Grayling and the local community painted while Ohio National Guard members laid concrete. The pavilion now boosts troop morale and hosts community gatherings, featuring upgraded interiors, new furniture, and renovated facilities. The USO's reopening underscores the importance of maintaining morale and providing soldiers with spaces to relax and bond outside training activities.

Legacy in Action

Annual training also serves as a platform for preserving history and building camaraderie. The 1st Battalion, 125th Infantry Regiment, gathered for a formation run to honor Private First Class John A. Conroy and Private George A. Laine, both members of the 125th Infantry Regiment in the early 20th century. The rediscovery of their graves during a 1950s training exercise is a poignant reminder of the regiment's storied past. This formation run, a mix of physical exertion and solemn remembrance, reinforced the unit's commitment to preserving its legacy and maintaining readiness. The soldiers' dedication to honoring their predecessors highlights the enduring values of respect and tradition within the Michigan Army National Guard.

Camp Grayling, established in 1913, is the primary training site for the Michigan Army National Guard. It has played a vital role in preparing troops for state and national defense missions, hosting a variety of training exercises that simulate real-world scenarios. Over the years, Camp Grayling has evolved to meet the changing needs of the military, continuously updating its facilities and training programs to ensure soldiers receive the best possible preparation. The camp's rich history and ongoing contributions to military readiness make it an indispensable asset for the Michigan Army National Guard.

In Michigan, annual training is essential for developing skills, upholding traditions, strengthening international partnerships, and preparing soldiers to be the best. This year's exercise included infrastructure upgrades to precision marksmanship, highlighting the importance of readiness and collaboration. The comprehensive training approach at Camp Grayling showcases the Michigan Army National Guard's commitment to excellence and dedication to both state and national service. As soldiers return to their duties, the knowledge and experience gained during this training will significantly enhance their effectiveness and preparedness for future challenges.

EMERGENCY MANAGERS PROVE AGILITY IN REGIONAL TRAINING EVENT

Story by Penelope Carroll, 127th WG PA



Photo by Penelope Carroll, 127th WG PA

In the face of the Great Power Competition, Airmen have been charged to consider how agile combat employment aligns with their own career fields. This is true of 56 Air National Guard emergency management airmen as demonstrated in a recent training event held at the Alpena Combat Readiness Training Center May 13-18, 2024, hosted by the 127th Wing.

ALPENA, Michigan - In response to the call for the Air Force to become more agile, the DOD wasn't just talking to pilots and maintainers. While A-10 Thunderbolt II aircraft land on highways and KC-135 Stratotankers are refueling with hot engines running, other critical units are defining how they can implement the concept of agile combat employment in a variety of new environments. Emergency managers with the Michigan Air National Guard's 127th Civil Engineer Squadron tested these concepts at the Alpena Combat Readiness Training Center, May 13-18, 2024 when they hosted a biennial training event called, "CBRN High Intensity Operational Preparedness 2024 (CHOP 2024)."

Emergency managers play a vital role advising commanders when events or

intelligence require increased Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear (CBRN) defense to protect personnel, assets, and the public in the face of CBRN threats. They also provide CBRN detection, identification, reconnaissance, and decontamination capabilities for a variety of situations, including natural disasters, industrial accidents, or deliberate attacks involving hazardous materials.

Aligned with Federal Emergency Management Agency's regions for more than 20 years, the ANG EM functional area manager ensures airmen in their career field are trained, equipped, and funded. Michigan's 127th Wing is located in the largest, Region 5, which includes the most bases, wings and airmen for ANG EM to facilitate. Fourteen units were represented during CHOP 2024.

Chief Master Sgt. Jeremy Bethke, president of the ANG EM Chiefs' Council, and Region 5 Chief said that Region 5 has led the charge in hosting these types of large-scale EM training events. Region 5 coordinates an EM training event every two years to bring airmen together in a controlled environment, to use equipment and exercise their capabilities at a level not possible at home station. With two decades of experience, he's seen many changes in the career field.

"The direction of EM has changed from a focus on CBRN defense, to hazmat response, and now it's shifting back to a CBRN focus."

Bethke says, the airmen have changed as well.

"These young airmen are so smart: they don't rely on technology but they know technology. One of our current goals is to push our airmen back to using less technology," Bethke explained. "To accomplish this, we've set up a 'five for 25' program - five focus areas by 2025, and the training here at the Alpena CRTC gets after all five."

The five focus areas are decontamination operations, hazard identification, manual plotting, combat skills, and physical and mental fitness. These focus areas will help ANG EM to succeed with the career field's new unit type code (UTC) - a five-digit alphanumeric code used by military planners to identify specific types of units, equipment, or capabilities available to combatant commanders.

"Our new UTC is a team of four Airmen who won't have security forces or other support when they're deployed in the field," said Master Sgt. Aric Kaufmann, 127th Wing emergency manager and CHOP 2024 planner. "We will not only be CBRN specialists, going out there detecting and identifying the hazard, sampling the hazard and determining what it is, we will do this while also protecting ourselves and pulling security in the field."

Detection involves the use of specialized equipment to identify the presence of CBRN substances in the environment. Identification determines the agent present. Reconnaissance involves gathering information about the extent and nature of the contamination. Decontamination is how hazardous materials are removed from people, equipment, and the environment.



Courtesy photo



Courtesy photo.

“This training has been designed for emergency management airmen to experience what it will be like to forward deploy into an austere environment and operate with only their small team,” said Kaufmann. “Components of this four-day training included intelligence briefings and discussions about leadership, manual plotting exercises, and land navigation. We also rucked in mission-oriented protective posture gear up to two miles into various CBRN scenarios.”

CHOP 2024 cadre trained the group on approximately 33 mission-based tasks, ranging from equipment use to briefing commanders. They also created four training scenarios that tested EM response to homemade explosives, unexploded ordnances, and biological and chemical labs.

The training group included airmen from Region 5, of all EM experience levels. One airman recently graduated from technical school and was falling in with her team for the first time in Alpena.

“This is my very first event and it was so good to work with my team performing EM tasks,” said Airman Alice Hamilton.

Hamilton was also promoted during her time at the CRTC.

“These exercises were amazing and I thought the cadre did a fantastic job setting up realistic scenarios. I also went on a tour with cadre after our exercise where they discussed why they set things up as they did. It was a great opportunity for me to learn from the vast experience and knowledge of my new coworkers,” Hamilton said.

Emergency managers also work closely with all civilian first responders, public health agencies, and the other military branches to coordinate CBRN response, making training, planning, and preparedness the most essential components of ensuring an effective response.

The training week ended with an opportunity for all 56 airmen to provide input for the after-action report.

“We encouraged the input from EM airmen on how to make this a better week of training, so we’re ahead of the planning already for our next regional training in 2026,” said Bethke. “With this type of hands-on training, our airmen are learning to be very agile. They will know what to do without hesitation when called upon by commanders or when they face challenges down range.”

HEROES UNITE:

Ex. Northern Exposure '24

Story by MIARNG Sgt. 1st Class Tegan Kuchera, 272 RSG

GRAYLING, Mich. — The Michigan National Guard's 272nd Regional Support Group's Rapid Reaction Forces (RRF) partnered with local emergency services for Exercise Northern Exposure 2024 at Camp Grayling from June 23-27, 2024. This annual training aimed to enhance cooperation among military personnel, local police, sheriff's departments, and firehouses across Crawford, Oswego, Cheboygan, and Roscommon Counties, putting participants through various emergency scenarios.

Camp Grayling, Michigan's largest National Guard training site, served as the backdrop for this critical exercise. The Rapid Reaction Forces, a unit trained for swift deployment in emergencies, worked alongside local emergency responders to navigate complex scenarios designed to test their readiness.

The exercise included simulations such as an active shooter event, where the 1776th Military Police Company from Taylor, Michigan, collaborated with local emergency responders to manage the situation.

"All it takes is one bad calendar day, and it could be a real thing," said Jon McFarland, a firefighter and EMT with the Grayling Fire Department. "You never know what could happen, so it's good for the people in the county to see what we can handle, who we can count on and see all of us working cohesively together."

In a simulated active shooter scenario, the 1776th Military Police Company, collaborated with local emergency responders to manage a coordinated response. The exercise involved clearing the barracks, treating the wounded on-site, and transporting them to local hospitals based on the severity of their injuries.



Photo by MIARNG 2nd Lt. Paige Bodine, DMVA PAO

"The nice thing about having this kind of relationship is the availability," McFarland noted. "Having trained medical people that can do wound care is important. If we ever get into a triage situation, it really helps, and that's what is really good about having the military close by."

The 1776th Military Police Company set up treatment tents and provided medics to assist. "Were this a real event, we would use the parade field at Camp Grayling to helicopter the wounded to different hospitals, ensuring no single hospital is overwhelmed," McFarland explained.

Simultaneously, the 1461st Transportation Company, part of the 272nd RSG, responded to simulated riots in Cheboygan and conducted perimeter patrols around key sites. "This training helps us develop our skills and strengthen our abilities," said Master Sgt. Corinna Juarez, a senior truckmaster with the 1461st Transportation Company from Jackson, Michigan.

"This training gives the younger soldiers the chance to learn and grow so they can develop the confidence to perform in a real-life setting."

Juarez observed her soldiers managing access to a wastewater treatment plant, a critical infrastructure site. "It is important for our soldiers to know how to maintain command and control of any situation they are dealt," she stated. Alongside them were local police, who monitored the soldiers to provide feedback at the end of each day. "They help us gain a better understanding of what our mission is because they do it all the time," Juarez added.

The exercise also tested the soldiers' response to a simulated bomb threat. "While patrolling the area, the exercise provided threats the Soldiers need to know how to handle, like a bomb that was planted to test them for their knowledge of what to do with that hazard," Juarez said. Other RRF soldiers were deployed to various areas deemed crucial for the preservation of the region and its residents.

"It was a real eye-opener working with the different entities," said Spec. Dylan Latoroco, a motor transport operator with the 1461st Trans Co. "It really exposed me to a lot of different things I don't normally get to see, and it was really great to see how everyone worked together to build a stronger connection to form a cohesive unit."

Latoroco, a former volunteer firefighter from Pennsylvania, appreciated the comprehensive nature of the training. "Being on the incident command side of the operation was different," he said. "Seeing it from behind the scenes and working with the Guard and local police, it is a really good eye-opener for when things happen, what is really going on, and how everything gets done."

Exercise Northern Exposure 2024 aimed to test not only the soldiers but also the other organizations they might work with in real emergencies. Not all events were scripted; for instance, while providing security at an electric station, Soldiers assisted a civilian whose car had overheated. Some soldiers provided aid, while others confirmed whether this was part of the exercise.

"This training was meant to purposely add stressors to analyze how everyone would react and evaluate them to see what deficiencies each participant needs to work on," Latoroco noted. "While it was a lot of hard work, the soldiers and everyone else will take away the knowledge of how they can improve themselves and others."

The exercise concluded with thorough evaluations to identify strengths and areas for improvement, providing valuable insights for all participants to enhance their readiness for real emergencies.





BLUE ANGELS TEST MOBILE ARRESTING GEAR AT CAMP GRAYLING

Photo by Jennifer Caverson, CGJMTC

Story by Jennifer Caverson, CGJMTC &
MIANG Maj. Cammy Alberts, DMVA PAO

GRAYLING, Mich. — The U.S. Navy Blue Angels conducted their inaugural test and certification of the Mobile Aircraft Arresting System (MAAS) at Camp Grayling Army Airfield on June 26, 2024 in preparation for their performance at the National Cherry Festival Air Show in Traverse City, which took place on June 29-30, 2024. The MAAS was specifically brought to Camp Grayling to support the Blue Angels for this event.

The MAAS is critical for the safe landing of high-performance aircraft like the Blue Angels' F/A-18 Hornets. These systems, which include hook cables and barriers, are essential for stopping aircraft within a short distance, ensuring safety in emergency situations. Regular maintenance and testing, such as the exercises conducted at Camp Grayling, are vital to keep the system operational.

“When the National Cherry Festival Airshow Director contacted us about the possibility of using the Grayling Army Airfield for their Mobile Arresting Gear, we didn’t hesitate to assist,” said Col. Scott Meyers, Camp Grayling post commander. “We were happy to play a small part in making sure the Blue Angels could perform at the festival this year. It’s important to the community and businesses, and who doesn’t love the Blue Angels?”

The decision to use MAAS at the Grayling Army Airfield instead of Traverse City Airport was due to the secure military proximity to the air show, ensuring optimal support for the Blue Angels. The public was invited to watch from outside the secure military gates as Blue Angel aircraft #7 successfully engaged the aircraft arresting cable, coming to a smooth stop on the runway.

“As part of the 33rd National Cherry Festival Air Show, we are required to install a MAAS to support our headline performer, the Blue Angels,” said Christian Smith, National Cherry Festival airshow director. “Camp Grayling and the Grayling Army Airfield graciously stepped up to support the MAAS installation. Without this arresting gear, the festival would not qualify to host the Blue Angels. We are very grateful for the support from the entire team at Camp Grayling.”

Camp Grayling, the largest National Guard training site in the U.S., offers extensive training facilities and a secure environment for military operations. Its proximity to Traverse City provides a strategic advantage for events like the National Cherry Festival airshow. The community gathered in large numbers to watch the event, sharing their excitement on social media.

Master Warrant Officer Jason Robinson, of the Canadian Armed Forces, which placed the arresting gear, praised the collaboration.

“It has been an honor and a privilege to work alongside Camp Grayling’s personnel and the Grayling community. This experience has been great for our team, and we hope it continues.”

For the first time, Camp Grayling, through the Michigan National Guard, participated in the National Cherry Festival Air Show with Army and Air National Guard aircraft. This collaboration highlights the importance and capability of Camp Grayling as a pivotal training and operational support center in Northern Michigan. ●



Photo by Jennifer Caverson, CGJMTC

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MVH SIGNS PURCHASE AGREEMENT IN MARQUETTE TWP FOR FUTURE SITE OF VETERANS HOME

Story by Michael Kroll, DMVA PAO

Michigan Veteran Homes has entered into an agreement with a private seller to acquire over 38 acres of land in Marquette Township. The subject property sits south of Marquette Cinemas, east of Wright Street and includes donated acres in honor of the property owner's late father, U.S. Army Veteran Edward F. Scott.



While the signed purchase agreement represents a significant step forward to replace the aging veterans home, numerous contingencies remain including receiving approval from the State of Michigan State Administrative Board and U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), and funding approval from the VA State Veterans Home Construction Grant Program. One of the next steps will include environmental testing of the site, which will begin promptly.

"We have always hoped to carry on Edward's legacy and are honored to be a part of this project," said Jim and Tonya Scott-Ross, owners of the Marquette Township property. "Edward loved the Marquette area and we know this is the perfect way to honor his memory. It provides our family immense pleasure to donate land in his remembrance and we are delighted that MVH will honor Ed's legacy by naming the MVH D.J. Jacobetti Community Center after him. This new facility will be a wonderful addition to Marquette Township and the veterans that have served our country. We are thrilled and look forward to working with MVH throughout this exciting project."

"We are excited to take the next step forward at this beautiful location in Marquette Township – a combination purchase and generous donation – and believe this site will be a wonderful new home for our UP veterans for decades to come," said Anne Zerbe, executive director and CEO of MVH.

"Marquette Township is honored to be selected as the newest home for our veterans," said Jon Kangas, township manager for Marquette Charter Township. "We look forward to working with MVH to facilitate this exciting project while welcoming the members and staff of the MVH D.J. Jacobetti to our ever-growing community!" ●

110TH WING SPEARHEADS CHILDCARE FACILITY PROGRAM TO SUPPORT MILITARY FAMILIES

Story by MIANG Tech. Sgt.
Valentina Viglianco, 110th WG PA

Photo by Staff Sgt.
Sean Moriarty, 110th WG PA

BATTLE CREEK, Mich. -- April is designated as the Month of the Military Child, a time to honor the sacrifices of the more than 1.6 million children of military members serving in the U.S. and overseas. One of the unique challenges faced by children of service members with the Michigan Air National Guard (MI ANG) is childcare on drill weekends.

“Most local childcare centers are not open on the weekend,” said Lt. Col. Bethany Torma, 110th Force Support Squadron (FSS) commander. “Our FSS team tirelessly reached out to numerous facilities until we found a location interested in pursuing a new community partnership with Battle Creek ANGB service members.”

Over a year, the 110th FSS advocated for guardsmen and their struggles to obtain and finance weekend childcare. Their efforts led to the establishment of the second ANG Childcare Facility Program that extends a new benefit to Battle Creek ANGB service members and other DoD personnel in the area, facilitating care during regular scheduled and rescheduled drills.

“Since the program’s start, we’ve witnessed a wave of positivity and enhanced productivity across our base,” Torma said. “Not only has it increased the quality of life for our Airmen and their families, but it has also strengthened our mission readiness, retention, and talent management.”

The program accommodates over 20 military children, ranging from two weeks to 12 years old. It aims to collaborate with parents in developing enthusiasm, confidence, and foundational life skills critical for each child’s educational and future success.

“I feel fortunate to be part of the CFP with the base,” said Airman 1st Class Abigail Vrielink, 110th Wing financial management technician and CFP user. “It allows me to serve without the added stress of childcare costs and availability. It’s a great example of the ANG’s commitment to family and service member care, enabling us to remain focused on the mission.” ●



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MICHIGAN ARMY NATIONAL GUARD'S 'FIRST FORMATION' STREAMLINES SOLDIER INTEGRATION AND READINESS

Story by MIARNG Sgt. Sierra Reuther, 1-119th FA

LANSING, Mich. — Since its implementation in October 2021, the Michigan Army National Guard's First Formation (FF) initiative has proven to be an invaluable asset in streamlining the integration process for new soldiers. This monthly event addresses several critical issues and ensures that new soldiers are fully prepared to join their units.

Three key issues drove the establishment of FF. First, Advanced Individual Training (AIT) graduates were reporting to their units as Medical Readiness Classification 4, necessitating urgent medical attention to render them fit for duty. Second, the distribution of organizational clothing and individual equipment to new soldiers often took 2-4 months, hindering their ability to participate in unit training. Third, updating administrative data was a challenge, as full-time staff sometimes lacked the availability on weekends to assist each new soldiers.

To address these challenges, the MING proposed conducting a FF one Friday a month. This initiative ensures that new soldiers receive a comprehensive welcome and are fully prepared to integrate into their units. The state-level staff, with assistance from major subordinate commands and battalion staff, are available to help focus on these issues to improve unit readiness.

While on-site, MSC personnel support soldiers conducts personal record reviews, updating essential

documents and ensuring new soldiers have virtual access to their pay through a DoD payroll website called MyPay. This process includes updating life insurance forms, housing allowance, and other important documents a soldier needs to be well prepared on the home front, as well as processing bonuses and identifying potential pay issues.

FF also provide new soldiers with valuable briefings on numerous benefits and programs. J9 family department representatives offer insights into Tricare health insurance benefits and assist with enrollment, while education benefits and Thrift Savings Plan contributions are also covered.

Additionally, G2 military intelligence representatives review soldiers' security clearance requirements, and G3 operations representatives assist with creating Defense Travel system (DTS) accounts and enrolling prior service soldiers in necessary training.

During each FF, Medical Detachment ensures that all attending soldiers complete their periodic health assessment (PHA), while the United States Property and Fiscal Office (USPFO) issues organizational clothing items and equipment, ensuring soldiers are fully equipped from day one. MSC S1 human resource team conducts thorough personnel records reviews to update administrative data, ensuring that soldiers have access to their MyPay accounts and updated documents such as the DD 93 Record of Emergency Data,

Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (SGLI), and their DA 5960 Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) Authorization and Dependency Declaration.

The FF also includes a patching ceremony, officially welcoming new soldiers from the RSP into their new unit's leadership.

Additionally, several support tables are available to address various soldier needs such as education and incentives, officer strength management, family programs, as well as job opportunities.

By including prior service gains from soldiers who have previously served, interstate transfers, and soldiers transitioning from active duty, the FF ensures a positive first impression of the MING. Units report receiving better-prepared soldiers, ready for immediate training and duties. This initiative not only improves readiness but also supports retention efforts, highlighting sponsorship as a key step in retaining soldiers.

The First Formation is a significant step forward in improving soldier readiness and integration within the MIARNG. Its comprehensive approach addresses critical challenges, ensures soldiers are well-prepared, and enhances their overall experience from the very beginning. The feedback from units has been extremely positive, noting the readiness and preparedness of soldiers from day one.



RECRUIT SUSTAINMENT PROGRAM PREPARES NEW SOLDIERS WITH TRAINING AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

Story by MIARNG Sgt. Brayden Stephan, DMVA PAO

Detroit RSP Combines Military Readiness with Community Impact, Offering Recruits Hands-On Training and Leadership Development Through Service Initiatives

DETROIT — Raising one's right hand to join the military is a leap of faith, filled with a plethora of unknowns. As the clock ticks down between a newly sworn-in recruit and their shipment date to Army basic combat training (BCT), a mix of emotions and nerves build up. This is where the Recruit Sustainment Program (RSP) steps in.

RSP is designed to prepare new Army National Guard recruits for BCT, aiming to help them adjust to military life and prepare them physically, mentally, and administratively for the rigors ahead. Beyond basic training, RSP extends into community outreach programs such as environmental clean-up and leadership mentoring in schools, placing a strong emphasis on community service.

Leadership development is another key attribute of the RSP. In partnership with Western Michigan University's ROTC cadets, recruits provided local students with hands-on military experiences. The WMU ROTC program hosts an annual Summer Leadership Camp in August, with participating schools spanning multiple states. Activities focus on team-building and leadership, with evaluations emphasizing essential leadership attributes. U.S. Army Lt. Col. Brandon Tennimon highlighted the camp's role in introducing prospective cadets to military life, while cadets and RSP soldiers facilitating activities like rappelling and tactical training.

Reflecting on his experience, Spc. Ben Skelton, a member of the Michigan Army National Guard RSP, noted the camp's resemblance to basic training, offering a glimpse into military life for interested individuals.

On June 8, 2024, the Detroit RSP, led by U.S. Army Capt. Jerred Johnson and Sgt. 1st Class Randall Fish, collaborated with the Michigan Department of Transportation and the St. Claire Shore Waterfront Environmental Committee for a community cleanup initiative in Detroit. This event highlighted their dedication to expanding their community impact beyond immediate service projects, reflecting efforts similar to those seen at the WMU ROTC Summer Leadership Camp.

RSP serves as a foundational pillar of community engagement and readiness, demonstrating a commitment to service and local impact. Through initiatives like the Detroit community cleanup, RSP fosters a sense of responsibility and service among its members. By extending beyond immediate projects to enhance the community, RSP builds stronger bonds within its ranks and leaves a lasting positive influence on the areas it serves. Such efforts resonate deeply, reinforcing the program's vital role in preparing future leaders and contributors to develop.

MVTF EMERGENCY GRANT 'MEANS EVERYTHING' TO NAVY VET, NURSING STUDENT

Story by Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency

Chelsey Demick's passion lies in helping others. From her time in the military, which emphasizes "others before self," to centering her life around her young daughter, to working as an advocate for cancer patients, the Wyandotte single mother is defined by her selflessness.

But when Demick's vehicle failed, she knew she was the one who needed help. The engine on her 2015 Mazda CX-5 sport utility vehicle had to be replaced—a \$5,000 expense—and the 31-year-old nursing student was denied a loan to pay for it.

So Demick, a Navy veteran, turned to the Michigan Veterans Trust Fund, which provides emergency assistance to eligible veterans. The Trust Fund paid the bill, the dealership provided Demick a loaner vehicle while the engine was being replaced and soon the Mazda was back on the road.

"I would characterize the grant I received from the Trust Fund as a blessing," said Demick, who still owes about \$12,000 on the Mazda. "This means everything to me and Ava."

Demick, who grew up in a low-income family in Metro Detroit, joined the Navy to get money for college and to be part of something bigger.

"It's almost built in me to put others before self," she said. "My passion has always been to help others."



Seaman Chelsey Demick of Wyandotte mans the helm aboard amphibious dock landing ship USS Whidbey Island in the Gulf of Aden near Yemen in late 2011. Whidbey Island was deployed as part of the Bataan Amphibious Ready Group, supporting maritime security operations and theater security cooperation efforts in the U.S. 5th fleet area of responsibility. Photo by James Turner, Navy, courtesy of DVIDS.



Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency

As a logistics specialist, Demick served for five years on both shore and sea, including a nearly yearlong deployment in 2011 in the waters around North Africa and Western Asia.

“The hardest part of serving was being away from my daughter when I deployed. It felt like half of my heart was gone,” she said. “The best part of serving was the cohesiveness and the adventure.”

After an honorable discharge, Demick used her military educational benefits to get a bachelor’s degree in health care administration and a master’s in business administration. She works at University of Michigan Hospital, getting chemotherapy authorizations for cancer patients.

But her goal is to become a nurse. She’s currently finishing up a microbiology course before starting Wayne State University’s Bachelor’s of Science in Nursing program for veterans in May. [BSN for Veterans](#) is an 18-month track designed to meet the unique needs of student veterans.

Having her vehicle back will allow Demick to get her 11-year-old daughter to and from school and to attend nursing courses. And becoming a nurse will help her build a better financial future for herself and Ava, she added, and also be on the front lines of health care, working directly with patients.

“I want to become a nurse because I enjoy helping others,” Demick said. “It fills my heart to see a patient’s relief or gratefulness.”

The [Michigan Veterans Trust Fund](#) (MVTF), which is housed within the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency, has been providing emergency assistance to eligible veterans and their families since 1946. The emergency assistance is intended to help veterans overcome an unforeseen situation causing a temporary financial emergency that a grant will resolve and for which the applicant can demonstrate the ability to meet future expenses. The biggest needs for emergency assistance in fiscal year 2023 were shelter, utilities and transportation.



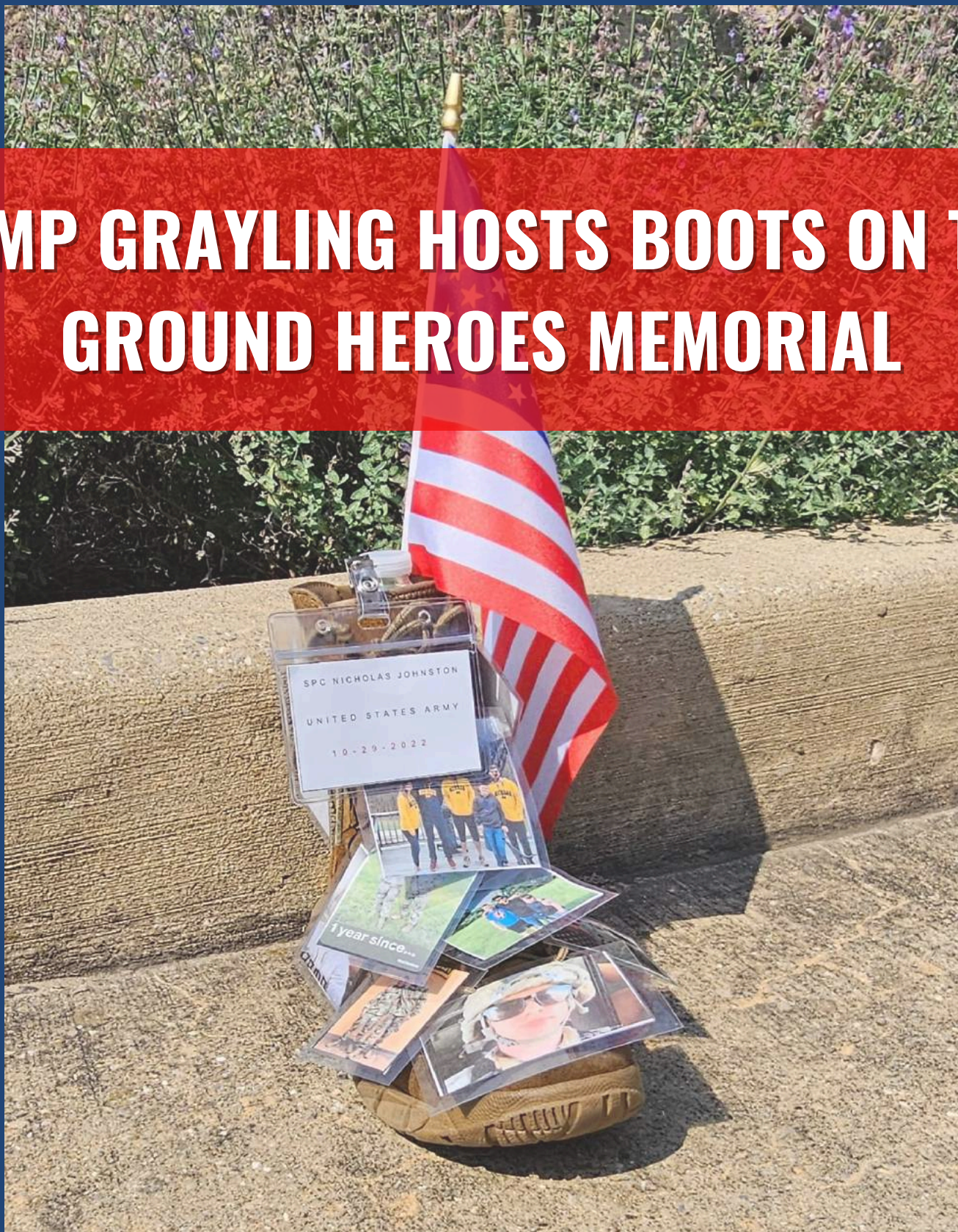
Courtesy photo.

[CLICK HERE](#) 

Veterans of any age or era — or their dependents — may qualify for benefits and resources, such as VA health care, mental health services and education and employment assistance. The MVAA serves as the central coordinating point for Michigan veterans to get connected to their benefits. Contact us at 1-800-MICH-VET (1-800-642-4838) or visit our website at Michigan.gov/MVAA.

If you're a veteran in crisis or concerned about one, contact the Veterans Crisis Line to receive free, confidential support and crisis intervention 24/7/365. Call 988 and press 1, text to 838255 or chat online at VeteransCrisisLine.net.

CAMP GRAYLING HOSTS BOOTS ON THE GROUND HEROES MEMORIAL



Courtesy photo.

Story by MIANG Maj. Cammy Alberts, DMVA PAO

GRAYLING, Mich. — Camp Grayling Joint Maneuver Training Center (JMTC), in collaboration with the Michigan Army National Guard (MIARNG) Survivor Outreach Services Team (SOS), hosted the inaugural Boots on the Ground Heroes Memorial and a ceremony to honor fallen service members on July 13, 2024.

The ceremony featured remarks by Col. Scott Meyers, commander of Camp Grayling Joint Maneuver Training Center (CGJMTC), and members of the MIARNG SOS Team, followed by a performance of Taps. The event, which took place at CGJMTC in Grayling, Michigan, aimed to pay tribute to service members from all military branches who have died in service.

MIARNG SOS coordinators were available at the Camp Grayling front entrance from July 13 through July 18, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., to assist families interested in participating in the memorial. The public was encouraged to bring one combat boot per fallen service member to be displayed outside the entrance. The SOS Team provided a flag and a name tag for each boot, which could be decorated. The boots will be on display from July 13 through July 26, 2024.

The MIARNG SOS Team is part of a broader Army program designed to provide long-term support to families of fallen soldiers. The program offers outreach and assistance regardless of a loved one's Army component, duty status, location, or manner of death. The SOS program aims to support families of Army National Guard, Army Reserve, and active component soldiers through a network of coordinators and financial counselors located at SOS offices across the country.

Meyers emphasized the importance of remembering those who served, stating, "This memorial serves as a poignant reminder for those who we've lost. At Saturday's event, there were many names that I read off that I had served with over the years. It just brings back those memories."

The ceremony and the memorial served as a poignant reminder of the sacrifices made by service members and provided an opportunity for the community to come together in remembrance and support of those who have lost loved ones in service to the nation.



Courtesy photo.

**"WE WANTED TO HONOR
THOSE WHO HAVE
SACRIFICED THEIR LIVES
FOR OUR COUNTRY.
THIS MEMORIAL SERVED AS
A SOLEMN REMINDER OF
THE BRAVE SERVICE
MEMBERS WE HAVE LOST."
-COL. SCOTT MEYERS**



Courtesy photo.



MVAA's Women Veterans Conference

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Saturday, November 2

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- 8:00 p.m. Awards Presentation
- 9:00 p.m. Post-Awards Celebration

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1SG JOHN SHEEHAN
MSG MICHAEL MOORE
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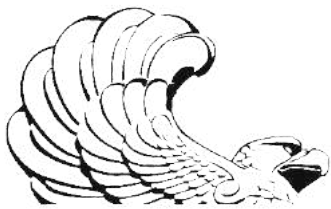
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1. Retired Pay Application - DD Form 2656 and DD Form 108 - Must use the current form or it will be rejected by HRC & DFAS.
2. Separation Orders transferring service member to the Retired Reserve.
3. Notice of Eligibility (NOE) - 20-year letter or 15-year letter if issued.
4. Retirement Point Statement - NGB Form 23B.
5. Reserve Component Survivor Benefit Plan election - DD Form 1883, 2656-5, or 2656-6. This must be submitted within 90 days of receipt of NOE. If not, a default selection will be made for you based on dependent information on record at the time.
6. Banking information for Direct Deposit - you will need the name of the institution, their mailing address, routing number, and account number.
7. Beneficiary information - you will need to provide the name, address, and date of birth for anyone you wish to include as a beneficiary for Final Pay or as part of a Survivor Benefit Plan.

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CMSGT RENA JACKMAN
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SMSGT JOHN HUGHES
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MSGT JASON CHAPMAN
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SRA OLIVIA RAYMOND
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SRA CHELSEA SCHROEDER
SRA CHRISTOPHER SOBIECK
SRA COLIN TROXELL
SRA YEN VO
SRA NATHANIEL WINCEL
SRA NATHAN WINGATE
SRA KYLE WOLLAM
A1C HAMZA AMJAD
A1C JOSEPH COYNE
A1C BROOKE EARL
A1C LAILAH FOSTER
A1C NOLYN FRANCEK
A1C CHARLOTTE HUBBARD
A1C KATHERINE LYON
A1C KARMIYAH RISING
A1C NEVIAH RODGERS
A1C COLSON ROOT
A1C JACOB SHANTZ
A1C STEPHEN WOODRUFF
AMN CHAYIM CHINO
AMN HAILEY CHISUM
AMN JACK DAVIES
AMN ALICE HAMILTON
AB SANJANA BIKKI
AB JULIAN BOUDREAU
AB CALVIN COLLINS
AB BRADLEY LUSK
AB JADA REEVES
AB JAKOB SIEGEL
AB ALLISON SLATER

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL PROMOTED AIRMEN AND THEIR FAMILIES



MICHIGAN AIR NATIONAL GUARD RETIREMENTS

COL KENT HARBAUGH
COL BRUCE ROGERS
COL KURT TAYLOR
LT COL DEREK BRITTON
LT COL JAMES LEWIS
LT COL ABRAHAM POSTON
MAJ MARK HUBBART
MAJ VALERIE WARD
CAPT SHALENA BREWER
CMSGT THOMAS GILL

CMSGT BARRY KEELY
CMSGT TREVOR SLATER
SMSGT TIMOTHY APLIN
SMSGT MICHAEL OWEN
SMSGT MICHAEL SEYMOUR
MSGT TIFFANY HANDY
MSGT MICHAEL MILLER
TSGT JEFFRY DECLERQ
TSGT SARAH MILLER
SSGT JOHN MCDONALD

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL RETIRED AIRMEN AND THEIR FAMILIES



MICHIGAN NATIONAL GUARD TAPS

SPC HENRY HEINZ - Apr. 20, 2024

PFC RICHARD ELLISON - Apr. 23, 2024

SGT BRUCE BRETHAUER - Apr. 24, 2024

SGT CHARLES HOOD - May 5, 2024

SFC THOMAS BROOKS - May 9, 2024

LTC ROBERT DEUKER - May 12, 2024

SPC DENNIS HULL - May 13, 2024

MAJ JUDITH PARSONS - May 20, 2024

SFC CHAD RINGS - May 25, 2024

SPC GARRY FRISBEY - Jun. 4, 2024

SGT JIMMY JENKINS - Jun. 6, 2024

SPC WILLIAM ALLEN - Jun. 9, 2024

SFC WILLIAM BUTLER - Jun. 27, 2024

"Their sacrifice is not in vain, for in the sorrow of their loss, we find the strength and resolve to carry forward the flame of freedom and justice they so bravely ignited."

- President John F. Kennedy

Please submit Michigan National Guard Veterans to be recognized on the TAPS list to:
MIARNG-funeralhonors@army.mil

MING UPCOMING EVENTS

AUGUST 2024

- **Exercise Northern Strike 24-2 (NADWC): August 3-17, 2024**
 - NS24-2 5K (Camp Grayling): August 4, 2024
- **Motor City 2024 (Detroit): August 17-26, 2024**
 - Joint Enlisted Leadership Conference (Detroit): August 18-19, 2024
 - Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the US (EANGUS) Conference (Detroit): August 17-21, 2024
 - MING Leadership Conference (Detroit): August 24-25, 2024
 - National Guard Association of the US (NGAUS) Conference (Detroit): August 22-27, 2024

SEPTEMBER 2024

- **Patriot's Day: September 11, 2024**
- **Veterans Resource Deployment Job Fair (Muskegon): September 18, 2024**
- **TAG Golf Outing (Lansing): September 20, 2024**
- **Warrior Rising (Detroit): September 20-21, 2024**

OCTOBER 2024

- **MVAA Women Veterans Conference (Novi): October 3-5, 2024**
- **HeroFest (DeWitt): October 5, 2024**

NOVEMBER 2024

- **DMVA Gala (Grand Rapids): November 2, 2024**
- **MVH Veteran 5K Race (Grand Rapids): November 9, 2024**
- **Motown Women Veterans - "A Moment in Time" (Detroit): November 10, 2024**
- **Veteran's Day: November 11, 2024**

SAVE THE DATE:

- **Wreaths Across America (Grand Rapids): December 14, 2024**

Find More Events:

CLICK HERE 

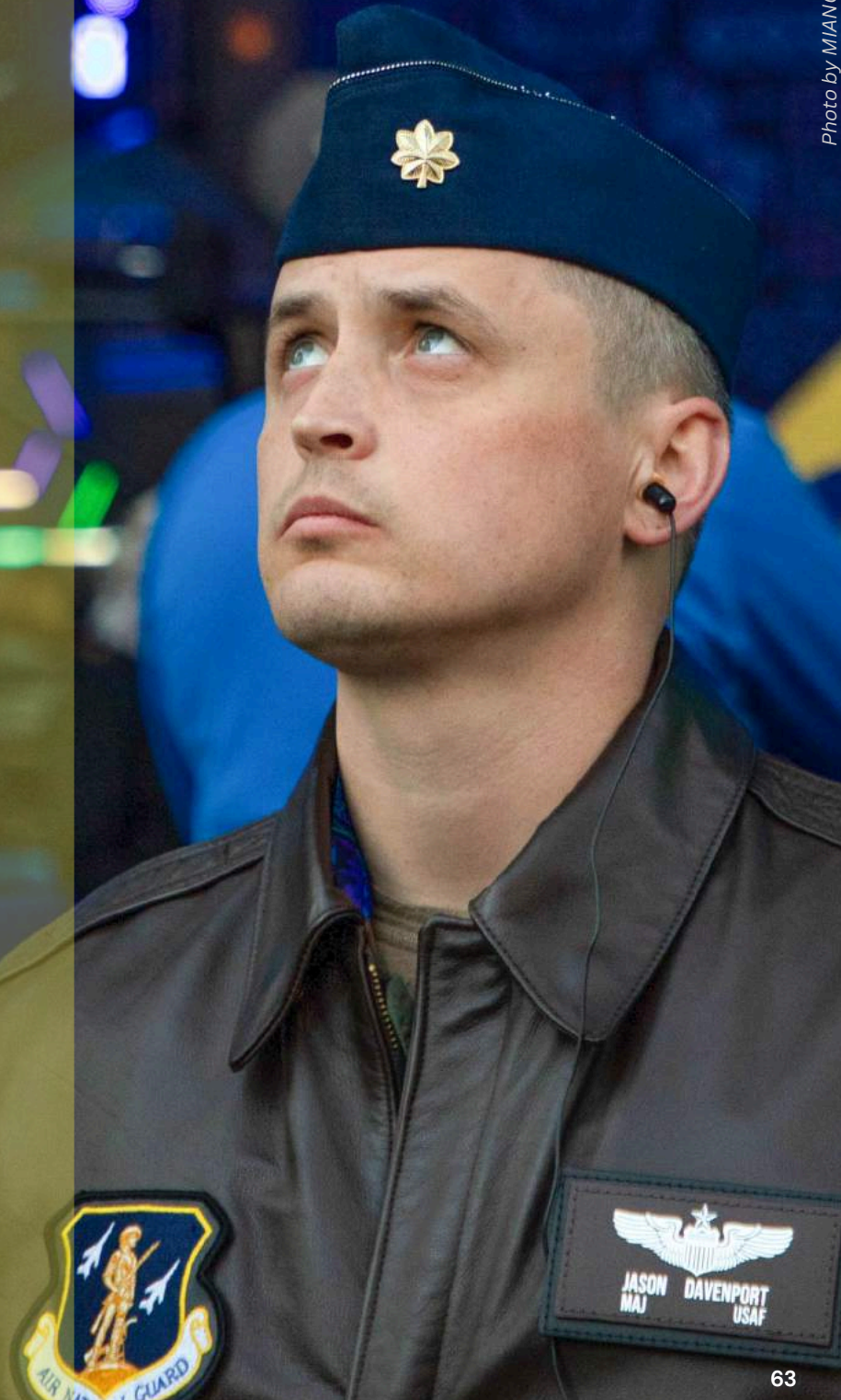
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- [Michigan National Guard Cyber Protection Team receives training on the Deployable Defensive Cyberspace Operations System - Modular kit](#)
- [Michigan National Guard Enhances Capabilities Through Alliance with Swedish Air Force](#)
- [Amanda Ward Has Been Promoted to the Rank of Colonel](#)
- ['Top Three' mentors tomorrow's leaders](#)
- [Michigan National Guard To Help Improve Wilderness State Park](#)
- [Applications open for Statewide Veteran Service Provision Grant](#)
- [Miss Michigan USA records special message for Women Veterans Recognition Day](#)
- [MVAA, DMVA and MSU join to rededicate the Memorial Grove honoring WWI service men](#)
- [Michigan National Guard Pass in Review ceremony at Camp Grayling](#)

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The WOLVERINE GUARD

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