

Messenger

FALL
2022

RETIRED SOLDIERS RETURN FOR PSCC



Ms. Miller
Departs
Accession Policy p.10

Boston
Blood Drive
and Barbecue p.12

Investing
in our Youth p.22



Greetings Teammates,

We made it through a busy summer, not just the summer surge but the first surge since the launch of MHS GENESIS – all thanks to the dedication and hard work from the entire command.

As you have likely heard from recruiting partners or even in the media, we are in the midst of an unprecedented recruiting environment due to a combination of factors including the tight labor market, intense competition for talent and an ongoing decline in the segment of America's young adults who are qualified and interested in serving in the military. As such, there is a lot of attention on the accession community right now. Ms. Miller (page 10), former director of Accession Policy and now Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (DASD) for Military Personnel Policy, testified before the Senate Armed Services Committees about the state of recruiting overall.

This is to say that what we do matters. We are all part of something bigger within the accessions pipeline -- a vital component of our military's overall readiness. I hope everyone in this organization will keep this in mind as we do our daily work, even if the current spotlight on our operations fades.

We continue to refine our processes, leverage resources (page 4) and improve technology to better evaluate applicants. To fully realize the potential of these modernization efforts, we must also adapt our thinking about what we do. The

submission from the medical team at NY MEPS on their approach to prescreening (page 25) is an example of this in action. With creative thinking and an approach to review sufficient, not necessarily complete, medical records. Despite being one of our largest MEPS, NY MEPS consistently has the lowest prescreen kickback numbers in our organization.

There's so much more in this issue of the Messenger that you'll just have to read - from MEPS pulling together to give back to the community (page 12), or build their team in fun and creative ways (page 20), to stories from outside our organization like how the Army is trying to prepare future Soldiers (page 22).

As we head into fall, we must remain optimistic in achieving our goals for the new fiscal year. We have overcome many challenges in the past few years. I know our intelligent and resilient team can tackle any obstacles that may arise.

Megan B. Stallings
Colonel, USA
Commanding

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Megan B Stallings".

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STAFF

Col. Megan B. Stallings
Commander
USMEPCOM

Marshall Smith
Public Affairs Officer

Derrik Noack
Messenger Editor
(847)-688-3680, ext. 7222
derrik.l.noack.civ@army.mil

Amy Gregorski
Visual Information Specialist
(847)-688-3680, ext. 7223
amy.e.gregorski.civ@army.mil

Israel Molina
Visual Information Specialist
(847)-688-3680, ext. 7228
israel.a.molina4.civ@army.mil

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derrik.l.noack.civ@army.mil
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ON THE COVER:

Dr. Ashley Jackson, USMEPCOM Western Sector medical officer, trains U.S. Army Maj. Marjorie Whitehead and U.S. Army Maj. Wendy Hand in completing medical prescreens in MHS GENESIS. Check out the full story on page 4.

RETIRED SOLDIERS RETURN FOR PSCC

By Derrik Noack

It had only been a few months since U.S. Army Maj. Marsha Paul, nurse practitioner, retired and put away her uniform, but luckily, she did not pack it too far back into her closet. While checking her email, she saw an exciting opportunity to come back and work with the latest medical technology. Paul decided to return to assist with the Prescreen Support Coordination Center (PSCC). Paul is among nine retired Army doctors, physician assistants and nurse practitioners answering the call to come back on active duty to help review prescreens virtually.

"I felt it was a good opportunity and I wanted to come back and serve," said Paul. "Everyone is enthusiastic and seems to appreciate what we are doing. That made me think I made the right choice."

The nine officers, now considered USMEPCOM J-3/5/7 Operations directorate personnel, attend two weeks of training where they learn how to operate MHS GENESIS and its PSCC. They will then return home, where the virtual capabilities of MHS GENESIS allow them to remotely review medical prescreens for all 67 MEPS and RPS.

"The training for our new HQ providers is meant to be engaging," said Dr. Ashley Jackson, Western Sector medical officer. "We are teaching them the broad strokes of how to complete a prescreen and they are filling in

the blanks by taking notes. The best part of having them attend training here is the contacts they establish. Building that community, where they have each other to reach out to, is going to help them succeed."

The PSCC was designed earlier this year to address backlogged medical prescreens. The new providers will be a significant resource as they benefit both MEPS personnel and applicants. MEPS locations can request a provider's assistance with prescreens at the beginning of each day, or the providers can manually select prescreens to complete from a list. This virtual processing helps decrease the amount of time an applicant spends in the MEPS and shortens contact-to-contract time.

"This came together very quickly with help from the Army," said U.S. Army Col. Kevin Cummings, USMEPCOM command surgeon. "The Army offered retiree utilization and funding for this recall to benefit all branches of service. At USMEPCOM, we worked to define the position description with what was needed. Then, the Army sent out the call to a specific set of recent retirees in an email database."

The HQ team swiftly went into action to ensure providers would be on track before arriving for training. Sector medical officers worked with J-1 Human Resources Directorate to build and refine documents that walk providers

through completing prescreens. J-6 Information Technology Directorate worked to grant computer access and establish IT support, J-4 Facilities, Physical Security and Logistics Directorate acquired the electronic equipment they would need, the Medical Modernization Team ensured the providers could access MHS GENESIS and J-3/5/7 coordinated the prescreen designation process.

Four Army Reserve Soldiers, through the Active Duty Operational Support (ADOS) program underwent training and are currently working as PSCC providers for the MEPS. The nine recalled officers will join them as providers as they complete staggered training by the end of 2022. These 13 personnel will work solely on medical prescreens for one year, with the possibility to extend up to three.

"We are really excited and we expect that they'll do well," said Cummings. "Those we have trained so far have been doing great. We are thankful for their willingness to come back and we are going to look to create permanent positions in the future." ■

► Dr. Ashley Jackson, USMEPCOM Western Sector medical officer, trains U.S. Army Maj. Marsha Paul and U.S. Army Maj. Marjorie Whitehead on the medical prescreen review process in MHS GENESIS. USMEPCOM worked with the Army to leverage retiree utilization to create a team of providers with a sole mission of reviewing medical prescreens for MEPS. (Photo by Derrik Noack)



USMEPCOM Hosts Battalion Executive Director's Conference

By Derrik Noack

USMEPCOM hosted the Battalion Executive Director (ED) conference Aug. 9-11. Bringing together all 12 Battalion EDs, the conference was the first of its kind since the position was established five years ago.

The command's Civilian Personnel Division organized the conference based off input from Battalion EDs. The Civilian Personnel Division is part of the J-1 Human Resources Directorate.





▲ Battalion Executive Directors pose for a photo outside USMEPCOM headquarters. The Battalion EDs traveled to USMEPCOM for the first ever ED conference. (Photo by Israel Molina)

◀ Battalion Executive Directors engage in open table discussions during a conference at USMEPCOM. USMEPCOM hosted the first ever ED conference, Aug. 9-11. (Photos by Israel Molina)

“While planning this conference, we asked EDs for topics they would like to be discussed,” said Mary Grant, chief, Civilian Personnel Division. “While soliciting feedback, open discussions were preferred over PowerPoint presentations. Therefore, we planned for three days of open discussions, focusing on the communication aspects of their job.”

Battalion EDs serve as the principal staff advisor to the Battalion Commander and are responsible for all administration and logistics functions in support of MEPS daily operations.

“From the J-1 perspective, the EDs are our ‘reach out and touch’ personnel,” said Grant.

“This conference will not only enhance the interactions between them and J-1, but also build their relationships with each other. They are all doing the same work. By meeting in person, they become more comfortable with asking each other for assistance when needed.”

A major focus over the three-day conference was examining the ED position description. Round table discussions opened up conversations on what duties and responsibilities are effectively being executed at the battalion level.

“This group is not lacking in experience, they know how things affect each other,” said Joe Stepro, director, J-1. “From these

discussions, we will build a more standardized approach to their position description.”

Attendees were excited about the opportunity to visit headquarters, meet each other and leave with a better understanding of their position.

“This conference was a wonderful idea and something us EDs have been wanting for a long time,” said Joseph Maenza, ED, 2nd Battalion. “A lot of things that were undefined in our job are being defined. All of us will now get to go back to our battalions and operate on the same sheet of music.” ■

Western Sector Welcomes New SEA

By Christine Parker

Army Command Sgt. Maj. Roger Rendon accepted responsibility as the senior enlisted advisor of Western Sector, USMEPCOM, succeeding Army Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Jackson, who will next serve at the G-1 sergeant major, 18th Airborne Corps, at Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

Marine Corps Col. Jesse Sjoberg, Western Sector commander, officiated the ceremony and explained Jackson led from the front, setting a tremendous example for others to follow. Sjoberg said, “He placed senior enlisted advisors where they would learn and perform well, and then gave them the most precious resource any of us has to give ... his time and energy to ensure they would succeed.”

“His interaction with all of those he took under his wing ... as coach, mentor, father figure at times, resulted in an incredible amount of growth and development and tremendous success,” Sjoberg said. “Success for a leader is defined by our lasting impact upon on those we develop, and believe me, for Sergeant Major Jackson, it’s a long list. There is no doubt he left an indelible mark on the Western Sector, on the lives of the leaders he developed,



▲U.S. Army Command Sgt. Maj. Roger Rendon holds the unit guidon during Western Sector’s change-of-responsibility ceremony. (Photo by Israel Molina)

and on the service members those leaders will go on to develop.”

Jackson, who served as the senior enlisted advisor since November 2019 and throughout the command’s COVID-19 operations at Military Entrance Processing Stations across the nation, thanked USMEPCOM leaders past and present, saying, “I truly enjoyed my time here in Western Sector. It has been awesome to see our joint community up close in action and it has been an honor to serve as the senior enlisted advisor alongside the great members of this sector.”

In his remarks, Rendon reflected on the military processing mission, saying “Right now a young applicant, somewhere in the United States ... is walking through one of those MEPS getting ready to process

and they’re a little apprehensive, a little nervous, wondering if they made the right decision. They come from different cultures, different backgrounds, different upbringings ... And the first people they see aside from the recruiters is us.”

Speaking about the applicants, he continued, “They have one thing in common – they want to serve their nation. So, that is the tip of the spear that I am really looking forward to be a part of!”

USMEPCOM has 65 MEPS and two Remote Processing Stations located through the nation, within 12 battalions, roughly half in Western Sector and half in Eastern Sector. Rendon, the new Western Sector senior enlisted advisor will provide support to and oversight of 31 MEPS and the two RPS that fall within Western Sector’s six battalions. ■



◀(From L to R) U.S. Army Command Sgt. Maj. Jason Peterson, Chicago Recruiting Battalion command sergeant major; U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class Renee Barton, policy NCOIC, J-3/5/7; and U.S. Army Lt. Col. Shane Doolan, Chicago Recruiting Battalion commander, pose for a photo during an awards ceremony at USMEPCOM, Aug. 9. (Photo by Israel Molina)

USMEPCOM Soldier Recognized by Recruiting Partner

By Derrik Noack

USMEPCOM's August Awards Ceremony began with a special presentation in recognition of U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class Renee Barton, policy NCOIC, J-3/5/7. U.S. Army Lt. Col. Shane Doolan and U.S. Army Command Sgt. Maj. Jason Peterson presented Barton an engraved sword for her work in training Chicago Recruiting Battalion's company command teams.

during this massive transition in modernizing processing efforts."

Barton trained the command teams of Chicago Recruiting Battalion, which has an area of operations covering more than 11,000 square miles. She gave training on MHS GENESIS and provided guidance on how personnel could navigate the process to increase efficiency.

"Barton came to us and gave great training to our team," said Doolan. "So far it has been paying

The quality of training content ensured measurable results, but it was her attitude that led personnel to feel comfortable sharing observations and critiques as they took on the new technology.

"Barton created an environment of trust during her training where command teams and station commanders gave honest feedback of how the USMEPCOM guidance was being implemented in the MEPS," said U.S. Army Master Sgt. Adam Snow, senior master trainer, Chicago Recruiting Battalion.

Although she was able to use her recruiting background to connect with the battalion personnel, she said taking each question that arises to heart is what makes for successful trainings.

"Prior to coming to USMEPCOM, I was a recruiter, a MEPS guidance counselor and a company master trainer for the National Guard," said Barton. "I understand how the MEPS work and can act as a bridge between both sides. When I tell

"Barton created an environment of trust during her training where command teams and station commanders gave honest feedback..."

"I was honored, but at the same time taking care of Soldiers is my duty," said Barton. "It does feel good to be recognized for assisting recruiters and their leadership

off. Our processing has been going so much better as we work with our MEPS on the medical side. She did it in such a way that we wanted to learn and improve."

recruiters and leaders to reach out to me, I make sure I take time to answer my phone or email to assist them in getting to the heart of the issue." ■

Ms. Miller Departs Military Accession Policy

By Derrick Noack



▲Stephanie Miller speaks to a full auditorium at USMEPCOM HQ on her final day as director of military accession policy. Miller now serves as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (DASD) for Military Personnel Policy. (Photo by Israel Molina)

On her final day as director of military accession policy, Stephanie Miller visited USMEPCOM to thank the team for their hard work and dedication since taking on the role in 2015. Miller led the command through vast changes and modernization efforts, including the continuation of processing during a global pandemic.

Miller's tenure spanned five USMEPCOM commanders and saw the launch of MIRS 1.1, deployment of MHS GENESIS, establishment of two remote processing stations, a headquarters reorganization and enlistment of the first Space Force applicants.

"Ms. Miller has been tremendous in pushing us through the throes of modernization and supporting us the entire way," said Col. Megan Stallings, USMEPCOM commander.

As Miller addressed the full auditorium at headquarters, she

assured personnel that she would remain a strong advocate for the accession triad in her new role as Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (DASD) for Military Personnel Policy. The office of the DASD for Military Personnel

"Thank you for letting me be a part of the journey. I've enjoyed getting to work with you and cheer you along."

Policy ensures all policies and programs measurably improve the readiness and lethality of the total force and total force manpower.

"This is bittersweet for me because I'm leaving accession policy, but at the same time I'm not going far away," Miller said. "Pretty much anything that touches military service members will be in my portfolio."

Before taking the opportunity to meet personnel individually, and then take a group photo, Miller reflected on the past seven years. She said a highlight was visiting different MEPS locations, and that she still plans to make those trips in her new role.

"Going out and seeing the work we do, seeing the applicants coming through our floors, is just so incredibly moving," said Miller. "It gave me a bigger sense of appreciation for the work that we do. I commit that I will still try to journey into different MEPS across the country, in both my professional capacity and my personal capacity."

USMEPCOM was awarded two Joint Meritorious Awards (JMUAs) during Miller's tenure as director of military accession policy, resulting in a total of four. USMEPCOM's third JMUA was awarded for enlisting 700,000 applicants while transforming to all-digital accessions from 2016 to 2019. The fourth JMUA was presented for the command's performance during the pandemic period of March 2020 to Feb. 2021.

"I'm so very proud of what the team has accomplished over the last few years," said Miller. "We really made some incredible leaps forward in terms of the modernization of USMEPCOM. We fundamentally changed the process of accessions, which have remained relatively the same since the inception of the all-volunteer force. Your commitment to the mission has never changed. Thank you for letting me be a part of the journey. I've enjoyed getting to work with you and cheer you along." ■



Rear Adm. Stuart Satterwhite
Commander USMEPCOM
Nov. 2015 - April 2016

"Stephanie Miller was always a staunch advocate for USMEPCOM. Stephanie was the type of leader that would look at the ASVAB and medical processes as tools that could be improved upon. Her willingness to not stay with the status quo allowed accession policy to evolve into a better place for all service members and their families."

-Rear Adm. Satterwhite



Capt. David Kemp
Commander USMEPCOM
April 2016 - May 2019

"Ms. Miller always kept an eye on the future and was a constant advocate for transforming USMEPCOM's industrial age processes and systems into modern digitally-enabled processes. No one has had more impact on recruiting and retention than Ms. Miller. Challenge after challenge, she provided a steady hand and vision for the future."

-Capt. Kemp



Col. Richard Brady
Commander USMEPCOM
May 2019 - Aug. 2021

"Ms. Miller did not shy away from the tough decisions. She was always willing to talk and listen, despite her very expansive portfolio of programs. It is easy to bow to the pressure of recruiting, but Ms. Miller consistently made decisions that were in the best interest of the accession enterprise, and many of those decisions were in support of USMEPCOM positions."

-Col. Brady



▲USMEPCOM HQ personnel pose for a photo with Stephanie Miller in the auditorium. (Photo by Israel Molina)

Boston Blood Drive & Barbecue

By U.S. Army Maj. Bridgette Navejar
Boston MEPS executive officer



▲ Boston MEPS personnel pose for a photo following a blood drive event held at their building. (Courtesy photo)

Boston MEPS hosted a Red Cross blood drive and barbecue for tenants of the Barnes Federal building July 8. Given the MEPS' firm foothold in the Boston community, the organization is continuously seeking opportunities to support the community it proudly serves.

Coordination for the event started in April when members of the Commander's Assessment Team, a diverse group of MEPS employees focused on morale-building events, vocalized their desire to give back to the greater Boston community. Heather Flynn, Boston MEPS human resources assistant, noted that the MEPS had conducted blood drives with great success in the past and recommended the team replicate a similar event. Erica Pollini, Boston MEPS medical technician, who previously worked with the Red Cross, leapt at the opportunity to unite the MEPS and the Red Cross. Pollini noted that the Red Cross was continually in need of donors and that a blood drive might serve as a great morale event.

From there, the Boston MEPS Headquarters took the lead with the first sergeant and operations officer coordinating with the medical support agencies and

the executive officer coordinating public outreach and logistics. Members of the Boston Team leveraged their networks to ensure the MEPS was able to fill its 37 allocated donation spots and their efforts were so successful that the Red Cross needed to increase spots to ensure all interested donors could participate.

On the day of the event, team members from the MEPS, local military recruiting, and federal security providers gathered to support the initiative. U.S. Marine Corps Sgt. Caitlyn Howarth, human resources NCO, was an integral asset to the MEPS' ability to fill all donation times. Howarth stated that she conducted several walk-throughs of the Barnes building to ensure all possible donors were reached and was glad to contribute to the event's success. The Red Cross team moved like clockwork, enabling the collection of several units of blood that they estimated had the potential to save 72 lives. Mark Zachem, donor relations, American Red Cross, commended the MEPS for achieving a first-time donor rate above 50 percent.

"For more than 80 years, the American Red Cross has depended on military service members to roll up their



▲ Larry Welch, Boston MEPS human resources advisor, votes in the best side dish competition at the barbecue following the blood drive. (Courtesy photo)

sleeves to help maintain a stable blood supply here in the United States,” said Zachem. “That partnership continues across the nation with local blood drives at military installations. We appreciate the support we receive at the national level, as well as at local commands where service members show a commitment to communities where they are stationed.”

While most blood drives provide snacks and beverages to their donors, Boston MEPS upped the standard with all donors and team members enjoying an afternoon barbecue. Robert Dellorto, Boston MEPS medical supervisor, served as head grill master and energetically served burgers and hotdogs to more than 70 attendees. Dellorto borrowed the grill from the Navy recruiting station and joked that “he’d show them how MEPS grill.”

Not to be outdone, the testing section took great pride in establishing a patriotic ambience under the flagpole with red, white and blue decor. The processing section led the charge with a barbecue side-dish competition in which six competitors placed their culinary skills under scrutiny. The victor of the competition, Erica Pollini, was pleased that all attendees enjoyed her pasta salad dish.

Upon completion of activities, the Red Cross was infused with additional blood supply to support community members in need and the Boston MEPS Team was energized through their community service and barbeque. United States Coast Guard Lt. Cmdr. Jordan Ortiz, Boston MEPS operations officer, reflected how the event was an “excellent way to promote the greater good.” Members of the Boston MEPS CAT said the drive was a great opportunity to increase morale and they look forward to future events where the team can leverage support organizations to give back to the Boston community. ■



▲ U.S. Marine Corps Gunnery Sgt. Jorge Diaz, Boston MEPS USMC liaison, donates blood to the Red Cross. (Courtesy photo)

More Time for Memories

By Jonathan Davis

Military Health System

Kimberly (Kim) Christy works at USMEPCOM where a blood drive by the Armed Services Blood Program (ASBP) Blood Processing Division, Great Lakes is held approximately every 56 days. She routinely donated blood with the ASBP before becoming ineligible due to a medical condition. Determined to 'keep on' saving lives, Christy now helps find donors and encourages them to donate at the MEPCOM blood drives.

Christy's primary reason for donating blood hits close to home. One of her family members was diagnosed with Neuroblastoma, a rare cancer often found in the small glands on top of the kidneys (adrenal glands), at a very young age and would have passed away after just six months if they did not have access to blood transfusions on a regular basis. He received over 100 blood products and was able to survive, and 'keep on' for over two years after being diagnosed.

"Because of the medical treatments and blood transfusions he received, he got to 'Make a Wish' and got a camper [van] to go camping in 2021, making tons of memories and friends along



▲Kim Christy, Acquisitions and Contracting SSO, USMEPCOM, poses for a photo at headquarters. (Photo by Derrick Noack)

the way," Christy explained. "Donations of blood that he received helped give his family more time to make memories that they will always cherish." Malcolm was known for having an infectious smile and a sweet personality that could light up a room.

"The need for blood continues every day, even holidays. Donors with a fighting spirit like Mrs. Christy and patients like Malcom are my motivation," said, Navy Lt. Cdr. Michael Collins, Division Head, Blood Processing Division, Great Lakes. "We need a large diverse supply of blood products to meet the needs of patients like Malcom. Mrs. Christy may not be able to donate anymore, but she is still doing her part motivating people to become new donors themselves."

Christy understands the importance of ASBP's mission and wants others to know that when a person takes the time to donate blood, they also give time to patients in need, like her family able to spend more time with their sweet boy.

"Like Mrs. Christy, we need people to continue to donate," said Tressa Vanderlois, ASBP blood donor recruiter, Great Lakes. "There are so many people like Malcolm that are fighting every day for their life

and need your help. Just think about it, it is as simple as pulling up your sleeve."

When donating blood with the ASBP, it can save the life of not only a warfighter, but also their family member in need. When a donor 'keeps on' giving, the ASBP can help 'keep on' saving lives.

To find out more about the ASBP or schedule an appointment to donate, please visit www.militaryblood.dod.mil. To interact directly with ASBP staff members or get the latest news, follow us @militaryblood on Facebook, Twitter and @usmilitaryblood on Instagram. ■



▲ASBP photo illustration of Christy and Malcolm.

Cadets Connect Through Research Program

By Derrik Noack

The Cadet Summer Research Program is a valuable partnership with service academies that brings cadets to USMEPCOM during the summer. Real-world application provides practical experience for the cadets during their internship and provides USMEPCOM with fresh, new ideas to move the organization forward.

This year, Cadet Ale Benavidez (U.S. Air Force Academy), Cadet Anthony Demitry (U.S. Air Force Academy) and Cadet Ben Lopez (U.S. Military Academy) participated in the program. Not only were the cadets able to strengthen tools learned in the classroom and refine interpersonal communication skills, the internship opportunity provided the future officers a deeper connection to the enlisted side of the military.



▲Cadet Ale Benavidez, Cadet Ben Lopez and Cadet Anthony Demitry pose for a photo at USMEPCOM HQ. (Courtesy photo)



▲Cadet Ale Benavidez presents his final research project to personnel at USMEPCOM. (Photo by Cadet Anthony Demitry)

“I didn’t go through MEPS,” said Benavidez. “Learning more about the process an enlisted applicant goes through can help me develop a closer relationship with enlisted personnel. I can better understand topics they may bring up in casual conversation.”

Aside from focusing on individual research projects assigned to them, cadets were also able to participate in various command functions at USMEPCOM. During ceremonies, retirements and changes of command they were able to network with both civilian and military personnel.

“My time here has helped with getting more comfortable talking to senior leadership,” said Demitry. “There are a lot of people from different branches, but everyone merges really well. I didn’t realize how easy it would be to connect with people from the other services.”

USMEPCOM launched the Cadet Summer Research Program nearly 20 years ago. Cadets from various military academies take part in the program for up to six weeks, working on individual research projects throughout their stay. They present their findings to leadership on their final day, providing a unique opportunity for both the cadets and USMEPCOM to grow.

“Having the cadets at USMEPCOM during the summer provides a fresh perspective on specific USMEPCOM problems,” said Kyle Cioffero, Cadet Summer Research Program manager. “They bring their unique background and outside expertise to our problem sets. It also, in many cases, gives them their first exposure to working in the joint environment.” ■

Welcome back to USMEPCOM, this is your third time with the command.

Yes. I was first with USMEPCOM back in 2001 as the test control officer at Dallas MEPS. Then, I returned to command 11th battalion, St. Louis, in 2019.

Why are you excited to be at USMEPCOM HQ?

I'm excited because USMEPCOM has been a part of my life since I was a young lieutenant. I had my daughter while at Dallas MEPS. It's where I learned to lead. I had a battalion commander there who I still keep in touch with today because he was the reason I stayed in the Army. I had an uncle that passed away in Operation Desert Storm, so I recognize that not all of our service members that walk through our doors necessarily always come home. I'm excited about the opportunity to share his story, remind the team of the importance of our job and to give honor to those who have given everything. To be back is a great privilege and honor.

How do you think your experiences at Dallas and St. Louis MEPS will help you in your role here?

I'm able to talk to the team here with context. By all means, I don't know everything. I've been so fortunate to be part of an organization where there are so many subject matter experts.

What are you looking forward to being at the command and in the Chicago area?

I think what I look forward to most being at the command is building relationships; with both the directors and the Eastern sector staff here, all in an effort to support our MEPS commands. I appreciate the culture of Chicago. I love to eat, so there is a lot to offer here. The lake is beautiful, there's so much to see.

You are very energetic. What is your secret?

Oh, it's natural. My family is very energetic; everywhere we are is a party. I have one cup of coffee in the morning, I work out almost every day and I get plenty of sleep. I like to cycle, run and walk. It depends on my mood and the weather.

What do you expect from your teammates at USMEPCOM?

I've been communicating the BEAST philosophy I created. It's my leadership philosophy and how I expect our team to treat each other, our applicants and our IRC partners.



Col. Kutter

U.S. Army Col. Janelle Kutter assumed command of Eastern Sector, USMEPCOM, in June. She brought with her an abundance of energy and experience earned throughout her 24-year military career. The Army has taken her to 10 different commands across the globe, including Republic of Korea, Egypt and Washington D.C., but this is her first time in the Chicago area. Read more to find out why she is excited to be here, what she expects from her teammates and what you would hear her playing in her car... you might be surprised.

By Derrik Noack

The "B" represents "Building the nation's might." USMEPCOM is part of the accessions triad. Together with our recruiting partners and our training centers, we are building the nation's might. Our service members are an important part of national security.

The "E" stands for "Enthusiasm." I have an expectation that the enthusiasm we have for the mission makes applicants excited about this opportunity. Have a sense of energy about what we do every day and a little fun while you're at it. Everyone's level of enthusiasm is different. I might be coming into a space with jazz hands; I don't expect you to do the same. I expect you to be excited about what we do every day in your way.

The "A" stands for "Accountability". We are accountable to each other. We are accountable to the safety of our applicants. We are accountable to the DOD standards we must uphold. We are accountable to treat each other with dignity and respect.

The "S" is "Support." This is support to each other, IRC partners and training centers. When I say support, it is with a level of competence, commitment and consistency.

Lastly is "T" for "Teamwork." We do not do this on our own. We have contractors, we have fee-based providers, we have transportation, etc. We each have an essential role as a customer-based organization. Quality processing is "what we are here for."

What I expect each of our BEASTs within East side is to apply that philosophy every day.

Do you have a personal life motto?

"What you see is what you get." The energy that I bring to work is the energy that I bring to my family and friends. My husband teases that I see yellow. I like to have fun. I love to appreciate the people in our lives.

How do you spend your off time?

On the weekends, I try to unwind and try new restaurants. I love to listen to music. This morning when I rolled into work I was listening to salsa and Latin vibes. I do like to hike and go biking, so I will check out some of the trails here. Because my husband does not live with me since I travel so much for work, I will travel to Colorado as often as I can to see him and our daughter.



1.

You are on a deserted island and can only listen to three artists, whom do you pick?

Rihanna, Dua Lipa and Harry Styles.

What is your favorite movie?

The Natural. It's an old baseball movie with Robert Redford.

Currently binge watching?

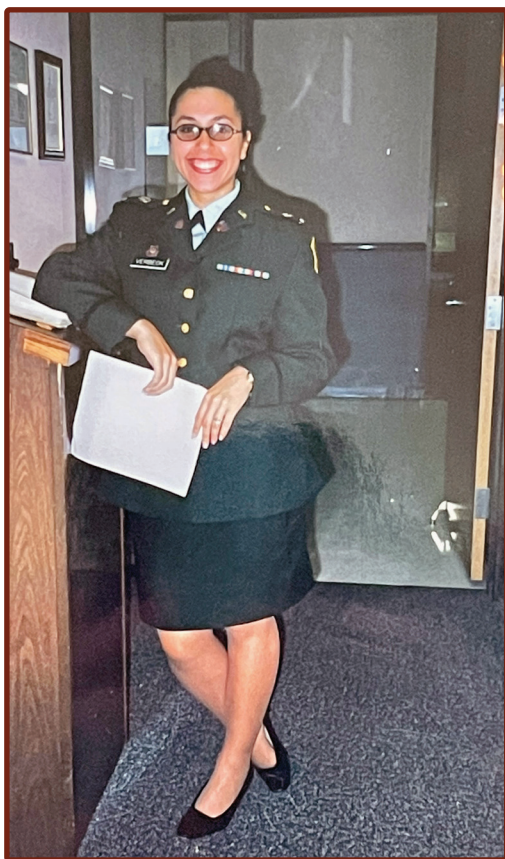
"I Shouldn't Be Alive" on Prime.

What would your last meal be?

Sushi. ■



3.



2.



4.

1. U.S. Army Col. Janelle Kutter poses alongside women of Dallas MEPS for an AAFES poster in 2002.

2. Kutter poses for a photo in the Testing Section of Dallas MEPS as the test control officer in 2001.

3. Kutter and her husband (center) pose for a photo with their family.

4. Kutter (front right) and her team at St. Louis MEPS pose for a photo during their CARES Day in 2022.
(Photos provided by Col. Kutter)

Master Chief shapes leaders, leaving Military Members of the Year in his wake



1. Senior Chief Petty Officer Brandon Majors, Ft. Jackson MEPS SEA, command photo.
2. A group photograph of the USS Carter Hall chiefs mess. The individuals in color left to right are Senior Chief Brandon Majors, Master Chief Adam Singleton and Senior Chief Ioana Wolfinger.
3. Senior Chief Petty Officer Ioana Wolfinger, New Orleans MEPS SEA, command photo.

By Marshall Smith

True leaders always hope to see their people achieve more than they did, but they don't always get the satisfaction of seeing that success come to fruition.

For Master Chief Adam Singleton, former Honolulu MEPS senior enlisted advisor (SEA), confirmation came when Senior Chiefs Brandon Majors, Ft. Jackson MEPS SEA, and Ioana Wolfinger, New Orleans MEPS SEA, respectively became the Eastern and Western Sector military members of the year.

Singleton was promoted to master chief in 2019 while with USMEPCOM and left Honolulu in January 2020 to become the command master chief on USS Carter Hall (LSD 50). Onboard the ship, Majors led the repair division and the damage control training team, and Wolfinger led the medical department and medical training team.

"As a CMC, I rely heavily on my Senior Chiefs to ensure Sailors are taken care of and we are meeting the CO's intent to deploy safely and complete our mission," said Singleton. "Both were literally my go-to senior chiefs for not only their departments, but for the entire ship."

Wolfinger put in her

retirement package while assigned to USS Carter Hall, but it was denied. Instead, she applied to the command program and was accepted.

"Deep down inside I knew I wasn't finished. I still had so much more I wanted to accomplish," said Wolfinger. "I was inspired and knew that I could do so much more for the Sailors and figured if my retirement was denied, then I'm all in. CMC [Singleton] was not at all surprised at my decision to submit for a Command package."

Majors and Wolfinger were selected for command senior chief while assigned to USS Carter Hall and attributed part of their decision to come to USMEPCOM to Singleton, who recommends the command as an opportunity to understand the accessions pipeline.

Singleton made sure to to prepare the two senior chiefs for their future role as senior enlisted advisors.

"CMC was always available to ask questions, provide guidance and once CMDACS [Majors] and I were selected into the program, he would bring us in on many decisions/scenarios to get our brains to start working out issues at the command level and how we would approach situations," said Wolfinger.

That preparation paid off as

demonstrated by the sailors' selection as MMOY for their sectors. USMEPCOM is a joint command with uniformed personnel from all the services. Majors is proud to stand alongside Wolfinger as Sector winner not just because of their history but as Sailors.

"I think it's pretty cool that CMDACS Wolfinger and I were forwarded this opportunity to represent the Navy in a joint command," said Majors. "She and I have the same leadership style and command mindset to ensure ALL sailors are trained, qualified and promoting here at USMEPCOM."

For Singleton, it was obvious that these two sailors would succeed at USMEPCOM.

"There's nothing I can say that would give justice to their hard work. They won because they put others before themselves," he said. "The result of that is their selection as the MMOY for their sectors. I always told them if they took care of their people first, their Sailors and MEPS staff successes would be their success."

That two high-performing sailors would both have worked under Singleton was also unsurprising to Cmdr. Gina Becker, current Western Sector deputy commander and former

Honolulu MEPS commander alongside Singleton.

"Having both of them win confirmed what I already knew, he is a great leader who helps develop great leaders," said Becker. "Knowing him, he will refuse any credit associated with their victories and just be happy for them. CMC Singleton, was everything a Commander hopes for in a SEA and more. He always led by example, was fair, and would tell me what he thought, not what he thought I wanted to hear. He took care of our team, was continually humble and always seeking self-improvement."

The three chiefs were close aboard the USS Carter Hall, leading hundreds of sailors through the pandemic and deployments. On one deployment to Bahrain, the three worked to support the civilian evacuation from Afghanistan. Over a ten-day period they built tents and provided medical and other assistance to families waiting on flights, said Singleton.

The final competition for USMEPCOM military member of the year will be held in September. Now these former shipmates become competitors. Only time will tell the winner. ■

Information Technology Specialists Focus on the Future



▲ITS hone their computer technician skills as they practice fixing circuit boards during training at USMEPCOM HQ. (Photo by Amy Gregorski)

By Darrin McDufford

The annual Information Technology Specialist (ITS) training returned after being on hiatus due to COVID-19, providing training to many new technology specialists throughout the command.

USMEPCOM has changed a lot over the last three years, including the accession processing system USMIRS 1.1, the electronic health record MHS GENESIS and the new online ticketing system ServiceNow.

“The purpose and intent of this training is to get everyone to the same standards, to improve and build upon a collaborative workforce, to train on a lot of different things,” said Gregory L. Roby, Customer Support Branch chief, USMEPCOM.

The training also provided the opportunity to reset expectations and change direction related to changes since the last ITS conference in 2019.

“We’re conducting training on using active directory,” said Roby “We’re conducting training on troubleshooting laptops. We’re conducting training on Microsoft Endpoint Configuration Management, which is how we remotely update computers. So we are doing a lot of different basic skills, intermediate skills training for the information technology specialist.”

The training also focuses on staying up-to-date in the information technology world. Due to changes in demands in skill sets, it is easy to fall behind and become obsolete.

If a computer is out of security compliance, it will get quarantined. An ITS needs to know how to identify that system before that happens. That’s important because a quarantined machine means someone somewhere is not able to work.

The training had eight breakout sessions and included many discussions about changes in the command. Attendees also offered constructive feedback from a MEPS perspective.



▲ITS observe computer fixing skills during an ITS training breakout session. (Photo by Amy Gregorski)

“This training definitely will assist me with improving customer service,” said Giselle Santiago, ITS, Tampa MEPS. “One of the very first classes we took yesterday was customer service and ensuring that we are self-aware in how we carry ourselves with our team, to make sure that we are approachable and that no question is invalid.”

Although ITS may not always have an answer right away, there is a system in place to ensure every problem is addressed.

“I get daily questions on USMIRS or MHS GENESIS,” said Santiago. “Most of the time they’re resolved, and if there’s not a solution, we go ahead and create a service desk ticket, ask those questions and then through the service desk, they’ll provide us with a response that they’re aware of the situation or that they’re working on the situation.”

One thing the ITSs do to further support one another is to provide assistance to MEPS where they’re missing an ITS or need additional support.

“Recently I visited the Miami MEPS and I assisted them with their lifecycle management,” said Santiago. “I went down to Miami and, along with the contractor, I was there to assist and stay the weekend to ensure that their lifecycle had a great outcome.”

She was enthused with the overall course content and the J-6 Customer support staff’s assistance in ensuring every opportunity has been taken to grow the ITSs.

“This has been a very good experience,” said Santiago. “I hope that we’re able to return on an annual basis, how it used to be. This is my first one and it’s good to share our experiences in person with all the other ITSs and be able to relate. Since we’re the only ITS in our MEPS, it’s great to just come together and share those experiences.” ■

Tampa MEPS Unifies with Unique Training

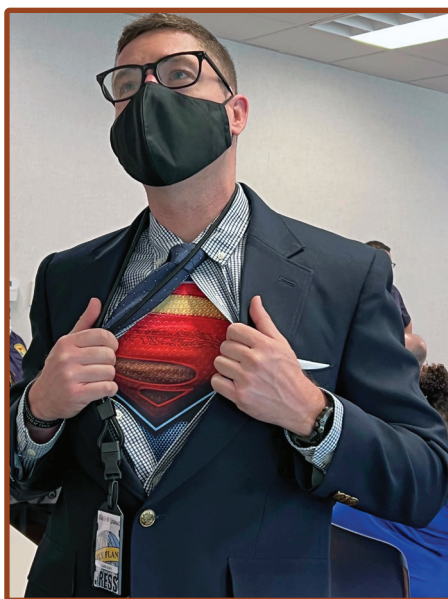
✈ By Tonia Edgin, Tampa MEPS education services specialist, U.S. Army Capt. Maria Perdomo, Tampa MEPS operations officer & Giselle Santiago, Tampa MEPS IT specialist

Training day is always an experience at Tampa MEPS, and this quarter's training was no exception. On Aug. 5, Tampa MEPS staff dressed in their favorite costumes, representing different themes for each section. The purpose of this exercise was to demonstrate the overall esprit de corps of the Tampa MEPS team. It was also an excellent opportunity to introduce U.S. Navy Lt. Cmdr. Estevez Guerrero, the new Tampa MEPS Commander, to how ambitious and entertaining the team is.

Although, at first glance, each theme was unrelated, each represented the camaraderie at the Tampa MEPS. Headquarters chose Star Wars, medical chose superheroes, operations chose a luau themed celebration, and testing chose a "Pirates Ready" approach. Historically, training day is not only a time to catch up on quarterly training, but to interact and learn from each other.

"May the Force be with you" was the quote of the day for the headquarters Star Wars team. As the Jedi High Council, the HQ team continues to support their staff (Padawans) as they face their newest Jedi trial, MHS GENESIS. There is no doubt that they will become Jedi Knights and Masters of the newest medical modernization tool.

Medical section, as the heroes they are, dressed as superheroes. Dr. Charles Baldwin, Tampa MEPS chief medical officer, and Sgt. 1st Class Brandon Mills, medical NCOIC, created a unique dynamic duo as Robin



▲U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class Brandon Mills, Tampa MEPS Medical NCO, reveals his secret identity as Superman during a unique training day at Tampa MEPS.

and Superman in their own Multiverse echoing Earth-One. The medical section, in flash speed, sprang into action by telling their story from a new beginning. Legacy systems are a thing of the past (or the future, or the present, hard to tell in a Multiverse) unveiling and keeping up with the new technological modernization efforts MIRS 1.1 and MHS Genesis simultaneously.

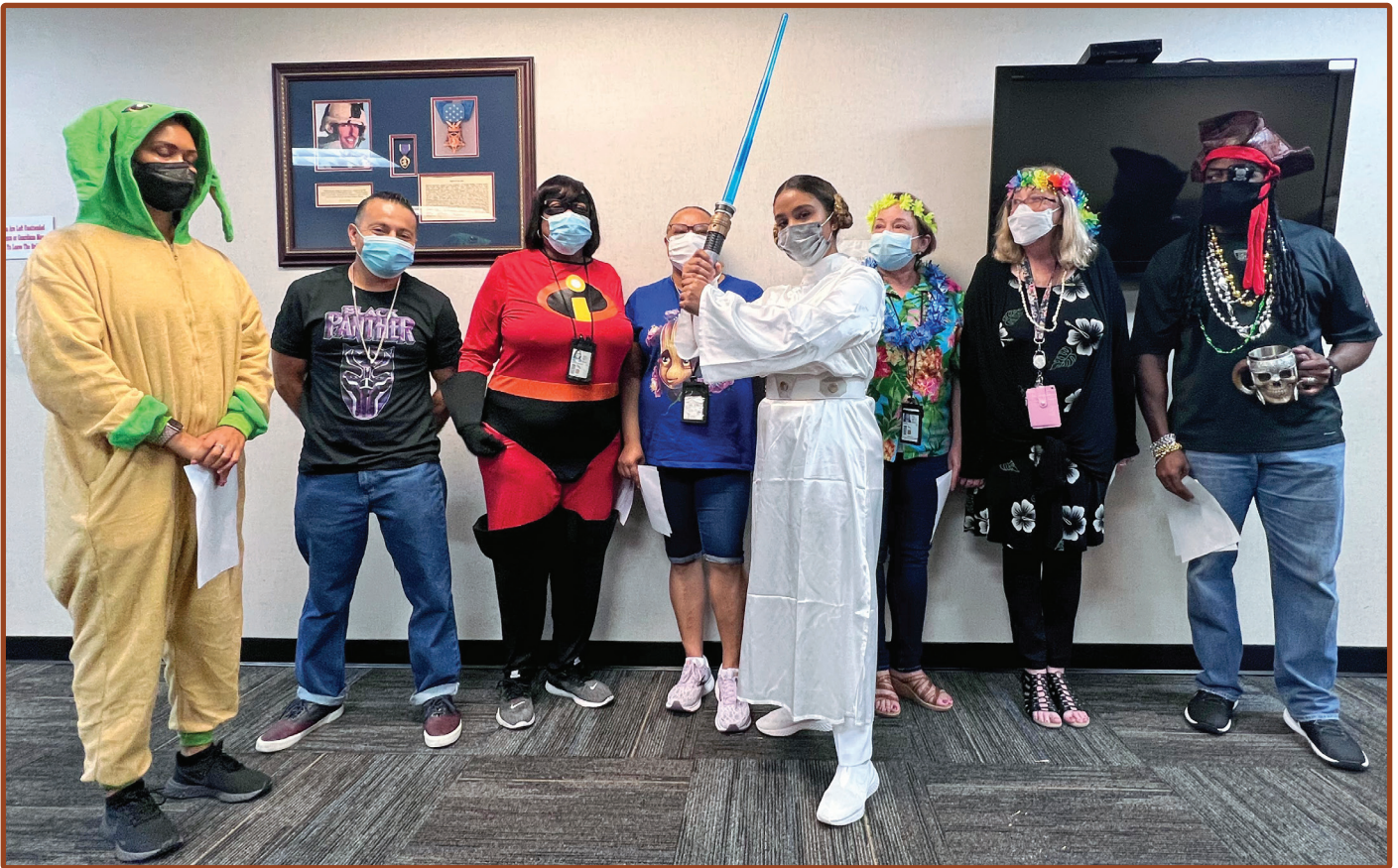
Operations decided to have a luau and presented the team with a dance. The dance not only represented traditions, but also the willingness to work together with one common goal: "having fun while accomplishing the mission." Day in and day out, we welcome applicants with different and rich traditions whose purpose is to defend

our nation. Each applicant is welcomed with a smile and positive attitude. Amazing men and women come through our doors who one day will be great leaders and share their traditions while accomplishing their mission. To all, Aloha.

Testing dressed for the occasion and represented Tampa MEPS as true Tampa Bay Buccaneers. They demonstrated their preparedness for the new school year in support of the ASVAB Career Exploration Program (CEP) with their slogan, "Arrgh you ready for SY22/23!" They too have modernization efforts coming their way with ConCEP replacing the legacy Schools 2001 database. Their expertise and professionalism will get them to the bounty.

Lt. Cmdr. Guerrero created an assignment in which staff selected another member from a different section to learn three things from their teammate. These three things were shared with the team after lunch. The MEPS's military members showed appreciation to all the civilian staff by preparing lunch. It was quite a wonderful and memorable experience as some were new staff.

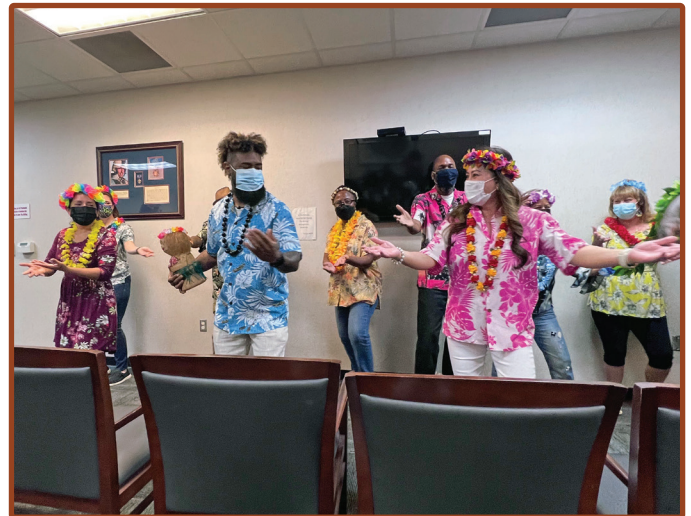
Dressing up and admiring everyone's creative side turned an event, sometimes thought as monotonous, into a multifaceted one. Learning from each other, laughing with each other and sharing a meal brought unification to better serve our Nation as Department of the Army civilians and members of the Armed Forces. ■



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1. Tampa MEPS personnel, recognized as award recipients at their August awards ceremony, pose for a photo.

2. Lt. Cmdr. Estevez Guerrero, Tampa MEPS commander (left) presents Giselle Santiago, Tampa MEPS IT Specialist, with an award during a training day.

3. Tampa MEPS Operations personnel perform a traditional luau dance during a unique training day at their MEPS.

4. Tampa MEPS military personnel prepare a special meal, serving lunch to their civilian staff in gratitude for their service.

(All photos courtesy of Tampa MEPS)

INVESTING IN ARMY DEVELOPS FUTURE

By Gary Loten-Beckford

In response to the most challenging recruiting environment since the start of the all-volunteer force in 1973, the Army is implementing an innovative new program to prepare recruits who are en-route to initial military training to meet or exceed our rigorous standards.

The Future Soldier Preparatory Course pilot program is an investment in America's youth to help them overcome academic and physical fitness barriers to service so they can earn the opportunity to join the Army.

The U.S. Army has already identified approximately 2,000 applicants who may be eligible to participate in the course. The Army will initially run the Future Soldier Preparatory Course as a pilot program and will review results in the early part of fiscal year 23 to determine if the course was effective and should become permanent.

"The Future Soldier Prep Course allows recruits, who meet all other qualifications for enlistment, a path to serve," said Gen. Paul E. Funk II, Commanding General, Training and Doctrine Command. "The young men and women who will participate in this pilot have the desire to improve themselves and want to honorably serve their country. This course is a great way to increase opportunities for them to serve without sacrificing the quality needed across our force."

The percentage of young Americans meeting Army enlistment standards has decreased markedly over the past four decades. Currently only 23% of young Americans fully meet the Army's eligibility requirements, down from 29% in recent years. The effects of the COVID pandemic over the past two years have exacerbated barriers to enlistment for many young Americans.

The pilot program will provide focused academic and fitness instruction to help recruits meet the Army's desired accession standards for body fat composition and academic test performance prior to basic training. Access to this program will allow these individuals who already meet all other qualifications for enlistment, to include moral and medical accessions standards, a path to serve.

Recruits admitted through this program will all be required to ultimately meet Department of Defense enlistment standards to ensure we maintain the overall quality of the force.

"This course is one of many approaches the Army is taking to invest in America's young people," stated Funk. "We have to acknowledge that society has changed and help our youth improve so they can benefit from the training and opportunities that Army service provides. The Army is still the best place for young people to achieve their potential."

Future Soldier Preparatory Course

The pilot course includes two separate tracks: a fitness program and an educational program for recruits who need help improving their scores on the Armed Forces Qualification Test (AFQT). Recruits with an ASVAB score of 21-30 may only participate in the academic track. Recruits with an ASVAB score between 42-49 may be allowed to voluntarily participate in both tracks, the fitness portion prior to basic combat training and the academic portion following basic training.

Individuals in both tracks are projected to remain in the FSPC for a maximum of 90 days, with opportunities every three weeks to leave the program and ship to basic training if they meet or exceed the Army's desired accession standards.

As part of their pre-enlistment process, all trainees will still have to take the gender-neutral Occupational Physical Assessment Test (OPAT), administered by a recruiter, to qualify for the physical demand level required for an Army MOS prior to their participation in the preparatory course.

"This course gives us an opportunity to unleash unrealized potential by surrounding trainees with experts that they likely would not have access to at home," said Brig. Gen. Patrick Michaelis, the U.S. Army Training Center and Fort Jackson Commanding General. "With the right instruction and professional support, we are confident they will be able to perform successfully and meet the standards expected of every Soldier."

The academic portion will include a course modeled after the Basic Skills Education Program (BSEP) the Army has been using since 1977. The program aims to improve word knowledge, reading comprehension, arithmetic reasoning, and test-taking skills using a format proven successful over the past 40 years.

BSEP is a refresher course covering both math and English that soldiers take to help raise their scores when re-testing on the Armed Forces Classification

OUR YOUTH SOLDIER PREP COURSE

Test (AFCT). BSEP is a teacher-facilitated program with computer lessons for learning enhancement.

Recruits with an ASVAB score of 21-30 may only participate in the academic track. Recruits with an ASVAB score between 42-49 may be allowed to voluntarily participate in both tracks, the fitness portion prior to basic combat training and the academic portion following basic training. Individuals who improve their score above a 50 move into the desired higher standard test score categories and are potentially eligible for additional MOS opportunities or enlistment incentives.

Trainees in the fitness program will ship to basic training once their body fat composition percentage is no more than 2% above the accessions standard, based on gender, age and height/weight. All trainees will have already qualified for their MOS by taking the gender-neutral Occupational Physical Assessment Test (OPAT) before arriving at the Future Soldier Preparatory Course.

To ensure individuals have enough time to safely manage their body fat, they will have one year from accession onto active duty to meet the Army's post-accession body composition standards. Recruits accessing into the Army National Guard or Reserve must meet post-accession body fat composition standards no later than one year after starting Initial Active Duty for Training.

Trainees will remain in the FSPC for no more than 90 days. Trainees in the fitness track who do not meet the body composition standard of 2% or less above accession standard after 90 days will be processed for separation.

Trainees in the academic track who do not meet the Army's desired higher standard of a 31 or higher on the ASVAB after 90 days will be evaluated using the whole person concept and may be retained and shipped to basic combat training as they met initial standards within the 4% TSC IV cap.

The whole person concept is already in use at basic training, and includes an assessment of their self-discipline, inculcation of the Army Values, and character. The whole person assessment begins once the individual starts the enlistment process and continues throughout the trainee's time in the FSPC, through basic

and advanced training and on to the first unit of assignment. All trainees, as is standard throughout the Army, are counseled regularly on their performance, expectations for success and ability to meet Army standards.

All individuals in both tracks must meet all other training standards and the whole person assessment standards to graduate from basic combat training and advanced individual training.

Trainees in both the fitness and academic tracks who are recommended for separation may be separated under the authority of Chapter 11, Entry Level Performance and Conduct for unsatisfactory performance while in an entry-level status. Chapter 11 allows for expeditious separation and facilitates future reentry into the service without prejudice. The authority to use Chapter 11 to separate FSPC participants does not limit the authority to separate participants under other provisions of law or regulation that are more appropriate in a specific case. FSPC participants will be treated in the same manner as Soldiers in all other stages of Initial Entry Training. Those separated under Chapter 11 are authorized to re-apply for an Army enlistment six months after the separation. This separation facilitates future reentry into the service without prejudice. ■

U.S. ARMY FUTURE SOLDIER PREPARATORY COURSE



Which Path Leads YOU to Service?

Academic Path →

Advance your skills in:



Reading



Writing



Math



Test Taking

Fitness Path →

Advance your skills in:



Physical
Fitness



Nutrition



Mental
Readiness



Sleep
Readiness



Spiritual
Readiness

Discover your #Path2Service

Visit goarmy.com for more information



On the road again... the return of in-person trainings and why they matter.

By Geoffrey Garner, EEO director, USMEPCOM

Prior to the pandemic, USMEPCOM's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) office had established a routine method for conducting face-to-face EEO training. Beginning in FY19, the initiative was to conduct live face-to-face training during the command's Training Day each quarter by traveling to a battalion headquarters or MEPS and conduct training there. The other MEPS within the battalion would participate virtually. The goal was to conduct live training for three battalions each quarter, thereby training the majority of the command before the end of the fourth quarter. Headquarters training would not occur on a Training Day in order to reserve those for the field.

In FY21, we began using Teams as an alternative method of instruction since travel was still restricted. Virtual training was, and remains an important tool in our toolbox, but it does have some serious limitations to meeting our mission of ensuring our people are properly trained. It is not a perfect substitute for in-person engagement. Fast-forward to FY22, and with the easing of travel restrictions, the EEO office began traveling to the field again to conduct training.

I cannot say that training is the be all, end all as a way to reduce the filing of complaints, but what we've experienced this fiscal year with live training is that when one person asks a question, others begin to ask questions. This often leads to a dialogue occurring among the group. This is the dynamic we want to achieve. We know if one employee has a question, several more do as well. Sometimes it simply takes the braveness of one person step into the forefront and simply ask.

So, why is EEO training required and so important? The short of it is that law requires it. For many who have military experience, it is a known fact that diversity is what makes our armed forces and our nation so strong. At USMEPCOM, we are committed to creating a workplace free of discrimination. The training not only promotes equal opportunity but also highlights tools, resources and responsibilities should personnel face any sort of harassment.

An example of personnel responsibility is, when an employee raises an allegation of being harassed while being subjected to a hostile work environment, they have 45 calendar-days from the date of

offense, or from the date they became aware of the action to initiate contact with an EEO official. In addition, the EEOC requires Federal agencies to post its business contact information for EEO Counselors, EEO Directors/Officers, and Special Emphasis Program Managers throughout the workplace and on their public website. The new Office of Diversity & Inclusion poster is generally placed on bulletin boards within MEPS, and on the bulletin board on the left side of the wall leaving the west entrance/exit of building 3400, HQ USMEPCOM.

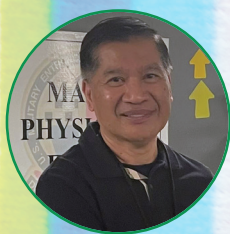
Commanders at all levels are required to establish a continuing EEO Educational Program for civilian and military personnel who supervise civilian employees, and ensure that annual EEO training is completed by these supervisors. This is just one way that the command can mitigate the potential for liability, and why there is a concerted effort by the commands senior leadership to ensure EEO training is conducted for the entire USMEPCOM workforce.

For more information visit <https://www.mepcom.army.mil/Archived-Pages/Equal-Employment-Opportunity/> ■

Common Sense Reviews

How one of the Most Utilized MEPS Evaluates Prescreens

Story by:

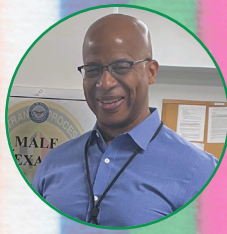


Filemon Reodique, MD
Chief Medical Officer
New York MEPS

Contributors:



Sgt. 1st Class Michael Robida, Medical NCOIC
New York MEPS



Allen Wilkins, MD
Assistant CMO
New York MEPS

On March 10 2022, the New York MEPS, along with many of our sister MEPS, went live with our transition from paper medical records to MHS Genesis. While this transition was a necessary one, it has introduced new levels of complexity and additional burden to the already daunting task of reviewing complex medical histories. Many people have asked about how one of the most utilized MEPS in USMEPCOM has consistently managed to keep up with the often overwhelming amount of prescreens submitted on a daily basis by our recruiting partners. Of all of the challenges we now face, I will be the first to tell you that **none of it is possible without first having a strong love and passion for the work we do and a greater understanding of the crucial mission we support** and fulfill for our recruiting partners.

My first recommendation is **don't generate more work** for yourself where you don't necessarily need to. If there is sufficient information to make a decision, make it. For example, if an applicant has submitted a prescreen stating they had surgery to repair a torn ACL two years ago, the only medical record I am likely to need prior to their physical is the operative report.

According to the DoDI, in order to determine if they are qualified I must ensure four things with this injury: the torn ACL was corrected with surgery, a cadaver graft was not used, at least 12 months have passed since the injury, and it is asymptomatic and stable. The first three things I will learn from the operative report. The fourth item will be examined and evaluated during their physical and through the NMSE. The only piece of supplementary medical documentation I need to floor and physical this applicant is the operative report. Asking for clearance from their orthopedic surgeon to return to physical activity, a current evaluation of their knee, or any related physical therapy notes will not provide me with any pertinent information that I didn't already get from the operative report or will get from conducting the physical exam and NMSE at the MEPS. Best case scenario: I will delay the applicant's physical date, increase their recruiter's workload retrieving these documents, and increase my MEPS workload by having to review these additional documents. Worst case scenario: I have just sent them and their recruiter on a wild goose chase looking for documents that might not exist, and put that applicant in an 'additional documents required' limbo.

We recently had a Med-Read submitted to us that was over 3,000 pages, by any standard this would have been a 10 day

review timeline (at least!), however, I was able to review it the next day and incorporate the information into the applicants profile beating even the 5 day review timeline. If you're wondering how this was possible, do not fear...it's not because I have any sort of super power, it is because a majority of the record didn't actually matter to the qualification determination. Not every electronic health record is built the same, but many are structured in a similar manner. **Knowing where to look and where you don't need to look can be incredibly helpful** when wading through large amounts of records.

In my example of 3,000 pages, this was all related to acute lymphocytic leukemia the applicant had as a child. I would say about 2,900 pages of this med read would not affect my qualification determination. A majority of the encounters were nursing notes regarding induction of chemotherapy treatments that can be skimmed through quickly, without a need to review each page with a fine-toothed comb. What did need to be reviewed were the initial encounters relating to diagnosis, and the included operative reports.

Another example of this includes a prescreen resubmission we have in our box right now that is 63 total pages. Upon opening it I identified that the recruiter has included military treatment facility records from when this applicant was a military dependent. These records are in JLV and have already been taken into account during the initial submission. Because of this, they do not need to be reviewed again, only the 5 pages from an outside source at the end of the submission needed to be reviewed. This allowed me to review this 63 med read in over the course of a few minutes. While these examples are not the majority of submissions we review, they happen often enough that **applying common sense to them can expedite your review**, and make a significant difference in your workload timelines.

It is of interest to those of us working through the tidal waves of prescreens, the recruiters spending all their time and efforts to get applicants in the door, and the young men and women volunteering to join the Armed Forces, that we continue to strive to provide timely and effective medical qualification determinations. **The best way we have found at the New York MEPS is by remembering our love and passion for what we do, reducing the amount of unnecessary documents we request, and by using common sense to review medical records submitted to us.** ■

M - Manage the mission; think "big picture"

E - Empower professionals, take ownership of work with self-discipline

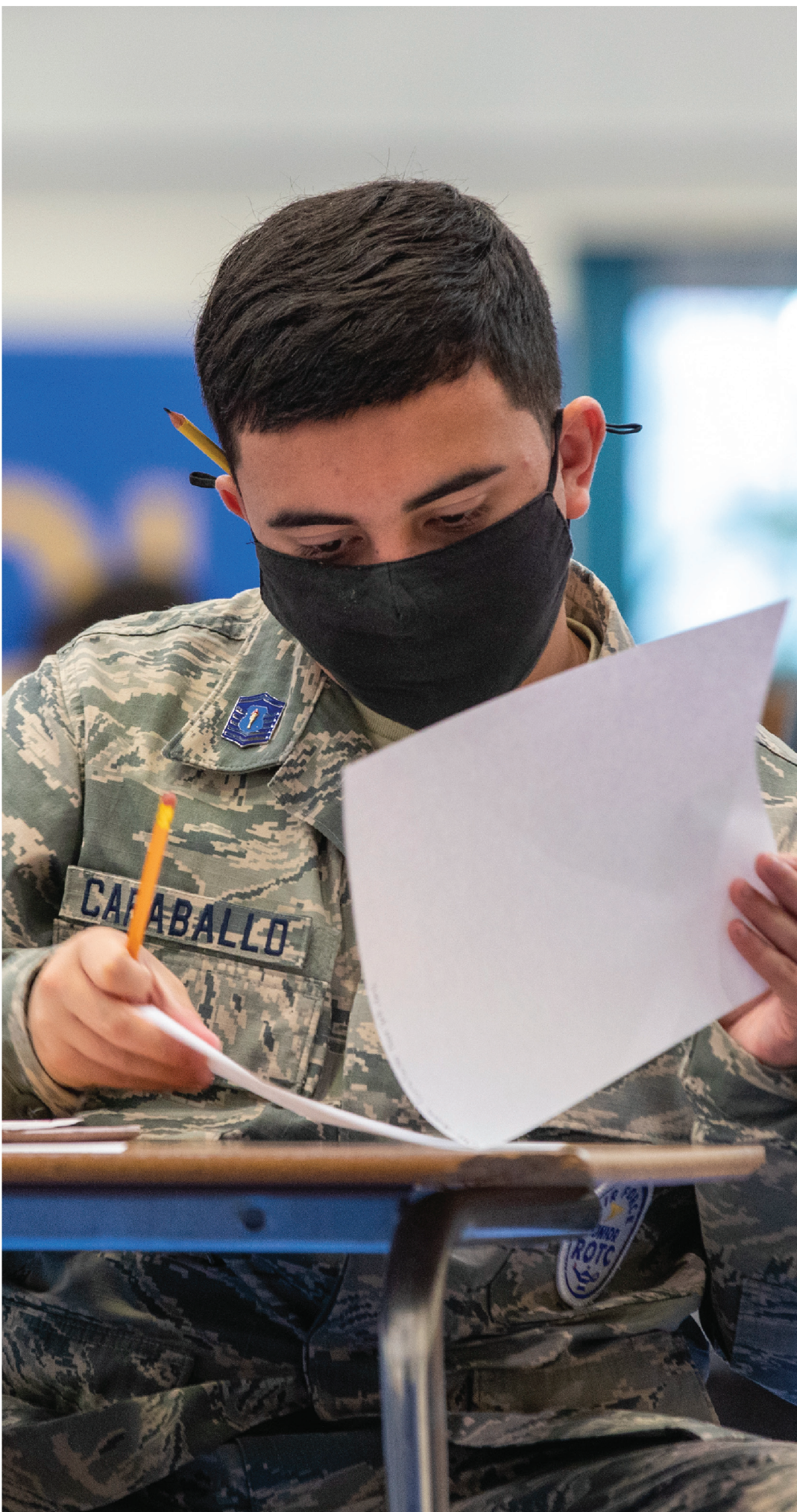
P - Professionalism and Passion influence decision making skills

S - Self-efficacy to work hard in accomplishing what you try to deliver

N - Need full knowledge of DODI standards

Y - You need to be involved and balance the load

C - Common sense helps speed the process



Congrats to all testing personnel!

USMEPCOM reached 607,324 student ASVAB tests on June 30, surpassing its FY22 goal of 450,000.

Top 3 Battalions with most improved number of testers from FY21:
7th, 2nd & 12th

Top 3 Battalions with the most leads for recruiters:
6th, 11th & 9th

USMEPCOM AWARDS



FY22 3RD QUARTER MEPS OF EXCELLENCE

CATEGORY 1

Fort Jackson
Chicago
Tampa

CATEGORY 2

Charlotte
Cleveland
Kansas City

CATEGORY 3

Butte
Des Moines
Spokane



USMEPCOM Focuses on Cybersecurity

By Darrin McDufford

The annoyances of entering your PIN multiple times and the removal of the Common Access Card every time you walk away from the computer can pay big dividends to an organization and its members.

Poor cyber security can mean facing pit falls. Under the Department of Defense instruction, the risk management framework requires having an external assessment every three years to ensure systems are up to date and vital information doesn't fall into the wrong hands.

"The USMEPCOM Cybersecurity Office's (CSO) mission is to protect the confidentiality, integrity and availability of the Information Systems, networks and data throughout USMEPCOM, while managing a customer-oriented Cybersecurity Program capable of meeting the needs of all USMEPCOM customers," said Jodie Goss, Cybersecurity Office chief, USMEPCOM.

A security checklist including environmental, physical and personal security controls are used during the triennial assessment. There are 403 controls and 1800 assessment procedures to consider that encompass managerial and technical controls also being monitored. Good cyber security involves asking the questions:

- How do we continue work and operations?
- What equipment do we need?
- Where do we go?

Better cybersecurity includes locking down sensitive documents in a drawer, routine updates for software and bug fixes and ongoing monitoring and policy implementation. It's not a set it

and forget it mentality, it's lather-rinse-repeat. Especially, in the Information Technology era. It is important to remember the risk management framework and apply it to cyber security and digital functions.

Good cybersecurity focuses on validating compliance, identify vulnerabilities, providing situational awareness of our cyber security posture and ensuring that USMEPCOM can protect against cyber threats.

This is important to the command and its customers (applicants) because USMEPCOM has a duty to protect and defend its systems and data from malicious attacks, hackers and data loss.

"We'd all like to think we're impenetrable, but it's not a matter of if, but when will we be compromised," said Goss. "It's this command's responsibility to adhere to the Department of Defense and Department of Army laws, regulations, and policies to ensure protective measures are in place, wherever possible."

Finally, good cybersecurity is having a good continuity of operations plan (COOP) in place in the event of a situation or worse some type of catastrophe involving a fire or the USMEPCOM offices being swept off to fairyland where staff can organize and keep the business or processing applicants while safeguarding operations and data.

"As we continue to move forward into a paperless, agile, cloud-based environment, it's crucial to establish risk management and cybersecurity hygiene at the forefront of solution architecting, not at the end," said Goss. ■

Medal of Honor Recipients visit Knoxville MEPS

U.S. Army Capt. Gary Michael Rose was serving as a Special Forces medic in Laos, 70 kilometers inside enemy-controlled territory on Sept. 11, 1970.

His company made contact with an enemy squad, wounding two Soldiers. Rose, engaging the enemy, rushed to get the wounded Soldier. Rose rendered expert medical treatment and carried the man through heavy gunfire back to the company defensive area.

When the enemy withdrew, the company continued deeper into enemy territory. Courageously, with no regard to his own safety, Rose moved through the enemy fire to render lifesaving medical treatment to the mounting numbers of wounded, personally engaging the enemy in order to get to the wounded men.

Over the next few days, the unit marched west and deeper into the Laos jungle, defending against continuous attacks. Rose was returning to the company area with a wounded Soldier when a rocket propelled grenade landed nearby, spraying Rose with shrapnel in his back, leg, and severely crippling his foot. Using a stick as a crutch, as he would for the remainder of the mission, Rose continued treating the wounded while ignoring his own painful wounds. Read more of his story at

<https://www.army.mil/medalofhonor/rose/>



▲Capt. Gary Michael Rose

U.S. Army Master Sgt. Leroy Petry distinguished himself beyond the call of duty in action with an armed enemy in the vicinity of Paktya Province, Afghanistan, on May 26, 2008. Petry moved to clear the courtyard of a house that potentially contained high-value combatants. While crossing the courtyard, Petry and another Ranger were wounded by automatic weapons fire from enemy fighters. Still under enemy fire, and wounded in both legs, Staff Sergeant Petry led the other Ranger to cover.

The enemy quickly responded by maneuvering closer and throwing grenades. A grenade landed only a few feet away from them. Instantly realizing the danger, Petry selflessly moved forward, picked up the grenade, and in an effort to clear the immediate threat, threw the grenade away from his fellow Rangers. As he was releasing the grenade it detonated, amputating his right hand at the wrist and further injuring him with multiple shrapnel wounds. Read more of his story at

<https://www.army.mil/medalofhonor/petry/profile.html>



▲Master Sgt. Leroy Petry



▲U.S. Army Capt. Gary Michael Rose is helped from a helicopter landing area during the Vietnam War. (Photo courtesy of Ted Wicorek)



▲President Joseph Biden speaks with U.S. Army Master Sgt. Leroy Petry at Arlington National Cemetery, May 30, 2022. (Photo by Elizabeth Fraser)



▲Medal of Honor recipients, U.S. Army Master Sgt. Leroy Petry and U.S. Army Capt. Gary Michael Rose, pose for a photo with nine new enlistees at Knoxville MEPS, Sept. 7, 2022. Petry and Rose shared words of wisdom and personal experiences for the applicants to carry with them to basic training. (Courtesy photo)

InstaMEPS



1. U.S. Army Maj. Cameron Webb, commander, Fort Lee MEPS, poses for a photo with his first fully qualified applicant that was off the medical floor and sent to their liaison before 8 a.m. The efficiencies gained through MHS GENESIS have greatly improved processing times for Fort Lee MEPS. (Courtesy photo)
2. Boston MEPS personnel Heather Flynn, human resources administrator, U.S. Air Force Tech Sgt. Jude Baidoo, medical NCO, Andre Gossop, test administrator and U.S. Army Maj. Bridgette Navejar, Battalion executive officer staff the wheel of the USS Constitution. (Courtesy photo)



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3. El Paso MEPS personnel took to Mt. Cristo Rey for their monthly Leader Professional Development (LPD). This LPD included a 2.5 mile hike up Mt. Cristo Rey where you can view Chihuahua Mexico, New Mexico, El Paso and neighboring cities. (Courtesy photo)
4. Mark Ritchie, Minnesota Civilian Aide to the Secretary of the Army, visits with Minneapolis MEPS personnel. (Courtesy photo)
5. This year marks the first time USMEPCOM has proclaimed August as Antiterrorism Month. Col. Megan Stallings, USMEPCOM commander and CSM Lorenzo Woodson joined Andre Markham, antiterrorism officer, to sign the proclamation during a ceremony Aug. 1. (Photo by Israel Molina)



WE WANT YOUR PHOTOS
 InstaMEPS is a brand new
 spread, highlighting pics of
 MEPS/RPS events or personnel.
 Email submissions to:
derrik.l.noack.civ@army.mil

**"NO MATTER
YOUR RACE OR
BACKGROUND,
ANYTHING IS
POSSIBLE."**

— Sylvia Mendez



UNIDOS

INCLUSIVITY FOR A STRONGER NATION

National Hispanic Heritage Month

Sep 15 - Oct 15

