



1ST MSC GAZETTE

VOL. NO. 10/ ISSUE 4 SUMMER 2020



ENLISTED SOLDIER **COMMISSIONS** THROUGH THE HEALTH SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

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**SOLDIERS
COMPLETED COLLEGE
WHILE DEPLOYED**

PAGE 9



1ST MSC GAZETTE

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BRIG. GEN. JEFFREY W. JURASEK

We must no longer think that we will have a Forward Operating Base or a contractor to set up our base camps. We must be able to self-support in any environment at any time, and to do so correctly will take some effort. Get back to the basics and ensure our Soldiers know the simple stuff and build on that.

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SOLDIERS EDUCATE STUDENTS ON FIRST AID

1ST MSC PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE



*U.S. ARMY RESERVE SOLDIERS
GIVING BACK TO THE COMMUNITY
BY EDUCATING STUDENTS ON
FIRST AID AT THE GENARO BOU
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IN COROZAL.*

COROZAL, Puerto Rico- Several Soldiers from the United States Army Reserve in Puerto Rico visited the Genaro Bou Elementary School in Corozal, Feb 27, before the pandemic, where they conducted first aid familiarization sessions with students and teachers on campus.

"We want to educate our children about the basic use of first aid in the event of an emergency in their educational environment, so that they can react if needed," said Sgt. Nilmarie Colon-Albino, who was in charge of training.

As part of the event, the children participated of simulated exercises, in an entertaining and interactive way, practicing how to use first aid bandages on small wounds.

"As Soldiers we do not only to go to combat, but we also have a responsibility to serve our community," said Colon-Albino.

The first aid familiarization sessions allowed the community to see the United States Army Reserve Soldiers in a

different role.

"Seeing Soldiers without weapons creating alliances with the community, is something that has exceeded my expectations, and it fills me with pride knowing that we have people like you," said Josue Rivera Figueroa, social worker and interim director of the Genaro Bou school.

"We usually underestimate children's abilities in times of emergencies and these familiarization sessions are good for all, since none of the trained adults are exempt from being paralyzed. I am a faithful believer in prevention. For this reason, I believe that this event is a perfect fit for the social reality that we are experiencing due to the recent emergencies on the island," said Rivera-Figueroa.

This initiative is part of the community outreach efforts of the largest Federal Army command in the Caribbean.

ARMY RESERVE FATHER HANDLES THE HOUSE DURING DEPLOYMENT

363RD PUBLIC AFFAIRS DETACHMENT

AGUADILLA, Puerto Rico- Sgt. 1st Class Luis Quiñones, from the 77th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion in Ramey, Aguadilla, - serves as an example of the resilience of military Families.

Due to the nature of the service in uniform, military duties could create some friction with Family roles especially during birthdays and other important events. This reality usually gets more complicated when both parents serve in uniform. That is the case of Quiñones and his wife Stephanie, who is currently deployed to the Middle East with the Navy.

“Stephanie mobilized with the Navy Reserve in April 2020 to the Middle East, and is projected to return later during the year,” said Quiñones.

The couple has three children: Alyssa, 14, Anthony, 12, and Gabriella, 6.

“Typically it has been me who has been away for an extended periods of time, so they are somewhat used to dealing with only one parent. This has made them more self-sufficient than your typical kid, which is very helpful for me this time around,” added Quiñones.

“At the time of my wife’s deployment, I was performing duties as the First Sergeant of the 246th Mortuary Affairs element, while we provided support to the Forensic Science Institute in Rio Piedras. “Being able to do what we do best for own people, is an honor that will be difficult to surpass,” added the Soldier

Not only does Quiñones fulfill his responsibilities, both as a father and a Soldier, but he also manages-



ABOVE-SGT. 1ST CLASS LUIS QUINONES (CENTER) CELEBRATING FATHER'S DAY WITH HIS CHILDREN: ANTHONY, GABRIELLA AND ALYSSA. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO BY SPC. JAIME TORRES, 363RD PAD/RELEASED)

to pursue a postgraduate degree in Project Management. He is also working on starting his own small business.

“I have a very detailed daily, weekly and monthly plan that allows me to fulfill a lot of responsibilities at once, plus I manage my health and sanity by working out, watching what I eat and meditating daily,” said Quiñones.

Following the common saying, “teamwork makes the dream work”, Quiñones has been able to implement clever strategies around the house.

“We had put together a ‘shore battle rhythm’, where everyone has a list of things to do every day. That helps us manage weekly recurring tasks,” said Quiñones referring to the battle rhythms military concept, that creates a deliberate daily cycle of command, staff and unit activities intended to synchronize current and future operations.

More than 900,000 children across the nation have experienced the deployment of one or both parents multiple times. The U.S. Army Reserve Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico, recognizes the importance of Family readiness, as part of mission success.



ENLISTED SOLDIER COMMISSIONS THROUGH THE **H**EA**L**TH **P**ROFESSIONS **S**SCHOLARSHIP **P**ROGRAM

363RD PUBLIC AFFAIRS DETACHMENT

“

I am excited and motivated for the opportunity and I will give everything humanly possible to fulfill my responsibilities as an officer,

”

2nd Lt. Stephanie Silvagnoli



2nd Lt. Stephanie Silvagnoli, newly commissioned through a virtual ceremony held by Capt. Jamie Jackson, from the Medical Recruiting Company in Orlando FL, June 26. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Eduardo Rivera, 363rd PAD/ released)



BAYAMON Puerto Rico – Spc. Stephanie Angely Silvagnoli Lugo, from the U.S. Army Reserve Puerto Rico, 1st Mission Support Command, commissioned June 26, as a 2nd Lt. through the Health Professions Scholarship Program (HPSP), while pursuing her Doctoral Degree in Optometry at the Inter American University in Bayamon.

Capt. Jamie Jackson, from the Medical Recruiting Company in Orlando FL., served as the master of ceremony during the virtual event.

Sgt. 1st Class Nilson Garcia, Medical Recruiting Station in Gainesville FL., described the selection process as one very competitive. “Twelve people applied for the 2 year HPSP scholarship. Spc. Silvagnoli was one of the two people selected nationwide,” said Garcia.

Silvagnoli gathered her General Point Average transcript, recommendation letters and test scores for the HPSP application.

“She received a recommendation letter from three professors of the Interamerican University, one from the Commander of the 390th Seaport Operations Company and another one from a Director of Research in Puerto Rico,” said Garcia.

In retrospection, Silvagnoli acknowledged the importance of perseverance.

“I applied during my first year in the Optometry School, ended up in the order of merit list, yet I was not selected,” said Silvagnoli.

It was not until her second attempt when she finally got awarded with the scholarship. “I tried again and this time it paid off,” she added.

“I am excited and motivated for the opportunity and I will give everything humanly possible to fulfill my responsibilities as an officer,” said Silvagnoli.

The F. Edward Hébert Armed Forces Health Professions Scholarship Program is one of the most comprehensive health care scholarships available. It offers full tuition, a generous monthly stipend for qualifying students and the support of the U.S. Army health care team, one of the largest, most advanced health care networks in the world.

COVID-19 DOES NOT STOP THE U.S. ARMY BASIC COMBAT TRAINING

363RD PUBLIC AFFAIRS DETACHMENT

Fort Benning, Georgia- During a recent interview, Drill Sgts. Keiven Rosa and Victor Vivo, from the U.S. Army Reserve- Puerto Rico, explained how the Army Basic Combat Training (BCT) looks like in times of COVID-19. The Drill Sgts. recently performed duty at the US Army's Maneuver Center of Excellence at Fort Benning.

Upon arrival, recruits begin their BCT experience wearing protective gear and practicing social distancing. "Recruits must wear face protection at all times during the day even during their personal time, and must have hands sanitizer available," said Rosa, a native of Carolina Puerto Rico.

If a Soldier shows COVID-19 symptoms, he or she is immediately placed on quarantine, along with any others who were in direct contact with him or her. "Once they test negative, they can proceed with their scheduled training," said Vivo.

Following the social distancing guidance, Soldiers are trained individually. "As a company we are divided, We train individually by platoon, instead of masses. Smaller training has been necessary in order to continue



RECENTLY, DRILL SGT. VICTOR VIVO, (LEFT) U.S. ARMY RESERVE-PUERTO RICO 1ST BATTALION 389TH REGIMENT, LEADS THE RECOVERY DRILL, DURING BASIC TRAINING IN FORT BENNING, GA.

operations," added Rosa.

The operations normally start around 5:30 am and conclude at approximately 7:00pm.

In Basic Combat Training, running continues to be critical requirement that enhances physical readiness. "Our troops are constantly running and I assure you that COVID-19 is not preventing them from getting fit," added Rosa.

Some of the visible challenges include the implementation of new training strategies that enhance the civilian transition to soldiering. "Usually Soldiers are taught drill and ceremonies, which involves formations and marching," added Rosa.

When in formation, now Soldiers are approximately 30 inches away from the next person.

Safety does not stop inside of the barracks. "Every other locker is available

for use and only one Soldier is authorized per bunk. We train to standard, the intensity is still the same, if there is a need for corrective actions due to lack of discipline, we take corrective actions according to regulations," added Vivo.

"A Drill Sergeant has a great responsibility, We proudly work long hours. COVID-19 has presented a challenge, but we are accomplishing the mission, while following the required safety measures to ensure everyone stays healthy" said Rosa.

The job that the Drill Sergeants assigned to the U.S. Army Reserve forces in Puerto Rico recently conducted at Fort Benning, GA, clearly shows their capacity to adapt and overcome to any obstacle. The members of the Army Reserve-Puerto Rico are an essential part of the total force, with streamlined, deployable forces and citizen Soldiers who embody the warrior mindset and spirit.



(ABOVE) MARCUS MOYETT ORTA, FCOMPLETED A BACHELOR'S DEGREE IN POLITICAL SCIENCES AT UNIVERISTY OF PUERTO RICO, RIO PIEDRAS.

Iraq -Sergeants Marcus Moyett Orta and Hector Montosa Perez recently completed their online Bachelor's degree, while mobilized to Iraq.

"It was not easy but I managed it. Last year I was at Poland and now I'm in support operations in Iraq, but I finally completed the Bachelor's in Political Science from the University of Puerto Rico" said Moyett.

For the Ammunitions Specialist, there is no excuse to not finishing university studies. "You have to keep moving forward no matter how hard it gets. We all have had challenges with the pandemic, earthquakes and hurricanes, but we must keep moving forward," said Moyett

"Without a doubt the discipline I gained from my service in the Reserve has helped me in this process," said Moyett, who will plans to also attend Law School next year.

Montosa completed his Bachelor's degree in Industrial Engineering from the Polytechnic University.

"I never thought I was going to finish. But with the support of my Family I did it," said Montosa.

The Soldier hopes to take the engineering test once he returns from the Middle East.

"No matter the obstacles, if you really want to achieve it with all our heart, nothing can stop you. Not deployments, nor hurricanes. On the contrary, these experiences make me a better person, a better leader," added Montosa.

The Army Reserve aggressively encourages the education of its members, because a college degree is really important to promote within the military, just as well as in their civilian life. Since 2001, a 100 percent of the Army Reserve Caribbean Geographic Command units have been deployed around the world.

SOLDIERS COMPLETE COLLEGE WHILE DEPLOYED

1ST MSC PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

"I never thought I was going to finish. But with the support of my family I did it."



Héctor Montosa Pérez



HÉCTOR MONTOSA PÉREZ, FROM SANTA ISABEL, CELEBRATES THAT HE RECENTLY COMPLETED A BACHELOR'S DEGREE IN INDUSTRIAL ENGINEERING FROM THE POLYTECHNIC UNIVERISTY OF PUERTO RICO.



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Two (2) scrambled eggs, cheese,
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of meat

Breakfast Sandwich \$4.50
One (1) egg, cheese, and bacon
or sausage

Omelet with Cheese \$5
Choice of breakfast meat

Western Breakfast Burrito \$5
Two (2) scrambled eggs, cheese,
tomatoes, green peppers, onions, and
your choice of meat

Keto Omelet \$5.50

With peppers, onions,
tomatoes & Provolone cheese
(choice of breakfast meat)

Deluxe Breakfast Burrito \$5.50
Two (2) scrambled eggs, cheese,
hash brown, tomatoes, green peppers,
onions, and your choice of meat

Two (2) Eggs Breakfast \$5.50
Two (2) scrambled eggs, choice of
breakfast meat, and toast

Western Omelet with Toast \$6
Peppers, onions, tomatoes,
American cheese, and your choice
of breakfast meat

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FROM THE 448TH HEADQUARTERS

U.S. ARMY RESERVE
PUERTO RICO

BEST WARRIOR COMPETITION



SPC. IVAN TORRES
FROM THE 756TH ENGINEER COMPANY



U.S. ARMY RESERVE PUERTO RICO CONDUCTS YEARLY TRAINING BRIEF

363RD PUBLIC AFFAIRS DETACHMENT



“Soldiers join the military for a reason. It is our job as first line supervisors to understand why did they join, and how do we keep them here, so they can fulfill their dream,

Command Sgt. Maj. Robert Breck



Fort Buchanan, Puerto Rico Leaders from across the U.S. Army Reserve Multifunctional Geographic Command for the Caribbean presented their 2021 yearly training plans to Brig. Gen. Jeffrey W. Jurasek, Senior Federal Army Officer in the Caribbean, June 6, at the command's headquarters.

The Yearly Training Brief (YTB) allows subordinate units to present their best practices, and request assistance for anticipated organizational missions around the globe, to include Defense Support to Civil Authorities.

“The first Commanding General's training priority is Military Occupational Specialty Qualification, to make sure the Soldiers are qualified in the job they have. The second is professional military education and the

third, collective training,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Robert Breck.

Every unit across the command designed their training schedule in accordance to their written requirements of wartime missions known as Mission Essential Task List (METL).

Commanders were also encouraged to include individual skills that prepare Soldiers to survive in the battlefield.

“If a person knows his or her job, but does not know how to survive on the battlefield, then knowing their job does not do them any good if they don't know how to be a Soldier first,” said Breck.

During this YTB, leaders also presented their training strategy for the new Army Combat Fitness Test (ACFT).

“This October the Army Physical Fitness Test is no longer in effect. The ACFT is here. It will not be for record, however we still want them to train,” said Breck.

After completion of the YTB, the senior leadership and selected staff members, participated on the Program Budget Advisory Committee (PBAC) process held by the 1st Mission Support Command, Deputy of Staff G-8.

The PBAC process provides prioritization of financial resources to ensure efficient use of command resources.

Due to the COVID-19, command teams that reside outside of Puerto Rico conducted the briefing virtually which represents the culture of flexibility and adaptability that exists in the largest federal U.S. Army Command in the Caribbean.

ANNUAL TRAINING SPRINKLED WITH REALITY

1ST MSC PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE



Approximately a thousand Soldiers from different units within the U.S. Army Reserve 1st Mission Support Command, the largest federal U.S. Army command in the Caribbean, are performed their statutory Annual Training across the island.

(Photo Credit: 432 TC UPAR/Released)

ROOSEVELT ROADS, PUERTO RICO- Approximately a thousand Soldiers from different units within the Army Reserve 1st Mission Support Command, the largest federal U.S. Army command in the Caribbean, performed their statutory Annual Training across the island, during the months of July and August, as the U.S. territory gets ready for the peak months of the hurricane season, in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The 432nd Transportation Company is one of the units conducting its Annual Training, under these conditions.

The unit's mission is to provide logistical support with the transportation and movement of containerized, non-containerized, dry and/or refrigerated cargo, and bulk water products.

"Our Annual Training mission is critical because it allows us to refresh our motor transport operator's skills in support to the command's readiness," said Staff Sgt. Luis Soto, Motor Transport Non commissioned officer.

The current COVID-19 conditions have not represented an obstacle to the Soldiers, since during the Annual Training, the unit has been successfully implementing specific mitigation measures that enable them to accomplish their mission, while avoiding spreading the pandemic.

"We have implemented the concept of training bubbles. These bubbles are groups of five to eight Soldiers who

work together for the duration of the training, avoiding interaction with others," said Sgt. Angel Barreto, team leader at the 432nd Transportation Company.

But Soldiers not only had to adjust their training due to the COVID-19, but also due to the proximity of a storm.

"We have adjusted our Annual Training at this time, so we can properly stage the equipment in case we receive a Mission Assignment from FEMA to assist the local authorities, as a result of the storm, which was expected to unleash flooding and landslides on July 29-30," added Barreto.

In the middle of this very fluid process, many Soldiers remember the role the Army Reserve played during the recovery of hurricane Maria three years ago, as part of the Defense Support to Civil Authorities (DSCA) mission.

"Even with my experience deploying to a combat zone, I have to say that the DSCA missions we did on the island in 2017 really marked my life. In the combat zone we fight against terrorists, but during the recovery after hurricane Maria, we used our combat acquired skills to support our own community," said Soto.

As the largest federal U.S. Army command in the Caribbean, Title 10 USC Section 12304a authorizes the Army Reserve to provide disaster assistance to a major natural disaster or emergency in the United States at the request of the governor of a state or territory

CADETS LEAD FROM THE FRONT DURING SUMMER CAMP IN PUERTO RICO

363RD PUBLIC AFFAIRS DETACHMENT

SALINAS, Puerto Rico- Approximately a hundred U.S. Army Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) cadets from Puerto Rico tested their ability to lead in tactical combat situations, under stressful conditions, during their summer camp, known as Operation Agile Leader, Aug. 1-8, at Camp Santiago Joint Maneuver Training Center.

The cadets, who were divided in three platoons, are from the Bulldog Warrior Battalion, University of Puerto Rico, Mayaguez Campus, and the Taino Warrior Battalion, University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras Campus.

The tactical exercise included the ambush training, which simulated an attack that tested the cadets' ability to react to an unexpected enemy encounter, while moving in tactical formations. Cadets also had the opportunity to conduct a reconnaissance mission, where they had to gather intelligence from enemy forces in order to gain advantage over a determined objective.

"This type of training normally is conducted on a 35 day time frame, but due to COVID-19 it has been condensed into an eight days training," said Lt. Col. Orlando R. Rojas, Professor of Military Science at the University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras Campus.

The tactical exercise will give every cadet the opportunity to be graded several times for a combined score that reflects their performance in an Order of Merit List (OML).

"You are smart, you have all the right leadership qualities, but when you put everybody together, not everyone can be number one. That is why we take in account the cadet's General Point Average and everything they have done in the program as a whole," said Rojas, while explaining the OML system to the cadets.

Army ROTC is one of the most demanding and successful leadership programs in the country. The training a student receive in Army ROTC provides leadership development, military skills and career training. Courses take place both in the classroom and in the field, and are mixed with normal academic studies. Upon completion, an Army ROTC graduate is commissioned as an officer in the Army.



TWINS SHARE A DREAM IN THE ROTC

363RD PUBLIC AFFAIRS DETACHMENT

SALINAS, Puerto Rico- Cadet Vanessa Melendez and her identical twin sister, Denisse Melendez, pursue their dream to become officers in the U.S. Army.

The twins were interviewed during the Field Training Exercise Operation Agile Leader of the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC). "We prepared together for this training," said Denisse.

These cadets became athletes at a young age, they have participated in sports like basketball, weight lift and soccer. Today, Denisse and Vanessa are scoring 300 in their Army Physical Fitness Test (APFT).

During their latest APFT, Denisse ran the 2:00 mile run event in 15 minutes, while Vanessa did it in 14:48 minutes.



CADET VANESSA MELENDEZ AND HER IDENTICAL TWIN SISTER, DENISSE MELENDEZ POSING DURING OPERATIONS AGILE LEADER IN CAMP SANTIAGO, SALINAS.

"Both of our parents did not like the idea of us joining the Army, however they witnessed our passion and ended up accepting our decision to be part of the ROTC," said Denisse.

Training with the ROTC can be challenging especially as a fulltime student, however both of them have a 4.00 GPA as they pursue a Bachelor's degree in Criminology at the PontificalCatholic University of Puerto Rico in Ponce.

"In the past and last year 'sFTXs, I got to work with them, they have also been part of the Ranger Challenge team. The Non Commissioned Officer that is with me in Arecibo, was their Ranger Challenge team coach, so he trained the Melendez twins," said Capt. Arturo Veloz, Assistant Professor of Military Science.

The Ranger Challenge is the Army's ROTC Varsity Sport which mission, challenging cadets mentally and physically.

"They have always been top performers and probably two of the most hardworking cadets in their platoon," said Veloz.

"We are clear that perhaps we will be separated and at a different duty station, however we will count with each other regardless of the location," said Vanessa.

ROTC is exceptionally sensitive to the demands and rigors of student's academic schedules, and always emphasizes that the first requirement for Cadets is to graduate from college.



This summer, for the first time in Cadet Command's history, the command is not conducting this training at Fort Knox. The Army made this decision based on the operational requirements to mitigate the effects of COVID-19 and the risks associated with bringing large populations from across the country together during this year's summer training period.



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