

A woman in a military camouflage uniform is the central figure, carrying a large green fuel canister on her shoulder. She is wearing black tactical gloves and looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with military equipment and another person in uniform.

RESERVE VOICE

May 2021
Magazine

**A YEAR OF
RESILIENCE**

**BUILT FROM
A CENTURY OF
READINESS**

ROA Adopts Plan to Celebrate Its Centennial

By Jennifer Franco

On March 13, 2021, the Reserve Organization of America's governing body unanimously adopted a plan to celebrate 100 years of ROA's supporting our nation's guard and reserve forces. The plan entails a year-long calendar of events that include in-person and social media engagements to inspire esprit de corps among ROA's current and potential members and their families. These efforts also aim to give greater visibility to the association. The plan includes an event at the Washington, D.C., Willard Hotel, where the ROA was founded during its first convention, October 2-4, 1922.

Commencing at ROA's Memphis National Convention in October this year, specific "lines of effort" will be programmed to take place throughout 2022, culminating in Washington, D.C., on October 2.

ROA is a congressionally chartered military service organization unique among other military organizations because of its specific focus of support for the Reserve Components. The charter states that ROA will "support a military policy that will provide adequate national security and to promote the development and execution thereof." The charter was signed by President Harry S. Truman on June 30, 1950. Truman, a life member of ROA, had commanded a National Guard field artillery battery with distinction in France in World War I and retired as a colonel in the U.S. Army Reserve.

In 1922, General of the Armies John J. "Black Jack" Pershing helped form the Reserve Officers Association, now doing business as the Reserve Organization of America, to ensure the Army had a reserve corps of officers should it need to expand for war. He and his fellow ROA founders, all veterans of the World War, knew that war would come again.

Unchanged after nearly a century, ROA's purpose is the support of national security through a ready reserve force. That force, the uniformed armed forces, including the National Guard and Coast Guard, as well as the U.S. Public Health Service and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. At the heart of ROA's work is its advocacy for law and policy that ensure the readiness of Reserve Component service members, the quality of life of their families, and support for veterans of Reserve Component service.

"ROA is the only national military organization that solely and exclusively supports America's Reserve




ROA's first convention at the Willard Hotel in October 1922

Components," said ROA's executive director, retired Army Maj. Gen. Jeffrey E. Phillips. "Supporting the Reserve and Guard is part of what some organizations do; it's *all* that ROA does."

ROA's Centennial Celebration plan includes contributions from its departments, chapters, and international programs delegations. Engagements will consist of online feature stories to honor local heroes, a writing contest, an organizational video, and special events. The plan has also proposed commemorative mementos.

ROA's Centennial Celebration Committee, which developed the plan, was established by former ROA President Don Stockton, and inspired and supported by our current president, Judi Davenport. ROA's staff, departments, and chapters will contribute to the effort, implemented during a year-long campaign in 2022 to celebrate our success in supporting the Reserve Components and fulfilling our congressional charter.

With the focus on great power competition, and the need to maintain our strategic depth of agile forces, there's no better time to celebrate the men and women of all Reserve Components and their families at the heart of our country's national security priorities.

"This event will highlight a century of service by ROA to this great nation," said President Davenport. "I invite you to be a part of ROA moving forward, building a professional organization for *all services – all ranks – all things Reserve*. Make a difference for the next century! Join the celebration!" 



ROA dba RESERVE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICA

Organized in 1922. Incorporated under charter of the Congress by Public Law 81-595.

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ON THE COVER

Sgt. Amber Hutchison, a motor transportation operator with Hotel Battery, 3rd Battalion, 14th Marine Regiment, 4th Marine Division, carries a 155mm high explosive round to a firing position before a live-fire range at Fort Pickett, Va., July 21, 2020, during Hotel Battery's annual training. The Marine Corps Reserves was established Aug. 29, 1916, after President Woodrow Wilson signed the Naval Appropriations Act of 1916. Since then, the Marine Corps Reserves have been called upon in every major conflict as well as serving in humanitarian and security operations across the globe. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Sgt. Niles Lee)

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Despite Pandemic, A Year of Accomplishments

As I look back at my first year as your national president, I think first of ROA's many great accomplishments.

They include:

- The first ROA webinar reaching out to the membership.
- The establishment of the Strong American Reserve and Guard Employers (SARGE) coalition.
- The first print magazine (*Reserve Voice*) in several years.
- Associate and term membership increase.
- Participation in Yellow Ribbon events.
- Redesign of the ROA website.
- Increase in giving to the Second Century Campaign through the ROA Standing Together for America's Reservists (STARs) Foundation.
- The new Family Support Committee that has become active with school kits, yellow ribbon programs, and community activities.
- The first ROA hybrid national convention that drew more than 260 participants.
- Legislative involvement that included Merrill's Marauders Gold Medal Act, the president's change of 89-day orders to 90-day orders, toxic exposure legislation, and gray area retirement benefits.
- Partnering with the European Union Delegation to the U.S. for an online Veterans Day salute—"We Stood Together, We Stand Together"—a first for ROA!
- Two successful National Council Leaders meetings held virtually due to COVID-19 restrictions.
- ROA support for the 10 living past secretaries of defense who united and reminded us that as military members, we all took an oath to "protect and defend the Constitution of the United States."

These are just a few of the great things that ROA has accomplished despite the turmoil of this past year with the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting ROA budget deficit due to cancellations at the Top of the Hill venue.

As a nation, we have endured record unemployment, public anger arising from social injustices, an attack on the hallowed ground of our Capitol, and devastation from extreme weather. We have found a way through all the chaos and pain, drawing from the resiliency of ROA, coupled with the American spirit, ingenuity, and faith in each other.

ROA continues to refine how the organization can continue on the positive path for the membership during uncertain times now and in the future. We have found a way to cut costs but still reach out through social media to support those on the front line, and continue to be there for

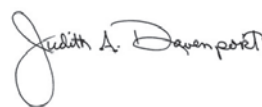
our members when needed and requested. The dedication and perseverance of your Executive Committee, committee chairs, and members has never wavered as they have made many hard decisions. Our redesigned website, along with our enhanced social media platforms, has allowed us to reach out to more members than ever before, from a hybrid national convention and department virtual conventions, to our monthly "Reserve Voice" digital outreach.

I'd like to publicly thank the Department of the Golden West for a generous grant allowing ROA to hire a media communications contractor, kalenmarieconsulting.com, who is doing an awesome job.

Like many nonprofit organizations during this pandemic, our donations have fallen short of our goal. I encourage any of our members who can to reach out to our ROA STARs Foundation and the Second Century Campaign with your donations. You can make a cash contribution now or planned monthly or yearly contributions. Maybe you would like to ensure ROA has a solid future through our many member programs by doing a planned giving contribution. Contact ROA for any assistance in setting up your donations.

Those of you who, individually or through your department, have already generously contributed; thank you. Those contributions have allowed ROA to continue the *Reserve Voice* magazine, the *ROA Convention Communique*, school kits, scholarships, and yellow ribbon events, to name just a few. A special thanks to the departments, chapters, and individuals who stepped up to sponsor this second edition of *Reserve Voice*.

As we close out ROA's first century, we will celebrate our 99th year through the national convention at the Graceland Resort in Memphis, Tennessee, Oct. 21–24, 2021. I hope you can make plans to join us. The 100th anniversary extravaganza year 2022–2023 is well into the planning stages. Mark your calendars for Oct. 2022 at the convention in Washington, D.C., where it all began for ROA. Stay safe, well, and blessed!



Judith A. Davenport
Colonel (Ret.), USA
81st ROA National President



Mckinley Williams

ROA, Concluding a Century of Service, Vaults into the Future

As I write this column, tall steel fencing topped by razor-wire coils rim the Capitol grounds outside my office on the fourth floor of the ROA Minuteman Memorial Headquarters Building. Except for the absence of an M1A1 Abrams tank, its gun tube and coaxial machine gun pointed at me as I approach the entry point, coming into work is reminiscent of entering the secured Green Zone of Baghdad, circa 2004.

This is grim stuff, as is the experience of seeing our revenues slashed, placing us in company with so many other organizations. Yet, as I told ROA's leaders during the March National Council and Leadership Conference, this is an anomaly: other than a financial straitening, *which will improve*, ROA's revitalization continues!

A year ago, in the 2020 *Reserve Voice Magazine*, I wrote that ROA is "in what I call a 'fragile' yet improving" financial recovery. That recovery was interrupted by the pandemic-driven million-dollar loss in Top of the Hill Banquet and Conference Center revenue, about a half-million dollars in gross profit. In a budget approaching \$3 million, that hurts. While we trimmed expenses by 22%, we still had to draw about \$360,000 from reserves. Our contingency fund, created and maintained for such a purpose, and the beneficiary of good management in a rising market, has just under \$1 million in it.

Our fiscal year 2022 annual budget just passed forecasts a \$280,000 deficit in operational accounts (not including such non-operational accounts as investment funds). Counting the fiscal year ending March 31, in the past five years, we have had two deficit budgets. Over time, we have built a reservoir and now are using some of it. We have also applied for the federal loans offered organizations to help them through this period.

The association's leadership shares my confidence that our banquet and conference business will return; already we are hearing from former clients asking when things will open up. The Congress is in session, and people want to be near the seat of power. While circumstances are transitory, human nature is not. We are using what we learned hosting the successful "hybrid" virtual/in-person convention last fall in St. Louis and offering that capability to our Top of the Hill clientele.

ROA's development campaign is driving toward its \$10 million goal. Every dollar helps ROA continue its service to our reserve components. Donors rightly want their hard-earned dollars, given so generously, to be used wisely. They are. The number of ROA national staff is at its lowest since, well, after World War II. We watch every dime and waste nothing. We're still using ROA stationery that predates our adoption of the Reserve Organization of America doing-business-as name. We'll use them up. We selectively use contractors to increase productivity and save on personnel expenses.

In days past, executive directors had deputy executive directors and executive assistants had assistant executive assistants. Well, no one on staff has "assistant" in their title. I do my own scheduling and writing, if you get a letter from me, I wrote it.

ROA's newly launched Citizen-Warrior Coalition earns corporate sponsorship to support ROA initiatives that help increase readiness and quality of life for members of the Reserve and National Guard and their families. It is an early success, with sponsors in four sectors: education (American Military University), energy (Centuri Group), health care (UnitedHealthcare), and transportation (American Trucking Association). These sponsorships total more than \$250,000. This is a magnificent example of America's employers rallying to the support of those who serve in the reserve components!

Our legislative and military policy campaign is presented in detail by ROA's director of legislation and military policy, retired USAFR Lt. Col. Susan Lukas, back with us after a brief hiatus. Susan knows more about reserve component legislation and policy than anyone I know.

Last year had barely begun when ROA took action with DoD to literally "open the gates" of secured military installations closed to members of the reserve force who were activated and trying to gain access so they could serve. Then last May, ROA wrote the president urging extension of Reserve Component COVID-related orders that curtailed duty one day shy of the 90 required for certain education and early-retirement credit; the orders were immediately extended. (What purpose are "89-day orders" if not to avoid paying benefits?)

ROA focuses on measures that significantly impact the readiness or the quality of life of members of the reserve components, their families, their employers (whose support of their serving employees we must encourage), and veterans of reserve component service. The watch word is “readiness.” Many quality of life issues enhance recruitment and retention and thus have a positive “echo effect” on readiness.

The measures ROA tackles cannot be “pie in the sky” initiatives too expensive to make it out of committee, or too broad to win focused support. A good example is ROA’s push for tax credits benefiting employers of the Guard and Reserve; they are affordable and incentivize hiring and retention of citizen warriors. Another example is new-model C-130J airplanes for the Air Force Reserve.

We’re fighting for legislation and policy that address battlefield toxicity, that help the Reserve and Guard get preference for federal hiring, and for improvements to early-age retirement. ROA is working with other military organizations, including the National Guard Association of the U.S., Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the U.S., and the Association of the United States Army. The necessity of ready reserve forces didn’t pause last year and neither did ROA’s legislative and military policy campaign!

ROA’s membership had begun a climb when COVID set us back. This setback has a tragic face, as we have lost many old comrades. The strong recruiting in our departments and chapters that turned the tide was interrupted during the pandemic. With our emergence from the pandemic’s grip, members will once again engage prospective recruits, and I expect to see a resumed climb.

ROA is attracting younger members, including enlisted. ROA has 32 enlisted Marine Corps members, from lance corporal to sergeant major (three are life members). That’s just under one percent of our total membership. Air Force Reserve NCOs recognize that within a revitalizing ROA, they can have influence, and are among our most active new members. In our new mentorship program, now in development, one of the two advisors is a recently retired Air Force Reserve chief master sergeant (E-9); her battle buddy is a retired Army Reserve major general.

The revitalization of ROA’s promotion packet review capability is a must. We can harness the expertise of members who sat on review boards to help serving members polish their packets and offer guidance on ways they can enhance their competitiveness, such as professional writing. As our national treasurer recently stated, ROA must offer more programs that directly benefit serving members. *He’s right and we will!*

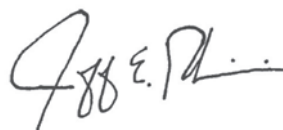
While the greatest ROA benefit is advocacy for strong reserve components—our founding purpose—ROA membership provides access to valuable member-benefit programs. As you read this, the application windows for our annual Henry J. Reilly Scholarship and Eileen M. Bonner Scholarship Award for Medical Excellence will be closing. Colonel Bonner was a longtime member of the Department of New York, which generously funds the award, and a past national president. Other benefits, on ROA.org, can save money, enrich your career potential, insure your family, provide financial services, and offer entertainment and leisure options. ROA’s leaders are constantly looking for benefits and welcome any suggestions you have!

Many ROA members have participated in our international programs; at the 2014 and 2019 CIOR summer congresses, I was impressed with the professional-development sessions for young reservists. ROA supports its partnerships with CIOR, the Interallied Confederation of Reserve Officers (essentially NATO member nations); UPORFA, the Pan American Union of Armed Forces Reserve Officers (similar to CIOR, with a Latin American focus); and CIOMR—the Interallied Confederation of Medical Reserve Officers.

ROA’s communications continue to improve. Our communications are organized by Kalen Marie Consulting; Kalen is a former Army Reserve public affairs officer and media expert. We have strengthened our social media outreach. The weekly Facebook Live video series, *Reserve Review*, presents items of interest to the reserve component community. This print and web-based edition of *Reserve Voice Magazine* shows the depth of ROA grassroots support: our departments donated more than \$44,000 to support the production of the magazine you are holding. On behalf of the national staff, I offer our gratitude to these supporters!

So when you “pull pitch,” climb a bit, and gain perspective over the transitory challenges of the past year, you see an ROA continuing its revitalization. We have shouldered aside the obstacles besetting us as our first century ends. We are moving resolutely into the dawn of the “first” second century in ROA’s history.

Thank you for being part of that historic advance!



Jeffrey E. Phillips
ROA Executive Director



ROA Photography by Henry Plimack

ROA Legislative Priorities

117th Congress

Service-Specific Priorities

ROA urges Congress to provide appropriations to support the Reserve Components' highest priority for equipment as identified by the services.

ROA urges Congress to support the National Guard reserve equipment appropriation in the budget to reduce shortages and replace equipment currently being used beyond its functional life.

ROA urges Congress to prohibit reprogramming National Guard and Reserve Equipment Account funds.

ARMY NATIONAL GUARD—Heavy Expanded Mobility Tactical Truck (HEMTT) Wrecker. This 11-ton wrecker provides lift-tow and flat-tow capability and can recover other HEMTT vehicles as well as medium and light tactical wheeled vehicles.

ARMY RESERVE—Joint Light Tactical Vehicle (JLTV). They will only have 17% of the current JLTV requirement on hand by the close of fiscal year 2022. Currently, 64% of the fleet does not meet the minimum force protection standards for global deployment to a non-permissive threat environment.

NAVY RESERVE—KC-130J. This aircraft would replace the 29-year-old C/KC-130T. It would serve as a connector between strategic airlift points and provide global logistics support while specializing in airlift for outsized cargo.

MARINE CORPS RESERVE—C-130J Super Hercules. The Reserve currently maintains a mixed fleet of KC-130J and legacy KC-130T aircraft that have completely different logistics, maintenance, and aircrew requirements,

which increases cost for maintenance and training. This aircraft has increased range and speed, lower cost per flight hour, better fuel efficiency, improved reliability, and better maintainability.

AIR NATIONAL GUARD—The C-130J requires the real-time, in-cockpit situational awareness system for 28 aircraft, including the EC and MC-130Js. Upgrades to the hardware/software provide an airborne dynamic re-tasking capability and an integrated processor that will improve operational effectiveness.

AIR FORCE RESERVE—C-130J to replace C-130H aircraft. The C-130H aircraft was first deployed in June 1974. Updated C-130J aircraft are needed for the aerial spray mission in Youngstown, Ohio, and the modular airborne fire fighting mission in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

COAST GUARD RESERVE—Base X Field Tents. Required by port security units for tactical safety and security; PSU 311 in San Pedro, California, requires 14 Base X units; PSU 307 in Clearwater, Florida, requires three.

Pay: Hazardous Duty Incentive Pay/Aviation Incentive Pay Parity

ROA urges Congress to ensure reserve component service members receive equal Hazardous Duty Incentive Pay (HDIP) and Aviation Career Incentive Pay at the same rate as their active-duty counterparts as they meet the same monthly standards for performance of duty. 37 U.S.C §301 and §301a

Thank you to service members, their families, and their employers for continuing to support the nation overseas and with the COVID-19 pandemic!

Gray Area: Early Retirement Age

Health Care: ROA urges Congress to provide the same health care coverage to retirees who qualify for gray area early-age retirement. 10 U.S.C. §1074

Interim Payment: ROA urges Congress to add interim payment when the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) conducts an audit of points for retirement pay, which can delay retirement pay. 10 U.S.C. §1415

Centralized Website: ROA urges the Department of Defense to establish a standard application and timeline process with one website location for reserve retirement applications to streamline the process.

Service Date: ROA urges Congress to direct the Department of Defense to create a military service date that establishes the specific date the reserve component service member qualifies for early-age retirement pay. 10 U.S.C. 12731(f)(2)(A)

TAPS: ROA urges Congress to direct DoD to budget and implement a mandatory transition assistance program for retirement to ensure service members understand the application process for age 60 pay and early-age retirement pay. 10 U.S.C. 1142(a)(3)(A)

Retired Reserve: ROA urges Congress to direct the Reserve Components to identify and advise the service members who have already transferred to the Retired Reserve about the specific date they qualify for retirement pay or early-age retirement pay. 10 U.S.C. 12731(f)(2)(A)

GUARD AND RESERVE OVERSEAS ACTIVATIONS

Currently Activated:	38,334
Deactivated Since 9/11:	986,084
Total:	1,024,418

Activations as of April 6, 2021

Taxes: Update Tax Laws and Policies for Service Members

Employers: ROA urges Congress to establish a tax credit for employers who hire members of the Reserve Components. 26 U.S.C. Chapter 1, Subtitle 1, Chapter 1, Subpart D of part IV of subchapter A

401K: ROA urges Congress to exempt Guard and Reserve employee and government contribution limits from the new “blended retirement” plan. 26 USC 401(k)

Mileage: ROA urges Congress to amend to decrease the distance to 50 miles for the above-the-line deduction for travel expenses. 26 USC §62(a)(2)(E)


Waiver: ROA urges Congress to update IRS Revenue Procedure 2016-47 to allow members of the Reserve Components on military deployment to qualify for a waiver of the 60-day rollover requirement.

Taxes: Update Tax Laws and Policies for Military Families

Spouse Employment: ROA urges Congress to create a target group for uniformed services spouses under the Work Opportunity Tax Credits to drive down the unemployment rate while incentivizing businesses with a much-needed tax benefit to help stabilize our economy and get Americans back to work. 26 U.S.C. § 51(d)(1)

Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account: ROA urges the Department of Defense to offer FSAs to uniformed service members when they are performing inactive and active duty.

Retirement: U.S. Coast Guard and U.S. Public Health

ROA urges Congress to change the Department of Defense Military Retirement Fund to pay for Coast Guard and Public Health Service retirement and survivor benefit programs in the same accrual system as other branches of the military. 10 U.S.C. § 1461(a), 1463(a), 1465 and 1466. 

ROA's 2020 Legislative and Policy Accomplishments


ROA maintains a robust legislative agenda that is tightly focused on the role of the Reserve Components in national security, and improving the lives of reserve component members, families, and veterans of the reserve force. Unlike any other association, ROA's legislative agenda tackles strategic and operational issues extending across all the reserve component services. *Supporting the reserve forces is part of what some other associations do; it's all that ROA does.*

ROA's achievements are a result of our direct action through resolutions, letters, seminars, and the ROA legislative agenda. These efforts occurred over the year with Congress, the reserve chiefs, The Military Coalition, the National Military and Veterans Association, Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States (EANGUS), National Guard Association of the United States (NGAUS), other military and veteran's service organizations, and the Reserve Forces Policy Board.

- The U.S. Public Health Service Ready Reserve was passed into law in the *Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act* (CARES Act), Public Law No: 116-136. ROA's call to action to establish the Ready Reserve convinced Congress this group could be another resource in future pandemics and other national emergencies or disasters.
- ROA worked directly with Del. Sablan's office on an employment bill, *GI Bill Access to Career Credentials Act*, that passed into law. ROA Executive Director Jeff Phillips said, "A college education is not the only way to secure a bright future. ROA believes H.R. 2934 by Del. Sablan will help reserve component service members find other avenues of employment."
- ROA proposed the award of constructive credit for reserve component service members during the pandemic shutdown when drill weekends and other training orders were cancelled; the Pentagon and Congress agreed and it was passed into law in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021.
- Military One Source agreed to add the ROA school kit on its resource page; the kits are for parents to give to schools so they can help Reserve and National Guard students when their military parents are deployed.
- ROA wrote the president about COVID-19 orders, which resulted in issuance of an executive order to change National Guard state active-duty orders to federal active-duty orders. At the urging of ROA, subsequent executive orders also prohibited ending orders on the 89th day, which would have prevented credit for education and early age retirement benefits that requires being on orders for 90 days or more.
- ROA supported extending transitional health benefits to National Guard members serving on orders for the pandemic when they separated from active service after serving on full-time duty.
- Servicemembers Civil Relief Act and Uniformed Services Employment & Reemployment Rights Act provisions supported by ROA were included in H.R. 6800, *The Heroes Act*, to provide lease protections and early termination of various service contracts. This became a problem when families were caught up in stop movement orders due to the pandemic and they faced having to maintain two residences between the departing installation and new assignment location. Contract protections were also included in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021.
- The Navy was directed to submit to Congress, within 90 days of the legislation being signed into law, a report that outlines a plan to recapitalize the two Navy Reserve squadrons with P-8A aircraft by 2023, when the reserve P-3Cs will reach the end of their service lives. ROA has requested appropriations for the P-8A since 2015 and previously was able to get authorizations for the aircraft passed.
- ROA was able to get a pilot program for the Department of Defense to provide job placement assistance and related employment services directly to members of the National Guard and Reserves

in reserve active status through the SkillBridge program, which is currently offered only to active duty. We believe this will help our service members have other employment paths when they encounter employment problems due to deployments.

- Through ROA's work with The Military Coalition, legislation was enacted that prohibited the realignment or reduction of military medical end-strength authorizations pending review of impact of the pandemic.
- After years of ROA raising the issue to Congress about reserve component members who encounter disruptive medical care when changing orders, Congress directed DoD to conduct a report on lapses in Tricare coverage. This will allow them to study the extent of the problem and consider changes to prevent these lapses.
- ROA staff worked with McClatchy publications on a series of articles about the prevalence of cancer among pilots. While providing subject matter expertise, ROA convinced them to include other personnel on flying status. These articles resulted in Congress requiring the secretary of defense to conduct a two-phased study, in conjunction with the National Institutes of Health and the National Cancer Institute, on cancer among aviators and aviation support personnel who served in the armed forces on or after Feb. 28, 1961.

- ROA, working with several military associations, was able to get a mental health provision passed that allowed the Department of Veterans Affairs to provide mental health services to reserve component members. This effort was helped when ROA identified a flaw in the system where Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) privacy was inadvertently not followed. It turned out that service members who sought mental health care could be identified to the unit because their medical condition could impact their ability to perform their military duty.
- ROA identified how the Department of Veterans Affairs Center for Women Veterans did not have a separate funding line because of how they were configured. After this disclosure, The Deborah Sampson Act was passed to establish the Office of Women's Health at the Department of Veterans Affairs that guarantees a dedicated funding account.
- An effort by the late Capt. Jerry Kromrey, U.S. Air Force, and ROA staff resulted in a bill titled *Identifying Barriers and Best Practices Study Act of 2019*. It was passed in 2020, directing the Government Accountability Office to study and report on disability and pension benefits provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs to members of the Reserve Components. 


Know Your Employment Rights

The Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) protects servicemembers' civilian employment rights. The act is intended to encourage service in the uniformed services, to minimize disruption in employment, and to prevent discrimination against all who have served or are serving.

But the law can be complicated and has been interpreted differently by jurisdictions, employers, and veterans themselves. Many employers have an incomplete or no knowledge of USERRA's provisions. The law is also dynamic, with recent federal court decisions impacting how the law is applied.

While the US departments of Labor and Defense should work collaboratively to meet the goal of ensuring

service members' USERRA rights are protected, resolving disputes at the lowest possible level before they reach litigation through outreach and education, for various reasons that does not consistently happen.

In support of a better outcome, ROA provides the **Service Members Law Center**, a resource to aid understanding of the complexities and developments of USERRA. The ROA Law Center, hosted on the ROA website, maintains more than 1,500 law reviews continuously updated and organized by subject areas. The free online database offers essential information and resources that should be the first resource any service member looks to understand their rights. Take a moment to review this vital resource: <https://www.roa.org/page/lawcenter> 

Department of Georgia, Greater South Georgia Chapter

Department of Georgia President Leonard J. Sobieski III, Lt. Col., USAF, and Greater South Georgia Chapter 19 members met with Rep. Austin Scott (8th District) on Feb. 17. They will also be working with Scott's military legislative assistant, Mr. Dolbow, since Scott was just placed on the House Armed Services Committee's Subcommittee on Readiness.

The group discussed most of the concerns in ROA's Feb. 16 letter to the president, which included health care, equipment, duty status reform, and tax credits. They also asked him to support prohibiting the reprogramming of National Guard and Reserve equipment funds.

Finally, they discussed why proposed bill H.R. 916, which will reduce the Department of Defense's civilian workforce, would have a negative impact on the Reserve Components. Because of this proposed bill, the Department of Georgia submitted a revision to ROA resolution 19-22, "Full Funding for RC FTS Personnel," for consideration at ROA's 2021 National Council and Leaders Conference held March 13-14.


The resolution addresses the four types of reserve component full-time support personnel: active guard and reserve, military technician, active component, and

civilian. This manning is important because they are "assigned to organize; administer; instruct; recruit and train; maintain supplies, equipment and aircraft; and perform other functions required on a daily basis in the execution of operational missions and readiness preparations" in law, U.S. Code, Title 5—Government Organization and Employees, Title 10—Armed Forces, and Title 32—National Guard.

Proposed reductions range from 15% to 25%, which would have a higher impact on the Reserve Component than on the Active Component. The "Fiscal Year 2020 Defense Manpower Requirements Report" shows only 158,200 military and civilian full-time slots in the Reserve Component (compared to the Active Component 746,000 civilian-only population). If passed, these reductions would be on top of cuts from the fiscal year 2013 level of 160,300 that have occurred in the past few years.

ROA President Judi Davenport said, "The legislative grassroots efforts of our departments can't be overstated. March is an important month to be active because that is when Congress begins developing legislation for the year." In previous years, ROA departments have been successful in getting law passed when visiting their representatives and senators.

For example, the Department of Missouri was able to get Congress to halt the retirement of the A-10 "Warthog" aircraft and it is still being funded. According to a RAND Corporation study, "Defining an Approach for Future Close Air Support (CAS) Capability," the "...A-10 flew approximately one-half of all the CAS missions ...despite representing a small fraction of the total aircraft in theater."

Grassroots efforts fulfill ROA's charter "...to support and promote the development and execution of a military policy for the United States that will provide adequate National Security." 



From left to right, Rep. Austin Scott; USAF Maj. Beverly Hayes; USAF Senior Master Sgt. Penny Ricketts; retired USAF Lt. Col. Gerald Mekosh; USAF Lt. Col. Leonard Sobieski; and USAF Tech. Sgt. Joshua Marsh. Photo by Ms. Alice Johnson.

The Many Facets of Service

By Lt. Col. William B. Pentecost Jr., USAR (Ret.), ROA Army Section Vice President
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The pandemic has challenged all of us to do our part to help those in need, while supporting our nation. While a tragedy on so many levels, COVID-19 has given us unprecedented opportunities to serve in new and innovative ways.

Service in the Army has traditionally been measured over the course of years on active duty, and further compartmentalized into deployments versus stateside duty. While that paradigm is accurate for many who have served over the years, it only scratches the surface as to the opportunities offered in the various components of the Army.

While there are approximately 500,000 soldiers in the active duty “standing Army” comprising four corps and 10 divisions, there are just over 335,000 soldiers in the National Guard and nearly 190,000 in the Army Reserve. As ROA supports soldiers in all components of the Army, with an emphasis on the Reserve Components, a brief overview of the many facets of the reserve forces is in order.

Soldiers are assigned to several categories within the RC, including the Ready Reserve, comprising military members of both the Reserve and National Guard. Soldiers assigned to the Ready Reserve are typically organized into units; they train to be ready for active duty in times of war or national emergency.

A large part of the Ready Reserve is the Selected Reserve, made up of units designated by the Army and approved by the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff as so essential to initial wartime missions that they have priority over all other reserves. The Selected Reserve consists of additional sub-subcategories, including drilling reservists/traditional reservists (TR), unit program/traditional guardsmen (TG), and unit program/troop program units (TPUs), which comprise soldiers who participate in unit training activities.

Individual mobilization augmentees (IMAs) are also part of the Ready Reserve. IMAs are trained individuals assigned to active component units. While these soldiers typically do not visit their active-duty units on the weekends, they are often assigned to augment those units for short periods of time and are always ready to mobilize and deploy on short notice with their host units. In addition

to serving with active-duty Army units, IMA soldiers are assigned to federal agencies, *e.g.*, the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Some members of the Army Reserve and National Guard work 365 days a year, but they are not part of the Active Component. They are full-time members of the Active Guard/Reserve (AGR) that have been ordered to active duty or full-time National Guard duty for the purpose of working with the reserve component units. AGR members may qualify for active-duty pensions if they meet the minimum active federal service obligations.

There are also soldiers in the Individual Ready Reserve (IRR). While typically not paid, these soldiers are also not required to drill, conduct annual training, or participate in military activities, other than periodic “muster” activities, unless they are activated or choose to drill, train, or serve in some capacity. These IRR soldiers provide a strategic pool as they have completed most, if not all, of their required training, and many of them have served in the Active Component or in the Selected Reserve.

Similarly, Inactive National Guard (ING) are soldiers in an inactive status in the Ready Reserve and are attached to specific National Guard units. They are only required to muster once a year with their assigned unit but do not participate in training activities. ING soldiers are subject to mobilization and deployment with their units.

The Standby Reserve consists of soldiers who maintain their affiliation without being in the Ready Reserve. Most of the Standby Reserve soldiers have been designated as key civilian employees or have a temporary hardship or disability. They are not required to perform training and are not part of units; they are a pool of trained individuals who could be mobilized if necessary as a last resort to fill manpower needs in specific skills. Typically, membership in the Standby Reserve is limited to one year. Afterwards, the soldier must determine if he or she will transfer to the IRR or a drilling unit.

Finally, the Retired Reserve consists of all soldiers who receive retired pay on the basis of active duty or reserve service, and those soldiers otherwise eligible for retired pay but not yet age 60 and have not elected discharge.

This refresher of the opportunities for service in the Army's reserve components leads to the concept of "continuum of service," the ability for soldiers to move between the active and reserve components and civilian service.

The continuum of service allows soldiers to move between different statuses, allowing them to maintain their accumulated benefits, including retirement, while benefitting the Army by allowing it to retain a pool of experienced, talented soldiers.

Historically, it was not easy for soldiers to transition among the various components. The labyrinth of statutes, regulations, and policies contributed to the difficulty of moving between different military components and the civilian sector. By simplifying the red tape, the continuum allows soldiers to seamlessly move back and forth between the various components throughout their careers.

After completing any mandatory period of service in the Active Component, a soldier would often default into the IRR, which he or she can still do, but the continuum allows that soldier to transition any number of times into drilling statuses in the Reserve Component, and even short tours in the Active Component. Depending on civilian obligations, the soldier can "take a knee" in the IRR, with the opportunity to later serve in other components.

This continuum will prove invaluable to the "multi-domain" capable force referred to in these pages by Chief of Army Reserve Lt. Gen. Jody Daniels. Multi-domain capability ensures the Army's reserve components are able to support the total force, which cannot prevail without our citizen-warriors. Army Reserve and National Guard multi-domain capabilities benefit from civilian experience such as gained in the information and cyber domains (to name just two); General Daniels is spot-on in asserting the importance of supporting the civilian work lives of citizen-warriors as they in turn bring their skills to bear as soldiers. I am proud of ROA's work to enhance employer support of our intrepid citizen-warriors as they help modernize the force!

The continuum fosters a partnership between the soldiers' civilian employers, which benefit from military skills, and the Army benefitting from the skills the soldier obtained through civilian education and training.

ROA is at the center of this strategic alliance between the Army and the civilian community, as shown by our Army members of the Executive Committee. Our junior vice president, 1st Lt. Endureth Culanag, had to step down from the ExCom to take care of several family


members who suffered from COVID-19. Our prayers are with her and her family. Our executive committee members—Lt. Col. Vincent Cummings, Maj. Peter Powell, and Maj. Jason Tolbert—have been called to active duty during their terms on our ExCom: Cummings, our former national chaplain, has been serving as the chaplain to the Military District of Washington, Powell has just returned from Kuwait, and Tolbert is still serving in Qatar.

Retired Col. Judi Davenport is our national president, with retired Maj. Gen. Jeff Phillips as our executive director and Col. Sherman Reed our national chaplain. Maj. Gen. Margaret Wilmoth serves as our health services officer, following her service on the ExCom and as chair of our Organizational Structure and Policies Review (OSPR) "Tiger Team."

Along with General Wilmoth, our Army section was prominently represented on the Tiger Team, with our former National Judge Advocate Lt. Col. Terry Benshoof, Major Tolbert, and myself. Diane Markham worked tirelessly as our staff liaison. The Tiger Team provided several recommendations for changes to ROA's governing documents, which are being reviewed by the ExCom and will soon be socialized to the departments.

The Army has always been ROA's largest section and, while supportive of the other services, advocates most strongly for the Army, with particular emphasis on its reserve components, the Army Reserve, and the Army National Guard. Using the *Reserve Voice Magazine*, we will continue to do what we do best: advocacy through education. As ROA approaches its centennial, I look forward to working with you all to continue to advocate for the sustainment and improvement of the Army's reserve components into ROA's second century of service.

Looking to the future, we as the Army Section need to continue to build our bench of future leaders, not only in the Army's reserve components, but also in ROA. Looking ahead to our national convention in Memphis, we must identify good candidates for service on the ExCom, as well as ROA's national committees. Please let me know your thoughts for good candidates based on what you are seeing in the chapters and departments. Possibly at least one of the candidates you recommend for service at the national level of ROA will one day become our national president.

Thanks for all that you have done and thanks in advance for all that you will do for ROA. It is an honor to serve with all of you. 

The People We Serve

By Capt. Rick Thomas, USCGR (Ret.), ROA Naval Section Vice President
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Sitting here in the middle of a snowstorm, I realize it is Tet, the Vietnamese Lunar New Year. My wife of 48 years was born in Vietnam. We met when I was in the country from 1967 to 1970 serving as an Army helicopter pilot. Tet gets me to thinking about where I was during this important national holiday 50 years ago. Are things different today? In 1971, I was the aviation section leader for the 1st Squadron, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment (Brave Rifles) at Ft. Lewis, Washington.

I look on my trusty internet search engine for the year 1971 and find a few items of interest: 1) Email was first developed in 1971 by Ray Tomlinson. 2) A bomb exploded in the Capitol building in Washington, D.C., causing an estimated \$300,000 in damage but hurting no one. The Weathermen Underground claimed credit for the bombing, done in protest of the ongoing U.S.-supported Laos invasion. They also bombed Long Island Court House, the New York City Police Department headquarters, the Pentagon, and the State Department during that time period. 3) The H3N2 virus pandemic (1968–1972), with genes that originated from avian influenza viruses, resulted in the deaths of an estimated 100,000 people in the United States.

And there were the Reserves and National Guard who were in and out of the country serving. Many of these young men and women from all walks of life were putting their lives on the line for our country and ideals. Today's dedicated citizen-soldiers have also chosen to serve their country as a career just as I, and many of you, did. As veterans and members of ROA, we should support these men and women of the Reserves and National Guard in any and all manners possible.

Today they are worldwide. Yet who would ever have thought they would be in Washington, D.C., performing security duties rather than attending as tourists the recent presidential inauguration? Unfortunately, there were a few on the wrong side of the fence. Do not let a few rotten apples tarnish our image and our call to duties no matter where or when. I applaud those members who were and still are serving in Washington to protect our leaders and our treasured public buildings. And thank you to the thousands

of our Reserve and National Guard members who have been on the front line performing various duties related to the COVID-19 pandemic. It sounds like a good fit for the Reserve Component of the U.S. Public Health Service as it establishes its Ready Reserve. This is a WIN for ROA and especially our own Susan Lukas, who has been aggressively engaged with Congress to establish it. Thanks, Susan.

Check the “human side” on what the Reserve Components are doing out in the field. As I searched through stories from the naval service components, I found a few items that I thought were kind of “cool,” where reservists made a difference. Reservists represent the most direct connection between the public and our military, yet most of us don't know what they do or how they do it.

Navy: Since December 2020, Naval Reserve pilots have supported test pilot school to solve COVID-19 challenges. “At the U.S. Naval Test Pilot School (USNTPS), we rely heavily on the NAVAIR Reserve Program to fill critical and demanding billets within the squadron,” Commanding Officer Lt. Col. Rory Feely said. “They bring a wealth of experience and perspective with them and are instrumental to USNTPS's mission success. Without the Naval Air Reserve Program (NRP), we would be dead in the water. I see this innovative use of staffing resources as a huge win-win for the NRP and USNTPS. We are talking top-quality talent that dons their service uniform and gets after the mission.”

Marines: Cpl. Joseph R. Manganaro is a mortarman and forward observer with 81mm Mortar Platoon, Weapons Company, 1st Battalion, 25th Marine Regiment, 4th Marine Division. Manganaro was on his way to the Marine Corps Center at Twentynine Palms to conduct training with his reserve unit. “[I was] sleeping on the plane, and I remember being woken up and hearing the intercom,” Manganaro said. “Someone asked if there were any medical professionals on board.” Manganaro works full-time as a firefighter and paramedic for the Stoughton Fire Department in Stoughton, Massachusetts, when he is not conducting Marine Corps training, so he volunteered to help. He was the only medical professional on board who

was trained to handle such a situation. He evaluated the man's symptoms and provided what medical care he could while the pilot made an emergency landing so the passenger could receive further emergency medical care. Manganaro takes equally seriously his professional responsibilities as a firefighter and paramedic and as a Marine.

USCG: The 2020 wildfires were devastating throughout the Pacific Northwest. Multiple agencies converged on the State Emergency Coordination Center in Salem, Oregon, just after Labor Day to help firefighter efforts. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), health services, U.S. Coast Guard, Oregon State Patrol, and the Oregon National Guard arrived to support the Oregon Office of Emergency Management's response efforts. Planning and operations worked to stabilize the incident at the state level as local fire teams fought to save their communities. One team was the Molalla Fire District responsible for an area that was very close to the Clackamas County Fire Complex. The fires were moving fast due to wind and dry conditions. One of Station Portland's reservists, Petty Officer 3rd Class Brandon Lauritzen, is a structural firefighter with the Molalla Fire District. After working 36 hours on a lumber mill fire, Lauritzen was called in to work the Clackamas fires. That night—September 7, 2020—was setting up to be one for the record books. After the 36-hour surge on the mill fire, a conflagration was declared and the Molalla Fire District, including Lauritzen's team, was rolled into Task Force 48, a group of fire crews tasked with wildland fire structure protection. They prepped structures by removing flammable items from porches, clearing brush, and digging fire lines eight to 10 feet away from the structure. Three weeks after the fires started, Oregon received significant rain, which helped gain containment of the fires and movement into recovery mode by state emergency managers and FEMA. It is stories like this that need telling. The efforts of Petty Officer Lauritzen and the Molalla Fire District team, along with thousands of first responders, saved lives, livelihoods, and property whether they were in or out of military uniform.

USPHS: We are new, and here we come: The Ready Reserve Corps offers a unique opportunity for its officers to serve their local community as well as their country in times of public health emergencies or in underserved areas. The Ready Reserve Corps is part of an elite group of commissioned corps' "America's health responders" who promote, protect, and advance the health and safety of the nation. The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, signed into law on March 27,

2020, provides both the authority and funding for the establishment of the Ready Reserve Corps. The USPHS Commissioned Corps began accepting Ready Reserve Corps applications online in fall 2020 and will commission its first officers in spring 2021. The USPHS Commissioned Corps is looking for service-driven individuals who desire to work in public health programs and clinical settings.

NOAA: The NOAA Commissioned Officer Corps received new authorities on December 23, 2020, to support NOAA's mission, when President Trump signed a bill that will expand and enhance the uniformed service. "The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps Amendments Act of 2020 authorizes the NOAA Corps to adjust the number of officers, as needed and funded, from 321 to a maximum of 500. It also expands benefits to NOAA Corps officers to align them better with the other uniformed services and includes provisions that will enhance NOAA's ability to recruit and retain officers and increase diversity in the workforce. NOAA Corps officers support NOAA's mission to understand and predict changes in climate, weather, oceans, and coasts and to conserve and manage coastal and marine ecosystems and resources. "This reauthorization act ensures that the NOAA Corps will be able to support NOAA and the nation more effectively than ever before," said NOAA Rear Adm. Michael J. Silah, director of the NOAA Commissioned Officer Corps and NOAA Office of Marine and Aviation Operations. When not at sea or in the air, NOAA Corps officers apply their operational experience, expertise, and training to advance new technologies, lead program and project teams, and respond to severe weather events, oil spills, and other emergencies.

There are many new and exciting things going on within ROA. Some are in the infant stage, and others are ongoing. Following are a few of my favorites.

The Yellow Ribbon program, although curtailed in some areas, has been progressing where it is allowed. Our reservists and National Guard members are still being deployed even though some are restricted in movements. My old unit, Port Security Unit 313, which I led as commanding officer during our tour in Kuwait and Iraq, is getting ready to move out. Want to see what's moving in your area? Go to yellowribbon.mil. Thanks to ROA's STARs Foundation for supporting this effort.

A growing effort being developed is the Citizen-Warrior Coalition, which matches up reservists and National Guard members looking for work with companies wanting to hire them. Several industry leaders are on board

with ROA to make this program a success. Please consider getting the word out once details are available to help our young men and women who are willing to put their lives on the line for our country. At least we can pay them back by offering employment where and when it is needed. Thanks to Brad Carlson and his crew.

The ROA mentorship project is being put together as well and will launch later this year. It will be a great program allowing those of us at the grassroots level to help develop our future Reserve and National Guard leaders. One objective is to encourage both mentors and mentees to register to participate. The program attempts to cast a wider net that also speaks to the importance of mentorship in creating opportunity, recognizing and rewarding merit, and grooming leadership of the next generation. Many of our members are senior officers who had the honor of serving as commanding officers or in leadership positions. We had young junior officers under our commands as well as sharp, intelligent enlisted personnel. During my 40 years of service, it wasn't until I was an O-4 that I had someone mentor me. When mentored in my senior years, it felt good that I could talk to someone who had been there and was willing to show me the way. My most successful mentoring occurred as an O-5, commanding USCG Port Security Unit 313 for four years. A young lieutenant junior grade (O-2) joined us in 1970. During our tour with the unit, including a one-year activation for 9-11 and a nine-month tour in Kuwait, I had many opportunities to help this


member. When I left the unit, he was a lieutenant and we kept in touch regularly to include mentoring long distances. Today, he is a retired O-6 and had a great career. I feel proud to have had a part in it.

To see more of what is going on within ROA, be sure to log into www.ROA.org and click on the "News" link to the following webpages within the members area: *The Reserve Voice*: A monthly update to legislation and membership information; and the *ROA SmartBrief*: A daily news source for Reserve Component information.

A quick look at our Naval Section membership numbers as of Jan. 31, 2021: Navy (3,884); Coast Guard (1,495); U.S. Public Health Service (1,020); Marines (775); NOAA (81).

By the time you see this, our virtual March leadership conference will be over. But don't forget your 2021 national convention is still a "GO" for Memphis. The big news for the Naval Services Section at Memphis is that our own Capt. Robert Carmack will assume the helm as our new president. Also, make plans now to attend the 2022 National Convention 100th Birthday event. The STARS board is planning a spectacular gala.

Finally, for the October convention, please be thinking of who might be willing to run for the position of naval vice president, thereby being my replacement. My two-year term will be up then.

A most hearty thank you to all who have made this edition of the magazine possible. 

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Precedented Times

By Col. Thomas H. Hueg, USAF (Ret.), ROA Air Force Section Vice President
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Last year as you were sitting down to enjoy the inaugural issue of *Reserve Voice Magazine*, we were entering the throes of a worldwide COVID-19 pandemic, unaware of all that would transpire over the next year or how our personal and professional lives would be impacted. Though I won't belabor the trials and tribulations we've all endured, I will say I saw one of the most appropriate summations of the year printed on a t-shirt: "I miss precedented times."

As the pandemic developed, it wasn't long before America's reserve components were activated to support the nation's COVID-19 response: augmenting in hospital ICU wards and mortuaries, securing streets, and transporting needed supplies. According to Lt. Gen. Richard Scobee, chief of the Air Force Reserve and commander, Air Force Reserve Command, "During the COVID-19 outbreak, more than 1,700 reserve citizen airmen were activated, and within 48 hours, medical personnel were sent to hot spots in New York and New Jersey, carrying along with them much needed personal protective equipment, testing kits, and ventilators. Their ability to rapidly mobilize and get people and supplies where they were needed saved thousands of lives and provided medical reservists with invaluable skills."

Add to that an active hurricane and wildfire season and other natural disasters, plus the rest of the commitments around the world that keep our citizen airmen on the go in any normal year, and it's not difficult to understand that our service has been operating at a frantic pace.

The dedicated ROA staff and leaders kept pace with you, despite working from home and participating in more Zoom meetings than I ever thought possible. Some of the achievements include:

- ROA was able to get National Guard service members placed on Title 32 orders (rather than state active-duty orders) when Jeff Phillips, ROA executive director, sent the president a letter encouraging support for invoking Title 32 Section 502f. Doing so offered the service member access to Tricare medical coverage, education benefits,

and points toward military retirement. Also, using federal money preserved state financial resources.

- ROA became involved again when it was reported that Department of Defense policymakers were curtailing COVID-response orders at 89 days, depriving reserve component service members of receiving the 90-day benefits they deserved, post-9/11 GI bill credit, and early-age retirement.
- ROA also got constructive credit for a "good" retirement year included in the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2021, Sec. 516. "Inclusion of drill or training foregone due to emergency travel or duty restrictions in computations of entitlement to and amounts of retired pay for non-regular service." This important provision ensures every reserve component service member will be credited with the points necessary for a "good" retirement year even though drill weekends were canceled because of the pandemic.

This determined effort is typical of what ROA puts forth every year to secure benefits for ALL reserve component service members, whether members of ROA or not.

ROA is, of course, concerned with issues beyond COVID-19 relief, and the results of its focus on advocacy often pay long-term dividends. Years ago, ROA's legislative staff worked with Congress to support the A-10 platform when the Air Force was seeking to retire the weapon system and use the money for more modern and expensive airplanes. The NDAA for that year directed the Air Force to continue supporting the A-10. Subsequent NDAA's continue to provide funds to upgrade and enhance the A-10 to increase its service life and make it more lethal and versatile than ever. Language in the 2021 NDAA "prohibits the divestment of aircraft until the minima are reached to ensure that the Air Force can meet National Defense Strategy and combatant command requirements."

ROA held its first-ever hybrid national convention in St. Louis, Missouri, last September in accord with state

and local social-distancing restrictions. While 50 souls attended the convention in person, many, many more of you registered to participate virtually via online streaming and telephone. In fact, there were more members registered last year than have attended a convention in a decade or longer! Maybe it was freedom from the expense and hassle of traveling. Perhaps it was because of the convenience of attending from the comfort of your living room or kitchen. Whatever the reason, it was gratifying to see this great enthusiasm. Those who hadn't been to a national convention before or in a long time were treated to a sensational experience.

An unintended benefit of the virtual convention was that all the sessions were open to everyone. Usually, the service sections break into individual meetings. This time, we were all together for every session, and *voila*, joint education occurred. Attendees learned about the Army Reserve's force modernization concepts. The naval services (Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, Public Health Service, and NOAA) hosted a virtual panel of reserve officers from U.S. Transportation Command, and everyone—not just Air

Force reservists—listened to a stimulating and entertaining (why not both?) presentation from Lt. Gen. Richard Scobee and Chief Master Sgt. Timothy White, senior enlisted advisor to the chief and command chief master sergeant of the Air Force Reserve Command. Attendees who might not have been aware, as we are, of the myriad missions the Air Force Reserve undertakes every day learned a great deal from their presentation and how well the Air Force Reserve strives to take care of its people. The candor with which they spoke gave all a glimpse of how privileged we citizen airmen are to have the leadership of these men.

The 2021 National Convention will be held Oct. 21–24 in Memphis, Tennessee, but may be hybrid again. During the convention, the Air Force Section will be electing a vice president, a junior vice president, and two National Executive Committee members. If you have considered becoming more involved with ROA at the national level where you can have a hand in determining

As ROA moves towards its second century, it still commands respect on Capitol Hill and in the Pentagon based on its reputation for honest dialogue. While some military or veteran service organizations may touch upon issues that have reservist equities, ROA stands exclusively for the reservist.


the organization's direction, I urge you to consider seeking a nomination to run for office. Eligibility requires that you be a regular member of ROA in good standing and nominated by your service section. You must be endorsed for nomination by your department. Remember that the Reserve Organization of America embraces all ranks. Anyone who has raised his or her right hand and sworn the oath to protect the Constitution against all enemies and has served America honorably can be a member of ROA. The Air Force Section holds the distinction of having the first NCO vice president, my predecessor Chief Master Sgt. Shane Smith, and junior vice president, Staff Sgt. April Hill, who is presently serving her second two-year term.

I hope all of you reading this are ROA members. If not, I heartily encourage you to become members! If you are a member, I urge you to recruit a colleague to join this association.

ROA has some exciting times ahead as we begin to celebrate our centennial year in 2022, culminating with the national convention here in the Washington, D.C., area. As ROA moves towards its second century, it still commands respect on

Capitol Hill and in the Pentagon based on its reputation for honest dialogue. While some military or veteran service organizations may touch upon issues that have reservist equities, ROA stands exclusively for the reservist. And the work goes on.

It is an honor to continue serving you as Air Force Service Section vice president, along with Junior Vice President Staff Sgt. April Hill and retired Col. Greg Bules, retired Col. Rick Nelson, and retired Lt. Col. Susan Lukas, members of the National Executive Committee. We continue to foster a good relationship with Air Force Reserve leadership. ROA, as an advocate on the Hill and in the Pentagon, is an instrument our leaders can use to help meet their goals of accelerated readiness and developing resilient leaders. Please let me know where you see opportunities for ROA to help. I look forward to working with you!

I wish you the best of health and hope we can return to “precedented” times again soon. 

New and Improved: Convention 2021

ROA'S 2021 TRADITIONAL CONVENTION TO EMBRACE LESSONS FROM THE 2020 HYBRID CONVENTION

By T. Diane Markham

It seems like just yesterday when we were planning the September 2020 convention in St. Louis, Missouri. It was to be a traditional convention with attendees, speakers, and award recipients all coming together in a single place to meet face to face, exchange ideas, and share a handshake.

Then COVID-19 turned the world as we knew it on its head. We started wearing masks, using gallons of hand sanitizer, and bumping elbows as the new handshake. Travel restrictions and social distancing were implemented.

ROA was faced with a huge dilemma. Can we even do a convention in this environment? Do we cancel? We had a contract with a hotel that included significant penalties for cancellation, for not ordering enough food, and for not booking enough guest rooms.

After a significant time in discussion, ROA's Executive Committee decided to conduct a hybrid meeting—some in-person attendees, some virtual attendees. Then negotiations began with the hotel. After some back and forth, the hotel granted relief from the minimum requirements as long as we still held the meeting.

Financially, that was great news. We needed the financial relief because conducting a virtual meeting would not be cheap or easy. In addition to the normal audio-visual setups of microphones, laptops, projectors, screens, etc., we had to add videographers, technical operators, video streaming, and a lot of other technical capabilities I still don't understand. ROA got lucky again. Condor, ROA's AV partner, donated a large portion of their time and equipment, cutting our AV expenses in half.

To accommodate the different time zones of virtual participants and to allow broadcasting from only one meeting room, we had to change the traditional schedule. Most meetings started in late morning or the afternoon. Awards were presented in one session instead of being split up into service sections. There were no concurrent sessions, so everyone was able to listen in on the other service section meetings. Speakers joined in virtually and both virtual and in-person attendees were able to ask questions.

When it came to business, the voting process changed only slightly. Each department was represented by only one delegate vs. the several they are allowed in a normal year. This enabled us to conduct business by roll-call voting.

Hybrid meetings have been new territory for most associations and meeting planners. We had a lot to learn in a short period of time, but it was worth it. We pulled off a very successful meeting, with more attendees than we have had in many years. We learned that our attendees like the joint awards ceremony. They like being able to sit in to hear the other service section speakers. But our virtual attendees missed the opportunities to see old friends and to exchange ideas.

Now, as we begin planning for our next traditional convention in October, we will use what we have learned



Graceland photos
by David Meany



as we develop the schedule. While the specifics of the agenda are still under construction, we can look forward to another joint awards ceremony. We will reduce the number of concurrent sessions and provide networking opportunities for our attendees.

One of our sessions will be “The Reserve Component: Partners in the Joint Response to COVID-19.” The Department of Defense created Urban Augmentation Medical Task Forces (UAMTFs) to respond to the crisis in our nation’s hospitals. Members of the Reserve Component were rapidly mobilized and assigned to these UAMTFs, deployed nationwide last spring, to augment health care for critically ill Americans in civilian hospitals. This session will include a brief overview of the UAMTFs and how they functioned, lessons learned from a senior leader, and experiences shared from a panel of deployed reserve component personnel.

The convention will also include other speakers, the State of the Association address by the executive director, and an update on ROA’s legislative activity. During the business session, the convention will consider resolutions, vote on proposed amendments to the governing documents, and elect new members of the Executive Committee.

The 2021 convention will be held at The Guest House at Graceland in Memphis, Tennessee, October 21–24. The group rate of \$139 will be extended three days before and after the meeting. The resort fee has been waived and self-parking is a low rate of \$5 per night. A complimentary shuttle is available to/from the airport.

The Guest House at Graceland offers a resort experience inspired by Elvis Presley. It is a healthy walk to the




The Guest House photos by Robert Dye

Graceland entrance and the hotel offers a complimentary shuttle. A perfect blend of style and Southern hospitality, The Guest House is a whole new way to experience Memphis—the Birthplace of Rock ‘n’ Roll and Home of the Blues.

In addition to the lobby lounge and the grab-and-go counter, the hotel has two restaurants. Delta’s has classic Southern cooking; breakfast features contemporary versions of the King’s breakfast favorites. Dinner has a more upscale feel, with a handpicked wine selection and a menu that reflects the history and bounty of Tennessee and the Mississippi Delta’s farms, fields, and markets. At EP’s Bar and Grill, enjoy the soul of the South with a modern twist. Elvis’ favorite food and beverages meet contemporary interpretations. This casual dining spot has Southern flair and plenty of TVs to feed your sports cravings.

When you are ready to explore the city, the hotel is offering its nightly shuttle to Beale Street for only \$5 round trip—a discount of 50%! Beale St. is best known as the “Home of the Blues.” Beale Street offers music, dining, and shopping. Download the app for more information.

Visit the Mud Island Riverwalk, tour the national civil rights museum, see the Orpheum theater, visit the Peabody ducks, or listen to some blues on Beale Street. Memphis is full of things to do!

Mark your calendar and join us for the 2021 National Convention. Hear interesting speakers, conduct ROA business, network, mentor or be mentored, see old friends, and explore the city. Your adventure awaits! 



**ROA
2021**

October 21–24

**The Guest House
at Graceland**

From Trenches to Tranches: Cybersecurity Bridges Military, Civilian Worlds

By Michael Gips, CPP

Modernization2 Cyber – Wyoming National Guard Airman 1st Class Thomas Schoening, a cyber transport systems specialist, addresses a server room issue at the 153rd Airlift Wing. There are more than 3,900 Army and Air National Guard personnel serving in 59 DoD cyber units in 40 states. (National Guard photo illustration by Tech. Sgt. Jon Alderman)



When news of the SolarWinds hacking campaign came out in December 2020—an operation that used that company’s information technology (IT) infrastructure management software as a jumping-off point for attacks against thousands of corporations and federal agencies—U. S. Army Reservist David Dodson had a singular perspective. Like many other reservists throughout all military and National Guard branches, Dodson is a cybersecurity expert with one foot planted in the military realm and the other in the business world. When his defense contractor employer and his reserve unit separately analyzed the attack and its implications, they approached it from different perspectives. Dodson bridged the two and shared analysis, insights, and actions that the organizations wouldn’t have gained on their own.

“From the reserve side, we were an outside group looking in,” says Dodson, meaning that his unit was not a direct victim of the hack. “We posited ways that we would do something similar.” From his reserve duty, Dodson had access to information sources that were not publicly available. He was able to provide his employer with information that helped them erect more robust defensive measures. And Dodson’s private sector experience dealing with ever-changing tactics, techniques, and procedures employed by threat actors has helped bolster his reserve unit’s readiness.

For cybersecurity practitioners who occupy dual roles—one to protect the nation and the other to advance the business interests of their employer—knowledge and experience gained in both spheres represent an enormous upside for all parties. Reserve forces throughout the military have become more alert to these benefits. They are becoming more savvy at facilitating these types of arrangements to satisfy an ever-growing need for cybersecurity expertise. The trend is toward a shared workforce. Still, significant obstacles remain.

Background

It’s no secret that we face an acute shortage of cybersecurity talent. Forrester Research has estimated a global shortfall of 1.2 million cybersecurity professionals globally by 2022. Emsi, a labor analytics firm, reports that the United States has less than half the cybersecurity talent than it needs to keep up with growing demand. And the problem cuts across the military, government, corporate America, academia, small business, and every other sector. High salaries and perks offered by Fortune 500 companies and big tech firms lure a disproportionate share of the candidates, forcing the military to take more creative approaches to talent acquisition and retention.

Those approaches include retraining active-duty troops and creating civilian cybersecurity teams that work with military units. But perhaps the most effective come through harnessing the talent of reservists who already work in the private sector.

According to data collected by Statista, which gathers market and consumer data, the five branches of the U.S. military (not counting the Space Force) number almost 600,000 reservists among their ranks. Including the Army and Air National Guard adds another 440,000 soldiers to that tally. Those one million part-time soldiers add a diverse skill set to the nation's military capabilities.

But only a modest percentage engage in cybersecurity. Though few data points are available, a study by the Defense Manpower Data Center counted about 6,300 reservists with cyber-related military occupations in 2015. A 2020 study by the Center for Security Studies, ETH Zurich, estimated that there were 1,444 members of the Army Reserve and Army working on Cyber Mission Force teams at that time. But that study excluded cybersecurity practitioners in different cybersecurity units and other branches of the reserve force.

Benefits

Reservists interviewed for this article uniformly expressed satisfaction with their dual roles. "If you are in both the civil and military worlds, you can be doubly effective," says Kenneth Voiland, an application systems analyst at Valleywise Health and a former Marine Corps reservist.



Benjamin Opel, senior director of cybersecurity at Attack-IQ, at his last going-away, AD unit 9th Comm Battalion, 1 MIG, 1 MEF. (Photo provided by Opel)

“The cyber problem, as a whole, is very complicated and constantly evolves over multiple areas, ranging from large space vehicles all the way to a smartphone. But yet, our restrictive policies and regulations stay in place for many years, and do not change with the times. They are nothing more than an unbreakable barrier to people that want to serve in any uniformed branch and a hindrance that continually affects overall mission. If we want to be successful and own cyberspace, the aperture needs to be opened to allow for people that may not meet age, medical, or prior service barriers. Talent is sorely needed and being overly selective is not helping; rather, it pushes talent away from service to the private sector. As for those currently serving, a pathway to easier promotions, for all ranks, would entice retention in this field. Cyber professionals are specialists in their respective fields, and should enjoy the same privileges that other specialty fields, like physicians, chaplains, and lawyers, already have.”

Dr. Jesse P. Samluk completed his doctorate in electrical and computer engineering. He is an RF Engineer with the Department of Defense and an ROA member. He co-authored "Recruiting Cyber Specialists: Why the Services Must Modernize Qualification Standards in the *Joint Force Quarterly*, Issue 99, 4th Quarter 2020. As a prior Army reservist he understands the challenges in the military cyber mission.

In some cases, skills, opportunities, and competencies flow mostly in one direction, but many others offer reciprocal advantages in both the military and corporate realms. The most frequently cited benefits that flow both ways are: development of a broader skill set; access to separate groups of experts; development of fuller leadership abilities; and access to multiple forms of training.

Military reservists also say that their units benefit from exposure to private sector innovation and a spirit of experimentation and possibility, colleagues who have business acumen, and a broader skill set than typically seen in the military. For its part, corporate employers are rewarded with disciplined employees and access to workers with security clearances.

Reciprocal Benefits

By sharing cybersecurity practitioners, the military and private employers receive a broader array of skills, increased access to experts, different elements of leadership, and a unique blend of training.

Skill Sets

“Reservists have a broad skill set that active-duty forces don’t have,” says Benjamin Opel, senior director at cybersecurity at AttackIQ. Opel, who served as a team leader for the Marine Corps Cyberspace Warfare Group and left active duty for the reserves in March 2020, adds that some reservists have honed their capabilities at employers such as Amazon and Google. “They have a view from the peak of industry.”

Practitioners note that skills developed in the private sector by constantly fending off cyberattacks also benefit the military. “Cybersecurity is one of the few jobs where you are at war all the time in the private sector,” says Blake Bryant, who doubles as a senior intelligence officer in the Army Reserve and as a professor at the University of Kansas. “Businesses are getting hacked in real-time,” adds Bryant, who has held several private sector cybersecurity positions. Battle-tested reservists can bring that skill and experience to their military role.

Some skills are more esoteric yet still immensely valuable. Bryant says that he learned Boolean logic while he was in the private sector and then applied it to his reservist duties to save his unit time and expense.

It works the other way, too. “Vincent Ayres,” a Navy reservist who works in the food/retail sector who asked that his name be changed so he could speak openly, praised capabilities that reservists bring to the corporate world. “If I had the opportunity to hire one of the folks I worked within the reserves, I would in a second,” he says.

Those skills are wide-ranging. Opel notes that his reserve unit abounds with talents such as red teaming, oversight of security operations centers, reverse engineering, threat hunting, and operational leadership. A reservist who picks up these skills from colleagues brings a new dimension back to his workforce.

Multiple reservists also mentioned that they gained experience in offensive cyber operations in the military, which complemented the defensive posture that characterizes their corporate work. David Dodson, a cyber analyst for a DoD contractor and an Army reservist, has used his knowledge of attack methodologies to identify for his employer approaches, vectors, and targets that an adversary might take advantage of. “It removes the low-hanging fruit you would not have insight into unless you were a pentester [penetration tester],” he says.

Beyond the rote skills, companies also benefit from the mindset of reservists. “We get a sense of goals, resources, and scope of capabilities of state actors,” Opel explains. “We can understand the worst-case scenarios better than anyone but a Mandiant, FireEye, or Google.” He says that he has used this mindset to help his corporate clients develop use cases.

Networking

Carrying over networking opportunities and access to a broad array of cybersecurity practitioners in their military units gives reservists in the business world a distinct advantage while also bringing value to both business and



Robert Lackey, Army reservist and cybersecurity design specialist at SAP Global Security. (Photo provided by Lackey)

the military. “The networking portion cannot be overstated,” says Dodson.

“I’m from Kansas, and my unit is in Arizona,” says Bryant, noting the diversity of backgrounds. “It’s like a mini RSA [public-key encryption technology invented by Rivest, Shamir, and Adleman] conference every month.” He and his unit trade information, conduct virtual labs, and mentor one another, he says.

Jared Hrabak, an Army Reserve computer network defense manager who also serves as a cybersecurity engineer for a private cyberservices provider, touts the ability to work on a cybersecurity team with other reservists who bring a diverse set of skills and experience to bear on a common mission. “I can ask them about problems I’ve had at my [day job],” Hrabak says, and get expert help with solutions.

Much of this access would be unlikely outside of the reserves. “I would never in my civilian job interact with cybersecurity experts in the FBI or other agencies unless there was a breach,” Hrabak says. “But I have a networking relationship with these folks.”

Camaraderie also mixes with healthy competition. While many reservists are open to sharing solutions and ideas, they also are driven to improve. That raises the quality of their performance in both the military and civilian sectors. As Bryant puts it, “You want to learn from people who are better than you.”

Interaction with counterparts who regularly see you in action among fellow reservists also boosts career prospects. Robert Lackey, an Army reservist as well as a cybersecurity design specialist at SAP Global Security, says that accumulating skills enhances promotion potential. Also, colleagues share positions that may not be publicly posted and can vouch for their fellow soldiers’ skills and work ethic because they’ve toiled together.

Leadership

Military service is justly known for developing leaders; it’s one of the main reasons businesses look to poach talent from the armed forces. However, the military benefits in kind from leadership qualities forged in corporate America.

Ayres, the reservist who works for the food manufacturer, recalls that his career progression didn’t provide leadership opportunities. “I’ve learned through the military to lead, motivate, build relationships with senior enlisted officers, be dependable, and provide basic instruction to sailors,” he says. Not only do those skills carry over to his day job, but they also inspire colleagues in both of his worlds to develop leadership skills of their own.

By contrast, Hrabak notes that the private sector fosters a different type of leadership. Reservists indicated that they might have to spend more time motivating people for personal goals than collective goals in the corporate world. Moreover, leadership must adapt to the specific organization’s culture, welcoming many voices to the discussion in companies with collaborative cultures.

Training

Reservists are enthused about training opportunities available to them as members of the military and the corporate workforce. “The military has training and experience that you can’t get on the private side,” he says. “You train to deal with nation-state activity,” he adds, as opposed to script kiddies, casual hackers, and scam artists.

Specifically, military training gets into detailed cyber-threat simulation that’s not usually available to the private sector. Reservists can also receive vouchers from SANS (Escal Institute of Advanced Technologies) and other private organizations to take courses restricted to members of the armed forces. They offer hands-on practice in hacking and developing new exploits, as well as defense against the same.

Dodson’s reserve sessions include training every month. “We make malware boxes for people to examine,” he says. “I put a zero-day [attack] in one of them. This is nation-state attack stuff.”

That sort of “niche” training is highly sought after, says Bryant. “There’s no other way to get that skill set.”

Cybersecurity training from the military can also benefit reservists in non-security roles. Robert Beveridge, a member of the Pennsylvania Air National Guard and technical manager at the Emerging Technology Center, Software Engineering Institute at Carnegie Mellon, develops curricula and training courses for the National Guard on various topics for soldiers who don’t practice cybersecurity yet have technical duties. Beveridge works with systems administrators, radio technicians, and help desk staff to help them learn cybersecurity fundamentals and develop a security mindset. He teaches them to understand attack tools and vectors and defenses such as intrusion detection systems.

“As we train them, they can take their experience back to their employers,” Beveridge explains. “Even though they are not in a security role, they can influence the organization they work at to build a security mindset. Assuming their employers embrace that, it’s a great relationship.”



Blake Bryant (front, left) senior intelligence officer-G2 in the U.S. Army Reserve and an assistant professor of practice at the University of Kansas, during a deployment to Kuwait in support of Operation Inherent Resolve with 1TSC-OCP G2 OIC. (Photo provided by Bryant)

ROA has supported a tax credit for employers for several years: “ROA appreciates Rep. Panetta reintroducing the Reservist Pay Equity Act in the 117th Congress. His commitment to Reserve Component employment is on display with increased employer tax credits. Deployments in 2020 for COVID and natural disasters are only some of the many times the National Guard and Reserve augmented the active force. We must not forget that employers are just as affected by these deployments as our service members, and this tax credit would help them support our citizen-warriors,” said Jeffrey Phillips, executive director, Reserve Organization of America.

Military cybersecurity training tends to dig much deeper, and demands longer periods of dedicated time, reservists say. By contrast, the private sector offers a broad palette of short-term training options not readily available in the armed forces. The emphasis is on putting training into practical use as quickly as possible. For example, during their day jobs, reservists may need to quickly get up to speed on new or updated software since they may be working with a wide array of products from different

vendors. While in the private sector one might jump from Juniper to Cisco in a day, Bryant says, the Department of Defense uses a specific set of tools that only changes via a drawn-out contract process.

Business to Military Benefits

In some respects, reservists’ business role provides unique value to their military role. They include a spirit of innovation, tolerance for experimentation, and business acumen.

Innovation and Experimentation

Businesses respond to market forces. The military responds to policy and events. Generally speaking, this requires companies to be dynamic while keeping the military hidebound.

Many reservists credit an open atmosphere for ideation and a bias for innovation as advancing their careers and injecting vigor into their military duties. “The civilian side is where ideas are generated,” says AttackIQ’s Opel. “We get exposure to real innovation in the industry.” He adds that the corporate working environment is far less restrictive in how initiatives are planned and approved. “In startups, the boss says, ‘Let’s do it.’ That’s not what happens in the Marine Corps.” Opel’s experience enables him to bring an outsider’s perspective to a situation in which he is an insider.



U.S. Airmen with the 156th Communications Flight, Puerto Rico Air National Guard, assemble a point-to-point microwave to receive network capabilities from the Joint Incident Site Communications Capability to their alternate location during training at the Roosevelt Roads U.S. Army Reserve Center in Ceiba, Puerto Rico, Dec. 9, 2020. Airmen with the 156th CF are conducting training with new team members on updated JISCC equipment. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Caycee Watson)

Reservists might even receive more exposure to fresh ideas than colleagues strictly in the private sector, especially if they don't attend conferences or network with peers. Reserve units often include practitioners from private cybersecurity companies, large cyber consulting firms like EY or Deloitte, Fortune 500 companies, and big tech companies such as Microsoft, Google, Amazon, Facebook, and Apple.

Business Acumen

Corporate security executives often say they would rather hire a business-oriented person and teach them security than take on a security professional and teach them business skills. For reservists looking to climb the corporate ladder, business acumen is an essential rung.

Ayres says that business savvy jumpstarted his career. He recounts working for a major aeronautical company early in his career: "I saw IT security being used to help solve business problems," he says, not just protect assets.

He learned that the best cybersecurity executives placed "more emphasis on building aircraft or understanding chemical profiles" than they did on security per se. In subsequent positions, he was able to deliver business value to his employer rather than mere compliance.

Bryant says that he used business management processes learned in the corporate world to complete a project with his reserve unit more efficiently. He says his six-person team of reservists working in the G2 section for the 1st Theater Sustainment Command (1TSC) took 12 hours to accomplish the task, compared to 18 hours for a 12-person team without business experience.

"The primary task for my section was gathering and processing intelligence feeds, preparing daily briefings for a 2-Star command, and producing and disseminating daily intelligence products to the Army at large," says Bryant.

"First I conducted business process analysis and activities-based costing immediately during the relief in place and transfer of authority (RIP/TOA) process. I quickly determined that some of the processes were running into head-of-line blocking waiting for other tasks within a critical path to be completed," Bryant reports. "Additionally, some tasks were performed manually that could have been automated, specifically the queries used to gather intelligence feeds from myriad databases."

Bryant used his background in Boolean logic to create a "one-line" query that replaced over a dozen disparate queries analysts had been issuing manually. This alone added consistency to data collection and removed the burden of a tedious data entry task spread across several soldiers.

Military to Business Benefits

On the other side of the coin, in some respects, businesses receive more skills, attributes, and abilities than they return to their military counterparts. They include discipline, project management, and accessed cleared personnel.

Discipline

It may be a cliché that military service instills discipline, but it's an accurate one. Outside of the strictest, most conservative companies, private-sector employees are generally not held to the same standards of comportment that reservists must live up to.

In a world where young careerists ghost job interviews, hopscotch through employers and expect instant promotion with little to commend them, employers crave the work ethic of reservists. In many ways, military discipline adds value to businesses without incurring recruiting or training costs.

Security Clearances

Obtaining staff with government clearances constitutes a massive boon for employers because the available talent pool is shallow. They also dodge the expense and burden of a Secret clearance which can cost up to \$3,000 according to Transition Assistance Online (TAOnline.com) and, as of Q4 2020, take 107 days to acquire, according to clearancejobs.com.

Companies like Honeywell scour for prospective staff with clearances, says Bryant. “They can be hard to find and hold big appeal.” The prospect of clearance might help convince a shrewd cybersecurity expert who wants to boost his or her salary and career prospects to join the reserves.

Challenges

Despite the vast advantages that accrue to reservists, their military units, and their employers, each faces obstacles to maintaining this relationship in the long term. These challenges center around competing loyalties and lifestyle issues.

It’s the age-old dilemma: who is the ultimate master, your employer or your country? How do you balance patriotic duty with your responsibility to the organization that pays you? Though companies benefit from the skills and connections of their reservist employees and the cachet it confers on them, they are ultimately in business to make money and have duties to shareholders and others to do so.

The time commitment to reserve units is “grossly underestimated,” says Bryant. It’s an 8-year service obligation, typically requiring one weekend a month and two weeks a year. But reservists can also be pulled away for more extended periods.

“I’ve been in situations where I’ve had to decide whether my military unit or employer is more important,” says Ayres. “In the first six months, my employers said

ROA recently wrote to the president and explained health care is no longer a benefit issue; it is a readiness issue for a service member. To maintain deployable status, a reserve component member needs continuous health care coverage, which should be done with one health care program that is not disrupted regardless of what type of order status they are on. Congress has taken a first step by passing TRICARE Reserve Select for all reservists; ROA encouraged the president and Congress to accelerate funding to fiscal year 2022. This approach would also benefit employers.

I was spending too much time away, even though there was no decline in my performance,” he recalls. He was subsequently called into active duty for 45 days, and when he came back, his employer had terminated his insurance. “At the end of the day,” he concedes, “you’re at the will of your employer. They are the ones paying your bills.”

Hrabak has faced a similar situation. In one case, he was on orders for 90 days. When he returned, his boss told him that his absence cost the company three times his salary.

And for sheer effectiveness and continuity alone, “You can’t just vanish,” says Dodson. “You can’t be a leader in absentia.”


Moreover, excessive time away can diminish skills. “Sometimes people spend so much time training, they come back, and their job has changed,” says Bryant. “There are new clients, new threats, a need to reintegrate. You may come back after months, and your job is unrecognizable.”

Private organizations’ support for their reservist staff has been a significant point of contention and frustration. Some organizations take a generous approach, while others may not be able to afford to lose key staff to reserve duties. And reservists find themselves in the middle, balancing patriotic duty with the desire to provide the best for their families.

This balancing act forces reservists to make difficult decisions about lifestyle issues. Will they accept a lower salary for a more lenient leave policy? Can they use vacation time to cover hours spent with their reserve units? Should you even inform a potential employer that you are a reservist? Would you even want to work for a company that you would hide that information from?

Despite the added stress and responsibilities, the dozen reservists interviewed for this story—covering most branches of the armed services—maintain that the journey has been worth it. Getting full corporate buy-in, though, may require explicitly presenting your value to the boss.

“I have strategic conversations, contacts, a network,” says Ayres. “Lots of organizations don’t see that. That’s where we have an opportunity to show that reservists bring an edge to corporate America. It’s not that we are retiring. We are motivated to provide expertise and assist.”

Dodson aptly sums up his colleagues’ consensus: “I have zero negative things to say about reserve opportunities. It opens so many doors for you.” 

Michael Gips, CPP, is a writer and principal at Global Insights in Professional Security, a consulting firm. The views expressed by the reservists are their own and do not reflect the opinions of the Department of Defense, any military branch or unit, or private company.

Confronti

THE ROLE OF THE RESERVES IN GREAT POWER COMPETITION

By Cmdr. Daniel R. Green, USNR, Ph.D.

Since the publication of the U.S. Department of Defense's National Defense Strategy in 2018, the department has aggressively sought to implement its key recommendation that the U.S. must re-focus its strategy on the long-term challenge of great power competition.¹ These efforts encompass a range of activities, including bolstering U.S., allied, and partner deterrence against aggressive actors, such as China and Russia, to better competing below the threshold of conflict for influence.

The enormity of the threat the Peoples' Republic of China (PRC) poses to U.S. interests and values and the global range of its activities from cyber to space has prompted an organizational and conceptual revolution within the Department of Defense. While the department is better aligning its resources toward modernizing its forces and bolstering deterrence against Chinese actions, it has also undertaken a systematic rethink of how it fights wars and how it globally competes with China. While any strategy vis-a-vis the PRC will, of necessity, be a whole-of-government if not whole-of-nation affair, there are several key challenges the U.S. military reserves can focus on to implement the NDS's priorities fully as well as to address the long-term threat of the PRC.

Warfighting

The reserves play a vital role in the defense of the United States, but the strategy requirements of great power competition, as well as great power war, will require new thinking. There is a profound gap between the strategies

the U.S. Department of Defense is currently pursuing with respect to the PRC and the structures (e.g., reserves) through which it must implement them. Even though 20 years of combat and counterinsurgency have prompted great change within the reserves, it is still ostensibly organized along conventional warfare lines, focused on short and sharp conflicts, and is acculturated to operating in an uncontested homeland environment. Additionally, as warzone deployment requirements have shrunk, cautious careerism is creeping back into the reserves, and more and more barriers are being erected to ostensibly "professionalize" reservists.

The practical effect of many of these changes is to chase away unconventional applicants and non-traditional current members. The creation of more onerous onboarding requirements, additional boards of qualification, and the inability to recognize civilian achievements in military credentials provide incentives for members to adhere to careful paths of career milestones versus taking professionally enhancing opportunities that will benefit the nation. Further, a generation of reservists who have deployed multiple times to warzones is confronting a reserve community that rewards members who took a risk-averse career path and so are missing out on promotion opportunities because of it. The reserves need to better prepare for a large-scale contingency and evaluate its structures and processes to shed this burgeoning peacetime mindset and continue to attract, retain, and promote unconventional thinkers.

¹ The National Defense Strategy, U.S. Department of Defense, 2018

ing China

While the focus of any such conflict with the PRC would likely be in the Indo-Pacific region, its operations are multi-faceted and global in scale. The reserves, of necessity, would likely focus on the main fight, which would be heavily conventional, although cyber and space operations will require significant support.

Additionally, the PRC's military presence in other regions of the world such as the Middle East, Latin America, and Africa will also have to be addressed. The global nature of any such conflict would challenge the reserves, as will the full spectrum of PRC's operations, including military forces and its political, economic, diplomatic, ideological, and informational capabilities. As much as there is a quantity component to its military abilities, there is, increasingly, a qualitative component to it as well. The implications of this for the reserves will be significant. Leadership will need to think through how the reserves are organized and whether they are optimally designed to operate on such a global scale across disparate warfighting domains for a prolonged duration.

This may require establishing multi-functional units with deep subject matter expertise where service members are allowed to homestead in it well beyond the usual rotations. Such operations will also necessitate a rethink in how U.S. reserve forces deploy, their peacetime footprint overseas, and their integration with active-duty components.

Full-Scale Mobilization

One of the key transitions the reserves must grapple with is full-scale mobilization in a contested homeland with a peer adversary that can degrade and challenge this process with great freedom. By and large, the U.S. has had the luxury to mobilize its forces on a timeline of its choosing in a relatively secure environment. While mobilization procedures have significantly improved following the attacks of 9/11,

they have never had to grapple with a full-scale mobilization of the kind likely to occur in a great power war. The logistical considerations of processing records, organizing travel for members to training and deployment, and linking up with supported units will be profound.

As large as these challenges will be, if a peer adversary is hacking reserve networks, deleting medical records, spreading disinformation, and, in general, inhibiting the mobilization process, the reserves will be hard-pressed to support the active-duty component. Additionally, the scale of such a mobilization will put great stress on activating all reservists, not just those who actively drill but those in the Individual Ready Reserve. Greater effort must be made to prepare these members for duty.

Competition

It is customary in the U.S. military to focus on deterring and, if called upon, defeating the conventional militaries of nation-states using overwhelming military force on its own timeline. The strategy the Peoples' Republic of China is pursuing against the U.S., its allies and partners, and the international system more broadly, however, reflects its Communist authoritarian system, interests, and values.²

While dramatically increasing the overall size of its military forces and investing in high-end capabilities, the PRC also seeks to gain an advantage by engaging in economic and political coercion, intimidation, propaganda, the blurring of civil and military approaches, and military operations below the threshold of open conflict. The range of competition with China includes day-to-day activities, long-term struggles for position, gray zone influence (e.g., propaganda, etc.), securing science and technology advantages, and influence with allies and partners.

The reserve community has, resident in its ranks, a plethora of unique skill sets and training, connections,

² Elizabeth C. Economy, "China's New Revolution: The Reign of Xi Jinping," *Foreign Affairs* 97, no. 3 (2018): pp. 60-74.

employers, and experiences that can be better harnessed in great power competition. Many of these capabilities are not captured well by reserve personnel systems, and others are not systematically encouraged due to outdated promotion systems and priorities. These skills can range from advanced language abilities (e.g., Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese, Cambodian) and high-tech training (e.g., engineering, aerospace, cyber) to advanced degrees (e.g., Ph.Ds., law degrees, MBAs). Additionally, many of the most complex challenges of great power competition are multidisciplinary, and units ostensibly organized along these lines to work on these specific problem-sets should be evaluated.

Allies and Partners

One of the key advantages the U.S. possesses in the Indo-Pacific is its robust network of allies and partners. If a conflict were to break out in the region, the U.S. would partner with these nations and rely upon them for military assistance, access, basing, and overflight rights, as well as political, economic, and diplomatic support.

Various capabilities exist within the active duty and reserve community to build partner capacity and relationships with these countries, but more must be done. The National Guard's state partnership program, for example, is a crucial enabler for our allies and partners through the assigning of guard units to specific countries to develop their capabilities.

Missions by special operations forces (e.g., SEALs and special forces) to build indigenous proficiency also play key roles. The reserve community should review its institutional design to better align its units to not just the Indo-Pacific region but to expand its mission sets beyond purely functional capabilities to focus on building relationships with specific countries. The reserves must broadly embrace the traditional roles of working by, with, and through allies and partners. Instead of a unit focusing on a specific warfighting or support mission, the practicality of having assigned countries and regions should be explored and opportunities to partner with the militaries of those countries. This will require greater resources to assist with language and cross-cultural training as well as learning how to advise partnered operations. It will also require a broadening of missions for many units and some institutional reforms.

Prolonged Warfare

The U.S. military and the reserves have become acculturated to relatively low casualty rates over the past 20 years. The force requirements of the wars in Afghanistan and

Iraq have not significantly affected mobilization procedures, timelines, and processes. While both conflicts have been long, the nature of the warfare did not fundamentally challenge the relatively steady state of manning, weapons procurement programs, munitions supplies, maintenance, and reconstitution efforts.

The challenge of fighting the PRC would not only be one of deterring and defeating their sizable military forces but also their ability, as a nation-state, to fight a prolonged war on a scale the U.S. is not currently accustomed to. The casualty numbers would likely be quite high, and mobilizations would be not only on a scale not seen in generations but also significantly longer. Behaviors, practices, and procedures will need to be revisited across the board and analyzed with an eye for prolonged warfare in a contested environment. The reserves will have to grow significantly and be prepared for longer and larger deployments in more forward-deployed stations than the current mobilization process has had to contend with.

Additionally, many reservists may not be able to deploy due to their essential skills in a civilian war economy. How the reserve community balances these competing needs will also have to be thought through. Finally, even though the military shifted to an all-volunteer force in 1973, the possibility of a draft will need to be reexamined if a prolonged conflict seems likely.


Conclusion

The 2018 National Defense Strategy charged the Department of Defense with reestablishing deterrence in key regions of the world (e.g., Indo-Pacific and Europe) while preparing for great power competition. Secretary of Defense Austin's recent message to the department on March 4, 2021, to "Prioritize China as the Pacing Challenge" versus China and Russia, which the 2018 National Defense Strategy focused on, indicates the priorities for the future.

The reserve community is well placed to play vital roles along the whole spectrum of competition to conflict to war termination. Still, fundamental changes need to take place for it to make the greatest contribution to the nation's efforts. There are significant gaps between the strategies the department wishes to pursue and the structures through which it needs to implement them in the reserves. There are misalignments of missions, resource misallocations, and institutional design considerations that must be addressed.

Further, a peacetime mindset and a cautious careerism have returned that seemingly prioritizes institutional interests over warfighting requirements. In many respects,

we have to overcome ourselves in order to create tailored institutional adaptations for the problems and potential warfights that confront our nation versus those we prefer to work on and fight. This will require significant leadership to overcome these obstacles and a conscious rethink about how the reserves recruits, retains, and promotes its members and how it is fundamentally organized and operates. The Peoples' Republic of China presents a determined challenge to U.S. interests and values and its role as a source of stability for the international system.

Meeting this challenge requires a multi-generational commitment from the United States. U.S. reserves are poised to serve an indispensable role in defending the nation across the whole spectrum of conflict in this era of great power competition. But reforms must be adopted to prepare for the long-term challenge of deterring peer adversaries and, if need be, defeating them. 

The views expressed in this article are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the Department of Defense or the U.S. Government.



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Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program



Mentors Provide A Career Edge for Tomorrow's Leaders

ROA TO LAUNCH NEW PROGRAM THROUGH RESERVE READINESS CENTER

By Jeanne Kouhestani, Associate Editor

She was born into poverty in Guatemala in an environment so toxic that it followed her throughout her teenage years in America. Yet 30 years later, Ericka Kelly retired from the Air Force Reserve as command chief master sergeant, the top spot for a non-commissioned officer. Today, she runs Ericka Kelly Enterprises, a company specializing in public speaking, coaching, and mentoring.

Richard Farnell had minimum exposure to diverse cultures growing up in a small town in Florida. When he

graduated from his minority high school and joined the Army, he was astonished by a new world of different cultures and backgrounds. He developed a passion for helping others reach their potential by understanding social and cultural diversity and seeking a doctoral degree in the field.

As a young junior Army Reserve lieutenant in the engineer corps, Loren Baldwin was full of ambition to be an excellent officer and engineer. Yet, he didn't know how to speak the language of senior officers. He was on his own, without anyone to guide him or look after his interests. Today a major, he looks forward to giving junior officers a mentoring hand.

Representing different races, genders, and social and cultural backgrounds, these three military officers have had in common those qualities requisite for success: the desire to be their best and serve their organization well, a willingness to learn and work hard, enthusiasm, and energy. But being

PEOPLE WHO
WANT A MENTOR

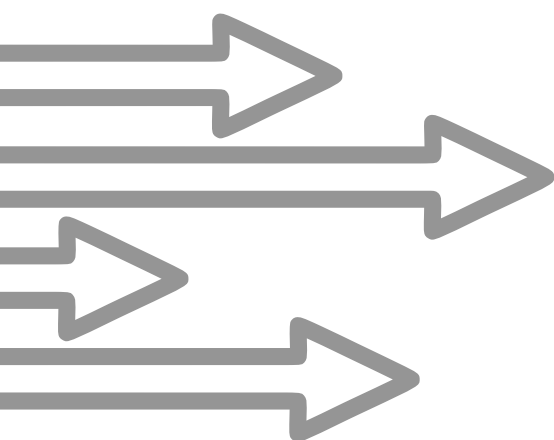
75%

PEOPLE WHO HAVE
A MENTOR CURRENTLY

37%

AVERAGE LENGTH OF
MENTOR RELATIONSHIPS

**3.3
YEARS**



open to guidance and developing mentoring relationships helped propel them farther and faster in their careers than they might have achieved on their own.

Dynamic Mentoring Dyads

Although it is widely accepted that mentoring fosters growth, more than half of professionals have not had a mentor. A mentorship relationship is usually a dyad composed of a mentor—in this article, a senior military officer—and a protégé or mentee.

Kelly, Farnell, and Baldwin were asked to provide, based on their personal experience, the essential qualities found in the ideal mentor and protégé:

Ideal mentors are those who want to share their experience, are well versed in their protégé's career ladder and field of interest, and are committed to the protégé's advancement. They should serve as a sounding board to help the protégé solve challenges that arise. They should understand the importance of nurturing diverse

talent whose differences make their contributions unique. Ideally, mentors are “connectors” who put their protégé in front of challenging situations they may not otherwise have encountered, both to solve the problem and develop the problem-solver.

Ideal protégés have the potential to help move the organization forward and are coachable. They are willing to meet the mentor on common ground, do the work to meet goals, have a positive attitude, are inspired by the future, and are ready to take risks and seek diversity in mentorship to gain a broader perspective. A promising protégé will follow the mentor's guidance, even if it requires going outside the comfort zone. An example would be volunteering to do a high-visibility job and doing it with such excellence that superior officers notice.

Maj. Richard Farnell, U.S. Army, who works in Washington, D.C., was recently selected for promotion to lieutenant colonel and battalion command. Coming up through the ranks—at one time being the only Black second lieutenant in his field artillery battery—his experiences in being mentored and becoming a mentor have led him to believe that mentorship within different social groups improves the emotional intelligence of both parties and leads to more vital leadership within the organization.

“A leader's ability to build a cohesive and effective organization,” Farnell said, “hinges on cultural understanding, appropriate attitudes, and organizational commitment. Mentoring people with diverse backgrounds improves social and cultural competence and helps leaders build trust and transparency faster, which leads to a stronger and healthier climate.”

“It is a skill that has to be intentionally developed because most people have a natural tendency to connect with those they believe they have more commonalities with,” he added.

Mentorship can start when making a simple human connection. When she joined the Air Force at age 22, retired Command Chief Master Sgt. Ericka Kelly felt she had finally found a safe haven. “My mentors were the

AVERAGE TIME SPENT
TALKING PER MONTH

**4
HOURS**

FREQUENCY OF
MEETINGS

**< 1
PER MONTH**

*Source: 2019 Olivet
Nazarene University
Survey of 3,000
Americans employed
full-time across twenty-
one industries*

people from day one telling me I had value, who made me feel safe and wanted,” she said. “Those were three things I never got when I was growing up. And going back to that first night [in her barracks], that’s when I promised the Air Force that they would never be ashamed of picking me as one of their own.”

Like Farnell, Kelly has had many informal mentors—some a few steps ahead of her and some outside her environment to give her a broader perspective. Looking back, she said she would have benefitted by having a more structured, long-term mentorship to guide her in the early stages of her career. In her own company today, she offers just that—a highly structured mentorship program that taps into her years of experience.

Kelly also credits diversity and inclusion with strengthening the organization. “If you have a group of individuals who think the same way and are clones of each other, that group is going to have a ton of blind spots,” she said. “By having a diverse and inclusive environment, there are so many perspectives, so many people who bring ideas to the table that the group becomes strong, productive, and effective.”

Mentorship can be formal and structured or informal and “as needed,” short- or long-term, depending on the needs and availability of each individual in the dyad.

There are no hard and fast rules for mentoring. Some individuals approach more senior officers they feel can be helpful by asking them to be mentors. Others sign up for more formal and structured mentorship programs. Such programs aren’t always available, however.

Maj. Loren Baldwin, an Army Reserve active guard reserve engineer officer, found his mentor, then Army Brigadier General Jeffrey Phillips, through a now-defunct program on the Army’s website that paired mentors with protégés. Though less structured than Baldwin had expected, the relationship has endured long-distance for more than ten years. Phillips retired from the Army as a major general and now serves as ROA’s executive director. Baldwin still picks up the phone and calls him when he needs advice, although less frequently than before as he has advanced in rank.

Baldwin said he chose Phillips based on his profile because he felt they would be a good personality match. He was shocked when Phillips called him and introduced himself as a brigadier general. “I was a junior lieutenant, and I thought I’d really overshot this one,” Baldwin said.



Maj. Richard Farnell (second from right), USA, engages in a quick coaching moment with staff. (Photo provided by Farnell)



At an enlisted leadership conference in San Antonio, Texas, now retired Command Chief Master Sgt. Ericka Kelly (front left), USAFR, mentored Command Chief Master Sgt. Rachel Landegent (back left), Puerto Rico National Guard; Senior Master Sgt. Alisa Merriott (back right), health professions recruiting flight chief for the West Coast; and Senior Master Sgt. Lan Archilla (front right), first sergeant at the 349th Air Mobility Wing, Travis Air Force Base, California. (Photo provided by Kelly)

“It was never a rigid type of relationship we had; it was more that when I had a question or concern, I would reach out to him,” Baldwin said. “He gave me sage wisdom, and I would go execute and then give him the result of his suggestions. It was a type of ad hoc relationship.”

Because Phillips was unable to provide the technical mentoring Baldwin wanted, Baldwin several times reached out to senior officer engineers to request a mentoring relationship. Though each officer he approached agreed to mentor him none followed through, to Baldwin’s disappointment. He still approaches them on occasion to ask a question, but the kind of structure he wants simply does not exist.

Baldwin believes the ideal mentor would be someone outside the chain of command who is a few steps senior and has the technical expertise and interpersonal skills to guide the more junior officer. However, he believes Phillips’ guidance, insights, and connections to senior officers have given an invaluable boost to his career.

One significant driver of his success? Phillips’ early advice to always make his boss look good.

ROA’s Department of Pennsylvania Steps Up

ROA Executive Director Jeffrey Phillips is bringing the value of structured mentorship to ROA, its launch

planned later in 2021. “The ROA mentorship program is an outgrowth of ROA’s revitalization and our desire to increase our services to members of the Reserve and National Guard. It will directly enhance their ability to succeed as citizen warriors,” he said.

ROA’s charter calls for support of an adequate defense, which translates into readiness for the reserve component and military, Phillips said. ROA has historically advocated for laws and policies that create an environment enhancing readiness, recruitment, retention, family support, and the ability of the Reserve and Guard to do their job successfully. “Retail” policies, such as a review of promotion packages, are designed to help individual members. “We still want to do that, and although we have to watch our finances, we can do some of these one-on-one retail operations,” Phillips said. A formal mentorship program will add another effective and economical retail service to the mix, giving serving ROA members a free leg up while tapping into the wisdom and experience of retired, separated, and active senior officers.

In 2019 the Department of Pennsylvania volunteered to create the national mentorship plan and do a pilot program in Pennsylvania to test it out. The effort, headed by retired Col. Denise Enders, U.S. Army Reserve, with the help of volunteers, recently ended with the successful conclusion of the pilot program and her completion of



Maj. Loren Baldwin (left), USAR EN, poses with retired Maj. Gen. Jeffrey Phillips, (USA), at Phillips' retirement ceremony. Phillips, now ROA's executive director, has mentored Baldwin for more than 10 years. (Photo provided by Baldwin)

an official handbook. In the pilot, Enders mentored Staff Sgt. April Hill, U.S. Air Force Reserve, who will soon be commissioned as a second lieutenant.

"The program definitely has a military spin on it—that's our primary focus—but we found out from the pilot that even though what got us together was our military affiliation, a lot of the protégé's questions and concerns also applied in her civilian career," Enders said. "So, it has a dual effect. What gets us together is the military affiliation; however, the benefits of the program bleed over into the civilian occupation."

Enders said the mentorship applies to the whole person, not just the career. At the beginning of the relationship, the mentor and protégé develop goals—where the focus will be. There may be some deviation from that, but it gives a path forward to make sure the protégé gets what they want out of the program. Both individuals determine how structured they want to be and set the logistics for mentoring. The eight-page handbook provides general guidance and pages to fill in a simple action plan and reportable program outcomes. The outcomes are included to ensure ROA is aware if a mentoring relationship ends without notice.

"In the case of the pilot, we focused on a little of everything, but it was mostly focused on her career—in particular, how to differentiate herself as a female leader. We spent a good portion of time working on that goal," Enders said.

The pilot ran for six months and was deemed successful by mentor and protégé. According to Hill, "Because of my tight schedule and changing issues, the flexibility we had in scheduling meetings and determining discussion topics was critical to the success of the mentoring relationship. We quickly developed a level of trust that enabled us to have sincere and helpful discussions.

"I can honestly say that Colonel Enders' professional career advice significantly helped me navigate challenges in both my military and civilian jobs," Hill said.

Although they ended the pilot at six months to move the national program forward, Enders said she and Hill agreed to continue the mentorship relationship on an as-needed basis until ROA's formal program kicks in. At that point, Hill will have more potential mentors to choose from and can make an informed decision about picking a mentor.

Sharing ROA's Wealth of Knowledge

Phillips expects ROA's mentoring program to provide an outlet for guidance outside the military chain of command, where protégés can speak freely of their concerns without being afraid of revealing weaknesses or being vulnerable to judgment. "A mentor is someone you can reveal a certain lack of understanding or a vulnerability to. It will not reflect on you. And that person can give you counsel and insight that you can then apply within your job and work-life to enhance your performance," Phillips said. "That's what mentorship does. No one is paid, no one gets monetary compensation," he added.

With its senior active, retired, and separated members, ROA is a storehouse of knowledge and experience that can significantly enhance commissioned and non-commissioned junior officers' careers. Phillips emphasized that even if a potential mentor has been retired for many years, they still have needed wisdom and insights. "What never goes out of date is human nature, communication, the dynamics of power, and the understanding of how to deal with people in senior and subordinate positions," Phillips said.

"The longer someone has been out, the more they have done something else, the more context and perspective they may have," he added. Protégés with a need for job skill mentoring may want to seek out the help of someone in their work environment or request assistance from their mentor in finding someone else with the needed skills.

Phillips foresees an extensive network of officer and NCO mentors who can help each other out if their protégés need guidance outside their realm of experience. This may be especially true when crossing between officer and NCO issues where a lack of understanding of others' positions or concerns may exist.


Helping protégés make connections to further their careers and establish networks is a valuable service mentors can offer. Phillips relayed his own mentorship story where his protégé, then Capt. Loren Baldwin wanted to be more competitive to earn a promotion to major. Phillips suggested he write an article about an engineering issue that he knew more about than any other engineer captains. Baldwin came up with an idea about a new project that had been successfully implemented during a deployment, wrote the article, and submitted it to *Engineer Magazine*, the professional publication for engineers in the Army and Army Reserve. When it was published, Phillips emailed a copy of it to every general officer for whom he had an address, including the chief of the Army Corps of Engineers, along with a note saying how sharp Baldwin is. He leveraged his connections so Baldwin's excellent work would be noticed.

"One of the benefits a mentor can bring is he can connect you. And as you know, your network is so important. Unfortunately, in the military, that point is not emphasized to young officers and NCOs. They tend to get localized in their chain of command," Phillips said. "The savvy officers and NCOs are the ones who keep track of their



Retired Col. Denise Enders (USAR), Department of Pennsylvania, led the development of ROA's mentoring program. (Photo provided by Enders)

network, keep in touch with their networks, and feed their networks throughout their lives. A mentorship dyad is a wonderful place to start establishing a network."

ROA's new program will open up doors for those willing to step through. "In my experience within the engineering world and some other parts of the Army Reserve, mentorship and engagement in subordinate careers are nonexistent," Baldwin said. "It would help to have somebody to rely on as a sounding board who is not in the chain of command or even in the branch you serve. The opportunity to glean that wisdom is something that is desperately needed." 

LOOKING FOR A MENTOR?

Clarify Your Needs

- Do you need a short-term coach to overcome specific career obstacles or recognized performance gaps?
- Do you need a connector, someone with relevant professional networks or political capital that can help you develop a network of professional relationships?
- Do you need a long-term sponsor who can take an active role in guiding your career progression?

Recognize the Right Mentor

The right mentor will be someone whose accomplishments earn your respect, whose interest in you is authentic, and that can relate to on a personal level. You should like this person and share core values and organizational commitment, but you should be open to how their differences can temper and inform your perspective.

Commit to the Work

Respect their investment in you by always bringing the best version of whole self to the work of being a mentee—energetic, engaged, and dedicated to excellence. Be prepared at every meeting to discuss progress, obstacles, and accomplishments. While the relationship should be collegial and social, you should always be advancing on clearly defined objectives.

Diversity and Inclusion in Military Leadership

By Tiffany Ayers

Last summer, as protests and calls for racial justice mounted across the country in reaction to the killings of several Black people, including Ahmaud Arbery, George Floyd, and Breonna Taylor, so too did the U.S. military take steps to address bias in its ranks. One area that has come under scrutiny is the lack of representation of minorities in leadership positions. The military is enacting several measures to promote diversity and inclusion, from mentoring young people as they enter the armed forces to removing barriers in promoting officers.

From a series of recommendations to the creation of diversity and inclusion offices and positions, the military is looking at ways to recruit and develop current and future leaders who reflect the diversity in society. The services are working to make promotion and selection boards fairer and more impartial by no longer including photos. This action addresses concerns that unconscious bias could be a factor in board members' decisions to deny promotion to a candidate based on race or ethnicity.

The services are also focusing diversity and inclusion efforts on recruitment, seeking a more diverse pool of candidates who will rise to leadership positions. This includes recruitment efforts at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) as well as ROTC units. In addition, they are reexamining traditional pathways to promotion, such as enrollment in combat commands, to promote more minorities to leadership positions. In the end, they believe that developing a diverse leadership—fostering a culture that benefits from the background and experiences of each service member—is essential for mission effectiveness and national security.

Diversity Report Released in December

The Department of Defense has made a number of recommendations to expand diversity in the ranks and address bias. On Dec. 18, 2020, Acting Secretary of Defense Christopher C. Miller announced the release of the Department of Defense Board on Diversity and Inclusion Report, "Recommendations to Improve Racial and Ethnic Diversity and Inclusion in the U.S. Military," which reviewed recommendations from team members across the services and called for steps to broaden equal opportunity for all members of the armed forces.

The report found that "While the military has been a leader in racial integration and inclusion, it nevertheless is not immune to the perils of bias and prejudice. This report recommends aggressive integration of diversity and inclusion into Military Department culture to build upon decades of progress and transform DoD for today's Service members and for generations to come." The report noted that while there have been moderate increases in minority representation in officer grades since the transition to an all-volunteer force, "persistent underrepresentation in senior officer grades continues."

The report called for more aggressive efforts to recruit, retain, and promote a more racially and ethnically diverse force. Some of the 15 recommendations include widening pools of applicants for enlistment as well as promotions and other leadership posts, increasing ROTC opportunities for minorities, reviewing aptitude tests to remove barriers to diversity without impairing rigorous screening, and making service members more aware of inclusion



Master Sgt. Ryan T. Wood, a Air Mobility Command Headquarters command aeromedical evacuation training manager assigned to Scott Air Force Base, Ill., instructs members of the 514th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron on how to remove rolling tracks from the floor of a KC-46 Pegasus Feb. 26. Members of the 514th AES flew a training mission to Isla Verde, Puerto Rico, with Air Force Reserve Command, Air Mobility Command, and the 916th Air Refueling Wing, Feb. 26, 2021. Members from the 514th AES were evaluated on many different scenarios designed to replicate real-world combat medical service in flight. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Ruben Rios)

policies. Deadlines to complete the recommendations are spread through 2021.

“I expect all leaders to take an aggressive approach to embed diversity and inclusion practices into the core of our military culture,” Miller said in the memo. “We must not accept—and must intentionally and proactively remove—any barriers to an inclusive and diverse force and equitable treatment of every service member.”

The diversity and inclusion board was created by then-Defense Secretary Mark Esper in July 2020. In addition to creating the board, Esper announced a number of actions to improve diversity and inclusion, including

ordering all military services to stop providing service members’ photos for promotion boards and during selection processes for assignments, training, and education. The fear was that bias, whether conscious or unconscious, could steer board members away from a minority promotion candidate. He also directed a review of hairstyle and grooming policies and called for improved training and data collection on diversity.

History of Efforts to Address Bias

Efforts to create a more inclusive military are not new, and the military prides itself on leading social change. A series

of commissions, recommendations, and initiatives have been launched over past decades in an effort to end discrimination. In 1948, President Harry Truman issued an executive order calling for an armed force built “without regard to race, color, religion or national origin.” In 1962, President Kennedy appointed the President’s Committee on Equal Opportunity in the Armed Forces; the committee called for improvements in recruitment, assignment, and promotion.

In 2010, Adm. Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told senior leaders the military urgently needed to improve its record on diversity. In 2011, the Military Leadership Diversity Commission reported that the Pentagon hadn’t been successful in diversifying the military leadership and presented 20 recommendations. Since the release of that report, DoD has restructured its diversity and inclusion oversight function, developed new policies to bolster the inclusion of minority service members, and developed ways to better assess the effectiveness of its diversity and inclusion policies.

Still, results must be the outcome by which effectiveness is measured. While the enlisted population is slightly more diverse than the general population, the same cannot be said for the officer corps. Personnel data show the percentages of women and minorities shrink as the military rank increases for both the active and reserve components. The only two Black military commanders attaining the top rank are Charles Brown, the Air Force’s chief of staff and the first Black service chief in U.S. history, and Michael Garrett, the head of the Army Forces Command.

Congress also has sought to eliminate bias in the military. Last summer, Rep. Jackie Speier, D-Calif., who chairs the military personnel panel on the Armed Services Committee, sponsored a provision to the National Defense Authorization Act that would remove all personal identity information—including names and photos—from packages that go to selection and promotion boards.

“Failure to cultivate leadership that is truly representative of America threatens troop morale and cohesion,” Speier said. “The strength and future of our armed forces is its diversity. Congress has a duty to ensure military leadership understand and heed that fact.”

Meanwhile, in December 2020, two senators on the Foreign Relations Committee introduced a measure aimed at reducing bias in military promotions by withholding some identifying information from the boards that decide on them. U.S. Senators Todd Young (R-Ind.) and Jeanne Shaheen (D-N.H.) introduced the bipartisan Combatting Bias in Military Promotions Act. Their legislation would require DoD to eliminate certain identifying information

from being presented to military officer promotion boards that may result in a biased promotion decision.

“Removing bias and prejudice from the force is critical,” said Young, a former Marine. “By removing information such as race and gender from promotion materials, we can ensure that promotion boards would assess and evaluate officers based purely on their merits and accomplishments.”

Actions by Services

Each of the military services, meanwhile, is enacting measures to battle racism and encourage diversity across the ranks. Last July, the Army eliminated photos when soldiers are being considered for promotion. The Navy did the same in September, as did the Air Force years ago. And the Coast Guard eliminated gender-specific pronouns from members’ promotion packages and professional evaluations in 2018 in favor of “Reported On Officer (ROO), Reported On Member (ROM), Member (MBR) or Service Member (SVM).”

Last summer, the Army launched Project Inclusion to identify practices that inadvertently discriminate. “The strength of our Army comes from our diversity,” wrote Army Secretary Ryan McCarthy and Chief of Staff Gen. James McConville in a memo announcing the initiative. “Developing and maintaining qualified and demographically diverse leadership is critical for mission effectiveness and is essential to national security.” The project seeks to listen to soldiers, civilians, and family members and enact initiatives to promote diversity and equity.

The decision to remove photos from promotion boards came after a study was conducted to better understand the role of the Department of the Army (DA) photo within its promotion system, said Col. Carl Wojtaszek, U.S. Army Office of Economic and Manpower Analysis, during a briefing with reporters. The study ran an experiment that involved two promotion boards—one with official photos and one without them.

“From taking a careful look at the data we collected from that experiment, our study finds that when you remove the DA photo...voters took less time to cast the votes on each individual file, their scores were most closely aligned, and the outcomes for minorities and women improved,” Wojtaszek said.

The study showed that using official photos led to decisions from board members that appeared to reveal unconscious bias, Army officials say.

“It’s just that people, even if they don’t think about it, they tend to want to be around people that look and think and act like them,” said McConville. “When you



Lt. Cmdr. Omari Downey, piloting a C-130, would go on to take a leadership role in the U.S. Navy Reserve diversity and inclusion program. (Photo provided by Downey)

get to a higher level, you start to realize you want diversity because you want different perspectives. You want people from all walks of life, from different ethnicities, different races, different genders, different branches—all to come together and give you a picture of things that you may not see, and that is where we are going with this whole Project Inclusion.”

“It’s more about looking at the record of a person,” Anselm Beach, the deputy assistant secretary of the Army for equity and inclusion, told *Reserve Voice*. “At the end of the day, it’s how we engage and compete for talent.” There have also been calls for removing other indicators of race and gender, such as visible names and a box on forms where soldiers must state their race.

Beach said Project Inclusion would take additional initiatives to address diversity and inclusion. The Army Diversity Council will be reconstituted. New training will be created to help raise awareness about unconscious bias in the ranks, from enlisted to senior personnel. Army leaders will visit bases worldwide to talk to soldiers and civilians about topics such as race, diversity, equity, and inclusion. The Army will also look to its ability to acquire,

develop, and employ a diverse leadership, expanding its outreach to historically Black colleges and universities and other minority-serving institutions.

The listening sessions are well underway, with more than 500 conversations across 70 installations already taking place. “We want to better understand their experiences so that we can better understand what values they hold and what problems are impacting their ability to serve at their maximum potential,” Beach said. “They have expressed appreciation that the Army is listening. We aren’t there to solve individual problems but to listen, and people really want to talk.”

Beach said another focus is on recruiting, developing, and retaining talent. “It’s about how we bring in diverse sets of people to solve problems and work toward fulfilling our mission,” he said. Traditionally, most officers have been promoted from the combat branches, but that may not always result in diversity. Beach said they are looking for ways to encourage soldiers to remain in the branches they have an affinity for so that they remain in the service and still find opportunities for promotion, even if they are not in the combat branches. “For example, even though

West Point produced fewer candidates than ROTC, they were being chosen more for combat branches, so we are trying to equalize that, so people from ROTC also have an opportunity,” Beach said.

The Army is also looking to attract talent from HBCUs by working with fraternities and sororities on HBCU campuses. “By partnering with them, we can tell the Army story,” Beach said. Mentoring at HBCUs will have a big impact, he said. “When students can see senior officers who return to campus and get a chance to engage with them, they can see what an Army career would be like and the possibilities they would have for advancement.”

Efforts will extend to the JROTC as well, Beach said. “In the past, JROTC has focused on teaching citizenship, but now it is also exposing them to seeing the Army as a career.” Beach said that it’s important to reach out and engage younger people and those entering the military to broaden the pool of talent so that eventually, more will be chosen for leadership positions. “Before we get to the top of the funnel—at the bottom of the funnel, they’re getting squeezed out, even before they get into the Army.” For example, Beach mentioned that swimming

is a requirement for ranger school, yet many inner-city youths do not know how to swim. He said efforts to prepare youth for leadership positions need to start early. “We need solid outreach and engagement to talk about the Army as a profession to start people early and prepare them for leadership positions,” he said.

Beach said diversity is important because it leads to better knowledge, information, and performance, and that diversity must also be reflected in leadership. “We have to attract talent and maintain it through the ranks all the way to the top,” Beach said. “If we are going to have the greatest Army, diversity gets us there.”

Task Force One Navy

Meanwhile, the Navy established Task Force One Navy in its efforts to eliminate bias in its ranks, as announced by Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Mike Gilday last June. The 20-member task force was tasked with analyzing and evaluating issues in the Navy that detract from readiness, such as racism, sexism, and other structural and interpersonal biases.



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Lt. Cmdr. Omari Downey served as a C-130 pilot for eight years in the USAF before separating early and affiliating with the “Minutemen” of Fleet Logistics Squadron (VR) 55 in the Navy Reserve. Today he serves as first-ever force inclusion and diversity officer (FIDO) on the staff of Commander, Naval Air Force Reserve (CNAFR) (Photo provided by Downey)

One of the first steps was the change effective Sept. 1 that the Navy will no longer show officer service record photos during promotion, selection, and assignment boards. “We are working through Task Force One Navy to eliminate systemic prejudice and bias in the Navy,” said Vice Adm. John B. Nowell, Jr., the Navy’s chief of personnel. “This immediate action will ensure no intentional or unconscious bias, based on race, ethnicity, gender or national origin, is any part of the career decisions we make about our people.”

The team, led by Rear Adm. Alvin Holsey, commander of Carrier Strike Group One, examined many issues, including barriers to service entry, scholarship, and mentorship opportunities for potential recruits, talent management, training and education throughout career paths, evaluations, promotion and advancement, racial disparities in the justice system, and health care and health disparities.

“We stood up Task Force One Navy to identify and remove racial barriers, improve inclusion efforts, create new opportunities for professional development, and eliminate obstacles to entering the Navy,” Gilday said in a statement. “We have fallen short in the past by excluding or limiting opportunity for people on the basis of race, sexual orientation, sexual identity, gender or creed. Our Navy must continue to remove barriers to service.”

In February 2021, the task force rolled out more than 50 recommendations on how to make the service fairer and more inclusive. The final report lays out specific changes to how the service recruits and retains sailors as

well as develops tools for professional development that open opportunities for women and minorities—particularly in the officer ranks.

Nowell said the goal was to look for new sailors in different places and to keep advancements and promotions fair for those currently in uniform. “The playing field is not level for all for a number of reasons. So how can we level that playing field? This is about making sure that everyone has the opportunity to compete.”

Naval Air Force Reserve Adds First FIDO Officer


To help implement such recommendations on diversity and inclusion is the job of Lt. Cmdr. Omari Downey. In his role as the first-ever force inclusion and diversity officer (FIDO) on the staff of Commander, Naval Air Force Reserve (CNAFR), Downey is putting his experiences to practice to ensure those different perspectives are heard. Downey began his career on active duty in the Air Force, serving primarily as a C-130 pilot, and then joined the Navy Reserve.

“In short, my role as FIDO is to promote inclusion and diversity across CNAFR,” he said. “What I’m looking to do is not only remove barriers but continue to foster a culture of understanding and the value each individual perspective brings to our team.”

Downey told *Reserve Voice* his work centers around three concepts. “First, everyone should feel they have a stake in the group,” Downey said. “They should feel they can voice their opinions and feel they are part of the group.”

“Second, promoting inclusion builds trust and connectedness in our people, which ultimately enhances our warfighting capability,” Downey said. “This is especially important at CNAFR because we operate globally and in many instances are deployed alongside our active component counterparts,” Downey continued.

Finally, Downey said, “We must leverage our diversity by examining our relevant differences and capitalizing on those differences to strengthen our organization and enhance decision-making. In addition to demographic diversity, diversity of experience and diversity of thought are key drivers to this effort.”

Downey’s goal is to serve as a resource for all the commands and squadrons under CNAFR. He said it’s important to “foster an environment that gives every sailor an opportunity to be his or her best self. We recognize that sailors come from different backgrounds, and we want to make sure inclusion and diversity become part of our DNA. We want to think about it all of the time—not just some of the time.” 

National Guard Priorities Will Help Ensure Mission Success

By Gen. Daniel Hokanson, Chief, National Guard Bureau

When I became the 29th chief of the National Guard Bureau on Aug. 3, 2020, the National Guard was having an unprecedented year. A global pandemic threatened every state and territory, widespread civil unrest roiled communities across the nation, and record-breaking weather events from hurricanes to wildfires decimated the American landscape. In every instance, our nation looked to the National Guard for help. Every time, we answered the call.

The high-water mark came on June 6, when more than 120,000 guardsmen and women were engaged around the world—the greatest numbers since World War II. Two-thirds of those guard members were conducting domestic operations: manning COVID-19 testing sites, sanitizing nursing homes, and restoring peace in the aftermath of riots, to name only a few of the many concurrent missions. But at the same time, nearly 34,000 guardsmen and women were deployed overseas, carrying out the National Guard's primary mission: supporting the warfight, serving as an operational force providing strategic depth to the Army and the Air Force, and providing operational capability to the Space Force. Despite the demands at home, the National Guard never misplaced its purpose; we never missed a single deployment.

It was an exciting time to be part of an organization with such a consequential mission; I've never been prouder to be a guardsman. Today's National Guard is the most professional, capable, and reliable force in our organization's long history. But our capabilities are only matched—and, unnervingly, perhaps surpassed—by the demands we face ahead. The current security environment is as perilous today as any time since the Cold War.

China is undaunted in its quest for global supremacy. Russia continues its campaign to shatter the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and destabilize democracy. North Korea and Iran remain enduring security threats, and violent non-state actors continue to target our nation and its people.

As critical members of the joint force, the National Guard will be called to face these challenges in support of the Army and the Air Force. At the same time, there is no sign of our domestic operations abating between natural disasters and human-made crises. Our joint force and our nation will need the National Guard more often in the years ahead. As chief of the National Guard Bureau, I want to make sure we're ready. Building on the efforts of my predecessors, I want to be the chief who closes the gap between *saying* the National Guard is an operational force and the National Guard that is able to sustain the operational force our nation needs.

To close that gap, I established four priorities for the National Guard Bureau to pursue over the next four years: people, readiness, modernization, and reform. By focusing on these priorities and aligning resources to support them, we will accomplish our mission: to be the primary combat reserve of the Army and the Air Force with the ability to compete and, when necessary, fight and win across all domains to defend America, ensure our national interests abroad, and protect our communities.

The following is not intended to be an all-encompassing review of our objectives and lines of effort, but a road map of the way ahead and an explanation of why these priorities are essential for the soldiers and airmen of the National Guard, the families, and employers who



Virginia National Guard soldiers head out to security posts near the Capitol in Washington, D.C., Jan. 12, 2021. More than 25,000 National Guard soldiers and airmen traveled to Washington to provide support to federal and district authorities leading up to the 59th Presidential Inauguration. (National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Matt Hecht)

support them, the joint force that depends on them, and the American people we serve.

People

The National Guard's ability to fight wars overseas, protect the homeland or establish partnerships across nations, states, and localities all comes down to one thing—our people. We are a volunteer force, and we need people to carry out our many critical missions. At the same time, we must be aware of what we ask of those who serve, particularly in the National Guard.

In 2020, the National Guard carried out 10.3 million man-days of domestic operations—the equivalent of more than 28,000 years rolled into one. Many of those hours were part of operations related to COVID-19: delivering personal protective equipment to clinics, setting up field hospitals, administering vaccines, and working at food banks so our fellow Americans wouldn't go hungry. We could not accomplish these missions without dedicated

men and women. That is why I'm making it a priority to invest in our people.

Our soldiers and airmen are giving us their valuable time—time away from their families and civilian careers. They carry out this complex, high-wire balancing act in the service of our nation. In return, they deserve an organization committed to their health, resilience, and professional development. This means supporting the family programs that make it possible for our soldiers and airmen to balance the demands of their family lives with their service and civilian careers. It means focusing on physical fitness and mental health and giving our guardsmen the resources they need to be physically and psychologically resilient. It means recognizing talent within our ranks and nurturing that talent both for their professional fulfillment and the betterment of our organization.

It also means committing to a diverse, inclusive, supportive, and safe working environment. Our National Guard members live in nearly every zip code in the United



Wyoming Air National Guard Staff Sgt. Christopher Demartin, a member of the 153rd Airlift Wing, reunites with his wife and son after a deployment on July 21, 2020. (National Guard photo by Tech. Sgt. Jon Alderman)

States; our organization should reflect the communities we serve. We cannot tolerate extremism, harassment, assault, or exclusion or abide those who perpetuate a culture of division. This is not only a challenge for the National Guard; our entire armed forces must address systemic barriers to equality and inclusion.

Readiness

The National Guard's motto is "Always Ready, Always There." It is a point of pride that we are able to respond to the demands of the joint force, to emergencies in our homeland, and to the requests of our partners. Chief among these is our readiness for the warfight. Since 9/11, the National Guard has supported more than one million deployments and continues to serve in every combatant command. As an operational force, the National Guard must be ready to rapidly respond to joint force requirements. That is why I am making readiness a priority.

Readiness includes manning, training, and equipping units to be prepared to support the National Defense Strategy. One exceptional case study is the tireless commitment and preparedness of the Minnesota National Guard's 1st Armored Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry Division.

The Red Bulls became the first rotational training unit to go through the National Training Center (NTC) under COVID-19 conditions. The NTC at Fort Irwin, California, is notoriously the most challenging training a unit can undertake. Still, this accomplishment is all the more extraordinary given the other missions the 1st-34th carried out in 2020. The brigade supported COVID-19 testing, conducted significant rail operations, and responded to civil unrest in Minneapolis—the epicenter of protests after the death of George Floyd. They also mobilized 700 soldiers from the 2nd Battalion, 135th Infantry Regiments for deployment to the Horn of Africa. This year, soldiers from the brigade will deploy to the Middle East in support of Operation Spartan Shield.

While the efforts of the 1st-34th are exemplary, they are not unusual. Despite the many simultaneous missions in 2020, the National Guard rose to every challenge and never missed an overseas deployment. With no decrease in our operational tempo in sight, we must commit to readiness at every level, and that begins with the personal readiness of our soldiers and airmen.

Modernization

The National Guard's support to the joint force and the National Defense Strategy is not wholly an issue of readiness at the individual, unit, or organizational level. It is also an issue of being fully interoperable with the Army and Air Force. In the past, the National Guard made-do with legacy equipment, outdated systems and processes, and a force structure that failed to meet the demands of the modern warfight. I am prioritizing modernization to ensure the Guard will be interoperable with the joint force, so we are fully ready for the challenges ahead.

Successful modernization will require working closely with our parent services to ensure equipment, systems, and facilities parity and ensure the National Guard equipment and force structure are prioritized within their budgets. The National Guard represents a tremendous value to both our parent services and our nation. When we are not in an activated status, our personnel costs are substantially lower than the active component's. Additionally, because of the dual-status nature of our roles and responsibilities, we provide essential services and abilities in both the warfight and here at home.

There are positive indications for modernization in the National Guard. For example, in 2020, Wisconsin and Arizona National Guard wings were selected to receive the



A Vermont Air National Guard F-35A Lightning II fighter pilot assigned to the 158th Fighter Wing prepares to depart for a training mission during the Northern Lightning training exercise held annually at Volk Field, Wisconsin, Aug. 11, 2020. This is the first time the 158th has participated in the exercise with the F-35s. (National Guard photo by Airman 1st Class Jana Somero)

F-35 Lightning II, becoming the second and third states after Vermont to receive the fifth-generation aircraft. By including these National Guard air wings in the Air Force's overall modernization efforts, we remain interoperable with the joint force, provide significant capabilities to the combatant commands, and leverage our expertise and experience. The National Guard must continue to be included in total force road maps to maximize joint force interoperability and flexibility.

Reform

To accomplish these objectives—to achieve our goal of being a fully actualized operational force by 2024—we need organizational structures that maximize performance and accountability. Not only is this a critical component of the National Defense Strategy, it is also the cornerstone of my priorities as chief.

We cannot be satisfied with the status quo; it is riddled with redundancies and inefficiencies that keep us from being a fully interoperable joint force partner. Are our drill periods helping our soldiers and airmen train for the warfight, or are they filled with meetings that could have been an email? Are our components communicating and collaborating, or are they reinforcing silos and fiefdoms? Are we allowing our soldiers and airmen to find creative solutions, or do we insist on carrying on outdated processes and procedures because “that’s the way it’s always been done”?


Reform means eliminating the ideas and systems that distract from our mission; if it doesn’t make us better, it doesn’t have a place in our National Guard. It means embracing the belief that good ideas can come from any and every part of your organization; no one holds a monopoly on innovation, clarity, or important perspectives. It means working as a unified National Guard Bureau towards the

National Guard Bureau



Reform 1 Wisconsin visor innovation—1st Lt. Nick Sinopoli, a pilot with the Wisconsin National Guard's 1st Battalion, 147th Aviation, wears a version of his ICARUS devices—a visor that can shift from clear to obscured to help pilots learn to transition from visual to instrumental flying when their visibility outside the aircraft is suddenly limited. (National Guard photo by Sgt. Alex Baum)

common goal of supporting the 54, so their formations can sustain being an operational force. Ultimately, it means being unafraid to ask tough questions and make changes for the better.

This is an ambitious agenda. We are implementing these priorities against a backdrop of a global pandemic, severe weather events, a new presidential administration, and a dynamic geopolitical climate. However, these priorities empower our soldiers and airmen to fulfill the demands of the mission, whatever and wherever it may be. They build on a legacy of patriotic commitment and a calling to a cause greater than ourselves. We are guardsmen and women because we want our nation to thrive; we are building a better National Guard because we want a brighter future. People, readiness, modernization, and reform are how we can ensure the National Guard will always be Always Ready, Always There! 



Gen. Daniel R. Hokanson serves as the 29th chief of the National Guard Bureau and as a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. In this capacity, he serves as a military adviser to the president, secretary of defense, and National Security Council, and is the Department of Defense's official channel of communication to the governors and state adjutants general on all matters pertaining to the National Guard. He is responsible for ensuring the more than 453,000 Army and Air National Guard personnel are accessible, capable, and ready to protect the homeland and provide combat-ready resources to the Army and Air Force.

Hokanson served previously as the director of the Army National Guard, and earlier as the 11th vice chief of the National Guard Bureau.

Hokanson graduated from the U.S. Military Academy and served on active duty in air cavalry, attack helicopter and aircraft test organizations prior to joining the Oregon National Guard. He has commanded at the company, battalion, and brigade combat team levels and served as the 30th adjutant general of the state of Oregon. Hokanson also served as the deputy commander of U.S. Northern Command, and vice commander, U.S. Element, North American Aerospace Defense Command at Peterson Air Force Base, Colorado. His combat deployments include Operations Just Cause, Enduring Freedom, and Iraqi Freedom. He commanded the 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team in Iraq and served as chief of staff for Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix in Afghanistan.

Army Reserve

Ready Now! Shaping Tomorrow...

By Lt. Gen. Jody J. Daniels, Chief of Army Reserve and Commanding General,
U.S. Army Reserve Command,
Command Sgt. Maj. Andrew Lombardo

Now more than ever, America needs a powerful and resilient federal reserve force ready to deliver the critical capabilities the Army needs to compete with our adversaries, respond to crisis, win in near-peer conflict, and prepare for the future. That force is the U.S. Army Reserve—ready now and shaping the force for the challenges of tomorrow. Our goal is to field a multi-domain operations (MDO)-capable force by 2028, and MDO-ready, next-generation capabilities by 2035.

It is a journey we are pursuing with the total Army, heavily engaged in the formation of future multi-domain operations spanning the spectrum from information advantage to protection capabilities. With investments in equipment and joint battle command platforms to enhance interoperability, we are shaping the Army Reserve of tomorrow.

Priorities

People are my top priority. They are the bedrock of our force and our most important weapon system. By focusing

on junior leaders; caring for soldiers, civilians, and families; reforming processes; and strengthening our partnerships, we will ensure the accomplishment of all the other necessary and difficult objectives we must achieve. We will embody “Ready Now!” by improving tactical and strategic **Readiness**. We will “Shape Tomorrow...” through comprehensive **Modernization** in conjunction with the Army’s Regionally Aligned Readiness and Modernization Model (ReARMM) to support the Army’s greater effort to become the MDO-capable force of the future.

People

My focus is on growth, learning, and retention—developing ready and resilient soldiers and capable leaders in support of the Army and the joint force. By investing in our people we will make our soldiers, units, and ultimately the Army as a whole, a stronger and more lethal force. A “People First” culture builds unit cohesion by creating a foundation of strength, resilience, discipline, diversity, inclusiveness, and trust that leadership will always take care of their soldiers.

We must ensure our soldiers, especially junior officers and NCOs, are growing as individuals and maintaining a fulfilling career outside of the military if we intend to retain them as our mid-grade leaders. A rewarding Army Reserve experience will ensure they go on to become our best recruiters.

Readiness depends both upon the families who support and sustain our soldiers and the employers who enable them to serve the Army and the nation. Strong families are crucial to individual readiness and to overcoming many problems that confront military families. Our geographically-dispersed families face challenges, and we are working with commanders across the Army Reserve to

MISSION

To provide combat-ready units and soldiers to the Army and the joint force across the full spectrum of conflict.

VISION 2028

To provide trained and equipped units and personnel at the scale and speed required to support the total force in a joint, multi-domain operational environment.



Spc. Catherine Downes, a U.S. Army Reserve military police soldier, representing the 200th Military Police Command, runs the conditioning course during the 2020 U.S. Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition at Fort McCoy, Wisconsin, Sept. 5. (U.S. Army Reserve photo by Staff Sgt. Kenneth D Burkhart)

re-energize soldier and family readiness groups to ensure they have access to help and resources in times of need—especially as a result of the pandemic. Additionally, Army Reserve ambassadors are engaging with key stakeholders to build a cadre of supporters and advocates at local and state levels.

The Army Reserve, along with public and private organizations, has a shared interest in enhancing the career and leader development of citizens, whose civilian skills and military capabilities make them a sought-after talent pool in all sectors. Our soldiers bring civilian experiences to bear in their military duties and their innovative mindsets, acquisition skills, and project management expertise help solve the Army's most complex challenges. As the Army adapts to multi-domain operations, our soldiers provide a critical link to the private sector. Resident talent in areas such as space and defensive cyber operations are valuable skills ready for the nation to tap. Part-time, rewarding service is a valuable mechanism to attract specialized capabilities.

We are leveraging the “This is My Squad” philosophy to aggressively combat the chief of staff of the Army's three biggest concerns for the Army: racism and extremism, suicide/behavioral health, and sexual assault/harassment.

The Army Reserve values the diverse background, cultures, and history of every soldier, civilian, and family member. When combined, these differences work together and contribute to an adaptive, culturally astute Army that further enhances our capabilities around the world. The Army Reserve leads the way in diversity and education. Nearly half of the force identifies as Black, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, or Native American, while women make up 25% of all Army Reserve soldiers. Diversity extends to the senior leadership, where women constitute 19% of our general officers.

Readiness

To strike a balance between the readiness required to address multiple long-term existing and evolving threats,

USAR CAPABILITIES Percentage of the Total Army Force

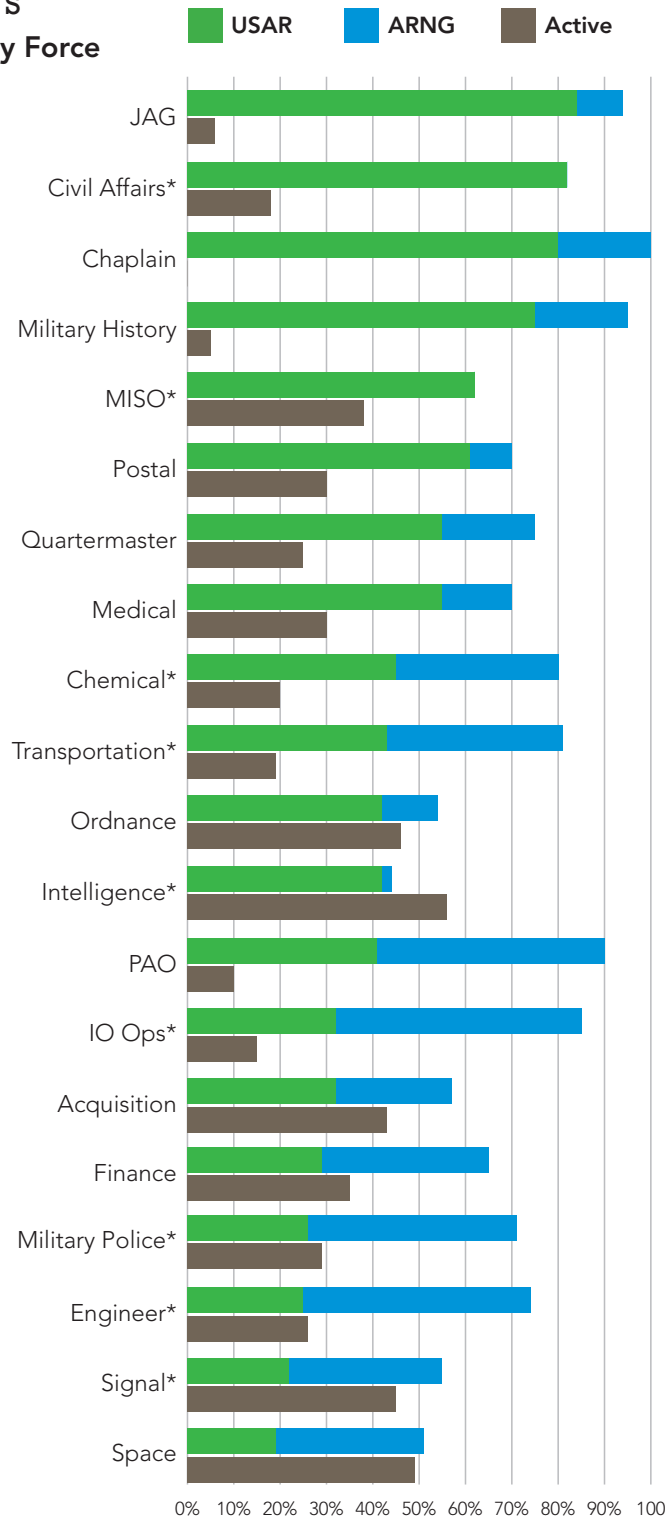
The Army Reserve's specialized capabilities are vital to the Army's ability to respond throughout the full spectrum of competition, crisis, conflict, and change.

Composed of nearly 190,000 Army Reserve soldiers and 11,000 civilians, the Army Reserve is present in all 50 states, five U.S. territories, and deployed to 23 countries around the world; soldiers, civilians, and families.

The Army Reserve contains nearly half of the Army's maneuver support and a quarter of its force mobilization capacity and costs just 6% of the total Army budget.

Although the Army Reserve only constitutes 20% of the Army's personnel, it provides over 65% of its quartermaster and medical formations; over 80% of its civil affairs, legal, and religious units; 83% of its military information support operations units; over 40% of its chemical, transportation, and ordnance; and 29% of its intelligence forces, as well as the majority of critical sustaining and enabling capabilities such as petroleum distribution, water purification, port opening, technical intelligence, and railroad operations.

*Potential Future Protection Brigade Capability (Way Point 2028)





Master Sgt. Randall Hughes with the United States Army Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Command (A), prepares his parachute prior to conducting an airborne operation from UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, July 17, 2020. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Javier Orona)

the Army Reserve is adapting its readiness construct to manage and prioritize readiness in line with ReARMM. The Army Reserve Mission Force, or ARM Force, complements ReARMM's efforts to transform the Army into a multidomain-capable force by aligning current force structure against competition requirements, providing predictable mission cycles that allow for training and modernization while preparing our formations under the "4C" construct: competition, crisis, conflict, and change.

As we prepare for the future, we must also contend with current challenges. For the past three years, the Army Reserve has focused on increasing its individual and collective readiness to contend with near-peer powers in large-scale combat operations. However, in March 2020, like the rest of the world, we encountered an enemy we never expected—not in a faraway country, but right here at home. And that readiness paid dividends in unexpected

ways with more than 4,500 Army Reserve soldiers mobilizing in support of the federal COVID-19 response between March 1, 2020 and March 15, 2021.

Within 24 hours of a presidential order invoking involuntary mobilization authority, the Army Reserve initiated one of the largest domestic mobilizations in its history, rapidly aggregating critical medical capabilities in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Army Reserve designed 15 urban augmentation medical task forces with the capacity of a 250-bed hospital to treat patients and relieve some of the burden on our civilian medical infrastructure. Within days, more than 2,800 soldiers, including critical medical personnel, were mobilized, and deployed to crisis zones around the country.

In addition to direct medical support, Army Reserve sustainers provided logistics support to units from all components—with the 377th Theater Sustainment Command Headquarters directly supporting U.S. Army North. Intelligence specialists assisted in tracking COVID 19's spread, and emergency preparedness liaison officers integrated federal, state, and local responses. Forward engineering support teams also helped to convert commercial buildings into hospitals, and Army Reserve aviation units flew more than 600 missions, moving 1,870 personnel and more than 8,000 pounds of cargo to points of critical need.

Outside of the United States, Army Reserve formations assisted our allies and overseas installations with their pandemic response. In Europe, the 7th Mission Support Command performed COVID-19 testing and provided civil support teams to decontaminate high traffic areas across the U.S. Army garrison and elsewhere. The 9th Mission Support Command supported three federal staging areas and moved more than 11,500 pieces of personal protective equipment and medical gear into the Pacific Territories, Hawaii, and Alaska.

Neither operations under defense support of civil authorities nor the pandemic itself prevented the Army Reserve from supporting combatant commanders. Nearly 12,000 soldiers from more than 250 units are currently deployed to support operations at home and around the globe.

Training

Even at the height of the pandemic, soldiers and units never stopped individual training. Early on, the Army Reserve began making use of cloud-based tools to conduct



Soldiers from the 358th Civil Affairs Brigade, the 416th Civil Affairs Battalion, the 426th Civil Affairs Battalion, the 404th Civil Affairs Battalion, and the 301st Tactical Psychological Operations Company load onto a C-130 aircraft before an airborne jump over the National Training Center, Fort Irwin, California, Sept. 12, 2020. (U.S. Army Reserve courtesy photo)

virtual battle assemblies. As the Army Reserve units transitioned to team and squad-level collective training exercises, medical screening procedures, testing (as available), and control measures were implemented to decrease risk during in-person gatherings. Leaders also made use of tools like Vantage that provided real-time data on area infection rates to make informed decisions on the risks of conducting training.

The Army Reserve also leveraged technology to build readiness. For example, Army Reserve cyber soldiers continued required individual and team collective training through use of the persistent cyber training environment, which allows soldiers to complete complex cyber exercises while geographically separated. This synthetic training environment enabled soldiers to collaborate via the internet to maintain training and readiness goals for the year.

Modernization—Building an MDO-Capable Force

We are at a critical inflection point and must aggressively pursue the Army's modernization efforts to maintain our competitive edge. Modernization must include developing the multi-domain operations concept at echelon, delivering the six modernization priorities, and implementing a 21st century talent management system.

The ARM Force is just one way the Army Reserve aims to shape tomorrow, a journey we are pursuing with the total Army. The Army Reserve is heavily engaged in shaping future capabilities from information advantage to next-generation protection, with investments in equipment like joint light tactical vehicles and joint battle command platforms to enhance interoperability with the active Army.

Modernization is vital to driving the processes and systems that support operations in a multi-domain environment and ensuring the Army Reserve is able to mobilize quickly and employ integrated capabilities to support the fight.

While still in early stages of operation, the 75th Innovation Command is an example of how the Army Reserve is supporting modernization for the Army, Army Futures Command, and combatant commands. The 75th is providing relevant technology scouting and critical subject matter expertise, serving as the bridge between the Army's modernization objectives and private sector innovators and technology leaders.

- Army Reserve subject matter experts have assisted the Army's chief information officer, Army Science Board, and Army Futures Command with critical challenges in cloud computing, cyber security, artificial intelligence implementation, and enterprise

Army Reserve

architecture, and participated in major events such as Project Convergence 2020, Joint Warfighting Assessment 2020, and the Army software factory concept.

- Personnel from the 75th Innovation Command also serve in key leadership roles in organizations such as U.S. Special Operations Command (director of Special Operations Forces Artificial Intelligence), the Defense Innovation Unit, and the Office of the Chief Technology Officer for the Army.


The Army Reserve must be prepared to meet the needs of the Army and our combatant commands across the full range of military options. Ensuring component interoperability across warfighter platforms such as equipment, communications, command and control systems, and addressing gaps identified by the Army in its ability to conduct large-scale combat operations remains a central challenge. It is essential that we continue to build on the readiness and modernization efforts that support survivability and lethality on the battlefield.

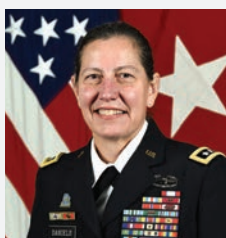
Shaping Tomorrow...

While the Army Reserve is proud of its accomplishments, there is more work to be done. The joint force cannot deploy, fight, and win without the Army Reserve. The Army provides the bulk of sustainment and enabling forces to other services, and most of these enabling forces reside in the Army Reserve.

In an era of great power competition, the Army needs forces able to compete with adversaries, respond to crises, win in conflict, and prepare for the future through continuous change. To accomplish this mission, the Army needs a dedicated federal reserve force that is ready today and prepared to meet the challenges of tomorrow. That force is the United States Army Reserve.

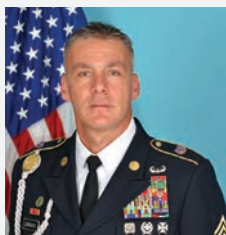
My goal is to build and sustain the most globally ready and responsive Army Reserve in history: the best trained, the best equipped, and the readiest—individually and collectively—soldiers and units the Army Reserve has ever produced; to build on the strong foundation of readiness we have today, to shape the Army Reserve of tomorrow.

And I only have four years to do it. 



Lt. Gen. Jody J. Daniels assumed the role of chief of Army Reserve and commanding general, U.S. Army Reserve Command, on July 28, 2020. Her 37 years of active and reserve military service includes assignments as commanding general of the 88th Readiness Division and chief of staff, U.S. Army Forces Command.

Daniels holds a bachelor's degree in applied mathematics (computer science) from Carnegie Mellon University, a master's degree and doctorate in computer science from the University of Massachusetts (Amherst), an honorary doctorate in public service from University of Massachusetts (Amherst) and a master's degree in strategic studies from the U.S. Army War College.



Command Sgt. Maj. Andrew Lombardo enlisted in the United States Army in 1985. He attended One Station Unit Training at Fort McClellan, Alabama, where he graduated from the U.S. Army Military Police School. He completed a two-year active duty commitment with the U.S. Military Academy Military Police Company at West Point, New York.

In 2015, Lombardo graduated from both the Army Force Management School and the National Defense University Reserve Component National Security Course. He is a 2016 graduate of the University of Kansas School of Business Army Leader Strategic Broadening Program, and was selected as honor graduate from the U.S. Army War College Nominative Leader Course 17-03. Most recently, in 2019, Lombardo completed the National Defense University Keystone 19-02 Command Senior Enlisted Leader Course in joint and combined studies.

The Senior Army Reserve Commanders Association

AN OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

By Maj. Gen. Rita M. Broadway, USA (Ret.)
President, Senior Army Reserve Commanders Association

The Senior Army Reserve Commanders Association is undergoing a resurgence that offers active and retired senior Army Reserve officers a platform through which to help shape the future of the Army Reserve. A private association, its mission is to support the United States Army Reserve in its role as a vital part of the Army, and to develop and mentor senior leaders of the Army Reserve as well as provide a forum for dialogue among senior Army Reserve leaders.

SARCA was organized in 1949 at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. The initial membership was composed of the general officers and chiefs of staff of the 24 combat divisions in the Organized Reserve Corps (ORC). Today, membership is open to Army Reserve colonels and generals who are currently serving or retired.

In 1949, Brig. Gen. James T. Roberts, commanding general of the 13th Armored Division (Calif.), called for the creation of an organization that would express the concerns of the senior field commanders of the units in the ORC. In 1964, following a proposal to merge the units of the U.S. Army Reserve into the National Guard, SARCA membership was expanded to include all general officer commands of the USAR. Working closely with the ROA, SARCA played a major role in preventing the merger. In 1980 membership was expanded to include colonels who commanded USAR units; in 1982 it was opened to colonels serving active-duty tours.

Health care benefits for reservists became the key issue for SARCA during 1985 and 1986 following the capture of a USAR major in Beirut by terrorists as he was returning from annual training. That incident caused the association to recommend legislation to provide reservists with the same protection as active component members for injuries sustained while on duty. These laws are now in effect.


SARCA was active in supporting and advocating for the Army Reserve through the Cold War and up to 9/11. During annual meetings in conjunction with ROA and the Association of the U.S. Army (AUSA) SARCA members

had candid, off-the-record discussions with the chief, Army Reserve, and senior Army Reserve staff. Operational requirements and added scrutiny of involvement of active Army Reserve officers in military service organizations drew SARCA into a period of inactivity. With the support of the Army Reserve, ROA, and AUSA, SARCA today is revitalized and a valuable partner in promoting Army Reserve initiatives.

One of SARCA's core pillars is to serve as a venue for professional development opportunities for not only the senior leaders of the Army Reserve but leaders at all levels. We offer military and civilian leaders the platform to discuss and brainstorm initiatives, current and future, as well as develop legislative priorities. Our partnerships with ROA, AUSA, and other military associations help ensure effective legislative action in support of the needs of the Army Reserve and its soldiers.

SARCA provides an opportunity for members to have open and collegial discussion with Army and Department of Defense senior leaders, as well as speakers from outside the military community, to help shape the future Army Reserve. We encourage discussion towards solutions that benefit our Army Reserve soldiers, their families, and the Army Reserve extended community.

SARCA encourages members to mentor Army Reserve soldiers and provide in-person and virtual opportunities to network and exchange ideas. Our members are highly active in their communities and continue to champion the Army Reserve. They are learners and soldiers for life. SARCA email updates are great opportunities to hear current information and initiatives directly from Army Reserve leaders and stay current on Army Reserve issues as they promote military service in the community.

If you are interested SARCA's mission, you can become a member today at no cost. Visit the SARCA website at www.sarcaonline.org, or reach out to our executive director, Col. Tony Kanellis (Ret.), directly at sarcamembership@gmail.com. 

Designing the Reserve Component of 2030

By Lt. Gen. David C. Bellon, Commander, Marine Forces Reserve

The Marines and sailors of Marine Forces Reserve, as expected, performed exceptionally well throughout 2020 despite the unique challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. Small-unit leaders across the force performed at an exceptionally high level, adapting to a dynamic and evolving threat, as is their nature. This past year we were able, through the actions of those small-unit leaders, to train as many Marines during our annual training period as years prior. Our Reserve Marines continue to demonstrate their *irrational call to service* as they adroitly balance the requirements of their civilian careers and familial responsibilities. Given the constraints and restraints of COVID-19, the cancellation of many service-level and overseas exercises, and the dynamic conditions in each state in which our home training centers reside, this was no small accomplishment and is worthy of significant praise and recognition.

As we look to 2021, the Marine Corps Reserve will continue to support the requirements necessary to stay ready to answer the nation's call at a moment's notice while evolving the force consistent with our commandant's planning guidance, the National Defense Strategy, and Force Design 2030. Furthermore, through efforts in 2020 and looking to 2021, we are confident that our efforts will lead to measurable improvements in readiness and enhanced capabilities. We will look to solidify the Reserve Component role as a major contributor to the commandant's "Service Retained Forces," enhance efforts under force design towards naval integration and continue to innovate in order to achieve a truly integrated reserve force into the total Marine Corps.

Service Retained Forces

The Marine Corps Reserves stands ready to answer our nation's call at a moment's notice. The Reserve Component, as a significant portion of the service's retained forces, is



Marines with Marine Forces Reserve salute the colors during the 245th Marine Corps birthday cake cutting ceremony at Marine Corps Support Facility, New Orleans, Nov. 9, 2020. The cutting of the cake is an integral part of Marine Corps birthday celebrations as it is an annual renewal of each Marine's commitment to the Corps and the Corps' commitment to our nation's quest for peace and freedom worldwide. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Samuel Tabancay)

well postured to respond to global contingencies in close alignment with II Marine Expeditionary Force's mission set. During this time of historic inflection for the service, we cannot afford to lose sight of our role as the nation's 911 force. Providing combat power during times of conflict is the top priority for the Marine Corps Reserve. However, it is equally vital that the Marine Corps Reserve evolve at the pace of the Active Component so that we remain ready, relevant, and lethal for decades to come. Understanding that a significant portion of the Marine Corps is focused

on potential threats in the Pacific theater, we will remain ready to “mobilize tonight” in support of worldwide contingencies and ensure a global presence to support “gray zone” competition.

Reserve Marines continue to operate across the competition spectrum. As an expeditionary force in readiness, we deploy on very short notice to confront any threat that emerges against our nation. It is imperative that we do so to remain operationally relevant. However, it is equally important that we are available to occupy the competition space to keep the service and our national interests are pertinent as we continue to address our pacing threat on a global scale. As the service winds down two multi-decade conflicts, reacting to contingencies while maintaining a global presence requires that the Reserves remain available and ready to embrace any mission set. Aligning the Reserve Component to the requirements of the Marine Corps Service retained forces as a whole will be the base movement for our conventional units of employment in the future. There are exciting opportunities for the Reserve Component to evolve by embracing our position on the field as it pertains to global great power competition outside of U.S. Indo-Pacific Command. This mission set requires enhanced capabilities beyond conventional units of employment. As our Marines and sailors gain experience, this is a natural progression following service in conventional units.

Aligning the Reserve Component disproportionately as part of the Marine Corps Service retained force offering is a significant paradigm shift for the service. I am wholly confident that our Reserve Marines, specifically the small-unit leadership, will embrace this refined mission and will continue to operate at an exceptional level of proficiency across the globe. The Reserve Marines and sailors of Marine Forces Reserve have shown a remarkable ability to adapt to these changes and continue to embrace the evolution of the service to address worldwide threats.

Naval Integration

As the Reserve Component evolves under the commandant’s force design efforts, there is a significant opportunity to do so in partnership with the Navy Reserve under a larger Department of the Navy strategy. Continued relationships with the Navy Reserve are vital to the success of the evolution of the total force, particularly as we look to embrace littoral maneuver and the sea-control and sea-denial missions within our hemisphere. Better integration



Lance Cpl. Jose Gallo, a canoneer with Hotel Battery, 3rd Battalion, 14th Marine Regiment, 4th Marine Division, fires a M777 howitzer during a direct-fire range at Fort Pickett, Virginia, July 19, 2020, during Hotel Battery's annual training. Marines with Marine Forces Reserve continue to safely train through the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic to go, fight, and win our nation's battles. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Sgt. Niles Lee)

between the Marine Corps and Navy Reserves will allow both to build efficiencies and better capture and retain talent across the naval spectrum of capabilities.

The strategic alignment with the Navy reserve structure will be critical for building efficiencies in what is likely going to be a time of reduced resources across the Department of Defense. For example, as capabilities in the Active Component become more advanced and exquisite, the need for redundancy in special access program (SAP) facilities will be a necessity. Dispersing capacity across the United States not only provides critical redundancy but also will provide our top talent access to our most sensitive mission sets. This access is essential for retention, particularly in the area of the Blended Retirement System (BRS). Initiatives such as these not only increase the relevance and lethality of the Marine Corps and Navy Reserves but, more importantly, bolster the entire joint force. Further, these advanced capabilities allow both the Marine Corps and the Navy to retain and gainfully employ talented service members as they transition from active duty into



A Marine with 3rd Force Reconnaissance Company, 4th Marine Division guides his parachute after a free fall jump during an airborne operations event at Camp Shelby, Mississippi, Oct. 6, 2020. Reservists with 3rd Force Recon train to remain the nation's force in readiness, prepared to go, fight, and win at a moment's notice. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Sgt. Conner Downey)

the Reserve Component. As we mold the force of 2030, without the above-listed SAP facilities as an example, the service will not have a place for Marines with advanced skill sets in areas such as cyber or critical generation 5 and 6 weapon systems.

Complementing the efficiency in structure, from an employment standpoint, naval integration allows for the designing and resourcing of a more integrated ashore and at sea campaign of competition within our own hemisphere; a closely coordinated Marine Corps and Navy Reserves can contribute significantly to unique sea-control and sea-denial requirements. Intentional design to integrate all available authorities within the maritime services, Special Operations Command, and our partner nations will be paramount to more effectively scale enduring efforts such as sea drug interdiction. From conducting training with

the Naval Small Craft Instruction and Technical Training School to working with the Navy Reserves on leveraging other littoral platforms, continued engagement with our fellow Department of the Navy colleagues will be crucial to solving “brown-water” dilemmas and executing our sea-control and sea-denial missions of the future.

Talent Management


The Marine Corps Reserves represents over 100,000 personnel from the Selective Marine Corps Reserve (SMCR), Individual Mobilization Augments (IMA), and the Individual Ready Reserve (IRR). The Reserve Component continues to attract top-tier talent into its ranks through both direct accessions into the Reserves, as well as through Active Component affiliations into the SMCR and IMA.

However, as the service evolves, so too must our concepts of talent management. We must continue to refine our ability to identify talent and retain talent through processes and policies that make reserve service more predictable and scalable so that we retain and develop the highest caliber of Marines and sailors. Throughout the Marine Corps' force design efforts, the Reserve Component is actively soliciting future requirements from the service to best align these critical skills and also offer a legitimate path to participate for those Marines who wish to continue to answer their *irrational call to service*.

We are in constant competition for talent across the total force. I firmly believe that in addition to growing talented enlisted Marines and officers within the Reserve Component, we are also best situated to act as a “catching feature” for talent leaving active service. As we look at the potential impacts of the BRS, it becomes apparent that in the future force, it may be just as likely that high-caliber Marines could depart service at 15 years as it might be for them to depart at five years. BRS will compel the service to design a pathway for Marines to have a more blended career to complement the changing realities of service in the 21st century. We are actively looking at methods through which we can allow the door between reserve and active service to swing both ways. As the goal of the service is to ensure that we have the best talent on the field at the time of conflict, we must also be willing to allow some Marines the flexibility to hone critical skills while serving in the Reserve Component and then, if they so choose, compete to bring that same critical skill and leadership back into the active ranks. Although we are likely a decade away from realizing the actual impact of

the BRS, we recognize the time for setting these conditions is now, as we design the force of 2030.

Conclusion

2020 was a year of constant changes in circumstances. The adaptability, tenacity, grit, and determination the Marines showed in the face of uncertainty is exactly what the nation expects of its Marines. Even with the conditions as they were, your Marine Corps Reserve was forward deployed, supported service- and joint-level exercises, and maintained faith with the American people in the conduct of funeral honors for our fallen brothers and sisters. Furthermore, the Marines were able to adapt to the needs of the American people and conducted another record-setting “Toys for Tots” season, ensuring that, especially in such uncertain economic times, children everywhere were able to celebrate the holiday season. As part of the total force, we are the country’s Marine Corps Reserve. With our nation’s continued support, we will remain ready. Semper Fidelis! 



Marines with Hotel Battery, 3rd Battalion, 14th Marine Regiment, 4th Marine Division, prepare to bed down for the night after a live-fire range at Fort Pickett, Virginia, July 18, 2020, during Hotel Battery’s annual training. The Marine Corps Reserves was established on Aug. 29, 1916, after President Woodrow Wilson signed the Naval Appropriations Act of 1916. Since then, the Marine Corps Reserve has been called upon in every major conflict as well serving in humanitarian and security operations across the globe. This photo was created by stacking 75 images taken over the span of 45 minutes together. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Sgt. Niles Lee)



Lt. Gen. David C. Bellon is commander, Marine Forces Reserve. He was promoted to his current rank and assumed his duties as commander in September 2019. Bellon was commissioned as a second lieutenant in 1989 before graduating from the University of Missouri School of Law in 1990. He served as an infantry officer, then as a judge advocate. He left active duty in 1997 and joined the Selected Marine Corps Reserve. As a civilian, Bellon founded his own law firm in 1999. After 9/11, Bellon returned to active duty for four combat tours in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. His positions included operations officer, intelligence officer, and battalion commander. He fought in battles in Al Fallujah and conducted counterinsurgency operations in Al Haditha. Promoted to colonel, he deployed to Afghanistan in 2009 with the British 6th Division, serving as chief of operations for southern Afghanistan during NATO’s surge of forces to secure Kandahar City. Bellon was promoted to brigadier general in 2013; his assignments prior to his current billet included deputy commander (mobilization), 1st Marine Expeditionary Force; deputy, Marine Forces Command; director, Reserve Affairs; commander, Marine Forces South; and director of strategy, policy, and plans (J5), U.S. Southern Command.

The Navy Reserve Force: Ready Now

TODAY'S NAVY RESERVE SAILORS PROVIDE STRATEGIC DEPTH FOR MARITIME SUPERIORITY

By Vice Adm. John B. Mustin, Chief of Navy Reserve and Commander, Navy Reserve Force, Force Master Chief Chris Kotz, Navy Reserve Force

The Navy Reserve provides a vital contribution to our nation's defense and crisis response, as it has since its 1915 establishment in anticipation of the United States' entry into World War I. As they have done for the past 106 years, reserve sailors again demonstrated their resilience and dedication to country with their response to COVID-19 in 2020. Last year, responding to a demand signal larger than any other year since the 2010 Middle East surge, nearly 6,000 reserve sailors mobilized to perform critical missions.

In March 2020, early in the nation's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, more than 1,300 Navy Reserve sailors were activated—many in under 48 hours—leaving their families to fight an invisible enemy and care for their fellow citizens at great personal risk. In the COVID fight, they served where they were needed—aboard the Navy's two hospital ships, USNS *Mercy* and USNS *Comfort*, as well as in make-shift intensive care units like those created at New York City's Javits Center and in other medical facilities around the world.

At the same time, Navy Reserve sailors supported a critical shortage of civilian staff at the Navy-operated Air Mobility Command (AMC) Air Terminal in Norfolk, Virginia. The busy terminal provides strategic airlift of personnel, high-priority cargo, munitions, weapons, and mail via AMC and Navy aircraft. Strained to maintain operations with limited staff, the active-duty complement was augmented by reserve sailors who kept mission-essential cargo, supplies, and personnel moving.

Similarly, when COVID-19 decimated the civilian workforce at our public shipyards, nearly 1,300 additional

Navy Reserve surge maintenance (SurgeMain) sailors, representing 18 units across the country, mobilized to the yards to provide turn-key maintenance support and get our aircraft carriers and submarines back to the fleet—which they did.

I could not be more proud of our reserve force, and particularly the force's response during this challenging last year. In unprecedented times, our sailors operated when, where, and how the Navy needed them. In the fight against COVID-19, and in myriad other global missions, they demonstrated that they are warfighting ready.

Navy Reserve Fighting Instructions

As the commander of 59,000 Selected Reserve and full-time support sailors, and nearly 50,000 Individual Ready Reserve sailors, I have one—and only one—priority: warfighting readiness. I issued the Navy Reserve Fighting Instructions late last year to drive the transformation from a reserve force designed to support the global war on terror to a force designed to fight and win in an era of long-term strategic competition. This change will pivot our force away from two decades of individual augmentee production for land-based conflicts to instead return to our maritime roots, with recognition of the requirements necessary to support a high-end fight against a peer adversary. The Fighting Instructions are aligned with, and logically nest under, critical Department of Defense strategic documents including The National Defense Strategy 2018, the Tri-Service Maritime Strategy, the Chief of Naval Operations' Navigation



Reservists and Engineers from the Naval Surface Warfare Center Panama City Division (NSWC PCD) collaborate to demonstrate the ability to safely deploy and board a 25 person lifeboat from the Landing Craft Air Cushion (LCAC)100 Class on November 7-8, 2020. (Photo by Ronald Newsome)

Plan 2021 (NAVPLAN), the Commandant's Planning Guidance, and others.

Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Michael Gilday stated in his NAVPLAN, *"Our Sailors—active and reserve, and the civilians who enable them—are the true source of our naval power. Controlling the seas and projecting power requires our Sailors to operate seamlessly in all domains and across the competition continuum."* To deliver on that simple but important statement, the reserve force needs to think differently about its contribution to naval power, and its priorities relative to current and future investments. The opening salvo in what will become a Navy Reserve force renaissance, the Fighting Instructions are designed around three lines of effort to ensure our sailors are ready to address the future: Design the Force, Train the Force, and Mobilize the Force.

Design the Force

The Design the Force line of effort (LOE) will identify those warfighting capabilities best suited for the Reserve Component and develop the force structure that delivers the capabilities and capacity our Navy values most. This effort will ensure all reserve component capabilities provide a clear, tangible benefit to the Navy, as prioritized and defined by the strategic documents previously mentioned. Decisions placing capabilities and capacity in the Reserve Component will be based on an assessment and determination that the reserve force can deliver against requirements at reduced cost and within acceptable risk relative to sourcing with Active Component forces. Also included in the Design the Force LOE is the rapid development of growth areas identified in direct fleet feedback, including reserve component investments in support to the fleet maritime



U.S. Navy Reserve medical providers deployed in support of the Department of Defense COVID-19 response, prepare for a shift at Bellevue Hospital in New York City, April 25, 2020. U.S. Northern Command, through U.S. Army North, is providing military support to the Federal Emergency Management Agency to help communities in need. (Photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Dan Serianni)

operations centers, expeditionary logistics, afloat support, surge maintenance, space, cyber, medical, emerging technologies, and unmanned systems.

Train the Force

Chief among Train the Force LOE is an initiative referred to as “mobilization-to-billet,” which focuses our reserve sailors’ training on requirements necessary to prepare for their mobilization billets. This higher level of readiness is cleanly differentiated from traditional “mobilization readiness” training, which is simply the cost of entry associated with the privilege of being a reserve sailor. Critical to “mobilization-to-billet” is ensuring all selected reserve

personnel understand the training requirements associated with their programmed mobilization billets, and that they are trained and ready to activate and fight on “day one” of a conflict. This LOE also includes the secretary of the Navy’s “IA to Zero” effort to reduce the number of reserve component-sourced involuntary individual augmentee billets supporting land-based war on terror requirements, addressing and improving reserve component manning metrics (i.e. “Fit/Fill”). The Train the Force LOE is also tasked to infuse the force with a sense of character in line with the Navy core values, diversity, inclusion, and culture.

Mobilize the Force

Mobilizing the force for a conflict against a peer or near-peer adversary requires efficient, scalable processes, mechanisms, and resourcing to ensure we can activate and deploy the entirety of the reserve force quickly and predictably. The development of distributed activation (DA), which enables activation and deactivation of the nearly 50,000 selected reserve population in 30 days, is the procedural solution that will remove geographic and infrastructural constraints limiting throughput today. Through the superlative efforts of many stakeholders in a complex eco-

system, we declared initial operational capability for DA in January 2021. We are on track to declare DA at full operational capability in January 2022, concurrent with the launch of the Navy Personnel & Pay System (NP2), a game-changing integrated system that simplifies pay processes for reserve members transitioning between reserve and active duty.

Resource Sponsorship

Analysis of the feedback, associated workflows, policies, and processes following a reserve capabilities review revealed a need for greater agility and flexibility in planning and programming the Navy Reserve budget.

To achieve that flexibility, in August 2020 the vice chief of naval operations designated the chief of Navy Reserve (CNR) a resource sponsor, meaning we now have explicit ownership of the planning, programming, budgeting, and execution process for the reserve force's people, equipment, and operations. Today, with oversight and ownership of budgets, as reserve chief I am directly responsible for enabling effective and efficient reserve force alignment with the Navy's multi-domain warfighting priorities.

Our Navy Reserve Force Strength and Structure

The Navy Reserve boasts nearly 110,000 members: approximately 49,000 Selected Reserve, 10,000 full-time support, 431 civilians, and 50,000 Individual Ready Reserve.

CNR is "dual-hatted" as both the reserve chief and the commander, Navy Reserve Force (CNRF). As such, the role is both that of an advisor to the chief of naval operations on reserve policy and strategy, as well as the commander of the distributed force. Three subordinate commands support the Navy Reserve structure: commander, Navy Reserve Forces Command (CNRFC), who also serves as deputy CNRF; commander, Naval Air Forces Reserve (CNAFR); and commander, Naval Information Force Reserve (CNIFR). These three Echelon III commands oversee the manning, training, and administrative support for our nation's reserve sailors.

CNRF manages the six regional reserve headquarters and 122 Navy Operational Support Centers (NOSCs), as well as two joint reserve bases—one in Fort Worth, Texas, and another in New Orleans, Louisiana. Through the regions and NOSCs, CNRF provides administrative, training, and readiness support to reserve sailors across the nation to ensure mobilization readiness. The regions and some larger NOSCs are also growing DA capabilities to expedite the mobilization and demobilization processes necessary to bring reserve sailors on and off active duty.

DESIGN THE FORCE
Identify warfighting capabilities best suited for the Reserve component, which provide a clear benefit to the Navy — delivered at reduced cost, within acceptable risk, and optimized for warfighting readiness.

TRAIN THE FORCE
Focus training efforts on preparing Navy Reserve Sailors for their mobilization billets, ensuring all Reserve Sailors are trained, ready to activate, and be able to fight on "Day One." Infuse the force with a sense of character in line with the Navy core values, diversity, and culture.

MOBILIZE THE FORCE
Develop and employ rapid mobilization processes like Distributed Mobilization to ensure large-scale readiness for conflict against a peer or near-peer adversary. Expedite Personnel & Pay improvements for Reserve administrative and pay processes.

“Achieving strategic depth and improving warfighting readiness requires us to build on the hard work completed so far with a sense of urgency.”
Vice. Adm. John B. Mustin
Chief of Navy Reserve

U.S. NAVY RESERVE

www.navyreserve.navy.mil

Working in close coordination with commander, Naval Air Forces/commander Naval Air Force Pacific, CNAFR oversees the Navy Reserve operational aviation squadrons and squadron augment units providing reserve support to naval aviation. CNAFR comprises three air wings—Tactical Support Wing, Maritime Support Wing, and Fleet Logistics Support Wing—as well as the Naval Air Facility Washington, D.C. and the Navy Air Logistics Office. With approximately 150 aircraft across the enterprise, these units provide intra-theater airlift and executive transport capability around the globe.


A huge growth area for the Navy Reserve, CNIFR provides Navy and joint forces with approximately 7,000 skilled, trained, and ready Information Warfare Community (IWC) professionals to support mobilization contingency and peacetime operations. The CNIFR enterprise encompasses warfare communities including METOC/Oceanography, Cryptologic Warfare, Information Professional, and Intelligence.

Conclusion

As a Navy Reserve force, we have both a proud heritage and a bright future. We are ready to contribute today. In fact, every day our sailors make high-value contributions in every domain, in every theater around the globe. Our Navy is stronger as a result. However, improving

Navy Reserve

warfighting readiness, designing, and delivering strategic depth, and simultaneously supporting global operations requires us to think differently. To deliver meaningful support, integrated and warfighting-ready on day one of a future conflict, requires that we transform our legacy processes, design, systems, and structure, and move out with a sense of urgency. That is our future. That is what

the Navy and our nation's taxpayers demand and expect of us. And it is what we are committed to delivering. With full appreciation for the complexity of the future world, when forecasting the Navy Reserve's contribution to competing and winning in adversity, we can claim with confidence, "We're ready now." 



Vice Adm. John Mustin is the 15th chief of Navy Reserve. Mustin's sea duty assignments include command of Expeditionary Strike Group 2/Task Force 29; commissioning operations officer on USS *Donald Cook* (DDG 75), and aboard USS *Vincennes* (CG 49), where he served as combat information center officer, navigator and the air warfare commander of the Independence (CV 62) Battle Group.

Affiliating with the Navy Reserve (NR) in 2001, Mustin served at NR Carrier Strike Group 2 during Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF). Other staff assignments include NR chief of naval operations for operations, plans and strategy; Maritime Expeditionary Security Squadron 14; and NR Carrier Strike Group 10. Additionally, he served as the inaugural littoral combat ship (LCS) NR enterprise director. Other command tours include NR Joint Staff South; NR U.S. Fleet Forces Command Maritime Operations Center, Greensboro; NR Maritime Expeditionary Security Squadron 6; and Inshore Boat Unit 22, including a mobilization to Kuwait during OEF and Iraqi Freedom. His other flag assignments include deputy commander of Naval Surface Forces; as a plankowner and the deputy commander of the re-established U.S. Second Fleet; and as vice commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command.



Force Master Chief Chris Kotz is the 16th force master chief of the Navy Reserve. His previous assignment was as the command master chief to the commander, Marine Forces Reserve and Marine Forces North, headquartered in New Orleans, Louisiana. He is designated a fleet marine force warfare and surface warfare specialist. He has completed six sea-duty assignments. His tours ashore include Navy Reserve Center, Tyler, Texas; Branch Medical Clinic, Fort Worth, Texas; Navy Reserve Readiness Command South; inspector-instructor, Company F(-), 2d Battalion, 23rd Marines; and Littoral Combat Ship Squadron ONE. He also served on a combat tour with Task Force Military Police, 1st Battalion, 14th Marines (Reinforced) in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. He has received numerous awards for his service. A native of North Augusta, South Carolina, Kotz enlisted in the Navy in 1991. He graduated from the Surface Force Independent Duty Corps School and the Field Medical Service School. He attended the Navy Senior Enlisted Academy (Class 140); Command Leadership School (Class 95); and Ashford University, where he earned a bachelor's degree in organizational management.

Coast Guard Reserve

In the Face of Adversity

COAST GUARD RESERVE ADAPTS TO OVERCOME PANDEMIC

By Rear Adm. Todd Wiemers, Assistant Commandant for Reserve,
Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard Reserve George M. Williamson

First off, let me extend to all readers of the *Reserve Voice* my fervent wish for your health and happiness after a very trying year. Believe me, I know it was a rough 2020, but I am extremely optimistic about this new year, and let me tell you why.

Two years ago, we changed our relationship with the Coast Guard when we established the Assistant Commandant for Reserve dedicated to the success and outcomes of the Reserve Component. After transitioning from the mission support side of the Coast Guard, we reevaluated many of our systems and processes from an operational perspective. While we're still getting on our feet, we have made enormous progress.

When we stood up, we set our sights on three strategic priorities: restoring the force, getting the force right, and getting the support right.

Less than seven months later, a crisis struck our nation, the likes of which none of us had ever seen. As a reserve component, we're a force that's used to being called in when things are going wrong, so, boy, were we glad that we got our priorities right. They set us in the right direction—and just in time, too.

A year ago, we never would have thought we'd see a pandemic—with the last round of hurricanes and a busy 2020 season predicted; it wasn't on our radar. But it's been all-consuming since March 2020, on two fronts.

First, we've recalled almost 800 people to both lead and support the Coast Guard's response to COVID-19. What is unusual about this mobilization is the heavy demand for mission support personnel over traditional Coast Guard operators. Moreover, there has been demand for Coast Guard support across the whole of government, with reservists filling key roles at the Department of Health and Human Services and assisting Federal Emergency Management Agency efforts to

vaccinate the American public. Our reservists have stood ready through it all, they've adapted to various challenges, and, typical of our people, they have exceeded the highest expectations.

Hitting the ground running, our reservists were key contributors to the Coast Guard's Permanent Change of Station assist teams, providing steadiness and support during a chaotic time for active-duty families who relocated last summer. They've assisted with COVID-19 contact tracing teams, and they've been a critical part of shoring up the Coast Guard's personal protective equipment warehousing and distribution system—a system that wasn't built to handle the sheer volume of requests and output required to meet current COVID-19 demand. Others have assisted in state and local emergency centers, providing leadership and support in helping our nation's most vulnerable populations get the vaccine quickly and safely. Still others, like the reservists of Station Yaquina Bay, backfilled units when members became sick or needed to quarantine.

When the nation needs help, they call the Coast Guard, but when the Coast Guard needs help, they call the Coast Guard Reserve.

I'm incredibly proud and humbled by the willingness of our people to serve during such an unpredictable and challenging time. Our reserve force has never been more necessary or more relevant.

But secondly, many more of our reservists continue to train at their local units, preparing to respond within 48 hours to potential hurricane-related deployments, other contingencies, or to meet the Coast Guard's enduring mission in support of Department of Defense requirements at Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

As the office responsible for the policies governing reserve training, we have sure been thrown some curveballs



Coast Guard reservists review the map of Lake Champlain during a patrol, Jun. 16, 2020. Reservists join the crew members of Station Burlington during the busy summer season to support law enforcement missions by providing two additional boarding teams. With the aid of the reservists, the active-duty crew members can focus on search and rescue. This year marks the fifth summer the reservists have joined the station and begins a new and fully integrated system involving one active-duty crew member for each of the two reserve boarding teams. (U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 1st Class Amber Howie)

by COVID-19. How do our drilling reservists maintain readiness in a “telework” world?

Our best readiness training occurs through the augmentation of Coast Guard daily operations. With the majority of our workforce traveling more than an hour to get to their drilling locations through a patchwork of local COVID-19 travel restrictions, we had to get creative. We never imagined reservists would train remotely, conduct meetings, or hold qualification boards via video conference, but that’s what we did to maintain as much readiness as possible. Even with these challenges, it’s heartening to know that during these trying times—especially during these trying times—the Reserve remains both essential and adaptable.

Despite this global pandemic, our course has stayed true, and our priorities remain in place. As I said, one of our top priorities is restoring the force. As of this

publication, we stand at just over 6,200 members, but the need to return to our fully authorized strength has never been more evident than during our country’s current crisis.

For the Coast Guard, crisis time is when we report for duty, but when faced with multiple challenges, including the pandemic, the vaccination process, and the looming environmental factors that produced more than an alphabet’s worth of hurricanes in a single season, we need to be at our full strength.

To that end, we’ve been working on several projects.

In July 2019, our commandant, Adm. Karl Schultz, announced his initiative to restore the Reserve Component to its authorized strength of 7,000. The Reserve End-Strength Action Team was created to analyze options and determine the best way forward, with two major themes ultimately emerging. First, we needed to find ways to create a more geographically stable workforce, and second,



Coast Guard reservists staff community vaccination centers at sites around the country in response to FEMA mission assignments. (U.S. Coast Guard photo courtesy of Lt. J.G. Brandon Towle)

we needed to make it easier to join, affiliate, or transfer to the Reserve. This team found some revolutionary ideas to help us reach our goals through close coordination and collaboration with multiple offices and commands throughout the Coast Guard.

One of the team's boldest changes was the Flexible Personnel Allowance List (FlexPAL). This system, implemented in October 2020, represents an enormous paradigm shift, breaking the active duty-style mold for how we manage reserve billets and assignments. Rather than assign reservists to stationary positions, we're moving training positions to members, as long as training capacity exists at a unit closer to where they already live. This will provide much better support to the nearly 60% of our members who must travel more than 50 miles to their drill locations.

Building a more geographically stable workforce that trains where it already lives reduces the burden and cost to our members and the Coast Guard while still providing trained personnel and assets to meet our contingency needs.

FlexPAL is just one initiative we pursued to make reserve service more attractive, especially to active-duty members preparing to enter the civilian community. We also implemented policy to defer deployment for active-duty members who affiliate with the Selected Reserve for up to one year. This gives these members sufficient time to establish themselves in their new careers and communities without the risk of immediate involuntary activation. This

involuntary activation risk was specifically identified as a reason why many active-duty members declined reserve service opportunities.

Just having the right number of people with the right number of opportunities to train isn't enough. We need to point them in the right direction by providing clear competency and training requirements designed to address organizational risk.

This is where our Reserve Component Requirements Generation System (RGS) comes in. When I started in this job, the commandant asked me directly, "How big of a reserve force do we need?"

To answer that question, myriad parameters must be analyzed. The Reserve Component is a contingency-based workforce designed to provide trained units and qualified personnel for active duty when operational demands exceed the Coast Guard's steady-state capability. So, we employed the Coast Guard's Force Planning Construct to evaluate a specific set of contingencies to determine the Coast Guard's needs for reserve support.

The effective development of the size and composition of a contingency-based force requires a quantitative and rigorous methodology. RGS considers personnel and resource requirements established by approved contingency plans to quantify unconstrained operational and mission-enabling resources needed to execute Coast Guard missions and strategies.

The difference between the resources we need and the resources we have defines our risk threshold. The establishment of a systematic and repeatable approach to determining the appropriate size, composition, and requirements for the Reserve Component ensures the Coast Guard can address normal maritime risks addressed by steady-state operations, as well as added risks presented in times of war, natural disaster, or other contingency events.

The results of this modeling and evaluation will be available in the next few months. It's been a lot of work and many conversations, but helping our leaders make well-informed, risk-based decisions is what being Semper Paratus is all about.

This is what it means to have an integrated Reserve, at all levels, all the way up to headquarters. The organizational focus on reserve capabilities over the past two years has brought about some other changes, including the restoration of reserve aviation capabilities for the first time in more than 30 years.

In March, we allocated 50 billets to enlisted aviation support personnel who are separating from active duty. These members will provide ground-based aviation maintenance, enabling them to continue their chosen career path in the Reserve. It's a tremendous opportunity for the Coast Guard and the Coast Guard Reserve. But we aren't stopping at enlisted aviation. We are expecting to add reserve aviator (pilot) billets beginning in fiscal year 2022. Our future is bright, and it's full of opportunities that many people thought impossible only a few short years ago.

Now, having the requirements is great, getting access to new missions is great, and providing geographic stability

to our workforce is phenomenal; but, unless you have the structure, budget, and support personnel to sustain and maintain the training and readiness, the system will eventually run down.

We don't just want to make it easy to join and train; we want people to know they're being taken care of in a way that respects their dedication and their desire to serve their country. To do that, we need to modernize the support structure, update the policies, and take a round turn on the processes that impact our folks.

To this end, we have been working hard on our Reserve Forces Readiness System (RFRS) 2.0 initiative slated for release this summer, with full implementation occurring over the next few years. The initial RFRS was established more than a decade ago, and it hasn't been given a thorough evaluation or revision since then. As part of this initiative, we are taking a holistic view of reserve management, from the unit level all the way to the headquarters level.

Clearly, we have come a long way in just two years, but we still have much to accomplish. And while this pandemic has challenged us and tested us, it has given us insight into areas we need to continue growing and adapting. It's also demonstrated the creativity and strength of our people in the face of uncertainty and adversity.

If I'm sure of anything, it's that the Coast Guard Reserve and its people are extraordinarily resilient. They have the grit and perseverance to accomplish any mission. To the Coast Guard Reserve's men and women, I am proud of your adaptability, steadfastness, and continued selfless service.

Together, we remain Semper Paratus! 



Rear Adm. Todd Wiemers currently serves as Assistant Commandant for Reserve at Coast Guard Headquarters, Washington, D.C. He provides operationally capable and ready personnel to support Coast Guard surge and mobilization requirements in the homeland and abroad.

Wiemers graduated with honors from the Coast Guard Academy and has a master's in business administration from the College of William & Mary.



Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard Reserve **George M. Williamson** assumed the duties of the 7th master chief petty officer of the Coast Guard Reserve on May 16, 2018. Williamson is the senior enlisted member of the Coast Guard Reserve and the principal advisor to the commandant on all reserve enlisted personnel matters.

INNOVATION AND DEDICATION IN UNPRECEDENTED TIMES

By Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard Reserve George M. Williamson

To the men and women of the United States Coast Guard Reserve, I could not be prouder of this remarkable team. In our 80th year, we have so much to be proud of after an extremely difficult time, to include 30 named storms amid a global pandemic.

From its establishment during World War II, the Reserve Component has been an integral part of the organizational success of the Coast Guard and eight decades of extraordinary service to our nation. As Admiral Karl L. Schultz expressed in his State of the Coast Guard Address, our Reserve force is ready, resilient and continues to answer the call providing critical support to both surge capacity and force augmentation. In recent months, you remained adaptable to an ever-changing course. As a team, you rose to the challenge in a very difficult environment and proved once again you are a dedicated and resilient force.

The Coast Guard Reserve is in the fight

The U.S. Coast Guard has deployed 20 reservists in NYC alone, with more heading to New Jersey, in support of the Federal Emergency Management Agency's national goals for COVID-19 vaccine distribution efforts. In addition, more than 700 reservists mobilized for support efforts related to the pandemic, including supporting Permanent Change of Station teams working to assist members and families navigating moves amid these challenging times.

As we continue to overcome recent obstacles facing our service and nation, I am certain your dedication and diligence in meeting Coast Guard commitments will remain strong. As a Coast Guard reservist, you bring unique perspectives and ideas to the service and use that innovation to change the way we do business and train for contingencies.

In an unprecedented time, we had to adapt, overcome, and think outside the box. We took advantage

of technology that allowed us to meet virtually and drill from home. We supported teammates as they navigated childcare, family, and their civilian careers, all while we looked out for each other, our families, and our communities.


Adding to the ever-ready role of reservists, you have also been called to support active duty members taking parental leave. In 2020, Coast Guard Surge Staffing assigned Reserve Component Volunteers to cover for 123 such active duty leave situations.

Because of the highly skilled and adaptable workforce, the Coast Guard can meet the requirements of varied operations and simultaneously excel at steady-state missions.

We continue to focus on capabilities and remain a ready and relevant force who could mobilize at any moment. Our Reserve members represent the best the nation has to offer; they embody the Coast Guard core values. We recognize the significant commitment members make to serve, to include mobilizations, time away from family, and long travel time to drill sites.

It has not been lost on senior leadership that we must continue to grow our Reserve Component, while maintaining our retention. We are focused on supporting geographic stability with the Flex PAL initiative, which allows reservists to train closer to where they live. The Coast Guard is also creating billets around hubs where our Reserve men and women can rotate through different unit types within a geographical region.

We remain dedicated to ensuring we have the right skill set in place to efficiently and effectively respond in all situations. We are a great team of agile, dedicated professionals, and are looking forward to growing our current strength of 7,000 members.

We are the United States Coast Guard Reserve and I could not be prouder to serve beside each and every one of you. 

2021: Forward Together

By Lt. Gen. Richard W. Scobee, Chief of Air Force Reserve,
CMSgt Timothy C. White, Jr. Senior Enlisted Advisor

As a command team, it is an honor to lead the more than 74,000 reserve citizen airmen of the Air Force Reserve. Over the past three decades, we have had the privilege of leading at every level of the organization. Our goal is to leave a legacy where every member of our team can answer “yes” when asked, “Is your life better now than last year?” To that end, we have accelerated our command’s strategic priorities as we begin to set them up for long-term sustainment.

These priorities dovetail perfectly with the Chief of Staff of the Air Force’s strategic vision of “Accelerate Change or Lose.” As the nation prepares for great power competition, the Air Force Reserve will remain a critical, cost-effective component of the Total Force. The past year has challenged us, as we had to adjust to operating through a global pandemic. During some of the most daunting times in 2020, reserve citizen airmen stepped up to take care of their fellow Americans. We are proud to lead a world-class organization that provides rapidly accessible combat airpower for the nation and sustains 20% of the Air Force’s total mission capacity on only 3% of the budget.

Air Force Reserve Strategic Priorities

Our three strategic priorities are: prioritize strategic depth and accelerate readiness, develop resilient leaders, and reform the organization. When we established these priorities in 2018, we planned a four-phased approach. During the first year of addressing these priorities, we refined them and began fixing acute issues to make airmen’s lives better. We continued to refine processes during the second year and worked on reforms to improve support to our units. This year, we are accelerating our actions to enable long-term success. Next year, during the fourth phase, we will focus on setting these priorities up for long-term sustainment.

Prioritizing strategic depth and accelerating readiness means that we will be ready to meet our nation’s top

defense priorities as outlined by the Secretary of Defense: defend the nation, take care of our people, and succeed through teamwork.

To meet these obligations, we must ensure that the Department of Defense remains able to leverage the Air Force Reserve fully. We will continue to hire, train, and retain our most vital asset: our Airmen. Telework options for unit training assemblies, where appropriate, maximize flexibility and allow units to tailor airmen’s participation schedules. To optimize individual readiness, we continue to explore telehealth and other non-traditional medical modalities and employ additional full-time medical support staff to decrease wait times and work medical cases.

In August of last year, the Chief of Staff of the Air Force published strategic guidance in his paper titled “Accelerate Change or Lose.” This paper is an introduction to his vision for the future of our Air Force. In it, General Brown set out four action orders:

Action Order A – Airmen: Describes a people-first approach focusing on developing the highly skilled airmen we need to win tomorrow’s conflicts.

Action Order B – Addressing Bureaucracy: challenges us as an institution to make analytically driven and timely decisions to outpace competitors’ decision cycles.

Action Order C – Competition: requires the Air Force to understand and master long-term strategic competition with the People’s Republic of China and the Russian Federation to accrue warfighting advantages to the United States and its allies and partners.

Action Order D – Design Implementation: lays out the necessary actions to ensure we can design and field the future force we need.



Senior Airman Eusevius Howard, a fire team member with the 910th Security Forces Squadron, guards the perimeter of Camp James A. Garfield's Slagle drop zone in Ravenna, Ohio, as an Ohio Army National Guard Boeing CH-47 Chinook helicopter transports some of his fellow Airmen from Youngstown Air Reserve Station to a landing zone, March 19, 2021. The 910th Security Forces Squadron held a four-day super Unit Training Assembly weekend March 19–22. (U.S. Air Force photo/Eric M. White)


Not surprisingly, the Air Force Reserve's strategic priorities align seamlessly with General Brown's framework. We will continue to remain in lockstep with our Total Force partners while doing what we do best: providing accessible combat power to the nation at the best value for the taxpayer.

Developing resilient leaders requires us to further develop strong, adaptable, and confident airmen who are able to build trust in their units, lead their teams independently, and take smart risks to generate combat power for the American people. To that end, we are continuously updating our Professional Development Center courses to successfully equip our leaders with the right skills to successfully navigate the complex strategic environment. We are also working to enhance our resiliency programs by investing in more full-time command chiefs, first sergeants, and chaplains. Finally, we are revitalizing and transforming the Key Spouse Program by incorporating best practices from across the command to better support all airmen and their families.

Reforming the organization is about modernizing the Air Force Reserve force structure to achieve national defense objectives. One enabler to reform is removing

stovepipes between information systems through a shared data environment (SDE). In our SDE, we can leverage cutting-edge business intelligence tools to make faster and more informed decisions on how best to allocate resources to optimize readiness. As we continue to reform, we will call upon one of the greatest strengths of the Air Force Reserve: the diverse experience reservists bring from their civilian employers. These experiences distinguish our ability to infuse best practices from industry, especially in talent management, financial operations, medical readiness, space, and cyberspace operations.

Last summer, in the wake of civil unrest across the country, the Chief of Staff of the Air Force ordered a racial disparity review. The Air Force Reserve is conducting its internal review to assess potential discriminatory practices within the command. Racial disparity in both disciplinary actions and career development opportunities undermines both institutional and interpersonal trust, which underpin mission success. Addressing these issues is central to developing resilient leaders as systemic racial disparities undermine even the most determined leaders' ability to build trust within their units. We build the best Air Force



Reserve possible when every airman feels valued and able to serve at his or her highest potential.

Surge and Steady State Operations During COVID-19

Our units' agile training delivery during the COVID-19 pandemic is an example of the culture of innovation and the value of resilient leaders within the Air Force Reserve. To protect our force, we had to accelerate our plans to train via virtual unit training assemblies. This was a proof of concept for future tailored participation constructs, as each unit found the right balance for its mission and airmen.

In the early days of the pandemic, we established five command priorities that shaped our response to COVID-19. The first priority was to take care of our fellow Americans, our airmen, and their families. Secondly, we recognized the need to continue mission-essential operations while remaining ready to execute wartime tasks. Third, we preserved decision space for commanders at the local level since they were best equipped to balance risk to their forces against risk to mission. Fourth, we needed to preserve our force. Finally, we needed to ensure robust information flow up and down the chain of command.

When it comes to taking care of Americans, approximately 3,600 airmen mobilized or volunteered to support operations in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Within 48 hours of a request for forces, we were able to generate airlift to ensure that 120 medics were in place in the New York City metropolitan area. In total, 274 medical personnel were deployed to the northeastern United States in support of the national COVID-19 response, representing the largest unplanned mobilization of reserve forces since 9/11. Our airlift forces were integral to the Air Force Reserve response, transporting personal protective equipment, testing kits, and ventilators, saving countless lives. A part of that aeromedical surge capacity was also crucial to our pandemic response, with more than 300 patients transported safely during the pandemic. After their deployments, the lessons that our medical reserve citizen airmen learned on the front lines of the pandemic were then brought home to each of their communities, strengthening our response as a nation.

Even during a historic pandemic, our enduring mission remains. On average, more than 6,000 reserve citizen airmen are deployed supporting contingency and steady-state operational missions. In addition to this, several of our reserve citizen airmen are stateside executing missions and

bringing the fight to our adversaries while being deployed in garrison. Air Force Reserve cyberspace professionals played key roles in defense of the 2020 presidential election, supporting operational planning and execution to prevent foreign influence. Further, on any given day, the Air Force Reserve provides up to 30% of the nation's military space operational capacity. Finally, we continue to provide steady-state support with our remotely piloted aircraft mission while maintaining the capacity to surge if needed.

Along with performing every one of the same core missions as our active component counterparts, the Air Force Reserve maintains the unique missions of weather reconnaissance and large-area aerial spraying in the Department of Defense. We also maintain aerial firefighting capabilities with our Air National Guard partners. Each of these missions experienced record-breaking years.

The 2020 Atlantic hurricane season was the most active on record, with nearly double the number of weather reconnaissance missions we saw during the 2019 season. When their primary base at Keesler Air Force Base, Mississippi, is in the "cone of uncertainty," the Hurricane Hunters of the 403rd Wing conducted dispersed operations. During the 2020 season, they found themselves doing this four times. In November, as Hurricane Zeta threatened their primary base of operations at Keesler Air Force Base in Biloxi, Mississippi, the Hurricane Hunters began conducting operations out of San Antonio, Texas. Within 48 hours of returning home from San Antonio, they were back in action, flying into Hurricane Eta off the coast of Central America. The weather data they provided was vital to helping our mission partners at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration make more accurate forecasts to save lives across the Atlantic Basin and Gulf Coast. In 2020 alone, they flew 146 missions into 23 storms compared to 80 missions into nine storms in 2019.

In the aftermath of a hurricane, clouds of mosquitoes are so thick that they endanger cattle and horses. When this menace threatens the lives and property of our fellow Americans, our large-area aerial spraying capability is there to respond. The 910th Airlift Wing out of Youngstown Air Reserve Station, Ohio, has been crucial to our assistance in hurricane recovery operations, as it maintains the Department of Defense's only large-area fixed-wing aerial spray capability. In response to Hurricane Laura, the 910th deployed to Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana, at the request of U.S. Northern Command. They were responsible for spraying nearly one million acres near



Senior Airman Bryelle A. Rackley, a 514th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron aerospace medical technician at the 514th Air Mobility Wing, Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., comforts a simulated patient from the 514th AES with a cup of water, Feb. 26, 2021. Members from the 514th AES were evaluated on the treatment of simulated patients during scenarios designed to replicate real-world combat medical service while in flight. The instructors were from the Air Force Reserve Command and Air Mobility Command. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Ruben Rios)

Lake Charles, Louisiana. These missions supporting civil authorities are a great example of how we have been doing remote basing operations for decades with minimal notice.

Last year also brought three of the four largest wildfires in history to the state of California, making our aerial fire-fighting mission even more critical. As we responded to hurricanes and swarms of insects on one side of the country, reserve citizen airmen assigned to the 302nd Airlift Wing out of Peterson Air Force Base, Colorado, mobilized with our Air National Guard counterparts and other mission partners to fight wildfires raging in the Western United States.

When the COVID-19 pandemic began, we made preserving decision space for commanders one of our top priorities. We realized the impossibility of issuing “one-size-fits-all” guidance. We had absolute confidence that our unit command teams would best be able to tailor preventative measures due to the knowledge that they have

of their units and populations, missions, and the local circumstances. Maintaining decision space allowed local command teams to continue mission-essential operations while preserving the force. Preserving decision space for local commanders also opened the door for innovation. Some units were able to migrate to completely virtual unit training assemblies. Others took the opportunity to train in new areas that would enhance their mission. For example, one of our cyber intelligence squadrons that would have been severely limited by classification issues developed its own training for using publicly available information to enhance its mission.

Our ability to preserve the force is essential to maintaining continuity of operations. We had already begun building the infrastructure to migrate to cloud-based solutions for our workforce. The pandemic accelerated those efforts. We were able to responsively scale from an average


Air Force Reserve

of less than 1,000 remote workers to nearly 15,000 across the Total Force within a matter of weeks. As a command, we are fully embracing a culture of telework. Teleworking was one of the best mitigations to protect the force from COVID-19. We proved we can accomplish our mission with a distributed workforce. Even in a post-pandemic environment, a telework culture can remove barriers and make it easier for some airmen to serve.

Ensuring robust information flow up and down the chain of command during COVID-19 has been essential to our success. Standing up our Crisis Action Team (CAT) paired with leveraging the Force Generation Center (FGC) have been the secrets to our success over the past year. Our command's CAT meetings served as a venue for sharing information across the command and disseminating best practices, enabling commanders in the field to make more informed decisions. The dedicated professionals at our FGC have provided a focal point for rapidly accessing Air Force Reserve forces. They made our initial short-notice pandemic mobilization work flawlessly.

Currently, the FGC is hard at work, driving several new initiatives as well. One of those is the vaccine

operations cell. The FGC is constantly monitoring the vaccine rollout to Air Force Reserve forces so we can return to in-person readiness training as soon as safely possible. They have also set up a process for ordering vaccines with just-in-time delivery to our units for their unit training assemblies. We are centralizing this process to ensure our reserve citizen airmen who elect to be vaccinated can receive it as soon as possible. Centralizing this process and basing it on the demand signals from our units also ensures we order the optimal number of doses and avoid straining supply chains while our fellow Americans also need vaccines.

In closing, reserve citizen airmen provide steady operational capability while still maintaining accessible strategic surge capacity for contingencies in the most cost-effective way possible. Our airmen have demonstrated their capability time and time again. When our nation needed a rapid pandemic response force, we saw unprecedented responsiveness and ease of access with volunteers on the ground within 48 hours. We could not be prouder of each of them. We are honored to lead the reserve citizen airmen and civilian staff that make up the Air Force Reserve. 



As chief of Air Force Reserve, **Lt. Gen. Richard Scobee** serves as principal adviser on reserve matters to the Secretary of the Air Force and the Air Force Chief of Staff. As commander of Air Force Reserve Command, Scobee has full responsibility for the supervision of all U.S. Air Force Reserve units around the world.

General Scobee was commissioned in 1986 as a graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy. He earned his pilot wings as a distinguished graduate of Euro-NATO Joint Jet Pilot training in 1987 and has more than 3,800 flying hours in the F-16, including 248 combat hours. He has commanded a fighter squadron, an operations group, an air expeditionary group, two fighter wings, and a numbered air force. Prior to his current assignment, he was the Deputy Commander of Air Force Reserve Command. He has earned numerous major awards and decorations, including the Distinguished Service Medal, the Defense Superior Service Medal, the Legion of Merit, and the Bronze Star. He has a bachelor's degree from the Air Force Academy and a master's degree in Business Administration from the University of South Carolina.



As Senior Enlisted Advisor to the Chief of Air Force Reserve, **Chief Master Sergeant Timothy White** represents reserve enlisted interests as an advisor to the Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force. As the Command Chief of Air Force Reserve Command, he has full responsibility for providing direction to the enlisted force by developing and implementing policy to develop all U.S. Air Force Reserve enlisted personnel.

Chief White has earned numerous majors awards and decorations, including the Legion of Merit. In his civilian capacity, he is a supervising law enforcement officer for a major law enforcement agency within the state of California. He has extensive experience with at-risk youth programs.

He has a bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice from the University of Phoenix, a master's degree in Organizational Leadership from Brandman University, and a MBA from Brandman University.



THE ROA

STARS

FOUNDATION

STANDING TOGETHER FOR
AMERICA'S RESERVISTS

ROA STARS Foundation: The Power of Philanthropy

Lt. Col. Donald Stockton, USAF (Ret.), Chairman, ROA STARS Foundation


As we transition to the “new” normal coming out of the pandemic and all the challenges COVID-19 brought to our families, our communities, and our great nation, we are grateful for the light that shone throughout—the ROA membership. Members stepped up when ROA needed them most. With the loss of event revenue typically generated by our Minuteman Building, members increased their philanthropic support to the ROA STARS Foundation—ROA’s 501c3 fundraising arm.

Even in the midst of a pandemic, ROA’s mission does not stop. Our legislative and military policy team members were out there working the issues critical to supporting our citizen-warriors and their families (see Legislative & Military Policy Section page 8). ROA expanded its communications capabilities with *Reserve Voice* online, social media, webinars, a hybrid national convention, and, most recently, the virtual March Leaders Conference. Our STARS in School school kit program provided valuable resources to teachers of children with a parent called up in the fight against COVID-19 (more than 60,000 recalled).

These are just some of the highlights of ROA meeting its mission. There are many more examples throughout

this issue of *Reserve Voice Magazine*. That ROA could meet its mission during the pandemic was, in no small part, due to the generosity of its members. In fact, several departments, chapters, and individuals stepped up as a group to ensure this issue of *Reserve Voice Magazine* was fully funded, donating nearly \$50,000. And I would be remiss to not recognize not only those donors who year-in and year-out support ROA–STARS but also our more than 500 first-time donors who accounted for nearly \$200,000 in philanthropic support. This was the single largest increase in first-time donors in over 20 years!

But our work is not done. As we move into the post-pandemic new normal, ROA continues to expand its support to our citizen-warriors with the launch of the Reserve Resource Center. The center will include the Reserve Component mentor program and employment portal and will facilitate the expansion of our role at Yellow Ribbon events, distribution of school kits, and new member recruiting efforts. Continued philanthropic support is essential for ROA to meet its mission.

Thank you for considering renewal of your support or joining our growing list of first-time donors. 

Adapting to a Changing World Though People-Driven Performance

By Rear Admiral Nancy Hann, Deputy Director, NOAA Commissioned Officer Corps
and Deputy Director for Operations, NOAA Office of Marine and Aviation Operations

Like other uniformed services, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Commissioned Officer Corps prides itself on its ability to adapt quickly to changing circumstances and execute the mission at hand. COVID-19 tested that self-confidence and challenged us to a degree we had not experienced since World War II.

Like other services and society at large, we have been tested by issues of racial and social equity. Our nation's civil unrest has impacted us. The pandemic has shattered our daily routines in the field and on the home front, and we have had to re-think our approach to nearly everything. That is a good thing, and we are stronger for it.

To navigate unfamiliar territory, we have drawn on our strengths, taken a hard look at our blind spots, and turned to those who have the expertise to help. In many cases, that expertise was inside our own ranks but not previously leveraged.

Throughout the tumultuous year, we have reminded ourselves that our work touches the lives of every single American every single day. It is in our power to help keep communities safe, protect precious environmental resources, and ensure the nation's economic well-being.

We continue to find common purpose in the mission, whether it's conducting hurricane reconnaissance and research, assessing the health of our oceans, or performing emergency surveys for navigation hazards that help ports reopen quickly—all with the goal of providing and promoting greater security, efficiency, and prosperity.

As we chart a course through 2021 and beyond, we are focused on three priority areas: people, platforms, and culture. We prioritize our people because we know we can

only maintain a high-performing workforce with the continual development and diversification of our personnel. Our ships, aircraft, and other data-collection platforms are also critical, and we must maintain a mission-ready fleet, supported by a strong infrastructure. Finally, just as we are investing in our workforce, platforms, and facilities, we continue to build a culture of safety, unity, respect, and excellence.

People

A specialized, expert, and diverse workforce is a force multiplier. One of our highest priorities in 2021 is to improve recruitment, training, and retention of a diverse, world-class workforce. To that end, we are optimizing our training, expanding opportunities for professional development, establishing clear career progression paths, and building leaders at all levels.

We are promoting training opportunities to all members of our team in technical, management, and leadership positions. We are also developing more transparent paths for advancement by clearly defining the experience, training, and qualifications required for promotions. To foster that development, we are implementing a training management system to plan, manage, and track personnel and unit-based training.

To promote diversity, we are applying no less than 40% of our total recruiting resources toward identifying qualified candidates at Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Minority Serving Institutions. We are also leveraging NOAA and other internship programs to bring about a 20% increase in hiring of candidates from underrepresented groups to technical positions.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps Amendments Act of 2020 includes provisions that will increase diversity in the work force and enhance NOAA's ability to recruit and retain officers. The act authorizes the NOAA Corps to expand the number of officers, as needed and funded, from 321 to a maximum of 500. It provides us with new recruitment tools to increase our reach into underrepresented communities, and also provides new benefits to NOAA Corps officers to align them better with the other uniformed services.

With specialized training and a commitment to serving the nation in uniform, NOAA Corps officers play a vital role in supporting NOAA's mission to understand and predict changes in climate, weather, oceans, and coasts, and to conserve and manage coastal and marine ecosystems and resources.

NOAA Corps officers command ships that map the seafloor for potential hazards to shipping, monitor oceanographic and atmospheric conditions, and study ocean resources. They also pilot NOAA's Hurricane Hunters and other state-of-the-art aircraft that collect data essential to hurricane and flood prediction, nautical charting, disaster response, and resource management.

When not at sea or in the air, NOAA Corps officers apply their operational experience, expertise, and training to advance new technologies, lead programs and teams, and respond to severe weather events, oil spills, and other emergencies.

Platforms

NOAA's network of Earth observation platforms is the foundation of the environmental intelligence the agency provides to the nation. Many of the ships and aircraft of the NOAA fleet and related infrastructure, however, are aging and require recapitalization and enhanced maintenance to ensure we can continue to collect high-quality environmental data and support scientific discoveries that push the boundaries of our understanding of our oceans and atmosphere.

Each year, NOAA ships conduct more than 100 missions for collection of data critical for nautical charts, fishery quotas, exploration of America's Exclusive Economic Zone, storm surge modeling, and weather forecasting. NOAA programs, other U.S. government agencies, communities, and businesses around the nation rely on this data to keep U.S. ports open to maritime commerce,



Ensign Iris Ekmanis at the helm of one of NOAA Ship *Fairweather* hydrographic survey launches near John Hopkins Glacier in Alaska. (Photo by Ensign Jessica Spruill, NOAA Corps)

understand changes to the planet, monitor the health of fish stocks, and plan for severe storm events.

While other federal agencies and academic institutions perform marine research and collect specific data, NOAA is unique in its roles of collecting data that directly feeds products and services vital to the economy and health of the nation, as well as researching new technology and methodology to improve the reliability and accuracy of the products and services. The specific products and services NOAA delivers are most efficiently met with ships designed for NOAA's mission.

We are taking an integrated approach to rebuilding the NOAA fleet, and have developed detailed plans for ship, aircraft, and facilities recapitalization that incorporate uncrewed systems and other emerging technologies.

Our ship fleet recapitalization effort took a major step forward in December 2020 with the award of a contract to Thoma-Sea Marine Constructors in Houma, Louisiana, for the detailed design and construction of two new oceanographic ships for the agency. NOAA is acquiring the vessels through an agreement with the Naval Sea Systems Command, a leader in building, providing, and procuring large research ships for the nation's research fleet.

The first ship, to be named *Oceanographer*, will be homeported in Honolulu, Hawaii. The second ship, to be named *Discoverer*, will be homeported in Newport,



Lt. Cmdr. Danielle Varwig pilots the NOAA Gulfstream IV-SP during high-altitude research mission to Hurricane Sally, Sept. 15, 2020. (Photo by Cmdr. Jason Mansour, NOAA Corps)

Rhode Island. The new ships will support a wide variety of missions, ranging from general oceanographic research and exploration to marine life, climate, and ocean ecosystem studies. These missions include shallow coastal, continental shelf, and worldwide ocean survey and data collection.

The second phase of NOAA's fleet recapitalization plan is focused on the acquisition of multiple vessels with the capability to perform all charting and surveying activities, with the ability to support secondary missions, including living marine resource surveys and oceanographic monitoring, research, and modeling activities.

As part of the effort to recapitalize the NOAA aircraft fleet, we took delivery in 2020 of a Beechcraft King Air turboprop. Piloted by NOAA Corps officers, the new aircraft is outfitted with remote sensing equipment that will measure the water content of snow and soil—data that is used for flood, river level, and water supply forecasts. The aircraft can also be configured to support other NOAA missions, including coastal mapping and aerial surveys of damage in communities after a storm landfall. NOAA is in the process of acquiring a Gulfstream G550 that will be outfitted with state-of-the-art climatological data-collecting equipment to support high-altitude atmospheric research, hurricane surveillance, atmospheric rivers, and other missions.

Recognizing that uncrewed systems are becoming increasingly valuable Earth observation tools, we established a new Uncrewed Systems Operations Center last year within the Office of Marine and Aviation Operations to support the rapidly expanding use of these systems across the agency. NOAA uses uncrewed systems for seafloor and habitat mapping, ocean exploration, marine mammal and fishery stock assessments, emergency response, and at-sea observations that improve forecasting of extreme events, such as harmful algal blooms and hypoxia. Led by NOAA Corps officers, the new center will promote their safe, efficient, and economical operation across the agency.

Our facility recapitalization plans are also moving forward. We recently completed an expansion of the NOAA Aircraft Operations Center in Lakeland, Florida, to accommodate the new King Air and Gulfstream G550 and other aircraft. We are also investing in new and revitalized NOAA ship support facilities in Alaska, Rhode Island, and South Carolina.

Culture

While a healthy, well-trained, diverse workforce and mission-ready platforms are essential, inspired teams and fully engaged individuals are key to getting results and driving innovation. Fostering such an environment requires a culture of safety, unity, respect, and excellence. We have, therefore, set the highest standard for our organizational culture.

We value an NOAA Corps and Office of Marine and Aviation Operations team that focuses on supporting the development and motivation of all team members, both civilian and uniformed, and on inspiring the very best efforts of our entire workforce. To realize this, officers, civilians, and work units are encouraged to understand and respect differences, and we are sponsoring training, listening sessions, and continuous learning experiences. We are also committed to ensuring a safe, respectful, discrimination-free workplace for every employee and continue to enforce a zero-tolerance policy for sexual assault and harassment.

We continue to support a culture of collaboration and performance excellence. We have adjusted our operating protocols to increase agility and quickly pivot to changing conditions, new mission trends, and technologies, often leveraging our partnerships with other federal agencies, uniformed services, and academia.

Our partnership with the U.S. Public Health Service, which has long provided medical and behavioral health

and wellness support to NOAA Corps officers and NOAA civilians, has enabled us not only to meet COVID-related challenges by providing science-based guidance, but also to confront cybersecurity threats and meet other information technology needs.

We have also partnered with both the University of California San Diego's Scripps Institution of Oceanography and the University of Southern Mississippi to improve how uncrewed systems are used to collect important ocean observation data and augment NOAA's operational capabilities. These agreements provide a framework for collaborating with NOAA scientists and uncrewed system operators on projects to further uncrewed system research, development, and operations.


One of our oldest and most enduring partnerships is with the U.S. Coast Guard. NOAA Corps officer candidates continue to train at the Coast Guard Academy in Connecticut alongside Coast Guard officer candidates. There they forge enduring working relationships and friendships that foster interagency collaboration well after they leave New London.

Forward, Together

It is an axiom that a well-equipped, well-trained, well-supported, and well-motivated workforce will perform. But as we have learned over the past year, the conditions in which we strive to achieve these ideals change with as much



NOAA Corps pilots Lt. Cmdr. Becky Shaw and Lt. Cmdr. Adam Abitbol on the flight deck of a NOAA WP-3D Orion during a test of an air-launched uncrewed aircraft on Jan. 14, 2021. (Photo by Nick Underwood)

dynamism as the Earth itself, and in the end, it is communities of individuals working together who carry the day. This makes it all the more imperative that we build resilient forces that not only respect and draw on the inherent strengths of its members but are also tuned to the sometimes subtle messages being sent to us by our surroundings and those around us, friend and foe alike. Only then will the investments we make in hardware be worthwhile. 



Rear Adm. (Lower Half) Nancy Hann serves as the deputy director for operations, NOAA Office of Marine and Aviation Operations, and deputy director of the NOAA Commissioned Officer Corps. Hann is responsible for the direct leadership and management of OMAO's operational assets, including the agency's fleet of 15 research and survey vessels and 10 aircraft. She has served aboard two NOAA ships and is a certified diver. Hann holds a master's degree in public administration from the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, a master's degree in aeronautical science and space studies from Embry Riddle Aeronautical University, and a bachelor's degree in marine science and biology from the University of San Diego. She has received numerous awards, including the NOAA Corps Meritorious Service Medal, and multiple Department of Commerce medals.

Ready to Protect the Nation's Public Health, Today and for the Future

Rear Adm. Susan M. Orsega, Former Acting Surgeon General,
Director of Commissioned Corps Headquarters

Although the Spanish influenza marked a pivotal moment in history, many people do not realize that it also marked a time when the U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS) Commissioned Corps deployed more than one-third of its officers. The role USPHS played during that time and throughout the years on the frontlines in “the silent war against disease”—as described in the lyrics of the Public Health Service March—has destined our service to be on the frontlines during the tumults of COVID-19. In that spirit, the USPHS Ready Reserve Commissioned Corps was implemented in 2020 to provide surge capability during times of crisis.

From the Beginning

The USPHS Commissioned Corps traces its origins back to a 1798 “act for the relief of sick and disabled seamen.” The law authorized the creation of a government-operated marine hospital service, a series of hospitals built and operated by the federal government to treat injured and ailing privately employed sailors.

On Jan. 4, 1889, President Grover Cleveland signed an act to authorize the USPHS Commissioned Corps as a uniformed service. We are a non-combat, non-enlisted officer service with the sole mission to protect, promote, and advance the health and safety of our nation. We are America's health responders, acting as the safety net for underserved populations and communities suffering from natural disasters. In our 132nd year, it is befitting to implement our Ready Reserve Corps to bolster our reach to Americans in underserved and minority communities

as the Corps marks its highest deployment in our history as a service.

Today and Tomorrow

As acting surgeon general of the United States, director of Commissioned Corps Headquarters, and the longest-standing Public Health Service career officer, my vision is to preserve the USPHS Commissioned Corps' legacy as America's health responders, and that we are a united front, standing as the public health warriors of today and tomorrow.

COVID-19 continues to impact everything in our lives, including our health, work, recreational time, and relationships, as we cross the milestone of one year since the pandemic arrived on our nation's doorstep. It is our duty to meet the current challenges and rise to the occasion.

We cannot be limited by the challenges we face; we must view these as opportunities to position the USPHS Commissioned Corps for the next 100 years of service. The timing for the Ready Reserve could never have been more perfect. The COVID-19 pandemic has magnified the need for additional emergency pandemic response resources to respond to this crisis and be better prepared for future ones. The USPHS has never been more appreciated nor visible on the national stage—nor have I ever been more proud of our service and my fellow officers. The challenges we face call for new approaches to better protect the nation against public health threats. The Ready Reserve is part of the solution.

U.S. Public Health Service Ready Reserve

The USPHS Ready Reserve Corps Mission

The USPHS Ready Reserve Commissioned Corps' mission is to provide trained, ready, and equipped public health professionals capable of mobilizing and deploying to augment the regular USPHS Commissioned Corps. Mobilization is authorized by the Department of Health and Human Services secretary in response to national emergencies and/or public health crises. The Ready Reserve Corps provides a unique opportunity for its officers to help underserved communities while also serving their country in times of public health emergencies, without the full-time commitment and risk of losing their jobs as civilian health professionals.

To meet the current challenges of maintaining the nation's overall health and safety, the Ready Reserve Corps will provide trained and ready personnel to fill critical public health needs and will:

- Support the USPHS Commissioned Corps' capacity to respond to regional, national, and global health emergencies and improve access to health services.
- Preserve clinical care positions by maintaining a surge capacity of health professionals available for deployment without jeopardizing the service of clinicians in hard-to-fill roles.
- Offer an opportunity to serve as mission-driven clinical and public health professionals who cannot commit to a full-time active-duty position in the USPHS Commissioned Corps.

The USPHS Commissioned Corps is the safety net for underserved populations. It is a mobile, duty-bound group of 6,100 uniformed health officers willing to go anywhere, at any time, to meet the nation's most urgent public health needs. This commitment is even more evident today. As Public Health Service officers and America's health responders, we stand ready to preserve public health and national security during national or global health emergencies. Responding to the COVID-19 pandemic is no different. Our mission is to protect, promote, and advance the health and safety of our nation. Our goal is to be out the door as soon as requested, as this response continues to be an "all-hands-on-deck" situation for our officers.



Active-duty Public Health Service officer Lt. Brenda Riojas masking up during her deployment to Travis Air Force Base to repatriate American citizens at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. (Photo by USPHS)

- Enable access to highly specialized skill sets that would be impractical in full-time active-duty positions.

As the nation aggressively responds to the coronavirus pandemic, the focus of the USPHS Ready Reserve is on three priorities:

First—Protecting the health of our nation for all individuals and their families no matter where they reside. We are committed to taking care of our fellow Americans, especially those in underserved and minority populations.

Second—Remaining prepared and postured to carry out our missions with federal partners.

Third—Continuing to support the president's whole-of-nation response to COVID-19 and beyond.

Building the Force

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic in which the novel coronavirus was dubbed the "invisible threat," the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act was signed into law, restructuring the USPHS Ready



Active-duty Public Health Service officer Lt. Cmdr. Andrew O'Carroll and Navy officer Lt. Joel Sheingold working together during the COVID-19 alternate care facility (ACF) mission at Javits New York Medical Station. (Photo by USPHS)

Reserve Corps to supplement our active-duty officers in their response to the most significant global health crisis in over a century. Prior to the pandemic, the Ready Reserve was just as invisible as the virus, at least in the public eye.

Before 2010, 99% of the officers whom we commissioned went into the formerly known Reserve Corps. To be considered a regular corps officer in the USPHS, an officer had to be nominated by the president and confirmed by the Senate. The Reserve Corps had the same functionalities as active-duty personnel, meaning officers held full-time positions at government duty stations and could receive benefits once they retired. There was also an Inactive Reserve Corps, which had roots dating back to the 1940s; however, officers in this unit weren't deployed and weren't required to drill to maintain their commission. They could receive no benefits from the corps once they retired.

In 2010 our service structure completely changed. In 2010, the Affordable Care Act (ACA) converted all reserve corps officers to regular corps officers and terminated the commission of all inactive reserve corps officers. The ACA

also established the Ready Reserve Corps to function as the new surge capacity for the USPHS Commissioned Corps. Formation of the Ready Reserve was intended to fulfill the need for additional commissioned personnel on short notice and assist active-duty personnel in routine public health and emergency response missions during involuntary calls to active duty. However, a technical error prevented the ready reserve component from being established. It wasn't until late 2019 that efforts to rectify these errors resumed, with funding finally being approved through the CARES Act on March 18, 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The passing of the CARES Act provided both the authority and the funding to re-establish the USPHS Commissioned Corps reserve unit, now known as the Ready Reserve Corps.

The CARES Act has provided significant funding to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to support an initial cohort of up to 300 ready reserve officers, as well as one-time startup costs and management infrastructure that will allow for a future expansion of the Ready Reserve at a lower per-officer cost. The intent of

U.S. Public Health Service Ready Reserve

restructuring the USPHS reserve component was to build our reserve unit similar to other uniformed services. The Ready Reserve Corps will provide trained and ready personnel and/or teams available on short notice to fill critical public health needs.

This past year has been the perfect model in showing us just how critical our public health needs can be. When COVID-19 hit, we had no idea what we were up against. But our officers rose to the challenge, some serving on multiple deployments with little dwell-time in between. When the Health and Human Services secretary declared COVID-19 a public health emergency on Jan. 31, 2020, our officers were rostered and out the door the next day. Our deployment expanded rapidly from 38 officers on Feb. 1, 2020, to more than 4,500 officers currently.

To date, Public Health Service officers have deployed to support the *Diamond Princess* cruise ship and compassionate use trials in Japan, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention traveler airport screenings, the repatriation of American citizens to Department of Defense military bases, the establishment of community-based testing sites, the staffing of long-term care facilities, the contact tracing and infection control of state-run facilities, the establishment of alternate care sites across our nation, and COVID-19 vaccination sites—exemplifying the care and compassion that all of us feel for those who have suffered during this pandemic. Now, more than ever, our Ready Reserve Corps is needed to not only sustain the mission but to give respite and renewal to our active-duty officers.

Rapidly Deployable Ready Reserve

As the nation develops and implements strategies for global health security and national bio-defense, the need for a cadre of trained, equipped, and rapidly deployable uniformed service professionals has become increasingly important. Our national security challenges, at home and abroad, require a whole-of-nation approach. For example, repatriation of American citizens and movement of non-combatants out of harm's way in the event of foreign conflict is fraught with complex challenges and resource scarcity. With the prospect of possible chemical or biological contamination, the mission becomes more complicated. The need for public health and medical resources increases dramatically, particularly those that can integrate with and support Department of Defense and Homeland Security assets. A transformed corps should be responsive to the 21st-century mission, structured to fill gaps, bolster

and support state, local, and federal partner capability, and enhance our national capacity to respond and be resilient. Part of this transformation involves modernization efforts that will yield a leaner and more capable force, recognizing the increasing demand for Public Health Service officers to staff traditional agencies and deploy during public health emergencies.

Champions for Change: The Necessary Role of the Ready Reserve Corps Now and in the Future

Our Ready Reserve Corps will offer the vital skills that complement and support the United States in times of crisis by providing trained and ready health professionals with multidisciplinary skills from a variety of professions. Having a reservoir of responders to backfill in healthcare facilities will help reduce the challenges we currently face of pulling officers from critical roles during a federal response. It ensures that the USPHS is able to maintain a force of health professionals available for deployment without risking the ongoing work of those serving in critical roles. It will also provide the necessary resources to overcome public health crises during national and global emergencies.

As the need for a robust public health response increases on both a state and federal level, so does the need for an increased number of Public Health Service officers. Our officers' skills, qualifications, and experience allow them to work directly at the local level to make independent risk assessments and response plans. I envision the Ready Reserve Corps acting as a force multiplier, providing continuous quality care during our current public health emergency and the public health emergencies of the future.

Capacity, Community Catalyst, and Collaboration

The mission involves traditional surge capacity to support medical operations. It consists of the development and maintenance of teams to perform highly specialized mission-specific roles during times of crisis where such capability is otherwise limited or unavailable. Missions involving close coordination and integration with other uniformed services, such as aeromedical evacuation and chemical and biological response, should be the focus of Corps capability development. These special skills may not necessarily have a high-demand steady-state mission but become highly sought-after during times of crisis. They



Active-duty Public Health Service officers Cmdr. Yvette Shumard and Cmdr. Chad Thompson count personal protective equipment in the warehouse at Javits New York Medical Station. (Photo by USPHS)

must be brought to bear rapidly and integrate seamlessly with other national response elements. The challenge is to establish and maintain on-demand capability efficiently.

We are excited for the continued opportunity to strengthen our relationship and commitment to providing health care to the nation through our joint efforts. I look forward to continuing to build our service together with other uniformed services.

Working alongside the previous National Guard Bureau (NGB) chief, we signed our first memorandum of agreement with the NGB in April 2019 detailing our collaborative efforts to train and equip both of our forces to provide the nation with comprehensive public health services during natural and human-made disasters and humanitarian missions.

This partnership has been key to our response to the coronavirus pandemic. We also had the privilege of integrating two NGB officers into our first-ever Command Center at Commissioned Corps Headquarters. They assisted in building the Ready Reserve infrastructure and served as a valuable resource identifying state-based NGB assets potentially available for augmentation of USPHS

strike team missions. There is also high interest from the National Guard adjutants general in many states/territories.

We envision more joint partnerships for mutually beneficial national responses with the other services and have begun to have discussions with the other surgeon generals of the Army, Navy, and Air Force. There is tremendous benefit to having access to USPHS Commissioned Corps subject matter experts on a variety of public health concerns, i.e., the possibility of embedding Public Health Service officers on response and training missions.

Ready Reservists will also embrace the responsibility to connect with the well-being of individuals within their communities. As a catalyst for public health collaborations, we will work alongside our federal and non-federal partners.

Ready Reserve Officers and their Individual Roles in Public Service

The USPHS Commissioned Corps is composed of officers from 11 diverse professional fields: dietitian, health service officer, environmental health officer, pharmacist, scientist, engineer, therapist, veterinarian, physician, dentist, and

U.S. Public Health Service Ready Reserve


nurse. Public Health Service officers serve throughout the nation in communities that are most in need by providing essential healthcare services to underserved and vulnerable populations. We fill essential public health leadership, clinical, and service roles in more than 21 federal agencies and departments.

As part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the USPHS Commissioned Corps is overseen by the assistant secretary for health and operationally managed by the U.S. surgeon general. Our Ready Reserve officers will come from the same professional backgrounds, share the same proud history, and wear the same identifiable uniform as our active-duty officers. The only difference will be in functionality.

The Ready Reserve Corps will be organized into units led by Ready Reserve officers who will maintain administrative oversight and ensure readiness and training through regular drills and annual training. In cases where units train for a specialized unit mission, like inflight critical care, Ready Reserve personnel will train and deploy as units. In other cases, reservist units may maintain the readiness of unit personnel, who would then be individually deployed based on needed skills or specialty. It is envisioned that individuals who are members of the Ready Reserve will have specific assignments in where they train and serve (i.e., backfilling for an Indian Health Service clinic or military hospitals, specialized emergency response, consultation to a state or county health department, etc.).

America's Ready Reserve

If there is one thing I hope we all take away from this past year, it's how interconnected we are and how we must work across the professions to address future public health crises and make changes to prevent them. I am optimistic about the future of the service and the future of our nation; I believe that we will come out on the other side of this pandemic stronger because of it. The USPHS Commissioned Corps is looking for service-driven individuals who have a passion to serve and a love for public health to join our Ready Reserve Corps. We are accepting applications on a rolling basis at www.usphs.gov and will commission our first ready reserve officers in spring 2021.

I'd be remiss if I didn't thank our active-duty Public Health Service officers. If it weren't for their commitment and their love for community and country, and their willingness to answer the call to serve time and time again, the Ready Reserve Corps would not be possible. Over the next hundred years, we undoubtedly will face new challenges, but our response to meet the nation's vast public health needs will be evergreen, rooted in our four core values of service, excellence, leadership, and integrity. COVID-19 is the catalyst that we need for the USPHS Commissioned Corps to blaze into the years ahead with greater missions to face and overcome. We are passionate about caring for underserved and vulnerable populations. And now, with the addition of the Ready Reserve, we will be even better positioned to meet the daily diverse and emergent public health needs of the nation. We are just getting started. 



Rear Adm. Susan M. Orsega oversees the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps, composed of approximately 6,000 uniformed health officers who serve in nearly 800 locations around the world, promoting, protecting, and advancing the health and safety of our nation. This includes the activation of the USPHS Commissioned Corps to support national COVID-19 vaccination efforts.

Appointed in March 2019, she is responsible for directing all functions regarding personnel, operations, readiness, deployment, and policy for the USPHS and development of the Reserve Corps. She is the principal advisor to the assistant secretary for health on activities and policies related to USPHS training, deployment, and total force fitness.

ROA's Key Role in International Reserve Programs

Col. Judith A. Davenport, USA (Ret.), ROA National President

ROA has long been the Department of Defense-designated reserve component executive agent for key international reserve organizations. ROA members, representing all the reserve services, have participated in our international programs with our reserve partners in the Western Hemisphere or NATO countries. Here is a synopsis of the international programs associated with ROA.

Interallied Confederation of Reserve Officers

Recently, the Interallied Confederation of Reserve Officers (CIOR), the premier international program for the armed forces reserves among members, expanded through a memorandum of agreement with the Interallied Confederation of Non-Commissioned Officers (CISOR). Similar to ROA, both CIOR and CISOR—associations of the reserve components of NATO countries—have incorporated inclusivity through this MOA. ROA is DoD's executive agent to CIOR, and CIOR attendees go as representatives of the United States. CIOR offers ROA members a unique opportunity to establish relationships



U.S. Interallied Confederation of Reserve Officers Delegation at CIOR/CIOMR's midwinter meeting at NATO headquarters in Brussels, Belgium.

with other NATO members. U.S. military strategy is underpinned by joint service. CIOR and CISOR allow the member to take this further by experiencing a multi-national association.

Each summer, usually the first week of August, CIOR conducts its annual Congress, hosted by a member country. The 2021 Congress is scheduled for Athens, Greece (international travel permitting).

U.S. delegation members serve on the various committees (some delegate-at-large positions are available). These committees include Civil-Military Cooperation, Defense Attitudes and Security Issues, Strategic Communications, Military Competition, Legal Affairs, Partnership for Peace, CIOR Language Academy, Winter Seminar, Symposium Working Group, and Young Reserve Officers Workshop.

Members can stay abreast of CIOR happenings on ROA.org's CIOR special interest site. Any ROA member may join a CIOR U.S. delegation group; simply submit a bio to retired Army Reserve Dr. (Lt. Col.)



CIOMR delegation after a medical workshop at the Queen Astrid Military Hospital during a CIOR/CIOMR's midwinter meeting at NATO headquarters in Brussels, Belgium.

Milton Houghton, the U.S. assistant secretary general, to LTCMilt@gmail.com.

The ROA current U.S. vice president to CIOR is retired Brig. Gen. Michael Silva, USA. If you are interested in attending as an officer or enlisted in YROW, military competition, language academy, a committee, or just to observe, let ROA know and we'll send you information.

Interallied Confederation of Medical Reserve Officers

In 1948, the Interallied Confederation of Medical Reserve Officers (CIOMR) was designated as an independent organization associated with CIOR. Today, reserve officer medical associations of most NATO countries are members. The national reserve military medical associations or their equivalents (in the U.S., ROA) became full members.

CIOMR objectives include establishing close relationships with medical reserve personnel and services within the alliance, and examining subjects of military medical importance. CIOMR meetings coincide with CIOR; the organizations cooperate closely.

CIOMR has two main committees: Operational Medicine, which also plans the Combat Casualty Care Competition, and Scientific, responsible for the theme and content of free paper (abstracts) sessions at the CIOMR meeting.

CIOMR is open to physicians, dentists, pharmacists, veterinarians, nurses, technicians, and medical service corps officers. NCOs in these professions or associated professions can also attend meetings.

The six delegations to the CIOMR meetings are led by a national vice president. The U.S. vice president is retired Brig. Gen. Lisa Doumont, USA, assisted by the U.S. CIOMR secretary general, retired Col. Nancy Mikulin, USAF.

Recently, the U.S. delegation organized the first-ever medical symposium for an international audience. More than 50 professionals from the U.S., Canada, U.K., Italy, Belgium, Spain, North Macedonia, South Africa, and other NATO nations attended virtually. The symposium offered an in-depth orientation to the mission, vision, and organization of CIOMR. Presenters briefed free papers to a panel of senior Army and Air Force reserve officers and received feedback in preparation for the annual "Martelet Cup" competition during the CIOR/CIOMR Athens Congress, August 1-7. Additional information on CIOMR and upcoming events is in the events section of the www.ROA.org website.




UPORFA attendees pause for a group photo at a recent Congress in Paipa, Boyacá, Colombia.

Pan American Union of Armed Forces Reserve Officers

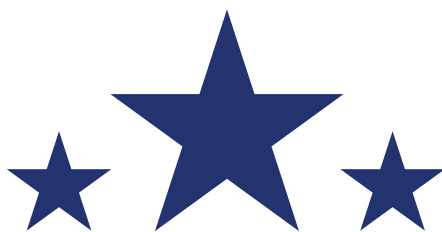
The Union Panamericana de Oficiales de Reserva de Las Fuerzas Armadas (UPORFA), or Pan American Union of Armed Forces Reserve Officers, is an organization of military associations throughout the Western Hemisphere. UPORFA has grown since 1983, when a charter was established in Buenos Aires, between Argentina, the U.S., Uruguay, and Chile, to establish an international reserve organization. UPORFA participants include many countries in North America, Central America, South America, and the Caribbean. ROA is the official U.S. representative at UPORFA; the official languages are English and Spanish. Membership, open to all democratic countries, promotes the value of military reserves in national security.

The U.S. delegation has DoD support through the U.S. Southern Command. A general officer from SOUTHCOM usually participates in every Congress, signifying the importance of UPORFA and the reserve force. UPORFA promotes the exchange of information, training, military skills competition, cooperation, and education about reserve issues. These events enrich cultural and language understanding.

UPORFA will hold its annual Congress in the beautiful city of Lima, Peru, November 17-21 (international travel permitting). Retired Brig. Gen. Fernando Fernandez, USA, is UPORFA's international president, and the chief of the U.S. delegation is retired Maj. Gen. Robert Smith III, USA. All ROA members are eligible to attend UPORFA's annual Congress and participate as part of the U.S. delegation.

ROA's participation in these international programs facilitates better understanding of and familiarity within our national security reserve force community. That in turn promotes a safer world. Every ROA member may participate in our international programs, another example of the value that ROA provides for its members. For further information, visit www.ROA.org. 

PRESERVING THE
ALL-VOLUNTEER
FORCE AND THE
ROLE OF THE
PRIVATE SECTOR:



CITIZEN-WARRIOR COALITION

Program Structure:

Organized by industry
national security sectors;

Each sector will establish
a “sector committee”
to gather the issues
/ challenges and
proposed solutions
in the employment
of Reserve / National
Guard.

Bring the right
stakeholders and
resources together
to resolve / find
compromise on these
issues / challenges
through quarterly
forums and connect with
Reserve Component
Leadership.

Participate in ROA’s
annual national
conference – **Preserving
the All-Volunteer Force
(AVF)** where all the
issues of maintaining the
AVF are brought front
and center (and solution
maps defined).

America’s Reserve Components have experienced two decades of the heaviest sustained use in the history of the nation; moreover, even as combat deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan have declined, other activities have taken their place.

The Pentagon acknowledges that this operational tempo is not going down: with an active component too small to do the massive job of securing the nation, the Reserve and National Guard have never been more essential.

In an editorial published last year, retired Army Reserve Maj. Gen. Peter Cooke observed that:

Out of the 35 million Americans between the ages of 17-24 in 2018, a staggering 29.8 million were unwilling to serve. There is a valid argument in the case of the Army Reserve and National Guard that the lack of desire to join may stem from the increased operational burden ... and the impact that it is having on their civilian lives. As we continually lean on the Reserve and Guard, we are stressing ... their civilian and military lives to a breaking point. More deployments mean more time away from their civilian jobs which also puts employers in a tough situation. The Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act protects military personnel from being terminated due to deployment, but it cannot protect them completely from other forms of discrimination, whether malicious or not. The fact is that spending more and more time away from their civilian job puts many at a significant disadvantage. These potential career disadvantages could undoubtedly lead to a lack of desire to join or rejoin the military which in turn weakens our national security. This trend is backward. Joining the military should not be seen as a career deficit, but as the opposite, a distinct career advantage.

From war to domestic crises, we have seen the change from the “strategic” reserve of the Cold War to the “operational” reserve of today. Often the life of a member of the Reserve or Guard is virtually indistinguishable from that of active duty service members. We want to avoid returning to the period—especially but not exclusively—after 9/11, from 2001 to 2008, when young officers and NCOs with growing families and civilian career aspirations, much as they wanted to serve, were finding the optempo becoming too high.

ROA, whose founding purpose is supporting national security through readiness in America's Reserve Components suspects that the high optempo is here to stay. Unless we grow the active force (unaffordable) and/ or reduce usage of the force (the opposite is more likely in an increasingly complex and lethal security environment), we must work for sustainability.

How do we create the conditions that enable our young men and women—and their families to sustain the pressures—and their civilian employers to support deployments that now include overseas training and other “non-war” events?

Over the past year, even as the pandemic upended our lives, ROA has established two coalitions that together focus on this enabling goal. The first, the ROA SARGE Coalition (Strong American Reserve and Guard Employers), supports initiatives that incentivize employers to hire and retain members of the Reserve and Guard. Members of the SARGE Coalition are American employers and civic groups who can add ROA's issues to those of their own that they advocate. Likened to a cargo truck (maybe a deuce-and-a-half for us old-timers), SARGE carries “cargo” such as advocacy for legislation now being considered that would provide tax credits for employers of the Reserve and Guard. Into the SARGE Coalition, we can add new advocacy cargo to create supportive “external” conditions.

Complementing SARGE is the subject of this section: the newly formed Citizen-Warrior Coalition. The Citizen-Warrior Coalition attracts sponsorships from the




Connecting Industry and the Reserve Components in support of our Citizen-Warriors

Industry Sector Committees

Capture the issues / challenges for each industry and identify solutions



corporate arena, including industry trade groups, that support the professional readiness and development of our citizen-warriors of all reserve components, and the well-being of their families. The Citizen-Warrior Coalition is the internally focused component of ROA's work to enable a sustainable reserve force.

As founding sponsors of the Citizen-Warrior Coalition, ROA looks to their leadership in embracing the “citizen-warrior” as part of their corporate culture—our National Defense depends on it. 

To create a strong and sustainable U.S. military, we need to explore root cause issues in order to reverse the distressing trends in our military strength

It is very unlikely that our current strategy (increasing bonuses and other recruitment expenses, and increasing utilization of the reserves) will enable our military to achieve its mission because the pool of eligible and interested candidates is simply too small.

In 2018, there were approximately 35 million people in the United States aged 17 to 24



29.8 million were unwilling to serve



24.9 million were unqualified to serve

Source: Cicero Group

From 1986 to 1989, reserve component usage was about 1 million man-days per year, according to DoD. It peaked in 2005, with 68.3 million man-days. It settled back by 2014 to 17.3 million man-days. New laws exist, however, that enable large-scale RC mobilizations for exercises wholly apart from wartime use. *Optempo will remain high.*

Reserves Play an Ever-Increasing Role in Our “Total Force” Doctrine—but Can We Sustain It?

Our civilian-military divide today is perhaps as wide as it has ever been. The burden of approximately two decades of war with almost 7,000 dead and more than 50,000 wounded has largely been supported by 1% of our population. As time continues to go on and this defense burden continues to increase, it is apparent that we must thrust this topic to the center of our discussions on national defense. This burden is becoming especially heavy for the Reserve and National Guard, or the Reserve Components (RC). These Citizen-Warriors comprise 38% of our total military force (and 53% of the “total” Army), a force that was not designed for such prolonged mobilizations.

In fact, we place such a large burden on this component that the word “Reserve” no longer accurately captures the commitment we require from them. The Citizen-Warrior is caught between an operational force and an “active force” that requires this operational reserve. This present model is broken and will require a retooling with community support.

“We are no longer a one-weekend-a-month, two-weeks-in-the-summertime force. What we are now is an operational reserve. That means on a predictable basis you will be expected to be called up and mobilized to deploy to defend your nation.”

*Former Chief of the USAR
Lieutenant General Jack Stultz*

Personnel in 1000s	Active	Reserve Components	Reserve Components (%)
Army	490.0	552.2	53%
Navy	323.6	47.3	13%
Air Force	310.9	172.1	36%
Marines	184.1	39.2	18%
Total Force	1,308.6	810.8	38%

In a commentary titled “Moving Beyond Total Force: Building A True Strategic Reserve” (WarOnTheRocks.com November 2, 2020), author Dr. Jacquelyn Schneider (Hoover Fellow at Stanford University and a non-resident fellow at the Naval War College with fifteen years of combined active and reserve service in the U.S. Air Force) goes into great detail regarding the history of the shift to an “operational reserve” dating back to the post-Vietnam Abrams Doctrine, and where the RC needs to head.

Whether or not Abrams actually ever meant the total force as a tripwire to restrain future presidents, the reserves have deployed in every war since the total force debuted — fighting in Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan, Libya, and beyond. They serve side by side with their active-duty peers in the air, on the ground, and at sea, and are perhaps the most operationally ready reserve in U.S. history.

But it’s time to move beyond the total force.

In 2018, the Department of Defense published a new *National Defense Strategy* that

called on the department to pivot towards great-power competition and invest in the talent to do so. A logical answer to the strategy's talent call is to lean more on the reserves. More flexible than the active duty, the reserves can draw on civilian airmen/soldiers/sailors with commercial skills and unique experiences. As a result, the reserves at first glance seem to be the perfect, cost-effective solution to an overly rigid active duty personnel system that rewards standardized career progression and cultural conformity — both anathema to the specialized tech talent that the *National Defense Strategy* highlights.

But the reserves are not currently optimized to attract and retain this kind of talent. That's because Abrams' imperative to mold an operationally ready reserve force — combined with a total force stretched to its limit in conflicts across the globe — has prioritized creating the best airmen/soldiers/sailors and undervalued (or at least not optimized) the citizen portion of reservists' skills.

Military leaders in some cases would think of this analysis and deduce it as a somewhat submissive statement of all of the things the Reserve force cannot be or do, but in fact, the intent is the opposite. If this precious American national security organization is to realize its complete potential in a progressively difficult and swiftly moving world, there must first be a clear and honest assessment of the Reserve force's inherent boundaries as well as its potential.

The first steps towards solving the problem are to acknowledge it and then define it, before offering ways to solve it.

In its essence, military leaders must be prepared for a rapidly changing and increasingly unstable world in which no one fully understands when a Reserve force might be needed. This perplexing and indeterminate threat environment is aggravated by the rise of equal or near-peer adversaries carrying out asymmetric and multi-domain operations within a set of weakening or failed states, an undecided international system, quickly thriving progressive technologies, domestic terrorism, and other undermining global developments. The evolving threat environment is even more difficult when compared with the current certainties of increasing military personnel costs, an obstinately elevated claim for forces, unmaintainable federal budget shortfalls, and unclear defense budgets for the likely future.

Further confusing these confrontations are other troubling trends in American society, with the declining suitability of young Americans to support the military and a decreasing inclination to serve. Not only do these disturbing developments present increasing difficulties to recruiters, but they also increase the danger of a military at risk of becoming progressively detached from the community it serves. When measured together, these trials make it clear that the military cannot afford to spare any source or leave any potential and suitable contribution untapped.

The Reserve has demonstrated over its history that it can adjust as required to deliver distinct and economical, balancing, and additional competencies to the military force structure, the joint force, and our interagency partners.

Maj. Gen. Peter Cooke

Centuri Group Chairs Citizen-Warrior Coalition as Part of Operation Solid Ground Initiative



Centuri Group and its operating companies across the U.S. have a long-standing tradition of putting the careers of its employees on “Solid Ground” with opportunities in a thriving industry and a forward-thinking philosophy. Their commitments to employees and to the communities they serve are guiding principles supported by meaningful action, and for Reservists and their families, Centuri is creating opportunities as chair of the Citizen-Warrior Coalition.

The objective of the Citizen-Warrior Coalition is to create legacy partnerships between the military and private sectors that enable Reservists to choose both options as one career path. As chair, Centuri will lead in developing these partnerships, focusing on aligning talent to industry, bridging training gaps between civilian and military skills, and connecting service members and their families to opportunities. It’s a win-win-win scenario that benefits our citizen-warriors, the private sector, and our nation’s military readiness.

Centuri’s leadership on the Coalition is a great advancement in their broader Operation Solid Ground initiative. Established in 2019, Operation Solid Ground embodies Centuri’s commitment to provide current and former service members career opportunities with their well-established companies in a thriving industry. As an enterprise effort, it guides recruiting strategies and hiring practices, development of support services for employees transitioning to civilian careers, and growth of partnerships with government and service member agencies that are embraced by all of Centuri’s operating companies across the U.S. Most importantly, it provides a framework to promote individual growth, continued military service, and safe communities.

With several former military service members at the helm for Centuri, being a citizen-warrior friendly company is a genuine priority and the driving force of

Operation Solid Ground. Centuri’s president and CEO Paul M. Daily, a U.S. Army veteran, captures the spirit of this commitment best: “As stewards of the communities where we work, it is our responsibility to support military service members to the best of our ability out of respect and appreciation for their service. With our increasing workforce needs and resources as an industry leader, Centuri companies are well-positioned to put service members on the path to a solid career that provides them the resources to maximize their potential for success.”

Centuri companies provide essential infrastructure services to North America’s gas and electric providers. Their team of 9,000 employees operating coast to coast literally connect homes and business to the critical energy sources they need for everyday life. A responsibility of this magnitude requires a workforce that’s committed to safety, discipline, and service, which makes Centuri a great fit for those with military experience.

There is also ample opportunity. As a massive number of seasoned utility infrastructure workers throughout the industry are expected to retire in the next few years, a new generation ready to enter the workforce with the leadership development, technical skills, and experience that citizen-warriors bring has never been in greater demand. This is another reason why Reservists play such an important role in Operation Solid Ground.

Centuri is a model company for doing their part to support service members. With their role as chair of the Citizen-Warrior Coalition and their Operation Solid Ground initiative, they are giving highly sought-after Reservists a pathway for a professional career that sustains their personal growth throughout their lifetime. As their name and “Think Ahead” company tagline asserts, they are laying the foundation for the future and in it for the long term.



American Trucking Association is Working to Hire Nearly a Million Drivers and Technicians Over the Next Decade

The trucking industry's support and admiration for our armed forces runs deep.

We can see that support when natural disaster strikes, we see trucks of relief supplies flowing in immediately following the National Guard to support their efforts to serve their fellow citizens in need.

As a demonstration of our respect, the American Trucking Associations, through our Trucking Cares Foundation, has sponsored displays of the 1917 Liberty Truck, the first standardized military motor vehicle, at both the National Museum of the Marine Corps and the National Museum of the United States Army.

ATA also currently operates the "Workforce Heroes Truck," a camouflage-wrapped Mack truck and trailer

that tours the country—promoting the hiring of veterans in an industry that is always looking for patriotic men and women to fill important jobs.

We recognize that the military forges character traits our industry values and whether that character is displayed behind the wheel, on the battlefield or in the board room, they're the marks of individuals—civilian or service member—that can get the job done.

In that spirit, no job is more sacred to us than our annual efforts as part of Wreaths Across America. Each December, dozens of ATA members and hundreds of trucks deliver wreaths so volunteers can honor more than two million veterans by adorning their headstones at Arlington National Cemetery and more than 2,100 locations across the country.

Whether it is promoting career opportunities for veterans, arriving side-by-side in times of natural disaster, or delivering wreaths to honor veterans who have passed, ATA is proud to support our men and women in uniform. We are honored to continue that support by joining the Reserve Organizations of America's Citizen-Warrior Coalition as chair of the transportation committee. We want to thank ROA and its members for your service, and we look forward to finding ways that our industry can give back to our nation's veterans, who have selflessly given so much to protect and defend our freedom and our way of life.



American Military University: Accreditation, Costs and Other Factors to Consider When Choosing a College

When deciding where to pursue your education, the number of choices can be overwhelming. American Military University offers guidance for your decision-making—to help you make the choice that is right for you, whether you pursue studies with AMU or another school.

When you first start researching schools that might fit your personal, professional, and educational goals—moving beyond personal recommendations from friends, colleagues, and family members—you may find it difficult to compare schools and programs. Some schools spend millions on advertising campaigns, presenting opportunities and promises that may seem too good to be true.

Two areas to initially consider involve **accreditation** and **cost**.

Accreditation

There are a few things you should understand about accreditation. First, accreditation is voluntary for schools. It is awarded and overseen by various nonprofit and non-government-affiliated organizations or accrediting bodies. Second, there are two types of accreditation: *Institutional* and *Programmatic*.

Institutional accreditation involves an accrediting body examining the entire school to see if it meets certain published criteria. Each accrediting body has its own set of criteria, but all generally focus on institutional practices to ensure the school has policies that meet and fulfill these criteria.

When people talk about accreditation, they usually mean institutional accreditation. But that is not the term they use—they actually are referring to “regional” or “national” accreditation. It is important to understand the difference.

Regional accreditation is issued to colleges and universities by accrediting bodies based on a geographic region. It applies to most “big name” public and private schools. The Council for Higher Education Accreditation (www.chea.org) recognizes seven regional accrediting bodies.

National accreditation is not necessarily geographically based. The U.S. Department of Education does not differentiate between regional and national accrediting agencies.

So, which is better—regional or national accreditation? That really depends on who you ask. But the most important thing to consider is this: You must understand how the credits or a degree from any school will be viewed by other schools. Some regionally accredited schools will not accept credits from a nationally accredited school, but many do. If you wish to attend a specific regionally accredited school in the future, it would be wise to learn if they would recognize a degree or credits from a nationally accredited school before enrolling at any nationally accredited school. (Note: AMU does recognize and accept credits and degrees from nationally accredited schools.)

Institutional accreditation focuses on overall quality and resources at a school, while programmatic accreditation looks at the curriculum of a specific program or discipline. Many business or engineering programs carry programmatic, or “specialized,” accreditation. Many MBA programs, for example, require that applicants have a bachelor’s degree from a program with specialized accreditation.

Tuition, Fees, and Total Costs

It’s important to understand the actual cost of any course. A school’s tuition and fees should be readily available on its website and easy to understand. You may find there are different tuition rates for different programs at the same school.

If a school references a huge discount, be wary. Ask for the total cost per course (tuition and fees) both before and after any discount. The amount you “save” with the discount may end up being an illusion once you compare actual costs at different schools with similar programs.

Sometimes tuition will be listed “per-credit.” Find out the number of credits in a course and the entire program so you understand the total overall cost. Also, look at the school’s fee schedule. Are there per-course, per-credit, or

per-semester fees? If so, how will that impact your total cost? Ask about average book/course material costs and add that to your total.

Also consider how the school handles transfer credits and previous learning. This could be other college work, basic law enforcement training, in-service training, or military transcripts. You may be eligible for academic transfer credits, which should reduce the number of credits you must take to earn your degree.

Some questions to ask about transfer credits:

- Is there any cost to evaluate your transcripts and previous courses for possible transfer credit?
- Is there any cost to apply those credits to your degree?
- If credits are applied, do they reduce the number of courses you need to complete your program?

Comparison Guide

To help you make an apples-to-apples comparison, AMU offers a complimentary comparison guide specifically for working adults who are exploring online programs, although it can be useful when looking at traditional programs too. Download our free guide at <http://bit.ly/amu-scorecard>.

EDUCATING THE MILITARY IS OUR #1 MISSION.



American Military University, founded by a retired servicemember, is proud to be the #1 provider of higher education to the U.S. military and veterans,* offering respected online degrees and certificates.

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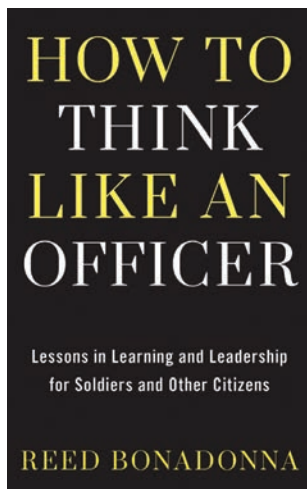
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* Based on FY 2019 Department of Defense tuition assistance data, as reported by Military Times, 2020

American Military University is part of American Public University System, which is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (hlcommission.org) and certified to operate by SCHEV. For more about our graduation rates, the median debt of students who complete a program, and other important information, visit www.apus.edu/disclosure.



“How to Think Like an Officer”

by Col. Reed Bonadonna,
USMC (Ret.)

By Jeffrey Phillips, Maj. Gen. USA (Ret.)

If, upon picking up Col. Reed Bonadonna’s *How to Think Like an Officer*, I was expecting a how-to manual on the ABCs of thinking like an officer such as “First, think this. Second, think that . . .,” I would have been disappointed. Perhaps I would have resorted to Field Manual FM 6-22, “Army Leadership,” or one of the legions of works on the topic.

Instead of a simple pragmatic how-to, Bonadonna offers thought-provoking insights of fundamental value to the would-be leader treading upon the journey that for the military officer officially begins somewhere around day one of cadet training.

In doing so, Bonadonna provides a guide for anyone who aspires to that species of leadership that can be fairly described as a “totality of leadership.” For it is the commissioned officer who, upon swearing the oath of commissioning, accepts without reserve the challenge of that very totality.

How to Think Like an Officer is segmented into two parts. Part I is entitled, “Thinking and Learning.” Here, Bonadonna, a retired Marine Corps colonel who started with a degree in history from the Virginia Military Institute (Gen. George C. Marshall’s alma mater), earned a master’s degree in English from Clark University and a Ph.D. from Boston University in English literature, as well as studied at Harvard’s Kennedy School of Government, makes fine use of his broad and deep education. He wastes no time in presenting a thesis: “There is evidence to suggest that the current caliber of officer thought is inadequate to the demands of the time,” that “officers have

not completely mastered the intellectual demands of their profession....”

Why this inadequacy? Bonadonna wastes little time here, citing the multitude of pressures and priorities officers contend with. Instead, it’s off to the races: “Thinking is a demanding art that must be understood and practiced.” He cites Marshall’s injunction to take time to think, which apparently served that magnificent leader well. Marshall, he observes, cautioned his officers against deep feeling but only shallow thinking. He explores the essential virtue of prudence to a warrior entrusted with lives and the fortune of a nation engaged in war. Prudence and character are yoked, and the officer’s character develops through a proper exercise of such virtues.

In a profession whose members show a bias for the technical, the concrete, the tactile and the sensible, Bonadonna praises the rounding and deepening effects of the arts and humanities. He especially emphasizes the value of reading, and not just military history, although that is important. Bonadonna cites the value of fiction, philosophy, and poetry. He notes that soldiers are often philosophers—no surprise. It is those who have confronted the enormity of war who grasp the gravity of life and seek to understand its mysteries and its meaning. Think of the great war poets: Owen, Sassoon . . . and of that (probable) non-combatant who perhaps knew war and warriors best, Shakespeare.

The value of humanities is to “hold up a mirror to ourselves. Self-knowledge is vital to an officer, lest decisions and relationships be burdened by self-delusion, by posturing or lack of authenticity.”

But to what end? What is an officer? In a recent discussion with a fine young Marine Corps NCO considering officer candidate school, I observed that an officer is not simply a “super NCO.” Bonadonna does better, identifying several discrete roles. Each role is constituent of the meta-role: the commissioned officer is a professional who is trained for and committed to performance in a particular role.

The “organizer” brings order and function out of component parts, such as people, equipment, and policy. The organizer includes the function of command, probably the most dramatically unique of the commissioned officer’s roles.

The “war fighter” is not an officer’s sole function, but the officer must be ready and able to fulfill this role. For the officer, this includes the necessities of competence in the realms of war: tactics, the principles of combat such as mass, movement, and so forth, and the interplay of strategy and tactics. Bonadonna recalls one of his officers observing that “lieutenants should concern themselves with field skills and not trouble their minds with tactics or the higher levels of military thought.” Without entirely agreeing, he and I, like many vets, would concur that the early months of an officer’s service are indeed a time of “apprenticeship”; unless the new officer is pressed into crisis, such as immediate deployment to combat, this is a time for converting schoolhouse learning into facility with the nuts and bolts of small-unit leadership.

For officers, thought is prelude to action. Here is where the officer’s education comes into play. It is the broadened mind that can think most broadly. The officer does not simply “take the hill.” The officer is expected to think beyond the immediate task. For what purpose? How is the unit to be prepared for what is next? How is the unit supporting the larger mission and how may it need to respond as circumstances change?

Indeed, Bonadonna uses the term “visionary” in describing a role of the officer. This aligns with my experience: an officer doing his or her job well envisions the organization’s end state, its state of being when it hits its goal. The officer then organizes the effort, the ways and the means, to achieve that end state.

How does this contrast to the leadership of an NCO? The NCO is a means—a primary means—for the fulfillment of the officer’s envisioning. The NCO organizes the effort within his or her area of responsibility. The NCO

does not characteristically envision the organization’s end state. The NCO makes stuff happen. The officer determines the stuff.

The value of Bonadonna’s work is his transcendence of the usual approach to leadership development—much of it, of course, is quite valuable. Instead of traits and the dissection of “battlefield scenarios” to provide pragmatic examples of leadership in action (Captain Jones, when confronted with ABC, did XYZ”), he explores the foundational structure that throughout history has underpinned the ability to fulfill the role of the commissioned officer specifically.

Bonadonna’s officer is a figure at once fully human and humane. His book is also a reminder that the military profession properly considered is aspirational, and that it is up to each of us to expand the range of our competence, of our thoughts, and of the profession of arms itself.

Bonadonna’s main, if unstated, purpose seems to be to raise the bar of military professionalism, with an emphasis on the officer’s role as ethical exemplar and teacher. The armed forces today face challenges that are essentially ethical, such as matters of conduct under fire, and garrison and off-duty life; his approach makes this book an essential addition to every officer’s library. I recommend it as well to anyone aspiring to commissioned service and those who would like to better understand the officers with whom they serve. It is also very appropriate for civilians and especially for service schools.

Reed Bonadonna served in the U.S. Marine Corps from 1979 to 1988 as an infantry officer, and his service included deployment for peacekeeping in Lebanon. During 20 years (1988-2008) in the Marine Reserve, he served as field historian in Iraq, instructor, career planner, and company commander. Since then, he has taught at Franklin Pierce College, the Marine Corps Command and Staff College, Norwich University, the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy (where he was director of ethics and character development), and John Jay College. He serves as a senior fellow for the Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs. His previous book is “Soldiers and Civilization: How the Profession of Arms Thought and Fought the Modern World into Existence” (U.S. Naval Institute Press, 2017). He lives in Larchmont, New York.

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In grateful appreciation to all the Departments, Chapters, and Individuals who made this second edition of the Reserve Voice print magazine a reality. Believing in ROA and communicating the important and wonderful work ROA is doing on behalf of all Reserve Component members and their families for almost 100 years (1922-2022) of service to this great nation cannot be understated, so

THANK YOU.

Be Well

Retired Col. Judi Davenport
ROA National President

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