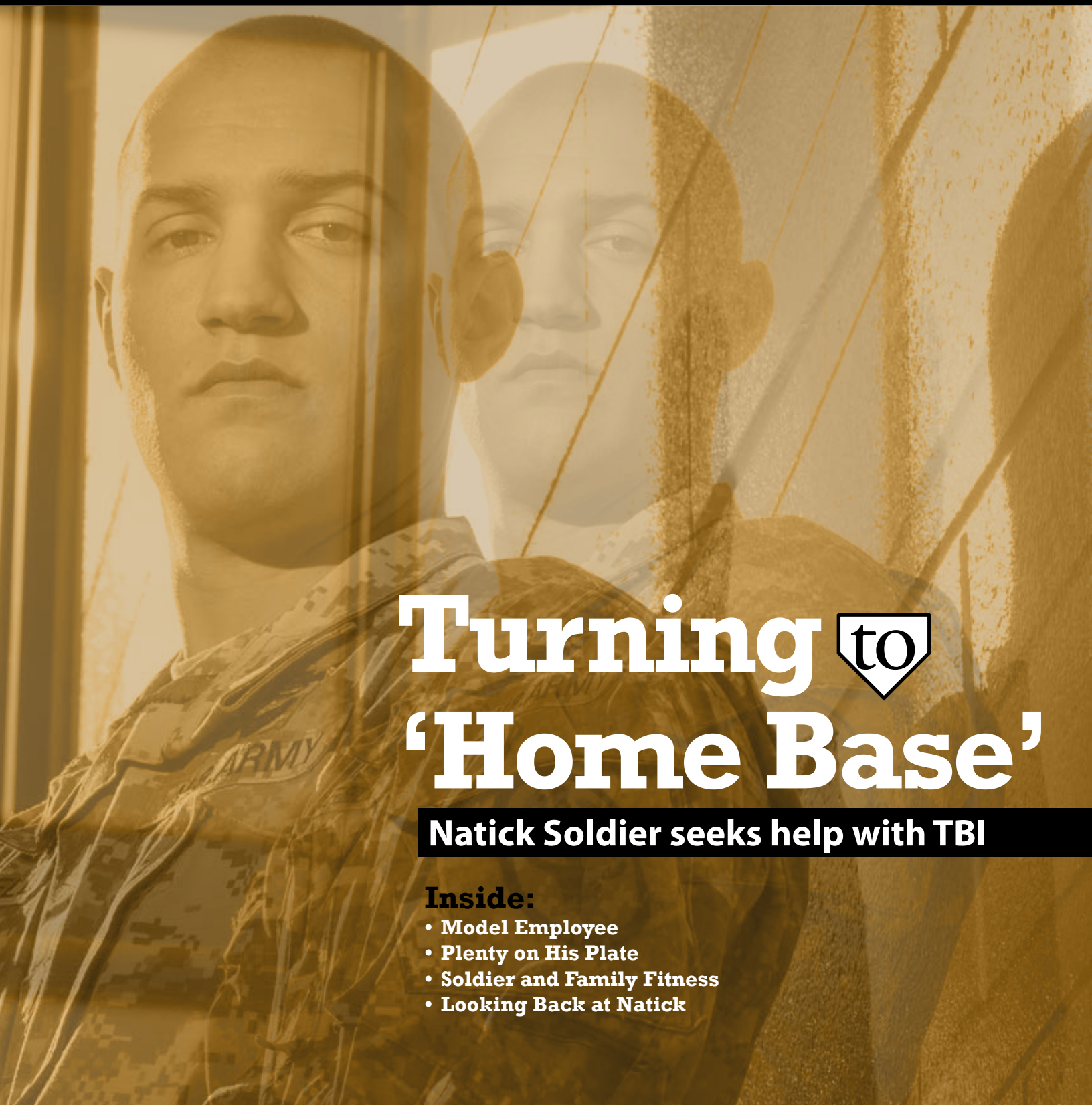
February 14, 2014

# NSSC This Week

Natick Soldier Systems Center Public Affairs Office



# Turning to 'Home Base'

## Natick Soldier seeks help with TBI

**Inside:**


- Model Employee
- Plenty on His Plate
- Soldier and Family Fitness
- Looking Back at Natick

## Commentary

Tazanyia Mouton
*USAG-Natick Public Affairs*

# What Black History Month means to me

Black History Month means celebrating the struggles and accomplishments of those who fought and are continuing to fight for racial equality. This is a time to think about where African-American people have been, and where we are going as a whole.

When I reflect about Black History Month, I can't help but think about the many iconic figures who have given so much for the cause, as well as iconic events.

Iconic figures such as Harriet Tubman, an African-American abolitionist and humanitarian who had an instrumental part during the American Civil War of the 1860s. After escaping slavery, Tubman was able to free more than 300 slaves using the network of antislavery activists and safe houses known as the Underground Railroad.

Another figure, W.E.B Dubois, founded the Niagara Movement in 1905, which embraced an approach calling for immediate equality in all areas of American life. The Niagara Movement demanded an end to the thought of being accommodating to white society.

An event such as Brown v. Board of Education, which declared that racial segregation in schools was unconstitutional. In September 1957, nine African-American students, known as the Little Rock Nine, integrated Central High School in Little Rock, Ark.

Then here was the event in the 1960s when four black students in Greensboro, N.C., sat at a segregated Woolworth's lunch counter. Six months after the initial sit-in, those same students were served at that establishment. The event triggered nonviolent protests throughout the South.

And honestly, the list can go on and on. The passing of the Fifteenth Amendment in 1870, which gave Blacks the right to vote. Spellman College becoming the first black college for women in 1881.The creation of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in 1909. The Harlem Renaissance, a cultural movement that spanned the 1920s. Jackie Robinson breaking the color barrier in Major League Baseball in 1947. The establishment of a civil rights group in 1957, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and others. The signing of the Civil Rights Act by President Lyndon B. Johnson in 1964. Most recently, President Barack Obama being elected as the first African-American president of the United States in 2008.

All of these people and events make me think about where I currently am in my life. I think about how if I had grown up during some of these important times, my life's outcome would have been different.

During this Black History Month, take a few minutes to reflect on your life and what this observance means to you, and what you can do to make a difference.

Tazanyia Mouton
*USAG-Natick Public Affairs*

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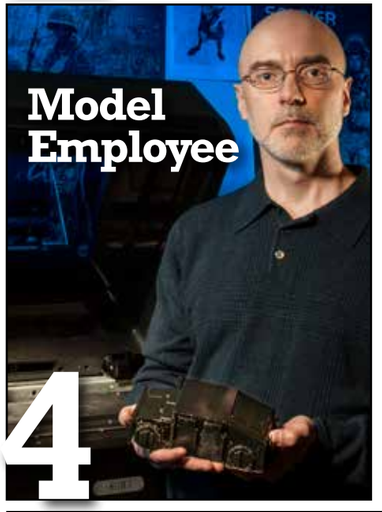


### Within the Gates

#### Monthly Caregiver Support Group

Are you following the most important rule of caregiving ... taking care of yourself first?

Join elder care consultant Sherrie Whittemore to discuss the issues, challenges and solutions of being a working caregiver. This group will focus positively on coping strategies to ease the strain and reduce the challenges of caregiving.

The program will run on the second Tuesday of each month, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. in the ACS Conference Room. Registration is not required.

For more information, contact Lauren Anzivino at lauren.m.anzivino.civ@mail.mil or (508) 233-4946.

#### Stress Management

Wendy Smolinsky of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Federal Employee Program will offer a Stress Management Seminar Thursday, Feb. 20 from 2 p.m.-3 p.m. in the Grant Conference Center.

This free seminar will give you the tools you need to identify stress in your life and develop healthy and effective strategies for managing stressful situations.

If you are interested in attending this seminar, please contact Melissa Brossi, ext. 5743 or by email to Melissa.A.Brossi.civ@mail.mil by close of business Feb. 18.

### Upcoming Events

#### Family and MWR Calendar

Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation announced a number of upcoming events.

They include: Valentine's Day paint party, Feb. 14, 5-8 p.m.; P.A. Trick live in the lounge, Feb. 28, 4:30-7:30 p.m.; Chili Cook-Off, March 7, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.; St. Patty's Day Trivia, March 14, 4:30-6:30 p.m.

For more information, call Sherita Baker at ext. 4791.

# Turning to ‘Home Base’

## Natick Soldier seeks help with TBI

By Bob Reinert, USAG-Natick Public Affairs / NATICK, Mass. (Feb. 10, 2014)

**He grew up a Boston Red Sox fan in Warwick, R.I., so Sgt. 1st Class Adam Morelli had long dreamed of touching home plate at Fenway Park.**

**When he did just that during the annual “Run/Walk to Home Base” fundraising event last year, he got something even more valuable — contact information for the Home Base Program, which helps veterans and families who are coping with post-traumatic stress and traumatic brain injuries. Recently, he took advantage of it.**

“Immediately, on my very first appointment, seeing the TBI doctor, he pointed out things that no other doctors had caught yet,” said Morelli, 33, the detachment sergeant at the U.S. Army Research Institute of Environmental Medicine at Natick Soldier Systems Center.

Morelli’s problems with TBI date back to April 2008, when he was a medic with a Military Transition Team in Mosul, Iraq. He had relieved the turret gunner in a Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected, or MRAP, vehicle during a patrol.

“About 300 meters away from the combat outpost and about 15 meters off to my right side was an IED that we didn’t know (about),” Morelli recalled. “And it detonated and just rocked the entire truck. Luckily, no damage to the truck, no damage to anyone inside — apparently, just to my brain.”

After the explosion, Morelli got back into position and the convoy kept rolling.

“My team was more important than I was at that point,” Morelli said. “Later on that night, I had a headache, but who wouldn’t have a headache? That wasn’t the first time that we had an IED go off near our trucks. It just happened that that was the first time that I was in the turret.”

Soon, Morelli was experiencing memory loss, but he pushed through it.

“It wasn’t important to me,” Morelli said. “What was important was my guys.”

By the time his deployment ended, Morelli’s memory loss had become more noticeable.

“When I first got back, I kept forgetting the bread and picking up $30 of other stuff at the store,” Morelli said. “Now (my wife) takes pictures of stuff and texts it to me and sends me a list on the phone so I don’t forget, because otherwise I will.”

And the headaches persisted. “It’s above my left eye, every time,” Morelli said.

Morelli has tried a variety of medications and has undergone speech and memory therapy since returning home.

“It’s always been trying to find that happy medium to what’s going to decrease my headaches but also not make me ineffective,” said Morelli, “because I still want to be a good Soldier.”

That goal brought him to the Home Base Program, a unique partnership between the Red Sox Foundation and Massachusetts General Hospital that began in 2009. In his initial visit, the doctor asked him to march in place.

“I’m marching eight feet across the room and didn’t know it, didn’t feel like I was moving forward,” Morelli said.

To address his balance problems, Morelli began vestibular physical therapy at Home Base.

“Since my deployment in 2008, I’ve been compensating and figuring out ways to get around everything,” said Morelli, “whereas, now with Home Base, they’re working on ways to stop my compensating and figure out ways to overcome those obstacles.”

He has compensated well. In addition to his duties at USARIEM, the father of two is also pursuing an associate degree at American Military University and coaching youth wrestling in his native Rhode Island.

Through it all, Morelli never hid his struggle with TBI from his Soldiers at USARIEM.

“I think that more emphasis needs to be put on getting the help that people need, and that’s why I talk with my Soldiers,” Morelli said. “I don’t make it a secret, because I want them to see that even as the detachment sergeant of this unit, it’s still OK to go get the help that we need.

“We can still be great Soldiers and do great things for the Army. I think that that’s an important message.”

Smith succeeds on any scale

# MODEL Employee

**By Bob Reinert, USAG-Natick, Public Affairs / NATICK, Mass. (Feb. 12, 2014)**

When Steve Smith was growing up in Wayland, Mass., he would go to a movie like "Star Wars," rush home, and try to replicate the technology he had seen using parts from models that he had already built.

All these years later, not much has changed for Smith, who works as a graphic designer in Strategic Communications at the Natick Soldier Research, Development and Engineering Center.

"This is the job I've been training to do all my life," said the 48-year-old Smith, who has been with NSRDEC as either a contractor or government employee for nearly two decades. "I had no clue that I was actually training for this job."

Just as in his youth, Smith spends a fair amount of time at NSRDEC StratComm making scale models. Now, however, he uses a 3D printer that uses liquid polymer exposed to ultraviolet light to turn out highly accurate, solid models of products researched and developed at Natick for Soldiers.

"If I had had one of these things when I was a kid, you would have had to use dynamite and a crowbar to get me out of my room, you know?" Smith said. "I'd just be making things all day long, coming up with things for people.

"I've gone from the physical to the digital, and now I'm going from the digital to the physical again, actually creating physical models out of digital material, digital media."

> **"If I had had one of these things when I was a kid, you would have had to use dynamite and a crowbar to get me out of my room, you know? I'd just be making things all day long, coming up with things for people."**
>
> Steve Smith, Strategic Communications, NSRDEC

Smith began working with 3D printing at Natick about a year and a half ago as a way of improving customer displays. Even he admits to being amazed with what this technology can produce.

"These solid objects pop out of basically digital commands, virtually from nowhere," Smith said. "Now we've got people building prosthetics with them. I feel pretty confident that there's going to be a merging of the materials people and biological people. Nature has designed so many things that we're looking for already that we should be taking advantage of that."

Smith added that as their costs come down, these printers have become more accessible.

"There are cottage industries springing up all around this kind of stuff — people creating artwork from mathematical models and things like that," Smith said. "Most of the work that I'm doing here is kind of illustrative, more than anything else."

This isn't the path Smith started down as an undergraduate at the University of Massachusetts, where he enrolled as a microbiology major.

"About halfway through, I realized that really wasn't what I wanted to do," said Smith, who earned his bachelor's degree with an individual concentration in computer science and fine art.

After graduating in 1988, Smith did some video editing and worked at a sign shop before settling in at Natick as a government contractor. He came here in 1996 and never left.

"When I came over here, I was doing a lot of PowerPoint slides, that kind of thing," Smith said. "Then we threw in some computer animation, illustration for tech manuals, field manuals, then for conceptual stuff. This is the kind of place where, if you want to wear a hat, they're glad to hand you another hat to wear."

*Steve Smith of NSRDEC Strategic Communications uses a 3D printer to produce detailed objects that help tell Natick's story.*

Smith has even applied moulage — mock injuries — to simulated victims in mass-casualty exercises at Natick.

"I really enjoy that," Smith said. "That's a lot of fun, but you talk about going back to an old skill set and revitalizing it and making it a part of what you do.

"So I get to do a lot of different things. There's no other graphic artist that I know of that gets to do as many different things as I get to work with."

He may have left microbiology in the past, but that doesn't mean Smith doesn't love interacting with Natick's world-class scientists and engineers.

"And for the most part, I can keep up with the conversation," Smith said. "A lot of what I do is take what they are doing and try to put it into some sort of visual communication form that the average person will look at and be able to understand.

"It doesn't get boring. Everything that we do new is a new challenge and has its own set of limitations or difficulties or challenges. I'm like a bulldog with that kind of stuff — I don't let it go. I really enjoy solving problems."

The way Smith sees it, 3D printing might be the answer to more and more problems in the future. He pointed out that one project he worked on with NSRDEC's Technology, Systems & Program Integration Directorate took less than four weeks to be suitable for field evaluation and provisional patenting.

"That's an unheard-of tempo," Smith said. "It used to be three years from research and development to fielding."

Smith promised to continue probing the "limitations and possibilities" of 3D printing as he seeks to fully exploit the technology in his work at Natick.

"I just want to be able to continue to be able to use this kind of stuff to tell the stories," Smith said. "It's really what we're doing is telling the customers' stories so when they go out, they have a really good set of tools to explain themselves."

# Plenty on his Plate

## PEO Soldier returns armor that saved Soldier

By Debi Dawson/PEO Soldier

**Usually a bruised rib is a cause for a Soldier's complaint. For a White Sands Missile Range-based Soldier who survived a direct rifle shot to his chest during combat in Afghanistan, it is cause for celebration.**

Sgt. Thomas Dacey was serving in Farah Province, Afghanistan, June 4, 2013, when insurgents attacked his unit. He had already been involved in several hours of intense combat in when a burst of enemy fire struck him around 2:50 p.m. His body armor stopped the bullet — which Dacey still carries in his pocket.

Dacey said he was so "pumped up" that he didn't notice he was hit at first.

"Later, when I got a moment to check myself out, I saw that I had been hit,"

Dacey said.

"A bullet went through my optics, and a piece of it hit my face," Dacey said. "Then I looked down and realized I had been shot. So I went around the wall real quick to see if I had been penetrated. When I saw it did not, I started returning fire."

Dacey's battle buddy described the NCO's reaction after learning he was OK.

"He just kept on fighting," said Pvt. Jacob Pinar.

Dacey killed at least one of the Taliban attackers using his grenade launcher. After the fight, the Army evacuated Dacey for medical care. He received new body armor while his damaged gear went for forensic examination and analysis.

Dacey said an hour or so after he was hit, he began to experience pain when breathing. After another week or so, he went back to medical personnel. They told him that he had suffered a severely bruised lower rib from what would have otherwise been a lethal shot.

"This experience makes me grateful for life every day," said Dacey, a native of Beverly, Mass., upon receiving his battle-damaged armor plate from Program Executive Office Soldier. This Fort Belvoir, Va.,-based organization is responsible for developing uniforms, helmets, small arms, night vision, and body armor for individual Soldiers. Dacey was grateful for receiving the plate and what it meant to him.

"Life's short; appreciate what you have," said Dacey as he held his 2-year-old son, Thomas M. Dacey IV. "Just be grateful for what you have."

Dacey now lives in Las Cruces, N.M., and continues to serve with the 2nd Engineering Battalion, 36th Engineering Brigade at WSMR.

Dacey said the plate presentation gave him a chance to remember one of his battle buddies, Pfc. Errol Milliard of Birmingham, Ala. A rocket-propelled grenade killed Milliard that day.

"He was the newest Soldier in our squad," Dacey said. "He was very religious and always had a smile on his face. No matter what was happening, he always tried to make the best of it."

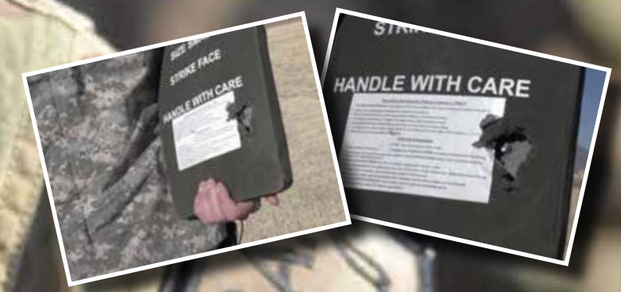
As he presented Dacey with his life-saving hard armor insert, PEO Soldier's Command Sergeant Major Doug Maddi said it was important to remember Milliard's sacrifice.

"He was a hero who made the ultimate sacrifice," he said.

Dacey's commander spoke of importance of the plate return.

"I really appreciate PEO Soldier coming out to make this presentation," said Lt. Col. Jim Koeppen. "That plate will always be in Sergeant Dacey's house. And when his young son grows up, it will mean a lot to him.

"Sergeant Dacey is not a big guy. So when the Soldiers see him able to walk away after taking a 7.62 round, there is no doubt that they have confidence in their protective equipment."



# Soldier and Family Fitness

**By Comprehensive Soldier and Family Fitness / ARLINGTON, Va. (Jan. 28, 2014)**

The Comprehensive Soldier and Family Fitness program launched a new social media platform yesterday, called ArmyFit, for Soldiers, their families and Army civilians.

ArmyFit is designed to offer members of the Total Army with tools and resources that will help them be more self-aware, and therefore have the ability to begin the process of self-development and self-improvement.

"Being Army fit is a state of mind in addition to having a strong physical capability," said CSF2 Director Col. Kenneth Riddle. "The ArmyFit online platform is designed to build one's comprehensive fitness across all areas of strength: social, emotional, spiritual, family and physical. ArmyFit will help our Army family be Army Strong both physically and psychologically."

Understanding that self-awareness is key to self-improvement, the user begins by taking a scientifically-validated self-assessment survey, known as the Global Assessment Tool, or GAT 2.0. Once the users receive their results in the five areas of strength on the GAT 2.0, they then receive recommended tools and resources tailored to them within the ArmyFit environment.

ArmyFit is tailored to an Army audience, making the platform one-of-a-kind. Recognizing that Soldiers, their families and Army civilians face unique challenges as part of Army life, CSF2 wants to ensure members of the Total Army have what they need to be successful throughout their careers.

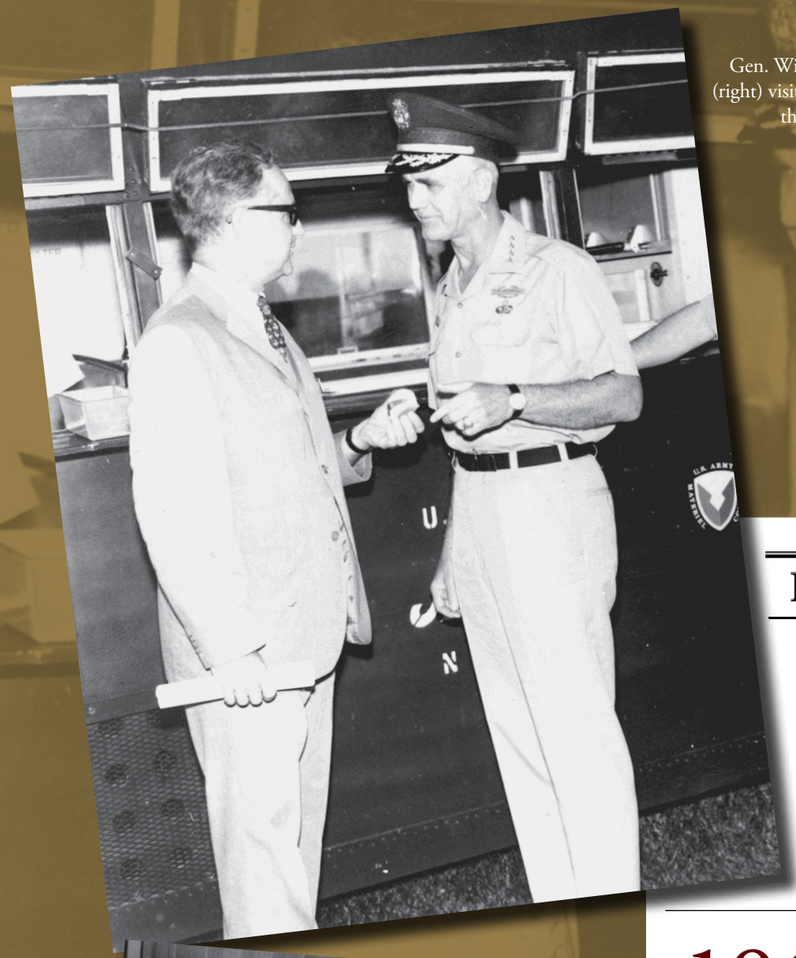
"The tools and capabilities of ArmyFit enable Soldiers, their families, and civilians to take control of their self-development in all dimensions of strength," said Sgt. 1st Class Robert Trice, CSF2 program manager at Fort Carson, Colo. "I've provided resilience training to Soldiers at my unit, and I know that ArmyFit is an excellent supplement to formal resilience and performance training."

"In addition to online tools and resources, ArmyFit also provides an opportunity for our Soldiers and their families to connect virtually," said Riddle. "With constant moves and deployments, it's often hard to connect with others that understand what you may be going through. Being able to share improvements in the various areas of fitness, compete against each other in friendly competitions, and be part of this community, will help our Soldiers and their families feel connected."

CSF2 plans to keep adding new content and functions to ArmyFit over the coming months. These include the ability to synch a personal activity monitor's data with the site to chart a person's daily physical activity, and use that data to compete with other users. CSF2 is developing a geo-targeting capability that will allow users to locate experts and resources in their immediate area, and to turn virtual communities into local face-to-face group activities.

"The launch of the ArmyFit online platform is just the start," said Trice. "As Soldiers, their families and Army civilians engage more with the platform, the more ready and resilient they will be."

For more information on ArmyFit, visit http://csf2.army.mil.



Gen. William Westmoreland (right) visits the Natick Labs in this 1969 photograph.

## Looking back at Natick

Chief of Staff of the Army Gen. Raymond T. Odierno became the most recent in a long line of senior Army officials to visit Natick Soldier Systems Center. They come here to learn about and witness firsthand the technologies being developed to aid our men and women in uniform.

# 1969 | VISITS

*U.S. Army Natick Laboratories*

During his visit, Gen. Westmoreland (center) samples some rations developed at the Natick Labs.

# NSSC This Week

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*Garrison Commander*
Lt. Col. Brian Greata

*Command Sergeant Major*
Command Sgt. Maj. Robert Beausoleil

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**About this newsletter**
*NSSC This Week* is a biweekly newsletter covering NSSC news within the Army and commercial media.

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Photos by David Kamm unless otherwise noted.

To subscribe to NSSC This Week, please contact Bob Reinert at robert.j.reinert.civ@mail.mil.

On the Web: www.army.mil/natick