

ALWAYS READY, ALWAYS THERE

ESTABLISHED 1856



MINNESOTA NATIONAL GUARD

2022 ANNUAL REPORT | 2023 OBJECTIVES

WE LIVE HERE

WE WORK HERE

WE SERVE HERE

PEOPLE

MODERNIZATION

PARTNERSHIPS



ADJUTANT GENERAL
MAJ. GEN. SHAWN MANKE

SAINT PAUL, MINNESOTA
MINNESOTANATIONALGUARD.NG.MIL

COMMAND SENIOR ENLISTED LEADER
COMMAND CHIEF MASTER SGT. LISA ERIKSON



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SERVE HERE

PARTNERSHIPS

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MAJOR COMMANDS

MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT
OF MILITARY AFFAIRS

2023 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

ECONOMIC IMPACT

FROM THE ADJUTANT GENERAL

To the Citizens of Minnesota,

Our annual report is a statutory requirement and provides an update on our agency's operations and accomplishments. Although the Minnesota National Guard was formed in 1856, the oldest annual report that our historians have located is from 1892 and is shared electronically on our website. That year's document reported that the Guard consisted of ten companies of infantry, two troops of cavalry, and two sections of artillery, with a total strength of 844 Soldiers.

Today, your Minnesota National Guard is nearly 13,000 strong — Minnesotans who have put on the uniform and sworn to defend our state and nation. Much has changed since the beginning of your Minnesota National Guard, but when we ask new enlistees why they joined, they frequently say, "I want to serve my country."

The Minnesota National Guard has done well in recruiting compared to other Guard states; however, we have seen a decline in those Americans eligible to serve and those who want to serve. I believe so few people serve because they do not know what we offer. On pages four and five, you will find the minimum requirements necessary to enter our Air or Army Guard and a QR code to facilitate joining this professional organization. Please share this information, as every lead provided to a recruiter helps ensure our success as a professional organization serving in times of need for our state and nation. I need everyone's support to keep our formations full of Minnesota's best.

A significant change since our organization's inception is the appointment of our first Air Guard Command Senior Enlisted Advisor. Not only does Command Chief Master Sgt. Lisa Erikson bring diversity of gender and diversity of experience, her branch of service also brings diversity and the ability for her to look at the organization through a different lens.

Our organizational priorities remain unchanged from last year and focus on People, Modernization, and Partnerships. Each priority is important, but we need partner support to conduct our federal, state, and community missions. This year's report highlights several partners and demonstrates how our organization shares relationships with multiple countries, communities, businesses, organizations, and individuals.

Our Soldiers and Airmen remain our greatest strength and most valuable resource. I acknowledge that we share this tremendous resource with employers as the Minnesota National Guard is a part-time job for more than 10,000 members, and activations and training requirements can disrupt businesses and organizations. I want to express my sincere gratitude to our employers for their continued support.

Lastly and most importantly, we thank our military families for their service, as we know they must adjust their lives when activations occur. We are thankful for their support and commitment to their loved ones and are forever indebted to them for the sacrifices they continue to make on our behalf.

Shawn Manke

Maj. Gen. Shawn Manke

SERVE HERE



ABOUT US

In the Minnesota National Guard, we live here, we work here, and we serve here. That service extends to not only the nation, but to the communities we call home, in ways only the Guard can.

Joining the Minnesota National Guard means joining an accomplished team with a purpose greater than ourselves. With hundreds of different job specialties and

opportunities for leadership experience, members can serve in ways that meet their interests, accelerating their civilian careers, setting themselves up for a successful future.

With career and leadership opportunities, healthcare and education benefits, and the freedom to choose how you serve, you're able to become the best you can in the Minnesota National Guard.

REQUIREMENTS

- Air: 17-39 years of age
- Army: 17-35 years of age
- Medically and physically fit, and in good moral standing
- A U.S. citizen or permanent resident with a valid Green Card
- A high school graduate or equivalent
- A minimum score on the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery Test (ASVAB)



LEARN
MORE

DEVELOP SKILLS FOR LIFE

Find your passion, then get the training to master it

EDUCATION BENEFITS: Joining the Guard gives you more than just the pride that comes from serving your state and nation. You can earn benefits to help pay for your education and expenses, and you can complete your education while you serve. The National Guard offers many programs for every type of student, whether you're still in high school, attending college or working toward a vocational certification.

CAREER TRAINING: With hundreds of different jobs in nearly every career field imaginable, members can find the opportunity to serve how they want.

BONUSES: An exciting future in the Guard offers huge benefits—and can currently include up to a \$20,000 bonus. Enlistment bonuses are available for new recruits who meet education and contracting requirements.

PAY: You will be paid for every day you serve, whether in training, weekend drills, annual training or deployment. Your rank, job, and education level will determine your specific pay level. The higher you go, the more you make. And the more time you serve, the more you earn.

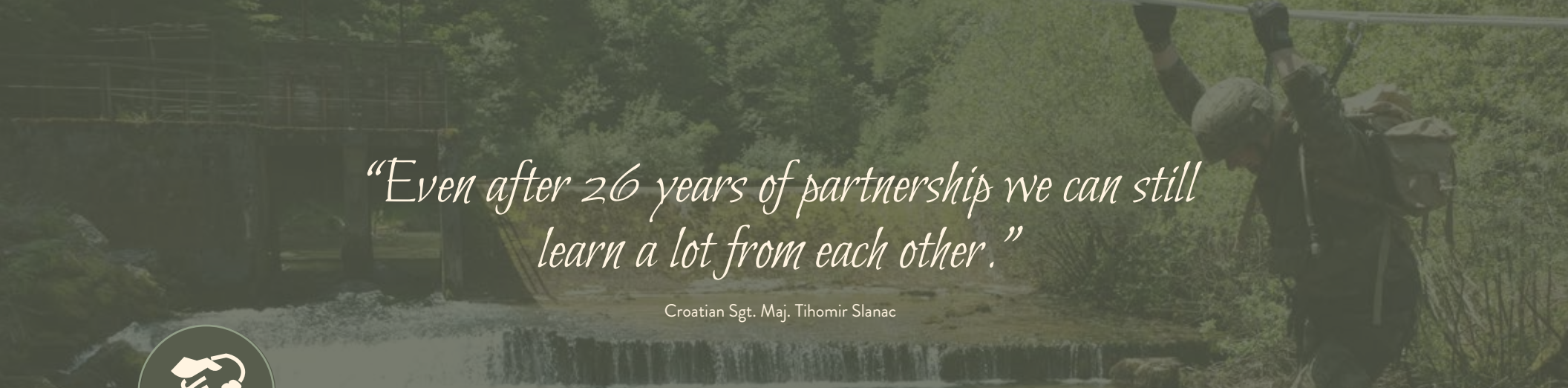
INSURANCE: Most serve because they want to give back to their state and nation. Then they find out that being part of the National Guard comes with other rewards. Beyond earning additional pay and getting help with their education costs, Airmen, Soldiers and Veterans — and their families — enjoy even more real benefits, such as inexpensive healthcare and low-cost life insurance that pays up to \$400,000. Take care of your health, your family, and your future.

RETIREMENT: You probably won't be thinking about retirement for many years, but think about this: the Guard can continue to pay you every month if you have 20 years service while serving in the Guard by age 60 (including service in other branches). And considering that retirement will probably mean time to travel, play, or even start a second business, financial security could be a nice part of your plan.





PARTNERSHIPS



“Even after 26 years of partnership we can still learn a lot from each other.”

Croatian Sgt. Maj. Tihomir Slanac



CROATIA

Staff Sgt. Sydney Mariette

In 2022, the Minnesota National Guard celebrated more than 25 years of partnership with Croatia, conducting 31 events focused on collaboration, education, and friendship.

“After 26 years of building the long-term relationship between Minnesota and Croatia, our Soldiers and Airmen have had the opportunity to learn with coalition partners, experience cultural exchanges, and we continue to reaffirm our unilateral commitment to advancing multinational capabilities,” said Minnesota’s Adjutant General, U.S. Army Maj. Gen. Shawn Manke.

The partnership started in 1996 when the Minnesota National Guard was officially partnered with Croatia through the State Partnership Program, a U.S. Department of Defense program administered by the National Guard Bureau to support nations developing their interoperability, and security cooperation on an international scale. Through the program, the two organizations have held familiarization events which developed into hands on advise and assist exchanges,

and recently have grown to include exchanges between civilian government officials and experts in critical fields like cybersecurity and disaster response.


In November, the Minnesota National Guard brought interagency civilian partners from Minnesota’s Department of Public Safety across the Atlantic to collaborate with members of the Croatian Directorate of Civil Protection. This three-day emergency preparedness conference provided participants with decades of combined experience in the field, where they could exchange information on disaster risk reduction.

The spring and early summer saw a focus on aviation. The Croatian Air Force identified the need to modernize their current helicopter fleet by incorporating the NATO interoperable UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters to meet various operational demands. When called, the Minnesota National Guard was ready to support their partners by sending Soldiers from the 34th Expeditionary Combat Aviation Brigade to Croatia to support the integration of this new platform into the

Croatian Air Force.

Throughout the real-world missions and exchanges, this partnership has fostered international friendships and has always remained a priority for Minnesota and Croatia. For the second year in a row, the two organizations exchanged Soldiers as part of their Best Soldier competitions, allowing service members to challenge themselves physically and mentally in a friendly competition of endurance.

“The international character of the competition enables the participation of allied and partner countries to develop interoperability, joint action, friendship, and partnership,” said Croatian Sgt. Maj. Tihomir Slanac, the executive noncommissioned officer for the Croatian Armed Forces’ Command Sergeant Major’s office. “I think that even after 26 years of partnership, we can still learn a lot from each other.”



*"It's a priceless relationship that we have with Norway...
This relationship needs to be maintained and grown."*

Command Chief Master Sgt. Lisa Erikson

NORWAY

Staff Sgt. Sydney Mariette

The military relationship between Minnesota and Norway is unique and special, in part because of the long-standing U.S. - Norway Reciprocal Troop Exchange. There is nothing like it between other National Guard states and other nations.

In 1973, the Norwegian Home Guard's Maj. Gen. Herluf Nygaard invited the Chief of the National Guard, Maj. Gen. Francis S. Greenlief, to visit their troops. The following year, the exchange between Norway and the Minnesota National Guard began. It has since become the U.S. Department of Defense's longest-running international military exchange partnership, with the 50th exchange to take place in 2023.

The first exchange occurred in 1974, with roughly 40 Minnesota National Guard members and Norwegian Home Guard Youth. The Norwegian Home Guard Youth allows young Norwegians to explore the

military as a career option before officially enlisting or commissioning.

In 1979 the first female service members participated. Since 1985, the exchange has increased in size to include approximately 100 Minnesota National Guard members traveling to Norway, while about 100 Norwegian Home Guard Soldiers and youth travel to Minnesota. In 2006, the Rapid Reaction Force, the Norwegian Home Guard's on-call, ready reserve service members, joined the exchange and have continued in the partnership ever since.


In Norway, Minnesotans participate in a field training exercise where they ski into the mountains, sleeping in tents and snow shelters. They also conduct weapons familiarization with their Norwegian trainers. The culmination is the opportunity for the Minnesota Airmen and Soldiers to experience Norwegian culture as they visit the sights of Norway and participate in a

"Buddy Weekend," where they stay with a Norwegian family.

Norwegian Home Guard Soldiers and youth travel to Camp Ripley and undergo winter training using American tactics. Additionally, the Norwegians also stay with a Minnesota family and get the opportunity to experience some local culture and Minnesota hospitality.

In 2016 and 2018, the exchange shifted to the summer to explore the survival skills and tactical training experiences that the warmer months offered. However, after a couple of exchanges, both organizations decided to refocus their efforts on what they are both known for best: winter tactical training.

The exchange promotes goodwill, sharpens military readiness between the nations, provides opportunities for cultural understanding among its participants, and has produced life-long friendships.



In February 2023, the Minnesota National Guard and Norwegian Home Guard will celebrate the 50th anniversary of this relationship. Minnesota's Norwegian guests will arrive in February 2023, with activities planned to celebrate the 50th exchange. The Saint Paul-based civic organization, Serving Our Troops, will cater an event, serving their famous steak dinners. Serving Our Troops' message is, "It's a simple thing: dinner with the family," and according to the organization, Minnesota's Norwegian partners are considered family.





NAVY & COAST GUARD DIVERS

Tony Housey

The U.S. Navy's dive teams have partnered with the Minnesota National Guard's Camp Ripley for five years, beginning in 2019.

This year the U.S. Coast Guard transitioned their Cold Water/Ice Diver Course from Seattle to Camp Ripley. The week-long course, run by Dive Rescue International and instructed by U.S. Navy divers and experienced civilian instructors, teaches students how to dive in a real-world cold-weather environment.

"Camp Ripley is proud to work with our Navy and Coast Guard partners," said Army Brig. Gen. Lowell Kruse, Camp Ripley's senior commander. "We welcome them to our training center and to utilize the Minnesota winters and landscape to help them be successful in their training."



CANADA'S LAKE SUPERIOR SCOTTISH REGIMENT

Tony Housey

In 2022 the Canadian Armed Force's Lake Superior Scottish Regiment and Minnesota's 2nd Assault Helicopter Battalion, 147th Aviation Regiment partnered for a joint training mission at Camp Ripley involving loading and unloading aircraft. The partners trained on entering and exiting an aircraft safely, and on loading and unloading medical evacuation litters. The training culminated in an aerial assault exercise with both live-fire and medical evacuation training.

"We have a long-standing partnership with the Lake Superior Scottish Regiment," said Army Brig. Gen. Lowell Kruse, Camp Ripley's senior commander. "Hosting our Canadian partners gives their organization a unique training opportunity and the Minnesota National Guard a chance to interact and learn from our international partners."



STARBASE

Audra Flanagan

STARBASE Minnesota has educated and inspired more than 72,000 youth in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and math since its inception in 1993. This 501(c)3 nonprofit organization is a U.S. Department of Defense program supported by the Minnesota National Guard. Minnesota now has two state-of-the-art facilities. One is located at the St. Paul-based 133rd Airlift Wing with the other at the Duluth-based 148th Fighter Wing. In 2022, Duluth's STARBASE celebrated a 7,000-square-foot expansion in partnership with the 148th.

"This expansion has allowed STARBASE to partner with many more school districts in Northeastern Minnesota," said STARBASE Director, Charity Johnson.

The free program offers students the opportunity to spend 25 hours across five days on-site with their class focusing on real-world problem-solving using cutting-edge technologies.

GUARD TO GUARD TRAINING PARTNERS

Staff Sgt. Sydney Mariette

Throughout the year, members of the Minnesota National Guard have partnered with several different other states' National Guards for joint training exercises and real-world emergency response. The summer saw the most action as Guard members from across the nation trained to meet their annual training requirements.

On July 28, aviators with the Minnesota National Guard's Alpha Company, 2nd Assault Helicopter Battalion, 147th Aviation Regiment had the unique opportunity to partner with the Iowa National Guard's Alpha Battery, 1st Battalion, 194th Field Artillery Regiment near Estherville, Iowa, moving artillery equipment via helicopter, a technique known as sling loading, including M119A3 105mm howitzers.

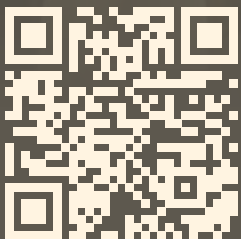
This innovative training opportunity is a natural extension of Minnesota's 34th Expeditionary Combat Aviation Brigade's mission essential tasks, simulating an 'artillery raid' combat scenario in which aircraft move artillery around the battlefield.

In August, infantry Soldiers with the Minnesota National Guard's 1st Combined Arms Battalion, 194th Armor Regiment trained alongside CH-47 Chinook aircraft aircrews from the Maryland National Guard's Bravo Company, 3rd Battalion, 126th Aviation Regiment, practicing aerial insertion techniques using a narrow landing zone at Camp Ripley.

"It's important to practice and train on the job we will be required to do," said Chief Warrant Officer 3 Jon Noble, a CH-47 instructor pilot with the 126th. "We have to be prepared to overcome terrain and odd conditions."

Current operations at home and overseas have shown the need for units to work collectively towards mission success. Examples of this interoperability can be seen over the past several years of the National Guard responding to natural disasters or civil unrest.





LEARN
MORE

BEYOND THE YELLOW RIBBON

HOW TO BECOME: A BEYOND THE YELLOW RIBBON ORGANIZATION

- Contact the Beyond the Yellow Ribbon Outreach Coordinator via the QR code below.
- Establish and maintain a centralized steering committee within the organization which meets regularly and includes active representation from:
 - An executive-level leadership sponsor
 - Human Resources and Recruiting
 - Internal Communications
 - Training and Development
 - Community and Employee Outreach
 - Other key departments needed to coordinate support efforts.
- Develop, implement, and maintain an action plan which, through organization leadership, actively recruits and supports current service members, Veterans, and their families.
- Participate as a committee, with organization leadership, in:
 - An annual review process.
 - Defined, sustainable, ongoing training and awareness programs.
- Commit as an organization to supporting military employees through an Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve statement of support.

BEYOND THE YELLOW RIBBON IN 2022

Cristina Oxta

Through its community and corporate partnerships, Minnesota's Beyond the Yellow Ribbon program, known as BTYR, provides service members, Veterans, and their families from all branches of the military a wide range of support, including deployment readiness, family assistance and resources, youth programs, educational and career opportunities, and more.

These partnerships are invaluable and work hand in hand to raise awareness, recognize, celebrate, and meet the needs of Minnesota's military community. For example, with the collaborative efforts of sponsors, financial contributors, and volunteers from its community and corporate partners, BTYR and Meals from the Heart were able to provide groceries for military members and families in need during the holiday season for the second year in a row.

BTYR companies' and organizations' efforts are an ongoing commitment to supporting military employees and communities, building a stronger, more compassionate, equitable, and inclusive workplace.

There are currently 79 active Minnesota BTYR companies and organizations.

A BTYR company or organization possesses national, regional, and statewide influence. It must be structured with essential areas, including Human Resources Recruiting, Human Resources Policy and Procedures department, Training and Development, and Community and Employee Outreach and Support. BTYR companies and organizations create a comprehensive network that unites, connects, and coordinates these key areas that honor and embrace those affected by past and present

military service. This support can enable a successful transition into the workplace for service members, Veterans and their family members, creating support systems for employees affected by military service.

Companies and organizations that do not have the required organizational structure can partner with a BTYR community network in their city or county and get involved in its events and activities. BTYR community networks in cities and counties across the state support their local military community through volunteering, hosting special events, sending care packages to deployed military members, and other important activities.

YELLOW RIBBON ORGANIZATIONS & COMPANIES

- 3M
- ALLETE/Clean Energy
- ALLETE/Minnesota Power
- Allianz Life
- Ameriprise Financial
- Andersen Windows & Doors
- Best Buy
- Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota
- Boston Scientific
- Capella University
- Capital One
- Cargill
- Central Lakes College
- Cliffs Natural Resources
- Dakota County Technical College
- Deluxe Corporation
- Donaldson Corporation
- Ecolab
- Experis
- Faelon Partners
- General Mills
- Great River Energy
- The Goodman Group
- Hennepin Technical College
- Hibbing Community College
- Hiway Federal Credit Union
- Hormel Foods Corporation
- Inver Hills Community College
- Land O' Lakes
- The Legendary Roy Wilkins Auditorium
- The Mall of America
- Marvin Windows and Doors
- Mayo Clinic
- McGough Construction
- Medtronic
- The Metropolitan Council
- Metropolitan State University
- Minneapolis Community & Technical College
- The Minnesota Department of Corrections
- The Minnesota Department of Employment & Economic Development
- The Minnesota Hiring Center for the U.S.
- Department of Homeland Security's Customs and Border Patrol
- The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
- Minnesota Sports and Entertainment
- Minnesota State Buildings & Construction Trades Council
- Minnesota State College Southeast
- Minnesota State Colleges and Universities
- The Minnesota Twins Baseball Club
- The Minnesota Vikings
- Minnesota West Community and Technical College
- The Minnesota Wild
- Minnesota State University Moorhead
- Normandale Community College
- North Hennepin Community College
- Northwestern Mutual - Bohannon Group
- Prime Therapeutics
- Prudential Financial Inc.
- Rasmussen College
- Regions Hospital
- Rochester Community and Technical College
- RSM US LLP
- Securian Financial
- South Central Community College
- Southeast Technical College
- Southwest Minnesota State University
- The Saint Paul River Centre
- Saint Cloud State University
- Saint Cloud Technical and Community College
- The Saint Cloud VA Health Care System
- Saint Paul College
- SuperAmerica - Northern Tier Energy
- Target Corporation
- Thomson Reuters
- Tokyo Electron Ltd.
- Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity
- U.S. Bank
- UPS
- USAA
- Wells Fargo
- Xcel Energy Center





PROFESSIONAL SPORTS

Capt. Kristin Ohrt

The Minnesota National Guard maintains long-standing partnerships with the state's professional sports teams.

For 19 years, the Minnesota Twins have partnered, each year to host an Armed Forces Appreciation Day, honoring current service members, Veterans, and their families. This year's game, held on September 11th, recognized more than 80 service members with on-field recognition. Thompson Reuters, one of Minnesota's many Beyond the Yellow Ribbon organizations provided 1,000 tickets. The Duluth-based 148th Fighter Wing provided two F-16 Fighting Falcon aircraft for a flyover timed at the culmination of the playing of the National Anthem.

Since 2012, the Minnesota Vikings have partnered with the Minnesota National Guard. This year, the partnership included coordination for service members and Veterans to serve as 'Guardians,' standing watch over the stadium's Prisoner of War-Missing in Action

Remembrance Chair. There were also several Color Guards, an opening game flyover, as well as a 'Salute to Service Game' in November.

Starting in 2017, the Minnesota Timberwolves have partnered with the Minnesota National Guard. During the 2022 season, the Timberwolves recognized 17 service members as the 'Hero of the Pack,' which is their team's way of highlighting and honoring currently serving members and veterans throughout the season. They also proved honorees with tickets and present a custom jersey during an on-court recognition during half-time.

The Minnesota Wild and Minnesota National Guard partnership, tied to the Guard's Recruiting and Retention Battalion, started in 2011. Through this partnership, the Minnesota Wild host a 'Guardian of the Game' to recognize currently serving or former members of the Armed Forces. The Wild also host an annual Military

Appreciation Game to recognize the Armed Forces and Veterans. This partnership has recognized 43 service members this year as Guardians of the Game, one as a community hero, and one who served as the 'Let's Play Hockey' announcer. Each service member receives tickets to attend the game and recognition during the National Anthem or first period. The Wild also display pillar banners throughout the arena's concourse, providing their fans with information on joining the Guard.

Minnesota United FC has partnered with the Minnesota National Guard since 2017. During the 2022 season, the partnership included in-game support elements like Color Guards. Minnesota United also hosted a 'Salute to Service Game' in July.

MINNESOTA STATE FAIR EMPLOYER SUPPORT OF THE GUARD AND RESERVE

Sgt. Bob Brown & 1st Sgt. Beth Dedic

The Minnesota State Fair's 11th annual Military Appreciation Day celebrated and honored employers of military families and all who have served in uniform, protecting the state and nation.

The opening ceremony, held at the Leinie Lodge Bandshell, included remarks by Governor Tim Walz, Department of Veterans Affairs Commissioner Larry Herke, and Minnesota's Adjutant General, Army Maj. Gen. Shawn Manke. Additionally, the ceremony had a statement of support presentation from the governor to Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve.

Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, known as ESGR, was created to foster a culture in which employers support and value the employment and military service of members of the National Guard and Reserves. ESGR celebrated its 50th year of promoting cooperation and understanding between Reserve Component service members and their civilian employers this year. During the Minnesota State Fair's Military Appreciation Day, ESGR recognized 25 employers who were nominated by their military employees for their above-and-beyond support to

them and their families. Leaders from the Minnesota National Guard, Army, Navy, and Air Reserve assisted ESGR in the awards presentation.

"The Minnesota National Guard is a part-time job for more than 10,000 members," said Manke. "Our service members and their families depend on support from Minnesota employers and communities to accomplish our state and federal missions. We wanted to recognize them for their sacrifices when our citizen Soldiers and Airmen are called to duty."

At Dan Patch Park, more than 45 educational and military-connected organizations' booths offered resources, services, and activities to the more than 112,000 fairgoers throughout the day. Minnesota National Guard veteran Kevin Gerdes provided live entertainment as Prairie Voice, and the day featured several performances by ensembles of the 34th Red Bull Infantry Division's Band. The event was presented by Minnesota Beyond the Yellow Ribbon company, USAA, and coordinated and supported by the Minnesota National Guard.



A close-up, profile shot of a young woman with dark hair pulled back, wearing a camouflage military uniform. She is looking upwards and to the left with a thoughtful expression. In the background, an American flag is visible, slightly out of focus. The text 'DIVERSITY & INCLUSION PARTNERS' is overlaid in large, white, sans-serif capital letters across the lower half of the image.

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION PARTNERS



GENERAL MILLS, INC.

Staff Sgt. Sydney Mariette

In 2022, the Minnesota National Guard's Women's Council partnered with General Mills, hosting the annual Women's Leadership Forum event, this year at the yellow ribbon company's Golden Valley campus. The venue hosted more than 500 participants and enabled unique discussions around the forum's theme of "The Bridge of Barriers: Persistence" to be shared between Airmen, Soldiers, and civilians. Throughout the event, participants learned how challenges in work and life can build perseverance within each of us to grow and advance in our leadership journey.

"The Women's Leadership Forum makes me a better leader, human, and Soldier," said Army Capt. Nick Vogel. "I learned why it is important to continue to diversify our force, lead with curiosity, and foster inclusivity."



LAVENDER MAGAZINE

Staff. Sgt. Sydney Mariette

The Minnesota National Guard continued its longstanding partnership with Lavender Magazine, one of the nation's largest LGBTQ+ publications. The organization has published 26 magazines a year since its founding in 1995.

According to Stephen Rocheford, the president, CEO and founder of Lavender, the partnership between the magazine and the Minnesota National Guard is the first time that he knows of in history that the military reached out to lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and queer potential recruits.

Beginning in 2017, Lavender Media has featured the stories of many Airmen and Soldiers of the Minnesota National Guard who also belong to the LGBTQ+ community.



JEWISH COMMUNITY RELATIONS COUNCIL

Sgt. Bob Brown

The Minnesota National Guard continued its proud partnership with the Jewish Community Relations Council of Minnesota & the Dakotas. As the public voice of the Jewish community in the region, the organization fights antisemitism and prejudice, advocates for Israel, provides Holocaust education, promotes tolerance and social justice, and builds bridges across the Jewish and broader communities.

The Minnesota National Guard's Holocaust Remembrance Special Emphasis Council maintains a unique partnership with the organization. The goal of this partnership is to remember the past and uphold organizational values. Working with the council gives Guard members educational opportunities, such as guided trips to the iconic United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C.





DULUTH POLICE DEPARTMENT

Audra Flanagan

In April, Duluth Police Department's K9 Handler Josh Aubart and K9 Vili partnered with the 148th Security Forces Squadron for multi-agency training to better understand each other's capabilities, build relationships and provide exposure to various environments and scenarios. Later in June, the police department partnered with several other agencies in a full-scale airport disaster exercise. In September, they participated in an Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Boss Lift mission to see the Wing. In November, Department staff spent a day at the wing enhancing the professional relationship between the two organizations.



EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE

Audra Flanagan

U.S. Air Force and Minnesota National Guard Explosive Ordnance Disposal technicians took part in a five-day, hands-on training at Camp Ripley in September.

Trained to detect, disarm, and dispose of explosive threats in any environment, EOD technicians serve as the Air Force's and National Guard's bomb squads.

The training included working on technical intelligence field evaluations, safe procedures, demolition techniques, explosive effects, lodged projectiles, and protective operations. Conventional course planners worked with the 148th Civil Engineering Squadron to build and transport structures so EOD technicians could train using various types of live, fused, and armed unexploded ordnance.



DULUTH FIRE DEPARTMENT

Audra Flanagan

In January, the 148th Fighter Wing Fire Department and community partners took part in a Blue Card training program, an incident command training system that trains fire department officers on how to standardize incident operations on scene.

In June, 148th Fighter Wing first responders and 25 partner agencies, including FAA Air Traffic Control, local police and fire departments, and St. Louis Country Sheriff's Office and Emergency Response Team, participated in a full-scale aircraft emergency exercise at the Duluth International Airport to practice communication, reaction, and responses.

In October, the 148th Fighter Wing and Superior and Duluth Fire Departments held a first-of-its-kind two-week finishing course for newly hired firefighters. The course culminated in live training at the Lake Superior College's Emergency Response Training Center that featured structure fires requiring advanced laddering techniques, forceable entry through steel doors, ventilation methods, and victim rescues.

HOMELAND SECURITY AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT - FLOOD RESPONSE

1st Sgt. Beth Dedic

In April, more than 50 members of the Minnesota National Guard's Little Falls-based 134th Brigade Support Battalion reported for flood response, fortifying the City of Crookston, helping to prevent water from further flooding into the area from the Red Lake River.

"The Minnesota National Guard is 'Always Ready, Always There,' responding when our state and nation need us," said Army Col. Scott Rohweder, Minnesota National Guard director of operations. "The service members assisted with sandbagging operations, levee patrols, and traffic control in the area. These Soldiers were attending their two-week annual training at Camp Ripley and were able to quickly shift their focus to supporting the community."

Several days later, Soldiers of 2nd Combined Arms Battalion, 136th Infantry Regiment, headquartered in Moorhead, relieved the 134th Brigade Support Battalion and assumed the flood response mission in Crookston and Fisher. The Soldiers conducted various operations along-side the Polk County Emergency Operations Department.

In May 2022, North Dakota requested support through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact, a mutual aid agreement to share resources between

states. Five Minnesota National Guard members departed with one CH-47 Chinook aircraft to provide heavy-lift support for flood response operations occurring in North Dakota.

"This mission was to move two 10,000-pound pumps closer to the Bourbanis Dam located on the Red River in Pembina, North Dakota," said Army Col. Gregory Fix, the Minnesota National Guard's state Army aviation officer. "The CH-47 Chinook aircraft is a tremendous asset for the National Guard. It has the capability to lift heavy loads greater than 10,000 pounds and moving the two pumps for flood support is just one example."

The Guard members and aircraft from the Saint Cloud-based B Company, 1st Battalion, 171st Aviation Regiment, departed before in the late morning, returning with their mission complete later that evening.

"This aviation unit has many hours of experience moving equipment," said Fix. "They recently returned from a deployment to Iraq and Kuwait. While deployed, the unit provided the aerial movement of troops and supplies throughout the area. The Minnesota National Guard is 'Always Ready, Always There,' to support our neighbors if needed."





MINNESOTA MILITARY RADIO

Staff Sgt. Linsey Williams

For 12 years, Minnesota Military Radio, a weekly radio show and podcast, has told the stories of Minnesota's service members, veterans, supporters and their families.

Producers from within the Minnesota National Guard, Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs, Minneapolis V.A. Medical Center, and Beyond the Yellow Ribbon, along with their organizational leadership, partner with volunteer show host and Vietnam Veteran Tom Lyons in his effort to inform and entertain listeners with the latest on topics that affect Minnesota's Veteran community.

In 2010, Twin Cities News Talk and iHeart Media Minneapolis generously began donating studio and staff time, technical expertise, and the equipment needed to produce the show both in-studio and live. Even with this considerable investment, iHeart Media Minneapolis continues to distribute the show free of charge to stations across Minnesota.

Over the years, Minnesota Military Radio has traveled around the state and across the globe to keep up with members of the Minnesota National Guard. The show has traveled to the Middle East twice during the deployments

of Minnesota's 1st Armored Brigade Combat Team and 34th Red Bull Infantry Division headquarters. From visiting Camp Ripley during the Norwegian Exchange to traveling with Guard members to Camp Værnes, Norway, Minnesota Military Radio goes where Minnesota service members go and is a place for their stories to be shared.

The show now airs weekly on 65 affiliate radio stations across Minnesota and has produced more than 660 shows with thousands of guests. In 2023, Minnesota Military Radio will record its 700th show and celebrate its 13th anniversary on the air.

PARTNER AFFILIATE STATIONS

- | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| • Twin Cities News/Talk AM 1130 | • 106.3 (Owatonna/Waseca) | • KROC AM 1340 (Rochester) | • K212FM – FM 90.3 (Warroad-Roseau) | • KVGO FM 104.3 (Preston) |
| • WYRQ 92.1 (Little Falls) | • KLGR AM 1490 (Redwood Falls) | • KBGY FM 107.5 (Faribault) | • KNUJ AM 860 (New Ulm) | • KFIL FM 103.1 (Preston) |
| • KTLF AM 960 (Little Falls) | • KLGR FM 95.9 (Redwood Falls) | • KBUN AM 1450 (Bemidji) | • KVBR AM 1340 (Brainerd) | • KRFO FM 104.9 (Owatonna) |
| • KOZY AM 1320 (Grand Rapids) | • KWLM AM 1340 (Willmar) | • KBUN FM 104.5 (Bemidji) | • KWNO AM 1230 (Winona) | • KMHL AM 1400 (Marshall) |
| • KLCI FM 106.1 (Ramsey) | • KWLM FM 96.3 (Willmar) | • WGZS FM 89.1 (Fond Du Lac) | • KWOA AM 730/FM 100.3 (Worthington) | • KSUM AM 1370 (Fairmont) |
| • KLFD AM 1410 (Litchfield) | • KAUS AM 1480 (Austin) | • KWAD AM 920 (Wadena) | • KKIN AM 930 (Aitkin) | • KALY FM 101.7 (Minneapolis) |
| • KXRA 1490 AM (Alexandria) | • KATE AM 1450 (Albert Lea) | • KNSP AM 1430 (Staples) | • KLKS FM 100.1 (Pequot Lakes) | • KBRF AM 1250 (Fergus Falls) |
| • KCHK AM 1350 (New Prague) | • AM 1190 KKOJ (Jackson) | • WCMP AM 1350 (Pine City) | • KLQP FM 92.1 (Madison) | • WMNT AM 650 (Hibbing) |
| • KCHK 95.5 FM (New Prague) | • KKOJ FM 97.7 (Jackson) | • WJON AM 1240 (St. Cloud) | • WKLX FM 95.9 (Forest Lake) | • KRPR FM 89.9 (Rochester) |
| • KDWA AM 1460 (Hastings) | • AM 800 KQAD (Luverne) | • KBFT FM 89.9 (Bois Forte) | • WQPM AM 1300 (Princeton) | • KTOE AM 1420/FM 102.7 (Mankato) |
| • KDWA FM 97.7 (Hastings) | • KLOH 1050 AM (Pipestone) | • KROX AM 1260 (Crookston) | • KQCL FM 95.9 (Faribault) | • KSDM FM 104.1 (International Falls) |
| • KDMA AM 1460 (Montevideo) | • WD SM AM 710 (Duluth/Superior) | • KROX FM 105.7 (Crookston) | | • KGHS AM 1230/FM 95.3 (International Falls) |
| • KOWZ AM 1170/FM | • KDDG-FM 105.5 (Albany) | • KXBR FM 91.9 (International Falls) | | |





U.S. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Staff Sgt. Linsey Williams

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs offers service members and veterans benefits, including education, health care, insurance, vocational rehabilitation and employment, pension, disability compensation, and burial. While the length of service, service commitment, and duty status determine eligibility for benefits, most recent members of the Minnesota National Guard have fulfilled service requirements to receive benefits through the VA. The Minneapolis VA Health Care System offers health care and other benefits to all members of the Minnesota National Guard who return home from deployments. Today, the Minnesota National Guard and Minneapolis VA maintain their relationship in the effort towards the health and wellness of all Minnesota National Guard members.



MINNESOTA MILITARY FAMILY FOUNDATION

Staff Sgt. Linsey Williams

The Minnesota Military Family Foundation, known as MMFF, is a community-supported fund founded in 2004 with the mission of providing timely financial assistance to currently serving Minnesota military personnel and their families. The foundation works closely with Minnesota National Guard's Family Programs team, Soldier and Family Readiness Specialists, and Chaplains who communicate with the organization, providing details of financial needs and direct requests to the foundation. The foundation is a 100% volunteer organization with zero overhead. They believe that when they help one Soldier, they help all Soldiers. In 2022, the MMFF dispersed 122 grants to military families who experienced a financial emergency due to service to the country or state, totaling over \$673,000. This was the biggest year for grant requests for the organization since its inception.



MINNESOTANS' MILITARY APPRECIATION FUND

Maj. Jackie Stenger

The Minnesotans' Military Appreciation Fund, known as MMAF, provides cash grants to Minnesota service members who have served in a combat zone since September 11, 2001, and to the families of fallen service members. Since its inception in 2005, the fund has awarded nearly \$13.2 million in grants to nearly 20,000 recipients. MMAF has thanked service members across Minnesota with grant checks sent to over 800 municipalities, covering every county in the State. Service partnerships and volunteers have allowed for more than 90 percent of donations to go directly to Minnesota service members. Roughly 12,000 Airmen and Soldiers of the Minnesota National Guard have received a grant from MMAF totaling about \$8.5 million.

MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF VETERAN AFFAIRS

Staff Sgt. Linsey Williams

The Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs serves members of the military, veterans and their dependents throughout the state by connecting them with the federal and state benefits they have earned. This year, the state legislature appropriated \$24.8 million for service bonuses to Minnesotans who have served in the U.S. Armed Forces between Sept. 11, 2001, to Aug. 30, 2021. In five months since opening the application, MDVA received 20,751 applications, of which 7,764 were approved and processed for members of the Minnesota National Guard. MDVA also offers the Minnesota G.I. Bill, which allows Minnesota National Guard members who do not meet the Veteran definition and have served at least five years in the Guard, to be eligible for \$10,000 in higher education, licenses, certifications, and on-the-job training. Since January 2019, there have been 4,928 Minnesota National Guard members who have used the Minnesota G.I. Bill.

Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs projects that there are still thousands of eligible Minnesota Veterans who have not applied for the Post-9/11 Service Bonus. If you or someone you know might qualify, please scan the QR code or visit vetservicebonus.mdva.mn.gov to apply. Tiers of eligibility offer bonuses of \$600, \$1,200, and \$2,000.

The application will run until June 30, 2024, or until all funds have been exhausted. If funds are exhausted while there are still Veterans who are eligible, MDVA will return to the legislature to seek funding for more service bonuses.



CHECK YOUR
9/11 SERVICE
BONUS
ELIGIBILITY





MINNESOTA'S LABOR LEADERS

Sgt. Austyn Aagaard

Service in the National Guard provides job training and instills a good work ethic, which is highly valued by civilian employers. Retired Maj. Gen. Harry Sieben formed a partnership with labor leaders 25 years ago to create relationships and a shared understanding between the Guard and this group of civilian employers. The Guard partners with labor leaders, offering briefings and tours, informing them about military service and jobs which complement their industry. The visits help labor leader supervisors learn about military member's training requirements and the time requirements for their union members who serve in the Armed Forces.

"Getting the opportunity to do something like this shows the labor leaders that the Minnesota National Guard recognizes organized labor's commitment to their Soldiers and their families at its highest levels," said Joe Fowler, Minnesota State Building and Construction Trades Council president.



CIVILIAN AIDES TO THE SECRETARY OF ARMY

Tech. Sgt. Amy Lovgren

Civilian Aides to the Secretary of the Army, known as CASAs, are community members appointed to advise and support Army leaders across the force. Civilian aides support bridging the gap between the Army and civilian community by sharing information about the Army's objectives and significant programs with the public.

Minnesota has two currently serving CASAs, former Minnesota Secretary of State Mark Ritchie, and retired Army Col. Eric Ahlness. Retired Air Force Maj. Gen. Harry Sieben served in this role from 2007 to 2019. This year celebrates the 100th anniversary of the program.

"As the eyes and ears of the Army Secretary in Minnesota, we serve as early warning sensors to alert her of both the Army's issues and achievements," said Ahlness. "We represent her at ceremonial events and promote the 'Soldier for Life' ideals."



SERVING OUR TROOPS

Sgt. 1st Class Ben Houtkooper

Sharing a meal with partners is another way to build relationships. The Minnesota National Guard has a close relationship with the Saint Paul-based, civic organization Serving Our Troops. This group of community and business leaders share a common interest in supporting those who put themselves in harm's way. Since 2004, Serving Our Troops has served more than 110,000 steak dinners locally and abroad for our service members and their families. These meals have taken place in locations across the world and have the added benefit of including our partners and allies.

"To smell steaks on the grill overseas in a military area is special because it sends an amazing message of support from Minnesota, that 'we are with you every step of the way,'" said Pat Harris, one of the founding members of Serving Our Troops.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND MINNESOTA FIRE MARSHALL - INTEROPERABILITY TRAINING

Staff Sgt. Mahsima Alkmooneh

The Minnesota National Guard's Saint Paul-based 55th Civil Support Team, known as a CST, responds to emergencies involving the use, or threatened use, of weapons of mass destruction, terrorist attack, or threatened terrorist attacks, which could result in a catastrophic loss of life or property. Additionally, they can respond to the release of nuclear, biological, radiological, toxic, or poisonous hazards.

The 55th CST partners with various organizations to better understand the needs and capabilities of other agencies.

In August, the team worked with the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community's (SMSC) Department of Public Safety, the FBI's Minneapolis Hazardous Evidence Response Team, and Minnesota's State Fire Marshall during a field training exercise near Shakopee.

"I was not aware of the number of resources available to us and how quickly they could respond to an incident," said SMSC Public Safety Shift Captain, Capt. Ken Deja. "It was interesting to see their footprint, meaning the amount of equipment and people that they bring."

The unit can detect and identify hazards in any environment, enabling them to make recommendations to an incident commander based on what they find. The unit's mission focuses on identifying hazards, assessing the situation, assisting other agencies, and advising their partners on response measures.

"This brings value for both of us to strengthen our understanding of each team's capabilities," said Special Agent Uri Rosenwald of the FBI's Minneapolis Hazardous Evidence Response Team. "Ultimately, every time that we work with the CSTs, we can refine both teams' practices and how to address and solve issues at a weapons of mass destruction crime scene."





PEOPLE



"I am a better human because of my service and the people I have served with, past and present."

Air Force Brig. Gen. Sandy Best



MINNESOTA'S FIRST FEMALE GENERAL RETIRES

Sgt. Bob Brown

"You can do anything the boys can do...only better."

Those words from her mother instilled bold confidence in Sandy Best at an early age and paved the runway for her to become the first female promoted to general officer in the 166-year history of the Minnesota National Guard.

Air Force Brig. Gen. Sandy Best was honored during a retirement ceremony on August 23, 2022, at the Cedar Street Armory in Saint Paul. She served as the assistant adjutant general after previously serving as the interim adjutant general in 2020.

"My sister had served in the Minnesota Air National Guard, so I knew about it," said Best. "I came from a military family where my father, uncles, and cousins had served."

Best always had a sense of adventure, so she decided to enlist in the Minnesota National Guard in 1984 after a friend joined the Marines.

As her career got underway, a couple of recruiters, now retired

Chief Master Sergeants Greg Beckwith and Bob Kleven, matched her to a personnel specialty. According to Best, it was a good fit, and the two served as mentors throughout her career.

To this day, she communicates with Beckwith, and even though Kleven passed away in 2011, Best still talks to his wife, Margaret.

"My mentors, coaches, and leaders pushed me outside of my comfort zone to do things that I didn't think I was capable of doing," said Best. "That encouraged my higher educational pursuits and exposed me to new career fields. It pushed me to join organizations, associations, and activities that differentiate me from my peers and emphasized the value of teamwork over self-interests and strict adherence to living the core values at work, home, and play. They were leaders that believed in me when I did not believe in myself."

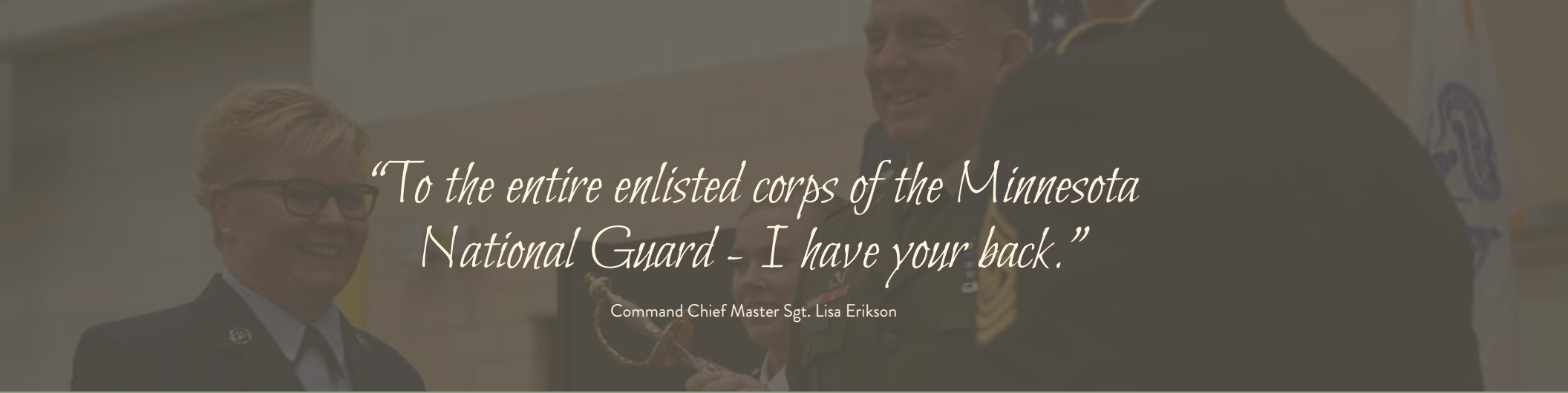
Best also served as the special assistant for diversity and inclusion to the Chief of the National Guard Bureau. There, she helped leaders across the 54 states, territories and the District

of Columbia focus on attracting, recruiting, and retaining a Guard workforce that reflects communities across the country.

"My greatest accomplishment in my 38 years career is paving the way for all that follow and helping Airmen, Soldiers, and civilian employees achieve their dreams," said Best. "There is no better sense of accomplishment than when someone I have served with and potentially helped influence through encouragement and mentorship, or a decision I made to support them, retires, is promoted or moves into a position they have been growing themselves for."

One of the most notable accomplishments during her service was the development of the annual Women's Leadership Forum. While the event was created to develop and empower female leaders, Best recognizes the collective work it takes, both past and present.

"I have loved the journey, and I love the people, but retirement is not goodbye, said Best. "It's 'see you later.'"



“To the entire enlisted corps of the Minnesota National Guard - I have your back.”

Command Chief Master Sgt. Lisa Erikson

MINNESOTA'S FIRST AIR COMMAND SENIOR ENLISTED LEADER

Sgt. Bob Brown

In November, Air Force Command Chief Master Sgt. Lisa Erikson became the Minnesota National Guard's Command Senior Enlisted Leader, known as a CSEL, and the first Air Guard member selected for this position since the inception of the Minnesota National Guard in 1856.

“First and foremost, my priority will be our Soldiers and Airmen,” said Erikson.

The CSEL is an advisor to the state's adjutant general, communicating the commander's directives to the enlisted service members while also serving as the senior representative for enlisted views and concerns.

“I'm very proud to be selected as the voice of the enlisted,” said Erikson. “I have a great network of senior leaders within the Minnesota National Guard, both

Air Force and Army, whom I have collaborated with in the past. I plan to continue with that momentum to provide more professional development to the Airmen and Soldiers within the Minnesota National Guard at all levels.”

Erikson has worn many hats throughout her career, having held six very different duty positions over 32 years of service. She began her career as a jet engine mechanic on the C-141 StarLifter cargo aircraft. She succeeded in this traditionally male-dominated career field at a time when only 5-6 percent of Airmen the U.S. Air Force were women.

She transitioned into administrative roles including training manager, personnel systems manager, and 148th Fighter Wing's recruiting office supervisor. She served

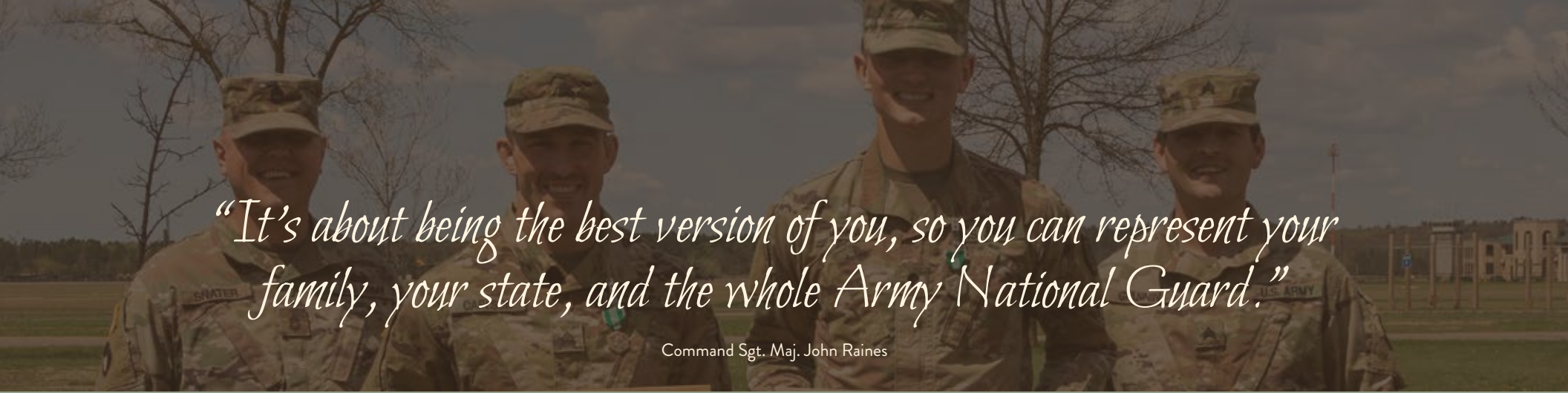
as the senior noncommissioned officer in charge of the 148th Medical Group for 10 years. In this role, she deployed to Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan, supporting Operation Enduring Freedom as part of the wing's aviation deployment.

Erikson is starting her new role by focusing on the three organizational priorities of people, modernization, and partnerships.

After mentioning how excited she is to get out and meet new Soldiers and Airmen, Erikson has a simple message for them.

“To the entire enlisted corps of the Minnesota National Guard, ‘I have your back.’”





"It's about being the best version of you, so you can represent your family, your state, and the whole Army National Guard."

Command Sgt. Maj. John Raines

BEST WARRIOR COMPETITION

Staff Sgt. Sydney Mariette

Minnesota's 2022 Soldier and noncommissioned officer of the year, winners of both the Minnesota and the region's Best Warrior Competitions, overcame many challenges to compete nationally and internationally this year. From April until July, Spc. Nathaniel Miska, a carpentry and masonry specialist with the Minnesota National Guard's 850th Engineer Company, 682nd Engineer Battalion, and Army Sgt. Richard Carlson, a health care specialist with Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 1st Battalion, 94th Cavalry Regiment, focused on continuing to maintain and improve their technical and tactical proficiencies. This sustained focus saw them through their unit, state, regional, All-Guard, and the international Croatian Best Soldier competitions.

In April, Miska and Carlson competed alongside 15 of their fellow Minnesotans and two Croatian Soldiers for the state-level competition at Camp Ripley. For five days, they endured challenges that tested their military skills, physical strength, and mental agility to see who would win the Soldier and noncommissioned officer of the year for the Minnesota National Guard.

After winning, Miska and Carlson, moving up to compete in May with the best in the National Guard from Region IV, the states across the Upper Midwest. In addition to hosting the state event, Camp Ripley also hosted this regional competition. It consisted of a five-day race that would challenge 12 competitors from seven states on their strength, physically and mentally. The competition included written exams, essays, in-person interviews,

the Army Combat Fitness Test, weapons qualifications, medical evacuation tasks, an obstacle course, a ruck march, mystery events, and more.

Again, Miska and Carlson met and overcame the challenge, advancing to the All-Guard Best Warrior Competition held in July at Camp Smyrna, Tennessee. There, the Minnesota Soldiers represented the region, in another grueling five days packed with more than 30 evaluated events. They faced 12 more finalists, each the best that the regions across the 54 states, territories and the District of Columbia had to offer. At the end, during the awards ceremony, leaders announced that Miska would go on to compete in the U.S. Army's first-ever Best Squad Competition in the fall.

In addition to the U.S. Army competition, both Miska

and Carlson also had the opportunity to compete on the international stage, as they were invited to take part in Croatia's Best Soldier Completion as part of the U.S. Department of Defense's State Partnership Program. Minnesota and Croatia have been partners for 26 years and engage in military skills and cultural exchanges year-round. The Minnesota National Guard and Croatian Armed Forces have exchanged Soldiers for each competition since 2021, with each region's competition has unique challenges.

"The international character of the competition enables the participation of allied and partner countries to develop interoperability, joint action, friendship, and partnership," said Croatian Army Sgt. Maj. Tihomir Šlanac, the executive noncommissioned officer for the Croatian Armed Forces' Command Sergeant's Major office.

Minnesota's Soldiers competed in the more than 20 milelong race, filled with eight challenges, with Miska finishing in 7 hours 47 minutes, placing 4th at the international level and 33rd overall, and Carlson finishing at just more than 9 hours, placing 9th at the international level and 50th overall.

"It's just been phenomenal watching these young Soldiers reach their full potential," said Command Sgt. Maj. Brian Soper, Minnesota's command senior enlisted leader. "And continue to evolve in their craft."

After more than six months dedicated to fitness, endurance, and NCO core competencies, Miska and Carlson can now rest after showing the world what Minnesota brings to the fight.





“The Outstanding Airmen of the Year represent Minnesota’s finest. We’re proud to recognize such well-rounded and proficient professionals!”

Command Chief Master Sgt. Mark Legvold

OUTSTANDING AIRMEN OF THE YEAR

1st Sgt. Beth Dedic

The Minnesota National Guard’s Outstanding Airmen of the Year represent the finest characteristics of the more than 2,200 Airmen within the state. To achieve this recognition, Airmen compete against their peers and must show exemplary aptitude in leadership and job performance, as well as the whole Airman concept. Airmen compete in five categories including: outstanding Airman, noncommissioned officer, senior noncommissioned officer, first sergeant, and company grade officer.

Senior Airman Madison Moritz

Outstanding Airman of the Year

While deployed, Sr. Airman Moritz was an active member of the Air Base 201 Women’s Association. This group was driven to improve the quality of life for women in the local village, raised funds for supplies, and distributed them throughout the local community. Moritz also volunteers for a local military program that helps to train service dogs for Veterans suffering from PTSD. She fosters dogs throughout their training and works to place the dogs with Veterans. Moritz wholeheartedly demonstrates the Air Force core value of “service before self.”

Tech. Sgt. Michael Schuette

Outstanding Noncommissioned Officer of the Year

While deployed, air transportation craftsman Tech. Sgt. Schuette facilitated 700 evacuation missions in two-weeks period as a part of the withdrawal from Afghanistan. His efforts in team leadership resulted in the safe evacuation of 123,000 Afghan refugees and 408 U.S. personnel and more than 2,300 tons of cargo. Schuette also displayed acuity in domestic cargo processing operations as a part of Operation Capital Response, moving Minnesota National Guard personnel and equipment, enabling Minnesota to lead the way in participation.

Master Sgt. Shane Trisco

Outstanding Senior Noncommissioned Officer of the Year

While serving as the noncommissioned officer in charge for the commander’s support staff, Master Sgt. Trisco’s exemplary support efforts aided an internal website migration, minimizing required staff hours, and significantly improved end-user experience. Trisco demonstrated keen organizational skills while assisting in the revitalizing of the wing’s social club. His assistance with fundraising and collecting 100 new members prevented a possible closure, restoring the social haven for 1,200 Airmen. Trisco’s dedication and leadership consistently put the welfare and needs of Airmen above all else.



Master Sgt. Sterling Hartwick

Outstanding First Sergeant of the Year

While serving as the wing first sergeant, Master Sgt. Hartwick was the lead planner in the annual Bulldog Day for unit members. His efforts produced an excellent morale event for more than 1,000 service members and their families. Hartwick also demonstrated his abilities during a crisis that involved providing immediate care and resources for six Airman. Hartwick's commitment to the Air Force core values resulted in his selection for this honor.

Maj. Katie Lunning

Outstanding Company Grade Officer of the Year

While deployed as a critical care nurse, then Capt. Katie Lunning exceeded mission expectations during the United States' withdrawal from Afghanistan, providing expert in-flight care. Initially treating refugees at her deployed location, she provided life-saving care for arriving Afghan children, women, and men with a myriad of medical challenges, including extreme dehydration and pregnancies. Her commitment to the military community also extends to her primary civilian occupation as a nurse for the Veteran's Administration.





MINNESOTA NATIONAL GUARD ALL WOMEN DROP ZONE TEAM

Staff Sgt. Austen Adriaens

On March 16, Minnesota's first all-female drop zone team recovered 11,109 pounds of cargo consisting of heavy platforms and bundles from Camp Ripley. Air Force Master Sgt. Heather Boutin, an air transportation specialist with the Minnesota National Guard's 133rd Air Transportation Function, known as an ATF, led the team with four other female Airmen.

"I am excited that I got to share this experience with our younger Airmen and that it coincided with Women's History Month," said Boutin. "I've been waiting to do it for three years!"

In the 50-year history of the team, there has not been a full-time female qualified on both rigger and semi-truck to facilitate an all-female drop zone team. For this to occur, two things needed to happen. First, an individual qualified and trained to rig cargo parachutes. Second, the individual needs to be qualified to drive a semi-truck.

Boutin gained the second qualification at the end of February, which allowed her to drive the semi-truck to the drop zone without a vehicle trainer. She immediately thought of all her female Airmen and offered them the opportunity to come out and make history.

"Female Airmen make up 41 percent of the [team] right now, which is crazy," said Air Force Sr. Airman Katie Braunwarth. "The [team] has been [mostly] men for most of the 50-years. It's cool to see that we showed up, we can, we do, and we succeed every time. We are just as strong, intelligent, and capable as our male counterparts."

Air transportation specialists have a demanding career field that can be challenging. Their responsibilities range from processing passengers and building cargo to building the heavy platforms and bundles that 109th Airlift Squadron used during the drop. The weather

conditions do not matter; Airmen are trained to recover equipment in rain, shine, sleet, snow, and freezing temperatures.

The biggest obstacle the team had was the weather, recalls Boutin. The drop zone fields were wet and muddy. The day drop bundles to recover were two 350 pounds low-cost low-altitude bundles and two Joint Precision Air Drop systems at 822 pounds each.

"It was great to be a female role model for the younger Airmen," said Boutin. "As a newly promoted senior non-commissioned officer, helping to mentor and provide feedback to them is extremely rewarding. It was a multifaceted experience doing something for the first time as an all-female crew."



“I was able to sharpen my skill sets in my job. The humanitarian experience helped shaped me as I was growing up in the Army.”

Warrant Officer Rose Xiong

CYBER-SOLDIER MAKES HISTORY FOR MINNESOTA'S HMONG COMMUNITY

Sgt. Bob Brown

Growing up in Saint Paul, Rose Xiong always admired Soldiers' courage, selflessness, and discipline.

Little did she know that nearly 20 years after enlisting as a mechanic, she would make history as the first female Hmong warrant officer in the Minnesota National Guard.

Warrant Officer Xiong serves as a cyber operations technician with the Minnesota National Guard's 177th Cyber Protection Team. She was promoted shortly after deploying with the unit in support of Task Force Echo V.

Their mission was to engineer, install, operate, maintain, and defend critical network infrastructure and conduct cyberspace operations in support of U.S. Cyber Command and the Cyber National Mission Force.

Task Force Echo V is only Xiong's most recent deployment. She also served in Kosovo from 2003-

2004 during the Kosovo Force mission as a liaison team member, which helped lay the foundation of her career.

“I was able to sharpen my skill sets in my [career specialty] and experience the world from a Soldier's perspective, said Xiong. “The humanitarian experience helped shape me as I was growing up in the Army.”

After returning home from her deployment, Xiong continued sharpening her skills by completing an undergraduate degree in management information systems at Metropolitan State University in Saint Paul before earning a master's degree from the University of Saint Thomas in software engineering.

Attaining a degree was one of her goals before she enlisted, and while having a master's is noteworthy, so are the skills she picked up serving in the National Guard.

“With my military leadership background, I was able to

obtain a good career in information technology once I graduated,” said Xiong.

So, what else is there to say about a career in the Minnesota National Guard spanning two decades and multiple deployments?

“You can say that that young girl who came seeking strength,” remarked Xiong, “reaped more than she could have ever imagined.”





MODERNIZATION



“As our challenges and adversaries change, we require forces, equipment, and training to ensure our national security.”

Air Force Col. James Cleet



133RD AIRLIFT WING WELCOMES FIRST EIGHT-BLADED PROPELLER C-130

Amy Lovgren

The Minnesota National Guard's Saint Paul-based 133rd Airlift Wing received their first C-130 Hercules aircraft with an updated eight-bladed propeller May 11, 2022.

The 133rd currently flies eight C-130H3 model Hercules aircraft out of the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport. Last year the unit launched a three-phase modernization process by introducing the new electronic propeller control system.

The 133rd is currently in its second phase of the modernization process, which includes transitioning the C-130s from four-bladed propellers to eight-bladed propellers. The eight-bladed propellers deliver more power and efficiency while reducing required maintenance. Due to increased thrust for takeoff, they are also helpful in cold weather and arctic operations. This is projected to be completed by September of 2023.

The third phase is expected to begin in the fall of 2023 and will introduce a newer T56 3.5 turbo engine.


“Modernization is one of the Minnesota National Guard's organizational priorities,” said Air Force Col. James Cleet, the commander of the 133rd Airlift Wing. “This aircraft upgrade reinforces our ability to protect our state and nation.”

“Modernization ensures we have the right forces, infrastructure, training spaces, and systems for our current and future missions,” said Cleet. “As our challenges and adversaries change, we require forces, equipment, and training to ensure our national security.”

The C-130 is a legendary cargo aircraft known for its tactical abilities. It can operate from rough dirt strips and is the prime transportation used for airdropping troops, equipment, and aid into hostile areas, and for providing

medical evacuations. In Minnesota, it is often used to assist with natural disasters and state emergencies. The 133rd has flown three different models of the C-130 aircraft over the last 51 years. The current model, the C-130H3 Hercules aircraft, has been with the 133rd Airlift Wing since 1996. Since the unit started flying the C-130 in 1971, crews have logged more than 213,000 flying hours. To put that into perspective, that would be 27 years of non-stop flight.

The 133rd Airlift Wing is one of the two flying wings in the Minnesota National Guard. They have a proud heritage as the first federally-recognized aviation squadron in the United States. In January 2021, the 133rd Airlift Wing celebrated their 100th anniversary.



“We love having the Guard here and look forward to many years of continued partnership.”

Sarah Warmka, New Ulm Chamber of Commerce president

FACILITY AND TECHNOLOGY MODERNIZATION

Sgt. Bob Brown

The Minnesota National Guard strives to improve readiness and training opportunities throughout the state with new construction and renovation of existing armories. According to Don Kerr, executive director of the Minnesota Department of Military Affairs, the planning is constantly evolving.

“The Department of Military Affairs conducts an ongoing and in-depth analysis of all of our buildings and property assets to plan systematic upgrades of our facilities sustainably and predictably,” said Kerr. “We try to schedule comprehensive renovations to upgrade roofs, windows, and mechanical systems every 25-30 years, depending on state and federal funding availability. Of course, we are sometimes surprised by unexpected failures of major building systems, like boilers, and adjust our plans accordingly.”

The Luverne Armory broke ground on December 14, 2021 and will serve National Guard members on drill weekends and facilitate public events throughout the year.

“The new [armory] in Luverne will be a quality, eco-friendly building that will enhance training, bring new capabilities to the area, and contribute to the mission readiness of the Soldiers in the local unit,” said Army Lt. Col. Troy Fink, Minnesota National Guard’s construction and facilities management officer.

The facility will be certified as ‘Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design-Silver’ by the U.S. Green Building Council and features offices, classrooms, a learning center, an exercise room, locker rooms, a commercial kitchen, equipment storage, arms vault, and vehicle maintenance bays.

To the east in New Ulm, the Minnesota National Guard celebrated the opening of a new maintenance shop.

“The new maintenance facility in New Ulm marks a point of recommitment for both the Minnesota National Guard and the City of New Ulm,” said Army Lt. Col. Mark Gile, commander of the 1st Battalion of the 125th Field Artillery Regiment. “This facility brings new capabilities and doubles our current facility’s size, adding jobs for our Guard members from this city and the area.

Adjacent to the shop, leaders plan to break ground for an armory in the spring of 2023. It will replace the current armory, which is more than a century old. Much like the Luverne project, this armory will accommodate more Soldiers on training weekends while providing the community with additional space for public events. In addition, there will be more classrooms available to



accommodate modern training. About 100 Soldiers typically drill at the current New Ulm Armory each month, which could triple as Soldiers from other units begin training at the planned new armory.

On a smaller scale, the Brainerd Armory held a grand opening event on March 25th to showcase the recently completed \$8 million renovation. This is the first renovation of the more than three decades old building. Locker rooms, restrooms, and showers were restored, along with the replacement of mechanical, electrical, telecommunications, and data systems.

The Fergus Falls Armory is another priority for the Minnesota National Guard. The 19,912 square foot armory needs an estimated \$4.9 million in renovations to improve functionality and accommodate assigned units.

Continuing north, the Moorhead Armory has opened bidding for a \$12.4 million renovation. Like Fergus Falls, the facility requires administrative, supply, arms vault, and toilet and shower space upgrades.

The increase in space would adequately meet the requirements for the unit and improve readiness through higher quality of training.

“Like all physical structures,” said Kerr, “our buildings require periodic maintenance, code updates, and, from time to time, replacement to ensure our Soldiers and Airmen have safe and efficient facilities to conduct training and operations.”

MINNESOTA NATIONAL GUARD APPS

The National Defense Strategy relies on the modernization of the force and the Minnesota National Guard must stay in step with the Army and Air Force as they modernize to maintain relevance as an operational force. In September, the Minnesota National Guard launched a public application in Apple and Android play stores.

Staying up to date and in touch with the Minnesota National Guard is easier and more enjoyable than ever before. Everything you want to know about the Minnesota National Guard is at your fingertips.

The app focuses on Soldier resources and acts as a one-stop-shop for unit chats, armory locations, family readiness, careers, hip pocket training, Chaplain information, among other resources. Within the app, service members can receive alerts such as weather or upcoming events.

DOWNLOAD HERE





MINNESOTA NATIONAL GUARD STRENGTHENS SUPPORT OF POSTPARTUM PARENTS

Staff Sgt. Sydney Mariette

“As leaders, we talk about putting people first because our Soldiers, Airmen and their families deserve to work in safe, healthy environments where everyone is treated with dignity and respect,” said Army Capt. Andrea Tsuchiya, the full-time administrative officer for the 1st Armored Brigade Combat Team of the 34th Red Bull Infantry Division. “Supporting mothers through their transition back to work is not only taking care of our current force, but it’s imperative to retaining women in our formation.”

In June 2022, the U.S. Army published an update to their 2020 directive regarding Parenthood, Pregnancy, and Postpartum, known as Army Directive 2022-06. The updated policy increases the resources available as well as flexibility on the length of time allowed before service members return to regular duty standards. Some of the most significant policy changes and program improvements include expanding postpartum

operational and training deferments, extending exemptions for physical fitness testing and the Army Body Composition Program, standardizing convalescent leave in cases of miscarriage, and allowing attendance for select military courses while pregnant.

Under the new Minnesota policy update, guidelines are laid out more clearly and specifically for both Army and Air Force commanders, service members, and civilian employees to understand. Whereas the 2020 policy encouraged lactating parents to express milk during lunch and authorized breaks for a “reasonable time”, the 2022 policy emphasizes that all bodies are different and that lactating service members should take breaks as needed for as long as needed.

“The main issue that I have faced is the negative connotation around pumping on duty,” said Army 1st Lt. Dana Showers, a traditional, drilling Soldier with the 334th Brigade Engineer Battalion and first-time mom

with a five-month-old daughter. “My command team is very supportive of me having to step out of meetings or be late to training, but I feel that there is a lack of education and support from other Soldiers. The lack of empathy, driven by the lack of understanding of the policy, can break down working relationships.”

The Minnesota National Guard encourages all service members and civilian employees to have a positive, accepting attitude towards working women and breastfeeding. Clear communication both up and down the chain of command, puts action behind the Minnesota National Guard’s people first priority and ensures the safeguarding of basic service member and employee care rights.



CROATIA DISASTER MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP

1st Sgt. Beth Dedic

Earthquakes, wildfires, floods, and pandemics. The disasters and emergencies of recent years have affected states and nations alike. The global community's increased focus on emergency preparedness and disaster management has strengthened the need to exchange best practices and broaden response plans.

The Minnesota National Guard recently brought interagency partners from Minnesota's Department of Public Safety, Homeland Security Emergency Management division, and Saint Paul's Emergency Management team across the Atlantic to collaborate with members of the Croatian Directorate of Civil Protection. This three-day emergency preparedness conference in Zagreb, Croatia, Nov. 15-17, 2022, resulted from the Minnesota National Guard's 26 yearlong partnership with Croatia through the Department of Defense's State Partnership Program.

Natural disasters impact all nations, and emergency agencies plan and prepare for public safety and provide

essential services regardless of the incident. In 2022, historic flooding in northern Minnesota resulted in the activation of Guard members to support emergency response efforts overnight. Additionally, the rise in wildfires resulted in requests for ground and aircraft support for state response efforts. Both nations recognize the need for teamwork during disaster response and have increased their cooperation exercises to reinforce preparedness for such incidences.

"Collaboration is important because no one department or level of government has unlimited resources," said Kevin Reed, of Minnesota's Department of Public Safety, Homeland Security Emergency Management division. "We need those partnerships, whether private or governmental, and key resources to provide the most effective and best response for the public."

Reed was one of the 28 participants in the long-awaited 2022 disaster management workshop, which was delayed almost three years due to the pandemic and



the subsequent earthquakes that devastated parts of Croatia. The Croatian-American cooperation provided participants with a venue where they could exchange information on disaster risk reduction and emergency preparedness best practices, planning, and response lessons learned.

Each year members of the Guard, in coordination with civilian agency partners, prepare and rehearse emergency response plans and review policies in support of emergency management operations to remain 'Always Ready.'

"I look forward to sustaining this partnership," said U.S. Army Col. Simon Schaefer, the Minnesota National Guard's director of plans and policy, "as well as to identifying new practices that best support our communities and citizens."

CAMP RIPLEY SENTINEL LANDSCAPE

Josh Pennington

The Sentinel Landscapes Partnership is a coalition of federal agencies, state and local governments, and non-governmental organizations that works with private landowners to advance sustainable land management practices around military installations.

Camp Ripley's Sentinel Landscape partners have pursued innovative, grassroots projects that protect agricultural and recreational land around the installation. As a result, the area has improved the quality of water entering the Mississippi River, preserved critical habitat corridors, bolstered local agricultural economies, and enabled Camp Ripley to conduct year-round training activities with limited restrictions.

With a recent infusion of funds and a focus on forestry, the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service, is making it easier and less costly for private landowners to manage their property within the Camp Ripley's Sentinel Landscape area, a 10-mile buffer that simultaneously protects natural resources and the National Guard's training mission.

To date, the local Morrison Soil & Water Conservation District has also worked with landowners to enroll 329 permanent easements totaling 33,126 acres within the tighter three-mile radius are known as the Army

Compatible Use Buffer. Those working-lands easements restrict development and help maintain a compatible buffer around the installation. In addition, the easements help wildlife, giving wildlife increased room to roam and retaining niche habitats for species such as the federally threatened Northern Long-eared Bat.

A new agreement from the USDA and a renewed funding source have also offered added technical and financial support. A \$400,000, three-year contribution agreement is bringing forestry related training and technical assistance to Camp Ripley's surrounding area. The agreement gave the local area the means to hire a forester and to subcontract with the Forest Stewards Guild to train regional staff and landowners in prescribed burning. The area's private lands forester is staffed within the Camp Ripley environmental conservation office.

"Most of our landowners enrolled in the Army Compatible Use Buffer Program were really motivated by wanting to leave their land better than when they originally purchased it," said Shannon Wettstein, Morrison Soil & Water Conservation District manager. "They have a really strong conservation ethic. We're just trying to create more opportunities for them to do the right thing."





“Modernization is a continuous process motivating interoperability across the entire Army.”

Army Col. Charles Rankin

PALADINS: MINNESOTA NATIONAL GUARD GUNNERS GEAR-UP FOR READINESS, MODERNIZATION

Tony Housey

The U.S. Army’s recent Modernization Strategy report to Congress describes how the ‘Total Army’ – Regular Army, National Guard, Army Reserve, and Army Civilians – will transform into what is becoming known as a multi-domain force by 2035. In doing this, the report states, the Army will meet its enduring responsibility as part of the joint force, supporting the defense of the nation, and retain its position as the globally dominant land power.

The report introduced the Army’s six materiel modernization priorities to make Soldiers and units more lethal and able to deploy, fight, and win the nation’s wars. This strategy expanded in recently with an adjustment to the Army’s approach beyond those six priorities, outlining a more holistic approach to modernization while maintaining the continuity of priorities.

“Modernization is a continuous process, motivating interoperability across the entire Army,” said 1st Armored Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry Division Commander, Army Col. Charles Rankin. “In the past, our organization would receive the previous generation’s equipment, but now we are receiving the same material as the rest of the Army, making us as lethal.”

While the strategy outlines the future Army in 2035, Army modernization will remain ongoing as the organization continues to test and refine operating concepts, draw on emerging technologies, and anticipate changes in the operating environment.

In early 2022, Soldiers of the 1st Battalion, 125th Field Artillery Regiment began integrating the Army’s newest version of the 155mm M109A7 Paladin howitzer and the

M992A3 tracked ammunition carrier vehicle, both the latest in the M109 series of vehicles. These serve as the primary artillery system for the Army’s Armored Brigade Combat Teams.

The history of motorized, mechanized, or self-propelled howitzers goes back to before the Second World War. Fast-moving, artillery support for rapidly advancing armor units was essential to bring the fight to the enemy. Gun systems of several calibers and types were mounted on tracked and wheeled vehicles, allowing for quick deployments of artillery units when called on to prepare the battlefield or support other units.

Many of the already existing chassis used by American tanks, mechanized infantry, and scout vehicles were upgraded to handle the weight of the gun system and



sent into battle along with ammunition or support vehicles. Today, the M109A7 uses the existing main armament and cab structure of the M109A6. It replaces the vehicle's chassis components, including the engine, transmission, final drives, suspension, and track with modern components common to the M2/M3 Bradley Infantry Fighting Vehicle. The commonality with other unit systems reduces sustainability costs while improving chassis structure and survivability.

After receiving rapid but detailed and informative instruction from a training team, Soldiers of the battalion worked in small groups, organized by crews and platoons, to practice the skills learned during the classroom portion. This hands-on practice included equipment inventory, primary and alternate methods

of standard operations, and maintenance. The tried and tested method of classroom instruction, paired with hands-on training, reinforces confidence and know-how for the individuals going through the fielding of the new equipment.

The M109A7 is the first vehicle at these units built with a 70-kilowatt, high voltage system, which replaces the hydraulic cab drive system and enhances electronic ammunition handling and air-conditioning.

Finally, the gunners of unit demonstrated their mastery of the required skills, firing during several scenarios, ensuring that all systems were working as intended and the crews were prepared for operations.

"Our batteries transitioned between the A6 model and

this vehicle very smoothly," said Sgt. 1st Class James Otto, a field artillery master gunner. "Once everyone is complete, we will be well prepared for any upcoming mission."



CAMP RIPLEY MODERNIZATION

Tony Housey

Camp Ripley's mission is to provide superior customer service; facilities, and resources empowering organizations to train in a realistic environment while fostering positive community relations.

Camp Ripley underwent a series of developments to its infrastructure in 2022.

Construction to improve housing and the replacement of outdated facilities for visiting military units and other Camp Ripley customers began in early 2022. The Area Five project, a traditional troop lodging area dating back to the 1930s, is a part of a plan consisting of constructing several 6,100 square foot buildings to be used to house service members, replacing many of the current, outdated tin-hut structures. The construction of these huts dates back to the early 1960s when visiting units would put up troop tents. At that time, these simple tin structures made staying at Camp Ripley easier for customers than tents.

The current replacement buildings will be long-lasting,

insulated block construction, each divided into five sleeping bays, an improvement to the uninsulated tin huts that could only be used seasonally. Upgrades to power, water, and sewer in each building will facilitate housing company-sized elements. As the project moves into 2023, additional unit headquarters, supply, and administrative buildings will also be built.

Modernization efforts also include redesigning and upgrading water run-off and drainage systems in the cantonment area. Within the 2,100-acre billeting, administrative, storage, and support area locations of Camp Ripley, several key roads, motor pools, and living areas have been subject to flooding at various times of the year. Efforts through the facilities management office, in cooperation with environmental teams and state partners, will bring upgrades to the base's drainage

systems, ensuring safe run-off into the Mississippi River. Upgrades and installation of several new range support structures at several of Camp Ripley's more than 60 ranges continued in 2022. The support structure improvements to these ranges include automated control towers, ammunition storage points, and other upgrades for better safety and observation. As the dynamic nature of the modern battlefield increases, so do the requirements for range space. Adding fiber optics, modern communications, and state-of-the-art observation tools are increasingly necessary for units to meet basic and advanced qualification standards. It is these ever-increasing standards that drive Camp Ripley's continued modernize efforts, meeting the needs of its thousands of annual visitors.

TRAINING

45 LIVE-FIRE RANGES

- Rifle ranges
- Pistol ranges
- Automatic weapon ranges
- Demolitions Ranges
- Metal cutting
- Cratering
- Bangalore torpedoes
- Convoy Protection Range provides up to platoon-level convoy live fire training

23 NON-LIVE-FIRE RANGES

- AR Qualification
- Reflexive Fire
- Pistol and Shotgun
- Grenade Launcher and Hand Grenade Qualification
- Rappel Tower
- Confidence Course
- Live Fire Shoot House
- Field Leadership Reaction Course
- Combined Arms Collective Training Facility (CACTF): with 23 buildings ranging in size from a single room to multiple floors and underground training options

SIMULATIONS (CRTC Simulation Center)

- 5 Electronic trainer systems
 - Rifle, pistol, and automatic weapon systems in a controlled environment
 - 3 permanent EST
 - 2 portable EST
- 4 Close Combat Tactical Trainer
 - Realistic synthetic battlefield that allows service members to operate combat vehicles
- Virtual Convoy operations center
- UH-60 simulator
- CH-47 simulator

MEDICAL SIMULATION TRAINING CENTER (MSTC)

- Continuing education units able to provide up-to-date training to military medical technicians
- CPR recertifications
- Combat lifesaver initial and refresher training
- Instructor ran simulation training lanes with realistic combat environment.

TRANSPORTATION & LODGING

AIR TRAVEL IS AVAILABLE AT MILLER ARMY AIRFIELD

- Supports parking for up to 7 C-130's
- All weather runways
 - 6,100' x 100' asphalt runway
 - 3,500' x 80' gravel assault runway
 - 1000' x 50' UAS runway
 - Heated bays for maintenance and storage
- 1000' by 50; tactical strip located in training area
- Rotary wing pads
 - 21 in cantonment
 - 17 in training area

CAMP RIPLEY-OWNED RAIL LINE

- Seven miles of track can support up to 60 railcars
- Two additional rail spurs designed to double railcar capacity and allow for smoother movement

LODGING

- 379 total maid service rooms
 - 174 standard with shared bathrooms
 - 32 VIP rooms with private baths
 - 88 suites with private bath
- 85 houses
 - 2, 4, or 6 bedroom models
 - Private deck with grill
 - Private bathrooms
- 4,057 year-round housing capacity
- 3,256 beds

- Each T-building has
 - 8 bays, orderly rooms, supply and kitchen facilities, 140-184 total beds
- 1 Super T-Building
 - 200 beds
 - 15 officer quarters
- 6 Longhouses
 - 600 total beds
 - 201 officer quarters
- 3,789 seasonal housing capacity
- 3,094 capacity in historic tin hut buildings
- 695 capacity in seasonal long houses

EDUCATION CENTER & MWR

CAMP RIPLEY EDUCATION CENTER

- 48 individual rooms
- Nine classrooms capable of holding more than 425 students
- 200 person-stepped theater
- 400-person dining facility capable of feeding 1,600 people during a single mealtime period

MORALE WELFARE & RECREATION (MWR)

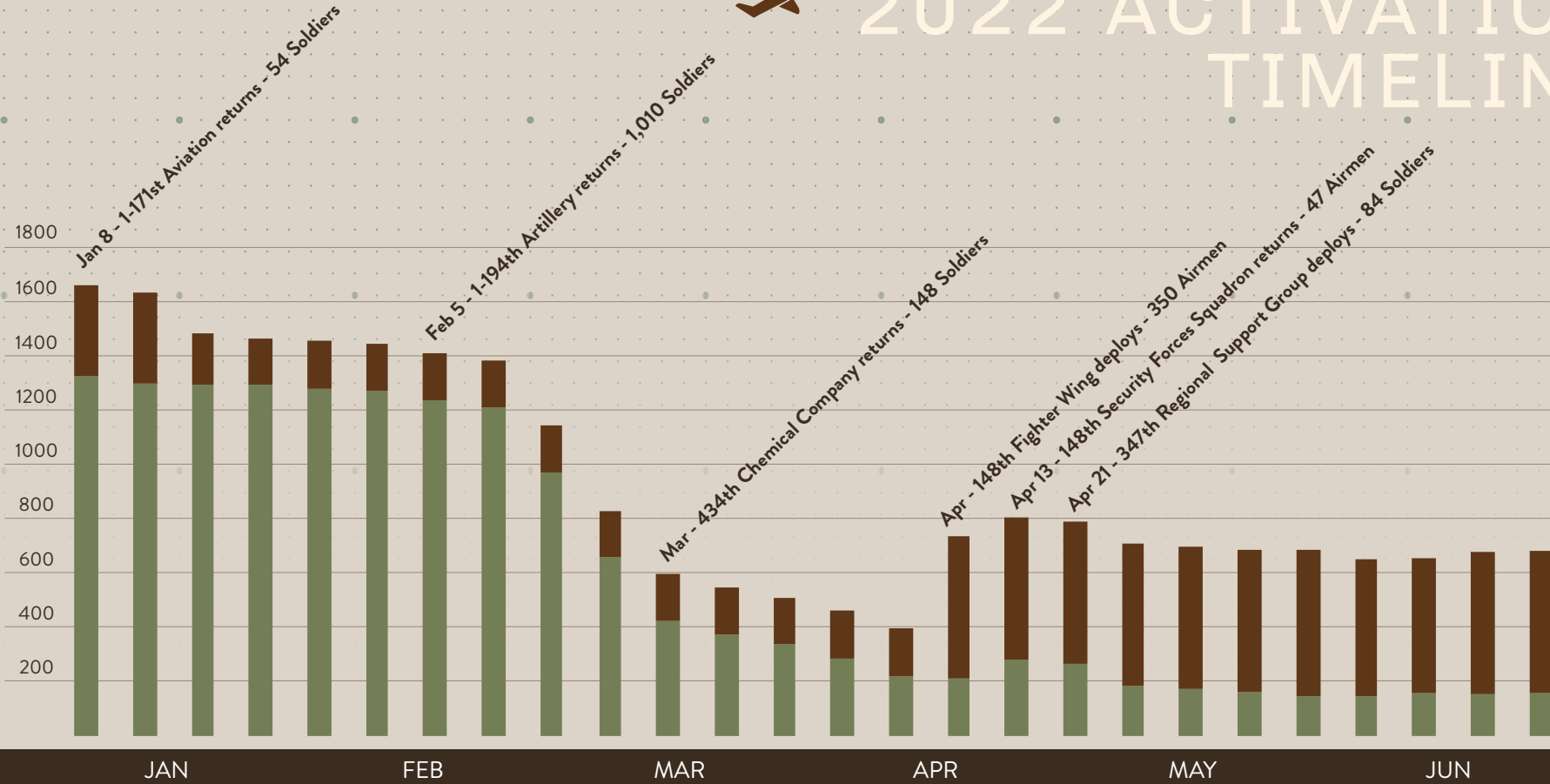
- Sports
- Backpacking
- Fishing
- Cross-country skiing
- Kayaking
- Indoor fitness centers
- Volleyball courts
- Basketball courts
- Video games
- Viking Club
- Museum & Library



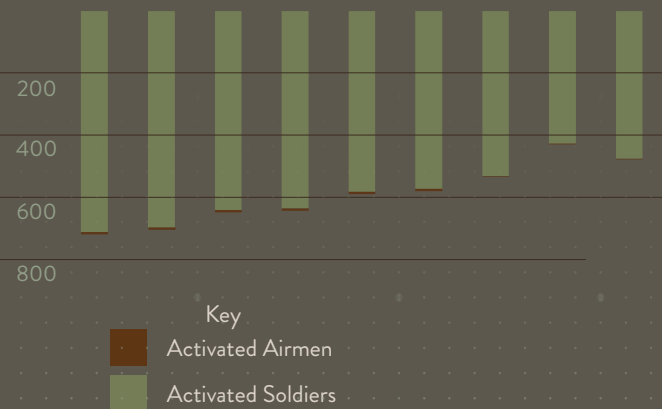


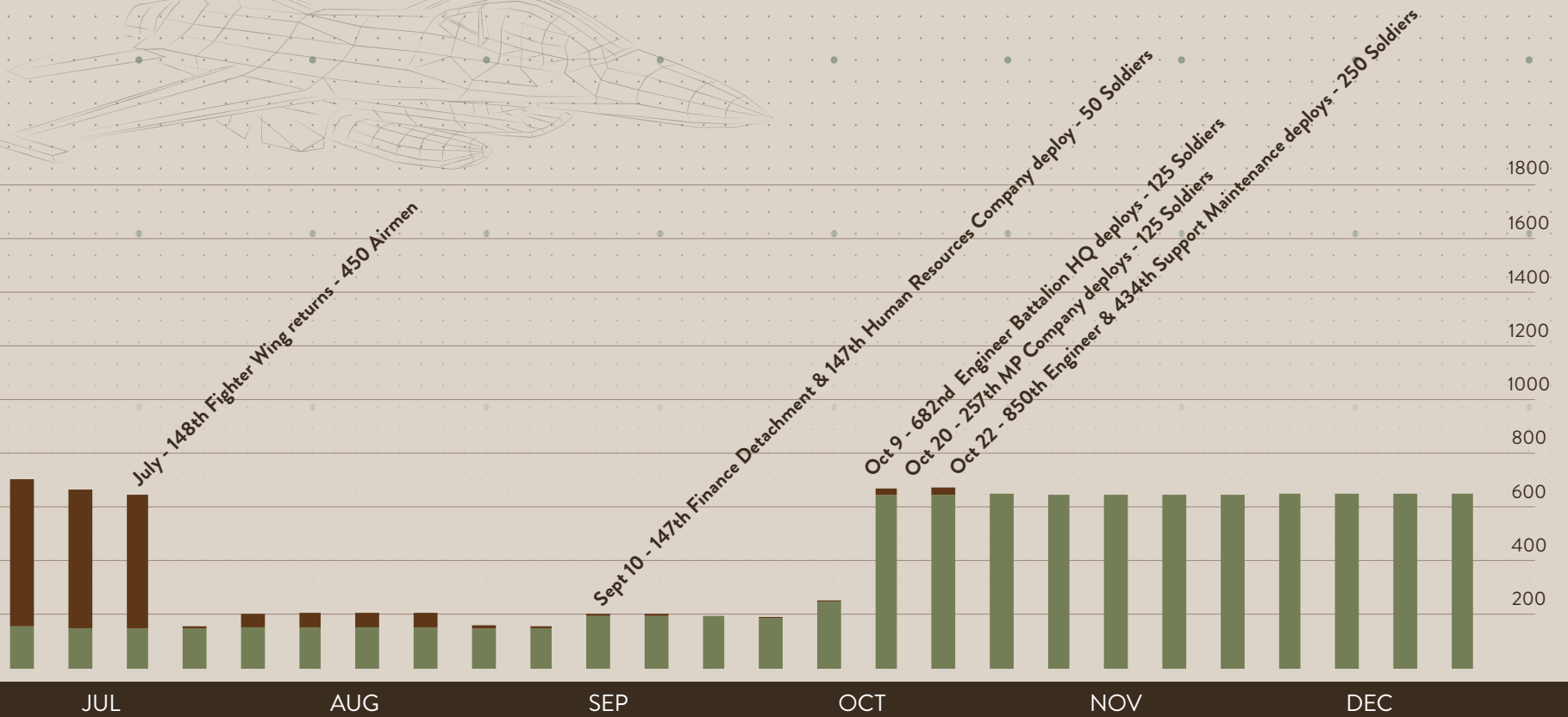
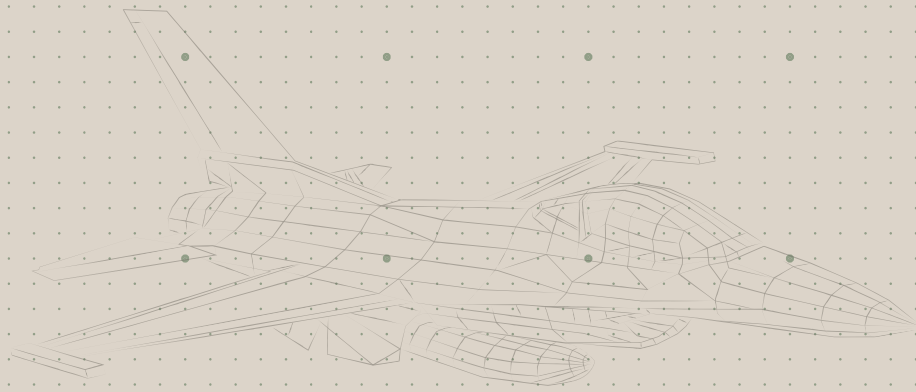
2022 ACTIVATION TIMELINE

FEDERAL DEPLOYMENTS



STATE ACTIVATIONS





FEDERAL DEPLOYMENTS

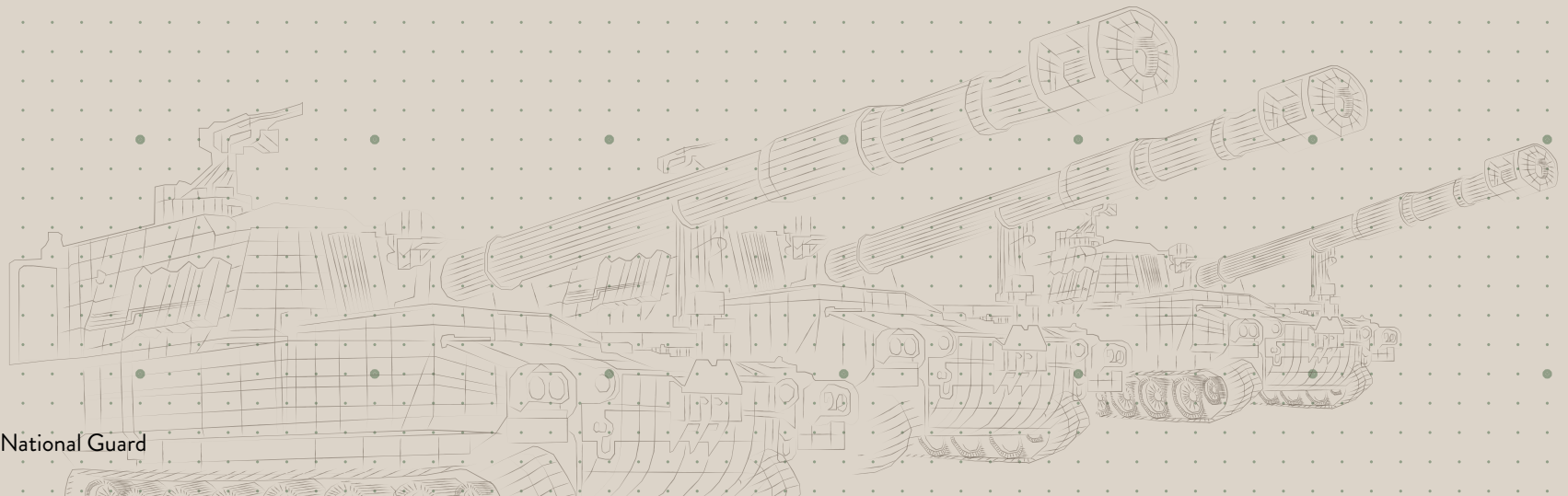
- Apr 21 - 347th Regional Support Group deploys - 84 Soldiers
- Apr - 148th Fighter Wing deploys - 350 Airmen
- June 28 - 434th Firefighting Team deploys to Romania - 3 Soldiers
- Sept 10 - 147th Financial Management Support Detachment and 147th Human Resources Company deploy - 50 Soldiers
- Oct 9 - 682nd Engineer Battalion HQ deploys to Southwest border - 125 Soldiers
- Oct 20 - 257th Military Police Company deploys to Southwest border - 125 Soldiers
- Oct 22 - 850th Horizontal Engineer Company & 434th Support Maintenance Company deploy to Southwest border - 250 Soldiers

FEDERAL REDEPLOYMENTS

- Jan 8 - 1-171st General Support Aviation Battalion, returns from Kuwait - 54 Soldiers
- Feb 5 - 1st Battalion, 194th Artillery Regiment returns from Kuwait - 1,010 Soldiers
- Feb 13 - 177th Cyber Protection Team returns from Washington, D.C. - 35 Soldiers
- Apr - 148th Fighter Wing returns from Joint Base McGuire - Dix - Lakenhurst and Holloman Air Force Base from Operations Allies Welcome - 32 Airmen
- Apr 13 - 107th Maintenance Detachment returns from Poland - 7 Soldiers
- Apr 13 - 148th Security Forces Squadron returns - 47 Airmen
- Apr 16 - 434th Chemical Company returns from Kuwait - 148 Soldiers
- July 28 - 148th Fighter Wing returns from Saudi Arabia - 350 Airmen
- July - 148th Fighter Wing returns from CENTCOM area - 100 Airmen



MAJOR COMMANDS



"I know without a shadow of doubt that you will accomplish the missions put before you with honor and excellence."

Army Brig. Gen. Charles Kemper



JOINT FORCE HEADQUARTERS

MinnesotaNationalGuard.ng.mil/jfhq



34TH RED BULL INFANTRY DIVISION

MinnesotaNationalGuard.ng.mil/34id



34TH DIVISION ARTILLERY

MinnesotaNationalGuard.ng.mil/34divarty



34TH EXPEDITIONARY COMBAT AVIATION BRIGADE

MinnesotaNationalGuard.ng.mil/34cab



1ST ARMORED BRIGADE COMBAT TEAM

MinnesotaNationalGuard.ng.mil/1abct



347TH REGIONAL SUPPORT GROUP

MinnesotaNationalGuard.ng.mil/347rsg



84TH TROOP COMMAND

MinnesotaNationalGuard.ng.mil/84trc



175TH REGIONAL TRAINING INSTITUTE

MinnesotaNationalGuard.ng.mil/175rti



CAMP RIPLEY TRAINING CENTER

MinnesotaNationalGuard.ng.mil/crtc



133RD AIRLIFT WING

133aw.ang.af.mil



148TH FIGHTER WING

148fw.ang.af.mil

Joint Force HEADQUARTERS

2022 Accomplishments

In June 2022, the U.S. Army published an update to its 2020 directive regarding Parenthood, Pregnancy, and Postpartum. The Minnesota National Guard's Joint Force Headquarters, known as JFHQ, has strived to disseminate and implement the directive throughout the state's units. The original policy outlined specific requirements for commanders and units to provide dedicated lactation rooms in all armories and training facilities. The 2022 federal policy specifies this requirement, with Minnesota adding the availability of field nursing kits that nursing service members can check out during field training exercises. These field nursing kits contain a portable refrigerator, power inverter, extension cable, cleaning wipes, sealable bags, and markers in a standard-issued assault pack.

JFHQ continues to foster the Minnesota National Guard's relationship with Croatia, the state's partner of more than 26 years through the DoD's State Partnership Program. The unit's information technology section

also conducts an annual cyber security exchange with Croatian partners. The program continues to grow and become more robust with 31 military advise and assist exchanges that have taken place, with topics including disaster relief, cyber security, aviation mechanics, and more.

JFHQ planned the Best Warrior Competitions for the state and region this year. The regional event, hosted at Camp Ripley in May, included the best noncommissioned officers and Soldiers from Illinois, Iowa, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin. The five-day competition tested the participants' technical and tactical knowledge through 24 events, including weapons qualification, fitness, land navigation, a ruck march, an obstacle course, and more, all designed to be physically and mentally challenging. Sections of JFHQ also planned the Women's Leadership Forum, which was hosted at General Mills headquarters, teaching more than 500 Airmen, Soldiers, and civilians how challenges in work and life can build perseverance.

2023 Objectives

In 2023, JFHQ's most significant objective is to host the 50th U.S./Norwegian Reciprocal Troop Exchange, known as NOREX. Minnesota's partnership with Norway is the U.S. Department of Defense's longest-running troop exchange. In 2023, Norway and Minnesota will strengthen their relationship, also officially becoming State Partnership Program partners. Each year, about 100 Airmen and Soldiers from Minnesota and a similar number of Norwegian Home Guard Soldiers and youth participate in the exchange. JFHQ will also be planning the 2023 Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States which will take place in Rochester in August.

JFHQ continues to focus on the effects of modernization, such as the new Army Combat Fitness Test and the new weapons qualification standards, as well as ensuring all Minnesota Guard units update their on-hand equipment with the most up-to-date equipment available for training.



JFHQ

Located in Saint Paul, the Minnesota National Guard's Joint Force Headquarters is a joint Army and Air unit tasked to oversee operations for all state National Guard forces. Joint Force Headquarters coordinates military support at the request of the Governor in the event of a disaster or state emergency.

HEADQUARTERS

Saint Paul, MN

COMMANDER

Maj. Gen. Shawn Manke

SENIOR ENLISTED LEADER

Command Chief Master Sgt. Lisa Erikson

STRENGTH

480 Airmen & Soldiers



34 ID

The Arden Hills-based 34th Red Bull Infantry Division provides training and readiness oversight for nine National Guard brigades with more than 23,000 Soldiers across Minnesota and 22 other states. In Minnesota, the 34th includes the 1st Armored Brigade Combat Team, the 34th Expeditionary Combat Aviation Brigade, 84th Troop Command, and the 347th Regional Support Group.

HEADQUARTERS

Arden Hills, Minnesota

COMMANDER

Maj. Gen. Charles Kemper

SENIOR ENLISTED LEADER

Command Sgt. Maj. Stephen Whitehead

STRENGTH

672 – HQ Only

9,369 – All Subordinate Units





34th RED BULL INFANTRY DIVISION

2022 Accomplishments

In 2022, Minnesota's 34th Red Bull Infantry Division completed a significant update to the unit's organizational structure. Not only did the division welcome back the 34th Division Artillery, it consolidated the Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion companies and created the staffing of a Main Command Post Operational Detachment. These changes will enable the division to be a Multi-Domain Operations-capable force prepared for all five domains of warfare.

Members of the 34th participated in an exercise with I Corps and the Republic of Korea, supporting the development of fighting at the corps and division levels. The exercise, known as Combined Command Post Training 22.1, took place at Joint Base Lewis-McChord in Washington.

The Red Bulls also partnered with their aligned-for-training units from South Dakota to conduct a river crossing exercise at Camp Ripley.

In February, 35 Soldiers from the 177th Cyber Protection Team returned home after mobilizing in support of

the 780th Military Intelligence Brigade in a joint effort called Task Force Echo. The task force is comprised of America's most innovative cyberspace operations force, deterring and, when directed, defeating the nation's adversaries throughout cyberspace.

In late November, NATO Allied Land Command sponsored a land domain tactical-level Computer Assisted Exercise/Command Post Exercise called Loyal Leda 22. NATO Joint Force Training Center, headquartered in Bydgoszcz, Poland, directed the exercise. The 34th participated alongside seven partner nations to support the training of the NATO Rapid Deployment Corps – Turkey and to increase the interoperability of NATO Forces.

2023 Objectives

In early 2023, the division will participate in a NATO alliance training exercise, acting as a United States Army division under the Rapid Reaction Corps – France. The exercise, known as Orion, is designed to enhance interoperability between NATO partners in a large-scale combat operations environment.

The Red Bulls will also participate in a U.S. Army V Corps-led global exercise conducted by U.S. Army Europe and Africa, scheduled by U.S. European Command in May through June. The Immediate Response 23 exercise is part of a more extensive combination of linked field training exercises and live-fire exercises, separated in time and space, known together as Defender Europe 2023.

In support of the 'Army of 2030' vision, the 34th Red Bull Infantry Division is being reorganized into a heavy, reinforced division. Alongside two active-duty divisions, the 34th will be at the tip of the Army's reorganization, designed to develop a force-wide capability to converge effects on land, in the air, sea, space, and cyberspace. The new structure is optimized to neutralize enemy defense systems and seize key terrain. This division type provides a unique gap-crossing capability which helps to sustain the fight across contested terrain over time.

34th DIVISION ARTILLERY

2022 Accomplishments

The 34th Division Artillery's formal activation occurred in October 2022. Before that time, the unit, known as the DIVARTY, made impressive use of its earlier implementation year to fulfill the commander's goals of staffing, equipping, training, and integrating with other units.

By the conclusion of the first year of early implementation, the DIVARTY had exceeded its personnel and equipment benchmarks. Its first-year goal was to have 50% of its personnel and equipment. It ended the year with 114 of its eventual 200 personnel.

Following the aligned-for-training model designated for the 34th Infantry Division, the DIVARTY established training relationships with their aligned units, including with field artillery battalions in Minnesota, Iowa, Utah, North Carolina, and Idaho.

In 2022, the 34th DIVARTY team planned to hold two events simultaneously at the Arden Hills Army Training Site. One event was a symposium, intending to provide a forum for professional development, sharing best practices, and providing stewardship across the artillery,

or 'fires,' community. Soldiers from peer organizations in the active-duty Army and National Guard were in attendance. The second event was a workshop for master gunners from aligned-for-training units. This event introduced Soldiers to the 'Red Book,' a document that standardizes field artillery doctrine for the 34th Red Bull Infantry Division and sets a training model units can follow.

In November and December 2022, select personnel from DIVARTY supported the division's role in Loyal Leda 22, an exercise in Bydgoszcz, Poland.

2023 Objectives

Standardization and certification across the division for both assigned and aligned-for-training field artillery units is a priority of effort for the DIVARTY. With the 34th's formal alignment to V Corps in the Europe, DIVARTY seeks to build relationships and integrate through division to higher echelons for an enduring role as a field artillery organization.

The DIVARTY will also participate in training opportunities by supporting multiple exercises in 2023.

Select personnel will join other Red Bull Soldiers for Defender Europe 2023, an exercise in Europe.

The DIVARTY has also committed to supporting the North Carolina National Guard's 30th Armored Brigade Combat Team in an Exportable Combat Training Capabilities exercise, known as an XCTC, in 2023. By volunteering for collective training opportunities, DIVARTY troops can continue refining their skills, operational capacity, and equipment fielding while implementing strategic personnel growth until the unit's maturation date in 2025.



DIVARTY

The 34th Division Artillery, known as DIVARTY, is the first of 8 National Guard DIVARTYs to be stood up over the next several years. The DIVARTY increases capabilities at the division headquarters by providing long-range precision fires, command and control of division-level artillery assets, fire support, and synchronization of joint fires. The DIVARTY will continue to grow over the next few years, with formal reporting in 2025.

HEADQUARTERS

Arden Hills, Minnesota

COMMANDER

Col. Eric Wieland

SENIOR ENLISTED LEADER

Command Sgt. Maj. Matthew Erickson

STRENGTH

114



34 ECAB

The Inver Grove Heights-based 34th Expeditionary Combat Aviation Brigade is a National Guard unit that supports the 34th Red Bull Infantry Division and the State of Minnesota. They provide UH-60 Black Hawk and CH-47 Chinook helicopter aviation capabilities for federal and state missions.

HEADQUARTERS

Inver Grove Heights, Minnesota

COMMANDER

Col. Kevin O'Brien

SENIOR ENLISTED LEADER

Command Sgt. Maj. Marc Dempsy

STRENGTH

121 – HQ Only

981 – All Subordinate Units



34th EXPEDITIONARY COMBAT AVIATION BRIGADE

2022 Accomplishments

The 34th Expeditionary Combat Aviation Brigade had a lot on its plate in 2022. The unit welcomed home 58 Soldiers from Bravo Company, 1st Battalion of the 171st Aviation Regiment in January after their deployment in support of Operations Inherent Resolve and Spartan Shield. Bravo Company provided helicopter aviation support within five countries in their area of operations. They conducted 331 CH-47 Chinook aircraft flights and logged a total of 1,641 flight hours while transporting 6,960 passengers and 1,940,920 lbs. of cargo.

Bravo Company only had a little time to unwind from their deployment. In May, the company supported flood flight operations by flying two large water pumps to a dam near Pembina, North Dakota which was inaccessible road.

The brigade's missions ramped up in June with Echo Company, 2nd Assault Helicopter Battalion of the 147th Aviation Regiment participating in the Sustainment Training Center's rotation 22-08 at Camp Dodge, Iowa from 5-18 June, 2022. Almost simultaneously, Charlie Company of the 2nd General Support Aviation Battalion

of the 211th Aviation Regiment took part in the National Training Center's rotation 22-08 at Fort Irwin, California, in support of the Pennsylvania National Guard's 56th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 28th Infantry Division.

The brigade continued to support the COVID-19 mission by deploying Soldiers to long-term care facilities and testing facilities. The unit continued its work with Croatian aviation units as a part of the DoD's State Partnership Program, exchanging best practices and experience while the Croatians fielded new UH-60M Black Hawk helicopters. North of the border, the brigade conducted air assault operations training partnering with Canada's Lake Superior Scottish Infantry Regiment.

2023 Objectives

In 2023, the brigade plans to conduct training to maximize available resources, sustaining personnel readiness and attaining the highest collective training level. This will ensure the unit can provide ready, adaptable, flexible, and agile aviation forces to support federal, state, and local missions. The 2nd Assault

Helicopter Battalion of the 147th Aviation Regiment will participate in the Joint Readiness Training Center's training rotation 23-08 at Fort Polk, Louisiana. Foxtrot Company, 1st General Support Aviation Battalion of the 189th Aviation Regiment, will participate also participate in training rotation 23-08.5, supporting the Hawaii National Guard's 29th Infantry Brigade Combat Team with air traffic services. The 834th Aviation Support Battalion will attend the Sustainment Training Center's rotation 23-04 at Camp Dodge, Iowa.

The brigade will undergo an organizational structure change 2024, converting the 34th Expeditionary Combat Aviation Brigade to a new Heavy Combat Aviation Brigade. This change will add two AH-64 Apache helicopter attack battalions and increase the brigade headquarters personnel to align with the emerging requirements of the 34th Red Bull Infantry Division.

1st ARMORED BRIGADE COMBAT TEAM

2022 Accomplishments

From January through February of 2022, the 1st Armored Brigade Combat Team of the 34th Red Bull Infantry Division welcomed home about 1,000 Soldiers from Task Force 1-194, also known as Task Force Bastards, led by Lt. Col. Jacob Helgestad and Command Sgt. Maj. Travis Mancke. The task force wrapped up a deployment, serving as the U.S. Central Command's Regional Response Force in support of Operation Spartan Shield. Task Force Bastard supported the withdrawal from Afghanistan, known as Operation Allies Refuge, and exercises Brightstar 2021 in Egypt, and Gulf Gunnery in Kuwait.

At the end of April, about 100 Soldiers from the Little Falls-based 134th Brigade Support Battalion and the Duluth-based 1st Squadron, 94th Cavalry Regiment supported flood operations in Crookston, Minnesota. On June 2, the 94th also mobilized to International Falls, with about 160 Soldiers reinforced by 50 more Soldiers from the Brainerd-based 1st Combined Arms Battalion of the 194th Armor Regiment.

In May, the New Ulm-based 1st Battalion, 125th Field Artillery Regiment received and trained on 18 of the Army's newest M109A7 Paladin howitzers. This effort is one of the largest modernization efforts for Minnesota's field artillery community in more than two decades, taking more than two months to complete the full fielding and operational training on the systems.

In July 2022, the brigade partnered with Estonian Soldiers who trained with the 334th Brigade Engineer Battalion during their annual training at Camp Ripley. In addition to international partnerships, Soldiers with 94th partnered with Michigan National Guard's 1437th Multi-role Bridge Company, to conduct a 'wet gap' river crossing with their M2/M3 Bradley Fighting Vehicles over a stretch of the Mississippi River at Camp Ripley, supporting a multi-echelon training exercise.

During 2022, the 334th assumed command of Minnesota's National Guard Reaction Force reserve mission and conducted training and validation at Camp Ripley.

In September, Brigade Commander, Army Col. Charles Rankin, presented Task Force Bastards Commander, Army Lt. Col. Jacob Helgestad, with the Deployment Excellence Award for 2021. This recognition for the large deploying unit category acknowledged the many accomplishments achieved while moving from stateside to overseas in support of Operation Spartan Shield.

2023 Objectives

In 2023, the 1st Armor Brigade Combat Team will participate in two significant training exercises, one in North Macedonia and one in France. The Orion exercise in France will be one of the largest military exercises to be executed in France in the past two decades. They will perform duties as the division asset to oversee this training exercise. In North Macedonia, the 2nd Battalion, 135th Infantry Regiment will be part of a NATO multinational exercise.



1 ABCT

The Rosemount-based 1st Armored Brigade Combat Team of the 34th Red Bull Infantry Division consists of a headquarters and eight major subordinate commands. More than 4,800 Soldiers make up the brigade's combined arms, armor, cavalry, infantry, artillery, engineer, and brigade support battalions. They constitute more than half of the Minnesota National Guard's total Solider force. The brigade provides subordinate commands with timely and effective guidance to support state and federal requirements.

HEADQUARTERS

Rosemount, Minnesota

COMMANDER

Col. Charles Rankin

SENIOR ENLISTED LEADER

Command Sgt. Maj.

Rian Hofstad

STRENGTH

134 – HQ Only

4,732 – All Subordinate Units



347 RSG

The mission of Minnesota's 347th Regional Support Group is to deploy and provide life support and command and control of military base operations. The unit's responsibilities include leading the reception, staging, onward movement, and integration of supporting forces as they arrive, managing facilities, and providing administrative, medical, and logistical support for troop services on a base camp. The brigade's companies also provide support for units during homeland security, homeland defense, and other civil support missions.

HEADQUARTERS

Brooklyn Park, MN

COMMANDER

Col. Stephen Burggraff

SENIOR ENLISTED LEADER

Command Sgt. Maj. Christian Hudson

STRENGTH

106 – HQ Only

1206 – All Subordinate Units





347th REGIONAL SUPPORT GROUP

Accomplishments

In 2022, the 347th Regional Support Group deployed multiple units to various locations. Soldiers from the Headquarters Company mobilized to Iraq and Kuwait to support Combined Joint Task Force – Operation Inherent Resolve, providing support for base operations. Soldiers from the 147th Human Resources Company mobilized to Kuwait, providing personnel support services and theater gateway operations support. Soldiers from the 434th Support Maintenance Company mobilized to the South West Border. Soldiers from the 147th Finance Detachment also mobilized to Poland, where they provided financial support and services.

In preparation for multiple mobilizations, and seamless full-time brigade operations, the headquarters company completed a transition of duties and responsibilities to Soldiers remaining in Minnesota, as the deployed unit's

supporting rear detachment. The brigade participated in training exercises such as Arctic Care in Kodiak, Alaska, and Diamond Saber at Fort Dix, New Jersey. The unit also went through pre-mobilization training, consisting of individual weapons qualification on the M17 pistol, M4 carbine, crew-served weapons, and counter-unmanned aircraft systems as well as counter-improvised explosive devices training.

Objectives

2023 will bring more deployments for units of the 347th Regional Support Group. Soldiers from the 147th Human Resources Company will relieve currently deployed Soldiers from their company, continuing the mission of providing personnel support services and theater gateway operations support in Kuwait. The 1903rd

Acquisition Team will mobilize and deploy to Djibouti to support naval contracting operations. Soldiers with the brigade's headquarters company, the 147th Human Resources Company, the 147th Finance Detachment and the 434th Support Maintenance Company will also be returning home and reintegrating after their current deployments.

The 224th Transportation Company will participate in the Golden Coyote training exercise in South Dakota, consisting of dozens of military units from across the United States. The 204th Medical Company will participate in a training exercise near Cass Lake, Minnesota, where they will conduct a multi-service operation, providing medical care to the local population.

84th TROOP COMMAND

2022 Accomplishments

In 2022, the 84th Troop Command displayed incredible resilience. They supported the Minnesota National Guard's activation of the 34th Military Police Company by providing security and support during the Kim Potter Trial. The 1st Battalion, 151st Field Artillery Regiment provided approximately 200 Soldiers to support as Certified Nursing Assistants/Temporary Nurse Aides in many of the state's long-term care facilities during staffing shortages.

The unit also staffed several COVID-19 community-based testing sites, where they oversaw the processing of 141,944 tests.

In addition, the unit's 55th Civil Support Team supported numerous high-profile sporting events.

Spc. Nathaniel Miska, a carpentry and masonry specialist from the 850th Engineer Construction Company, was named the Soldier of the Year for both the state and National Guard Bureau's Region IV area. He also participated in the National Guard Bureau's National Soldier of the Year competition in Nashville, Tennessee,

and was selected to represent the National Guard at the Army-wide best squad competition.

The 434th Chemical Company deployed in July 2021 in support of Operation Spartan Shield, in Kuwait, returning home in April 2022. Their mission was to maintain command and control of the Middle East's chemical, radiological, and nuclear reconnaissance, and surveillance assets. The company was also prepared to provide decontamination operations for U.S. Central Command across the Middle East.

After validation, the 34th Military Police Company became the National Guard Reaction Force for the Twin Cities metropolitan area.

The Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, and Explosives Enhanced Response Force Package achieved exemplary results on their external evaluation.

2023 Objectives

84th Troop Command's vision of the future includes a broad spectrum of capable units ready to deploy at home or abroad. The organization modernized over the year by adding a Tactical Operations Command Trailer within the 55th Civil Support Team, M53A1 protective masks within the 434th Chemical Company, Acoustic Hailing Device, and M2A1 machine guns within the 34th Military Police Company. They have also built, strengthened, and maintained the partnerships created throughout the year and look forward to making future partnerships in 2023.



84 TC

The 84th Troop Command, headquartered in Cambridge, maintains control of field artillery, military police, engineer, and civil support forces, providing a force capable of performing a wide variety of missions. A specialized command with a unique mission, the 84th Troop Command maintains training standards to remain ready to support federal missions in addition to conducting domestic operations throughout the state.

HEADQUARTERS

Cambridge, Minnesota

COMMANDER

Col. Scott Rohweder

SENIOR ENLISTED LEADER

Command Sgt. Maj.
Katie Blackwell

STRENGTH

37 - HQ Only
1505 - All Subordinate Units



175 RTI

The 175th Regiment's mission is to develop, educate and train Soldiers, leaders and technical advisors in a premiere training environment to be prepared for 21st Century missions.

The Camp Ripley-based 175th Regiment Regional Training Institute provides combat arms, Military Occupational Specialty and leadership training to the U.S. Army to prepare Soldiers and units for deployment at maximum combat readiness levels.

HEADQUARTERS

Camp Ripley, Minnesota

COMMANDER

Col. Jason Benson

SENIOR ENLISTED LEADER

Command Sgt. Maj. Shane Hybben

STRENGTH

26 - HQ Only

108 - All Subordinate Units





175th REGIONAL TRAINING INSTITUTE

Each year hundreds of Soldiers from the National Guard, reserve and active components travel to Camp Ripley to attend one of more than 30 courses offered by the unit. The institute ensures that all courses meet the requirements of all components, supporting the 'One Army School System' standard.

Two of the courses offered at the 175th Regional Training Institute qualify Soldiers for the wheeled and tracked vehicle recovery additional skills identifiers. The regiment also offers Infantry Advanced Leader courses, Maneuver Senior Leader courses, and more than ten functional area courses. The institute also contributes to the commissioned officer ranks by offering phases I and II of Officer Candidate School and Phase II of Warrant Officer Candidate School.

2022 Accomplishments

In 2022, the 175th provided instruction to more than 848 Soldiers from across the country. The institute's Officer Candidate School graduated 15 candidates with 13 commissioning and two candidates receiving eligibility certificates. Phase I of the school, was comprised of 68 officer candidates from four states, resulting in 58 officer candidates advancing to phase II in their respective states. The Warrant Officer Candidate School graduated 14 candidates with nine commissioning and five receiving a certificate of eligibility.

2023 Objectives

In 2023, 175th Regiment, Regional Training Institute, will continue to support and improve upon the One Army School System standard. The unit will prepare for and train upwards of 800 active duty, National Guard, and Army Reserve Soldiers from across the U.S. Army.

Lastly, the regiment will provide realistic and valuable learning experiences, utilizing the most experienced and professional cadre to produce skilled, professional, and adaptive leaders.

Camp Ripley TRAINING CENTER

2022 Accomplishments

Minnesota's Camp Ripley is a 53,000-acre regional training center near Little Falls whose mission is to provide superior customer service, facilities, and resources, empowering organizations to train in realistic environments while maintaining positive relationships throughout the local and regional community.

In 2022, Camp Ripley focused on the local community, opening its gates to surrounding community members, and hosting students from local elementary, middle, and high schools. Camp Ripley welcomed many veteran organizations, hosting annual meetings, recognition dinners, and reunions.

Camp Ripley welcomed back Minnesota's Norwegian partners, hosting them for the local side of the 49th annual U.S. Norwegian Reciprocal Troop Exchange program, known as NOREX, in anticipation of the upcoming 50th exchange in 2023.

Camp Ripley again hosted members of the Croatian Armed Forces as part of the DoD's State Partnership Program, continuing the longstanding and essential partnership. Camp Ripley also welcomed more than six international partners and twelve other states' who trained on Camp Ripley in 2022.

Camp Ripley has the honor of being the home of the U.S. Coast Guard's cold-water dive course. Camp Ripley also welcomed the U.S. Navy's Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit school, which operated on the frozen lakes.

Camp Ripley completed the historic Nelson Hall renovation, moving its base headquarters back to its original home. Initially built in 1934, the building now meets modern demands while keeping many beautiful, historic features.

Camp Ripley completed a new Fire Hall barracks that houses the only full-time firefighting team north of Saint Cloud, assisting in emergency responses on and off base.

Camp Ripley completed the new 15-acre Joint Emergency Response Training area which provides realistic simulations of crises including pipeline explosions, tanker truck crashes, and hazardous material leaks. This joint venture with the Minnesota Department of Safety offers state-of-the-art facilities where first responders can train in any environment for disasters.

2023 Objectives

In 2023, Camp Ripley will continue to engage with surrounding communities, hosting annual hunts for Veterans and youth events, helping visitors learn about Camp Ripley's conservation efforts and the daily accomplishments of the National Guard.

Camp Ripley will also focus on hosting winter operations training and continuing to be the premier training site for our partners. Camp Ripley will support the beginning of the new Minnesota Military and Veterans' Museum to be built near Minnesota's Little Falls Veterans Cemetery.

Camp Ripley will continue to meet the National Guard's increasing demands, work toward increasing railroad access for logistics and building more facilities for visitors to live and train.

Camp Ripley's long-term goals continue to be aligned with supporting the modern force, continually improving capabilities and training areas to support new equipment and technology.



CRTC

Camp Ripley, located near Little Falls, Minnesota, is a 53,000-acre regional training center hosting numerous ranges and state-of-the-art facilities to support the training requirements of military and civilian agencies.

The training center provides service, resources and facilities that empower organizations to conduct essential training. Supporting a wide range of customers, from local law enforcement agencies to all branches of the Department of Defense, Camp Ripley is a primary training facility for Minnesota National Guard units.

HEADQUARTERS

Little Falls, Minnesota

COMMANDER

Brig. Gen. Lowell Kruse

Col. Bryce Erickson

SENIOR ENLISTED LEADER

Command Sgt. Maj. Marcus Erickson

STRENGTH

820 Employees



133 AW

The 133rd Airlift Wing is a Minnesota National Guard flying wing headquartered at the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport. Utilizing the C-130H3 Hercules aircraft, the Wing provides the U.S. Air Force with tactical airlift capabilities to transport troops, cargo, and medical patients across the globe in addition to providing the citizens of Minnesota with domestic operations and disaster response support.

HEADQUARTERS

Saint Paul, Minnesota

COMMANDER

Col. James Cleet

SENIOR ENLISTED LEADER

Command Chief Master Sgt.

Mark Legvold

STRENGTH

1,187 Airmen





133rd AIRLIFT WING

2022 Accomplishments

Minnesota's Saint Paul-based 133rd Airlift Wing has a long-deserved reputation as a unit ready to answer the state and nation's call. In 2022 the 133rd continued to strengthen its reputation as a premier National Guard airlift wing. This year alone, they deployed 272 Airmen to 14 countries for a total of 17,800 federal deployment days and 718 state active duty days.

2022 began with a one-year delayed celebration of the 133rd Airlift Wing's centennial by hosting a military ball at Union Depot in Saint Paul. The event highlighted all the wing has accomplished in the last 100 years. The unit, and the entire Minnesota National Guard, welcomed the opportunity to celebrate with the state's Commander in Chief, Governor Tim Walz. The governor attended the banquet as the keynote speaker and saw firsthand the accomplishments of his 133rd Airmen.

Sights remain set on procuring newer C-130J Super Hercules aircraft to improve mission efficiency further, utilize new technologies, and increase our ability to deliver logistics anytime, anywhere for our state and nation. In May, the first C-130H3 Hercules aircraft, modified with new composite eight-bladed propellers, arrived at the wing. These advanced propellers deliver more power and efficiency while also reducing required

maintenance. The 133rd Airlift Wing expects to complete the propulsion modifications of the entire fleet in mid-2023.

In June, the 133rd Airlift Wing completed a unit-wide large-scale readiness exercise with the goal of training multi-capable Airmen prepared to face the nation's adversaries. The exercise spanned 10 days and six locations with over 1,000 Airmen. The Airmen trained outside of the comfort zones of their specific Air Force career specialties and reacted to more than 550 combat scenarios.

Later, in the summer, wing leadership and top-performing Airmen traveled to the National Guard Association of the United States conference in Columbus, Ohio, where Air Force Lt. Gen. Michael Loh, director of the Air National Guard, and Chief Master Sgt. Maurice Williams, the command chief of the Air National Guard, bestowed to the Minnesotans the Curtis N. "Rusty" Metcalf award. The award is presented annually to the most outstanding Air National Guard Tanker or Airlift Wing.

Throughout the year, Airmen of the 133rd Airlift Wing expanded partnerships through numerous engagements and training opportunities. Senator Amy Klobuchar and

Congresswoman Angie Craig visited the wing to further engage with Minnesota National Guard leadership on aircraft modernization and recapitalization priorities. Between April and August, the 133rd deployed Airmen across the globe for training. From Antarctica to Japan and right here at home, Airmen trained alongside partners to share best practices, problem-solve, and achieve mutual goals.

2023 Objectives

The 133rd Airlift Wing will kick off 2023 by presenting a Distinguished Flying Cross to Air Force Maj. Katie Lunning for her heroism during the evacuation of Kabul, Afghanistan. Lunning will become the first ever Air National Guard flight nurse to receive this honor. The wing will continue the modernization of the fleet and maintain readiness through training, engagement, and aircraft upgrades. By mid-year, all eight C-130H3 Hercules aircrafts will be equipped with the new eight-bladed propellers.

Finally, large groups of Airmen will support air expeditionary forces, reserve component deployments and training worldwide, maintaining a high level of readiness.

148th FIGHTER WING

2022 Accomplishments

In 2022, nearly half of the unit's personnel deployed across ten countries in southwest Asia and Africa to support federal missions.

In response to the withdrawal from Afghanistan, 30 Airmen deployed stateside to Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, New Jersey, and Holloman Air Force Base, New Mexico, to support resettling Afghan refugees as a part of Operation Allies Welcome, a U.S. Northern Command mission.

About 100 Airmen in varying career fields, including security forces, civil engineering, fire protection, administration, and more, deployed to military bases in Kuwait, Qatar, Djibouti, Niger, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and the United Arab Emirates for six months in support of several federal missions.

More than 350 personnel and 12 of the wing's F-16s deployed to the 378th Air Expeditionary Wing, Prince Sultan Air Base in Saudi Arabia, in support of Operations

Inherent Resolve and Spartan Shield. While deployed as the 179th Expeditionary Fighter Squadron, Minnesota National Guard members supported the U.S. Air Forces Central Command for 115 days, flying 766 individual aircraft combat missions, conducting 79 interceptions, or the moving of one aircraft to move up on another aircraft in flight. While overseas, personnel and aircraft deployed to Thumrait Air Base in Oman and to Cairo, Egypt, for first-of-their-kind Agile Combat Employment (ACE) missions showcasing effective coalition air power and collaboration.

2023 Objectives

In 2023, the 148th Fighter Wing will focus on recruiting and retaining Airmen, modernizing facilities and aircraft, military operating airspace, and building crucial community partnerships. The 148th will also dedicate efforts to building a team reflective of our community. The unit will continue to be ready to succeed against current and future threats.



148 FW

The Duluth-based 148th Fighter Wing is an F-16CM 'Block 50' Fighting Falcon aircraft equipped National Guard flying wing comprised of more than 1,000 Airmen. The 148th provides mission-ready Airmen and equipment to meet state and federal missions while promoting critical partnerships. The 148th Fighter Wing flies the newest and most capable F-16 model in the Air Force fleet. The 148th is one of only two National Guard wings trained to provide suppression of enemy air defense support, to suppress enemy surface-based air defenses. When called upon, the 148th is also a NORAD Aerospace Control alert-trained flying wing capable of defending the sovereignty of North America.

HEADQUARTERS

Duluth, Minnesota

COMMANDER

Col. Nathan Aysta

SENIOR ENLISTED LEADER

Command Chief Master Sgt.

Jozef Miketin

STRENGTH

1,034 Airmen



MN DMA

The Minnesota Department of Military Affairs is the state agency that oversees and supports the military operations of the National Guard when it is operating under state control by the authority of Title 32, United States Code (USC).

HEADQUARTERS

Saint Paul, Minnesota

COMMISSIONER

Maj. Gen. Shawn Manke

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Mr. Donald Kerr

STRENGTH

380 Employees



Composition

The Minnesota Department of Military Affairs is comprised of and includes the military forces of the state, the Office of the Adjutant General, all military reservations, installations, armories, air bases, and facilities owned or controlled by the state for military purposes, as well as civilians employed by the state for the administration of the military department.

Strategies

The department integrates state resources to match the adjutant general's priorities of people, modernization, and partnerships. The department accomplishes this by actively engaging with the staff sections of the Minnesota National Guard, collaborating regarding opportunities and constraints that the state agency lends to mission support.

When units of the National Guard are called into state service, the agency provides contracting and direct logistical support to ensure that units have the resources necessary to provide the desired support to local authorities as directed by the governor. Additionally, the department is the primary conduit for communications with other State of Minnesota executive branch agencies and the Minnesota Legislature.

Minnesota Department of MILITARY AFFAIRS

Major Programs

- The enlistment incentives program supports and manages enlistment and retention incentives and tuition reimbursement programs for members of the National Guard.
- The maintenance of military training facilities program maintains the state's facilities used to train and house Minnesota National Guard members and protect the state's investment in facilities.
- General support provides the general administrative, financial, accounting, budgeting, project management, strategic planning, and human resource support necessary for the operation of the department.
- Emergency services funds response activities ordered by the governor's activation of the National Guard.

Accomplishments

Using the experience and lessons learned from the unprecedented requirements for state military service in 2020 and 2021, the agency worked with federal officials and staff in the National Guard to improve the administration of state active service for units. Additionally, the department worked to change policies and practices to manage benefits to service members in state service, aligning as closely as possible with federal benefits. The department also developed procedures to help manage activation situations that might require alternating between state and federal orders, as had been found necessary during previous COVID-19 response missions.

2022 brought another year of historically heavy use of the Minnesota National Guard in support of local authorities. The agency provided material support and facilitated the training of service members to become certified nursing assistants to fill a critical gap in long-term care facilities and hospitals. The training was coordinated through Minnesota State Colleges

and Universities. Soldiers were also activated in the spring to protect infrastructure in three separate counties in northern and northwestern Minnesota. Additional Soldiers were activated under the Emergency Management Assistance Compact to provide aviation support during a flood event in North Dakota.

During the 2022 legislative session, the agency worked with the Minnesota Legislature to enact timely updates to the Minnesota Code of Military Justice that enhanced the chain of command's ability to maintain good order and discipline, particularly to improve the timeliness of investigations regarding allegations of sexual assault.

2023 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES



Minnesota's elected officials continue to support and advocate for the Minnesota National Guard and our organizational priorities.

Governor Tim Walz continues to serve as the Council of Governors co-chairperson and leads the Military Matters Committee.

Minnesota's members of Congress represent a bipartisan delegation that are actively engaged in efforts to improve military service, our missions, and our partnerships. Several representatives serve as members on legislative caucuses that align with the Minnesota National Guard and military service. These include the:

- National Guard Caucus
- Army Caucus
- STARBASE Caucus
- Joint Strike Fighter Caucus
- Friends of Norway Caucus
- USO Caucus

The 2023 National Defense Authorization Act, known as the NDAA, includes several sections which directly support the Minnesota National Guard's campaign plan and established legislative priorities.

IMMEDIATE PRIORITIES

- C-130 Total Aircraft Inventory - Critical
 - Sustain 271 total C-130 aircraft in inventory
- Recapitalize to C130J Super Hercules aircraft
 - Continued C-130H3 Hercules modernization until C-130J fielding across National Guard
- Fix Fiscal Year 2018 NDAA Unspecified Minor Military Construction changes
 - Realign local approval authority threshold (\$750K) to authorized project amount (\$4M)

The Minnesota National Guard has three immediate legislative priorities for 2023 and the Fiscal Year 2024 NDAA.

The most critical of the three priorities is sustaining the nation-wide total aircraft inventory of C-130 Hercules aircraft at 271. This priority ensures that the 133rd Airlift Wing maintains its ability to support state and federal flying missions. Additionally, we seek continued C-130H3 Hercules aircraft modernization until the

C-130J Super Hercules is fielded across the National Guard.

The following actions ensure short-term success: Fiscal year 2023 National Defense Authorization Act, Section 126, "The Secretary of the Air Force shall maintain a total inventory of C-130 aircraft of not less than 271 aircraft," and "The Secretary of the Air Force may not reduce the total number of C-130 aircraft assigned to the National Guard" (both through September 30, 2023)." Budget appropriations are expected to fund 16 additional C-130J Super Hercules aircraft to the National Guard.

The Guard's third immediate priority involves a fix to the 2018 NDAA Unspecified Minor Military Construction changes, as it has been a challenge to appropriately execute projects due to inflation and strict timelines. We seek to realign the local approval authority threshold of \$750,000 to an authorized project amount of \$4 million. With support from the Minnesota delegation, the National Guard will benefit from more flexibility on spending thresholds.



ENDURING PRIORITIES

- **TRICARE reform**
Zero-cost service member TRICARE to ensure medical readiness
- **Recapitalize to 5th generation fighter aircraft**
Recapitalize Reserve Component fleet concurrently and proportionally to Active Duty
- **STARBASE funding**
Continue to fund \$50M per year, until permanent funding solution

The Minnesota Guard has three enduring priorities:

First, military healthcare reform has been an enduring priority across the reserve component. The primary goal is to provide zero-cost TRICARE to all service members, regardless of their service status. Congress is taking steps to make this a reality. The 2023 NDAA includes the following language, “The Secretary of Defense may conduct a study on cost effects of expanding eligibility for TRICARE Reserve Select to include all members of the reserve component.”

Second, the Guard seeks to have the same modern equipment as its active-duty counterparts by recapitalizing to fifth generation fighter such as the modern F-35 Lightning II fighter aircraft. These aircraft would modernize the 148th Fighter Wing’s fleet and ensure their lethality and survivability against near-peer threats.

Third, STARBASE Minnesota has educated and inspired more than 72,000 youth in science, technology, engineering, and math since its inception in 1993. This 501(c)3 nonprofit organization is a Department of Defense program and is supported by the Minnesota National Guard. The Guard seeks to have a permanent funding solution to maintain this valuable program. The NDAA approved \$50 million for fiscal year 2023.

Executive Branch

GOVERNOR

Tim Walz

LT. GOVERNOR

Peggy Flanagan

SECRETARY OF STATE

Steve Simon

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Keith Ellison

STATE AUDITOR

Julie Blaha

U.S. Senators

SENATOR

Amy Klobuchar

SENATOR

Tina Smith

U.S. Representatives

DISTRICT 1

Jim Hagedorn, Brad Finstad

DISTRICT 5

Ilhan Omar

DISTRICT 2

Angie Craig

DISTRICT 6

Tom Emmer

DISTRICT 3

Dean Phillips

DISTRICT 7

Michelle Fischbach

DISTRICT 4

Betty McCollum

DISTRICT 8

Pete Stauber



ECONOMIC IMPACT

Federal Master Cooperative Agreement: Indirect federal funding that reimburses state expenses for services and goods paid for using state general funds in accordance with an agreement between the adjutant general and the chief of the National Guard Bureau. These funds are accounted for separately from the agency's budget.

State Funding: Services and purchases that are paid for using funds appropriated by the Minnesota's Legislature to the Department of Military Affairs in the State General Fund, including the state share of maintenance costs for facilities jointly supported by the federal and state governments.

Federal Impact: Direct federal funding of operations and maintenance, Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, federal technician salaries, active guard and reserve salaries, and pay to service members for military training. While individual lines of this chart are broken out by location, the total is inclusive of several other federal funding subcategories, such as federal education benefits used by members and federal dollars that are not location specific.

*Financial figures are based on the state fiscal year ending June 30 and federal fiscal year ending Sept. 30.

	Federal Congressional District	State Legislative District	Federal Master Cooperative Agreement	State Funding
Albert Lea	1	27A	\$38,970	\$51,795
Alexandria	7	08B	\$29,141	\$74,705
Anoka	6	35A	\$26,615	\$42,429
Appleton	7	20A	\$96,264	\$49,372
Arden Hills	4	42A	\$1,530,951	\$159,225
Austin	1	27B	\$38,133	\$41,440
Bemidji	7	05A	\$133,777	\$55,981
Bloomington	3	50B	\$63,015	\$90,809
Brainerd	8	10A	\$1,081,235	\$99,610
Brooklyn Park	3	36B	\$33,226	\$33,376
Cambridge	8	32A	\$70,604	\$94,879
Chisholm	8	06A	\$35,282	\$367,271
Cloquet	8	11A	\$21,349	\$53,338
Cottage Grove	2	54A	\$92,198	\$147,423
Crookston	7	01B	\$33,768	\$167,973
Detroit Lakes	7	04B	\$40,718	\$29,351
Duluth	8	03B	\$68,038	\$42,550
Duluth (Air Base)	8	03B	\$7,459,364	\$2,205,117
Fairmont	1	23A	\$45,436	\$53,037
Faribault	1	24B	\$99,978	\$156,849
Fergus Falls	7	08A	\$74,224	\$17,829
Grand Rapids	8	05B	\$23,452	\$12,753
Hastings	2	21A	\$24,691	\$32,100
Hibbing	8	06A	\$58,724	\$262,498
Hutchinson	7	18B	\$27,131	\$218,723
Inver Grove Heights	2	52B	\$66,161	\$116,831
Jackson	1	23A	\$33,352	\$35,671
Litchfield	7	18A	\$17,282	\$15,919
Little Falls (Camp Ripley)	8	09B	\$40,675,476	\$5,592,208
Luverne	1	22A	\$45,135	\$19,490
Madison	7	16A	\$25,823	\$19,962
Mankato	1	19B	\$74,174	\$208,494
Marshall	7	16A	\$39,499	\$38,616
Minneapolis	5	60A	\$118,520	\$126,980
Mpls/St Paul (Air Base)	5	63B	\$3,190,617	\$588,984
Montevideo	7	17A	\$106,581	\$93,706
Monticello	6	29B	\$2,732	\$3,490
Moorhead	7	04A	\$62,049	\$80,841
Morris	7	12A	\$32,139	\$32,097
New Ulm	1	16B	\$8,980,852	\$45,972
Olivia	7	17A	\$38,520	\$55,339
Ortonville	7	12A	\$37,791	\$51,538
Owatonna	1	24A	\$29,962	\$30,576
Pine City	8	11B	\$32,699	\$32,302
Pipestone	7	22A	\$25,918	\$28,545
Red Wing	2	21A	\$35,525	\$53,528
Redwood Falls	7	16B	\$34,661	\$53,059
Rochester	1	26A	\$214,053	\$29,063
Rosemount	2	57B	\$245,298	\$109,659
Sauk Centre	6	14B	\$28,628	\$22,406
Saint Cloud	7	15B	\$1,483,018	\$3,946,552
Saint James	1	23B	\$27,800	\$38,011
Saint Paul (& East St. Paul)	4	65B	\$8,589,023	\$28,930,811
Saint Peter	1	19A	\$41,367	\$663,382
Stillwater	6	39B	\$101,548	\$230,790
Thief River Falls	7	01A	\$29,197	\$48,322
Wadena	8	09A	\$22,352	\$17,775
West St Paul	2	52A	\$65,211	\$114,672
Willmar	7	17B	\$59,531	\$28,175
Winona	1	28A	\$43,553	\$37,497



2022 IMPACT TOTALS

Federal Funding 93%

State Funding 7%

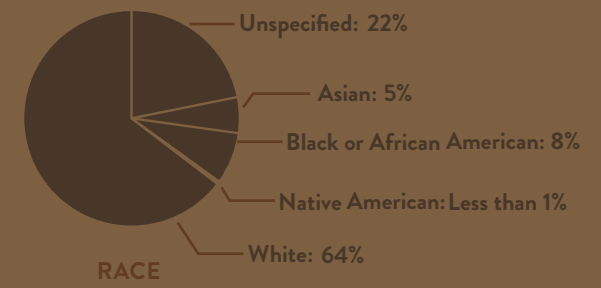
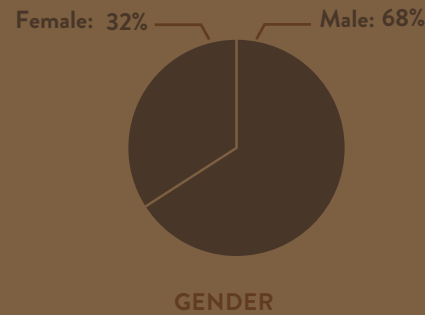
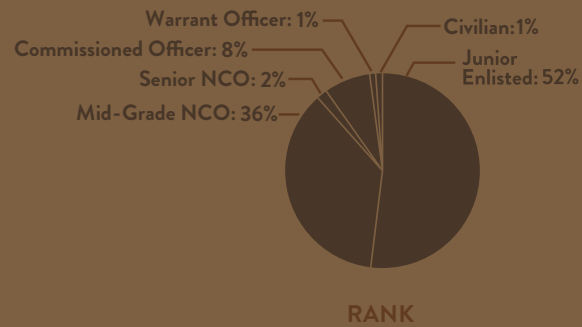
Assigned Members 13,846

Federal Funding \$484,316,343

State Funding \$52,789,074

Impact per Member \$45,981

STATE TUITION REIMBURSEMENT DEMOGRAPHICS





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