



Influencers, education leaders experience National Training Center

Story by Kimberly Hackbarth

FORT IRWIN, Calif. — Influencers and education leaders from California spent a day as a Soldier during the National Training Center and Fort Irwin's Distinguished Visitor Immersion Tour April 28 and 29.

Brig. Gen. Curtis D. Taylor, commander, NTC and Fort Irwin, said the installation conducts the tour two times a year with the intent of connecting influencers, with limited exposure to the Army, to the Soldiers who serve and the mission of the installation.

"They won't remember a briefing they get from me, but when they hear about all of our Army's opportunities and what it means to serve from the young men and women in our ranks; no briefing can replicate that," Taylor said. "That's a take-away that will last a long time."

Different groups visited the installation each day which started with a ride in a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter from Burbank and included a combat demonstration, a Meal, Ready-to-Eat for lunch, weapons familiarization, a static display with multiple military occupational specialties and a simulated patrol lane.

Whitney Cummings, a comedian, writer and podcaster, attended the first day of the tour.

"I tend to not give myself too much credit for the courage that is required for performing in front of thousands of people in such a vulnerable way," Cummings said. "It's terrifying to most people, to me, it's terrifying the idea of not doing that, but I think that most comedians who do something that is ostensibly, incredibly brave [and] terrifying, other people look to, that's how I feel about people that serve our country."

Cummings invited actress and comedian Hannah Stocking to attend with her.

Together with other attendees of the event, Cummings and Stocking formed a team and learned how to enter and clear a building from 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment Soldiers.



Photo by Pfc. Richard Monyer

Influencers, including Whitney Cummings (far right) and Hannah Stocking (center), conduct a simulated battle drill during the National Training Center and Fort Irwin's Distinguished Visitor (DV) Immersion Tour at Fort Irwin, California, April 28, 2023.

"I've never done anything like this, so it was invigorating," Stocking said. "I got to experience something I never would have gotten to experience [and] I have so much respect for Soldiers and everybody in this space."

For Cummings, working with the team was one of her favorite parts of the day, she said.

"Watching the diamond formation moving towards one of the buildings was so cool because even though I didn't neces-

sarily know what I was doing, I feel like I took it in, but very quickly this sort of teamwork mentality comes in," Cummings said. "I'm a comedian, I'm very lone wolf in what I do, so it was just so cool to have this wolfpack mentality come in right away."

On both days, guests attended a round table session with senior leaders of the installation and spouses.

"I learned that this whole community is really supportive,"

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US Army CBRNE Response Team leader helps to protect nation from all hazards

Story by Walter T. Ham IV

20th CBRNE Command

JOINT BASE LEWIS-MCCHORD, Wash. — An Army Chemical Corps officer helps to protect the United States and its warfighters from all hazards across the nation and around the world.

First Lt. Toy Nguyen serves as the team leader for Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, Explosives (CBRNE) Response Team 1, which is currently part of the interagency National Technical Nuclear Forensics Ground Collection Task Force (NTNF).

Supported by U.S. Army Nuclear Disablement Teams and CBRNE Response Teams as well as the U.S. Air Force Technical Applications Center, the



Courtesy photo

U.S. Army 1st Lt. Toy Nguyen (second from left), the leader from Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, Explosives (CBRNE) Response Team, participates in the Army 10-miler.

See **CBRNE**, Page 2

'Keeping tradition alive': 'Blackhorse' rides again at Presidio of Monterey

by Winifred Brown

Presidio of Monterey, Calif.

When the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment "Blackhorse" Horse Detachment visits the Presidio of Monterey, it's like two longstanding friends getting together for a reunion.

The 11th Cavalry Regiment was stationed at the Presidio from 1919 to 1940, and on Sept. 14, 1924, their shared histories became further united. That was the day lightning struck a 55,000-barrel oil tank in Monterey and ignited a fire so large and destructive that it took days to extinguish. The regiment's "Blackhorse" moniker and patch emblem refer to the color all the unit's horses turned that day because of the soot and ash in the air as they helped with



Army photograph by Winifred Brown

Members of the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment Horse Detachment ride at Salinas River State Beach, Moss Landing, California, May 13, 2023.

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Movie Screening

Fast X screening



Photos by Jack J. Adamyk

Soldiers from the National Training Center and Fort Irwin attended the Fast X advanced screening May 17, at Universal CityWalk Hollywood's AMC theater.

From **CBRNE**, Page 1

BI-led NTNF Ground Collection Task Force gathers and packages samples of radioactive fallout that enable partner agencies to determine the source of the radiation.

The Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington-based CBRNE Response Team 1 is assigned to the 11th Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear (CBRN) Company (Technical Escort), 110th Chemical Battalion (Technical Escort), 48th Chemical Brigade and 10th CBRNE Command, the U.S. military's premier all hazards formation.

From 19 bases in 16 states, American Soldiers and Army civilians from 20th CBRNE Command confront and defeat the world's most dangerous hazards in support of joint, interagency and allied operations.

CBRNE Response Teams tackle a variety of challenging missions, including initial sampling, limited decontamination, packaging, escorting, detection, munitions assessment, explosive threat mitigation and contaminated sensitive site exploitation.

Nguyen began her military service as an enlisted combat medic at the Weed Army

Community Hospital (WACH) on Fort Irwin, California.

"I truly enjoyed working at WACH during those first four developmental years as a junior Soldier and noncommissioned officer before commissioning," said Nguyen.

The CBRNE Response Team leader decided to join the Army after earning her bachelor's degree in crime, law and society from the University of California-Irvine and her law degree from Whittier College, adding that she wanted to learn everything about the legal system to advocate for laws that best represent the people.

"The best part of serving as a Chemical Corps officer is the variety of missions and the schools offered," said Nguyen. "My favorite assignment so far is the NTNF mission because it allowed me to be part of an elite CBRNE response task force that works together to navigate threats to the American people."

Nguyen said that leadership in the Army is built on trust and respect. In the future, she plans to build on that leadership philosophy by taking care of her Soldiers and their families while also taking care of her family.

"The greatest lesson I have learned so far in the Army is that it is in the business of people — respecting people's needs and capabilities is critical to building trust," said Nguyen. "This trust in turn builds better working relationships within the unit and among entities that the Army works with."

Nguyen said joining the Army is a great way to gain valuable leadership experience and to make a difference around the world.

"My best advice for someone thinking about joining the Army is to make your own path. You are the biggest advocate for your career," said Nguyen. "There will be great leaders to guide you along the way and memories you will not soon forget."

Nguyen was inspired to serve in the U.S. Army by her father and mother who immigrated with her from Saigon, Vietnam, to the United States in 1987.

After spending less than a year in Florida, her family moved to Los Angeles where she recalls making friends with a diverse group of students.

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WHO WE ARE

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Luke 10:38-42

38 Now as they went on their way, Jesus entered a village. And a woman named Martha welcomed him into her house. 39 And she had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to his teaching. 40 But Martha was distracted with much serving. And she went up to him and said, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her then to help me." 41 But the

Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things, 42 but one thing is necessary. Mary has chosen the good portion, which will not be taken away from her."

A number of years ago, when I was a student, I was driving home from class when I realized that I had no conscious recollection of most of my drive home. I had travelled that route every day for a couple of years. I knew the route, knew that I had made all the turns, I was on my street, but I could not consciously remember stopping at each stop sign and red light. It hit me, that I had become so used to the routine that I would lose focus and get distracted by the important tasks, in this case, driving safely. It bothered me for a bit, I had to drive on the interstate, speeding cars, multiple red lights, and the memory was not clear. Then I began to think about what else in my life distracted me from the important things.

When I read the passage above the Scripture cut my heart deep to realize how often I get so distracted by the never ending list of things to do that I forget the one thing necessary — the good portion. Jesus is not telling Martha she is wrong for serving, he is reminding her that her serving, the tasks, can easily take over and cause us to be distracted from those things that are most important. It is so easy to wake up

Chaplain's Corner

and have the list of priorities for the day and time with God to fall to the bottom of that list. We must remember those things that are most important in our lives and prioritize them. We must not become anxious and troubled by all the distractions — there will always be tasks on the list. There is always more to be done. However, Jesus is encouraging us here not to lose sight of the one thing necessary.

Whatever your faith background, beliefs, or priorities, that one thing necessary speaks to our spiritual well-being. Our spiritual wellness depends on not losing sight of those things most important in our lives. Our faith, family, friends, deeply held identity in understanding who we are as a person. For Christians, this passage speaks directly to time with Jesus. Whatever beliefs one may hold, I believe we can all agree that life is full of distractions. The whirlwind of life and constant tasks and changes tempt us to become distracted from staying focused on what is most important in our lives. The passage above encourages each of us to shake off the distractions and focus on the good portion.

From INFLUENCERS, Page 1

Stocking said.

"Everybody just works as a unit, and it's a lot of fun."

Christina Maggio, a teacher with Santa Paula High School, attended the second day of the Immersion Tour and said inviting educators on the tour is important.

"If they didn't have somebody in the military in their family, they only hear stereotypes or have preconceived notions," Maggio said. "To be here firsthand to hear about integrity, ethics, meet the leaders, be able to shake their hand and have a sit-down, round table meeting with them, I think it's beautiful because it's a level of transparency that you don't see every day."

Maggio said the Soldiers she encountered impressed her.

"General Taylor inspired me with his belief in his Soldiers and the validity that every Soldier has integrity and leadership skills no matter their age, gender, ethnicity and I feel that way about my students, so I see a direct path for them," Maggio said. "Every single Soldier we met, whether it was with the ready-made meals or teaching us how to shoot a gun, everyone had what I hope my students would have: confidence, trust teamwork, all those skills that you not only want on a resume,

but you want in a person that you work with because they're valuable, they have a strong sense of self, and they have values."

After spending the day with Soldiers, guests on the tour left with new experiences and in some cases, new views of the military.

"People are going to take this experience back to their districts and say, 'If you really want what's best for your students... you will take this motto *Be All You Can Be* and see the Army as a valuable pathway that they can take,'" Maggio said.

Cummings said with all the different things fighting for peoples' attention, she is always looking to find a way to use her talent to either draw attention to a cause that means more or bring laughter to the people who deserve it.

"To me, being able to either learn from the military, participate in any way in terms of entertaining them, or at least giving them a little bit of a day of a distraction to see silly comedians come in and try to do what they do and to be in awe of them might just be a nice break from what they deal with on a day-to-day basis," Cummings said. "I never want to miss an opportunity to be humbled, inspired and awe-stricken."



Photo by Cpl. Dominic Acuna

Influencers and education leaders from California pose for a photograph during the National Training Center and Fort Irwin's Distinguished Visitor (DV) Immersion Tour at Fort Irwin, California, April 28, 2023.



Photo by Cpl. Dominic Acuna

Influencers and education leaders from California pose for a photograph during the National Training Center and Fort Irwin's Distinguished Visitor (DV) Immersion Tour at Fort Irwin, California, April 29, 2023.



Photo by Kimberly Hackbarth

Christina Maggio (center), a teacher with Santa Paula High School, takes a photograph on her cell phone of a Soldier preparing a Meal, Ready-to-Eat in the training area on Fort Irwin, California, April 29, 2023. Maggio and other educators attended The National Training Center and Fort Irwin's Distinguished Visitor (DV) Immersion Tour to learn about the installation's mission.



Photo by Kimberly Hackbarth

California educators learn about Army occupational specialties from Weed Army Community Hospital Soldiers during the National Training Center and Fort Irwin's Distinguished Visitor (DV) Immersion Tour at Fort Irwin, California, April 29, 2023.

News

From CBRNE, Page 1

“Before I was born, my family twice attempted to escape Vietnam during the Vietnam War but was caught by the Viet Cong,” said Nguyen. “After I was born, we received sponsorship and moved from Vietnam to the U.S.”

Her father served in the Vietnamese Air Force and spent almost five years as a prisoner of war.

“My mother and father inspired me to serve. My mother, when she was living, inspired me by always having a big heart and giving

to others,” said Nguyen. “My father inspired me, not only as an aviation officer in the Vietnamese Air Force during the war but also by being captured and resilient as a POW. He showed me that freedom is worth fighting for.”



U.S. Army photo by Marshall R. Mason

Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, Explosives (CBRNE) Response Team 1 Leader 1st Lt. Toy Nguyen (right) tapes the hood of Capt. David D. Manzanares (left) from Nuclear Disablement Team 1 during Exercise Prominent Hunt. Highly specialized American military units trained for nuclear forensics missions with interagency partners during Exercise Prominent Hunt in Houston, May 1-5.



Courtesy photo

First Lt. Toy Nguyen (right) joined the Army as an enlisted combat medic and served at the Weed Army Community Hospital (WACH) on Fort Irwin, California.



Courtesy photo

First Lt. Toy Nguyen (left), the leader from Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, Explosives (CBRNE) Response Team, stands together with Capt. Josiah De Costa.

Asian American Pacific Islander Celebration



The Fort Irwin Military Equal Opportunity and Equal Employment Opportunity offices along with 2916th Aviation Battalion, 916th Support Brigade, hosted an Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month Celebration May 17, at Sandy Basin Community Center on Fort Irwin, California. Col. (Ret.) James Barros, a former armor officer with the U.S. Army and Hawaii Army National Guard, served as the guest speaker for the event and members of Toa O Samoa performed several traditional dances.

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Fort Irwin Consolidated Graduation



Photos by Jack J. Adamyk

The National Training Center and Fort Irwin, in conjunction with the Fort Irwin Education Center, hosted the 23rd annual Fort Irwin Consolidated Graduation at the Sandy Basin Community Center May 25, on Fort Irwin, California. The ceremony recognized the accomplishments of those who graduated college between 2021-2023.

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From BLACKHORSE, Page 1



firefighting efforts.

Meanwhile, two Soldiers gave their lives fighting the fire: Pvt. George Bolio, assigned to the 11th Cav. Regt., and Pvt. Eustace Watkins, assigned to the 76th Field Artillery Regiment. Leaders named a gate and road after both Soldiers, and the main gate and road into the Presidio still pay tribute to Bolio. Watkins Gate, at the former Fort Ord, no longer exists, but Watkins Gate Road still runs across Fort Ord National Monument. Those associated with the regiment and installation see a remembrance of the fire on a nearly daily basis -- whether they know the history or not.

The detachment visits the Presidio nearly annually for the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center's Language Day, an event that features cultural performances and displays. This year, on May 12, members of the detachment presented and retrieved the colors, met with service members, and displayed their riding skills with two demonstrations. They also toured the Presidio of Monterey Museum with a special presentation from Cameron Binkley, command historian for the DLIFLC, on May 11, and took a traditional ride on an area beach on May 13.

Today the unit is stationed at Fort Irwin, Calif., and Capt. Dave Richards, the detachment's officer in charge, said members of the detachment have a special appreciation for visiting the Presidio because it helps keep them in touch with their heritage.

"The motto of our horse detachment is 'Keeping Tradition Alive,' so this is a really unique trip for us that we do every year because we get to come back here where our actual roots are," Richards said.

All members of the detachment come from the 11th ACR, and members of the detachment vote to decide who joins after a two-week



selection process, Richards said. Members are top performers from all military occupational specialties and do not have to have any experience with horses. It is a temporary assignment that usually lasts between 18 months and two years.

In addition to keeping the tradition alive at as many as 100 community relations events a year, the detachment's 20 Soldiers and 16 horses train almost exclusively for competitions, Richards said. They have won the U.S. Cavalry Association's national competition for the past four years consecutively and six times total — the most of any horse Cavalry team throughout the Army.

"We take a lot of pride in being the best regiment and the finest in the land and being those national champions year after year after year," Richards said.

Richards said the Cavalry horseback riding skills that Soldiers used in the early 1900s are the same skills that the detachment uses today.



"We use the appropriate tack, the appropriate saddles and bridles and bits that were used by the Cavalry in the early 1900s," Richards said. "They're all built to specification using manuals from the early 1900s that are still original, period-piece manuals. Everything is as exact and historically accurate as possible."

That also includes the detachment's uniforms and guns, Richards said.

Spc. Zachary Carroll has been a member of the detachment for one year and said the experience has changed his life.

"I've really found a new passion," said Carroll, who is an Infantryman by MOS. "I never was a horse person before, but I have a lifelong obsession here. I get to come to work every day and work with this guy [Comanche, the horse]. It's the

best job in the world."

Cpl. Sarah Alsup, a generator mechanic by MOS, has been a member of the detachment for about six months. She grew up with horses and joining the detachment was one of her main goals when she arrived at Fort Irwin.

In addition to working with horses every day, Alsup said the detachment's impact on the larger world, as well as its heritage, make her especially proud to be a member.

"Ten [members of the detachment] came out here and we interacted with almost a thousand in a few hours," Alsup said, referring to Language Day. "That's a pretty big impact if you stop and think about it."

Alsup said she appreciated Binkley's presentation about the unit's history in Monterey and it helped her gain a deeper understanding of Army tradition.

"Getting to see where your unit has been, is kind of like seeing where your ancestors come from," Alsup said. "We live by the motto,



shown by the detachment during Language Day," Binkley said.

The regiment has a storied history dating all the way back to its creation in 1901 to support military actions in the Philippines through the Vietnam era until today, where the 11th ACR serves as the opposition force at Fort Irwin's National Training Center, Binkley said.

The Army created the 11th Cavalry Regt. just a year before the establishment of the Presidio of Monterey, and it created both for the same reason — to support the rise of the United States as a Pacific power, Binkley said.

Richards said it is important to note that while the regiment has switched from horses to mechanized vehicles such as Humvees and Strykers, the basic principles of the Cavalry have not changed.

"The Cavalry has always been that formation that's out front, scouting, scoping out the enemy, probing lines," Richards said. "They're the ones that are setting the conditions for the main fight and they're gathering as much intelligence as they can for the commander to then decide, 'This is how I want to go about solving whatever complex problem that is in front of me.'"

The detachment is one of six horse detachments throughout the Army, and while they play a major role in keeping traditions alive, it's crucial for all Army units to honor their history and traditions, Richards said.

"A lot of Soldiers will tell you the reason they joined the military is for the men and women to their left and to their right that are fighting right beside them," Richards said. "History is our tie-in to those people who were to the left and to the right of us going all the way back to the founding of the Army and our units."

'Keeping Tradition Alive' every day. We do it all the time. Every day we think about it. We talk about it, but now we actually get to see it, which is really good, because we can talk about things, but until you put them into play or get a real visual of what it is, you never really know. Now we know."

Binkley said the detachment's visit is meaningful historically because the Army quartered the 11th Cavalry Regt. at the Presidio between the World Wars. It is also an important part of Monterey's local history.

"Older residents of Monterey may still recall the days when the mounted Cavalry's performance team drilled on Soldier Field or at other local venues during public demonstrations of their skills, quite similar to those



News



JUNE 2023



SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
				1 • Fort Irwin Chambers meeting	2 	3 
4	5 • VBS STARTS	6 Fort Irwin ERP Job Fair	7	8 Parent Education Class (BLDG 21)	9 • VBS ENDS 	10 CYS Mini Ball
Vacation Bible School (VBS)						
11	12	13	14 	15	16 	17
18 	19 JUNETEENTH	20	21  • USAG Change of Command	22 Blood Drive (Sandy Basin)	23 	24 FREEDOM FEST & Food Truck Festival 
25	26	27	28  • TOWN HALL	29 • Army Heritage Month	30 Karaoke Every Friday Night 2000-2300 hrs. SHOCKWAVE 	COSMIC BOWLING Every Saturday Night 1830-2230 hrs. DesertWinds 
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National Training Center and Fort Irwin Highlights

- Vacation Bible School: 05-09 JUN
- Parent Education Class 08 JUN (BLDG 21)
- Happy Birthday ARMY: 14 JUN
- Happy Fathers Day: 18 JUN
- Federal Holiday: 19 JUN
- USAG Change of Command 21 JUN
- OPS GROUP Change of Command 24 JUN
- Freedom Fest and Food Truck Festival 24 JUN




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