

November 2015

NSSC This Month



U.S. Army Garrison Natick Public Affairs Office

Natick recognizes the contributions and sacrifices of service members and veterans within our organization and community

VETERANS DAY





Publisher's Note

John Harlow
USAG Natick and NSSC Chief of Public Affairs



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NSSC This Month

A Season of Thanks



There are many things to be thankful for as we close in on Thanksgiving. Just look around this 78-acre campus, and there is plenty to be thankful for.

Thanks to all of you who helped make this fall's veterans' clothing drive the most successful ever. Your generosity brought in more than 2,700 pounds of clothing and other items that will help our veterans who have fallen upon hard times.

I am thankful that I was able to go to the Veterans Day program in Wellesley. Lt. Col. Raymond gave a great speech, and it is awesome to see the community support for those who are protecting us.

It was an honor to participate in the dedication of General Greene Avenue. Every time I make the right turn at the traffic light, it reminds me of what he always charged us with ... people first, mission always.

I am beyond thankful to work with the Public Affairs and StratComm team that puts this newsletter together. It is an honor to see this work done firsthand. Our folks are committed to telling the Natick story and share the great work done on this installation on behalf of the Soldier.

Most of all, I am thankful for the Soldiers who serve today. To raise your right hand and swear to defend and protect the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic, while our nation is at war takes a special person.

When you are carving the turkey tomorrow and watching football, take a moment and think about the families who are missing someone at the table because they are deployed or lost their lives.

Have a Happy Thanksgiving.

John Harlow
USAG Natick and NSSC Chief of Public Affairs

NSSC This Month

NSSC

Senior Mission Commander
[Brig. Gen. Thomas H. Todd III](#)

Garrison Commander
[Lt. Col. Ryan Raymond](#)

Command Sergeant Major
[Command Sgt. Maj. Erika M. Gholar](#)

Public Affairs Officer
[John Harlow](#)

About this newsletter

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Photo Credit: Staff Sgt. Steve Cortez



USARIEM Soldier honored as an ‘Angel of the Battlefield’

By Mallory Roussel, USARIEM Public Affairs / NATICK, Mass. (Nov. 12, 2015)

When Sgt. 1st Class Adam Morelli learned he had been nominated as the Army’s “Angel of the Battlefield” honoree, he was surprised.

“In my mind, I was thinking, ‘It is not a big deal. I was just doing my job,’” Morelli recalled.

While the detachment sergeant from the [U.S. Army Research Institute of Environmental Medicine](#) portrays his accomplishments modestly, the [Armed Services YMCA](#) recognized him among other service men and women at the Ninth Annual Angels of the Battlefield Gala in Washington, D.C., on Nov. 4 for providing life-saving medical treatment on the battlefield.

“They were basing the award off my time in Iraq, when I was deployed there,” Morelli said. “We had an incident in April of 2008 where there was a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device that had detonated next to the building near our compounds. I got there and I was the only medic on-scene because there was only one medic assigned per team.”

Alone, Morelli provided triage and treatment to 28 wounded Soldiers and cared for another Soldier trapped on a rooftop while under enemy fire.

“Those 29 Soldiers are alive today because of the efforts of then Staff Sergeant Adam Morelli,” said [U.S. Army Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Milley](#), who presented Morelli with the honor.

Each year, the Angels of the Battlefield Gala honors medics, corpsmen and parascuemen who administer lifesaving medical treatment and trauma care on the battlefield. The honorees are compassionate men and women who have risked their lives to protect other Soldiers. These Angels of the Battlefield are the reason why many Soldiers wounded in battle have made it home to their families and communities. To date, ASYMCA has honored over 450 medics, corpsmen and parascuemen for their service.

“This recognition is truly an honor to receive on behalf of all Army medics,” Morelli said. “We have medics saving lives every day.”

The ASYMCA is an outstanding organization that supports Soldiers worldwide. For them to take the time to recognize medics is very humbling.”

Not only has the Angel of the Battlefield recognition been humbling for Morelli, but it has also helped drive home the essential mission of USARIEM and Army Medicine: to help Soldiers, whether that is through research or action.

“For Army Medicine as a whole, as is in USARIEM, our job is to save lives on the battlefield,” Morelli said. “Whether that is through prevention or treatment, our research at USARIEM helps Soldiers every day.”

“I think that medics share the Army Values of selfless service and personal courage and hold those values very close. These are the tenets as to why we act in the way we do. We join the Army to help people and serve our country. The ASYMCA operates within those same values, as well. We are here to take care of Soldiers.”

U.S. Army Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Milley presents Angels of the Battlefield honoree Sgt. 1st Class Adam J. Morelli with an award for heroism at the 9th Annual Angels of the Battlefield Gala in Washington, D.C., Nov. 4, 2015. Angels of the Battlefield honors medics, corpsmen and parascuemen who administer life-saving medical treatment and trauma care on the battlefield.

USARIEM, NSRDEC employees honored

By Mallory Roussel, USARIEM Public Affairs / NATICK, Mass. (Nov. 16, 2015)

Tension was high at [Research & Development Associates](#), an organization whose mission is to provide the safest and highest quality food and food service to the U.S. Armed Forces, when judges of the 2015 [Colonel Rohland A. Isker Award](#) debated over the winner.

The Rohland Isker Award is presented annually to civilian employees of the federal government or military personnel for outstanding contributions made to national preparedness in food, equipment, packaging, food service or related areas. Judges grant the award for significant accomplishments made in the past 12 months or to a series of project accomplishments made over a period of time.

“What project really had the greatest impact in the long term to benefit Soldiers, Sailors, Marines, Airmen and Coast Guardsmen away from their families?” said John McNulty, the executive director of Research & Development Associates, or R&DA, of the tiebreaker.

This year, the ComRaD, a website application based on a nutritional database created in collaboration with the [U.S. Army Research Institute of Environmental Medicine’s](#) Military Nutrition Division, won for making nutritional information easily available to warfighters.

Application creators Holly McClung of USARIEM, Julie Smith of the [U.S. Army Natick Soldier Research, Development and Engineering Center](#), and Andrea Lindsey of Department of Defense Human Performance Resource Center were unable to attend the R&DA Awards Banquet on Oct. 21. However, McNulty took a trip from San Antonio, Texas, to present them with the award on Nov. 3 in Natick Soldier Systems Center’s Grant Conference Center during the annual Combat Feeding Research and Engineering Board Meeting.

“ComRaD is a nutrition tool for warfighters and military dietitians working with warfighter populations in garrison to smartly plan their fueling and refueling for mission deployments,” McClung said.

With a few clicks of a mouse, warfighters and dietitians can view menus for three types of rations: Meal, Ready to Eat; First Strike Ration; and Meal, Cold Weather/Long Range Patrol. They can even read the nutritional information in a nutrition label format for specific menu components, such as drinks and side dishes.

According to McClung, all nutritional information is accurate, and all menu components have been chemically analyzed, making the ComRaD the go-to application for precise, easily accessible nutrition information on individual items, menus, and daily food intake. The judges of the 2015 Rohland Isker Award were impressed by the capabilities of this software to provide warfighters with robust information about the rations and the potential for affecting their diets and mission readiness.

Smith, from NSRDEC’s [Combat Feeding Directorate](#), or CFD, took the vision of a publicly available source of ration nutrition information to a website concept through her collaborations with McClung, from MND, when constructing a testing plan for chemically analyzing the ration components. McClung executed the testing plan and built the Ration Analysis System Database. Lindsey, from Uniformed Services University, or USU, was the liaison to contract programmers and is the website host.

“My contribution to ComRaD is the nutrition data,” McClung said. “Basically, all the nutrient data that feeds into ComRaD is from my research team. Working collaboratively with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and (veterinary) inspectors stationed at every ration manufacturing and assembly plant, ration component samples

were captured during food production and shipped to USARIEM.”

McClung’s research team then inventoried and processed the ration samples before sending them to an outside lab for nutrition analysis. The chemical data from these analyses were then reviewed and systematically entered into the RAS Database, the fuel of ComRaD. McClung said it took the team close to nine years to fund analysis and build a complete dataset containing all food items—more than 300 components—in multiple years of MRE and First Strike Ration menus.

USARIEM generates all the ration nutritional data that feeds into ComRaD, but this was only possible because of a close collaboration with CFD. CFD took the partnership a step further by envisioning and assisting in the building of ComRaD and taking responsibility for the upkeep of the application. USU currently hosts ComRaD at HPRC’s Human Performance Optimization website, which provides warfighters key resources in achieving total fitness, including performance nutrition.

“I feel this effort falls under performance nutrition as it offers the warfighter a tool to perform and recover smartly and efficiently,” McClung said. “The goal of the site is to promote (Human Performance Optimization), and the ComRaD gives warfighters a tool for accurate and reputable nutrition information on the military rations.”

Visit the ComRaD at: <http://hprc-online.org/comrad/>





Service members participate in food distribution event

By Tazanyia L. Mouton, USAG Natick Public Affairs / NATICK, Mass. (Nov. 10, 2015)

Approximately 200 meals were distributed by [Boston Celtics](#) head coach Brad Stevens and his family Nov. 2, at the Stevens Family Thanksgiving Meal Distribution Event at the [Greater Boston Food Bank](#).

Along with the Stevens family and the Celtics' front office employees, 15 Soldiers, Marines and Coast Guardsmen participated in the event.

Chief Warrant Officer Cortez Frazier, an aerial delivery chief at the [Natick Soldier Research, Development and Engineering Center](#), said the event was a success.

"The Soldiers did a great job by helping the moms carry the four full bags of groceries to their cars, and the players and coaches were very helpful and caring," Frazier said. "My wife and I have been looking to get more involved with the community, especially with helping to feed the homeless."

Frazier's wife, a social worker at the Brockton Veterans Affairs hospital, helps veterans with a number of services, such as finding adequate shelter and food.

"I have served my country for more than 30 years, and it really saddens me to see people homeless and starving in this great country of ours," Frazier said. "In the past, I have

worked with local grocery stores to help utilize their baked goods [by] providing them to homeless shelters and other food banks."

Stevens said this food distribution event is very important to him and his family.

"I think the biggest thing is just the opportunity to come out and lend a hand in November, which is a huge month for the Boston Food Bank," Stevens said. "Nutrition has always been a big thing for our family. It's always been something we've been really passionate about."

The GBFB is the largest hunger-relief organization in New England and distributes more than 50 million pounds of food each year to help provide wholesome meals to nearly half a million people. The GBFB is also among the largest food banks in the country and remains committed to increasing their food distribution to provide at least one meal per day to every person in eastern Massachusetts who is in need.

Through product donations, food drives and financial contributions, the GBFB is able to sustain those community members.



Photo Credit: Brian Babineau, Boston Celtics

This year, the Stevens family worked shoulder-to-shoulder with service members as a part of the NBA Cares Commitment to Service program. This comprehensive partnership brings together the [National Basketball Association](#) and the [Department of Defense](#) to benefit the community.

The joint venture supports local communities and hundreds of thousands of active and retired armed forces members, and their Families, each year. The program, based on the four pillars, community, health, leadership and transition, is in its second year.

Stevens said working with service members was an added touch to this year's event.

"To have the troops here this year helping us, it's a fantastic collaborative effort," Stevens said. "We couldn't be more thankful for what they do for our country and for us to all get together and hand [the Thanksgiving meals] out is pretty special."



Employee of the Quarter

NATICK, Mass. (Nov. 23, 2015) – Patti Franciose, a senior management analyst for the Resource Management Office, was named employee of the fourth quarter by the [U.S. Army Garrison Natick](#).

Franciose was recognized for her analysis, technical expertise, exceptional job performance, customer service and teamwork.

"Mrs. Franciose is very deserving of this recognition," said Terry Ewing, director of Resource Management. "She has unequaled loyalty to the garrison, dutifully accepts additional responsibilities in support of mission accomplishment, and consistently fulfills the terms of commitments made to customers and management alike."



NSSC CELEBRATES VETERANS DAY

"The willingness with which our young people are likely to serve in any war, no matter how justified, shall be directly proportional to how they perceive the Veterans of earlier wars were treated and appreciated by their nation." – George Washington

The nation's first president uttered those words many years ago, but they continue to resonate in 21st century America. This is especially true at Natick Soldier Systems Center, where every day is dedicated to protecting and improving the quality of life for our nation's warfighters.

NSSC celebrated Veterans Day 2015 by symbolically and tangibly marking the occasion inside the installation gates and beyond.

As always, NSSC representatives visited local communities to take part in their observances. Brig. Gen. William E. Cole, NSSC senior commander, served as the guest speaker for the Town of Natick; Lt. Col. Ryan Raymond, U.S. Army Garrison Natick commander, spoke at the Town of Wellesley; and the NSSC Color Guard participated in the Town of Wayland's ceremony.

On the installation the previous day, an audience listened attentively at Hunter Auditorium as five local veterans recalled their experiences during the Vietnam War era. The event commemorated the 50th anniversary of that conflict.

On Nov. 16, veterans in the NSSC workforce gathered for lunch at the Lord Community Center to form stronger bonds.

In what has become a growing semi-annual tradition at NSSC, a weeklong collection for local homeless veterans produced a record yield of nearly 3,000 pounds of clothing and personal hygiene items.

Even in 2015, it appeared that the people of NSSC heard the echoes of Washington's words and were moved to respond.





Natick veterans recall Vietnam War

By Bob Reinert, USAG Natick Public Affairs / NATICK, Mass. (Nov. 17, 2015)



Fifty years after the United States entered the [Vietnam War](#), five veterans from that era of conflict visited the [Natick Soldier Systems Center](#), or NSSC, to relate their experiences, Nov. 10.

Vietnam was as much about cultural and political upheaval as it was about military strategy. That became apparent as Warren Griffith, Bob Sinclair, Al McLean, Ed Carr and Scott Dixon took turns sharing their memories with [Command Sgt. Maj. Erika Gholar](#) and a Hunter Auditorium audience.

“It was cultural shock in a way, but it was growing up time,” said Carr, who served in the Marines as an artillery forward observer and later as a Vietnamese language interpreter. “It was a social revolution going on.”

“There was a great divide within the country,” said Griffith, a fellow former Marine.

Dixon, another Marine Corps veteran who also works at NSSC, said there definitely were racial issues among the troops in Vietnam.

“But when you were in the bush ... that went away,” Dixon said. “The same people that would not talk to you or get close to you in the rear would give their lives for you in the field.”

“Once you’re in that situation, it’s not about fighting for your country; it’s about fighting for each other. And racial lines were crossed almost immediately in that situation.”

Sinclair, a retired Army master sergeant, pointed out that the 11th Armed Cavalry Regiment in which he served, lost 516 men in Vietnam. He added that Natick, alone, lost 11 service members during the war.

“Scott, myself and Warren went to high school with seven of those eleven,” Sinclair

said. “I honestly felt it was my absolute obligation to defend the United States of America. We all felt that. Natick has always been a very patriotic town.”

Which made returning from the war all the more difficult for many veterans. Dixon recalled being greeted by peace activists hurling objects and insults when he arrived on the West Coast.

“When I came home, I was ashamed I was a Vietnam veteran,” Dixon said. “I was just a very young man and I was ashamed, and many of my brothers were the same. We were not well taken care of when we came back.”

The son of parents who had served in the Pacific during World War II, Dixon was just doing what he considered his duty.

“It had nothing to do with politics,” Dixon said. “It had to do with supporting my country.”

Griffith had a similar experience upon his return from Vietnam.

“We came home as individuals,” Griffith said. “I think that was part of the problem. Our greeting generally wasn’t good. The attitude wasn’t that great.”

[Brig. Gen. William Cole](#), NSSC’s senior commander, thanked the veterans for coming to the installation. He recalled the Soldiers with Vietnam experience who were still on active duty when he began his Army career in 1983.

“We looked up to them,” Cole said. “They were the Soldiers that had been there and done that, and if they told you to do something or if they gave you advice, you better listen to it because they were speaking from experience.”

NSSC participates in local Veterans Day events

By Bob Reinert, USAG Natick Public Affairs / NATICK, Mass. (Nov. 12, 2015)

Less than two weeks before he relinquishes command at [Natick Soldier Systems Center](#), Brig. Gen. William Cole spoke at the Town of Natick's Veterans Day observance Nov. 11 at the [Morse Institute Library](#).

Meanwhile, Lt. Col. Ryan Raymond, U.S. Army Garrison Natick commander, spoke at the Town of Wellesley's event, and the NSSC Color Guard participated in the Town of Wayland's ceremony.

At Natick, which claims nearly 10 percent of the 37,000 veterans living in Massachusetts, Cole said that whenever America's interests have been threatened, men and women from across the country have stepped forward to serve around the globe.

"May we remain forever bonded by our service and forever indebted to their service," Cole said. "In our actions and in our words and in our hearts, we must always be there for one another. Today, we celebrate that bond and that service, which has preserved this country's freedom and our way of life."

It didn't matter whether one had served in the National Guard, as a Reservist or on active duty, Cole said.

"You have given us security," said Cole, "and you have allowed us prosperity and you have secured the greatest nation on earth."

Cole also recognized the non-veterans in the audience.

"I'd like to thank you so much for observing this event today," Cole said. "Your attendance and support is so important to our country."

Cole urged all veterans to engage with communities and fellow citizens so that society knows their story.

"Be like Warren Griffith, who serves as the president of Natick Veterans Council. Be like Joe Murphy, who served in Vietnam and recently retired as our fire inspector at the Labs," Cole said. "Be like Tom Hudner and

Tom Kelley, who were awarded the Medal of Honor and served as the commissioner for the Massachusetts Department of Veterans' Services. All of you, I ask, keep serving and keep being a vital part of this great community."

Cole also pointed to the late Maj. Justin Fitch, who served at NSSC before retiring last December. Fitch had devoted himself to ending veteran suicides in his final months.

"He reached out and was a sounding board for veterans in times of their personal crisis," Cole said. "He recently lost his battle to cancer at the age of 33, but he had a huge effect as a veteran."

Cole also remembered those who continue to serve this country overseas.

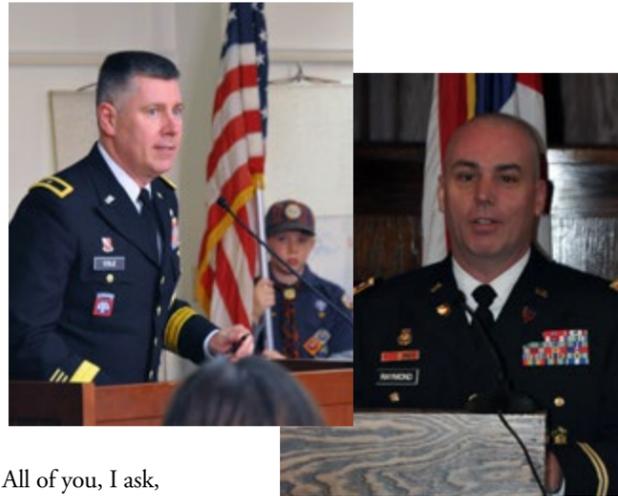
"Say a prayer for them and for the families," said Cole, "who are waiting here for them to come home."

"Please take pride in knowing that the title of veteran is earned, not bestowed, and the power of that title does not diminish over time."

Lt. Col. Ryan Raymond

At the Wellesley Town Hall, Maine native Raymond said it was an honor to return to New England and to serve at NSSC.

"As the garrison commander at the Natick Labs, I am truly appreciative of the tremendous support we receive from the Town of Wellesley and the surrounding communities that embrace our service members and veterans," Raymond said. "While great attention is rightfully and regularly given to the service and sacrifices of the men and



women who have worn a uniform in service to our nation, the close connection between the military services and local communities is often overlooked. In fact, the strength of our Armed Forces is wholly dependent on that community bond."

As Raymond noted, every Soldier, Marine, Sailor, Airman and Coast Guardsman enters service locally and later returns home.

"While serving, our men, women and their families are embraced in the various communities in which they reside ... and when service members transition, they return to a local community to start their next phase of service," Raymond said. "There is no national reservation for veterans. We reside right here alongside the people we have been protecting."

Veterans, Raymond said, continue to serve the community in such positions of influence as teachers, coaches, police officers and business leaders.

"These veterans share their stories and have a great deal of influence over how military service is viewed by our youth — as an avenue of growth and success, or as a temporary postponement of goals," Raymond said. "The story these veterans tell is largely dependent on the reception they receive in communities like yours."

In closing, Raymond extended a special thanks to the veterans on hand.

"Please take pride in knowing that the title of veteran is earned, not bestowed," said Raymond, "and the power of that title does not diminish over time."



Photo: Tazanyia Mouton, USAG Natick Public Affairs

Natick clothing drive sheds light on veteran homelessness

By Tazanyia L. Mouton, USAG Natick Public Affairs / NATICK, Mass. (Nov. 20, 2015)

Growing up in Batavia, New York, Sarah Ross, a human research volunteer program coordinator with the [Natick Soldier Research, Development and Engineering Center](#), didn't know anything about veteran homelessness.

Even after enlisting in the Army as a healthcare specialist in 2006, Ross couldn't imagine that after our heroes had served their country, they could possibly end up with nothing.

It wasn't until Ross moved to Boston and saw veteran homelessness firsthand that she realized there was a huge problem.

"I was with my mother, and she was so confused as to why there would be a homeless veteran," said Ross, "and as I tried explaining it to her, I found myself just as confused."

At that point, Ross started volunteering at the [New England Center for Homeless Veterans](#) while she was still a Soldier.

After leaving the Army in 2009, Ross transitioned into a position as a civilian working with Soldiers at the [Doriot Climatic Chambers](#). One day in 2013, she remembered back to that day she saw the homeless veteran and, it just clicked for her.

Since that time, twice a year, Ross has organized a clothing drive for homeless veterans and their families. The drive brings in much needed items such as heavy coats, socks and gloves for the winter, and T-shirts and other clothing items for the warmer months.

Along with clothing items, Ross said she accepts hygiene products, diapers, babe wipes and children's clothing.

Ross said she is humbled and proud to be a part of the [Natick Soldier Systems Center](#) community.

"Their outpouring of support doesn't show in the words they say but, instead, with their actions," said Ross. "They don't have to go out and buy items (or) clean out their closets, but they do."

Ross also said a number of employees also ask her throughout the year about upcoming clothing drives.

"People actually keep their bagged items for months in anticipation for the time the clothing drive rolls around," said Ross.

Ross said she is most impressed with help she has received from the human research volunteers.

"Our HRVs have stepped up and have taken it upon themselves to help me empty the bins, collect the items (and) help me weigh the items," said Ross. "They come to me every morning asking when they can help."

Veteran homelessness has continued to decline each year since 2010, but there continues to be a long way to go. In 2014, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, or HUD, estimated that there were nearly 50,000 homeless veterans on any given night in January of that year. That number is down nearly 14 percent from 2013.

Ross said that one day she hopes that veteran homelessness will be an issue of the past.

"Sometimes, it just takes someone to present them with a way to be able to (help), and that is what the clothing drive is," said Ross. "All I do is put out the containers."

Ross said the selflessness of her colleagues who choose to support the effort in ending veteran homelessness is what makes the drives successful.

The November clothing drive brought in 2,785 pounds of clothes and personal hygiene items, the largest amount a clothing drive has garnered here at NSSC.

The next drive is currently scheduled for April 2016.

If you would like to learn more information about veteran homelessness and what you can do to help, please visit www.veteransinc.org.



'The Right Person'

NSSC welcomes new senior mission commander

By Bob Reinert, USAG Natick Public Affairs / NATICK, Mass. (Nov. 12, 2015)

Brig. Gen. Thomas H. Todd III assumed command of the [Natick Soldier Systems Center](#) mission in a Nov. 24 arrival and departure ceremony at NSSC's Hunter Auditorium.

Todd also serves as deputy commanding general of the [U.S. Army Research, Development and Engineering Command](#), or RDECOM, at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md.

Brig. Gen. William E. Cole departed Natick in the ceremony, which was hosted by Maj. Gen. John Wharton, the commanding general of RDECOM.

"It's all been about service — service to nation, service to community," said Wharton of Cole's time at Natick. "It's been my privilege not only to be the commanding general of RDECOM, but to have you as deputy commanding general."

Wharton then turned his attention to Todd, lauding his extensive background and how it would apply to Natick.

"We're really looking forward to getting you on the team," Wharton told him. "We know you're the right person for the job at the right time. Tom, you have an important mission. I know you'll rise to that occasion."

Todd comes to Natick from Redstone Arsenal, Alabama, where he was project manager, Utility Helicopters, Program Executive Office, Aviation. There, he led the

UH-60M Black Hawk Program into a five-year multi-year contract, achieved program initiation approval for the Improved Turbine Engine Program and the H-60V Black Hawk Program, and fielded more than 500 UH/HH-60M and UH-72A aircraft to the Army, Navy, Air Force, Homeland Security and 35 international partners.

"We provide and we equip the man and the woman, the son and daughter of our nation. That's what makes the Army unique. It really is all about the Soldiers."

Brig. Gen. Thomas H. Todd III

He and his family are happy to be at Natick, Todd said.

"We have found New England to be cold but New Englanders to be extremely warm," said Todd, reminding those in attendance that their job is "to provide American Soldiers with the best equipment in the world, hands down. You've done a great job of that."

Cole thanked the Natick community for its support of his command and wished his successor good luck.

"Brigadier General Todd, you are stepping into a great job and a great organization," Cole said. "I wish you the best, and I know you will do very well."

"To everyone here who has attended this ceremony this morning, I appreciate all that you do every day. You've inspired me, and made this job unforgettable. It has truly been a privilege to serve with you."

After the ceremony, Todd took a few minutes to reflect on NSSC and its role in an era of great uncertainty.

"We're at a unique time right now in our nation's history," said Todd, "and really what we are going to be asked to do as an Army, it makes the work here all the more important and relevant, all of a sudden. We have such a unique mission set that that should, in and of itself, create a sense of urgency amongst our team, and I hope it does. This is the only organization with the centerpiece being the Soldier. If we don't get it right, nobody will."

"We provide and we equip the man and the woman, the son and daughter of our nation. That's what makes the Army unique. It really is all about the Soldiers."





More Efficient FOBs

Saving fuel and water on operating bases

By C. Todd Lopez, Army News Service / WASHINGTON (Oct. 23, 2015)

“Energy and water issues - operational energy, water and waste - these and other aspects of sustaining our force create vulnerabilities our enemies have in the past and will exploit in the future,” [Richard Kidd](#) said.

Kidd, who serves as the deputy assistant secretary of the Army for energy and sustainability, said he’s excited to talk about “operational energy” - “I could go on all day,” he said. In particular, Kidd is interested in finding ways to make it so that combat outposts and forward operating bases, or FOBs, of the future are far less dependent on logistical support than what they were during Afghanistan and Iraq.

“If we are going to win in a complex world,” he said, referring to the Army’s operating concept, “we have to pay attention to the resource demands that we generate and we have to look at a way to increase our capability without increasing our resourcing footprint.”

For the Army, this means that operating bases will need to use less fuel and less water, and they will need to generate less waste. That goal doesn’t mean Soldiers will need to have a lower quality of life. Laptops can still be charged, hot showers can still be enjoyed, and hot food can still be eaten, he said. But what it does mean is that the Army will find ways to do all these things that don’t require nearly as many resupply missions as they have over the last 14 years.

From his perspective as a warfighter, Maj. Gen. Steven A Shapiro, director of plans, operations and distribution and assistant deputy

chief of staff, Army G-4, said for the force of 2025 to be successful, things must change in the way the commanders use resources on combat facilities.

In World War II, Shapiro said, the Army used about one gallon of fuel each day for each Soldier. Today, that number is up to 20 gallons.

“Clearly our fuel requirements, our energy requirements, have gone up significantly since WWII,” he said. “But we are much more technologically based. We’ve got airpower now at our air bases. It’s a different environment. But we must become more efficient at our FOBs, because we can’t afford to sustain that pace of refueling.”

Concerns regarding inefficient use of fuel on a FOB go well beyond the cost in dollars, Shapiro said. What it really boils down to is that fuel used in theater, and water used in theater, both have to be delivered by re-supply convoys, through dangerous areas. Those convoys are manned by other Soldiers. Inefficient use of fuel or water on a FOB means that more Soldiers will go into harm’s way as part of the logistics resupply effort.

“In Iraq, as we were convoying, the predominate commodity that was being convoyed was fuel,” Shapiro said. “It was the same in Afghanistan. We are consuming fuel on our FOBs and we are inefficient in our FOBs, and that generates a large requirement for fuel, which puts Soldiers in harm’s way bringing fuel over dangerous roads to the FOB.”

Shapiro said the Army is committed to making itself more energy and water efficient at the tactical level. We are able to do this through advanced research and development that is creating more fuel-efficient power generation. These generators are able to establish plug and play power generation grids that operate at an optimum capacity, while turning generators off and on as needed.

The Army will find ways to reduce both fuel and water use, to reduce re-supply missions and make installations more resilient and independent, while at the same time maintaining an acceptable quality of life for Soldiers.

“We still have lights, we are still eating - we don’t want to change the quality of life,” he said. “But we have to change the way we do business.”

Guiding the Army’s efforts to make more fuel and water-efficient installations, both stateside and in-theater, is the recently-signed [“Energy Security and Sustainability Strategy.”](#) The Army calls it “ES2” for short.

“It’s worthy to note that this document doesn’t make a distinction between operational energy or installation energy,” Kidd said. “And it doesn’t list mandates or goals. Instead, it talks about why the Army must build resilient forces, whether at the installation level, a maneuver unit, or a Soldier. We must have resilient forces that are able to anticipate, respond to, adapt and prevail when bad things happen. That’s applicable in the operational energy realm just like it is on the installations.”

Five goals in ES2 will guide the Army toward more sustainable infrastructure across the force. The first goal is ensuring that that when commanders make decisions that affect the logistics chain, they are aware of the impact of that decision. “You don’t have to cut down on the quality of life to save fuel,” Kidd said. “But if you want that quality of life, you should know the operational implications in terms of convoys and others. We want to make sure the humans in this organization have the information they need to make energy-informed, or resource-informed decisions.”

Other goals in ES2 are to optimize use of resources; assure access to energy, water and land; build resiliency by advancing the ability of systems, installations, personnel and units to respond to unforeseen disruptions in delivery of resources; and drive innovation.

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Photo: Bob Reinert, USAG Natick Public Affairs



Ben Amos, Integrated Training Area Management coordinator on Fort Devens, Mass., points out damage done to trees by invasive species at the range complex.

Balancing Act

Fort Devens juggles training, environmental considerations

By Bob Reinert, USAG Natick Public Affairs / FORT DEVENS, Mass. (Nov. 6, 2015)

Think about training Soldiers, and protecting the environment probably doesn't come immediately to mind.

Yet, finding a way to balance the two needs consumes each and every workday for Ben Amos, the Integrated Training Area Management, or ITAM, coordinator on [Fort Devens](#), who is just as comfortable discussing how to thin a forest to accommodate land navigation training as he is talking about the nesting habits of the Grasshopper Sparrow.

"That's part of the balance that is desired ... here, to make sure training will occur while environmental considerations are given as much [weight] as possible," Amos said. "It's a lot of fun. There's certainly never not enough to do."

A federal regulation - the [Sikes Act](#) of 1960 - provides for the protection and enhancement of wildlife and natural resources on military lands and led to the Army's Sustainable Range Program. As Keith Jackson, Fort Devens Range Control officer, will tell you, it can get a little tricky.

"We really want to make sure the Soldiers get the best training," Jackson said. "Somehow, we have to balance this. That's where Ben's job is the hardest."

Consider the Turner Drop Zone on Fort Devens, which most people view as an area to conduct air operations. Amos has to take a different perspective on the site.

"I see it from an environmental perspective as a rare upland meadow," Amos said. "This being cleared, it's a unique environment."

That environment is favored by the Grasshopper Sparrow.

"It and other birds that will use grasslands for nesting, they'll be nesting on the ground during ... certain times of year," Amos said. "Part of our job ... is to make sure that they're allowed to without either training or maintenance ... impacting their life cycle."

"We mow the drop zone twice a year, and there's a certain ... time when it can't occur. One of the goals is to leave it alone as much as possible while still allowing for use as training."

In another part of the 5,000-acre range complex on Fort Devens' South Post, Blanding's Turtles cross over from the nearby [Oxbow National Wildlife Refuge](#) to lay their eggs in the sandy soil at the range complex before returning to the refuge. To

facilitate their movement, a road is sometimes closed and range users are alerted to the turtles' presence.

"Part of the ITAM program is Sustainable Range Awareness," Amos said.

Amos must be aware of more than just wildlife on Fort Devens. Invasive species are among his greatest concerns.

"The [Oriental] bittersweet is my personal arch-enemy, mostly because it's everywhere," Amos said. "It's a very rapidly growing vine that chokes out trees. It spreads like wildfire."

"Not only are you going to begin losing trees, which impacts the habitat, but you have dead trees falling into landing zones, dead branches falling onto people trying to train, and just basic maneuver impacts. You couldn't drive through it if you wanted to."

"We want ... Fort Devens to be available for training. As long as it's needed or desired, it needs to be available and maintained for that purpose."

Ben Amos, ITAM

Amos said that mechanical clearing and spot herbicide application are used to battle the infestation.

"When you have a serious, problematic area like this, it will spread out," Amos said. "It's a multi-year process. We'll keep monitoring it for the years to come."

"The invasive species is the biggest threat to this and any other training area, or any other facility, in my opinion."

If you lose trees, erosion follows, Amos explained.

"And then you're losing land," Amos said. "Again, your ability to train and maintain the training with good stewardship is greatly reduced."

When he's not worrying about wildlife and invasive species, Amos is maintaining forests, maneuver trails and wetlands so that Fort Devens' ranges remain viable for training and environmentally sound.

The forest lands undergo "rotational shaping" in which 75-acre parcels are thinned out every five years for the safety of troops using them.

"It's basically going in and clearing the dead stuff," Amos said. "One of the goals for training is to maintain safe passage for troops, both day and night, as they maneuver through the forest."

Maneuver trail maintenance can be just as important. Rutted trails lead to erosion and further loss of land.

"If they weren't maintained, if they weren't evaluated regularly, the trails may become impassable," Amos said. "All of a sudden, you have training lands that aren't being used."

Amos also keeps an eye on the range complex's many types of wetlands.

"The rule of thumb is that nothing occurs within 100 feet of a wetland," Amos said. "We are responsible for maintaining and protecting wetlands, regardless of the definition."

To help maintain the wetlands and maneuver trails, old corrugated steel culverts are being replaced with reinforced concrete culverts that encourage the flow of water and help fish and amphibians navigate between breeding and feeding areas.

"Culvert maintenance is another very big part of maintaining wetlands and streams and making sure that the required training areas, the required maneuver trails like this, won't impact the stream health," Amos said. "Again, it's a stewardship consideration."

For a big-picture look at what's happening on the range complex, Amos relies on ITAM's Geographic Information Systems, a highly-accurate satellite view that can show changes over time. As an example, Amos used a hypothetical pair of landing zones, one of which never needs re-vegetation work and another that needs constant attention, regardless of usage.

"Well, then you know you have some other problem," said Amos, "some other erosion problem that needs to be addressed."

Twice a year, Amos will travel the entire range complex to identify possible problems.

"Any time you notice a situation, [you] put that on the menu to repair it," he said.

The goal is to provide the best training areas possible for future generations of American warfighters.

"We want ... Fort Devens to be available for training," Amos said. "As long as it's needed or desired, it needs to be available and maintained for that purpose."



By USAG Natick Public Affairs / NATICK, Mass. (Nov. 19, 2015)



Realizing that food makes up 21 percent of all the waste dropped into this nation's landfills, three ambitious folks at the [Natick Soldier Systems Center](#) seek to put the installation on a diet of sorts.

Jo Ann Ratto, Danielle Froio, and Rich Valcourt want to curb NSSC's appetite for the styrofoam containers and conventional plastic dinnerware available in the cafeteria, [Combat Feeding Directorate](#) sensory laboratory and pilot plant, and the dining facility, diverting those items and food scraps from the solid waste stream into a compost pile at a local farm.

"It's called 'Zero Waste Cafeteria,'" said Ratto of the Combat Feeding Directorate, [Natick Soldier Research, Development and Engineering Center](#), or NSRDEC. "So, we're replacing all of the styrofoam in the cafeteria with compostable items, whether they're made out of a biodegradable plastic or they're going to be made out of a natural fiber material, or paper."

The [Commonwealth of Massachusetts](#) recently announced a ban on food waste in commercial operations if it exceeds one ton per week. According to Valcourt, a [U.S. Army Garrison Natick](#) environmental engineer, NSSC currently produces three-quarters of a ton per week.

"So we're under the threshold, but ... we want to be the stewards of the environment," Valcourt said. "That (maximum) could be lowered in the near future. So we went forward."

Through a "Bootstrap Initiative" sponsored by the NSRDEC chief scientists, Ratto was able to obtain \$17,000 in funding for the project earlier this year. Such initiatives are submitted by NSRDEC employees in hopes of streamlining processes and minimizing bureaucracy. A large portion of that money was used to buy biodegradable tableware that will be available in the cafeteria and individual bins that the workforce can use to dispose of food waste in their work areas.

"Given that the success of this initiative is largely dependent on the workforce's participation, a significant part of this effort will focus on educating the workforce about the switchover to compostable food service products in the cafeteria, and how this affects the way in which they dispose of their food waste and dinnerware," Froio said. "Visual cues will help guide employees through the sorting process, in an effort to minimize contamination of the compostable bins with non-compostable items, like condiment packets, potato chip bags and other commercial packaging that is either purchased in the cafeteria and PX or brought in from home, and consumed in the dining area."

"We're going to be collecting all the food waste and those compostable items all in one bin," Valcourt said.

"You can take your plate that has leftover food on it and throw it right in the same bin," Ratto added.

Conventional trash bins will also still be available for the collection of all non-compostable items.

Waste from food preparation will also make its way to the compost pile, but what happens when employees take meals back to their offices?

"People in the work area (will) have little bins — they're two-gallon bins — and we're going to have a biodegradable bag in there," said Ratto, noting that the bins are well vented. "They're odorless. They won't smell."

"That's important that people know where to put stuff," said Valcourt, "because there's going to be multiple places to put your trash."

The waste will be picked up and transported weekly to the farm. The program will run three to four months, when data will be collected to assess how much waste has been diverted from landfills and, instead, converted into compost, a valuable product that can be used by the community.

Data collection will also include surveys which that employee feedback about the new compostable products and the initiative as a whole. This combination of data will help determine if the cafeteria can be a zero-waste facility.

"We want to collect at least three months of data," Ratto said. "I think it's going to be exciting for the base, and it's going to be educational and environmental."

Valcourt said the garrison will pick up where the program leaves off.

"We're going to move forward with it," said Valcourt, adding that he hopes it will help Natick reach a solid waste diversion rate of 60 percent this fiscal year. "Going to this ... program will help out, greatly."

"This is a great program. It's long overdue."

For more information or to volunteer time to the Zero Waste Cafeteria program, call Jo Ann Ratto at ext. 5315, Danielle Froio at x6903 or Rich Valcourt at ext. 5582.

Natick researcher Dr. Tom Yang wants to talk turkey.

Yang is a food technologist in the [Combat Feeding Directorate](#) at the [Natick Soldier Research, Development and Engineering Center](#), or NSRDEC. He is working on healthier forms of jerky and bacon made from turkey that he believes Soldiers will gobble up.

Yang has been experimenting with osmotic meat technology, which was originally developed in France, to develop the new turkey jerky and turkey bacon products that taste great but are much lower in salt and fat.

The turkey, osmotic version of jerky stays moist and avoids the texture problems of commercial jerky, which can become brittle. It is also higher in protein. The turkey version of bacon allows all Soldiers to enjoy bacon anywhere in the world because it does not contain any pork.

"This is new technology, and it is very energy efficient and is inexpensive," Yang said. "The technology uses a principle called osmosis. So what we have now is a semi-dried meat. It has much less salt and stays moist."

During the process, the meat is ground and made into a paste. It is then extruded onto a sheet, sandwiched between two layers of paper and put through a conveyer.

"The conveyer will take the sheet into an osmotic tank, which contains a high concentration of non-sugar solution," Yang said. "Ninety-two to ninety-five percent of moisture will migrate from the meat into the solution. The whole process takes place at refrigeration temperature so any heat-sensitive nutrients will not be destroyed."

In addition to turkey, this process can be used on beef, pork, chicken and seafood. The meat's texture is somewhat moist, resembling the texture of prosciutto.

"The French eat the meat as is," Yang said. "It's safe. But Americans are used to a cooked-meat type of texture. So we toast it. We can then, according to the recipe, make a jerky or a bacon. The toasting is for two or three minutes at 350 degrees."

Yang's recipes add omega-3s and use lean, turkey breast. He sees applications beyond bacon and jerky.

"You could also use the meat as a wrap by wrapping the meat around vegetables," Yang



Talking Turkey

Natick researcher develops bacon, jerky

By Jane Benson, NSRDEC Public Affairs / NATICK, Mass. (Nov. 23, 2015)

said. "This type of wrap would have a lot of protein as opposed to carbohydrates. And because the meat is lean, it is not greasy at all. It is a very healthy alternative. Soldiers need more protein as opposed to carbohydrates."

In addition to working on healthier forms of bacon and jerky, Yang is also working to improve hash browns with bacon, a very popular item in the meals, ready-to-eat, or MREs. The new, healthier version has osmotic meat that tastes like bacon. It is pork-free.

"So Soldiers will be able to have the hash brown and bacon that they like without pork," Yang said. "It is healthier. There is no

grease from bacon, and it is a good source of beef protein."

It is important to Yang to develop cost-efficient, good-tasting, nutritious food for the warfighter. He plans to continue to find new uses for the osmotic technology and to continue improving his recipes.

"To see Soldiers eat and like something that you have developed and see that it improves their morale and helps them perform their mission better—I think that is the most fulfilling my job as a researcher can get," Yang said. "My mission is to know they are well-fed and well-nourished."



Brain Trust

New collaborative research center launched to gain insights into human behavior

By Sophie Lehrenbaum, The Tufts Daily / MEDFORD, Mass. (Sept. 4, 2015)

In collaboration with the [U.S. Army Natick Soldier Research, Development and Engineering Center](#) (NSRDEC), [Tufts University](#) inaugurated the new Center for Applied Brain and Cognitive Sciences (CABCS) in April. Located in the [School of Engineering](#) labs at 200 Boston Ave., the center is operated by researchers hailing from both organizations who hope to gain a better understanding of the impacts of demanding environments on people.

With a team consisting of Scientific Manager Dr. Tad Brunye and Program Managers Dr. Heather Urry, an associate professor of psychology, and Dr. Matthias Scheutz, a professor of computer science, CABCS will embrace an interdisciplinary approach to complex problems that extend across different domains of science and engineering.

“The Center... [is] bringing together experts from multiple scientific and engineering disciplines in academia and government to solve real-world challenges in the brain and cognitive sciences,” Brunye said.

Brunye emphasized that the joint commitment to addressing similar issues, which brought Tufts and NSRDEC together, sets the Center apart from existing research labs affiliated with Tufts.

“Traditionally, government organizations fund scientific endeavors but do not necessarily actively engage in collaborative research,” he said. “The Center, however, takes a uniquely collaborative approach in this regard, establishing shared goals and forging strong active collaborations between Tufts faculty and civilian scientists from the Army laboratories.”

The idea to develop this collaborative research center was first formulated three years ago, when Co-Directors Professor of Psychology Dr. Holly Taylor and Dr. Caroline Mahoney from the U.S. Army NSRDEC sought to

find a way to enrich the existing research relationship between their respective institutions, according to Brunye. Taylor leads the Spatial Cognition Laboratory within the Psychology department, while Mahoney, who received her Ph.D. from Tufts, directs the Cognitive Science team at the U.S. Army NSRDEC.

Taylor noted that CABCS came to fruition due to the support and assistance they received from beyond the Psychology department.

“The momentum to make the Center a reality came when Dean Linda Abriola, former dean of Tufts School of Engineering, recognized the Center as an opportunity to truly support interdisciplinary, cross-school collaboration,” Taylor said.

CABCS also includes a Research Advisory Committee (RAC), which is comprised of representatives from Tufts and NSRDEC, as well as individuals from outside the two institutions. The role of the RAC is to scrutinize and provide feedback on initial program reviews, annual reviews and proposals for continuation. Furthermore, the Center’s specific objectives are meant to be supported and advanced by RAC members, several of whom are directly involved in some of CABCS’ projects.

This past spring through May 15, the nascent Center began requesting research proposals. It ultimately received nine applications for consideration from faculty in the Schools of Medicine, Nutrition, Engineering and Arts and Sciences. Brunye described the proposals as auspicious, stating that their authors were all invited to revise and resubmit their ideas to compete for possible funding.

The proposals for 2015 were to fall within the bounds of one of four fixed topics: “understanding humans and supporting systems,” “monitor, characterize and optimize cognitive and non-cognitive states,” “understanding the

immersed ambulatory human” and “pioneering individual to team translation.”

“Topics ranged from delivering low-current electrical stimulation to brain regions responsible for the control of attention and behavior to developing and validating mobile systems for monitoring and interpreting gestural communications,” Brunye said.

The projects that CABCS is currently undertaking boast investigator teams that match the Center’s interdisciplinary focus: psychologists are teaming up with engineers and computer scientists to carry out many of the research projects. The projects themselves are varied as well; titles for current projects include “Mobile sign and gesture recognition system for communication in impoverished environments,” “Using neuro-cognitive multi-modal techniques to assess mental workload in real-world language contexts” and “A Pilot Study of the Influence of Different Urban Environments on Mental States.”

Besides innovative interdisciplinary research projects, Brunye emphasized that the Center promises both graduate and undergraduate students valuable work experience with groundbreaking technologies for monitoring neural activity, employing virtual reality to mimic the real world, stimulating cortical activity, tracking eye movements and examining behavioral processes.

“The cutting-edge technologies offered by the Center provide novel, unprecedented opportunities for faculty and students to engage in basic and applied sciences,” Brunye said.

Mahoney agreed and added that the collaboration between the two organizations also provides researchers access to equipment beyond what is available at 200 Boston Ave.

“The new collaborative effort allows Tufts students and faculty the opportunity to use special resources at NSRDEC such as the state of the art environmental chambers,” Mahoney said.

After a few months of developing infrastructure and research capabilities, the Center has begun to collect data, setting its real work into motion, according to Brunye.

“The Center has broadened the impact of Army science and technology investments by supporting innovative faculty research that pushes the boundaries of human performance enhancement,” he said.

Cole says goodbye

NSSC senior commander looks back on Natick tenure

By Bob Reinert, USAG Natick Public Affairs / NATICK, Mass. (Oct. 28, 2015)

As he prepared to depart [Natick Soldier Systems Center](#), the installation’s outgoing senior commander recently took time to look back on his two productive years at NSSC.

[Brig. Gen. William E. Cole](#), who had come to Natick in December 2013, pointed to the successful collaboration of tenant organizations and the continued strides made in the environmental realm at NSSC as two of the highlights of his time here.

“It’s really fabulous to see how well they work together and how routinely they collaborate,” said Cole of tenant organizations. “That’s something that you don’t see everywhere else, especially between different organizations under different (major Army commands).

“If you see the researchers working here side by side each day, you wouldn’t even realize they’re in different organizations. That’s one thing I’ve been happy to help encourage and foster.”

Cole has been just as impressed with the cleanup of the [Environmental Protection Agency](#) Superfund site at NSSC. The 17 original violations were the result of activities here in the 1950s, ’60s and ’70s.

“We’ve cleaned up 14 of them,” Cole said. “We have three left, and all three involved groundwater contamination.”

Cole pointed out that more than 30 pumps work continuously to filter that groundwater.

“It’s so clean coming out of the filters, you could drink it, although we don’t,” said Cole, “but we use it to help flush toilets and other industrial uses for water that reduces our demand on commercial water that we have to buy from the town.

“We’re on track to get below the EPA threshold levels for the groundwater contamination around the middle of the next decade. I predict we’re going to come off the EPA

Superfund site list. Today, there’s been a complete culture shift, and it’s great to see how well we take care of the environment now.”

Another area of focus for Cole has been updating [Army Family Housing](#) at NSSC.

“What we want to do is a pretty innovative land exchange (with the state), giving up some old housing in Needham and Wayland that we don’t need and it’s not conveniently located, but is in very expensive zip codes,” said Cole, adding that in return the state would help build housing for NSSC on the installation itself.

“I think we finally got the ball rolling on that,” Cole said. “Even though I won’t see it, I think my successor will get to see it, and I hope that I can come back here on TDY at the ribbon-cutting ceremony and see the brand-new housing.”

During his time at Natick, Cole simultaneously served as deputy commanding general of the [U.S. Army Research, Development and Engineering Command](#) at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md.

“Natick is only one of seven major laboratories underneath the Research, Development and Engineering Command,” Cole said. “I try to be equally involved with all of them. I’ve earned a lot of frequent-flyer miles – put it that way.

“Professionally, it’s been really a fantastic tour because as the (deputy commanding general) of the Research and Development Command, you get to see emerging technology in all



areas. And being able to see all of that has just, I think, made me a much more well-rounded acquisition officer. I think that has prepared me for just about anything in the future.”

Cole leaves behind an NSSC that he said is also prepared for the future despite the uncertain budgetary climate.

“It’s been tough all over for the Army in terms of the budget, but Natick is in a good spot, I think,” Cole said. “First of all, the Army made a conscious decision not to cut the science and technology research budget any more than they absolutely had to.”

Cole added that Natick’s balance of personnel, facilities and mission is nearly perfect.

“There are many Army bases that have excess capacity,” Cole said. “We don’t have that problem here at all. It’s a nice balance, and that’s certainly helped us in these times.”

Cole said he looks forward to coming back to visit NSSC in the future.

“On a personal note, I’ve really loved living here in Massachusetts and being part of the tight community here,” Cole said. “This is one of the smaller Army bases, but we’re very much a community. It’s been a great place to command.”



Natick learns about ‘Soldier for Life’

By Bob Reinert, USAG Natick Public Affairs / NATICK, Mass. (Nov. 20, 2015)

According to the famous saying, “Once a Marine, always a Marine.”

If you served in the U.S. Army, you probably felt that there was no equivalent sentiment in that branch — until “[Soldier for Life](#)” was established in July 2012, that is.

“Soldier’ is earned; it absolutely is,” said Col. Todd Kelly, deputy director of the Army’s Soldier for Life program. “And then it’s not forfeited, ever.”

Kelly visited the [Natick Soldier Systems Center](#) on Nov. 17 to spread the word about Soldier for Life, or SFL, and what it means for the Army. He gave a presentation in Hunter Auditorium.

“It’s really this idea of a mindset,” said Kelly, “and it’s a cultural change in the Army.”

Kelly spoke about the “Soldier life cycle,” which involves starting strong, serving strong, reintegrating strong, and remaining strong. It refers to the beginning of one’s career, the career itself, return to society after service, and serving the community afterward.

“And each and every step of the way, (Soldiers) continue to contribute,” Kelly said.

“They continue to be active in their communities. They continue to tell their stories.”

Telling the Army story is a cornerstone of SFL, which was launched at a time when the Army is working to maintain its readiness despite its decreasing numbers. Meanwhile, departing Soldiers need help transitioning into the civilian workforce.

“We bring folks together,” said Kelly of SFL. “There’s a tremendous sea of goodwill out there. We try to connect that sea of goodwill with our transitioning service members. And once that connection is made, we’ve been successful.”

It appears to be working. While the Army paid out \$515 million to states in 2011 for unemployment benefits for veterans, that figure dropped to a projected \$250 million for this year. That means Soldiers are making smoother transitions to civilian life.

“We’d like to think we’ve had a little impact in nudging that down,” Kelly said. “We’re saving the Army money. It translates into dollars, which translates into readiness.”

On the other side of the equation is busi-

nesses, which get good, reliable employees, Kelly said.

“These organizations realize it’s a good business decision,” Kelly said. “Businesses look at it as a great hiring practice.”

SFL also focuses on the Army of the future, Kelly added.

“We are competing to get the nation’s finest,” said Kelly, noting that the pool of potential Soldiers boils down to only 25-29 percent of the nation’s youth.

Youth will be served, but the Army can’t ignore the other end of the age spectrum. According to Kelly, Army retirees and surviving spouses number about 1.1 million.

“Our largest cohort in the Army is our retired personnel, our veterans that are out there,” Kelly said. “How do we encourage that group to talk about the Army?”

Kelly pointed out that they can share their experiences — good and bad — as they remain active in their communities.

“Go out there and be proud about the contribution, because that’s what matters,” Kelly said. “Tell your story.”

“Stay involved. There is no former Army. There is Soldier for Life. You’ve been a part of something great, and you’re still a part of something great.”

that has been experimented with at both [Fort Devens](#), Massachusetts, [Base Camp Integration Lab](#) and Fort Bliss, Texas, during the Network Integration Evaluations that happen there.

In Afghanistan, as forces drew down, Kidd said one thing going into the country were material solutions to decrease energy usage by increasing energy efficiency.

“Operation Dynamo,” in Nimroz, Afghanistan, was one such example. Kidd said the installation had started with 13 generators there when they came into the country.

But that many were running at far less than their capability. The diesel engines for those generators were not reaching an appropriate temperature to burn all the fuel they were ingesting, and as a result, unburned fuel was collecting in the exhaust system, a condition called “wet stacking.”



NSRDEC Soldiers and veterans score a visit from Boston Bruins

By Jane Benson, NSRDEC Public Affairs / NATICK, Mass. (Nov. 10, 2015)

Jimmy Hayes and Zachary Trotman of the [Boston Bruins](#) showed their gratitude to veterans and current members of the military at the [Natick Soldier Research, Development and Engineering Center](#), an organization committed to improving the safety and quality of life of our nation’s warfighters.

Hayes and Trotman met current members of the military and veterans at NSRDEC. The players also got the opportunity to tour NSRDEC’s unique facilities and learn about NSRDEC’s efforts to help warfighters stay on top of their game through ongoing technology research and development.

Brian Scott, an NSRDEC equipment specialist and Army veteran, had the opportunity to meet Hayes, whose hometown is the nearby Dorchester, Massachusetts.

“It was an honor to meet one of the Bruins players as I’ve been a huge Bruins fan my whole life,” said Scott.

Scott has special insight into the work done at NSRDEC.

“I am glad I was able to share the pride I take in working at NSRDEC due to the fact as a Soldier, there was technology developed here that saved my life,” Scott said. “In August 2008 while deployed to Baghdad, Iraq, the vehicle I was in was hit with an Improvised Explosive Device (IED). The shrapnel that came from the IED and through my vehicle was absorbed by the Advanced Combat Helmet (ACH) I was wearing. Although I sustained injuries and was medically evacuated out of country, I can honestly say that I wouldn’t be here today if it wasn’t for the ACH.”

Bruins players toured the [Doriot Climatic Chambers](#) and the [Cognitive Performance Laboratory](#). They were also treated to a sampling by NSRDEC’s [Combat Feeding Directorate](#).

Scott told Hayes about NSRDEC’s Combat Feeding Directorate’s efforts to introduce performance optimizing components to the rations for Soldiers, including Omega 3, calcium, Vitamin D, and caffeine.

“As an athlete, I’m sure he can relate on some level to the nutrition needed for high-tempo physical activity and recovery,” said Scott. “He also seemed very interested and taste tested some of the items.”

The team members also got the chance to participate in the Load Effects Assessment Program, or LEAP. The LEAP tool consists of a series of obstacles and mission-relevant activities to resemble challenges that warfighters face in current combat situations. The tool is helping NSRDEC researchers better understand the effects that clothing and equipment can have on Soldier performance.

The visit ended with a meet-and-greet session between veterans and the Bruins. The session was fittingly held underneath the American flag, concluding a special day filled with recognition and gratitude for the nation’s warriors — past and present.

Continued from p.14

“These goals should inform the development across the Army of programs and regulations and doctrine,” Kidd said.

Shapiro and his team received guidance from the Army Management Advisory Group, and he’s been tasked to look at contingency basing, which is one aspect of operational energy where the group thinks great improvement can be made. He cited a visit to a base camp in Turkey, the problems experienced there, and the subsequent solution, as being an example of how things could change for the Army in the future.

On a visit to Turkey, he had seen how a team had set up a new base camp on the top of a mountain, using “force provider sets,” for about 150 Soldiers. “I have never been more physically cold in my life,” Shapiro said. “It was the most remote site I’d ever been on.”

“The cold and wind were destroying the tents,” he said. “And we were pumping heat into these tents. And the generators and the environmental control units [ECUs] were going 24 hours a day. And you couldn’t keep the tents warm because it was escaping out the sides.”

Shapiro said he brought out representatives from the Rapid Equipping Force, and they put in rigid walled shelters.

“We want to put rigid-walled shelters in our deployment packages so if you go to a remote site, either extreme cold or extreme heat, the shelter can maintain the right temperature and you don’t have to use as much fuel to keep your ECUs operating,” he said.

Shapiro said that most recently, in Liberia, during the Army’s Ebola response there, Soldiers were equipped with “fairly modern” force provider kits outfitted with equipment

“They would break down,” he said of the generators. Additionally, he said “it required a fuel truck every day to fill those generators with fuel.”

At Nimroz, they went to one 250kw generator with a 12kw load, down from 13 generators. Also, the site got a backup generator and two “hybrid sites,” which included a trailer with a generator, battery pack and solar panel, to provide power for very specific missions, such as a camera system. If the solar-charged battery didn’t prove to be enough energy, the generator could kick on.

Total fuel savings for the project came to about 1,600 gallons a week. There was also a reduction in labor hours for refueling of about 30 hours a week, Kidd said. And finally, there was a reduction in maintenance on the generators of about 20 hours a week. About eight of 10 maintainers could be tasked to do work elsewhere.

“What’s more important is the time and the Soldiers from 10 to two,” Kidd said. “This platoon leader got eight Soldiers back to do what they need to do when they engage the enemy. With operational energy, fuel and money savings are great. But the real value is in Soldier time or combat assets or logistics assets freed up to do something else besides take care of fuel.”

Nathan Cornell, Army’s program manager for operational energy, said there are some goals already set for the “basecamp for force of 2025.” Included among those goals are a 50 percent reduction in fuel use, a 90 percent reduction in water use, and an 80 percent decrease in waste production. He said by 2019, the Army should know what kind of equipment set will be needed to reach those goals.

“That’s going to make that force more sustainable in the future and easier to deploy,”

he said. What the Army will get, he said, is something that is affordable, sustainable and that Soldiers can use.

At the recent NIE, he said, the Army evaluated, among other things, a gray water recycling system, and two micro-grid setups as well.

“What that micro-grid did is help them learn that they probably need only half as much power they used to need in order to run a camp, just because of the ability to centralize the centralization of distribution,” Cornell said.

Also evaluated, he said, ridged-wall shelters that are already available in force provider packages. Those kits include containers with “everything you need inside it: shelters for billeting, kitchens, hygiene, showers and latrines.”

“Soldiers love those,” Cornell said.

