



The Arrowhead

TASK FORCE SPARTAN

June 2021
Magazine Vol. 8
36th Inf. Div.
TF Spartan

Army Heritage Month: Celebrating Diversity

PARTNERSHIP | DETERRENCE | READINESS

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF TASK FORCE SPARTAN AND THE 36TH INFANTRY DIVISION

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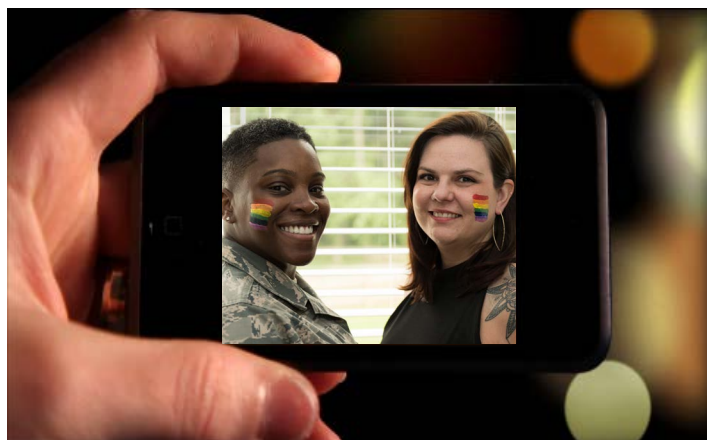
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Contribute to The Arrowhead

Send us your great photos, articles, or ideas to the Arrowhead

-- usarmy.arifjan.usarcent.list.div-pao@mail.mil

-- taskforcespartanoss@gmail.com



From the Top

Col. Eric Martinson
36th Inf. Div. Command IG
Task Force Spartan



The Arrowhead TASK FORCE SPARTAN

Public Affairs Officer
Maj. Jessica Jackson

Deputy Public Affairs Officer
Capt. Allegra Taylor

Division Public Affairs Team

Sgt. 1st Class Suzanne Ringle
Staff Sgt. Mark Scovell
Staff Sgt. Daryl Bradford
Staff Sgt. Daisy Broker
Sgt. Samuel DeLeon

318-480-5313
Camp Arifjan, Kuwait

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Re-Integration

Reintegration with family or everyday life after a deployment can be stressful. I have learned over the years that a successful transition back into my family's life requires communication. Discussing the desires and expectations can comfort your family and limit frustrations as they try to make up for the lost time. Hearing their desires and expectations recognizes they have had a routine while you were away.

Hopefully, you have started by now to allow yourself and significant others to discuss expectations of the coming weeks after your return. If not, it is never too late to start, and remember to exercise a little grace if it doesn't go as planned.

This Month... Celebrating Pride Month



NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU
1636 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20301-1636

JUN 08 2021


To the Soldiers and Airmen of the National Guard

Combat is the ultimate team sport; it takes a collection of skills, talents, and strengths. But most of all, it takes people—extraordinary people of courage and character who are dedicated to the Constitution, and willing to make sacrifices in the service of our Nation. This Pride Month, we honor the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Intersex (LGBTQI+) Soldiers and Airmen who strengthen our National Guard team.

It's been ten years since Congress repealed the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy, which barred Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual service members from openly serving in the Armed Forces. Its repeal signified three things that endure today: First, dishonesty has no place in our military culture. Second, we honor the diversity of our workforce and the power that diversity provides. Third—and most important—who someone is and whom they love has no bearing on their ability to serve our Nation.

It doesn't matter if we're flying sorties in the Middle East, or filling sandbags in the Midwest—our success depends on our strength as a team and our ability to work together. Our success depends on our people. We stand in solidarity with our LGBTQI+ service members, and commit to an organization built on inclusion and dignity for all. It's what it means to serve with pride.

Sincerely,


Tony L. Whitehead
Senior Enlisted Advisor
National Guard Bureau


Daniel R. Hokanson
General, U.S. Army
Chief, National Guard Bureau

Read more from 36th Inf. Div. own's
Sp. Richar Leblanc on pages 10-11.

Happy Birthday Army! 246 Years!



Happy Father's Day to all of the fathers, both at home and serving abroad, on behalf of everyone in Kuwait, we want to wish you a Happy Father's Day and thank you for everything you do!

Read more from 111th Theater Engineer Brigade on pages 8-9.



June is Safety Month

By Maj. James A. Johnson,
Task Force Spartan Safety Officer

Safety is a mindset and must be embraced. Accidents and/or mishaps occur when we fail to follow and enforce standards. Understand we cannot eliminate all risk, but we can minimize our exposure to those risks. Through the Deliberate Risk Assessment process, we minimize risk, accept and carefully manage only the residual risk at the appropriate levels. Regardless of grade, rank, or position, safety and loss prevention is everyone's responsibility.

In observance of National Safety Month, TF Spartan Safety Office would like to recognize all the Soldiers, DA Civilians and Contractors who have made safety a priority through the incorporation of the risk management process into their planning and operations. Remember, prevention time spent up front significantly reduces lost time on the back end due to equipment failure or personal injury. As always, Safety is 24/7...so don't make it a part-time practice!



Wear Sunscreen

It is recommended to use sunscreen with SPF 30 or higher and to apply it every 15 minutes while exposed to direct sunlight.



Stay Hydrated

Remember to stay hydrated and drink lots of water, especially when spending a lot of time in the sun.



Wear Protective Clothing

Wearing a hat with a wide brim shades your face, neck and ears from the sun. Additionally, light clothing will help you stay cool in the heat.

Beat the Heat



Summer Safety Tips



Cool Off in the Shade

Seeking shade under an umbrella, tree or another form of shelter can prevent sun damage during peak sunlight hours.



Avoid Direct Sunlight

UV radiation is strongest between 10 A.M. and 2 P.M.



Protect Your Eyes

Wearing sunglasses protects your eyes and the skin around your eyes from harmful UV rays.



U.S. ARCENT

Best Warrior Competition



U.S. Army Spc. Rena Bailey, a wheeled vehicle mechanic with Area Support Group - Kuwait, climbs a rope during the U.S. Army Central 2021 Best Warrior Competition obstacle course event at Camp Buehring, Kuwait, June 21, 2021. Best Warrior competitors had to complete 10 obstacles that tested their mental and physical fortitude. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Elizabeth Hackbarth, U.S. Army Central Public Affairs)

Sgt. Ellahimod Alexander, human resources non-commissioned officer, Area Support Group - Kuwait, attempts to fireman carry a casualty during the mystery event for the U.S. Army Central 2021 Best Warrior Competition, Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, June 22, 2021. After a soldier has taken care of any life threatening injuries their next responsibility is to move them to a safe location. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Juan Carlos Izquierdo, U.S. Army Central Public Affairs)



tion 2021

Competitors run beside, U.S. Army Spc. Rena Bailey, a wheeled vehicle mechanic with Area Support Group - Ku-

wait, to show support as she finishes the mystery event with a sprint as part of the U.S. Army Central 2021 Best Warrior Competition, Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, June 22, 2021. It may be a competition, but the competitors cheer each other on and push everyone to perform the best they can. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Elizabeth Hackbarth, U.S. Army Central Public Affairs)



U.S. Army Spc. Omar H. Dacosta, an infantryman with Company C., 3rd Battalion, 172nd Infantry Regiment (Mountain), Task Force Spartan, and U.S. Army Sgt. Brandon Brantley, a chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear noncommissioned officer with 25th Strategic Signal Battalion, are recognized as winners in the enlisted and noncommissioned officer categories, respectively, of the U.S. Army Central 2021 Best Warrior Competition during the recognition ceremony at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, June 24, 2021. A total of 11 competitors took part, from various places in the United States, as well as representing the Army, Army Reserve, and National Guard. (U.S. Army photos by Spc. Maximilian Huth, U.S. Army Central Public Affairs)



Happy Father's Day: Fathers and Daughters reunite in Kuwait



*Story by 1st Lt. James Mason,
111th Theater Engineer Brigade*

In light of Father's Day being this month, the 111th Engineer Brigade wanted to share a story about a Father who had a reunion with his daughter while deployed.

One of the proudest moments for a parent is when their child decides to follow in their footsteps.

For Master Sgt. Kendall Hodge, a logistics noncommissioned officer in the 111th Engineer Brigade, a thought that was once far-fetched has now become a reality. Spc. Emilee Richards, daughter of Hodge, is currently a unit supply specialist in the 2nd General Support Battalion, 104th Aviation Regiment, West Virginia Army National Guard.

"I did not think either one of my children would join the military," said Hodge. "In hindsight, it's great that she joined, it offers a lot of opportunities and makes me very proud."

Not only did she join the military, but within her first year of being a Soldier, she was deployed to the Central Command Area of Operations in Support of Operation Spartan Shield, which just so happened to be at the same time as her father.

"Seeing my dad in Kuwait for the first time was awesome," said Richards. "It's nice to have someone else to talk to. We go to dinner, hang out and watch TV, get ice cream together, it's almost like being back home – except hotter and dustier."

Father and Daughter Reunited during Deployment

During their time reunited in Kuwait, they don't go a single day without seeing each other. They both agreed that things just feel right again.

Until the next goodbye, which is right around the corner, they will soak up as much of this experience as possible and enjoy each other's company.

"Telling her goodbye the first time was harder than this next goodbye will be," said Hodge. "She is already done and safe, so I'm not going to have to worry anymore. I am going to miss not being able to see her whenever I want to though."

This once in a lifetime opportunity of Hodge being deployed at the same time as his daughter would not have been possible if she did not follow in his footsteps – which he thought would never happen – but Richards had other plans.

However, Richards' path to joining the West Virginia Army National Guard was not the traditional path.

"I never thought too much about joining the military actually, but also did not really know what I was going to do after high school," said Richards. "I realized I could get college paid for by joining the National Guard and also serve my state and country so I was like 'why not?'"

Her entire life her father had been in the military, so she was constantly involved in the National Guard family.

Hodge, who joined in 1992, has been on three deployments to three different countries. In 2003 he deployed to Iraq, in 2010 he deployed to Afghanistan and now in 2021 he is in Kuwait.

But according to Hodge, being deployed to the same country as his daughter has been the most unique of them all.

"This was completely unexpected. She found out she was going to deploy after the 111th found out and then she ended up deploying before we even starting pre-mobilization training," said Hodge. "It has been a great experience crossing paths with her here though. It has felt like a piece of home and I felt relieved that she was safe."

For this being Richards' first deployment, it has been pretty unique. While being in an aviation unit allows for distinctive opportunities, even she did not know what was in store for her while being deployed.

"I had no clue that I would be going on multiple road trips, but in a helicopter, while here," said Richards. "I traveled all around Kuwait, as well as trips to Jordan and Iraq."

Richards said that she would not mind another deployment down the road, but nothing will beat the experience of being deployed to the same country at the same time as her dad.

To all of the fathers, both at home and serving abroad, on behalf of the 111th Engineer Brigade, we want to wish you a Happy Father's Day and thank you for everything you do!



A lesson in Pride

Story by Staff Sgt. Daryl Bradford,
Task Force Spartan Public Affairs

As the Army comes to the end of the month of June, I want to say we would be remiss if we didn't talk about pride, and to be more specific Pride Month.

When thoughts of Pride Month enter the mind, it is paired with images of colorful parades littered with extravagant costumes through downtown streets. But that can't be all it's about, can it?

We all have pride; in ourselves and in our work. But Pride Month has to be something much deeper to have an entire month dedicated to it, doesn't it?

I wanted to know. I wanted to be educated.

So, I asked the bigger question of "What is Pride Month?" And it did not take long to get a reply.

Spc. Richard Le Blanc, a Signal Company admin clerk, 36th Infantry Division, Task Force Spartan, was happy to oblige my interest and give me a lesson in Pride.

"There is no single dictionary definition of Pride," said Le Blanc. "Pride as a concept began with the marches, riots, and demonstrations that were spurred by the Stone Wall Riots in June of 1969...demonstrations that would eventually become a mainstream celebration known as Pride Parades."

Le Blanc said that when the month of June became about Pride, it stretched the single event

into an entire Pride Season — with each major city celebrating in their own way at their own time.

Once the important question of what the movement is seems to be answered an even more important question of "Why" comes to the forefront.

"We celebrate Pride because we've survived," said Le Blanc. "We've survived in a world that has tried to either eradicate us or force us into hiding. Pride is a reinforcement telling us that everything we've been through personally or as a community is worth it because we can finally be ourselves without fear or shame. Furthermore, Pride reminds us of where we have been and where we are going."

From talking to Le Blanc, Pride Month is a celebration of every individual in a much larger community, but the celebration is also attached to a reminder of how far the world still has to go.

Le Blanc said he was treated as a second-class citizen for the first 19 years of his life in a state, and a country, where he worked, lived, and served — not having protections as a LGBTQIA+ employee till 2020.

"Pride is necessary because there is still work to be done," said Le Blanc. "If nothing else, Pride is an opportunity to start a conversation. In the last ten years, the world and the Army has done a 180 in its attitude toward the LGBT+ community. The Army and queer community can't expect that after almost 300 years the world would suddenly change and be perfect. It takes work, on both the Army's part and the part of the queer Soldiers."

Talking about the LGBTQIA+ community and informing his fellow Soldiers about that culture is not foreign to Le Blanc. Trying to avoid confusion resulting from an issue, Leblanc saw the need for an informative class that could educate and possibly avoid violations of the Army's Equal Opportunity policy.

"I recognized that what would help both parties





the most wasn't an accusation of misconduct but an opportunity to be educated," said Le Blanc. "The class is geared more towards enlisted leaders but has a little something for everyone. My motto for the class is 'Let's talk about it.' Let's talk about what to do if a Soldier of yours comes to you with LGBT+ related questions or problems."

Le Blanc saw a chance to bridge a gap and do his duty as an Army Soldier by using his knowledge and pride in himself to educate and grow his squad. He has taught the class twice now to positive feedback and would like to teach it again to a higher element if possible.

Le Blanc said he thinks pride should be the eighth Army Value because without it there can be no honor.

"When Soldiers are proud of their units, they serve them honorably," said Le Blanc. "Soldiers are baptized in the fire of military tradition and then given a piece of that flame with the charge to keep it burning. But without pride in military tradition, what motivation does a Soldier have to keep that flame burning?"

A valid question for the present but also as the military looks to the future on inclusivity and assisting in inspiring feelings of pride in military service for those that have felt traditionally side-lined.

Le Blanc said, as a suggestion when talking about the future, he thinks the Army needs to stop trying to be hyper-inclusive and focus on refining the existing force.

"There is a saying in southern Louisiana where I'm from, 'Do you want a big church or a holy church,'" said Le Blanc. "The best way to create a better working environment for queer Soldiers is to educate the existing force and allow inclusivity to happen naturally. Why strive to bring in different Soldiers before you've created the force that will allow them to succeed?"

Pride Month is so much more than just a celebration of oneself and the diversity that makes not only our Army but also our nation so great. While the military as a whole still has a ways to go to change its culture, pride month, and beyond, are opportunities to educate, change perceptions and overall be better as a fighting force because we are united in our pride for ourselves, in each other and our military. But it starts with questions and listening and a conversation.

"We should be able to expect quality leadership in the face of diversity of opinion or thought," said Le Blanc. "And that begins with a conversation."

IG TEAM

36TH Infantry Division
Inspector General Team



Col. Eric Martinson
Command Inspector General



Capt. Seulata Rodriguez
Deputy Inspector General



Sgt. 1st Class Shawn Sipes
IG Office NCOIC



A new "People First" slogan and it is up to you to spread it. Don't forget, this month and every month, your number one priority is looking after your battle buddy.

WARRIOR OF THE MONTH



Spc. Ingrid Restrepo

As a Base Defense Operations Center Desk Sergeant, Spc. Restrepo is a key leader who is vital to mission success. During a real-world battle drill at Eskan Village, the BDOC received information that Theater Ballistic Missiles were in-bound near Eskan Village.

Without being directed to do so, Spc. Restrepo took the initiative to report to the BDOC and assist with the battle drill. Spc. Restrepo kept a chronological log of events as they unfolded. Simultaneously Spc. Restrepo was answering phone calls as they were coming in. Ensuring clear lines of communication were maintained between the 342nd Military Police Company and the many program partners who reside at Eskan Village.

Spc. Restrepo's log of events was critical in developing and maintaining a common operational picture for the 342nd Military Police Co. command team and BDOC NCOIC. Spc. Restrepo displayed the calm demeanor and decisive action of a seasoned NCO.

Furthermore, Spc. Restrepo has proven time and time again to be an indispensable asset to the 342nd Military Police Co. Spc. Restrepo sets the standard for all Soldiers to emulate.

Thoughts from Military Equal Opportunity Hoplites

By Lt. Col. Pedro Agapay, Task Force Spartan Equal Opportunity Program Manager

From the Task Force Spartan Military Equal Opportunity Office, we thank you for allowing us to be a part of the monthly Arrowhead production. It truly has been a joy and a privilege to write about Military Equal Opportunity and keep the readers informed about how treating everyone dignity and respect means everything even while deployed. Our Office thanks the Public Affairs Office for their support in these publications as well as the Offices of the Inspector General, Staff Judge Advocate, Behavioral Health, Chaplain, Red Team, and Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion. Our Office is grateful to be working with such great teams in assisting with the overall command climate as well as supporting various initiatives.

This June, we take time to celebrate so many events that honor the American Heritage. We take pause to thank and honor all those who have served in the United States Army over these past 246 years. We celebrate June as Army Heritage Month to recognize the achievements and contributions of Soldiers, families, and civilians. We celebrate Army Heritage Month to commemorate the establishment of the Continental Army with General George Washington as General and Commander-in-Chief of the new force on June 14, 1775. The Army's history of answering our Nation's call continues to be an enduring fabric of America's legacy.

The Army has never been challenged as it has been before in its 246-year history. We look back at the history of the United States Army and see the transformation from colonial mili-

tias fighting against British forces to supporting contingency operations in the Middle East, Central and Southern Asia, or wherever the nation has called. We have supported national emergencies such as hurricanes, wildfires, the COVID-19 pandemic, and even protecting our nation's capital. Our Army has also transformed to where all qualified Americans can serve in uniform regardless of sex, race, religion, sexual orientation, color, or national origin. Despite the different battlefields we have served on, people remain the Army's top priority as we celebrate Army Heritage Month.

June is also a time when the United States Army recognizes the many lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning, intersex, or asexual (LGBTQIA+) Soldiers and civilians who have served with honor and pride during our 246-year history. The legacy of LGBTQIA+ Soldiers and civilians who have served in the military is commemorated every June as "Pride Month". As celebrated in conjunction with Army Heritage Month, Pride Month also highlights the diversity and inclusion that has made our Army the most effective fighting force in the world. Many members of the LGBTQIA+ have served honorably throughout American history and have made impacts seen today. Private First Class Frank Kameny served in World War II at Normandy, served with the Army Map Service and became a gay rights activist. Gilbert Baker, an Army draftee served as a medic in the early 1970s and would later design the famous "Pride Flag", a symbol of the LGBTQIA+ community that continues to fly around the world today. Colonel Margarethe "Grethe" Cammermey-

er volunteered to serve in Vietnam during the heaviest periods of combat, became the head nurse of the neurosurgical intensive care unit, and earned a Bronze Star for her service. Even today with the repeal of the “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” policy, many LGBTQIA+ continue to serve with honor and distinction as members of the greatest military force in the world.

We also celebrate June 14th as Flag Day, where Americans can showcase the patriotism and love of country as well as the Oath to defend the American way of life.

The month of June is also a time when many people across the country celebrate “Juneteenth”, commemorating the end of slavery. According to various sources, Juneteenth, also known as Emancipation Day, Freedom Day, or Jubilee Day; began on June 19, 1865, when Maj. Gen. Gordon Granger arrived in Galveston, TX, and announced the end of the Civil War and the end of the slavery of many African-Americans. This announcement, also known as General Order Number 3, came two and a half years after the Emancipation Proclamation and would call for the release of all slaves to become freemen and freewomen. This piece of our military’s history helped pave the way for many to celebrate freedom, introduced legislation to make Juneteenth a state holiday (Texas was the first state in 1980), and until only recently, became a federal holiday.

The United States Army continues to embrace diversity and inclusion of its service members to maximize individual talents, increase morale, and enhance military effectiveness. As the Secretary of Defense, Lloyd J. Austin III, stated, “If you’re fit and qualified to serve, and you can maintain the standards, you should be allowed to serve”. Our Army leaders will continue to promote and enforce an open, diverse, and inclusive culture that acquires, develops, employs, and retains the best talent. This June, we salute all members of our Army of a different sex/gender, race, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation and thank them for their service during these challenging times. “This is

Our Squad, This is Our Army”.

On behalf of the Task Force Spartan Military Equal Opportunity Office, we are honored to have served with you and look forward to what the future holds for us all. Thank you and “In Spite of Hell”.

Task Force Spartan MEO Office “Hoplites”

Lt. Col. Pedro Agapay, Master Sgt. Stanford Autry,
Sgt. 1st Class Scotty Scruggs

DSN 318-480-4846/4851



36th Infantry Division Military
Equal Opportunity Advisor/
Program Manager

Building TT-117, Camp Ar-
rifjan, Kuwait DSN: usarmy.
arifjan.usarcent.mbx.tfs-eo@
mail.mil

Website:

<https://idhq.swa.army.mil/EO>

130th FIELD ARTILLERY

130th Field Artillery Brigade Develops New Solutions to Track Air Threats

Story by Capt. Patrick Montandon, 130th FAB

The 130th Field Artillery Brigade, deployed to the U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) region, have developed improvements over the last several months for commanders to detect enemy air activity.

A commander, at any level, needs timely and accurate information regarding enemy activity to make effective decisions on the battlefield. Decreasing any delays or errors in this process is worth every effort.

The 130th Field Artillery Brigade, Air Defense and Airspace Management (ADAM) Cell, put in that effort to achieve valuable results. Several other organizations within the CENTCOM region assisted them, to include Task Force Spartan and the Combined Air Operations Center.

Their work has led to radar and defense systems that were never suspected to be compatible. This allowed for assessing threats at a higher capacity, enabling commanders' operability. Due to this, the brigade ADAM Cell's current air picture is now shared theater-wide, providing an up to date, near real-time, air picture for commanders.

Capt. David Sanders, ADAM Cell Officer in Charge, and Chief Warrant Officer 2 Anthony Calanni, Command Node System Integrator, were the right people to lead this effort. Calanni holds a rare military occupational specialty, 140 alpha, and came to the 130th from the Army Reserve. He is referred to as a Link 16 expert, which specializes in how all U.S. military branches, to include international partners and allies, speak to each other across data networks.

Casually pointing to a nearby radar from a neighboring unit, Calanni described, "this radar right here. I have no idea what it is. But if you give me a couple

hours with it, I could find a way to make it talk to one of my computer systems and give you some kind of information."

Even before coming overseas, Calanni expressed his desire to make a difference as the new ADAM Cell team was created and prepared to deploy with the 130th.

"I want to be able to show what a 140 alpha can do and show them all our capabilities."

Sanders always planned to join the military as he's had multiple generations serve before him. The only reason he entered air defense artillery was due to this branch being connected to the local unit in his native South Carolina. Sanders claimed, "I knew I wanted to go National Guard because I'm a homeboy." Ironically, he has now deployed in an air defense or counter UAS capacity three times to the Middle East within the last couple of years and works full-time in Florida for the Joint Staff J6 section.

The ADAM Cell deployed motivated to learn and make progress within their domain, but their success didn't come without several hurdles and complications. The team had a grueling, yet worthwhile, process to see the payoff from their meticulous efforts.

The Q-53 radar, employed by the 130th, does not inherently communicate with other air defense systems such as the Forward Area Air Defense Command and Control (FAAD C2) system. These systems are both used to detect enemy activity and display radar sectors and acquisitions. But they were never initially designed to work in tandem. This was all new territory, and there was no established method to move forward. No previous attempts had been made to integrate these radars into the theater air picture until now.

The 130th ADAM Cell recognized this opportunity to explore and got to work. They dug into the regulations, manuals and technical specifications for every system and piece of equipment related to what they were trying to achieve – an integrated and enhanced sight picture of low-level air space threats. Restrict-

ERY BRIGADE



tions due to COVID-19 along with 2nd and 3rd order effects, finding and waiting on the proper points of contact, dissecting outdated tactical and field manuals, reconciling software updates, and a myriad of other issues all stood as obstacles to reach their intended end state.

Sanders, recalling the rigorous process, described, “It’s constantly getting your nose in the books and FM’s [Field Manuals] and knowing how to appropriately articulate that... My face was in the TM’s [Tactical Manuals] and FM’s and his [Calanni’s] nose was in his documents...living and breathing in the Link 16 world.”

The manuals and policies alone would never have provided the breakthrough they were looking for. The solutions came as they coupled their newfound book smarts with the wisdom of other experts in the field. That’s when the creativity kicked in. Once again, people proved to be the Army’s greatest asset to find solutions to even the most complex and technologically packed problems. When asked about the most important resources they utilized, Calanni gave the sure answer:

“My fellow Soldiers really have been my biggest assets. I really got stumped a lot, and I was able to look over my shoulder and call any 140 alpha or 14 series...retired, active duty, Reserve, National Guard... and that helped me get to my next step. It definitely wasn’t one person’s knowledge. It was reaching out and getting knowledge from everybody else and getting those different bits and pieces to find the right parts of the puzzle,” said Calanni.

Generously providing a couple descriptions of the problem, he continued, “I have a triangle piece, and I can fit it into a square hole. I just need to figure out how to get it in there,” or “The flathead screwdriver is not meant for the star Phillips head, but it can work, and we made it work!”

Sanders, explaining the importance of getting everyone’s input, said, “I’ve been able to rely heavily on my ADAM Cell team. It’s been a combined team

effort and it wouldn’t have been possible without those guys.”

Other key leaders of the team saw the incredible progress that the section has made on this mobilization.

Staff Sgt. Johnathan Bustamante, the protection and ADAM Cell noncommissioned officer in charge, said, “We continue to make it a better foundation. We refined the process so future field artillery headquarters ADAM Cells are set for success.”

The systems have been integrated and now provide a higher level of confidence in detecting low level air tracks and UAS. The battlespace continues to be contested on many levels as enemy use of UAS repeatedly probe for reconnaissance or attacks against United States or Coalition Forces. The 130th ADAM Cell has delivered advanced protection capabilities, providing a huge step forward in the anti UAS fight. Their commitment to teamwork has paid off and led to several tactical and operational improvements that will continue to provide increased base defense.

“The big so what to those senior leaders is to maximize search capability,” says Sanders. “We have to be able to see something before we can engage it.

“At the end of the day, if what we’re doing saves a life on the ground, that’s what it means to me personally. The best thing we can do is stay focused on the guy that’s on the ground. If we save a life, and we may not know about it, but if that’s what we’re able to do, then it’s been worth all the heartburn, heartache and headache that it took to go through it.”

“We’ve done everything we possibly can. I can sleep good at night,” said Sanders.

Hopefully, U.S. and Coalition commanders within the region can enjoy some rest as well knowing they have enhanced protection capabilities.

111th THEATER ENGINEER

Meet Khadidja Diouf - A Soldier Up For Any Challenge

By 1st Lt. James Mason, 111th Theater Engineer
Brigade

When Soldiers are deployed, they not only miss their families, but also often miss out on special life events. For Sgt. Khadidja Diouf, a Soldier in the 111th Theater Engineer Brigade, this statement rings especially true.

Sgt. Diouf, 22, has been in the West Virginia Army National Guard for four years and is currently mobilized on her second deployment. During her first deployment, with the 157th Military Police Company to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, a few years ago, she missed her friends and families but was still able to attend school online without missing any substantial events. This time, deployed with the 111th TEB to Camp Buehring, Kuwait, she did miss a milestone event: graduation.

Although she was upset about missing her graduation, she knew that she would have more opportunities to shine in the future.

I recently had the chance to sit down and talk with Diouf about her past, present and future.

Q: What degree did you recently graduate with?

A: Bachelors of Science in Accounting with a Minor in Leadership Studies from West Virginia University

Q: Although you missed your in-person graduation, what did it mean to you that the 111th con-



ducted a ceremony for you in Kuwait?

A: It meant a lot to me that they held the ceremony. I really felt the love in that moment. It would not have been possible without the help of Spc. Harris, though. I have grown very close with her throughout this deployment, so knowing that she made this happen, everything from the decorations to the mock diploma, really meant a lot.

Q: Now that you have graduated with your Bachelor's Degree, what is your plan?

A: In January of 2022 I will start submitting my applications to law school, and plan on attending my first law school class in Fall of 2022. I have always wanted to be a lawyer since I was a child, and that is something that has always been a part of my plan.

Q: What was your best memory of being a student at West Virginia University?

A: One of my best memories at WVU would be my first football game. That day I truly felt Mountaineer pride. Surrounded by all of my friends, just having fun and enjoying the moment. It also was the first time that I actually sang along to Country Roads – Magical!

Q: What has been your best memory of being in the National Guard?

ENGINEER BRIGADE



A: While deployed with the 157th MP Co to Guantanamo Bay, I was lucky enough to get trained on the Polaris DAGOR. On about the fourth day of training we were out doing trails and it had rained the previous night, so there were mud holes throughout the trail. My sergeant said, "Let's go muddin," and that we did. I'm from the city, so I had never done anything like that before, but I had so much fun. By the time the training day was over, I was drenched in mud but had the biggest smile on my face.

Q: How has the experience of being a student and Soldier at the same time?

A: At sometimes it did become a bit overwhelming, especially when I was pulled out of my junior year of college for my first deployment, but I made it through. My professors were always very understanding and accommodating, as were my Sergeants and leaders at my Guard unit.

Q: This is your second deployment while also being a student – how did you manage to still graduate successfully?

A: If I set a goal I am going to achieve it; it's really quite that simple. There were many obstacles that I had to overcome while being deployed but I always had one thing in mind – and that was graduating. Also, I have a very strong support system. Both my friends and family always give me words

of encouragement when I am in need and I am forever grateful for that and them.

Q: What do you hope to gain from this deployment?

A: During this deployment I hope to excel not only at work, but also in my personal life. During my free time, I am focused on studying for the LSAT and spiritual growth. When at work, I always try to bring positive energy and put my all into my work.

Q: If there was one thing you could tell someone who has never met you before, what would it be?

A: My entire life I have strived to be the voice for those who could not speak. The voice for those who were silenced and told that no one cared about them or what they had to say. As I enter law school, I will keep that in mind and stand firm in my beliefs. I will continue to be the change I want to see.



Sgt. Khadidja Diouf, 111th Theater Engineer Brigade, recently graduated with her Bachelor's Degree from West Virginia University while deployed. A native of Dayton, Ohio, Diouf is excited for the next challenge thrown at her - Law School.



1-194th ARMOR BATTALION TASK FORCE BASTARD

Why this US Army tank unit proudly calls itself 'The Bastards'

By Capt. Charlie Anderson,
1-194th Armor Battalion

Photos by Spc. Spc. Juan Carlos Izquierdo, U.S.
Army Central Public Affairs

I never hesitate to identify as a Bastard. More than once I've heard surprised reactions to the moniker. Should the term "Bastards" be changed? Isn't it insensitive at best or inflammatory at worst? I would argue that not using "Task Force Bastard" is a disservice to the military, our soldiers, and our unit's heritage, although I acknowledge that most don't know the history behind the name. If they did I'm certain they'd use the term out of a sense of duty.

The 1st Combined Arms Battalion of the 194th Armor Regiment (Task Force Bastard) traces its lineage to the 34th Tank Company. Headquartered in Brainerd, Minnesota about 100 miles from the source of the Mississippi River, the area is traditionally known as the home of legendary lumberjack Paul Bunyan. Densely wooded with areas of fertile river valley, many of the men came from family farms. The Minnesota Company was part of the National Guard which early on provided much of the fighting power for World War II, and was federalized in February 1941. Arriving at Fort Lewis, Washington, 34th became A Co. and was combined with two armored units from Missouri



and California to form the 194th Tank Battalion, commanded by Minnesotan Col. Ernest B. Miller. The unit was equipped with M3 Stuart light tanks.

In the fall of 1941, prior to U.S. entry into WWII, the 194th became the first expeditionary armored force in U.S. military history when it deployed overseas to the Philippines to augment Filipino forces and defend Manila Bay from invasion as part of Gen. Douglas MacArthur's War Plan Orange. Unknown to the men of the 194th, MacArthur's intent was to use the Philippine front as a temporary shield to blunt Japanese tempo, allowing for additional Allied planning for a comprehensive Pacific theater strategy, to include the retention of Midway Island designated as decisive terrain.

The Japanese bombarded Clark Field on December 7th, 1941, the same day as the attack on Pearl Harbor. With the U.S. Naval fleet and "Far East" Army Air Force crippled, the Imperial Army invaded a few days later for a ground offensive. Outnumbered and out-gunned, the brave soldiers of the 194th and their Filipino counterparts fought for more than three months before the forces of the island country surrendered. The survivors endured the infamous 60+ mile "Bataan Death March," unsurpassed in cruelty in modern military history. The men who survived the march were

BATTALION, RD

eventually loaded onto “Hell Ships” that transported the POWs to languish in squalid camps where they suffered psychologically and physically from torture, malnourishment, Beriberi disease, malaria, and dysentery until liberation in 1945 following Allied victory in the Pacific and the end of World War II.

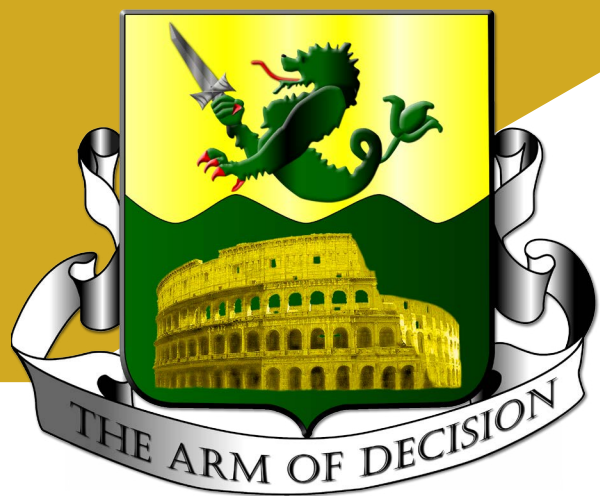
82 men of the 34th Tank Company left Minnesota in 1941, and 64 accompanied the 194th overseas to the Philippines. Of the original 64 Minnesota National Guardsmen, only 32 survived to return to the forests and fields of central Minnesota, forever marked by their perseverance and mindful of their fallen brothers. Pvt. Walt Straka, 101, the sole Minnesota survivor of the Death March, resides in Brainerd. “I should have been dead a thousand times,” he said in a recent interview.

The battalion motto is “Remember Bataan...Never Forget!”

We are the Bastards precisely because Gen. Douglas MacArthur, and the Army by extension, abandoned the 194th and left them to fend for themselves as a tactical pawn in a greater Pacific strategy. They held out for months with degraded equipment, no air support, no resupply, no reinforcements, no food, no medical supplies, and scarce ammunition. By the time they surrendered the soldiers’ barrels were empty, and so were their stomachs. The name “Bastard” reminds the Army that utilitarianism in all its forms is to be rejected, that the men of the 194th will never be forgotten, and that the lesson of the Bastards’ abandonment should never be repeated. As captured in the poem by US war correspondent Frank Hewlett:

We’re the Battling Bastards of Bataan.

No Mama, No Papa, No Uncle Sam,



No aunts, no uncles, no cousins, no nieces,

No pills, no planes, no artillery pieces

And nobody gives a damn.

Nobody gives a damn.

Today, the 1st Combined Arms Battalion of the 194th Armor Regiment (Task Force Bastard) is proud to serve as the theater armored Regional Response Force and we stand ready to answer the call and come to the aid of our brothers and sisters in CENTCOM. In other words, we will not abandon them in a time of need. We are prepared to provide highly trained personnel and equipment in support of federal, state, and community missions in order to assist and protect the citizens of Minnesota and the United States, and to partner with allied nations to promote regional peace and stability.

Instead of being amused, feeling uncomfortable, or even upset by our name, take a moment and remember the men at Bataan who died and those who came back forever changed. With honor and a commitment to never forget, loudly call us “Bastards.” It’s okay. We deserve it.





40TH COMBAT AVIATION

California Highway Patrol officers bring added value on National Guard deployment

By Maj. Jason Sweeney, 40th CAB

CAMP BUEHRING, Kuwait — National Guard members are Citizen Soldiers who often have civilian careers and skillsets very different from their military occupational specialties.

On the military side, Staff Sgt. Cindy Gray is a 92W water treatment specialist and Sgt. Daniel Gunther is a 91B wheeled vehicle mechanic. On the civilian side, both Gunther and Gray are California Highway Patrol (CHP) officers.

Gunther and Gray are currently deployed to the Middle East with the U.S. Army National Guard's Task Force Phoenix, which is providing full-spectrum aviation operations for the U.S. Army Central Command's Operation Spartan Shield and Operation Inherent Resolve. When Task Force Phoenix needed Soldiers to serve as drivers and protection for the Task Force commander and command sergeant major, Gunther and Gray were the obvious choices.

"As a personal security detachment and as drivers, their skills as highway patrolmen are exactly suited to both of these jobs," Task Force Phoenix Commander Col. Alan Gronewold said. "They're proficient with firearms, they're well trained in how to handle tense situations, how to de-escalate situations, and they're both great drivers. I feel safer riding with either of them than with anybody else because I know they're well trained and can handle vehicles."

"We chose them based on their skill set on the civilian side," Task Force Phoenix Command Sgt. Maj.

Refugio Rosas said, explaining that the training they received from the California Highway Patrol Academy and the daily driving they do for their civilian jobs were the key factors in selecting them for their roles during their 9-month deployment overseas.

During the deployment, Gunther and Gray make sure Gronewold and Rosas get where they need to go, and provide security when they get there.

Gunther and Gray's home unit is the California Army National Guard's 1040th Quartermaster Company in Hollister, California.

For their civilian careers, Gray works out of the CHP's Hayward office in the San Francisco Bay Area and Gunther out of the CHP's San Jose office.

Older Americans may know the CHP from the long-running television series "CHiPs," starring Erik Estrada and Larry Wilcox. The show was famous in its day for car chases and crashes on L.A. freeways. In real life, many Californians have personal experience with the CHP when they see flashing lights in their rearview mirror when they're driving over the speed limit.

But Gunther and Gray say there's a lot more to being CHP officers than car chases and speeding tickets.

"Everybody thinks we write tickets and go after people all the time, but most of what I do, especially on my shift, is help people," Gunther said. "I respond to accidents and help drivers stranded on the road. We deal with wildfires that have happened lately in



N BRIGADE

California, weather-related incidents, all kinds of stuff. Probably 70 to 80 percent of my job typically in a day is just helping people, making sure they get on their way safely.”

Gunther served four years in the active-duty Army before switching over to the California Army National Guard to be closer to family in California.

“I love serving,” he said. “I enjoy wrenching on vehicles. I enjoy the Army lifestyle. And I like helping other Soldiers out.”

After leaving active duty, he applied for a position with the CHP because of the similarity between law enforcement and military service. He’s been working as a CHP officer since 2016. He said his dual careers as a mechanic in the Guard and a patrol officer with the CHP are a perfect fit.

Gray’s military career began when she joined the California Army National Guard while attending Fresno State University where she earned a criminology degree. She’s spent much of her Guard career serving on the California National Guard’s Honor Guard, which provides military honors at funerals.

She completed the CHP Academy in 2020 and then spent a year on the road as a patrol officer before being activated to deploy overseas with the Guard. Her first year with the CHP was a busy one. She was involved in riot control, arrests of felons and car chases. During a typical shift, she said she might help a motorist change a flat tire, pull over a reckless driver, assist at traffic accidents, or help keep traffic moving around stalled vehicles or debris.

“But there’s not really a typical day because every day is a different,” she said.

As a child, Gray was impressed and inspired by a Fresno County Sheriff’s deputy who ran the Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) program at her elementary school. She said since then she’s always wanted to serve, both in law enforcement and in the military. The National Guard gave her the oppor-



tunity to do both.

“I plan on staying on in the Guard,” she said, adding that she’s hoping to attend Officer Candidate School when she returns from the deployment. “I feel like the balance between the CHP and the Guard is good because they complement each other. And the Guard keeps me on track with staying fit. I also feel like serving one weekend a month and two weeks a year in the Guard gives me a little break from work, too. But I think my drive and determination came from the fire within me to serve my community, help people in need and be part of something bigger. Both the California Army National Guard and the CHP have not only fulfilled my expectations regarding these goals but have far exceeded them.”

Command Sgt. Maj. Rosas said Gunther and Gray’s civilian skillsets are bringing added value to Task Force Phoenix during the deployment.

“Sgt. Gunther and Staff Sgt. Gray are professional Soldiers,” he said. “They’re always ready for any type of mission. If one word says anything about them, it’s ‘awesome.’ They’re awesome for what they do on the civilian side of the house, and for what they do for the Army National Guard.”



Chaplains Corner

By
Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Harold Bender,
36th Infantry Division, TF Spartan



President Reagan is famously quoted saying, "Some people wonder all their lives if they've made a difference, Marines don't have that problem."

I believe the same could be said for Texas Army National Guardsmen. Whether your life is making a difference or not is not a bad thing to ponder even still, however, for the answer to whether your life is making a difference is what gives life its meaning.

Pastor Rico Tice writes, "I'll never forget the funeral at which an old lady said to me, 'Rico, do you know what failure is?' 'No – tell me,' I answered."

"What she said next has stuck with me ever since: 'Failure is being successful at the things that don't matter.'"

Rico continues, "Success is hearing, 'Well done

from the only lips that matter. Failure is being successful at the things that don't truly matter at all."

It is true, what we do in this life echoes in eternity. Make sure you are proud of the echo.

Strength and blessings,

CH Bender



Do your part
#DefeatCOVID
and get vaccinated

Around the Force

Task Force Spartan command and section leaders attend the TF Spartan Partnership Training Information Resources Conference, May 31 - June 4, 2021, at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait. The conference was a week-long event held by TF Spartan with representatives from subordinate units including: TF Avalanche, TF Bastard, TF Hellhound, 111th Engineer Brigade, 130th Field Artillery Brigade and adjacent commands including 1st Theater Sustainment Command, to plan for future activities, engagements and joint exercises with partner nations. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Daryl Bradford, Task Force Spartan Public Affairs)



Recently members of the Task Force Spartan G-2 section were given G-2 coins and awards by the Section Officer in Charge, Lt. Col. Laura Cross, for outstanding work during their deployment. The awards were handed out June 5, 2021, at a small ceremony, held before Cross left theater. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Sam Deleon, Task Force Spartan Public Affairs)

U.S. Army 1st Lt. Samuel Ellison, Task Force Spartan signal intelligence officer in charge, conducts preventative maintenance checks and services on a generator during the TF Spartan XO Academy, June 10, 2021, at the Camp Arifjan motor pool in Kuwait. The academy was held to assist first and second lieutenants in their professional development and to prepare them for future positions as an executive officer. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Daryl Bradford, Task Force Spartan Public Affairs)



Capt. Michael Bertoli, chaplain for Area Support Group - Jordan, conducts a baptism for U.S. Army Capt. Jas Jordan, judge advocate and deputy Jordan liaison officer with Task Force Spartan, at The Baptismal Site of Jesus Christ, Jordan, June 9, 2021. The baptismal site is located on the eastern bank of the Jordan River, 5.6 miles north of the Dead Sea and is considered to be the site of the baptism of Jesus and the ministry of John the Baptist. Moments like this help Soldiers become and stay spiritually resilient. (Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. Robert Torres, U.S. Army Central Public Affairs)



Last week Task Force Spartan Commander, Maj. Gen. Hamilton, visited 1st Combined Armored Battalion, 194th Armor Regiment Soldiers at Camp Buehring as they conducted training at Udairi Range Complex. Afterward, Maj. Gen. Hamilton had lunch with Task Force Bastard Commander Lt. Col. Helgestad and Command Sgt. Maj. Manzke along with 10 Soldiers from the task force that were recognized by their leadership for their outstanding achievements. (U.S. Army photos by Cpl. Bridget Haugh, 1-194 AR)

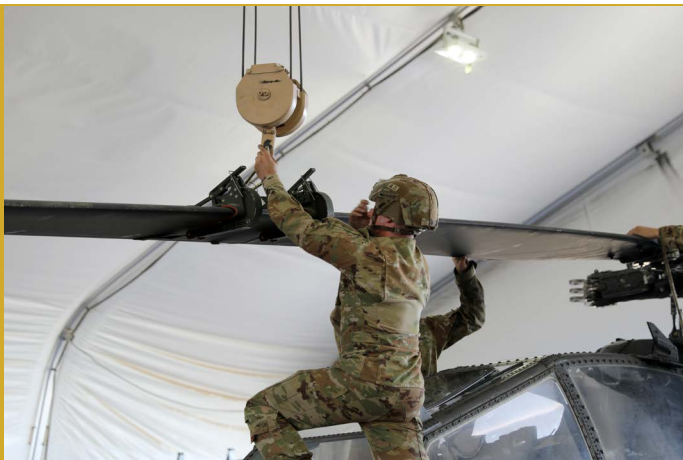
Australian Army Maj. Gen. Chris Field, Deputy Commanding General of Operations with U.S. Army Central, and U.S. Army Brig. Gen. Win Burkett, Task Force Spartan Deputy Commanding General of Operations with the 36th Infantry Division, cut the cake during a cake cutting ceremony in celebration of the U.S. Army's 246th birthday at the Zone 2 Dining Facility, Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, June 14, 2021. Burkett said he was proud to be a part of an organization that has been a beacon of freedom around the world. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Elizabeth Hackbarth, USARCENT Public Affairs)



Around the Force

Congratulations to Spc. Jordan Bright, 111th Theater Engineer Brigade, who was promoted to his current rank over the weekend. He has demonstrated excellent leadership skills and knowledge of his assigned duties while deployed and we are excited to see him continue to grow.

Job well done, Soldier.



Pfc. McKinnley Gantt, an attack helicopter repairer with Alpha Company, 1st Attack Battalion, 82nd Combat Aviation Brigade, attaches a clamp to remove the last helicopter blade from an AH-64E Apache attack helicopter at Erbil Air Base, Iraq. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. 1st Class Ryan Sheldon, 40th Combat Aviation Brigade)

Staff Sgt. Brianna Pritchard, an Army National Guard UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter mechanic from Anchorage, Alaska, who falls under the 40th CAB, shows her Olympic breaking moves at Al Asad Air Base, Iraq. Pritchard wants to prove it's possible to serve her country and also have the highest honor of being called an Olympian. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Daniel Soto)



Congratulations to Staff Sgt. Barnhill on his recent promotion! Glad to have you here as part of the Task Force Spartan team!



Soldiers with the 318th Chemical Biological Radiological and Nuclear Defense Company, Task Force Spartan, receive their right sleeve insignia after a patching ceremony at Joint Training Center, Jordan, June 5, 2021. A right sleeve insignia is an indication of a Soldier's service in or in support of ground combat operations. (Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. Robert Torres, U.S. Army Central Public Affairs)

The 130th Field Artillery Brigade ADAM Cell assigned to Task Force Spartan (Left to Right)
Capt. David Sanders, Chief Warrant Officer 2 Richard Machina, Chief Warrant Officer 2 Anthony Calanni, Spc. Bryce Manker, Spc. Christopher Dame, Staff Sgt. Chase Weber, and Staff Sgt. Johnathan Bustamante.
(U.S. Army photo by Capt. Patrick Montandon, 130th Field Artillery Brigade)





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Sexual Assault Response
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Email:
Mitchell.w.dorris.mil@mail.mil

Phone: (254) 315-1115
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Kuwait DSN: **318-430-6082**

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The Arrowhead/TASK FORCE SPARTAN



U.S. Army Spc. Omar Dacosta, Task Force Avalanche, climbs the first rope in the obstacle course portion of the TF Spartan Best Warrior 2021, May 28, 2021, at Camp Buehring, Kuwait. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Daryl Bradford, TF Spartan Public Affairs)