

STRONG COMMUNITIES. STRONG BASES.

# AMERICA'S DEFENSE

★ COMMUNITIES ★

## STRENGTH THROUGH SERVICE

**5 Places Making Life Great  
for Military Families**

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**Award-Winning Community Leaders  
Talk about What Works**

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**Tomorrow's Leaders Are Here**

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**The Push for Better Schools**

June 2018



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# Strength through Service

Watching a fighter jet take off never grows old. **By Tim Ford, Chief Executive Officer, ADC**

I recently had the chance to be part of an ADC Advisory Services trip to interior Alaska, where we were hosted by our amazing community members in Fairbanks. Driving onto Eielson Air Force Base, we stopped in awe to watch the 18th Aggressor Squadron take off as part of a Red Flag exercise. Watching their graceful movement while hearing their mighty roar, I was reminded of our military's unmatched force and its awesome strength.

Strength has always defined our military and its global dominance today. Measured in planes, ships, weapons and personnel, strength can also be what is not in uniform—the community of support that surrounds our military. Supporting those who serve is the mission that drives America's defense communities. Through their service, our military grows stronger.

In this issue of *America's Defense Communities*, we share the stories from communities across the country, their leaders and the people whose service make our defense communities great.

We learn that keeping the military strong takes the right investment and how generations of civilian workers are making sure that Aberdeen Proving Ground in Maryland remains the hub of innovation for the Army.

We better understand how to leverage the strength of those who have served. The communities around Fort Knox, Ky., for example, are taking a regional approach to support transitioning service members



An F-16 from Eielson Air Force Base, Alaska, flies over the Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex May 2, 2018. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Jerilyn Quintanilla

and their spouses. We learn about an innovative program in Tampa that is leveraging community networks to build lasting connections. And in San Diego, entrepreneurial veterans and a big-name university are collaborating to create new opportunities—and great beer!

By providing the strength to support families dealing with deployments, a mentoring program near Moody Air Force base in South Georgia is bringing people together; and something called Swamp Salad epitomizes the enduring spirit of a community.

The four Defense Community Awards winners profiled in this issue exemplify

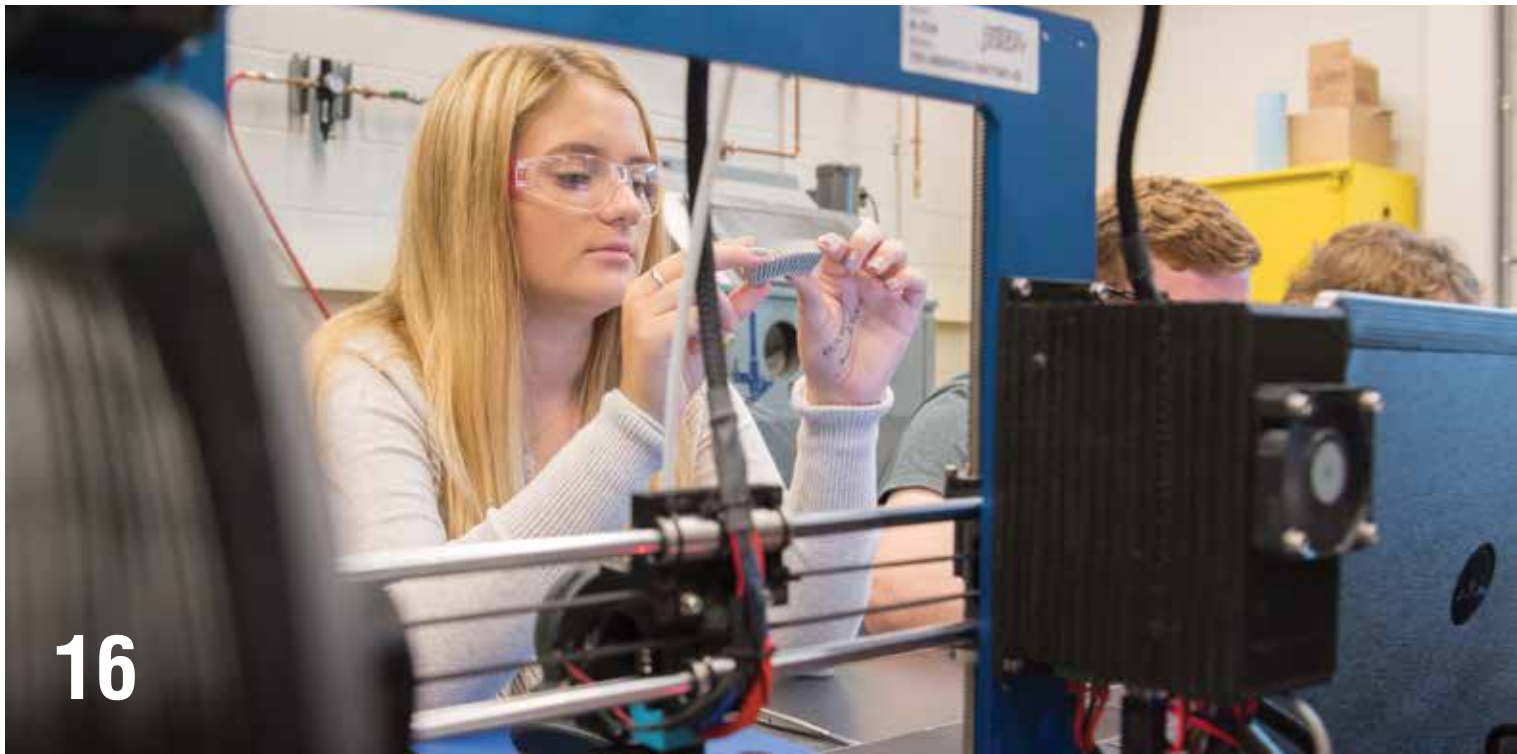
strength through leadership. From two leaders whose work on behalf of their communities is building a lasting impact to a military leader whose vision will ensure a proud tradition continues. We also share the story of a visionary leader whose decades of diligence transformed a crumbling base into an award-winning community asset.

Finally, we look forward to how our service must evolve to ensure our military remains strong.

These stories from every part of the country embody the idea of strength through service. It is an idea and way of life whose quiet roar soars high every day in America's defense communities. 🇺🇸

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JUNE 2018



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On the cover: Lt. Gen. Charles Q. Brown Jr. and Tampa Bay Buccaneers linebacker Adarius Taylor salute the flag during the national anthem Nov. 12, 2017, at the Buccaneers' "Salute to Service." Salute to Service is a partnership between the NFL and USAA. Photo courtesy of Tampa Bay Buccaneers

## Morning Mug

A student shows off her beads and bow during a Scott Craven Mentoring Program breakfast at Sallas Mahone Elementary School in Valdosta, Ga., March 13, 2018. Read more about the program on page 30. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Ceaira Tinsley



PUBLISHED BY



## ABOUT ADC

ADC builds resilient communities that support America's military. We are the connection point for leaders from communities, states, the military and industry on community-military issues and installation management to enhance knowledge, information sharing and best practices. With nearly 300 communities, states, regions, and affiliated industry organizations, ADC represents every major defense community/state in the nation.

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# AMERICA'S DEFENSE

★ COMMUNITIES ★

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## 2018 EDITION

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# Community Snapshots

*America's Defense Communities looks back at some of the moments that caught our eyes over the past year.*






**1** A member of the 4th Fighter Wing and his wife take a selfie during a homecoming event April 10, 2018, at Seymour Johnson Air Force Base, N.C. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Shawna L. Keyes **2** 1st Sgt. Joseph Bierbrodt with the 933rd Military Police Company and Cayleigh Hinton, whose father had died in a training accident, prepare for a father-daughter dance in Beach Park, Ill., Feb. 7, 2018. Their limo was escorted by the Patriot Guard and nearby police and fire departments. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Robert R. Adams **3** Defense Secretary James N. Mattis takes airmen's questions during a town hall meeting at Mountain Home Air Force Base in Idaho Jan. 16, 2018. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Jeremy L. Mosier **4** Boston residents greet Logistics Specialist Seaman Justin Moore, assigned to USS Constitution, March 18, 2018, during the city's annual Evacuation Day Parade, commemorating the day British troops left Boston in 1776. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Casey Scoular **5** Vice President Mike Pence and Secretary of the Air Force Heather Wilson greet families at Peterson Air Force Base, Colo., June 23, 2017. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Dennis Hoffman **6** Rick Dwyer, deputy executive director of the Hampton Roads Military and Federal Facilities Alliance, talks with a guest during a Great American Defense Communities reception at the 2017 Defense Communities National Summit. Photo by Rob Mesite **7** Soldiers with the Texas Army National Guard rescue Houston residents from Hurricane Harvey floodwaters Aug. 28, 2017. Army photo by 1st Lt. Zachary West **8** The Eglin-Hurlburt community in Florida unveils the nation's largest Great American Defense Communities logo in March 2018. The area was named a Great American Defense Community in 2016. Photo submitted

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Photos courtesy of Presidio of Monterey Flickr.

# Better Schools for Military Students

By Randy Ford

A student in Fort Riley, Kan., wanted the visiting VIPs to see the problem for themselves. In an impromptu demonstration, he turned on the faucet in his classroom in USD 475, and members of Congress watched as brown water gushed out.

The congressional delegation's visit was prompted by comments a mother made during a closed-door meeting with then-Defense Secretary Robert Gates had with military families from Fort Riley.

By raising their concerns in 2010, the mother and student helped kick off a DOD effort to assist public schools located on military installations that are either deteriorating or are overcrowded.

Congress soon began appropriating money for the Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA) to support school upgrades. Most recently the FY 2018 omnibus spending bill included an additional \$235 million for the initiative, known as Public Schools on Military Installations. The goal is to boost military readiness by assuring service members their children are not going to school in inadequate facilities. Priority is given to schools with the most pressing issues through grants that require local or state matching funds.

"All students in our community deserve the highest quality education and first-rate

facilities," U.S. Rep. Adam Smith said in 2012, when one of the grants was awarded to replace two schools at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash. "This money will ensure the children at JBLM receive both."

USD 475 at Fort Riley—where brown water led to congressional action—got an entirely new school that opened in 2015, and it was a boost for the entire region, according to John Armbrust, who was executive director of the Governor's Military Council in Kansas at the time.

"There was truly great excitement, not only on the fort but also among neighboring communities with other school districts," Armbrust said. "There was excitement that we were supporting military families, and they were getting schools where they were comfortable and able to grow. The teachers had been doing phenomenal work making the best of the conditions, so there was also excitement that they were getting facilities that matched their efforts." 📱



Students help break ground July 30, 2012, on two new schools at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash., funded in part through an OEA grant. Army photo by Sgt. Christopher Gaylord. Right, the new Carter Lake Elementary School at JBLM.

## The Numbers

Public Schools on Military Installations Program



**\$1.18 BILLION**

appropriated by Congress since 2011



**33**

completed or planned projects



**11,000**

students impacted each year



**11**

states receiving matching grants through 2018

CALIFORNIA  
HAWAII  
KANSAS  
LOUISIANA

OKLAHOMA  
NEW JERSEY  
NEW MEXICO  
TEXAS

UTAH  
VIRGINIA  
WASHINGTON



Construction begins at the new San Onofre Elementary School at Camp Pendleton, Calif., Dec. 14, 2017. The community received a grant from the Office of Economic Adjustment to help fund the new school, which will have 900 students, computer labs with wireless internet and an improved STEM program. Marine Corps photo by Pfc. Drake Nickels

# The Next Generation of Community Leaders

By Dan Cohen

It started with a simple question: What if we invested in the new leaders who are investing their energy in defense community across the nation?

**A**DC, its Military Families & Veterans Council, and Blue Star Families—a nonprofit founded by military spouses in 2009—wanted to provide more resources for these emerging leaders. In fall 2017, they launched the Defense Community Leadership Academy, a one-day training event to help up-and-coming community leaders better nurture local networks of military family supporters and connect with their peers across the country.

The Academy marked the first time ADC and BSF have formally partnered, so the event had the added bonus of introducing the groups' members to the resources offered by the other. Each organization selected one-half of the Academy's 40-plus participants, with BSF choosing students from among their local chapters and communities. For ADC, candidates needed to have a connection to a defense community, region or state through their job or a volunteer role. Most of the ADC participants do not belong to the association or had recently joined.

One of the strengths of the Academy, first held in March 2018 in Washington, D.C., was it brought together participants from diverse backgrounds, including active-duty military personnel, military spouses and civilian leaders, said Katie Lopez, government relations manager for the Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce. It helped bridge the longstanding gap between the two sectors, according to Lopez, who previously was the director of military affairs for the Christian County (Ky.) Chamber of Commerce.

The Academy's workshops and networking sessions allowed participants to begin the kind of conversations needed for the two sectors to work more closely together.

"It was great to see the Blue Star Family participants interacting with ADC participants, so when everyone goes back to their community, they can leverage that network for collaboration," Lopez said.


Brittany Boccher, who attended the Academy as a community leader supporting service members at Little Rock Air Force Base, said the event exceeded her expectations.

"I definitely made a lot of networking connections, and it allowed me to work with people in different regions to help them work with military families," said Boccher, who was president of the installation's Spouses Club until recently and the Armed Forces Insurance Military Spouse of the Year for 2017–2018.

Lopez was an Academy faculty member, along with leading service member and military family support practitioners and other experts. Discussions covered the role the military plays in the surrounding community, identifying local issues to support, measuring progress in addressing quality-of-life issues, building support at the local level and defining the community leader's role.

But more so than the tools and resources the Academy provided, its most valuable contribution almost certainly was the lesson it offered the participants of the need to connect with other military family support organizations in their regions. Too often, leaders singularly focus on their organization's mission and lose sight of the potential to collaborate, Lopez said.

"DCLA was a great environment to open up that line of communication," she said.

ADC offered the Academy through a special grant from its sponsor, the Defense Credit Union Council. BSF's sponsor, USAA, provided similar support. 



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Each of the communities included in the 2018 class of Great American Defense Communities has a rich legacy—multiple generations of leaders and families who are proud of the role they play in our national defense and in the daily lives of service members and their families. They join 18 other regions that have been previously designated Great American Defense Communities. To get your area on the map, check [defensecommunities.org](https://defensecommunities.org).



# Our Great Communities



### Key

Class of 2018

Class of 2017

Class of 2016



# INSPIRING

## the Next Generation of Innovators

“At Aberdeen Proving Ground, we’re known as the Army’s ‘Home of Innovation.’ If a soldier uses a piece of technology for protection, intelligence, to shoot, to move or to communicate, chances are that an APG organization developed, tested and fielded it,” said Maj. Gen. Randy S. Taylor, senior commanding general at Aberdeen Proving Ground and commanding general of Communications-Electronics Command.

By Willona Sloan

**W**ith a focus on inspiring the next generation of innovators, Aberdeen Proving Ground (APG) provides meaningful opportunities for young people in northeastern Maryland to engage with professionals at APG while also learning critical skills that can lead to exciting careers.

“On a yearly basis we facilitate more than 40,000 student interactions, more than 1,000 teacher interactions, and participate in more than 130 events,” Taylor said. “Our employees selflessly give their time to support these efforts, and they are excited to feed that technology hunger to build up our next generation of APG workers.”

APG personnel participate in STEM & Beyond nights in local public schools,

support FIRST Lego Leagues and FIRST Robotics events and trainings, serve as judges at school science fairs, and organize math and science summer and in-school programs. At the installation, they host STEM-related activities for the community such as the APG Discovery Fest and the Junior Solar Sprint competition.

APG also serves as a partner to Joppatowne High School’s Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (HSEP) Program.

“APG has been a tremendous supporter of the HSEP Program at Joppatowne High School,” said Erica Kelly, a teacher and coach who serves as the HSEP program coordinator. “APG has continuously

supported our program through mentorships, guest speakers and field trips. Students can use these valuable experiences to help them become college- or career-ready.”

At Aberdeen High School, APG has been an integral partner for the school’s Science and Mathematics Academy, a magnet program for students interested in rigorous study of the STEM fields. The school’s Project Lead the Way Engineering is a STEM program designed for students interested in learning about the different fields of engineering.

Through APG, Aberdeen High School students can participate in mentorships, internships, STEM camp and other educational enrichment activities.



Taylor Wagley, a student at North Bay Haven Charter Academy High School in Panama City, Fla., prepares a 3-D printed sample she made at the U.S. Army Research Laboratory as part of a two-week internship with the Joint Science and Technology Institute in August 2017. Army photo by David McNally

"APG is the perfect community partner," Aberdeen High School Principal Michael O'Brien said. "People on APG understand the nature of service. They are constantly looking to provide experiences and mentor our students. What the great people on APG teach our students is how to selflessly serve and give back to the community. There are people on APG from every STEM career imaginable, and they all help us on every path we travel."

For APG, the mission is clear. Supporting STEM education efforts is great for the entire community.

"We know that a scientifically and technologically literate citizenry is our nation's best hope for a secure, rewarding and successful future," Taylor said. 📷



Joppatowne High School students watch as Andre Lewis of Morgan State University demonstrates how to solder resistors and wires to a circuit during a field trip. Photo submitted

## Tony: A STEM Growth Success Story

The region around Aberdeen Proving Ground takes pride in training new generations to carry on the tradition of innovation and service. *America's Defense Communities* talked to one person about the opportunities he's gotten, what he's done with them and how he's giving back.



For Tony Harris, participating in the Kenneth V. Hilton Mentorship Program at Edgewood High School changed the trajectory of his life.

The mentoring program was sponsored by the U.S. Army Materiel Systems Analysis Activity (AMSAA) at Aberdeen Proving Ground. Every month, mentors from AMSAA visited Harris' high school to speak with participants in the program.

"They talked about being respectful. They encouraged us. They inspired us. They supported us academically," Harris said. "They talked to us about different STEM careers. I had never actually met a black man who was an engineer or a scientist or a mathematician. That was inspiring to me. That put a fire in me to work a lot harder in school. I was a very good student, but I worked harder because I knew that if this was something that I wanted to do, I needed to put my best foot forward. These guys were an example of that."

Harris graduated from Morgan State University, where he studied electrical engineering. Interning at AMSAA while in college helped him to chart his career path. Today, Harris is a systems engineer, working with the Network and Comms Team at AMSAA. With support from AMSAA, he also earned a master's degree in systems engineering.

Harris is now the co-lead of the mentoring program, working with a team of dedicated volunteers to continue to inspire students at Edgewood.

"We want to make sure that we give them the tools that they need to succeed once they graduate from high school," he said. —WS

# SERVING AT APG: A Family Tradition

By Willona Sloan

Civilian team members comprise an important part of the Aberdeen Proving Ground (APG) community.

“Our large civilian population is an important part of what makes APG so special, because our civilians connect and bind the installation to the local communities of which we are part,” said Maj. Gen. Randy S. Taylor, APG senior commanding general and commanding general of Communications-Electronics Command. “That means when they come to work, they are prepared and excited to commit themselves to the goal of protecting our soldiers, wherever and whenever our nation may call on them.”

The large civilian workforce includes team members who have made APG a family

tradition. In 1948, Carl Eissner’s father Robert started working at the Army’s Weapons Systems Laboratory at APG. That organization transitioned into the Army Materiel Systems Analysis Activity (AMSAA) in 1968. Robert worked at AMSAA until he retired as an operations supervisor and operations research analyst in August 1985.

One month later, Carl joined AMSAA, which conducts weapons systems analysis and logistic systems analysis for all of the Army’s major weapons systems programs.

“It was a really fun job,” said Eissner, who held different roles throughout his



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**EXPERIENCE** 10 years  
**REMARKS** ...

**PRESENT POSITION** ...

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Bob Eissner (seated at desk) with APG colleagues in 1963 | Bob's 1948 application for employment at APG, showing a \$3,727.20 salary request | Bob's retirement party, 1985 | David Eissner at an AMSAA picnic, 1994 | Carl Eissner receiving the Commander's Award, 1999 | David, Carl and his wife Donna at Carl's retirement, 2013. Photos submitted

career at AMSAA, including as a testing evaluation analyst, an operations research team leader and a branch chief. “Aberdeen Proving Ground is a scientific analysis research, high-tech STEM atmosphere,” Eissner said. “It brings in a lot of talent. It’s a fun and challenging and worthwhile place to work.”

As branch chief, he managed a 25-person team that conducted systems analysis studies for Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Systems, and the independent testing and evaluation for the Army’s now \$40 billion chemical demilitarization program. He retired in 2013 from AMSAA. Eissner still spends a lot of time at APG, working with JRAD, a veteran-owned small business contractor, while his son David carries on the APG family tradition. David did a summer internship at AMSAA while earning a computer network security degree at Wilmington University and joined AMSAA in 2010 as an IT specialist.

Both of Coby Lantry’s parents worked at APG. Her father was a management analyst

and worked for the garrison. Her mother was a secretary.

In her 35-year career at Aberdeen Test Center (ATC), Lantry has taken on several roles, including data collector and maintenance evaluator, working on military equipment. She is now in the automotive directorate with the reliability, availability, maintainability and integrated logistics support division at ATC, where she authors reports for military test equipment.

While her son was in college, he needed a job during his school breaks. Through ATC, he gained important experience that helped clarify his studies.

“It made him decide to get his engineering degree,” Lantry said. He now is an engineer with the testing center.

Multigenerational employees have become somewhat common, said Lantry, whose brother also works at ATC as an engineer. As the largest employer in Harford County and the sixth-largest employer in Maryland, APG contributes \$6.5 billion to the regional economy annually.



▶ Carl and David Eissner talk about their family history at APG at [defensecommunities.org](http://defensecommunities.org)

For local families, APG can provide exciting educational and professional opportunities.

“They have training and funding if you want to enhance your career,” Lantry said. “You can get your degree at your pace. If you want to go to night school or go to school during the day and work part-time, they will work with you.”

These opportunities can transform lives for generations. 🇺🇸



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# CAREER MATCHMAKERS

When Tony Whelan retired from the military, he had no idea what kind of civilian career he might transition into. All he knew is he wanted to stay near Fort Knox.

By Haley Shapley

“This is one of my favorite installations,” said Whelan, who retired after 25 years in the Army. “I knew I wanted to stay close to it. There’s such a community here.”

As a master sergeant, he had been a successful leader throughout his military career, but he was worried about how to find a job that would maximize his talents and provide the same standard of living. As Whelan was going through the Solider for Life—Transition Assistance Program, he heard about Where Opportunity Knox (WOK), a regional initiative to connect transitioning veterans and military spouses to jobs in the greater Louisville area. He knew immediately he wanted to take part.

While many employers across the country hire veterans, no region has the same approach to recruiting and retaining veteran talent as WOK, which is now in its fourth year and funded through grants. The greater Louisville area is well-positioned

for this initiative; approximately 100,000 soldiers transition from active-duty service annually through the U.S. Army Human Resources Command located at Fort Knox.

Three regional veteran connectors (RVCs), all retired service members themselves, lead the program, coaching participants on everything from cover letters to salary negotiation. When a client needs something outside their areas of expertise, the RVCs connect them to 170 community partners who are willing and able to help. They also travel outside of Kentucky to recruit even more veteran talent to the area.

The RVCs work with businesses in the area, setting up events such as employer showcases, which offer a firsthand look at what it’s like to work for a particular company.

Among WOK’s many offerings is the Senior Leaders Corporate Fellowship Program, designed for those who are



Tony Whelan, LouieConnect project manager, and Cathe Dykstra, Family Scholar House CEO, discuss nonprofit organizations and careers with transitioning veterans at the Fort Knox Senior Leader Symposium March 28, 2018. Photo by Whitney Allen

# The Numbers

Where Opportunity Knox accomplishments since October 2014:



**7,235**

New hires



**331**

Employer partners



**73**

Networking events



**8%**

Active job seekers from out of state

within 180 days of their transition. For two months, participants intern with a company for four days a week and spend one day a week in the classroom learning skills relevant to job hunting.

"We currently have a 90 percent success rate with that program," said Linda Larson, one of the RVCs. "When employers see someone with great talent that would be a very valuable asset to the company, they will often offer them a job halfway through the program."

Whelan is one of those success stories. He interned with the nonprofit Family Scholar House, then was hired as a project manager. In that role, he recently launched a web app called LouieConnect.com for those who are in crisis or need assistance connecting with local resources.

"If it was not for Where Opportunity Knox, I do not think I'd be where I'm at today," Whelan said. "If you do not participate, you are selling yourself short." 📌

## Make Better Matches

Here are some tips for how a community can make its work transition program work for more people.

- 1 Cast a wide net(work).** Where Opportunity Knox sends recruiters out of state to bring more veterans to the area.
- 2 Train employers, too.** "We train the employer partners to realize the value of what these veterans bring to the table," said Linda Larson, one of three regional veteran connectors. "Not all the time can they see the connection with the roles they're trying to fill and what talent is being presented to them."
- 3 Include the spouses.** They have often "foregone their careers to support their spouse's career, so it could be a challenge of getting back into the workforce," Larson said. —Randy Ford

# Cause for CELEBRATION

By Grace Marvin

News travels fast in Radcliff, Ky. When Randy Acton heard that Will Stolz, a fellow local businessman, had an idea for a Hardin County military appreciation day, it didn't take long for Acton to track Stolz down.

“I knew I wanted to be a part of it,” Acton said. “I reached out to Will, and he already had the name in mind: ‘Hooray for Heroes.’”

Acton and Stolz met for lunch and discussed their idea for a patriotic community event focused on giving back to veterans, military families and first responders.

“It was half my vision and half Randy’s,” Stolz said. “We combined our ideas, and before we knew it, the entire event was planned out.”

The inaugural Hooray for Heroes celebration was in 2006. For both Acton and Stolz, the growth of the event and community involvement has been remarkable.

“The crowds are growing every year,” Acton said. “Seeing the size of the tents go from 20 x 20 to 40 x 120 in order

to accommodate the crowds has been inspiring. Now we feed, on average, 3,000 people.”

Early on, the duo decided the day was going to be about paying tribute.

“It’s a free day for families, full of fun and entertainment,” Acton said.

The celebration is also an opportunity for the Fort Knox community to say thank you.

“We tell Korean War vets and Vietnam vets that we appreciate them,” Stolz said. “The ones that maybe didn’t get a thank you when they returned home.”

That’s what keeps community volunteers showing up year after year.

“People show up so eagerly,” Acton said.

“They want to shake hands with soldiers and say thank you face-to-face. Hooray for Heroes gives them that chance.” 🍷

## How to Plan a Great Community Event

The organizers of the Fort Knox region’s Hooray for Heroes event told *America’s Defense Communities* their top tips for a successful military appreciation event.

**1 Make it a passion project.** Hooray for Heroes is in its 12th year. Acton and Stolz attribute much of the event’s success to having chosen a cause their community was already passionate about. “In our community, no matter where you walk, you see people in uniform,” Stolz said. “It gives us a sense of pride to know these people are serving and have served all around the world.”

**2 Pull together an all-star team.** Look to community members who share the same passion but have different skill sets. “We gathered a committee of like-minded citizens who were energized about the same goal,” Acton said.

**3 (Fund)Raise the roof.** Cast a wide net for support. “We haven’t found it difficult to raise money for Hooray for Heroes, because the event is so entrenched in the community,” Acton said. “All types of local businesses pitch in.” He said financial support comes even easier once you “determine the what, when, where of your event.” —GM



The Ladies of Liberty singers perform at Hooray for Heroes in 2013. | Volunteer Pam DeRoache serves up the event’s traditional lunch at Hooray for Heroes in 2015. | A boy climbs on a military vehicle on display at Hooray for Heroes. Photos by Randy Acton.

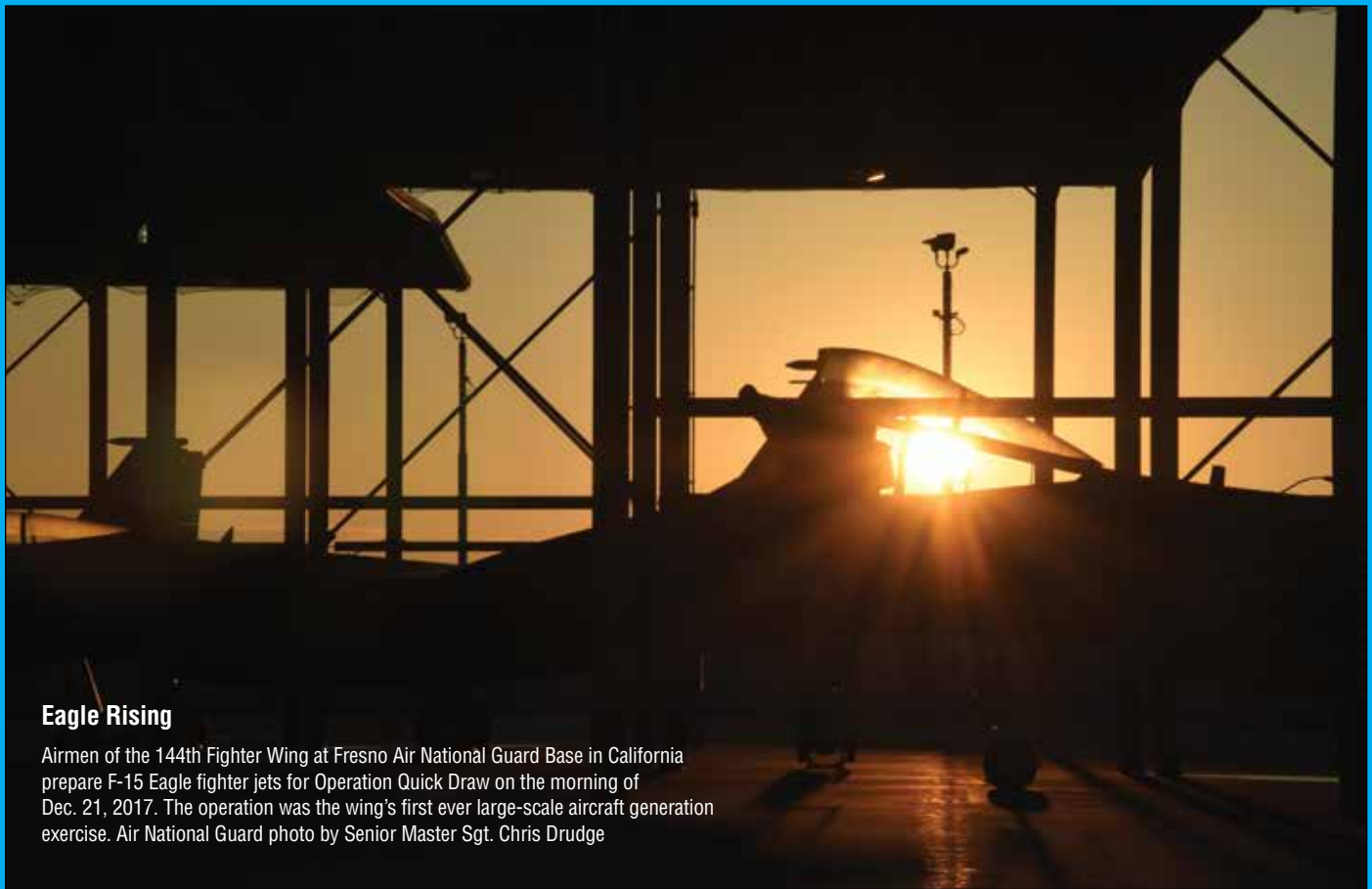


# RE-CREATING HISTORY

**M**ore than 2,000 service members and neighbors gathered at Fort Knox May 23, 2018, to recreate an iconic image taken days after the Armistice of November 1918. The new photo celebrates the centennial of the base—originally called “Camp Knox”—and the region’s selection as a 2018 Great American Defense Community.

“This was extremely cool,” Lt. Gov. Jenean Hampton told *America’s Defense Communities* after the photo. “Maybe 100 years from today, someone’s going to see that photo, and I’m somewhere in it. That’s something to tell your kids and grandkids about.” 🇺🇸





### Eagle Rising

Airmen of the 144th Fighter Wing at Fresno Air National Guard Base in California prepare F-15 Eagle fighter jets for Operation Quick Draw on the morning of Dec. 21, 2017. The operation was the wing's first ever large-scale aircraft generation exercise. Air National Guard photo by Senior Master Sgt. Chris Drudge



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# GETTING BACK TO Business



By Haley Shapley

Back in 2010, Navy SEAL Sean Haggerty was in Iraq when he really wanted a beer. There were none handy in the desert, so Haggerty got an idea: He'd brew his own.

“An entrepreneurial light flicked off in my head,” he remembered later. “That’s when I said to myself, ‘I’m going to start a brewery.’”

Seven years later, he was on the verge of doing just that when he heard about the new Veteran Ventures program at the University of California at San Diego. Housed at the Rady School of Management, the 10-week program is free and open to any veteran with an interest in entrepreneurship. Participants have the opportunity to compete for non-diluted funding and can access all the university’s resources, from the 3-D printers and maker spaces to the faculty who are willing to share their expertise.

“We want to empower veterans in our community,” Sandra Brown, vice chancellor of research at UC San Diego,

said. “We are one of the largest veteran communities in the country, and I know what a challenge it is for veterans to transition out of the military. They need support for their entrepreneurial efforts.”

Haggerty used Veteran Ventures to refine the go-to-market strategy for Protector Brewery, San Diego’s first USDA-certified organic brewery. In a saturated market, they’ve found a way to stand out, selling 25,000 pints within the first 10 months. Now, Haggerty pays it forward by serving as a mentor.

“I truly believe that veterans are naturally primed to be entrepreneurs and work in small-team dynamics,” Haggerty said. “Just helping them find what they want to do and make an impact in the U.S. economy is very important to me.”



Sean Haggerty poses inside Protector Brewery in June 2017, when he first opened the brewery with support from Veteran Ventures. Protector Brewery photos by Mark Thorsen

That opportunity for one-on-one coaching is one aspect that program participant Robert Sweetman found particularly valuable. The former Navy SEAL is on a mission to help those who struggle with issues no one can see—such as PTSD and insomnia—by creating a device that delivers an immersive virtual sleep experience. He believes if you can rewire the brain to get back into a natural rhythm, you can treat many issues related to sleep deprivation.

“Going through the program helped me find a way to communicate with others

what I’m thinking and feeling inside,” Sweetman said. “This process is giving me the opportunity to take an idea that I have as a veteran and make that dream a reality as I transition into the civilian world.”

Getting that practice of presenting an idea, brainstorming with other program participants, and just being surrounded by others who want you to succeed is where the real magic lies.

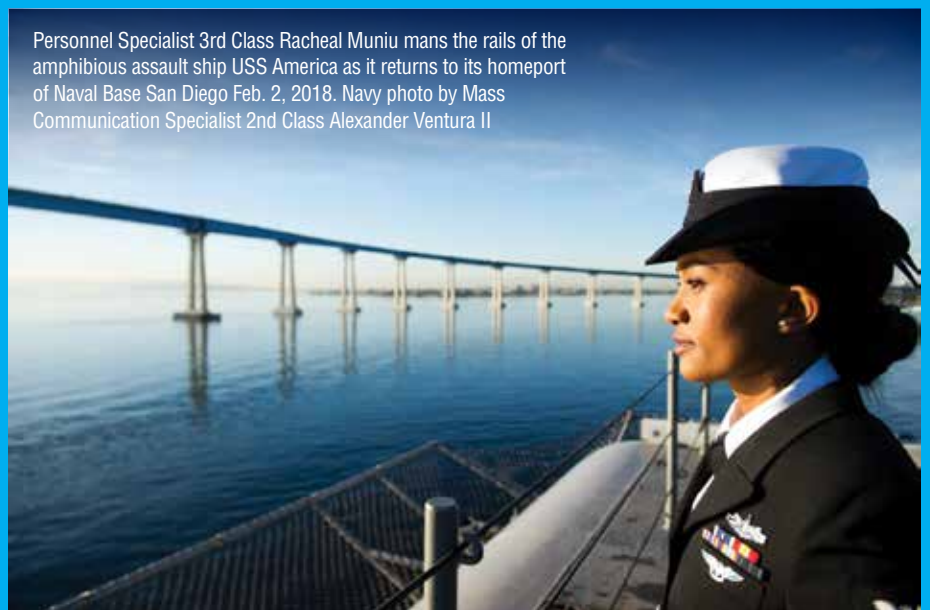
“We really try to support them and help them get connected,” Hayden said. “No one individual is smarter than all of us together.”

This idea of veterans helping veterans is at the core of the program. When UC San Diego was looking for someone to spearhead it, they turned to Michael Hayden, who spent 21 years in the Marine Corps and has been helping veterans start businesses since 1999. For Veteran Ventures, Hayden has taken the principles of Rady’s Lab to Market course series and adapted them specifically for those with a military background.

“It’s not a static program,” Hayden said. “We take into consideration each series of veterans, and by the third week, we bring in targeted mentors.”

Those mentors come from both the military and civilian worlds—and given the wealth of expertise in San Diego, there’s never a lack of top-notch talent willing to lend a hand.

Personnel Specialist 3rd Class Racheal Muniu mans the rails of the amphibious assault ship USS America as it returns to its homeport of Naval Base San Diego Feb. 2, 2018. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Alexander Ventura II





## A community that 'TAKES CARE OF ITS OWN'

San Diego has one of the largest military populations in the country, and its residents rally around their own through one-on-one support and a range of community organizations. *America's Defense Communities* had a chance to talk with four Gold Star wives who say the community has made them feel at home through some of their toughest moments.

As told to Grace Marvin

“

### Jennifer Carazo



The Sugar Bear Foundation was formed in honor of my late husband, Lt. Col. Mario Carazo, to preserve his legacy but also to give back and to support other Gold Star families. His call sign was Sugar Bear, which was appropriately fitting for him and his personality. He had a kind of very sweet, very outgoing, endearing personality. He knew from the time he was a little boy he wanted to fly. He was consumed—obsessed—with aviation. As he grew, his desire to serve also grew.

Mario and I had two children together, Mario and Milla. Young Mario was nine when we lost Sugar Bear, and my daughter was almost seven. We've been so blessed by the Marine Corps and the military community, San Diego and Carlsbad in general. They have really rallied around our family, and I think that support has made all the difference in the world for us. We've definitely felt that love. It's inspired me and fueled me to want to give back.

”

“

### Chrissy Gibson



My husband deployed in April 2013 for a six-month deployment. A month before he was supposed to come home from his routine deployment, there was an aviation accident aboard the USS Lawrence, and my husband, along with the pilot, rests in the Red Sea.

[Angels of America's Fallen, with support from The Sugar Bear Foundation] is pretty amazing. My daughter is pretty active. But my son is pretty timid because he doesn't have his dad. He doesn't want to play sports. He doesn't want to do things that most little boys want to do. He'll tell you that it's because he doesn't have his dad, so I'm hoping that with this program, we can try different things, hopefully get some male mentors, coaches and teach the kid how to throw a ball, because he doesn't want to even do that with me.

”

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### Macarena Cardenaz



We were dual-military. I met him in Germany. I was stationed in Würzburg and he was stationed in Vilseck. He passed in 2010. In 2012, I was selected to move to San Diego to work in the naval hospital helping wounded service members and helping them transition out of the military. After I came out of my 20 years in the military, I decided to stay here.

We love it. We know we are not by ourselves. There are people out there who care about the well-being not just of me and my kids but for the community of other children of the fallen.

### Janice Bryant



We lost my husband in Afghanistan in 2011. He was there to help the Afghans build an Afghan air force. He was an F-16 pilot and deployed when our son was about two weeks old, and he was about to come home a year later when he was killed. My son is now seven. He was a year old when we lost his dad. He's essentially never known him.

We moved to San Diego from Washington, D.C. By the time he was two and a half, I realized he just needed to be somewhere where he could be outside. He had this boundless energy. He was just like his dad. He wanted to run around and play. Of course, in D.C., we were limited by weather and traffic and jobs and commutes, and so I had this moment of realization that I needed to get up and move him to San Diego and give him a better life.

Immediately, folks took us in as family, and it has been home to us. We would never leave at this point. It really is the right place where we're meant to be. It's a great, great military community, and it takes care of its own.

 The Gold Star wives tell their stories at [defensecommunities.org](http://defensecommunities.org)



# The Kids Are All Right

By Grace Marvin

At 7:15 a.m. on most Thursday mornings, you'll find Bonnie Ard elbow-deep in glitter leading a craft project at Sallas Mahone Elementary School in Valdosta, Ga. Her audience? The children of the Scott Craven Mentoring Program, a breakfast club for students who have one or two parents deployed in the military.

**A**rd is now the front office receptionist at Sallas Mahone, but when she started the program she was a PTO mom looking for a way to help.

"There was a little girl in my son's kindergarten class who had both her parents deployed," Ard recalled. "I could not fathom. She was five years old, and I thought we had to come up with something to help her."

Ard spearheaded a partnership with Moody Air Force Base to begin a lunch buddy program. Each child of deployed parents was

matched with a mentor from the base to eat lunch with them once a week.

"When a parent is deployed, we sometimes notice a change in behavior," Principal Gary Glover said. "The program helps them feel less alone. They realize they aren't the only kid with a parent deployed."

Scott Craven, an instructor pilot assigned to the 3rd Flying Squadron at Moody was one of nine pilots who first volunteered to mentor students at Sallas Mahone. Craven passed away in a car accident in 2006 while he was a mentor. The day he was killed, the program was renamed in his honor.

Ard remembers Craven for his dedication and great personality.

"Scott was the only mentor who mentored two lunch buddies," Ard said. "He took it seriously and never missed a lunch."

Robert and Linda Craven of Bensalem, Pa., recall the enthusiasm their late son had for the program.



Col. Susan Riordan-Smith helps students with a breakfast club craft project. Volunteers from Moody Air Force Base are encouraged to come in their uniforms. | Ryleigh Crews, 9, makes green slime with her parents at the breakfast club. | Bonnie Ard leads the group during a homecoming ceremony celebrating an airman's return from deployment. Air Force photos by Staff Sgt. Ceaira Tinsley



"He used to get very excited when he talked about the kids," Robert said. "Knowing that he was helping them, having an impact."

And what an impact the program has had. Ja'Niayah Ellis, 12, participated in the Scott Craven Mentoring Program when she attended Sallas Mahone. Ellis was one year old when her father, Staff Sgt. James Darren Ellis, was killed in Afghanistan. Now in eighth grade, Ellis returns frequently to the breakfast club.

"It feels amazing that I started in Scott Craven as a little kid and as a member of the program and now I am talking in front of kids that are part of it," Ellis said.

Ja'Niayah's mother has seen her daughter grow because of her experience in the program.

"She has been able to share her journey, and the kids in Scott Craven understand her story," Ulrica Ellis said. "I am very proud of her."

Ard credits the school's partnership with the Craven family as a key to sustaining the program.

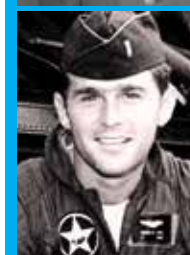
"Scott's family raises money every year through a golf tournament. That is how we are able to fund the crafts and breakfast," she said. "Partnering with the Cravens has driven us to make this program what it is today."

The program has evolved since it began, allowing it to sustain its success. The one-on-one mentoring session structure was adjusted into a group session when Ard and others discovered that students benefited from interacting directly.

Robert Craven smiled imagining his son's reaction if he'd known the program was renamed for him.

"Scott and I had a very unique relationship," he said. "If he was here, that conversation would start with, 'Dude, can you believe this?'"

"It's very rewarding," Scott's mother Linda said. "Comforting to know he has a legacy." 📌



Future President George H. W. Bush pins wings on future President George W. Bush in 1969 at Moody Air Force Base, where the younger Bush was stationed. Photos courtesy of Lowndes County Historical Society and Museum



See and hear from people involved in the Scott Craven Mentoring Program at [defensecommunities.org](https://defensecommunities.org).



*"South Georgia & the people that live there are what make America great."*  
- Billy D. Thompson, Brigadier General, USAF

*"We did not ask for help, this community just acted."*  
-Chad P. Franks, Brigadier General, USAF

*"If there was only one word that captures the essence of South Georgia & Moody AFB it surely would be the word Community, with a capital 'C.' Moody Is Us."*  
-Nick Lacey, Colonel, USAF Retired

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### Boy's Best Friend

Hunter Coddling, 4, bonds with his new service dog Indy on Luke Air Force Base, Ariz., April 26, 2018. Hunter was born with optic nerve hypoplasia, which causes blindness. A non-profit organization connected them through the base's Exceptional Family Member Program. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Clinton Atkins



# Rolling Out the Red Carpet

By Grace Marvin

In South Georgia, a program dedicated to making service men and women feel at home, has rolled out the red carpet to welcome Moody Air Force Base personnel for a half century.

"The purpose of our Red Carpet dinners is to welcome the airman and their families to our community. To let them know we are glad that they are here," said Ty O'Steen, the current chairman of Red Carpet of South Georgia (RCSG). RCSG is the force behind planning the three to four Red Carpet welcome dinners a year that provide an opportunity for Moody personnel and community members to get to know each other.

RCSG began as a subcommittee of the Valdosta-Lowndes Chamber of Commerce's Military Affairs Committee. The first welcome dinner was in 1965, and not much about the dinners has changed in 53 years.

"We have a 50/50 split of military personnel and community," O'Steen said. "The community folks that attend the dinners range from sponsors to city and county representatives. The community members appreciate the chance to meet the airmen and to hear their stories."

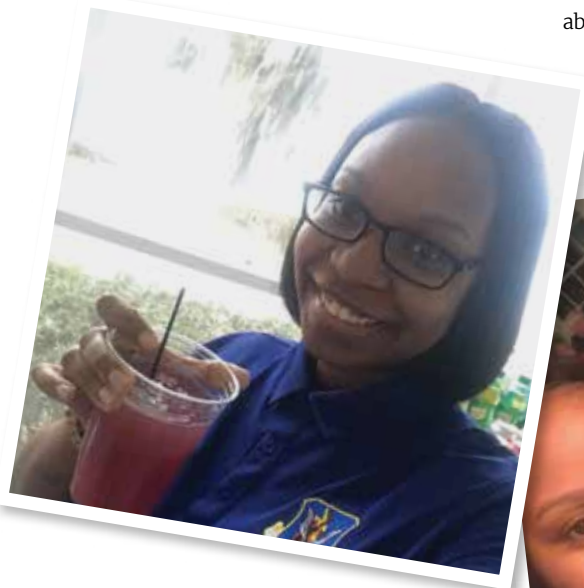
Every Red Carpet dinner is held at Ocean Pines Clubhouse and features a menu of southern fare staples, including Swamp Salad, a memorable crowd-pleaser.

"Swamp Salad is a great association for anyone who has ever been to Moody or a Red Carpet Dinner," said Lucy Greene, a Valdosta resident who has been involved with Red Carpet dinners since 1970. "Former Air Force Secretary F. Whitten Peters came to a party several years ago and he still asks about it whenever we hear from him."

O'Steen said the community's welcoming nature goes back to its roots as an agricultural town.

"Back when there were family farms, you'd help your neighbor. A neighbor helped bring in your crops, and you helped them bring in theirs. That type of mentality still permeates today," O'Steen said. "It's more than Southern hospitality. It's in our DNA because Moody has been in our life for decades." 🇺🇸

"Valdosta knows how to roll out the red carpet and make you feel welcome!," Staff Sgt. Ceaira Tinsley says. She posed with Col. Jennifer Short, 23rd Wing commander, at the February 2018 Red Carpet dinner. Photos submitted





A Red Carpet of South Georgia specialty is Swamp Salad, an hors d'oeuvre of pickles, tomatoes, onions and cheese piled on a cracker. Shown are (above) the dish being served at a recent event and (left) by then-23rd Wing Commander Col. Clarence Parker, circa 1969. The original recipe from more than 60 years ago (bottom left) included shopping tips. It has been revised for *America's Defense Communities* (bottom right). Photos submitted

#### OCEAN POND RED CARPET SWAMP SALAD

20# TOMATOES  
10# SMALL SWEET WHITE ONIONS  
4 QTS. DILL PICKLE HAMBURGER CHIPS  
4 QTS. CIDER VINEGAR  
2# LIGHT BROWN SUGAR  
1 SMALL BOX BLACK PEPPER  
SALT TO TASTE

COMBINE ALL INGREDIENTS AND LET MARINATE IN REFRIGERATOR FOR ONE HOUR BEFORE SERVING OR PUT ICE CUBES OR CRUSHED ICE ON TO AND LET STAND FOR AT LEAST 30 MINUTES.

SUGGESTION: TOMATOES NEED TO BE SMALL ENOUGH TO FIT ON CRACKER WHEN SLICED.

BUY 3 JUMBO PACKS OF WHITE NAPKINS FROM THE GROCERY STORE.

BUY 12# KRAFT CHEDDAR CHEESE LOAF FROM JOSEPH PRODUCE AT THE FARMER'S MARKET ON SOUTH PATTERSON STREET. CUT CHEESE INTO BITE SIZED CUBES.

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CHAIRMAN,  
RED CARPET COMMITTEE  
WORK: 244-1260, EXT. 260  
HOME: 244-2810



#### TITLE: South Georgia Swamp Salad

Revised for *America's Defense Communities*, June 2018

Can't make it to the South Patterson St. Farmer's Market in Valdosta to pick up a cheddar cheese loaf? Don't worry. You can still make a batch of Swamp Salad for your next gathering.

#### INGREDIENTS:

2 qts. apple cider vinegar  
1 lb. light brown sugar  
10 lbs. Roma tomatoes, sliced very thin  
5 lbs. sweet white onions, sliced very thin  
2 qts. thin dill pickle chips  
3 lbs. cheddar cheese, cubed  
Salt and pepper  
Saltine crackers

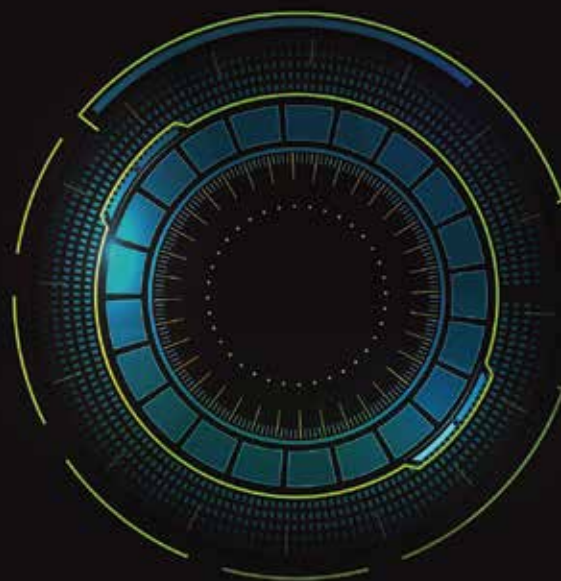
1. Combine the apple cider and brown sugar in a large container.
2. Layer half of the tomatoes. Top with half of the onions, then half of the pickles with their juice. Lightly salt and pepper the top layer, but do not mix.
3. Layer the remaining tomatoes, onions, pickles and juice, then lightly salt and pepper, but do not mix.
4. Apply downward pressure to ensure the liquid covers all ingredients. Let stand, preferably in a refrigerator.
5. Stir just before serving, layering tomatoes, onions and pickles on a saltine cracker, topped with a cheese cube.



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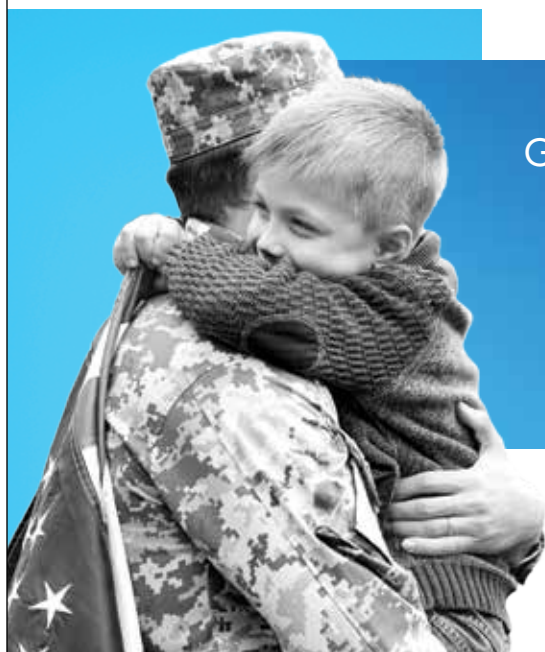
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# NETWO

By Grace Marvin

When service members are ready to move to civilian life, Tampa's business leaders make sure they don't also move away.

**K**ay Schwartz felt the call to serve early in her life.

"When I was 18 my father asked me what I was going to do with my life," Schwartz said. "I responded with, 'Dad, I think I want to join the military.'"

Like most veterans, when Schwartz enlisted in the Air Force she didn't think about life after her military service.

"When I left the Air Force, I felt a lot of insecurity," she said. "I questioned what I was going to do with my life and how I was going to contribute."

Schwartz was able to find a new purpose, and it was helping others realize theirs.

Today, she is an executive director of regional HR operations for USAA and an active volunteer with Operation Partnership, a veteran career transition program in Tampa.

Operation Partnership includes an annual three-day event that is a collaboration among the Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce's Military Council, Emerging Leaders of Tampa Bay, Leadership Tampa Alumni and the chamber's Women of Influence Committee.

"I have experienced a military transition just like everyone in Operation Partnership," Schwartz said. "The program is designed to help transitioning military veterans connect with the business community so they can find meaningful work when they leave the military."

For soldiers and veterans, the connections they make at Operation Partnership extend long after the event is over.

"Tampa does the connection and networking piece really well," she said.

Reggie Godbolt met Schwartz in 2017, when he was planning his retirement from



Left, Lt. Col. Meredith Spenceley talks with Kay Schwartz and Ed Spenceley March 13, 2018, about the Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce's Women of Influence Committee, to which she hopes to recruit more women from MacDill. Photo by Christopher Wright | Above, Reggie Godbolt represents Coca-Cola Beverages Florida at a recent event. Photo by Coca-Cola Beverages Florida | Spenceley talks with transitioning service members about how to build a professional network. Photo by the Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce



# WORKED

MacDill Air Force Base, where he was a squadron commander. She invited him to her office to talk about his transition.

"We talked a lot about his resume," she recalled. "Senior leaders have a wide breadth of experience and can have difficulty putting it on paper."

Godbolt credits Operation Partnership for his successful transition to a senior management position at Coca-Cola Beverages Florida.

"I would not be in my career today if it was not for the mentorship and relationships I gained," Godbolt said. "Every call, every interview I got was from leveraging that network."

Ed Spenceley, an Operation Partnership volunteer, said his own transition out of the Army was a time of uncertainty until

a hiring manager took a chance on him 18 years ago.

"Someone with vision saw my resume and called me in for an interview," said Spenceley, now a senior vice president at Bank of America. "She realized that I had a skill set that she was not going to find within the banking industry."

Spenceley views Godbolt's journey as the ultimate success story.

"It embodies getting rid of the fence line between MacDill and the civilian community," he said. "[Operation Partnership is] not just a program. It creates relationships within the Tampa community."

Schwartz said it's one way the region is unique.

"For a big city, Tampa is kind of a small town," Schwartz said. "People look out for each other here." 📍



 Hear more from Operation Partnership at [defensecommunities.org](https://defensecommunities.org)



# AIRMEN'S BIGGEST FANS ARE ON THE FIELD

"This is Tampa's team, and the Bucs' outpouring of affection is genuine."

—Col. Randy Bright, Commander, 927th Air Refueling Wing, MacDill Air Force Base

By Randy Ford

Tampa Bay Buccaneers leaders say the team has always embraced the region's military personnel and joined in the community's appreciation for the men and women at MacDill Air Force Base. USAA sponsors the NFL's league-wide Salute to Service program, which the Buccaneers have expanded.

America's Defense Communities talked with Buccaneers Chief Operating Officer Brian Ford, who is also an honorary commander of the 927th Air Refueling Wing.

**ADC: Give us an overview of Salute to Service.**

**Brian Ford:** Our Salute to Service program begins internally at the highest level. It's embraced by everybody that is involved, from the fans to the coaches and players, to the military itself. It's a showcase for us to show the partnership that we have with the military and the many different branches that are active at MacDill. It gives our fan base an opportunity to share their appreciation for the sacrifices that take place and for the involvement that takes place.

**ADC: How did these activities start to come about?**

**Brian Ford:** This goes back years and years. MacDill has been an active part of this community longer than the Buccaneers, and we recognize that. On game day, for the singing of the national anthem, we put out the largest American flag that you can find in any professional sports venue, and it's held

up by members of the military and their families.

We have a military appreciation game centered around the armed forces and Salute to Service.

One of our former players, Vincent Jackson, is one of the biggest supporters of the military in the entire league. His Jackson In Action 83 Foundation is dedicated to helping military families, which is inspired by the fact that he himself grew up as a "military brat." Vincent and his teammates were frequent visitors to MacDill. He was honored for that work when he was the winner of the NFL Salute to Service award presented by USAA back in 2016.

**ADC: How do the players get involved?**

**Brian Ford:** They get involved with the folks that come out to military practice days, and they thank them for their service, they hear their stories. A lot of them have military backgrounds themselves with their families, so they can kind of relate to that. They see Salute to Service and our Hero of the Game each game day. I can't tell you the number of visits our players, our cheerleaders, our staff make to the veterans hospital as well as to MacDill and the elementary school there.

**ADC: What do you think makes Tampa a great defense community?**

**Brian Ford:** Our recognition and our commitment to the men and women that serve. In Tampa, appreciating and recognizing our men and women in the military is a way of life. 🇺🇸



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1 Tampa Bay Buccaneers wide receiver DeSean Jackson greets an airman at a recent visit to MacDill Air Force Base. 2 Players and cheerleaders learn about types of military equipment used at the base. 3 The Buccaneers cheerleaders show their support at the annual Military Day at training camp. 4 Brenda Schwarzkopf, wife of the late Gen. H. Norman Schwarzkopf, and Darcie Glazer Kasewitz, owner of the Tampa Bay Buccaneers and president of the Glazer Family Foundation, congratulate the winners of the annual General H. Norman Schwarzkopf Military Family of the Year Award. 5 More than 200 military recruits take the field Nov. 12, 2017. 6 The recruits are officially enlisted into the Air Force during a special halftime ceremony. Photos courtesy of Tampa Bay Buccaneers

# CELEBRATING EXCELLENCE IN THE *Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri Region*



In 2017, the Sustainable Ozarks Partnership and Fort Leonard Wood were awarded the U.S. Army Community Partnership Award. This recognition is a testament to the many successful partnerships that exist between Fort Leonard Wood, the region, and the state that are improving readiness, sustainability, cost savings and efficiencies for the installation. We were proud to receive this award alongside our Fort Leonard Wood leadership. We remain committed to our stake in the defense of this nation through the many enduring and emerging partnerships that continue to enable the success of our men and women in uniform.

For over 75 years the Fort Leonard Wood Region's citizens, business owners and community leaders have proudly supported American servicemen and women, their families and veterans in the heartland of America. We are exceptionally proud to be an Army Community Partnership Award recipient and part of the inaugural class of Great American Defense Communities!





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DEFENSE  
COMMUNITY AWARDS



Together, the four individuals honored with the 2018 Defense Community Awards have kept airmen in the sky, kept veterans in their communities, helped pass a slew of military-friendly laws, brought diverse viewpoints together into one voice and turned a shuttered base into an economic engine that attracts visitors from around the world. Their stories show what happens

# When Great Leaders Soar

Tom Neubauer, 2018 Community Leader Award winner, flies with the U.S. Army Golden Knights, a parachute demonstration team. Photo submitted



# When Encroachment Is Enemy Number

By Barbara Bryant

Mark Kern is a lifelong resident of Belleville, Ill., the largest city in St. Clair County, where he is serving his fourth term as county board chairman. He has watched Scott Air Force Base go from being considered for closure in 1995 to an installation with 13,200 personnel, making it the region's largest employer.

**ADC: How important is Scott AFB to St. Clair County?**

**Kern:** My father and uncle served in the Air Force, so I grew up understanding how important military installations are to the communities that host them. Scott boosts the local economy by providing jobs and thousands of consumers who support local businesses and contribute in other ways to the community. The base is also a source of

well-trained, technically proficient workers who retire from Scott and appreciate the quality of life we offer, decide to stay and pursue second careers here.

**ADC: What type of support do you believe Scott AFB needs and values most?**

**Kern:** We've done a lot to support Scott: taxpayer dollars have paid for on-base housing, a school, roads leading to the base

and a control tower that's staffed by the Air Force. I also negotiated a new joint-use agreement with the Air Force that allows the base to use part of our civilian airport, which was built to relieve congestion at Lambert Airport in St. Louis but also allowed Scott to acquire an additional flying mission. That move was important, because the base's lack of a flying mission was identified as a major deficiency during the 1995 BRAC round.

## MARK KERN



- Board chairman, St. Clair County, Ill.
- President, Belleville Mechanical, Inc.
- Former mayor, Belleville, Ill.
- Former alderman, Belleville, Ill.





Today, I think the type of support that Scott prizes most—and that I’ve pressed hard for—is preventing encroachment and we have done that through enactment of a joint land use study. That’s why the county spent millions of dollars to buy thousands of acres around the base to control development on that land. This is a controversial move, because that’s prime real estate, and the civilian portion of the airport doesn’t have the same constraints the military portion does, so it can be hard to explain to developers. But it’s one of the most important things we can do to help insulate the base from a future BRAC round.

**ADC: What other efforts have you spearheaded to ensure the county feels strongly connected to the base?**

**Kern:** The workforce development staff I supervise participate in DOD’s Transition Assistance Program by meeting with exiting airmen to teach them how to connect into our regional and statewide employment network. Our goal is to retain them and help them find training and jobs. In 2014, I also created a new county-appointed department position, the director of military affairs, which is staffed by a retired brigadier general, to serve as a dedicated county liaison to the base. I’m also proud of having formed a committee in 2015 to organize the first annual St. Clair County Armed Forces Ball, which has raised more than \$40,000 over the past three years, which were donated to the three wings on the base for morale, welfare and recreation activities. Some of the funds were also used to offset costs associated with the annual air show last year, which marked Scott’s 100th anniversary. 📍



## Kern shares some ideas for protecting and growing a local installation.

- 1 Show the economic impact.** The communities around Scott know the benefits of having Scott as a neighbor, but Kern wanted to expand support by touting the base’s economic impact to the rest of the region. The region originally commissioned an economic study about a decade ago that showed Scott generated \$3 billion each year. That figure has since gone up to \$3.5 billion.
- 2 Focus on quality of life to attract veterans.** St. Clair County is home to more than 20,000 military retirees. Under state law, disabled veterans and surviving spouses of veterans with a service-connected disability of 70 percent or more are exempt from paying property taxes on their primary residences. The county’s workforce development staff meet every two weeks with airmen transitioning out of service to discuss civilian job opportunities. And top employers come calling, looking for residents with leadership and technical skills who can serve as executives at Boeing or mechanics to work at the county airport.
- 3 Forge good relationships with base leaders.** Commanders often rotate out every two years, and those coming in have to learn to navigate local government channels. Attend every celebratory event and meeting, and work with civilians on base who have deep historical knowledge needed to get things done.
- 4 Negotiate and enforce binding land-use agreements.** Developers want to build wherever they can, and not everyone in the community understands the need to stop encroachment as a way to preserve the base’s mission. Hold high-level meetings with base personnel to discuss these agreements and how else to address potential encroachment issues, especially when preparing to add a new mission.
- 5 Treat all base supporters as equal partners.** “We have tons of volunteers in the community who appreciate being recognized for their contributions,” Kern said. “It’s important to give every one of them their due.” —BB

# Finding Time to Lead

Tom Neubauer spends a lot of time every day talking about his community's military mission and the programs that support it.

By Barbara Bryant

Even Florida Gov. Rick Scott was surprised to learn recently that Neubauer has a separate full-time job running a real estate company with his wife Margaret. But it's easy to get confused. Neubauer has a way of downplaying the extent and impact of his activities by shining the spotlight on others.

He notes Larry Dantzler was president of the Bay County Alliance when it lobbied successfully to bring F-22 training to Tyndall Air Force Base in 2003. He credits Scott and the Florida legislature with recruiting lawmakers and former service members to the Florida Defense Support Task Force, which has helped pass more than 75 defense-friendly laws. And he points to former Congressman Allen Boyd and a four-star general for getting top Air

Force leaders to visit when the community wanted to replace two departing F-15 squadrons with a squadron of combat-coded F-22s.

"The secretary and chief of staff expected to face an angry mob over the loss of the F-15s," he said. "Instead, they were met with proclamations of support for Tyndall and the Air Force from every mayor and county commissioner."

He also praised 22 leaders of public schools, colleges and businesses in the communities surrounding Tyndall for paying to travel to Holloman Air Force Base, where they spent a day and a half describing to relocating military members and their families the high quality of life they would enjoy in the communities that support the base.

## TOM NEUBAUER



- President, Bay Defense Alliance, Panama City, Fla.
- Chair, Air Combat Command Commander's Group
- Vice chair, Florida Defense Support Task Force
- Former chair, Florida Council on Military Bases and Mission Support
- Former member, Air Education and Training Command Commander's Group





“That was an important exercise for us, because it caused us to focus on the toll prolonged deployments take on military families, the many sacrifices they make and on what we can and should do to support them,” he said.

But there’s no question Neubauer’s leadership is behind much of the community’s success. He and his wife are former “Air Force brats” whose fathers flew in wartime, giving them the desire to “give back” to the military as civilians—no matter what it takes.

“We all have the same amount of time, and the way I spend mine feels in no way like a sacrifice,” Neubauer said. “I love what I do and get an enormous amount of inspiration and support from the Bay Defense Alliance,” whose members include community organization leaders and retired military personnel, including several installation commanders who had served at Tyndall and Naval Support Activity Panama City.

“I view that as a testament to our support for active-duty personnel and veterans.” 📱

## Lessons from the Bay

*America’s Defense Communities* asked Neubauer how other communities can prepare for what’s ahead.

- 1 **Speak with one voice.** Neubauer recommends creating an alliance of community organizations to achieve consensus ahead of regular meetings with base leaders instead of asking them to meet with multiple stakeholders with disparate views.
- 2 **Recruit the right people.** “I know that the Alliance will continue to thrive after I’m gone because anyone on our board could do my job.”
- 3 **Know your competition.** “Communities should know if there are other installations providing the same or similar missions. If so, can [your] community find ways to help the military deliver the product more efficiently and in the location

that would improve other benefits to the customer?” He noted his community has committed to not being predatory when missions are being considered.

- 4 **Remember the socioeconomic relationship.** “It’s important for the public to understand the impact the military members and their families have on schools, community organizations” and volunteer projects.

- 5 **Enlist new voices.** The Bay Defense Alliance once engaged with a class at Florida State University Panama City to help analyze the surge capacity needed to accommodate rapid growth for community services such as education, utilities and housing. —**Randy Ford**

Libby Day has been instrumental in transforming the former Naval Training Center (NTC) in San Diego into Liberty Station, an ambitious, award-winning mixed-use redevelopment that serves regional residents and attracts visitors worldwide.

**T**he Naval Training Center San Diego/Liberty Station Base Reuse Project involves the ongoing, public-private redevelopment of the former NTC, which was recommended for closure in 1993 and closed in 1997.

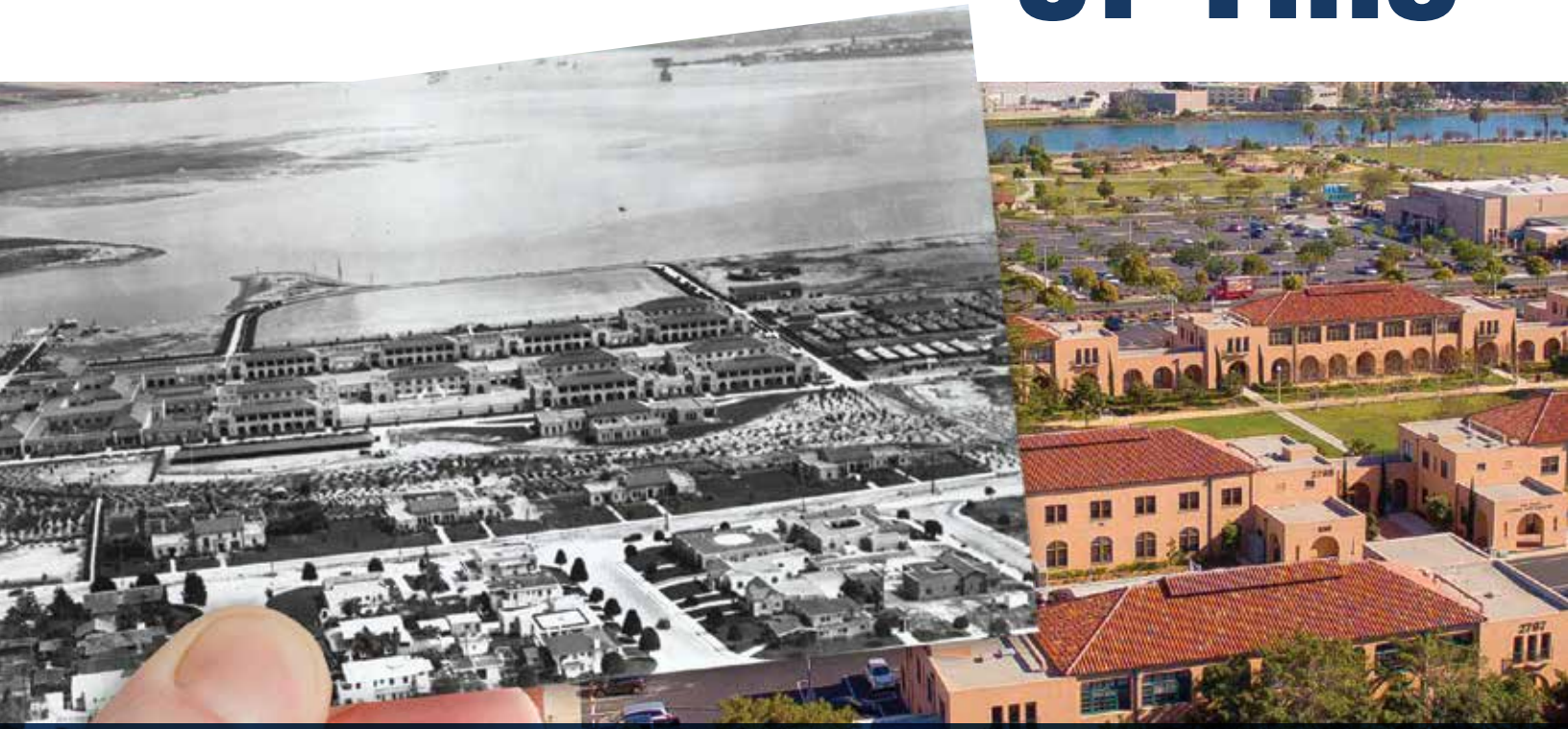
Liberty Station celebrates San Diego's rich maritime heritage and has revitalized the area by providing distinct districts for retail, commercial, nonprofit, educational, residential, hotel, office, arts, culture and open space, while adhering to strict historic preservation requirements. The project was awarded ADC's Base Redevelopment Community Award in 2007.

"The project wouldn't have developed the way it has if she weren't involved," Erik Caldwell, San Diego's director of economic development, said. "Without her participation, Liberty Station would have fallen by the wayside."

With Day scheduled to retire in June 2018, *America's Defense Communities* asked her to look back at the community she helped build. 📸

# 'Out IN FRONT of This'

By Barbara Bryant



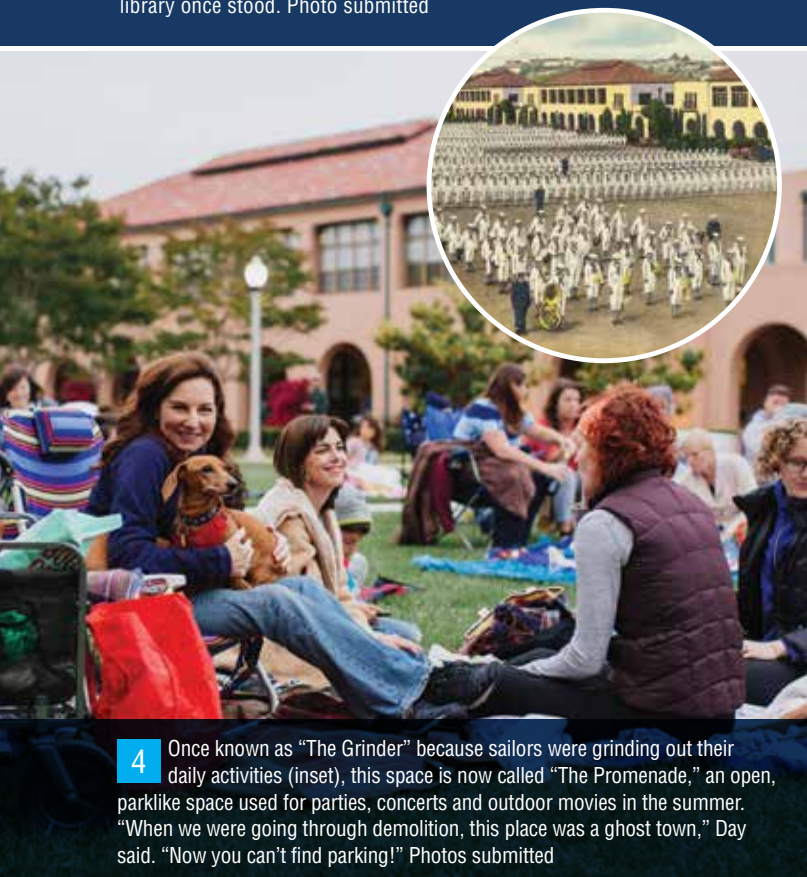
**1** "I'm a native San Diegan, born and raised here," Libby Day said. "To be able to see the Naval Training Center, which was important to the community as an active base, transitioned into an active, thriving community, is probably the biggest thing I can take pride in." Day was called into a meeting about the project just days into her job with the city. Photo submitted



**2** “I’ve met people who trained at the NTC and are happy to come back with their families and share that part of their lives. They’re surprised at what they see. I heard someone say, ‘It didn’t look this good when I was here!’” An arts and culture district with museums, galleries, movie theaters and other businesses now stand where barracks, classrooms and the base library once stood. Photo submitted



**3** “People recognize Liberty Station because of entertainment, restaurants and shopping, but it’s its own community,” Day said. “This was an early example of an ‘urban village.’” The former commissary and mess hall are now Liberty Public Market. Photo submitted



**4** Once known as “The Grinder” because sailors were grinding out their daily activities (inset), this space is now called “The Promenade,” an open, parklike space used for parties, concerts and outdoor movies in the summer. “When we were going through demolition, this place was a ghost town,” Day said. “Now you can’t find parking!” Photos submitted



**5** Day with Greg Block, communications director for Corky McMillin Companies, left, and her husband Tim. NTC Foundation President and CEO Lisa Johnson told ADC that when Day retires, people will miss her trademark hats. “She always has a cute sun hat on. That’s something everyone knows about her.” Photo submitted

## LIBBY DAY

- Project manager, Naval Training Center San Diego/Liberty Station Base Reuse Project
- Assistant project manager, Naval Training Center San Diego/Liberty Station Base Reuse Project
- Member, Association of Defense Communities Local Redevelopment Authority Directors Council’s Outreach Committee
- Board member, California Association of Enterprise Zones (CAEZ)
- Legislative Committee member, CAEZ
- Member, California Closed Military Base Coalition

# A Legacy in the Sky

December 2017 was eventful for Randal Efferson. He was promoted from colonel with the Alabama Air National Guard to brigadier general and named chief of staff of the Alabama ANG, and his duty station, Montgomery Air National Guard Base/Dannelly Field Guard Station in Montgomery, was one of two ANG bases selected to host a squadron of the new F-35 Joint Strike Fighter. Efferson had worked alongside a task force established by the Montgomery Area Chamber of Commerce to land the F-35.

By Barbara Bryant

**E**fferson was previously wing commander of the 187th Air Wing. His advocacy for guardsmen helped enact a law that provides 100 percent of tuition assistance for every member of the Alabama Air National Guard. He has also tirelessly saluted and promoted the 187th's ownership of the 100th Fighter Squadron, one of the all-black Tuskegee Airmen squadrons that flew with distinction in World War II.

"I came up with a saying at Dannelly that became our motto: 'Red Tails—we deliver!' Efferson said. "It tells the world that we're going to put bombs on target and bring the pilots back safely."

*America's Defense Communities* asked community leaders about Efferson's work. Here are portions of those conversations.

## BRIG. GEN. RANDAL K. EFFERSON



Air National Guard photo by Tech. Sgt. Matthew Garrett

- Brigadier General, U.S. Air Force
- Assistant Adjutant General for Air and Air Component Commander, Joint Force Headquarters, Montgomery, Ala.
- Former commander, 187th Fighter Wing, Dannelly Field, Air National Guard Base, Montgomery Ala.
- Command pilot
- Former Air National Guard initial cadre F-35 instructor pilot
- Former executive officer to the director of the Air National Guard
- Former Deputy Operations Group Commander, 33rd Operations Group, Eglin AFB, Florida Air National Guard
- Former J3 director of operations for U.S. Central Command Forward Element, Jordan
- Served with the Texas, Alabama and Florida Air National Guard

### **LORA MCCLENDON, director, military & federal strategies, Montgomery Area Chamber of Commerce:**

General Efferson has long prioritized and maintained exceptional relationships and open communication with the community and public officials. People always knew how to reach him. He even gave out his cell number as his point of contact.

### **BRIG. GEN. (RET.) PAUL HANKINS, former 187th Fighter Wing commander; vice-chair, F-35 Task Force; member of Alabama's Military Stability Foundation:**

He has a great, self-deprecating sense of humor. After a deployment, during which he was flying combat missions, he'd always talk to members of the community about the rest of his unit's achievements, then with those of us who knew what he

was doing, he'd sit down with a beer and share his stories.

Gen. Efferson accepted all of the advice and support we in the community made available, ranging from hiring consultants, to providing support for congressional delegations and welcoming former general officers to help him prepare for site visits. He was able to step aside and be part of a team to get things done.

**TODD STRANGE, mayor, Montgomery, Ala.:**

Seven years ago, when Gen. Efferson contributed to writing "the book" on how to train pilots on the F-35, he gained valuable familiarity with this high-tech marvel. His dynamic leadership of the 187th, pushing it to remain one of the top units in the military, and in-depth knowledge of the F-35 were true assets in the campaign to bed down America's next generation fighter jet in Montgomery.

An important factor in our success was Gen. Efferson's steadfast embrace of the proud legacy of the 100th fighter squadron of Tuskegee Airmen. The tails of the Wing's F-16s are red in homage to the bravery of the "Red Tails." He worked diligently to incorporate the airmen's continuing story into the 187th's history.

**LESLIE SANDERS, chair, F-35 Task Force:**

Gen. Efferson's commitment to his country and especially to his unit, along with their families, is remarkable. Through his example of a strong work ethic, his unquestionable knowledge and great sense of humor, he has become an authentic leader among his peers and in this community. He is an integral part of why this region believes in and strongly supports our military and the missions of our United States Air Force. 🇺🇸



Efferson throws the first pitch at the Montgomery Biscuits Military Appreciation Night August 1, 2015. Air National Guard photo by Tech. Sgt. Christopher Baldwin | Efferson speaks at a press conference at the 187th Fighter Wing to announce that Secretary of the Air Force Heather Wilson had selected Dannelly Field Air National Guard Base, Ala., as a preferred location for the F-35A aircraft Dec. 21, 2017. Air National Guard photo by Tech. Sgt. Chris Baldwin | Efferson talks with U.S. Rep. Terri Sewell in 2016 about F-35 basing. He later took her for a ride in an F-16. Photo submitted | "The family is the real combat power for America," said Efferson, pictured with his son Ethan, wife Meladie and daughters Emily and Elizabeth at his December 2017 promotion ceremony. "If my family isn't happy, I'm not going to do it."



# Our Enduring Strength



By Bill Parry, President, ADC

Military installations and their surrounding communities are the foundation of our military's competitive edge.

**N**o longer defined by their fence lines, military installations need to be active partners with their communities and states. Strong bases working together with strong communities support our warfighters, enhance missions and reduce costs.

Our strength both on and off base depends on the infrastructure—roads, buildings, facilities, utilities and land—to support a lethal, agile and resilient force posture and employment necessary to protect our nation. There is also the infrastructure of people, organizations, services and goodwill that define a community of support in every military area. Mission of force and family, readiness and resiliency comprise our defense infrastructure and the foundation of our military's competitive edge. Sustaining a more lethal, resilient and rapidly innovating military will continue to rely on collective strength.

As communities, we must be willing to make investments that efficiently sustain missions and tackle big problems that still exist such as quality of public schools and spousal employment. We must go beyond simply creating supportive communities and create truly great places our military families want to call home. We need to think big, be innovative and foster leaders that will get the job done.

Strong communities need the support of our military and entire federal government. We need a partnership that leverages the local investments with federal support so we can sustain the infrastructure critical to our bases. We need to support agencies like DOD's Office of Economic Adjustment, which for 60 years has worked on behalf of DOD to shed excess infrastructure, engage a more resilient supply chain and competitive defense manufacturing sector, and enhance the lethality of our assets through joint land use planning.

Four decades ago, when ADC got its start supporting communities impacted by closing bases, relationships between communities and bases were limited. Through the active involvement of 350 communities, state and organizations and our military partners that comprise ADC, that has changed in a dramatic way. We have moved beyond engagement to a model of collaboration that shows results. It is changing how our bases operate and how we support military families.

Strong communities and strong bases can only be preserved through a commitment to exceed what has been done in the past. That is our challenge, but it is also an opportunity that we as America's defense communities must be ready to embrace—for the warfighters, their families and our nation. 🇺🇸



# DEFENSE COMMUNITY AWARDS

★ ★ ★ 2018 ★ ★ ★



*Congratulations to the 2018 Winners!*



## COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AWARD

Mark Kern

*Board Chairman, St. Clair  
County, IL*



## COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AWARD

Tom Neubauer

*President, Bay Defense Alliance,  
Panama City, FL*



## JOHN LYNCH BASE REDEVELOPMENT LEADERSHIP AWARD

Libby Day

*Community Development  
Specialist, City of San Diego*



## MILITARY LEADERSHIP AWARD

Brig. Gen. Randal Efferson

*Chief of Staff, Alabama Air  
National Guard*

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### Hilary A. Jackler

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*Managing Partner,  
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