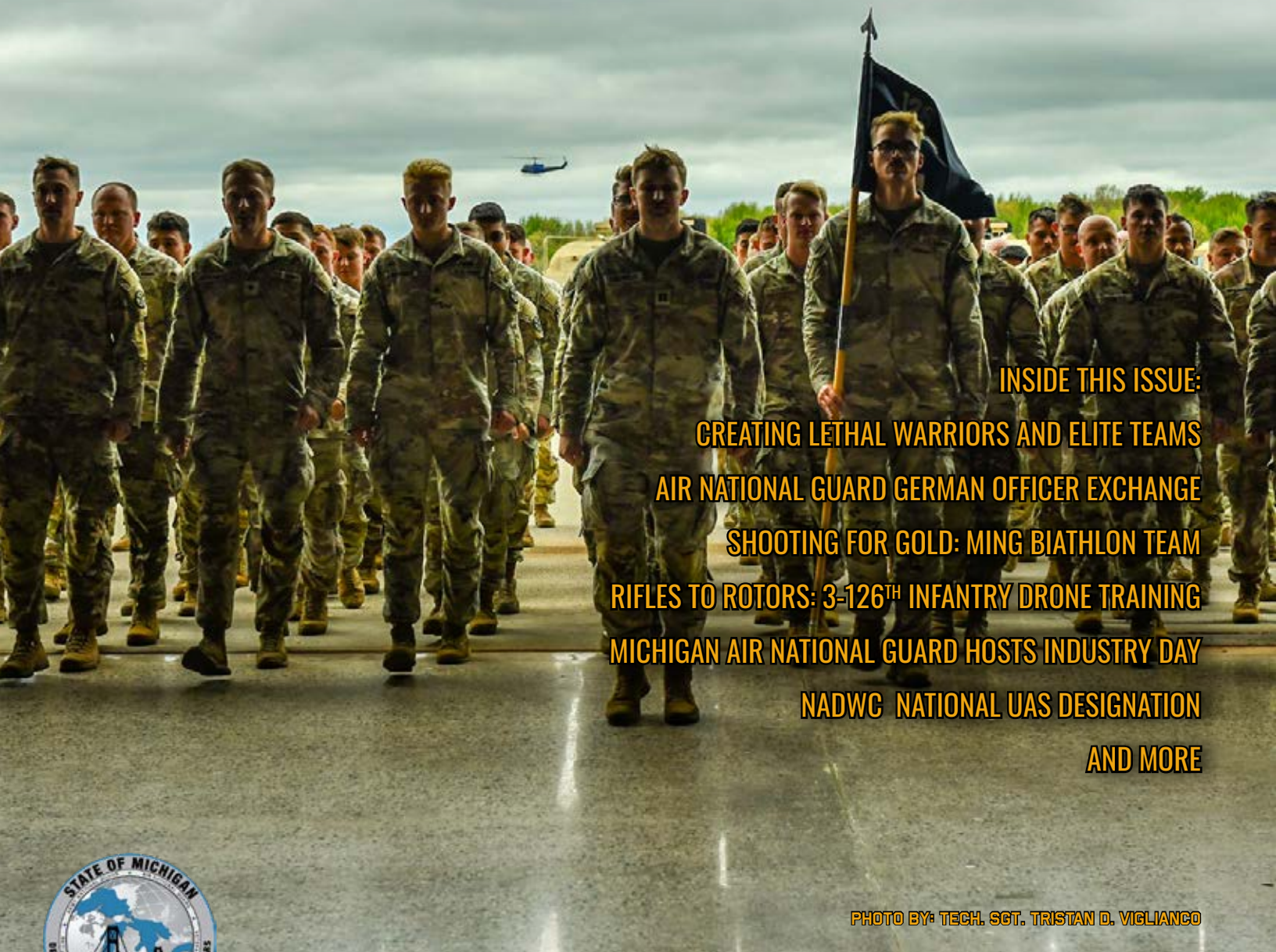


WOLVERINE GUARD

VOLUME 26, ISSUE 3



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:
CREATING LETHAL WARRIORS AND ELITE TEAMS
AIR NATIONAL GUARD GERMAN OFFICER EXCHANGE
SHOOTING FOR GOLD: MING BIATHLON TEAM
RIFLES TO ROTORS: 3-126TH INFANTRY DRONE TRAINING
MICHIGAN AIR NATIONAL GUARD HOSTS INDUSTRY DAY
NADWC NATIONAL UAS DESIGNATION
AND MORE



PHOTO BY: TECH. SGT. TRISTAN D. VIGLIANCO

A PUBLICATION OF THE MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS



**MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS
PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE**

**MICHIGAN NATIONAL GUARD JOINT FORCE HEADQUARTERS
3411 N MARTIN LUTHER KING JR BLVD
BUILDING 30, ROOM 230
LANSING, MI 48906-2934**

517-481-7735

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER

DEPUTY PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER

DEPUTY PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER

PRODUCTION TEAM

DIGITAL MEDIA

VISUAL INFORMATION

MAJ. TREVOR KAY

MR. DAVID KENNEDY

MR. MICHAEL KROLL

CAPT. BENJAMIN LARSON

**MR. DANIEL GARAS
TECH. SGT. TRISTAN VIGLIANCO
STAFF SGT. CATHERINE BROOKS
SGT. BRAYDEN STEPHAN**

1ST LT. PAIGE BODINE

MASTER SGT. PATRICK MCCARTY

Cover photo: The Michigan Army National Guard's 3rd Battalion, 126th Infantry Regiment returns from deployment May 23, 2026, at Grand Ledge, Mich. Approximately 70 Soldiers are returning after their deployment in support of U.S. Central Command. (U.S. Air National Guard photos by Tech. Sgt. Tristan D. Viglianco)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

04	TAG TALK
05	SERIES: LEADER SPOTLIGHT COL ROSSI
09	FROM THE FRONTLINES: PFC GENTIL ISHIMWE
10	DRIVEN TO SERVE: THE 246TH TRANSPORTATION BATTALION TRUCK RODEO
14	HITTING THE MARK: GOVERNOR'S 20
16	FIT TO FIGHT: SRP SUPPORTS SOLDIER READINESS AT CAMP GRAYLING
18	DEATH FROM AFAR: MING EXECUTES 2,000-MILE HIRAIN DURING MINUTEMAN ROTATION AT NTC
20	BLESSING OF THE FLIES: SOLDIERS FIND FAITH ALONG THE AU SABLE
22	RIFLES TO ROTORS: 3-126TH INFANTRY USE UAS TO TRAIN FOR TOMORROW'S BATTLEFIELD
24	FORGING THE FUTURE: 745TH EOD LEADS HISTORIC JOINT ANNUAL TRAINING & MEMORIAL TRIBUTE
26	CARING FOR THE FALLEN: PARTNERSHIP ENGAGEMENT WITH LIBERIAN CHAPLAINS, MORTUARY AFFAIRS SPECIALISTS
28	SHOTS FROM AROUND THE STATE
30	SPECIAL EXCHANGE: GERMAN AIR FORCE OFFICER STRENGTHENS PARTNERSHIP DURING MICHIGAN AIR NATIONAL GUARD EXCHANGE
32	SHOOTING FOR GOLD: MING BIATHLON TEAM PARTICAPTES IN NGB EASTERN INVITATIONAL
34	OPINION: READINESS: CREATING LETHAL WARRIORS AND ELITE TEAMS
36	SHARED COMMITMENT: COMMAND PRAYER BREAKFAST
37	INVESTING IN THE FUTURE: MICHIGAN NATIONAL GUARD, MACOMB COUNTY HOST INDUSTRY DAY
41	OPINION: CULTIVATING STRATEGIC LEADERS
46	PROMOTIONS
47	RETIREMENTS
52	TAPS
53	FUTURE EVENTS

TAG TALK

MAJOR GENERAL PAUL D. ROGERS

"PARTNERSHIPS: LOCAL TO GLOBAL"



Welcome back to another edition of the Wolverine Guard! This edition's focus is partnerships. Our organization's ability to protect Michigan, respond when our nation calls, and serve our veterans depends on how well we work with allies abroad, communities at home, and innovators across the defense enterprise. Those connections show up in how we train, how we modernize, and how we care for our service members and families.

Partnerships enhance readiness because they expand what we can accomplish on our own. Multinational training sharpens our Soldiers' and Airmen's ability to operate alongside allies and partners in complex environments. Local relationships with employers, schools, and community organizations strengthen recruiting, retention, and support for our members' families. Collaboration with defense innovation organizations—including efforts tied to Michigan's Joint

Experimentation Warfighting Laboratory (JEWL), now an official research lab for the Army and Air Force—helps bring emerging technology, data, and new concepts into Michigan training areas and mission sets. When we put those pieces together, our formations gain skills, insight, and tools that make us more capable and more adaptable.

Across the Michigan Army National Guard, partnerships are visible in every major training event. During State Annual Training, units such as the 745th Explosive Ordnance Disposal Company worked with a multi-state contingent of ordnance experts, building technical interoperability and reinforcing the shared tactics needed to neutralize threats and protect our formations. The 1st Battalion, 182nd Field Artillery's HIMARS operations tied precision fires to joint air support, demonstrating how integrated ground-air teams deliver rapid, accurate combat power. The 3rd Battalion, 126th Infantry Regiment's live-fire drone exercise reflected cooperation with technology and training partners who help us integrate unmanned systems into all-domain operations.

In the Michigan Air National Guard, partnerships are equally central. Airmen work with other states, federal agencies, and combatant commands to run joint exercises and readiness events that prove their ability to rapidly generate aircraft, sustain operations, and support national missions. Those relationships give our Airmen early exposure to future capabilities and help shape how they will be used in real-world operations. In this edition, you will find a story about Industry Day at Selfridge Air National Guard Base, showing how our Wings rely on community partners, employers, and local leaders who directly contribute to unit strength and long-term readiness.

Partnerships, whether multinational, community, or innovation focused, are part of how the Michigan DMVA trains units, modernizes, and serves our veteran population. They multiply the impact of our efforts and tie our work here at home to something larger: a network of allies, neighbors, and teammates who share the load of readiness. Your role in building and sustaining those relationships is a critical part of our success, and it is a core reason the DMVA remains a premier organization for Michigan and the nation.

Always Ready, Always There.



LEADER SPOTLIGHT

COL JAMES M. ROSSI



U.S. Air Force Col. James Rossi speaks during the 110th Wing change of command at the Battle Creek Air National Guard Base, Mich., Aug. 3, 2024. Col. Daniel Kramer II relinquished command of the 110th Wing to Col. James Rossi. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Sean Moriarty)

MAJ. TANDI BAILEY 110TH WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Thirty-nine years ago, U.S. Air Force Col. James M. Rossi walked into the Michigan Air National Guard not as a pilot, not as an officer, but as an Airman Basic assigned to a finance office. He spent his early years processing paychecks and fielding pay inquiries for the 191st Fighter Interceptor Group at Selfridge Air National Guard Base, a job not normally at the tip of the spear, but one that taught him something he still leans on today.

“What I learned working in the military pay office was that focusing on customer service is incredibly rewarding,” said Rossi. “What I’ve learned since then is that every airman has at least one customer. Your customer may be your boss, a combatant commander, your subordinates, or organizations across the Wing or state. Serving those customers is critical to accomplishing the mission.”

Now, as commander of the 110th Wing at Battle Creek Air National

Guard Base, Rossi oversees more than 900 military and civilian personnel across four groups. The groups are responsible for conducting MQ-9 Reaper operations, cyber defense missions, operational-level command and control in the European and African theaters, and the generation of combat support for combatant commanders worldwide. It is a long way from the finance counter at Selfridge, and Rossi is quick to credit his mentors along the path, and the path itself, for shaping how he leads.



U.S. Air Force Brig. Gen. Rolf Mammen, left, commander of the Michigan Air National Guard, Col. James Rossi, middle, commander of the 110th Wing, and Col. Daniel Kramer II, laugh after a change of command at the Battle Creek Air National Guard Base, Mich., Aug. 3, 2024. Col. Kramer relinquished command of the 110th Wing to Col. Rossi. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Sean Moriarty)

"I've had the advantage of frequent career moves that allowed me to learn from talented leaders and their leadership styles," he said. "I've been fortunate to have received guidance from countless mentors, peers and subordinates. Because of these frequent career shifts, I've spent a great deal of my career outside of my comfort zone, and that's where growth happens."

Rossi's rise through the ranks took him from Staff Sergeant and wing military pay supervisor to a commission in 1993, when he was selected to become a navigator on the 191st Airlift Group's C-130E aircraft. He graduated from the Academy of Military Science, completed navigator training at

Randolph Air Force Base, Texas, and returned to Michigan to fly. A decade later, he cross-trained as a pilot, graduating from Joint Specialized Undergraduate Pilot Training at Vance Air Force Base, Oklahoma, in 2003. When the 191st Airlift Group converted to KC-135R Stratotankers in 2008, Rossi requalified again, this time as a tanker pilot. It's a pattern Rossi knows well. Just this year he requalified once more, this time in the Wing's MQ-9 Reaper aircraft.

Across all assigned aircraft, Rossi has amassed more than 4,900 flight hours, with approximately 950 of them in combat. Along the way, Rossi deployed in support of Operations Desert Storm, Noble

Eagle, Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom and Freedom's Sentinel. He commanded the 171st Air Refueling Squadron beginning in 2015 and the 127th Air Refueling Group starting in 2018, before taking command of the Alpena Combat Readiness Training Center in August 2020. Ross held the post for four years before assuming command of the 110th Wing on Aug. 3, 2024.

"Every command has taught me something different," he explained. "Alpena taught me how to run a joint training enterprise that other units, customers, depend on to get ready for the fight. The 110th is different. It's about sustaining a wing that's operating forward every



U.S. Air Force Col. James Rossi presents a 110th Wing guidon during a change of command ceremony at the Battle Creek Air National Guard Base, Mich., Aug. 3, 2024. The guidon symbolized the exchange between commanders. Col. Daniel Kramer II relinquished command of the 110th Wing to Col. James Rossi. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Sean Moriarty)

single day, whether that's flying remotely piloted aircraft, defending the military's cyber networks, or supporting combatant commands overseas. My job is to make sure our Airmen have what they need to do it well."

Rossi is candid about the fact that his career has not followed a single track, enlisted to officer, navigator to pilot, C-130s to KC-135s, squadron command to group command to wing command. Each transition required him to be, in effect, a beginner again.

"I've had to put myself in student-mode many, many times in this career," he said. "I think that's a healthy experience for a leader to go through periodically. It keeps you humble, and it keeps you close to what our Airmen are experiencing

when they're asked to learn something new."

"I've spent a great deal of my career outside of my comfort zone, and that's where growth happens."

—Col. James M. Rossi
110th Wing Commander

As he approaches his third year leading the 110th Wing, Rossi says the mission reflects the same lesson he carried out at that finance

office decades ago: learn who your customer is and provide the most exceptional service possible.

"This Wing does a lot of different missions in a lot of different places," Rossi said. "What ties it together is the same thing that's tied my whole career together, take care of your people, and they'll take care of the customer and the mission."

Family Programs



SFR ★ SOLDIER AND FAMILY
READINESS

The Soldier & Family
Readiness Program assists Service Members and
their Families with:

Education Concerns

Employment Assistance

Unit and Family Readiness

Family & Relationships

Non-Medical Administrative Casework, including:

Financial Crisis
(loss of income, job, etc.)

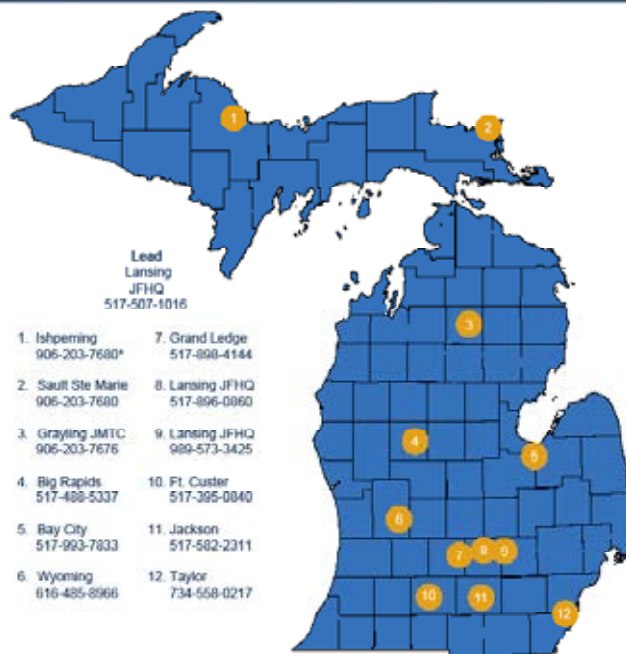
Under-Employed
(career assistance)

Unexpected Life Events
(car accident, medical diagnosis, house fire,
flood, loss of
transportation, etc.)

We can also assist in
addressing other Guard
and Family concerns by
advocating through Command and partnering
organizations.



SFR ★ SOLDIER AND FAMILY
READINESS



**MILITARY & FAMILY
LIFE COUNSELING**

FREE
NON-MEDICAL
COUNSELING
Service Members and
Dependents Eligible

Free, confidential counseling includes:

- Child, Youth, Family Counseling
- Relationship/Marital Counseling
- Resiliency, Coping skills
- Conflict Resolution, Anger Management
- Grief & Loss
- Deployment Concerns/Stress/Reintegration
- General Soldier & Family Stress

Kristy Torsky

Military & Family Life Counselor
(734) 460-5000
ktorsky9@magellanfederal.com
Camp Grayling Bldg. 117

Lia Hollis

Military & Family Life Counselor
(269) 361-7816
hollisl@magellanfederal.com
Joint Forces Headquarters, Lansing



Face-to-Face
Virtual
Telephonic



**OFFICE OF
FINANCIAL
READINESS**

PERSONAL FINANCIAL COUNSELORS

Dave Roberts

Lansing
571.424.4981
plfc3.mi.ng@zeiders.com

Ron McAllister

Grayling
571.422.5034
plfc1.mi.ng@zeiders.com

Gary Salach

Selfridge
571.421.6001
plfc2.mi.ng@zeiders.com

ASSISTANCE IN:

- Personal budget/financial planning
- Money management techniques
- Credit counseling
- Debt repayment options
- Retirement and estate planning
- Saving and investing
- Tax planning

FOR MORE FAMILY PROGRAMS, CLICK [HERE](#).

SERIES: FROM THE FRONT LINES

PFC GENTIL ISHIMWE



U.S. Army Pfc. Gentil Ishimwe, assigned to the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 507th Engineer Battalion, Michigan Army National Guard, participated in Expert Infantry, Soldier, and Field Medical Badge (E3B) training during State Annual Training at Camp Grayling, Michigan, June 2026.

Staff Sgt. Jeffrey Cross
126 TPASE

Soldiers seek opportunities to prove themselves. They turn mundane tasks into competitions of efficiency and completion, train to improve their performance on physical fitness tests, and complete specialized courses and evaluations to distinguish themselves from their peers. One such evaluation is the Expert Infantry, Soldier, and Field Medical Badge (E3B). This evaluation is a training and testing event covering various physical and tactical aspects of soldiering. This year, the Michigan Army National Guard is hosting the E3B, where Soldiers, regardless of rank, will challenge themselves to earn the infamous badge.

Serving in the U.S. military had long been a goal for Gentil Ishimwe. Having spent years in a region affected by conflict, he felt a strong desire to give back and contribute to global security. As 2024 came to a close and 2025

began, he took the first steps toward that goal by enlisting in the Michigan Army National Guard.

“I was hoping to be a part of the great team [that] made the world safer,” Pfc. Ishimwe said. “I’m glad I made it.”

Now, Ishimwe will be participating in an Expert Soldiering Evaluation. The E3B consists of four main components. First, Soldiers must take and pass a six-event physical fitness test which includes a two-mile run, plank, deadlift, push-ups, and the sprint drag carry. Soldiers complete the AFT before moving on to the next phase.

“I would say the fitness test is what I have prepared for the most,” said Ishimwe. “I feel the most confident in it.”

From there, Soldiers must complete land navigation during both day and night. Soldiers are given coordinates to plot and must traverse uneven wooded terrain to find markers at those coordinates. They must find all

assigned points in a given amount of time to be considered proficient in the course.

Next, Soldiers take part in various exercises called lanes. These lanes include rendering first aid and weapons assembly and function. The Soldiers completing the lanes do not know the simulated injuries they are going to treat, or the order in which they are going to disassemble and assemble the weapons. They have to be trained and ready for several weapon systems.

“I’ve been training a lot on the M240B (machine gun),” Pfc. Ishimwe said through a grin. “But I’ve been training for all of them.”

Finally, the Soldiers must complete a 12-mile ruck march. The standard time to complete this task is 3 hours at a 15-minute-per-mile pace. This event can be grueling, as Soldiers will carry a rucksack of equipment throughout the march. Upon completion, Soldiers will again be given a weapon system to take apart, reassemble, and perform a function test on.

Soldiers who adequately complete these tasks will be awarded their expert badge. They can wear their badge on their duty and dress uniforms, a visual representation of their success to their peers.

“This is a great opportunity for me,” Pfc. Ishimwe said. “I’m going to take this opportunity and see how far I can go, even though I’m not sure how far that is.”

This year, the E3B evaluations will be held in September. Training lanes are taking place during the Michigan National Guard’s State Annual Training.

To read this story online, click [here](#).

DRIVEN TO SERVE

246TH TRANSPORTATION TRUCK RODEO



U.S. Army Sgt. Jamie McDavid and Spc. Christian Hadley, of the 1460th Transportation Company, 246th Transportation Battalion, flip a tire during the battalion's annual Truck Rodeo, at Camp Grayling, Mich., June 2, 2026. The annual Truck Rodeo is a ten-team competition with two Soldiers per team, competing in multiple events and being evaluated on both physical strength and truck driving skills while building morale and skills proficiency within the battalion. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Dana Vermilye)

Pfc Ariana Taylor 126 TPASE

The slogan 'two weeks in the summer and one weekend a month' is a phrase commonly heard from National Guard recruiters across the country. While the saying is simple, it often leaves many wondering what National Guard Soldiers do during those two weeks of annual training. For Soldiers in the Michigan Army National Guard, it is a critical period when service members sharpen their military skills, improve unit readiness, strengthen relationships with fellow Soldiers, and gain

valuable hands-on experience that prepares them for future missions.

For many, joining the National Guard is a family tradition or the fulfillment of a lifelong dream. Their reasons for serving may vary, but their commitment to their state and nation brings them together.

"Both of my brothers are in the National Guard, so I thought I'd give it a try," said U.S. Army Spc. Tyler Rowland, 1460th Transportation Company, Pinconning, Michigan.

"I have always wanted to be in the Army since I was a little boy,"

said U.S. Army Pfc. Boonthavy Omahavong, 1461st Transportation Company, Clinton Township, Michigan.

Outside of the uniform, National Guard Soldiers come from diverse backgrounds. They are students, mechanics, teachers, business owners, health care workers, and countless other professions. They represent communities from every corner of Michigan, bringing unique experiences and abilities to their military service.

A portion of these Soldiers come together to form the 246th

Transportation Battalion, a unit specializing in the movement of people, equipment, supplies, and more throughout the state and beyond. Transportation units play a critical role in military operations, ensuring that resources reach their destinations safely and efficiently. Whether supporting training exercises, emergency response efforts, or overseas deployments, transportation Soldiers are responsible for keeping missions moving forward.

Training is only one aspect of the experience. Leaders throughout the battalion understand that maintaining morale and teamwork is equally important. Strong relationships within a unit contribute to mission success by helping Soldiers communicate effectively and trust one another in challenging situations. To build these connections, leaders often organize competitions and events that allow Soldiers to demonstrate their skills while encouraging friendly rivalry and teamwork.

"I think that builds connection, it boosts morale, and just overall your happiness in the Army," said U.S. Army Sgt. Jack Peirson, 1461st Transportation Company, Farmington Hills, Michigan. "I think that we need that all the time."

"I think that builds connection, it boosts morale, and just overall your happiness in the Army,"

*—Sgt. Jack Peirson,
1461st Transportation Company*

One of the most anticipated events during the battalion's recent annual training period was the Truck Rodeo. For motor transport operators, or 88Ms, the competition challenged Soldiers to demonstrate their technical skills, precision driving

abilities, physical fitness, and teamwork under pressure.

The Truck Rodeo featured a series of timed events conducted on several military vehicle platforms, including the M915A3 Freightliner, M915A5 Freightliner, M1077 Palletized Load System, and M1088 tractor truck. These vehicles are used throughout the Army and require extensive training to operate safely and effectively.

Competitors were selected by leadership based on their performance, professionalism, and dedication to their duties. Participation in the event served as recognition for Soldiers who consistently demonstrated excellence both on and off duty.

The driving portion of the competition challenged Soldiers to maneuver large military vehicles through a variety of obstacles that simulated real-world situations they may encounter during operations.

"So the first station is the serpentine



U.S. Army Soldiers, of the 246th Transportation Battalion, cheer for comrades during the annual Truck Rodeo, at Camp Grayling, Mich., June 2, 2026. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Dana Vermilye)



A convoy assigned to the 1461st Transportation Company, 246th Transportation Battalion, Michigan Army National Guard, descends down the north side of the Mackinac Bridge, St. Ignace, Mich., June 4, 2026. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Jeffrey Cross)

and second station is a straight-line back-in with the trailer,” explained U.S. Army Spc. Blake Jackson, 1460th Transportation Company, Midland, Michigan. “Essentially, if you're backing up into a parking spot, you're watching your trailer and trying to keep it straight. Then the third station is the alley dock. If you're

coming into an alley where you have to transition your trailer 90 degrees, that's where you put your trailer.”

In addition to precision driving events, competitors were required to complete practical transportation tasks. One station tested Soldiers on properly securing an HMMWV

(Humvee) to a trailer using chains and binders, a skill used for safely transporting military vehicles over long distances.

“You'll take the chains and the binders, and you'll chain and bind the HMMWV onto the flat rack just so the HMMWV is secure,” Jackson said.

The competition also included physically demanding events designed to test strength, endurance, and teamwork. Soldiers participated in tire flips and an HMMWV push, requiring them to move a military vehicle approximately 2.5 meters using only manpower. These events highlighted the physical demands often associated with military service while also emphasizing the importance of working together under pressure.

While the Truck Rodeo was a competition, its primary purpose was education and professional development. Soldiers were able to learn from one another, observe different techniques, and receive feedback from experienced leaders. Events like these help identify strengths, improve weaknesses, and reinforce confidence in individual and collective abilities.

Beyond the Truck Rodeo, another significant training event conducted by the battalion was a convoy operation from Michigan's Lower Peninsula into the Upper Peninsula. The mission provided Soldiers with valuable experience operating military vehicles over extended distances while navigating unfamiliar terrain.

“It was good to sightsee and know the history of Michigan,” said Omahavong. “I've never experienced the Upper Peninsula, so it was cool seeing a different area of Michigan that I haven't been to at all.”



Convoy operations are among the most important responsibilities for transportation units. Whether supporting disaster relief efforts, overseas missions, or training exercises, transportation Soldiers must be prepared to move personnel and equipment safely and efficiently. Opportunities to conduct realistic convoy operations allow Soldiers to build confidence while reinforcing critical driving and communication skills. The convoy crossed the Mackinac Bridge, one of Michigan's most recognizable landmarks, connecting the state's two peninsulas. For many Soldiers, the journey marked their first visit to the Upper Peninsula and offered an opportunity to experience a different region of the state they serve.

The success of these events depends heavily on leadership throughout the battalion. Noncommissioned officers, particularly sergeants, play a crucial role in mentoring younger Soldiers and ensuring training objectives are met. Annual training provides leaders with opportunities to teach, coach, and evaluate Soldiers in real-world scenarios.

"It's an area we've never really traversed through, especially with this unit," said U.S. Army Sgt. Trevor Scarpeli, 1461st Transportation Company, Waterford, Michigan. "It gets experience with the new drivers. We have a lot of new Soldiers who need experience behind the wheel,

and just putting miles on that truck, and a big giant semi like a 915, is essential to their growth."

For junior Soldiers, this mentorship is extremely valuable. Experienced leaders share lessons learned from years of military service, helping newer Soldiers develop their skills. At the same time, leadership positions allow noncommissioned officers to refine their own skills and prepare for greater responsibilities within the organization.

Training events such as the Truck Rodeo and Upper Peninsula convoy also reinforce the battalion's sense of unity. Soldiers spend extended periods working together, overcoming challenges, and celebrating accomplishments. These shared experiences create bonds that often last long after the training period concludes.

Morale is a critical component of military readiness. Soldiers who trust one another and enjoy working together are more likely to communicate effectively and perform well during demanding situations. By balancing rigorous training with opportunities for competition, exploration, and camaraderie, leaders help create an environment where Soldiers can thrive.

The 246th Transportation Battalion's annual training period demonstrated the importance of both readiness and

morale. Through competitive events, convoy operations, and hands-on training, Soldiers strengthened the skills necessary to accomplish their missions while building relationships that contribute to long-term success.

For many Soldiers, annual training represents much more than two weeks away from home. It is an opportunity to learn, lead, challenge themselves, and grow as members of a professional military organization. Whether navigating a difficult obstacle course during the Truck Rodeo, crossing the Mackinac Bridge in a military convoy, or mentoring a fellow Soldier, each experience contributes to the development of a stronger and more capable force.

The dedication, professionalism, and commitment of the 246th Transportation Battalion Soldiers to one another ensure they remain ready to answer the call whenever Michigan needs them.

To read this story online, click [here](#).

HITTING THE MARK

MICHIGAN MARKSMEN COMPETE IN THE GOVERNOR'S 20

TSgt Bethany Rizor
110th Wing Public Affairs

Michigan National Guard Soldiers, Airmen and U.S. Army Reserve personnel competed in the Governor's Twenty marksmanship competition at Fort Custer Training Center, April 13 to 16, 2026.

The annual competition brought together members of the Michigan Army and Air National Guard to test their marksmanship through a series of rifle and pistol events designed to measure accuracy, speed and adaptability under operational conditions.

"This competition gives Soldiers and Airmen a broader knowledge of marksmanship and more refined techniques," said Sgt. 1st Class Steve Ophoff, Governor's Twenty director. "They can take what they learn here back to their units and help improve overall readiness."

Competitors engaged targets from

multiple firing positions, including standing, kneeling and prone, as well as supported and unsupported positions using barricades. Events included both known and unknown distance engagements, requiring participants to apply precision shooting fundamentals while adapting to changing variables.

"For most shooters, their experience stops at basic qualification, and they don't get pushed beyond that standard," said Staff Sgt. Jared Parham, Governor's Twenty range staff. "This competition exposes them to more stressful shooting events, shows them where they rank among their peers and gives them the opportunity to work through their gear to determine what actually works versus what doesn't."

Timed events introduced stress and required competitors to balance speed and accuracy while maintaining

weapons control. One event, known as the pistol "get together," required competitors to assemble a pistol and engage six targets with 10 rounds under time constraints. The competition also provided an opportunity for less experienced participants to learn from seasoned marksmen.

"It's my first Governor's Twenty, and I've done a little dry-fire training," said Airman 1st Class Lincoln Kowalski, a 110th Security Forces Squadron Airman. "It's been a great opportunity to get more practice on the range and learn from people who have been out here before."

For returning competitors, the event reinforces skills beyond standard qualification requirements that they can take back to their units.

"Most of us train to the minimum stan-



dard,” said Staff Sgt. Joel Bock. “This competition gives us that level of trigger time in just the first half day. Over four days, it builds experience with the M4 and M17. When we go back to our units, we use that experience to coach others on the range and help build confidence and competence across the formation.”

Several events within the competition were named in honor of fallen service members, reinforcing the legacy and purpose behind the training.

At the conclusion of the competition, the top 20 competitors were awarded the Governor’s Twenty tab, recognizing the highest-performing marksmen across the Michigan National Guard.

Sgt. 1st Class Erik Andersen earned the top overall score, followed by U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Donald Spielman in second place and Pfc. Noah Hunzinger in third. The three competitors demonstrated consistent performance across multiple rifle and pistol events, balancing accuracy and speed under timed conditions.

The remaining competitors, who earned the Governor’s Twenty tab, included Sgt. 1st Class Erik Andersen, Staff Sgt. Donald Spielman, Pfc. Noah Hunzinger, Sgt. 1st Class Daniel Plaisier, Sgt. 1st Class Taylor Johnson, Sgt. Connor Smale, Sgt. Josiah Wyse, 2nd Lt. Davis Grumhous, Master Sgt. Rick Van Seters, Sgt. 1st Class Connor Nitka, Staff Sgt. Christopher Russell, Sgt. 1st

Class Logan Rutledge, Staff Sgt. Trac Saul, Sgt. Noble Pallett, Staff Sgt. Nicholas Persails, 2nd Lt. Logan Ogle, Sgt. Nico Dominy, Staff Sgt. David Dohnal, Staff Sgt. Carlos Escobar and Staff Sgt. Nikolas Dakers.

The competition was conducted alongside the Best Warrior Competition, with both events sharing training ranges at Fort Custer. The Governor’s Twenty competition supports Michigan National Guard priorities by strengthening individual lethality, building disciplined shooters and contributing to overall force readiness. Another Governor’s Twenty competition is scheduled for September 2026.





FIT TO FIGHT

MICHIGAN ARMY NATIONAL GUARD SRP SUPPORTS SOLDIER READINESS AT CAMP GRAYLING

A Michigan Army National Guard medical Soldier conducts a blood pressure screening during a Soldier Readiness Processing event at Camp Grayling Joint Maneuver Training Center, Grayling, Michigan, June 1, 2026. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Cadet Garrett Wayne Clark)

Cdt. Garrett Wayne Clark
126 TPASE

GRAYLING, Mich. — Approximately 3,000 Michigan Army National Guard (MIARNG) Soldiers participated in Soldier Readiness Processing (SRP) at Camp Grayling Joint Maneuver Training Center, Michigan, to ensure that they are deployable and fit to serve.

“Medical screens allow us to identify any deficiencies with the Soldiers’ medical readiness,” said U.S. Army Sgt. James Hickey, a noncommissioned officer with the MIARNG SRP medical personnel. “Doing large units at a time like this allows us to get a large percentage of the overall force processed so they can rectify

those issues before it comes time for them to deploy or separate.”

The SRP serves as a critical component in maintaining readiness across the force. The program is a comprehensive review of Soldiers’ medical, dental, administrative, and personnel records. The process helps identify and resolve issues before they affect mission readiness, ensuring Soldiers remain prepared to execute the nation’s call when needed.

SRP is classified into two levels: Level I is conducted annually, and Level II is conducted prior to unit mobilization. Level I covers the preparation and completion of personnel, medical, administrative, and readiness records. Level II Soldier Readiness Processing must be conducted prior

to movement to ensure Soldiers meet deployment requirements.

“SRP contributes to your unit ratings for deployability,” said U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class Chelsea Herman, a MIARNG SRP administrative noncommissioned officer. “Not only that, but it contributes to your overall capacity for Soldiers going out the door. It helps make sure any issues or problems are addressed so your unit is capable of completing the mission and task at hand.”

Throughout the event, Soldiers moved through multiple stations, each with a packeted checklist in hand. Administrative professionals, medical personnel, and unit leaders worked together to verify requirements, update records, and address



Soldiers undergo a variety of medical screenings during a Soldier Readiness Processing event at Camp Grayling Joint Maneuver Training Center, Grayling, Michigan, June 1, 2026. (courtesy photo)

any current or past deficiencies. Cadre members directed Soldiers throughout the event, going through multiple buildings, following signs going to and from immunizations, dental and service provider stations to their next requirement.

“NCOs manage the system created. They ensure accountability, proper standard operating procedures are followed, and all resources needed are provided, while also monitoring individuals’ health,” said U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Rebecca Hillman, a noncommissioned officer with the MIARNG SRP medical personnel.

At the event, Soldiers went through stations that included medical and administrative support, legal, family readiness resources, and religious support services.

“The providers play a critical role in reviewing all of the Soldiers’ medical readiness indicators,” said U.S. Army Maj. Mark Glotkowski, MIARNG medical provider section officer in charge. “Vision, dental, and hearing are evaluated to determine if Soldiers still meet Army standards for duty. We are also identifying any Soldiers who might have a new injury that prevents them from performing their duties.”

For Soldiers, SRP provides a clear picture of individual and unit readiness.

“It prepares me, as well as my unit, to understand what elements we are lacking to be fully mission capable,” said Cadet Cecelia Jacuzzo, MIARNG 1171st Medical Company Area Support. “It allows each individual to know their faults, as well as receive advice efficiently and effectively.”

The event helped ensure Soldiers are medically, administratively, and personally prepared to meet mission requirements. Through coordinated support from medical personnel, administrative staff, leaders, and readiness professionals, SRP continues to strengthen the force and prepare Soldiers for future missions.

By bringing Soldiers, leaders, administrative professionals, and medical personnel together in one location, SRP streamlines the readiness process and reinforces the Army’s commitment to maintaining a capable and deployable force.



Soldiers undergo a variety of medical screenings during a Soldier Readiness Processing event at Camp Grayling Joint Maneuver Training Center, Grayling, Michigan, June 1, 2026. (courtesy photo)

DEATH FROM AFAR

MICHIGAN ARMY NATIONAL GUARD EXECUTES 2,000-MILE HIRAIN DURING MINUTEMAN ROTATION AT NTC

Capt. Ryan Benoit
126 TPASE

ALPENA, Mich. – Michigan National Guard Soldiers and Rhode Island National Guard Airmen completed a High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS) Rapid Infiltration (HIRAIN) from Alpena Combat Readiness Training Center, Michigan, to Fort Irwin, California, during the National Guard's Minuteman Rotation, the first at the National Training Center (NTC).

The Minuteman Rotation concept aligns National Guard annual training requirements with combat training center rotations with their active-duty counterparts. The first Minuteman Rotation took place in March 2026 at the Joint Readiness Training Center in Fort Polk, Louisiana, with Soldiers from the Florida Army National

Guard's 3rd Battalion, 265th Air Defense Artillery Regiment.

"The Minuteman Rotation is a specialized, high-intensity training program at combat training centers that are designed to simulate real-world combat scenarios for rotational units in a controlled, large-scale environment," said U.S. Army Capt. Courtney Bonneau, Alpha Battery commander, 1st Battalion, 182nd Field Artillery Regiment (1-182nd FAR), Michigan Army National Guard. "Being able to conduct this mission, within our annual training plan as National Guard Soldiers, was a great opportunity to train as we would fight in combat operations."

Soldiers from the Michigan unit participated in the Minuteman Rotation

from June 6 to 13 to support the 2nd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division's deep fires during NTC rotation 26-08. The rotation highlighted joint interoperability across the Army and Air National Guard to rapidly infiltrate over 2,000 miles with 1-182nd HIMARS on a C-130J Hercules from the Rhode Island Air National Guard's 143rd Airlift Wing (AW).

"The joint training is extremely beneficial for successful agile combat operations," said U.S. Air Force Capt. Ben Newman, C-130J Hercules 143rd AW pilot. "By understanding the interoperability between the Air Force and Army, we can align processes and terminology to achieve mission success."



U.S. Army Soldiers with Alpha Battery, 1st Battalion, 182nd Field Artillery Regiment, Michigan Army National Guard, guide an M142 HIMARS into a C-130 Hercules aircraft at the Alpena Combat Readiness Training Center, Michigan, June 10, 2026. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. 1st Class Daniel Garas)

Static artillery is highly vulnerable in the multi-domain environment that has advanced sensors and long-range fire capabilities. By leveraging HIRAIN, commanders can conduct deep fires forward of the line that minimize ground exposure and create an unpredictable, nonlinear battlefield.

rapidly airlifted to a forward or austere location, offloaded to execute a precision strike, and quickly reloaded and extracted before adversary forces can detect or target the unit. It is the ultimate military execution of the "shoot-and-scoot" tactic at extreme speed and distance, in degraded conditions.

"HIRAIN brings speed, reach and survivability to the deep fight."

— Sgt. 1st Class Corey Morawa,
Alpha Battery, 1-182 Field Artillery Regiment

"HIRAIN brings speed, reach and survivability to the deep fight by inserting a precision-fire platform that can be rapidly inserted to support any theater of operations," said U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class Corey Morawa, platoon sergeant, Alpha Battery, 1-182nd FAR.

HIRAIN is a highly coordinated joint operation in which HIMARS is

The Minuteman Rotation at NTC provided valuable joint training across U.S. services and active-duty counterparts, while aligning to the annual training requirements for the National Guard.

For more information, click [here](#).



The Blessing of the Flies

SOLDIERS FINDING FAITH ALONG THE AU SABLE



Michigan National Guard State Chaplain (CH) Col. Brian Martinus and Religious Affairs NCO Master Sgt. Chad Hollopeter display a selection of fishing flies at the George W. Mason Chapel near Grayling, Michigan. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Capt. Cameron McPhail)

Capt. Cameron McPhail
Michigan National Guard

GRAYLING, Mich. — Before dusk falls over the Au Sable River, anglers gather their rods, tie on flies, and prepare to enter one of Michigan's most storied trout streams.

For a few moments, however, the fishing can wait.

This year, anglers gathered at the George W. Mason Chapel near Grayling for the Blessing of the Flies, an emerging tradition that brings together faith, conservation and a deep appreciation for the outdoors.

Michigan National Guard state chaplain U.S. Army Col. Brian Martinus was joined by his religious affairs noncommissioned officer, U.S. Army Master Sgt. Chad Hollopeter. Both avid fly fishermen, Martinus and Hollopeter helped inspire the Blessing of the Flies, an emerging tradition centered on faith, fellowship and stewardship along the Au Sable River.

Together, Martinus and Hollopeter support Soldiers across the Michigan National Guard, helping provide spiritual care, resources and support that build resilience and readiness throughout the force.

For those who know the pair, the idea began with a joke.

After long days supporting training and operations at Camp Grayling, a small group of Soldiers often found themselves on the banks of the Au Sable River, fly rods in hand. What started as a running joke about

"The river teaches patience," Martinus said. "You cannot force success. You cannot control the conditions. You learn to slow down, pay attention and appreciate the gift of being present."

—Col. Brian Martinus
State Chaplain

spending every free moment chasing trout gradually evolved into something more meaningful.

Somewhere between evening hatches, missed strikes and stories shared along the river, the idea for a "Blessing of the Flies" was born.

What began as lighthearted banter soon revealed a deeper truth: the river offered a place to slow down, reflect and reconnect with both nature and faith.



The Au Sable River is a 138-mile-long river in Michigan's Northern Lower Peninsula, renowned worldwide for its world-class fly-fishing, pristine canoeing, and rich logging history. (Courtesy photo)

Surrounded by towering pines and the quiet beauty of northern Michigan, the chapel offers a fitting place to pause. Built in 1957 overlooking the Au Sable, the sanctuary was dedicated to preserving both the natural beauty of the river and the inspiration it provides to those who visit. Inside, sunlight pours through towering windows that frame the forest beyond the altar. There are no distractions—only stone, wood, light and the wilderness outside.

It is a place designed for reflection.

"The river teaches patience," Martinus said. "You cannot force success. You cannot control the conditions. You learn to slow down, pay attention and appreciate the gift of being present."

For Hollopetter, fly fishing offers many of the same lessons that Soldiers learn throughout their military careers.

"Every day on the river is different," said Hollopetter. "You have to adapt, stay patient and pay attention to what's around you. Those are qual-

ities that serve you well both as an angler and as a Soldier."

As a religious affairs specialist, Hollopetter regularly works alongside the state chaplain to support Soldiers during training, deployments and times of personal challenge. For him, fly fishing offers another avenue to build connections, foster conversation and encourage reflection away from the demands of daily life.

As an experienced fly fisherman, Hollopetter understands that success on the Au Sable often comes only after hours of observation and persistence. The same qualities that help anglers read the water and match a hatch can also help Soldiers navigate challenges in their personal and professional lives.

For Martinus, the lessons found on the river extend beyond recreation.

In addition to his duties as Michigan National Guard state chaplain, Martinus volunteers with Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing, a non-profit organization that uses fly fishing as a therapeutic intervention for active-duty service members and veterans.

Through programs that include fly fishing, fly casting, fly tying and rod building, participants experience the restorative power of nature while building camaraderie, connectedness and community. The organization serves more than 7,000 veteran participants across all service eras with the support of nearly 4,000 volunteers nationwide.

(Story continues on page 39)



U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class David Burr, an infantry platoon sergeant assigned to the 3rd Battalion, 126th Infantry Regiment, operated as the drone navigator and confirmed the flight plan as Spc. Aleksandr Blain donned his control goggles in preparation for the strike. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Kaitlyn Jernigan)

Sgt. Kaitlyn Jernigan
Michigan National Guard Public Affairs

CAMP GRAYLING, Mich. — Nine Soldiers assigned to the 3rd Battalion, 126th Infantry Regiment, Michigan Army National Guard, participated in a two-week unmanned aerial system program that began May 31, 2026, as the Michigan National Guard expands its UAS training initiative.

The Michigan National Guard's UAS program provides service members with no prior experience the training needed to understand regulations, develop flight proficiency and safely operate unmanned aerial systems in support of unit missions. Once certified, operators can utilize and integrate UAS into their units. The training can also tailor instruction to specific unit capabilities, including drone-strike

simulations.

"The goal of this training is to expose [service members] to the challenges and opportunities provided by a piece of equipment like that," said U.S. Army Maj. Brandon Shortner, the battalion's executive officer. "That's making such an impact on the modern battlefield."

Students began in the classroom for an overview of regulations and systems before moving to flight simulators. Once proficient, they transitioned to field training with a level one UAS, the smallest drone class, maneuvering through an obstacle course that replicates real-world conditions. Instructors adapted the course difficulty based on mission requirements and individual skills.

"Every unit has a different mission set, and every mission set will require

a different platform," said U.S. Army Chief Warrant Officer 2 Aric Petersen, UAS Training Center supervisor for the Michigan National Guard.

After demonstrating competence on the level one drone, the Soldiers will progress to live-fire training to learn demolitions and how to arm the platforms.

In February, the War Department designated the Michigan National Guard's Camp Grayling as the nation's first national range for deep uncrewed aerial systems training, resulting in an increased emphasis on UAS training and capability development across the force. Camp Grayling is the largest National Guard training facility in the U.S.

"It's an incredible honor to be part of a

small group of individuals selected to do this," said U.S. Army Spc. Aleksandr Blain, an infantry team leader assigned to the 3rd Battalion, 126th Infantry Regiment. "We are looking forward to developing these skills."

Blain was the first of the trained 126th Infantry Regiment drone pilots to execute a drone strike using a first-person-view drone June 10. U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class David Burr, an infantry platoon sergeant assigned to the battalion, assisted Blain with the strike as the drone navigator. The navigator's role is critical to ensuring UASs reach targets accurately and safely.

The strike was completed using a two-drone hunter-killer team composed of an intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance platform used to crosstalk with the pilots to confirm targets prior to the strike and a first-person-view system equipped with a fixed-angle camera, giving operators a real-time view from the aircraft's perspective.

The drone is flown entirely by the pilot, enabling precise maneuverability and continued operation in contested environments where GPS may be unavailable or degraded.

The first-person-view drones are piloted completely by manual control, so they find what is called acrobatic mode, which means the pilot has full control over the drone; it doesn't hover.

The two-week training course not only enhanced the unit's tactical performance but also boosted morale among the small group of participants.

"Being on the cusp of innovation is always fun," Blain said. "It's uncharted territory."

To read this story online, click [here](#).



U.S. Army Spc. Ryan Vanderveen, 3rd Battalion, 126th Infantry Regiment, practices a First Person View (FPV) Unmanned Aerial System (UAS) simulation during the UAS FPV cross training at the Grayling Army Airfield, Grayling, Michigan, May 31, 2026. (U.S. Army Photo by Staff Sgt. Dustin Stewart)



(From left) U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Richard Serrels, Sgt. 1st Class Joshua Duckett, and Staff Sgt. Jonathan Gray, right, drone operators and master trainers for the Michigan Army National Guard UAS training course, assigned to Delta Company 837th Brigade Engineer Battalion, pose behind several Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) at the Grayling Army Airfield, Grayling, Michigan, May 30, 2026. (U.S. Army Photo by Staff Sgt. Dustin Stewart)

FORGING THE FUTURE

745TH EOD LEADS HISTORIC JOINT ANNUAL TRAINING AND MEMORIAL TRIBUTE

Capt Joel Meller,
745th Ordnance Company

CAMP GRAYLING, Mich. — The 745th Ordnance Company (EOD) spearheaded a massive, multi-unit joint annual training (AT), May 18 to June 2, 2026, at Camp Grayling, Michigan. The event served as a proving ground for both tactical lethality and civil-military interoperability, directly operationalizing the Adjutant General's Campaign Plan (AGCP) priorities and the Alignment for Training (AFT) policy. By the conclusion of the AT, the collaborative effort had driven a remarkable 40 percent increase in combat readiness across the joint force.

The foundation for this grueling training was laid not in the dirt of Camp Grayling, but on the hallowed grounds of the Eglin Air Force Base Explosive Ordnance Disposal Memorial. Prior to the AT, the 745th EOD attended the 58th EOD Memorial Weekend in Florida, where the unit achieved an exceptional 70 percent participation rate. Standing shoulder-to-shoulder with their joint-ser-

vice peers, the Soldiers honored the 345 fallen EOD technicians memorialized on the wall, a profound demonstration of the state's priority of manning and building cohesive teams.

The reverence of the memorial provided a fitting backdrop for a milestone in the company's history. Unit leadership proudly presented the Master EOD Badge to two of the company's senior technicians at the Memorial Wall. Pinning the Master Badge—the pinnacle of EOD technical achievement—in the presence of the community's legacy symbolized the highest standards of expertise, directly supporting the AGCP priority of strengthening the profession.

Carrying the solemn energy of the memorial into the field, the 745th EOD transitioned to Camp Grayling to direct a complex tactical assembly. The joint force seamlessly integrated the 741st EOD Battalion, the 319th and 217th EOD Companies, and

leadership from the 48th EOD Group. Together, they executed 96 intensive tactical lanes simulating modern, multi-domain conflict. Technicians conducted specialized MK22 stand-off de-arming ranges and mastered high-risk "stuck round" extraction procedures on a live M777 155 mm howitzer—a rare, high-consequence scenario, which ensures teams are ready to clear jammed combat systems under pressure.

Beyond the tactical lanes, leaders engaged in targeted key leader engagements and officer/leader professional development sessions with battalion and group leadership. These strategic discussions focused on talent management and force structure, cultivating ethically fit servant-leaders equipped for the future of EOD.

The 745th EOD's mission profile also extended into domestic community safety, demonstrating strict accountability and risk management. The unit hosted an explosive and fire-



Soldiers of the 745th Ordnance Company (EOD) stand together at the EOD Memorial Wall, honoring their fallen brothers and sisters while celebrating the lineage of the EOD profession, June 2, 2026. (Courtesy photo)

works safety class from the Michigan Bureau of Fire Safety (BFS) State Fire Marshals. This interagency cooperation culminated in a large-scale joint disposal operation, coordinated alongside federal agents from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives; Detroit Bomb Squad; and BFS fire marshals.

Through controlled mass detonations, technicians safely destroyed 17,827 confiscated and volatile line items, neutralizing more than 2,000 pounds of net explosive weight. The operation successfully cleared regional inventories of "Code H" unserviceable ammunition and returned the Range 43 impact area to safe, operational status.

This unique blend of civil-military integration and advanced aerial drone training caught national attention, with a featured broadcast by NewsNation highlighting the unit's innovative approach to security. Ultimately, the Joint AT proved that the 745th EOD remains ready to meet



U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Reigling, with the 745th Ordnance Company, Michigan National Guard, receives the Master Explosive Ordnance Disposal Badge at the EOD Memorial Wall, May 2, 2026. (Courtesy photo)



U.S. Army Capt. Johah Dornbos, with the 745th Ordnance Company, Michigan National Guard, receives the Master Explosive Ordnance Disposal Badge at the EOD Memorial Wall, May 2, 2026. (Courtesy photo)

the future of warfare—anchored by a deep respect for its history, driven by technical mastery, and dedicated to the safety of the communities it serves.

CARING FOR THE FALLEN

MICHIGAN NATIONAL GUARD CONDUCTS PARTNERSHIP ENGAGEMENT WITH ARMED FORCES OF LIBERIA CHAPLAINS, MORTUARY AFFAIRS SPECIALISTS



U.S. Army Master Sgt. Chad Hollopeter, assigned to the Michigan Joint Forces Headquarters, Lansing, Michigan, discusses casualty assistance procedures with members of the Armed Forces of Liberia Chaplain Corps during a subject matter expert exchange in Liberia, May 5, 2026. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by 1st Lt. Michael Sian)



Members of the Michigan National Guard and Armed Forces of Liberia mortuary affairs personnel pose for a group photo outside the 14 Military Hospital in Liberia, May 7, 2026. (Courtesy photo)

1st Lt. Michael Sian 110th Wing Public Affairs

MONROVIA, Liberia — As part of the National Guard Bureau's (NGB) State Partnership Program (SPP), the Michigan National Guard sent Airmen and Soldiers to Liberia to participate in a military-to-military engagement with the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL).

During a weeklong exchange, May

4 to 8, 2026, U.S. Air Force 1st Lt. Spencer Lawson and U.S. Air Force Master Sgt. Cameron McArthur, both assigned to the 110th Force Support Squadron at Battle Creek Air National Guard Base, Michigan, collaborated with AFL mortuary affairs personnel at the 14 Military Hospital in Liberia. The team exchanged ideas and discussed mortuary affairs capabilities, while working alongside partner forces

to revise formal standard operating procedures.

"This was a great opportunity to learn from our partner, better understand their culture, and improve our interoperability," Lawson said. "This type of engagement reinforces the importance of dignity, honor and respect for fallen service members of both nations."



U.S. Air Force 1st Lt. Spencer Lawson and Master Sgt. Cameron McArthur, assigned to the 110th Force Support Squadron, Battle Creek Air National Guard Base, Michigan, meet with Armed Forces of Liberia mortuary affairs personnel during a subject matter expert exchange at the 14 Military Hospital in Liberia, May 5, 2026. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by 1st Lt. Michael Sian)

In addition, a two-person team consisting of a chaplain and chaplain assistant returned to Liberia to engage with the newly formed AFL Chaplain Corps. U.S. Army Col. Brian Martinus and U.S. Army Master Sgt. Chad Hollopeter, both from the Michigan Joint Forces Headquarters in Lansing, Michigan, conducted a subject matter expert exchange with Liberian chaplains.

Discussions focused on the role of chaplains in the event of a service member's death, including casualty assistance, funeral preparation, military honors and the integration of chaplain support with mortuary affairs operations.

"As Liberian chaplains continue to develop their Chaplain Corps within the Armed Forces of Liberia, a structured exchange of ideas is critical to its successful establishment," Martinus said. "The Michigan National Guard remains committed to supporting the AFL in achieving the three core

tenets of chaplaincy: nurturing the living, caring for the wounded and honoring the dead."

"This type of engagement reinforces the importance of dignity, honor and respect for fallen service members of both nations."

***—1st Lt. Spencer Lawson
110th Force Support Squadron***

U.S. Air Force Capt. Andrew Layton, bilateral affairs officer at the U.S. Embassy in Liberia, emphasized the value of the engagement.

"The mortuary affairs specialists

and the chaplain team complemented each other, creating a well-rounded engagement between the Michigan National Guard and the Armed Forces of Liberia," Layton said. "This military-to-military exchange provided valuable insight to both forces and further strengthened our partnership."

The SPP pairs U.S. states with partner nations to conduct cooperative, mutually beneficial engagements across military, security and civilian sectors. The program supports regional stability, enhances interoperability and builds enduring relationships between partner forces.

To read this story online, click [here](#).

SHOTS FROM AROUND THE STATE

INTO THE NIGHT

U.S. Army Spc. Samuel McEnroe, Illinois Army National Guard, checks the azimuth on his compass while competing in a night land navigation event during the Regional IV Best Warrior Competition, April 30, 2026., Fort Custer Training Center, Augusta, Mich. The Region IV Best Warrior Competition features competitors from Michigan, Minnesota, Iowa, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Wisconsin. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Daniel Garas)



PARTING SHOTS

Airmen assigned to the 110th Security Forces Squadron, 110th Wing, conduct close quarters battle training at Fort Custer Training Center, Michigan, June 5, 2026. The training focused on room-clearing procedures, team movement techniques and threat response tactics to enhance mission readiness and strengthen the unit's ability to respond to real-world security incidents. (Michigan Air National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Ryan



IRON BESSEMER



U.S. Army Soldiers with 3rd Battalion, 126th Infantry Regiment, Michigan National Guard, conduct Air Assault training at Camp Grayling, Michigan, May 31, 2026. Soldiers conducted, Operation Iron Bessemer, a training exercise during annual training. Annual training is the two-week yearly training period conducted by all National Guard members to ensure mission-readiness by improving the skill level of Soldiers and Airmen with military duties. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Patrick Mayabb)



FIELD OF HONOR

Command Sgt. Maj. Terry Richardson, a Medal of Honor recipient, is recognized during Military Appreciation Day at Comerica Park in Detroit, Michigan. Richardson received the nation's highest military award for valor for his actions during the Vietnam War and concluded his military career after more than 29 years of service in the Michigan National Guard. The Detroit Tigers honored service members, veterans and their families throughout the event in recognition of their service and sacrifice. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Catherine Brooks)



LINE OF SIGHT

U.S. Army Sgt. Eleanor Osgood, assigned to the 126th Theater Public Affairs Support Element, Michigan Army National Guard, operates the M155 mounted machine gun optic to zero the M2 Browning machine gun, at Camp Grayling, Michigan, June 9, 2026. The 126th TPASE is the first Army unit to field and train on the M155 MMO which is a wide-field red-dot optic that mounts to crew-served weapon systems, allowing soldiers to quickly acquire close and long-range threats using the flip-in 3X magnifier. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Patrick Mayabb)

Special Exchange



GERMAN AIR FORCE OFFICER STRENGTHENS PARTNERSHIP DURING MICHIGAN AIR NATIONAL GUARD EXCHANGE

1st Lt. Michael Sian
110th Wing Public Affairs

BATTLE CREEK, Mich.— The Michigan Air National Guard (MIANG) welcomed German Air Force Maj. Silas Scherer, basic training instructor officer, assigned to the Luftwaffenausbildungsbataillon, June 1 to 13, as part of the National Guard Bureau's 40th Annual Military Reserve Exchange Program (MREP).

Scherer was hosted by U.S. Air Force 1st Lt. Michael Sian, 217th Air Component Operations Squadron public affairs officer. Sian facilitated an in-depth look at the missions, readiness and capabilities of the Michigan National Guard (MING), while fostering a lasting professional partnership between the United States and Germany.

The MREP pairs U.S. National Guard members with reserve component personnel from NATO partner nations to strengthen interoperability, enhance professional relationships and improve mutual understanding of each nation's military capabilities and operations.

During his visit, Scherer toured KC-135 Stratotanker and A-10 Thunderbolt II aircraft at the 127th Wing, Selfridge Air National Guard Base. He also met with leaders at Michigan Joint Force Headquarters in Lansing and received in-depth mission capabilities briefings at the 110th Wing, Battle Creek Air National Guard Base. Scherer learned about the wing's cyber operations, MQ-9 Reaper mission and command-and-control capabilities.



U.S. Air Force Maj. Kyle Bruckner, 127th Operations Support Squadron commander, right, and German Air Force Maj. Silas Scherer, instructor officer, left, pose for a photo during a tour of the A-10 Thunderbolt II, June 2, 2026, at Selfridge Air National Guard Base, Michigan. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by 1st Lt. Michael Sian)

In addition to learning about Air National Guard missions, Scherer explored the capabilities of the Michigan Army National Guard. He visited Camp Grayling, where he attended the Adjutant General's social and the MING's annual Pass in Review ceremony. Scherer then visited the 177th Regional Training Institute at Fort Custer Training Center to learn about the education and training mission of the MING.

"Programs like this strengthen the enduring partnership between the United States and Germany, while providing valuable opportunities to exchange ideas, share best practices and build relationships that enhance readiness," said U.S. Air Force Col. Daniel Guy, MIANG director of staff. "Hosting Maj. Scherer allowed us to showcase the diverse capabilities of the Michigan National Guard, from the National



Photos of German Air Force Maj. Silas Scherer, instructor officer, during his visit with the Michigan Air National Guard as part of the Military Reserve Exchange Program with the German Air Force. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by 1st Lt. Michael Sian)

All-Domain Warfighting Center (NA-DWC) to air mobility and precision strike missions at our bases. These professional exchanges help ensure we remain ready to operate together whenever called upon."

Outside of official engagements, Scherer visited several of Michigan's most notable destinations, including the Henry Ford Museum of American Innovation, Lake Michigan and the Mackinac Bridge.

"It has been an honor to participate

in this exchange and experience the professionalism of Michigan's Airmen and Soldiers firsthand," Scherer said. "I was particularly impressed by the variety of missions and the expertise of the personnel performing them. The opportunity to learn, while building relationships across the organization, has been invaluable."

As part of the reciprocal exchange, Sian is scheduled to visit Germany in September 2026, where he will be hosted by the German Armed Forces and gain insight into their training, operations

and military culture. The exchange will further strengthen the longstanding partnership between the United States and Germany while expanding opportunities for future collaboration between military professionals from both nations.

To read this story online, click [here](#).

MING SHOOTS FOR THE GOLD

MING BIATHLON TEAM PARTICIPATES IN NGB EASTERN INVITATIONAL

TSgt Tristian Viglianco
Michigan National Guard

Four members of the Michigan National Guard biathlon team participated in the National Guard Bureau Eastern Invitational at Fort Kent, Maine, March 28 to 29, 2026.

Originally scheduled for February in Utah, the 2026 Chief of the National Guard Bureau Biathlon Championships was cancelled due to poor snow conditions. However, the opportunity to compete alongside civilian competitors arose, and the National Guard Bureau Eastern Invitational was born.

“The Fort Kent Outdoor Center was gracious enough to allow the National Guard to join in on their invitational, which included civilian athletes 13 years and older from the Northeast and even Canada,” said U.S. Army Capt. Austin DeOrio. “The event was successful largely through the many civilian volunteers who spent their personal time taking care of set-



U.S. Army Capt. Austin DeOrio, Michigan National Guard Biathlon team member, prepares to shoot during the National Guard Bureau Eastern Invitational at Fort Kent, Maine, March 28, 2026. Biathlon is a unique sport, which combines skiing and shooting from prone and standing positions. (Courtesy Asset)

ting up the venue, providing range personnel, timing and various other support staff positions.”

Biathlon is a unique sport that combines skiing and shooting from prone and standing positions. Missed shots mean a time penalty or skiing extra distance.

“It’s like a combination of two opposing activities,” said U.S. Army Maj. Brad Watkins. “You’re pushing yourself hard, your heart rate is at its peak, and then you have to slow down and calm your heart rate and breathing to shoot.”

Watkins competed in his first competition last year and has found a love for the sport.

“This year really reinforced how much I enjoy this sport,” said Watkins. “I realized that I need to dedicate some serious time to the range this summer and focus on improving my shooting if I want to progress.”

Another team member, U.S. Army Staff Sgt. David Dohnal, saw improvement from his previous results.

“I did the best I’ve ever done at a competition,” said Dohnal. “I shot really well, but I still have room for improvement. I especially want to improve my shooting. My goal is to hit every single target.”

The team is planning to participate in the future and is looking for additional team members.



The Michigan National Guard Biathlon team poses during the National Guard Bureau Eastern Invitational at Fort Kent, Maine, March 28, 2026. Biathlon is a unique sport, which combines skiing and shooting from prone and standing positions. (Courtesy Asset)

“There were plenty of biathletes at this event who were brand new to skiing and still having a lot of fun with the sport,” said Watkins. “I would say give it a try. It’s a great sport that really translates to making you a better Soldier and will probably make your Michigan winters more enjoyable!”

For those interested in joining the Michigan National Guard biathlon team, Capt. Austin DeOrio can be contacted for more information at austin.a.deorio.mil@army.mil.

RESULTS:

STAFF SGT. DAVID DOHNAL (MEN’S MASTER 50-69 INTERMEDIATE CATEGORY)

4.5KM SPRINT - 5TH

7.5KM SHORT INDIVIDUAL - 2ND

MAJ. BRAD WATKINS (MEN’S MASTER 30-49 INTERMEDIATE CATEGORY)

7.5KM SPRINT - 14TH

10KM SHORT INDIVIDUAL - 16TH

CAPT. AUSTIN DEORIO (SENIOR MEN’S CATEGORY 22Y/O AND OLDER)

10KM SPRINT - 9TH

15KM SHORT INDIVIDUAL - 9TH

SGT. SHELBY FLORY (SENIOR WOMEN’S CATEGORY 22Y/O AND OLDER)

7.5KM SPRINT - 7TH

12.5KM SHORT INDIVIDUAL - 7TH

READINESS: CREATING LETHAL WARRIORS AND ELITE TEAMS

WHY MICHIGAN AIR NATIONAL GUARD READINESS MATTERS IN TODAY'S STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT



A KC-135 Stratotanker from the 171st Air Refueling Squadron, Selfridge Air National Guard Base, Michigan (SANGB) and three A-10 Thunderbolt II's from the 107th Fighter Squadron also from SANGB perform a fly-over during the base's Air Show on July 9, 2022. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. David Kujawa)

Maj. Jahir Ramos
127th Wing

"The views and opinions expressed in this article are solely those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of The Wolverine Guard."

The character of today's security environment demands more than the ability to mobilize when called upon. It requires forces that are prepared every day—trained, disciplined, and ready to generate combat power at speed. For the Michigan Air National Guard (MIANG), readiness is not simply a measure of preparedness for future conflict; it is a visible demonstration of credibility that strengthens deterrence and reassures partners and citizens alike.

Readiness is the foundation upon which the MIANG fulfills its dual

mission to defend the nation and serve the state. It is more than a checklist of training requirements, equipment availability, or manning documents; readiness is a living

"Creating lethal warriors begins with individual readiness."

—Maj. Jahir Ramos
127th Wing,
Michigan Air National Guard

culture that enables forces to generate credible combat power on demand. It is reflected in the ability of Airmen to transition seamlessly from civilian life to operational warfighters, and

from steady-state operations to crisis response in complex and contested conditions. The Department of War defines readiness as the ability of military forces to fight and meet the demands of assigned missions, emphasizing both capability and capacity across the force.

Lethality in this environment is not defined by force alone, but by the ability to create decisive effects against capable adversaries. Air Force doctrine emphasizes that combat effectiveness emerges from the integration of trained Airmen, advanced systems, and effective leadership operating across multiple domains. The MIANG expresses this through precision, adaptability, and professionalism across air, cyber, medical, maintenance, security, and support functions. Elite teams are formed when individual excellence is matched by a shared commitment to collective success.

Creating lethal warriors begins with individual readiness. Each Airman must possess the technical proficiency, physical stamina, and mental agility required to operate under stress, ambiguity, and time compression. The guard amplifies this challenge due to the need to balance civilian careers, families, and community obligations while remaining prepared to deploy globally or respond locally with little notice. Air Force doctrine recognizes that individual readiness extends beyond technical training to include physical fitness, cognitive agility, and moral strength.

Meeting these demands requires training that is deliberate and realistic. Training must replicate the complexity of modern operations and emphasize decision-making under pressure rather than rote task completion. Scenario-based training has been shown to improve adaptability and performance in complex operational environments. While inspections and regulatory requirements establish necessary baselines, they should never become the ceiling of excellence. Realistic training builds confidence, reinforces trust, and prepares Airmen to operate effectively in uncertain or degraded conditions.

Leadership remains the decisive factor in transforming capable individuals into elite teams. Leaders who communicate intent clearly, set consistent standards, and empower Airmen to exercise disciplined initiative create organizations that are adaptable and resilient. Air Force leadership doctrine underscores that leaders are responsible for creating the conditions in which Airmen can perform at their best, particularly in demanding and high-risk environments. Trust—built through competence, fairness, and accountability—is the foundation upon which elite teams operate.

Elite teams consistently outperform the sum of their individual parts. Cohesive teams demonstrate improved mission outcomes, greater resilience, and faster decision-making, particularly during high-tempo operations. The MIANG benefits from continuity, experience, and long-standing professional relationships, which—when intentionally cultivated—reduce friction and enhance interoperability across mission sets.

Modern warfare relies heavily on advanced technology, but equipment alone does not create combat power.

Readiness ultimately depends on Airmen who understand their systems, anticipate limitations, and adapt when technology is disrupted or denied. Air Force doctrine consistently emphasizes that people—not platforms—remain the decisive advantage in warfare. Maintenance, logistics, cyber, medical, and support functions are therefore essential components of lethality and must be fully integrated into readiness planning.

The MIANG dual state and federal missions further highlight the importance of adaptable readiness. Whether contributing to national defense objectives overseas or responding to emergencies at home, Airmen must be prepared to shift focus rapidly while maintaining disciplined professionalism. This adaptability strengthens public trust and reinforces the Guard's role as a reliable and relevant component of the Total Force.

Readiness is not an event—it is a culture sustained through daily action and leadership commitment. By investing in people, realistic training, disciplined standards, and cohesive teams, the MIANG ensures it remains ready not only to answer the call, but to succeed in the complex security environment of today and tomorrow.



A U.S. Air Force Agile Combat Employment maintenance team, from the 180th Maintenance Group, 180th Fighter Wing, Ohio Air National Guard, performs an integrated combat turn on a 180th FW F-16 Fighting Falcon during Exercise Northern Strike 2024-2, at Oscoda-Wurtsmith Airport, Michigan, Aug. 7, 2024. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Tech. Sgt. Tristan D. Viglianco)



From the left U.S. Army Lt. Col. Jim Miller, Col. Brian Martinus, and Master Sgt. Chad Hollopeter, of the Joint Force Headquarters chaplain command team, awaits the commencement of the annual Command Prayer Breakfast at Camp Grayling, Michigan, June 11, 2026. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Kaitlyn Jernigan)

Sgt Kaitlyn Jernigan
126 TPASE

CAMP GRAYLING, MICH. — Members of the Michigan National Guard (MING) joined their state's Chaplain Corps for a morning of spiritual reflection, fellowship, and a shared commitment to mission readiness during the annual Command Prayer Breakfast at Camp Grayling, June 11, 2026.

The event brought together service members of all ranks, unified by a common focus on faith, community and the mental fortitude required for operational missions.

“We are spread out throughout the state attached to units in chaplain-religious affairs specialist pair teams. The prayer breakfast is one of the few times we are able to be together as a state corps,” said U.S. Army Spc. Sheri Rodgers, 156th Expeditionary Signal Battalion religious affairs specialist. “This is a great opportunity for us to get in additional training together once the breakfast is complete.”

The morning commenced with chaplain-led prayers and spiritual reflections emphasizing the importance of

inner resilience and leadership. This was followed by a song performed by U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class Amy Pearson and U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Melany Miller, 126th Army Band senior musicians.

A highlight of the breakfast was the introduction of the guest speaker, U.S. Army Lt. Col. Jim Miller, a Michigan Army National Guard chaplain. Miller shared a powerful personal testimony of how faith guided him through the challenges of deployment, leadership, and finding his calling within the Chaplain Corps.

“All of us will be confronted with rare moments where that moment is critical,” he said. “It might be a career decision. It might be a family move. It might be a heated verbal altercation with a boss. It might be an encourag-

ing word you give. That moment will either tip the balance toward or away from victory.”

By sharing authentic, lived experiences from the field, the speakers bridged the gap between faith and the practical realities of military operations with the Guard members in attendance.

Ultimately, the event was more than just a morning meal; it was a strategic investment in the holistic well-being of the force. By focusing on faith and unity, the MING reinforced its commitment to maintaining a spiritually fit, resilient force—fully prepared to answer the call for both domestic responses and overseas operational missions.

To read this story online, click [here](#).

U.S. service members attend the Command Prayer Breakfast at Camp Grayling, Michigan, June 11, 2026. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Kaitlyn Jernigan)



INVESTING IN THE FUTURE

MICHIGAN NATIONAL GUARD, MACOMB COUNTY HOST INDUSTRY DAY



Master Sgt Chelsea Fitzpatrick
127th Wing Public Affairs

SELFDRIDGE AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, Mich. — With more than \$1 billion worth of investment in the pipeline, Michigan military and government leaders met with more than 300 business representatives at Selfridge Air National Guard Base April 27, highlighting opportunities, timelines, and the processes that will be utilized over the next several years at the base.

Michigan National Guard leaders are leveraging long-standing ties with Macomb County government and local community organizations to educate businesses on how to bid on the work, which will position Selfridge for future missions.

The event, dubbed “Infrastructure Day” and led by Macomb County’s Planning and Economic Development Department (MCPED), brought together government, military and private-sector partners to educate companies on how to pursue work tied to an estimated \$1 billion Air Force investment planned for Selfridge over the next five years.

The investment will upgrade infrastructure and facilities in support of the 127th Wing’s transition from the A-10 Thunderbolt II and KC-135 Stratotanker aircraft missions to the F-15EX Eagle II and KC-46 Pegasus platforms.

“This is a generational investment at Selfridge,” said U.S. Air Force Col. Bryan Amara, 127th Wing deputy commander. “From runway extensions to drainage updates, demolition to new construction, these infrastructure upgrades require partners who have expertise in everything from engineering to environmental services.”

To put the investment value in perspective, U.S. Army Maj. Gen. Paul D. Rogers,



U.S. Air Force Col. Bryan R. Amara, deputy commander of the 127th Wing, Michigan National Guard, addresses the audience at Selfridge Air National Guard Base, April 27, 2026. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Chelsea E. FitzPatrick)

the adjutant general of the Michigan National Guard, said the investment at Selfridge ANGB will be the second largest in Air Force history, after the 2018 reconstruction of Tyndall Air Force Base in Florida. In October 2018, Hurricane Michael destroyed nearly 95 percent of the installation’s facilities.

“This is second to that, a billion dollars, and essentially the entire airfield and flight line is going to be razed and reconstructed,” Rogers said. “There’s so much change here, it’s literally unprecedented.”

The event was coordinated by MCPED in collaboration with the Aerospace and Defense Council, Selfridge Base Community Council and the Macomb County Chamber of Commerce, reflecting a unified regional effort to support Selfridge ANGB and align local industry with future mission needs. Attendees received guidance on navigating government contracting processes and learned about the timing, challenges and magnitude of the projects.

U.S. Air Force Lt. Col. Stephen Klenke, commander of the 127th Civil Engi-

neer Squadron and base civil engineer, explained that the range of projects will offset the challenges associated with basing new aircraft at a location more than a century old.

“The one-billion-dollar investment portfolio is all about solving our current problems to position Selfridge to be an airpower leader for the next 100 years,” Klenke said. “Selfridge will be able to compete for and win future missions that haven’t even been identified yet.”

While the investment at Selfridge ANGB is expected to bring significant infrastructure updates over the coming years, leaders emphasized that strong partnerships with local stakeholders remain essential to mission success.

“Leadership from Macomb is so important to us, from the base community council up through the elected officials. It’s just an amazing relationship we have here,” Rogers said. “This is a team sport and everything you’re hearing about today is about that team sport and the fight to get these two amazing missions.”

To read this story online, click [here](#).

★★★

5th Annual
NORTHERN STRIKE 5K
Run/Walk/Ruck

NGAM charity event raising funds for
Camp Grayling USO & NGAM's Leadership Scholarship.
All donations are 501(c)(19) tax deductible.



**NOTE: REAL ID OR OTHER FEDERALLY COMPLIANT IDENTIFICATION
REQUIRED FOR ENTRY CHECK MICHIGAN.GOV/SOS FOR DETAILS.**

***SOLDIERS
*VETERANS
*STUDENTS
*FIRST
RESPONDERS
\$30**

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

\$40 Entry Fee if registered by July 1st (\$50 after)
Check-in starts at 7:30am
Camp Grayling Parade Field
Shot Gun Start



★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

SUNDAY
2 AUG 2026
9:00AM



The first 150 registered participants will be guaranteed a
free medal and shirt. Prizes for top finishers and most
patriotic. Professional Timing Company will be used.

★★★

MUST PRE-REGISTER AT
NORTHERNSTRIKE5K.ITSYOURRACE.COM
(FOLLOW OUR EVENT PAGE ON FACEBOOK FOR UPDATES)
CONTACT: JENNIFER.A.CAVERSON.CIV@ARMY.MIL





Michigan National Guard State Chaplain (CH) Col. Brian Martinus and Religious Affairs NCO Master Sgt. Chad Hollopetter stand overlooking the Au Sable River near the George W. Mason Chapel outside Grayling, Michigan. Both avid fly fishermen, the pair helped inspire the Blessing of the Flies, an emerging tradition centered on faith, fellowship and stewardship. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Capt. Cameron McPhail)

(continued from page 21)

The program's mission resonates with many of the same values celebrated during the Blessing of the Flies. Time spent on the water encourages patience and perseverance, while shared experiences help strengthen relationships and foster a sense of belonging.

For Martinus, those experiences reinforce a simple truth: sometimes the best conversations happen not in an office or classroom, but standing knee-deep in a river, waiting for the next rise.

Those lessons resonate with many Soldiers.

Military service often requires resilience, discipline and the ability to remain calm in uncertain circumstances. Fly fishing demands many of those same qualities. Success depends less on force and more on observation, preparation and persistence.

Before heading to the water, participants gathered their flies for a blessing—not as a guarantee of success, but as a reminder of gratitude.

This newfound tradition recognizes the river as a gift to be respected rather than simply a resource to be used. It also serves as a reminder that some of life's most meaningful moments are found in stillness.

That spirit reflects the vision of George W. Mason, whose dedication to conservation helped preserve this stretch of the Au Sable for future generations. A plaque inside the chapel expresses that hope, noting that the fisherman who visits may receive the same inspiration that led Mason to preserve both the land and the sanctuary beside his beloved river.

Outside, waders hung from a nearby bench and fly rods leaned against the wood, waiting for the day's first cast. For a brief moment, distinctions of profession, title and rank faded into the background. Everyone present

shared a common purpose: to spend time on the water and appreciate the beauty of God's creation.

As anglers made their way toward the water, they carried more than rods and fly boxes. They carried a deeper appreciation for the river, for one another and for the quiet moments that continue to draw people back to the Au Sable year after year.

Whether the blessing improved the fishing remained open to debate, but no one questioned the value of the fellowship found along the river.

For many, that is the true Blessing of the Flies.

For More Information

To learn more about Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing and its mission to support active-duty service members and veterans through fly fishing, fly tying, rod building and outdoor recreation, visit projecthealingwaters.org.



Organizers plan to continue the Blessing of the Flies as an annual tradition.

The next gathering is scheduled for the first Sunday in June 2027 at the George W. Mason Chapel near Grayling, Michigan. Anglers are encouraged to bring their favorite flies, a healthy appreciation for the Au Sable and, if possible, proof that the blessing improves catch rates.

CALLING ALL MICHIGAN ARMY NATIONAL GUARD ENGINEERS!

Col (Ret) James R. Parker
Military Engineer Association of Michigan

Were you or are you a Michigan Army National Guard Engineer? If you are, I have something you may be interested in attending.

Did you know that every year on the 3rd weekend of September, there is a Military Engineer Association of Michigan (MEAM) organization that organizes an “Engineer Weekend” at the Camp Grayling Officer’s Club?

This is open to all Active or Retired Engineers and their family and friends of the family to attend. Events include a Friday and Saturday schedule.

Friday afternoon— For those who are interested, the first weekend event starts out with an afternoon golf outing at 12 p.m. at the nearby Patriot golf course.

Friday evening - Social time begins at 6 p.m. at the Historic Camp Grayling Officers Club. This includes an opportunity for camaraderie with old friends and a time for making new ones as well. Food is provided Friday night at the “O” Club by the generosity of the MEAM Leadership and by many attendees who want to bring their favorite dish to ensure a good time is had by all.

Saturday - A morning breakfast 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. is offered at the “O” Club, provided again by the support of the MEAM Leadership and some very generous attendees.

Saturday - Free time is from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. When available, some of the Camp Grayling SIM centers are offered or possibly a Camp Grayling tour. When those options are not available (if visiting soldiers are training), this time allows for the attendees to enjoy some of the local attractions, like the nearby Turtle Creek casino, canoeing down the AuSable or Manistee rivers, or visiting

the Hartwick Pines State Park, plus many more local attractions.

Saturday evening – Social hour at the “O” Club is from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m., followed by an 6 p.m. catered dinner by the Officer’s Club staff. Following the dinner, there will be a presentation by a special guest speaker. Some of the past speakers are Maj. Gen. Paul D. Rogers, the Adjutant General of Michigan, Col. Lucas Lanczy, the current Camp Grayling Camp Commander, and many other notable speakers. The 2026 Engineer Weekend looks to have a special guest speaker, more on that as the date nears!

In addition to a great dinner, and guest speaker, there are door prizes, soldier recognition and camaraderie and friendship abounds.

So, if you’re looking for a great event with fellow Engineers, this year the dates are 18 to 19 September 2026 at the Camp Grayling Officer’s Club. Remember all current and former Engineers, Retired Engineers and friends are welcome. Feel free to contact other Engineers who may not have access to the Wolverine Guard!

If you would like to learn more about the Engineer Weekend, contact Jim Norton, 1st Sgt. (Ret.) with email at james-m.norton126@gmail.com the MEAM Secretary, to have your name placed on the “Save the date” email that will go out in June.

If you feel like some of the best times of your life were when you were serving in the military, where you made friendships that have lasted a life time, then join us and get that same feeling of being part of a team again! I am certain you will have a great time!

CULTIVATING STRATEGIC LEADERS

HOW THE FUTURE STRATEGIC LEADERS PROGRAM SHAPES THE NEXT GENERATION OF MILITARY THINKERS



Members of Michigan National Guard's (MING) Future Strategic Leader Program pose for a photo in front of the Cheyenne Mountain Complex, Colorado. The Future Strategic Leader Program aims to raise awareness of MING service members regarding adversary activity in other parts of the world and provides leaders with a valuable new skill set to combine with the expertise they gained from multiple deployments in Central Command. (Courtesy photo)

Maj Steven "Husker" Linebaugh, Capt Hannah MacDonald, Capt Nick Rivera
Michigan Air and Army National Guard

"The views and opinions expressed in this article are solely those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of The Wolverine Guard."

The Michigan National Guard is preparing its next generation of leaders through a program called the Future Strategic Leaders Program (FSLP). The goal of the FSLP is to expose junior majors and senior captains, from both the Army and Air Guard, to global issues from a strategic standpoint. This initiative explores how the United States uses diplomatic, informational, military, and economic tools to achieve its goals through various readings, writing assignments, and discussions with

senior leaders throughout the state. The program also involves travel for in-person key leader engagements across the globe. The objective: to see strategy in action and to witness global issues managed from multiple perspectives, far beyond traditional operational thinking. While expanded thought, strategic exposure, and professional networking are all hallmarks of the program, participants are also challenged to find a path toward professional publication for their assigned papers, with several past members succeeding in this endeavor. Additionally, each cohort consists of senior leader mentors to guide discussions as well as previous cohort participants as peer group leaders to assist in the planning

and coordination of travel and engagements scheduled throughout the journey.

PRIOR STUDIES RECAP

To date, the FSLP has completed three cohorts, with the fourth currently underway. Each cohort studied a different geographic command.

Beginning in 2021, the inaugural cohort concentrated on the Indo-Pacific theater. This first group traveled to Hawaii to meet with leaders at U.S. Indo-Pacific Command where they discussed the challenges and strategic importance of the Indo-Pacific region, including competition with China and



Members of Michigan National Guard's Future Strategic Leader Program pose for a photo in front of the U.S. Capitol building, Washington D.C. (Courtesy photo).

the geopolitical/military context of Chinese expansion in the South China Sea. Possible conflict over Taiwan was heavily explored and discussed during this cohort.

The second cohort took place in 2022 and focused on the European theater and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, visiting Belgium, Latvia, and Germany. Engagements with leaders at U.S. European Command and NATO highlighted the security conditions in Europe, particularly the conflict and decision-making in the region regarding the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The trip also featured a visit to the historic Bastogne battlefield in Belgium.

In 2023, the third cohort shifted focus to U.S. Africa Command, holding meetings in the National Capital Region with the U.S. Agency for International Development, the African Center for Strategic Studies, and several foreign embassies. This cohort concluded with strategic level engagements in Italy, Burundi, and Liberia—one of Michigan's State Partnership Program allies.

THE CURRENT GROUP

After a brief hiatus, cohort four began in December 2025, with a sharp focus on homeland defense. Aligning directly with the nation's highest strategic priorities, the cohort studied the North-

ern and Southern Command Areas of Responsibility. Travel was conducted in three phases and included strategic level conversations with professors at the William J. Perry Center for Hemispheric Defense Studies and in-person engagements with the leaders at the Department of State and the Office of Net Assessment (ONA). The group also met with key stakeholders at the Pentagon, including Gen. Steven S. Nordhaus, Chief of the National Guard Bureau, and various members of Congress. Later phases brought the cohort to the North American Aerospace Defense Command, commonly known as NORAD, the Cheyenne Mountain Complex in Colorado, and the Joint Interagency Task Force-South in Flor-



ida. Throughout these engagements, cohort members asked insightful questions that pushed the boundaries of their own strategic thought while challenging the beliefs and decisions made by upper echelon strategic leaders throughout the nation.

Members of this cohort represent a true joint collaboration spanning many different organizations and career fields within the Michigan National Guard. Officers from the Army and Air National Guard have various experiences ranging in fields including engineers, signal corps, medical services, intelligence, logistics, infantry, and remotely piloted aircraft operations. Drilling status of this group also varies and includes traditional M-Day members and Active Guard Reserve members. The group benefits from senior mentorship provided by U.S. Army Col Hyo Jin ‘Jeana’ Cho, the Chief of the Joint Staff for the Michigan National Guard, and U.S. Army Col. Jason Evans, the Judge Advocate General for the Michigan National Guard. The program’s lead advisor and director is the Michigan Adjutant General, Maj. Gen. Paul Rogers, who brings his vast experience and perspective to the group.

TIMELY, TOPICAL, RELEVANT

Cohort members focus their thinking on the concepts and goals outlined in the 2025 National Security Strategy and the 2026 National Defense Strategy. These documents fundamentally elevated “defense of the homeland” to the nation’s number one priority, followed by deterring threats from the People’s Republic of China and the Russian Federation as priorities two and three, respectively. Current events constantly shape the group’s thinking as global challenges exercise the strategic mindset and stress the cohort’s ability to think about simultaneous problem sets and how to overcome them collectively. For example, scheduled meetings with senior defense officials at the Pentagon and congress-

sional leaders on Capitol Hill coincided with the start of Operation Epic Fury. Cohort members witnessed the full effect of how current events shape daily operations at the highest national level. While meetings went on as planned, the conversations involving homeland defense became increasingly relevant. Senior leaders across the ONA, NGB, and Congress were intrigued and interested in the thoughts brought forth by the junior leaders from Michigan, which included national infrastructure defense, cyber and space security, mass migration, supply chain resiliency, and defending U.S. territorial integrity from ballistic threats and hybrid attacks. These discussions continued at NORTHCOM and NORAD, capturing the interest of senior officials such as Lt. Gen. Allan Pepin, U.S. Army North commander, and Lt. Gen Joseph Jarrad, NORAD vice commander. Select members of the group toured the joint operations center at NORAD, and the entire group received an exclusive tour of the highly secretive Cheyenne Mountain Complex.

Topical conversations continued at U.S. Army South, and Joint Interagency Task Force-South. Defending the homeland includes counter-drug operations which are in the national spotlight with the ongoing Operation Southern Spear and other recent actions in South America. Cohort members were afforded the opportunity to speak with Maj. Gen. Philip Ryan, U.S. Army South commander, to ask questions directly involving these events and their strategic implications on U.S. hegemony in the Western Hemisphere.

ALL WORK, SOME PLAY

Amidst the rigorous curriculum, the group was able to explore and appreciate their travel destinations when they weren’t conducting nightly debriefs with Maj. Gen. Rogers, affectionately known as TAG talks. Cohort members conducted physical training together, explored the headquarters of the

National Guard Association of the U.S., the National Museum of the United States Army, and even hiked the Garden of the Gods near Colorado Springs. Bonding as a group and learning to lean on the strengths of each other is as equally important to the growth of the Michigan National Guard as are the strategic discussions taking place.

THE TAKEAWAY

Throughout the engagements around the country, both in-person and online, cohort members met with leaders that have roots or ties to Michigan. Members were consistently reminded that a strategic leader is made, not born, and opportunities are available for those seeking assignments directly involving national strategy and homeland defense.

The Future Strategic Leaders Program does more than just fill a calendar with high-level meetings; it fundamentally reshapes the thinking of Michigan’s military leaders. Cohort members now view the defense of the homeland not as a localized military mission but see the whole picture as a complex balance of diplomatic, informational, and economic power. This investment in the current generation of mid-grade leaders actively helps to secure the long-term resilience.



Join Us This Fall!

More details coming soon! Visit [Mi.gov/WomenVeterans](https://mi.gov/WomenVeterans) or follow the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency on social media for updates.

[Linkedin.com/company/MIVeteran](https://www.linkedin.com/company/MIVeteran) | [X.com/MIVeteran](https://twitter.com/MIVeteran)
[Facebook.com/MIVeterans](https://www.facebook.com/MIVeterans)



Join Us This Fall!

More details coming soon! Visit [Mi.gov/WomenVeterans](https://mi.gov/WomenVeterans) or follow the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency on social media for updates.

[Linkedin.com/company/MIVeteran](https://www.linkedin.com/company/MIVeteran) | [X.com/MIVeteran](https://twitter.com/MIVeteran)
[Facebook.com/MIVeterans](https://www.facebook.com/MIVeterans)



SPONSORSHIP INFO

Michigan Women Veterans Conference ★★★ 2026 ★★★

Disclaimer and Cancellation Policy:

The State of Michigan does not endorse any sponsor. All sponsorship funds will be used exclusively for Michigan Women Veterans Conference 2026. In the event of a cancellation of the conference, no refunds will be issued. All proceeds will go to future Women Veterans Conference programming and planning.

Conference Policies:

Material deadlines help conference organizers ensure sponsor information is included in the printing of attendee materials and other sponsorship fulfillment is completed, where applicable. Conference organizers will send reminders in advance of deadlines, but conference organizers cannot guarantee the fulfillment of benefits if sponsors miss those deadlines. **Sponsorship must be confirmed by August 27 for inclusion on Michigan Women Veterans Conference 2026 print materials.**

We will be providing a swag bag of items for conference attendees. If you would like to provide any items, we will need 200 by September 17.

The general distribution of unauthorized marketing materials during the conference is strictly prohibited.

Questions:

If you have any questions about Michigan Women Veterans Conference 2026 or the sponsorship opportunities, please email Sarah Daniels at **danielss12@michigan.gov**.

Submit a Sponsorship

To submit a sponsorship and help support this year's conference, please email Sarah Daniels at **danielss12@michigan.gov**.

Checks Can Be Sent To:

Account: NATIONAL GUARD ASSOCIATION OF MICHIGAN

Contact: T.J. Pierce

Email: tjpierce@ngam.org

Group Type: 501c19/Non-Profit (Tax Exempt)

Address: PO BOX 14095 | LANSING, MI 48901

For: Michigan Women Veterans Conference October 2026

MICHIGAN ARMY NATIONAL GUARD PROMOTIONS

LTC CARL ELWOOD
LTC COREY HIRDES
MAJ AARON BICKERSTAFF
MAJ BRIAN MADURI
CPT JONATHAN BATES
CPT AARON BAUM
CPT MARK DRESAJ
CPT PAUL SCHULMAN
CPT NICHOLAS VANDERWAL
1LT DANIEL COOK
1LT DANIEL ESCHBACH
1LT ELIAS HADDAD
1LT RAFAEL MALDONADO
1LT BRIANNA MCNATT
1LT SAMUEL MISAK
1LT ANTHONY MORIO
1LT DAVID NAYBACK
1LT JAMES PIPER
1LT DERRAH RICHARDSON
1LT JEFFREY SENER
1LT BURDEST WILLIAMS
CW5 JOEL MACK
CW5 ROBERT SEXTON
CW2 TRENTON DARROW
CW2 ERICA FUENTES
CW2 TROY PALETHORPE
CW2 SHAREEF SASNASOPA
CW2 COURTNEY TOPPER
SGM LUCAS CATTERFELD
SGM LAUREN SIRKEN
1SG SHEA GROSSMAN
1SG JOEL JAMES
1SG AUSTIN PARKS
1SG DANNY POTTER
MSG ZACHARY BOYL
MSG ANTONIO YBARRA
SFC STEVEN ALLEN
SFC DOMINIC BARONE
SFC DOUGLAS BIDDLES
SFC DOMINIC BOWLESCOLON
SFC ROBERT COE
SFC KATHRYN DAVIS
SFC JORDAN JONES
SFC KAYLYNN MARSHALL
SFC MARK OCONNOR
SFC JOSHUA POYER
SFC ISAIAH REYNOLDS
SFC JEREMY ROSS
SFC RENO ROZELA
SFC SANG TRUONG
SFC CONRAD WEISSENBORN
SSG JOSHUA BARRIX
SSG MATTHEW BARRY
SSG MICHAEL BARTON

SSG HEATHER CHACON
SSG STEPHEN COUSINEAU
SSG JEFFREY CROSS
SSG JAY DAVIS
SSG JOURDAIN DUKES
SSG BEAU DUTTON
SSG JAMES HICKEY
SSG SPENCER HUGHES
SSG JOHN JABRO
SSG TAMBA JAMMEH
SSG LANE JONES
SSG SHAWN KESSEL
SSG TABITHA LAFRAMBOISE
SSG MATTHEW LANE
SSG ADRIEN LOISELLE
SSG MARYCLAIRE MANSFIELD
SSG STEPHEN NUGENT
SSG COREY SULLIVAN
SSG EMILY THON
SSG KEVIN WATTAWA
SSG ANGEL WEATHERBEE
SSG DANTE WENBERG
SSG ANDRES YERENAS
SGT NEBIYU ABEBE
SGT ERIC ANDREWS
SGT EMMANUEL BEAN
SGT WILLIAM BERGIN
SGT LEON BONNER
SGT TRENTON BRAMAN
SGT BLAINE BRIDGES
SGT TANNER BUWALDA
SGT TREVOR CASTILLO
SGT ERIC CUNNINGHAM
SGT MEGAN DEWEY
SGT PAPA DIOP
SGT BRANDT DUBOIS
SGT MICHAEL EDMONSON
SGT LAWSON FAIRFIELD
SGT DOMINICK GONZALEZ
SGT MICHAEL GOVAERE
SGT JAMES GRENLIN
SGT DYLAN GRIFFING
SGT UNDREREON HALL
SGT GLEN HANTON
SGT ROBERT HEYART
SGT NATHANIEL HODGES
SGT ADAM HUSSEY
SGT JALEN JEMISON
SGT NICHOLAS KAMP
SGT JUSTIN LEAVELL
SGT CODY LONG
SGT RYAN MALDONADOQUINTERO
SGT DAVID MENDOZA
SGT JUSTIN MICHELS

SGT AUSTIN MITCHELL
SGT TRENTON MOORE
SGT LUIS MUNOZ
SGT RICHARD NALETTE
SGT ROBERT NEMETZ
SGT KENNETH NEVILLE
SGT SEAN OTOOLE
SGT MAISON PAGE
SGT DYLAN PENNINGTON
SGT WYATT PETTY
SGT CHEYANNE POSTON
SGT COLLIN PRICE
SGT IGOR PRYLEPSKYI
SGT JACOB RECTOR
SGT RYAN RISNER
SGT JACOB ROBBINS
SGT PEYTON ROCKHILL
SGT CARRIE RUEL
SGT DANIEL SCHULTZ
SGT HUNTER SEELEY
SGT MICHAEL STRAUSS
SGT ETHAN VANG
SGT TIMOTHY WILKERSON
SGT JACOB WILKINSONLANPHAR
SGT ASHTON WYANT
SGT JACOB ZAMORA
SGT CHARLES ZINN
SPC LEX AIKENS
SPC MOHAMMED ALKHATIB
SPC ALEXANDER ASBRIDGE
SPC ELIJAH BALSITIS
SPC CARSON BAUGHER
SPC XAVIER BLANTON
SPC ISABELLA BOYD
SPC MUSIQ BRANTLEY
SPC TREVOR BROWN
SPC TREVOR BUNTING
SPC ISAIAH BYERS
SPC JAMES CAIN
SPC RENEE CANTY
SPC GAVYN CARDEN
SPC SIRANI CARDIEL-NIEVES
SPC FRANK CARDINALE
SPC ALEX CARGILL
SPC MARIANGEL CHACON
SPC MICHAEL CHAPMAN
SPC DERIC CHUPURDY
SPC CURTIS CRIVEA
SPC ASHLEY CUEVAS
SPC JOSEPH CUNG
SPC RYAN DELAVAN
SPC MBUYU DIEUDONNE
SPC CY EICHENBERG
SPC HUNTER EMMENDORFER

MICHIGAN ARMY NATIONAL GUARD PROMOTIONS

SPC ANDREW ENGLE
SPC FRANCISCO ESPARZA ESCOBEDO
SPC DAVID FARISON
SPC JACKSON FARRAR
SPC ADAM FITZGERALD
SPC LUCA FOLDEN
SPC LEE FOLLETT
SPC GAGE FREIBERG
SPC WANG FRIDLINE
SPC DAYTHAN FRY
SPC JAMISEN GAGER
SPC KAYLA GILARDI
SPC CALEB GILDE
SPC JOSHUA GONZALES
SPC SIMON GONZALEZ
SPC JOHN HALE
SPC DIEGO HARDEN
SPC DEMARIA HARRIS
SPC MALACHI HERZOG
SPC KEEGAN HIGGINS
SPC REBEKAH HILL
SPC QIERA HOLT BEY
SPC JORDAN HYATT
SPC NICHOLAS INGRAM
SPC ALHASANA JALLOW
SPC PAIGE JENNEMAN
SPC JILLIAN KOCH
SPC DEVIN KUHENS
SPC MADISON LANGER
SPC BRENDAN LAURENDINE
SPC CAMBRIE LAWRENCE
SPC VAN LIAN
SPC KYLEE LONERGAN
SPC EMMANUEL LOPEZ-VAZQUEZ
SPC DOMINIK LUBANSKI
SPC ANDREA LUNA ROJAS
SPC SAIDI LUNDY
SPC KENDRIC MACLEAN
SPC KYLER MANCOS
SPC ISAI MARTINEZ GUTIERREZ
SPC JONATHAN MAURICIO MARTINEZ
SPC DRAKON MAYES
SPC LUKE MCFADDEN
SPC NANCY MEDINA
SPC KIMBERLY MENDOZA
SPC JOSHUA MERCIER
SPC DEMETRIUS MILES
SPC ABBY MILLER
SPC KAITLYN MITAS
SPC JEFFERY MONTGOMERY
SPC JAZMIN MOYA
SPC KYLE MUNTIAN
SPC GINSUM NAULAK
SPC TUCKER NETHAWAY

SPC YINKA OGIUGO
SPC JACK ORDWAY
SPC GUILLERMO ORTEGA SANTANA
SPC PATTON OSWALD
SPC LUKAS OTTO
SPC TYLER PAUL
SPC NADIA PEREZ
SPC EVERETT PHIPPS
SPC BRYAN PONCE-TORRES
SPC ALASIA PRICE
SPC BREANA PROBST
SPC LUCIANO PROVENZOLA
SPC DAVID PURIFOY
SPC MYA RAMOS
SPC KELBYN REYES
SPC DAMIAN RIDENOUR
SPC EMMA RODRIGUEZ
SPC JUSTIN ROGNER
SPC EDMOND ROOT
SPC MARC LUIS SALAMAT
SPC GRAYCIE SCHROEDER
SPC LEILA SEARS
SPC KELCIE SHALTONIS
SPC NAMAN SHARMA
SPC JARED SLAGER
SPC ANTROVEL SMITH
SPC COHEN SMITH
SPC QUINLAN SMITH
SPC TARA SNIDER
SPC STEPHAN SPEIKES
SPC YALITZA STENCH
SPC OLGA SUAREZ
SPC MAXWELL SYNHA
SPC BAELEE SYTSMA
SPC MARK TAYLOR
SPC ROWEIN TOLER
SPC AXEL TREJO
SPC KADIENCE TROMBLEY
SPC DANIEL UGOCHUKWU
SPC ELIJAH VANDERGELD
SPC QUENTIN VANNATTER
SPC DARIUS WADE
SPC LOGAN WALLACE
SPC DESTINY WALLAG
SPC WILLIAM WENDT
SPC ISIS WILLIAMS
SPC JORDYN WILLIAMS
SPC GRACE WILTON
SPC ISABEL WINGO
SPC SAMUEL WOODBURY
SPC LUKE ZASTROW
PFC AAVIN ADDIS
PFC LUCAS AGUIRRE
PFC OBALOLUWA AKINYEMI

PFC JAYDEN ALBRIGHT
PFC CHRISTIAN ANDERSON
PFC JONATHON ANIBLE
PFC ZANE BARBER
PFC JUAN BASURTO
PFC BRAYDEN BAYES
PFC GAVIN BEILMAN
PFC ADAM BEZOTTE
PFC NOAH BLEVINS
PFC RUFUS BRISCO
PFC OSVALDO CABRALES-MARTINEZ
PFC AARON CARTWRIGHT
PFC ALEXIS CERVANTES-LUNA
PFC DILLON CHUPURDY
PFC DOMINIC CLARK
PFC SAMUEL CLARK
PFC KHALAN COLE
PFC JAEDEN COSGRAY
PFC DOMINIC CREMER
PFC ALECXAVIER CRUZ
PFC MAGALY CRUZ GONZALEZ
PFC GABRIELE DARIO
PFC BRANDON DAVENPORT
PFC SHAUNA DAVID
PFC JAVION DAVIS PATTERSON
PFC JOUSELYN DE LA ROSA
PFC JALYNN DELMOTTE
PFC EVA DEWAELE
PFC JADEN DOERR
PFC ALEXIS DUNN
PFC DEVIN ELLIS
PFC ADAM ELOMDA
PFC DANIEL FLORES
PFC KALEB GAGNE
PFC DEREK GALBRAITH
PFC PATRICK GASS
PFC ETHAN GOODEMOOT
PFC MALIA GOODEN
PFC STERLING GRANGER
PFC ANDREW GREEN
PFC LONDON GRIFFIN
PFC JONATHON HARTOON
PFC JONATHAN HOWSON
PFC RILEY HUSH
PFC DAVID HUTCHERSON
PFC GIA HYDEN
PFC OZZIE HYNAN
PFC ZAKIYA JACKSON
PFC MANDIAYE JAMMEH
PFC MICHAEL JENKINS
PFC MICHAEL JORDAN
PFC KALANA KAILIMAI
PFC KYRA KELLSTROM
PFC ANDREW LADA

MICHIGAN ARMY NATIONAL GUARD PROMOTIONS

PFC JEREMIAH LEE
PFC BRAYDEN LEWIS
PFC ADRIAN LLERENAS
PFC JAYDEN MCPHEARSON
PFC ABIGAIL MEDER
PFC JACK MILTON
PFC DAMION MISENER
PFC OSCAR MOONS
PFC JAVEN MOORE
PFC YAMILET MUGICA GAYTAN
PFC DREW NOREN
PFC JOHNY OLMOS-NAVARRO
PFC JACKSON PAGE
PFC MALYZHIA PARKER
PFC FIONA PETERS
PFC RYLAN RAPP
PFC NOAH RENNEY
PFC ALDAIR RODRIGUEZ-CUEVAS
PFC MAX SCHNEIDER
PFC JOHN SCOTT
PFC ORAEN SEIVWRIGHT
PFC MYAH SELLEN
PFC JACOB SHELL
PFC CHITILEEN SINGH
PFC MICHAEL SLAWINSKI
PFC BRODY SMEYERS
PFC GAVIN SMITH
PFC NOAH THIERY
PFC ETHAN WAGNER
PFC DAKOTA WALKER
PFC ABRAHM WARD
PFC JONATHAN WHIMS
PFC GABRIEL WILKES
PFC BRIZEIDA ZATARAIN
PV2 VINCENT BOUCHER
PV2 BRITTON CARPENTER
PV2 MALAKHI CENTERS
PV2 AARON CHAFFIN
PV2 VANESSA COCHRAN
PV2 CARLOS CORTEZ
PV2 TAMIA DAVIS
PV2 KILIAN DELGADO-GUERRERO
PV2 GEORGE DIAZ
PV2 LORENZO DIEZ CANSECO DEVOTO
PV2 COOPER DUBOIS
PV2 PRESLEIGH EDWARDS
PV2 YAHAIRA ELICEA-MORENO
PV2 JAYLEN ELLIOT
PV2 TYLER ELLYSON
PV2 ERIC FLORES
PV2 JOSHUA FRAILEY
PV2 MARCO GARCIA DORANTES
PV2 SKYLER GILMORE
PV2 NICHOLAS GOODRICH
PV2 GARY GRAY

PV2 SHAHANNA HARPER
PV2 KOLE HEEG
PV2 JACK HEINONEN
PV2 DANIELLE JACKSON
PV2 RUBY KLOPCIC
PV2 LUKAS KOBE
PV2 EMMA KWANT
PV2 KOHLE LANNING
PV2 BISETSA MERCI
PV2 RYKER MILLS
PV2 KENDALL MINICK
PV2 EVAN MONROE
PV2 JUAN MUNOZ-LARA
PV2 SAVA MURUTA
PV2 MACARTI NIX
PV2 JULIAN ORTA MERCADO
PV2 ANTHONY PRYOR
PV2 CARLITO RIVERA
PV2 SKYLAR SACHJEN
PV2 SAMUEL SCHLAGEL
PV2 NICHOLAS SCHULTZ
PV2 PASCALI SELEMBE
PV2 KYLYNN VANHOLDER
PV2 STEVEN ZOPPA

MICHIGAN AIR NATIONAL GUARD PROMOTIONS

CMSGT	MATTHEW T. PERRY	SRA	CAMERON D. WHITE
CMSGT	ANDREW C. WHITE	SRA	JOSE L. GENOVEZ JR.
CMSGT	JULES M. DESCAMPS	SRA	TRAVIS S. CHILDS
CMSGT	MARC A. MUNIZ	SRA	HARLEY A. KOEHLER
SMSGT	YOLANDA BEARD	SRA	DYLAN CHARLES TIPKEN
SMSGT	BRIAN HELLER	A1C	JOSEPH G. AMORMINO
SMSGT	DANDREA VANPOPERING	A1C	LOUIS JACOB CALAMIA
SMSGT	CHRISTOPHER S. PROCTOR	AMN	GUNNAR R. BUSEN
MSGT	PATRICIA GUNNING	AMN	IRVIN BURT III
MSGT	TYLER HOOVER	AMN	KYLIE M. TREVINO
MSGT	MICHEAL O'NEIL	AMN	KAILEY E. FICK
MSGT	ANGELINA CARDELLA	AMN	JADA C. GIBSON
MSGT	IAN CALLEWAERT		
MSGT	KEVIN CATRELL		
MSGT	ZACHARY T. DYBAS		
MSGT	BRENT J. WALTERS		
MSGT	TYLER C. GEE		
MSGT	KATARYNA OSTROWSKI		
MSGT	JOSHUA P. LEDDY		
TSGT	EMILY M. GORDON		
TSGT	BRAYDON D. LUKASVITZ		
TSGT	JACOB M. FIELDS		
TSGT	JAMES R. MAINE		
TSGT	SEAN M. TRIBUZI		
TSGT	REBECCA J. BUCKLEY		
TSGT	SCOTT DAVID ST. ARNAUD		
TSGT	BRENNAN ARMSTRONG		
TSGT	DYLAN M. GREEN		
TSGT	BRADEN M. BUTKOVICH		
TSGT	BROCK D. MATHER		
TSGT	EPHRAIM BLEVINS JR.		
SSGT	DANIEL R. BENNETT		
SSGT	CHRISTIAN M. QUICK		
SSGT	HELEN A. LLOYD		
SSGT	JESSE D. ADAIR		
SSGT	NICHOLAS M. ROGERS		
SSGT	COLIN M. TROXELL		
SSGT	LATIA L. ROBINSON		
SSGT	LUCAS D. SHELTON		
SSGT	SEAN R. LANGLOIS		
SSGT	SIMON C. ANDERSON		
SSGT	DESTIN N. BELGER		
SSGT	NATHANIEL C. WINCEL		
SSGT	NICARLE FERNANDEZ MORETA		
SSGT	COLIN J. PORTER		
SSGT	ALANA L. CARROLL		
SRA	ABIGAIL M. BARTLEY		
SRA	MAX J. HELESKI		
SRA	BRADY A. CARRIVEAU		
SRA	JACK R. DAVIES		
SRA	BRYCE P. HILLERMAN		
SRA	GISELLE T. QUINTANA		
SRA	DANIELLE H. RUDD		
SRA	LUCAS A. LITTLE		
SRA	MILES A. LAMAIRE		

MICHIGAN ARMY NATIONAL GUARD RETIREMENTS

LTC TIMOTHY FINDLAY
LTC SHANNON RUBY
MAJ CHAD CONQUERGOD
MAJ ANTOINE FAIR
CPT ADAM STEPHENS
CW4 DALE ELLIS
CW4 JEFFREY MALLISON
CW4 JERRY MOODY
SGM MELINDA FOURNIER
1SG ADAM STOJAK
MSG CORINNA JUAREZ
MSG STEVEN MCDANIEL
MSG MICHAEL MOORE
MSG JAMES SCHWARTZ
MSG SCOTT WATKINS
SFC PHAIPHIN ANONGDETH
SFC JOSHUA BANKS
SFC MITCHELL BECKER
SFC JOSEPH BOESLER
SFC ANDREW BRENNAN
SFC PAUL DALY
SFC TERENCE DICKINSON
SFC RONALD FRENCH
SFC LINK HIBERNIG
SFC DANIEL HINER
SFC KEVIN JORAE
SFC JORDAN MARTZ
SFC TAMMY MILLER
SFC PATRICK NACY
SFC LEONARD SIEGRIST
SFC ERIC THIBODEAU
SSG LANCE BAILEY
SSG JOSHUA DRULLINGER
SSG TY HUNTER
SSG SEAN KEELER
SSG CHRISTOPHER SCHMIDT
SGT JESSICA CARR
SGT JAMES GREEN
SGT CLIFT KENDALL JR.
SGT ALFRED KENNEDY
SGT JEREMY SANDAHL
SGT BRANDON WELCH

MICHIGAN AIR NATIONAL GUARD RETIREMENTS

LT COL RYAN ALTER
LT COL RICO BATES
LT COL RACHEL GENIER
LT COL JAMES ROSBOLT
LT COL TIMOTHY RYAN
LT COL COREY ENDERBY
LT COL RUSSELL FORTIN
MAJ MICHAEL COX
MAJ AMY PADESKY
MAJ DOUGLAS HENRY
CMSGT LYLE BLACK
CMSGT BRIAN JACKMAN
SMSGT GERALDINE LADD
SMSGT RYAN POMERVILLE
MSGT QUINTEN GOODWIN
MSGT ADAM WALDEN
MSGT JAROD MANSFIELD
MSGT DAVID BORG
MSGT JASON CHAPMAN
MSGT JOSEPH KOROTKO
TSGT CHRISTOPHER LAVIGNE
TSGT GEORGE JAMES
TSGT AARON JOHNSON
TSGT MICHAEL J. HOLTZ
TSGT DANIEL MCKNIGHT
TSGT GREGORY GLENN
TSGT DERRICK COPELAND
TSGT TODD OSBORNE
SSGT COREY ROSS
SSGT BRENDA SCANLON
SSGT TIMOTHY SKAGGS

TAPS

ARMY

COL	ROGER WARNER	26-JUN-26
LTC	WILLIAM VEJCIK	6-JUN-26
MSG	DOUGLAS HOGAN	13-APR-26
MSG	BRANDON VICKERY	7-JUNE-26
SFC	LEEROY COLEMAN	2-APR-26
SFC	RICHARD MIZER	6-APR-26
SFC	ROY SLY	13-APR-26
SFC	ROBERT BROOKS	14-JUN-26
SFC	DENNIS KREHN	19-JUN-26
SSG	RICHARD KANIPE	27-APR-26
SGT	MITCHELL SIMONS	4-APR-26
SGT	ANGELLO ZANNIS	8-APR-26
SGT	EUGENE VANARMAN	14-APR-26
SGT	EDWARD GOLDMAN	15-APR-26
SGT	CLAUDE OSTRANDER III	22-APR-26
SGT	GARY TINO	17-MAY-26
SGT	JAMES ROZELL JR.	3-JUN-26
SGT	GARY CRONKRIGHT JR.	7-JUN-26
SGT	ANTHONY MAYO	14-JUN-26
CPL	JASON NICKERSON	6-MAY-26
SPC	JOHN NASH	6-APR-26
SPC	CARL WILLIAMS	22-APR-26
SPC	TERRY SCHAMPER	5-MAY-26
SPC	EDWARD FRYER	16-MAY-26
SPC	GEORGE JOERIN	18-MAY-26
SPC	DONALD TEACHOUT	21-MAY-26
SPC	ROBERT TENHARKEL SR.	4-JUN-26
SPC	THOMAS SMITH	5-JUN-26
SPC	RICHARD BUGAY	6-JUN-26
SPC	ROBERT BUTLER	15-JUN-26
PFC	MICHAEL RUIZ	10-APR-26
PFC	ALFRED INSOLD	4-MAY-26
PFC	WALTER SALISBURY JR.	21-MAY-26
PVT	WILLIAM ERICKSON	26-APR-26
PVT	KARON DAVIS	5-MAY-26
PVT	ROBERT PARKO	16-MAY-26
PVT	JEROME MCCOY	11-JUN-26
PVT	KENNETH HAYES	18-JUN-26

AIR

COL	KURTIS RING	24-JUN-26
SMSGT	BRETT TRISKO	28-MAR-26
MSGT	SARAH DEWITT	24-APR-26
TSGT	SWEN TYRUS	23-APR-26

FUTURE EVENTS

NORTHERN STRIKE 26-2

01- 15 Aug. 2026
Camp Grayling, MI

EXPERT INFANTRY, MEDICAL, AND SOLDIER BADGES

26 Sept. - 04 Oct. 2026
Fort Custer, MI

9/11 SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE: 25TH ANNIVERSITY

11 Sept. 2026
Grosse Pointe War Memorial, Grosse Pointe MI

TAG GOLF OUTING

24 Sept. 2026
Sunfield, MI

DMVA LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE AND GALA

7-8 Nov. 2026
Fort Pontchartrain Hotel, Detroit, MI

TELL YOUR STORY



Share your personal or unit news and associated photos (with captions please) to ng.mi.miarng.list.pao@army.mil. Keep operational security in mind and ask permission when taking photos of other people and equipment. We distribute material all over the world so yours might just be the next global feature story! Never fear, to bend our ear, with event descriptions, unit accomplishments, training photos, armory changes, any news that impacts the Soldiers, Airmen, families and friends of the MING. Please do your part to steer us in the right direction and tell the Michigan National Guard story. You could be featured on our Social Media pages! Either way, follow and like us: Facebook: [MichGuard](#) Instagram: [MiNationalGuard](#) Flickr: [Photos/MI NG](#) DVIDS: [JFHQ-MNG](#) Youtube: [MichiganNationalGuard](#) LinkedIn: [MiNationalGuard](#)





GREAT LAKES\$ GRAND

MIARNG SOLDIER REFERRAL PROGRAM

SCAN THE QR CODE



SUBMIT THE REFERRAL

UPON ENLISTMENT, YOU WILL RECEIVE:

\$1,000

CAREER PROMOTION POINTS
THE ARMY RECRUITING RIBBON



ALWAYS READY

ALWAYS THERE

