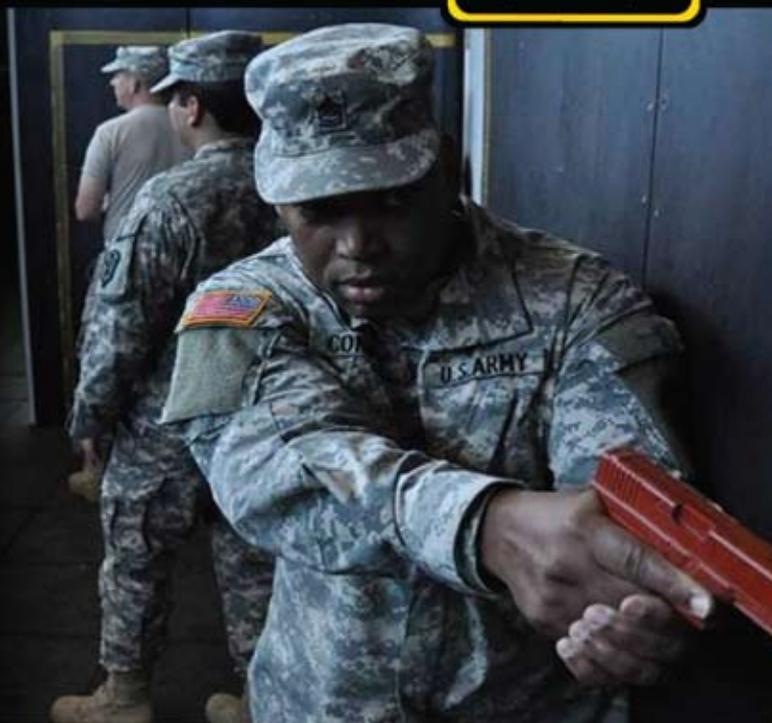


# MIRG *MAGAZINE*

VOL. 4  
ISSUE 1  
FALL 2010



## THE MANY FACES OF TRAINING



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**ON THE COVER** • Top left to right: Staff Sgt. Michael Chamberlain serves the nation by training service dogs to assist Wounded Warriors, photo by Spc. Erika Montano. Sgt. Daniel Acree participates in the 2010 Best Warrior Competition, photo by Timothy Hale. Bottom left to right: Spc. Aaron Thomas participates in the 2010 Best Warrior Competition, photo by Sgt. Joshua Risner. Sgt. 1st Class George Conway, 2400th Military Intelligence Group (MIG), leads his team in room clearing procedures during the unit's annual training in San Diego, Calif., photo by Maj. Sharon Filadelfia.

# FROM THE COMMANDING GENERAL

As we head into the 2010 holiday season and the end of the calendar year, I want to take this opportunity to wish all the Soldiers, Families, and friends of the Military Intelligence Readiness Command a joyous and peaceful holiday season.

With the ongoing battle against terrorism, many MIRC Soldiers will be away from their Families and friends over Thanksgiving, Christmas, Hanukkah and New Year's. Separation from Family and loved ones is tough on those deployed and those at home, especially over the holidays. Many of you have already experienced such separations and many more of you will experience this type of separation in the future. Please take a moment to remember all these members of the MIRC Family in your thoughts and prayers.

In the midst of celebration and good cheer, remember that the holidays should also be a time of safety. I ask you to use good judgment to plan your trips and evenings out wisely. Take into consideration traffic, weather, and alcohol consumption. Don't be a statistic. I want all MIRC Soldiers to be standing in morning formation at January Battle Assembly.

The MIRC has accomplished many things in 2010. In the December 2009 issue of this magazine I mentioned many objectives and goals for 2010. One was the TPU Officer Career Management program. Now called the Career Management Office (CMO), the CMO team has provided guidance in professional development, assisting over 100 officers in finding the right position in units, transferring branches, and preparing board files. The team is ready to step in and assist MI officers who aren't familiar with policies and procedures and will be visiting units to explain the concept more fully. Right now this program is geared toward TPU officers but we are working hard to expand assistance to the NCO Corps. The CMO is here for you...contact the team to see how they can help.

We also have built upon VOFORGEN or "Volunteer Force Generation" in our quest to match up qualified, trained professionals with critical deployment missions. In the past year, 30 Soldiers have volunteered and have served in MI and non-MI missions in support of both Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. The OPORD that explains VOFORGEN has been sent to the field and is also posted on the MIRC website on AKO.

Leaders within the MIRC are working closely with our partner in the intelligence community, Intelligence and Security Command (INSCOM), to ensure that junior officers and enlisted personnel receive the training and experience necessary to become stronger, more effective Intelligence personnel and leaders. The Junior Officer Development Program (JOPD) and the Junior Enlisted Development Program (JEPD) are avenues that Soldiers can use

to find opportunities for active duty assignments to develop their technical and leadership skill sets inside INSCOM formations. This initiative has received rave reviews from those who have participated.

I believe in these and other programs as a successful and productive means of training and mentoring our future leaders of the Army Reserve and the Military Intelligence Corps. I encourage all Soldiers to seek out the assistance and opportunities provided as you start and then move up through your MI careers.



*Brig. Gen. James "Boe" Young Commanding General of The Military Intelligence Readiness Command*

Our missions will continue into 2011. The MIRC currently has multiple units either deployed or getting ready to deploy. Detachment 25, 203rd MI Battalion, Weapons Intelligence Company, has Weapons Intelligence Investigators spread out across 15 Forward Operating Bases in Iraq, embedded with Explosive Ordnance Detachment (EOD) Teams and working in very austere remote locations, hand in hand with Iraqi Security Forces. After a long, successful mission, the detachment is getting ready to return home. The 325th MI Battalion is also in Iraq and contributing to the intelligence mission and transition every day.

Detachment 26, 203rd MI Battalion, and the 373rd MI Battalion (BfSB) are moving quickly through pre-mobilization training and SRP, ramping up for movement into theater. Alpha Company, 345th MI Battalion is currently at their mobilization station, training every day to get ready for their rotation into theater. I have confidence that these three trained and ready units will succeed in all of their missions.

The MIRC is still expanding our community outreach and strategic communications programs. The Public Affairs Office is pushing to tell our Soldiers' stories through Facebook, Twitter, and this magazine. We also want to continue to reach out to the local communities around our units and tell them about the training and hard work that we accomplish. The PAO needs your ideas, photos and stories in order to do that. All of the MIRC units have a Unit Public Affairs Representative; contact them about submitting your stories and photos.

As we end one calendar year and begin another I am proud of all that we have accomplished in 12 short months. The New Year will bring us more challenges, more experiences, more missions. I am confident that we can be successful in accomplishing all that is asked of us, plus so much more!

Happy Holidays.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Boe Young".

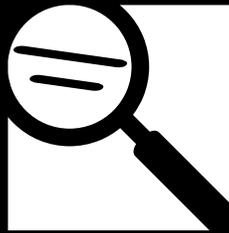
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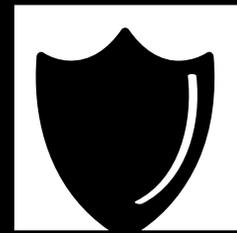
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*Story and photo by Staff Sgt. Stephanie Abdullah, Military Intelligence Readiness Command Public Affairs Office*

The Military Intelligence Readiness Command (MIRC) dedicated the MIRC Wall of Heroes mural at the Mosby Army Reserve Center at Fort Belvoir, Va., to honor the six MIRC Soldiers who made the ultimate sacrifice while in combat. Efforts to design, paint and frame the mural began in May 2009 and was officially unveiled one year later.

The design of the mural was a coordinated effort among seven MIRC Soldiers: 1st Sgt. Angel Ortiz, the Headquarters Headquarters Company (HHC) 1st Sgt.; Master Sgt. Sonja L. Bates, Provost Marshal; Master Sgt. David P. Landgrover, 1st Sgt.; Sgt. 1st Class Ronald C. Newton, HHC Training NCO; Sgt. 1st Class Tricia A. Morales,



*Soldiers with the MIRC stand in front of the Wall of Heroes mural at the Mosby Army Reserve Center, Ft. Belvoir, Va., in honor of those who have given the ultimate sacrifice. From left to right: Brig. Gen. Leslie Purser, Warrant Officer Floyd Bingham, Staff Sgt. Tricia Morales, Sgt. 1st Class Ronald Newton, Sgt. 1st Class Sandra Hawkins, Sgt. 1st Class Lydia Ruff, and Staff Sgt. Jeovanie Claudio.*

Theater Support Command Human Resources NCO; Staff Sgt. Jeovanie Claudio, G-8 Finance NCO; and Sgt. Hoori Khandani.

Once the design was established, a team from the MIRC worked hard to paint the mural: Brig. Gen. Leslie A. Purser, former MIRC Commanding General; 1st Sgt. Angel Ortiz; Sgt. 1st Class Ronald C. Newton; Sgt. 1st Class Tricia A. Morales; Sgt. 1st Class Lydia A. Ruff, G1 HR NCO; and Staff Sgt. Jeovanie Claudio. Warrant Officer Floyd C. Bingham, G-3 Mobilization Officer, completed the framework for the mural.

# How Does the Inspector General (IG) Serve You ?

*By Lt. Col. Daniel G. Foulkrod, Military Intelligence Readiness Command Inspector General*

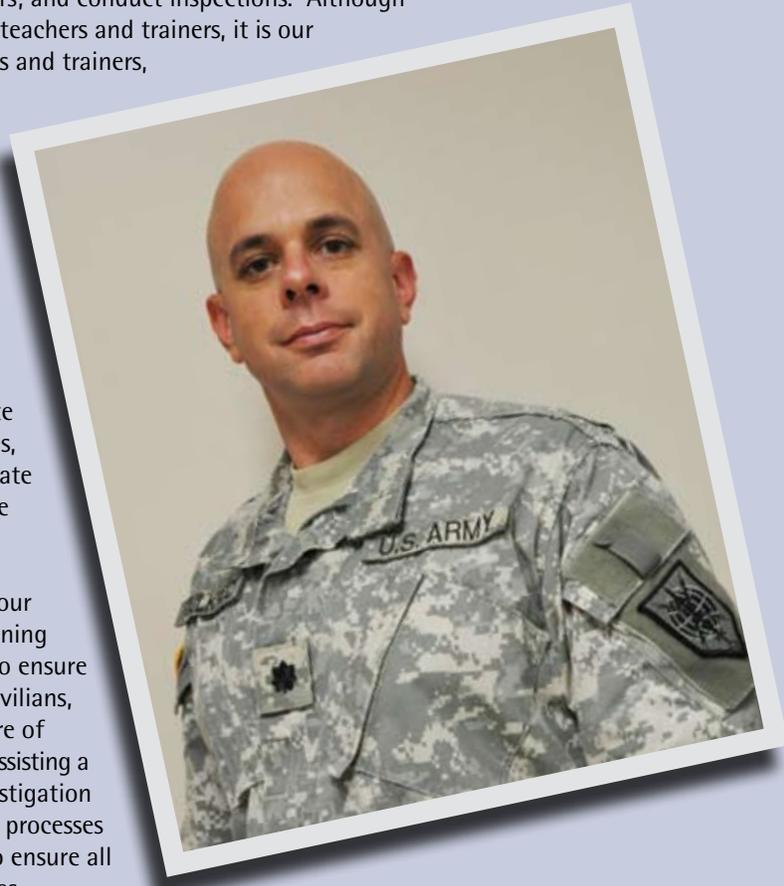
What are the roles of the Inspector General (IG)? Many only see the IG as an investigator and assistor, but the IGs perform other roles that enable them to accomplish their primary mission: enhance the warfighting and readiness capabilities of the command. This mission was developed by the earliest Inspector General of the Army, Baron Von Steuben of Revolutionary War fame. He was brought in to teach and train the continental Army drill and ceremony. This improved the readiness of the Army, increased its warfighting abilities, and enabled the Army to be more effective in fighting the British. Although IGs no longer are responsible for conducting drill and ceremony, they remain an extension of the commander's eyes, ears, voice and conscience. As the IG for Military Intelligence Readiness Command (MIRC), we serve the command, its Soldiers, civilians and Family members by working to identify issues and provide analysis that result in solutions the commanding general (CG) can implement.

The IG is more than just an investigator and assistor. We have two other functions: teach and train Soldiers and commanders; and conduct inspections. Although many don't see the IG as the teachers and trainers, it is our primary function. As teachers and trainers, it's our responsibility to inform everyone: commanders, Soldiers, civilians and Family members. We help them understand laws, regulations and policies, to include their underlying reasoning. Teaching and training can be a standalone function or embedded in our other functions. As a separate function, we can teach classes, provide guidance or disseminate information keeping everyone updated on recent changes.

As an embedded function in our other tasks, teaching and training requires us to take the time to ensure that commanders, Soldiers, civilians, and family members are aware of their responsibilities. While assisting a Soldier or conducting an investigation or inspection, we will explain processes and teach current doctrine to ensure all involved are aware of the rules.

Sometimes this may mean the complainant will be advised that the unit has followed the regulation, law or policy. In these instances, we will explain why and ensure the complainant understands the rules.

The second function of the IG is to conduct inspections. We conduct two types of inspections: Intelligence Oversight (IO) and of systemic problems. IO inspections are similar to other types of inspections units receive in that they are compliance oriented. We are there to determine whether the intelligence units and sections are in compliance with US law, DoD Directives and Army Regulation (AR) 381-10. During these inspections, we will receive a briefing from the unit on its intelligence oversight program to ensure compliance with AR 381-10; inspect training records to ensure Soldiers are trained on AR 381-10; ensure units are not maintaining intelligence information



on U.S. citizens; review unit procedures for handling intelligence information; survey unit members to ensure they are familiar with AR 381-10 and Procedure 15, reporting questionable activity; and ensure the unit has all appropriate regulations and standing operating procedures (SOPs) on hand.

The primary purpose of systemic problems inspections is to determine the root cause of systemic problems within the command. We are not there to determine whether a unit is complying with a regulation, policy or law, but rather to determine why the unit is having problems meeting the requirement. There are three basic root causes:

- Don't Know- the unit personnel never knew of the requirement or forgot about the requirement;
- Can't Comply- not enough resources to complete the task, personnel don't know how to complete the task, or the task is impossible to complete;
- Won't Comply- the personnel simply refuse to do the task because there is no reward for doing it, no penalty for not doing it or they disagree with the requirement.

IGs also conduct investigations. These can be command directed, which means only the CG can direct an IG investigation. Our investigations are limited to resolving issues of impropriety and enforcing Army Values and Standards. We do not investigate serious criminal conduct or issues that have previously established forms of redress unless these other forms of redress have been exhausted. For example, if you did not agree with your evaluation, you must appeal it through the processes outlined in AR 623-3. Only after those appeals are complete can the IG investigate. Even then, we are limited to ensuring that the unit followed the proper procedures during the appeals process. We may offer assistance in preparing your appeal or Commander's Inquiry to help ensure the Soldier receives due process.

Allegations that may lead to adverse action are referred to the chain of command for another form of investigation, the Department of the Army (DA) 15-6 or Commander's Inquiry. The CG may also decide to investigate complaints using other means. Although these other investigations are completed by someone other than the IG, the allegation remains as an open IG case until the investigation is complete. Once completed, the IG reviews the DA 15-6 or Commander's Inquiry for accuracy and recommends a finding to the CG. Although a Commander's inquiry or DA 15-6 could result in no action recommended based on the findings, it could still be "substantiated" or "not-substantiated" by the IG.

The most commonly utilized function of the command IG is assistance. IGs are directed to assist Soldiers and commanders to correct injustices. In doing so, we attempt to eliminate conditions that are detrimental to the efficiency and reputation of the Army and MIRC. We are always willing to help, but we are limited in what we can do. There are many avenues available to correct a problem. There are other forms of redress which must be allowed to complete their processes prior to the IG providing assistance. The primary avenue to resolve a problem is the chain of command. Allow the chain to work your problem first. We analyze all complaints and issues to determine if there is a systemic issue within the MIRC, which will require an inspection to determine the root cause.

Although we are an extension of the CG, we are not part of the chain of command. We will always allow the chain of command the opportunity to fix an issue prior to working the issue ourselves. Thus, before you call us, allow your chain of command the opportunity to address your problem. If the issue is with the chain of command, use the next level in that chain. We will ask you if you have addressed the problem with the chain of command when you call, only to ensure your commander has had the opportunity to fix the problem.

#### MIRC IG Contacts

Lt. Col. Daniel G. Foulkrod at [daniel.foulkrod@usar.army.mil](mailto:daniel.foulkrod@usar.army.mil) or (703) 806-5931  
Master Sgt. Laura German at [laura.german@usar.army.mil](mailto:laura.german@usar.army.mil) or (703) 806-6356

# Military Intelligence Battalions Team up for Yellow Ribbon



*Story and photos by Maj. Monica V. Womack, Military Intelligence Readiness Command Public Affairs Office*

SAN ANTONIO - How does it feel to be almost to the end?" asked Marie Balocki, Family Program Director for the Military Intelligence Readiness Command (MIRC). The room, filled with more than 100 Family members, responded with jubilant applause and triumphant whistles.

Family members from the 203rd and 321st Military Intelligence Battalions (MI Bn) were approaching the end of their Soldier's yearlong deployment as both units teamed up for the MIRC's first combined Yellow Ribbon phase 4 program. Both units had previously completed the first 3 phases months earlier and were now reunited once again to complete what some considered to be the final Yellow Ribbon phase.

For most family members phase 4 was considered a reunion, for others, such as Lourdes Barnes, wife of Cpl. Byron Barnes, assigned to the 321st, this was the first day of class.

Even the youngest members of a Soldier's Family have fun at Yellow Ribbon weekends. Youth enjoy a video game during phase 4 of the Yellow Ribbon Program for the 203rd and 321st MI BNs in San Antonio.



Family members of MIRC Soldier Spc. Loreal Wynn create a welcome home banner during phase 4 of their Yellow Ribbon program in San Antonio. This Yellow Ribbon weekend was for Families of the 203rd and 321st MI BNs, the first time the MIRC had hosted one event for two separate units.



Welcome home banners made by Family members blanket the floor during the combined Yellow Ribbon phase 4 program for the 203rd & 321st MI BNs in San Antonio.

"I'm very excited to meet everyone. It's my first time here and I'm hoping to learn more about the Army," Barnes said.

By day two of the program, all of the 203rd and 321st Family members had learned more about the Army and the Army Reserve community. With classes such as Pre-deployment Battlemind, VA Benefits, Employer Support for the Guard and Reserve (ESGR), Suicide Awareness and Prevention, and Reunion Expectations and Reintegration, phase 4 educates family members about significant deployment issues.

Toya Trevino, Training Instructor for the U.S. Army Medical Department Center and School (AMEDD C&S), kicked off the program with a dynamic pre-deployment Battlemind presentation that included the Nature of Military Life, a session which gave Family members the opportunity to discuss specific issues that impact the Army Reserve community. Issues included obtaining identification cards and finding local military treatment facilities, to reinstating YMCA memberships offered through Military One Source. While Trevino facilitated the discussion, Family members who had experienced similar problems were able to provide solutions to some of these issues.

Military Family Life Consultant Donald Knoll was on hand to help Family members learn more communicating with their redeploying Soldier. Knoll encouraged family members to avoid the "who had it worse game", provided Family members with homecoming tips to help reintegrate with their Soldier and encouraged Family members to seek counseling services for Soldiers who experience difficulty reintegrating. Chaplain (Maj.) David Arrendondo, 4th Infantry Division Chaplain, Fort Carson, Colo., used video and real life examples to help Family members recognize potential warning signs during the Suicide Awareness and Prevention class.

"This is a difficult class to teach," Arrendondo explained, as he reviewed the Army's latest suicide statistics and the effects that combat might have on Soldiers. Family members were introduced to a simple acronym: ACE— Ask, Care and Escort, as a means by which to help a Soldier during a serious situation. Family members were cautioned not to wait but to take immediate action in the event that their Soldier exhibited any of the warning signs.

In the end, Family members departed with the essential tools needed not only to help their Soldier but to help everyone's transition back to normal, routine lives. This weekend of phase 4 training provided several of the family members with months of invaluable Army knowledge.

# CONTINUING TO SERVE

Story by Maj. Monica Womack,  
Military Intelligence Readiness Command  
Public Affairs Office  
Photos by Spc. Erika Montano

After eight years of service and multiple surgeries, Staff Sgt. Michael Chamberlain is serving his country as a Wounded Warrior in transition. Chamberlain, a counterintelligence Soldier assigned to the 321st Military Intelligence Battalion (MI Bn), deployed to Iraq in 2005.

Today, Chamberlain trains service dogs to assist Wounded Warriors with their transition from the hospital to home. Chamberlain got the idea after participating in a radio talk show when a listener called in and asked if he would be interested in training service dogs for Wounded Warriors. He immediately agreed and was later given Betsy Ross, an eight-week old American bulldog, as his first student. After Chamberlain went through a series of surgeries, he relied on Betsy Ross, now his own personal service dog, to assist with his recovery.

Chamberlain has trained Betsy Ross to respond to three basic commands: at ease, rest (for lay) and pull, which are requirements for her to be considered as a service dog. He has also been awarded the service dog patch authorizing him to train more service dogs for other Wounded Warriors.

When asked why he trains service dogs, Chamberlain put it in simple terms. "The whole point of doing this is to help other people," he said. And while others may view him as a hero of sorts, Chamberlain is quick to point out who his heroes are. "My Family members are the true patriots and, as with all military Families, they have sacrificed beyond what others could," he said.

Although he would prefer to remain a Soldier and return again to Iraq, Chamberlain has found



*Staff Sgt. Michael Chamberlain, 321st MI Bn, and his wife, Victoria, spend some time with Chamberlain's personal service dog, Betsy Ross. The American bulldog was the first service dog Chamberlain trained for the Wounded Warrior program.*

Staff Sgt. Chamberlain, 321st MI Bn, relaxes after training with his personal service dog, Betsy Ross. The American bulldog was the first service dog Chamberlain trained for the Wounded Warrior program.



fulfillment in helping other Soldiers. Whether he's training service dogs, providing administrative support or giving advice to deploying Soldiers, this Wounded Warrior still continues to serve.

With his extensive deployment experience, Chamberlain is always ready to offer advice to deploying Soldiers. "When troops get down to a few weeks in theater, they start to think they have made it home. You have not made it until you are home with your Family. Training is boring but it is important. Stay alert and make sure that you make it home," he said.

Chamberlain also encourages deploying Soldiers to reach out to their Families. "Spend the money and get the computers with webcams, make sure your family knows you're coming home and that you think of them as much as they think of you," he said.

As Staff Sgt. Chamberlain continues to serve his country while undergoing treatment for his injuries, his humble companion, Betsy Ross, and his Family, remains at his side. Chamberlain's wife, Victoria, is pleased with her husband's furry sidekick.

"From the first day that we brought her home, she had a natural instinct to help him. Not that she wouldn't lay her life down for any of us, but she knows that he's the one that she has to take care of. She's made such a big difference in his life. It just gives him a reason to get up and go again," she said.

Chamberlain plans to train at least five dogs a year for the Wounded Warrior program.

# MIRC Funded Reimbursable Authority (FRA) Program

The MIRC's Funded Reimbursable Authority (FRA) Program is a valuable tool which supplies funding to bring Soldiers and Officers on voluntary active duty for training (ADT) tours in and outside the Continental United States (OCONUS) to provide Operational Intelligence Support (OIS) to Department of Defense (DOD) commands and Intelligence Agencies. Operational Intelligence Support (OIS) has a dual purpose and is specifically defined as "any support provided by Army Reserve Military Intelligence (AR MI) units or Soldiers that simultaneously benefits AR MI training/readiness while also satisfying DoD intelligence requirements via participation in military intelligence (MI) operations and/or exercises." The FRA program provides the mechanism through which the Active Army reimburses the Army Reserve for orders produced for the purposes of providing OIS (previously referred to as Intelligence Contributory Support (ICS)). Through FRA ADT tours, AR MI soldiers help to satisfy DoD Intelligence Community Production Requirements

while simultaneously enhancing and maintaining their technical and perishable intelligence skills. Improvement in AR MI readiness and retention are additional benefits of this support. FRA tours vary in length from a few weeks to six plus months.

The Department of the Army (DA) Intelligence (G2) provided the MIRC with \$2 million dollars to execute its FRA Program. A number of requirements were drafted and approved for funding and the major support commands (MSCs) provided their FRA/OIS requirements. Again, approved areas of support or requirements must have an intelligence support value, but may be extended to include projects that enable or enhance the training or readiness of Soldiers and/or units to perform their intelligence missions. This year's approved requirements included OIS support to National Ground Intelligence Command (NGIC), National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA), the Army Reserve Intelligence Support Centers (ARISCs), the Combatant Commands (COCOMs), as well as planning and readiness support within MIRC commands and staffs. Commanders at all levels have been encouraged to coordinate with their active component (AC) supported units/agencies to identify OIS needs, requirements, and opportunities to enhance missions as well as the operational, training, and technical readiness of AR MI Soldiers.

Procedures for FRA packet submission are fairly straightforward. Packets should be submitted through the chain of command to the Operations Integration Branch OIB, which manages the program within the MIRC operations section. The FRA packet consists of the following forms: DA Form 1058-R (Application for Active Duty – signed by the MSC commander or MIRC deputy commanding officer), DA Form 7349-R (Medical Certificate – front page only), SF Form 507 (if applicable), and DA Form 5500/01 (if applicable). Additionally, periodic health assessments (PHAs) and HIV tests must be current for tour approval. Packets must be submitted to the Human Resources Command (HRC) by the OIB at least 14 days prior to the tour start date. FRA packet instructions, tour postings, procedures, forms, and a MIRC FRA-specific DA Form 1058 are available on the MIRC Homepage at <https://www.us.army.mil/suite/page/531466>.

Unfilled FRA requirements are listed/"advertised" under the OIB link on the MIRC Homepage and on the Human Resources Command (HRC) Intelligence Tour link. If an FRA Tour requirement/opportunity is identified, but no one can be immediately identified to fill it, units should submit the job description and criteria to the OIB for posting for potential recruitment/fill.

Anyone with questions about FA or voluntary OIS tour opportunities are encouraged to contact Maj. Eero Keravuori in the MIRC OIB at (703) 806-7245 or at [eero.keravuori@usar.army.mil](mailto:eero.keravuori@usar.army.mil).

# The MIRC Celebrates Women's History Month

By Maj. Monica V. Womack, Military Intelligence Readiness Command Public Affairs Office

The Military Intelligence Readiness Command (MIRC) celebrated Women's History Month at the Mosby Army Reserve Center. This year's theme of "Writing Women Back into History" was inspiration for guest speaker Dr. Kizzy M. Parks, Ph D., who spoke about past and present trailblazers and the importance of ensuring that the annals of history record their achievements.

"Ensuring that women are in the history books is of the utmost importance to me," said Parks.

Parks further described her experience as a minority second grader who dressed up as Rosa Parks (no relation) during a history presentation. To Parks' dismay, the teacher had no idea who Rosa Parks was. This sparked Parks to pursue a career that would give her opportunities to educate diverse audiences on the accomplishments of women in our history.



Col. Alicia K. Lynch, MIRC Chief of the Career Management Office, highlighted women's contributions to the war effort. Lynch's presentation included discussion of Mary Edwards Walker, the only female Medal of Honor recipient, Deborah Sampson, the first woman to enlist into the military (as Robert Sampson during the Revolutionary War), and Spc. Lori Ann Piestewa, the first female Soldier killed in the 2003 invasion of Iraq. Lynch also described her experience as the only female in her Airborne class and encouraged men and women to always strive for excellence.

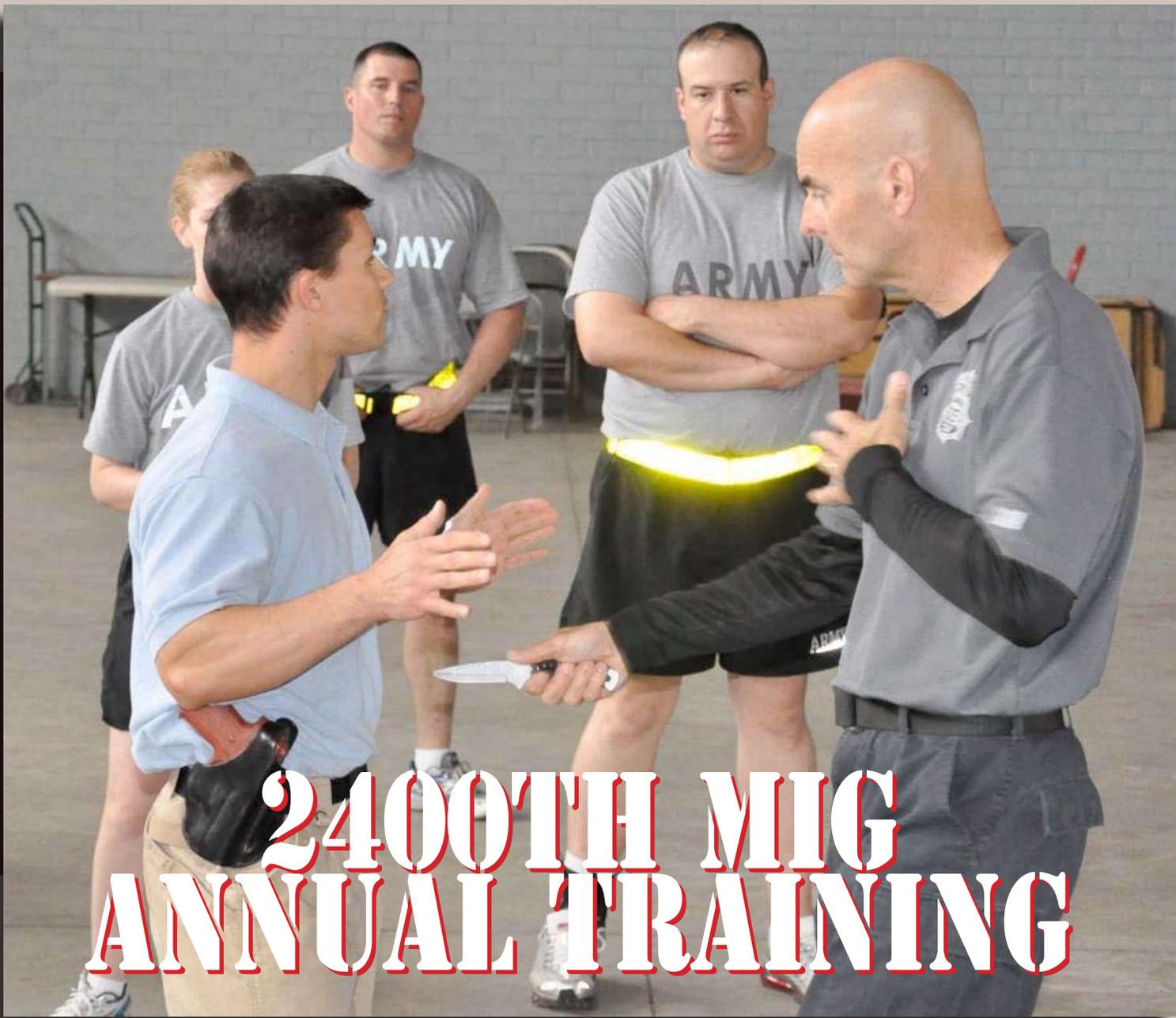
"Don't focus on the things you cannot do but, focus on the things you can do and do it better than anyone else," she said.

The MIRC's Women's History Month celebration also featured poetry by Mr. Antwan Gains, MIRC Logistics Specialist; and a performance by eight members from the Army Soldier Show.

*Col. Alicia K. Lynch, MIRC Chief of the Career Management Office, speaks at the Women's History Month celebration at the Mosby Army Reserve Center. Lynch spoke about many prominent women and encouraged men and women to strive for excellence.*

***Don't focus on the things you cannot do but, focus on the things you can do and do it better than anyone else.***

***Col. Alicia K. Lynch***



# 2400TH MIG ANNUAL TRAINING

*By Maj. Sharon Filadelfia, 2400th Military Intelligence Group*

"Make your fighting stance your everyday stance. Make your everyday stance your fighting stance," stated Capt. Jeffery Clancy, 2400th Military Intelligence Group (MIG), Detachment 2 Soldier as well as full-time Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) agent and combative expert, while leading Soldiers through physical and combatives training sessions.

Realistic, effective, varied and motivating training was the goal for Annual Training (AT) of the 2400th MIG, hosted by the 2400th's Detachment 2 in San Diego.

Lt. Col. Joseph Dziezynski, acting commander, said the three tenets of his command philosophy are Soldier readiness, quality intelligence production and basic Soldier skills. Even though AT lasts only two weeks, this event was the culmination of creative choreography of personnel, facilities and out of the box thinking, which took approximately one year to plan and execute.

The 2400th MIG is able to provide its Soldiers premium training opportunities by taking advantage of the experience and skills of the group's Soldiers, as well as generous support from the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), DEA, Defense Acquisition University (DAU), Anaheim Fire Department's Paramedic volunteers, California National Guard, as well as private industry in the area.

Here are a few highlights of the two weeks:

- Primary Marksmanship Instruction (PMI) conducted by unit members who work in law enforcement as well as volunteers from other federal agencies resulted in many of the 2400th MIG's Soldiers achieving higher weapon qualification scores. Spc. Caitlin Franzmeier was exhilarated when she counted the bullet holes in her target. She'd progressed over the course of the day, from her first score of 10 to qualifying as expert with a score of 38.



*Sgt. 1st Class George Conway, 2400th Military Intelligence Group (MIG), leads his team in room clearing procedures during the unit's two-week Annual Training in San Diego.*

*Soldiers with the 2400th Military Intelligence Group (MIG) demonstrate their shooting skills with the M9 pistol during their two-week Annual Training in San Diego.*



*Capt. Jeffery Clancy, right, 2400th Military Intelligence Group (MIG), Detachment 2, demonstrates hand-to-hand combat techniques to fellow Soldiers during their 2-week Annual Training in San Diego.*

- "Medic! Medic!" the call came in – a High Mobility Multi Wheeled Vehicle (HMMWV) with three Soldiers in it had been struck with an improvised explosive device (IED) while traversing hostile terrain. Members of the Anaheim Fire Department's Paramedic team culminated the day of training with a realistic scenario that would test the Combat Lifesaver (CLS) material covered over the course of the day. The paramedics positioned "victims" in an HMMWV and applied realistic looking wounds that Soldiers had to treat. The first team responded, assessing injuries such as a lacerated hand, sucking chest wound, severed hand with severe shock, and deep forearm laceration. The team leader of the first team requested backup and then called in a nine-line medical evacuation (MEDEVAC). Applying tourniquets, stabilizing for transport, treating a sucking chest wound, applying pressure dressings and treating for shock were just a few of the skills Soldiers demonstrated during the scenario. Throughout the day they also practiced Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), using an Automatic Electronic Defibrillating (AED) device, and inserting a nasopharyngeal tube.

- "There'll be a pit bull, first thing, that takes the number one guy down but the rest of the stack will just have to fill and flow," said Sgt. 1st Class Sedrick Hayes, 2400th MIG, Detachment 3. "Don't ride the walls," he adds, as he nudges a few Soldiers away

from the walls of the shoothouse, a structure designed to give federal law enforcement personnel practice clearing and securing buildings. "Bullets ride walls," he said.

- Training was rigorous. Many days began with 6:30 a.m. physical training and ended well after 6 p.m. Soldiers used the Joint Reserve Intelligence Center systems throughout the AT to continue detachment intelligence production and conduct mandatory annual briefings, including Prevention of Sexual Harassment, Equal Opportunity, Suicide Awareness, Consideration of Others, Intelligence Oversight, and language training. A Judge Advocate General (JAG) officer was present to conduct legal training, provide legal assistance, and prepare wills for group members.

The 2400th MIG conducted an After Action Review (AAR) in order to capture lessons learned, things to improve and things to sustain. Spc. Trevor Kennedy summed up the two-week training effort: "We left here better MI Soldiers than when we arrived."

# SOLDIER BY DAY, DERBY GIRL BY NIGHT

*Story by Spc. Erika Montano, Military Intelligence Readiness Command*

Staff Sgt. Courtney Fisher has served the nation for seven years as an Army Reserve Soldier. She spent two years as the Fort Lewis, Wash., based 373rd Military Intelligence Battalion's Headquarters Headquarters Company's (HHC) Unit Administrator. She has deployed twice, and even had the honor of reenlisting in April at the National Capital Reenlistment Ceremony in Washington, D.C.

However, Fisher is not your average Army Reserve Soldier. With the team name of 'D.V.S. (Devious) Dicer', she is a proud member of the Tommy Gun Terrors, one of the teams in the Fabulous Sin City Roller Girls roller derby league.

"It all started in Centralia, Wash., when someone asked me if I wanted to go watch a roller derby game," said Fisher. "When I got to the game I noticed it was all women playing and thought it was going to be a 'frilly' thing to watch, but soon noticed that it was really awesome," she said.

Roller Derby is a tough sport, mainly played by women, where two teams go all out on a circuit track. Fisher's position is jammer and her job is to maneuver and dodge blockers, gaining points as she passes the opposite team and laps around the track. Altogether, each team has five members on the track: one jammer, three blockers, and a pivot. The blocker's duty is to prevent the other team's jammer from making points, the pivot controls the team.

"It's a rough sport. People think that we just skate around in circles and tap each other," said Fisher. "I play with girls who are sometimes 250 pounds and above, like in weight, and they're big!" she added.

This non-profit organization is run, owned and organized by the team members. Each team member is required to work a certain number of hours each month and be on a committee. The sport can be very time consuming, but everyone helps out to support the team.

"It's like a business, but run internally. For instance, I am the chair head of the merchandise committee. I am in charge of ordering, inventorying, and bringing merchandise to and from games," said Fisher.



*Staff Sgt. Courtney Fisher, known as 'D.V.S. Dicer' on her roller derby team, shows her more relaxed Army Reserve 'personality'. Fisher was formerly with the 373rd Military Intelligence Battalion. Photo provided by Soldier.*



Staff Sgt. Courtney Fisher, formerly with the 373rd Military Intelligence Battalion, puts on her safety gear before heading out on the track to practice. Photo by Spc. Erika Montano, Military Intelligence Readiness Command.



Staff Sgt. Courtney Fisher, formerly with the 373rd Military Intelligence Battalion, practices with her teammates on the track. Fisher's position on the team is the jammer; she is responsible for scoring points while preventing blocks. Photo by Spc. Erika Montano, Military Intelligence Readiness Command.

"Your derby personality is an alternate ego. I'm a Soldier. I'm a business person at work and then I go to the track and I have padded shorts on with thigh-high socks and my Army knee pads," said Fisher. "It's an outlet. 'D.V.S Dicer' can be who she wants to be on the track, and still be legitimate when she comes to work," she said.

Along with her derby name, Fisher wears an important and memorable number on her back: C40.

"It was my bumper number when we got blown up in our convoy, so it's kind of like my little tribute to the guys in my vehicle," she said.

While on a convoy in Iraq, her vehicle was attacked by an Improvised Explosive Device (IED). The driver was severely injured and was losing a lot of blood. The truck commander, turret gunner, and Fisher quickly provided him with first aid until a medical evacuation team arrived. One of his legs had to be amputated but his life was saved. Knowing that she was able to do something so remarkable and courageous was a real eye opener for Fisher, but what was most important was making sure that that Soldier returned home safely to his family.

At times, it's been hard for Fisher to shift from Soldier to 'D.V.S. Dicer'. The physically demanding and sometimes dangerous sport made her think about whether she should continue to pursue the game. She also feared the possibility of getting seriously injured and possibly getting kicked out of the Army.

"It's pretty brutal. I had my nose broken back in Washington about nine months ago," said Fisher. "I got punched in the face when I was coming around...a girl threw up her hand with her wrist guard on and fractured the bottom of my nose," she said.

No matter how many times she's thought twice about continuing with the roller derby, she always comes back to it. It's an important part of her life, and her love for the game won't allow her to quit.

"It's a great tension release, and it's a really positive environment for me to release my aggression legally," said Fisher, laughing. "I think it really can teach you how strong you are. Next to the Army, it's a tough place to be, and it really shows you where your weaknesses are," she said.

Fisher has recently been reassigned as the Brigade Medical Representative for the 650th Regional Support Group in Las Vegas, Nev.

# TRICARE SMART Website: One-stop Information Portal for Guard, Reserve

Army National Guard and Army Reserve members who may not live near a military treatment facility or TRICARE Service Center no longer have to rely on printed publications as a main source of TRICARE benefit information.

In the six years since its launch, the TRICARE SMART – Standardized Materials and Research Technology – website has been a one-stop, online information portal full of accurate, up-to-date information about TRICARE benefits that members and their families can easily access in the comfort of their homes. View the website at [www.tricare.mil/smart](http://www.tricare.mil/smart).

By using the TRICARE SMART website, Army National Guard and Army Reserve members can stay informed about the latest TRICARE programs created just for them and their families. These programs include TRICARE Reserve Select, as well as benefits that are only available while serving on active duty.

The "TRICARE Choices Guide," which can be found under "Handbooks" on the website, makes it easy for a National guardsman or Army Reserve member to make informed decisions about programs such as TRICARE Prime and Standard for his or her family. For easy navigation, all publications on the website are organized by regions and publication type and there is a search feature. Publications are also printer-friendly.

A National guardsman or Army Reserve member can go one step further and subscribe to TRICARE alerts to receive updates on new benefits and programs. Subscribing to TRICARE e-alerts is easy. Visit [www.tricare.mil/subscriptions](http://www.tricare.mil/subscriptions), enter an e-mail address and choose a beneficiary category and topics or TRICARE products of interest. Subscribers can receive, via e-mail, the latest benefit updates, the "TRICARE Beneficiary Bulletin" weekly podcast, as well as TRICARE news releases.

Army National Guard and Army Reserve members are encouraged to stay informed about TRICARE benefits during activation and deactivation periods. The TRICARE SMART website and e-mail updates are easy ways to do just that. For more information on TRICARE SMART, visit [www.tricare.mil/SMART](http://www.tricare.mil/SMART).

## MIRC CAREER MANAGEMENT OFFICE (CMO)

*By Col. Alicia Lynch, Military Intelligence Readiness Command Career Management Office*

The Military Intelligence Readiness Command (MIRC) commanding general has directed the creation and emplacement of a Career Management Office (CMO) for fiscal year 2011. The CMO has developed a comprehensive cross-functional strategy which establishes increased capabilities in the career management of Troop Program Unit (TPU) Officers.

The goal is to enhance awareness of training, educational requirements, assignment opportunities, and career path progression to facilitate identifying qualified officers who are agile and adaptive leaders for 21st Century full spectrum operations.

The CMO has developed a career path model for Army Reserve Military Intelligence TPU officers to use as a guide in the self-management of their own career. The CMO has also developed processes to provide TPU officers with information regarding position vacancies for all 35/34 series and O1A Key Developmental (KD) positions in the entire Army Reserve. As such, the CMO will have the capability of advising on career reassignment options.

The CMO assignment officers serve as subject matter experts or SMEs in providing professional guidance and career management counseling to the Army Reserve Military Intelligence TPU force through web-based information sharing and career management officers. The office will also serve as a central location for career management self-help.

For more information visit the CMO Web-Portal at <https://www.us.army.mil/suite/page/632013> or contact Col. Alicia Lynch at (703) 806-6294, Lt. Col. Wanda J. Walker at (703) 806-6915, or Maj. Matthew Peoria at (703) 806.6926.

# OPERATION TRIBUTE TO FREEDOM SOLDIER STORY: STAFF SGT. CANDICE DELGADO-MELLA

**Current Unit:** 2600th Military Intelligence Group  
**Current Position:** Intelligence Analyst, Component: Army Reserve  
**Current Location:** Fort Worth, Texas **Hometown:** Las Cruces, N.M.  
**Years of Service:** 10 **Age:** 28

Staff Sgt. Candice Delgado-Mella is an intelligence analyst with the 2600th Military Intelligence Group and a member of the U.S. Army Reserve who is proud to serve her country in uniform. However, as a mother of two young girls, she is also proud to give her daughters a positive role model of a strong, independent and brave woman. She believes that lessons learned in uniform, especially overseas, influence how she thinks as a mom, and Delgado-Mella hopes her daughters will follow in her footsteps to serve in the future.



During Delgado-Mella's deployment to Baghdad, Iraq in 2008-2009, she served in the 301st Military Intelligence Battalion, and she was the non-commissioned officer in charge for the Tribes and Religion team. Her team was responsible for providing intelligence to the command officers, particularly working to correlate insurgent activity and increased fighting between the Sunnis and Shiites with religious holidays and cultural traditions. In her line of work, she often met with Iraqi locals and officials to gather information related to upcoming missions.

Aside from her military intelligence responsibilities, she also volunteered with the Iraqi Boy and Girl Scouts, through a partnership offered at the Victory Base Complex.

"It helped me when I was missing my kids," said the mother of two. "Children aren't that different around the world. They have the same type of innocence and curiosity."

While Delgado-Mella was stationed at Camp Victory, she had the opportunity to meet President Obama and former President Bush, as well as Gen. David H. Petraeus. She also participated in the filming of the Stephen Colbert show at the Al Faw Palace, just days before she left Iraq.

"It was a great opportunity, and a fun way to end the deployment. When I returned, everyone had seen me on television," she said.

After graduating high school a year early at age 17 and attending a community college part-time, Delgado-Mella joined the Army to travel the world. She served on active duty in Korea for four years before transitioning to the Army Reserve in 2004 and moving back to the United States.

"The Army allowed me to realize my potential and not rely on others to take care of myself. I know I can make it on my own," she said. "It is a scary first step, but it is so rewarding to serve your country."

Originally from Las Cruces, N.M., Delgado-Mella is a graduate of Mayfield High School, and currently lives in the Fort Worth, Texas area with her two daughters, Karina (8) and Karolina (6).

"I've told both my daughters that they can do whatever they want to do, including serve in the military. They can be strong and independent girls. The military will teach them that it is okay to be that," she said.

As a civilian, she is a security analyst for a government contracting firm and works with the Department of Homeland Security, something that she says goes "hand-in-hand" with her military background and experiences. In the future, she hopes to finish her bachelor's degree in security management and move into a managerial role at work, as well as become a warrant officer for military intelligence.

# SOLDIER SPOTLIGHT

By Maj. Monica V. Womack, Military Intelligence  
Readiness Command Public Affairs Office

This issue's spotlight is cast on Sgt. 1st Class Lydia Ruff, Senior Human Resources Non-commissioned officer (NCO) assigned to the Military Intelligence Readiness Command (MIRC) headquarters located at Fort Belvoir, Va. Although Ruff has only been assigned less than a year, she has already made quite an impression on the command as a professional member of the NCO Corps and as an artist, which is why this Long Beach Calif. native is in the command's spotlight. Here's a look at the "Ruff" side of life.

**What was your last assignment?**

Active Guard Reserve (AGR), 63rd RRC, Los Alamitos,  
Calif. from Oct. 2008 to Dec. 2009.

**Where do you live?**

Fort Belvoir, Va.

**Do you have any special skills?**

Being creative and basically anything I put  
my mind to do.

**What's your favorite dish?**

Grilled Salmon

**What's your favorite movie?**

*Shawshank Redemption*

**What's your favorite team?**

I stopped tracking basketball when Michael Jordan  
retired the second time;  
I stopped tracking football after Joe Montana retired;  
I stopped tracking baseball after the players  
went on strike – it takes heart for me to watch a game.



**What's your favorite past time?**

Spending time with my kids

**What's your favorite book?**

*Angels and Demons, The DaVinci Code, and The Lost Symbol* by Dan Brown

**Who's your hero?**

I don't have a hero; but I would have to say anyone who goes above and beyond the call of duty— our warriors on the frontlines.

**What's your favorite vacation spot?**

Venice, Italy

**Do you have any pets?**

No – it's hard enough cleaning up after two kids

**What's your most memorable military moment?**

Being a part of the Memorial Day Honor Platoon to render honors to our fallen comrades at a WWII Cemetery in 2006; and at a WWI Cemetery in 2007 in France

**If you could change anything about your career, what would you change?**

Never live your life in a "could have, would have" status.

Could have been a Commissioned

Officer, but then I wouldn't have had all the fun I've had training troops

**How has the Army changed your life?**

The Army has changed my life in so many ways. First, and foremost, it has taught me discipline; discipline to complete any task (personal or professional, military or civilian) to the best of my ability. Learning discipline is the **ONLY WAY** to stay focused to successfully achieve your goals.

It also allowed me to achieve my personal goal of graduating from college, and to provide a comfortable lifestyle for my family. I have set myself up for success after the military (whenever that might be).

I have grown so much from being a part of the Army family, and coming into contact with all of the great people who make up our fighting force. It feels good being a part of something bigger than yourself, and something you believe in.

**What advice do you have for in-bound Soldiers?**

Do it for God and Country, work hard, and the rest will fall into place.

Ruff is married with two children, Resée age 15 and Kirby age 12.

Ruff was recently recognized for her contributions as a team artist for completing the MIRC Mural.

(See story on page 6)

# MIRC SOLDIER AWARDED THE OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEER SERVICE MEDAL

By Maj. Monica V. Womack, Military Intelligence Readiness Command Public Affairs Office

*"No person was ever honored for what he received. Honor has been the reward for what he gave."  
—Calvin Coolidge*

Cable television brought the devastation caused by the aftermath of the Haiti earthquake right into our living rooms. We watched in despair as rescuers pulled body after body from wreckage once called home by the Haitian people. Empathy compelled many to give money to help aid efforts while others, such as 1st Lt. Timothy Keegan, were determined to use their energy instead.

Keegan, an Intelligence Officer assigned to the 2500th Military Intelligence Group (MIG), Jacksonville, Fla., used his time and Army Reserve training to amass 1.2 million pounds of supplies for the people of Haiti. Working with the 143rd Expeditionary Sustainment Command (ESC), as a component of Operation Big Heart Brigade, Keegan was able to coordinate the logistical support necessary to secure much of the cargo and then transport it to the point of departure, the Opa-Locka Airport in Miami.

For his efforts, Keegan was presented with the Outstanding Volunteer Service medal by Lt. Col. John Hetherington, Deputy Commander of the Combat Support Agency Support Command, and Florida Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen at a luncheon at Coral Gables, Fla.

"I am pleased to report that within 14 days of the initial devastation, Tim and his charitable organizations aggregated, sorted and delivered in excess of 1.2 million pounds of medicine, medical equipment, food, water and temporary shelters in support of Haitian relief. That is the equivalent of 18,757 cargo jets," Ros-Lehtinen said.

Applause echoed throughout the ballroom. Keegan, humbled by the reaction, thanked the charitable organizations and the Army Reserve for their support.

A former Army Reserve Ambassador for the state of Florida, Keegan has worked with both federal and state leaders to support Army Reserve legislative initiatives. In 2006, after successfully petitioning for increased recruitment ages for Army Reserve and National Guard Soldiers, Keegan joined the Army Reserve at age 44. In early 2009, Keegan voluntarily deployed to Afghanistan in support of overseas contingency operations where he was assigned to the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), in support of the United States Special Operations Command and Joint Intelligence Operations Center. Keegan was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal in recognition of his contributions to the Afghan NATO/ISAF mission.



*1st Lt. Timothy Keegan (standing) and Sgt. Mohamed Al-Darsani, 2500th Military Intelligence Group, Detachment 1, observe Memorial Day with the Cub Scouts of America. Keegan was recognized for his relief efforts for the victims of the earthquake in Haiti with the Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal.*

# *Battlemind for Couples and Spouses of Deploying Soldiers*

*By Master Sgt. Maneasseha Bartimus*

The Battlemind Training Program was created by the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research as a result of data compiled from a land combat study of Soldiers and their Family members. Battlemind presentations were designed and developed in part as a response to the reported increase in symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and increased suicide rates in both the United States Army and Army Reserve.

As the proponent for all U.S. Army medical training, the responsibility for further developing Battlemind concepts, programs and training fell to the Battlemind Training Office, Soldier and Family Support Branch, US Army Medical Department Center and School (AMEDDC&S).

The Battlemind training system was established in March 2007. The core objectives of all Battlemind Training are:

- To mentally prepare our Warriors for the rigors of combat and other military deployments
- To assist our Warriors in their successful transition back home following deployment completion
- To provide our Warriors with the skills to assist their "battle-buddy" with the transition home
- To prepare our Warriors again in support of all types of military operations, including additional combat tours

The Spouses and Couples Battlemind Training takes place during all phases of the Yellow Ribbon Program. The training is designed to prepare spouses for the deployment cycle emphasizing resiliency training, understanding the re-integration process and making the most of available resources. The training participants include spouses, family members and significant others. Battlemind Training discusses potential challenges and changes that are likely to occur as well as focus on some things our spouses and Soldiers can do to reduce/eliminate deployment-related concerns common to military life.



# Looking to Volunteer?

*By Military Intelligence Readiness Command Operations Section*

Volunteer Force Generation, or VOFORGEN, is a recently instituted program by the Military Intelligence Readiness Command (MIRC) that provides support to Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) through individual volunteers. The program generates Soldiers who are trained, equipped, and ready to meet the operational intelligence requirements of Combatant Commands and the National Intelligence Community.

The MIRC is supporting an Army at war, which is in turn supporting a nation at war. VOFORGEN was created as a means to respond to ad hoc force requirements from Department of the Army (DA), Intelligence and Security Command (INSCOM) and other agencies not related to formal unit mobilization sourcing solutions. VOFORGEN expedites the MIRC's volunteer process by building a consistent, predictable pool of pre-qualified, mobilization ready volunteers prepared to deploy in support of war time requirements.

MIRC Soldiers interested in deploying in support of OCO should submit an application and volunteer statement through the MIRC Operations section to become a member of the VOFORGEN program. Submissions must also include a signed statement that the individual understands the VOFORGEN rules/intent, three of the volunteer's most recent evaluations and a biographical summary.

## The MIRC provides support for Overseas Contingency Operations through VOFORGEN

Once accepted, the MIRC will source valid overseas deployment requirements for the following commands/agencies: DA Intelligence, Special Operations Command (SOCOM), Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), INSCOM, Central Command, and Forces Command. Other commands requesting support for OCO will also utilize this process based on their outlined requirements.

Soldiers can anticipate at least a six month deployment to minimize disruption to their unit and time away from family. However, a six month deployment is not a guarantee. Applications submitted by volunteers not assigned to the MIRC will not be approved. High demand military occupational specialties (MOS) such as 35T, 35 N/S will not be eligible to participate, nor will Soldiers in units within Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN) phases Ready 1. Active Guard Reserve (AGR) Soldiers can also apply for VOFORGEN. All submissions will require an O-5 level commander approval that cannot be further delegated. Master Sgt. (E-8) and above nominations will require approval of the MIRC Command Sergeant Major. Chief Warrant Officer nominations will require the approval of the Command Chief Warrant Officer.

Volunteer Force Generation is not a customizable process. Volunteers will be expected to deploy to any overseas location, primarily Afghanistan, Iraq and Africa. The program does not include mobilizations in the Continental United States, or short tours within the intelligence community.

Individuals selected for VOFORGEN must be ready to deploy within the next 12 months, with 60 days notice. The time frame is ongoing, meaning that the 12 months is a rolling and non-static time period. The commitment ends when a volunteer completes his/her enlistment or permanently changes duty stations or when the volunteer specifically requests to be removed from the program.

# 325TH MILITARY INTELLIGENCE BATTALION WELCOMES ULTIMATE FIGHTING CHAMPIONSHIP FIGHTERS

By Spc. Erika Montano, Military Intelligence Readiness Command.

Early in the Summer of 2010, Soldiers of the 325th Military Intelligence Battalion (MI Bn) were packing up their gear and supplies and preparing to deploy to Afghanistan. The Soldiers were eager and ready to serve their country overseas, but they were also excited about the special visitors coming to meet them.

It was 10 a.m. when the 325th MI Bn. Soldiers were in formation outside the Middleton U.S. Army Reserve Center. Brig. Gen. James Young, Commanding General of the Military Intelligence Readiness Command, arrived to greet the Soldiers and introduce Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) Fighters, Matt Serra and Joe Lauzon.

Both fighters expressed how much they appreciated what the Soldiers were getting ready to do, and said that the Soldiers who serve this nation and fight for our rights and freedom are the real heroes.

"We put it on the line, [and maybe] lose some skin," said Serra, "but you guys put your lives on the line and it's greatly appreciated..."

After a group photo with the UFC Fighters, Soldiers headed into the reserve center for autographs and a few additional snap shots. The UFC meet and greet was definitely the highlight of the day as Soldiers shook hands, laughed, and posed with Serra and Lauzon.

"It's always great getting to meet all the different Soldiers," said Lauzon. "... We enjoy doing this and we enjoy coming to places and visiting whenever we can."

"Everybody was awesome. Everybody was great!" said Serra. "They were happy we were there; we were happy to be there. So it worked out awesome."



Spc. Vera Barroso demonstrates some Army ultimate fighting moves on UFC fighter Matt Serra.



Brig. Gen. James Young, Commanding General of the MIRC, trades punches with UFC Fighter Matt Serra.



(left to right) Joe Lauzon, Spc. Aaron Tobias Fischer, and Matt Serra flex for a photo.

# 2010 BEST WARRIOR COMPETITION

Military Intelligence Readiness Command Soldiers competed in two levels of Army Best Warrior Competitions (BWC) hoping to make to the third level, the Department of the Army (DA) BWC. The Soldiers did not make it to the DA level competition, but they did compete at the United States Army Reserve Command (USARC) level competition at Ft. McCoy, Wis. Overall, 27 Army Reserve Soldiers competed. The MIRC Soldiers met all of the challenges and remained in the games until the end. They endured confidence courses, night firing, land navigation, mystery events, and the culminating event: the combatives tournament, which streamed live on [www.dvidshub.net](http://www.dvidshub.net). In addition to recognition the Soldiers received at BWC, the MIRC leadership recognized the Soldiers during its Senior Leaders Conference.



MIRC Best Warriors Sgt. Daniel Acree and Spc. Aaron Thomas are honored by the MIRC's commanding general, Brig. Gen. James Young at the MIRC's Senior Leader Conference. Photo by Spc. Erika Montano.

By: Sgt. Christine Samples

FORT McCOY, Wis. — Spc. Aaron L. Thomas of Pennsville, N.J., a competitor here at the 2010 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition, got more than he anticipated when he decided to be a competitor. He realized Best Warrior isn't just a competition, it's the best training he's ever had.

Thomas said he considers the competition as training because of the opportunity to handle equipment he's never used before and compete in events he's never experienced like the night fire range.

"Best Warrior has taught me leadership and basic Soldier skills," said Thomas. "I wish everyone in the Reserve could do this."

He's a supporter of the competition now, but he underestimated its intensity when he was first selected as a competitor in March. "I had no idea what I was getting into," he said. "It's been fun, but I didn't know it was this extensive."



Spc. Aaron Thomas, a small arms/artillery repairer assigned to the 203rd Military Intelligence Battalion, sets his sights for the finish line during the ruck march event at Fort McCoy, Wis. Thomas is from Pennsville, N.J. Photo by Sgt. Joshua Risner, U.S. Army Reserve Command PAO

Some of the competition events included a 10-kilometer foot march with a ruck sack weighing more than 35-pounds, a board appearance, a physical fitness test, combatives, a night and day land navigation course and live fire range.

Thomas said the worst event of the competition was the 10-kilometer foot march.

*Thomas' advice to future competitors thinking of participating in the Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition is to study the Warrior Training Tasks manual at every opportunity and to practice ruck marches.*

"It tore my body up," he said. "I ended the march on a field ambulance."

He added that his favorite events of the competition were the board appearance and the written essay. Thomas' advice to future competitors thinking of participating in the Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition is to study the Warrior Training Tasks manual at every opportunity and to practice ruck marches.

The competition can be overwhelming, but competitors aren't left to their own devices. They each have a sponsor to help mentor them and assist in their training and military studies. Master Sgt. Nick Amanatidis, with the Military Intelligence Readiness Command, sponsored Thomas at this year's competition.



Spc. Aaron Thomas completes the Night/Day Land Navigation course at the 2010 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition at Fort McCoy, Wis. Photo by: Timothy L. Hale/Army Reserve Public Affairs

"Spc. Thomas is a stellar Soldier, but he's never been able to train at events like they have here at Best Warrior, said Amanatidis.

"It's made him a better Soldier and a future leader. He will be an asset to the noncommissioned officer corps," he said.

With his new knowledge and improved skills gained from the competition, Thomas plans to return home and encourage all the enlisted Soldiers in his unit to start training for next year's competition.

# Q & A with MIRC's NCO of the Year

By Staff Sgt. Stephanie Abdullah, Military Intelligence Readiness Command Public Affairs Office



Sgt. Daniel Acree pours rehydration powder into his canteen after the 10 kilometer road march during the 2010 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition. Photo by Timothy Hale, USARC Public Affairs.

**Full Name:** Sgt. Daniel Elbert Acree  
**Unit:** 368th Military Intelligence Battalion (MI BN), Camp Parks, Calif.  
**Hometown:** Sonora, Calif.  
**How long have you been in the Army?** Two years Active Duty (Headquarters Headquarters Company, 4th Infantry Division, 2003-2005). Two years Reserve (368th MI BN)  
**Military Occupational Specialty:** Graphics Illustrator

**What is your civilian job and how does it support you as a Soldier?**

I am a member of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters Union Local 2785. The Union supports me being in the military by letting me take so much time off of work to compete in the 2010 Best Warrior Competition (BWC). Many of the Teamsters have served the country in previous conflicts.

**What were your thoughts going into the United States Army Reserve Command (USARC) BWC?**

I think I finally understood how a professional athlete feels before the big game, because he or she is not just competing for him or herself, but for their families, their teammates, their fans and their country.

**How did you feel the first day of the competition?**

Relaxed. I was excited to see Spc. Aaron Thomas (MIRC Soldier of the Year) again. We'd competed in both the MIRC competition and the 99th Regional Support Command (RSC) competition together. So, I felt comfortable having someone familiar who was about to go through the same challenges as me. The cadre were not all in your face drill instructor like, but more professional and catering to the competitors and our sponsors.

**What was the most challenging aspect of the BWC?**

I weighed in at 172 lbs. and the cadre put me with the heavy weights for the combatives tournament.

*Sgt. Daniel Acree performs perimeter security after exiting a UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter as part of the 2010 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition. Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Ron Burke, BWC Public Affairs.*



**What advice would you give future competitors?**

Your heart is stronger than your mind. Push through the pain, make it through no matter what and hold your head up high when you've completed your task.

**How did the BWC make you a better Soldier?**

Never giving up even when it seems hopeless is why I'm still alive to be a Soldier.

**What did you learn from the BWC experience?**

That the Army Reserve is not just more squared away than the Active Duty Army, but that the Reservists themselves are Soldiers with intellect and not archaic robots like some would say.

**What was the most rewarding part of the experience?**

The skills I learned that I'll pass along to my seniors, peers and subordinates alike and the people I met during each phase along the way.

**Will you compete again?**

You will see me again!

**Is there anything else you would like to add?**

I want to thank the 99th RSC, the MIRC, the 648th Regional Support Group and the 368th MI BN. A special thank you to Command Sgt. Maj. Theodore Dewitt, Master Sgt. Nicholas Amanatidis and my sponsor, who was my corner man for six months, Staff Sgt. Michael Cacciaroni.



*Sgt. Daniel Acree negotiates an obstacle in the confidence course during the 2010 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition. Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Ron Burke, BWC Public Affairs.*

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