

Soldier Systems Center

SPOTLIGHT

Issue 18

MAY 2025



A Brief Word



As I reflected on the annual appraisals conducted this past April, I am reminded of the relentless dedication, commitment, and significant accomplishments of our civilian workforce. Each of us plays a vital role in contributing to our collective mission, whether through major initiatives or everyday tasks. This high level of teamwork is a hallmark of our Department of Defense (DoD) civilian community.

With May upon us, we look forward to the warmer weather and the outdoor activities it brings. However, it is essential to prioritize safety during this time. By taking a moment to evaluate potential risks and plan accordingly, we can ensure that our sunny days remain enjoyable and free from stress. A little foresight can elevate a good day into a truly great one.

I would also like to extend my sincere appreciation for your unwavering service, dedication, and sacrifices. While Veterans Day in November is a time for recognition, the upcoming months present a special opportunity for our nation to come together and honor the remarkable contributions of the U.S. Armed Forces, including our active-duty personnel, DoD civilians, contractors, veterans, and the resilient families who support them.

May is recognized by Congress as National Military Appreciation Month, highlighting the importance of every achievement and commitment within our military community. Throughout this month, we will celebrate various aspects of service, culminating in Memorial Day on Monday, May 26, 2025, a day dedicated to honoring those who made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedoms. Additionally, May is designated as the Month of the Military Caregiver, reminding us that every aspect of service, whether past or present, is profoundly valued.

Throughout the month of May, numerous cities and towns within the Commonwealth will honor various special days and events that pay tribute to different facets of our military community. The month begins with Loyalty Day, Silver Star Service Banner Day—dedicated to our wounded heroes—and the National Day of Prayer on Thursday, May 1, 2025. The following week features VE Day, commemorating the conclusion of World War II combat in Europe, alongside Children of Fallen Patriots Day on May 8 and Military Spouse Appreciation Day on May 9. As May progresses, we will observe Armed Forces Day on May 17, culminating in Memorial Day on May 26. This spirit of gratitude will extend into June, where we will celebrate significant milestones such as the U.S. Army’s 250th birthday and Flag Day, paving the way for the patriotic enthusiasm of Independence Day weekend.

Thank you for your unwavering commitment and exceptional contributions. Your professionalism is truly commendable, and I feel privileged to be part of Team Natick every day. Please, don’t hesitate to reach out, after all, the Garrison staff exists to support you.

We Are the Army’s Home!
Mr. Keith M. Jackson
Deputy to the Garrison Commander

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To submit content to the Spotlight please email the Garrison Public Affairs Team at:
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- MHS Genesis Login

Community Garden Survey



Would you be interested
in an NSSC Community
Garden?
Take the survey and let us
know!
<https://forms.osi.apps.mil/r/YEQBM3c8Dy>

Commuter Program Survey

The Garrison is
conducting a survey
to assess interest in
carpooling and facilitate
connections among
potential riders using
designated park and ride
locations throughout the
New England region.



Natick Army Community Service Program May 2025



Mental Health Awareness Month | May 2025

"In every story, there's strength!" This May, take action, raise your voice, and help change conversation around mental health.

Need Support? You're not alone! If you or someone you know are struggling with mental health, call **800-950-NAMI (6249)** or text **"Helpline"** to **62640**.



National Military Spouse Appreciation Day | May 9, 2025

Observed each year on the Friday before Mother's Day, this day honors the dedication, resilience, and sacrifice of Military Spouses.

Thank you to all Military Spouses for the strength and support you show everyday!



EFMP: Discovery Museum | 18 June @ 1230-1400

Join us for a fun and inclusive event for the whole Family. Discovery Museum offers 3 floors packed with 9 unique and interactive exhibits. This is a free event open to all. Registration and Military ID are required.



Health & Fitness Fair | 7 May 2025 @1200-1500

Hosted by Hanscom AFB, this fair highlights the four pillars of wellness to include spiritual, social, physical, and mental health. Over 50 vendors will be present. **Free and open to all.**



Libby DoD Library | Mobile Device App Available Now

The DoD Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) Libraries are uniting across all five service branches to provide top-quality online library resources for Military Families and personnel.

Download the Libby app on any device and explore your free access to the DoD Libby platform.

For more information contact: **Natick Army Community Service**

Phone: 508-206-4035

Email: usarmy.natick.id-training.list.nati-ac@army.mil



MWR Resources



At Natick Family and MWR, we strive to continuously improve the quality and ease of access to MWR services and information. When planning your next event, please visit our website where you can easily request rental equipment, request dates for facility use, or send a message to one of our representatives.

Water Sports: The dock is in, and the boats are ready. If you want to take a canoe or kayak out on the lake during lunch or after work, swing by MWR in Building 38 to rent a boat and pick up a life preserver and paddle.

Thirty Minutes to Win It is BACK!!!

Beginning April 7, TMtWI Class will offer TWO CLASSES per day and be running FIVE DAYS a week!

Choose between 11:40 a.m. and 12:20 p.m. start times and, for the first time ever, you can choose between two payment options:

- **\$50/month** for TWO CLASSES per week (ONLY \$6.25 per class!) OR
- **\$75/month** for UNLIMITED CLASSES (if you co REDIT CARD in Building 38.

Please direct all inquiries to darin.p.stgeorge.naf@army.mil or (508) 206-4098

Equipment Rental

Visit www.natick.armymwr.com and click on the 'Equipment Checkout Center' banner.



Open to all authorized patrons. Prices subject to change.

Hero WOD

MURPH

May 2025

In memory of Navy Lieutenant Michael Murphy, 29, of Patchogue, N.Y., who was killed in Afghanistan June 28, 2005.

For time:

1-mile run

100 pull-ups

200 push-ups

300 squats

1-mile run

Partition the pull-ups, push-ups, and squats as needed. Start and finish with a mile run. If you've got a 20-lb vest or body armor, wear it.

This workout was one of Mike's favorites and he'd named it "Body Armor." From here on it will be referred to as "Murph" in honor of the focused warrior and great American who wanted nothing more in life than to serve this great country and the beautiful people who make it what it is.

A Hero WOD, also known as a Hero Workout, is a challenging and intense CrossFit workout that is named after a fallen hero. These workouts are created to pay tribute to those who have made the ultimate sacrifice in service to their country or community.

Do you and your team participate in the monthly Hero WODs? Send us your photos completing the workouts and we'll share them here in the Spotlight!



30 MINUTES TO WIN IT! IS BACK!

TWO CLASSES A DAY - FIVE DAYS A WEEK AND YOUR FIRST CLASS IS FREE!

Choose between 11:40 a.m. and 12:20 p.m. start times and, for the first time ever, you can choose between two payment options:

- \$50/month for TWO CLASSES per week (ONLY \$6.25 per class!)
- \$75/month for UNLIMITED CLASSES (if you come 3x a week, still only \$6.25 a class!)

Classes are to be utilized during the month that they are purchased and are not transferrable or carried forward.

Classes can be purchased with CASH or CREDIT CARD in Building 38.

Please direct all inquiries to darin.p.stgeorge.naf@army.mil or (508) 206-4098



TENANT SATISFACTION SURVEY

3 MAR 2025 - 15 MAY 2025

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"Do your part!
Take the barracks survey!"

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Matters!



Participants Needed for Cold Stress & Sleep Deprivation Research Study

Purpose: Determine if the FDA-approved medication, Modafinil (Provigil®), will improve the effects of cold environmental temperature and sleep-deprivation stressors.

- Determine whether Modafinil will mitigate cognitive and physical performance decrements from the combination of cold stress and sleep deprivation.
- Determine if Modafinil increases heat production in the cold regardless of whether Warfighters are well-rested or sleep deprived.

You are potentially eligible if you:

- Are between the ages of 18-39 years old. Active duty military personnel who are 17 years of age will also be allowed to participate.
- Can refrain from the use of caffeine – including dietary supplements that contain caffeine – alcohol, and nicotine 24 hours prior to data collection.
- Can refrain from vigorous physical activity 24 hours prior to data collection.
- Can refrain from dietary supplement use within one week of initial screening and at any time while enrolled in the study, with the exception of a multi-vitamin containing up to 100% RDA.
- Agree to consume study diets throughout the course of the study.
- Did not donate blood within 8 weeks prior to study participation
- Obtain supervisory approval for participation if permanent part military or a federal employee.

Description:

- This study consists of one day of baseline testing, followed by two days of continuous wakefulness under cold-stress testing (26 hours), followed by a two-day recovery period, and another two-day testing cycle of continuous wakefulness under cold-stress (26 hours).
- We will measure body composition (height, weight, and DEXA scan) at baseline.
- Participants will ingest or insert a telemetric thermometer capsule to determine core body temperature.

Benefits:

There are no direct benefits from participating in this research. However, data from this study will assist in understanding whether or not a pharmaceutical compound will effectively counter the effects of two common military stressors (cold-stress and sleep-deprivation stress).

Compensation:

You may be compensated up to \$1,440 for completing the study if you are a non-federal civilian employee. Active-duty military personnel may be eligible for hazardous duty pay. All participants traveling more than 50 miles to the Natick Soldier Systems Center will have transportation paid for by the study and may be reimbursed for additional travels costs or other costs related to participation.

This research is being conducted by
USARIEM's Military Nutrition Division (PI: Dr. Harris R. Lieberman).

M-11048/23-19HC, PI: Harris R. Lieberman, version 16JAN2025

For more information contact: Dr. Harris Lieberman@ 508-206-2326 or USARMY.USARIEM-MNDstudies@health.mil.

"Survey
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For any questions, please text SGT
Borden at (573) 480-3375 or email at
charlesjoseph.b.borden.mil@health.mil



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Salute our troops and honor all members of the
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Visit devenscommunity.com for event details.
(Rain date: Sunday, 5/18)

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Soldier Center names new research facility for local Medal of Honor recipient

By: Jeff Sisto, DEVCOM Soldier Center Public Affairs

The U.S. Army Combat Capabilities Development Command (DEVCOM) Soldier Center held a ribbon cutting and building dedication ceremony for the Sergeant First Class (SFC) Jared C. Monti Soldier and Squad Research Facility at the U.S. Army Natick Soldier Systems Center (NSSC) on April 7, 2025.

The new facility, completed in November 2024, was formally named for Raynham, Mass. native and Medal of Honor recipient U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class Jared Monti, who was killed during combat in Afghanistan in 2006 while serving with the 10th Mountain Division.

Monti's devotion to the Soldiers under his charge, for whom he made the ultimate sacrifice while heroically acting to save, was the driving force in naming a building dedicated to Soldier and small unit performance research in his honor.

The SFC Jared C. Monti Soldier & Squad Research Facility is an 80,600 square-foot, state-of-the-art, military research complex designed for understanding, predicting, and optimizing the performance of the individual warfighter and squad.



Medal of Honor recipient and retired U.S. Army Lt. Col. William D. Swenson, Massachusetts Lt. Gov. Kimberley Driscoll, Commanding General of U.S. Army Combat Capabilities Development Command (DEVCOM), Maj. Gen. John A. Cushing, Mrs. Janet Monti, DEVCOM Soldier Center Director Mr. Doug Tamilio, and Mrs. Nicole Monti-Alicea, cut a ribbon during a building dedication ceremony to officially open the Sergeant 1st Class (SFC) Jared C. Monti Soldier and Squad Research Facility at the U.S. Army Natick Soldier Systems Center (NSSC) in Natick, Massachusetts on April 7, 2025.

The facility's 19 embedded laboratories deliver cutting-edge, multidisciplinary applied research, test and evaluation studies in the cognitive, behavioral, nutritional, biomechanical, and physiological sciences, offering a one-stop-shop for Soldier performance optimization research.

The ceremony marked its official opening and was attended by Massachusetts Lt. Gov. Kimberley Driscoll, the Commanding General of U.S. Army Futures Command, Gen. James E. Rainey, the Commanding General of U.S. Army DEVCOM, Maj. Gen.

John M. Cushing, members of the Monti family, Medal of Honor recipient and retired U.S. Army Lt.Col. William D. Swenson, Army senior leaders, state and local politicians, and other distinguished guests.

After a stirring rendition of the National Anthem performed by Mr. Fran Rogers of the famed Boston Pops, the audience heard remarks by Cushing, Driscoll, Monti's sister Nicole Monti-Alicea, and Swenson.

"Today we start a new era of Soldier Center research capabilities in support of Army transformation and war-winning future readiness," said Cushing. "After hearing about Sgt. 1st Class Monti and the type of Soldier and leader he was, anything we can do to improve Soldier and squad lethality, I'm pretty sure he would be all for it."

"The battle that took Jared's life underscores the incredible challenges our Soldiers face on dismounted missions in remote locations," said Cushing. "That's why we're so proud to be officially opening the SFC Jared C. Monti Soldier and Squad Research Facility, where our scientists and engineers will focus on optimizing the individual Soldier's and squad's operational, cognitive, behavioral, nutritional, physiological, and physical performance."

"Simply put, our work starts and ends with the Soldier in mind," said Cushing. "Innovations in this facility will save Soldiers' lives."

"It is our honor to dedicate this facility to a Soldier who truly led

a life of character and commitment, a Soldier who we all aspire to be more like," he said.

Nicole Monti-Alicea delivered a moving speech in which she shared stories about her brother's life that further illustrated his character. She described her family's grief in coping with his loss and how honoring him in this way provides the closure they needed.

"My mom and I had been having conversations over the last few years about where we would give all of Jared's medals, uniforms, and other military items," said Moni-Alicea "We wanted them to go where we knew they'd be honored, not hidden away in a room.

"After our meeting, we knew that Jared's highest honors belonged here," she said.



(Left to right) Gen. James E. Rainey, Commanding General of U.S. Army Futures Command (AFC), Command Sgt. Maj. Brian A. Hester, and Command Sgt. Major Stephen Helton, salute during the National Anthem at a ribbon cutting and building dedication ceremony for the new Sergeant First Class (SFC) Jared C. Monti Soldier and Squad Research Facility held at the U.S. Army Natick Soldier Systems Center (NSSC) in Natick, Massachusetts on April 7, 2025.





U.S. Army Combat Capabilities Development Command (DEVCOM) Soldier Center Director Mr. Doug Tamilio introduces an infantry squad demonstration inside the Combat Maneuver Lab after a ribbon cutting and building dedication ceremony for the new Sergeant First Class (SFC) Jared C. Monti Soldier and Squad Research Facility held at the U.S. Army Natick Soldier Systems Center (NSSC) in Natick, Massachusetts on April 7, 2025.

“And my mother finally got the one thing she always wanted – and that was for her son to finally rest in peace.

“Rest in peace, little brother,” she said.

Lt. Gov. Driscoll recognized the commonwealth’s partnerships with the installation, referred to locally as “Natick Labs,” and reinforced the benefits that being in the Bay State offers the Army.

“Here in Massachusetts, we strive to be leaders in everything we do. We’re global leaders in STEM (Science Technology Engineering Math) and life sciences. We’re home to life saving treatments and cures, technological advancements, and innovative solutions to some of the world’s most pressing challenges,” said Driscoll.

“We also make a major impact in the defense sector,” said Driscoll. “Thanks to Natick Labs and other installations, we’re continuously in the top ten [states] for defense spending nationally. Not only do our bases generate \$13 billion in total economic activity and

57,000 jobs, but we also know that our talent here greatly benefits the military.”

Driscoll described how her own upbringing in a military family instilled the values that have guided her career since, including her current roles as chair of the STEM Advisory Council and co-chair of the Massachusetts Military Asset and Security Strategy Task Force.

“Both of those missions align critically with the work being done here in Natick,” said Driscoll.

“As the only active-duty Army installation in all of New England, Natick Labs is the key leader on projects that make all of us stronger, safer, and more innovative,” said Driscoll. “Natick is also responsible for practically everything a Soldier needs.”

“It’s all done here and we’re proud to be a partner on that team,” she said.

Addressing Monti’s family, Driscoll expressed gratitude for their sacrifice and

pledged to honor his legacy through the mission of the facility commemorating his name.

“Having his name on this building is only going to ensure that we work extra hard to continue to find the best way forward for our Soldiers every day,” she said.

As the keynote speaker, Swenson, also a former member of the 10th Mountain Division, related how Monti’s story was a source of inspiration during his own service, which later led to him earning the nation’s highest award for valor in combat.

“It was Sgt 1st Class Monti’s story that I got to look to before I deployed to Afghanistan in 2008,” said Swenson. “To see something amazing, to see what a warfighter with capabilities could do when put in situations beyond comprehension, to see what he would do for his team.”

“For me, to know that Sgt. 1st Class Monti will forever have this building enshrined to him is important. Because our enemies fear us through our strength. Our enemies fear us through our resilience. Through our capabilities. And with Soldiers like Sgt 1st Class Monti, and the systems that are produced out of this facility, we will have peace,” said Swenson.

Closing out the dedication, multi-platinum award-winning country music artist Lee Brice performed, “I Drive Your Truck,” a song inspired by the loss of Monti in Afghanistan and named Song of the Year during the 49th annual Academy of Country Music Awards in 2014.

Monti’s actual pickup truck served as a backdrop to Brice’s touching acoustic tribute.

Following the ceremony, guests observed an infantry squad demonstration by current Soldiers from the 10th Mountain Division inside the facility’s Combat Maneuver Lab, or CML.

Within the larger facility, the CML is a highly configurable human performance laboratory boasting 18,000 sq. ft. of space dedicated to conducting warfighter and squad systems research, development, and integration uniquely focused on analyzing and improving team dynamics, lethality, and combat readiness.

The CML utilizes immersive simulation technologies with operational scenario-driven exercises that track an infantry mission cycle from baselining and planning to movement, action, and recovery.

DEVCOM Soldier Center Director Doug Tamilio introduced the demonstration, highlighting the CML’s unique features and emphasizing how its work will benefit the entire Army.

“This demonstration offers a glimpse into the CML’s vast potential, showcasing its data collection capabilities across various research areas and scientific disciplines,” said Tamilio.

“The impact of this research is threefold: data-driven feedback to revolutionize squad training, quantifiable data on Soldier burden and lethality to drive smarter acquisition decisions, and unparalleled insights into the dynamics of high-performing teams,” said Tamilio.

“Ultimately, the CML is an investment in a more lethal, more effective fighting force,” he said.

Army Fellows Visit NSSC to Explore Joint Research and Readiness Initiatives

By: Gregory Boisvert, Plans, Analysis, and Integration; Army Fellow, U.S. Army Garrison Natick

Five Department of the Army Fellows from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers visited Natick Soldier Systems Center (NSSC) as part of a joint effort between the Combat Capabilities Development Command Soldier Center (DEVCOM-SC) and U.S. Army Garrison Natick (USAG Natick) Mar. 26.

The fellows—who have backgrounds in engineering, biology and geology—were introduced to NSSC’s mission through briefings from senior leaders across the installation. Representatives from DEVCOM, the U.S. Army Research Institute of Environmental Medicine (USARIEM), TACOM Integrated Logistics Support Center, Navy Clothing and Textile Research Facility, and Air Force Life Cycle Management Center shared insights into their unique roles supporting the Joint Force.

“During our visit we met several leaders across the NSSC team,” said Army Fellow Joe Bozzo. “All of them were well prepared to brief us on their goals to continue providing protection for our soldiers in all kinds of conditions. Learning from each one of those individuals was a pleasure, and it is comforting to know we have a coordinated and efficient team providing expertise toward the future outfitting of our service members.”

The visit included tours of key facilities across NSSC, beginning with the Doriot Climatic Chambers. There, the fellows heard from Deb Cornelius about how the



Lt. Col. Andrew Ballow, the U.S. Army Garrison Natick Commander, provides an overview of the NSSC mission to Army Fellows to begin the day long visit to the installation.

Soldier Research Volunteer Program uses the chambers to test gear and improve warfighter readiness. Cornelius, the program manager, provided an overview of how environmental testing contributes to research on soldier performance.

“Doriot Climatic Chambers provide several testing chambers that are capable of recreating virtually any climate on Earth—on any day of the year, no matter how extreme,” said Jeff Faulkner, the facility’s building manager. “The accuracy and repeatability of our chambers ensure that when we’re developing or testing new products or equipment, we’re being as precise as possible. That enables us to get the best equipment to soldiers.”



Jeff Faulkner gives the visiting Army Fellows a briefing on the capabilities of the Doriot Climatic Chambers, while inside one of the active low temperature chambers.

At the Jared C. Monti Soldier and Squad Research Facility, DEVCOM researchers highlighted Sensored Soldier technologies and advancements aimed at improving warfighter lethality and survivability. The group also visited the Combat Feeding Directorate, where they explored challenges in field meal development and ongoing innovation to make food more compact and accessible. At the Navy Textile Facility, staff discussed clothing sizing, standardization and uniformity across the services.

“It was incredible to see the capabilities of the labs on base,” Bozzo said. “A team favorite from the visit was the Doriot Climatic Chambers. It was amazing to see and learn about how many different factors could be tested on potential gear and the human body. We’re all thankful for the courageous volunteers who give their service to test gear and brave the elements to support the survival of our troops.”

The tour concluded at the installation’s mercury treatment plant, where the fellows met with USAG Natick’s environmental chief to discuss the garrison’s water treatment systems and environmental compliance efforts.

“It is our responsibility to monitor and minimize our impact on the ecosystem here at Natick,” said Rich Valcourt, USAG Natick’s environmental chief. “Environmental compliance isn’t just a mandate—it’s a commitment to future generations. I am inspired by this emerging generation of civil servants stepping forward to carry this torch. Their passion and innovation give me hope that our shared mission of safeguarding the environment will continue to thrive.”



HRDD Commander Runs Boston Marathon

Courtesy Story

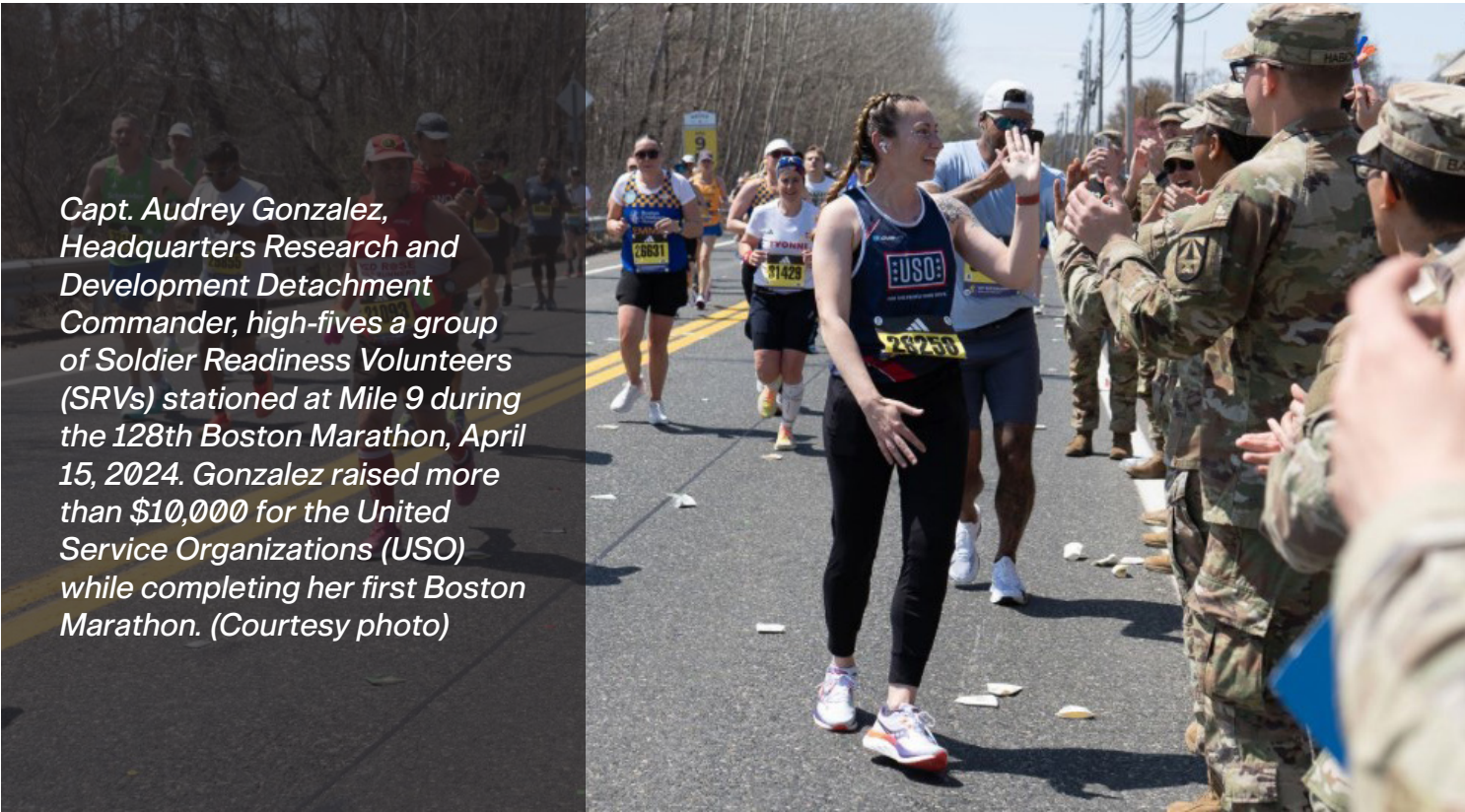
Capt. Audrey Gonzalez, Headquarters Research and Development Detachment Commander, completed her first Boston Marathon last week, raising \$10,256 for the United Service Organizations (USO) through the charity bib program.

Gonzalez, who was running her second marathon overall, joined more than 30,000 participants in the prestigious 26.2-mile race. The USO, which supports service members and their families, selected her as one of 16 runners to represent Team USO at the 128th Boston Marathon.

“The entire day exceeded every one of my goals,” Gonzalez said. “I’m proud to have supported a nonprofit that gives so much to the military community.”

Gonzalez was greeted at Mile 9 by a group of her Soldiers from the Soldier Research Volunteers (SRVs), who were on a study-free day and lined the route in uniform to cheer on runners. She shared a high-five with the group as she passed, a moment she described as a highlight of the day.

According to the USO’s New England chapter, Team USO raised over \$200,000 this year through the Boston Marathon, funding programs and centers that serve tens of thousands of service members across the region.



Capt. Audrey Gonzalez, Headquarters Research and Development Detachment Commander, high-fives a group of Soldier Readiness Volunteers (SRVs) stationed at Mile 9 during the 128th Boston Marathon, April 15, 2024. Gonzalez raised more than \$10,000 for the United Service Organizations (USO) while completing her first Boston Marathon. (Courtesy photo)

Girl Scouts Visit NSSC

Photos by David Accetta and Madison Langweil



Top Dog: When a Colonel with Four Legs Visited TACOM

By: Omid Gharony, Readiness & Sustainment Budget Execution Section Chief TACOM-ILSC

Let's be honest, Mondays are ruff. But last week at the Natick Soldier Systems Center, a certain four-legged Colonel turned a whole lot of Mondays – and Tuesdays – into something a little brighter. We're talking about Colonel Wrigley, a remarkably and well-decorated (with belly rubs, mostly) US Army therapy dog who paid a visit to TACOM on April 7 and 8.

Now, you might be thinking, "A Colonel? That's a pretty high rank for a pup." And you'd be right! Wrigley, affectionately known as COL Wrigley and Wrigley to those lucky enough to bestow head scratches, isn't your average canine. He's a professional morale booster, a certified good boy, and a master of the soulful gaze with MA Army National Guards Behavioral Health section at Medical Command.

Word spread fast. TACOM folks quickly realized this wasn't just any dog visit. This was a visit from a Colonel. A Colonel who specializes in stress reduction and accepting all the pets. Soon, the halls weren't just buzzing with the usual engineering discussions and logistical planning – they were buzzing with, "Have you met the Colonel yet?!"

And meet him they did. People from all corners of TACOM, and even visitors from DEVCOM and PEO, flocked to spend time with Wrigley. It was a beautiful sight. Forget inter-agency rivalries – everyone united under the banner of adorable floof.



"He just has this way of making you forget about everything else for a few minutes," said one TACOM employee. In fact, a steady stream of carefully concealed snacks found their way to the Colonel throughout his visit – often slipped to him behind his handler's back with a knowing glance. Though, we did hear a rumor of a particularly tempting breakfast yogurt making a brief, unauthorized detour into Wrigley's possession.

The visit was thoughtfully orchestrated under TACOM's Commander's Ready and Resilient Campaign (CR2C) by TACOM's Chaplain office, who clearly understands the power of puppy power. They recognized the need for a morale boost and skillfully coordinated Colonel Wrigley's visit with the Massachusetts Army National Guard's Medical Command. Talk about teamwork! It's proof that sometimes, the best solutions come with a wet nose and a happy bark.

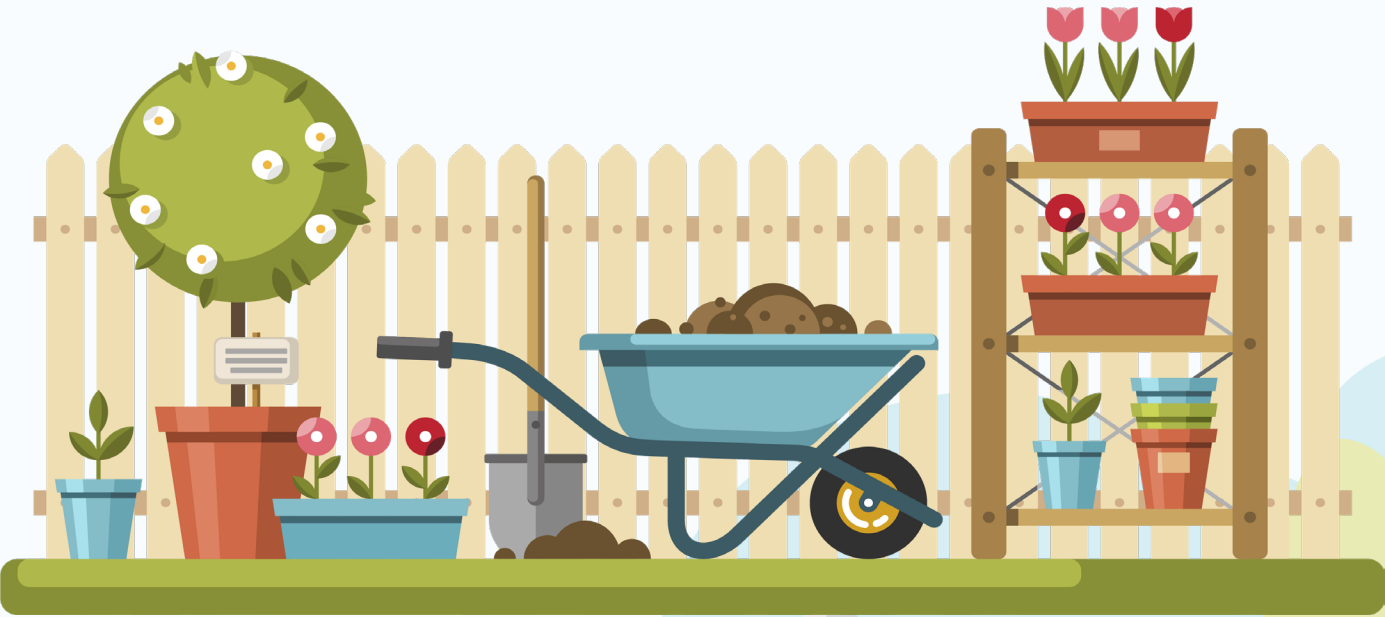
But beyond the laughs and the Instagram-worthy photos, Wrigley's visit was a powerful reminder of the importance of connection. In a busy work environment, it's easy to get heads-down and focused on tasks. Wrigley forced us to pause. To smile. To connect with colleagues over a shared love of a very good boy.

He didn't solve any engineering challenges, and he didn't streamline any logistical processes. But he did something arguably more important: he reminded us to remember the human element. He reminded us that even in the midst of serious work, there's always room for joy, for connection, and for a really good belly rub.

So thank you, Colonel Wrigley, for your service. Your mission to spread happiness was a resounding success. And to TACOM leadership, please make Colonel Wrigley a returning VIP, including his fellow four-legged squad members.



Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month



Gardening and Yardwork Safety

By the Installation Safety Office

- » Check the ground before starting any work or before mowing the lawn.
- » Wear gloves to protect skin from fertilizers, pesticides, and fungus in the soil.
- » Avoid prolonged repetitive motions.
- » Choose the right tool for the job.
- » Check your posture.
- » Avoid back bending.
- » Watch for pests.
- » Protect your eyes and airway with goggles and masks.
- » Stay hydrated.





Bone stress injury risk reduction optimizes force readiness

By: V. Hauschild, MPH, Defense Health Agency-Public Health Public Affairs

Bone stress injuries, which include stress fractures, can be debilitating to athletes but are also a problem for the U.S. military, according to public health experts.

“Service members who develop BSIs may be placed on a medical profile limiting duty or training activities, or even need orthopedic surgery,” says U.S. Army Maj. Shay Lopez, a physical therapist and chief of the Defense Health Agency-Public Health Injury Prevention Branch at Aberdeen, Maryland.

“By finding ways to prevent and reduce the number and severity of BSIs, the military can improve force readiness, lethality, and reduce costs,” says Lopez.

In pursuit of this goal, experts from the DHA-PH have been studying trends and risk factors of BSI with scientists at the U.S.

Army Research Institute of Environmental Medicine and military leaders at the U.S. Army Training Center at [Fort Jackson](#), South Carolina, an initial entry training installation for nearly half of the U.S. Army.

These scientists now have a better understanding of some factors that may increase the risk of service members’ developing a BSI.

What are bone stress injuries?

A BSI is a type of musculoskeletal overuse injury resulting from gradual, repetitive force on bone tissues. Common activities in the military that cause these injuries are running, marching, and load-bearing exercises. [MSK overuse injuries continue to be a primary reason](#) for service members’ medical visits and cost the Department of Defense [billions of dollars annually](#).

“While a gradual increase of exercise and physical activity will encourage bone and other supporting musculoskeletal tissues to strengthen over time, a BSI happens when the bone tissue doesn’t have enough time to build between activities,” says Katelyn Guerriere-Aaron, a senior research physiologist at USARIEM.

DHA-PH injury experts agree.

Lopez explains that BSIs may be missed during an initial medical exam. BSIs may take time to develop, are confused with other types of injuries, or are painless until becoming severe. Catching early signs of BSIs is also difficult with motivated military personnel, who want to ‘tough out’ physical training programs for fear of restarting (known as being “recycled”) or failing military training due to injury.

“[Data](#) show most BSIs in the military are to the lower parts of the body. This includes areas extending from the hip down to the toes,” says Ryan Steelman, a DHA-PH injury prevention epidemiologist. “BSIs to the tibia, which includes a condition sometimes referred to as shin splints, are especially common among men. Women more often experience BSI to the hip or the femoral neck, an upper portion of the thigh bone.”

Diagnosing BSI injuries can be challenging, even by doctors.

“BSIs, particularly hips, can be tricky to diagnose as the pain level doesn’t always equal the severity level, and X-ray imaging doesn’t always show early BSI,” says U.S. Army Maj. Gary Helton, assistant chief of the Fort Jackson Department of Sports Medicine. “Tibial BSIs, and hip BSIs,

particularly the femoral neck, can lead to a complete fracture needing surgery if not addressed in a timely manner.”

[Evidence](#) indicates extensive running and long road marches with heavy rucksacks – especially on consecutive days – are associated with military lower-body MSK injuries like these BSIs.

“These training activities, however, are critical to ensuring personnel are ready for the physical rigors of combat operations,” says Steelman. “By studying BSI trends and risk factors, we are better able to help identify ways to reduce BSI impacts and build more resilient warfighters.”

Who is at risk?

[New military recruits are particularly at risk of BSIs](#) because their initial entry training, typically 10 to 16 weeks, often brings a sudden and substantial increase in the amount and intensity of their physical activity. DHA data show that while female service members have a higher risk of BSI, there are almost five times more male service members, so more men than women will develop a BSI.

“We have been diagnosing BSIs in recruits at Fort Jackson for years. A large number of these BSIs are diagnosed as early as the second and third week of training,” says Helton. “The treatment for these BSIs detracts from the success of the training.”

With support from DHA public health experts and USARIEM researchers, Helton has been able to objectively review BSI trends and risk factors and identify potential ways to reduce BSI severity and case numbers.

“Many recruits who are eventually injured in training lead relatively sedentary lives prior to enlistment, so they do not have the foundation necessary for the rigors of military training,” says Helton. “Preparing their bodies with physical training before volunteering for initial military training can reduce their risk of developing a BSI during initial training programs.”

While all forms of exercise before initial military entry can improve fitness, the type of physical activity may also be important.

“Our findings suggest that specific activities that require multi-directional body movement, such as soccer or basketball, may lower rates of BSI more than exercises like running or lifting by helping build stronger overall MSK structure,” says Julie Hughes, a senior researcher and colleague of Guerriere-Aaron at USARIEM.

What risk factors can be controlled?

USARIEM experts have highlighted an especially critical finding that could help reduce the risk of BSI.

“[Several studies](#) have pointed to excessive use of non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, or NSAIDs, during rigorous physical training activities as a factor that will increase BSI risk,” says Guerriere-Aaron. “NSAIDs have also been found to delay healing in those who do have a bone stress injury.”

Hughes agrees that [use of NSAIDs, which include products that can be purchased over the counter, such as ibuprofen, may be one of the most significant and preventable risks of BSI.](#)

“Our ongoing studies are finding that NSAIDs may increase BSI risk as much as five times during initial military entry training,” she says.

Many orthopedic doctors are aware that NSAIDs delay healing, but this may not be well known by others in the medical field, says Helton.

“Since NSAIDs can be effective for pain management, many providers may prescribe NSAIDs, such as ibuprofen, for pain,” he says. “But if pain is the result of potential bone injury, research suggests NSAIDs should be avoided.”

Helton points out that recruits in military initial entry training are dependent on military medical providers for any form of medication and typically cannot purchase over-the-counter medication such as ibuprofen.

“We are working to ensure military providers are aware of the NSAID risks with bone injuries. This is a key message we want to get out,” he says. “We also discourage NSAID use by recruits who may be able to access NSAIDs over the counter or from a buddy.”

Past evidence has also indicated that [low bone density is a risk factor for BSI](#) among young women who have other risk factors. Key underlying risks include poor nutrition and/or being underweight, and excessive exercise. [Recent evidence](#) suggests similar risks among young adults of both genders may contribute to low bone density and thus increase BSI risk.

Another consideration Helton observed is the added stress on recruits’ lower

body bones during running or ruck march formations if drill sergeants tell recruits to ‘stride it out,’ particularly shorter trainees.

“There appears to be more bone stress if a trainee has to change their normal gait and stretch their legs forward to keep up with formation, landing harder on the heel and increasing stress at the hip,” Helton says. “Quicker, shorter steps may be safer, or – even better – putting shorter persons up front in a formation to manage the pace.”

What can be done by service members?

An estimated [one-third of applicants to military entry training don’t meet basic military fitness standards](#). Recruits who are more physically fit before their initial training program have lower BSI rates. Other underlying factors, such as poor diet and lack of sleep, may make some service members more vulnerable to developing a BSI than others.

Lopez recommends that before military initial training, recruits should—

- Gradually increase various exercising drills to include agility, power and balance training along with more traditional aerobic endurance (cardio) and strength exercises.
- Allow time between exercise sessions for rest and bone recovery.

During training, recruits should —

- Avoid NSAIDs for bone pain.
- Eat nutritional foods to maintain energy levels.
- Prioritize sleep to allow for bone recovery.
- Avoid overreaching gaits and striding out; aim for shorter quick steps.
- Seek medical assessment at the earliest signs of bone pain and follow recovery

treatment plans to avoid more serious BSIs.

- By reducing BSI rates and severity during initial training, the military can improve the readiness and resilience of its fighting force.

Additional information sources:

DOD:

- [DHA Military Injury information](#)
- [Musculoskeletal Injury Rehabilitation and Recovery](#)
- [Military Operational Research](#)

U.S. Army:

- [Physical Readiness Training](#)
- [Army Combat Fitness Test, frequently asked questions](#)
- [Healthy Force Training Manual, 2023](#) and [Health Force Training Doctrine, 2022](#)

U.S. Navy:

<https://www.navyfitness.org/>

U.S. Marine Corps:

<https://www.fitness.marines.mil/SMIP/>

U.S. Air Force:

<https://www.afpc.af.mil/Career-Management/Fitness-Program/>

The Defense Health Agency supports our Nation by improving health and building readiness—making extraordinary experiences ordinary and exceptional outcomes routine.

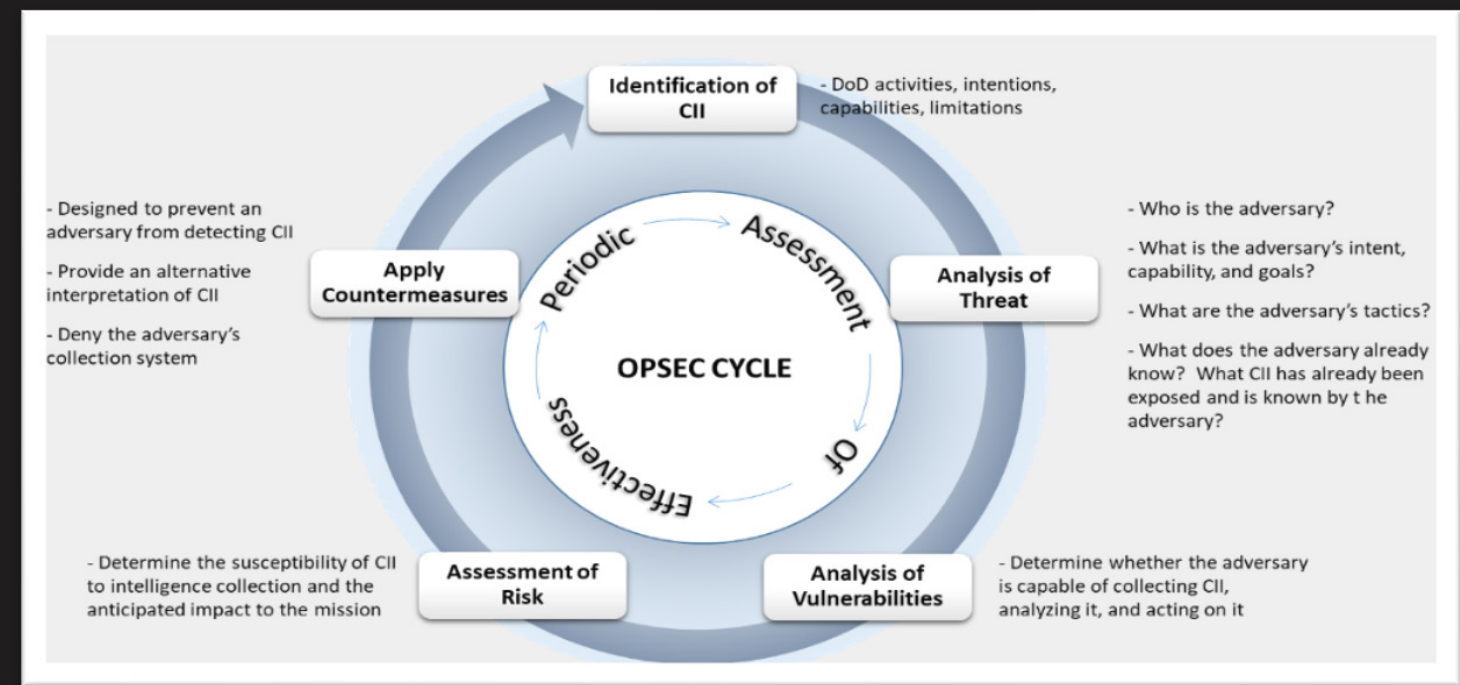
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DHA Public Health



May is National OPSEC Awareness Month

By: Blair Rodgers, Operations Specialist, U.S. Army Garrison Natick



OPSEC is a process that identifies and protects critical information indicators (CIIs) or essential elements of friendly information (EEFI) related to and associated with friendly force actions. OPSEC preserves friendly essential secrecy by identifying, controlling, and protecting critical information indicators that would allow adversaries or potential adversaries to identify and exploit friendly vulnerabilities through the combined efforts of traditional security programs and the implementation of measures and countermeasures derived through the OPSEC process.

- OPSEC is not optional. It is always in force across all Army evolutions, activities, and operations at all echelons and all posts, bases, forts, garrisons, and installations
- OPSEC mitigates threats to Soldiers,

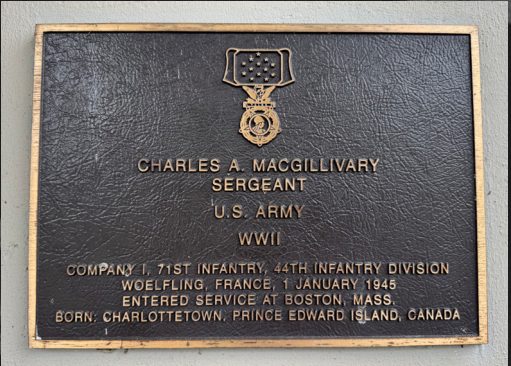
- DA Civilians and Contractors, and their families
- OPSEC is simultaneously programmatic and operational, one cannot exist without the other
- OPSEC is a force multiplier across the principles of war and warfighting functions to enhance combat power in complex, congested, and contested multi-dimensional, multi-domain operational environments
- OPSEC can save lives; it might save yours

POC: Garrison OPSEC Officer:
Blair Rodgers
George.b.rodgers2.civ@army.mil, Phone:
508 206-4062

Your Installation and the Medal of Honor

Building 3

CHARLES ANDREW MACGILLIVARY
RANK: SERGEANT (HIGHEST RANK: TECHNICAL SERGEANT)
CONFLICT/ERA: WORLD WAR II
UNIT/COMMAND: COMPANY I, 463D BATTALION, 71ST INFANTRY, 44TH INFANTRY DIVISION
MILITARY SERVICE BRANCH: U.S. ARMY
MEDAL OF HONOR ACTION DATE: JANUARY 1, 1945
MEDAL OF HONOR ACTION PLACE: NEAR WOELFLING, FRANCE
CITATION



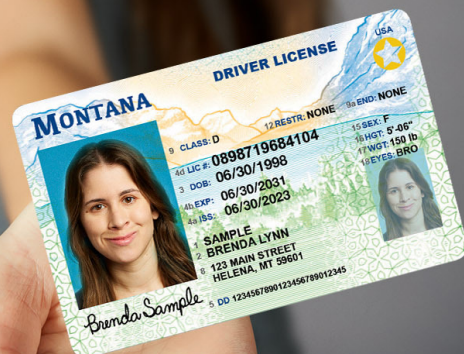
He led a squad when his unit moved forward in darkness to meet the threat of a breakthrough by elements of the 17th German Panzer Grenadier Division. Assigned to protect the left flank, he discovered hostile troops digging in. As he reported this information, several German machine guns opened fire, stopping the American advance. Knowing the position of the enemy, Sgt. MacGillivary volunteered to knock out one of the guns while another company closed in from the right to assault the remaining strongpoints. He circled from the left through woods and snow, carefully worked his way to the emplacement, and shot the two camouflaged gunners at a range of three feet as other enemy forces withdrew. Early in the afternoon of the same day, Sgt. MacGillivary was dispatched on reconnaissance and found that Company I was being opposed by about six machine guns reinforcing a company of fanatically fighting Germans. His unit began to attack but was pinned down by furious automatic and small-arms fire. With a clear idea of where the enemy guns were placed, he voluntarily embarked on a lone combat patrol. Skillfully taking advantage of all available cover, he stalked the enemy, reached a hostile machine gun, and blasted its crew with a grenade. He picked up a submachine gun from the battlefield and pressed on to within 10 yards of another machine gun, where the enemy crew discovered him and feverishly tried to swing their weapon into line to cut him down. He charged ahead, jumped into the midst of the Germans, and killed them with several bursts. Without hesitation, he moved on to still another machine gun, creeping, crawling, and rushing from tree to tree, until close enough to toss a grenade into the emplacement and close with its defenders. He dispatched this crew also, but was himself seriously wounded. Through his indomitable fighting spirit, great initiative, and utter disregard for personal safety in the face of powerful enemy resistance, Sgt. MacGillivary destroyed four hostile machine guns and immeasurably helped his company to continue on its mission with minimum casualties.



ARE YOU ★**REAL ID** READY?

DEADLINE:
MAY 7, 2025

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YOUR REAL ID TODAY AT
TSA.GOV/REAL-ID



Natick Soldier Systems Center(NSSC)
– Visitors requesting access to military bases and some federal installations will be required to present a REAL ID compliant credential beginning May 7 2025.

A REAL ID is a driver's license or identification card that meets federal requirements for accessing federal facilities, nuclear power plants and boarding domestic flights.

When the Automated Installation Entry (AIE) REAL ID barcode is scanned from the security guard, the system runs a background check through the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) and the results are immediate if the individual can enter on base or not.

The requirement will mainly affect visitors

and non-permanent party personnel, such as retired civilians, delivery drivers, construction workers. After passing the background check, base access can be added to the ID barcode. This eliminates the need for a separate pass.

Federal employees, military members, dependents, military retirees, contractors and base residents may still use their common access card or Uniformed Services Identification card to enter the installation. Military retirees cannot use their retiree card when working as a contractor. All states and the District of Columbia issue REAL ID compliant driver's licenses and identification cards.

Visitors who do not possess a REAL ID compliant credential must present two valid forms of identification. In addition, all

vehicles operated on the installation are required to be registered and insured, even if the state they are registered in does not require insurance.

The partial list below of secondary ID's that will be accepted to accompany all State ID's that do not meet the requirements of the REAL ID act, this list will be updated when new information from OHS becomes available.

- US Passports
- PIV Card- (Personal Identification Verification) issued by the Federal Government
- PIV TAC I Card- (Personal Identification Verification Interoperable) issued by the Federal Government
- Driver's License issued by the US Department of State
- US Permanent Resident Card/ Alien Registration Receipt Card (Form 1-551) accompanied with Employment authorization document with photograph issued by OHS (Form 1- 766) and foreign passport with a temporary (1-551) stamp or temporary (1-551) printed notation on an immigrant visa
- Identification cards issued by Federal, State, or local government agencies, provided the identification card contains photograph & biographical information such as name, date of birth, gender, height, eye color, and address.
- Documents deemed appropriate to provide reasonable assurance by the Garrison Commander or delegated authority will be used to positively identify

individuals for access.

Forms of identification NOT accepted at NSSC include the following: all RAPID Gate cards, Transportation Worker Identification Credentials (TWIC), and Defense Biometrics Identification System (DBIDS) cards issued by other installations. The listed security cards are not linked to a central database that can be cross-referenced by security and law enforcement at NSSC.

Questions or concerns can be address to Major Anthony Spina, Police Operations Officer at anthony.j.spina.civ@army.mil



NSSC Online

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